Chapter - VI

HARI-HARA CULT
The Cult of Hari-Hara is a very important cult in Brahmanical faith. It represents the idea of union of Śiva with Viṣṇu. The earliest literary reference to the Hari-Hara cult is found in the Harivaṃsa1 This work describes about a dream incident where Śiva was presented with the attributes of Viṣṇu and vice-versa. In the Epic and Purānic accounts it is found that each divine personality has a tendency to merge with the other. In the Matsya-Purāna there is a detailed description of the composite image of Nārāyana and Śiva. 2 In the Skanda-Purāṇa it is mentioned that after the marriage of Gaurī with Rudra, a fight ensured between Hari and Hara. After this Brahmā intervened and said, "let both of you be of established reputation as Hari-Hara"3.

The Liṅga Purāṇa 4 the Bhāgabata Purāṇa 5 and the Viṣṇu Purāṇa 6 also tell interesting stories about the union of Hari and Hara. There is no distinction between the two. Due to ignorance only people find a difference between them. The Skanda Purāṇa, the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the Nārādiya Purāṇa, the Varāha Purāṇa, the Kurma Purāṇa etc also describe different interesting stories about the oneness of Śiva and Viṣṇu 7. In the Bibhuti Yoga of the Bhagavadgīta Krṣṇa (Viṣṇu) declares “we are Śamkara among the Rūdras”. (Rūdrānām Śamkaraschāsmi) : The prayer :-

"Śivāya Viṣṇu rūpāya Śivarūpāya vaisṇave
Śivasya hṛdayam Viṣṇuvṛṣṇoḥca hṛdayam Śivah."8

(Śiva in the form of Viṣṇu and Viṣṇu in the form of Śiva. The heart of Śiva resembles the heart of Viṣṇu)

The same ideology is reflected in a verse from Lilāvati Prakāsa by Vardhamāna” 9. In the Brhadharma Purāṇa it is mentioned that there is no
difference between Śiva and Viṣṇu; these two deities live in one place and those who worship Śiva, worship Viṣṇu. The Vāyu Purāṇa also furnishes information that all things in this world are manifestations of Rudra-Nārāyana. The Śiva Purāṇa gives information about the worship of this composite icon of Hari-Hara.

In various Śaiva Samhitās and Āgamas various descriptions have been given about the construction of temples and images which are often regarded as practical guides for the devotees. The Suprabhedāgama, Kāmikāgama, Amsumadbēdāgama, Kiranāgama, and Silparatna throw a flood of light not only on the Hari-Hara cult but also on different branches of Brahmanical Hindu iconography.

The developing trend of harmony between these two Hindu gods finds its expression in sculptures of early mediaeval period. The earliest stone representing Hari-Hara is found at Bādami. The four-armed God stands erect facing front, his back right and left hands holding a battle axe with a snake entwined round it and a conch-shell (the respective emblems of Śiva and Viṣṇu) His front right hand is broken. The clear line of demarcation between the left (Hari) and the right (Hara) halves is shown by the Jatāmukuta and the Kirtamukuta, Sarpa kuṭḍala and the Makara kuṭḍals and the Naḍḍi bull and Pārvati on the one side and Garuda and Laxmi on the other side of the deity.

It may be noted that images of Hari-Hara have been found at many sites in northern India. The image of Hari-Hara enshrined in the temple of Vesnagar in Gujrat possesses all the features prescribed in iconographic texts. One unique Hari-Hara image is noticed in the Bihar Gupta gallery of Indian Museum. The Hari-Hara image here is flanked by standing figures.
of Buddha and Sūrya on the right and left sides respectively. This sculpture demonstrates in a striking manner not only the combination of the Hindu deities of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Sūrya but also that of Buddha with them.

To trace the origin of Hari-Hara cult in Orissa we have to go back to sixth century A.D. when the eastern Gaṅgas became the masters of the whole of Kalinga. The eastern Gaṅgas had their political head quarters at Kalingaṇāgarā, which has been identified with modern Mukhaliṅgam in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. The early Gaṅgas were worshipper of Śiva and during their rule from fifth century A.D. Śaivism was popular among the people of Kaliṅga. They occupied the coastal tract of Kalinga by Ganga era 79 or 577 A.D. By this time Mātharas had already popularised the Pancharātra cult of Vaiṣṇavism in the coastal region of Kaliṅga. Prabhajana-varman of the Māthara family had accepted Bhagavataśvāmi as the supreme lord (Bhagavataśvāmi Nārāyana Pādānudhyāta).

Hence probably this Vaiṣṇavite influence of costal tract of Orissa was accepted by the eastern Gaṅgas when they ruled this area, because king Hastivarman of this family felt Śiva and Viṣṇu are identical. His Narasimhapālli charter describes Śiva as “Sakala bhuva nirmānaika sutradhara” and Nārāyana or Hari as “Saptalokaśaṅkātha”. However, it is important to note that in this royal charter Hastivarman declares himself “Paramamahēśvara but donates the village Rohanaka in the Vāraha Vartini Visaya to the God Nārāyapa, who lies on the seven seas, who is sung in seven hymns, who is the sole lord of seven worlds for the sake of performing oblations known as Vali, Charu and Satra and for the repairs of dilapidations (of the temple). Hence it is sure that king Hastivarman was...
influenced by Hari-Hara cult and it was the beginning of the process of synthesis of Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism which ultimately resulted in the cult of Hari-Hara.

Further it is very interesting to note that in Śvetaka which was ruled by a branch of the Gaṅgas the worship of Viṣṇu and Śiva was given equal importance. During the reign of Indravarma, queen Elā donated a portion of land to the temple of Sri Lokamādha (Viṣṇu) and another portion of the same land to Bhattāraka -Svayambhukeshvara (Śiva) while the rest was given to different Brāhmans. This charter clearly indicates the peaceful co-existence of Viṣṇu and Śiva cults during this period.

The temples of the Someśvara, the Madhuśvara and the Bhimesvara at Mukhalingam built during the early Gaṅga rule contain various Vaiṣṇavite sculptures though they were all Śiva temples. These Vaiṣṇavite images found in Śiva temples referred to above indicate the co-existence of Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism in Kalinga during the rule of the early Gaṅgas. It resulted in a process of synthesis of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, the two great Brāhanical faiths. The images of Hari and Hara fused in one physical form were also built during this time.

During the rule of Sailodbhavas both Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism were co-existing with the royal patronage. The Ganjām Plates of Madhavarāja refers to his devotion to the feet of the blessed Lord of the three worlds (Śiva) Similarly the Parikud plates of Madhyamarajadeva and the Nivina Plate of Dharmarāja refer to them as Paramamāheśvara. On the other hand rulers of the same family also patronised Vaiṣṇavism. The Khurdhā Plates of Mādhavarāja records the worship of “Lord Mādhava with discus in his hands” by the people of this region. Four
members of this ruling family Sainyabhita-I alias Mādhavarājā-I, Ayasobhita-I alias Mādhavarājā, Sainyabhita alias Mādhavarājā-II and Mādhava used the name Mādhava. Besides synonyms of Lord Viṣṇu like Srinivāsa, Madhusudana, Hari and Nārāyana are often used in their Copper Plate grants. These references clearly indicate that Sailodbhava rulers patronized both Vaiṣṇavism as well as Śaivism.

The Kṛṣṇagiri appears to have been a famous religious centre of both Śaivites and Vaiṣṇavites during the rule of Sailodhavas. In the temples built during this period various Hari-Hara images are found. A typical example is the Hari-Hara image found in the niche of west façade of the Satrughneśvar temple at Bhubaneswar. The image stands in a rigid frontal pose with both feet firmly planted on the ground. It holds a trident in the upper right hand and vestiges of a Sarpa Kuṇḍala are visible behind the right shoulder. The other attributes are damaged. It is assumed that Sailodbhava rulers also contributed for the growth of both Śaivism and Visnavism during their rule.

During the rule of Bhaṭṭas, Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism also coexisted with harmony. A branch of Ādi Bhaṭṭa family migrated to Khiṇjali Maṇḍala and became known as Bhaṭṭas of Khiṇjali Maṇḍala. They ruled over the modern Sonpur region with their capital at Dhṛtīpūra. The second king of this branch-Satrubhaṭṭajadeva alias Gandhata is considered as the founder of the city of Gandhatapati. This city has been identified with the modern Gandharādī, where exists the celebrated twin temples of Sidheśvra and Nilamādhava, Satrubhaṭṭajadeva was the first Bhaṭṭa King to use the title “Paramavaīṣṇava”. It is interesting to mention here that he also used the ‘prasasti’ of Śiva in his Copper Plate grants and also used the Śaivite symbols in his royal seals. Further the Kumurakela Charter was
issued in favour of one Bhatta Manoratha, son of Bhatta Nārāyana on the
day of Māhādvādasya. According to Vaiśṇavite Dharmasāstras lord Viṣṇu
rises from his long sleep during the period of Chaturmāsya. Kārtika Sukla
dvādasi, otherwise known as Mahādvādasi, is a day of great festivity for
Vaiśṇavites. These references clearly indicates that though
Satrubhaṅjadeva embranced Vaiṣṇavism, he was devoted to their family
deity Śiva all the while.

Like wise Ranabhaṅja the son and successor of Satrubhaṅja was a
follower of his father’s foot print. He was a devotee of both Śiva and
Viṣṇu. His Orissa Museum Plates37 and Sonpur Plates38 indicate that he
patronized Śaivism. But while donating land to God Vijayēśvara, the king
declares himself a “Parama vaisnavav” in his Pāṭnā Museum Plates39. In
Tāsapāikera Charter40, Dasapalla Plate 41 and Boud grant (26th year)42 he
declares himself as ‘Parama Vaiṣṇava’ but again he uses the title “Parama
Maheśvara” in two of his other Boud grants one issued in the 54th year43
the other in the year 58th 44. Further in another undated Boudh grant45
Ranabhaṅja declares himself as “Parama Vaiṣṇava”. These references
prove beyond doubt that both Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism were patronized by
the Bhaṅjas and it was this eclectic outlook of the Bhaṅja rulers which led
them to construct the twin temples of Sidheśvara and Nilamādhava, two
identical temples built side by side on a common platform at Gandharādi
in the district of Boud.

The Pāṇḍuvaranāsis who were the predecessors of the Somavarmanāsis
originally ruled over the South Kosala, (Western Orissa and parts of
Chattisgarh) with Sripura (modern Sirpur) as their Capital city. The
Pāṇḍuvaranāsis were originally Śaivites but in course of time they also
showed their Interest for Vaiṣṇavism. Tivaradeva46 the first great king of
this family and his son Mahānanarāja47 declared themselves “Parama
Vaiṣṇava” in their royal charters. South Kosala was ruled by Sarabapuriyas before the rule of Pāṇḍuvaṁśis. Sarabapuriyas were worshipper of Nārāyaṇa. Hence it is presumed that Sarabapuriya’s Viṣṇu worship might have influenced the Pāṇḍuvaṁśis. Chandragupta, Harsagupta, queen Vāsatā and the next three rulers of this dynasty, remained faithful to Vaiṣṇavism. The Sirpur Stone Inscription of the queen Vāsatā begins with invocations to Purusottama (Om Namoh Purusottamāya). She is referred to as Lakṣmi in this inscription. The same Inscription also mentions that she built the brick temple for Hari at Sirpur in memory of her late husband. Now it is popularly known as Lakṣmana temple. But her son and successor Mahāśivagupta Bālaṛjuna came under the influence of teachers of the Mattamayūra school. The Senakapāṭ inscription of his time records that Śivāchāryas of Amardakā visited South-Kośala. This Śivachārya can be identified with Rudraśīva alias Rudrasambhū the fourth in descent from Kadambaguhavāsi. His great grand disciple Āchārya Sadāśīva also visited south Kosala and influenced Mahaśivagupta Bālaṛjuna. Being influenced by Rudra Śambhū and Sadāśīva the Pāṇḍuvaṁśi kings embraced Śaivism. In the Senakapat Inscription and in the Bārdulā Inscription Bālaṛjuna assumes the title “Paramamaheśvara”. His Lodhiā Copper Plate grant records that he made rich endowments for the temple of Iṣaṇesvara Bhattāraka and for Śaivite ascetic Śūlapāṇi, disciple of Pramathāchārya. But it is significant to note that Bālaṛjuna has been represented as an incarnation of Viṣṇu in his Senakapat Inscription. These references indicate Bālaṛjuna’s faith in Vaiṣṇavism although he assumed the title “Paramamaheśvara”. Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism thus co-existed in South Kosala under the rule of Bālaṛjuna. This fact is also corroborated by the existence of temples and various sculptures of the period. In the capital city of Sripura which is adorned with the famous brick temple of Lakṣmana, there exists Gandheśvara temple dedicated to Śiva. It is very much interesting to
mention here that in the Manḍapa of this Śiva temple a four armed Viṣṇu image sitting on a Garuda is found. Another four armed Hari-Hara image is found in the Kośalesvāra temple of Vaidyanātha. In this image while the right side of it represents Śiva, the left side stands for Viṣṇu. The deity holds a trident in his right hand and the wheel, the weapon of Viṣṇu, in his upper left hand. The lower right hand shows Varadamudrā and the lower left hand is broken. This image is a very important image of the period and it shows the growth of Hari-Hara cult in western Orissa during the rule of the Pāṇḍuvarṇas.

Similarly at Rānipur-Jhariāl there are several Śaivite Shrines as well as the brick temple of Gopāl which is popularly known as Indralātha. In the Tīrtha Khanda of Krtya Kalpataru, compiled by Bhatta Laxsmidhara in 1110 A.D.,34 one quotation of Vāmana Purāṇa is found. It is mentioned that there were temples of Gopāla and Sambhu (Someśvara) as well as a tank named Somatirtha at Rānipur-Jhariāl. This Gopāla temple can be identified with the existing temple of Indralātha. In this temple there is no presiding deity at present. But sculptural presence of Varāha, Narasimha and Hanumāna on the outer surface of the temple proves that it was a Vaiṣṇavite temple. The Someśvara temple and the Somatirtha still continue to exist there with the same names. Similarly Narasimhanātha was another centre of Hari-Hara cult of this period. Even though the present Narsinghnāth temple was built by Vaijāl Deva in 14th Century A.D., sculptural representation prove the existence of an earlier temple at the site. That original temple might have been built during the Pāṇḍuvarṇaśi rule. Here on the bank of Kapiladhāra stream we notice the figures of Viṣṇu and Śiva carved on a rock side by side. Thus, above analysis clearly indicates that Viṣṇu and Śiva or Hari and Hara were co-existing during the Pāṇḍuvarṇaśis rule.
The Pāṇḍūvaṃśis in course of time were defeated by the Kālaḥuris and were driven out from Sripura. One of the family members of the Pāṇḍuvaṃśis being driven out of the capital, migrated to western parts of Orissa and established a new Kingdom with Subarnapura as capital. To distinguish themselves from the earlier rulers, he called himself as belonging to Somavaṃśa.

Mahābhāvagupta Janamejaya, the great ruler of this dynasty, occupied Boud-Sonpur region probably by defeating the Bhaṭṭa ruler Ranabhanja in the middle of the ninth century A.D. He was a patron of both Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. Earlier the twin temples of Nilamādhava and Siddhesvara were built at Gandharādi near Boud by the Bhaṭṭas. Probably Janamejaya was influenced by the Bhaṭṭa rulers. His Sonpur plates mentions the grant of the village Gottikela to Kamalavana Vanikasansthāna (Merchants Association of Kamalavana), who in its turn donated the village to the deities Keśava and Āditya.

Janamejaya was succeeded by his son Māhāśivagupta II alias Yayāti I to the throne of the Somavaṃśis. Due to the weakness of the Bhaumakaras Yayāti I occupied the coastal region of Orissa by 931 A.D. According to tradition Yayāti Keśāri (Yayāti I) performed Dasāśvamedha Yajña on the bank of the river Vaitaraṇi at Jajpur. He invited 10,000 Brāhmmins from Kānyakubja (modern Kanauj) for the purpose. At present the Dasāśwamedha Ghāt is still existing on the bank of the river Vaitaraṇi. It is just a step of stones where the pilgrims take bath and it is the place where Yayāti performed the horse sacrifice. Though there is no architectural attraction of this place, the religious sanctity due to the Dasasvamedha Yajña this place attracts hundreds of pilgrims to take bath in order to wash their sins in this famous Ghāt. Probably Yayāti-I
created this Ghāt after the horse sacrifice for the convenience of the pilgrims for taking bath. At Jajpur the great Subhastambha has been identified by scholars like Fergusson, Birupakhya Kar, Kedarnath Mohapatra and K.C. Panigrahi as Garuda Stambha. Dr. R.P. Mohapatra suggested that possibly this Subhastambha was erected by Yayāti I of the Soriavahşi dynasty to commemorate his victory over this land. Further its architectural similarity with Muktesvara temple at Bhubaneswar places its antiquity to 10th century A.D. Yayāti I was a devout worshipper of Śiva. He constructed the Muktesvara temple at Bhubaneswar the temple chronicle of Lord Jagannāth says Yayātikesari was the builder of the celebrated temple of Jagannāth at Puri. This traditional account is corroborated by the remnants of early Soriavahşi art in Puri. Hence above discussion clearly shows that Yayāti I, though a Śaivite, was patronizing both Vaiśnavism and Śaivism.

However, with the march of time the Hari - Hara cult received much royal attention, as a result of which a big and expensive temple for Hari-Hara was built by the Somavaṁsi king Yayāti II. He was the builder of the temple of Liṅgarāja at Bhubaneswar. Here Hari and Hara or Viśnu and Śiva are worshipped in a equal footing as the main deity of the temple. The priests of Liṅgarāja temple even today point out a line marking the division in the presiding Liṅga as the division between Hari and Hara. The leaves of Vilva and Tulasi which are favorites of Śiva and Viśnu respectively are used here for the worship of the deity. The Vāhana stambha in front of the temple carries the images of Garuda, the mount of Viśnu as well as Naḍḍī or the bull, the mount of Śiva; There is representation of Jaya and Vijaya, the gate keepers of Viśnu on one gateway and Nandi and Bṛkuti, the gate keeper of Śiva on the other. The sculptural representation of Naḍḍa, Yasodā and Śrīkṛṣṇa that appear on the southern wall of the Vimāna of the temple with the scene of churning.
curd supports the view that the temple of Liṅgarāja is a shrine of Hari-Hara. The ayudha on the amalaki of the temple is represented partly by a trident (trisūla) and partly by a disc (chakra).

Besides above observation on the deity and temple one can find a four armed Viṣṇu image in a votive temple on the southern side of the main temple. It is a Sthanakamurti in tribhānga pose. The tiara is conical. The halo is not distinct. The deity holds lotus in the lower left hand, the lower right hand is broken, Gadā is held in upper left hand. Chakra is held in upper right hand. Various heavenly bodies are shown at the top of the figure. Further a Hari–Hara image in the compound of the Liṅgarāja temple is seen. It is a Sthanakamurti in tribhānga pose. The right side of this image represents Hara while the left side represents Hari. The conical Hara bears both Jata-Mukuta and Kirti Mukuta. The Prabhāmaṇḍala is ornamented with beads. The upper right hand holds the rosary (jaṃpaṇa). The other three hands are broken. The vanamālā as well as erected sex organ are prominent. The figures of bull and Garuda have been carved on the pedestal of the image. Flying Vidyādharas are shown at the top of the image. It is a brilliant testimony to the fulfillment of the process of synthesis between Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism.
Reference:

1. Harivamśa – II, Adh, 129, 40ff
4. Linga Purāṇa Pūrvādha Adh – 96
5. Bhagābata Purāṇa - VIII 6-7
10. Brhaddharma Purāṇa, Purva Khanda Adh, 9 Sls, 39-47
12. Š.P. Sanat – Kumār - Samhitā Adh, 23 Sls. 30
15. Agrawala V.S. BIM, PL Gupta, C.P.M.,
20. Rajguru S.N. I.0 Vol – II, pp-14-16
25. Rejguru S. N. I.0 Vol – I, Pt II, pp 157-159
26. Ibid pp 199-200
27. Ibid pp 206-207
28. Ibid p 163
30. JBORS Vol. IV. p. 162
31. E.I. Vol. XXIXP – 38
32. Ibid Vol XXVIII PP 79-85
34. Tripathy S, I.O. Vol VI, Bhubaneswar – 1974 P-60
35. Ibid p-52
37. Ibid pp-65-66
38. Ibid, pp-71-72
39. I.O. Vol. VI, pp 77-84
41. Tripathy S. I.O. Vol. VI, p. 92
42. I.O. Vol. VI, p. 98

116
43. Ibid 1 – 106
44. Ibid - 113
45. JBORS Vol. XX, pp. 147-152 ff
46. Rajguru S.N. I.O. Vol-IV, p-25
47. Ibid 40
49. Rājguru S.N. I.O. IV, p. 70
50. Ibid, pp. 48-50
51. Panda L.K. Śāivism in Orissa, Delhi, 1985, p. 84
52. Rajguru S.N. Op. cit p-56
53. Ibid pp 87-89
56. Rajguru S.N. – Opcit, PP. 131-134
60. Mohapatra Kedarnath – Virajā Vaktrutmālā No-5 (Oriya) 1978- Jajpur, p.34
61. Panigrahi K.C. – Virajā Vaktrutmālā No- 1 (Oriya) 1973, Jajpur p.02
62. Mohapatra R.P. Archaeology in Orissa, Delhi, 1986, p. 47
64. Panigrahi K.C. Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneswar, Cuttack – 1981, p.166