CHAPTER VI

MISCELLANEOUS STUDIES
Although Prof. N.K. Sahu was a pioneer researcher on the political and religious history of Odisha, he was equally a notable archaeologist. From his student life he visited the archaeological sites in different parts of Odisha as well as of India and earned initial knowledge in archaeological field. In 1948 A.D. he inspected the archaeological excavation of Kausambi in Uttar Pradesh and Sisupalgarh in Bhubaneswar. During his teaching career at Ravenshaw College he was associated with the excavations of Jaugada in 1957 A.D. and the Bhuasuni hill in 1958 A.D. In due course of time, he was associated with many excavation works in Odisha. Besides his love for archaeology, he also threw light on the socio-economic and cultural history of Odisha.

Contributions to Archaeology

Prof. Sahu was associated with many excavations in Odisha. He had taken keen interest at the excavation of Asurgarh, Ganiapalli, Trisul, Manamunda and Maraguda Valley. He had gathered vast experience by visiting the excavated site of Kausambi associating himself personally with the excavation of Sisupalgarh at Bhubaneswar with that experience, his unflagging
zeal prompted him to undertake excavations at different sites in Odisha, stated earlier.

**Asurgarh**

The archaeological excavations of Asurgarh have thrown significant light on the history and culture of Odisha. It brought to light the antiquities datable from 3rd Century B.C. to 5th Century A.D. As the Professor and Head of the Department of History, Sambalpur University Prof. N.K. Sahu had directed the excavations at Asurgarh. The excavation work had been undertaken by the joint efforts of the Department of History, Sambalpur University and the Department of Cultural Affairs of the Government of Odisha. The craving work continued for a month from 14th February to 15th March 1973 and about twenty post-graduate students participated in the project.²

The Asurgarh fort is located in Kalahandi district of Odisha about three miles to the west of Narla Railway Station and one and half miles to the north-east of Rupsa Road Railway Station on the Raipur-Vizag Railway line. It covers an extensive area of more than half-square kilometer. The ramparts as found at present are about 4 metres in width and 15 to 50 metres in height and are made of roubles and mud with brick facing. Close to the western rampart of the river Sandul with its stoney bed flows to the north to meet the river Tel. It appeals that the flow of the river has been diverted to pass by the side of the western rampart.
forming a natural moat on that side of the fort. On the eastern side of the fort there was an extensive lake previously and water from that lake was being brought through two sluice gates to fill up the moat on three sides of the fort, northern, eastern and southern. In course of time the lake has become smaller size but even today it covers area of about two-hundred acres. It was renovated for agricultural purposes by Raja Udit Pratap Dev who ruled over Kalahandi in the second half of the 19th Century and it is now named after him as Udit Sagar. The water from the moat on the three sides could be drained to the river Sandul when required. The fort had four wide gates in four cardinal directions and at each gate one guardian deity was installed. Now these guardian deities are named as Ganga at the eastern gate, Kalapat at the northern and Dokri at the southern gate. As reported by the village priest the fort was being surrounded by sixty four Yoginis in earlier times although no Yogini image is found at present.³

Places in various parts of Western Odisha are found in the name of Asurgarh. In the Tel river valley itself, there are more than one Asurgarh fort out of which the one in Kalahandi district had been excavated by Prof. Sahu and another is situated at the confluence of the Tel and the Mahanadi. The Asurgarh fort in Kalahandi district is by far the largest and the most important one. Excavations conducted at Asurgarh by N.K.Sahu and his team has thrown significant light on the history and culture of Odisha. Just one raveled to the south of the fort a village
named Asurgarh is found and Prof. Sahu presumes that the fort was named after that village or the village might have been named after the fort.⁴

There are two trenches, one in the eastern part and the other in the western part of the residential area of the fort. Both the sites were carefully selected after proper survey and exploratory works by Prof. Sahu. Both the trenches yielded many important antiquities and the same type of postsheards in almost identical layers revealing the same cultural sequences through ages. After digging of about one and half feet of the upper most layer the house floors paved with brick bats were found. From the floor level of the ancient houses interesting iron objects like hooks, door hinges, arrow heads and axes were found and beads of precious stones like chalcedony, agate, carnelian crystal and coral were recovered in large numbrs.⁵

The most important findings in the floor level pointed out by Prof. Sahu were fifty punch marked silver and bronze coins, which were buried in the plinth level. Previously, in 1958 a good number of 539 silver punch marked coins were unearthed accidentally which were almost of the level of the first layer of the above excavation. P.K. Deo and P.L. Gupta who examined these stray finds of coins are of the view that out of 539 specimens, 69 belong to Pre-Mauryan Period, 272 to the Mauryan age and the remaining 198 to the post-Mauryan era.⁶ The coins which were recovered from the three varieties which led Prof. Sahu to rethink
about antiquity. He suggested that, it cannot be ruled out that these coins discovered by the excavation in 1973 were also being minted and circulated in the Cir. 5th Century A.D. the period attributed to the first layer of Asurgarh. 

Prof. Sahu takes into consideration the contemporary literature particularly, the *Visuddhimagga* of Budhaghosa which indicates that punch marked coins were being minted and circulated in India as late as the 4th and 5th Century A.D. Scholars were so far in search of some archaeological findings to corroborate this vital literary evidence. The excavations of Asurgarh have thus conclusively established the fact known from the Buddhist writer Budhaghosa. Besides the punch marked coins a number of unfinished coins were found in this layer which indicate that there was probably a mint for fabrication of punch-marked coins found at Asurgarh. A dozen of bronze punch marked coins found at Asurgarh seem to be of considerable importance as such variety of copper and bronze punch marked coins are rarely found in Odisha.

In between the two excavated trenches, a third site was selected in the residential area for trial digging which brought to light a circular brick structure forty-feet in diameter, which was completely buried underground. The structure was probably a temple of the mother goddess as known from a small terracotta figure of a goddess and broken terracotta figures of different animals. Terracotta and silver ornaments and pieces of bluish
glass bangles as well as amulets and other articles for magic
cure were also recovered from the site. The circular brick temple
had probably wooden roof as indicated by grooves for wooden
pillars. The structural ruins and the antiquities unearthed from
this site have been assigned to 5th Century A.D. by Prof.
N.K. Sahu. 9

A copper plate inscription discovered at Terasinga near
Asurgarh reveals that a king named Shri Maharaja Tushtikara
ruled here during 5th – 6th century A.D. and the headquarters of
the king was at Tarabharamaraka which can be identified with
modern Talbhamra in the Tel river in Kalahandi. Maharaja
Tushtikara was a devotee of the goddess Stambheswari installed
at Parvatadwaraka. So to Prof. Sahu it appears that the worship of
this goddess was very popular in 5th – 6th Century A.D. in
Asurgarh region and the shrine brought to light in the residential
area of Asurgarh fort most probably belong to this deity suggests
Prof. Sahu. 10

In the second layer of the main excavation site various
antiquities assignable to the period from Cir. 1st to 4th Century
A.D. were recovered from this layer. In the upper phase, different
types of decorated potteries of indigenous fabric were found and
the most common ones were dull grey to grayish-black in colour.
An interesting mould for preparation of beads and ornaments was
also found along with heaps of precious stones and half-finished
or broken pieces of stone ornaments. It clearly indicates that,
there was a factory for stone ornaments which was thriving at Asurgarh during 3rd – 4th century A.D. Two pieces of chopping implements made up of polished stones in that layer were found which as Prof. Sahu suggests are supposed to be the tools of the Neolithic man.¹¹

The most important findings in the lower phase of this layer are, the red-glazed Kushan potteries, different types of black-polish potteries of thick fabric with concentric circles inside, high necked and high shouldered pink wares and pinkish wares with short handles, etc. The pottery types obtained from this layer have opened new fields for archaeological research.

In the upper phase of the 3rd layer Red and Black potsherds were found in abundance together with black-polished potteries of a finer texture. The blackwares were in profusion towards the lower phase. The soil of the lower phase was ashy and slightly sandy and in fact it was the fourth layer. Black-polished potteries of very fine fabric and of metallic texture, as well as postherds of terracotta colour of Ahichhatra type was found in this layer. Among other findings, a broken piece of Chunar sand-stone with Asokan polish is considered to be quite illuminating. Prof. Sahu assigned this finding along with fine black-polished potteries in the lower most layer of Asurgarh to Cir. 250 B.C.¹²

Thus, the Asurgarh excavation undertaken by Prof. Sahu brought to light various antiquities belonging from 3rd Century B.C. to the 5th Century A.D. The same type of cultural antiquities
was found in more or less elaborate manner in the excavation of Sisupalgarh near Bhubaneswar in 1948. Therefore, Prof. Sahu says: 13

The Asurgarh excavation is a complimentary to the excavation at Sisupalgarh and the results of both these excavations need to be correlated to bring out comprehensive data for the study of history and culture of Odisha.

The excavations undertaken at Asurgarh by Prof. Sahu amply indicate that the Atavika territory was not undeveloped during the days of Asoka and the people of that region were leading a civilized life characterized by well polished potteries of the Northern Black polished fabric. The similarity of some of the punch marked coins of Asurgarh with those found at Bijnor and Paila near Kausambi and the similarity of texture and fabric of some pottery types of Asurgarh with those found at Ahichhatra in Northern India of the Maurya rule. Asurgarh was no doubt an important political and commercial centre situated on the high road joining South Kosala and Mahakantara with Kalinga. During 4th Century A.D., the fort of Asurgarh seems to have belonging to King Vyaghraraja of Mahakantara who was defeated by Samudragupta in course of his South Indian campaign. Thereafter Maharaja Tushtikara ruled over the fort and he donated the Terasinga Copper plate grant. However, Prof. Sahu after excavation indicates that, the fort area was deserted after 5th – 6th Century A.D. and it may be said that King Tushtikara was
probably the last ruler of Asurgarh region known to history, because when the Chinese Pilgrim Yuan Chwang traveled through the area in course of his journey from Kalinganagar to Sripura he said nothing about Asurgarh fort. So it is evident that this area had lost its importance by 7th Century A.D. and in this context the findings of Prof. Sahu about Asurgarh seems to be true.¹⁴

Ganiapali

The excavation at Ganiapali was conducted by Prof. N.K. Sahu in 1978. Ganiapali is a village in Padmapur subdivision situated on the river Ang, six miles from Melchhamunda in Bargarh district. In course of the excavation about thirty rusted iron implements, carnelian beads and terracotta objects were found which indicate about the antiquities of the area. Besides, a large number of interesting microliths have been procured from various sites.¹⁵

Prof. Sahu started the excavation from northern side and discovered the Muchalinda, Buddha monastery covering an area of one and half acres. The monastery had a structural building on northern and southern sides of the main Chaitya hall and towards the north there is evidence of some dormitory like buildings and a number of small chambers towards south. The foundation wall of the monastery was quite massive measuring 2 ft. 10 inches in width containing 12 layers of well burnt bricks placed on strong earth mixed with small chips of stone and sand clay. The heavy foundation walls indicate that the entire structure was a multi-
storeyed building. The Central Chaitya Hall could not be excavated as on the ruins of it two colossal Buddha images in meditation posture with five hooded snake canopies over the heads are being worshipped in a small dilapidated shrine. Prof. Sahu mentioned that in the apsidal portion of the Hall, a colossal image of Buddha in Bhumisparsa mudra was originally installed flanked by the two images of Muchalinda Buddha. But the earth touching Buddha is now missing. As far as the name Muchalinda is concerned, Prof. Sahu thinks that it might have been derived from the name of the modern village Melchhamunda which is located about 10 Kms from the site.\textsuperscript{16}

It is known from the Chinese sources that the Satavahana king Satakarni constructed a multi-storeyed monastery called Parimalagiri for the philosopher Nagarjuna during 2\textsuperscript{nd} Century A.D., it was a five-storeyed structure with four big halls adorned with life size images of Buddha made of solid gold. Prof. Sahu says, the Muchalinda Vihara at Ganiapali was most probably built after the designs of the Parimalgiri Monastery. The date of Muchalinda monastery of Ganiapali can be ascertained from the sculptures and antiquities recovered from excavation site. The Muchalinda Buddha images were made up of bluish chlorite stone and its iconography suggests that it belonged to a period not later than 5\textsuperscript{th} Century A.D. as per the observation of Prof. N.K. Sahu. From its archaic design Prof. Sahu says it must belong to a period earlier than medieval era. Again from the earthen bowls and
postsherds recovered from the area proves that it belonged to 5th Century A.D.\textsuperscript{17}

Prof. Sahu says that the monastery excavated from Ganiapali is the earliest of its kind in Odisha and it speaks of a glorious Buddhist place that existed therein remote past. The Chinese Pilgrim Hiuen-Tsang did not mention about it and Prof. Sahu says, he may not have the scope to visit the monastery as he was moving towards south Kosala.\textsuperscript{18}

**Manamunda**

The archaeological excavation at Manamunda was undertaken by the Department of History, Sambalpur University in February 1981 under the leadership of Prof. N.K. Sahu in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology, Deccan College, Pune. It continued for three weeks and the staff and students of P.G. Department of History made a preliminary survey and collected varieties of pottery including some inferior variety of North-Black pottery from the surface. The work was undertaken under the supervision of S.C. Behera of Sambalpur University and Ashok Marathe of Pune University.\textsuperscript{19}

The site of Asurgarh at Manamunda is located near the confluence of the river Mahanadhi and Tel in the Phulbani district of Odisha and very close to Sonepur. Previously Sonepur was known as Suvarnapura during Somavamsi rule over South Kosala from 7th to 10th Century A.D. Somesvaradeva, a subordinate chief of the Somavamsi King Udyota Kesari, has been described
in a charter as ‘Paschimalankadhipati’. The Mahada Plates of Somesvaradevavarman of the same period also refer to the topography in the vicinity of Lanka (Lankavarttakasannidhau). All these indicate clearly that in the 11th Century A.D., a portion of South Kosala was known as Lanka. This myth of Lanka drew the Emeritus Professor of Decan College, Pune H.D. Sankalia to carry out excavation of Manamunda in Sonepur-Phulbani region. Initially, he thought that Ravana belonged most probably to the Gond tribe and his Lanka would have been somewhere in the Chhotnagpur plateau in east Madhya Pradesh in the vicinity of Jabalpur. But, the epigraphic references to Lanka in the inscriptions found at Sonepur drew him to Manamunda. So, under joint effort of Prof. S.K. Sahu, excavation continued at six places around that site. In course of excavations they found two sections of the ramparts of the fort each measuring 16.8 m x 12.45 m. The sections of fortifications indicate that extra-large bricks cemented with river slurry were used to make the walls strong. However some parts of the wall were broken and Prof. Sahu thinks, it must be due to frequent floods in the river Mahanadi.

The excavation team further discovered two cylindrical pillars separated from each other by 106 metres. The height of the first one is 8.3 metres and the inner diameter is 0.8 metre and outer diameter is 1.26 m. It was a confusing structure to identify. Prof. Sankalia thought it to be a soakpit as well excavated at Kolhapur in 1945, Nasik in 1952, Nevasa in 1954 and Maheswar.
in 1958. But, after clearing the inner space of the hollow pillar upto the bottom they found 6 earthen pots arranged systematically upon a layer of sand with huge deposit of charcoal. So they thought it might have been a *Havan* used for ritualistic sacrifice. They also found a piece of Northern Black pottery which was found during 1st century A.D. as were discovered near sisupalgarh. The second soakpit measures .81 m inner and 1.2 m outer diameter with deposit of human child skeleton inside.²¹

They also dug two trenches vertically and found some shreds of black grooved ware and black and red ware. The pottery can be attributed to 1st and 2nd century A.D. and according to Prof. Sahu it can be assigned to post-Gupta era. The Manamunda excavation proved that the site was at least 2000 years old and it was indicative of the time of Chedi rule in Kalinga. However nothing relating to the myth of Paschim Lanka was discovered so the purpose of Prof. Sankalia could not be proved. Prof. N.K. Sahu says it require more extensive excavation to bring to light the mystery of the area.

The untiring zeal of Prof. Sahu forced him to identify the epical Lanka with modern Sonepur (Suvarnapur). Although there was no unanimity among historians as to the identification of Lanka of the *Ramayan* age. Historians like S.N. Adhikari identified it in Indonesia, S.N. Mehta in Australia, V.H. Bader in Maladive, Harmone Jekobi in Assam and Ray Bahadur Hiralal in Jabalpur. H.D. Sankalia identified it in Amarkantaka while Dwaraka Prasad
Mishra in Andhra and Hiralal Shukla in the bank of river Godavari. But, Prof. Sahu ventured to prove the identity of Lanka in Sonepur which created a sensation throughout the country. He studied the Sonepur Copper Plate inscription of Somavamsi ruler Kumara Somesvara and Mahada Copper Plaste of Telugu Choda King Somesvaradeva Varman but ignoring all records he regarded Sonepur as the epical Lanka. Sonepur was called 'Paschim Lanka' as per the inscriptions of Monarchs but not the epical Lanka of Ravana.  

The boundary of Lanka cannot be limited to the Sonepur region because there are many places named as Lanka were found in Odisha and India. There is Lankagada in Kandhamal region, Aneka Lanka in Bastar region of Chhatisgarh and many more places in South India are known as Lanka and even a place in about 10,000 ft height in the Himalaya mountain is also known as Lanka. However, Prof. Sahu had his own vision on Lanka. He did not bother the criticism which came on his way. I.B. Kar rightly admires the courage of Prof. Sahu saying that he always gives his independent views on archaeological controversies. 

Maraguda Valley

Prof. Sahu as an advisor to the Department Archaeology, Government of Odisha undertook an excavation at Maraguda Valley near Khariar in Kalahandi district with the help of Jita Mitra Singh Deo, the crown prince of Khariar. During excavation he discovered the ruins of an ancient fort called Jumalgarh on the
bank of river Jonk in the shape of 'U'. A big tank called Raital Sagar was also identified and Prof. Sahu identified the fort Jumalgarh as 'Surabhapur', the capital of South Kosala.²⁵

He also discovered a Saktipitha called 'Maheswari Bhavada' which was inscribed in Brahmi. Prof. Sahu considered it a sacred institution of the Gupta age and attributed it to the Nala King Bhavadattavarman. Besides, he also found certain antiquities belonging to the Jaina faith, some iron clamps perhaps used during construction of Maraguda Valley and a royal clay seal of Maharaja Nannaraja of the Pandu dynasty. That seal was presented to Sambalpur University by Sri Bisahu Ram Yadav of Maraguda valley. A few other articles belonging to the Sarabhapuriyas like, Copper Plate Charters and seals are also discovered from the valley. Prof. Sahu also found certain images of lions, headless warriors riding a horse and several Hero stones which indicate the commemoration of the death of soldiers and performance of Sati rites.²⁶

**Trisul**

The archaeological excavation of the Trisul Mound in Kalahandi district was undertaken under the direction of Prof. N.K. Sahu²⁷ in the month of February, 1983. The Trisul mound on the west bank of river Jonk is so named after the Trisul darha of the river which is located very close to it. The mound is situated four kms down stream from Godhas. The mound consists
of five tiers hanging from a hill which is watered by a perennial spring which rises from the hill itself.

The excavation work started on 25\textsuperscript{th} June 1983 and the first two tiers were taken up for digging. A huge mass of debris had to be removed to trace the position of the backwall. After two days, the ruins of a temple were discovered. The very next day the sanctum (\textit{Garvagriha}) was dug out and a beautiful Saktipitha in the centre was brought to light. Prof. Sahu found two small stone pillars marking the gate of the sanctum and while exposing those pillars the circumbulation path round the Saktipitha could be traced.\textsuperscript{28}

Prof. Sahu detected a huge terracotta vessel just below the Saktipitha which was placed on a stone platform for collection of water which was being poured on the Sakti by the devotees. After clearing the third-floor Prof. Sahu and his team could discover another temple in that tier. On 30\textsuperscript{th} June, they were able to restore the presiding Goddess of the temple. It was the image of Durga having two arms, standing in Alidha attitude (archers' pose) on a lion. The head of the Goddess and that of the lion were found completely damaged.\textsuperscript{29}

During the excavation Prof. Sahu also found five small images in the porch of the first temple in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} floor of the mound and those were all female deities most probably Yogini images.
The first phase of excavation had to be stopped in view of incessant rain and flow of flood water in river Jonk. The second phase started from 20th July 1983 and Prof. Sahu and his team concentrated mainly at the two sites of the residential buildings to the north of the two temples in the 2nd and 3rd floors. In the process four residential rooms and a dormitory were brought out in the 2nd floor and five residential rooms were dug out in the 3rd floor. Those two building were most likely the residences of Acharyas, disciples and students. Two temples and residential buildings were discovered from that place.\textsuperscript{30}

Prof. Sahu before undertaking excavation of Trisul mound thought, it would have been a great hill castle, but after two days he came to know that it was a ruined temple. When the whole structure came to limelight, he found it was a gizanting monastery comprising of a place of workship, a residential place and a place of congregation as well. He found a Saktipitha in the first temple and a Simhavahini Durga in the second temple which gives indication that there was a Saiva monastery. The antiquisities which Prof. Sahu discovered indicate that it belonged to a period not later than 500 A.D. No Sikhara or Viman was found in either of the two temples but the terraced roof implied that those were built prior to 500 A.D. The Pradakshina Patha and the light sculptures of Goddesses discovered by them indicate their existence to earlier period. Before the excavation, it was presumed that the establishment belonged to the period of

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Sarabhapuriya rule but the antiquities discovered confirmed that the monastery belonged to a pre-Sarabhapuriya Saiva Monastery. Prof. Sahu says, the Sarabhapuriya kings being devout Vaisnavas, probably could not have patronized Saivism or Saktism in such a big scale.31

Prof. Sahu suggests that, this Saiva Monastery was founded by the Nalas who ruled in 5th Century A.D. over the Jonk Valley region with their Capital at Pushkari identified with modern Podagada in the Umarkot taluk of Koraput district. Most of the Nala Kings were great worshippers of Siva and they assumed the title of 'Paramamahesvara'. The Nala Kings who ruled in that region were Vrishadhvaja, Varaharaja, Bhavadatta Varman, Arthapati Raja and Skanda Varman and excepting Skanda Varman all others were patrons of Saivism and this Monastery and Trishul Mound was most probably built by Varaharaja. As a great ruler he issued varities of gold coins struck with figures of humped bull and crescent moon. His son Bhavadatta Varman was also a powerful king and defeated the Vakatakas and occupied their Capital Nandi Varadhana near modern Nagpur. So, Prof. N.K. Sahu confirms that the Saiva Monastery was built either by Varaharaja or by Bhavadatta Varman. But he prefers the former as the excavated site suggests that it was short lived and was destroyed by enemy kings before it suffered from natural decay.32
The Nala-Vakataka war was a protracted one and it took place over a vast area. As the Upper Jon Valley was the battle field for many years during the time of Arthapatiraja, who was defeated and killed by the Vakataka King Prithvisena, it was probably during this war that the Saiva monastery might have suffered destruction. Skanda Varman who was the younger brother of Arthapatiraja rescued the kingdom but as he was a Vaisnavite by faith he most probably did not pay much attention to restore the monastery to its earlier position which lied far off from his Capital Pushakri.

Prof. Sahu says that, in the ancient period in India monastic establishments were formed all over India and they either belonged to Buddhism or Jainism, but no monastic establishments of the Saivas in ancient India has been traced yet. The Trisul Vihara is therefore a unique Saiva monastery which was excavated by him and he says its structure appears to have been built on the pattern of Buddhist Viharas. It bears greater significance in the history of Indian Culture and throws light on the history of Odisha in the 5th Century A.D. These were the contribution of Prof. Sahu to the archaeology of Odisha.

Glimpses on Social Life

The social life of ancient Odisha has been well depicted by Prof. N.K. Sahu. In his book titled, *Odia Jatira Itihasa*, Part-I, he has thrown light on the social life of that period.

Caste System
Like other places in India, the Caste System also prevailed in ancient Odisha. Brahmanas occupied the highest position in the society. They were instrumental in imparting education and interpreting Dharmasastras. Among the Brahmanas, there were many Brahmacaris and Brahmacarinis. They preferred to spend their whole life in reading and teaching the Vedas. They were admired by the people in the society. Prof. Sahu refers to Tekkali Copper Plate Grant of the eastern Ganga ruler Devendravarman-I which states that Brahma Chari Pillasvami and Brahmacarini Pillikasvamini were granted Navatula village in the Karasada Panchali Visaya. The Brahmanas received land grants from the kings and engaged themselves for the spread of religious and cultural values inside the society.

The Kshatriyas occupied the next position after the Brahmanas in the society. They appointed Brahmins in many important administrative works such as, 'Mahasandhivigrahika', 'Amatya', 'Sarvadhikari', etc. However, other Kshatriyas were appointed as 'Visayapati', 'Durgapala', 'Mahasamanta', 'Mahattara', etc. The Kshatriyas were apt in Military education. They actively took part in work and also devoted their time for the welfare of their subjects. During that period, some kings of ancient Odisha were quite able to capture elephants and tame them. The elephant capturing scene on the temple wall of Laxmanesvara Temple is a pointer in this direction. Of course, the number of Kshatriyas inside the society was not more.
The Vaisyas were third in the ladder of the society. They worked many times as the Commander of the army. The Andhavaram Copper Plate\textsuperscript{37} of Ganga ruler Vijrahasta-II describes the glory of Bhima who was a Vaisya – ‘Dandanayaka’. Besides being appointed in different posts under the king, they also resorted to trade and commerce and helped in bringing prosperity to the country.

The position of the Sudras was the lowest in society. The butchers, meat sellers haunters, fishermen, etc. were regarded as the sudras. They were untouchables. They remained outside the cities and villages. In fact, their position was quite inferior in comparison to others in the society.\textsuperscript{38}

**Position of Women**

The position of women, as envisaged by Prof. Sahu, was high inside the society. Dowry system was perhaps prevalent inside the society. Prof. Sahu refers to the Parlakhemindi Copper Plate Grant\textsuperscript{39} of the Ganga King Ananta Varman – I which refers that at the time of his daughter’s marriage he donated Talathera village to Brahmana Visnusomacharya. Prof. Sahu admits that it can not be definitely spoken whether widow remarriage was prevalent in the society or not. However, a large number of Vikshunis and Brahmacharinis were seen inside the society. Women of royal family were pious and even donated villages as is apparent from the acts of Kalyani Devi,\textsuperscript{40} the Queen of Dharmaraja-II of the Sailodbhava dynasty and Achhipoti

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Bhasttarika, the wife Danarnava and the mother of Indravarman-III. The women, like all the ages were very fond of ornaments. They also took part in song and dance as is revealed from the images of dancing girls in temple walls. In every sense of the term, the women enjoyed high position inside the society.

Education

Prof. Sahu discusses the system of education prevalent in ancient Odisha. Brahmanism grew in Odisha. The Brahman villages were known as the 'Agraharas'. Prof. Sahu refers to Brihatprostha Copper Plate of Mathara King Umavarman which refers to the existence of 36 Agraharas in Kalinga. From the Sumandala Copper Plate Grant of Dharmaraja it is known that Upadhyaya Matasvami was a famous teacher who looked after the educational development of the Agraharas like Ardhaka, Manduka, Chandana, Vataka and Hombaka of Kalinga with his colleagues. During the rule of Duttas Mahamahattara Priyamitravsvami was a popular teacher. His associates like Chatumitravsvami, Dhruvamitravsvami, Batamitravsvami and Arungamitra-svami were also popular teachers during that period. The Vigrahas, Mudgalas, Duttas, Sailodbhavas and others also patronised the Brahmanas who brought development education in their kingdom. They took care of the princes of different kingdoms and taught them properly as is revealed from the Khurda Copper Plant grant of Madhavaraja-II. The Buddhists Philosophers, scholars and teachers imparted education in different viharas in
Odisha. In fact, the Agraharas and the Viharas were responsible for the spread of education in ancient Odisha.

**Economic Condition**

The economic condition of the people of ancient Odisha was fairly good people were largely dependent upon agriculture. The lands were demarcated after measurement and were granted to people. During that period big ponds were dug and water was supplied to agricultural lands through canals. As stated earlier, Kharavela had extended a canal to his Capital Kalinganagar in his 5th regnal year. Further, Prof. Sahu mentions about several ponds of Kalinga like, 'Raja tadaga', 'Gura tadaga', 'Kalinga tadaga', 'tungana tadaga', etc. Digging a pond was regarded as a virtuous work. Prof. Sahu refers to the Almonda Copper Plant Grant of Ganga king Ananta Varman which refers to the inauguration of a big pond on a solar eclipse day.

The people of Kalinga also depended on trade and commerce for earning their livelihood. The vaisyas were largely carrying on trade and commerce. The kings built roads and bridges for internal trade in their kingdom. They also built the 'Raja marga' (Highway) to establish trade relations with other countries. A famous road of this type in the 7th Century A.D. was named as 'Dharmaraja Kalinga Marga' which connected Kongoda with Kalinganagar and Viraja. This was probably named after Dharmaraja-II, the famous king of Kangoda. The Chinese Piligrim Yuan Chwang travelled from Karna Suvarna to Kalinganagara via
Viraja and Kongada. Many roads connected different kingdoms.\textsuperscript{49} Further ancient Odisha had maritime trade and cultural relations with countries like Burma, Ceylon, Siam, Cambodia, Champa, Java, etc.\textsuperscript{50}

**Kalinga's contact with outside world**

Kalinga had a rich maritime heritage in ancient period. Its proximity to the Bay of Bengal (*Mahodadhi*) and the adventurous nature of the Kalingans led to massive maritime activities in the past, Kalinga maintained its relations with Burma, Ceylon, Siam Cambodia, Champa, Java and other countries. Prof. Sahu has taken due care in analyzing Kalinga's cultural relation with outside world.

**Kalinga and Burma**

Burma as a neighbouring country of India established friendly relationship with Kalinga since remote past. Prof. Sahu gives an account of Kalinga's maritime trade relation with Burma in the past. It is known from the folktales collected by Lt.Colonel A.P.Phyre of Burma that a large number of people from Kaling had established colonies in Burma.\textsuperscript{51} The same fact is corroborated by Gerini after going through Ptolemy's *Geography*. The Buddhist works like the *Mahajanaka Jatakas* and the epic *Mahakarma Bibhanga*\textsuperscript{52} provide enough evidence of close trade relationship between the people of the two regions. Kautilya in his *Arthasastra* and the Buddhist *Mahaniddesa* give enough evidence of it. Traders and merchants regularly sailed over the sea route and
brought enormous wealth, gold and essence from the Burmese mainland. The fact is further proved from a dilapidated ship discovered from sea in the coast of Rangoon called Tunte.\textsuperscript{53}

Prof. Sahu gives an account how during the reign of Asoka in about 250 B.C. he sent two Buddhist scholars named Sona and Uttara for propagating Buddhism in Burma. The Buddhists scholars over the years from the days of Asoka to Buddhaghosha had gone to Burma and spread Buddhism there. The popularity of Buddhism in Burma and the foundation of Buddhist Sanghas in that land gives sufficient proof of it. Besides Buddhism, Saivism and Vaisnavism had its sway in Burma. The three idols of Lord Visnu discovered from Thaton in Burma clarifies the religious interdependence between the two nations.\textsuperscript{54}

**Kalinga and Ceylon**

The Hathi gumpha inscription of Kharavel indicates that Ceylon as a political entity had been in existence since 13\textsuperscript{th} Century B.C. The *Mahavamsa*\textsuperscript{55} states that in the year 487 B.C., Vijaya, the Prince of Bengal went to Ceylon with his followers and established political hegemony there. He named this country in the name of his grandfather Simhabahu, who was in fact the founder of the capital city of Kalinga Simhapura. During Asoka's reign, the emperor had sent his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra along with eight Buddhist families to Ceylon for the propagation of Buddhism.\textsuperscript{56}
Kalinga and Ceylon since the days of Asoka have established relationship in the field of art, culture, religion and trade. There were evidences of maritime relationship between the two countries. During 3rd Century A.D. King Guhasiva of Kalinga and King Mahasena of Ceylon established friendship as is known from the Dathavamsa.53 Guhasiva gave her daughter Hemamala in marriage to Dantakumar of Ceylon and Prof. Sahu further says that, Guhasiva in order to ensure safety to the tooth relics of Buddha sent it to Ceylon with his son-in-law and they sailed from the Tamralipti Port for Ceylon.58 The Chinese Piligrim Fa-hien also said in his book that there was regular sea voyage in between Che-li-ta-lo, Pallur and Tamralipti for trade and commerce. Prof. N.K. Sahu also draws our attention to the fact that during 5th Century A.D. there was cooperation between Ceylon and Kalinga in the field of art and architecture. The sculpture of Sitavinjhi had its similarity with that of Sigiria of Ceylon.

The influence of Mahayana Buddhism in Ceylon and its popularity gives enough evidence of religious and cultural ties between the two coastal nations in the age old past. The Chulavamsa59 speaks of marital relationship between King Vijayabahu of Ceylon with Tilakasundari the Princess of Kalinga in 11th Century A.D. Thus, Prof. Sahu states that it can be safely presumed that Kalinga and Ceylon were involved with close relationship in the ancient period.
Kalinga and Siam

Prof. Sahu tries to establish the relation between Kalinga and Siam (Thailand). The excavation conducted at Ban-Chienga brings to limelight the existence of an old civilization which resembles with ancient civilization of India. Yuan Chwang, describes that the kingdom of Dwaravati extended from Srikshetra (Burma) in the west upto Ishanpur (Cambodia) to the east. Although it is not definitely known who had developed Indian civilization at Siam, K.N.Sastri opines that they belong to the coastal area of the easter region of India. Taking that view into consideration Prof. Sahu considers that, the people of Siam had kept their cultural relations with Odisha, on the one hand and Ceylon on the other.

Kalinga and Cambodia

A close cultural relation between Kalinga and Cambodia has been discerned by Prof. Sahu. The Chinese called a part of Cambodia as Fu-nan. The kings of Fu-nan state that their dynasty took birth with the combination of Somasvasmi Kaundinya and Nag. He further states that the succeeding generation of Kaundinya worshipped Mahesvara of Motan Mountain and Gokarnesvara respectively associated with ancient Odisha. From one inscription found from Cambodia it is known that king Gunavarma had built the temple of Chakratirthasvami Visnu. Prof. Sahu says that Chakratirtha was Puri and its 'Svami' was
Purusottam (Jagannath). In this way he tries to establish relationship between Kalinga and Cambodia.

Kalinga and Champa

Prof. N.K. Sahu refers to an area named Annam of the present Vietnam which was the Kingdom ancient Champa. The capital of this kingdom was known as Simhapura which was also the capital of Kalinga at a time. The Jaina Uttaradhyayana Sutra states Kalinga had its trade relation with Champa. The people of Champa came to the Port of Pithunda in Kalinga which was a famous centre of Jainism. In 7th – 8th Century A.D., Saktism prevailed in Champa and the presiding deity of Puo city was known as Bhagabati which has been identified with Goddess of the same name at present worshipped at Banapur.65

Kalinga and Java

Ancient Odisha had its relations with Java. Taking the discussion of the ‘Kiskindhakanda’ of Ramayana and description of Ptolemy Prof. Sahu states that Javadvipa denoted Java and Sumatra. From the folktale prevailed in Java it is known that 20 thousand families came from Kalinga and established a colony at Java.66 In 3rd Century B.C., Emperor Asoka had sent Sona and Uttara to spread Buddhism in Java. After them Dantakumar, the Prince of Dantapura had established a colony at Ligor. In 7th Century A.D. the ruler of Tang dynasty
of China established a kingdom at Java. It was named as 'Ho-Ling' (Kalinga) which states that there was a cultural relation between Kaling and Java. In the 8th Century A.D. the Sailendras came to Sumatra and established a kingdom there. Prof. Sahu states that the Sailendras were the Sailodbhavas of Kangoda.67

Kalinga and Rome

Kalinga had maritime relation with Rome. Prof. Sahu draws the attention of Scholars to the excavation of Sisupalgarh near Bhubaneswar which took place in 1948. The potteries discovered from Sisupalgarh resemble with those discovered at Rome.68 He further states that this maritime trade with Rome was possible due to the existence of many ports like, Pithunda, Palur, Tamralipti, etc. in Coastal Kalinga.69 Prof. Sahu refers to the coins of Roman emperor Constantine and Gardiyen discovered from Vamanaghati in Odisha.70 Madras Museum preserves many Roman coins which affirm the trade relations of Rome with the eastern coast of India. Prof. N.K. Sahu thinks that since ancient Odisha had many ports in her eastern coast, there is every possibility of a trade relation between Odisha and Rome.71

From the above discussion, it is apparent that Prof. Sahu was a genius to handle variety of sources and to contribute to any field of history writing. As an eminent archaeologist, he had conducted excavations in Western Odisha and was markedly
successful in his mission. He has also tried to throw welcome light on the socio-economic condition of Odisha during that remote phase of history which is, in fact, difficult to comprehend. By discussing Kalinga's maritime and cultural contacts with outside world he has tried to prove the adventurous spirit of the ancient Kalings. His contribution to various facets of history and culture of Odisha is, in fact, noteworthy.

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32. Ibid.
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34. Ibid.
36. See Fig.30.
38. For more detail see, N.K.Sahu, pp.313-14.
42. For detail see, N.K.Sahu, op.cit., 314-319.
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46. See, *Supra*, Ch.III, Discussion on Buddhists Scholars and Teachers.
47. See supa, Ch.II, Discussion on the achievement of Kharavela in his 5th regnal year.
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