CHAPTER - EIGHT
In Hindu India, 'Pilgrimage' is treated as an important socio-cultural dimension of Indian civilization. It is essentially a religious phenomenon. The concept of pilgrimage exists in all major religious, although its meaning varies greatly within the canonical structure of each religion. It acts as an important socio-cultural phenomenon in Indian society by which socio-cultural interaction of people takes place. Among Hindus, the tradition of pilgrimage, the "Tirtha Yatra" seems to be as old as their civilization. It varies from one place to another in India and still the institution of pilgrimage is one of the main unifying forces in Hinduism. Innumerable sacred centres spread all over India which can be taken together as a system having varying degree of socio-religious traits. The place of pilgrimage of several levels viz. in all India level, regional and also local levels have their corresponding pilgrim 'field' for their interactions. In India, the number of Hindu sanctuaries is so large and the practice of pilgrimage is so popular that the whole of India can be regarded as a vast 'sacred geography' being organized into a system of pilgrimage centres of varied importance.

Anthropological approach to the study of different sacred centres, the places of pilgrimage forms an important aspect of Indian civilization which has now become a relevant field of research in the whole world. At present, the study of anthropology of pilgrimage could be able to contribute substantially to an understanding of the roles the religions play in maintaining and also in modifying social systems as well as in facilitating or impeding relations between the members of different societies. Hence, anthropological studies on pilgrimage as theoretical entity provided an analytical model to explain the problem and the prospects of Hindu pilgrimage. This study investigated how a domain is marked out as sacred and
how that sacrality is advertised. Also it examines the ways as to how sacrality is articulated with other forms of power in the society, whether those of local patronage, ecclesiastical authority, political representation or other power structures. Through the description and analyses of the staging of pilgrimage anthropology enquired about pilgrims' reaction to pilgrimage, the associations between the worshipped objects and entities and other reasons of social life, and their attitudes towards constitution and the methods of the groups which control and advertise pilgrimages.

Hence, pilgrimages are the institutions where ideological beliefs are imposed and reiterated and an anthropology of pilgrimage is aware of the political implications of a field in which participants in the mundane life of cities and villages meet under the aegis and direction of guides and officiants with relics and representations of the powers they see as ruling over their days. Anthropologists are concerned with the power attributed to the Gods and also with all other powers which gather around their august relics. So anthropologists turned their attention to the central pilgrimages in order to get different prospectives on pilgrimage phenomenon particularly those derived from studies of local or regional pilgrimages. After careful examination of the development and subsequent evolution of such pilgrimage centres, anthropologists are provided with the means of ending the scholarly neglect of pilgrimages and of turning pilgrimage studies into powerful tools for the analysis of societies in the history.

In the present investigation the studies were taken from two important sacred centres of Hindu India, i.e. (Puri and Simhachalam, two neighbouring vaishnavite shrines of India.) Puri is the abode of Lord Jagannath, the
most important Hindu place of pilgrimage, is well-known throughout the world. The image of Jagannath be a synonym of either a Buddhist or a Brahminical deity in origin, is not found anywhere else in ancient India except at Puri. Now-a-days the images of Jagannath are seen in various other places of India like in the state of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh which were caved in imitation of the image of Lord Jagannath at Puri. Puri is treated as one of the four great shrines or 'Dhams' of Hindus, being established according to tradition at the instance of Sankaracharya, the great teacher and reviver of philosophic Hinduism, at the four corners of India. Puri forms an important 'Dham' in eastern zone of India to be the first place amongst the four which has helped to strengthen the solidarity of Hindu India.

As a centre of pilgrimage, Puri is considered to be a network of different social and cultural relations within and between communities at different levels of socio-cultural integration. Puri is in continuous contact with a whole lot of pilgrims and tourists who come from different strata of society. This sacred place of Jagannath serves that local, regional and the entire Hindu Universe through sacred activities. It is a meeting place for different kinds of people and traditions, of castes and sects, of class and status and thus nourishes a sense of unity. Puri is a place where exchange of ideas, ways of life and traditions take place. Puri constantly shapes and moulds the regional culture of Orissa through cultural changes. So it is a place where religious, philosophical and literary specialists reflect, synthesize and create new developments out of traditional materials.

In the cult of Jagannath, caste distinctions diluted and syncretism is a dominant feature. Since the advent of British rule, India's life and culture move
towards a broad synthesis as having diversified cultural identities. In Hindu life, the caste division is very much extensive so also intensive and no aspect of social life remains unaffected. Each has its own religion and Hindu religion allows greater freedom to individuals in comparison to other religions. As a Hindu pilgrim centre, Puri has similarities in many respects with the other sacred centres like Simhachalam, Tirupati, Banaras, Allahabad, Haridwar, Mathura, Vrindaban, Dwarika etc. of India. But in comparison to other places of pilgrimage, the number of pilgrims come to Puri is definitely the greatest amongst all.

Other sacred centre, Simhachalam, the place of Lord Narasimha is one of the important vaishnavite shrines of Andhra Pradesh. Simhachalam temple is situated on a hill range Kailasa of eastern ghats and Visakhapatnam of Andhra Pradesh. The ritual of Simhachalam temple does not differ in essentials from the ritual of other temples of South India like temples at Tirupati, Kanchi and Srirangam. The decorative architecture and sculpture of Simhachalam temple are very much famous in India which attracts people from all over the country even from abroad.

In the medieval times, Simhachalam and its environs grew into importance. Simhachalam, the hill of lion, is a famous centre of pilgrimage for great Man-lion-Narasimha, the fourth incarnation of Lord Vishnu. The pilgrims coming to Simhachalam on pilgrimage have different motives and purposes to fulfill. The tonsuring ceremony is the most attractive sacred performance at Simhachalam temple, for which most of the pilgrims come here on pilgrimage. And most of the pilgrims are mostly attracted to visit the temple to fulfill their votive offerings. Also large number of visitors, tourists are coming to Simhachalam to see its beautiful sculpture and architecture.
of the temple which are quite attractive ones.

While coming on pilgrimage the Hindu pilgrims have diverse motives and purposes in their minds which may be concerned with either of learning religious merit or with the observance of different religious ceremonies. In secular India, through the institution of pilgrimage, people could be able to interact and exchange their ideas and feelings amongst themselves who come from various regions and language areas. It is observed that the institution of pilgrimage is linked up with religious beliefs and practices and in the free democratic and secular India, it serves individual as well as national purposes of seeing places of tourist interests, meeting of people of other linguistic regions and thereby forging national unity and integration.

It has been observed that though Puri and Simhachalam are two vaishnavite shrines of India, still many differences are marked between those places of pilgrimage. When one considers about their origins, then it has been evidenced from different sources that in case of Puri temple, the process of Hinduization is interrelated with the regional tradition of Orissa. Jagannath temple, the most important sacred centre of Orissa has developed the religious traditions from Hinduized cults which still display elements of tribal origin. Moreover, the same tribes whose cults were incorporated are also living as tribal and semitribal communities in the region and Hinduization can be observed within the context of regional tradition of Orissa. But in case of Simhachalam temple, the history regarding its origin is still shrouded in mystery. According to tradition, the Varaha Narasimha image is a 'Sivalinga' which has been converted into a Vaishnava image by Ramanuja, the great Vaishnava saint who came to Simhachalam and found it to be suitable for centre of
Saivism, so he advised to convert the Linga into a 'Vaishnava' icon of the Varaha Narasimha. Many other views also came to picture regarding the origin and development of Simhachalam temple.

In order to study anthropology of pilgrimage of Lord Jagannath and Lord Narasimha from the structural and functional point of view, the present investigator had to face lots of problems during her course of research. The main difficulty was to get the pilgrims available for data collection as they had very limited time at their disposal while they were on pilgrimage. It was also difficult to motivate them properly for the interviews. The languages used for communication with pilgrims/priests of different language groups is another problem for the investigator at the time of data collection. Lastly, as the local priests of the temples are very much commercial minded, so it was very much difficult to get detail informations from them who were not at all interested to respond any questions asked for.

The present study had been designed with certain objectives and hypotheses which have been discussed in Chapter - I. The study had elicited some data which fully or partly, have met the above mentioned objectives.

The **FIRST** objective was to ascertain the regular visits of pilgrims which reinforce their sense of religiosity and repose their faith in the supernatural power symbolised herein pilgrim centres.

It is found that there were regular visits of pilgrims of all over India to Puri and Simhachalam showing their sense of religiosity and deep faith and devotion towards the Hindu deities i.e. Lord Jagannath and Lord Narasimha. At Puri in the world famous 'Rath-Yatra' (Car festival) large number of pilgrims (about more than five
lakhs) assembled to observe the occasion irrespective of their religion, caste, class, creed, sect, language and social status, which ultimately showed their sense of religious beliefs on Lord Jagannath. Similarly at Simhachalam temple, in the famous 'Chandan Yatra' of Lord Narasimha, large number of pilgrims (about 40,000) gathered to observe the occasion irrespective of caste, class, creed, social status which reflect their attitudes towards Hindu religion.

Discussions have been made in Chapter - III and Chapter - V regarding the regular visits of pilgrims to the centres of pilgrimage during festive occasions i.e. annual festivals and periodical festivals. It is found that during Rath Yatra, the special festive occasion, more than one lakh pilgrims visit Puri daily and about 10,000 pilgrims visiting Puri daily (floating population) in ordinary days. Annually about more than 16 lakhs pilgrims are coming to Puri on pilgrimage and more than 10,000 foreigners visit Puri annually to enjoy the scenic beauty of the town. At Simhachalam, during Chandan Yatra about 25,000 pilgrims per day coming on pilgrimage and about 6,000 pilgrims coming daily (floating population) to Simhachalam in ordinary days and annually about 13 lakhs pilgrims come to visit the temple. Hence regular visits of pilgrims in large scale were observed at both the centres of pilgrimage of Hindu India which proved their sense of religiosity.

The SECOND objective was to ascertain the socio-economic status of the pilgrims who come on pilgrimage occasionally/regularly.

It is found that people of all status group, the lower, middle and upper classes come to Puri and Simhachalam frequently on pilgrimage. Particularly upper class people come to the sacred centres occasionally and lower class people come on special festive occasions where as middle class people come regularly to the sacred centres throughout the year irrespective of any special occasion.
Discussions have been made in Chapter - V and Chapter - VI regarding different types of pilgrims showing their socio-economic status and their purpose of visit to Puri and Simhachalam. Different types of pilgrims were classified according to their income, occupation, age, sex, caste, educational status etc. And middle income group people came on pilgrimage very regularly to Puri and also to Simhachalam whereas higher income group came only for specific festive occasions to observe and to make offerings to the deities.

Most of the pilgrims who come regularly as well as occasionally to Puri and Simhachalam maintained their sense of purity and pollution as regards their food habits and dress pattern during their pilgrimage, are concerned. It has also been observed that people of higher socio-economic status do not obey all the pollutionary rules and regulations very rigidly whereas people of lower status group obey it more strictly to gather more Punya during their pilgrimage.

The THIRD objective was to ascertain the nature of ritual and economic relationship between the pilgrims and the priests of the temples.

It is found that the priest and pilgrim were inter-dependent and inter-related to each other. At Puri temple, the sacred specialists (priests) were quite dependent upon the pilgrims for their economy, whereas pilgrims were fully dependent on priests for their guidance, knowledge and proper understandings and also for making offerings to deities inside the temple premises. But in case of Simhachalam temple, the priests are not depended on pilgrims for their economy because the temple has been totally managed by the Government administration. The priests are paid by the Government of Andhra Pradesh which
were fixed up by them. The priests here help the pilgrims only in making sacred performances, the observances of religious acts before the deities. So there exists no economic relationship between the priest and pilgrim. All the sacred specialists are paid monthly salary by the Government directly depending on their nature of work and experiences on religious acts.

Discussions have been made on Chapter IV regarding the typology, network and organisations of sacred specialists of Puri and Simhachalam. It also described their mechanisms of organisations, the ritual and economic relationships and interactions between the priests and pilgrims coming to temple. At Puri the temple priests get a good amount from the pilgrims directly as they render necessary services to them during pilgrimage. Besides the temple priests, local businessmen (middlemen) also are benefited monetarily out of pilgrim services towards their accommodation, transports etc. Priests received their remuneration daily in the form of kind (Khei) instead of cash and in festive seasons they earn more amount comparatively. Also the priests get extra tips (both cash and kind) from the pilgrims which are not fixed. Here pilgrims are not allowed to make offerings to deities directly, so they offer through priests (Puja Pandas) of temple. It was evident that from the very ancient periods, the pilgrim-priest relationship existed on a durable basis and similar relationships exist even today. Most of the pilgrims during their pilgrimage take the help of priest at Puri for proper guidance and understanding about the origin, history and functioning of temple irrespective of their occupation, social status and positions.

At Simhachalam temple, pilgrim-priest relationships do not exist like that of Puri temple. Here only ritual relationship, interdependence are observed
between them but not the economic interrelationships. All offerings (both cash and kind) made before deities are diverted to government fund to be utilized for temple development and maintenance. Government of Andhra Pradesh directly pays their monthly remunerations in cash depending on the nature of their services. It was observed that few numbers (40 to 50) of sacred specialists are appointed to render services at temple. Pilgrims are permitted to buy directly the 'bhogas' from the selling counter of temple but offerings are made before deities by the temple priests. Here no direct economic relationships and interdependancies are existed between pilgrims and priests of the temple.

The FOURTH objective was to ascertain the nature of organisation and functioning of pilgrimage at Puri and Simhachalam.

It is found that the nature of different temple organisations and their functioning are quite complex in case of Puri. The temple priests for their convenience divided the entire country into forty clientele areas, each one of which is managed and maintained by a particular group of servants/priest class. Each clientele area is fixed and being allotted to a priest who tries to manage smoothly his organisation and he gives appointments for different posts to different suitable candidates to assist him properly to manage and to handle all pilgrims of that particular area. All the personnels get their monthly salaries from the head of the organisation depending on their nature of work and their own ability and efficiency for pilgrim handlings. Different types of pilgrims belonging to different linguistic groups come on pilgrimage to Puri, so for appointment of pilgrim agents, the managers of all the organisations select them on the basis of their speaking abilities. Generally high caste Hindus are appointed as pilgrim agents who help the priests to procure, to guide and to look after the pilgrims properly during their pilgrimage.
At Simhachalam temple, priest-pilgrim interactions are very much restricted as the temple has been totally managed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. Here priests do not have any private organisations to handle the pilgrims. Pilgrims do not take the help of priests like Puri to settle them during their pilgrimage. They donot pay any amount to the priests, rather they give the amount either in the form of cash or kind on charity to the temple directly according to their capacities. So no such informal relationship like Puri is marked at Simhachalam between the priest and pilgrims. All their interactions and interrelationships are quite formal.

Discussions have been made on Chapter - IV and Chapter - VII regarding the nature of organisation and functioning of pilgrimage at Puri and Simhachalam. Nowadays as modern facilities are available for the pilgrims as regards their accommodation and transport which made them more easier to carry out the institution of pilgrimage at different sacred centres. As a result, hundreds of thousands pilgrims from allover India even from abroad are attracted to Puri and Simhachalam to perform their pilgrimages and to enjoy the scenic beauties of both the places all along the year. Even pilgrims from distant places could able to come easily on pilgrimage due to modern technology and advancements.

The FIFTH objective won to ascertain the sincerity, devotion and attitude of priests towards their profession.

It is found that in comparison with ancient days the present day priests of temples are not so much sincere and devoted towards their services. Gradually their attitudes have become changing due to modern impact; they do not concentrate fully towards their traditional occupations. At Puri, priests could not manage their
families out of their priestlihood only, so they have to go for secondary occupation for better living. And by their opinions, it happened only because of changing of temple administration from the hand of the priests to the hand of Government of Orissa. The temple administration is handed over to the Government for better development and management of temple. But as a result priestliclass people could not get sufficient amount of money as before, to manage their families, now-a-days, they are deprived of practising their traditional occupations to earn their livelihood.

At Simhachalam temple, the sincerity, devotion and attitudes of priests are being very much formal as they are the Government servants, getting a fixed amount from the government to manage their families. So they are very much formal towards their profession, seemed to be sincere and devoted towards their duties only to that extent of government servants. It was observed that the sacred and the secular acts all are quite mechanised priests simply do their duties very formally.

Discussions have been made on Chapter - IV as well as Chapter - VII regarding the types, organisation, and functioning of the professions of the priests. At Puri, most of the priests (about 73%) opined that after governments' interference in temple management, they were monetarily very much loser whereas few ones (27%) told that after Governments' take over, the temple administration is running smoothly with different types of interferences from priestliclasses. So as a result, priests could not concentrate fully on their traditional occupations, so gradually their sincerity and devotion are decreasing day by day as their professions concerned. At Simhachalam as the temple administration is totally handed over to Government the
priests perform their duties according to the prescribed rules and regulations of Government. So their devotions towards performance of religious acts and other secular acts are very much confined rather more restricted and remaining within certain limitations.

However, it has been evidenced that modernisation has direct impact and influence even on the institution of pilgrimage and in the performance of religious acts. The modern technologies are fully responsible to increase the speed of the rate of adoption of modern amenities which ultimately help to encourage the people to proceed, to progress towards national integration. Now-a-days due to availability of modern facilities in all fields, the vast number of visitors/tourists/pilgrims are attracted to visit sacred centres/tourist places more easily. They are being encouraged to come frequently to different centres of pilgrimage in India by availing modern transport systems. Also for accommodation to many government, semi-government, Corporations, Public sector/Private sector companies have provided good accommodating places at different regions of country which attract large number of people to perform their pilgrimage more conveniently. Hence the present study of anthropology of pilgrimage of two different vaishnavite shrines of India is treated as an incentive to analyse and to interpret the most important socio-cultural dimension of Indian civilization.