Chapter 4

Religious Equations between Buddhism and Brahmanical Religions in ‘Early Medieval Orissa’

4.1 Contours of religious Developments

Conceptualising the relations between two religions, Hinduism and Buddhism, which were far from being monolithic and were very dynamic – both experienced exponential development and growth – is a complex task. Buddhism, in particular Vajrayāna Buddhism in its exoteric version, experienced horizontal and vertical expansion in our period. At the horizontal level the archaeological sites – monastic, sculptural, and stupas – point out that it was an expanding religion. Vertically, the period saw the introduction of new deities, rituals for them, mandala form of rituals and possibly married monks. Appropriating Tantric-Yogic practices and their epistemology and giving them a Buddhist hue, Buddhism developed a neat but complex pantheon structure. These developments in Buddhism — both at the ritual and iconographic level (The Kriyā Tantra deals with the everyday aspect of the religion took the religion to layperson and made it this worldly.) — have been dealt in chapter 2 and 3. Buddhism introduced many new deities during the period. These new developments resulted in the spatial expansion of Buddhism as more than 100 sites emerged during this period, particularly after 9th century AD.

Chapter 3 also discussed the growth of Brahmanical religions. At one level brahmanical religions are centred on Panca-pāsāna (Visnu, Siva, Sakti, Ganapati and Surya) and Saktism but on the other hand, it goes beyond them to include myriad minor autochthonous cults, which had attained popularity at local and sub-regional levels. Still at another end of the spectrum is the presence of Tantric goddess worship was very popular. The folk elements in them were very apparent from their iconographic representations and ritual practices. Inscriptions of various times refer to these folk deities like Maninagesvari, Stambhesvari, Kanchipotti Bhattarika and Gokarnasvamin (discussed in Chapter 3.4, Chapter 4). Saivism, Saktism and Vajrayana Buddhism tried to incorporate these folk gods and goddesses.

4.2 Issues in studying Religious Dynamics

How does one conceptualise the inter-religious relationship, particularly between the above two religions in this south-eastern part of the Indian sub-continent, which is situated on the north-eastern of the Bay of Bengal and lies between peninsular south and Gangetic north, thus exposing it to the cross-regional influences as well as influence from the sea?
Two impediments come up in this exercise. First, the nature of the sources and the second is the existing historiography. The latter seems to be compounding the former problem.

The existing historiography while providing some insightful analysis of the religio-cultural conditions of the period and its relationship with royalty has completely glossed over Buddhism. It accepts the earlier historiographical notions that Buddhism was waning during this period. It was Hinduism in all but name (Snellgrove 1987: 106). Vajrayāna Buddhism, it is said, consisted of only psychosexual practices, which were borrowed primarily from Hindu Tantricism. It was nothing but Hindu Tantricism crafted with Buddhist terminology. The loss of Buddhism is posited against a resurgent Hinduism during the post-Gupta period, while the assimilation of Buddha as an avatar of Visnu is shown as clinching evidence of the waning Buddhism and its absorption into the expanding and dynamic Hinduism. This historiographical notion has continued from the time of the European scholars who studied Buddhism. They abhorred the degeneration that crept into Buddhism in its Vajrayana version. They glossed over the religio-cultural history of the period, which was far more complex than has hitherto been acknowledged by historians.

Once the decline assumption is accepted a priori the task has been to explain 'octopus Hinduism' in complexities and dynamics of its expansion. Historians cite temple architecture, a corpus of literary texts—Puranic, śāstraic, Tantric and Bhakti literature—and a vast array of epigraphic sources—copper plate, stone inscriptions—that apparently suggest the supremacy of Hindu religion in this period and corresponding decline of Buddhism. In contrast Buddhist sources of the period are largely archaeological. The vast Vajrayāna literature is too abstruse to be given meaningful attention. Now that Buddhism has become extinct in India provides the additional space to historians to work on different dimensions of a resurgent Hinduism.

The last two chapters tried to contest this dominant paradigm by exploring the religious landscape of Orissa between 5th century AD and 12th century AD. It tried to show not only the spatial expansion of Buddhist sites in a period when Saivism was emerging as an important cult in Orissa with huge temples being built but also the vertical side of the growth of Buddhism, especially in its ritual, in its introduction of deities and their instrumental functions. If we accept uncritically that Hinduism was expanding and assuming a hegemonic character because of its inclusive character, then how does one explain the existence and expansion of Buddhism in the same period?

On the other hand if it is accepted that Buddhism was a flourishing and dynamic religion juxtaposed with an equally resurgent and vibrant 'Hinduism' (which is the case as
Chapter 3 shows), then this alternative perspective offers an opportunity to reconstruct their relationship both in relation to their possible competition and co-existence. This alternative paradigm opens a floodgate of questions—questions of religious identity i.e. whether identity is homogenous or multi-layered varying according to the status of social groups, multivalency of symbols, kingship and religious affiliations and the symbolic relationship between politics and religion and autonomy of religion.

However, the relationship between the two religions has been seen in binary categories. The decline of Buddhism in post-Gupta period is posited against an ascendant and syncretic Hinduism. The question of spread and visibility of one religion is inextricably linked with the question of practitioners' identity. How was one viewing himself as a follower of particular sect or religion? This is a complex question, especially in South Asian religiocultural context where different sects of Hinduism and Buddhism have so many commonalties. Worshiping Buddha at a single temple by a worshipper can be interpreted in two ways: a Buddhist paying homage to the lord of the religion or a Vaiṣṇava worshipping Buddha as an *avatar* of Visnu (like worshipping Krisna or Rama). Of course there are divinities, who are exclusively Buddhist, Brahmancial or Jaina. But majority of the pantheon fall in between Hindu and Buddhist dichotomy. They belong to the same religion and are worshipped under multivalency of symbols (e.g. Sarasvati is worshipped in Hindu and Buddhist religions). She is identified with Manjusri as well. To take one example, Karunamaya, a form of Avalokitesvara, is known in Nepal as a form of Siva. Manjusri is identified as Kartikkeya. Visnu Lokesvara and Sankhapani Lokesvara look more like Visnu and are evidently modelled on Visnu. In these situations, a single behaviouristic approach of religious identification is of little value. S. Levi wrote, “A rigid classification which simplistically divided divinities up under the headings Buddhism, Saivism and Vaisnavism would be pure nonsense; under different names and at different levels the same gods are for the most part common to different confessions.” (Levi 1905 I: 319). In ancient Indian cultural context modern insistence on single, context-free religious identity leads to a paradox, which did not exist in pluoro-cultural Orissan context in particular and in south Asia in general. Xuanzang's observation that both Buddhism and deity temples lived pell-mell in his times in many parts of India is a closer approximation to the poly-religious environment of South Asia in early medieval times than the insistence on a context-free religious identity.

Religious equations between Hinduism and Buddhism cannot be studied in terms of opposition between the two. Depending on particular context, the religious permutation of each religion can only be taken into account within the totality of religious idioms. Gellner classifies these contexts as follows: soteriological, social and instrumental (Gellner 1996: 68).
A further question in the study of inter-religions relationship involves the analysis of the degree of heterogeneity of each religion. Both religions cannot be described in their common modern nomenclature i.e. Hinduism and Buddhism. Depending on particular aspects and its contexts, only can their mutual relationship be ascertained. For example, popular Tantric influences are found in both religions. To characterise one of the two as an imitation of the other’s Tantric feature is to deny not only the independent existence of popular tantricism but also to gloss over the dynamics which led both the religions to channel, capture, conceptualise and profit from a vast array of autochthonous elements. When one talk about brahmanical religion it must be born in mind that what type of religion is one talking about that is whether it is Vedic religion or strong Saktic-Saivite-Tantric tradition or religion of laypeople or brahmanical caste identity. When the Buddhism is talked about it is the monasticism of the monks or devotional worship of the lay worshipper or extreme esoteric Tantricism of the Vajrayāna or the magic alchemy.

Group psychologists argue that it is a tendency to interpret group identity in terms of in-group heterogeneity versus out-group homogeneity, thereby giving an impression that the competing religion that is talked about is homogeneous. Buddhism maintains and accepts heterogeneity, which includes the monasticism of Stravakayana, devotion and worship of Mahāyāna and ritual and magic of Vajrayāna. At every level and phase of its existence these elements are to be found in Buddhism. Further there must have existed perceptual variation of different social groups about the nature of their own and other’s religion. This seems particularly important while studying the religious identity and characterization of the ‘others’. The religions of the sacredotal elite are certainly different from the religion of the lay community and high religion of the masses (Singer 1972). Similarly Conze’s pithy remarks that the monks are the Buddhist elite and only Buddhist in the proper sense of the term leads us to make a distinction between religions of different groups and reveals the socially layered nature of religious identity (Conze 1960:53). 1

In many sites of Orissa Buddhism and brahmanical deities coexisted. Many of the Buddhist deities are modelled on their brahmanical counterpart viz. Visnu Lokesvara, Amoghapasa Lokesvara, and Sugatisandarsana Lokesvara. Similarly brahmanical religions developed the cult of Surya Lokesvara, Hari-Hara. Historians explain these deities as eclecticism in the South Asian religions.

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1 Edward Conze’s argument that the monks alone go through a phase of initiation and therefore, they are the only Buddhist in the proper sense of the term. Male members of Vajracaryas and Sakyacaryas of Nepal go through a phase of initiation in monasteries.
4.3 Eclecticism/Syncretism/or competition

The theme of eclecticism, which has been accepted as a truism, pervades historical writings. Historians speak of harmony, eclecticism among various religions in ancient times. Sylvan Levi's statement that the Nepal Mahāmya faithfully reflects the eclectic syncretism, which has nearly prevailed in Nepal, finds an exact echo in modern writing on the Somavamsis of Orissa. The authors state that the epigraphic records of the period refer to diverse creeds and point out clearly the catholicity of mind and tolerant policy of the Somavamsi kings (Levi 1905: 204; Sarma 1983: 69).

What is missed out in these perspectives of polar opposites of antagonisms—syncretism is moot question of why particular features of another religion are incorporated by another? The incorporation of the Buddhist deities into the fold of brahmanical pantheon or vice versa indicates a more complex level of interaction and symbiosis between Buddhism and brahmanical religions. It reflects a degree of competition between the two religions in order to attract the parishioners of the other by incorporating certain baseline concepts and icons to attract the parishioners of another religion. These baseline concepts—irrespective of their provenance—were very popular. They include worship of gods and goddesses, several rites, Tantric traditions, incorporation of autochthonous deities, alchemy, various life cycles rites, etc. The origin of these features may be brahmanical, Buddhist or independent but were adapted and incorporated by other religions. Both religions wanted to incorporate within them by giving sectarian hues to these elements.

One instance of this incorporation is the incorporation of tribal elements. While the brahmanical religions incorporated many deities and identified them as forms of Siva or Sakti viz. Stambhesvari, Maninagesvari, Gokarnesvara, etc. the Buddhist incorporated into their fold under the name of Parnasabari who has been described in the iconographic texts Samsāhrāmam bhagavatī (the goddess of all śabarīs (Getty 1978:134). Other instances of mutual borrowing and adaptation from other contexts can be cited. Caste system is an area, which Buddhism borrowed. Even though the Buddhism denied it the fact that many kings who described themselves as Paramaśaṅgata declared themselves to be believers and upholders of caste. These instances of competitions through borrowing and adaptation occur in both religions. The domination and subordination each religion can only be studied in particular context. What seems to be clear in historical records of early medieval times is not of hegemonic Hinduism incorporating Buddhism, tribal elements, Tantric practices and

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2 Many of the Bhaumakara rulers proclaimed that they had restored and upheld cast system. For example, the Neulpur grant of Subhakara records that Paramaśaṅgata Subhakara II established the varnaśrama in its golden age purity in strict accordance with the scriptures (Mishra 1934: 1–7).
cults through agrahara bramhanas but a more nuanced relation between two religions is a shared cultural contexts.

A frequent reference to syncretism, eclecticism is encountered while describing inter-religious equations. As noted earlier, Sylvan Levi stated that the Nepal Mahāmya represents religious syncretism. This is particularly referred to in connection with an eclectic Hinduism, which accepts diversities with an élan. The classic example is that of the incorporation of the Buddha as an avatar of Visnu. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa first refers to this. The first epigraphic and sculptural representation of the Buddha avatar is found in the Pallava and in Osian sun temple (8th-9th century) AD respectively.

A religious cult is syncretic when it combines soteriological, social and instrumental religion within a single, exclusive and monotheistic framework (Gellner 1996:100) and hence opposes the use of any other system. This definition fits hardly with brahmanical religion or with Buddhism. Brahmanical religions accept high degree of cultural relation and accept diverse paths to salvation.

Rather syncretism disguises understanding of an important process of competition existing between two religions. Criticising Levi's comment that the Nepal Mahāmya faithfully reflects the eclectic syncretism Brinkhaus argues that the passages Levi quotes reflect rather a special from of conflict and inclusivistic attempt to resolve the conflict (Brinkhaus 1980: 279). He states that the manner of confrontation does not raise doubts about the validity of an alien religion which has an independent existence and its own set of traditions, but rather attempt to incorporate and at the same time subordinate the religion to one's own. (ibid.). Dumont’s concept of hierarchical encompassment in the context of caste system applies equally to Hinduism-Buddhism relations. Dumont’s concept of hierarchical encompassment postulates that the superior pole of an opposition absorbs within it a higher level what is opposed to it at the lower level (Dumont 1980: 239). For instance, practices of the Theravada and the Mahāyāna were absorbed in the higher poles of Vajrayāna Buddhism. Allen’s remarks that Vajrayāna Buddhism is based on simple inversion of orthodox monastic Buddhism (Allen 1973: 13) is true at one level, yet at higher level Vajrayāna Buddhism integrated the Śrāvakayāna practices, the Mahāyāna devotionalism and ritualism of Vajrayāna Buddhism within a single Vajrayāna Buddhism framework. The same applies to the relationship of Vaisnavism and Saivism. The sectarian exclusiveness of the Vaishnavas is evident for many Vaishnava texts. The Nārada Pancarātra says that Brahma, Rudra, Surya, their saktis or their children should neither be worshipped daily nor even be resorted to for the fulfilment of any desire. But at the higher level, such exclusiveness gave way to the development of Hari-Hara cult. The process of polar opposition at the lower level and
integration of opposition at the higher level marked the relationship of Hinduism and Buddhism. The orthodox Buddhism decried the worship of divinities, it opposed brahmanical religions but at the higher-level brahmanical deities are incorporated and given subordinate status. It also holds true to the attempt of brahmanical religions to incorporate Buddhism within them. Buddha became an *avatar* of Visnu. Other deities like Tara, Mahakala were also incorporated within brahmanical pantheon and hierarchy.

Buddhism and Hinduism in early medieval Orissan context operated in a shared cultural environment, an environment characterised by popularity of goddesses, popularity of magic, belief in worship of instrumental deities, numerous rites, rituals, observances and cyclical and calendrical festivals. In these situations, contestation between two religions took place in a very subtle way, given the shared nature of certain base-line concepts, which are common to both religions.

4.4 Routinisation in Vajrayāna Buddhism

Since competition was to attract the soul and patronage of the parishioners of another religion, it is likely that such contestation found expression in idioms that were acceptable to people in general. There were certain ideologies in brahmanical religions and Buddhism, which prescribed five ‘m’ karas for salvation. There were of course some serious believers who believed in Tantric practices as a soteriological means to attain salvation (*mahāsukha*). But many of these Buddhist *Siddhas* engage in these practices in order to learn magic and alchemy, which definitely had instrumental value.

The *Hevajra Tantra* (*Hevajra Tantra* 2.3.41-5) describes a *yoginī* as one who is characterized by his being over all worldly distinction (of caste, purity etc). The Lord said “food and drink must be just as it comes. One should not avoid things wondering whether they are suitable or unsuitable.” (ibid.) This is contrary to a layman’s perception of the nature of religion, which involves rituals, worship, purity etc. Even though Vajrayāna Buddhism as soteriology was esoteric, as an exoteric religion it is highly unlikely that monastic organisations of early medieval India, which had established economic interests would have preferred the open display of such antinomian practices of esoteric Buddhism. In fact, the Buddhist *tantras* betray traces of a process of routinisation of these extreme practices. Still some members of the monastic community of the early medieval India were engaged in sexual practices as is evident from the *Kriya Saṃuccaya* of the 12th C (*Kriyā Saṃuccaya* 1977 352-5).

The process of routinisation is evident from the *Hevajra Tantra* which prescribes: “First the precepts should be given, then the ten. Then he should teach *Vaiśāhāya*, then the *Sautāntrika*. After that he should teach *Yogāṭhā*, then the *Madhyamikā*. After he knows levels
of the ways of Mantras then he should begin on Hevajra. The pupil who lays holds with zeal will succeed. There is no doubt.” (Hevajra Tantra II 90) Kanhapada’s commentary on this passage prescribes a process from exotericism to esotericism rather than outright display of antinomial behaviour. The Samvarodaya Tantra (17.1-6) describes the characteristics of vajra master who should give initiation. They include tranquil appearance, who has subdued his passion, who knows the practices of mantra and tantras, who is compassionate and who is termed in treatise, who talks to sweetly to everybody, who treats all living beings as his own, who always takes pleasure in alms-giving and is engaged in yoga and dhyāna, meditation, who speaks truth, who does not injure living beings whose mind is compassionate and intent upon benefitting others.

“Sameness is the emblem (mudrā) of his mind. He is the protector of living beings; he knows the various intentions of living beings and is regarded as the kinsman by those who have no protector. His body is complete as to sense organs. He is beautiful and agreeable to see. He knows the true meaning of consecration. His speech is clear, he is an ocean of merit and he always and continuously resort to pītha (power place), he is called acārya.” (Tsuda, 1974: 294). These liberal prescriptions of the nature of Vajrayāna contain inclusive accounts of all three yāmas.

This might be an actual or ideal representation of a Tantric ācārya but the fact such interpretation is given in a core tantra (anuttarayoga tantra) like the Samvarodaya suggests that within monastic communities such routinisation was at work. It was in response to the growth and development of Buddhism as primarily a religion of lay people. It is to be noted in this connection only very few deities in yab-yum pose are found in Indian context in general and in Orissa in particular.

One can suggest that early medieval monasticism favours such a routinisation and scaling down of extreme practices. In present Nepal the newer Buddhists maintain a distinction between inner and outer divinities. The esoteric deities with Yūgānātha pose are kept in inner chamber while other deities are found in the other parts of the monastery. Only those who have been initiated to the Vajrayāna tradition are allowed to inner level. Whether this was in practice in the Orissan Buddhism is not known (this requires an analysis of the architecture of the monastic complex). But the near absence of the Yab-Yum images point out that an open display of an antinomial Vajrayāna practices were dissuaded in general. Another evidence of such routinisation is the absence of Buddhist deities trampling on their Hindu counterparts in Orissa. As pointed out there are certain cultural idioms, which are very popular and cut across religious idioms. One is the use of Gaja-Laksmi; the other is the popularity of gods and goddesses like Ganapati, Sarasvati, Siva and
Visnu. Their representation as subordinate deities to Buddhist deities as prescribed in Buddhist literature would not have acceptance from the lay people who followed and worshipped them. The fact that Buddhist sites preserve Mahisamardini, Ganesa, Sivalinga and other images suggest their cross-religious appeal. To represent them as being trampled by Buddhist divinity would have been antagonistic to Buddhism as an adaptable religion, which borrowed and incorporated many cultural icons into their pantheon.

Therefore, contestation between the two religions found expressions in popular realms. They include the realm of divinities, rites, cyclic rituals, observances and other facets of everyday religion.

4.5 Religious Equation: Study of Iconography

One area of cross-religious borrowing and adaptation was in the sphere of iconography. The priestly class of each religion tried to attract the patronage and support base of wider social groups and sometimes the support of the practitioner of opposite religion. They tried to attract the contesting religion’s support base by investing their divinities with forms and symbols of competing religion and adapted and integrated them in a language and in a framework of their respective religion. Iconography was a fertile field of such cross-religious experimentation.

Lienhard’s analysis of this relationship between Hinduism and Buddhism in the context of Nepal offers insight on the relationship between the two religions in our period of study. He identified three processes in his theoretical conceptualisation of inter-religious equation (Lienhard 1978: 278). These three processes are: borrowing — borrowing from one religion to one’s own; Parallelism — by which functional equivalents are developed in one religion of the cults and rites of the other; and Identification — whereby a single cult is frequented all under different names (Gellner terms this as examples of multivalency of symbols).

To this conceptualisation could be identified four other processes, namely subordination — in which divinities are directly given a subordinate position in the competing religion; conflation — in which two or more divinities or motifs of the contesting religion were conflated to invent anew deity in their respective religion; Conversion — in which the divinities of the opposite religion were converted to be part of one’s pantheon and Combination of any of the above six processes. The following pages analyse these processes.

4.5.1 Evidence of Borrowing: Hindu Divinities in Buddhism

a. Mahākāla: Mahākāla is regarded as a form and prototype of Siva. The main temple of Ratnagiri, which was built in the usual Kalinga-style of architecture, is dedicated to Vajra Mahākāla, a vajrayana variety of Mahākāla. The popularity of the deity is still evident today in Orissa where he is worshipped as a Hindu deity. Observances (Bratas) in the form of Vajra-
Mahakala Brata (this brata is still observed in Orissa.) In the Sadhanamala and the Nispannayogavali he is described as having one face with two, four or six arms and eight faces with sixteen arms. He shared the following characteristics with Siva: 1 three eyes, trisula and decked in ornaments of serpents indicating borrowing from Hinduism. However, he is adapted in Buddhism as a guardian of kitchen. I-tsing refers to Mahakala who is found in great monasteries in India “at the side of a pillar to the kitchen or before the perch. Being always wiped with oil, his countenance is blackened and the deity is called Mahakala” (Takakusu 1966: 38). The ancient tradition asserts that he belonged to the beings in the heaven of the Great God (Mahdeva). At meal times, those who serve in the kitchen offer light and incense and arrange all kinds of prepared food before the deity (ibid.).

b. Sarasvati. The Buddhist Sarasvati may have one face with two arms and three faces with six arms. She is regarded as a goddess of wisdom learning, intelligence and memory, etc. The Buddhist worshipped Prajnaparamita and Manjusri as divinities associated with learning and wisdom; here incorporated another deity who was popular as goddess of learning. The Sadhanamala refers to five varieties of Sarasvati (Arya, Vairavini, Mahesvara, Sarasvati, Vajrasaradhi, Vajra Sarasvati).

c. Ganapati: Ganapati is described as a 12-armed deity standing in ardhaparyankasana, the khatavangha, the Kapala full of blood, the kapala of dried meat etc. Bhattacharya gives a description of Vajrayana Ganapati. In the Dharmaadhyakusvara Mandala of the Nispannayogavali he is described as white in colour and riding on a mouse. He has an elephant face and snake forms his sacred thread. In his two right hands, he carries the trisula and the Ladduka and in the two left the paraiku and the modaka.

d. Eight Digapalas: They were described as guardian of quarters in the Dharmaadhyakusvara Mandala of the Nispannayogavali.

e. The great gods Visnu, Mahesvara: They were incorporated into Buddhist pantheon in the same way as has been found in brahmanical canonical texts owing to the popularity of these cults. While there were ten types of bramhanas the Vajrayana Buddhist had not made any reference to Mahesvara and Visnu.

f. Other minor deities: Other minor Hindu deities incorporated within Buddhism were Kartikkeya, Varahi, and Camunda, nine planets, fire, were also incorporated into Buddhist system. Apart from these Balabhada group of deities (p. 378) representing the companion of Kama the god of love are also borrowed. It is to be noted that there were the three great gods were incorporated as widely suggesting their vast following. Apart from them one other deity of Pancapusana group Ganapati seems to have received special attention and attests the popularity of Ganapati cult. They made changes in the iconographic features of
the deities. Camunda, Varahi were Tantric deities in brahmanical pantheon and their borrowing attests to the popularity of Tantric worship, goddess worship so also the worship of the nine planets who enjoyed following in early medieval times. The nahagriha panels have been found in the temple rituals of the several temples of Orissa.

From the above description the borrowing reflects three patterns 1: borrowing the popular cult like Ganapati and giving them independent status. Instances can be made of Sarasvati, Kartikkeya, and Ganapati. 2: borrowing the Tantric goddess tradition. 3: incorporation of high Hindu gods. It is to be noted that while popular gods and goddesses were incorporated in the Buddhist system, the three great gods of brahmanical pantheon, Brahma, Visnu and Mahesvara were given inferior and subordinate positions within the Buddhist pantheon. This will become clear as we discuss subordination. As noted Mahakala who is a form of Siva is represented as guardian of kitchen.

4.5.2 Buddhist divinities in Hinduism: Buddha: The Buddha is regarded as an avatar of Visnu. First literary evidence of Buddha as an **avatār** of Visnu is found in the **Bhāgaṇata Purāṇa** while his epigraphic and sculptural representations belong to Pallava period and Osian in Jodhpur districts (9th C) respectively (Banerjea 1985).

a. Mahacina Tara. The *Tārāhaṇya* of Bramhananda, who flourished in the middle of sixteenth century claim Tara as a brahmanical deity. The *Tantrasāra* describes the deity as standing as **pratyālīdha** attitude with a garland of snakes round her neck having a fierce a face, protruding tongue and bare fangs. She is armed and carries **kāpāṭha** while in two others she carries the sword in the right and the blue lotus in the left. She is decked in five **mudrās** and has one tuft of hair on her head, which is ornamented with Aksobhya.

This description tallies with a form of Ekajata nomad Mahacina Tara (*Sādhanamāla* 210). The *Sādhanamālā* refers to the fact that the deity was restored by Arya Nagarjunapada from the country of Bhota, which is corroborated by the Rudrayamala and *Tārā Purāṇa* (*Sādhanamālā* II: CXXXVII–CXLC)

b. Chinnamastā: The deity is regarded as one of the ten Mahāvidyās and is described in the *Tantrasāra* and *Chinamastākalpa*. The deity is described as holding her own severed head in her left hand and from her severed neck issues forth a stream of blood falling into the mouth of the severed head. She is nude, of fierce appearance, with legs in **pratyālīdha** attitude. She wears a garland of heads and carries in her right hand the *kartari* and according to some texts, she stands on Rati and Kama. The *Sādhanamālā* contains the description of the deity who is named Vajrayogini and resembles in all respects the Chinnamasta description (*Sādhanamālā* 452). From the manuscript the *Sādhanamālā* has been composed before 1100 AD and from the Śādha it is known that Śūdha Sabarapada (Circa 657) was
responsible for a new cult of Vajrayogini, which makes the cult of Vajrayogini still older. From the mantra of Vajrayogini, Bhattacharya argues for a Buddhist origin of Tara (Sādhanamāla I: CXLII-CXLV).

In the brahmanical literature, the principal deity is designated Chinnamasta while the companions are named Dākinī and Varanari with the prefix Vajra of Sādhanamāla dropped altogether.

c. Janguli: Janguli's iconographic form was taken from Buddhism and was incorporated into Hindu pantheon as Manasa, who like Janguli cures from snake bite

d. Tara- Tarini

The main centre of Goddesses Tara and Tarini in Ganjam is regarded as an important pilgrim centre of southern Orissa. Here the two goddesses are represented in two stones with silver eyes (aniconic). These two folk deities, now fully Hinduised, seems to have gone through a Buddhist phase before being incorporated to Hinduism (Jaiswal 1985: 1-14). A small Bodhisattva image is now being worshipped together with the goddesses in the garbhagrihya. The folk element of the deity is still extant this important shrine where during Durga pujā animal sacrifices are offered to the goddesses inside the garbhagrihya (Eschmann 1978: 91).

4.5.2 Evidence of Parallelism

In both religions the functional or iconographic equivalents or the both are found suggesting a process of parallelism

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<td>6. Mātyendranath (Krishna in Nepal)</td>
<td>Similar traditions</td>
<td>Karunamaya Avalokitesvara</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Narayana</td>
<td>Iconographic functional</td>
<td>Sriskåtar-Lokesvara6</td>
<td>Creator god</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Chinnamasta's Buddhist origin is discussed in the previous section.
2 Manjusri is worshipped as Kartikkeya. This god is knowledge and learning is represented in the Ghyusanāya-tantra as Kartikkeya. In the Manjusrimad skalpa, Manjusri is called Kartikkeya, Manjusri (devyadwara sumpa Kartikkeya Manjusri Mayūrādana). (Ghyusanāya-tantra XXVII).
3 Kubera/Jambhala: Like pot-bellied Kubera Jambhala's iconographic form is represented a pot-bellied man. Kubera holds a bag of treasure but Jambhala holds a mongoose which vomits jewels.
4 Narayana/Sriskåtar Lokesvara: The Buddhist god having one face and two hands is depicted with gods coming out of his body which suggest a clear copy from Sriskåtar Lokesvara. An image of the deity with
8.Nilakantha & Similar tradition Nilakantha Avalokitesvara Goddesses of fecundity
9.Saptamatrika Iconographic and functional Hanumā Goddess of learning
10.Sarasvati Functional Manjusri Goddess of learning
11.Sirala Functional Parasarabhan Goddess of epidemics
12.Sri Laksmi Iconographic and functional Vasudharā Goddess of prosperity
13Sri Laksmi Functional Mahasri Tara Goddess of wealth
14.Surya Iconographic Manicī Goddess of prosperity
15.Varahi Iconographic Varahamukhi Goddess of prosperity
16.Visnu-Hayagriva Iconographic Saptasatikā Hayagrīva

4.5.3 Evidence of Subordination:

Hinduism, by accepting Buddha as an avatar of Visnu, accorded equal status to the lord of the religion. But more often in temple architecture Buddhist deities find place in temple recesses only suggesting their peripheral position the hierarchy. Within Buddhism on the other hand, the dominant pattern is incorporation and subordination of Hindu divinities. Elements of Hindu cosmology are rearranged in Buddhist scheme in a way deliberately subordinating the brahmanical divinities and giving them inferior positions. Many of the Hindu divinities are described in the Buddhist texts assuming inferior roles in the service of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

a. Srīstikārtr Lokesvara: This form Avalokitesvara is depicted creating the world. The iconography shows the deity emitting various Hindu gods from different parts of his body. The textual inspiration of this iconographic form comes from the Gānakarṇadātyuhya which says that Avalokitesvara creates sun and moon from his eyes, Mahesvara from his brow Brahma and other gods from his shoulders, Narayana from his heart, Sarasvati from his feet and Varuna from his belly (Winternitz 1983 II: 308).

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Hindu gods emitting from it appears on the gold window of the Lalitpur royal palace. At first glance his form is very similar to the Hindu icon of Narayana or Ardhanarīsvara surrounded by ten āvatāras (e.g. parallelism, subordination)

Nilakantha Avalokitesvara: Like Śiva whose throat has become blue after churning the poison of Vasuki. The Buddhist iconographic texts describe purely in terms of the description of Śiva as wearing a tiger skin, having a blue throat by poison and flanked by cobras (borrowing, parallelism).

Saptamatrika/Hariti: The mother goddess who carries a body in their lap. Hariti holds a child. She is regarded as goddess of fecundity.

Manjusri/Sarasvati: Sri Pancami is celebrated as a festival of Manjusri and Sarasvati for skill and learning.

Sri Laksmi/Kumari/Vasudharā: The functional equivalent of Sri-Laksmi in Buddhism was Vasudhara. The Vashundhāra-Vratopatti Ardhanā a Sanskrit Buddhist text copied in NS 923 AC (1902 AD) claims that the goddess assumes three fold form of Vasudhara or the Mahā-Laksmi or the great prosperity and Kumārī, the Virāja. The Sāthakarasūlā's description of Vasudhara clearly matches with the iconographic form of Laksmi.

Surya-Manićī. She is the goddess of dawn and is having a chariot drawn either by horses or by boars

Visnu Hayagrīva/Saptasatikā Hayagrīva: Hayagrīva, according to the Puranic mythology was primarily a demon to kill whom Visnu assumed the form of a horse-headed man. The special cognisance of the Saptasatikā Hayagrīva is the scalp of a horse over his head. Another aspect of the same god associated with – is three faced and eight armed and the number of arms as well as the attributed placed in his hands clearly associated him with Visnu Hajo-Hayagrīva temple of Assam illustrates an incorporation of this folk deity, first by the Buddhist and followed by Hindus. (Jaiswal 1985: 1-14).
b. Harihariharavahana Lokesvara. It depicts Avalokitesvāra Padmapani riding on shoulders of Viṣṇu Hari who as Hari (Garudā) as his mount, the divine bird man again being mounted on the back of a lion (Hari) (Brinkhaus. 1985: 422-29). Advantage was thus taken of some of the synonyms of the word Hari by the sectarian iconographers in order to formulate such an icon in which the principal god of Viṣṇu worshippers was shown as a mere mount of Buddhist divinities.

c. Candramahasona carries the noose in order to bind the enemies who cause suffering to humanities such as Viṣṇu, Śiva, Brahma who were terrified by the raised index finger (tāṇya) of the god (Sādhanaśīla: 174). In the same Sādhana they describe that Candrosana should be conceived as looking towards miserable people who were subjected to constant revolution in the cycle of existence by wicked gods like Viṣṇu, Brahma, Śiva and Kandarpa. By Candrosana’s intervention the host of Maraś who are terrified, weeping nude with dishevelled hair, hopeless and in despair, are hacked to pieces with swords. Candrosana gives their lives back and places them near his feet so that they may perform pious duties in the future.

d. Mrutyuvacana Tara: The worshipper conquers death as though emancipated and Brahma, Indra, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Surya, and caturdiṣṭa pālas cannot destroy even the ends of his hair (Sādhanaśīla: 175).

e. Aparajita: Aparajita is depicted as trampling upon Ganesa and having Brahma as her parasol bearer. But from Lalitgiri and elsewhere in Orissa Aparajita is seen trampling upon an elephant instead of upon Ganesa.

f. Prasanna Tara: Indra, Brahma, Upendra and Rudra are below his feet

g. Marici: While describing Marci the principal Hindu gods are reduced to a humiliating position of making obeisance to Marici. Some of them are trampled under her feet while others obey her orders like her servants (Sādhanaśīla: 300).

h. Kurukulla: Whoever pleases goddess Kurukullā, to her Brahma, Ruder Indra and Narayana and others come and meet him like servants (Sādhanaśīla: 350).

i. Vajravalanārka: he is characterised as trampling under his feet not only Viṣṇu but his consort Lakṣmī (Sādhanaśīla: 512).

j. Bhutadamarā: he is described as one who is an expert in destroying the pride of Indra, Brahma, Kubera and others (Sādhanaśīla: 512).

k. Ucchusma Jambhala: The deity is described in one place as pressing Kubera under his feet so that he vomits jewels.

l. Severed head Brahma: Marici, Vajra Sarasvati, Bhrkuti, Prasanna Tara and several others carry the severed head of Brahma.
**m. Trailokyavijaya:** She is seen trampling on the head of Siva and the bosom of Gauri who lie on the ground in opposite direction (Sadhanamalā 511).

**n. Paramasva:** The deity is described as four-legged and as trampling with the first leg on Indrani and Lakṣmi with the second on Rati and Priti with the first left on Indra and Madhukara and with the second left leg trampling on the Jayakara and Vasanta (Sadhanamalā 510).

His *locus classicus* is the *Sarvatathāgata-tattvasaṅgraha* where he is depicted in an epic battle to subjugate Mahesvara—the great god, the lord of knowledge. Mahesvara expresses his willingness to submit to Mahavairocana Buddha but it offends his dignity to submit to anyone of lesser status than the central Tathagata. Trailokyavijaya is stated to be the combined wisdom and commanding power of the five directorial Tathagatas and a form of Vajrapani. To Mahesvara this makes Trailokyavijaya as murdering. Mahesvara calls him a Yaksha and despite being commanded by Vairocana to submit to Trailokyavijaya, he refused to submit. Once Mahesvara surrenders he is given a nickname and is admitted into Buddhist fold as a powerful preceptor (section 2, *Sarvatathāgata-tattvasaṅgraha*).

**o. Hayagriva:** Worshipping Hayagriva entails to *vidyādha* lad where the ascetic enjoys all sorts of pleasure. Devendra becomes his parasol bearer. Brahma his minister, Kartikkeya his general, Hari his gate keeper, Sankara his preceptor.

**p. Ubhayavarahanaka Marici:**
She is clad in tiger skin and tramples under her feet the gods like Hari, Hara, Brahma and others (Sahai: 1975). However it is to be noted that there is no evidence of subordination of brahmanical deities in Orissa except in two instances. One is at Fakirpatna and the other in Baneswarnasi. In the former, Buddha is represented in *bhūmisparsā mudra*. On the uppermost corner of the backslab are found Hindu deities riding on their *vāhanas* with right arm raised in *tārjani* suggesting that they were the army of Mara. On the left side the four gods—Indra, Brahma, Visnu and Siva—are representing but now each holds their principal hands in *ānjali mudrā* to indicate that they are paying homage to the Buddha (Section 3.6.3c, Chapter 3).

**4.5.4. Multivalency of Symbols:**
Many deities who are functionally equivalent and have shared iconographic forms is different names. Lakṣmi, the brahmanical goddess of prosperity is known in Buddhism as Vasudhara. Her popular form is Kumāri. In Nepal Kumari worship is vital in any religious worship. Similarly Janguli is known is Buddhism as Manasa while the folk name is Jagulei in Orissa. Other instances of multivalency of symbols can only be ascertained by studying the folk deities and their traditional roles. Karunamaya-Matsyendranath in Nepal is known by different names. Buddhists always refer him as Karunamaya. Others call him *Budha* (the
village where he spends half the year). Hindus worship as Siva while the bramhanas of Lalitpur like to relate a story, which illustrates his identify with Krsna.

4.5.1 Any of the combinations:
While Sristkartar-Lokesvera illustrates an example of borrowing parallelism and subordination, Mahacina Tara/Tara represents an example of borrowing and parallelism. Similarly, Nilakantha Avalokitesvara points out the process of borrowing and parallelism at work. In most cases where Buddhism had been borrower, there seems to be a combination of borrowing-parallelism or borrowing subordination at work.

4.5.6 Evidence of Conversion:
Fieldwork reveals many instances where Buddhist deities were converted and worshipped as Hindu divinities in temples of modern Orissa. Now that Buddhism is totally extinct in Orissa, it is not being possible to identify the exact timing of this process of conversion. More often, the Buddhist divinities are encountered lying on the roadside and are worshipped as goddesses.

Mailman has encountered a Halahala Lokesvara, who is worshipped as Brahma and Sarasvati (Mailman 1961: 203-20). goddess Bhattārika and goddess Mangala, on close iconographic examination reveal: to be Tara. A Siva lingam in Soro in Balasore district is inscribed with a Buddhist dhāraṇī (De 1953:271-73). Similarly the Bhaskaresvara lirgam is argued to be an Asokan pillar (Panigrahi 1986: 314). Panigrahi believes that the conversion took place around 5th century AD when Bhubaneswar was emerging as Ekamra. The temporal dimension of the conversion is important for it reveals whether the divinities of Buddhism were converted when Buddhism was still extinct, or it started later in the aftermath of the decline. In the case of the former, which seems to be the case, as suggested by the Bhaskaresvara temple, it might have involved strong resistance from the followers of Buddhism.

4.5.7 Evidence of conflation:
The process involves fusion of the elements of two deities into one. One instance of conflation is the Buddhist deity Yamantaka, who a conflation of Yama and Antaka (Durga). Mahasri is the conflation of Laksmi and Sarasvati.

4.6. Rituals – the other Arena of religious contestation
These processes were not limited to iconography alone. Rather it found at many other levels of which rituals and religious observances are most important. They provide evidence of other categories in which such competitions between religions found expressions. The Kṛṣṇa tantras (One of the four classes of the Tantric literature) exclusively deal with the everyday aspect of rituals, both at the levels of monks and laity. Jaini postulates that one
distinguishing distinctions between Buddhism and Jainism as well as reasons for the decline of Buddhism is relative the absence of asceticism among the Buddhist laity. (Jaini 1975: 27).

The *Kriyā* *tantras*, however, provide clear evidence of the prevalence of rituals and corresponding observances with the rituals in Buddhism. They deal with the rituals of the Mahayanist cult, which include the erection of *stupas*, construction and setting up of images, *stotras* and daily observances. Among the *Kriyā* *tantras*, the *Adikarma Pradīpa*, fashioned on the mould of the *Grihya Sūtras* and the *Karma Pradīpa* (an example of borrowing and parallelism) describes the ceremonies and religious acts which include initiation of a layman to monkhood, sprinkling, worship and prayers, rituals and evening devotions, offering of waters to the departed, alms-giving, meals, worshipping of the Buddha and other sacred beings, reading of the *Prajñāparamita* by the beginners. (Poussin 1898: 177-232). *Abhisekha* rituals became integral to the initiation into Vajrayāna, so also many homavīdhīs. The *Vajraśekharahomavīdhi* was composed based upon the *Vajraśekharatantra* (Nakamura 1987: 330).

The *Āstamibhūtavīdhāna* contains the rulers for the performances of ceremonies to be observed on every eighth day of every half month (Winternitz 1983 II 400). *Amoghapāsa Lokesvara* is the main object of worship on the *āstamibhūta*. The *Krisṇaśāhgraha-Panjikā* by *Kukladaita* in which detailed prescriptions are given for the erection of monasteries is probably also a ritual work of similar nature. (Shastri 1927: 119 ff.). The *Upasotha Awadāna* deals with *upasotha* first by the laity and its merits (Mitra 1981: 265). It refers to *Upasotha* (*Upavasatha*) day when the host arranges for celebration of the day by inviting monks to his house. After the completion of rituals, the host (a laity) comes to the priests and after a salutation invites them to the festival (Takakusu 1966: 38). *Vasundharā-Vratotpatti-Awadāna* (NS 923) speaks of the origin of a fast in honour of a goddess named Vasundhara. The goddess claims three-fold form of Vasundhara or the Earth, *Maha Lakṣmi* or Great Prosperity and Kumari, the Virgin (Mitra 1981: 269-73).Apart from these text-based observances, there were numerous periodic festivals celebrations, which provided impetus to communities. Fa-hein referred to such festivals (one in Pataliputra that is held in his accounts). Other aspects where such shared idioms found manifestations were the *mahāmyas*, *stotras*, etc, which were written in specific genre akin to the *Purāṇas*. The following gives a list of such *mahāmyas* and litany.
Table 4.2: Important Stotras dedicated to Buddhist Deities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stotras</th>
<th>Nature and dedicated to</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Ref. Winterniz 1983: 362-386</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUPRABHĀTA-STOTRA</td>
<td>A morning hymn in praise of Buddha in twenty-four verses</td>
<td>Harsa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AŚAMADĀ-IRŚCAYA-STOTRA</td>
<td>A hymn in praise of the eight great shrines in five stanzas</td>
<td>Ascribed to Harsa</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOKEŚVARA-SADAKA</td>
<td>Hundred stanzas in praise of Lokeśvara</td>
<td>Vajradatta in Devapala’s reign (9th century)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARAMARTHANAMASYA SUGHTI</td>
<td>A litany of an enumeration of names and laudatory epithets of Buddha</td>
<td>Mitra 1981:185</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARYA-TĀRA-SRAGDHARA-STOTRA</td>
<td>A stotra in Sragdhara metre in praise of Tāra in thirty-seven verses</td>
<td>Sarvajnanamitra of Kashmir (8th-9th century)</td>
<td>Winternitz vol. II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EKAVIRNISI-STOTRA</td>
<td>Hymn dedicated to Tāra in twenty-one verses</td>
<td>Wayman 1959: 36-43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARYA-TĀRA NAMASTOTRA-STOTRA</td>
<td>Long of praise consisting of 108 names of the goddess Ekajara Tāra</td>
<td>Mitra 1981: 259-60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAŚUĐHĀRA SATOTSAVADA-STOTRA</td>
<td>108 epithets forming a hymn in praise of Vasudhāra</td>
<td>Mitra 1981: 274</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAPTABHÜDDHA-STOTRA</td>
<td>Praises of the seven Manuṣī Buddha</td>
<td>Winternitz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.7 Contestation within Brahmanical religion

These aspects of contestations, which operated in very subtle way, was not limited to Buddhism alone. Rather it found its expression in Brahmanism camouflaged in the garb of syncretism. One notable example of such domination subordination syndrome in the guise of syncretism is the architecture of Lingaraja temple of Bhubaneswar.

The Lingaraja temple (11th century) is the most grandiose edifice proclaiming Saiva presence in coastal Orissa in general and Bhubaneswar in particular. Bhubaneswar is one of the important Saiva centres of early medieval India and the place was known as Ekamra (Brahma Purāṇa I: 230-1). However, when the Jagannatha cult centring around the present temple at Puri started dominating the religious landscape of Orissa (particularly after Anangabhimadeva III declared himself as the servant of the lord in 1230), there was an attempt to superimpose Vaisnava-Jagannatha, its motifs and symbols on a Saiva centre which remains camouflaged in syncretism of Hari-Hara.

During the Ganga period (12th century to 14th century), nātamanḍara and the bhogamanḍapa were added to the Lingaraja temple and so also the Vṛṣa-stambha (the bull pillar), which now stands in front of the bhogamanḍapa. This pillar bears at the top not only a brijānava (bull)—the mount of Siva but Garuda—the mount of Visnu. This deliberate superimposition continues in the crowning members (above the kalasa) of the Lingaraja temple. The crowning members of the Lingaraja, seen from a distance, are the sāudha
(weapon) and pataka (flag). The āyudha, which would have been originally a trāṣūla (trident) a symbol of Siva was replaced by half-disc and a half-trident.

The tradition says that a man at the order of a Ganga king climbed to the top of the sthākharā in the dead end of the night and pulled down the original āyudha and replaced it by above composite āyudha proclaiming deliberate syncretism. The man is said to have been granted tax-free lands and was given the title Nisādhakamalla (the fearless hero) which is still borne by his descendants now in Nuapalli village in Bhubaneswar.

The tradition reveals an attempt of domination by the Vaisnava cult in the guise of syncretism. This encompassment found manifestations in numerous sculptures of the period. It varied in form in different time and space; between the sixth century and ninth century, Buddhist-Tantric influences were evident on the Saivism of Orissa, in the post-Somavamshi period, the Vaisnava dominance was quite discernible over Saivism.

A favourite mode of representing Lakulisa in the first period in Bhubaneswar (evident in Parsurameswar temple) is to show him as the Buddha the great miracle of Sravasti. Like the latter, Lakulisa is seated on a double-petalled lotus being raised upon by two Nāga kings and his hands in dharmacakrapravartana mudrā (turning of the wheel pose). In some reliefs, even two deers and the wheel are carved on the pedestal clearly indicating Buddhist influence. In this period the Tantric influence was discernible in both brahmanical religions.

In the Vaitala temple (9th century) (where goddess Camunda is the presiding deity) there was an attempt at inclusivism by including deities of different pantheon, which include Lakulisa, Manibhadra and Amoghasiddhi. Similarly in the Sisiresvara temple (assigned to the same period), one encounters images of Avalokiteshvara suggesting attempts to subsume some Buddhist deities within Saivism.

### 4.8. Appropriation and Accommodation of Buddhism in Brahmanical Religions

There was also an attempt to develop a composite deity combining the attributes of Siva, Buddha as in Java and Bali. A composite image of Hari-Hara (now in the Gupta gallery of Indian Museum, Calcutta) shows the four-armed Hari-Hara at the centre the backhands carrying a trident and a conch-shell and the front hands a skull-cup and a discuss. He bears

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13 The Baudha stātis of Bali have considerable Śaiva admixture. Hooykas has observed that some of them make the impression of purely Śaiva, while the others are shared by the Baudhas and Śāivas. He further notices that ṛukub priest of Bali was represented in three varṇas, Śaiva, Baudha and Śāiva-Buddha. In important ceremonial feasts one finds four Śaiva and one Buddhist priests. Similarly at the cremation of princes, the consecration of water of the two sects are mingled together. In two important Śaiva rituals, particularly important to note is their role in the Ekādaśa Rātra ceremony, which is celebrated once in a century (Hooykas 1973: 8, 177).
the other usual features and there are some attendants by his side. What is unique about the image is the presence of Surya and Buddha in the left and right of the main sculpture.

The hallows around the image of Buddha and Surya and the lotus pedestal on which the former stands indicates that the Buddha was represented as an equal deity (unlike many Buddhist sculptures where brahmanical gods were assigned subordinate and inferior positions (Banerjea 1985: pl. XLVIII Fig 1).

Two other sculptures, now in the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta are a carved brass figure of Siva-Lokesvara and another image of Surya-Lokesvara. The brass figure of Siva-Lokesvara shows the composite two armed ithyphallic god standing on the Samapadasthānakā pose on a double-petalled lotus, his right hand holds up a kapāla and the left a trisula, he is very sparsely ornamented and bears on the top his jātāmukuta a tiny seated figure of Dhyāni Buddha Amitabha to whose family Avalokitesvara belongs. (Banerjea: 1985:547, pl. XLVI Fig 4).

A fragmentary relief from Orissa shows the representation of Surya-Lokesvara. The composite god appears to have been ten-armed. Six of whose hands are gone, of the remaining two hands the two rights hold a noose and a full-blown lotus flower by its stalk and another unidentified object. The tiny figure of Dhyāni Buddha Amitabha seated on the top of the raised coils of the jātāmukuta indicates Lokesvara character of the god while the full blown lotus held by his parallel hands on either side is a manner in which they are shown in the hands of a north Indian Sun icon emphasises his solar nature. The figure is dated to 11th century. (Banerjea 1985: 548).

This process was also reflected in the literary texts as well. Bodh Gaya—the most sacred pilgrim centre for the Buddhist as well as centre for Hindus provides interesting vignettes about inter-religious relationship, particularly between Vaisnavism and Buddhism. Xuanzang records that a brahmana who had built the Buddhist vihāra at Bodh Gaya. “On the site of the present vihāra Asokaraja first built a small vihāra. Afterwards there was a brahmana who constructed it on a large scale.” (Beal 1958: 119). The brahmana at first was not a believer of Buddha but on Lord Siva’s advice he returned and built the vihāra and his younger brother excavated the tank (ibid). An important containing an inscription reveals attempt to articulate the inter-religious relationship in a manner so as to contain sectarian conflict but simultaneously offers insights into attempts to superimpose a religion (in this case Saivism) in a Buddhist complex. The sculpture represents Visnu, Siva and Surya, all in very crude fabric (Cunningham 1892: pl. XXVIII 3).

The inscription on it refers to the dedication of a figure of Caturmukhi Mahadeva who was installed in the “pleasant abode, the temple of the Buddha, the lord of righteousness”
by Kesava, son of Ujjvala, the stone cutter “for the benefits of the descendants of the snatakas” (the erudite Saivite Brahmin scholar) residing at Mahabodhi. A tank of exceeding depth and holy river Ganges has been excavated for this good people at the cost of thousand drachmas” (ASIAR vii 1908-09:139-58). The inscription belongs to the reign of Dharmapala’s reign (8th century). It reveals the subtle way in which brahmanical religions were imported to the most sacred Buddhist monument. It at once acknowledges the importance of Buddha but simultaneously it attempted superimposition and take over by the Saivite.

Similarly the Vaisnavas acknowledged Buddhist presence in Gaya. The tradition here is that Visnu here was born as Lord Buddha. The Vaiṣṇava at first did not identify Visnu with Buddha but with the sacred Bodhi tree, which to the pious Buddhist still forms the centre of the universe. The Prayogas or books on ritual prescribed for Vaisnava pilgrims at Gaya and the sacred tirtha in its neighbourhood offers evidence of Buddhist supremacy in the region. In Manirama’s Gaya yatra (MS III ASB Sanskrit Manuscript D, 27 fol. 17 A). The pilgrim’s visit to Bodh Gaya on the fourth day of his pilgrimage to holy centre is described in the following manner. “...Thereafter he should bow down before the Dharma, Dharmesvara and the Mahabodhi tree in the due order. On this occasion the following verses should be recited.” “Adoration to the noble avastha, the Bodhi tree whose soul is Brahma, Visnu and Siva (as means) of saving our dead ancestors and makers. The relations in my own and in my mother’s family who have gone to hell, may they all come to heaven forever through seeing and touching tree. Oh noble tree, I have paid off a three-fold debt by coming to Gaya. May I be saved from the ocean of rebirth through the favours.” Verses like these are found in other manuscripts like Gajanu-Sthana-Paddhati (ASB Sanskrit Manuscript MS D 26).

These evidence point out the subtle manner in which Bodh Gaya was appropriated by the Vaisnavas through the Pipalla (Bodhi tree), which is sacred to the Vaisnava as well. The epigraphic, textual and sculptural evidence quoted above reveal two trends simultaneously at work. On one hand there is a ready acknowledgement of dominance of a particular cult in a particular space, on the other there are attempts to elbow out, push back the dominant sect/religion from the place and replace it by a rival sect or religion.

The degree of superimposition and appropriation varied in different contexts depending on the popularity of the existing cults, its embeddedness in the cultural milieu, its support system and degree of patronage by the ruling elite. The Gajamahātmāya’s acknowledgement of the Buddhist presence in Gaya speaks of the former trend (i.e. acknowledgement of the supremacy) while the inscription, which describes installation of a Caturmukhi Siva, reveals a superimposition on the Buddhist Bodh Gaya, which later on was
complete with the taking over by the Mahabodhi temple by the Šaiva mahantas. Similarly, the Ekamraksetra, which was a Šaiva centre, came under attempted Vaišnava domination. The Ekámra Purāṇa—a text of 12-13th century, prescribes that the pilgrim should visit the Vaišnava temple of Ananta-Vasudeva (built by the Gangas) before paying homage to Lingaraja (18th and 25th chapters, Ekámra Purāṇa 1933).

The Ekámra Purāṇa narrates a story of the accommodation of Vaisnava deity at Ekamraksetra (Panigrahi 1986: 345) but the Kapilasamhita, written during the reign of Prataparudradeva (16th century), gives a contrasting view narrating that Vasudeva fixed the abode of Siva at Ekamra (Bhubaneswar). Thus the former, which is a Šaiva text, makes concessions to a Vaišnava deity in a predominantly Šaiva culture, where as the latter provides evidence of attempts at giving a superior position to Vaišnavas vis-à-vis Šaivites at a Šaiva centre. As noted earlier, the presence of Garuda with bull in front of the bhogamandapa of the Lingaraja temple, change over of the āyudha at the top of the Lingaraja, the tradition association with the change as well as the Kapilasamhita's narration of the story of the origin of the EkámraKsetra clearly suggest an endeavour at Vaišnava superimposition.

There is another evidence of such an appropriation by a rival cult. Tara is spoken in the Haravijaya of Ratnakara of (9th century) as a form of Cāndi who originated in the origin of the Arya-Avalokitesvara, and who is said to have been amidst lotus bosom (Handique 1965: 548). Sarala Das's Cāndi Purāṇa (the author of the Oriya Mahābhārata) speaks of Ugra Tara as a Yogini emanating from the Devī-the great goddess of Hinduism (Sarala Das Cāndi Purāṇa, ORP 101 folio 201-202). Another example of deliberate syncretism is the Twenty one Praises of Tārā, which had liberally borrowed from Šaivism and give an appearance of a hymn of Šaivite nature (Wayman 1959: 36-43). Nagaraju also refers to similar attempt to incorporate Buddhism within Vaišnavism in Karnataka (Nagaraju 1969: 67-75).

These processes of appropriation of Buddhism had begun long ago as Xuanzang observes that he saw hundred monasteries in Kashmir but the religion followed in them was mixed hinting thereby that the people worshipped both Siva and Buddha (Dutta 1939 I: 36-37). Xuanzang also observed a similar process in Orissa, when he referred: there are above hundred monasteries and myriad brethren all Mahāyānist, of Deva temples, there were fifty and the various sects lived pell-mell (Watters 1905 II: 193).

These evidence which show attempted appropriation and dominance of rival religious centres and deities of rival sects/religions operated within the boundary of shared cultural space. These competing religions and sects shared certain baseline concepts, used similar idioms, and engaged in common cultural practices. Simultaneously, they engaged in
contestations to broaden their support base and religious territory by borrowing the locomotifs of their rival religions and presenting it in a manner to give an appearance of their distinct religious hues as well. Present their religions in a superior way vis-à-vis their rival religions.

The Vaisnavas liberally borrowed the Buddhist ideas of \textit{Su\'n\ya}. The Vaisnava poets of Orissa in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century employed numerous Buddhist terminologies in their poetic expressions (Balarama Das's \textit{Vir\=ata G\=ita}, Acyutananda in \textit{Su\'n\ya S\=amhit\=a}). Despite these healthy competitions in a shared cultural and geographical space, there were occasional flare-ups in sectarian bellicosity. The \textit{Dharmap\=uj\=a-vidh\=ana} refers to the \textit{sad\=hari} and the Buddhists of the Jaipur region of Orissa who are said to have been persecuted by the \textit{br\=amh\=an\=a} (Bhattacharyya 1994: 334). The \textit{Caitanya Bh\=agab\=ata} composed by Iswar Dash towards the end of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century records a tradition as how Anangabhimadeva sided with Brahmins and clubbed thirty-two Buddhists when they failed to satisfy him in answering a test. (Panigrahi 1986: 312). The \textit{Madalap\=an\=i} (the Jagannatha temple chronicle) records a similar story of the persecution of the Buddhists by Madana Mahadeva, who is represented in the text as a brother of Anangabhimadeva (\textit{ibid}).

\textbf{4.9. Emergence of the Jagannatha Cult and its Implication}

These processes of contestations through coexistence ended with the emergence of the Jagannatha cult and a regional state under the Gangas and the Gajapatis (12\textsuperscript{th}-15\textsuperscript{th} century). The Jagannatha temple centring on the present temple at Puri became a regional/imperial deity under the Gangas, particularly after Anangabhimadeva-III declared himself to be the \textit{раута} (servant) of the Lord Jagannatha and the latter as the real ruler of the state of Orissa in 1230 AD.\footnote{Kulke also argues that the year in which Anangabhimadeva declared himself to be the \textit{rauta} (servant) ruling the kingdom in the order (\textit{adela}) of the god Purusottama marks a decisive event in the history of Orissa (Kulke 1993:17).}

This identification with the deity as the real ruler and the king as merely earthly representatives had great bearings on the religio-cultural landscape of Orissa. From 12\textsuperscript{th} century onwards, the state-sponsored Jagannatha cult assumed a hegemonic contour. It displayed inclusivism in its acceptance of diverse cultural traditions. Balabhadra, one of the triad who was included in the present complex sometime during the 13\textsuperscript{th} century was regarded as a form of Siva. Lord Jagannatha is regarded as a form of \textit{Visnu} in numerous texts and his principal \textit{mantra} \textit{Oṁ Gopijanha\=v\=allabh\=\=aṁ t\=\=aṁ} reminds us of his \textit{Krsna} connection. Sometimes he is regarded as \textit{Mahabhairava} suggesting Saivite affiliation. (Stietencron 1978 119-23). In the Nepalese \textit{Svayambhu Purāṇa}, Ādi Buddha, described as the
nature of ultimate substance (dharma-dhatu) and often conceived as Vairocana, is equated with Jagannatha (Bhattacharyya 1994: 334). In the works of early Vaisnava saints of Orissa, Buddha is often equated with Jagannatha as in the Mahabhirata of Sarala Dasa, the Daru Brahma Gita of Jagannatha Dasa and the Surya-sambita of Acyutansanda Dasa. Sarala Dasa even gives a Buddhist background of the origin of Jagannatha. Lord Krśna’s body could not be burnt on the funeral pyre. The body was thrown into the sea near Dwarka. It came floating to Puri and remained in the custody of the sāhāra for sometime to become a tree later mysteriously, out of which a statue was carved in the form of Buddha.

Buddha is the 9th incarnation of Visnu who follows Krśna, who is the eighth incarnation (Tripathi 1978: 479-481).15 In the dancing hall of the Jagannatha temple one finds the figure of Jagannatha replacing Buddha as the ninth avatār of Visnu. Goddess Bimala became an integral part of the temple complex and its ritual. She accepts sacrifice, which betrays Tantric goddess influences in a Vaiśnava complex. The tribal-Tantric tradition is further evidenced from Jagannatha’s association with Narasimha Jagannatha is worshipped with Narashimha mantra in navakalevara (new embodiment) ceremony. The emergence and growth of Jagannatha as an imperial cult resulted in superimposition of Vaisnava features on other cults of Orissa. The Konark temple of Orissa has preserved a sculpture of Jagannatha being worshipped by Narasimhadeva—the chief patron of the Konarka-Surya Temple. Similarly, as noted earlier the Lingaraja temple was subject to such Vaisnava superimposition.

The growth of a regional tradition centring on Jagannatha and the emergence and development of a regional kingdom under the Gangas and the Gajapatis resulted in the relative marginalisation of other cults and religions in post-12 century. The state-sponsored inclusivist Jagannatha cult engaged with other cult centres through various ritual means and positioned itself vis-à-vis other cults to emerge at the centre of the religions of Orissa.16

The religious landscape in the early medieval period offered a study in contrast with what followed subsequently. The period between 7th–12th century AD showed remarkable experimentation with iconography (in Buddhism and Hinduism), appropriation and

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15 Where as early scholars like Hunter and Cunningham believed that Jagannatha evolved from Buddhism, G C Tripathi opines that the association of Jagannatha with Buddha is more to the fact both stood outside the pale of Brahmanism. The Buddha incarnation, not so firmly established in Hindu tradition, would also be the one most easily dislodged for the sake of Jagannatha when he was added as an incarnation (Tripathi 1978: 479).

16 Vertical integration of deities and cult centres has been studied by James Preston, who makes a topological classification of deities from village to imperial level; the network of relationship among them and the process through which such networks were established One instance of such ritual integration with important sub-regional cults of Orissa is Jagannatha association with Manigalā of Kakatpur (Preston 1992: 78-112).
integration of tribal cults as in the case of Stambhesvari, Parnasabari, Gokarnesvara, great upsurge in the construction in the religious structure (both brahmanical temples and Buddhist religious structures), inclusion of popular Tantric features (as in Tantric Hinduism and Vajrayāna) and the popularity of the goddess tradition as found expression in the Saptamatrika, 64-yoginis and a number of Buddhist female deities. This was halted (Hinduisatation of goddess tradition is the only exception) in the post-Jagannatha phase. It is to be noted that no significant temple (other than Jagannatha and goddess temples) was constructed in the Gajapati and post-Gajapati period in Orissa.\(^1\) Plurality of patronage (instead of an overarching political system favouring a particular cult as in the post-Ganga/Jagannatha phase) was a significant cause for the religious dynamism of early medieval period. Differentiated structure created sufficient momentum for some vibrant dynamics of competition to prevail among various sects/religions.\(^1\)\(^8\) This was disrupted when a state backed only a singular cult. The pre-Ganga period (particularly between 7th-10th century) saw different political entities in different parts of Orissa. This political fragmentation and differentiation created possibilities for religious dynamism, political support, choice and freedom. They provided opportunities for diffused patronage for several cults than to a single cult/religion, as happened after the emergence of Jagannatha cult in 13th century. The political entities of this period were situated contiguously but are simultaneously engaged in the pursuit of expansion to other units. They supported and patronised different cults simultaneously. However their contiguity ensured that a political unit could not be immune to changes at the religious sphere and therefore, adjusts its royal policy to cults according to changing religious kaleidoscope. This provided opportunity for different religions to flourish in early medieval Orissa. However, this scope for plurality of patronage and heterogeneity of cult practices ended with the emergence of the Imperial Gangas and imperial cult of Jagannatha. However, it must be said that this was not a significant reason for the decline of Buddhism.

4.10. Decline—Possible causes

How and why did these monasteries of Orissa disappear in subsequent times? Even if one accepts that the Vaiṣṇava saints, while popularising the Jagannatha cult, appropriated Buddhist idioms or a state-sponsored inclusivistic Jagannatha cult led to the decline of

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\(^1\) An interesting study in this regard will be to conduct an enquiry about the construction of temples from 15th century onward.

\(^1\)\(^8\) The cultural explosion in Renaissance period in Europe in 15th century owes much to the competitions among the city-states, who vied with each other to proclaim their superiority over others by patronising scholars, painters and by beatifying their cities. Such competition provided opportunities for scholars to get patronage.
Buddhism, they do not explain the decline in its entirety. If they were the decisive factors, how did other cults, particularly Śaivism, retain its popularity in Orissa? Despite the Lingaraja temple being subject to Vaiṣṇava invasion it continues to remain an important Śaiva centre and in some measure contests the imperial Jagannatha cult.

Hence the reasons for the decline of Buddhism are to be located within its structure. One reason could be the monastic nature of Buddhism. Buddhist religious structures were primarily not independent structures (the Kalasan inscription in Java, the Dambal inscription of Karnataka however, refer to temples of Tara) but parts of monastic complexes, which were subject to Muslim invasion. The destruction of Nalanda and Vikramasila led to the fleeing of Buddhist monks to Tibet (Shastri 4). Taranath also referred to Turuska invasion implying Muslim invasion of the Buddhist monasteries of Bihar and Bengal (Taranatha: 137-38). It is to be noted that the decline of Buddhism in Orissa coincided with a phase of development and flourishing of Buddhism in Tibet and Nepal.

The monastic-centric nature of Buddhist religious structure was a handicap vis-à-vis brahmanical temple. Unlike the brahmanical temples, which were embedded within socio-economic niches of micro and sub regions, the Buddhist viharas were elaborate structures, which required vast amount of resources to sustain them. Moreover, the monastic nature also meant that they were less embedded with various micro and meso regions.

Another significant factor for the decline of Buddhism in general is its inability to come to terms with folk practices. Eschmann has conceptualised the steps in which tribal-folk deities have been transformed into a Hindu deity (Eschmann 1978:79-99). A visit along the road reveals the process of transformation at work in Orissa. Numerous village goddesses are now integrated to brahmanical religions, the most recent being Tarini. The most significant one from our point is Stambhesvari, who as a wooden goddess is now the presiding deity of a temple in Ganjam (ibid.). Hinduism easily accepts these folk practices as low form of Hinduism. Buddhism also tried to appropriate and accept them as part of Buddhist pantheon. The fierce goddesses, such as Parnasabari are instances of such incorporation and acceptance. But the incorporation and the corresponding position allotted to them in the Buddhist scheme were some what frozen after 7-8th century AD. The schematic arrangements of Buddhist pantheon prevent quick and easy incorporation of autochthonous elements.

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19 Eschmann has conceptualised the transformation of symbol to image - from Aniconism to iconic and integration into Hinduism as involving five stages aniconic symbol invested with vermilion, irregular worship, ritual specialist in the form of deities, followed by temples, regular worship and daily rituals consisting of gandha, pūṣpa, abhūta, āpuṇa, naivedya, māna (Eschmann 1978: 79-88).
Rather the integration came from the above, which neatly developed the Buddhist pantheon keeping their eyes on the support base of their religion. In contrast, the assimilation of folk deities into Hinduism always started from below. It is later in the evolution of the deity that the brahmanical Hinduism integrates it into its fold, introduced rituals and bija mantra for regular worship, invented myth and tradition to integrate it with high tradition Hinduism. The process seems to be the bottom to top rather than the top to bottom, as in case of Buddhism. This provided Hinduism a decisive leverage in capturing people at the lower level who always constitute an important segment in the sustenance and longevity of a mass religion. The monastic-centric Buddhism was a big handicap in this regard.