CHAPTER - III

SOCIETY
One of the most outstanding features of the Hindu society was *Varnāśramadharma*. The Puruṣasukta of the Rigveda refers to the fourfold classification of the four varṇas emanating from the mouth, the arms, the thigh and the feet of the creator. Accordingly they were named *Brāhmaṇa, Rājānya* (later *Kṣatriya*), *Vaiśya* and *Śudra*. The nature of the four varṇas in ancient times was rather professional than hereditary. Primarily it was evolved on the principles of division of labour. But in the subsequent period varṇa became synonymous with *jāti* which emphasised more on heredity.

The protection of the established order of society was an important aspect of statecraft. It was the duty of the king as head of the state to maintain the social order. Kautilya also emphasises the king's duty as the promulgator of dharma, to protect the four-fold caste system. Narada and Manu also mention that the prosperity of a kingdom depends on the purity of castes maintained, otherwise it would lead to grave calamity and disaster.

The epigraphic study of the period under review shows that special care was taken by the ruling dynasties to preserve the *Varnāśramadharma*. The Jayrampur Copper plate of Gopachandra belonging to 7th century A.D. refers to *Chaturvarṇa*. The Jayapur Copper plate grant of Dhruvananda of the Nanda dynasty states that, "he placed all the four varṇas in the positions they
deserved and made them discharge their duties properly. Even the Buddhist kings of the Bhauma-Kara dynasty also tried to enforce *Varnāśramadharma*. The Neulpur charter describes Kṣemāṅkara put 'varṇas in their proper places.' The Terundia plate of Subhākara states that the donor established "the order of Varnāśramadharma in its golden age purity in strict accordance with scriptures." 10

Not only Orissa, but the rulers of Assam 11 and Bengal 12 also emphasised on Varnāśramadharma in their charters. Even Prabhakaravardhana was described as the protector of Varnāśrama in the Banskhera plate. 13

Thus we find much emphasis was paid on Varnāśramadharma as the basis of the society. The four varṇas based on profession in the early part, subsequently gave rise to a number of sub-castes.

BRĀHMANAS:

The Brāhmaṇas occupied the highest order of the society based on Varnāśramadharma. Smṛti 14 writers attributed high social status to them. Itsing describes the dignified and honourable position of the brāhmaṇas in the society. They studied the Vedas and were qualified to teach the Veda, to make gifts and to receive them. 15 They were destined to lead a religious, intellectual, and saintly life. They were held in
high position by the kings and the people for their virtuous life and devotion to the Vedic studies and learning.

The brāhmanisation of Orissa started on the fifth century A.D. However, the Purāṇas describe the degraded position of the brāhmaṇas in Orissa in ancient times. The Matsya Purāṇa\textsuperscript{16} states that the brāhmaṇas living in the mlechha countries of Oḍra, Andhra and Dravida must not be invited to a funeral repast. This stigma attached to Orissa was wiped out after it came under the influence of the Guptas who were zealous Brāhmanists. The ruling families such as the Mātharās, the Śailodbhavas, the Bhānjās, the Nandas and the Bhauma-Karas in early medieval times made lavish land grants to the Brāhmaṇas. The Brāhmaṇas were invited to settle in their territories and to pursue the study and teaching of the sacred laws for the material and intellectual prosperity of the people.

In the period under review large number of brahmin settlements known as agrahāras were established. Tax-free lands were granted to the brahmaṇas. Large number of brāhmaṇa donees were migrated to Orissa from different parts of India. From the study of the contemporary records we find brāhmaṇas migrated from Madhyadesa,\textsuperscript{17} Pundra-Vardhana,\textsuperscript{18} Rādhā,\textsuperscript{19} Varendra,\textsuperscript{20} Vengipāṭaka,\textsuperscript{21} Kolāṇcha,\textsuperscript{22} Srāvasti\textsuperscript{23} and Ṭakārī.\textsuperscript{24}

One of the interesting feature of this period was that large scale brāhmaṇa immigrants belonged to Uttar Pradesh region. According to a tradition ten thousand brahmins migrated
from Kanauj to perform ten horse-sacrifice at Jajpur during the period of Somavamsi King Yayati I. Most of the Brahmanas belonged to Vajasaneya school in this period. Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh was a highly honoured place for Vajasaneyins. Besides Ayodhya, Madhyadesa was a stronghold of Brahmanical religion. The Brahmanas from Northern India were tempted enough by the free land grants and settled down in Orissa. From the neighbouring states West Bengal and Andhra the Brahmana donees migrated and helped in the spread of Brahmanism in Orissa. The Arual plate refers to the donee Purusottama belonging to Pundravardhana. A Sulki grant refers to Racha, the place of the donee. Dasapalla grant of Ranabhanja refers to Varendra as the native place of the donee Padmakara. These places were situated in Bengal. The donee in the Ganjam grant of Dandi Mahadevi belongs to Vengipatatka identified with Vengi.

The epigraphic study shows donations to large scale Brahmanas at a time, who might have migrated from different parts. The early Ganga ruler Devendravarman donated land to three hundred braminas who came from different places. The Buddhist king Subhakara I of the Bhauma-Kara dynasty granted two villages Komparaka and Danjaki-yoka under the new name Solanapur to two hundred brahmanas in his Neulpur grant. The Sailodbhava king Madhavavarman also donated tax-free lands to a large number of brahmanas to perform religious sacrifices for them. The Sailodbhava rulers performed Asvamedha and Vajapeya sacrifices to earn religious merits for which brahmanas
were donated lands. Brāhmanism received a great impetus during the reign of Somavamsi and the Gaṅga rulers which resulted in large scale migration of Brahmānas to Orissa. Thus Brāhmanical religious rites, rituals and sacrifices began to dominate the tribal society of Orissa during this period.

Distinction among the brahmans is noticed in respect of their gotras, pravaras and anu-pravaras. The gotra is defined as an exogamous partrilineal group whose members trace their descent back to a common ancestor. According to the Baudhāyān Śūta-śāstra, Viśvamitra, Jamadagni, Bharadvāja, Gautama, Atri, Vasistha, Kāśyapa and Agastya are the eight sages and the progeny of these eight sages is declared to be gotra. Pravara may be defined as a stereo-typed list of names of ancient ṛṣis or seers who are believed at specific points on the sacrificial rituals. The land grants during our period refer to a number of gotras e.g. Bharadvāja, Vatsasa, Haritaha, Mudgalaya, Kausīka, Kaundinya, Kāśyapa, Jatukarma, Maṅgalya, Śaṇḍilya, Gārgeya, Kautsasa, Gautama, Vasistha, Parāśara, Kātyāyana.

Among the Pravaras we come across Āṅgirasa, Varhaspatya, Bharadvaja, Yauvansva, Śaṅkara bhadra, Utathya, Vasistha, Atreya, Jatukarna, Audala, Vaiśvanara, Viśvāmitra, Yamadagni, Devalya, Devarāta, Kāśyapa, Avatsara, Naidhurya etc.

The Brahmāna society in Orissa in the period under review was not only based on gotras and pravaras but on their Vedasākhās. The Vedasākhās are indicated by their charanas and
Sākhās. The various Charānas noticed in the inscriptions are as follows — Vājasaneya, Chhāndoga, Kanva, Kāthuma, Madhyandina, Taittiriya etc. The different sākhās are e.g. Vājasaneya, Kanva, Madhyandina. Āsvālayana, Chhāndoga, Taittiriya etc.

The brahmanaṣ proficient in different branches of Vedas, Upanishads and Samhita were splitted into numerous families. Brahmaṇas of Vājasaneya Charana of Sukla Vajurveda found mention frequently in the inscriptions. The Vatsa gotri brahmins studied only Kanva sākhā where as Taittiriya charana was adopted by the brahmaṇas of Haritaka gotra. Brahmaṇas of Bharadvaja, Vatsa and Śāndilya gotra studied Vājasaneya charaṇa.

The number of Bharadvaja, Vatsa, Kāśyapa and Kausīka gotriya brahmins appear to be quite large in Orissa during the period under discussion. Most of the brahmaṇas were proficient in Kanva Chhandogya and Vajasaneya sākhā.

During the period of our study the brahmaṇas used various titles as prefix or suffix to their surnames. The surnames are as follows Bhāṭṭa, Svāmi, Dīkṣita, Pāṇḍita, Śarmā, Datta, Āchārya, Upādhyāya etc. In the Neulpur charter of Subhakaradeva, we come across surnames like Bhāṭṭa, Svāmi, Dīkṣita, Deva, Bhuti, Vardhana, Ghosha, Datta, Kara, Kunda. Some of them bore the titles like Agnihotri, Vajasaneyi, Chhandiga, Atharvabhatta, Purohita etc. It seems Bhāṭṭa and Svāmi brahmaṇas were very popular in that period.
According to a Rashtrakuta inscription dated 926 A.D. of Indra III, there were five classes of brāhmaṇas - Saraswata, Kānyākubja, Utkala, Maithili and Gauḍa. It was not their places of origin but their profession which determined their status.

During this period the brāhmaṇas, generally proficient in Vedas, Vedangas were patronised by the Orissan rulers. The Midnapur plate of Somadatta refers to "brāhmaṇas who are themselves worthy of worship." The Dharmalingesvara grant of Devendravarman refers to the priest Pataṇga Sivāchārya well versed in Veda, Vedangas, Purāṇas, Nyāyas and Itiḥāsa. The duties assigned to brāhmaṇas were six-fold in character namely Yajña (offering sacrifice), Yajana (officiating at sacrifices), adhyāyana (study), adhyāpana (teaching), dāna (gift). The brāhmaṇas were recognised in their specialisation in any of the three Vedas - Rig, Sam and Yajur. The Atharva Veda was not popular at that time.

Alberuni has remarked that the brāhmaṇas learnt the Vedas by heart and many could recite them without knowing their meaning. They preserved it in their memory from generation to generation. The Vedic studies were monopoly of the brāhmaṇa. They used to teach the Vedas to the Kṣatriyas but not vice versa, the Vaiśya and the Śudras were not allowed to learn it. Brāhmaṇas were highly respected in the Orissan society.
Besides performing religious rites and teaching profession the brāhmaṇas adopted various other professions. Some of them were appointed as priests in the palaces and temples. In some of the inscriptions land donation was made to the temples for their maintenance under the brahmin priests. The priest were instructed to lead an austere and devoted life. With establishments of brahmanical shrines throughout Orissa, the influence of the priestly class immensely increased. Some of the brāhmaṇas were appointed as family priest of the king, commonly known as Purohita. The Purohitas were closely associated with the king and found a place among the important officials in the court. They advised the rulers regarding important matters of statecraft and were highly honoured by the kings and his officials.

The brāhmaṇas did not confine themselves to traditional duties like study, teaching and religious rites only but showed their worth in statecraft also. The inscriptions of this period show brāhmaṇas occupying different administrative posts like that of Mahāsandhivigrahika, śāmanta, Amātya, Dutaka, Lekhaka etc. The Datta brāhmaṇas specially distinguished for playing significant roles in the administrations. The original home of the Datta brāhmaṇas was Ayodhyāpur identified with modern Ayodhya in Balasore district. Ayodhya was a famous religious centre. Loka vigraha assumed the title Bhāṭṭa Mahāśāmanta in his Kanas plates. The Soro plates of Sambhu-yaśa refer to brāhmaṇa officers e.g. Narayana, Mahāsandhivigrahika
and Mahattar Vedasavāmin an officer. Sometimes the scribes of the plates were composed by brahmins who were designated as Lekhaka an important branch of officers. Suryadikṣita was the Lekhaka in Kanas plate of Lokavigraha. Kondedde plates of Dharmarāja refer to Damodara as Lekhaka. Brāhmaṇās were appointed as Dutaka, Dutakotra, and Vrahadbhogi in the charters of early medieval Orissa. The feudatory rulers also appointed brāhmaṇa as ministers and as important officers in the state hierarchy. The Bhaṇja rulers of Vañjulvaka appointed Bhaṭṭa Bāpuka, Bhaṭṭa Stambhadeva, Bhaṭṭa Bapadeva as ministers in their court.

Due to the growth of Brāhmaṇa population and paucity of the gifts, they adopted the professions of the Kṣatriyas and Vaiṣyas. Parasāra permits the brāhmaṇas engaging others for their cultivation work. The brāhmaṇas adopting Vaiṣya profession were less in numbers and generally were inferior to the brāhmaṇas who adopted the traditional profession. Sometimes land surrounded by forest, trees, rocks were granted to them and the brāhmaṇas transformed them to cultivable land.

Thus the above discussion on brāhmaṇas show that brāhmaṇas in our period were donated tax free land in a large scale. This encouraged large scale migration of donees from different parts of India and to settle down in Orissa. The brāhmaṇa settlements or agrahāras became important centre of Vedic learning. The colonisation of some villages by the brāhmaṇas resulted in the superior non-peasant right on the land.
The Vaisyas and Sudras were reduced to semi-serfs. Thus the land grants made the brāhmaṇas emerge as an influential and superior class in the society.

The method of patronising brāhmaṇas was highly beneficial to the royal dynasties. Not only that the tribal hinterlands were brāhmanised but also they infused loyalty in the people and helped maintaining law, order and authority over the distant tracts of the kingdom. Thus frontiers were secured from foreign invasion as well as internal aggression.

**KSATRIYAS:**

The Kṣatriyas occupied the second position in the social hierarchy. They were known as rājānyā in the Vedic times and later as Kṣatriyas. The theoretical duty of the Kṣatriya was protection which included fighting in war and governing in peace. Generally the martial class from monarchs to petty chiefs and all the invaders belonged to this order in ancient times.

The epigraphic records of the period under review refer to Rājaputra along with other officers like Mahāsāmanta, Mahārājā, Rājānyaka, Antaraṅga, Rājaballabha etc. Of them Rājaputra naturally means the son of a king who is a Kṣatriya. Rājānyaka, Antaraṅga and Rājaballabha were officers, closely associated with the royal family and probably were Kṣatriyas. Hence the prince of royal blood and the close relations of the
king were descendents of the Kṣatriya families. The Kṣatriyas formed a class of military vassals\textsuperscript{72} and entrusted with other important administrative duties as accountants,\textsuperscript{73} executors of charters\textsuperscript{74} and ministers of war and peace.\textsuperscript{75}

The epigraphic records of the period under discussion show the tribal chieftains and even royal families who had non-Kṣatriya origin, later on included in the Kṣatriya varṇa by the brāhmaṇas.\textsuperscript{76} The progenitor of the Šailodbhavas, born out of a rock was a tribal chief in Mahendragiri region.\textsuperscript{77} The Bhauma-Karas belonged to a Non-Aryan tribe and traced their descent from the supreme god Viṣṇu.\textsuperscript{78} The feudatories of the Bhauma-Karas also belonged to Non-Kṣatriya tribes. The Bhañjas trace their origin from the egg of a pea-hen.\textsuperscript{79} Like wise the Sulkis, the Nandas\textsuperscript{81} and the Tuṅgas\textsuperscript{82} also had tribal origin.

There was a constant and continuous efforts by the Brāhmaṇas who settled down in the frontier parts of the kingdom to brahmanise the tribal chieftains by concoting a family myth and associating him with the solar and lunar Kṣatriyas.\textsuperscript{83} Hence brāhmaṇas were donated huge land grants, exempted from all taxes and free from all official interference. In this process many non-Aryan Gods and goddesses were re-organised as brāhmaṇa deities. In ancient society religion and politics were closely linked with one another. Loyalty was diverted towards a social order represented by religion and not toward the state.\textsuperscript{84} Hence in Orissa the tribal kings took the help of the brāhmaṇas to consolidate themselves in their kingdom.\textsuperscript{85} Thus there was a
gradual process of Kṣatriyisation of the tribal stock in Orissa in early medieval times.

In Orissa, the rulers who were non-Kṣatriyas claimed Kṣatriya-hood by three methods (a) matrimonial alliance with principal kṣatriya families (b) performance of Rājasuya and Aśvamedha sacrifices (c) adopting Kṣatriya titles. The Bhauma ruler Sāntikaradeva married the daughter of Rājamalla I of the Western Ganga dynasty, who was Tribhuvana Mahādevi. She played a significant role in consolidating the Bhauma kingdom during her reign. Another ruler of the same dynasty married Prithvi Mahādevi the daughter of Somavamsi ruler Svabhāvatunga of South Kosala. Hiuen Tsang in his accounts has stated the ruler of Kośala was a Kṣatriya by birth.

The Bhaṇja ruler Nettabhāṇja married a lady of Kṣatriya caste known as Kṣatridevi. The Śailodbhavas had a tribal origin. Later they were brāhmanised by performing religious practices which were officiated by the brāhmaṇas. Like the Pallavas of South India who attained Kṣatriyahood by performing brāhmanical rituals, the Śailodbhavas rulers also performed aśvamedha and rājasuya sacrifices. Mādhavarāja, Dharmarāja and Madhyamarāja performed these sacrifices and tried to elevate their social status.

Some of the rulers adopted the titles indicating Kṣatriya quality viz - Unmatta Siṅha, Unmatta Kesāri and adopted Varman as suffix viz. Anantavarman Devendravarman, Mādhavarman etc.
Very often the royal panegyists used grandiloquent title such as Parama bhattāraka, Parama vaiṣnava, Parama mahēśwara, Parama Bhāgavata etc. prefixing the names of the rulers. These religious epithets protryary the divine attributes to the rulers. Sometimes they were compared with gods of brāhmaṇical pantheon. The Bhauma ruler Sāntikaradēva II is described as glorious as Vaikuṇṭha (Viṣṇu) in the Talcher plate of Sivakara III. Again Tribhuvana Mahādevī compares herself with Kātyāyinī in her Dhenkanal charter.

It is interesting to note that during the period under survey quite a number of temples were constructed in Orissa by the ruling dynasties. It was the beginning of temple architecture which reached the pinnacle of glory and excellence under the Somavamsi and the Ganga rulers. Thus, in Orissa the ruling families with an aboriginal beginning, in course of time by associating themselves with the brāhmaṇical system, raised their social status and consequently attained the same prestige and honour like their Kṣatriya brethren elsewhere.

From the very beginning the king has been an inevitable agency for the welfare of the people. He is the root cause of all successes and happiness material and spiritual. So knowledge in different branches of studies was essential in the part of a king. The curriculum of a Kṣatriya prince is revealed by the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela which included Lekha (correspondence), rūpa (currency), gaṇana (finance), Vyavahāra-'Vidhi' (civil-judicial laws), gaṇcharva (music and dance).
Moreover the princes also had military training as a compulsory subject in which use of swords and archery was necessary item. The rulers in this period were not only great warriors but were also proficient in different branches of religious texts, law and grammar.

The Khurda plates of Madhavarāja state that the king was well versed in the 'Chatusṭaya Vidyā'. According to Sukrachārya Anviksiki (philosophy), Trayī (three Vedas), Vārtā (agriculture, cattle breeding, trade) and Dandaniti (Politics) are the Chatusṭaya Vidyā. Dharmarāja, the Sailodbhava ruler was also well versed in all sāstras and a widely read man.

The Bhauma ruler Sivakara I patronised talents and always shone forth in the company of distinguished scholars. Subhākara IV is described as "deeply conversant with the sastras" in the Talcher plate. The Asanpat inscription points out Satrubhañja mastered Śruti, Śmṛiti, Nyāya, Samkhya, Vedānta and Vyavahāra. Besides the brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas were also entitled to study the Vedas.

The king was an integral part of the state and a kingless state was most disastrous. The king was responsible for allround development of the people. In the inscriptions the kings are described possessing the noble qualities like mercy, charity, benevolence. The Ganjam plates of Madhavarāja states that the wealth of the king was enjoyed by the distressed, helpless and the poor.
The Bhauma-Kara ruler Sivakara I "delighted the people by redressing their miseries". Subhākara I was a benevolent ruler and "had the protection of the subjects as his highest aim." He is eulogised as "a mine of good conduct and good qualities." Šantikara I also possessed noble qualities and was 'well behaved, peace loving, affable and peerless in quality.' Like his predecessors Subhākara IV was also lavishly praised in the charters for his virtues.

Hiuen-Tsang describes the Kṣatriya kings 'held sovereignty for many generations, defended the people and their aims were benevolence and mercy.' Alberuni also described them as courageous, high-minded, eloquent, munificent, unheedful of dangers and capable of striking terrors in the hearts of the enemy. The inscriptions of the Bhauma-Kara rulers also depict the heroism, strength and prowess with some grandiloquent verses. Subhākara I is described as conqueror of adversaries. The Talcher plate of Subhākara IV mentions countless rulers bowed to the command of Šantikara.

Thus, the rulers of Orissa were powerful, learned, noble and virtuous. They performed the duties of a Kṣatriya according to the Varṇadharma.

The Arab traveller Ibn Khuradbhi observed two sections of Kṣatriya namely, Sabkufria or Satksatriya and Katasiya or Kṣatriya. Sabkufria constituted the members of aristocracy descended from royal stock where as Katariyas were of general
military order. During the time of peace the Kṣatriyas took up trade and agriculture which was permitted by the Smritis.

Kāyasthas as a caste emerged in the medieval period. The earliest reference to this group was made in the Yajñavalkya Smṛti. The first epigraphical reference to Kāyastha is mentioned in Damodar Copper plates of the Gupta period. Sudraka has mentioned them in his Mrichhakāṭikā as writers in the courts. Kane is of opinion that they were writers in the revenue department. R.D. Banerjee had accepted them as scribes.

The contemporary epigraphic records do not provide much information on the Kāyasthas. Yasodatta, in the Daspalla grant of Devanandadeva of Airāvatta Manḍala was a Kayastha. He was a sattva qrhi (virtuous house holder) and a teacher of military science (sāstropadhya). In the Parlakhimedi grant of Vajrahastadeva of Ganga dynasty, Vāchhapajya has been described as a minister who belonged to the Kayastha caste. This community occupied important administrative positions in the subsequent period of Orissan history.

Karana as a caste figure frequently in our epigraphic records. In most of the Sailodbhava charters we find mention of Karana along with the brāhmaṇas - "Karana brāhmaṇa purocādīn jana padañcha." The mention of Karaṇa with the brāhmaṇas at the head of the local population not only indicate their crystallisations into a caste group, but their rank in the society.
The Bhanja rulers also mention the Karanas along with the Brahmanaśas in their charters. The Sadyadhikarana of the Bhauma records was the chief judicial officer. Later the Karanas evolved into a community of accountants in the state service and occupied important position in the society. The Kayasṭha and the Karanas belonged to Kṣatriya caste.

VAISYAS:

The Vaiśya or the mercantile class comes third next to the Brahmanas and Kṣatriyas in the social order. In the Aitareya Brahmana they are described as paying tribute to another to be lived on by another, to be oppressed at will. Though the Brahmana literature attributes Vaiśya a low status, the Buddhist and Jaina literature depict them as a wealthy community favoured and respected by the ruling class. Hiuen Tsang noticed only trade as the occupation of the Vaiśyas. Smṛiti writers prescribe duties like trade, commerce, agriculture and domestication of animals to the Vaiśyas. They were recognised as Vanika putra and Panyājibi in early medieval times.

The medieval traders were divided into three categories namely the local traders, the travelling traders and professional traders. Kalinga established itself as maritime power in the ancient times. Kalidasa has depicted the ruler of Kalinga as 'Mahodadhipati' or lord of the sea in his Raghuvamśa. There were a number of ports in the Kalingan coast. Famous among them
were Che-li-ta-lo, Palur, Dantapur, and Pithunda. Maritime activities made the people of Kalinga rich and prosperous. In the folk life of Orissa we find festivals which relate the maritime trade of ancient Orissa with foreign countries.

In the inscription of the period under review we find references to Vanikas, who constituted the Vaisya caste. Bhanja rulers made references to this community in their inscription. Besides maritime trade with south Asiatic islands like Java, Sumatra, Borneo, and Burma, Ceylon and China internal trade also flourished. The merchant communities sold different commodities in the hattas which were situated in the vicinity of towns and villages or important centres. In Kongoda there were "ten small towns which abound in many rare and valuable articles." The Hamsesvara temple inscription of Bhauma queen Madhava devi speaks of a hatta, set up near the Madhavesvara temple. Angulaka identified with Angul was a prosperous centre of the merchant community known from the Bhanja charter.

Efficient Vaisyas were appointed in military and administrative services. The title Nayaka mentioned in the early Ganga inscription shows that they served as military officers in medieval times. Some of them were appointed as scribes. The Baud grant and the Singhava grant of Ranabhanjadeva of Khinjali manḍala reveals that Sivanaga and Padmanāva the scribes of the above grants were Vaisyas. The Vaisyas were also appointed as Pedapāla, Pustapāla, Mahaksapatalika etc. in the civil administration.
The caste system was not rigid in early medieval times. Very often the upper orders switched over to the profession of lower order. The tribals and the lower order often joined the military services and moved upward in the ladder of Varṇāśrama system. The upward mobility of the caste system was a marked feature in Orissan society.

SUDRAS:

The fourth position in the Varṇāśrama system was occupied by the Sudras. The Smriti writers attribute a humble and wretched life for the Sudras. They had to serve the three higher castes. The Sudras were not allowed to hear or repeat the Vedas. Yajñāvalakya smriti describes the Sudras as people adopting various professions like rearing of cattle, trade, painting, dancing, music etc. They had also right to sell oil, ghee, and milk.

The Sudras were free to adopt any profession that suited them. Sometimes it was found that some professions were common both to Sudra and Vaisya. The line of demarcation between them was fast fading out. They were known more by their castes rather than the Varṇa of a Vaisya or Sudra. The epigraphic records show there were many castes in the medieval society in Orissa namely Kumbhakāra (potters), Kāmsakāra (bellmetal worker) Kaivarta (boat-man), Sutradhara (weaver), mālākāra (florist), tailaka (oilman), nāpita (barber), gāndhika (perfumers),
lauhakāra (blacksmith), Swarṇakāra (gold smith), saundhika (distillers), Gokuṭa (milk man), charmakaras (leather workers), karmakāras (carpenters) etc. These castes become hereditary in character.

It was found that sometimes craft became localised and some village or localities were inhabited by a particular class of artisan. The Khurda plate of Madhavaraja mentions about villages Kumbhārachheda and Kumbhārapadraka. Pottery was one of the popular industry in India which flourished from the days of Indus Valley civilisation.

The blacksmiths manufactured different types of agricultural industrial implements as well as weapons of war. Madhavarāja repulsed the army of his enemies by the sharp edge of his sword. The Bhauma-Kara king Sivakara extorted his enemies fortune with the power of his bright sword. In the sculpture in the Vaital temple different types of war weapons are represented. The blacksmiths were very useful to the society.

The sculpture in the temples of our period reveal beautiful ornaments worn by the males and females suggest the existence of goldsmiths in the society. The reference to golden feet, golden stick also indicate the popularity of gold ornaments. Hiuen Tsang mentions pearl being used in the ornaments in Kongoda. The discovery of beautiful bronze images from Banpur indicate the existence of bronze-smith during that period. The inscriptions were also engraved on the copper plates.
Magnificent temples were constructed during the Sailodbhava and Bhauma-Kara period. The artistic excellency and craftsmanship are exposed in the chiselled stone sculptures in the temple by the stone cutter (Sīla Kūṭa) a sudra community. It seems that furnitures were also used by the rich and royal families which were made by the carpenters.

The Bhauma-Kara records refer to tantuvāyas (weavers). The Mahabharata also reveals that Kalinga produced best type of cotton goods. The textile industry as well as dress making made a gradual progress during the Bhauma-Kara period.

Besides there were people who belonged to other castes e.g. oilman, perfumers, leather workers, milkmen and brewers living in the villages and towns. Drinking of wine became popular with the growing popularity of the Tantric cult. A Sulki charter refers to a village inhabited by brewers. The Bhauma-Kara records also frequently mention about the Saundhikas. This community must be very rich and popular in the villages and towns of Orissa in early medieval times.

With the decline of trade and commerce in the later period however some artisan groups degraded to the lower strata and suffered from various social taboos like untouchability. Some professional groups like peasants were degraded from Vaiśya to Sudra, hence Hiuen Tsang saw Sudras engaged in farming.
Many of this community worked for wealthy tradesman, land-lords or influential persons on a regular wage basis. They were subjected to relatively light taxation. The Bhauma-Karas refer to light taxation in their charter.

There was an upward movement of this community in early medieval times. Many Sudras were promoted to the Kšatriya status and many of them claimed the status of a Vaiśya. With the rise of Śākta Tantric cult some of the Sudras gave up their duty and turned into wandering mendicants. Many tantric teachers and Siddhāchāryas were from fisherman, leather worker, wood worker communities.

**ANTYAJAS:**

The antajyas collectively known as chāndālas who were the out castes and were untouchables. They lived in the outskirts of the village to avoid contact with other classes. The Charyāpadas, which were composed by the Tantric Siddhas, give their names. Some of them e.g. Hadipā, Dombi, Herukā, Kanhapā belonged to Hadi and Domba group.

The Jaina texts refer to Chāndālas who belonged to this group. They took on low profession like hunting animals, selling baskets made of bamboo, and cleaning hides, and snake charming etc.
ABORIGINES OR TRIBALS:

Through the process of acculturation many tribals were assimilated into the lower varnas of the Hindu Varṇaśārama system. But there were many who remained outside the Hindu fold and were firm in their own culture and religion.

The tribals were commonly known as Savaras. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa refers to them as non-Aryans living in the Vindhyā mountain regions. Pliny has described them as Surai and Ptolemy as Savara. The Charyāpadas of the Vajrayāna Siddhācharis mention the tribals as dombg, savaras and bhils. Kadambari of Banabhatta gives a clear picture of the savaras.

The life style of the savaras can be understood from the Charyāgitikas. The Savaras put on tiger skins and adorned their bodies with feathers of peacock necklaces and ear-rings of guṇa fruit. They dwelt far away from the human habitation. Hunting was their main occupation and drinking wine was their usual habit. The gradual process of sanskritisation among the savaras occurred in this period. According to a tradition the deity lord Jagannath was first worshipped by the savaras.

The Gonds were another group of aborigines. The Bonai plates of Vinitatuṅga refer to the ruler as 'astādasa-gandamādhipati'. The Dhenkanal plate of Kulastambha addresses the Śulki king as 'sakalagandamanātha. The Jaypur plate of Dhruvananda refers to the Nanda kingdom as Gondamā.
Thus Gondas were tribals living in Orissa who played a prominent role in the political history of Orissa. The Pulindas and the Bhuyans were also tribals who lived in the forest tracts of Orissa.

The spread of Brahmanical ideology helped the process of acculturation of the tribal belts of Orissa. The economic pursuits and heredity were the two factors that were responsible for the growth of a number of castes and subcastes in Orissa in the subsequent period.

**POSITION OF WOMEN:**

The women occupied a respectable position in the society. There was a marked difference in the status of women in Orissa during the rule of the two major dynasties - the Sailodbhavas and the Bhauma-Karas. In ancient times women had certain limitations. Though they were efficient, learned and wise they were barred from becoming dejure sovereigns.

Bana's Harsacharita depicts Rajyasrī, an intelligent and accomplished lady. She played an important role in the administration of Kanauj. In ancient times we have evidences of queens playing significant part in the state administration. The Sātavāhana queen Nayanikā was a regent of her minor son and was at the head of the administration. The queens in Vākaṭaka and Chālukya families also took active role in the administration of their kingdom.
In the early times the women however, were restricted within the four walls and engaged in household activities. The Smṛitis emphasize absolute devotion of wives to the household activities and obedience to their husbands. Madhātithī\textsuperscript{179} illustrates that she should render all personal service to the husband. Further equal legal rights can be claimed by the wife along with her husband before the king.\textsuperscript{180}

Apart from the household activities, the women took active part in religious function along with their husbands.

The period under discussion show women were reserved and were not exposed in public during the Śailodbhava rule. Perhaps the ancient traditions and customs were followed by the people. And it was certainly a male dominated society. We rarely come across any instance of women participating in public or political activities. The inscriptions of the Śailodbhavas are silent about the queens. Only in the Banpur plates\textsuperscript{181} of Dharmarāja the queen Kalyāṇa Devī is mentioned as donating land in favour of the Jaina saints Nasichandra and Pṛṇḍhachandra. We can assume that the society in 6th-7th century was a traditional one where freedom was not granted to the women.

Surprisingly enough, we find a marked difference in the status of women in 8th century A.D. As many as six queens of the Bhaumakara dynasty ruled Orissa not as regents but as de-jure and de-facto rulers. This is a rare example of predominance of women in the society in the contemporary history of
India. The Bhauma-Kara queens ascended the throne assuming imperial titles like Mahārajadhīrāja, Paramabhaṭṭāraka etc.

Tribhuvanamahādevī I, the first female ruler of this dynasty "ascended the throne like Kātyāyinī."\(^{182}\) She faced rebellions from many quarter but was able to suppress them with determination.\(^{183}\) She has been described as 'having taken up the burden of administration of entire kingdom ....... and shining like Śesa holding up the entire earth on her hoods.'\(^{184}\) She was a good administrator and had good control over her officers and the feudatories. The Talcher plate\(^{185}\) of Subhākar IV glorifies her reign in these words "during her rule the country advanced in three branches of administration, the foes were extirpated, the glory spread abroad and there was harmony among the people." The glory and pride of the Bhauma-Kara queen also corroborated by the contemporary geographers of Arabia and Persia. Hudūd-al-Alam states that "the royal power belongs to a woman who is called rayina (rāni or queen) and the Dahuma (Bhauma) does not consider any one superior to himself."\(^{186}\)

Besides Tribhuvana Mahādevī, another queen Daṇḍī Mahādevī also maintained authority and secured defence in the frontier parts of the kingdom. The hostile and formidable rulers were subdued by her power.\(^{187}\)

The other famous reigning queens of this dynasty were Prithvi Mahādevī, Gauri Mahādevī, Vakula Mahādevī, and Dharma Mahādevī. These queens not only safeguarded the kingdom
successfully but also attained glory for their inclination towards religion and culture. They donated lands freely to the Brahmanas and constructed temples. Vatsa devī installed the image of Chāmunḍā at Jajpur. Another Bhauma queen Mādhava devī constructed Madhaveswara temple at Jajpur.

It is interesting to note that though issueless the Bhauma-Kara kings did not adopt a son to inherit the throne. Though there were male relations, the widow queens ascended the throne ignoring their claims. They were even supported by other ruling families like the western Gangas, the Somavamsis and the Bhanjās.

The right of accession by the female heirs, was accepted by the people of Orissa at that time. Scholars attribute the high status of women in the political affairs to the growing popularity of Śakti cult in Orissa. Another factor may be the tribal origin of the ruling families and the tribal culture which had a great impact on the society.

Women in the aristocratic families received education in different śāstras. Lakṣmikarā was one of the Buddhist Siddhas who studied Buddhist philosophy called Sahajayāna. The queens of the Bhauma-Kara family who were proficient in administration must have adequate education for this purpose. The Bhanjās and the Svetaka ganga families also attributed high status to their queens. Vijaya Mahādevi, the queen of Raṇabhaṅjadeva donated a grant. The records of the Bhanjās of
Khijjiṅgakoṭṭa also reveal the fact that it was customary for the chief queens to remain present at the time of making land grants by the sovereigns. The queens in the royal families took active part in the religious and cultural activities. Giridevi, the mother of Gopachandra, Bappa devī, the mother of Śailodbhava ruler Dharmarāja had a proud social status.

The Purdah system was not in vogue in Orissa during our period. The women enjoyed equal status with men. The Bhauma-Kara queens successfully reigned Orissa and resisted internal revolts and external aggression. The sculptures of this period in the temples show the active part played by the women in socio-cultural life. In Sisiresvara temple a female door-keeper can be seen with all her grace.

There is no reference to practice of Sati in the contemporary records. After the death of their husbands the Bhauma queens. Tribhuvana Mahādevī, Prthvi Mahādevī, Gaurī Mahādevī, Vakula Mahādevī, and Dharma Mahādevī lived as widows and ruled their kingdom. Rajyashri, the sister of Harshavardhana also lived as a widow after the death of her husband. Sati system crept into the society in a later period. In general the widows lived a life of austerity and self restraint.

Although the epigraphic records of this period do not throw light upon the existence of devadāsī system, it may be assumed that with the construction of temples, this institution
developed probably in the later part of our study. Dancing girls were employed in the Buddhist monasteries to please the deities and to attract the rich people mainly the traders, merchants and members of royal families who made rich endowments to these monasteries. Buddhist monasteries sprang up in different parts of the Bhauma-Kara kingdom and probably received royal endowments. In the Talcher plate of Sivakara, we find reference to nunnery in Jayāśrama Vihār. A Somavamsi charter of Karṇakesarī refers to Rāṇi Karpuraśrī who was the daughter of a Mahārī or devadasi in Solanapur Mahā Vihār. Instead of the names of her father and grandfather reference is made to her mother and grandmother. This suggests that the profession of dancing in the temples was carried on from the time of her grandmother. The virgins dedicated to a noble cause later degenerated into temple dancers.

Prostitution, as a feature of Indian society prevailed from the ancient times. The Arthasastra refers to an officer appointed by the Maurya rulers as the superintendent of the prostitutes. However we do not get evidences from the inscriptions about this system in Orissa. Only in one charter, the Taltali plate of Dharma Mahādevī there is a faint allusion to "women of loose character." We may assess that during the period of our study the profession was not encouraged much and the prostitutes occupied low social status in the society.
MARRIAGE:

Marriage is regarded as one of the most sacred and important institution of the Hindu society. It had three purposes: the promotion of religion by the performance of household sacrifices, progeny, whereby the line was continued and lastly for sexual pleasure.203

The epigraphic records of the period show the anulomā and pratiloma marriages were in vogue among the different social groups. The royal families established matrimonial relations irrespective of caste. The Bhāṇja princesses Vakula Mahādevī and Dharma Mahādevī married to the Bhauma-Kara rulers. Trikalingamahādevī a princess of the Somavamsis wedded to a Bhaṇja king Vidyādharabhaṇja.205 The Bhaṇja king Nettabhaṇja had two queens - Kṣatri Devī of Kṣatriya caste and Kaivarta devī of fishermans caste. But in general marriages were arranged after consultation and study of the auspicious physical characteristics, omens etc. In case of higher castes usually the couple belonged to same caste but of different gotras. But the system was not strictly followed in Orissa which was primarily a tribal kingdom.

Out of the eight206 different types of marriage mentioned in the Hindu law texts Prajāpatya and Gāndharva marriages were popular in Orissa. The rāksasa type of marriage was also prevalent in Orissa. The Bhauma-Kara king Sivakara I took away in victory the daughter of the king of Rāṇha along with the latters fortune.207 The sculptural representation
of the beloved waiting for her lover in the Vaital temple shows the prevalence of Gandharva marriage in that period.

Marriage ceremonies were performed by the priests with much pomp and gaiety. On the walls of the Bharatesvar and Parasuramesvar temple the marriage scenes are depicted. Through a grand procession the bridegroom used to go to the bride's place. The brahmana Priest performs the marriage by uniting the hands of the bride and the groom through recitations from the sacred text. And at the end of the ceremony the bride bids farewell to the family members and goes to the in-laws house in a closed palanquin.

Child marriage was not prevalent in the early medieval times. Probably dowry system or making a gift at the time of marriage was popular in Orissa. The Trilingi plates of Devendravarman reveal that on the occasion of a marriage a village was donated to Pillasārmā and his sister Pillikā svāmī. Anantavarman, the early Ganga ruler also donated a village Talathe to a brahmana Viṣṇu Somāchāravya on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter. Rich and aristocratic people must have made this custom much popular in that period.

Polygamy was in vague in Orissa from the ancient times. Kharavela had two queens. The kings of different dynasties had more than one wife. The Bhaṅja king Nettabhāṅja had three wives - Kṣatri devī, Meghavāli devī and Kaivarta devī. The Bhauma-Kara king Subhākara had two queens Gaurī Mahādevī and Vakula Mahādevī.
Nunnery was allowed in the Buddhist monasteries and temples. In some inscriptions we find reference to the nuns and Brahmacharins living a secluded life, free from family bondage and luxury.

**FOOD AND DRINK:**

The food habit is another important feature of the social organisation. Orissa is famous as a rice producing state from the ancient times. Hiuen Tsang states that the soil of Wu Cha was very rich and fertile. In Kongoda or Kung-yu-to there was "rich harvests." In Ka-leng-ka or Kalinga "there were regular seed time and harvests, fruits and flowers grew profusely." From the above statements it can be assumed that Orissa was very fertile and full of eatables.

Vegetarian food was more popular with the people in early medieval times. The Buddhists and Jainas as well as the higher caste Hindus lived on vegetarian items whereas the lower order and the non-Aryan communities used to take meat. The most commonly used food cereals were probably rice, wheat and barley. The ancient and medieval literature refer to rice (tandula) which was the most famous cereal in Kalinga. The Laṅkāvatāra sūtra describes rice, wheat, barley, three types of pulses, milk and milk products and molasses as the chief diet of the people. Boiled rice was the staple food of the people. The Hindol plate of Subhākara mentions rice. In the temples charu, a food item was offered to the deity. This was
prepared by boiling rice with milk and clarified butter. Very often we come across the reference to this item in connection with the temples. Rice cooked with curd and ghee was also in vogue in the temples. Jayarampur plate of Gopachandra also makes a reference to rice.

Hiuen Tsang in his accounts has mentioned fruits of different varieties grew profusely in Odra and Kalinga. There were fruit gardens known as Vātaka where different types of fruits were grown. The Sumandala plate of Dharmarāja, Ranapur plates, Banapur plates of Dharmarāja, the Sailodbhava ruler we come across the word Vātaka. Beside the Early Ganga records also refer to Vātakas. Among the fruits coconut, mango, bel, palm, tamarind, plantain, jackfruit etc. were popular in Orissa.

Another common food article was milk as well as milk products. The Bhauma-Kara plates frequently mention qokuta which denotes milkmen. There are references to gohiri, gopatha and gopachara in the Bhauma-Kara charters. These words are associated with cow and since Vedic times cow was the most important possession of man. Naturally, therefore milk, curd, cheese, ghee etc. comprised one of the essential food item in the daily menu. Hiuen Tsang also stated milk, curd and butter included in the food articles of the students of Nalanda Mahāvihāra. These might have been taken by the students in the Buddhist Vihāras of Orissa also. Besides in the temples charu a special preparation for the deities was
made with milk, rice and clarified butter. Thus milk and milk products constituted one of the most important food article among the people of Orissa.

Among the sweetening ingredients honey and jaggery were very much famous. In the Dhenkanal plate of Tribhuvana Mahādevi27 the word honey is mentioned. In many charters of this period we find the reference to bee - the carrier of honey. In the contemporary records we come across names of the places like Guḍḍa viṣaya228 and Guḍa ṣarkara229 which suggest jaggery was one of the sweetening agent in the food articles in Orissa. Different types of sweetmeats were prepared for offerings to the deities and at homes on the festive occasions. The system still continues in Orissa.

Among the agricultural products besides the food grains, vegetable, pulses and oil seeds must be grown in plenty. Though the inscriptions do not throw much light on them, it is acceptable that in the fertile land where food cereals and fruits were grown abundantly, common vegetables and other agricultural products must be grown to cater to the need of the people. Vegetables like pumpkin, cucumber, gourd, plantain, radish etc were grown and among the spices ginger, cumin, pepper, mustard, camphor etc were used for the preparation of dishes.230 Oil seeds like mustard, sesamum were grown in early medieval times.

Salt constituted one of the most important non-agricultural product consumed by the people. Samudrakarabōṇḍha
mentioned in the Kumuranga plate of Daṇḍi Mahādevī probably refers to the embankment of sea water for the manufacture of salt. The long coast line of Orissa encouraged for the manufacture of salt which was an essential commodity. Even the name Lavapahāra or Lopabhāra\textsuperscript{232} suggests the importance of this article.

Non-vegetarian food items like fish and meat were taken by all the people except the higher order - the brāhmaṇas. The tribal population living in the hilly and forest tracts were non-vegetarian as hunting was their main occupation.\textsuperscript{233} In some of the contemporary records we find the word Vali, which means sacrifices in the temples. With the ascendancy of Śaktism and Tantricism animal sacrifice was fostered in early medieval Orissa. The people in Orissa\textsuperscript{234} usually used to take the meat of deer, goat, hare and tortoise. In the records the delegation over deer and tortoise is referred to.

Quite a large number of rivers flowing through the heart of Orissa provided fishes - one of the favourite delicacy of the people. The sculptures in the temple depict the pictures of fishes. In one of the temple, goddess Varahi is shown with fish in one land.\textsuperscript{235} The fishermen community known as Kaivarta was living in Orissa who were engaged solely for the profession of catching fish.

Drinking of wine was prevalent in the society. The epigraphic records of the Bhauma-Kara kings often refer to the
saunḍhikas or brewers. They are also mentioned in the Bhaṇja and Ganga records. Hiuen Tsang mentioned brahmanaṣ in India used to drink wine made from grapes and sugarcane. Ibn Khurdadhbhi who paid a visit to Orissa during the reign of the Bhauma-Karas noticed the Kṣatriyas drinking wine. Alberuni speaks of Sudras drinking wine. The Charyapadas mention the drinking habit popular among the Savaras. Thus it may be assumed that drinking of wine was prevalent among all the sections except the brahmanaṣ. In fact Medhatithi interpret Manu's text to mean that three kinds of sura or wine (viz. those made from rice flour, molasses, honey or grapes or Madhuka flowers) were forbidden to Brāhmaṇaṣ, the Kṣatriyaṣ or Vaisyaṣ permitted to take the last two kinds. Large number of Madhuka trees are found all over Orissa and the inscriptions of medieval times frequently refer to Madhuka trees. This suggest that wine made from Madhuka flower was popular among the common people. The higher castes and the aristocrats used to take wine made from grapes, honey or sugarcane.

It was a period which witnessed the ascendancy of Tantricism all over India. Orissa, undoubtedly was a famous seat of Śaktism and Tantricism. Sacrifices and drinking are closely associated with this cult as religious rituals. So drinking was in vague and the brewers emerged as a significant community in the Orissan society. However the Buddhist and Jaina canonical laws banned meat eating and drinking.
DRESS, ORNAMENT, COSMETICS:

Colourful, befitting costumes, jewellery and ornaments of different designs and cosmetics were an enduring passion that developed amongst men and women since earliest times. However the pattern, and style varied from generation to generation. The epigraphic records of the period under discussion do not throw much light on the dress, coiffure, ornaments and cosmetics. However we find a glimpse of the varieties of costumes, ornaments and coiffures from the sculptures of the period.

Males in general wore a lower garment or dhoti (antariya). The lower garment does not reach the knee and the folded ends are tucked in front. Sometimes to secure it a scarf is tied on the loins. In order to secure the dhoti and the scarf hanging from the waist a girdle is tied around the waist. The girdles were of different designs and sometimes were studded with beads or crystals. Men also sometimes used to put on an upper garment or chadar, which was put across the chest covering the left shoulder. The right shoulder was left bare.

Females generally wore both the lower garment or saree and an upper garment or uttariya. The lower garment with graceful folds reaches up to the knee and the folds are gathered and passed between the legs and tucked on the back. The saree is secured by a girdle around the waist like that of the males.
The dancing girls used a close fitting tunic or pyjama.

The upper portion of the body or the breasts usually covered by a bodice (kañchuka) with strings on both sides tied in the back. Sometimes a long scarf loosely hangs over the shoulder. In some temples the women figures are dressed in petticoats held round the waist by a girdle. Needle stiched dresses were worn by the people. Dress making industry developed in that period. The women were fond of colourful, embroidered clothes.

The amorous couples in Vaital temple expose the uncovered breasts. The exposure of the breasts can not be considered as indecent as they are the symbol of motherhood. Nudity in sculptures may be due to the artistic contention of the age. But this was not the general practice. Usually the upper part of the body was covered with saree or a scraf or by a chauli (bodice).

Men and women wear different types of clothes. Silk and linen clothes were popular among the aristocrats and rich and affluent families. As there was cultural and commercial ties with China, Chinese silk or Chinamsuka might be imported from China. Silk costumes were generally worn by the members of the royal and aristocratic families. In the Mahabharata it is mentioned that the Pandavas were gifted silk garments known as dukula and kausik by the Kalingas. However people in general used cotton cloth. The forest tracts provided cotton and silk cotton (Salmali) trees which helped
the textile industry in Orissa. In fact we come across the weavers community (tantavāyas) in the Bhauma-Kara inscription. Fine cotton garments with designs, colours and embroideries were great passions of the people in Orissa in early medieval times.

The sculptures found in the Vaital, Parasuramesvar, the sixty-four Yogini temples and hoards of bronze images discovered at Banpur depict the variety of ornaments used by the men and women in Orissa. Both men and women were very much fond of ornaments. In Khandagiri and Udayagiri caves male and female figures are associated with ear-rings, necklaces, bracelets and anklets.249

Usually various ornaments like Kundala, ratnahāra, keyura, kaṅkāpa, mekhalā, nupura etc were worn by men and women in early medieval times.250 The inscriptions of this period also describe various ornaments which adorned different parts of the body of the kings and queens. The Kumurang plate of Daṇḍī Mahādevi and Taltali plate252 of Dharma Mahādevi refer to necklaces strung with pearl and foot ornaments (mañjira) which were very popular along with other ornaments. The necklaces were of two types - short and long. Short necklaces were tied close to the neck with different designs. They were made of rectangular, circular or petalled beads or precious stones.253 The long type generally hanged down the chest. In many cases the strings of different shaped beads were attached to a locket or a pendant in the central position which was
studded with precious stones or pearls or gems. The necklaces were made of precious metals like gold or silver. The jewellers of that period were skillful enough to make beautiful floral patterns and geometrical designs to add to the taste of the people.

Ear ornaments or kundalas and karnaphulas were also of different designs. Sometimes they were circular or square studs with a hole and or crescent shaped in some other. Natural patterns representing a flower or leaf was carved out skillfully by the jeweller. Men, women both were fond of ear-rings of different types. In Vaital temple we come across beautiful ornaments worn by the Apsaras.

Both male and female figures in the sculptures decorate their hands with bangles and bracelets. Sometimes less number of bangles were worn by the women and at times number of bangles upto the elbow were worn. The designs of armlets worn by men and women donot differ much in their designs. They were made of costly metals and studded with precious stones.

The next important ornament adored by men and women of this period was the girdle. Girdles were worn round the waist like a belt to tie up the lower garment and secure it. The girdles were of different designs and usually were heavy. The sculptures depict girdles with a central locket with petalled bonds or strings of knots on both sides. Sometimes they were simple in design while in some cases beautiful ornamentation is made to increase its beauty.
Anklets or *nupura* was also a popular ornament worn by the women and the dancers. The Kumurang plate of Dandimahadevi refer to *māñjira* or anklet to increase the beauty of the foot. A bronze image of a woman found from Banpur is seen fastening her anklet. Besides the female figures in the Vaital temple are found with anklets of simple design. The nose ornament was not found in any of the sculpture of this period. Perhaps it was introduced in a later period.

Thus it may be summed up that men and women of our period were extremely fond of different types of ornaments to decorate their body. There is not a single figure of either male or female without ornaments on its body. The rich people could afford costly metals, precious stones, pearls and ivories for making ornaments. The poor people used ornaments made of silver, copper and ordinary beads. The *charyapadas* refer to ear and neck ornaments used by the savaras made of *guñja* fruit.

**Coiffure:**

The sculptures of the period depict the hair-do of both the sexes of different styles. Both the sexes grew long hair which was combed backward and made into chignon or knots. The knots were of different styles. Sometimes men had two knots arranged vertically above the head. The top knot is either roundish, or spiral bun shaped in form. Sometimes locks of curled hair or ringlets are left on the forehead. Sometimes
The spiral bun shaped knot is rested on one side of the head or the shoulder. The knots were bordered by curled locks or bands were provided to support it.

The usual practice with the common people was to comb the hair upward and to arrange it in a judā at the back. The judā was of different shape and size e.g. round, elongated, loosely tied or coiled. Curly hair was a fashion popular among the women. In the Kumurang plate the curly hair of lovely women is referred to.

In all the hair styles of men and women beautiful bond of string is used between the fore head and hair locks. Pearl strings or ordinary chords are used to tie the hair at the top. The rich ladies decorated their coiffure with different types of head ornament. The figures in Vaital temple, Sisiresvar temple, Ratnagiri, Udayagiri and Lalitagiri depict different types of hair-dos popular among the people.

**Cosmetics:**

Though we do not know much about the use of cosmetics from the sculptures and inscriptions, however it is acceptable that men and women who were fond of costumes ornaments and coiffure. So the use of cosmetics and perfumes might be a passion with them.
Rajasekhara in *Kavyamimansa* gives a complete account of cosmetics and toilette used by women in India e.g. sandal, agollochum, saffron, and musk, saffron with bee's wax applied to the lips, fragrant oil to the hair, camphor powder etc. In Orissa women in high families must be enjoying such luxury items. Women coloured their feet with lac-dye and applied vermillion in the forehead. A female figure applying vermillion in the forehead and looking into a mirror is shown in the Vaital temple. In the Talcher plates of Sivakara, it is mentioned that women decorated *patrânkura* in their cheeks. Collyrium was applied to the eyes and sandal paste to their bodies and scented oil to the hair. The *Āgama Sanksipta Sāra* describes the practice of colouring teeth and painting the breasts by women.

**Entertainments, game and pastime:**

In the early medieval times dice playing, hunting, fishing, taming of birds, music, dance, wrestling and acrobatics, festivals and yatras were main source of entertainments.

Dice-playing was one of the favourite indoor games in ancient and medieval times. This game was very popular among the kings and members of the royal family. The *Arthasāstra* refers to an officer as superintendent of dice playing. The *charyāgitika* also refers to gambling. Not only the kings and officers even the brahmins were also fond of this game. Dice
playing or gambling was so popular and widespread that the writers of this period warned the people of its devastating effect. 269

Most parts of Orissa mainly Kongoda and south-west part of Orissa were forest clad territories. The natural condition made hunting of animals and birds a favourite pastime. The tribal and aboriginees in the hinterland had hunting as their chief occupation. Hunting scene is also depicted in the sculptures.

Kalidasa in Kumarasambhava 270 has referred to elephant catching in Kalinga. In fact Kongoda was famous for big "dark coloured elephants which were capable of long journeys." 271 The lintel of the Bharatesvara temple contains a frieze depicting the scene of elephant catch. 272 The people of Kongoda were experts in catching the elephants and taming them. Even Madhyamarāja I knew the art of taming elephants. 273

Taming of birds and animals was also very popular with the people in Orissa. In the Vaival and Parasuramesvara temples figure of woman with parrot is depicted.

Fishing was one of the outdoor pastime. Fish comprised a favourite dish of the people. The network of rivers, streams and water reservoir must have tempted the people to cultivate this hobby.

Music and dance held a great place in the daily life of the nobles and royal families in Orissa. The temples of this
period depict dancing figures and various musical instruments being played by the musicians. The songs of Tantric Buddhist siddhas refer to dance and music both vocal and instrumental. Among the musical instruments lyre and violin were popular with the Siddhas. The sculptures of the period represent different types of musical instruments veena, Bheri, Turi, Cowch shell, mrdanga, kartala, drums and flute were famous.

Dance scene is depicted on the lintel of Parasuramesvar temples which belonged to 7th century A.D. scenes of females playing lyre and cymbals are also found. The dancers expose different mudras and styles. In the Sisiresvara and Vaital temples at Bhubanesvar the dancing Natraj on the front facade can be noticed. The Odra magadhi music mentioned in the Natya sāstra of Bharata of 2nd century A.D. developed in Eastern India. Orissa made a significant contribution to the development of music and dance in early medieval period. Later this Odraragadhi music developed into Odissi music and dance. Music and dance performances were main source of enjoyment to the people in the court and in the temples also.

Theatrical performances also developed as a source of great amusement to the people. The period between the first and eighth centuries A.D. saw the rise of great dramatic authors. Dramas were staged on religious or royal ceremonies and public or private celebrations of importance. Harsavardhana who was a great scholar of sanskrit literature himself wrote dramas and they were staged before the people. Among the dramas written
during the period under discussion mention should be made to \textit{Anārgha Rāghava} which was written by Murari Misra.\footnote{279} This drama deals with the story of Ramayana and was staged on the occasion of car festival of Lord Jagannath at Puri. Another drama written by Bhatta Narayana was \textit{Venisanhāra}. Besides these we do not have any other works of that period. Probably they were lost in course of time. It is reasonable to assume that dramas containing stories from the Puranas and epics were staged before the people as a source of enjoyment on festive occasions.

Wrestling, acrobatics, animal or bird fighting, wooden and eastern toys for the children were other means of amusements. Cities and towns of Orissa also provided parks and gardens for the people who spend their leisures enjoying the serenity and beauty of nature.

The people in the urban centres full of beauties and bounties occasionally arranged gosthis or social gatherings for merrimaking and good will. Vātsyāyana\footnote{281} states that gosthis consisted of men of common cultural intellect, social status and professions. Arranged in a temple or in a rich man's house gosthis provided pleasure to the people in forms of drama, music, and poetic discussion. Here the scholars as well as men of fine arts got a chance to expose their skill in the respective fields through deliberations concerning art, craft, music, poetics and literary contexts.
The Śailodbhava and the Bhauma-Karas who had a great inclination towards literature, learning, and fine arts must have encouraged such gatherings in Orissa.

Festivals were another source of recreation and along with amusements, dance, music and drama they added colour and flavour to the social life.

Among the festivals in Orissa the car festival which is referred to in Anārgha Rāghava, Holi, Lakṣmī Pujā, Śivarātri, Durga Pujā or Dussehra and Saṅkrānti Pujā must be very much popular in the public life. The agriculturists and the merchant community started worshipping goddess Lakṣmī long before the 1st and 2nd century A.D. As Orissa primarily an agricultural state Lakṣmī Pujā must be celebrated with utter devotion and honour in medieval times as it is today. The ruling dynasties e.g. the Śailodbhavas, the Bhanjas etc. were great worshipper of the feet of Hara, naturally therefore Śivarātri must have been celebrated throughout Orissa. With the ascendancy of Saktism during 8th-9th century A.D. goddess Durga was worshipped in various places of Orissa. Besides auspicious days like the solar and lunar eclipses and the saṅkrānti days were also observed by the religious minded people.

Besides the Brahmanical festivals, the Buddhist and Jainas and the tribal people also observed auspicious days with dignity and devotion.
Beliefs and Superstitions:

Many popular beliefs and superstitions existed in the Hindu society from ancient times. *Matsya Purāṇa* gives a long and systematic accounts of omens and prescribes adequate remedies to avert the evil effects. Crowling of certain birds and insects, dropping of objects, eye winking etc were believed to be good and bad signs. *Medhatithi* illustrates popular superstitions, magic spells and the power of mantras. It was an age of tantra and mantra, people believed in tantras and mantras to be cured of various ailments. Water sanctified with mantra believed to have the power to drive away the evil spirits and their impacts. People believed in ghosts and spirits.

Gift of land was considered in this period as the most meritorious deed. Not only the kings but also rich people donated lands to the brahmins to be free from all the evil impacts and to increase religious merit. The Dhenkanal plate of Tribhuvanamahādevī mentions the donation of village Kontaspara to Bhaṭṭa Jagaddhara for bringing down rain. The tradition of granting lands during the occurrences of eclipses established by the Smṛti laws, were observed by the people. Maharaja Tuṣṭikara granted a village when the queen mother was suffering from fever to avert evils. Neṭṭabhaṅja granted lands on behalf of the queen for easy access to heaven. The same king issued a charter during the srāddha of his queen Vasatādevī to gain religious merit.
In medieval times people engaged all important works like marriage, construction of temples, digging wells and tanks, sowing, reaping and harvesting etc after consulting the astrologers. The astrologers (jyotisha), Naimittika (reader of omens) held important position in the society and they could foretell the auspicious or inauspicious days by calculating the movement of heavenly bodies.291

As we discussed earlier, Tantric Buddhism was very much popular in Orissa during the reign of the Bhauma-Karas. Dhāranī literature or protective spells became one of the important aspects. Dhāranīs are a form of protective magical formulae applied to protect the reciters from evil spirits, diseases, sins, theft, snake bites, punishments etc.292 Dhāranīs were enshrined in the stupas and chaityas. They are found in Udayagiri, Lalitagiri, Ratnagiri, Chaudwar, Jajpur, Khadipada, Khiching, Baudh and in Puri district. The famous Buddhist dhārani is 'Ye dharma hetu prabhavā .......

Such was the nature of social life in the time of the Śailodbhavas and Bhauma-Karas. It was a typical Hindu society which flourished on the basis of Varnāśramadharma and caste system. It is difficult to assess the rigidity of caste system and its concomitant evils. Since Islam had not made its appearance it is not desirable to affirm upon the purdah system as an existing evil. The over all picture gleaned from the Inscriptions and Hiuen Tsang's account is one of consistent affluence and not poverty, one of harmony and not discord.
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