Chapter-V

MINOR CULTS
ŚAKTISM, BUDDHISM,
JAINISM, SŪRYA CULT ETC.
SAKTISM

The worship of Śakti forms a significant aspect of our culture. However the origin of this cult is still shrouded in mystery. From literary and archaeological source, we come to the conclusion that from time immemorial worship of Śakti was prevalent in India as it existed in other parts of ancient world. The Goddess of Śakti represents various phenomenon. Saraswati represents learning and wisdom. Laxmi represent wealth, Durgā represents benevolent aspect, and Kāli represents malevolent aspect. Archaeological evidences lead us to believe that Śakti worship was a prominent cult during the Indus Valley age. In the Vedic age the worship of Śakti relegated to a sub-ordinate position in comparison to the main deities. Due to influence of the Non-vedic people the Śakti cult in the later Vedic period underwent some change and worship of female deities gained importance. During the Purānic period Śakti was considered as the world mother i.e. the supreme reality. During this period Śakti or the mother goddess was worshipped by different names like Durgā, Ambikā, Kātyāni, Bhadrakāli etc. In course of time Śaktism assumed an independent status. Important male deity like Śiva and Viṣṇu became sub-ordinate to the Goddess.

On the basis of available archaeological evidences the antiquity of Śakti worship in Orissa can be traced back to as far as 2nd century B.C. The Nāgini figures worshipped in a modern temple at Kapila Prasad near Bhubaneswar and several Yakhni figures preserved in the Orissa State Museum are the earliest evidences of Śakti worship. The Kalāhāndi Copper Plate of Tustikara indicates that Stambheśwari, a tribal deity, was Āryanised and was worshiped as family deity by the Sulkis. Another evidence of Śakti worship in Orissa is found at modern Jajpur where
The earliest epigraphic evidence regarding Śakti worship is found in the Kalahandi Copper Plate grant of Tustikara who flourished about 5th or 6th century A.D. He was a worshipper of the goddess Stambheśvari. D.C. Sircar thinks that Stambheśvari was the family deity of the Sulki and that she was represented in the form of a pillar indicating Śiva and Śakti. The Sulki records speak of the blessings of Stambheśvari on the kings of the dynasty. In later times goddess Stambheśvari finds mention in the records of the Bhanja Kings of Khiṭjali Manḍala. The Sonpur Plates Satrubhaṇja. The Orissa State Museum Plates, Pātnā Museum Plates, Dasapalla Plates of Ranabhaṇja, Boud grants and Phulbani Plates of the Ranabhaṇja speak high of the goddess Stambheśvari, who bestowed her blessing on the kings. Thus Śakta divinity in the form of Stambheśvari was very much popular in this part of Orissa.

Kanāsa Plate of Lokavigraha and Olasing Copper Plate grants of Bhānudatta reveal the existence of Mother cult in Tosāli during sixth-seventh centuries A.D. Further during this period we come across epigraphic records referring to Virajā Kshetra, which proves existence of Mahisaśamandini Durgā in the name of Virajā.
Pārvati being the consort of Śiva gets a regarded place in the Śaiva pantheon. The early Bhaumakara rulers like Kṣemankaradeva, Śivakaradeva-I, Śubhakaradeva-I, and Śivakaradeva-II, bore the Buddhist epithets “Paramopāsaka” “Paramatathāgata” “Paramasaugata” and “Saugataśraya” respectively\(^\text{19}\) in their Copper Plates. But queen Gauri Mahādevi was a patron of Śaktism. The Kumaranga Plate of Daṇḍi Mahādevi\(^\text{20}\) indicates that queen Gauri considered herself as the incarnation of Gauri or Pārvati and built in the honour of the deity the temple of Gauri in the Ekāmra Kṣetra. Her daughter Dandi Mahādevi was also an illustrious queen and patron of Śākta-tāntricism\(^\text{21}\). In the subsequent period of the Bhaumakaras we find that the Mahāyana form of Buddhism and Tāntrism mixed up. The Vaitāl temple of Bhubaneswar, a Śākta shrine, built during the time of Bhaumakaras, shows in its sculptures strange amalgamation of Śaktism, Śaivism and Mahāyana Buddhism\(^\text{22}\). This temple includes images of Hara-Pārvati, Ardhanārīśvara, Hari-Hara, Lākulisa, Bhairava and Gajāntakaṁī Mūrti and such Tāntrik Mahāyāna images as Amogha Siddhi etc. with Chāmuṇḍā as its presiding deity\(^\text{23}\). Likewise near the Śomesvara temple at Jajpur, there is an image of Chāmuṇḍā with an inscription “Śri Vastā Devyekirtee” carved on the stone. Paleographically it is assigned to 8th century A.D.\(^\text{24}\).

However with the ascendancy of Samavarnāśis in the costal tract of Orissa Śakti worship received same importance though its rulers are devout worshippers of Śiva. Certain epigraphic sources of this period provide us references about the Śakti worship in Orissa. The Māraṇjāmūra Charter\(^\text{23}\) of Yayāti II entitle Bhagavati Panchāmbhari Bhadrāmbikā of Sūvarnapur as their family deity. The passage says:-

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\(^{19}\) Corresponding to the Mahāyana Buddhist epithets of the Bhaumakaras.

\(^{20}\) Kumaranga Plate of Daṇḍi Mahādevi indicates her patronage of Śaktism.

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“Sakalalokābhilosisa vara-pardanāhugraha-kamaya.
Bhagavatya Sri Pańchāmbhari –
Bhadrambikāyādhishitā Pattana Suvanapura –
Vabita.”

This shows that the goddess Bhagabati Pāńchāmbhari Bhadrāmbikā was the presiding deity of Suvarnapur or modern Sonpur and she gives mercy to the people. The Brahmeśvara Temple Inscription mentions Yayāti-II as Chaṇḍīhāra which means he was Chandi (Śakti) and Hara (Śiva). Thus it has been suggested that Yayāti-II was a follower of both Śaktism and Śaivism. Further even before Yayāti-II Śakti worship was popular during the rule of the Pāńḍuvamsis. Queen mother Vāsata, mother of Bālārjuna, is compared with Pārvati and Kolāvati mother of Udyota Keśari is compared with Durgā in their Inscriptions.

Various sculptural representations of Śākta deities of this period show beyond doubt about the prevalence of Śaktism in Orissa. Among various Śākta sculptures, the image of Mahisamardini Durgā is numerically greater than other sculptures. Mahisamardini Durgā images assigned to this period are found at Jajpur where a demon in a human figure is issuing out of a decapitated body of the buffalo. This type of image is found in broken condition (Fig. No-40) from the compound of Virajā temple. Further Prof. G.C. Pattnaik also noticed this type of Mahisamardini image worshipped in a small shed near Gariāpur in Jajpur town. Thomas Donaldson also has noticed one Mahisāmardini image of this iconographic feature in the compound of the Ākhandalaśwara temple at Jajpur, where the Goddess is ten-armed and the demon is attempting to flee the decapitated buffalo carcass. However, now there is no trace of this image in the compound of Ākhandalaśwara Temple. Except Jajpur such
type of Mahiṣamardini images are found in other places of Orissa like Pātaparā Latāharana, Nilaharana, Ambapazā, Someśvara in the Prāchi Valley, Bhattarika near Baramba, Kanaka Durgā near Remuna, Bhubaneswar, Golābai and Bālpur on Dayā river valley in the district of Puri.

Another important reference to Śakti worship is the sculptural representation of Saptamātrikā images found in various places of Orissa. The Mātrikās basically represent the embodied energy and prowess of the seven famous gods, their male counterparts, such as Viṣṇu, Kumāra, Varāha, Indra, Brahmā, Mahēśvara and other. The Mātrikā of Somavaṇśi period are represented along with Gaṇeśa and Virabhadra. They are associated with babies on their laps. Mātrikās of this period are found in the ceiling of the porch of the Muktesvara temple at Bhubaneswar, at Belkhaṇḍi in the district of Kalāhāndi, inside the embankment of Mārkandesvara tank at Puri, at Salanapur in Jagatsinghpur district, at Beraboi in the Delang P.S. of Puri district. Two interesting sets of Saptamātrikā images are found at Jajpur which have drawn the attention of various scholars. One set having three images is placed in the compound of the residence of Sub-Collector, Jajpur and preserved by the Archaeological Department of India. Those Mātrikā images are Chāmunḍā, Indrāṇi and Varāhi. Another set having eight images namely Chāmunda, Varāhi, Indrāṇi, Vaiṣṇavi, Kaumāri, Māheśwari, Laxmi Nṛsimha, worshipped as Brāhma and Dantura or Sebadwiti are found in a small shrine on the bank of the river Vaitaraṇi. Scholars like R.P. Chanda, R.D. Banerjee, Thomase Donaldson, K.C. Panigrahi, J.N. Banerjia and B.C. Pradhan etc. have given their valuable suggestions after considering the iconographic features of the Mātrikā images.
However, careful and critical comparison of the iconography between the two sets of Mātrikās at Jajpur indicates no serious difference. Only the size of Mātrikās at the residential compound of the Sub-Collector, Jajpur are larger than the Mātrikās of the Daśaśvamedha Ghāt and the Mātrikās at Daśaśvamedha ghāt are more polished in comparison to the Mātrikās of the Sub-Collector’s residence. Further at present the number of Mātrikās in the Sub-Collector’s compound are less than the number of Mātrikās in the Daśaśvamedha ghāt. Chandrasekhar Banerjee\(^43\) indicates that according to tradition, Muslim invaders had broken down five images and made them balls to start their guns.

Except these differences there is no fundamental difference in iconography between two sets of images. However, the chronology of these two sets of mātrikās is subject to debate. R.P. Chanda\(^44\), K.N. Mohapatra\(^45\) ascribe it to Bhaumakara period. B.C. Pradhan\(^46\) assigns the first set of Mātrikās to the later part of the Bhauma period and the 2nd set to the early Somavaṁśi period. K.C. Panigrahi\(^47\) assigned the two sets of Mātrikās to the Somavaṁśi period as the Mātrikās at Jajpur hold child in their hands, which is absent in case of the Mātrikās of Bhauma period in the Vaitāl temple. Further Thomas Donaldson\(^48\) also ascribes the two sets of Mātrikās of Jajpur to Somavaṁśi period. As there is no epigraphic record to ascertain the actual date of the Mātrikās at Jajpur we have to depend upon iconographic evidences to determine its chronology. One of the interesting iconographic features of Jajpur Mātrikās is that all the Mātrikās except Chāmupḍā are associated with babies.

In this respect they closely resemble with Mātrikās found on eight petalled lotus carved in the ceiling of the Jagamohana of the Mukteśvara temple at Bhubaneswar and Mātrikās found in the Mārkandēśvara tank at Puri\(^49\). Mukteśvara temple is an early Somavaṁśi architecture\(^50\).
Bhimaṅkaśari or Bhimaratha is credited for the installation of Seven sisters (probably Saptamātrikās) on the eastern side of Mārkandeśvara tank⁵¹. The Somavaṁśis were traditionally associated with Puri and Jajpur and Jajpur was their capital⁵². The Mātrikā worship received a great impetus during this period, though the official faith of the Somavaṁśi was Śaivism⁵³. Thus as the Mātrikās in the Mukteśvara temple and Mārkandeśvara tank ascribed to Somavaṁśi period and associated with the babies, the two sets of Mātrikās at Jajpur with babies can be ascribed to Somavaṁśi period and not to the Bhaumakaras. The Mātrikās found at Parsurāmeśvara (circa 650 AD) and Vaitāl temples are not associated with babies which are dated to Bhaumakara period or before⁵⁴. Thus it is sure that Mātrikās associated with babies is a later iconographic development and at Jajpur they occur in two sets with a difference of a very short period in the early part of the Somavaṁśi rule as the second set is more polished than the 1st set. Similarly another group of Saptamātrikās of the same period is also found at a village Solānpur near Jagatsinghpur. Another interesting feature of Śaktism i.e. a Śakti of Gaṅeśa (Gaṅeśī) was also conceived. Such an image is now placed in one of the inner niches of the Ākhandaleśvara temple at Jajpur⁵⁵.

Further in addition to the worship of Saptamātrikā in groups, Chāmupāḍā and Varāhi were worshipped either as presiding deity or as side deity. A Varāhi temple assignable to the 10th Century A.D. still exists at Chaurāsi in the Prāchi Valley. Another Varāhi temple is found at Narendrapur in Balasore district. A single image of Vārāhi is noticed in the Raja Bagichā of the Nilagiri town of Balāsore district and it seems to have originally belonged to a shrine⁵⁶. Another important deity of Śakti worship is Yogini. This yogini worship is found in a greater form during Somavaṁśis period as two important Yogini pithas of the period are found in Orissa. These Yogini temples are located at Rānipur–Jhariāl of
Bolangir district and at Hirāpur on the Bhārgavī valley near Bhubaneswar in the district of Khurda. In their sculptural representation the Yogini sculptures of these two places differ with each other.” The Yogini or female anchorites who were originally conceived as emanations of Gaurī centred round the exoteric Kaulakāpālīka worship. The basic principle behind this cult is that the Kapālikās used to live in spiritual intimacy with the Yogini’s and it is the Yogini’s who were instrumental in the transformation of their associate anchorites into Śiva in and through the insights and pleasures of sex⁵⁷. This esoteric cult of Yogini was introduced in the coastal Orissa from the central India through western Orissa during the Somavarāṇśi rule⁵⁸. It is not surprising that with the predominance of Buddhist and Brāhmanical Tāntric practices this esoteric cult appealed to the Śāktas, who readily accepted and included this cult into their fold in Orissa⁵⁹.

Further since Somavarāṇśi rulers were devout worshippers of Śiva, they might not have forgotten to worship Pārvati, the consort of Śiva. So Pārvati as a Śākta divinity was worshipped in various temples of Somavarāṇśi period along with Śiva.

Thus, during the Somavarāṇśi rule Śakti worship in different forms like Mahisamardini Durgā, Sapat Mātryikā, Yogini, Chamunḍā, Pārvati, Varāhi and even Gaṇeṣi, prevailed. This shows a sense of religious toleration by the Somavarāṇśis. Further the above analysis proves that Śaktism played a predominant role, next only to Śaivism, in the religious scenario during the Somavarāṇśi period.
JAINISM

The origin of Jainism in Orissa can not be determined definitely. But it is sure that it had its origin before Kharavela, the devout Jaina King, who brought back the Jina image which was taken away by one of the Nanda Kings. Parsvanatha is believed to have preached Jaina faith in Orissa But there is no definite evidence to prove that Jainism prevailed in Orissa during the time of Parsvanatha.

Mahavira is believed to have visited Orissa in the sixth century B.C. The Jaina Harivarna Purapa mentions that Mahavira preached his religion in Kalinaga. He was invited by Chetaka, the Ksatriya king of Kalinaga to visit his kingdom. We get reference from Vyavahara Bhysya that Tosali was the seat of Jaina image which was guarded by the king of Tosalka. The Uttaradhyayana records that Kalinaga was a centre of Jainism during the time of Mahavira. The above mentioned sources gives an idea about Jainism during 6th century B.C.

From the time of Mahavira up to the time of Kharavela Jainism was in a flourishing condition. Regarding the prevalence of Jainism in the age of the Nandas, we get sufficient source material from the Hatigumpha Inscription of Kharavela. In lines eleven and twelve of this Hatigumpha Inscription it is mentioned that in the twelfth year of his region he terrorised the Magadhan king, Bahastimita (Brihaspatimitra) and forced him to pay obeisance at his feet and then brought back the image of Kalinaga Jina which had been taken away by a Nanda king three hundred years ago. Thus it proves beyond doubt that Kalinaga was a stronghold of Jainism in the fourth century B.C. when it was a apart of Nanda empire. Though there is no direct reference of the prevalence of Jainism during the
rule of Asoka, yet indirect references in his Rock-Edicts suggest the prevalence of the cult. Asoka declares that even though he patronised Buddhism, he also showed respect to other religious faiths. This lead us to believe that Jainism, being an important religion, must have prevailed during the time of Asoka. The condition of Jainism from the age of Ashoka till the rise of Khāravela is not known. But with the coming of Khāravela to power, Jainism received a great lift.

During the time Khāravela Jainism received the status of State religion. The Hātígumpha Inscription, begins with a salutation to arhatas (Tirthankaras) siddhas (liberated souls). Earlier we have mentioned that Khāravela defeated Brihaspatimitra of Magadha and recovered Kalinga Jina. In the next year he excavated a large number of caves in the Udayagiri Hill to provide shelter to the Jaina monks. Khāravela was a great fallower of Jainism, entire Udayagiri rock establishment testifies it. He offered white clothes to the Jaina monks. A panel of sculpture in the Manchapuri cave bears inscriptions of Mahārājā Kudepsi and Kumāra Vadukha, two of the successors of Khāravela. These sculptures indicate that the successors of Khāravela were all Jainas.

After Khāravela we get several references about the presence of Jainism in Orissa. One Mahārājādhirāja Dharmadāmadhara, a Murunda king who is believed to have ruled over certain parts of Orissa and Bihar during third century A.D. was a Jaina by faith. Guhaśiva, who was rulling in the last quarter of the 3rd century A.D. is known to have worshipped the Nigranthis (Jaina ascetics). The Asanpāt Inscription in the district of Keonjhar mentions that Mahārāja Satrubhanja of Nāga dynasty donated large amount of wealth to Bhikus and Nigranthis. Further Māthara rulers of Kaliṅga are known to have named one of their headquarters as Vardhamānapūra in honour of Bhagavān Mahāvīra. These above stray
references give an idea that Jainism was existing in post-Kharavela era in sporadic manner.

The Hiuen-Tsang’s Account reveals that “Kalinga had 10 Sanghârâmas with 100 priests and 500 Hindu temples with different sorts of unbelievers most of whom were Nigrantas.” A.P. Shah suggests that Nigrantas who later came to be called Jainas, were numerous in Kalinga during the first half of the 7th century. Further Hiuen-Tsâng's account also mentions that people of Kang-Yu-to (Kangoda) were not Buddhist. Deva temples were about 100 in number and of Tithikas there were more than 10,000. Thus the accounts of Chinese Pilgrim Hiuen-Tsâng suggests that as late as the middle of the 7th century A.D. Jainism was in a comfortable condition in Orissa.

Further in 8th century A.D. during the time of Sailodbhavas Jainism was also popular among the people of Kangoda Mandala. The Banpur plates of Dharamarâja Mânabhita mentions that his queen Kalyânadevi donated land to the Jina monks Arhatâchârya Nasichandra and his disciple Ekaśata Prabodha Chandra. The existence of a Jaina establishment in the vicinity of Bânpur is indicated by the discovery of ten Jaina bronze images at Achyutarâjpur and a late chlorite image of Râshabhanâtha now fixed to the exterior wall of the Buâhimâ temple within the enclosure of the Daksâ Prajâpati temple at Bânapur. Jain Tirthankara images of the same period have been found in the Prâchî valley, at Podasingidi of Keonjhar district and at Jajpur. Jaina icons of Rsabhadeva, Pârsvanâtha Mahâvira etc. assignable to the eighth century A.D. are seen at Podasingidi. These archaeological remains prove that Jainism was prevailing in Orissa up to ninth century.
However, Jainism during the period of our study got a new vigour due to Somavarahṣi royal patronage as attested by three short inscriptions engraved inside the Lalatendu Keśari cave and the Navamuni Cave in the Khandagiri hill near Bhubaneswar, the capital city of Orissa. During the victorious reign of Sri Udyota Keśari the decayed wells and tanks were shown cleared for bathing and drinking and the images of twenty four Tirthankara were established on the Kumāra parvata. Further it is also mentioned that if any heretic causes even damages (to them) such a cheat (will) excite the anger of Pārśvanātha by this act. This statement indicates how much regard, he had for Jaina Tirthankara Pārśvanātha.

One of the two inscriptions of Navamuni-Gumpha speaks about the work of Jaina monk Subhachandra, desciple of Kulachandra during the reign of Udyota Keśari. Subhachandra made arrangements for the sojourn of Jaina ascetics coming from Garhwall. Dr B.K. Rath has observed rightly when he says that Subhachandra was a Jaina monk residing in the caves of Khandagiri hill and that he made arrangement for the stay of obviously Jaina ascetics coming from Garhwall. He had also dedicated a stuff with umbrella probably to some Jaina deities which was a common practice with the Buddhists and the Jainas. Further Lalatendu Keśari Gumpha cave No-ll bears an inscription which says that in the fifth regnal year Lalatendu keśari caused to have restored a decayed “vapi” and temple of the Kumari hill (Khandagiri) and also images of the Tirthankars were set up on the walls of the temple.

Besides the above epigraphic evidences of the existence of Jainism in the Somavaṁśi period, we have many other sculptural remains to prove the existence of Jainism during the period of our discussion. During our intensive visit at Jajpur we have noticed several Jina images. Since Jajpur
was a very important place of activities of Somavāṃśī rulers these images might have been built during the Somavāṃśi period.

Now only two Jaina images are found in the village of Narsimhapur near Jajpur. Out of the two one is of Pārśva and other is of Chandranātha87. Another image of Neminātha is found in the premises of present Ākhandaleśvara temple88 (Fig. No-44) which is surrounded by twelve Tirthankaras. Further one colossal image of Jaina Tirthankara is found at Hatadhia89 (Fig. No-45) a village near present Kantabania in Jajpur district. Further a beautiful image of Jina Tirthankarh Sāntinātha (Fig. No-43) is found in the present Gāpeśa temple near Saptamātrikā temple on the bank of the river Vaitaraṇi. This Jina image can be assigned to this period. Further one Jaina establishment is also found at Brāhmaṇidevi near the present D.I.E.T. at Jajpur Road on the way to Keonjhar. Further various caves meant for Jaina ascetic are found in present Indira Gandhi field in Nuagada Panchayat near Jajpur Road. Another image of Jaina is now worshipped as Brāhmaṇidevi who is identified with Jaina Sāsanadevi. It is also seems that Jainism, like Buddhism, was strongly influenced by the faith and practices of the Brāhmaṇical religion90. The rise of the Śakti cult synchronized with the rise of a new philosophy and a new attitude towards divine consorts91. This new attitude sought to indicate that not the God as such but the Goddess (his Śakti) associated with him was responsible for the creation, maintenance and destruction of the Universe. This had led to the depiction of the Śāsanadevis along with their respective Jina Tirthankaras in the Jaina sculptures in Orissa. This event first took place during the rule of the Somavāṃśis in Orissa as evident from the images of Sāsanadevi depicted along with the Trithankara in the aforesaid caves of Khandagiri Hill92.
Except Jajpur Jaina images of Somavarnșī period have been discovered from Charampā in Bhadrak and Ayodhyā in Balasore districts, Khiching and Bāripadā in the Mayurpbhanj district, Podasirgid of Keonjhar district, Adaspur in Cuttack district, Panchagaon and Bagalpur of Puri district. Nandapur, Chata, Subei, Kachela, B. Singhpur, Charamala, Komala, Jamunda and Jeypore of Koraput district. The Mukteśvara temple at Bhubaneswar also contains a number of Jaina images.

Thus from the above reference we can conclude safety that Jainism was also existing during the Somavarnșī period. Because some Somavarnșī rulers were providing royal sympathy to this religion and this religion due to its non-antagonistic attitude to other religions was getting public support to grow in a natural way.

BUDDHISM

From the antiquarian remains of Buddhism, it is presumed that once it was a very popular religion in Orissa. The spread of Buddhism in Orissa started in the right earnest from the third century B.C. after Asoka’s Kaliṅga war of 261 B.C. But the Mahāvācga of the Vinayapitaka informs us that Tapussa (Tapasu) and Bhallika, two merchant brothers of “Ukkala” country had been initiated into Buddhism by Buddha himself. This “Ukkala” has been identified with Utkal by some scholars. This reference proves that during the time of Buddha, Utkal had relation with him. But it is only Ashoka who after Kalinga war gave a new dimension and new impetus to Buddhism for it’s propagation, not only in Orissa but
also in many parts of the globe. We get reference from Dathāvamsa a Buddhist text of 3rd century A.D. that Guhaśiva a Buddhist was ruling over Kalinga, Mahesa (Midnapur) and Mahendragiri in the 3rd Century A.D.

Further it should be noted here that Buddhism was also existing during the 5th / 6th century A.D as evident from an Inscription found from Ratnagiri. Hiuen-Tsang who visited this region in the seventh century A.D refers to the famous Monastery Pu-sie-Po-Ki-Li or Puspagiri. Unfortunately this has not yet been satisfactorily identified. However, with the rise of Bhaumakara with their capital at Guhadevapātaka, identified with Jajpur, Buddhism spread in and around his capital in a vigorous manner as the earlier rulers of the dynasty i.e. Kṣemankaradeva, Śivakaradeva I, Subhakaradeva I and Śivakaradeva II, bore Buddhist epithets like 'Paramopāsaka', 'Paramatathāgata', 'Paramasaugata', and 'Saugataśvara' respectively. The Dhenkanal Plate of Tribhuvana Mahādevi-I and the Boud Plates of Tribhuvana Mahādevi II indicate that the early Bhaumakara rulers built a number of monasteries and sanctuaries in their kingdom. Further a large number of Buddhist images found from the close vicinity of Jajpur like Solampur, Khadipadā, Ratnagiri, Udyagiri and Lalitagiri assignable to the eighth-ninth century indicate that the Mahāyana form of Buddhism flourished in Orissa during the early Bhaumakara period.

The Tālcher plates of Śivakaradeva-III informs that Jayaśram Vihār was another Buddhist Monastery of ninth century A.D. Śivakaradeva-III donated the village Kallani for the God Buddhabhattāraka. The place has been identified with Jagati near Talcher. The Bhauma king Sāntikardeva is said to have built a monastery called Arghyakavartika near Dhauli in or about 829 A.D.
Thus, during the Bhaumakara period Buddhism was a very popular religion in Orissa due to active royal support.

After Bhaumakara the political scene of Orissa was dominated by the Somavamsis. The Somavamsis were devout worshippers of Śaivism but they were not antagonistic to other religions. Under their sympathetic and tolerant attitude other religious faith like Vaiśpavism, Śaktism, Jainism and Buddhism also flourished.

We know from the early Somavamsi Inscriptions that king Bālārjuna Mahāśivagupta was patronizing Buddhism. His Sirpur inscription while praising the lotus feet of Saugata or Buddha records the construction of a monastery by Bhikshu Ānandaprabhā and the establishment of a free kitchen for the monks. He is also known to have donated a Vihāra for Buddhist nuns. Further, he granted the village Kalaspur in Taradamsakabhoga to the monks who were residing in the Taradamsaka monastery.

But when the Somavamsi rulers shifted their capital to the coastal tracks of Orissa they concentrated on Śiva worship and made immense contribution for the growth of Śaivism in Orissa. Buddhism gradually lost its grip in the society due to lack of royal patronage. It is told that Jaypur by the time of Yayati-II at about 1025 A.D. was submerged with Sahajāna Tāntricism. But Yayati-II in order to establish Brāhmanic faith and with a intention to end the influence of Buddhist Tāntricism, had killed six hundred Buddhist Tāntrics and converted the Tāntric Buddhist establishment in to Śaiva pithas. He also destroyed several Tāntric establishments on the bank of river Vaitarapi and Brāhmani and established Śiva Liṅgas in the destroyed place and also performed Horse sacrifice on the bank of river Vaitarapi. However we do not have much
recorded evidences of this period to prove the condition of Buddhism. Two Copper Plate Charters of the Somavānśi dynasty give us some information about Buddhism. The Bānpur Charter of Indraratha, discovered from a place called Achutarājpur near Bānpur, states that the king granted a village to meet the cost of ritualistic offerings to be made to Khadirāvani Bhāttārikā, considered to be a Tārā image of Kaṅgoda Mandala. However towards the end of 11th century A.D. when Soma dynasty was in a stage of decline king Karnadeva granted a village in favour of Rāpi Karpūrasri of Solānapura Mahāvihāra. D. Mitra suggest that Karpūrasri appears to be a lay devotee or a Bhikṣuṇi and the village was donated to meet her expenses. Karpurasri, according to D.C. Sircar, was one of the secondary queens or concubines of Karnadeva hailing from Solanapura Mahāvihāra. This Solanapur may be identified with present Solampur on the other side of the river Vaitarāpi very close to Jajpur Town, now in Bhadrak district. This Solampur even today contains some Buddhist remains to prove the existence of Buddhism. Hence, it is beyond doubt that this Solampur Mahāvihār was existing during the time of Karnadeva and he has shown sympathy to Karpurasri of this Buddhist establishment.

Further there is a rock-cut well at Udyagiri in Jajpur district at the base of the terrace of the hill. The well is twenty-three feet square and twenty-eight feet deep from the top of the rock to the water edge. It is surrounded by a stone terrace about ninety five feet long and thirty nine feet broad. The well is fenced by large blocks of wrought stones, three feet in height. There is an Inscription on the arch over the lowest steps, which records that the well was dedicated by Raṇaka Vajraṅa. The Inscription is engraved in the Characters of the tenth or eleventh century A.D. Vajraṅa was probably a Raṇaka (subordinate chief) under the Somavānśi king. About fifty feet height up the well there is a platform upon which once
stood a shrine of Buddha. A ‘sadhu’ removed the images and sculptured stones, which lay scattered in and around the platform to his hermitage. Beames removed some beautiful images from the ‘sadhu’s’ collection to Cuttack, when he visited Udyagiri\textsuperscript{121} Thus, since Vajrāṅga probably a Ranaka (subordinate chief) of Somavāraṇśi king constructed this well in the well-settled Buddhist establishment it might be a fact that he was patronising Buddhist establishment at the behest of his Somavāraṇśi lord. At Bāṇapūr various Buddhist strongholds have been discovered. According to D. Mitra\textsuperscript{122} the Buddhist stronghold at Bāṇapūr was in a flourishing stage during the Somavāraṇśi period. Further Buddhist antiquities of Somavāraṇśi period are found at Ayodhyā\textsuperscript{123} in Balasore district, Solampur and Khadiypadā in Bhadrak\textsuperscript{124} district, Ratnagiri, Udayagiri, Langudi hill, Kaimā hill, Duburi hills and Kolanagiri of Jajpur district. Brahmavana near Salipur, Kendupātana (Birupa–Chitrotpala valley) Chaudwar Lalitagiri and Banesvaranasi of Cuttack district, the Prāchi valley and Kuruma, Bāṇapūr, Haripur of Puri district and Bhubaneswar of Khurda district. The Buddhist antiquities of above places include images of both Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna.

From the Tibetan accounts it appears that Ratnagiri played a significant role in the emergence of the Kālachakra–tantra\textsuperscript{125}. The practice of Kālācakrāyāna, an offshoot of Vajrayāna was introduced towards the end of the tenth century A.D.\textsuperscript{126}. From Tibetan reference it seems that Ratnagiri had become a renowned centre of learning in Buddhist practices during the Somavāraṇśi rule in Orissa\textsuperscript{127}. The Tibetan source Pag Sam Jon Zang\textsuperscript{128} states that “at the last moment of the King (Mahipāla), Āchārya Bitobā came and Vajrapāṇi instructed him to go through magic to Sambhāla\textsuperscript{129}, where Kālachakrā would be found. He went there and brought it to Ratnagiri and explained the doctrine to Bhikṣu Abadhutipa, Bodhiśrī and Naropa”\textsuperscript{130}. According to D. Mitra\textsuperscript{131} Ratnagiri’s importance
during this period as an important centre of Vajrayāna and its offshoot Kālachakrayāna is evident from the numerous votive stūpas, with reliefs of divinities of Vajrayāna panteen, separate images of these divinities and inscribed stone slabs and moulded terracotta, plaques with dhāranis found as the result of excavation at Ratnagiri.

Thus, in conclusion it can be said that Buddhism, which was the State religion under the Bhau Makaras, gradually became weak when Tāntric form of Buddhism introduced many corrupt practices in the society. The Somavārāhis, who patronised either Šaivism or Vaisnavism, neglected Buddhism because of its esoteric features. As a result Buddhism was thrown to the background.

**GANESA**

Another interesting aspect of religion of our period is the worship of Gapeša. In the pre- Somavārāhi period Gapeša is also found as a side deity in Šiva temples. It is always found in the southern niche of the temple. Besides, Gapeša images with elephant face, found at various places, suggests the prevalence of this cult before the Somavārāhi period. This Gapeša is also found along with the Mātrikā figures.

Independent shrines for Gapeša were built during this period. The Gapeša temple situated at the foot of the Dhauli hill was a monument of Somavārāhim period. Inspite of its reconstruction and modification, it clearly betrays the architectural and sculptural features of the Liṅgarāja. Similarly at Jajpur one colossal image of Gapeša (Fig.No-34) is found to be worshipped in a separate temple near the present Saptamātrikā temple, on the bank of the river Vaitarapi. In the locality of Jajpur this
Gañeśa is popularly known as Budhā Gañeśa or Siddhi Gañeśa. Here, mouse is represented as the mount of the God, Observing and comparing various Gañeśa images Dr. R.P. Mohapatra opines that “this image of Jajpur may be regarded as the biggest sitting Gañeśa in Orissa reported so far.” This type of Gañeśa image with the mouse as the distinctive feature is found in the temple of Muktesvara. It is also, noticed in the dated temple of Brahmesvara, Kedareaśvara and Meghesvara and in all other Śaiva temples of the later group such as the Līṅgarāja, the Sidheśvara, the Bhāskaresvara, the Yameśvara, the Chitreśvara, the Isanesvara etc of Bhubaneswar. These temples were built during the Somavarmśi period. Hence the Gañeśa worshipped in a separate temple at Jajpur is no doubt received popular support for its worship during the Somavarmśi period.

During this period Gañeśa images either in Sthana (Standing) or Lilā (dancing) pose are also found. The deity in the first case is represented with four arms while in the later case with eight arms. The mouse, the mount of the God is invariably represented. Notable sculptures of this deity are found in different places of Orissa. At Jajpur, this type of Gañeśa images are found in the niches of Viraja temple (Fig. No-35). Inside the Jagamohana of Akhandalesvara (Fig. No.-37) temple and in the steps of Brahmakunda and in the temples like Sidheśwara, Darukeswar, Bālukeśwar Trilochaneswar, Kapileśwar, Vismeśwar, Bhimeśwar, Yoginārāyan, Rāmeśwar, Nilakhi, Varaṅnāth, Jambeśwar, Kedāreśwar, Hāvaleswar, Viswarupeswar, Agastiśwar, Vīllweśwar and at the steps of Dasāśwamedha ghaṭ. These images with distinctive features of mouse were generally carved during the Somavaṃśi period and later. Therefore, they may be assigned to the 10th–11th centuries A.D. At Bhubaneswar Gañeśa image of this period are found in the southern niche of the Līṅgarāja temple. In the premises of the Bhava Kundalesvara temple of village Tankapāni in the Bhārgavi valley, Agrahāt near
Chaudwar, Teraboi in the Dayā valley, in the Prāchi Valley, and in many other places of Orissa Gaṇeṣa images of this iconography features are found. However, this was perhaps the developing period for the cult of Gaṇeṣa which ultimately resulted in the establishment of Mahāvināyaka kṣetra at Chandikhol in Jajpur district in subsequent period.

SŪRYA

The Sūrya or Sun God is very popular from the early period. Its importance as an object of worship can be traced back to as early as Neolithic period. However, Sun worship was very much prevalent in Orissa during the Somavāṃśī period. As compared with other minor cult of the period we get very less reference of Sun worship during the Somavāṃśī period. The fragmentary Sūrya sculpture from Gandibedhā of Bālasore district now preserved in the Orissa State Museum, contains an inscription of the time of Karnadeva. Accordingly the image can be placed in the Somavāṃśī epoch. The Sonpur Plates of Mahābhāvagupta-I records the donation of a village to a Guild of Merchants for the maintenance of the deities Keśava and Āditya. The presence of the name Āditya clearly indicates that during the time of Mahābhāvagupta 1st Sun worship was prevailing in western Orissa. The Bargaon Inscription of Prithvi-vigraha, a feudatory of Somavāṃśī king Janamejaya issued in the 13th regnal year of the latter throws interesting light on this aspect. In this charter the doner Prithvivigraha son of Vāmana Vigraha and grand son of Vyāghrarāja has declared himself as “Parama Soura” i.e. a staunch devotee of Sun–god. That the Vigrahas were patronizing sun–worship is also known from Sumaṇḍala Copper Plate.
of Dharmarāja—a feudatory of Prithvi Vigraha. Here he declares himself as ‘Sahasaraśmi Pādhbhaktah’. Most probably the Vigrahas being defeated by Mudgalas migrated to the western Orissa and patronised Sun worship. This show that during Somavāṃśi period, their feudatories were also patronizing Sūrya worship in a greater form. Similarly the image of Sun God (Fig. No-39) is also found at Bhimesvara temple in the village Bhelanga of Jajpur district. This village is situated six miles from Virajā temple. This Bhimesvara temple is a modern one having a number of images affixed to it. Two beautiful standing Sun images with two blossomed lotus on the two hands each riding on the celestial chariots drawn by seven prancing horses are affixed on either side of the door of the Vimāna facing to the Jagamohana. Aruna, the sacred vulture is conspicuous by his presence in the middle of each figure. From iconographical point of view they may be assigned to the 10th–11th centuries A.D. In various temples of Jajpur similar type of images of Sun god are found. Those temples are Akhandaleswar (Fig. No-38), Dakeśwari, Sihdeswar etc. Since Jajpur was a centre of Somavāṃśi activities these Sūrya sculptures may be assigned to the Somavāṃśi period. Madalā Pāḍjī informs us that Somavāṃśi king Purandara Keśari, who was ruling from Jajpur has constructed a temple for Sun worship at Arka Kṣetra, Konarka. Purandara Keśari may be identified with Puranjaya of Somavāṃśi dynasty. He was the grandson of Udyota-Keśari. Further the existence of a dilapidated brick temple in the southwest corner of the present Sun temple of Konark and its architectural peculiarities lead us to believe that this brick temple was built during the tenth – eleventh centuries A.D. At Paliā there exists a damaged temple of God Viranchi-nārāyan belonging of to the 10th or the 11th century A.D. The temple has been renovated and protected recently (Fig. No-10). Here on a squire sized stone slightly tapered towards the top are carved four images of the Sun God (Fig. No-41) in low relief on the four
sides. The figures hold lotus flowers in either hand. The parts of the body below waist have not been damaged. Like wise at Kaupur an ancient site situated on the eastern bank of the river Salaṇḍi about 15 km from Bhadrak two images of Sūrya are preserved in a half built brick shed along with other images and are worshiped as Viranchinārāyana. This historic site of Kaupur was the religious seat of the Somavāṁśi dynasty. However, it can be said that during the Somavāṁśi period Sūrya cult or Sun worship was existing and it was in a formitive stage till the great temple for Sun at Konark was constructed by the Gaṅga King Narasimhadeva-I in the thirteenth Century.
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