INTRODUCTION

BUDDHISM IN ORISSA
The present state of Orissa, with the ancient names of Kalinga, Utkala and Odra (Lat 18° North, Long 82° East) though untrodden by the Blessed one (Buddha), has been an invincible bee hive of Buddhism ever since the hey day of Buddha (6th century B.C.) and nourished the faith up to the glorious regime of Mukunda Deva (1568 A.D.) i.e. circa 16th century A.D. in occasional breaks. It is known from the ancient Buddhist Pâli texts such as the Nikāyas, Jātakas, Pitakas and Lalitavistara, that Trapusha (Tappassu) and Bhallika, the two merchant brothers turned foremost lay disciples of Buddha propagated Buddhism in Orissa building the Nakha Stupa (enshrining the sacred nail of Buddha) and Kesa stupa (Preserving the auspicious hair of the Blessed one), somewhere at their native places called Kesasthall and Bhalluka, in the ambit of the city (Adhisthāna) Asitānjana. (2) Those two lay Buddhists are too known to have erected a stupa at ceylone for the spread of the faith. (3) However, the veracity of the above noted earliest stupas are yet to be substantiated by the archaeological evidence.

Notwithstanding the conversion of two merchants as the first lay devotees of Buddha, Kalinga, that covered a major part of present Orissa, did not seem to have been grossly influenced by the Buddhism in the beginning.
However it is known from Nikāyas that Vāssa and Bhānna tribes of Utkala embraced the teaching of the Great forty (Mahachattari Saka-Sutta) repudiating their previous doctrine of Ahetuvāda, Akriavāda and Nāṭṭhikavāda. (4)

Soon after the Mahāparinirvāna of Buddha (486 B.C.), the sacred tooth relic (the left cannie tooth) of the Blessed one, which was brought to Kalinga by Khema Thera is known to have been enshrined in the womb of a Chaitya erected by the king Brahmadatta, somewhere in the heart of his capital, Dantapura (5). The monumental Chaitya, which is believed to have been habitually worshipped by Brahmadatta and his successors namely Kāsirāja, Sūṇanda and Guhasiva (B.C. 5th century to A.D. 3rd century) is yet to be identified by archaeological warranty.

The Buddhist doctrine together with art and architecture made headway in this virtuous land with the Maurya emperor Asokā’s conquest of Kalinga, (261 B.C.) which only served as a significant event bringing about a radical transformation of the emperor’s career of Chandāsoka to Dhammāsoka. Two versions of his Major rock edicts, which still survive at Dhauli (District, Puri) near Bhubaneswar and Jaugada (District Ganjām) attest to the above event. (6)
The rock cut inscribed elephant at Dhauli which theriomorphically represents Buddha "The best of elephants (Gajatame) (7) sculpturally attests to the only remnant of Asokan art, ascribable to the 3rd century B.C.

It is known from the important Tibetan Buddhist Texts and the accounts of Lâmâ Târanâth that the Buddhist emperor Asoka (Asokârâja) is believed to have built an overwhelming number of 84,000 stupas all over India and world for the universalisation of Buddhism (8). The same emperor is also known to have constructed a monastery (Sanghârâma) called Bhojakagiri Vihâra for his brother Moggaliputta (Arâhanâ) Tissa, who preferred Kalinga to be the abode of retirement. (9) The controversial monastic establishment is yet to be corroborated by the archaeological evidence.

But, we do not have any archaeological finds discovered so far to throw light on the Buddhist structural monuments in Orissa, that might have cropped up during the Maurya period.

It is however known from Lâmâ Târanâth's account that the celebrated Chinese pilgrim Hieun-Tsang in the circa (638 A.D.) 7th century A.D. has recorded ten number of Hinayânic corporeal (Sârîrika) stupas or Tathâgata Adhisthita Dhâtugarbha stupas (Stupas enshrining the sacred relics of the Lord Buddha), earlier built by the Maurya emperor Asoka (râja). (10)
However, the spectacular discovery of a galaxy of early stupa ruins in shape of railing pieces (Vedikās), lenticular sockets, cross bars (suchis) and the coping stones (Ushnisas) from Orissa somewhere at Tarapur Duburi hill, Jānakinagar Rādhānagar, Kaima hill, Dharmasala (in Jajpur district), Dumdumā, Bhāskareswara temple area (Bhubaneswar), Arāgarah (in Delāng P.S. of Puri District) together with the three sets of the uninscribed relic caskets (preserving the sacred bone (tooth) relics of three illustrious Buddhist luminaries, presumed to be Buddha, Sariputta and Mahāmaudgalāyana) of Khondolite soap stone, Silver and gold, unearthed from the womb of the excavated stone stupa of the Landa hill, Lalitgiri, archaeologically attest to a good number of the earlier structural Hinayānic (corporeal) stupas erected in Orissa, which were contemporaneous and parallel to those at Sanchi, Bharhut, (in Madhya Pradesh), Saranath (Uttar Pradesh), Bodhgaya (Bihar) and piprāhā (in the Basti District of Uttar Pradesh, India).

The antiquity of the recently explored Buddhist finds approximately goes back to the Maurya Sunga period (3rd-2nd century B.C.).

Even if Buddhism in Orissa was temporarily eclipsed during the reign of the devout Jaina king Mahāmeghavāhana Aira Khāravela, (1st century B.C.),
however, the brisk Buddhist building urge and architectural activities were in vogue as is evinced by the Hāṭigumpha inscriptions of Khāravela, which characterise him as an optimistic, utilitarian, tolerant and secular emperor, the worshipper of all the religious sects (Sava pāsānda Pujaka) and the renovator of all the religious shrines (Sava Dvāyaśatana Sankāra kārak) paying obeisance to the Buddhist monks (Arhats), sramanas and siddhas.

Mention may be made here about the excavated brick built apsidal (Hinayānic) Chaityagriha at Lalitgiri, which is contemporaneous and identical in ground plan with the excavated apsidal Jaina super structure (laterite) on the crest of Udayagiri hill (Bhubaneswar) (1st century B.C.).

The Āndhra Sātavāhanas, who supplanted the Mahāmeğhavāhana rule in Orissa, presumably played a vital part in the construction and renovation of the Buddhist edifices in Orissa, as is archaeologically corroborated by the remarkable discovery of the typical Andhra Sātavāhana ceramics, inscribed pot shreds at Lalitgiri, and a row of inscription (exclusively Southern Indian Sātavāhana character) neatly engraved on the wall of the double storeyed Buddhist temple at Arāgarah, (Puri district, Orissa) ascribable to circa 2nd-century A.D.
The Sātavāhanas, lording over the coastal tracts of present Orissa (Kalinga) seemed to have been perfunctorily eclipsed by the Kushān take over of power under the aegis of the Kushān emperor Kanishka, who is believed to have patronised and propagated the Mahayana sect of Buddhism expounded by the leading prophets namely Nāgarjuna (the exponent of Mādhyamika Sunyāvāda and the harbinger of numerous Buddhist Dhāranis, Aswaghosa (the vice-president of the fourth Buddhist council) pārśva, and Vasumitra, (the president of the fourth Buddhist Council, Convened by the emperor Kanishka at Kundalavana Vihāra, Kāśmir(12).

The aniconic trends and tradition of the Hinayanaic worship of Buddha's sacred mortal remains i.e. tooth, nail hair, foot prints, peepal tree, vacant throne, sacred wheel (Dharmachakra) (13) were declared by the Mahayanists as obsolete and they, on the contrary, looked up on the "Blessed one" as the living universal Lord saviour being Incarnate, or Mahāpurusha Chakravartin or Lokattara and started worshipping him in pantheistic forms. Thus developed the varied iconography of Buddha in different postures (Mudrās) and the future Buddhas, called the Bodhisattvas namely Maitreya, Manjusri, Vajrapāni and Padmapāni etc. (14)
The latest surface finds show that, Orissa witnessed a roaring prosperity of Mahayana together with an unprecedented efflorescence of the Mahayana Buddhist art, archaeologically corroborated by the huge bulk of Buddhist monuments comprising the stone and brick built structural stupas, apsidal Chaitya griha, (Lalitgiri), sumptuous and the brick built structural monasteries (Vihāras or Sanghārāmas) the remarkable figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, scattered all over Orissa including Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri and Udayagiri, the largest Buddhist establishments in the world.

The recent Buddhist finds in Orissa are categorically ranging from Kushan to Gupta period (A.D. 2nd to 6th-7th century A.D.). The noteworthy discovery of the Kushan Brāhmi and ornamental conch shell Brāhmi (Sankhalipi) inscriptions of typical Rājgir type, engraved in bold relief on the excavated (moon stone) stone pedestal (Sailamandapa) in front of the huge brick built apsidal Chaityagriha at Lalitgiri, a galaxy of structural and brick built sumptuous monastic complexes at Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri and Udayagiri, the inscribed stone slabs as well as a good number of terracotta monastic seals, sealings and Dharanis, ascribable to the Gupta period, archaeologically attest to the tremendous efflorescence of Mahāyānic (Buddhist) art and architecture, that flourished in Orissa from Kushan period (1st-2nd century (A.D.) to the post Gupta period of circa 6th-7th century A.D.
Broadly speaking, a good number of Mahāyānic Buddhist establishments sprang all over Orissa during Gupta and post Gupta (6th-7th century A.D.) period. Particularly noteworthy amidst those are Lalitgiri (identified as Sri Chandrāditya Vihāre Samagra Ārya Bhikshu Sangha), Ratnagiri (deciphered as Sri Ratnagiri Mahāvihāriy Ārya Bhikshu Sanghasya) Udayagiri (traced through the monastic seals as Sri Madhavapura Mahāvihāry Ārya Bhikshu Sanghasya), Bhorasaila (Bhotasaila) Jayarāmpur Mahāyāna Bhikshu Sangha (district Bālasore), Chelitālo, Tāmrālipti, Devagiri, Pushpagiri (Puphagiri, as engraved in Nāgarjuna kondā inscriptions, circa 3rd century A.D. (Andhrapradesh), and the same Pu-sie-po-ki-li, as described by the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen-Tsāng in the 7th century A.D.), Tosalī, and Parimalagiri (Pā-li-mo-li-ki-li, as recorded by Hiuen-Tsang of the then Kosala state). Most of the above Buddhist sanctuaries, which are yet to be identified by the archaeological evidence, are still lying buried in the womb of the unexplored and dilapidated mounds and debrises.

Here it is important to note that a copper plate of king Gopachandra (Circa first half of the 6th century A.D.) recovered from a huge and dilapidated brick mound at Jayarāmpur (district Bālasore) near the shore of the Bay of Bengal (Ocean) records the grant of a village to the
Mahayanist Bhikshu Sangha for constructing a Vihāra at Bodhipadraka. The presiding deity of which was Arya Avalokiteswara. (15)

According to the Si-yu-ki, an itinerary (Travelling diary) of the celebrated Chinese Pilgrim Hiuen-Tsâng, circa 7th century A.D., the Mahayana Buddhism witnessed a roaring prosperity in the then Wu-Tu or Orissa country (Orissa) with the mushroom growth and efflorescence of hundreds of monastic establishments (Sanghārāmas) pulsated by the ten thousand monks of Greater Vehicle (Mahāyāna). The people according to Hiuen-Tsâng, who visited Orissa in about 639 A.D., "were indefatigable students and many of them were Buddhists. There were above hundred Buddhist monasteries, and myriad Brethren all Mahāyānists. In the South West of the country was the Pu-sie-po-ki-li (restored by Julien as Pushpagiri) monastery (Sanghārāma) in a mountain. The stone tope of this monastery exhibited supernatural lights and other miracles. Sunshades placed by worshippers on it between the dome and the amalaka remained there like needles held by a magnet. To the north east of the tope in a hill monastery was another tope like the preceding in its marvel. Near the shore of the ocean in the South east of the country was the city "Chelitālo" outside it were five (convents) monasteries close together of lofty structure and with very artistic images."(16)
From the account of Hiuen-Tsang it is evident that Pushpagiri Monastery (Vihāra) was a flourishing Buddhist establishment during 7th century A.D. According to Pāthādhātu Vamsa Pushpagiri, soon after the decline of the glory of Dantapura following the transfer of the sacred tooth relic of Buddha, became a glorious seat of Hinayāna Buddhism from 3rd century A.D. and flourished up to the fag end of circa 7th century A.D. in the wake of an invincible sanctuary of all the divergent Buddhist sects (Sarvadharma Samannvaya peetha). The hypothetical views of some learned scholars as regards to its identification with Buddhist ruins at Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri and Udayagiri, are yet to be substantiated by archaeological evidence. But the archaeological excavations at Ratnagiri and Udayagiri have completely ruled out the existence of Pushpagiri through the excavated monastic seals, which have already confirmed the names of those apocryphal monasteries as "Sri Ratnagiri Mahāvihāraīy-Ārya-Bhikshu-Sanghasya" and "Sri Mādhavapura Mahāvihāriy-Ārya-Bhikshu Sanghasya" respectively.

Even the excavated monastic establishment (Vihāra) No-4 at Lalitgiri, has been deciphered through the monastic seals as "Sri Chandrāditya Vihāre Samagra Ārya Bhikshu Sangha" ascribable to Gupta period.
However, on the basis of the adequate surface finds, the probable location of Pushpagiri or Puphagiri (Pushpagiri in Sanskrit) as already engraved in the Nāgarjuna Konda inscriptions, circa 3rd century A.D. (Andhrapradesh) (17) or Pu-sie-po-ki-li (Pushpagiri) as recorded by Hiuen-Tsāng (7th century A.D.) (18) may be sited in the womb of one of the hundreds of impressive monastic (brick) mounds and debrises, lying scattered all through the hills right from Lāngudi, Kaimā, Vairagiri, Duburi (Dharma) down to Landā and Pārabhādi. Those ancient quadrangular and domical brick mounds when excavated, will no doubt expose not only the famous monastery of Pushpagiri, but also an overwhelming number of other monasteries bearing different names. On the basis of the latest archaeological finds, the potentiality of the site of Lalitgiri is amply attested to not only by the spectacular discovery of the sacred relics of the illustrious Buddhist luminaries (presumed to be Buddha, Sariputta and Mahamaudgalāyana) preserved in three relic caskets of gold, silver, soap stone and Khondolite, a huge brick built apsidal (Hinayānic, and later on metamorphosed to a Mahāyānic super structure) Chaityagriha, ascribable to the Sunga period (2nd-1st century B.C.), but also by a host of exceedingly rare hoard of Muchalinda Buddha (Circa 4th century A.D.) standing image of Buddha representing the miracle at Sānkāśya (Gupta period) and a huge bulk of Bodhisattva images bearing the stamp of post Gupta art idioms.
Apart from Pushpagiri, Chelitalo, a flourishing riverine port turned a landmark Mahāyānic Buddhist centre comprising five monastic establishments in a row near the Orissa Coast (in the South eastern frontier of Odra desa, as described by Hiuen-Tsang, 7th century A.D.) is yet to be corroborated by archaeological evidences, expected to come in from the Mahānadi, Chitrotpalā, Brāhmani, Kharasrotā and Gobari river valley right from Salipur Brahmanvana, Nembala, Bandhupur, Kendupatanā, Natarā Mahājānput, Naruā Derābish, down to Nilakanthapur Chāuliāchhandā, and Rāuliā Dariāsāhī. All these find spots are enriched not only by the ancient port ruins, but also by the myriads of Buddhist remains ascribable to the booming period of Vajrayāna.

A whirl wind exploratory field study undertaken in around the close vicinity of Arāgarah comprising Saanlā, Paanrā, Banivakreswar, Jamunā, Jhārpadā, Vindhyeswari hill, Bātola hill, Viswanāth hill (mundiā), Delāṅg Pānchagāon and Dhauli, have brought to light a veritable treasure of Buddhist monuments. Particularly noteworthy amidst those are a good number of rare rock cut (Buddhist) caves, the brick built monasteries (Vihāras), stupas, the remarkable images of Buddha, Bodhisattvas. An image of Yakshyaat Pānchagāon (still worshipped as the village godling) is worth mentioning. However the antiquity of the explored Buddhist monuments may well go back to the flourishing
period of Mahāyāna (circa 2nd-3rd centuries onwards).
Mention may be made about a recently explored hillock Batola, replete in Buddhist ruins, appears to be the corruption of an erstwhile landmark Mahayanic establishment called "Bhotasaila or Bhorasaila", which was a glorious seat of Āchārya Dignāga, a leading prophet of Mahayana Yogachara Vijnānavāda, famous Buddhist dialectician and the distinguished author of a grand Buddhist logic "pramāṇa Samuchaya". (19)

However, the very name of the Buddhist village Delāṅga seems to be a corruption of the sacred name of Dignāga.

The trumpet of Mahāyāna was too resounded in the hilly tracts of Baragarah, Sambalpur district, (earlier formed a part of Kosala state in the 7th century A.D.) as is already corroborated by the archaeological evidence. The discovery of an exceedingly rare images of Muchalinda Buddha, Buddha in Dharmachakra Pravartana Mudrā (both being worshipped in names of Nāgamuni and Siddhārthamuni respectively) from the Mlechha mundā village (District Baragarah), magnificent icons of Buddha, the colossal head of Buddha and the Chaitya motifs from Mahādevapāli, and the remains of the brick built monastic edifices from Ganiāpali amply attest to the strong Mahāyānic influence over those hilly areas of modern Sambalpur district.
However, the Buddhist village of Mlechhamundā appears to be a corruption of "Muchalinda" Buddha. On the basis of the available surface finds, the hilly tracts of existing Sambalpur district (Previously included in the ambit of Kosala) starting from Mlechha mundā, Mahādevapāli, Ganiāpāli as far as the extreme western fag end of Nrusinghanāth bordering Rāipur and Bilāspur of present Bastar region (Madhyapradesh) might have incorporated the famous parimalagiri (Pa-li-mo-li-ki-li, as described by Hiuen-Tsâng) Vihāra, honey combed by four multi storeyed convents (monastic complexes) stupas in four cardinal directions as well as the gold images of Buddha. (20) The famous Mahāyānic monastic establishment, as is known, was the glorious seat of Nāgārjuna, one of the leading prophet of Mahayana and the expounder of the Mādhyamika Sunyavāda (circa 1st-2nd century A.D.). (21)

Mahāyāna Buddhism in Orissa was super imposed by Vajrayāna advocated by Indrabhuti, the king of Oddiyāna or Uddiyana (the Northern part of present Orissa) in the dawn of the 8th century A.D. (22) So also Acharya Pitopada or Pritopāda or Pindopā (Bitoba) and Laxminkara, the illustrious sister of Indrabhuti, introduced in to Odivisā (Orissa) the Kālachakrayāna and Sahajayāna somewhere at Ratnagiri, a famous monastic university of Tāntric Yogachara Vijnānavāda, as is evident from the important Tibetan Buddhist Chronicles such as pāg-Sām-Zon-Zāng" and
the mystic tales of Lāmā Tāranāth. (23) The postulate of Vajrayāna was stirred by the influx of the terse and esoteric portals and quintessence of Prajñopaya or Sunyata Karuna or Vajra padma or the sexo-yogic practices (Yugannadha or Advaya) of the ĀdīBuddha Vajrasattva and (Vajra) Tārā, that procreated the so called Buddhist Tantric universe. The five celestial Dhyāni Buddhas (Pancha Dhyāni Buddhas) namely vairochana, Aksobhya, Amitābh, Amoghasiddhi and Ratnasambhava (representing the five constituents (Pancha skandhas) namely Rupa, Vedanā, Samskāra, Samjnāna and Vijnāna and five families (Pancha kulas) such as Raga, Moha, Dvesa, Chintāmani and Samaya) in the mystic sexo-yogic practices with their respective divine consorts (Saktis) namely Vajradhātveswari, Māmāki, Lochanā pāndara and Tārā {25} emanated an overwhelming bulk of Buddhist Tantric (Vajrayānic) divinities (both masculine and feminine) namely Padmapāni Avalokiteswara, Vajrapāni Avalokiteswara, Heruka, Samvara, Yamāntaka, Trailokyavijaya, Mahākāla, Vajrajwalanarka, Buddha kapāla, Hevajra, Vajradharma, Lokeswara, Rakta Lokeswara, Jatamukuta Lokeswara, Khasarpana, Sthira Chakra Manjusri, Jambhala, Tārā, Vajra Tārā, Vasudhārā, Hārīti, Aparājita, Ārya Saraswati, Jānguli, Prajnāpāramitā, Chundā, Mārichi, Vajravārāhi and Bhrukuti etc.
Broadly speaking, the Mahāyānic concept of Trikāyā (Nirmanakāya, Sambhogakāya and Dharmakāya) was further inserted by the Vajrayānists with the fourth Kāyā i.e. Vajrākāya or the thunder bolt body, the expressive of Vajra or void (Sunya), that constituted the "Kernel" of Vajrayāna.

Orissa, the cradle land of Vajrayāna, Kālachakrayāna, Sahajayāna and other noteworthy Buddhist Tantras, witnessed an unparalleled index of prosperity of Buddhist Tantric (Vajrayānic) art and architecture under the active royal patronage of the kings of Bhaumakara dynasty, emerged in the first half of the circa 8th century A.D. Those kings, building their capital, variously mentioned as Guheswara Pataka or Guhadeva pataka or Guhasiva pataka, somewhere in the close neighbourhood of Viraja (Jāipur) are known from their copper plate grants to have been the zealous patron of Buddhism who assumed the pompous and dignified Buddhistic epithets such as paramopāsakānugata Sri Kshemankaradeva, parama Tathāgata Sri Sivākaradeva-I, Parama Sougata Sri Subhākaradeva-I, Sougatāsrya Sri Subhākaradeva-II,

The Dhenkanal Copper plate of Tribhuvana Mahādevi profusely eulogizes the activities of her preceding rulers (including her husband Sivākaradeva-III (884 A.D.) a devout worshipper of Buddha) who exhausted the treasures of
their vast empire on religious works in order to enlighten their country and others, They decorated the earth by constituting in unbroken continuity various Mathas, Monasteries and sanctuaries which were like the stair case to ascend the city of Purandara." The Boudh copper plate charters of Tribhubana Mahādevi too refer to her illustrious predecessor king Subhakaradeva-I, who is credited with the construction of lofty stone built monastic edifices.

The Vajrayānic monuments, which gained tremendous fillip under an unbridled artistic urge and building initiative of the Buddhist kings of Bhaumakara dynasty, spread all over Orissa. The coastal districts of Orissa became the inexhaustible emporiums of myriads of stupas, structural and sumptuous monasteries (Vihāras), Buddhist temples, votive stupas, and the picturesque sculptures of Buddha and other noteworthy Buddhist Tantric masculine and feminine divinities, unparalleled in India and world.

From an extensive exploratory field survey, it is found that, a portion of Dhenkanal district was influenced by the Tantric Buddhism during Bhaumakara period. The substantial remains of a huge brick built monastic establishment are sited on the dynastic grave yard of the Dhenkanal royal family Tālcher, across the right bank of river Brāhmāni very close to the Paschimeswar temple, popularly known as "Bouddha-Dhīpa", meaning there by a mound connected with the heritage of Buddha and Buddhism.
The potentiality of the newly explored site is amply attested to not only by the host of loose sculptures of life size Buddha (5'6" in height) in Bhumisparsa Mudrā, an attractive image of Buddha in Varadā Mudrā (3'6" in height), the weather beaten images of two armed Manjusri and Padmapani (3' in height, all poised in Lalitāsana posture) already shifted from the monastic mound to the near by Paschimēswara temple, but also by an impressive quadrangular brick mound pregnant with a structural and sumptuous monastery (Vihāra). The less known Buddhist site, on the basis of the archaeological finds, closely corresponds with the great Jayasrāma Vihāra, as recorded in the Tālcher Copper plate grants of Sivākaradeva-III. According to the same Copper plate charter, a revenue village "Kallani" granted by Sivākaradeva-III to meet the daily expenses of dhupa, gandna, Puspa, balī, charu and oblation of Buddha Bhattāraka, the maintenance of the family of the donor and the expenses of the servants and ten attendants for the Buddhist nuns in Jayasrāma Vihāra hummed up by the Bhikshus and Bhikshunis) (27) may very well be identified with the present village of "Kanhiā" near Tālcher. The Buddhist village Kanhiā appears to be a corruption of Kallani.

The exploration shows the traces of the brick built monastic edifices in around Vajrakote (a bastion of Vajrayāna) ascribable to the Bhaumakara period. Besides, the beautiful images
of thrice bent standing (sea) goddess Ganga and Jamuna in close affinity to the Ratnagiri prototype and at present installed at the gate way of the present Bhrungeswara temple, are expected to have adorned the entrance gateway of an earlier monastery, erected nearby.

The Buddhist ruins are lying scattered at Rasol, somewhere in the close vicinity of Hindol, while a pair of foot prints, already installed in a cave on the crest of the Kapilas hill, still command popular obeisance. The pair of foot prints theriomorphically represent the Hinayānic reminiscence at large.

The Bhaumakaras exercised their spheres of influence over an extensive part of Orissa including the modern coastal districts of Bāłāsore, Cuttack, Jāipur, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrāparā, Puri, Ganjam, Boudh-Phulbāni, Keonjhar. Similarly the Bhanjas of Khinjāli mandala extended their political suzerainty lording over the certain portions of the districts of Bolāngir, Phulbāni, Keonjhar and Ganjam. Another line of Bhanjas, who built their capital at Khiijingā (modern Khiching, district Mayurbhanja) ruled in about circa 9th century A.D.(28)

The golden reign of Vajrayāna together with an unbriddled artistic impulse and intense building urge under the aegis of the Buddhist kings of Bhaumakara dynasty
dominated Orissa as revealed through the overwhelming
dominating numbers of exceedingly rare Buddhist Tantric sculptures,
myriads of stupas, and the brick built structural and
sumptuous monastic establishments, unparalleled in India
and world.

The latest surface finds show that, the modern
coastal district of (undivided) Balasore was a flourishing
centre of Vajrayāna and Vajrayānic art. The archaeological
remains bear the vestiges of the lavish monastic establishments
at Khadipadā Mohanāparā, Bhārda Cuttack, Dhāmnagar, Ayodhyā,
Kupari, Bhuināparā, Kasbā, soro, Avanā, Solampur, Manināthpur
Bahanaga (Bāsulei Thākurāni Precinct), Avanā, Gandibedhā
and Jayarampur. However the loose sculptures of Buddha
and other Vajrayānic divinities are in situ somewhere at
Varahanāth, Khaira, Charampā, Nāndur, Sundhira, Goliha,
Nahangā, Adhā, Kundi Sāsana, Palasā, Kundapātanā,
Dāripokhari, Sarasatiā, Dāhisarhā, Badagāon, Kāupur,
Charampā, Soro, Gohiriāsāi, Sajanagarah and Jayarampur,
and the near by sites in around the Pakiramohan College too.
The antiquity of those explored Buddhist ruins may be
ascribable to the Bhaumakara period (Circā 8th-9th century
A.D. onwards.
Particularly noteworthy among those are Soiampur, Ayodhya, Bharda Cuttack, Khadipada, all yielding the veritable treasure of Buddhist monuments such as the brick built structural stupas, monolithic votive stupas, sumptuous and structural monasteries (Viharas), gigantic (life size) colossi of Buddha (built in three sections by several pieces of Khondolite) in different postures (Mudrās) Bodhisattva Avalokiteswara, Manjusri, Vajrasattva, Māricni etc. Mention may be made about an exceedingly rare image (bluish black chlorite) of Buddha at Solampur depicting Eight great Miracles (now attached to the western wall niche of the Raghunāthjew temple, extremely beautiful and thrice bent standing (chlorite) colossus of two armed Tara (embedded just beside the image of Buddha), an excellent image of Manjusri fixed to the front wall of same Raghunāthjew temple, a chlorite image of Jambhala and a seated image of four armed and three eyed Jatāmukuta Lokeswara, installed somewhere at Dwāravāsinī temple of the spot. Those stray Buddhist sculptures which bear the stamp of Bhauma art idioms are no doubt the priceless gems of Orissan art unsurpassed in in execution and workmanship.

However, a squareshaped but dilapidated brick mound dotted with huge bricks and brick bats (
(measuring 16" by 10" by 3", 15" by 10" by 3" respectively) and the depressed brick alignments amply attest to the traces of a brick built structural and sumptuous monastic establishment (Vihāra) ascribable to the Bhaumakara period. The huge bulk of archaeological treasures corroborate that the Buddhist village Solampur, across the left verge of river Vaitarani opposite to Jāipur, appears to be a corruption of same Solanapura, as engraved in the Neulpur copper plate grant of king Subhākara-I, and the famous "Solanapura Mahāvihāra" as revealed through the Ratnagiri copper plate charter of King Karna (circa 11th-century A.D. (29).

Next to Solampur, Ayodhya, sprang up as a prolific Buddhist establishment of Bhaumakara period, sited in the Sona Ghagarā Sindhu rivers valley. The potentiality of the site is archaeologically attested to not only by the host of the spectacular icons of Buddha, Bodhisattvas and other remarkable Buddhist Tāntric male and female divinities but also by the impressive brick mounds, when excavated will no doubt yield the brick built Buddhist structural edifices such as stupas, monasteries (Vihāras) and the temples. Particularly noteworthy amidst the hoard of Buddhist sculptures are the thrice bent standing (Tribhanga) colossus of two armed and one faced Manjusri (4'6" in height), a fascinating image of three faced and eight
armed Sankshipta Mārichi, (still worshipped as Mārichi Thākurani in the sanctum of modern Uttareswara temple), the standing image of four armed Jatāmukuta Lokeswara, seated image of two armed and one faced Tara, and an exceedingly rare image of four faced and eight armed - Vajra-Tārā. The antiquity of the site may well go back to the booming period of Vajrayāna. The Buddhist sculptures, lying scattered all around the village, bear the brand of Bhauma art idioms.

Apart from Ayodhya, Bhārdā Cuttack (district Bālasore) located in the close vicinity of Khadipāda Kanjiāpānī matha across the left bank of river Vaitarani, on the authority of the available surface finds, was a flourishing Buddhist centre of Vajrayāna, ascribable to the Bhaumakara period. The local inhabitants, ignorant of their rich cultural heritage, had frequently denuded the ancient brick (monāstic) mounds and despoiled the building materials in the construction of their residential buildings. Sited in between the valley of rivers Kālandi and Siāliā (already dead, dried and silted up rivulets, the distributaries of river Vaitarani) the potential Buddhist sanctuary have yielded huge bulk of the life size colossi of Buddha in different Mudrās, Bodhisattva Padmapānī, and other
remarkable Buddhist Tantric male and female divinities.

Mention may be made about a good number of colossal images of Buddha (5'6" in height) in Bhumisparsa Mudrā, Dharmačakra pravartana Mudrā (3'6" in height), a thrice bent standing image of Manjusri (3'6" in height), an inscribed image of two armed and thrice bent standing Padmapani Avalokiteswara (depicting the name of the donor Mahamandalacharya Parama Guru Rāhularuchi during the reign of Subhakaradeva-I (30) All those above images of the site have already been shifted to the Orissa Museum, Bhubaneswar for preservation and display.

The present exploration, has brought to light not only the remains of the brick built central stupa, and the structural monastic complexes (Sanghārāmas) lying buried under ground, but also the stray Buddhist sculptures namely two armed and one faced Vasudhārā, the head of an Avalokiteswara, and a beautiful image of two armed one faced Janguli, lying scattered all through the valley as far as Khadipada. The brick built structural monastic ruins are too lying scattered at Agarapada, and Bhadrak across the bank of river Sālandi. The very name Bhadrak seems to be originated from the name of Bhadrika, a disciple of Buddha.
Besides, the loose Buddhist sculptures are lying scattered in the nook and corners of the Bālasore district. Particularly remarkable amidst those are an attractive image of Hariti at Charampa, an exceedingly rare image of two armed Vajra Vārāhi at Badagaon, together with the traces of the brick built monastic ruins, a fascinating image of three faced and eight armed Sankshipta Mārīchi at Sajanagarah (mythically worshipped as Buddharachandi), a miniature image of Buddha now worshipped as a female Brahminical godling at Kupāri, the headless forepart of a colossal figure of Buddha worshipped as Baladeva in a modern shrine in the heart of the village( at present found missing), an weather beaten image of two armed Tārā at Kāpur lying by the road side, the terracotta images of Buddha, hundreds of Buddhists dhāranis, images of Padmapāni Avalokiteswara, unearthed from the Belabhumi College premises, Avanā, the terracotta dhāranis and good number of Buddhist stupas with special high light to a monolithic votive stupa turned grand Siva linga at Soro, an image of Avalokiteswara at Orāsāhi, ten kilomtres South East of Chāndbāli together with the vestiges of brick built monasteries and stupas of Bhaumakara period lying beneath the huge accumulation of ancient brick bats and fulfledged bricks on the bank of river Vaitarani.
However, the ruins of a huge and open laterite pillared oblong hall, presumed to be the Buddhist Chaitya griha, the series of rock cut caves and the monolithic pillars, and the traces of the laterite votive stupas enshrining on the drum facades with the effigies of Buddha and other Buddhist divinities in around the Ambikā temple precinct as well as the remnants of the huge brick built monasteries and stupas are lying scattered all over the Buddhist village of Kupāri.

Broadly speaking, the significant villages of Soro and Kupari presumably correspond with the Sarpeharo and Komparakagrama already recorded in the Neulpur copper plate grants of king Subhakaradeva-I of the Bhaumakara dynasty. Similarly the modern village Gandibedha of Khaira Thana associated with the rich Buddhistic heritage appears to be originated from the sacred name of Gandavyuha, the last part of the Mahāyāna Buddhist Avatamsaka. This tiny hamlet has however yielded an image of Buddha and Ganga gold fanams.

Dhāmnagar so also located in the close vicinity of Khadipada and Bhardā Cuttack seems to have been evolved out of the Dhamma (one of the three jewels of Buddhism) i.e. Buddhism.
The hilly tracts of Mayurbhanj district are littled with the vast treasure of Buddhist monuments. Particularly noteworthy among those is Khiching, which, according to the latest surface finds was a flourishing centre of Vajrayāna under the aegis of the ruling Bhanja kings in about circa 10th century A.D. The potentiality of the site is satisfactorily borne out by the huge bulk of Buddhist remains exposed during the haphazard digging somewhere at the precinct of so called Kichakeswari temple, Virātagarah, Itāmundia, Kukudāgarah, Sankurājāragarah, and Chandiasol. A huge brick mound,legendarily called Virātagarah, has yielded the remains of a square shaped and brick built structural monastic establishment, honey combed by the cells all around including a stone paved central courtyard. Besides, six terracotta plaques, designed in shape of a stupa, bear the sacred Buddhist creed, Ye dharma hetuprabhavā... in the character of circa 10th century A.D. onwards. The noteworthy sculptures recovered so far from the hoard, comprise the images of Buddha, Manjusri, Vajrasattva, Jambhala, Vasudhārā, Tārā and Mārichi respectively. The loose Buddhist sculptures are lying scattered in the nook and corners of the near by localities. Particularly noteworthy amidst those are the images of Buddha in Dhyāna and Bhusparsa Mudrā,
Jambhala, now preserved in the Jagannāth temple, Baričada, eight armed and three faced Sankshipta Marichi and Jambhala at Udalā, Ranibandha, rare images of Jānguli, and Tara at Hariharapur, and the remarkable images of Dharma and Sītāla at Badasāhi. The local museums at Khiching and Bāripadā have also housed a good number of spectacular images of Buddha (chlorite) Bodhisattva Padmapāni, Tārā, Arapachana Manjusri, Lokeshwara, eight armed Marichi and Parnasavari. The above Buddhist sculptures, are, no doubt the remarkable treasures of the medieval Orissan art, unparalleled in India and world.

It is important to note down about a broken image of a Lokēsa, unearthed amidst the ruins of the temple at Sankurājāragarāh. The image enshrines an inscription, which depicts about the image being a dedication in the reign of King Rajyabhāṇa. (33) The vestiges of the brick built monastery are found extant at Manjusā, Somewhere at the extreme northern fag end of the Mayurbhanj district bording Bihār, which appears to be the corruption of the monastery Munjushi built by king Munja of Odiśā(orissa) (34)

The modern coastal district of Puri has been archaeologically attested to be the remarkable emporium of Buddhist monuments. The Buddhist ruins in shape of huge brick built structural stupas, monasteries (Viñāras) and the mushroom-burk of monolithic Khandelīte sculptures of Buddha and other remarkable Buddhist divinities are found lying haphazardly.
scattered somewhere at Jharpada, Badagada, Aragarah, Kuruma, Achyutarajpur, Banapur, Haripur, Panchagāon, Dumduma, Bhāskareswara temple area, Astamana (yielding vast monastic brick mound), Amaragārdagh, (Laxmi-Nrusinhath temple precinct), Chaurāsi, Jiunti, Delāngā, Viswanath hill (mūndā), Jagadalpur, Satyavādi, Dhamakirtti, Chandanpur, Buddhagāra, Buddhābara, Sahajapur, Uttarāchhak, Amareswara, Sounya (Kākatpur) Lendurā Bhagavanpur, Siruli, Patnāikā, Balārpur, Rāmāchandā, Babruda, Bhārda, Betendā, Rāhulapātānā and Narasimhāpur.

An extensive exploratory field study has already brought to light a good number of lenticular sockets, cross bars (suchis) of the railings of an earlier stupa (2nd-1st century B.C.), the remains of the brick-built monasteries (Vihāras) stupas, votive stupas, lying scattered all through the crest of the Aragarah hill. The double storeyed Buddhist temple (like that of Sānchi prototype) has yielded an inscription of typical Sātavāhana character (circa 2nd-3rd century A.D.). A village Jagadalpur in the close vicinity of Aragarah and Viswanath hill studded by Buddhist remains, appears to be the corruption of same Jagaddala vihāra of medieval Orissa, the prestigious seat of a galaxy of Buddhist-Tantric luminaries, namely Āchārya Mokshakara Gupta, the author of Takkabhasa, Viśhutikaranda, an erudite translator of Buddhist Tantric texts, Dānasila, the commentator of Vartikālakara, (Pramāṇavartikā Bhāsya), Subhakara Gupta, the author of Siddhākavira Tantra and Jñānāmitra, an adept in Guhya Tantra and Mahāyānic scriptures. A nearby village Haripur has too nourished a spectacular hoard of Buddhist remains representing the images of Buddha in Bhumisparsa Mudrā,
the unparalleled Buddhist Tantric images of three faced four armed, three faced six armed and three faced eight armed divinities, enshrining on the heads the effigies of Dhyāni Buddhas. The exceedingly rare Buddhist Tantric (Vajrayānic) images are yet to be identified.

Kuruma was equally a prosperous Buddhist establishment of Bhaumakara period, as is already indicated by the huge density of Buddhist remains. Particularly noteworthy amidst those are the substantial remains of the brick built structural monasteries (Vihāras) stupas and a host of loose sculptures of Buddha, Bodhisattva, Padmapāni, four armed Jatamukuta Lokeswara poised in Lalitāsana posture). A huge and life size colossus of Buddha in Bhumisparsa Mudrā already shifted to the nearby locality is being worshipped as "Yamadharma". The image, built in three sections, betrays the Bhauma art idioms. Here it is interesting to note that, the Srikurma stupa, of Odradesa (35) already recorded in the Cambridge University Library manuscript (No-Add-1643) of A.D. 1045, archaeologically corresponds with the grand brick stupa at Kuruma, yet to be exposed.

The adequate surface finds show that, Achyutarājpur near Bānapur, was a flourishing Buddhist centre of Vajrayāna. The potentiality of the site is amply corroborated not only
by the stupas and monasteries, but also by an unparalleled Buddhist Bronze hoard, numbering seventy five sculptures, (Out of ninety five). The richest hoard, ever found in Orissa, stylistically bears the stamp of Btipala Dhiman School of art technology and metal casting. (36) It is known from the Achyutarajpur (Banapur) copper plates of Indraratha (first quarter of 11th century A.D.) (the Somavansi King) that the king granted a village to defray the cost of the ritualistic offerings to be made to the Khadiravani Tārā Bhattarikā. (37)

Besides, the stray Buddhist sculptures are lying dispersed in the nook and corners of the Prachi valley across the bed of the river Prāchi. Particularly noteworthy among those are an exceedingly rare image of four armed Oddiyānā Kurukullā at Soumya, Kākatpur, an eight armed and four faced image of Vajra Tāra at Chaurasi, an eight armed and three faced image of Sankshipta Mārichi at Astarangā, an exquisite image of Buddha in Bhumisparsa Mudrā, preserved in the precinct of a modern Siva temple at Bhingārapur, miniature image of Tāra at Tulasipur, near Chaurāsi, the eight armed and three faced images of Sankshipta Mārichi at Kahala, Marichipura (Astaranga), images of Buddha, Tārā at Babruda, bronze image of
Avalokiteswara at Bhāradā, three faced and eight armed image of Mārīchi at Betendā.

The significant Buddhist spots namely Dharmakirtti, Dhammapada, Buddhpadā, Buddhābāra, Buddhagāma, Sahajapāri, Sahajapāri, Chaurāsi and Jagaddalapur (district Puri) which are intimately associated with the heritage of Buddha, Buddhism, and the noteworthy Buddhist luminaries are unparalleled in India and world.

Besides, a landmark Buddhist monastic edifice called Arghyaka Varatkā was erected in the close vicinity of present Dhauli hill, Bhubaneswar, during the reign of king Santikarādeva. (829 A.D. year-93) of Bhaumakara dynasty by Bhimata and Bhatta layamaka the son and grand son of Nananta and his wife Ijjya as already revealed through an inscription engraved in one of the rock cut caves at Dhauli hill, adjacent to the Asokan edict. (38) The same Bhimata caused another inscription to be engraved inside the Ganesa Gumphā (cave) of near by Udayagiri hill, a jain strong hold, usurped by the Buddhists by 8th century A.D.

Noteworthy fact is that, while the low compound wall niches of the Mukteswar temple, Bhubaneswar are found attached with the loose but remarkable sculptures of Buddha in Dhyāna Mudrā (2'6" high), two armed three-bent standing Padrmapāni (3'6" high) and Jamabhala- (1'6" high), so also, a colossal image of Buddha in Samadhi mudra adorns the grand Sikhara of the famous Sri Jagannath temple, Srikshetra-Wilāchala-Puri.

Thus Buddhism gained tremendous fillip in the modern coastal district of Puri under the active royal patronage of the Buddhist kings of Bhaumakara dynasty.
The trumpet of Buddhism (Vajrayāna) was echoed in the hilly areas of Boudh Phulbāni district as is evident from the huge bulk of Buddhist remains. The potentiality is archaeologically corroborated not only by the loose Buddhist sculptures, scattered somewhere at Boudh town, Rājagada, Rāmeswar temple area, paragalpur, Shyāmasundarpur, G. Udayagiri, but also by the impressive brick mounds. Those ancient brick mounds covering the Mahānadi Sālunki river valley as far as Kalingāghāti, when excavated, will no doubt yield a vast treasure of Structural monastic edifices, stupas, ascribable to the Bhauma Bhanja period (circa 9th-10th century A.D.) Amidst the huge bulk of the Buddhist monuments, particularly noteworthy are a life size colossus of Buddha in Bhumisparsa Mudrā (5' in height) at the royal palace of Rajasāheeb of Boudh, locally worshipped as Buddharāja, the imposing colossi of Buddha (built in several stone pieces) at Paragalpur and Shyāmasundarpur, still worshipped as Taibaradiā Mahāprabhu Buddha Bhattāraka, the images of four armed Jatāmukuta Lokeswara, two armed goddess Tārā with sacred Buddhist creed, popularly worshipped as Ugra Tārā, in the sanctum of Rāmeswara temple of Boudh. The late lamented scholar Prof. Dr. N. K. Sāhu, has already reported from the Boudh the Buddhist bronze hoard representing the two armed and
one faced image of Maitreya, four armed Sankhanāth Lokeshwara. (39) Prior to Dr. Sāhu, Dr. R. D. Bānerjee has however brought to light the loose Buddhist sculptures of Māhāttārī Tārā and Lokeshwara. (40) It seems that the very name Boudh still represents an illustrious legacy of Buddhism.

Similarly, the adjoining hilly tracts in around G. Udayagiri Tehsil are replete in important Buddhist ruins ascribable to Bhauma Bhanja period. The quadrangular and domical brick mounds, dotted by brick courses and dumped brick alignments archaeologically bear the vestiges of the huge brick built monasteries and stupas, constructed during the reign of Bhauma Bhanja period (circa 9th-10th century A.D.). Particularly noteworthy is that, a life size stupendous colossus of Buddha Amoghaśiddhi with seven hooded snake canopy above the head (5'6" in height) has already been shifted from the site to the Orissa state museum, Bhubaneswar for preservation and display.

Similarly, Kalingāghāt, recently explored as a prolific Buddhist establishment of Bhauma Bhanja period, has yielded the spectacular hoard of Buddhist monuments. The potentiality of the site is vouched safed not only by the host of the truncated images of Buddha, an exquite head of Buddha, Bodhisattva Padmapāni, images of Tārā,
the lintel of a sculptured door jamb showing the Gaja Laxmi motif, the Chaitya motifs lying scattered all through the precinct of a modern Siva temple, but also by the huge accumulation of brick bats, fulfledged burnt bricks and the spectacular brick mounds, if excavated, will no doubt unveil the remains of the structural monasteries and stupas.

The modern district of Korāput, though not grossly influenced by the tempo of Buddhism, however shows the vestiges of the stray Buddhist ruins at Kesaribedhā and Jagamandā hill. The inscriptions (circa 6th-7th century A.D.) engraved on the wall of the Nilakantheswar temple, archaeologically attest to the site intimately associated with Āchārya Dharmaśīkātī, a distinguished Buddhist luminary-cum-famous dialectician and a prolific author of the grand Buddhist logic "Nyāyavindu", who is known from Taranāth's account to have thrice defeated the Brāhmaṇicāl stalwart Sankarachārya and Bhāṭṭa Āchārya in various metaphysical combats. However, the glimpses of the ancient brick bats on the top of the Jagamanda hill, attest to the said monastic establishment. The stray Buddhist ruins are found at Belkhandi (district Kalāhāndi) in the wake of the Saptamātrikā hoard. The remains of the brick built structural edifices ascribable to circa 10th-11th century A.D. are there in situ.
The Buddhist ruins are lying scattered over the major portions of the modern coastal district of Ganjam. Particularly noteworthy amidst the hoard are the loose sculptures of Buddha in Dhyāna and Bhusparsa Mudrā at Buddhakhhol (cave connected with the heritage of Buddha) lying weather beaten across a natural stream, the images of Buddha in Bhumi-sparsa Mudrā and two armed Tara (seated) being habitually worshipped by the local Dehuris of Purusottampur in the name of Tārā-Tārini on the top of a hill across the right bank of river Rusikulyā. The Buddha lingeswar temple at Surudā, in the district of Ganjam however enshrines in the sanctum a votive stupa turned huge Siva linga mysteriously worshipped as Buddha linga or Buddhalingeswara, (a curious amalgam of Buddhism with Saivism). The entire precinct, which stands on a dilapidated brick mound, dotted by the ancient bricks and brick bats, yields the remains of a structural monastery ascribable to the Bhauma Bhanja period. The traces of the important Buddhist ruins such as the sacred wheel (Dharmachakra) footprints, are noticeable in the hilly tracts of Ghumusar area.

So also, the Chausathī Yogini temple precinct at Rānipur Jhariāl in the district of Bolangir was a glorious seat of Tāntric Buddhism (Vajrayāna Sahajayāna) as is
evident from the available Buddhist ruins. The surface finds show the remains of the brick built monasteries (Viharas) enshrining in one of the partially excavated cells an exquisite but headless image of Buddha in Dhyāna Mudrā. The portion of the monastic wall of about 15 metres (50 feet) in length together with the above said image of Buddha unearthed from an experimental excavation at the spot under taken by the state Archaeology, Stylistically point to the circa 10th-11th century A.D. Noteworthy fact is that the remnants of the brick built structural Buddhist stupas and monastic edifices are in situ at Titlāgarah, Kumudā, Amātaghāt, accross the river Tel, and Pātanāgarah in the district of Bolāngir.

However the loose Buddhist sculptures namely Avalokiteswara Padmapāni, eight armed Sankshipta Māricī are found extant at the precinct of Mānikeswari temple, Sonepur, so also the Kosaleswara temple at Vaidyanāth (Sonepur) houses the stray Buddhist ruins. Evidently, the orthodox Brāhminicāl Somavamsis, supplanting the Bhaumakaras, appear to have demolished the Buddhist edifices at Rānipur-Jhariāl, and built the Chausathī Yogini (brick) temples over the Buddhist ruins exploiting the dismantled bricks of the earlier Buddhist super structures.

The stray Buddhist remains are lying scattered Pellmell in the hilly tracts of Sitābinji-Papiliā, Mugapur, Fakirpur, Banchuān, Vaidakhiā, Hāvaleswara, Kusaleswara temple precinct, Deogāon. Particularly noteworthy amidst those are the seven rock cut (Buddhist) caves at Papiliā,
near Sitābinji, an excellent image of four armed Jatāmukuta Lokeshwara, lodged in the Kusaleswara temple premise, an excellent image of Ārya Saraswati with Varadā pose and a sacred text in right and left hands (1' X 10") enshrining the sacred Buddhist creed "Ye dharma hetuprabhavā . . . . at Garuan, images of Buddha and Padmapāni (1'6" X 1') bearing sacred Buddhist dhārani of "Ye dharma hetuprabhavā . . . (9th-10th century A.D.) at Raghunāthjew temple precinct, Viragovindapur, across the river Vaitarani in the district of Keonjhar.

The potentiality of the sites are amply attested to by a good number of ancient brick mounds at Sitābinji, Pipilia Deogāon, Garuān and Viragovindapur across the bank of river Vaitarani. When excavated will no doubt, yield the important Buddhist stupas and the monastic edifices, assignable to the Bhaumakara period. Buddhist remains are lying scattered all over Orissa. The Buddhist kings of Bhaumakara dynasty with their unbridled Buddhist religio-cultural-aesthetic urge and intense artistic impulse, constructed the numerous Buddhist images of extra ordinary merit and the structural edifices through out their empire.

Broadly speaking, the present state of Orissa, is practically llttred with the over whelming bulk of Buddhist images of Late Mahāyāna Vajrayāna pantheons.
But the Buddhist remains in their best, are lying scattered in the modern coastal districts of Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur and Cuttack Sadar (formerly included in the undivided Cuttack district).

A whirlwind exploratory field study confirms that, the undivided Cuttack district is dotted by the veritable mines of Buddhist monuments. The potentiality of the sites is amply corroborated not only by an unparalleled index of the magnificent Buddhist images lying scattered in the nook and corners of the villages, hills, river valleys, but also by the hundreds of impressive brick mounds, if excavated will no doubt yield the remnants of brick built structural stupas and monastic edifices, ascribable to the post Gupta period.

The latest surface finds show that the reign of Bhaumakaras witnessed a roaring prosperity of (Tantric) Buddhism together with the Buddhist art and architecture in the Mahanadi, Chitrotpala, Gobari, Birupā, Brāhmani, Vaitarani, Buddha, and Kharasrotā river valleys of modern coastal district of Cuttack.

Almost 350 new Buddhist sites have already been discovered from Orissa, in course of my whirlwind and hazardous exploratory field study. Particularly noteworthy among those are Lalitgiri, Udayagiri, Ratnagiri, Kolanigiri, Lāngudi hill, Vajragiri, Dharmasāla (originated from a sacred memory of Dhamma,
In Pāli, Dharma in Sanskrit, meaning thereby the Buddhism)

Kaima, Duburi hill, Assiā, Ghodkāpāta, Majhipāra, Chandia
Khandamarei, Ālamgiri, Achyutavasanta, Kapilā, Eradā,
Tarāngasāgarpur, Solampur, Bhārdā Cuttack, Khadipadā,
Dhāmanagar, Mugapadā, Kuānsa, Yogimunda, Kuānrapur,
Haladidhia, Ragadihill, Mahākālaparā, Badaghumuri hill,
Khairā, Kantigadiā hill, (in newly formed Jājpur district),
Narua Derābish, Sanghatimatha, Belārpur, Rāj Nagar, Bāzāramatha
Raghuḍaipur, Nilakanthapur, Bārīmula, Indupur, Garadapur,
Babkarpur, Rājagarah, Binodbihārijew temple precinct,
Ichhāpur, Māusimā temple (in Kendrāparā district), Mudupur,
Kalyānapur, Marichipur, Purana Maindipur, Nāsik, Kotian,
Pāradipgarah, Dharmeswara temple precinct, Bandhabāti,
(in Jagatsinghpur district), Rāmeswara, Brahmāvana Sālipur,
Natarā Mahājanpur, Kendupātanā, Bandhupur, Trilochanpur,
Bāneswaranāsi (in divided Cuttack district). Evidently,
Lalitgiri, Udayagiri and Ratnagiri sprang up as the largest
ever Buddhist establishments in the contemporary Gupta
Buddhist religio-Cultural-aesthetic world. The potentiality
of each site is amply attested to not only by the over
whelming hoards of Buddhist images lying scattered all through
the hill, but also by the spectacular brick mounds, when
excavated, will evidently yield the huge brick built
structural stupas, temples and the structural monastic
edifices.
The latest archaeological finds confirm that the antiquity of Lalitgiri may well go back to the Maurya period (3rd century B.C.). However, the structural stupas, monasteries and the numerous Buddhist images unearthed from Lalitgiri excavations, may be ascribable to the Gupta and Post Gupta period. The Buddhist Tantric images yielded from the site stylistically point to the flourishing period of Vajrayana.

The antiquity of the Buddhist monuments exposed so far from Udayagiri and Ratnagiri may be assigned to the Bhaumakara period. (circa 8th century A.D. onwards).

Towards the end of the 10th century A.D. Sri Kālachakra Tantra, later on modified to Kālachakrayāna, was introduced in Orissa by a distinguished Buddhist Tantric stalwart Acharya Pitopāda. (42) The famous monastic university of Ratnagiri played a significant part in the growth and dissemination of Kālachakra yoga Tantra of Tantric Yogāchāra Vijnanavada as is evident from the important Tibetan Buddhist texts such as "Pāg-sām-zon-zāŋg" and the mystic tales of Lāmā Tāranāth. The celebrated savants, monk scholars and the leading disciples of Pitopāda namely Avadhuti, Bodhisrī, Naropā and Souri are known to have perfected in Sri Kālachakra Yoga Tantra and attained the body of invisibility. (43)
It is known from the Chinese sources that Prajña, a monk scholar of Kapisā (Afghanistan) after his long eighteen years study at Nālandā university, presumably stepped in to Ratnagiri to study the cryptic portals of esoteric Yoga and the quintessence of Tantra, as Ratnagiri from circa 8th century A.D. (44) onwards sprang up as a flourishing monastic university of Tāntric Yogāchāra Vijnānavāda under the aegis of the Buddhist kings of Bhaumakara dynasty.

According to the celebrated Chinese historian Yuanchao's account, Prajña after the successful completion of his study of Yoga Tantra, from Ratnagiri, visited the royal Court of the Chinese Emperor Te-Tsong (788 A.D.) and presented to Chinese emperor, the Orissan king's autographed manuscript of the last section of the Buddhist Mahāyāna Avatāmsaka, called, Gandavyuha, hand written letter and an embroidered canopy as the cultural ambassador to the Buddhist king of Wu-CHĀ (Orissa) who does what is pure, The Lion. (45) The fortunate Buddhist king of the then Orissa epigraphically appears to be either Parama Tathāgata Sri Siivākara deva-1 (Unmattasimha) or Parama Sougata Subhakara deva-1 (also known as Subhakarasimha) of the Bhaumakara dynasty. It is known from the Yuanchao's account that Prajna translated the Mahāyāna Bodhisat Pāramitā
Sutra and Gandavyuha in to the Chinese in the circa 796 A.D. (46).

Laxminkarā, the illustrious sister of Indrabhuti, and the author of Advayasiddhi, a wonder in the annals of the contemporary Buddhist Tantric world, introduced Sahajayāna (an off shoot of Vajrayāna) in to Orissa next to Kālachakrayāna nullifying the futility of the observance of stringent monasticism, fasting, ritualistic worships, holy bathe, obeisance to the gods and goddesses made of wood, stone and mud, rather emphasising on the deification of one's own body. According to Laxminkarā, the body of the microcosm happens to be the only abode of numerous gods, goddesses including the pancha Dhyani Buddhas and Vajrasattva etc. (47) It is presumed that, Sahajayana doctrine and epistemology was disseminated from Ratnagiri, the famous Buddhist Tantric monastic university of Yogāchāra Vijnānavāda.

Broadly speaking, Ratnagiri played a significant part in the evolution, growth and dissemination of the esoteric portals and quintessence of Kālachakrayāna and Sahajayāna in the contemporary medieval Buddhist religio-cultural aesthetic world.

On the basis of the important Buddhist finds scattered all over Orissa, and from the archaeological evidences furnished by the excavations at Ratnagiri it appears that, Buddhism was not so much affected during
the Brāhminical Ganga rule that superseded the Somavamsi rule in Orissa (circa 12th century A.D.). The discovery of Ganga gold fanam from the womb of the stupa No. 24 at Ratnagiri attests to it.

Buddhism does not seem to have fared well during the Gajapati rule in Orissa (15th century A.D.). After the fall of the Gajapati regime, Mukunda Deva (A.D. 1559-1568) had fostered keen interest in the revival and dissemination of Buddhism as revealed through the account of Lama Taranath in which Mukunda deva is portrayed as "Dharmarāja". Accordingly, Mukundadeva had constructed a temple and a good number of satellite Buddhist centres in Orissa (orissa) (49). Buddhism together with the living trends of Buddhist building activities in Orissa witnessed a marked decline from the 12th century A.D. onwards.

A large number of factors were practically responsible for the decay and the final disappearance of Buddhism in Orissa. The swelling tides of Muslim invasion led by Muhammed bin Bakhtiyār Khilji, tremendously affected Buddhism and the Buddhist edifices of Northern India including Orissa. The Muhmmedan invaders sacked and burnt the monastic institutions of Nālandā, Vikramaiśā, Odantapuri in the 13th century A.D. (50)
So also in Orissa, the landmark Buddhist establishments namely Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri, Udayagiri, Jagaddala (Vihāra), Vajragiri, Kolanigiri, Lāngudi hill, together with the overwhelming number of equally potential Buddhist centres were succumbed to unbridled Muslim Vandalism. The Muslim fanatics massacred the Buddhist monks, despoiled and burnt the Buddhist monastic edifices including stupas, monasteries and sculptures and rebuilt the mosques and mausoleums over the Buddhist ruins somewhere at Lalitgiri, Udayagiri, Alamgiri, Ratnagiri and Jājpur as already substantiated by the archaeological evidence.

Particularly noteworthy amidst those is the existing tomb worshipped by both Hindus and Muslims (Called Durghasā Satyapira) on the crest of So called Alamgiri, dotted by the important Buddhist ruins. According to a galaxy of Arabic inscriptions engraved on the lintel, the said Mosque was built by Muhmmed Sujāuddin (a deputy Subedar under Murshid Quli Khan, the Nazim of Bengal) in 1711 A.D. (51). Next to Muslim Vandalism, the orthodox Brahminical Hinduism (Saivism, Saktism and Vaishnavism) supplanted Buddhism in Orissa. The myriads of Brahminical shrines and temples (Saiva, Sākta, and Vaishnava) sprang over the Buddhist ruins. Mahayana Buddhism, radically transformed to an obnoxious and enigmatic doctrine of Vajrayāna, completely foreign to the teachings of Buddha.
with the influx of elaborate ritualistic practices, hideous Tantric Sadhanas, Dhyānas, Mudrās, Mandalas, became essenceless competing with the Brahminical Tantricism. With the cryptic portals and gruesome practices confined only to the initiated, Vajrayāna cultivated an exclusive spirit and lost popular appeal. (52)

The induction of incestuous and carnal elements of five hideous and unintelligible Tantric esoteric rites "Pancha Mākāra" (Madya, Māmsa, Matsya, Mudrā and Maithuna) and six heinous practices (Satvichāras, namely Stambhana, Mohana, Vasikarana, Uchattana, Vidwesana and Mārana) (53) together with the most in-comprehensible and twilight concept of (Prajnopāya) sexo-yogic practices (of divine male and female personified) gave an indirect fillip to the monks and nuns of less understanding to indulge in carnal eroticism, flagrantly deviating from the highest sense of ethical standard. The Tantric Buddhism ceaselessly competing with the Brahminical Tantricism became doomed and the Buddhist Tantric stalwarts were forced to devise the Dhyāna, Sādhanā and iconography of numerous gods and goddesses of Vajrayānic pantheons reminiscent with those of Brahminical counter parts namely Vajrapāṇi, (Padmapāṇi Avalokiteswara, Lokeswara, Lokanāth), Manjusri, Jambhala, Heruka, Vasudhārā, Hāriti, (Prajnāpāramitā-Chundā-Āryasaraswati), Mārichi, Jānguli,
which closely correspond with the Brāhminical pantheons of Indra, Vishnu, Nārāyana, Ganesa, Kuvera, Siva, Laxmi, Mātrikā, Saraswati, Surya, and Manasa respectively so far as the iconographic features are concerned.

Further the cult of violence, as is evident from the worship of such gruesome and canniballic Buddhist Tantric deity, like Mahākāla, which was invoked to devour the raw flesh and blood of the anti-Buddhist heretics, who did not offer obeisance to the Triratnas (Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha) and the preceptors, was rather completely exoteric and diametrically antagonistic to the Buddha’s doctrine of non-violence (Ahimsā). The secret portals of Sri kālachakra Tantra, Kālachakrayāna, and Sahajayāna together with the most violent and blood thirsty cult of Mahākāla were introduced in to Orissa for the first time somewhere at Ratnagiri. The rational and highly ethical teachings of Buddha were smothered under an impending burden of superstitions, elaborate rituals, and the enigmatic worship of numerous deities, carnal eroticism and immoral life against which Buddha had crusaded ceaselessly. Consequent upon which, Buddhism lost unanimous mass appeal in Orissa and thus abandoned.

Discarded by the enlightened, devoid of being backed by the innate devotional urge of the half hearted laity,
lack of any strong royal patronage, and the abandonment
of the active maritime trade with the South East Asian
countries owing to the speedy sedimentation of the net work
of riverine ports, the centuries long popular Buddhism in
Orissa withered away.

The Buddhism in Orissa suffered more from absorption
than destruction. Noteworthy fact is that, the Buddhist
Brāhminical syncretic shrines in Orissa namely Buddha-linga,
Buddhalingeswara, Tārā-Tārini, Bhattachārika, Buddhār-Chandi, Tāivaradiā-
Buddha Nārāyana Bhattāraka Mahāprabhu, Dharmeswara, archaeologically
attest to the doctrinal fusion, absorption and interaction
between Buddhism and Brāhminical Hinduism or vice versa.
The irresistible flood of Vaishnavism saturated by the
lofty ideals of universal equality, fraternity, secularism
and untarnished devotion (Bhakti) swept over the popular
mind and drew adherents in overwhelming numbers. As a result
Buddhism being an obsolete and invertebrate, morbid and
decadent motive force too weak to counteract against
Vaishnavism, could not but succumb.

At the same time Vaishnavism was exceedingly liberal
to acknowledge the greatness of Buddha and incorporate him
as one of the ten incarnations (Avatār) of Lord Vishnu as
is evident from the benedictory versions of Jayadeva to his
grand liturgical (Sanskrit) Vaishnavite Text "Geeta Govinda" composed in about 13th century A.D.).

Jayadeva invokes Lord Buddha as the 9th incarnation of Vishnu. (54)

Thus ended the 2500 years of the prolonged history of Buddhism and the Buddhist monuments in Orissa. The golden reign of Buddhism, the glorious Buddhist heritage and the benign name of Buddha in Orissa gradually flickered and subsequently faded from the popular mind for ever. The overwhelming bulk of Buddhist monuments such as stupas, monasteries, (Viharas) temples, and sculptures being popularly abhorred, abandoned and finally succumbed to frequent vandalism, were miserably dwindled to structureless mounds densely shrouded in huge brick bats, impassable jungles and thorny bushes.
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   ati vakyantitokshissam, dusūlohī bahujjano. . . . .verse-
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Vajram pumsendriyam tathā" Verse-II, Chapter-2, Jñānasidhi.
Yosit tābat bhavet prajñā upāya purusa smrutah/
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43. Ibid.


47. Nakasta kalpanām kuryātnapovāsanachakriyām/
   Śnana soucha nachaivātra grāmadharma vibarjitam/
   Nachāpi vandayen devān/ Kāsta pāsāna mrunmayān/
   Puja masyeiba kāyascha/ kuryānnitya samāhitam/
   Gamyā gamya vikalpaṃtu/ Bhakṣā bhakṣhya tattheibachā/
   Peyā peyam tathā mantri/ Kuryā naiba samāhitah/
   Sarva varna samudbhutah/ Jagupasya naiba yositah/
   Saiba Bhagavati prajñā/ Sambrutya rupa māsrita/"

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54. "Nindasi Yajna Vidherahaha smruti jātam/
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   Jaya Jagadisa Hare //" 

Sri Jayadeva, Geeta Govinda.