CHAPTER III

PROBINGS ON THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF ODISHA
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The religious history of Odisha also received comprehensive treatment at the hand of Professor N.K.Sahu. His book *Buddhism in Orissa* published by Utkal University under the scheme of the University Grant Commission in 1958, is the revised Ph.D. thesis of N.K.Sahu and one of the rarest of rare works of his life. The book is valuable for its scholarly exposition of the origin and development of the Hinayana, Mahayana, Tantrayana and Yogayana systems of Buddhism and also for its very interesting accounting of Tibet's cultural indebtedness to Odisha. The work has been enriched with the careful and authentic remarks of Nalinaksha Dutt, Professor of Pali, Calcutta University. Prof. Sahu has got the privilege of studying rare Buddhist Manuscripts which is known from his work. The work acquaints the scholars of the genesis and growth of Buddhism in Odisha and a study of Buddhist ruins in different parts of the state. Besides, he also shed light on other religious aspects of Odishan history at different points of time.

His research book, *Buddhism in Orissa* represents a historical analysis of the development of Buddhism in Odisha from the 5th Century B.C. to the early 16th Century A.D.. This book may however
be claimed as the first of its kind, as no attempt has so far been made to throw light on the growth and development of Buddhist Culture in Odisha. Prof. Sahu has made an exhaustive study of all the aspects of Buddhism as it evolved in Odisha in the course of about 2000 years receiving the contributions made by the people, saints, kings and Buddhist scholars of Odisha for its growth. N.K. Sahu has enriched his work by a reproduction along with an analytical study of the finds of images and sculptures so far discovered within the borders of the province. In the growth and development of Buddhism, Odisha played an important role and it was the only province of India except a few district in Assam and East Pakistan, which preserved and nurtured the religion upto the seventeenth century A.D.¹

Prof. Sahu gives a historical exposition about the existence of Odra, Kalinga and Utkal.² He has also enriched his work after making an exhaustive study about the various aspects of Buddhism taking into account the scholarly works evidences, rock-edicts, copper plates and historical monuments. He exposes different phase of the evolution of Buddhism. The earliest phase is known as (i) Hinayana or Sarvakayana, which is more ethical than Philosophical; (ii) Mahayana or Philosophical and ultruistic religion; and (iii) Tantrayana (Bajrayana, Kalachakrayana and Sahajayana) which believes in Sadhana along with the philosophical ideas of
Mahayana. He also depicts the growth and development of Tantrayana Buddhism in Odisha.

Utkala in Buddhist Literature:

Prof. Sahu cited to Puranic literature which refers to Utkala, Ukkala or Okkala as mentioned in Pali works is the same territory. The Apadana of the Khuddaka Nikaya of Sutta Pitaka identifies Ukkala as a people along with the Mekalas. The early Pali literature states that the two merchant brothers of Ukkala named Tapassu and Bhalluka are the two first disciples of Buddha. Maha Chattarisaka Sutta of Majhima Nikaya named Vassa and Bhanna as the two tribes of Ukkala. B.M. Barua has interpreted the expression "Ukkala – Vassa – Bhanna" of the Pali text as unintelligible and uncouth Jargon of the country of Ukkala. Prof. Sahu refers to the Buddhist traditions in India recorded in the Lalitavistara and Mahavastu consider Ukkala as the homeland of Tapassu and Bhallika in the north-west of India and not in south-east. The Chinese Pilgrim Yuan Chwang who came to India in the 7th century A.D., has also recorded the existence of two cities in the north-west region of India during his time. Chwang states:

at a distance of about 50 li north-west from the capital (Balkh) was Ti-Wei’s city and 40 li to the north of that was Po-li’s city ....
Both Ti-wei and Po-li cities are identified with Tapassu and Bhallika respectively and so in face of these records their place of origin may not be assigned to the country of Ukkala (Utkala) in the south-east of India.

N.K. Sahu has rightly rejected the plea of Yuan Chawang for the fact that 7th Century A.D. is too far away from the time of Buddha to make any identification with certainty. He also differs from the opinion given in *Lalitavistara* which states that Tapassu and Bhallika were the inhabitants of the city called Siluksa, which is identified with the city of Sila in the kingdom of Gandhara. Prof. Sahu also disapproves the opinion given in *Lalitavistara* that the city of Ukkala existed somewhere at the Irrawady Delta.

Prof. Sahu is right in accepting the old Pali texts in the Vinaya texts, the Nikayas and the Jatakas, which hold that the two merchants Tapassu and Bhallika hailed from the country of Ukkala, that is present Odisha in south-eastern India. N.K. Sahu also has cited some ancient proofs like connecting roads and communications from Magadh to the country of Ukkala to establish his conclusion.

Prof. Sahu discussed about the origin and spread of Buddhism in Odisha in and around the Asokan age. Buddhism in Odisha in ancient days began as a religious movement confined to the recluses dwelling in monasteries and had very little to do with the
existing social systems and religious beliefs. The Buddhist recluses lived on alms collected from householders. In course of time, people felt attracted towards Buddhism and the monasteries turned into religious and philosophical academies imparting training to the new entrants on the philosophy of Buddha.

N.K. Sahu traces the existence of Buddhism in the early Kalinga or Ukkala from the Mahavaga of Vinaya Text, the Anguttara Nikaya and from the Buddha Jatakas, which regard Tapassu and Bhallika as the two first disciples of Buddha.

The early Buddhist works state that Tapassu ands Bhallika were going for trade from Ukkala to Majhima Desa which makes it clear that Ukkala was outside the limits of middle country. Thus the Buddhist works scrupulously exclude Ukkala from the limits of early Buddhism. Even the Kalinga Bodhi Jataka does not indicate the prevalence of Buddhism in Kalinga. Though the Mahaparinibbana Sutta of Digha Nikaya mentions that there were worshippers of tooth relics of Buddha in Gandharapura and Kalinga yet.

The Chulla Vagga, the Vinayas of the Sarvastivada and the Dharmagupta schools which provide graphic accounts of the Vesali Buddhist council are also silent about Kalinga.

Prof. Sahu remarks that Buddhism was not unknown to Kalinga by the time of Second Buddhist Council was held. The Mahagovinda Suttanta indicates that the territory of Kalinga Rock Edict – XIII has
recorded that his campaign brought misfortune not only to the Brahmanas and Sramanas of Kalinga, but also to her householders. According to D.R. Bhandarkar, in the expression of emperor Asoka, Buddhism had a good number of devotees in Kalinga when Kalinga war was fought. Prof. Sahu agrees with the statement of Bhandarkar.°

Asoka fought the Kalinga war in 261 B.C. and the horrors and destruction of the war transformed Asoka into Dharmasoka. The Kalinga war produced far-reaching effects on his policy of Dhamma and Dhamma-Vijaya and it ushered in an era of spiritual imperialism flavoured by love, peace and brotherhood as is known from Rock Edict XIII.

As per the analysis of N.K. Sahu, Asoka did not shed tears for the political debacle of Kalinga but for the religious and cultural disaster which badly affected the Brahmanas, Sramanas and Buddhist Laity. It would have been better if Asoka treated the people of Kalinga as allies rather than ruled them as subjects.°

Asoka realized the deep resentment of the people and took every possible care for the work of healing and consolidation. The Rock Edict XIII which contains a detailed account of Kalinga war not allowed to be engraved anywhere in Kalinga so that it would remind people of their humiliating defeat. D.R. Bhandarkar°° thinks that it was clearly a matter of political expediency rather than the result of
the same and remorse of Asoka. The Asokan regime was essentially a paternalism bent which provided a cure-all-tonic for the people through administrative reforms.\textsuperscript{12}

**Asoka and Buddhism:**

Asoka was undoubtedly a patron of Buddhism but N.K.Sahu finds himself in a fix as to whether Asoka preached Buddhism or something else. N.Dutt in his book *Early Monastic Buddhism*\textsuperscript{13} says that the edicts do not contain a single reference to Nirvana or Sunyata, Anatma or Dukha whereas they speak of heavenly life which was never an ideal of early Buddhism. D.R.Bhandarkar in his book *Asoka*\textsuperscript{14} clarifies that Dhamma of Asoka was nothing sort of that aspect of Primitive Buddhism which was meant for the lay worshippers of Buddha. So, Prof.Sahu says that Buddhism was the personal religion of Asoka and was split up into three principal sections such as: Theravada, Sarvastivada and the Mahasamghika. He further says that, it was yet to be clarified as to which Vada Asoka belonged to.\textsuperscript{15}

*The Mahavamsa*\textsuperscript{16} asserts that Asoka was a follower of Theravada under the guidance of Mogaliputta Tissa. The Sarvastivada traditions recorded in *Avadanas* implies that he was a devotee of Upagupta who belonged to Sarvastivada School. While Yuan Chwang following the Mahasamghika tradition placed Asoka under the Mahasamghika School. But, N.K.Sahu rightly says, as a

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liberal patron of Buddhism it was unlikely that Asoka could have extend support to any section of Buddhism at the cost of the other.\textsuperscript{17}

Asoka never made Buddhism the State religion but propagated it throughout the length and breadth of India with the help of Buddhist monks. According to Prof. Sahu Buddhism was already in Kalinga before Asokan age but it was during his regime that a thorough and systematic propaganda was carried out by the protagonists of different schools of Buddhism. Thus, Buddhism in Kalinga received a new spirit and vigour during his rule by the phenomenal mission any activities. The resurgence of Buddhism in Kalinga may be regarded as a part of the great Buddhist Movement in India.\textsuperscript{18}

The Buddhist Art in ancient Kalinga drew the attention Prof. Sahu and he made an extensive tour throughout Odisha in locating these art remains. Buddhist Art marked a significant advancement during the age of Asoka and the graphic quality improved. Buddhist monuments inspired the people about Buddhist thought. N.K. Sahu has taken into consideration all information relating to Asokan monuments and inscription discovered at Dhauli and Jaugarh and remnants of the stupas, railings and pillars found in Odisha. The artistic features of the stupas and railings have a close similarity with those of Sanchi and Bharhut implying that in the Post Asokan period Buddhism was propagated in Kalinga.\textsuperscript{19}
In the enumeration of Prof. Sahu the ancient historical monuments of Odisha are Buddhist in nature and spirit and are created by Emperor Asoka. The Asokan relics are mostly found in Dhauli-Bhubaneswar region where the city of Tosali was located. It was a great centre of Buddhism during the later-half of the 3rd Century B.C. as it was adorned with stupas, monasteries, chaityas and pillars, the remains of which are noticed even at present. The Chinese Pilgrim Yuan Chwang testifies to the presence of the Asokan Stupa to the South of the capital of Kalinga. Prof. Sahu accepting this statement says that, even if the pilgrim visited the site during 7th Century A.D. his statement regarding location of the Asokan Stupa may be taken to be accurate.  

The site of the stupa near Tosali can be traced somewhere between the Dhauli rock and the temple city of Bhubaneswar. Some scholars are of the opinion that the huge mound lying on the western bank of rivulet Gangua, to the right side to Saradeipur preserves the remains of it. There are a number ancient mounds on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar and it is difficult to say without a systematic excavation as to which of them retains the relics of Asokan Stupa. N.K. Sahu, as a careful observer traced the remains of Buddhist Art and Sculpture in Dhauli and Jaugarh. He therefore, concludes that the presence of the elephant figure close to Asokan
Edict was the symbolic representation of the Buddha by the side of the Dhamma lipi.

The Asokan Pillar at Bhubaneswar near Dhauli has been a subject of discussion among historians and archaeologists. Raja Rajendralal Mitra holds the view that the unusually large lingam in the Bhaskareswar Temple might be the remnant of an Asokan Pillar. B.M.Barua finds Asokan characteristics in this pillar. However scholars like M.M.Ganguli and N.K.Bose do not agree to it as they find no Asokan characteristics on this sacred lingam. Historian N.K.Bose says that, the column is made of fine grained sandstone and does not bear the slightest trace of Mauryan Polish on its surface, that practically rules out the possibility of an Asokan origin. However, N.K.Sahu finds distinct marks of heavy chiseling all over the body of the lingam upto certain height after which the top is hewn off in large fragments and as such the Mauryan Polish whether was there or not cannot be expected to have survived on it since long. Again, he says, even though the elephant of Dhauli is a product of Aokan age, it rarely display any sign of the Mauryan Polish. Hence, the absence of Mauryan Polish on the controversial figure may not necessarily be taken as a absolute characteristics of Odishan art under Asoka.

K.C.Panigrahi says that, the lingam is undoubtedly the remains of an Asokan Pillar with cognizable traces of deep cut
Brahmi letters on it and was built by Asoka in the capital of Kalinga. Prof. Sahu has given an elaborate analysis of the Bell capital of Bhuvaneswar. He finds a pillar capital near Asoka Jhara (an old tank) in between the temples of Bhaskareswar and Rameswara, consisting of an abacus, torus and the bell. It resembles an Asokan bell capital with some differences like having no polish of Mauryan style, no animal figure in the capital and no motif of honey suckle commonly found in Asokan bell capital.

Kalinga and Burma

According to Ceylonese Chronicle Buddhism was propagated in Burma during the time of Asoka and Muggaliputta Tissa sent celebrated Theras like Sona and Uttaras to Burma for this purpose. But, the Edicts of Asoka do not corroborate such view. Prof. N.K. Sahu analyses the remark of Blagden who says that these two monks do not figure in the Kalyani Inscriptions of Pegu. According to Nagarjuna Konda Inscriptions Theravada Buddhism was prevalent in Burma prior to 3rd Century A.D. Early Chinese texts also state that Buddhism was popular in Burma during 3rd Century A.D. By the time of 5th Century A.D. the Pyu occupied the Central Burma and they propagated the Hinayana Cannons and the Theravada Culture.

Prof. Sahu refers to the view of A.S. Burma and states that, there was a strong Hinayanic faith in Pyu, which was brought here.
from South Eastern India. There are evidences of close relationship between Burma and ancient Odra, Utkala and Kalinga which helped in spread of Brahminical and Buddhist culture in Burma. The old name of Pegu is Ussa, which is a variant form that of Odra of Odisha. The capital of Pyu was 'Srikset' of Srikshetra\textsuperscript{29} (Puri) in Odisha.

As to the foundation of the kingdom of Srikshetra and introduction of Buddhism in that land, the famous inscription of the Shwezigon Pagoda states\textsuperscript{30}:

The Lord Buddha smiled and Ananda asked him the cause of his smile and the Lord spoke to Ananda; Ananda, hereafter a sage named Vishnu, great in supernatural power, great in glory, possessing five transcendental faculties together with my son Gavampati and King Indra and Bissukarmadevaput and Katakarmonanagaraja shall build a city called Sisit (Srikshetra). After the sage Vishnu has built the city of sisit, he shall depart from thence in the city of Arimaddanapura (Pagan) he shall become King Sri Tribhubanaditya Dharmmaraja.

Making a thorough analysis of this inscriptions Prof. Sahu has come to the conclusion that the Srikshetra kingdom was originally colonized by the Brahminical Hindus but later supplemented by the
Buddhists. These colonists were most probably the immigrants from Odisha. He also finds evidences of close relationship between Odisha and Burma in the earlier days. The Mon-documents refer to a place called Talaing or Trikalinga in Burma where Buddhism flourished in those days. So, the author firmly believes that the people of ancient Odra or Utkala and Kalinga Countries were responsible for the spread of Brahminical and Buddhist Culture in Burma during early Christian centuries. Further Prof. N.K. Sahu also finds close resemblance in artistic features and style of many Buddhist and Brahminical images in Burma with those found in Odisha. The famous Ananda Temple of Burma was said to be designed after the 'Anantagumpha' in the Khandagiri hills at present in the district of Khurda. Prof. Sahu says that, the striking influence of Odisha in propagation of Buddhism in Burma is testified from the above facts.

Kalinga and Ceylon

A close relationship between Kalinga and Ceylon as expressed in the Samanta Pasadika has been analysed by Prof. N.K. Sahu. B.C. Law in Datha Vamsa states how the tooth relic of Buddha was taken from Kalinga to Ceylon during the 9th regnal year of Kharavela. The Chulavamsa and other documents also speak about the inter-relationship between the two countries. Analysis all
these evidences Prof. Sahu affirms the relationship between Kalinga and Ceylon.\textsuperscript{35}

**Kalinga and South India**

N.K. Sahu after going through a number of Buddhist relics finds a close relationship between Kalinga and South India since the days of Asoka. The Mahasamghikas who settled in Kalinga may be belonging to the Saila Sangha and are close associates of the Buddhists of the Andhra territory. Prof. Sahu traces the location of the three apavarakas at the stupa of Hirumu, seven apavarakas in Papita and a Saila Mandapa in Puspagiri to Kalinga. He identified Hirumu with Modern Hira Mandalam on the Nagavali river where a lot of Buddhist remains are seen. He says that the name Hiramandalam seems to be a corruption of Iramandala (the Tamil Ittamandalam) the ancient name of Ceylon, and it indicates that there was close relationship between Kalinga and Ceylon in those days.\textsuperscript{36}

As per the Nagarjuni Konda inscriptions, Bodhisri constructed three apavarakas, one at Papita which is supposed to be the same as Papita near Sitavinjhi in Keonjhar district, which was a Centre of Saivism in 4\textsuperscript{th} Century A.D.\textsuperscript{37} The other at Pushpagiri (Pupha giri) where Bodhisri founded a Saila Mandapa, which may be identified with the Peu-so-po-ki-li located by Yuan Chwang in the south-west
of the Wuta (Odra) country or Odisha. Thus, Kalinga or ancient Odisha was undoubtedly a famous place for Buddhist Pilgrims.

Popular Buddhism in Kalinga

After a careful study of Nagarjuna Konda inscription N.K.Sahu reveals that the religious endowments of the Upasika Bodhisri were connected with that aspect of Buddhism which developed outside the Hinayanism. It was a dominant force in the religious life of the country and it produced far-reaching effects in the history of Buddhism leading to the building of stupas, chaityas and caves in different centres of Buddhism.

In Kalinga stupas and chaityas are supposed to be constructed in Dantapura, Tosali, Hirumu and Puspagiri. As per the accounts of Datha Vamsa\textsuperscript{38} of Ceylon, popular Buddhism developed in Dantapura where the Stupa was believed to have contained a tooth relic of the Buddha, which was brought by Khema Thera to King Brahmadatta of Kalinga and was kept in a magnificent stupa at Dantapura. This place became the centre of the religious life of the people of Kalinga in subsequent centuries and a series of Kalinga rulers like, Brahmadatta, Kasiraja, Sunanda and many others devoted themselves to the upkeep of the precious relic to which they used to offer ceremonial homage and worship. Subsequently, the tooth was believed to have possessed magical efficacies which
excited emotional devotion among the people and contributed towards developing a mystic faith and superstitious belief.

Pandu, the King of Pataliputra harassed Guhasiva, the ruler of Kalinga and put the relic under sacrilegious tests, but he was subsequently won over to Buddhism by the magical supramundane power of the tooth. Due to the liberal attitude of King Guhasiva of Kalinga and for his aversion to war and bloodshed neighbouring states invaded his kingdom and finding no way out he sent the sacred tooth to Ceylon under the custody of his son-in-law, Dantakumara and daughter Hemamala. N.K. Sahu does not accept this description as historical. However, he accepts Dantapura as a centre of Buddhism in ancient Odisha.  

All the Pali texts beginning from the Pitakas to the Chronicles of Ceylon, Dantapura is regarded as the glorious capital of Kalinga. The Pali evidences are further corroborated by the Mahabharata traditions and Greek writers who have mentioned Danagula or Dandagula as the Metropolis of Calingae.  

G. Ramdas while editing the Purle Plates of King Indravarman of Ganga dynasty, identifies Dantapura with the present site of the fort of Danta-Vaktra, situated on the way from Chicacole to Siddhantam. Siddharthaka grama, a Buddhist village. He also states that the cultivators have discovered valuable jewels, images of various kinds, coins and other articles which led him to believe

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that in the past there was immense treasure. So, Prof. Sahu discard the view of M. Sylvan Levi who identified Dantapura with Palura and finds the suggestion of G. Ramdas more acceptable.  

Puspagiri was another centre of popular religion in ancient Odisha and it had immense influence over the minds of the devotees who used to visit the place for spiritual benefit. Upto 7th Century A.D. it was considered to be one of the most wonderful monasteries of the Buddhist culture and Yan Chwang considered it to be built by demons. In a great mountain on the south-west frontiers of the country is a Samgharama called Puspagiri (Peu-su-Po-ki-li) the stone stupa belonging to it exhibited very many spiritual wonders on the fast days it emitted a bright light. For this cause believers from far and near flock together here and presented offerings. To the north-west of this another stupa was situated having extra ordinary miracles. Prof. Sahu compares the accounts of Puspagiri given by Yuan Chwang with the description given by Dathauamsa about the miraculous stupa of Dantapura, and safely concludes that Puspagiri was a popular Buddhist Centre in Odisha in the 7th Century A.D. However, the location of the site has still remain a dispute.

In the 7th Century A.D., the Ganga King Devendra Varman registered a Copper Plate grant in the Puspagiri Pankhali Visaya which provides an epigraphical evidence about the geographical existence of Puspagiri. After analyzing the accounts of Yuan
Chwang and the above evidence clearly Prof. Sahu views that, Puspagiri was located in the South-west frontier of Wu-tu country or Odra or Odisha, close to the northern boundary of Kalinga, and it occupied an important place as a centre of Popular Buddhism in Odisha.\textsuperscript{44}

**Clash between Hinayana and Mahayana**

With the beginning of the Christian era, Mahayana Buddhism developed into a full grown force and there began a clash between the ideas and ideals of Hinayana and Mahayana schools of Buddhism. The Mahayanists advocated the ideal of missionary life as against the self-seeking ideal of the Hinayanists. The Mahayanic works started with a motive to discredit Hinayanists. In Odisha both Hinayana and Mahayana forms of Buddhism existed. In due course of time, rivalry developed between them.

The conflict and rivalry between the followers of the two rival groups of Buddhism in Odisha during 7th Century A.D. has been well depicted by Prof. Sahu. When Harshavardhan came back to Odra after the invasion of Kangoda, a group of Hinayanic priests met him and requested him to convene a conference to settle their differences, but of no avail. However, after the overthrowing of the Dutta rulers of Utkal and Dandabhukti and undermining the power of Sailodbhavas in Kangoda the Bauma-Karas emerged in Odisha and patronized Mahayanism.\textsuperscript{45}
Nevertheless, Hinayanism was influential not only in Odisha but also in most parts of Eastern India. Harsha was influenced by the ideas of famous Hinayanic Monk Acharya Divakar Mitra and his sister Rajyashree but afterwards he was own over to the Mahayanic fold by Acharya Silabhadra. The spread of Hinayana Cult in no way was an obstruction to the spread of Mahayana Cult in India. In Odisha, there were 10,000 Mahayanic monks. Thus, in due course of time Mahayana form of Buddhism flourished in Odisha.

**Mahayana Buddhism in Odisha**

Odisha is considered to be the place of origin of Mahayana Buddhism. According to Taranath:

Shortly after the time of King Mahapadma there lived in the land of Odivisa King Chandragupta to whose house the venerable Manjushree came in the shape of a Bhikshu and delivered the different Mahayana teachings and even left behind a book.

Thus, Taranath clearly speaks that Mahayana Buddhism originated in Odisha. This view of Taranath is corroborated by Pag Sam Jon Zang.

Further, Taranath informs that during the time of Kaniska, Kulika of Saurastra invited the Sthavira and Arahanta Nanda, a native of Anga to know about the new teachings of Mahayana. That means in those days, a class of Hinayana Monks were propagating
Mahayana teachings during 1st Century A.D. The great poet-cum-philosopher Asvaghosa composed several Mahayanic works although he was a Sarvastivadin. According to Prajna Paramita literature Mahayana teachings originated in the Dakshinapatha and passed on to the eastern countries and prosper in the north. When Kaniska and his successors patronized Mahayana this School of Buddhism actually flourished and prospered in the north. Prof. Sahu accepts the fact that the Sarvastivada tradition paved the way for the rise of Mahayanism.48

Thus, taking all these sources and informations into account Prof. N.K. Sahu states:

The Buddhists have contributed largely to the development of the Buddhological speculation of Mahayana. The Buddhists of this school are very staunch Mahasamghikas and strict in matters of doctrine, hence it is unlikely to attribute such a staunch Hinayana school the doctrine of ‘Sunyata’ and ‘advayam’ Advaidhi Karam advocated by the Prajna Paramita. The Prajna Paramita works could have bloomed in an atmosphere of both Sarvastivada and Mahasamghika traditions. These works have accepted the Sarvastivada conception of skandhas, dhatus, ayatanas, arya satyas, angas, etc. and have utilized terminologies like, Paryavasthana, Samgrahavastu, Dvadasanga, etc.
Prof. Sahu finds from the annals of history that during the Post-Asokan period in Odisha both the Mahasamghikas and Sarvastivadins flourished. When the Mahasamghikas migrated from Magadh to Andhra some of them settled in Odisha in the southern districts of Ganjam and Guntur. They were known as 'Saila Sangha'. The sarvastivadins were also present in Odisha since the time of Dhitika and Acharya Kala, who popularized the doctrines of Sarvativadins in Odisha and Ceylon. Prof. Sahu has therefore rightly said that, both the schools of Buddhism achieved significant progress in Odisha before the beginning of the Christian era.

The time of origin of Mahayana Buddhism is not actually known. Prof. Sahu analyzing the chronologies of kings and Acharyas presented by Taranath and Pag-Sam-Jon-Zang finds no historical proof about it. He traces the origin of six paramitas from the Mahavastu of 2nd Century B.C. Here, Prof. Sahu finally comes to the conclusion that, Mahayana is a developed form of religion, more advanced than primitive Buddhism in respect of doctrines and philosophy. It developed gradually with the unfolding of Buddhist thoughts in course of more than four centuries. The Prajna Paramita literature is believed to have been composed first in Odisha. Hence Prof. Sahu attributes the origin of Mahayana Buddhism to Odisha.\(^{49}\)

As per the available literature Mahayana Buddhism developed into a full grown force by the end of the 1st century A.D., when the
works like, *Sadharma Pundarika* and *Mahayana Sraddhotpada* were composed. The Kusana ruler Kaniska patronized Buddhism for its humanistic and universal appeal.

Buddhism in Odisha developed during the early Christian era independent of Kusana Patronage. Till the coming of the Bhauma-Karas in 8th Century A.D., Mahayana Buddhism has to thrive only on popular support. In course of time, Buddha and Buddhist monasteries became the centres of religious life of the people for many centuries. These were the seeds of culture and education in the country and some of them were grown into famous university centres and became the torch bearers of Buddhist culture.\(^{50}\)

The development of Buddhism in Odisha can be studied through the history of monastic institutions and through the activities of sages and philosophers. Prof. Sahu reveals that, the Nagarjuni Konda Inscriptions engraved during the 14th year of the Mathariputa Virapurusadatta testifies to the development of some Hinayanic strongholds at Tosali, Palura, Hirumu, Papila and Puspagiri by 3rd Century A.D. In course of time, Tosali developed into famous centres of Mahayana and other such places like, Bhora SAILA, Tamralipti, Che-li-ta-lo, Viraja, Ratnagiri and many other places.\(^{51}\) Prof. Sahu discusses various places of ancient Odisha which were centres of Mahayana Buddhism.

**Tosali**
Tosali was a famous Buddhist Centre of Odisha during 3rd Century A.D. The Sanskrit text *Gandavyuha* provides a vivid description about the city of Tosali. According to the book, Tosali was an important city of Amita Tosala. There was a lovely monastic establishment on the Sourabha hill which was a famous centre of Buddhism. Prof. Sahu identifies the Surabha hill with Dhauli or its adjoining places and states that it was an important Buddhist Centre in Odisha.

**Bhora Saila**

N.K. Sahu finds Bhora-Saila, another place in Odisha, where a Buddhist monastery was found in 4th Century A.D. It was here that the mystic philosophy of Mahayana was propagated, and the Samkhya Philosopher Isvarakrisna defied Dignaga in a series of Metaphysical combats. Acharya Dignaga is remembered in the cultural tradition of Odisha and the village Delang in Puri district is believed to have been named after him. From Delang upto the vicinity of Bhuvaneswara there is found a remarkable group of low hills, the notable of these are the Vindhyesvari, Saanla Paanra, Banivakres'vara, Jamunajhadapada, Aragada and Dhauli, where Buddhists monks were residing upto late medieval period. When Tosali was flourishing as a famous Buddhist centre in the early Christian era these hills appeared to be busy with stirring monastic
So Prof. Sahu thinks that probably Dignaga and his followers might have been residing during 4th Century A.D. The Bhora Saila may be identified with one of this group of hills.

**Tamralipti:**

Tamralipti was another Mahayanic Buddhist site which exists at the apex of Indian ocean. When Fa-hien came to India during 5th Century A.D., Tamralipti had 24 monasteries where priests and pilgrims stayed for years. By the time of Yuan Chwang visited India, Buddhism has suffered a decline and in Tamralipti and pilgrim could find about 50 Deva Temples. Tamralipti has been identified with modern Tamluk in the Midnapur district of West Bengal which has once upon a time under the sway of ancient Odisha.

**Che-li-ta-lo**

It was a famous port on the coast of Odisha and a seat of Mahayana Buddhism. According to Yuan Chwang, the city of che-li-ta-lo was surrounded by strong and lofty walls outside which there were five great coverts with many storeyed towers. These coverts were full of life and beauty and each of them was adorned with artistic carvingfs of Buddha and Bodhisattva images. Che-ii-ta-lo was also a famous emporium of trade and it was a thorough fare and resting place for sea-going traders from distant lands and also a Buddhist centre.
Viraja

During Bhauma-Kara rule in Odisha, Viraja (Guhasivapalaka) of the modern Jajpura was the Capital City of Odisha, and under the patronage of the Bhauma-Kara Kings a large number of religious institutions developed in many parts of Odisha and particularly in the city of Viraja and its environs where the remains of a number of Buddhist monasteries are found today. Along with Mahayana Buddhism, Shakti Cult also flourished in the Capital city of Viraja. So specimens of Mahayanic sculptures along with Matrika images of the 8th and 9th Century A.D. are found today.

Ratnagiri, Udaygiri and Lalitgiri

Mahayana Buddhism also flourished in the Asia range of hills consisting of Udayagiri, Ratnagiri, Lalitagiri where the monuments of Mahayanic arts, the scattered ruins of stupas and shrines have been preserved and all these testify to the prosperity of Buddhism in early medieval Odisha. Ratnagiri is known to be a centre of learning in Medieval India and as a centre of Buddhist Yoga. Eminent teachers and Acharyas were staying here to teach Yoga. According to Lama Taranath. Acharya Pito who acquired Siddhi of invisibility, was a teacher of Yoga at Ratnagiri and Abadhuti, Bodhisri and Naropa were his disciplies.58

Dharmasala
Dharmasala, situated to the south of Asia hills is the seat of Mahayana Buddhism. The Jnanasri Temple, the Gokarnesvara temple, the Sankares'vara temple also contain a number of Mahayananic images. Undoubtedly, this area was a famous centre of Buddhism during the Bhauka-Kara rule.59

**Khandiapada**

Khandiapada, a place only six miles to the north-west of Japapura is another site of Buddhism. An inscribed image of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara discovered in 1940 from Khandiapada was supposed to be installed in the Monastery by Mahamandala Charya Parama Guru Rahularuchi during the days of Subhakaradeva. Besides, these, the other places of Odisha where Buddhist art and images were found are; Baidakhia to the north of Khandiapada, Soro and Kupari in Balasore, etc.60 According to Yuan Chwang, Prajna an eminent scholar of north India settled in Odisha after 18 years of learning to study Yoga. He was sent as a cultural Ambassador for the Court of Chinese emperor Te-tsong by the King of Odisha, Subhakaradev-I of Bhauma-Kara dynasty who sent a presentation *Gandavyuha* through *Prajna* to the China Emperor Te-tsong.

**Jayasrama Vihara**

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It was a monastery in Northern Tosala where Sivakaradeva-lll executed a Copper Plate grant in 885 A.D. The sanctuary of Buddha bhattaraka, enshrining the image of God Buddha bhattaraka was built by Ambubhattaraka most probably within the precinct of the Jayasrama Viahara as is suggested by N.K. Sahu.\(^61\)

**Arghyaka Varatika**

As per the archaeological excavation at Sisupalgarh, near Bhuvaneswar the famous city of Tosali, which flourished during Asoka was deserted by 4th Century A.D. Therfeafter, Bhubaneswar came under the influence of Saivism and became a city of temples. The Dhauli area still continued to be a stronghold of Buddhism. There was a monastery named Arghyaka Varatika, built in 829 AD by the Bhauma-Kara king Santikaradeva.

**The Bha-ra-ha Monastery**

The Bha-ra-ha monastery of Tamralipti was another centre of Buddhism in Eastern India. Both monks and nuns lived there under strict discipline. But its moral life succumbed to the overwhelming forces of Tantrayana. Under the patronage of early Bhanja rulers Tantricism and Saivism began to flourish there from about the 10\(^{th}\) Century A.D., remarks Prof. Sahu.\(^62\)

**Munjashi**

It was a famous sanctuary in Odisha and a centre of Buddhist learning. It was founded by King Munjashi, a convert to Buddhism
and the sanctuary was therefore named after him. The great Sanskrit scholar Anandagarbha visited Munjashi and was presented with a Buddhist work called *Pal-chog-deng-po* but the exact location of the place is yet to be traced, says Prof. Sahu.  

**Jagaddala Vihara**

There is a dispute among historians as to the exact location of the Jagaddala Vihara. According to H.P. Sastri, it is situated in West Bengal while N.N. Dasgupta suggests that it might have been situated at the confluence of the Ganges and the Karatoya.  

But, both Taranath and Sumpa clearly stated that Jagaddala Vihara was in Odisha and it was the place of refuse for Tantric Siddhas and Buddhists when their monasteries were ransacked by Muhammedans. Jagaddala was in Odisha and was outside the reach of the Muhammedans. As to the exact location of the place, it is difficult to establish its location because, a place named as such is found at present in Puri and Sambalpur districts and also in Bastar in Chhatishgarh. As these places are far away from one another, Prof. Sahu fails to give its exact location.  

**Buddhist Sages and Philosophers**

Prof. Sahu traced the role of sages and philosophers who propagated the tenets of Mahayanism in Odisha. They developed inspiring monasteries, abstract philosophy and metaphysical dialects and won reputation for the cult. Monasteries like,
Bhorasaila, Tosali and Ratnagiri became the centres of Buddhist yoga, while Dantapura and Puspagiri in 7th Century A.D. immensely contributed to the growth of popularity of Buddhism in Odisha.\textsuperscript{66} Prof. Sahu had given a description of such sages and philosophers.

**Nagarjuna**

Nagarjuna was the principal expounder of the Madhyamika School of thought which believed in universal sunyatta. This school of thought flourished in Kosala and Kalinga in 2\textsuperscript{nd} century AD and gave Buddhism a new twist. According to Chinese Pilgrim Yuan Chwang Nagarjuna Pusa was a contemporary of King Sha-to-po-ha, who is supposed to belong to the Imperial Satavahana line. This view is confirmed by Bana Bhatta in his *Harsa Charita*. Prof. Sahu analyses the view of Lama Taranath, H.C. Raychaudhury and other scholars and makes it clear that there were two Nagarjunas, one was Bodhisattva and the other as a Siddhacharya. The former was the propounder of Madhyamika Philosophy and considered as second Buddha, while the latter was invoked as a scholar in Tantrayana.\textsuperscript{68}

N.K. Sahu is confounded with another confusion over the identification of the mountain Po-lo-mo-lo-ki-li. According to Yuan Chwang, Po-lo-mo-lo-ki-li was a compact rock existing towards the south west of South Kosala. S. Beal regards Po-lo-mo-lo-ki-li as
Bhramarigiri or the mountain of Parvati. Burgess identifies Bhramarigiri with Sriparvata in the Krisna Valley and his view is accepted by many scholars on the ground that Sriparvata was the seat of activities of Nagarjuna and goddess Durga or Bhramari is the presiding deity of the mountain. As per the data available in *Pam-Sam-Jon-Zang* the tantric Nagarjuna who practiced the Siddhis and visualized the goddess Tara was living in Sriparvata and most probably this centre of Tara worship has been converted into a seat of Durga or Parvati a fate common to all tantric centres in India. Prof. Sahu here makes it clear that, Madhyamika Nagarjuna who stayed in 'Po-lo-mo-lo-ki-li' was by no means associated with the Tantric seat of Sriparvata which is far away from 'Po-lo-mo-lo-ki-li'.

Again from none of the historical inscriptions belonging to 2nd to 4th Century A.D. Sriparvata has been associated with the name of Nagarjuna. The *Gandavyuha* also speaks nothing of Nagarjuna or about Nagarjuni Konda. Hence, it is clear that Tantric Nagarjuna who was related to sriparvata came much later and the Madhyamika Nagarjuna whose activities were confined to South Kosala can in no way be associated with Andhra. Further N.K. Sahu is doubtful about the identification of 'Po-lo-mo-lo-ki-li' with Bhramarigiri and its association with goddess Parvati. Julien has identified the word 'Po
lo mo lo ki li' with Paramalagiri and according to Prof. Sahu, Julien's view seems to be more valid than the rest.

Bodhisattva Nagarjuna visited various parts of India for consolidating Mahayana Buddhism through his genius. He also visited Odisha, Malwa and South India for popularizing Buddhism. He also erected a number of viharas in Odisha and Bangla as protector of Mahaayanism. He filled Jamvudvipa with trophies of his pious deeds. Nagarjuna on the one hand tried to encounter classical Brahminism on the one hand and to orthodox Hinayanism, on the other and therefore, he enriched Buddhism with a number of works of logic and metaphysics such as, Prajna Paramita Sastra, Prajna Mula Sastra, Tika, Prajna Pradipa Sastra Karika, etc.\textsuperscript{71}

**Aryadeva**

Aryadeva was a disciple of Nagarjuna who played a vital role in the spread of Mahayanism in Odisha. He was born in a Brahmana family of Simhapura in Kalinga. The *Manjusri Mulatantra* states that, he was an inhabitant of Saihnikapura which was mistaken as Simhaladvipa by authors like Taranath and the author of *Pam-Sam-Jon-Zang*. Nalinakshya Dutt in his short review of the *Chatuh Sataka* of Aryadeva opines that the home of Aryadeva should be somewhere in the mainland of India, not Ceylon. Aryadeva was an erudite
scholar of Madhyamika school and he was traveling all over north India consolidating the strength of Mahayanism. Prof. Sahu remains silent about the identification of this author.

**Asanga and Vasuvandhu**

Mahayana Buddhism marched ahead under the guidance of Asanga and Vasu Vandhu. Asanga transformed vijnanavada into a powerful spiritualistic dialectic. He converted his younger brother Vasuvandhu into a Mahayanist and the writings of the later, like, Vimsatika and Trimsika have become classics in their faithful demonstration of the absolute idealism. Vasuvandhu, the younger brother of Asanga, systematized the Yogachara Philosophy in his Vijnaptimatratasiddhi in place of Nagarjuna's Sunyata. Yogachar in Vasuvandhu went to Odisha to increase that number of followers of Mahayana Sect.

**Dignaga and Vasumitra**

Dignaga Dharmakirti and Vasumitra also played an important role in the development of Yogachara Vijnanavada in Odisha after Vasubandhu. Dignaga was known for his learned treaties and laid the foundation of Science and Logic in Ancient India. He visited Odisha and converted the kings treasurer Bhdrapalita who earned great merit by erecting sixteen monasteries. Under the influence of Vasubandhu, Dignaga learnt all the pitakas of both Mahayana and Hinayana and the metaphysical doctrines of the idealist school of
Vijnanavada. For a short period he was the Chancellor of Nalanda and there he completed his famous work *Pramana Samuchaya*. He worked for the spread of Buddhist Culture in Odisha till his death.

According to Prof. Sahu, Vasumitra, a contemporary of Dignaga, also took a leading role in Preaching Buddhism in Odisha. His disciple, Triratnadasa was a great scholar of Mahayana Cult who introduced Tantrayana into Buddhist Philosophy. Sthiramati, Dharmapala Dharmakirti and Santideva were other Buddhist scholars who visited Odisha. Both Madhyamika and Yogachara school flourished in Odisha. Prof. Sahu writes...

... the two great systems of Philosophy, Madhyamika and the Yogachara Schools rolled over India as well as Orissa, generation after generation, during the first seven centuries of the Christian era and produced a great Buddhist Culture, along with scholastic philosophy, under the aegis of a band of reputed scholars and dialecticians.

Thus the six great scholars of Buddhism like, Nagarjuna, Aryadeva and Asanga along with Vasubandhu, Dignaga and Dharmakirtti are considered to be six ornaments of Jambudvipa. They enriched Buddhist Philosophy in Odisha.

**Development of Tantric Buddhism in Odisha**
Prof. Sahu has sincerely attempted to explore the development of Tantric Buddhism in Odisha. 'Tantra' means a religious system connected with the Vedas where the worship of Goddess is considered vital. It is the source of all scriptural authority for Kaliyuga. Its origin can be traced from the *Atharva Veda* and from the earlier Buddhist works.

According to M. Winternitz "there is no line of evolution from Yajurveda and Atharva veda to the Tantras."\(^74\) Tantric elements were present in the earlier Buddhist works and also prevailed in social system as per the references of the *Mahavagga* and *Chullavagga*. Binayatosh Bhattacharya\(^75\) on the authority of *Tattva Sangraha* of Santaraksita and his disciple Kamala Sila are of the opinion that Buddha incorporated magical practices in his religion to make it popular and attractive. But Prof. Sahu has rightly rejected the low profile remarks cast against Buddha.\(^76\) He cites the *Brahmajala Sutta* of *Digha Nikaya* where Buddha enumerates a long list of superstitious-magical 'vijjas' which probably prevailed at that time, but he strongly condemns these as "Tirachhana" meaning low and crooked. Again Binaytosh Bhattacharya holds the view that the seeds of Tantric Buddhism were therein original Buddhism in the form of *mudras, mantras, mandalas, dharanis, yoga* and *Samadhi* as a means to attain happiness and prosperity in the world. But, M. Winternitz\(^77\) contradicts him as he finds nothing either in Tripitaka or
in any other Buddhist documents like, *Mudra, Mandala, Dharanis, Yoga* and *Samadhi* etc. practised in early days were different from those of Tantric Buddhism.

Binaytosh Bhattacharya has traced the origin of Tantra since the days of Asanga who was influenced by Maitreya in Turita heaven. Asanga introduced Tantra in Buddhism and according to B. Bhattacharya his work *Guhya Samaja Tantra* is probably the first literature on Tantra School. The opinion of B. Bhattacharya can be substantiated from the Prajnaparamita found in the Sadhanamala written by Acharya Asanga. But N.K.Sahu is not convinced that Asanga was the founder of *Yogachara-Vijnanavada*. He agrees to the fact that, the origin of Tantric Buddhism has been a matter of controversy and for that its origin cannot be confined to a particular period of time. However, he agrees with the fact that during the rule of Palas in Bengal, a number of Tantra Sadhakas appeared in Odisha in the 8th Century A.D. and they gave wide currency to this aspect of Buddhism. After a sincere study N.K.Sahu finally concludes that Odisha has produced some greatest teachers of tantric Buddhism.78

Prof. Sahu analyses the view of H.P.Sastri and traces the origin of Tantra from the predominance of Mantra. The Mantras in association with Dharani changed the colour and tone of the later Mahayana sect to such an extent that a new concept 'Mantrayana'
grew out of it. He comes to a conclusion that, this Mantrayana School of Mahayana was transformed into Mantrayana which developed as a composite system of Tantrism incorporating within itself various heterogenous and mystic practices like, *mudra*, *mandala*, *Abhiseka* and *Samadhi*, while seeking bliss and immortality through psychophysical exercises, bisexual rites and alchemic preparations. The six forms of esoteric rituals or *Abhicharas* like, *Marana* (killing), *Mohana* (enchanting), *Stambana* (Paralysing), *Vidvesana* (envying), *Ucchatana* (exciting) and *Vasikarana* (subduing) together with five Ms. (*Pancha Makaras*) like, *Madya* (wine), *Mamsa* (Meat), *Matsya* (Fish), *Mudra* (women or coin) and *Maithuna* (sexual intercourse) generally made their way into Tantrayana, and Buddhism lost its identity in this new form and all of its established ideals and moral values of life were completely repudiated.

**Tantric Buddhism in Odisha**

Prof. Sahu has attempted to trace the origin of Tantric-Buddhism in Odisha. As per the information received from the Chinese document *Pag-sam-jon-Zang*, Tantric Buddhism first of all developed in a place called Uddiyana, which is by far the most important among the four pithas frequently mentioned by Hindu and Buddhist Tantras. As per the Tibetan sources, Saraha, Kambala, Padmavajra, Luipa, Laltavajra, Gambhiravajra, Kakkuri and Pito, all
the tantric scholars were associated with Uddiyana. Prof. N.K.Sahu holds that, Uddiyana is the fountain head of all tantric knowledge and an important place of Tantric Buddhism where all schools of Tantric Buddhism like Vajrayana, Kalachakrayana and Sahajayana flourished. He refutes the views of different scholars like H.P.Sastri, M.Levi, P.C.Bagchi who argue Uddiyana to be the Swat Valley but Prof. Sahu does not agree with it.\textsuperscript{81}

Prof. Sahu has proved the existence of Tantrapitha Uddiyana in Odisha and his irrefutable arguments sewed the voice of the critics. He states:\textsuperscript{82}

It should be borne in mind that Uddiyana is ultimately associated with the worship of the deities like Marichi, Kurukulla, Lokesvara, Urddhvapada, Vajravarahi, etc. and as none of these deities are traceable in the Swat Valley, its identification with the Tantric land of Uddiyana cannot be maintained. On the other hand, all these deities are found in large numbers, along with such other images of Dhyani-Buddha, Manjusri, Padmapani, Vajrapani Trailokyavijaya, Heruka, Jambhala, Bhairavi, Chamunda, etc. carved out in grace and beauty with regard to the minute details prescribed in their Sadhanas. It may be said that the Goddess Kurukulla and Vajravarahi who are described...
in the Tantric literature as the presiding deities of Uddiyana are found only in Odisha and nowhere else in India, what to speak of the Swat Valley and hence, in the light of it, Odisha may be identified with great amount of certainty with Uddiyana.

Prof. Sahu has taken a lot of care to establish the fact that Uddiyana Pitha where Tantric Buddhism flourished was no other place but modern Odisha. All epigraphical evidences and historical facts and archaeological arguments thoroughly established Uddiyana as the cradle of Tantric Buddhism and it is identified as Odisha. Most of the Sadhanas of Sadhanamala mention four places of Tantric importance in India, namely, Uddiyana, Purnagiri, Kamaksa and Srihatta and Prof. Sahu ascertain that the place Uddiyana is none other than Odisha. It was by far the most important centre of Tantrayana and it influenced the other three Pithas. The places situated close to the modern Jajpur district such as Udayagiri, Ratnagiri, Lalitagiri and Alatigiri are regarded as the four Pithas of Odisha which influenced the Tantric Buddhism.83

Tantric Buddhist Siddhas of Odisha

Prof. Sahu has taken due care in describing about the Siddhas who were associated with the Tantic Buddhism in Odisha. These Siddhas were instrumental in spreading Tangric Buddhism in this land.
Saraha

According to Bastan-hygur Saraha or Sarahapada belonged to Uddiyana or Odisha. He is also known as Rahulabhadra who flourished during the reign of King Chandana Pala of Prachya. He is regarded as one of the earliest scholars of Tantric Buddhism. He was the author of at least 25 works. P. Cordier, referring to Bstan-hygur states that there seems to be more than one Saraha and they are described as Mahabrahmana, Mahacharya, Mahayogi and Yogisvara, etc. N.K. Sahu analyzing the view of Saunders states that, there were at least two Sarahas - one belonged to 8th Century A.D. to the period of Subhakaradev-I and the other, the author of songs and Dohas belonging to 10th Century A.D.\(^4\)

Nagarjuna

Nagarjuna was a disciple of Saraha and was associated with Sri Parvata in the south, which was later named after him as Nagarjuni Konda. He was a great luminary of Tantrayana system possessing super-natural knowledge and mystical activities. Two of his Sadhanas are preserved in Sadhanamala and he also wrote the Guhya Samaja Tantra. He was instrumental in spreading Tantric Buddhism in Odisha.

Savaripa

Savaripa was a disciple of Nagarjuna and a follower of Vajra-Yogini Tantra. Luipa was a disciple of Savaripa, who introduced
Yoginikula in Tantrayana and was associated with the origin of Natha Cult. N.K.Sahu also refers to some other scholars like Vijraghanta, Kambala and Padmavajra who belonged to Odisha and introduced the Hevajra Tantra into Buddhism. Padmavajra is known for his work *Guhya Siddhi*, a text on Tantrayana. Angavajra was a disciple of Padmavajra and was famous for his work *Prajanopaya Vinischaya Siddhi* based on the Philosophy of Vajrayana. Indrabhuti was the author of *Jaina Siddhi*, a text on Tantric Buddhism.85

**Indrabuti, Padmasambhava and Laxmikara**

The Tantric ideology attained its highest development in the writings of Indrabhuti. He was the king of Uddiyana and the disciple of both Kambalpada and Anangavajra. His work *Jnana Siddhi* throws light on the various estoric rites of Vajrayana, an important text of tantric Buddhism. His son Padmasambhava was also a great religious reformer who preached Tantrayana in Tibet. Laxmikara, the sister of Indrabhuti was another exponent of Tantric Buddhism. She brought about a change in the rigourism of knowledge and yogic practices and thus gave a Sahaja System which revolted not only against worshiping Buddha but also against all sorts of traditional and moral injunctions. Thus, in the evolution of Buddhist mysticism Laxmikara stands as a finger-post towards Sahajayana. Prof.Sahu mentions the names of Jalandharipada, Virupa, Kanhupa, Tilopa and
Naropa who were Tantric Buddhist scholars and all of them played an important role in popularizing Tantric Buddhism in Odisha.

**Nathism in Odisha**

Nathism in Odisha started as a reactionary movement against the erotic practices of Tantric Buddhism. Gorakhanath was the first great exponent of this cult who flourished during 12th Century A.D. According to S.C. Das, Gorakha was initially a cowherd who accepted Tantric Buddhism and became popular as sage Gorakha. His religious school survives in the Yogi Sect who goes under the title Natha. The Buddhists looked upon him as a heretic as he gave the Natha cult a saivite turn deviating from Tantric Buddhism. Dr. S.B. Dasgupta argues that, Natha Cult originated independently of Tantric Buddhism. Prof. Sahu does not subscribe to this view and affirm that the Natha Cult was an off-shoot of Tantric Buddhism. The *Gorakh Samhita* written by Gorakha contains some principles of Nathist literature which have similarities with the Buddhist-Tantra Texts, Charyas and Dohas. Thus, Prof. Sahu concludes that Nathism was closely associated with later Buddhism. It was due to the hatred of Nepalese Buddhists towards Gorakha as a seceder of faith, that the Natha cult could transform itself from Tantric Buddhism to Yogic Saivism.

Nathism became an all India religious movement within no time and its influence was also felt in Odisha. The teachings of this
Natha cult inspired a powerful yogic movement in Odisha which influenced the Jagannatha cult. The great Odia Poet Saraladasa and other Yogic Philosophers like, Achyuta, Ananta, Yosovanta, Baranga and others who flourished in Odisha in 16th Century, based their Yoga System on the Hatha Yoga of the Nath Cult.

**Latest Buddhist Siddhas of Odisha**

Towards the last part of 15th and 16th Century, when Buddhism was forgotten in India, Odisha could preserve the values of various schools of later Buddhism. According to Achyutananda Dasa, Buddhism was existing in four different schools, such as, Naganti, Yoganti, Vedanti and Siddhanti School. Nagarjuna belonged to the Naganti school and it had considerable influence on the religious life of Odisha during 8th and 9th century A.D. These four schools, in a degenerated form, represented the ideology of Tantric Buddhism in Odisha.

The Prominent Buddhist teachers of 16th Century were Varanga Swami, Loidasa, Valigandasa and Virasimha, who used to practise yoga in forests. Their followers were staying in the rock-cut caves of Dhaull, Khandagiri, Udayagiri and Tapanga in the district of Khurdha, in the hillocks of Mahiparvata, Manduka, Jalauka, Ratnagiri, Udyagiri and Lalitagiri in Cuttack and in other Garjat areas of Baud, Sonepur and Patna.
Virasimha was a great philosopher and a yogic purusa, a renowned physician and a Tantric Siddha who commanded respect not only in Odisha but in many parts of Andhra and to him the land of Jagannatha was then a stronghold of Buddhism in Odisha.

N.K.Sahu also gives a brief account of the 16th century saints and writers of Odisha who were interested in Tantricism. It would have become useful for the students of Buddhism if Prof. Sahu would have given more details and discussed the essential teachings of 'Sunya Samhita' of Achyutananda and Dharmagita of Mahadev Dasa, Stuti and Bhajans of Bhima Bhoi in this book. Still it remains as a desideratum in the religious history of Odisha. Most of these works preserved the Philosophy of Sunyata but do not refer to the secret Tantric Practices. A close study of these texts reveals that the essence of Buddhism was retained by the thinkers of Odisha upto very late. It also shows at the same time how Buddhism was absorbed in Vaisnavism, Mahima Dharma and Nathism. Prof. Sahu opines that Nathism should be treated as a new religion but not as a phase of Buddhism. However, it must be noted that all the philosophical conceptions like, Vaisnavism, Mahimadharma and Nathism bear resemblance to Buddhism.90

Mahayanic and Tantric Art in Odisha

N.K. Sahu has cited a lot of information about Mahayanic-Tantric Art in Odisha in order to substantiate his views that
Buddhism flourished in Odisha from its earlier days and the Buddhist artistic creations and remains found in the state give a clear testimony of his hard work.

The first ever evidence of Mahayanic Art was found in the Post-Gupta era in places like, Tosali, Palura, Pushpagiri, Bhora-Saila, Tamralipti and Che-li-ta-lo, etc. The fresco paintings at Sitavinjhi in Keonjhar district, the ruins of excavations at Sisupalgarh also throw light on the Mahayanic Tantric Art in Odisha.

The Sitavinjhi Painting

It is a natural rock-shelter\textsuperscript{91} in Keonjhar district, known as Ravana Chhaya. It depicts the scene of a royal procession in five colours in the style of Ajanta Caves. The pictorial technique indicates it to be a Buddhist Art.

Buddhist Architecture in Medieval Odisha

The Buddhist gave greater emphasis on carving out beautiful statues and laying out great monastic institutions than on constructing gigantic temples of stones. The Buddhist temples at Lalitagiri and Udayagiri near Jajpur with their Door Way\textsuperscript{92} and Door Frame\textsuperscript{93} represent the beauty of Buddhist Architecture.

Buddhists sculptures of Medieval Odisha

During medieval era in Odisha, the Buddhists paid greater attention towards sculptural art form. The Mahayanic art are found today in Udayagiri, Ratnagiri and Lalitagiri, Solanpur, Khadipada,
Baud and Narsimhapur, etc. The other tantric arts are found in Choudwar, Ayodhya and Khiching.94

Udayagiri

N.K.Sahu points out that Udayagiri is the most valuable of the Buddhist artistic creations and it contains several mounds of the ruins of Buddhist Monuments such as:

(i) The colossal image of 'Avalokitesvara'95
(ii) The figure of Dhyani Buddha (Amitabha)96
(iii) The figure of Goddess Ganga97
(iv) The figure Vaisravana98
(v) Toddess Kurukulla99

Lalitagiri

Prof. Sahu refers to Lalitagiri which is situated seven miles to the south of Udayagiri. It is a combination of three small hills like, Olasuni the Landa Parvata and the Paravadi. Olasuni is famous as the seat of Yogi Arakshita Dasa of 18th Century A.D., but it contains the least Buddhist monuments.

The Landa Parvata contains the ruins of brick monuments. There is a math on its top with a colossal figure of Buddha100 under a banyan tree seated in Bhumisparsa Mudra, Maitreya101, Aparajita102, Sthira Chakra Manjusri103 are all graceful in design.

Ratnagiri
It is an isolated hill on the north-east of Lalitagiri. It contains the colossal statues of Buddha\textsuperscript{104}, Budha Head\textsuperscript{105} and Charming images of Taras\textsuperscript{106}, Bodhisattvas\textsuperscript{107} etc. He has given graphics illustration of several Tantric Buddhist figures not only of Ratnagiri but also from other places of Odisha.\textsuperscript{108}

The book *Buddhism in Orissa* written by N.K.Sahu is one of his Master-Pieces and it has won wide acceptance all over India as a valuable and scholarly exposition of the origin and development of the Hinayana, the Mahayana, the Tantrayana and Yogayana systems of Buddhism. The book is a treasure house for scholars, academicians and historians as it contains vital informations about the Buddhist religion and culture. The author has done a commendable job by collecting such a variety of informations about Buddhist Philosophy, scholars and art with due authenticity and as the book was published in 1958, his effort is to be appreciated. Till date his *Buddhism in Orissa* has remained unchallengeable.

**Jainism**

A holistic view regarding religious condition of Odisha has been given by prof. Sahu. He mentions that Jainism, Budhism and Brahminism grew in this land. Prof. Sahu states that Jainism prevailed in Odisha from the remote past although the rise of
Jainism in the 5th-4th Century B.C. has not been attested by any archaeological sources but Prof. Sahu states that Jainism had its appearance during that time of Kalinga.\(^{109}\)

Jainism flourished in Kalinga in the 1st Century B.C. during the rule of Kharavela. In his 12th regnal year, Kharavela had brought back Kalinga Jina from Magadha.\(^{110}\) He states that in the 5th – 6th Century A.D. Jainism was prevalent in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar area. Referring to the Jaina remains of Podasingidi near Anandapur, Baidakhia, Soso, etc., Prof. Sahu discerns that in 6th – 7th Century A.D. Jainism was very popular in Keonjhar area. In the 7th Century A.D. Jainism flourished in Kangoda. He refers to the Banapur Copper Plate Grant which states that Queen Kalyanadevi had granted land to Jaina arhat Prabuddhachandra for the growth of Jainism in that area.\(^{111}\) Prof. Sahu further states that in Tosali and Kangoda Jainism along with Buddhism declined when king Sasanka of Gauda established his sway over that region. The rise of Brahminism put an end to Jainism in ancient Odisha.\(^{112}\)

**Buddhism**

Right after the Kalinga War of Asoka in 261 B.C. Buddhism flourished in Odisha. In due course of time it became very popular in the nook and corner of this land. In early medieval period Mahayanic and Tantric Buddhism flourished in Odisha. Ratnagiri, Udayagiri, Lalitagiri and other places became Centres of Tantric
Buddhism. There was immense growth of Buddhist art and architecture in Odisha during that period.\textsuperscript{113}

**Bhagavatism (Vaisnavism)**

The worship of Vasudev was prevalent in India around 5th Century B.C. In due course of time Bhagavata was regarded as one and equal with Visnu. In Odisha Bhagavatism also prevailed. Towards the middle of 4th Century A.D. Visakhavarman, the 1st Mathra King took the title 'Paramadaivata'. From Ningodi Copper Plate\textsuperscript{114} it is known that Anantasakti-Varman considered himself as 'Bhagabat Swami Narayana Padanudhyata'. During the Ganga period the worshipping of Visnu became very popular in Odisha as is attested from the building in Odisha as is attested from the building of Jagannath Temple at Puri. During the Suryavamsi rule Vaisnavism grew in Odisha and it was galvanized by the coming of Sri Chaitanya. Rama-cult also became popular in this land. Even today Vaisnavism is a popular religion in Odisha.\textsuperscript{115}

**Saivism**

Prof. Sahu also refers to the rise and growth of Saivism in Odisha. He draws attention to Asanpat inscription\textsuperscript{116} where Siva is found in a dancing posture. During the period of the Sailodbhavas Saivism flourished in Odisha. The Somvamsis and Gangas popularized Saivism in this land. Prof. Sahu says about Gokarnesvara Siva of mound Mahendra and Ekamrakshetra
Bhubaneswar) which became famous Saiva centres in Eastern India. Saivism is even now famous in the nook and corner of Odisha.\textsuperscript{117}

**Saktism**

Prof. Sahu draws the attention of scholars towards Saktism which also prevailed in Odisha. The *Mahabharata* refers to Viraja-Kshetra where Goddess Viraja was worshipped on the bank of river Vairarani.\textsuperscript{118} In the Bhauma-Kara inscriptions references to Chamunda Katyayani are found.\textsuperscript{119} Sakti worship continued in Odisha unperturbedly till 15th Century A.D. Saraladasa in his *Chandipurana* referred to different Sakta deities like Chandi, Chamunda, Mahisamardini, Viraja, Bhagavati and others, various forms of Sakti worship in Odisha have also been described by Prof. Sahu.\textsuperscript{120}

**Sun Worship**

The Sun worship in Odisha has also been described by Prof. Sahu. Right from the Vedic age Sun worship in India was very popular. In the 7th Century A.D. Maharaja Dharmaraja described himself as *Sahasrarahashmbhakta*.\textsuperscript{121} Prof. Sahu believes that Dharmaraj had first started Sun worship in Odisha. In due course of time it became popular. Narasimhadeva-I of the Ganga dynasty built the Sun Temple at Konark which is an indicator of Sun worship in
Odisha. Although some scholars associate Udaygiri in Bhubaneswar with Sun worship but Prof. Sahu does not believe it.\textsuperscript{122}

**Naga Worship**

Naga worship was also popular in Odisha. Prof. Sahu refers to the Kanasa Copper Plate of Lokavigraha and Bhanudutta respectively where Maninagesvara Bhattarakka and Maninaga Bhattarakka have been projected.\textsuperscript{123} Maninagesvara Bhattarakka is identified with Nagaraja of Sundarapada near Bhubaneswar. In due course of time he was worshipped as a Naga deity in that area. Further Prof. Sahu refers to ‘Kaliyadalana image’ now preserved in Odisha State Museum. It was designed to be fixed at the outer wall of a temple in Bhubaneswar. It belongs to 7th Century A.D. Prof. Sahu states that Nagaworship was prevalent in Odisha during that period. This peculiar aspect of Odishan religion was a novel chapter which drew the attention of Prof. Sahu. Due to his inspiration his disciple Sadhu Charan Panda completed his doctoral thesis titled ‘Naga Worship in Orissa’. This neglected religious aspect of Odisha has been given proper place by Prof. N.K. Sahu.\textsuperscript{124}

Thus, Prof. N.K. Sahu has vividly analysed the religious condition of Odisha in the remote past. His painstaking research had enabled to produce a monumental work like *Buddhism in Orissa* where he categorically discusses about the rise of Buddhism in Odisha, in general and Mahayanic Tantric Buddhism, in particular.
Every nook and corner of Odisha has been visited by Prof. Sahu for reconstructing the history of Buddhism in Odisha. Besides, he also reflected about other religious faiths like Jainism, Saivism, Vaisnavism, Saktism, worship of Sun God and Naga in Odisha which made him very popular among the scholars and people of Odisha.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. N.K. Sahu, *Buddhism in Orissa*, Utkal University, 1958, 'Foreword', p.i.
2. For details see Infra, Ch.IV, Discussion on Odra, Kalinga and Utkala.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., p.12.

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23. N.K. Sahu, op. cit., p.29;
   See Fig. 12.

24. JAS, xvii, p. 98.

25. See Fig. 13.


32. Ibid.
35. N.K.Sahu, op. cit., p.45.
36. Ibid.
38. B.C.law, op.cit.
41. El, XIV, 361.
42. N.K.Sahu, op. cit., p.48.
43. N.K.Sahu, op. cit., p.49.
44. Ibid., p.50.
45. Ibid., p.52.
46. Taranath, op. cit., p.58.
48. N.K.Sahu, op cit., p.70.
49. Ibid., p.73.
50. Ibid., p.79.
51. Ibid., p.81.
53. N.K. Sahu, op. cit., p.82.
54. Ibid., p.83.
56. N.K. Sahu, op. cit., p.83.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid., p.89.
62. Ibid., p.91.
63. Ibid., p.92.
65. N.K. Sahu, op. cit., p.93.
66. Ibid., p.95.
68. N.K. Sahu, op. cit., p.98.
71. Ibid., p.102.
72. Ibid., p.109.
73. Ibid., pp.118-119.
75. B.Bhattacharya, Sadhana Mala II, Introduction, p. xvii, also F. notes: An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism, p.48.
76. N.K.Sahu, op. cit., p.123.
78. N.K.Sahu, op. cit., p.127.
79. Ibid., pp.130-131.
80. Ibid., p.131.
81. Ibid., pp.141-152.
82. Ibid., p.153.
83. Ibid., p.155.
86. Ibid., p.172.
87. Ibid., p.174.
88. Ibid., p.177.
89. Ibid.
90. Ibid., p.180.
91. See Fig-14.
92. See Fig-15.
93. See Fig-16.
94. N.K.Sahu, op. cit., p.188 ff.
95. See Fig-17.
96. See Fig-18.
97. See Fig-19.
98. See Fig-20.
99. See Fig-21.
100. See Fig-22.
101. See Fig-23 (Maitreya)
102. See Fig-24 (Aparajita)
103. See Fig.25 (Sthirachakra Manjusri)
104. See Figs of Buddha 26, 26(A), 26(B).
105. See Fig-27 (Buddha Head)
106. See Fig-28, 28A, 28B (Tara)
107. See Figs of Bodhisatwa (a,b,c) – 29, 29(A), 29(B)
113. For detail discussion, See *Supra*, pp.126-164.
116. N.K.Sahu had discovered this inscription in 1963 at Asanpat in the Keonjhar district. In 1969 Sri Aniruddha Das, the then Director and Secretary of the Department of Culture,
Government of Odisha had transferred to Odisha State Museum.


120. For more detail see, N.K.Sahu, op. cit., pp.345-47.


122. N.K.Sahu, op. cit., p.335.
