Chapter – V

Patronage

In the previous chapter I have analysed the South-Kośalan temples, their emerging regional style and a plethora of issues related to hierarchy, functional aspects of temple sites, religious affiliation and ritual practices. Here I would like to examine the nature of their patronage and the sources of donations. Who were the people and communities participated that in the construction and maintenance of the religious shrines? For a comprehensive analysis of the subject matter, this chapter has been divided into three sections. The first section deals with a review of the existing models and hypothesis on patronage. A critical examination of inscripional data related to patronage is the theme of the second section. The last section delves into an analysis of extant temples and sites to understand the nature of patronage.

(i) Review of Existing Models and Hypotheses

Religious patronage in the early medieval period as a subject of research continues to be dominated by scholars working on state formation, and their arguments are derived from epigraphic sources. Based on the data provided by inscriptions, it is generally argued that the royalty was responsible for the construction of temples.

R.S. Sharma1, the leading scholar of the ‘feudalism’ debate described the post-Gupta period as an era of social crisis (Kali age) and decline of urban centres, trade and metallic currency. This period was also marked by large scale land donation to Brāhmaṇas, religious institutions and secular donees. The land was donated with various immunities (paribhara). According to him

this resulted in the fragmentation and disintegration of the central authority on one hand, and creation of a landed intermediary on the other. This initiated local state formation in both old and newly settled areas. The newly created ruling class patronised the Brāhmaṇas and religious institutions in order to legitimise their rule and these also provided the much needed ideological support to the newly created states.²

Furthermore, Sharma has presented a materialistic view of religious transformation of the period under review. He argued that the cult of bhakti was a reflection of the complete dependence of the tenants or semi-serfs on the landlords.³ This in turn manifested itself in the panchayatana shrine (i.e., main shrine is surrounded by four subsidiaries shrines in four cardinal directions) indicating general social differentiation in which landed magnates were graded in a system of sub-infeudation.⁴ Besides, religious construction and the production of idols were possible only because of surplus agricultural production.⁵

D.N.Jha⁶ is another exponent of the feudal model. While supporting the concept of Indian 'feudalism', he disagrees with the notion of decline of foreign trade as a factor of feudal development. Jha emphasises however, on the concept of the Kaśyapa, which according to him indicates sharp class antagonisms in ancient Indian society.

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Devangana Desai, while agreeing with the feudal dimension of early medieval patronage, also talks about its changing nature from early historic to early medieval period. According to her, the ancient religious art of Bharhut, Sanchi, Karle, Kanheri, Junnar, Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda etc. were patronised mainly by the merchant and commercial class, artisans, and craft guilds as well as group of families. But with the multiplication of feudal chiefs and crystallisation of feudalism, the nature of patronage also changed. The art of the period from c. A.D. 650 to 1300 was supported mainly by kings of different principalities, feudatories, military chiefs, etc. who alone could own and donate land to religious institutions. While she agrees that religious merit accrued from temple building activity, nevertheless she also views it as satisfying the inflated ego and appetite for fame and glory of the aristocratic and royal families of the period who competed with each other in building large and magnificent temples.

Diametrically opposed to the 'Feudal' model is the 'Integrative' model of state formation. The propounder of this model has instead highlighted the integrative role of the Brāhmaṇas and religious institutions. H. Kulke in his monumental work on the political structure of early medieval and medieval Orissa, in general and on the cult of Jagannath, in particular, put forward the theory of the 'integrative' model. He also holds the view that the post-Gupta period was an era of intensive state formation. This has mainly taken place in those areas of South-Asia, which lay at the periphery or even outside the core areas of ancient state formation. But unlike the 'feudal' model, he argued that

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7 Desai, Devangana (2000), 'Art under Feudalism in India' (c. A.D. 500-1300), in D.N. Jha (ed.), The Feudal Order State Society and Ideology in Early Medieval India, New Delhi, pp. 487-496.

the overwhelming majority of early medieval states emerged from a process of continuous agrarian expansion and political integration.9

The land donation to Brāhmaṇas and religious institutions played a seminal role in the shift from chiefdom to imperial kingdom. The Brāhmaṇas were instrumental in the vertical as well as the horizontal legitimation of the king’s authority. Kulke argued that Brāhmaṇas, because of their ritual specialisation and monopoly over Śāstric texts, knowledge of state, administration and political economy bestowed royalty upon the king. This was done through the creation of a genealogy (vamsa) and by vesting Hindu paraphernalia on the ruler. Similarly, their knowledge about agriculture, seasons, iron technology, etc. led to the expansion of agriculture and spread of Brahmanic culture in the peripheral zones. In the peripheral zone the Brāhmaṇas played a crucial role in the acculturation of tribal people through cult appropriation or the inclusion of the autochthonous tribal or local deity into the Brahmanical pantheon and through the construction of hitherto unknown temple architecture.10

Kulke asserts that

“the Brāhmaṇas of the court circle together with those Brāhmaṇas who had been settled in the outer areas had a tremendous influence upon the ‘inner colonisation’ of nuclear areas and maintenance of (Hindu) law and (royal) order. Furthermore, it was mainly due to their influence that these areas were gradually integrated into all Indian spheres of Sanskritic learning and hitherto unknown temple architecture

both indispensable paraphernalia of future Hindu kingship.”

Kulke also emphasised royal patronage to religious institutions, which he called “The Royal Temple Policy’, as an instrument of legitimisation of the king’s authority. The construction of new imperial temples within the core region of the kingdom was one of the ritual measures undertaken by the king to counterbalance the centrifugal forces of the regional kingdom. He pointed out that the king constructed new monumental temples, which exceeded in height sometimes by two or three times from previous temples, and reached a height, which was never achieved again. Through the construction of these temples the Rāja tried to create a new and centralised ritual structure, focused on the new state, its temples and its royal cult.12

A. Eschman13 in her study on the cult of Jagannath reiterates the position taken by Kulke. According to her, the incorporation of tribal and folk religion into Hinduism was a gradual process widely prevalent in the post Buddhist time and such practices became frequent and intense in the medieval times because of two reasons. Firstly, the development of the bhakti cult, and secondly, the emergence of new institutions like the temple, which became an agent of Hinduisation. Royal patronage to such institutions became vital.

Similarly, Upinder Singh’s14 study on Orissa also suggests an integrative role of the Brāhmaṇas and religious institutions. She points out


that large scale land donation to Brāhmaṇas was the prime factor which made possible the transition to statehood and political integration of the kingdom. The period of the formation and proliferation of kingdoms all over Orissa was a period of royal grants to Brahmans and religious institutions, a phenomenon that seems to have had more than a causal connection. Between the fourth and the mid twelfth century, Brāhmaṇas, Brāhmaṇas settlements, and to a lesser extent royally endowed temple establishments had an important integrative function, political as well as cultural.\textsuperscript{15}

But after a through analysis of Orissan inscriptions dated between c. 300 to 1147 A.D. she advocates an altogether different argument regarding the nature of religious endowments. Taking the small number of royal grants in favour of temples, she suggests that intensive temple building activities that occurred in Orissa from the sixth century onwards and the patronage of these temples was not a royal preserve, but perhaps the result of the activities of the elite group such as merchants, military chiefs and nobles.\textsuperscript{16} Her other explanation on the paucity of epigraphic evidence of royal grants to temples is that it was towards the end of the period under review that the organisation of temple worship and liturgy became elaborate and impressive enough for kings to seek to enhance their status by identifying themselves closely with temple establishment. Further, the timing of royal temple-building and patronage was also influenced by competition with political rivals as indicated by the fact that the building of the Puruṣottama Jagannatha temple by Anangavarman Codaganga in the mid-twelfth century seems to have been this king's challenge to the monumental Brhadesvara temple at Tanjore built by Cola rivals.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., pp. 291-292.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., pp. 295-296.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.,
Vidy Dehejia\textsuperscript{18} has also presented a similar argument. In her study on the early stone temples of Orissa, she suggests that royal patronage was not the \textit{raison d'être} for the evolution of the Orissan temple, which displays a continuous development of a strong architectural tradition apparently not affected by political vicissitudes. She further advocates that patronage was no doubt crucial to the building and maintenance of the temple, but this patronage may have come for the most part not from the king but from the nobility and wealthy classes.

B.D. Chattopadhyaya\textsuperscript{19} also adheres to the view of the integrative nature of land donation to Brāhmaṇas and religious institutions. He points out that state formation among the Rajput and in general, was invariably linked with the practice of grants of land to Brāhmaṇas, temples, Buddhist monasteries (vibāras) and Brahmanical monasteries (mathās). Such grants, which reinforced the nexus between royal power and sacred authority, were undoubtedly on the increase in the early medieval period. Royal power, usually having obscure origin required legitimacy, which it procured by extending worldly patronage to the higher caste Brāhmaṇa varṇa. This priestly caste monopolised sacred knowledge and the sacred centres, and in turn, assigned respectable ancestry to new kings. He also talks about different subgroups like Kayastha, merchants, goldsmiths etc. as important patrons of temples.

Michael D. Willis\textsuperscript{20} study on early medieval religious patronage in north India also suggested a similar view. He argued that temple was a complex institution consisting of one or more gods and a number of social

\textsuperscript{18} Dehejia, V. (1979), \textit{Early Stone Temples of Orissa}, New Delhi.


groups who managed the temple’s property and controlled worship. Making a gift to a temple or more correctly to God in temple was seen as a meritorious act in which all could participate according to their means. Gifts were made by all sorts of people but most commonly by the ruling nobility.

Cynthia Talbot\textsuperscript{21} in her study of the Kakatiyas, albeit based on inscriptive data, argued for alternative motives of religious gifting. She pointed out that temple endowment was a replacement of other types of religious observance for the dead such as the sriddha funeral ceremony. According to her, love and reverence for a deceased relative was a compelling motivation for religious gifting. Anxiety over the welfare of a loved one and fear of what lay beyond this worldly existence were hence among the greatest impetus for temple patronage.\textsuperscript{22} She asserted that temple patronage was a means of acquiring religious merit and social prestige and influence. This possibly led to greater control over economic resources including labour. It could provide an entry into the social circle outside one’s kinship or occupational networks, access to property, and labour beyond one’s immediate command. Economic rights and privileges already possessed might have been granted through endowment.\textsuperscript{23}

In recent years some attempt has also been made to ascertain the nature of religious transformation and patronage from a different source. Vijay Nath’s\textsuperscript{24} work is an attempt in this direction. In her research, she has used Puranic texts and anthropological data to trace the process of acculturation. She pointed out that the Purānas were a special category of sacred literature written in a well thought out plan by the Brahmanical ideologues to reach out and acculturate the aboriginal groups to acquired land.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{21} Talbot, C. (2001), \textit{Pre-colonial India in Practice; Society, Region and Identity in Medieval Andhra}, New Delhi.
\item \textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 92-93.
\item \textsuperscript{23} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 117.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Nath, V. (2001), \textit{Puranas and Acculturation, A Historico-Anthropological Perspective}, New Delhi.
\end{itemize}
and to avert a social crisis that emerged from Brahmanical encroachment in the tribal world as well as due to the proselytising activities of the Jaina and Buddhist religious orders. Regarding the modes of acculturation she talked about the decline of market economy, pressure on land, local state formation, large scale land donation, migration of Brahmans from the core to peripheral regions etc., which is similar to other writings on the early medieval period.

Besides the above discussed early medieval centric research, patronage has also been studied from a larger historical perspective of a wider time span. Barbara S. Miller's\textsuperscript{25} edited book \textit{The Power of Art, Patronage in Indian Culture} is a useful contribution in this regard. This book is a collection of articles covering a time span from ancient to colonial period. The essays in this volume are grouped into four broad divisions corresponding to dominant modes of patronage. These are Buddhist and Brahmanical modes of patronage in ancient India, south Indian elaborations of Brahmanical patronage, Islamic patronage under Mughal rule, and modern transformation of the patronage style under the influence of British rule.

In the introductory note Miller and Eaton have rightly pointed out that the literary, artistic and historical evidence of individual royal patronage in India is sufficiently prominent to blind us to other modes of patronage that are vital markers of changing social patterns. Examples of nobles, merchants and village patrons abound throughout Indian history as powerful means through which individual families, guilds, or whole village, bind art to religious, ideological and dynastic purpose.\textsuperscript{26}

Romila Thapar\textsuperscript{27} while dealing with Buddhist patronage of early India focuses on community donation to the building and adornment of monuments as acts of piety. According to her, community patronage in the

\textsuperscript{25} Miller, B.S. ed. (1992), \textit{The Power of Art, Patronage in India Culture}, Delhi.
\textsuperscript{27} Thapar, R. (1992), 'Patronage and Community', in B.S. Miller (ed.), \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 19-34.
early period took the form of dāna given by a group of people who came
together primarily because of common and closely defined religious identity,
and a more closely defined social identity. Community patronage also
involved social relations and a conscious act of exchange. The act of
patronage asserts the status of the patron and in addition articulates the
cohesion of the community making the donation.

In her article Vidya Dehejia\textsuperscript{28} also reiterates similar arguments. She
points out that in the early Buddhist period the donation of single railing,
pillars or even a paving slab brought religious merit to the individual donor,
who was often a humble tradesman or his wife. From the evidence of
inscriptions at Sanchi, Karle, and Mathura she concludes that between 100
B.C. and A.D. 250, sacred monuments were erected through voluntary
contributions of ordinary individuals, including monks, nuns, pilgrims, and
guilds. Significantly, not a single Buddhist image from Mathura was donated
by a royal patron.

However, in the same book patronage in the Gupta and post-Gupta
period are perceived from a different perspective. Miller and Eaton\textsuperscript{29} point
out that collective patronage by groups of lay people remained prominent
during the period of Kuśāṇa rule. In contrast, in the Gupta period Hindu
kings and their courtiers emerged as the most notable patrons of art and
literature. Since these kings were ritually and ideologically dependent on
Brāhmaṇa priests, the pattern of courtly patronage during this period may be
called Brahmanic. This view is also reflected in the writings of Walter Spink
and Devangana Desai.

\textsuperscript{28} Dehejia, V. (1992), 'The Collective and Popular Basis of Early Buddhist Patronage,

\textsuperscript{29} Miller, B. S. and Eaton, R., 'Introduction', pp. 5-6.
Walter Spink\textsuperscript{30} suggests that painted caves and sculptures of Ajanta were made possible by the combined effort by the king and a group of courtiers engaged in competitions for legitimising power of Buddhist piety in its later or Mahayana form. Similarly, Devangana Desai\textsuperscript{31} holds the view that patronage arose from the need of upwardly mobile social groups to legitimise their acquisition of social or political power. She has specially cited the example of the Chandella dynasty's patronage to the shrines at Khajuraho.

The use of ethnographical data is another important aspect of the study of patronage. The lack of historical sources and creation of new research design prompted scholars to visualise the notion of patronage from a different historical perspective. A project titled, "Continuities of Community Patronage and Pilgrimage Temples in Western India" is undertaken by a group of scholars to ascertain the construction, maintenance and continuation of religious shrines and the nature of patronage through documentation of living traditions. This project finally took the shape of a monograph titled, \textit{Ethnography and personhood, Notes from the field}. Meister\textsuperscript{32} in his paper clearly mentions that art historians too often speak of the temple as if built by the king, but they are all built for communities as ritual instruments, the use of which changes. One important function of the temples is to web individuals and communities into a complicated and inconsistent social fabric through time. They survive because communities make use of them in reciprocal relationship of self-preservation, quite removed from the agenda of historical conservation. He further argues that "a temple is not simply a structure of one period or even one community. It moves through time, collecting social lightning and resources. It must be repositioned constantly to survive. If it


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serves one king it may die with that king let each tell its long story: both
temples and the communities they serve continually redefine their pasts and
renegotiate the present”.

John E. Cort33 in his study on four important temples of western India
also holds similar views. He argues that the study of the medieval Indian
temple has been largely the study of structures created, endowed, and
sustained through royal patronage as sign of royal prestige, political aspiration,
and evolution. But the study of four temples exhibits an importantly different
pattern. Whatever may have been the nature of their original construction and
endowment, they have survived for a thousand years due not to exclusively
royal support, but largely due to the support and devotion of specific
connection between castes and the deities enthroned in these temples, which
could explain both the continuing importance of these temples and even their
very survival.

After a detailed analysis of each and every aspect of the four temples
he suggests, “Temple can be studied as sites of contestation over financial
assets, political assets, spiritual assets, and cultural assets. To the one time
visitor, a temple will usually appear to be a fixed entity with a clearly defined
identity. But when viewed over time, the identities of the temple and the deity
enthroned in the temple are tied to the identities of an array of people who
are connected to the temple as patrons, builders, renovators, owners, trustees,
ritual specialists, devotees, descendants, neighbouring inhabitants,
government representatives and pilgrims. The relationship among these
people, the temple, and the deity will fluctuate as different people advanced
various claims to proprietary in relation to the temple and/or the deity. The
one time visitor comes away with the impression that the temple is a solid,

33 Cort, John E. (2000), 'Patronage, Authority, Proprietary Rights, and History:
Communities and Pilgrimage Temples in Western India', in M.W. Meister (ed.), Ibid.,
pp. 165-191, also see, Cort, John E. (2000), ‘Communities, Temples, Identities Art
Histories and Social Histories in Western India’, Ibid., pp. 100-128.
continuing presence. To an architectural historian the temple appears to be far more fluid, as the physical structure is renovated, rebuilt, and reconfigured repeatedly over the centuries. In a similar manner, to a social historian, the temple also appears to be far more fluid over time, as it is one node in an ever shifting array of social groupings and identities.”

James Preston’s case study on the Candi temple at Cuttack (Orissa) suggests a similar view. According to him the patronage of the shrines was changing but ever increasing in nature. Earlier it was a small neighbourhood temple made of clay but over a short span of time period, it changed into a well built permanent ritual structure. Similarly during this period there are three contestant parties who claim their legitimate rights to the control and management of the temple, and accordingly they have designed the temple legends to serve their interests in the issue of patronage, while he agreed with its association with royalty in the past, its decline over the period of time did not effect the worship of mother goddess. Instead the worship continued to flourish, but with new patrons and in a different form. The new patrons are those segments of Indian society mostly rich merchants and the educated elite, who have inherited power and influence in the vacuum left by the fall of the feudal princes.

The above historiographic discussion on patronage has revealed the multi-faceted and multi-dimensional nature of the subject. There is no unanimity among scholars and no theory has a universal application. Empirical research on different time span has brought out diverse trends in the nature of patronage. Scholars working on Buddhist patronage highlight

34 Ibid., p. 184.
36 Ibid., p. 23.
37 Ibid., pp. 28-30.
38 Ibid., p. 38.
the role played by traders, guilds, lay worshippers, and the community. For
this they use different sources like seals, sealings, votive stupas, donative
inscriptions tablets, and normative literatures. Similarly, ethnographical
researches also bring out the changing nature of patronage and the
involvement of communities and social groups in the maintenance and
survival of religious shrines. But patronage of the early medieval temple has
mostly been seen from the prism of royalty and nobility. This uni-dimensional
approach arose due to ideological leanings, use of conventional methods and
over emphasis on inscriptive sources. In the following two sections
patronage has been discussed from a critical use of inscriptive data, and the
extant temple remains with the adoption of new research methodologies.

(II) INSCRIPTIONS AND THEIR CRITICAL EVALUATION

Inscriptions are the only available written sources to study religious patronage
of the early medieval period. However, it is important to remember the fact
that they were issued by a particular section of the society to glorify their
deeds and achievements. Thus, these records should not be considered as the
total representation of the entire society. Taking the very nature of
inscriptive records into consideration, an attempt has been made to use
them to understand the patronage dynamics of South-Kośala region on one
hand and the role of Brähmaṇas on the other.

As many as twenty eight inscriptions of South-Kośala are somehow or
the other associated with religious institutions (See Table No. XXVII). But
they are not equally distributed among the three sub-regions. The upper
Mahanadi basin alone contains twenty three records, whereas the middle Tel
basin and the middle Mahanadi basin contain two each. The remaining one
record belongs to the Koraput region. Moreover, the inscriptive records are
not homogenous in nature. They furnish data regarding the construction,
donation, maintenance and management etc. of religious shrines, which
differs considerably from one record to the other.
**Upper Mahanadi Basin**

The inscriptions of the upper Mahandi basin are very peculiar in nature. In terms of the political affiliation only two inscriptions belong to the Nala and Sarabhapuriya dynasties (one each respectively). The remaining twenty records belong to the Pāṇḍuvamśi dynasty. Interestingly, all the Pāṇḍuvamśi rulers were not associated with religious institution, at least in inscriptions. A great number of them (19 out of 21) came from the reign of Mahasivagupta Ballarjuna alone (See Table No. XXII).

The inscriptive records indicate the preponderance of Śaiva sects in the upper Mahanadi basin during the period under review. As many as sixteen inscriptions are associated with Śaiva temples, mathas and ācāryas. Among these eight alone are linked to the temple and monastery complex of Balesvara-Bhaṭṭāraka situated at Śrīpura (Sirpur). These charters provide a detail description about the making of the temple as well as the monastery complex of Balesvara Bhaṭṭāraka and its different phases of construction (See Table No. XXII, Sl. No. 15-22). But such a great temple complex of the early medieval period has not yet been identified architecturally. Of the remaining inscriptions, three are related to the Buddhist establishment (See Table No XXII, Sl. No. 4, 6, and 9) and two to Vaiṣṇava shrines (See Table No XXII, Sl. No. 2 and 3). A few inscriptions are too badly damaged to ascertain their specific religious affiliation. It is surprising to notice that not a single inscription refers to any form of the mother cult and Jaina sect, whose sculptures are found in plenty from the upper Mahanadi basin. Another noticeable feature of the inscriptions is that a majority of them (fourteen) have been found from Sirpur the then political headquarter. Accordingly, a majority of the religious establishments mentioned in the inscriptions were probably located at Sirpur and its vicinity.

The construction of religious shrines was neither a royal prerogative nor every king participated in it. In spite of the royal nature of the
inscriptions, they also bear information regarding temples built by other people as well. However, we cannot undermine the role played by royalty especially in the context of temple building activities of the upper Mahanadi basin. The king Mahasivagupta Balarjuna alias Sivagupta actively participated in it and a large number of temples were constructed during his reign. Out of the 23 inscriptions related to religious establishment 20 belongs to his reign alone (See Table No. XXII). King himself appears to be associated in the construction of eight temples and mathas. Direct evidence however, comes from a set three of Sirpur copper plate charter.39 These record land donations to Saivādṛya Aghorasiva at the time of the establishment of the monastic residence (maṭhika) attached to the shrine of Balesvara Bhaṭṭāraka erected by the king himself (sva-karita) on the low-lying land at Śrīpura. Set 4 of the same charter40 also refers to the establishment of the shrine of Dvayesvara-Bhaṭṭāraka as built by him (sva-karita). This temple was erected within the maṭhika of Balesvara-Bhaṭṭāraka. The Balesvara shrine seems to be named after one of the names of king Balarjuna. The special references to sva-karita or built by him shows the close association of the king with these particular shrines. One important fact about the temple building activities of Mahasivagupta Balarjuna is that all the shrines with which he was directly involved were located within the four quarters of the capital city of Sirpur. It means that the king had less interest in temple building activities taking place outside the capital city. The other kings who built temples were Vilasatunga of the Nala dynasty who constructed a Viṣṇu temple,41 Mahārīja Narendra of Sarabhapurīya dynasty who built a temple dedicated to Śiva42 and Isanadeva

of the Pāṇḍuvamśi dynasty who built a Śaiva temple (See Table No. XXII, Sl. No. 2 and 13).

Women, especially royal, were not lagging behind in the act of temple building. They had also participated and constructed temples. Vasata the Queen mother of Mahasivagupta Balarjuna, the great temple builder king, constructed the shrine of Hari (Viṣṇu) at Sirpur (See Table No. XXII, Sl. No. 8). Alaka, wife of Koradeva was another royal lady who built a Buddhist monastery (vihārika) at Taradamsaka (See Table No. XXII, Sl. No. 6). The recently found copper plate charters from Sirpur reveals some interesting information on participation of royal ladies in temple building activities. Set 5 mentions that Amaradevi built a shrine Amaresvarayatana named after her. It was attached to the mathika included within the shrines of Balesvara-Bhaṭṭāraka. The same thing is also mentioned in set 7 of the charters (See Table No. XXII, Sl. No. 20). Here it is stated that a certain village was donated in favour of the Amaresvara shrine built by queen Amaradevi inside the penance-grove (tapovana) attached to the monastery (mathika) of the temple of Balesvara. Set 6 of the same charter records that the Queen named Abbanibbadi had built a shrine called Abbesvara after herself in the precincts of the Balesvara temple (See Table No. XXII, Sl. No. 6). Set 8 of the same plates record that the king’s wife (dharmapatni) Ammadevi had constructed a shrine named after her as Ammesvara in the proximity of the Balesvara temple (Balesvarasamipartha) (See Table No. XXII, Sl. No. 21). Royal women’s contribution to temple building also appears to be limited within the boundaries of the capital city of Sirpur. Like Balarjuna, they also followed the tradition of naming shrines after their own names.

As I have already mentioned, temple building activities were not only restricted within the royalty but other people also participated in it, albeit their representation in the inscriptions are very meagre. The people who are

43 Ibid., pp. 375-76.
mentioned in the inscriptions in connection with temple construction and
donation to religious establishments consist of Brähmaṇas, Buddhist monks,
vassal chiefs, Saivācāryas, individual donors etc. The involvement of a
Brähmaṇa in the repairs of a fallen abode of Sugata Muni (Buddha) indicates
cross-religious participation in the construction and maintenance of religious
establishments (See Table No. XXII, Sl. No. 4). Monks and Saivācāryas also
played an important role in the maintenance and running of the religious
institutions (See Table No. XXII).

Besides the inscriptive references to temple construction, epigraphic
records also mention the existing shrines to which donations were made.
Since most of the shrines mentioned in the inscriptions are not identified yet,
it is difficult for us to assign a precise date of land donation and temple
construction.

Donations especially of land in most cases come from the royalty.
King Mahasivagupta Balarjuna donated land not only for the temple of his
own construction, but also for the temples built by the Queen and other
individuals. Besides the king, there is only one instance where a servant of the
king who appears to be a governor, donated land. Inscriptions also refer to
individual donations albeit very few in number. Individual donations were
mainly concerned with provisions of flowers for the daily worship.

Donations made at the behest of someone else were another important

44 The Senakpat stone slab inscription of the reign of MahaŚivagupta Balarjuna mentions
that, Durgarākṣita a devoted servant of king Balarjuna and a devotee of god Sambhu
(Śiva) built a unique temple of Sambhu and donated two halas of black-soil in the
village Gudasarkaraka. He also donated land measuring four halas black-soil in the
village Kodasima to Śaiva ācārya attached to the temple. Likewise two other plots of
black-soil land, each of two halas measure, one in the village named Viyanaka and the
other at the place called Lata within the villages of Sripurnika also given away by him.
Ibid., pp. 154-59, EI, XXXI, pp. 31-36.

45 The Sirpur Gandhesvara Temple inscription records that a certain Jorjjaraka instituted
the offering of a flower garland, measuring a pūrṇa in height for the worship of the
God Gandhervesvara. Flower for this purpose were to be supplied, as long as the
moon sun and star last, by all the garland makers residing at Navahatta. Shastri, A. M.
feature of this period. There are at least four insessional references which
talked about donation made at the request. All the donations were perpetual
in nature and request was also made in the inscription to honour and maintain
the status quo of the donated land in the future.

Donations were made for the provision of bali, cāru, naivedya,
maintenance and repairs, and establishment of the free feeding house (sattrā),
which formed an integral part of religious institutions of the upper Mahanadi
basin. Besides these conventional functions some charters also refer to
instrumental music (vāditra) and dance (nṛittā) as part temple worship.46 Set 4
of the Sirpur charters mentions that a village was donated for its repairs,
maintenance of its precincts, daily worship and musical concerts (See Table
No. XXII, Sl. No. 17). In set 7 it is stated that the village was donated to meet
the cost of repair, sweeping, anointment, worship and musical performance
(See Table No. XXII, Sl. No. 20). Set 6 states that half of the village was
granted to defray the expenses on the repairs to the shrines (devakula-
khandśphutitā-sams-kaṇana) and offering of worship and other sundry activities,
while the remaining half was meant to be a gift to her preceptor (gurudakṣīṇa)
in order to meet the expenses of the religious sermon by the line of spiritual
teachers and for the maintenance of a free feeding house (See Table No.
XXII, Sl. No. 19). Set 8 refers to the donation for meeting the expenses on
repairs bali, cāru offering, musical performance, incense, worship, sweeping
and anointment (See Table No. XXII, Sl. No. 21). The Senakpat stone slab
inscription clearly mentions certain obligations which the Śaiva ascetics
(donees) had to fulfil. They were expected to arrange a sacrificial rite (gaga),
the ceremony of initiation (dikṣā) into the Śaiva faith. It described as capable
of securing final beatitude (nirvāṇa-dikṣā), the exposition of the Śaiva doctrine
(samaya) and a free feeding house (annāya sattrā) every years on the full moon

46 Lodhia plates specifically mentioned that besides bali, cāru and naivedya, nṛittā (dance)
and vāditra (instrumental music) were an integral part of the Śaiva worship. Ibid., pp.
128-133, EI, XXVII, 319-25.
day of the month of Asadha, Karttika and Magha. The ascetics were required to reside in the temple and were prohibited from taking to money lending on interest (See Table No. XXII, Sl. No. 12).

The purpose of the donation is always mentioned as the religious merit accruing to the donor and his parents. The inscriptions also provided some useful information regarding the commemorative nature of some temples. The Rajim stone inscription\textsuperscript{47} of the Nala king Vilasatunga mentions that the king built a shrine of Viśṇu for the increase of the religious merit of his deceased son. The Arang stone inscription\textsuperscript{48} of Sūryaghuasa an independent ruler states that the king plunged in deep grief when his dear son died by falling from the top of the palace and realising the ephemeral nature of life built a magnificent temple of the Muni (Buddha). The Sirpur Lakshmana temple inscription\textsuperscript{49} of the Pāṇḍuvarṇaśi ruler Mahasivagupta Balajuna mentions that the Queen mother Vasata built it as an abode (temple) of Lord Hari (Viśṇu) in memory of her deceased husband. These examples show that along with religious merit of the builder the temple structure was also built to commemorate their loves one.

The inscrptional records of the upper Mahanadi basin reveal meagre but useful information regarding the maintenance and management of religious shrines. The Bardula plates\textsuperscript{50} of Tivaradeva states that he donated land to a free feeding house (sattra) with the condition that it has to be maintained by the local body (adhiṣṭhāna). The Senakpat stone slab inscription\textsuperscript{51} mentions that the management of the temple was entrusted to

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., pp. 119-123, EI, XXVI, pp. 287-91.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., pp. 141-147, EI, XI, pp. 184-201.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., pp. 154-159, EI, XXXI, pp. 31-36.
Saiva ascetics and their spiritual successors. The Sirpur stone slab inscription\textsuperscript{52} indicates that the responsibility of maintaining the sattrā created by a monk at the Buddhist monastery at Sirpur also rested with the Buddhist monks living there. The Sirpur Lakshmana temple inscription\textsuperscript{53} mentions that all the transactions were to be performed unanimously by the Brāhmaṇas in association with the local body (adhiṣṭhāna) and the temple attendants. From the above evidence it is clear that the adhiṣṭhāna or local body existed in the said period and that it played a major role in the maintenance and management of the religious institutions. Repairs and maintenance of religious institutions were one of the important provisions of land donation mentioned in almost all the inscriptions. The manual work appears to be managed by the local bodies, and the priestly class with their specialised and spiritual functions were hardly involved in it.

In contrast to the upper Mahanadi basin, inscriptional references regarding the religious establishment of the Tel and middle Mahanadi basin are very scanty. So far only two inscriptions have been found from the Tel basin. However, none of these belongs to royalty and do not record land donation. The Somevara temple inscription\textsuperscript{54} states that the temple was built by a ācārya named Gaganasiva, an immigrant from uttara-Terambagriha. The Kenduvalli temple inscription\textsuperscript{55} states that Devananda, son of Jayesvara raised this shrine in honour of Kṛṣṇa.

Similarly, there are only two inscriptions associated with the religious establishment of the middle Mahanadi basin. The Sonepur charter\textsuperscript{56} of Janamejaya I records that the king granted a village to a merchant association of Suvarnapura (kamalavanavanik-sthāna). But after receiving the grant the

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., pp. 148-149, EI, XXXI, pp. 197-198.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., pp. 141-147, EI, XI, pp. 184-201.
\textsuperscript{54} EI, XXIV, pp. 239-243.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., pp. 243-44.
merchant association donated it to the temples of god Keśava (Viṣṇu) and Ādiyā-Bhaṭṭāraka (Sūrya). The Gopalpur plates\(^{57}\) of the same king mention that they granted a village to Bhāṭṭa-Sadharana who held the post of Mahābhattara under the king. But after receiving he donated the same village to a religious institution and Brāhmaṇas on the same auspicious day. It is stated that donated village was divided into eight parts, three of which were made in favour of his own temple (sva-kṛittani) dedicated to god Nārāyaṇa-Bhaṭṭāraka.

The above discussion has raised many questions on the applicability of one or the other existing hypothesis on the nature of early medieval patronage discussed in the first section of this chapter. The inadequacy, over generalisation and simplification of the existing hypothesis became more apparent when we compare and contrast the inscriptive data with the material situated on the ground.

The upper Mahanadi basin has fifteen temple sites, out of which four sites seems to be represented in the inscriptions. Among them Sirpur was the most prominent one. It was the political headquarter of the Śarabhapuriya and Pāṇḍuvarṇaśī and majority of the inscriptions related to religious establishments are associated with this site. All the temples built by Pāṇḍuvarṇaśī king Balrajuna and royal queens were located within its four-quarters. Besides royalty, other people participated in the construction (?) and maintenance as well as management of the religious institutions of the capital city. Anandaprabha,\(^{58}\) a Buddhist monk who established a free feeding house (saṭṭra) for fellow monks was located here. Importantly the saṭṭra was to be managed by the monks themselves. Similarly, certain individuals donated money to arrange flower garlands measuring a height of man for the daily


worship of god Gandharvesvara (Śiva) located at Sirpur.\textsuperscript{59} Most importantly, the capital city had a local body called \textit{(adhiśāhana)} involved in the management and maintenance of the religious establishments.\textsuperscript{60}

Rajim is another important temple site associated with an inscription.\textsuperscript{61} The said inscription was affixed to the \textit{mandapa} of the Rajivalochana temple. However, the temple and inscription are not of the same period, and the former is earlier than the latter. Architecturally Rajivalochana temple appears to built in c. 7\textsuperscript{th} century A. D. whereas the inscription attached to it dated to c. 8\textsuperscript{th} century A. D.

Kharod and Senakpat are two other temple sites associated with inscriptions. The Lakshmana temple inscription\textsuperscript{62} at Kharod belongs to the reign of the Pāṇḍuvarṇa king Isanadeva which mentions that the shrine was built by the king. But the temple to which the inscription attached is a modern construct. The inscription at Senakpat\textsuperscript{63} is engraved on a broken temple slab dated to c. 7\textsuperscript{th}-8\textsuperscript{th} century A. D. However, no temple of that period is found from the site.

Besides these above discussed sites, the upper Mahanadi basin has eleven more temple sites that flourished during the period under discussion. But none of them is associated with epigraphic records. Some of them are very important sites and continued for a long period of time. Malhar was one among them, whose temple remains and art tradition has been discussed in the previous chapter.

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., pp.152-153.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., pp. 154-159, \textit{EI}, XXXI, pp. 31-36.
Furthermore, the inscriptive data on patronage needs to be analysed from the perspective of polity. Since, scholars have vehemently argued for the nexus between royalty and religious establishment in the structuring of the early medieval polity, our discussion attempts to provide insights into the complex nature of the subject matter.

The Sarabhapuriyas were the earliest ruling dynasty of the upper Mahanadi basin who issued their own copper plate charters. Out of the eighteen charters found so far only one is associated with a shrine. Mahārāja Narendra, one of the early rulers of the dynasty donated land to existing shrine for its maintenance. However, this tradition of donating land to the religious institution was not followed by subsequent rulers. The Sarabhapuriyas were supplanted by the Pāṇḍuvaṁśīs. Though a large number of Pāṇḍuvaṁśī records are associated with the religious establishments, but as I have already mentioned, not all the rulers of the dynasty participated in it. Almost all the records belong to the reign of Mahasivagupta Balarjana alias Śivagupta who had raised shrines and donated land. However, his large scale temple building activity does not appear to be affecting the political structure of the period or bringing any territorial gains for the king. In terms of political boundaries, the Pāṇḍuvaṁśīs were ruling over more or less the same geographical areas as held by the Sarabhapuriyas. Moreover, Balarjuna the temple builder king neither extended his territorial limits nor claimed any superior political status through adopting high sounding titles like Mahārājadhirāja, Parama-Bhaṭṭāraka and Paramesvara etc. Interestingly, even he did not retain the epithet sakala-Kośaladhipati (Lord of entire Kośala) as assumed by his predecessor Tivaradeva and Maha-Nannaraja. The only tangible result was his long reign as he ruled for a period of around 60 years. But how far his long rule was linked to his association with the religious establishment needs to be investigated further.

This contradiction between the inscriptive data and actual materials situated on the ground is more prominent in the case of the middle Tel basin. This sub-region has maximum number (twenty four) of temple sites. Notwithstanding such a large number, the inscriptive records on them are very scanty. So far only two stone inscriptions have been found from the site of Ranipur-Jharial, which provide some information about their construction. However, they do not belong to any king, Queen, or royal officials, rather claim that, the temples were built by a Śaiva ācārya and an individual respectively.

In the political front the middle Tel basin remained under the domain of the local power till the turn of c. 8th century A.D. Maharāja Tustikara (c. 5th century A.D.) was the earliest independent ruler of this sub-region who had issued his own charter. The Terasingha copper plates charter is the only available record of the ruler. This charter has been the point of references for many scholars working on the early medieval period. In this inscription it is mentioned that the king and his queen mother assumed the epithet Stambheśvari-pāda-bhakta or devoted to the feet of goddess Stambhesvari. The single piece of information led scholars to postulate that Stambhesvari was a local deity, and when Tustikara rose to power he patronised the deity to claim legitimacy. And in the process the tribal deity became Hinduised. However, the occurrence of Stambhesvari in the copper plate charters of Sulkis' of Kodalaka- maṇḍala67, and Bhaṇjas of Khīṇjalimaṇḍala 68 raise many questions about the process of cult appropriation and Hinduisation of tribal deities. If the Hinduisation process came through cult appropriation by royal initiative then Stambesvari could have became a Hinduised deity by 5th century A.D.

But she has maintained her independent status and continued to the present day. It is still a prevailing deity of the local communities inhabiting the Sonepur, Boudh, and Kalahandi region.\textsuperscript{69}

The dichotomy between inscriptive data and actual extant temples located on the ground exist even in the middle Mahanadi basin. This sub-region has eleven temple sites, among these only Sonepur is associated with inscriptive records. Two copper plate charters of the Janamejaya reign mention the shrines of his capital city Suvarnapura. However, on both occasions the king was not the patron. On one instance, his minister claimed that he built a temple (sva-krittam) and donated land for its maintenance.\textsuperscript{70} In the other case, a merchant association (kamalavana-vanik-sthāna) who received land grants from the king donated the same to the existing shrines of Keśava (Viṣṇu) and Ādiya-Bhaṭṭāka (Sūrya) located at Suvarnapura.\textsuperscript{71}

This meagre inscriptive data on religious establishment does not fit into the model of territorial expansion and large scale temple construction. This sub-region appears to be under the control of the local powers till the end of c. 8th century A.D. This phase of political formation was over when it came under the rule of the Bhāñjas of Khiṇjilimandala.\textsuperscript{72} But their rule did not last long. They were ousted by the Somavamśis who ruled for a longer period. In their long rule, they consolidated their power over the whole of middle Mahanadi and middle Tel basins and expanded towards coastal Orissa but in a gradual manner. That is why they were credited with the creation of the first regional kingdom of Orissa.\textsuperscript{73} Their imperial status is also evident from their

\textsuperscript{69} Mishra, B. (1994), 'Communication, Post-Worship of Kondh in Kalahandi', Man in India, Vol. 74 (No. 4).
\textsuperscript{72} Singh, U (1994), \textit{op cit.}, pp. 60-62.
high sounding epithets like, Mahārājaśīvā, Parama-Bhaṭṭāraka, Parameśvara Parmamaśīvāra, Somakuṭalāka and Trikaṅgādhīpati. The early medieval debate on the regional state formation and patronage to religious establishment does not find support in the context of Somavañšī rule in South-Kośala. In spite of their long rule and high political status, the temple building activities did not get an impetus in this sub-region. As scholars have argued that the territorial expansion was a factor behind the proliferation of religious shrines. In this context this proposition needs reconsideration.

Land donation to Brāhmaṇas and their so-called role in state formation through expansion of settlements, wet rice cultivation and legitimisation of king’s rule, and religious transformation through acculturation and cult appropriation is a major issue in early medieval research. It is within this theoretical background, I would like to evaluate the nature of Brahmānical presence, and their role in South-Kośala region.

The presence of Brāhmaṇas in the South-Kośala region goes as far back as c. 5th century A.D. Nalas, the earliest ruling dynasty of the region donated land which is recorded in two out of their four inscriptions. The Brāhmaṇas of this period are known to us from their name, suffix ārya (?) and gotra (i.e., Kauśīka and Parāśara). No other identifiable mark is mentioned in the charter (see Table No. XXIII) nor for that matter their place of origin.

Brāhmaṇa identity became little more complex during the rule of the Śarabhāpurīyas who succeeded the Nalas. Except one, all the Śarabhāpurīya charters record land donation to Brāhmaṇas. A majority of donations were given to single Brāhmaṇas (11 times). However, in some cases donations were also made in favour of two Brāhmaṇas (3 times), and more than two (3 times). The identity of the Brāhmaṇa donees revolve around their title (prefix/suffix), gotra, śākhā and caraṇa. Svāmin was the most common suffix.

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74 See Table No. XXI.
adopted by all except one who adopted Vatsa. They occasionally used the prefix like Dikṣita and Bhāṭṭa too. Altogether thirteen gotras are mentioned in the charter (see Table No. XXIV) Vajasaneyi of Sūkla Yajurveda was the main Śākha of donees. Some of them also associated to Madhyāndina, Kānva, and Taittiryā Śākha of Yajurveda and Rgveda. The Carana is rarely mentioned. Only one donee is mentioned along with his father name. Another Brāhmaṇa claimed that he was a Caturvedin. Brāhmaṇa as Karanika (scriber) and Bhogika (head of the bhoga) reveals the diverse functions of the donees (see Table no. 2).

Land donation to Brāhmaṇas deceased during the Pāṇḍuvamśī who succeeded the Sarabhapuriyas. The Pāṇḍuvamśī charters records maximum donation to religious institutions, āstya and monks which superseded the donation to Brāhmaṇas. Out of six, in the three instances the donations were made to groups of Brāhmaṇas. These Brāhmaṇas received the donation in share or piece of land, and not the whole village. In the other three instances donation was made in favour of two (twice) and one donees respectively.

No substantial changes took place in the Brāhmaṇa identity of this period. Like earlier period they are known to us through their title (prefix/suffix), gotra and carana. Bhāṭṭa was the only prefix mentioned in the inscriptions. Whereas Opadhyāya, Svāmin, Rupa, Deva, and Datta were the suffix used by all the donees. The gotras of all the Brāhmaṇas are not mentioned, especially of those who received donations in groups. The Śākhā and Vedic schools mentioned in the inscriptions are Maitrāyaniya, Vājasneya-Mādhyāndina of Yajurveda, Chandoga of Sāmveda and Rgveda (see Table No. XXV). The genealogy of the Brahmans was in the incipient form. Like the previous period, the father of a Brāhmaṇa donee is mentioned only in one charter. The Adbhara plates75 mention the Brāhmaṇa donee as bhāgavata (devotee of

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Viṣṇu). The Sirpur stone inscription mentions that Kesava, a Brāhmaṇa donor was highly proficient in the arts. In the Bonda plates, Lata is attached before the name of a Brāhmaṇa donee. According to A.M. Shastri it indicates that the family of the donee belonged to Lata (central and southern Gujarat). But there is no concrete evidence to substantiate this hypothesis.

The Brahmanical presence in the middle Tel basin was meagre. There are only four charters found till date which talked about their existence. The earliest of which can be traced back to c. 5th century A.D. The Terasingha copper plates of Mahanāja Tustikara indicate donation of land to Brāhmaṇa arya Dronasarman belonging to Kāśyapa gotra. Another charter of a little later period records donation to three Brāhmaṇas having the suffix sarman and mentions that they belong to various gotras, caraṇas and pravaras. The donee of Manikyapur Museum plates (c. 8th century A.D.) is Bhaṭṭa Narayana deva son of Bhaṭṭa Samanaga who belonged to Kauśika gotra and Śāmaveda caraṇa. The Terasingha plates of the same period record donation to Narayanadeva of Kauśika gotra and vejasenaya caraṇa.

The Somavamśī inscriptions of South-Kośala provide a detailed description of Brahmans and the growing complexities in articulating their identity. Most of the Somavamśī charters record land donations to a single Brāhmaṇa, whereas in three instances donations were made in favour of two, four, and five donees respectively. The repeated land donation to some

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76 Ibid., pp. 150-151.
78 Ibid., p. 106.
80 Ibid.
82 Mishra, B. and Acharya, O. (2003), op cit., pp. 73-75.
Brāhmaṇas\(^83\) or to one family of Brāhmaṇa\(^84\) was an important feature of this period. It has wider historical implications in the context of land donation to Brāhmaṇas, and their role in the expansion of settlement, agriculture, acculturation and legitimisation, etc.

Moreover, Brāhmaṇa identity became more complicated and elaborates during the Somavamśi period. We have seen that in the early period (i.e., Sarabhapuria and Pāṇḍuvamśi) the Brāhmaṇa donees are known to us by their name or rarely along with their father's name. But in the Somavamśi period all the donees are mentioned along with their father and grandfather's name. Even in a few cases the names of the great-grandfather is also mentioned but in the charters of the later period. This phenomenon is an important indication of growing complexities in Brāhmaṇa genealogy and identity. Bhāṭṭaputra and Bhāṭṭa were the common prefix while in a few cases the donees bear the double prefix of pandita-Bhāṭṭaputra, Bhāṭṭa-mahattama and Dīkṣita-Bhāṭṭa. Similarly Sarman and Kara were the common suffix of the donees (See Table No. XXVII).

The elaborate and complicated Brāhmaṇa identity is more apparent in term of their gotra, pravara and anupravara which formed an important aspect of Brāhmaṇa lineages of the early medieval period. Altogether 16 gotras are mentioned in the charters. Among these Kumāraharita gotra which is mentioned twice does not belong to the standard Brahanical gotra list.\(^85\) Pravara and anupravara was used for the first time to trace the Brahman

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\(^83\) Sadharana one of the important officials during the reign of Somavamśi king Janamejaya I received six land donation in the 1\(^{st}\), 10\(^{th}\), 12\(^{th}\), and 31\(^{st}\) regnal years of king. The donee and his father highly praised in the charters. Shastri, A. M. (1995), op cit.

\(^84\) The Kelga plates of Somesvaradeva records donation to Bhāṭṭaputra-Udayakarasarman, great-grandson of Bhāṭṭapura Lakshmanahara, grandson of bhāṭṭa-Jayakara and son of Bhāṭṭa Vidyakara (Ibid., pp. 318-24) Bhāṭṭa-Jayakara of this plates was the donee of a stray plates found from the same place (Ibid., pp. 337-40).

ancestry and strengthen their identity. The donees associated themselves with the pravara of one ri (9 times), two ri (4 times) three ri (13 times), and five ri (3 times). Unlike pravara, the anupravara was not widely prevalent. It is mentioned only five times in the inscriptions. However, in some cases the gotras and pravaras do not match.86

Barring a few, all the Brāhmaṇa donees are mentioned with their Vedic schools to which they were associated. Among the Vedic schools, Yajurveda along with its different sākhyas like, Kavva, Madhyandina, Vajasaneyi, and Maitriyanayya were most popular. The Brāhmaṇa donees also claimed their association with Chandogya sākha of Samaveda and Naidhruva school of Rgveda. In a few cases, the donees associated themselves with the Vedas only and do not mention their different branches (see Table No. XXVII).

Another significant aspect of Brāhmaṇa identity is their categorical claim of the original places of residence. Some of the donees of the Sōmvamsi period traced their origin to specific village settlements located in Madhyadēśa and Sravasti mandala or to broad territorial units like Madhyadēśa, Sravasti, Tirabhukti, Radha, Kalinga, etc. Some other donees trace their place of origin to village settlements located within the territorial units of Kośaladēśa and Odradēśa (See Table No. XVII). However, one thing was common among the donees that they all formed a part of village settlements of South-Kośala prior to donations of land in their favour. What remains ambiguous is the reason

86 The donee of the Jatesingha Dungri plates was Bhattputra-Svarodayi Sri Yasakara of Parasara gotra and the Atreya Pravara. The Parasara gotra actually has the pravara of Vasiśtha, Sakya, and Parāśarya. The donees of the Kudopali plates were Bhattputra-Sri Narayana of the Kaundinya gotra and Maitravaruna pravara. The Kaundinya gotra may have the pravara of Angirasa, Barhaspatya and Bhāradvāja, or Vasiśtha, Maitravaruna and Kaundinya. The donee of the Sonepur plates of the time of Kumāra Somesvara was bhata-Udayakarasarman who had the Kumārahita gotra and a five-ri pravara. The donee of the stray plate found at Sonepur was Bhatt putra-Abhabhakarasarman, apparently the son of Udayakarasarman with the same gotra and pravara details as his father. The Kumāraharita gotra does not appears in the gotra list. There is a Harita gotra which however, has a three ri pravara: Angirasa, Yauvanasva or Mandhatra, Ambarissa, Yauvanasva, Ibid., pp. 169-70.
that why the Brāhmaṇas of this period traced their original place of residence and when they precisely migrated to South-Kośala. The inscriptive records do not offer any explanation to such questions. In my opinion such a claim was a deliberate attempt on the part of the Brāhmaṇa donees to assert their ritual superiority, strengthen their position in the society and to draw political attention.

Besides their ritual function the Brāhmaṇa donees were associated with state administration as well. Brāhmaṇa donee Sadharana who received six donations was the mantri-ilaka (chief minister) under king Janamejaya I. The inscriptions clearly mention his gradual increase in position from dutaka (engraver) to mantri-ilaka\(^{87}\) (chief minister) and his proficiency in science, economy, law, Veda, Vedāṅga Śikṣa, Itihāsa and Kalpa. Some donees held the title of Rāṇaka\(^{88}\) which signified an administrator or feudatory chief. Brāhmaṇas also held the position of Rajaguru (royal preceptor).\(^{89}\) The Brāhmaṇa donees Bhṛṭaputra Devu was a Kaladesin (Astrologer) who was permanently attached to the royal camp (sada-kataka-vastarya).\(^{90}\) Bhṛṭaputra Kako, another donee claimed that he was a permanent resident of the royal camp (sada-kataka-vastarya).\(^{91}\)

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\(^{87}\) In the Gopalpur plates of Somavamsi king Janamajeya I (R.V. 1") Sadharana the donee is described as sole abode of dharmā, was foremost among the intelligent people and having risen to the office of amajya (minister) protected and maintained his subjects even as the divine preceptor Brihaspati had done for Śakra (Indra) and Vasistha had done for Dasaṛatha. Shastri, A. M. and Tripathy, S. (1995), (OHRJ, XXXIX, p. 101). Then in the Satalama plates (R.V. 8\(^{\text{a}}\)) he figure as the dutaka (conveyor) of king's order regarding the grants and styled as mahamahārāja (EI, VIII, 138-43), in the Gopalpur grant (R.V. 12\(^{\text{b}}\)) Sadharana for the first time called mantrin Shastri, A. M. and Tripathy, S. (1995), (OHRJ, XXXIX, p. 112). In the Chaudwar plates (31\(^{\text{a}}\) R.V.) he is mentioned as mantri-ilaka (chief minister). Shastri, A.M. (1995) Op. cit., pp. 206-212.

\(^{88}\) In the Cuttack plates of Bhimaratha the Brāhmaṇa donee Raccho bears the epithet Rāṇaka, (EI, III 335-59). Similarly, in the Mahulpara plates of the Dhamarātha, the Brāhmaṇa donee Abnimanyes styled himself as Rāṇaka (EI, XXXVII, 225-32).

\(^{89}\) In the Gopalpur plates (R.V. 12\(^{\text{a}}\)), Vidyasagara is called as Rajya-Parama-Guru and styled as Bhṛṭarāka, Shastri, A. M. and Tripathy, S. (1995), OHRJ, XXXIX, p. 139).


\(^{91}\) Ibid., pp. 219-225.
In our above discussion we have seen that the Brāhmaṇa varṇa was not a monolithic structure in South-Kośala. There was a proliferation of Brāhmaṇa varṇas and the need to distinguish different identities. The mention of gotra, sākhā, cārana, pravara and anupravara provided one basis of distinctiveness. The growing lineages by tracing the origin from grandfather and great grandfather might have provided another. The claims of migration from different regions seem to be deliberate attempts on the part of some donees to show their ritual superiority and strengthen their position in society. The levels of learning and branches of specialisation were other sources of differentiation. This is evident from the vivid description of cārana, sākhā, pravara and anupravara mentioned in the inscriptions. In the Somavamśi charters some donees claimed the pravara of five-rū, whereas some others of three, two and one, respectively. A similar claim is also made in respect of anupravara. Therefore, these differences in pravara and anupravara indicate the differential hierarchy in the Brāhmaṇa varṇa. The most important source of proliferation was the practice of land grants along with administrative, judicial and fiscal rights. Uneven distribution of land grants must have created a hierarchy within the so-called monolithic Brāhmaṇa varṇa. The practice of diverse occupations by Brāhmaṇas was another factor which created hierarchy among them. Land donation to a single Brāhmaṇa donee and their non-association with religious institutions are two most important facts about the nature of Brahmanical presence in South-Kośala. These two facts compel us to think afresh about the existing hypothesis regarding the large scale donation to Brāhmaṇa expansion of settlements and the emergence of religious shrines in the so-called peripheral regions.

In contrast to Brāhmaṇas the Śaiva ācārya played an important role in religious activities of the early medieval period of this region. Their role, however, has not yet been highlighted before. We have enough epigraphical evidence regarding the active role played by Śaiva ācāryas in the construction
and maintenance of religious shrines and mathas (monastery) as well as for the arrangement of sacrificial rites (yaga) and ceremony of initiation (dikṣa) into the Śaiva faith.

Śaiva ācārya GaganāŚiva⁹² who was an immigrant from uttara-Terambagriha built a temple at Ranipur-Jharial an important religious centre of South-Kośala. Śaiva ācāryas played important role in the installation of the shrine of Balesvara Bhaṭṭāraka as well as a number of additional shrines and mathikas (monasteries) attached to it. Their role is clearly documented in a set of 7 copper plate charters, found from Sirpur along with charter from Malhar.⁹³ The Senakpat inscription⁹⁴ mentions that the donation was made in favour of Śaiva ascetics in lieu of certain obligations which the ascetics had to fulfil. They were expected to arrange a sacrificial rite (yaga) and the ceremony of initiation (dikṣa) into the Śaiva faith. It described as capable of securing final beatitude (nirvāṇa-dikṣa) the exposition of Śaiva doctrine (samayya) and a free feeding house (annasya-sattram) every year on the full moon day of the month of Asādha Karttikā and Magha. In another instance one Śaiva ācārya

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⁹² EI, XXIV, pp. 239-243.
⁹³ Set-2 of Sirpur copper plates charters record donation in favour of (bhagavat-pada) Irhācārya belonging to Nandapura at the time of the installation of the temple of Balesvara Set-3 records land donation in favour of divine Vypasivācārya, pupil of the divine Dirghācārya and grand pupil of divine Saivācārya AghoraŚiva hailing from Nandapura at the time of the establishment of the monastic residence (mathikā) attached to the shrine of Balesvara-Bhaṭṭāraka. Set-5 of the same plates records land donation in favour of divine Astrasiva pupil of Vypasivācārya and grand pupil of Dirghācārya also known as Aghorasiva. The donation was received on the installation of the shrine of Amaradevi in side the penance grove (tapovana) attached to the monastery (mathikā) of the temple of Baleśvara. The shrine is said to have been established (pratiṣṭhāpita) by Vypasiva, pupil of Dirghācārya and grand pupil of Agorasiva of Nandapura. The Malhar plates of the same king record land donation in favour of Śaiva ascetics revered Bhimasoma for certain charitable activities connected with the Balesvara temple. We are told that the donation was meant for the maintenance of the tapovana of this complex built by the king. Bhimasoma was the pupil of the illustrious Tejasoma and grand pupil of the illustrious Rudrasoma who belonged to the line of the spiritual teacher descending from the celebrated Kakulisānatha. JESI, Vol. 18, pp. 15-61, Shastri, A.M. (1995) op cit., pp. 376-381, also see, Shastri A.M. (2001), ‘Malhar Plates of MahaŚivagupta Year 57’, JIE, XXVII, pp. 25-48.
⁹⁴ EI, XXXI, pp. 31-36.
named Sulapani, a disciple of the holy illustrious Pramathācārya who hailed from the celebrated penance grove called *pancayajña-tapovana*, situated in *Dāvatavana*. He was instrumental in land donation by the king to a Śaiva temple located at *pattana-Khadirapadra-tala*.\(^{95}\) Set 1 of Sirpur copper plates records the land donation to the Śaiva teacher (*guru*) of the penance grove (*tapovana sthāna*) attached to the shrine of Muktatalesvara installed in the low laying land (*tala*) at Śrīpura.\(^{96}\)

### (iii) Patronage: Some Observations

A critical analysis of the epigraphic sources show that the number of temple structures situated on the ground are much more than the total number of inscriptions associated with religious shrines. Thus any study on patronage based solely on inscriptions is bound to be inadequate. Even the selective use of the religious shrines as done by some scholars will not make any difference. In his study Herman Kulke\(^{97}\) talks about the royal temple policy and to corroborate his hypothesis refers to the temple of Jagannath at Puri and Brihadesvara at Tanjore. Similarly, in his study B.D. Chattopadhyaya\(^{98}\) also refers to the temple complex at Osian in Rajasthan and Udayesvara in Madhya Pradesh. But the question arises; are these grand temples the only extant temples of the early medieval period? Was there homogeneity in style, dimension and elaboration in the temples of the said period? The answer is certainly ‘no’. Besides these few grand temples, there exist hundreds and thousand of other temples having great diversity in their dimensions, styles, elaboration and decoration. Therefore, it will be highly inappropriate if one clubbed together all of them into one category and ascribed their patronages to royalty. Hence scholars working on the patronage dynamics of the early

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\(^{95}\) EI, XXVII, pp. 319-25.


\(^{97}\) See foot note no. 10, 11.

\(^{98}\) See foot note no. 19.
medieval period should look beyond the inscriptional data and use some new sources with new research designs. In this regard I have made a modest attempt to look into the subject matter by analysing religious architectures of the said period. To deduce the patronage aspects from the temple structure I have delineated certain key areas whose proper analysis will shed some light in this regard. One area of analysis will be the dimension and physical appearance of the temples. Locational and functional analysis of temples sites will form another area of focus. Last but not the least I will also analyse the religious affiliation of the temples and sites.

**DIMENSION AND PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF TEMPLES**

In the last chapter I have discussed this aspect in detail. Here I would like to just reiterate some of the main findings. In terms of dimensions both vertical and horizontal there is no homogeneity in the temples of South-Kośala region. There are many marked and substantial differences exist among the shrines. The biggest shrine of South-Kośala is the Indralath temple at Ranipur-Jharial, which rises to a height of 70 feet (See Photo Nos. 22, 23 & 24). However, a majority of the shrines are below the height of 30 feet and some of them are very small in nature and below 10 feet in height (see Photo). Similarly many differences exist in the horizontal axis as well. The garbhagṛha, antarala, and pillared mandapa are three main components in the horizontal axis. These features are common to the three identified sub-regions. But not all the temples belong to this standardisation, and differences exist. The temples at Dhobini and Adbhara of upper Mahanadi basin bear two additional components i.e., an ardhamandapa and a mukhamandapa and are more elaborate. This difference is apparent among the temples of the middle Tel basin. While some temples are comprised of three components, a majority of them are single celled i.e., garbhagṛha fronted by a small porch. Such an arrangement can also be noticed in the three stone temples located at Boudh in the middle of Mahanadi basin sub-region (see Photo).
arrangement can also be noticed in the three stone temples located at Boudh in the middle of Mahanadi basin sub-region (see Photo).

Moreover, the decoration and elaboration is another aspect where the dissimilarities are obvious. The temples of the upper Mahanadi basin are ornately carved. In the horizontal axis each and every component i.e., jangbā, vedibandha, vaḷāndika, śikbāra along with its bhūmis are clearly delineated through precise carvings. The outer wall is also adorned with the images of deities and various decorated motifs which make the temple lively and an organic unit (See Photo). Similarly, the interior of these temples is profusely carved. The pillars, pilasters, doorjambs and door lintels are major spaces where artistic creation is made. The pillars are chiselled to the shape of round, square, octagonal, sixteen sided and carved with floral designs. The pillars also bear life size images of various gods and goddesses, saḷābanjika, alasakanya etc. The most lavishly decorated part is the doorjambs and lintels. The jams are divided into different sākhā and carved with floral patterns, paṭrāvadi, foliate scroll, twisted garland, paṭraśākhā, stambhasākhā etc. In some temples, doorjambs bear the images of river goddesses (i.e., Ganga and Yamuna) or dvārapala etc. Similarly, the door lintel is lavishly decorated. Thematically it is religious in nature. It bears narrative panels drawn from epic and Puranic literature and also images and busts of gods, goddesses, Yakṣa, Yakṣinī, attendants Nāga, Nāgini, etc.

The temples of the Tel basin form a distinct category by themselves. In terms of decoration and elaboration, they can be divided into two groups. One group of temples are decorated and carved like their counterparts in the upper Mahanadi basin, whereas another are totally plain, devoid of any decoration, squat, and simple in nature. In broad principles they belong to the nāgara variety of north Indian temple. But due to lack of any decoration and carving no standard divisions like jangbā, vedibandha and vaḷāndika are
demarcated. However, the *sikbaha* is a spire, but no *bhumi* divisions are found (See Photo).

In contrast to the temples of the Tel basin the temples of the middle Mahanadi basin are more ornamental in nature. The stone built temples bear all the standard components in their vertical and horizontal axis. The *mandapa* of these temples are unique and manifest a regional style of temple architecture (See Photo).

The materials of all the temples are not the same and differ from one sub-region to the other. The temples of the upper Mahanadi basin were built of brick, stone, or a combination of both. Majority of the temples belong to the latter category i.e., brick superstructure with the foundation, doorframe, pillars and pilasters made of stone. The dilapidated shrine at Tala appears to be built of stone up to the level of *varāndika* with a brick superstructure. However, there is no dearth of temples exclusively built of stone or brick alone. The shrines at Dhobini and Adbhara belong to the former category, whereas many dilapidated shrines of the Maraguda valley come under the latter category.

Unlike the upper Mahanadi basin, stone was the most popular medium in the Tel basin. Most of the temples were built of stone procured from the same locality even some time from the site itself. However, brick temples are not totally absent. Indralatha temple, the biggest in South-Kośala is built of brick with a stone foundation and doorframe. Furthermore, the brick remains at Ranipur-Jharial and Kumda indicate the existence of more brick shrines.

Stone was the most popular medium for the construction of temples in the middle Mahanadi basin. Occasionally brick was also used, especially to fill the stone frame of the *mandapa*. Differences in dimension, decoration, elaboration, and material are not just indicators of artistic creation but have wider historical implications. These factors are directly linked with the nature and extent of early medieval patronage. The construction of a grand and
mobilisation. While the construction of a grand temple had regional ramifications and required proper planning, efficient labour management and huge resources perhaps from affluent people like the royalty, nobility, traders, merchants, guilds etc. the construction of a small shrine was a local affair. They could have been built by an individual or by the effort of a community with collective donation.

**Locational and Functional Analysis of Temple Sites**

The locational and functional aspect of temples and site are dealt extensively in the section on hierarchy in the previous chapter. Here I would like to discuss their linkages with the patronage dynamics of the early medieval period. We have seen that the temple of South-Kośala region was distributed over diverse geographical zones i.e., riverbank, confluences, inland and upland areas, etc. However, some of the sites were located amidst densely populated areas whereas some others were located in sparsely populated area. Moreover, this location and spatial distribution of temple sites had a bearing on the nature and extent of patronage. The temples which were located in densely inhabited settlement clusters were visited by more number of devotees and daily worshippers than the temples located in sparsely inhabited areas. As I have already mentioned, the very survival, both religious and structural, of a temple depended much upon the communities living in its vicinity. They not only provided the required ingredients for its daily worship but also various services required in rituals and participated in the repair and maintenance of the temple. So, in actual terms the local populace were the greatest patron. When the religious importance of a local temple transcended to supra local and regional level it became a pilgrimage centre. This transformation widened its patron base. Now, along with the existing local patron it received donation from pilgrims. The mobilisation of huge resource resulted in the construction of more shrines and a temple complex developed.
All the temple sites were not exclusively religious in nature. In the previous section we have seen that temples sites were also served as important political, commercial and art production centres. Therefore, in such centres there were many interest groups who acted as patrons. In a political centre certainly royalty and nobility were a party to it, but inscriptive records provide ample evidence for the participation of other people as well. Similarly, in a commercial centre, patronage revolved around merchants, guilds and traders.

**Religious affiliation of Temples and Sites.**

This aspect has also been dealt in detail in the previous chapter. Here I would like to just link it with the issue of patronage. In the previous chapter we have seen that some of the important temples of South-Košala were associated with more than one religious sect. The depiction of Vaiṣṇava gods and goddesses on the door lintels of the Śaiva temples of the upper Mahanadi basin were not just decorative in nature or carved to filled up the space but were imbued with certain religious meanings. The fact became dearer by the examples drawn from the temples of the middle Mahanadi basin. Here, the door lintels of Śaiva temples are adorned with a life-size image of anantasayi Viṣṇu. Its majestic representation speaks about the deep-rooted religious meaning. However, the multiple religious affiliations of the sites are more apparent. All the major temple sites of South-Košala were poly religious in nature, which in my opinion, was one of the important reasons behind the rise of a religious centre in the period under discussion. Moreover, the poly-religious affiliation of a temple or site is not just an indication of religious tolerance, catholicism, synthesis etc. but it had wider religious and social meaning and is linked up with the issue of early medieval patronage.

The poly-religious temples and centres certainly had wider acceptability. The co-existence of different gods and goddesses at one temple or centre could have enlarged the network of linkages among social groups.
The poly-religious temples and centres certainly had wider acceptability. The co-existence of different gods and goddesses at one temple or centre could have enlarged the network of linkages among social groups and communities. Such temples and centres were visited by larger numbers of devotees and worshippers, who were the greatest patron in their survival and maintenance, as compared to their mono-religious counterparts. Though there was no clear cut division in society on the basis of their religious affiliation, but when a deity became the kuladevatā or family deity of certain community then the patronage came largely from them.

The above discussion has revealed the nature and extent of early medieval patronage dynamics in which each and every segments of the society were involved. However, the much hyped royalty and nobility were just one among the many interest groups who patronised the religious establishments. Meister has rightly pointed out that “if it (temples) serves one king it may die with the king. But the very survival of the temples shows their support was based beyond royalty. Therefore, any study on early medieval patronage should not begin and end with epigraphic records. A holistic picture can only be achieved through the systematic and judicious use of all available sources including the temples themselves.

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<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name and find spot</th>
<th>Religious Establishment</th>
<th>Nature and Purpose</th>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>References</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Podagarh stone inscription, Koraput Dist, Orissa.</td>
<td>Padamula (Temple) of Visnu</td>
<td>Here it is stated that the king had installed the footprints (Padamula) of Visnu for worship, and he granted (some land or a village) along with some money which was to be availed of for a free feeding house (śūtra) for Brahmans, ascetics and destitutes.</td>
<td>Nala king Skandavarman</td>
<td>R.Y. 12 c. 5th century A.D.</td>
<td>Tripathy, S. (1997) <em>Inscription of Orissa</em>, Vol. I New Delhi, pp. 162-163, <em>EI</em>, XXI, pp. 153-57.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Arang stone inscription, Raipur Dist. Chhattisgarh.</td>
<td>Temple of the Muni (Buddha)</td>
<td>King Suryaghosa who appears to have an independent ruler plunged in to deep grief when his dear son died by falling from the top of the palace. Realising the ephemeral nature of life, he built a magnificent temple of the Muni (Buddha). After a long time another king named Bhavadeva Ranakesarin gave protection to the abode of Sūgata which, when it had fallen into decay, was repaired by a Brahman who was well-versed in the words (teachings) of Sūgata and the science of medicine, and a śākpadin (one who observes the ten precepts of religious life prescribed by Buddhism), and a brahmācārin named Namobuddha who is compared to a Bodhisattava. In the inscription it is also mentions that the restored structure as a monastery.</td>
<td>Suryaghosa an Independent ruler and Panduvamsi king Nananaraja and a Brahmana and Bodhisattava</td>
<td>About the middle of c. 7th century A.D.</td>
<td><em>Ibid.</em>, pp. 95-101, <em>EI</em>, XXVII, pp. 116-17.</td>
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9. **Sirpur stone slab inscription, Raipur Dist, Chhattisgarh**

**Buddhist Monastery**

Anandaprabha a great Buddhist monk established a free feeding house for the monks of the local monastery after purchasing, for this purpose from the *Sangha*, by paying a price, a hut in the monastery (śahāra-kutā) and *setika* of white rice together with an appropriate quantity of condiment (*vijaya*) for each of the monks for day for so long as the sun adorn the sky. The monks are exhorted to maintain this gift keeping in mind the ephemeral character of the wealth and realising that dharma is the only succour in this worldly existence which is full of great suffering.

Anandaprabha a Buddhist monk in the reign of Panduvamsi king Sivagupta Balarjuna. R.Y. is not mentioned. About the middle of c. 8th C.A.D.

Ibid., pp. 148-149, EI, XXXI, pp. 197-198.

10. **Sirpur, stone inscription Raipur Dist, Chhattisgarh**

**Saiva Temple**

Brahmana Nagadeva and Kesava the servants of Sivagupta acquired together for abundant money. Four flower garlands of the measure of man’s height from all the garland residing at Sripura and gave them to the trident-bearer (i.e., Siva) for the worship of the (Lord) Śrīkantha (i.e., Siva).

Brahmana Nagadeva and Kesava in the reign Panduvamsi King Sivagupta Balarjuna. R.Y. is not mentioned. About the middle of c. 8th C.A.D.

Ibid., pp. 150-151.

11. **Sirpur Gandhesvara temple inscription Raipur Dist, Chhattisgarh.**

**Saiva Temple**

Certain individual named Jorjjaraka instituted the offering of a flower garland measuring a *purusa* in height for the worship of God Gandharvesvara (Siva). Flower for this purpose were to be supplied as long as the moon, the sun and the star last, by all the garland makers residing at Navahatta.

Jorjjaraka in the reign of Sivagupta Balarjuna. About the middle of c. 8th C.A.D.

Ibid., pp. 152-53.
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Senakpat stone slab inscription, Raipur Dist, Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>Saiva temple and monastery complex</td>
<td>Durgarakshita, a servant of king Balarjuna and belongs to the family of a Brahmana administrative, built a unique temple of a Sambhu and donated two hala of black-soil. It is records that the temple was dedicated to one Saiva ascetics. He also donated four hala of black-soil in one village and two hala each from two other villages respectively. The inscription also mentions that the Saiva ascetics had to fulfill certain obligation. They were expected to arrange a sacrificial rite (paga), the ceremony of initiation (dikśa) into the Saiva faith, described as securing final beatitude (nirvāṇadakśa) the exposition of Saiva doctrine (samāja) and a free feeding house (annāya sattram) every year on the full moon day of the months of Ashā, Karttika, and Magha, the ascetics were required to resides in the temple and were prohibited from taking to money lending on interest.</td>
<td>Durgarakshita in the reign of Sivagupta Balarjuna</td>
<td>About the middle of c. 8th C.A.D.</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Kharod Lakshmanesvara temple inscription, Bilaspur Dist, Chhattisgarh.</td>
<td>Temple</td>
<td>Isanadeva erected the temple at Kharod and gifted some land</td>
<td>Isanadeva, son of Panduvamsi king Indrabala</td>
<td>About the middle of c. 8th C.A.D.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Set-1 of Sirpur copper plates charters, Raipur Dist, Chhattisgarh.</td>
<td>Saiva</td>
<td>It records the grant of the village to the Saiva teachers (guru) of the penance-grove (tapovana-sthāna) attached to the shrine of Muktaalesvara installed in the low-lying land (tala) at Sirpura. The teachers are described as hailing from Phuttapamti and belonging to Nandapura</td>
<td>Sivagupta Balarjuna</td>
<td>R.V. 25th first half of c. 8th C.A.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Set-2</td>
<td>Saiva</td>
<td>It records that at the time of the installation of the temple of Balesvara in the thirty-seventh years of his reign Sivagupta gave away the village to divine (bhogavatpada) Vyapasivacarya, pupil of the diving (bhogavatpada) Dirghacarya belonging to Nandapura</td>
<td>Sivagupta Balarjuna</td>
<td>R.Y. 37th do</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Set-3</td>
<td>Saiva</td>
<td>It records the grant of village to Saivacarya divine Vyapasiva pupil of the diving Dirghacarya and grand-pupil of the divine Aghorasiva hailing from Nandapura at the time of the establishment of the monastic residence (mathaka) attached to the shrine of Balesvara-bhatisaraka erected by the king himself (asa.</td>
<td>Sivagupta Balarjuna</td>
<td>R.Y. 38th About the middle of c. 8th C.A.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set</td>
<td>Saiva</td>
<td>It records the grant of a village on the occasion of the establishment of the shrine of Dayesvara-bhattaraka within the <em>mathika</em> of the Balesvara-bhattaraka. It purpose was to repairs (when needed), maintenance of its employee, daily worship and musical concerts.</td>
<td>Sivagupta Balarjuna</td>
<td>R.Y. 46th middle of c. 8th century A.D.</td>
<td>Ibid., pp. 16-17, p. 34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set</td>
<td>Saiva</td>
<td>It records grant of village to divine Astrasiva pupil of Vyapasiva and grand-pupil of Dirghacarya on the occasion of the installation of the shrine of god (<em>jatana-deva-bhattaraka-pratistha</em>) Amaresvara built by the illustrious Amaradevi in the <em>mathika</em> attached to the shrine of Balesvara-bhattaraka.</td>
<td>Sivagupta Balarjuna</td>
<td>R.Y. 48th middle of c. 8th century A.D.</td>
<td>Ibid., pp. 377-78, p. 34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set</td>
<td>Saiva</td>
<td>It records another addition to the Balesvara temple. We are told that the queen named Abbanibbadi had built a shrine called Abbesvara after herself in the precincts of Balesvara temple, and Astrasivacarya pupil of Vyapasiva acted as the teacher in-charge (<em>Sthana-guru</em>). The granted village was divided into two parts. Half of the village was granted to defray the expenses on the repairs and offering of worship and other sundry things. While the other half was meant as a gift to her preceptor (<em>guru-dakshina</em>) in order to be able to meet the expenses on the religious sermons and for the maintenance of a free feeding house.</td>
<td>Sivagupta Balarjuna</td>
<td>R.Y. 55th middle of c. 8th century A.D.</td>
<td>Ibid., p. 378, p. 17, p. 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set</td>
<td>Saiva</td>
<td>It records the grant of a village in favour of Amaresvara shrine built by the queen Amaradevi inside the Penance-grove (<em>taposvama</em>) of the temple of Balesvara. The shrine is said to have been established (<em>pratishtapita</em>) by Vyapasiva. The grant, which was made at the request of queen Amaradevi, was intended to meet the cost of repairs, sweeping, anointment, worship and musical performances.</td>
<td>Sivagupta Balarjuna</td>
<td>R.Y. is not mentioned R.Y. 46th middle of c. 8th century A.D.</td>
<td>Ibid., pp. 378-79, p. 17, p. 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set</td>
<td>Saiva</td>
<td>It register grant of village to the shrine of Ammersvara <em>bhattacharaka</em> built by Ammadevi near the Balesvara shrine in order to meet the</td>
<td>Sivagupta Balarjuna</td>
<td>R.Y. 46th middle of</td>
<td>Ibid., p. 379</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
22. Malhar plates, Bilaspur Dist, Chhattisgarh. - Saiva

It records the donation of two villages in favour of a renowned Saiva ascetic for the creation of charitable activities connected with the Balesvvara temple. The villages were granted in favour of Bhimasoma, pupil of illustrious Tejasoma and grand pupil of illustrious Rudrasoma, who belonged to the line of spiritual teachers descending from the celebrated Lakulisamatha. The grant was made for the purpose of expenses on sacrifices, initiatory rites, preaching and for the residence of the mathiska and its repairs.

Balarjuna - c. 8th century A.D.

23. Sirpur stone slab inscription, Raipur Dist, Chhattisgarh. - Do

This record is engraved on a slab built into the floor of the Gandhesvara temple. It refers to Balarjuna and the gardeners' mālakara of Pranavahafaka, which is evidently same as Navahafaka of another inscription of the same place. The object of this record was undoubtedly to mention offering of flowers by the gardeners of the new market at Sripura.

Sivagupta Balarjuna - R.Y. 57th middle of c. 8th century A.D.

24. Somesvara Temple Inscription, Ranipur-Jharial, Bolangir Dist, Orissa. - Saiva

The object of the inscription is to record the construction of the temple by an ādyā named Gaganasiva, an immigrant from uttara-Terambagriha. In the inscription it is further stated that it combines in itself in merit of all the holy places, in beneficent for the people and is sacred containing the images of four gods, namely Sona, Svamin, Siddhesvara and Lakshmi. This holy place delivers (one) of all sins if (one) baths (here).

Ācārya Gaganasvāda - c. 9th-10th century A.D.

25. Kendudballi Temple, Inscription, Ranipur-Jharial, Bolangir Dist, Orissa - Temple of Kṛṣṇa

The record simply informs us that Devananda, son of Jogesvara has raised this shrine in honour of Kṛṣṇa.

Devananda son of Jogesvara - c. 9th-10th century A.D.
<table>
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<th>Place Name</th>
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<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Gopalpur plates, Bolangir Dist, Orissa</td>
<td>Narayana-bhattaraka (Visnu)</td>
<td>The king granted a village to Bhatta-Sadharana who held the post of Mahamahattara under the king. But the donee did not keep the grant for himself or for his descendent but donated the same in favour of a religious institution and brahmanas on the same auspicious occasions. It is stated that he divided the village into eight parts, three of which were made over to his own temple (sva-kirttam), constructed at Suvamapura itself, called Jalasena (residing in waters) of the god Narayana bhattaraka to meet the cost of the offering bali, dancers, and naivedya, services and repairs to the temple and for worship.</td>
<td>Bhatta-Sadhrana in the reign of the Somavamsi king Janamajaya, R.Y. 10th c, 9th century A.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Sonepur plates, Sonepur Dist, Orissa</td>
<td>Temples of Kesava (Visnu) and Aditya-Bhattaraka (Surya)</td>
<td>King donated a village to a merchant association called Kamalavanavajik-sthana at Suvamapura. But after receiving the grant the merchant association donated the same village in favour of the temple of the god Kesava (Visnu) and Aditya-bhattaraka (Surya) for meeting the cost of bali, dancers, naivedya and repairs.</td>
<td>A merchant Association in the reign of Somavamshi king Janamejaya, R.Y. 17th later half of c, 9th century A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sl. No.</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Name of Brahmana</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rithapur Plates</td>
<td>Maraddhyarya and his eight sons Devarya, Devadattarya, Kumaradattarya, Viradattarya, Vasudattarya, Gauridattarya, Dhruvadattarya &amp; Durgadattarya</td>
<td>Arya (?)</td>
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### Table No XXIV: The Sarabhapuriya Period

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<td>1</td>
<td>Pipardula</td>
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<td>Vajasaneya</td>
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<td>Dharani</td>
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<td>Amgura plates</td>
<td>Visnu svamin</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Vajasaneyi Sahhit of</td>
<td>About the Middle of c. 6th c. A.D.</td>
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<td>Yajurveda</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Kaparda svamin</td>
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<td>Kautsa</td>
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<td>Arang Plates</td>
<td>Brahmadeva svamin</td>
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<td>Malhar Plates</td>
<td>Maheesvara svamin and Sabrabhogika Rudra svamin</td>
<td>Svamin Sabrabhogika gika</td>
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<td>Dhamtari Plates</td>
<td>Caturvedin Madhava svamin</td>
<td>Caturvedin</td>
<td>Kasyapa</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Sirpur Plates</td>
<td>Karanika Kansippa svamin</td>
<td>Karanika</td>
<td>Parasara</td>
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*Ibid., pp.20-23.
*Ibid., pp.24-27.
*Ibid., pp.32-34.
*Ibid., pp.35-38.*
*El, XXXIV, 28-31.
*El, IX, 170-73.
*El, XXXI, 103-108.
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<th>No.</th>
<th>Origin of Plates</th>
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|    |        | plates              |         |           |            |      | Ibid, pp.116-
|    |        |                      |         |           |            |      | El. XXXI, p.219-22 |
|    |        |                      |         |           |            |      |             |
| 4  | Bardula | 12 Brahmanas        | Opadhyaya | Kopa (4) | -          | Chāndogya | c. 8th century |
|    |        |                      |         |           |            |      | A.D.        |
|    |        |                      |         |           |            |      | Ibid, pp.116-
|    |        |                      |         |           |            |      | El. XXXV, p.60-65 |
|    |        |                      |         |           |            |      |             |
| 5  | Bonda  | Bhavat – Trivikrama | Bhatta  | Swamin    | Bharadvaja | c. 8th century | Ibid, pp.124-27 |
|    |        | lord               | (2)     |           | Chandogya | A.D.       | El. XXVII, p.287-91 |
|    |        |                     |         |           | (Śāmaveda) |            |             |
|    |        |                     |         |           |            |            |             |
| 6  | Sirpur | 15 Brahmanas        | Bhagavata | Opadhyaya | Bhavre Ṛgveda | c. 8th century | Ibid, pp.141-47 |
|    |        | Lakshmana Temple   | (2)     |           | (4) Yajurveda | A.D.       | El. XI, p.184-201 |
|    |        | Stone Inscription  |         |           | (4)        |            |             |
|    |        |                     |         |           |            |            |             |
| 7  | Sirpur | Copper Plates      | Bhavat  | -         | Kauṣṭika   | c. 8th century | Ibid, pp.379 |
|    |        | Sot-9               | Joijada |           | Kauṭumaka of | A.D.       | El. XXV, p.136 |
|    |        |                      |         |           | the Chandogu |            |             |
|    |        |                      |         |           | (Śāmaveda)  |            |             |
Table No XXVI: Copper Plates Of Tel Basin

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<td>Narayanadeva</td>
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<td>Mishra B &amp; Acharya, D. (2003), A Note on the</td>
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<td>Deva</td>
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<td>Deva</td>
<td>Sarman</td>
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<td>Patna Plates</td>
<td>Bhagatputra Kesava and Apya, son of Bhagat Daddi</td>
<td>Bhagatputra Bhistha</td>
<td>Kumanraya (Kohala)</td>
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<td>Father's Father</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Do</td>
<td>Bhujyaputra - Aarvamrupsa</td>
<td>Anandavarna</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Gopalpur Plates</td>
<td>Bhatta - Sadaharana</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Kalbhan Plates</td>
<td>Kaladai, Bhajyaputra</td>
<td>Arvamrupsa son of Arvamrupsa</td>
<td>Anjana gotama</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Degosan Plates</td>
<td>Bharana - Narayananda</td>
<td>Varavasa</td>
<td>Antara (Kosala)</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Sambolpur University Museum Plates</td>
<td>Bhaulyaputra - Varana son of Varana</td>
<td>Bhaulyaputra</td>
<td>Tali Dharamanagara</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Orissa State Museum Plates</td>
<td>Kako, Son of Madhu</td>
<td>Three prasana</td>
<td>Royal Camp</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Patna Plates</td>
<td>Karnadeva, son of Narasimha</td>
<td>Madhrala (Kohala)</td>
<td>Jaliyadda (Kohala)</td>
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<td>No.</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Plates</td>
<td>Son of/Grandson of</td>
<td>Father</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Cuttack</td>
<td>Plates</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rajuka Raccho son of Bhatta Vasistha and grandson of Bhatjpatra maheswar</td>
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<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Kudopali</td>
<td>Plates</td>
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<td>Bhattaputra-Narayana son of Jamadana</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Mother</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Jatesingha</td>
<td>Bhagavata</td>
<td>Yasakara</td>
<td>son of Santikara and Grandson of Narayana</td>
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<td>Dungri</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>Balighari plates</td>
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<td>Sankaran</td>
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<td>Kelga plates</td>
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<td>Udyakara</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>Mahada plates (Stray)</td>
<td>Pandita - Bhagavata</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>Sankhameri Plates</td>
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<td>Pandita-</td>
<td>Sarman</td>
<td>Sonabhuda (Madhyadri)</td>
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<td>40.</td>
<td>Mahada plates</td>
<td>Madhusudan son of Purushottam and grandson of Godedhara</td>
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