To determine the antiquity of Jagannatha is a difficult task. Legend and tradition throw some light on the problem, but a critical examination of the evidences furnished by them is essential before any reasonable hypothesis can be made on their basis. It is now necessary to turn to Sanskrit texts both Vedic and Pauranic for this.

In the Rgveda we find a reference to Daru in the Sukta which runs thus "Ado yaddaruvā plavate sindhoh pāre āpūruṣam, tadā rabhasva durhano tena gaccha para staram". Sāyanācārya, who lived in 13-14th century A.D. interpreted this sukta in the following manner. 'It means that there exists on sea-shore in a far off place the image of deity of the name Purusottama which is made of wood floating as it were, in the sea. O ye, by worshipping that wood the indestructable attain the supreme place of the Vaiṣṇavite.'

But after his own interpretation he casually mentions another interpretation which was prevalent at that time, but which was perhaps considered by him as unsatisfactory

The second interpretation means that the evil spirit is asked to use the Daru (wood) as boat for crossing the sea and going over to the far off island. This verse also occurs in the Atharva Veda with slight variation. It is difficult to treat this repetition of the same verse in the two Vedas as unmeaning. This may lead some to suppose that the worship of the deity Purusottama or Darurahma might have been in vogue even in the remote past; but the supposition on the basis of this single verse of cryptic nature may not be universally accepted.
M. M. P. V. Kane does not accept Sayana's interpretation. He is of opinion that the second interpretation fits more with the context. He, however, was not aware of the Atharva Veda extract, when he wrote this. An acquaintance with the latter might have led him to accept Sayana's interpretation.

At the time of Sayana the popularity of Dārubrahma conception in Utkal was great, and the wooden image of Purusottama had singularly attracted the attention of Vedic and other scholars in India. This might have influenced him to suggest this explanation.

According to Sayana there are three sūktas in the Rgveda which suggest that Dāru was regarded as the symbol of Brahman. The immutable aspect of Brahman as different from the mutable aspect, is compared with a tree containing many branches which in its aspect of unity is the Absolute, motionless and eternal one (Vrksa eva divitiṣṭhīysaka). In these sūktas the seer enquires what can be that tree and what can be that forest in which it stands out and out of which the earth and heaven came to be designed by the Gods. Sayana after reading three sūktas together makes a very significant suggestion at the end. That the tree, which is most ancient and imperishable, is Brahman himself. On the basis of this conception of Sayana, Brahman can be symbolised as a tree and the pranava is the symbol of Brahman. The four matras of Pranava may correspond to the four pādas of Brahman, and the four forms were carved (not five)(or three) to translate Brahman worship into pranava worship. This pranava worship later on took the tāntric form and subsequently the pauranic form and in this way worship of Dāru Brahman and Pranava has been transformed into the worship of Balabhadra, Subhadra, Jagannātha and Sudarsana.
All this must be understood as the basic tradition of Jagannātha worship as current in the modern times. There is little wonder therefore that the trees which are very ancient, very large in dimension came to be venerated by people as divinities. Even today in rural India trees such as Banyan, Vīlva etc. are worshipped as Gods. There seems to have been therefore very ancient communion between Dāru and God. There is also evidence of Dāru worship in the Bhagavat Gītā.

It may tempt some one to trace the beginning of the worship of the Dāru-Brahma so vividly present in the worship of Purusottama-Jagannātha at Puri to the vedic concept as interpreted by Sāyana. It is a fact that the priests of the Puri temple in the daily worship of the composite deity do emphasise this supposed vedic connection in modern times.

When we come to the age of Upanishads we find some reference to the description of Puruṣa as the creator of the universe. The Dāru Upāśana was moulded gradually into image or Puruṣa upaśana. Various conceptions of Puruṣa as described in them are the special features of the 10 Upanishads. The Śvetāsvatara Upanishād and the Kaivalya 11 Upanishād describe Puruṣa as one, who possesses neither eyes nor hands nor legs, who has no ages, but sees everything, no ears but hears all and who though unknowable knows everything. This description of Puruṣa serves as the basis of the peculiar form of Purusottama and his associates.

Vālmiki mentions Jagannātha in the Uttarakānda of the Rāmāyana, wherein Rāma is described as exhorting Vibhīṣāna to devote himself to the worship of Jagannātha,
the family deity of the Iksâvâku Vaṃsa. It is astonishing
that there is actually a ritual, even today in the temple
of Lord Jagannâtha called Vibhīsana Bandânsa. Scholars,
however, are of opinion that the Uttarakânda of the Râmâyana
is a composition of much later date and that there have been
lost of interpolations in the text. But there are references
to the names of the deities in the Kiskindhâkânda which may
not be regarded as a later insertion. The monkey lord
Sugrîva sends four groups of searchers in four directions to
find Sitâ devî. One of these groups is ordered to proceed to
the eastern directions upto the Meru-mountain. Sugrîva
gives a graphic description of the famous places which may
serve as milestones to the searchers. Vinâyak Mishra finds
mention in the epic the description of various sites and
shrines of the Puri temple as well as the several deities
worshipped there. But the passages (Râmâyana IV, 40, 42-61)
do not expressly justify this assumption because the names
of Ananta (Balahhadra?), Purusottama, Sudarsana (here named
as an island) and the Vedi (Ratnavedi?) are mentioned.

Tradition has associated the worship of the deity
Purusottama with the name of Indradyumna. In the Mahâbhârata
we find mention of a legendary king named Indradyumna (III
198-99). The king has been described there as one who performed a
thousand sacrifices. It is said there that the cows brought
for the sacrifice made a pond with their hooves which was
named after the king. The epic story of Indradyumna and the
tank named after him, appear to have helped to develop the
traditional association of king Indradyumna and Indradyumna
Sarovara with Purusottama Jagannâtha. In the Mahâbhârata
(III, 114/ 22ff) we find mention of Vedi which is identified by some with Antarvedi where Lord Jagannatha is enshrined. Manmohan Ganguli and other scholars like Pandit Sadasiva Mishra were inclined to believe that this Vedi of the Mahabharata is the same as the Antarvedi mentioned in the Skanda Purana which was the place of worship of Lord Jagannatha. There is another reference to Vedi in the Taitteriya Samhita (II 6,4,3) which runs thus: "Iyam Vedih Paro antah prithivyah ayam yajno bhuvanshya nayih. Prithivyah pradhanaatyah bhumyaha paroantah paramanta parayavasam iyam vedih nahi vedyatirakta yumirasti". It means that this altar is the end and the last point of the Goddess Earth: this is the important part or the personification of the sacrifice - yajna. This is the naval portion of the centre of the Earth. There is no earth beyond this vedih. One will be very much tempted to identify this vedih of the Upanishad with the Ratnavedi of Jagannath to establish the antiquity of the temple and the place, but it is very difficult to connect this vedih and the vedih mentioned in the Mahabharata with the Ratnavedi of Lord Jagannatha for want of sufficient materials.

It is now relevant to mention here the meanings of the word Antarvedi as given in the Visnudharmottara Purana (Ch.I, p.3). It refers to the place where the worshipping of God at the time of sacrifice is made. (Yajnesu devayajanam-antarvedi prakirtitah.) Although, there seems to be no historical basis for identifying 'vedi' of the Mahabharata with the place of worship of Lord Jagannatha, it is probable that the Skanda Purana referred to 'Antarvedi' on the basis of the tradition that the temple of Jagannatha had been
constructed after performance of sacrifice by Indradyumna. We, however, find a reference in the Santi Parva of the Mahabharata regarding the religion of Jagannatha which reads thus -

"Naradana tu sampraptah sarahasyah sasamgrahah
Esodharmo Jagannathat narayanat narpa!
Evameva mahan dharmah sate purva-nrpotama
Kathito harigitasau samasa-vedhi kalpitah"

Pandit Nilakantha Das while interpreting the verses is inclined to connect the Narayaniya story and the religion with the Jagannatha cult. According to him "Narada and Narayana story was propounded just in the pauranic way, and it is said in the same Narayaniya story itself that this religion was obtained in revelation from Jagannatha who is Narayana in person. This was revealed to Narada with all its mysteries and practices. It is further said that it is the religion (Dharma) that had been narrated briefly and systematically in the Hari Gita in the Bhagavat Gita. The name Jagannatha was there in the Kalinga coast from the Vedic times along with the name of Purusottama. The reference to this Jagannatha, as I have said is distinctly made in Narayaniya story time after time to indicate the supreme God." The above view of the scholar can not be easily treated as sufficient evidence for the existence of the cult of Jagannatha even in the Mahabharat period but these references give sufficient clue which throws much light on the antiquity of Jagannatha.

We may now turn to references about Purusottama Ksetra and Jagannatha in the Puranas. The Matsya Purana, which is considered as one of the oldest of the Puranas, mentions the Purusottama Ksetra in two places. But it
contains no reference to the deity Jagannātha or the king Indradyumna. It mentions only the deity Vimalā in Puruṣottama Ksetra. Among the later Purāṇas, namely Viṣṇu, Agni, Padma, Nārada, Brahma and Skanda, we get more references to Jagannātha, the deity and the place of His installation. But it is only in the Agni, Padma, Brahma and the Skanda Purāṇas that there occur passages about the sanctity of the place, construction of the temple and the part played by Indradyumna.

The Agni Purāṇa (in its chapter on the enshrinement of Sudarṣanacakra etc. (Ch. 63), appears to mention the figures of Viṣṇu, Balabhadra and Bhadrā (Subhadrā) along with those of Sudarsana (cakra), Pāneajanya (sankha), Śrī, Puṣṭi, and others. The Nilādri Mahodava enumerates the seven-fold images of Puruṣottama Jagannātha as Śrī, (Puṣṭi?), Bhū, Mādhava, Cakra, Bhadrā, Cakrī, Abanibhṛt (Ananta-Balabhadra)/Subhadrā, and the close coincidence between these two texts seems to indicate that the Purānic author has in his mind the installation of the images of the Puri temple when he writes this.

The story as given in the Padma Purāṇa in connection with the sanctity of the place of worship of Puruṣottama and the magnitude of his glory may now be noted. References to Lord Puruṣottama at the Nilagiri are made in the Patālakhaṇḍa of Padma Purāṇa without any allusion to the story of Indradyumna. The account in the Padma Purāṇa runs thus -

Satrughana who kept guard on the sacrificial horse of Rāma Chandra came to Nilagiri which was situated at the Puruṣottama Ksetra. This place was beyond the confluence of Gangesāgara. Satrughana was told by one Sumati that Lord Puruṣottama was being worshipped at the Nilagiri. Sumati added - one day a Brahmin who came there on a pilgrimage found
all the beings with four hands and asked for the reason. The villagers present narrated a story — one day a boy named Prthuka ascended the hill-top and observed a wonderful temple. He entered into it and found the four-armed Hari holding the Conch, the discus, the club and the lotus in his four hands. The offerings made by the gods were scattered all around. As soon as Prthuka picked up a little grain he became four-armed. The other villagers followed him and became four-armed too. Hearing this the Brahmin bathed in the confluence of Gahgasagara and visited Lord Purusottama at Nilagiri. He too became four-armed. This Brahmin was seen by Ratnagriya, the pious king of Kanchi, first in dream and then in his court. Enquiry about his four arms led the Brahmin to narrate to Ratnagriya the story of the greatness of Purusottama as he had heard it from the Sabaras.

Ratnagriya was inspired and set out with his forces on a pilgrimage to Nilagiri. To his despair, the Nilagiri was not visible when Ratnagriya looked at it after a bath in the Gaagiasagara confluence. In deep regret the king kept on meditating upon Hari who appeared after five days in the guise of a monk. The king fell prostrate at the feet of the monk who graciously declared that the four-armed blue Lord would be visible the following day at noon. The king waited patiently till he had the sight of Lord Purusottama on the Blue Mountain. He then made his way to Vaikuntha.

The Brahma Purana mentions the tradition of Jagannatha in the following way. King Indradyumna arrived at Purusottama Ksetra and made the three images of Samkarsana, Subhadra and Jagannatha, which were installed in the shrine built by him. It is important to note that the Brahma Purana,
for the first time gives the number of the deities and their respective names; it also uses the term 'Puruṣeṣa' or 'Puruṣottama' to indicate the dāru (wood) that came floating on the sea and was dreamt of by king Indradyumna. It should be noted also that the names "Nilamādhava", "Sanātana", 'Vaṭa Rāja' are also mentioned in the course of this story. The anecdote of Indradyumna as narrated here is almost identical with that in the Narada Purāṇa. The material furnished by the Skanda Purāṇa however needs more elaborate discussion. In its Utkal Khanda we get the following story.

At the time of the Varāha incarnation of the Visṇu, Brahmā enquired of Visṇu of the means of attainment for the salvation of all beings. Visṇu replied - 'He himself is being worshipped as Nilamādhava in the Blue Mountain of the holy Puruṣottama Pīṭha. The highest form of salvation on earth is to be obtained by a visit to this god. But this frightened Yama, the god of death, in the apprehension that he would then lose his importance. To assure him of his position, Visṇu declared that he would be invisible after some days from that place. The story goes further in this manner: The Rohini Kunda was situated a mile west of the desire-yielding tree on the 'Blue Mountain'. To the north of the Rohini Kunda was the shrine of Nilamādhava who was being worshipped by a Saṭhara. By that time nobody knew about the sanctity of that holy place. Only the Devas used to worship Lord Nilamādhava every day. Indradyumna, the king of solar-dynasty, standing fifth in line of succession to Brahmā, was reigning in the kingdom of Avanti in the
Satya-yuga. He was very wise, learned and a Vaishnava too.

One day he called a council of the learned people and enquired of them the place of Lord Visnu. A sanyasin replied that Lord Visnu himself was visible in perfect form as Purusottama at the 'Blue Mountain' of the country of Odra. Emancipation of body and soul was possible through realisation of this form. At this Indradyumna sent Vidyapati, the brother of his family priest, as a messenger to the country of Utkala. Coming there, Vidyapati took refuge in a Satara village, west of the 'Blue Mountain'. There he befriended with the Satara chief Visvavasu. Vidyapati requested him to be kind enough to make arrangements for a sight of the Lord Nilamadhava. He told him that Indradyumna, his sovereign Lord would be fasting until he returns. The Satara chief, out of compassion for the king, took Vidyapati through a narrow track and showed him the shrine of Nilamadhava. Vidyapati went back to the country of Avanti. In the meanwhile Lord Visnu, in order to fulfill the pledge which he gave to Yamaraja, made the shrine of Nilamadhava invisible in a heap of sand. The king had by that time, set out for Utkala with his forces accompanied with Narada. No sooner had he reached its boundary than the king of the country communicated to him the sad news of the disappearance of Nilamadhava. At this news, Indradyumna felt very much aggrieved. Narada, however, assured him that the Lord would appear in the form of Dāru (wood). The king thus got some consolation and went to Nilagiri for the performance of horse-sacrifice. On the closing day of the horse sacrifice, the Lord Nilamadhava made himself visible to Indradyumna in a dream, and the attendants of the king at the time of
his bath told him the news of a Dāru with four branches floating on the sea. Then the king brought it and placed it on the Mahāvedī with supreme care and ceremony.

At the time of discussion with Nārada about the construction of the shrine a voice from the air announced, 'The Lord himself will construct his own image, and thereafter will appear on the Mahāvedī. The Mahāvedī will be secretly covered for fifteen days. The old carpenter standing with his instruments will get himself confined inside with its doors shut. Nobody will approach him until the work of construction is over. Even the sound of work is forbidden to all'. Thereafter, various musical instruments started playing and the work was duly accomplished in conformity with the aerial message. At the end of 15 days, the images of four deities, Balabhadra, Subhadra, Jagannātha and Sudarśana became manifest on the Mahāvedī. Again the aerial voice declared, 'O, king, dress these four deities with silken garments and adorn them with their own colours. Then construct a temple of one thousand cubits high on the 'Blue Mountain' and establish the images there with due propriety'. Then the king worshipped the Lord Jagannātha, Balabhadra, the goddess Subhadra after muttering 'Aṣṭāksara(Mantra) 'Puruṣa Sūkta' and 'Devi Sūkta' respectively. He made abundant offerings according to Tūṣā Puruṣa measure and innumerable cattle. The strokes of the hooves of the cattle created a big hollow there. It was converted into a tank filled with the conch-water at the time of donation. Afterwards, it was known as 'Indradyumna-tank' (Cf. the Mahābhārata story mentioned above).

Indradyumna then made up his mind to begin the work
of temple-building. Before the temple was finally built, he according to Nārada's advice, went to Brahmaloka to invite Brahmā for the consecration of the shrine according to ceremonial rites. There was some delay in Brahmā's coming to consecrate the shrine, and another king of Utkala Gālāmādhava by name, claimed in the meantime, the shrine as his own. Brahmā intervened and had the temple restored to its original builder. It is evident from this elaborate description that the Skanda Purāṇa attempted a co-ordination of the various anecdotes of the Mahābhārata and the other Purāṇas.

In presenting this story of Lord Purusottama, the Skanda Purāṇa introduces certain novel features. Now when the Padma Purāṇa refers to Purusottama as worshipped by the Bhils, the Skanda Purāṇa presents Purusottama as the 'Śatara Devatā' or the deity devoutly worshipped by the Śataras under the leadership of Viśvāvasu. It introduces the term Mahāvedi-Antaryādi in the place of 'Vedi' of the Mahābhārata. It also introduces the conception of 'Chaturdhā Mūrti' (four images) by narrating the process of installation on the Mahāvedi of four deities in the temple of Puri. The idea of worshipping the three deities of Balabhadrā, Subhadrā and Jagannātha each with a separate mantra or hymn occurs for the first time in the Skanda Purāṇa. The specification of the colour and dress of the three deities is also another notable feature. Finally, the description of each deity as given here also deserves careful consideration.

When we turn to other Sanskrit texts we find references of Purusottama Dharma and the deities of Purusottama, Subhadrā and Balabhadrā in Bṛhaspatvasūtram, Kanilsamhita, Tīrthakṣiantāmani, Ksetramahātmya, Nilādri Mahodava, Purusottama Candrika, Rudrayamala, Tantrayamala, Purusottama
Tatva, Saubhāgya Mañjusā etc. Excepting Niladri Mahodava all these works describe Purusottama more or less in the same manner as does the author of the Skanda Purāṇa. These works therefore, add nothing more substantial than the story of Purusottama as presented in this Purāṇa.

In the Niladri Mahodava, however, we get a detailed account of rituals and festivals associated with the worship of Purusottama Jagannātha. After the story of the temple construction in the Skanda Purāṇa mention is made of the advent of 'Saptadhi Mūrti' or the seven images after 14 days since the beginning of the construction of the temple. These seven images are Purusottama -Jagannātha, Balabhadra, Subhadrā, Sudarśana, Madhava, Sridevi and Bhūdevi. The latter three are additions to the company of the four main deities already mentioned in the Skanda Purāṇa. The intention of the author of the Niladri Mahodava was perhaps to make the Purusottama Pīṭha known as the Saptāvarana Pīṭha in order to bring it in accordance with the Vaikuntha Dharma as Saptāvarana in the Tāpinis (vide Mukticintāmani and Purusottama Tāpinī, Ch.II, p.57).

The author of Niladri Mahodava furnishes us with interesting details regarding the respective colour and pose of the deities which we do not find in the earlier texts. While giving the iconographic features of the images of Sri Jagannātha and others, the main image is described as Skyblue in colour, and with eyes round like lotus-leaf. Unlike the description given in the Skanda Purāṇa, this text endows Jagannātha and Balabhadra with two arms (the other two being concealed). Balabhadra is referred to as
suntanāda or with the feet concealed and with a head covered by the sevenhooded serpent; his colour is said to be as white as the Kūnda flower or the moon or the conch, and he is also said to possess lotus-like eyes. Subhadrā is said to have hands stretched down and a body of yellow colour. Sudarśana is described as pillar-shaped and jītendra or the one who has mastered the senses. The rest of the other images are described as very small figures with usual attributes.

No account of the tradition associated with Jagannātha can be regarded as complete without the consideration of various literary works in Oriya which will be noticed here. The earliest work of importance of this nature is the Mahābhārata of Saralā Daśa, written probably in the fifteenth century during the reign of king Kapilendra Deva. Saralā Daśa appears to ascribe the origin of the worship of Jagannātha to that of Mādhava or Nilamādhava, also named Sātaraṇārayana by the Sātara community of bygone days. The story begins with Vasu Sabara, (Viśvāvasu) the son of Jara Sābara who used to worship secretly the stone image of the traditional god of his community—Mādhava. The practice of secret worship is ascribed to the command of the deity Mādhava himself; the god wanted to be worshipped secretly because of the Kaliyuga, and had threatened Vasu to annihilate his community if he divulged the secret to anybody. Saralā Daśa next proceeds to introduce in the story another character, Gālamādhava, the king of Kāñcī. One day, the Brahmin family-priest of the king, also named 'Vasu', related to Gālamādhava the secret worship of Nilamādhava in the Sātarapāli. Gālamādhava sent his priest Vasu to find Nilamādhava. Vasu made friends with
Vasu Sahara, and was taken blind-folded to the spot where the deity was being worshipped. While he was being led to the deity, he had skilfully managed to drop grains along the way so that he could himself reach his place afterwards. After hearing from the priest Vasu the secret of Nilamadhava, Galamadhava set out on an expedition to the Sabarapalli to take possession of the deity. But to his misfortune the deity had disappeared. The God Nilamadhava reassured Jara (Vasu-Sabara's father) that he would incarnate himself as Buddha in Nilagiri. Galamadhava was enraged at the disappearance of the deity from the spot and attacked the Sataras with a view to extracting from them the information regarding the whereabouts of the deity. A fierce fight ensued and all but one Sahara, were killed. The surviving Sahara cursed the king that his entire family would be extinct, as he was responsible for the destruction of the Satara community. When Galamadhava was fighting with the last Sahara he heard a voice from air asking him to desist from fighting with him as he was a great devotee of the Lord. Here ends the story of Galamadhava; Indradyumna is then introduced to carry the story further.

Indradyunma was a devotee of Visnu and was inspired by what he had heard from Jara regarding the worship of Krisha. After offering prayers to YamesvaraMahadeva at Puri, he completed the construction of a temple and was anxious about the deity whose image would be installed there. Indradyumna developed friendship with Jara who told him about the presence of the half-burnt body of Sri Krishna at the Rohini Kunda. Krishna was killed by Jara's arrow, and when his body was being consumed in fire, a heavenly voice ordered the latter to throw the half-burnt body into the
This partly-burnt body of Krsna floated down to Rohini Kunda in the shape of a dāru. When Indradyumna's efforts to take the dāru away from Rohini Kunda failed, he was advised by Sṛkṛṣṇa in a dream to send for Jārā Sabara and Vasu brahmin to lift the "Mahameru-like dāru" which is not a 'mere piece' of wood but the Pinda or the very body of Sṛkṛṣṇa himself. Indradyumna followed these instructions and employed the services of Jārā and Vāsu who were able to lift the dāru. What is striking here is the failure of the thousands of Indradyumna's men to remove the dāru and the miraculous success of the joint endeavour of two persons - belonging to two different cultures namely the non-Aryan and the Aryan.

But Indradyumna was at a loss as to how the images could be made out of the dāru. So he again sought divine grace. The Lord appeared in a dream and asked him to request Jārā to make the images. In compliance with Indradyumna's request Jārā entered the temple and was joined by a queer-looking Brahmin. Both constructed, out of the dāru, three images of three different heights - the tallest, the medium-sized and the smallest. When the sound of the implements used in the making of the images was no longer being heard, Indradyumna became impatient and dashed inside the temple. In the flash of the lamp Indradyumna saw three images on the altar bearing three different colours - white, yellow and black.

Indradyumna enquired of the Brahmin companion of Jārā about the identity of the images. The Brahmin said that the white image was that of Īśva, the yellow one embodied Brahma, and the black image was no other than Lord Viṣṇu Himself. Saralā Dās interprets these images as the symbols...
of Triguna – namely, Satva, Rajas and Tamas. According to his story Brahma stood for Subhadra, and this female form of the god was due to a previous curse. Indradyumna was favoured with the particulars of the mode of worship of the three images. It is also said by Sāralā Dās that Jārā’s descendants would be known as Daitas, and those of Vasu as the Brahmin priests; both the groups are now associated with the Jagannātha worship in the temple.

The Deula Tola of Nilāmbara Dās offers a slightly different account of the three images. He starts straight with king Indradyumna of Malava who sent Vidyāpati to find the image of Nīlamadhava. Vidyāpati took the help of Lalita, the daughter of Viśvāvasu, the Savara chief and found the deity. Indradyumna, on hearing from him, started on a military expedition to Orissa and met Viśvāvasu at Bānki in the district of Cuttack. Both became friends. Nīlamadhava disappeared but was pleased to appear in a dream to Indradyumna, who had kept on fasting for twenty-one days. He exhorted him to get the daru of Nīlamadhava floating on the sea and install the images to be constructed by Viśvā-Karma himself. He further commanded not to open the doors of the temple till the completion of the work by Viśvakarma. But the doors were thrown open before time at the impatience of his queen Sūndichā. This rash act is considered to be the cause for the half-finished images of the three deities – Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannātha.

The story of the construction of the temple and the installation of the images of the three deities is given in much detail in the Deula Tola by Śīśukṛṣṇa Dās. The pattern of the story is more or less similar to the above. The difference lies in the introduction of some interesting
anecdotes to emphasize the intensity of the desire of Indradyumna to get the clue for finding the image of Nīlamādhava. Out of the four messengers sent by Indradyumna to different directions only Vidyāpati succeeded, by marrying Lalitā, the daughter of Visvāvasu, in getting the secret about Nīlamādhava. Here Nīlamādhava is represented as expressing His desire to come to Nilagiri and get there worshipped as Dāru Brahma. Indradyumna, who constructed the temple to fulfill the desire of Nīlamādhava, approached Brahmā to come down to the earth in order to consecrate the temple. Brahmā took a long time to come down and in the meanwhile the temple got covered under sand and was discovered by king Gālamādhava, who claimed it as his own work. This gave rise to a severe dispute between Gālamādhava and Indradyumna. Brahmā, who was accepted as the arbiter went to "Bhusanda Crow" on the Kalpavāta for evidence. The crow's evidence went in favour of Indradyumna's claim for the construction of the temple. When this was disputed they all went to the tortoise in the Indradyumna tank. At the sight of Indradyumna all the tortoises hid themselves under water and told Brahmā that they were originally the artisans employed by Indradyumna for the construction of the temple and became tortoise on account of pressure of work and that they are afraid of meeting Indradyumna again lest he should re-employ them in that hard work. This evidence proved conclusive and Gālamādhava was discomfitted. Brahma consecrated the temple and helped in the performance of sacrifice. The rest of the story is the same as given in the earlier works. After the installation of the images Indradyumna sought from Jagannātha four boons, which were
granted to him. The first was that the descendants of Viśvāvasu would be Dāitās who would decorate and do other services especially during the Ratha Yātrā and Anavasara. The second secured for the children of Lolitā and their descendants - the designation of the Suāra (Sūpakāra) or the cooks; the third was that the descendants of Vidyāpati would be priests of Jagannātha. But on being asked as to what he wanted for himself, Indradyumna asked for a boon that involved a tremendous sacrifice on his part; he wanted no survivors in his dynasty lest they should with a sense of vanity claim the temple as the work of their ancestor, and the Lord was pleased to grant this boon also. Thus Śiśuṇa Dās attempted to make Indradyumna immortal through self-sacrifice.

Jagannātha Dās in his "Dāru Brahmacita" presents the story of the construction of the temple as well as the images with little variation. According to him the Pāṇḍavas desired to burn the dead-body of Śrīkṛṣṇa after his death at the hands of Jārā. Being advised by Sahadeva they decided to take the dead body of Śrīkṛṣṇa to Svargadvāra situated near the Nīlagiri for funeral purposes. They constructed a sandal-wood cot, placed Śrīkṛṣṇa's body on the same and reached Nīlagiri. Then they brought sandal-wood from the Nīlasundara forest and set fire to the same. But his body could not be consumed by flames except his hands and feet only because he would have to appear in the shape of Buddha in Nīlāchala being devoid of hands and feet. At this moment an aerial voice was heard directing them to throw the partly burnt body of Śrīkṛṣṇa into the sea. This Pānda of Śrīkṛṣṇa reached the sea-shore of Puri and was seen by Vasu Sahara for the first time, who kept
it near the Banyan-tree adjacent to the Rohina Kunda. The rest is as described in the other works.

From a comparative study of the stories as narrated in the various works both Sanskrit and Oriya, it is evident that the name of Indradyumna is invariably associated with the construction of the temple at Purusottama Ksetra, and the installation of the images. This raises the question as to why almost all the works make mention of 'Indradyumna' and of no other person, historical or legendary. This may be due to the sanctity of the name of Indradyumna because of its occurrence in sacred and authoritative upanisadic texts as well as in famous epics like the Mahabharata. The Brahmana describes Indradyumna as 'Rajarshi'. The Chandogya Upanisad refers to one Bhallaveya Indradyumna as a great meditator of Brahman-Atman (V.XIV, 1). The Mahabharata as stated above presents Indradyumna as a great religious person. Probably it was the intention of the authors of the Puranas and other works to trace out a man of deep piety who alone could succeed in evoking divine grace for constructing the images of the Lords and inaugurating their regular worship. So great was the credit that has been given to Indradyumna that one festival namely, Indradyumnotsava, otherwise known as 'Dipadana Sraddhotsava', has been devised to commemorate Indradyumna. Indradyumna thus appears to have become a legendary figure. However, attempts have been made by scholars to identify Indradyumna with some historical figures. For instance, Buckingham identified him with the last king of the Pala dynasty. Similarly, V. A. Smith in his 'History of India' tried to identify Indradyumna with one Indradyumna Pala of the Pala
Dynasty. Fleet takes him to be Indrabala of the Sirpur inscription. But these identifications do not receive the support of authentic historical evidence; partial similarity in names cannot lead us to any definite conclusion. Moreover, in the history of Malava or Avanti we do not get any information about Indradyumna, although the Purāṇas have attributed to him the kingship of Malava or Avanti. The explanation offered by the author of Daru Brahma Gitā appears to be more plausible. He says that Indradyumna is not a particular person but a hereditary title. That is why Yayāti is styled as Indradyumna II, and Rāma Chandra Deva of Bhoi dynasty was given the title Abhinava Indradyumna, for both of them reinstalled the deities in the temple.

The mention of the anecdotes concerning the images being made of Daru (wood) found floating on the sea by Sāralā Dās, Sīskukṛṣṇa Dās and Jagannātha Dās and the author of Skanda Purāṇa shows the eagerness of the authors of these texts to establish connection of the worship of Lord Jagannātha with the vedic tradition concerning the Daru as given by Sayāna. The authors in Oriya literature concerning Jagannātha rouse the interest of the reader by identifying the Daru with the half-burnt body of Kṛṣṇa with a view to establishing the uninterrupted connection of Jagannātha of Kaliyuga with Lord Kṛṣṇa of the Dvāpara Yuga and to show that Jagannātha was no other than Lord Kṛṣṇa himself. This was in line with the tradition started by Viṣṇu-Purāṇa which stated that Kṛṣṇa and Jagannātha as well as Puruṣottama were one and the same. "Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Jagannātha jāne tvām Puruṣottamaṃ".

Viśvāvasu is also another important figure in the tradition. It is probable that one aspect of Jagannātha
was originally connected with a god of the Śabaras whom the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* recognises as the cursed sons of Viśvāmitra. This aspect might have been emphasised by the traditional association of Viśvāvasu the sabara chief, with the images of the deities. As regards the connection of Viśvākarma with the making of the images, it might be with a view to laying stress on the Aryan aspect of the cult of Jagannātha. Again, the story about the partial completion of the images may in some way lay down the sense of imperfection and incompleteness in the attempts of human beings to give shape and form to the Hirguna Brahma.

The traditions associated with the temple of Jagannātha are widespread not only throughout India, but also in certain parts of the world.

In 1200 A.D. a Baudha Pilgrim named Lāmā Tārānātha has given an account of a mysterious tradition regarding the construction of a Buddha image, which has a resemblance with the construction of the image of the Lord Jagannātha. A certain Brahmin named Kalyān wanted to make an image of the Buddha. Accordingly, he built a temple and brought many carpenters including Viśvākarma to make the image. The temple was to be closed for 7 days so that the image could not be made complete. After 5 days Kalyān's mother apprehended the death of Kalyān inside the temple. So she opened it before the stipulated period was over, and saw a half-made image. Such a tradition is also prevalent in Orissa regarding the construction of the image of Jagannātha.

An August archeologist named L.A. Wadell, going while to give an account of the Baudha ruins of Munghyr has said that the people called the place, where the ruins of
Buddha temple were found at Indradvumna Gadla. In the history of the construction of the temple of Jagannatha there is also a mention of the name of a king named Indradyumna who is said to be the first builder of the temple. So it is evident that the tradition associated with Jagannatha was not localised in Orissa, it spread throughout India with certain alterations.

It is interesting to note that the names Puri and Hilacala were also mentioned in ancient Java and Bali. In Bali the temple where images were worshipped was called Puri. The legend of Galamadhana discovering the temple of Jagannatha buried in the sand, is also found in Burma in a different form. In place of a Hindu temple in Burma there was a Buddhist shrine which was similarly hidden in sand and which was to be discovered in the long run. From the Archeological Survey Report of Burma it is known that ancient Prome was called Sriksetra and the entire region from Rangoon to Tarte was known as Miholale or Utkalana.

Reverend S. Beal in his Article under the title "Buddhist Pilgrims from China to India" states that a priest named Galamadhana (In Chalal) left China by sea for the south in the year 605 A.D. and spent three years in the country called Miholale. This view is supported by various scholars, both Indian and foreign.

This fact certainly throws light on the cultural contact between Orissa and Burma. This might have been due to our cultural contact with the far off islands.
of Pegu as well as to an island in the south seas (Vide Indian Antiquities Vol.X, p.194 ff.)

In the Buddhist book named "Si-Ku-Ki" it is stated that the country of Samantala or Ganga was located to the south-west of the Sri-ksetra and that was closely associated with the Far-Eastern islands (Vide Ibid. Vol.LIV, p.236). Probably that is the old name of Burma and the culture of Kalinga spread to that extent in the Eastern islands. It is not possible to explain when and in what stage the name or the term Sri-ksetra was imported from Orissa to that region or in some later age from that region to Orissa. Dr. N.R. Roy in his book 'Brahminical Gods in Burma' has proved that the name Sri-ksetra was imported from Orissa to Burma and the culture of Kalinga spread to these islands.

In the opinion of Dr. Roy, the ancient name attributed to old Prome is Sri-ksetra, so often mentioned in the Mon-records as Sik-set or Sri-kseta and by the Chinese pilgrims as Se-li-chu-ta-lu; and Sri-ksetra is the holy land of Puri on the ancient Kalinga coast. He further says that the name Sri-ksetra given to old Prome may be apocryphal, but the attribution itself is significant, however late it may be. The old name of Pegu is Ushā which is but a form of Oṣḍra or Orissa. It is difficult to disbelieve that Pegu was colonised from Orissa or was once dominated over by a people who had migrated from Orissa. Indeed, the classical names are but survivals of actual colonisation from the original country inhabited by the colonists themselves. Likewise the earliest colonisation of Malaya peninsula and Java had probably been made from Kalinga for the Hindus of the Peninsula, and the islands were and are still known as Klink. Notice should also be taken of the fact that the gold coins
Not only in Burma, but also in Ceylon there are many traditions which have great resemblances with Orissan traditions. Like the car festival at Puri, a similar festival is observed in Ceylon in the 15th day of Asāḍha. This is called 'Perhera' festival.

In Arakāni tradition, there is a story that the queen of Mina-fa-long wanted to build a temple and so she brought many images from outside. But she could not bring those images from the boat to the land. A similar tradition is also found in Orissa regarding the lifting of Daru in connection with the construction of the image of the Jagannātha. The Daru could not be lifted from the sea by the king alone, but it was easily removed with the help of a Sābara named Visvāvasu. So it is obvious that the legends connected with Jagannātha are not local traditions only; they are also found in the other parts of the world with slight variations.

According to another tradition Lord Jagannātha was originally a sun-God and Sun-worship was a prevalent feature in the coastal areas of Orissa. Lord Jagannātha himself is sometimes called Sūrya Nārāyaṇa. From a copper plate inscription discovered in a village called Sumandala in the Khalikote Taluk it is clear that there was a king named Bāsorap who was a devout worshipper of Sun-God. He used the title of Sahasra Raśmi Pādayakta and granted lands to Brahmins. In ancient Egypt, people also worshipped Sun as a source of life and cosmic energy. From this it is evident that there was a cultural and commercial contact between Orissa and Egypt in ancient time.
There is another instance of Sun-worship prevailing in Orissa. Clear evidences in the Purāṇas indicate that Maga brahmins, who were well versed in Sun-worship, were brought from Sāka and Sākadvipa to Orissa. The legend of Samba, stated in the Mārkandey Purāṇa bringing Maga brahmins from other states for the cure of his leprosy, goes to prove the prevalence of sun-worship in the coastal regions of Orissa. Some historians are of opinion that sun worship is an importation from foreign countries but there is no conclusive evidence in support of this view.

It may be argued whether the Sākas or some relevant foreign tribe had settled in the Coastal Orissa during the Gupta age and after. In this connection, we may cite numerous numismatic collections found in the coastal Orissa which refer to the period of Kusānas and Mūraṇas. A large number of Kusāna coins discovered from the Mayurbhañj, Cuttack and Puri districts and preserved in the Orissa and other state museums have been named as Puri Kusana coins. Due to their peculiarity in shape and emblazonment of symbol, these coins have been attributed to the 3rd or 4th century A.D.

There is one significant point which shines prominently throughout these various traditions. It is this fact that the Lord Purusottama or Jagannātha is regarded in all the writings as a sacred deity, and the Purusottama Kṣetra, the sanctuary of Lord Jagannātha as a holy place both of worship and pilgrimage. In other words Jagannātha and Puruṣottama are descriptive epithets, one meaning Lord of the Universe and the other, the Supreme Being (cf. the Bhagavad-gītā description of the Supreme Lord as Puruṣottama in canto XV). The images which are worshipped today and which number four (and not three) including Sudarśana have enjoyed
a continuity of tradition. It is a fact that after the lapse of every twelve years which, according to the traditional Indian computation is called a yuga, the images are renewed. But every subsequent designing of the images follows exactly the previous pattern in all particulars and details, and in this way, although the wood out of which the images are cut or curved is changed, the same old forms and symbols enjoy an unbroken continuity and consequently permanency. Therefore it can be said that in a sense the worship of Lord Jagannātha in the group of four figures is the worship of the mysterious forms and symbols which the images represent throughout the ages. The wood which forms the "Kalevara" or the bodies of the deities are being removed but the forms and symbols are being preserved with utmost precision and care.

Then again it is only a particular species of wood (such as the Nimba) which is being regularly used for carving the images and none other.

There has not been any attempt at any time to carve the figures in stone or to cast them in metal. It is evident, therefore, that the intention was to give permanence to the forms and symbols only and not to the material component of the images. This system is also regarded as another tradition in addition to all others previously narrated. Various names have been given to these forms suiting the exigency of the period or in accordance with the requirements of a particular popular religion prevalent at the time. But it can not be overlooked that the same images (forms or symbols) are the bearers of that infinite multitude of names and surnames. It may be that pre-historic ancestors of the Sābaras had one type of name for the images, the Sābaras another, and the people of the
subsequent period quite different ones; but it can not be denied that the same kind of images, forms and symbols continued to be worshipped from the hoary past to the present day. According to some the main images of the Puri temple have something in common with the totem worship of the aboriginal people of the locality. But whatever connection the latter might have with the developed worship of Purusottama Jagannātha at a very early stage of its career, it was merged completely with the cult in course of time.

Some scholars have attempted to recognise either Jaina or Buddha emblems in the four symbolic images of the Jagannātha temple. One scholar has suggested that not only the images and symbols, but also the mode of worship and the cultural tradition centering round the religion of Jagannātha are Jaina in origin. He is perhaps of the opinion that the three main figures of Balabhadra, Subhadrā and Jagannātha collectively stand for the Jaina trinity concept of Samyak-jñāna, Samyak caritra and Samyak Drsti. But he has not cited sufficient conclusive detailed and objective evidence in support of his suggestion. Again the spirit of tolerance, the absence of caste distinction, the belief in Kaivalyamukti etc. which he mentions as reminiscent of Jaina mode of religious life, can not be regarded, as exclusively Jaina features. Similar traits can be found also in Buddhism and in the great synthesizing spirit of Hinduism. Dīnākrushṇa Das, a poet of the 16th century, is one of the originator of the religious faith that the type of liberation or mukti which Jagannātha-worship gives, is the Kaivalya Muktī. This concept of Kaivalya mukti has been taken as an additional evidence by the scholar in support of his view that Jagannātha religion was definitely
a Jain mode of worship in the beginning. But it is overlooked by him that Jaina religion and ethics do not believe in the sanctity of exclusiveness, and an Arhat to be an Arhat must necessarily work for the upliftment of all fallen and suffering souls. The spirit of exclusiveness or indifference contained in the idea of Kaivalya is found only in Sāṅkhya-Yoga philosophy, which believes in individual liberation and not in general liberation of mankind. This takes away one fundamental ground underlying his contentions. He seems to confuse between the notions of Kevala jñāna; Kevali on the one hand, and Kaivalya mukti on the other.

Kevali in Jainism is different from the concept of Kaivalya mukti as in Sāṅkhya. The apparent participation of Purusa in the world-process is bondage; transcendent aloofness through knowledge of discrimination is the Kaivalya according to the Sāṅkhya philosophers. Kaivalya means spirit of detachment. The exact English equivalent of Kaivalya is therefore Isolation, and this idea is radically different from the Jaina idea of sympathetic participation in the cause of spiritual upliftment of the fallen by an Arhat. The word Kevala in Jainism means perfect knowledge. (Tattvārthadīghīga Sūtra Chap.I, IX). It also means the Omniscient (Ch.VI:XIII). The Sāṅkhya Kārikā (Sloka 21) says "Puruṣasya darsanārtham Kaivalyārtham tathā prādhānyah ".

Then again much has been made out of the affix "Nātha" by the said scholar. He suggests that Jagannātha like Adinātha, Parsvanātha must have been Jaina saints or Tīrthaṅkaras. Such a conclusion based upon so flimsy a ground can hardly be accepted.

Archaeological excavations have brought to light a
large number of stone images of the Jaina saints in various parts of Orissa. Most of them are beautiful, and none of them resembles the wooden images of Puri. Then again the Daru or the piece of wood out of which the images are carved is called Apuruṣam (impersonal), and Jagannātha is not only called Puruṣottama but also Apuruṣa; never a Jaina who is after all personal. The Jaina saints are all historical or mythical persons, and there is nothing impersonal about them. It is possible that in the process of integration the cult of Jagannātha adopted some of the rites and symbols which were in vogue in Jainism. But that can not prove that the cult of Jagannātha is itself Jaina or had an origin in the Jaina religious tradition.

There is no such elaborate system of worship in any Jaina shrine as is current in the temple of Jagannātha. Then again a "Tirthaṅkara" is venerated or worshipped as a superman, as an enlightened soul, as an uplifter of a community, but Lord Jagannātha is venerated as God Himself, as the Absolute spirit; as the Lord of the universe, as the creator, preserver and destroyer, and as the ultimate goal of spiritual life. So the concept about Him is absolutely different from that of a Jina, - and it is strange that one should suggest that a religious tradition involving belief in God should have originated in a religion without a God.

Another suggestion made by the scholar in support of his view that Jagannātha worship was Jaina in origin, is that the reference to Kalinga Jina in the Hatigumpha inscription of Kharavela is nothing but the earliest mention of Jagannātha worship in Jaina setting. But this is apparently so absurd and uncritical that it does not bear the least scrutiny.
Some others have attempted to trace the origin of Jagannātha from Buddhism which was prevalent as a dominant religion in eastern India embracing the part of Orissa adjacent to the shrine of Jagannātha. Buddhism is also a religion without a God; although contrary to the advice of Buddha himself, the Buddhists made a God out of him. The data upon which the contention of these scholars is based may be summed up as follows:

1. In Buddhism, there is the worship of three symbols called "Trimatna"; such as Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha;

2. The image of Jagannātha is supposed to contain a bone commonly believed to be a bone of Lord Kṛṣṇa, but according to the advocate of this theory a relic of Lord Buddha himself;

3. The bathing festivals and the Car festivals of Lord Jagannātha bear resemblance to the similar Buddhistic festivals witnessed in many Buddhistic shrines during the ages of Fā-Hiàn;

4. While Hindu religion is caste-ridden, Buddhism is casteless (although not sectless). There is no caste-rigour within the temple-precincts at Puri.

As regards the first of these contentions it can be pointed out that the images in the temple of Jagannātha are actually four not three (The Agni, Padma, Brahma and Skanda Purāṇas bear witness to it). So if the images stand for "Ratnas" then these are four Ratnas and not Triratnas as in Buddhism.

As we have said before, these four rather correspond to the four pādas of Brahma or four mātrās of pranava of the ancient upaniṣadas. If the number is to be the basis of any
argument, then it seems that the Caturdhā murtis (Balabhadrā, Subhadrā, Jagannātha and Sudarsānā in the temple of Lord Jagannātha are suggestive of their affinity with the vedic, Āgamic or Upanishadic religion and not Buddhism or Jainism. Then again if the number of images was actually three instead of four, then could not constitute an argument worth the name in support of the thesis that the emblems are Buddhistic or Jaïna. In Hindu or the Brahmanical tradition there are several groups of three namely - Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara; Sattva, Rāja and Tama; Paśu, Paśa and Paśupati; Iḍā, Piṅgalā and Susumnā; Jāgrata, Susnā and Susupti; Rāma, Laksmana, Sītā; Krśna, Balarāma and Subhadrā. So this can not be any valid reason why the three uninformed images are to be taken as Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha or the Triratna or Jaïna doctrine -

(1) Samyag darsāna or Samyag drsti (the perfect faith);
(2) Samyag jñāna (the perfect knowledge) and (3) samyag caritram (the perfect conduct).

Regarding the second point it can be said that apart from the mention of the common belief in the existence of a bone inside the images, the protagonists of the theory have not advanced any sound reason to connect it with a relic of the Buddha. Some of the temple ministrants are of the opinion that the sacred objects inside the Vigrahas are not bones but tantric yantras with the salagrāmaśilā. Still there is not the least certainty about the exact nature of these objects, and it will be too hazardous to take them as relics of Buddha. Moreover in the Hindu Dharma Sāstra the worship of bone is not permitted. But wherever a Buddhistic relic either of Buddha himself or of his disciples could be found stupas were built and the places remained continuously
Buddhistic sanctuaries with the Viharas all round the holy places. But the temple of Lord Jagannātha does not have any such tradition, and all the mathas old and new are Hindu mathas. It is true that Hiuen-Tsāng mentions five Buddhist Viharas in the town of Che-li-tālo, identified by a few scholars with the present Puri. But this identification is not universally accepted and it is not at all safe to come to any conclusion on the basis of this uncertain data.

The spirit of tolerance, which is advanced as an argument in favour of Buddhistic base of Jagannātha worship, is not unknown to Hindu tradition. Hindu attitude towards Buddha was not antagonistic, and he was given an honoured place in the Vaiśāpava pantheon as one of the Avatāras. Again the Hindus of Puri had no objection to allowing many other religious establishments connected with such medieval saints as Kabir, Nānak and others to function in the holy city.

Yet it is a fact that no establishment connected with Buddhism and Jainism is to be found anywhere in or about the city. But there were such institutions in other parts of Orissa, and remains found near Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and other places fully prove that Buddhism, Jainism and Brāhmanical Hinduism flourished side by side in early medieval times.

Moreover the rites known as Maṅḍaśnāna or (the bathing festival of Jagannātha) is performed on the Jyeṣṭha Pūrṇimā day at Puri (full-moon day of Jyeṣṭha) whereas the image of Buddha is bathed on Vaisākhapūrṇimā according to the Buddhistic rites observed in Ceylon.

As regards the fourth point, it seems to be a very weak argument. This suggests that since the Hindu religion is caste-ridden and Jainism and Buddhism are casteless, and
since the universalistic religion of Jagannātha does not admit of any caste-barrier, therefore, it must have been a Buddhist or a Jaina institution.

The universality of Jagannātha-religion is most prominently noticed in the acceptance of Mahāprasāda by members of all castes and creeds together. The greatness of mahāprasāda has been loudly acclaimed in Purāṇas, such as Padma, Viṣṇu, Bhātisya, Brahmatāvarta, Varāha, Garuda, and other tāntřic texts like Brahmayāmala and Rudrayāmala (Śrīkṣetra in Bengali, p.44).

This prasāda system is not found in any Buddhist or Jaina institution, and this is the most fundamental part of the Jagannātha cult of Puri. How the sectarian Hindu faith evolved a non-sectarian universal mode of worship may be an interesting problem for our historians and philosophers. But there is no evidence to prove that integration of cults and faiths was not and is not an essential part of Hindu religion, which claims to be an eternal and universal religion— Sanātanadharma.

The custom of cleaning the temple and sweeping the floors of the chariots can not be regarded as peculiarly Jaina as has been contended by some scholars. The Jainas sweep their own paths to avoid possible killing of ants and other insects which are also regarded by them as jīvas (having souls. But the Jainas are not accustomed to sweep the floors of their temple or their deities as a mark of veneration or humility. The Jaina is a Godless religion and so this age-worn custom of sweeping the floors of the chariots of the Gods by the Rājā of Puri, can not by any stretch of imagination, be regarded as a Jaina tradition. In all the Hindu rituals cleaning the grounds and floors forms an essential preliminary.
So this evidence is rather peculiarly in favour of the Brahminical and Hindu tradition than of the Buddhistic Jain traditions. Most of our ancient towns were built around temples. The king in most of those places not only looked upon himself as a servant (Sevaka) of the temple deity but also used this special status as a part of his surname. The Maharaja of Travancore called himself as Padmanabha Dasa, and this is true of most of the ancient traditional kingdoms of the south. Sometimes the whole kingdom of Utkal came to be described as the kingdom of Lord Jagannatha and the Raja himself passed as the Sevaka of Jagannatha and as the Superintendent of His temple. So the ritual of sweeping the floors of the chariots is not only a Hindu ritual but is also characteristically an Orissan one. There are several legends connected with this function of the Raja of Puri.

Devotion (bhakti) or absolute self-surrender constitutes the most dominant note in the religious tradition of Jagannatha, and before the Lord of the universe all are deemed as equals and co-sharers of the Mahaprasada. It seems to be a very strange argument that since sectarian Hinduism prevails in some other parts of India, there could not evolve a non-sectarian universalistic Hindu religious tradition in one of the most ancient seats of Hindu religion and culture.

Jagannatha religion is the result of a process of evolution, and many historical and other forces might have contributed to the evolution of the most universal form of religious worship. The existence of Kalpavata and Nilacakra has again been regarded a noticeable Jaina feature. The supporters of this view should remember that the Kalpavata
and Nilacakra are to be found in almost all the Vaisnava temples in India, and that they are not exclusively Jaina.

Thus there seems to be no valid reason in support of the contention that the non-sectarian cult of Jagannātha can not be a Hindu tradition simply because of this feature. The Hindu religion beginning from the pre-historic days down to the present time accepted, integrated and synthesized all living elements of the various sectarian religions of India. It has housed as infinite multitude of different sects and creeds, but it is not in its historical evolutionary aspect, one of those sectarian beliefs or creeds. This is the Jagannātha Dharma and this is the Sanātana-Dharma, the faith which refuses to be eclipsed, which rejuvenates itself at every stage, absorbs and integrates the basic tenets of all historical religions.
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9. Bhāgavata-gītā Ch.XV, sloka I.


12. Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa(Uttarākanda) 108. 23.

Sāyana while give the interpretation of this sukta concludes saying in the last portion of this sukta:

"Kim ca Īśvaraḥ Bhuvanāni dharayant yat stānām
adhyatīṣṭat tat api prchati: Etasya sarvaśāpyutaram
Brahmam satprkṣaya āsit ityādikamutāram"

(a) Rgveda, X, 31, 7, p.38, 3.


Gītā Press, p.333.

Svādūdasottare tirē yojanāni trayodashā
Jātarupasīlo nāma sumahān kanakaprabhān

Sahasirasām devamanantām nīlavāsaśām
Trisūrah kaṁcanaḥ ketustahastasya mahādamanah

Stapitah parvatasyāyāṃ virājeti Sa-vedikāh
Pūrvasām dinirmanam kṛtam tāt trīdāvavīraih

Tatāh param hemamayaḥ śēmānu-pāya-parvataḥ
Tasya koṭirīvaṁ sprātvā sātyojanamāyātah.


16. Mahābhārata III Chapter 198, Sloka I.


M. M. Ganguli, Orissa and her remains, pp.406-407.

19. Taittirīya Samhitā II, 6. 4. 3.

20. Viṣṇudharmottaranapurāṇa, Ch. I, Pt. 3.


22. Mātṣyapurāṇa, Ch. XIII, Sloka 35.

Ibid, Ch.XXII, Sloka 38.

23. Viṣṇu, I, XV, 52.

Agni, Ch. 63.

Padma - Ch.158, S. 1-6. Ch. 18.

Nārada - Ch.32, S 41-93.

Brahma - Ch. 48.

Skanda - Ch. XX, Slokas 35-36.

24. Padma - Pāṭalakhanda, Ch. 16-26.

Brahma - Ch. 42-52.

Skanda - Purusottama Gīta Mahātmyas, Chs. 15-23.

25. Agnipurāṇa, Ch. 63.

26. Padmapurāṇa Pāṭalakhanda, Ch. 18 Whole.

27. Brahmapurāṇa, Ch. 45, S. 71-76.

28. Skandapurāṇa, Chs. 6, 7, 9 and 15.

29. Skandapurāṇa, Chs. 20 and 47.

30. Bārahṣapataya sutra, Ch. III, p.20, Sūtra 119, p.120.
30. (Contd.) Kapila Samhitā
Tīrtha Cintāmāni
Kṣetramāhātmya
Nilādri Mahodaya
Puruṣottama candrikā
Rudrayāmala
Tantrayāmala

(References of the above books have already been given).

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32. Ibid, Chs. IV, pp.33-35.

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35. Nilāmbara Dās Devāl Tolā in Oriya.

36. Śisūkrāhna Dās - Devla Tola.


38. Mahābhārata, III ch.195.

39. Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, V.XIV, I.


41. History of India, p.401, V.A-Smith.

42. Sirpur Inscription of Indravala.

43. Dārubrahmagītā, Ch.III.

44. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, XXXIII, VI.

45. Tales of Tārānāth (Quoted in Prajātantra Special Issue) Sunday 28.6.63.


47. Ibid.


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    (b) Vālsa Topes, Ch. XXVII, p. 351.
    (c) M.M. Ganguli's Orissa and her remains, p. 406.
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    (e) History of India and Eastern Architecture by James Ferguson.
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59. Rasakallola, Deana Krushna Dās,
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61. Ibid.
62. Tattvārthādhigama sutra, Ch. I, IX and Ch. VI, XIII.
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67. Ibid.

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