CHAPTER-IV

PROCESSES OF LEGITIMACY: THE CASE OF KHURDA

Ramachandra Deva established the kingdom of Khurda in the middle of the sixteenth century in the coastal region of Orissa. Initially he had to struggle hard to legitimize his rule over his newly established kingdom. Though he proclaimed himself to be the political successor of the imperial Gajapati, the people of Orissa did not acknowledge him as the real Gajapati king of Orissa. Taking the opportunity of absence of a central authority over the coastal part of Orissa many chieftains declared their independence. While Afghans as well as Mughals were constantly looking for an opportunity to capture Orissa, descendents of the late imperial Gajapati were constantly claiming their right to their lost throne. Under such adverse circumstances, Ramachandra Deva followed an inclusive to legitimatize himself as the king of Khurda. He accommodated large sections of people into the political fold. He explicitly donated land to Brahmans, revived patronage to lord Jagannatha and tried to bring about an amiable relationship with all the feudatories of Orissa as once the Gajapati rulers had. His son and successors followed his policy with equal zeal and by the middle of the seventeenth century the Bhoi kings of Khurda:

succeeded in regaining the exalted position that the power of Gajapaties[sic.] of the Ganga and Suryavamsha dynasties once had.

Despite their relatively small hereditary possessions, the Gajapaties

---

of the seventeenth century assumed a position so similar to that of
the imperial Gajapaties.\(^2\)

In due course of time the Bhoi kings of Khurda became so powerful that the
feudatories of Khurda regarded Mukunda Deva (1657-1689) as follows:
as the leading Zamindar of the country whose ordered are obeyed
by the other Zamindars, whom all the other Zamindars of this
country worship like a God and disobedience of whose order they
regard as a great sin, wait on him with due humility accompanied by
other Zamindars and Khandait of Central Orissa.\(^3\)

Ramachandra Deva seized power from the late Gajapati's successor when the
Mughals were struggling hard with the Afghans to capture Orissa. Akbar deputed
Mansingh to Orissa to overcome the Afghan menace. In 1592, while Mansingh
advanced towards Cuttack, Ramachandra Deva extended his help to the Afghan
General who took shelter in the court of Khurda. Meanwhile Telinga Ramachandra
Deva and Chakkadi Bharamarabar the two sons of the late Gajapati king, Mukunda
Deva came forward to set forth their claim to the throne of Orissa before Mansingh.
They had complained to the Mughal emperor that Ramachandra Deva had no valid
title to the throne (Rājā Mānasīṅhe Āile Ehāṅka Saṅge Mukunda Debanka Pua
Thile.)\(^4\) Akbar had planned to conquer Golconda and wanted to mobilize his force
towards the south through Orissa, but he did not wanted to practise a rigid attitude


\(^3\) *Muruqat-i-Hassan*, quoted by J. N. Sarkar, “The History of Orissa in the Seventeenth Century,

towards the king of Orissa which would lead to his allaying with the Sultan of Golconda. Akbar instructed Mansingh to apply a policy of consolidation in Orissa and thus "the Rajah (Mansingh) recalled his troops, and apologized, Ramachand, on seeing the graciousness of H. M took the thought of paying his respects." According to Madalapanji, Raja Mansingh went to Puri accompanied by both Ramachandra Deva of Khurda and Telinga Ramachandra Deva (Mānasīṅghāṅka Sāṅge Rāmacandra Deba Thile, Mukunda Debāṅka Pua Thile.) It was the time when the Chandan Yatra was celebrated (E Uttāru Candana Yātrā Hoile.) The Chief priest of Jagannatha sought direction from Mansingh as to who they should offer Khadiprasad (God's offering) and Mansingh looked towards them and asked to bring the offering to him (Sebakaṅku Boile Khāḍī Prasāda Āṇa.) In the presence of Goddess Bimalai, Mansingh offered the Khadiprasad to Ramachandra Deva of Khurda and recognized him as the king of Orissa (Bimbalāṅka Āge Rājā Mānasīṅgahe Rāmacandra Debaṅku Khāḍī Prasāda Lāṅgī Karāile; Oḍiśā Rājyare Rājā Kale.) Thus in the sixteenth century:

Orissa Gajapati changed from transregional maharajadhirajas, first, into local little kings, and then into sub-regional maharajas. Certainly, they were now the respected overlords of their own samantacakras, but in contrast to earlier times they themselves were subject to the rulers of a still greater galaxy. Furthermore, they had

---

to tolerate other samantacakras of the same type in north and west
Orissa, as well as influential Mughal governors in Cuttack.\(^7\)

**POLICY OF CONSOLIDATION OF THE STATE**

From the twelfth century onwards rituals supremacy of the Brahman became a
central features of the socio religious environments in the different kingdoms of
Orissa. The Ganga ruler of the twelfth century and the Gajapati ruler of the fourteenth
century donated land to the Brahmans for large number of settlements across Orissa.
Between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries a large number of Brahmans migrated
from different parts of India and settled down in Orissa.\(^8\) The Ganga who had
matrimonial alliance with the Cholas of south India invited south Indian Brahmans to
settle down in Orissa. It was the Ganga ruler Anangabhima III (1216-1239) who first
provided royal patronage to Brahmans in the religious sphere (Emanta Rājye Śri
Jagannātha Mahāprabhuṅka Padārabinda Prasāde Brāhmaṇamānaṅkara Kalyāṇa
Khaṇḍāre Yasa Kari Bhuiāṁ Purāṇamānaṅku Jaya Kari Āe Kalu . . . Debatā
Brāhmaṇakū Nānā Niyogaku Bala Poṣibāku Rājanītiki Bhaṇḍāra Saribāku
Nānābaeku Madhya Kari Bhiyāṇa Kari Delu,)\(^9\) Gradually these communities were
incorporated into the daily rituals of the lord Jagannatha temple at Puri. In the
fourteenth and fifteenth centuries they became the impetus for the legitimization of

\(^7\) Burkhard Schenepel, *The Jungle Kings, Ethnohistorical Aspects of Politics and Ritual in Orissa*, p.106.

\(^8\) The Bhubaneswar Prasasti refers to Bhatta Bhavadeva, a Brahman of Sarvana gotra who was
migrated from the village Sadhala in Radha. For detail see, F. Kielhorn, “Eulogy of Bhatta-Bhavadeva

the Suryavamsi Gajapati kings over the coastal tract of Orissa. They constructed a genealogy to prove that the founder of the dynasty, Kapilendra Deva, was nominated by lord Jagannatha to succeed the last Ganga king Bhanu Deva. In the Rajabhoga section of Madalapanji, the sixteenth century work narrates the story of how Kapilendra Deva legitimized his kingship with the help of the priestly class. His son Purushottama Deva went a step ahead of his father's policy and established fifteen Sasana or villages in the vicinity of Cuttack for Brahmans. He also lavishly distributed precious gifts and granted tax-free land to the Brahmans. The last Gajapati ruler of Orissa, Prataprudra Deva (1497-1540), ordered the priestly class to chant Abhinava Gitagovinda, which was written by his father Purushottama Deva in the temple premises and prohibited the singing of Gitagovinda by Jayadeva. In due course, Brahmans and the priestly class became so powerful that they protested against the policy of Prataprudra Deva and under their pressure he had to withdraw his previous order. Thus the Brahman had been played a prominent position in the state and in the religious affairs of the kingdom since the Gajapati period.

The Bhoi legitimacy over Khurda was based upon this give and take policy with the Brahman. Ramachandra Deva followed an inclusive policy to gain support of the Brahman community because, firstly he belonged to the Sudra Varna (Sudra Gajapati Rājā Rāmacandra Deva) which needed the support of the higher Varna.

particularly the Brahmans who could justify him as the lawful successor of the imperial Gajapati. Secondly, he would not want to face any kind of uprising led by a Brahman with the support of the son and successor of the late Gajapati. It was Danai Vidyadhara, the minister of Chakra Pratap Deva who created a region of terror prior to the Bhoi establishment and even forced the Brahman to carry out such menial jobs as cutting grass. He even extorted money which angered the Brahman (Brāhmaṇāna Ghāsakatranabiṣeye Niyojoyāmāsa . . . Dhanādikaṁ Gruhitaṁ, Rājyesṭhaprajaś Ati Biraktāḥ.\(^{13}\)) While Mughals began making rapid inroads into Orissa from the north and the Golconda Sultanates started moving from the south, the Brahman communities were also in search of a new patron who would provide them internal stability and extensive patronage. Starting with Ramachandra Deva (1568-1600) to Birakishore Deva (1737-1793) all the Bhoi rulers of Khurda explicitly donated land to Brahmans and in return the Brahmans honoured them with high titles. It was Ramachandra Deva who donated four villages to Brahmans on the occasion of the reinstallation of the idol of Jagannatha in Puri. In return they honoured him with the title Dwitiya Indradyumna, Thakur Raja and Chalanti Vishnu.\(^{14}\) His son and successor followed his policy with equal zeal and Mukunda Deva (1657-1689) donated land to Bhagabana Panda, Sadasiva Mishra, Jagannatha Ratha, Gangadhar Das and Pitambara Das.\(^{15}\)

The Bhoi depended upon the institution of royal preceptor for their legitimacy.

As soon as Ramachandra Deva came into power he acknowledged a Brahman Sri

\(^{13}\) Katakara[javamsavali, Trans. in English by G. C. Tripathi and Hermann Kulke, Verse 70, Allahabad, 1987, p.34.

\(^{14}\) S. Pattanaik (ed.), Chakada and Chayani Chakada (in Oriya), Cuttack, 1959, p.7.

Bardhana Mahapatra, son of Kavidindima Jivadeva, court poet of late Gajapati Prataputra Deva (1497-1533) as the royal preceptor (Śrī Jība Kabiḍindimo Nrupaguruḥ Śaḍadarśanideśika, Stasyāyāṁ Tanayo Nayottomadhanaḥ Śrī Barddhnastāḍrśaḥ, Soḥyaṁ Bhupuruhuta Rāmanrpaterādesaṭaḥ Śailajā, Pujākarmakṛute Sattāmabhimatāṁ Kicita Krītiṁ Nirmane.)\textsuperscript{16} Bardhana Mahapatra in his literally work Durgostav Chandrika described him as follows:

\begin{quote}
Yasyodetiyaśo Bidhustrījagatāmānananda Māpādayan
Starabhi Paripanthi Sārtharamaṇīgaṇḍe Marhāpāṇḍubhiḥ
Kacintā Labaṇāmbudhoubalayīmapyagatasyābhitaḥ
Kṣūṁbhodhīrakhandamanḍala Paribeśāya Neśāyate
Karnaḥ Karṇapathaṁ Nayāti Nasate Bairocanṭrocate
Mohāḥ Kamadughāḥ Babhuburanaghā Nicodadhīcīsvayaṁ
Alpaḥ Kalpataruḥ Pareṣuganānā Kāṇāmakāmaspruṣāṁ
Yasmin Dānabidhāna Māṇasa Samādhāna Brate Jāgrati
Badānya Manupuṇjānojanoyamanuṣaṁsatī
Ayaṁ Mukāyete Nunam Bhadāṇyamiti Pruchhati
Śvetadvīpaṁ Śiśirāśikharī Lakṣatepakṣayumgāṁ
Sandhyopādoubihitakanakṣmadaraścāṅcu Šobhāṁ
Tārāstārāpatirapitanuddhutapatrāṅkāṛī
Yasya Sveraṁspurati Bhubane Yasyāśa Kṛttihamsī
data\textsuperscript{16} Ramachandra Deva, Durgostav Chandrika (in Sanskrit). Quoted by K. N. Mahapatra, Khurda Itiḥasa, p.4.}

\end{quote}
Whose moon like rising fame is a joy for the inhabitants of earth, water and cosmic world; who receives the proximity of the queens of the rival power; who dares to call, the earthly territory of the ruler, as a piece of land surrounded by salt! For this pious king, it is evident to consider that, his territory is a land surrounded by nothing less than the ocean of milk. As the king re-established Lord Jagannatha, the incarnation of Lord Vishnu, the ocean has been converted into an ocean of milk.

When the mind and ear rendezvous with the legend of the king’s rule and donation, the ear of the commoners refused space for the great Karna. Compare to the achievement of this king even great donor like King Bali is also disliked by the wise. The generosity of King rendered ineffective to the services of all time generous donor like the Kamadhenu. The best of donors like Dadhichi becomes subordinate in front of this king’s generosity. The donation of Kalpa-taru it seems little in front of the donation of this king. To whom else we may compare with the generosity of this king?

When anyone asked who this extraordinary respectable person is? He said who else he may be other than Raja Ramachandra Deva Gajapatī? If the person asks to name another such person, the

\[17\] Ibid, Quoted by C.D. Mahapatra, Utkal Itihas Eka Agyanta Adhyaya, (in Oriya), Cuttack, 1969, pp. 77-78.
answer is a long silence. Really, who else is there to be named along with him?

Whose chivalrous achievement is comparable with the King who is like the snowy white of a cold mountain of a wing of a swan; the reddish morning and evening are like the bloody foots of the swan; the tropic of cancer may be like the swan’s glowing red mouth, the moon and stars are like her discarded feathers; that highly reputed swan, like an authoritarian queen dispensing her rule like a volcanic eruption.

All the evil adversaries evaporated into the sky like the dust when hit by the strong stamping of the hooves of horse of the ever fighting king. But to witness the acclamation songs of this ruler of the earth from the celestial nymphs (women from haven) those evil forces again fearlessly descent into their respective place.

Bardhana Mahapatra helped Ramachandra Deva to revive the god offering in the temple of Jagannatha. Furthermore he helped Ramachandra Deva to resist the advances of the Golconda forces where he died in the battlefield. After the death of Bardhana Rajguru, his only son, Balabhadra, became the Rajguru of Purushottama Deva. Similarly, Dharma Deva, son of Balabhadra, became the Rajguru of Narasingha Deva, Balabhadra Deva and Mukunda Deva I, respectively. Usually the position of the royal preceptor was confined to the influential Bachha family. But in due course of time to accommodate other sections of the Brahmans in the state the

---


Bhoi kings of Khurda appointed another influential family as the royal preceptor. Gadadhara who belonged to Kausik Brahman family served as the royal preceptor for king Harikrishna Deva (1716-1720) and Gopinatha Deva (1720-1727) respectively. They granted land and ownership rights to their royal preceptor. Ramachandra Deva II divided the home land of the one officer called Harihara Rajguru into two parts and granted the western part to his royal preceptor Paramalakshmi Mahapatra and assigned the right to collect taxes from the granted land (Ye Śāsanaru Paramalakṣami Mahāpatraṅku Ye Harihara Rāegurunika Ghara Bhāga Madhyaru Paścimabhāga Dānakari Ānjākalu, Ye Bhāga Yehāku Jala Kṣṭra Bhumi Madya Āsīmānta Kari Yābachhandrärke Āyakarāi Hakarā Karāi Upana Prasādadai Māhājana Satwa Madhya Āya Karāibu).\(^{21}\) Birakishore Deva granted three hundred rupees to his royal preceptor Narasingha for the annual expenditure of his personal horse and ordered the state official to renovate the royal chariots of the royal preceptor with silver and peacock feathers (Narsingha Pātajosi Kiṅ Je Rājaguru Karibāku Ānjā Kalu. Eḥāṅka Ghodā Śīropā Mukutā Sālaku Madhya Tinisa Ṭaṅkā Kothum Deba. Pālikīre Rupā Kalaśa Caara Mayura Jhula Dośākhā Masāla Madhya Kothum Tiārī Karī Deba, Ghaḍi Śaṅkha Mahurī Rājaguru Dastura Māna Khaji Dei Amala Karāiba.)\(^{22}\) Besides that they had also granted land to their Brahman state officer and such an arrangement was made by Birakishore Deva. He granted the village of Herida and Madagada to Brundabana Kuara, the western gate keeper of the royal house (Paścima Dwāra Parichā Brundābana Kuara Guru, Mahāpatraṅku Śrīhasta Tambāpāṭiā Ghumusura, Ćakā Pādamālare Anugula Mālare Asamayare Māhāsrāma

\(^{21}\) Ibid, p. 211.

\(^{22}\) Sanad Quoted by C. D. Mahapatra, Utkal Itihas Eka Agyanta Adhyaya, p.293.
The royal preceptor played an important role in the process of legitimacy and became one of the important instruments to reach out to the common mass. In order to legitimize the authority of the king through ritual practice, the royal preceptor introduced many religious functions in the state. Sometimes the king too introduced some religious festival. Though the festival of Dasahara was started by the Gajapati king of Orissa, it was only limited to the royal house. In order to gain larger support of the local community as well as the Brahman community, Bardhana Mahapatra started the celebration of the Dasahara festival with pomp and grandeur. It was celebrated in all the Sakti shrines of Khurda and the royal preceptor instructed the king to show his military strength during the procession of the Goddess and to involve all sections of the people in the festival irrespective of their religion by providing equal space in the rituals (Räjäyänāṁ Brähmaṇānāṁ Bīśāṅca Śudrāṇāṁ Bā Sarbabarṇāṅganaṇāṁ, Mlechāṇāṁ Bā Bhakticaryā Biśeṣaih Karmayasyaṁ Nirbibādodhakārāh.)\textsuperscript{24} The king himself was seen as the representative of lord Jagannatha and Goddess Durga and sat in front of the idol. In the southern side of the king the royal preceptor and on the northern side different feudatories were seated. All the state officials from the commander in chief till the village head worshipped the goddess with the king (Nṛupatiratha Daśamyāṁ Prekaśa Duṣṭāri Senāṁ, Bahubidha

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid, p. 246.

\textsuperscript{24} Ramachandra Deva, Durgostav Chandrika. Quoted by C.D. Mahapatra, Utkal Itihās Eka Agyanta Adhyaya, p. 61.
In due course of time another festival, *Gundica Yatra* or return of the car festival was introduced by Narasingha Deva (1621-1647). He restarted the *Gundicha Yatra* or car festival for lord Jagannatha in the month of spring which had been celebrated during the time of Cadoganga Deva (1077-1147) and brought to a halt due to the Muslim menace in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The contemporary poet Dinakrushana Dasa in his work *Rasabinodana* states that, in the 33rd regnal year of the king, Narasingha Deva who was the devotee of lord Vishnu started the Gundicha Yatra (*Tāhāṅkatāru Je Tanuja, Nrūsingha Deba Mahārāja, Tetisa Aṅka Yāe Thile, Biṣṇucarane Sebā Kale, Mina Māsare Yatrā Puṇe, Basanta Gundicā Bhīṇa, Jahun Se Biṣṇūka Bhagata, Kale Gundicā Nāme Jāta*). Second, he sincerely patronized the Vaisnava sect for the propagation of Vaisnavaism in his kingdom. It was Vaisnava saint Rasikananda who spread Vaisnavaism across Khurda kingdom and established a monastery at Puri. Narasingha Deva acknowledged Rasikananda as a poet who visited his court with due honour and worshipped him in various ways (*Parabesa Helā Prabhu Gajapati Sthāne, Dekhilena Rājā Jene Duti Nārāyaṇe, Astabyasta Hei Rājā Uthilā Twarite, Dandaabata Paramāna Karilā Sākṣāte, Śrī Jagannāthara Adhikāri Āni Rājā, Rasikendra Candre Bahurupe Kaile Pujā*).

Narasingha Deva (1621-1647) followed some popular polices to woo a large section of Brahmins to his fold. Firstly, following the footsteps of the Sena ruler of

---

25 Ibid, p. 64.


Bengal, he introduced the system of *Kaulinya* in Khurda according to which Brahmins were divided into different categories and they were granted land accordingly to their status. The high class Brahmins were divided into three grades, Samanta, Bhatta, Mishra and Baidika. Some Brahmins of Vastsa Gotra were first raised to the status of Samantas and were settled in the village of Vira Narasinghapur near Sakhigopal. Subsequently, the Nandas, Vaujpeyis and the Goatreyas were also placed on the same footing as that of the Samanta.28 Secondly, he explicitly donated land and village to Brahmins in the different part of his kingdom. One copper plate grant of the king states that he donated the village of Sunyaramachandrapur to Dhani Rath and other Brahmins. Another states that in the 17th regnal year of his rule he donated some land to Sri Dharma Charana Sura Maharatha Mahapatra and one of the servants Narayana Panda.29 He donated the village of Biswanathapur to his royal preceptor Dharma Deva.30 It was Dharma Deva who organised all the Zamindars of Orissa against the Mughals for the independence of Khurda. It was he who negotiated with the Mughals for the throne of Khurda when Mukunda Deva (1657-1689) suffered a defeat in their hands.

With the downfall of the Gajapati empire and followed by a rapid Muslim invasion to Orissa from the north and south the significance of the ‘Sasana’ or small principalities of Brahmins gradually declined. Establishment of the Sasana was started by the Ganga king Ananga Bhimadeva (1211-1238) who founded 20 Brahman

---


villages (Brāhmanānāṃ Biṁśatiparimitāḥ Agraḥāraḥ Krutāḥ). In order to gain the blessing of the Brahmans for a son the Gajapati king Purushottama Deva (1468-1497) established the Sohala Sasana in the vicinity of Cuttack. Although Govinda Vidyadhara was a very cruel ruler who killed 32 sons of the Gajapati king Prataprudra Deva, he established a Brahman village named Vira Govindapura (Pratāparudradebasya Dvāṁśatiputrā Mātītāḥ . . . Anena Rājā Biragobindapuranāmakāgrāharati Kārītāḥ.).

When Mukunda Deva became the king in 1568 he served Brahmans with great devotion and established a Brahman village named Mukundapura (Brāhmanā Bahumānena Sebitāḥ . . . Mukundapuranāmakāgrahāraḥ Kārītāḥ.). Following in the footsteps of the Gajapati king of Orissa and to consolidate the sentiment of the Brahmans in his tenures Ramachandra Deva also established a 'Sasana' in the vicinity of Puri. He established Bira Ramachandrapur, Sri Ramachandrapur, Bijaya Ramachandrapur, Ubbayamukhi Ramachandrapur and Pratapa Ramachandrapur Sasanas and donated them to the Brahman communities. His son and successor Purushottama Deva (1600-1621) followed his policy with equal zeal and established Bira Purushottamapur, Sri Purushottamapur and Pratapa Purushottamapur in and around Puri. Narasingha Deva (1621-1647) established Bira Narashingahapur on the banks of the river Bhargabi. Similarly, Balabhadra Deva (1647-1657) also established Bira Balabhadrapura. At the same time they even established Sasanas far away from their kingdoms and such an arrangement was made by Birakishore Deva in his feudatory state of Ghumsur where

---


33 Katakaraṇavamsavali, G.C. Tripathi and Hermann Kulke, Verse 70, p. 33.

34 Ibid, Verse 74, p. 35.
he established the Kshatriyabarapur Sasana (Kṣṭriyabarapura Nāme Śāsana Dāna, Ghumusura Rājyare Kale Stāpana.)  

Although the Sasanas were mainly assigned to the Brahman families, sometimes they also granted land to learned poets who came from outside. In return, the poets glorified their rule in their works. Birakishore Deva (1737-1793) granted 22 Bati of land to Banamali Dasa who praised him in his poem as a calm and wealthy ruler (Dhīra Śrī Bīrabara, Hīrā Mukuṭa Śīra, Śrī Bīrakisōra Deba Gānare.)  

They often gave high titles to such poets. Birakishore Deva (1737-1793) gave the title of Kabisurya Brahma to the poet Sadananda (Purbe Śrī Birakēśarī Datta Pada, Kabisurya Brahmā Boli Loke Bada.)  

Sadananda in his work gave a vivid description of his previous patron, viz., Nayagarh, Ghumsur, Dasapalla, Kataka, Madupur as well as the Bhoi of Khurda their overlord under whom he served (Nayāgadā Rājye Purbāśrama Ye Mohar, Kichidina Mātrakē Rahili Ghumusura, Daśapallā Bhaṇja Rājye Sakhya Prema Mota, Bahu Sabhābanāre Rakhile Baṣra Kete, Kataka Nikate Dāmodarapura Nāme Cāribarṣa Rahili Mātrak Se Sthāna , Taduttāre Madhupura Rājye Achi Abe.)  

The seventeenth century poet Dinakrushana in his work,
Rasabinodan, states that, when Mansingh attacked Khurda, Ramachandra Deva ruled over his subject peacefully with Khurda as the capital (Jedine Mānasinga Sāhi, Āilā Odiśāku Bāhi, Sedine Rāmacandra Rāja, Šubhe Pālanti Janaprajā, Khoradhā Kataka Nagar, Rahiṇa Thile Nṛupabara.) ⁴⁰ Bhupati Pandit, a contemporary of Divyasingha Deva (1689-1716) in his literary work praised the king for granting him so much land and wealth that he left his own homeland Bengal and learned Oriya language to write his work (Dhana Basan Bhumi Dāna, Dele Se Hoi Suprasanna, Dekhi Anugraha Aśeṣa Chādi Ailu Nija Deśa, Tāhāṅka Anna Jala Khāi, Sukhe Tāhāṅka Rājye Thāi, Paścimā Bhāṣāre Kabitwa, Baṅgalā Bhāṣāre Tirahotra, Utkala Bhāṣā Naba Śikṣā.) ⁴¹ Another poet of the same period Dinakrushana Dasa praised the king for giving him food, clothing and shelter in his kingdom and to those who fled from the neighbouring kingdom (Jāhāra Anna Bastra Khāi, Tā Sukha Cintā Karuthāi.) ⁴² Kunjabihari Bhramararbara in his literary work described Divyasingha Deva for his worship of Brahmans and cows and for the law and order in his kingdom (Go Brāhmaṇa Baisṇaba Pujane Tatpara . . . Nāyare Prajāpālana Anyāye Bināśi He.) ⁴³ Similarly poet Biswambara Dasa the contemporary of Birakishore Deva (1737-1793) in his work described the glory of the Khurda as follows:

Prthiṃdala Sāra Bhumi Odiśā, Khoradhā Nāme Nagara,
Tahṃre Nṛpati Śrī Birakeśārī, Pratāpare Birabara He,
Mukutamaṇi Lakṣe Rājāra He, Dayābanta Ārata Lokara He,

⁴⁰ Dinakrushana Dasa, Rasabinodan (in Oriya). Quoted by K. N. Mahapatra, Khurda Itihasa, pp.7-8.
⁴¹ Bhupati Pandit, Premapancamruta (in Oriya). Quoted by K. N. Mahapatra, Khurda Itihasa, p.115.
⁴² K. N. Mahapatra, Khurda Itihasa, p. 119.
⁴³ Kunjabihari Bhramararbara, Premashila (in Oriya), Canto I. Quoted by K. N. Mahapatra, Khurda Itihasa, p.135.

154
English translation is as follows:

in the world there is Orissa where Khurda is situated; where king
Birakishore Deva is one of the powerful ruler who is over lord of
one lakh feudatories and a kind hearted ruler who love both the
friends and foe.

In the middle of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries when the
Bhoi kings faced repeated invasions of the Mughal Subahdar of Cuttack, they became
more dependent towards the Brahman communities and some of the state officials.
Mukunda Deva (1657-1689) died in Jajpur and the incident was followed by active
invasion of the Mughal Subahdar to Khurda. It was Divyasingha Deva (1689-1716)
who became king of Khurda, with help of Ramachandra Pattanaik, the son of the
Diwan Paramananda Pattanaik (Bichā 23 Dīna Diāna Paramānanda Paṭṭanāyaka Pua
Rāmacandra Paṭṭanāyake Yāi Dībyasingha Rāe Gosāīmuki Barapadā Gaḍaru Ānī
Rathipura Kaṭake Bije Karāī Rātra 5 Khari Ṭhāre Abhiṣekha Hoi Debārcana Kale.)

In order to legitimize his power like his predecessor, he appointed Bhupati Pandit as
his royal poet and honoured him by donating land and a house at Rathipura. Bhupati
Pandit in his work Prema Pancamruta honestly described him as the great follower of
Vaisnavaism and a powerful king among the one lakh kings (E Birabara Vaiṣnaba
Nāma Śrī Divyasingha Deva, Lakṣa Rājānka Maudamani Sundrapaṇe Agragaṇī.)

Similarly, with the help of Diwan Gopinatha Vidyadhara, Harikrishna Deva (1716-
1720) became king and his coronation was held in Rajanagar. He patronised Sri

44 Biswambara Dasa, Biciṭṭa Bharaṭa (in Oriya), Quoted by K. N. Mahapatra, Khurda Itihasa, p. 8.

45 A. B. Mohanty (ed.), Madala Panji, p. 70.

46 Bhupati Pandit, Prema Pancamruta (in Oriya). Quoted by K. N. Mahapatra, Khurda Itihasa, p. 11.
Krushana Mahapatra, the leader of the Kaushika Gotra to perform the *Vajapiya* sacrifice and to propagate the Vedic religion in Khurda. He appointed Haladhara, son of Krushana Mahapatra as the preceptor of the queen who performed the *Sarada Vajapiya* sacrifices. For his service to the state he donated the Harikrishnapura Sasana to Haladhara. He acknowledged Nilambara, the brother of Haladhara as the royal preceptor and granted him a gold coin and royal canopy to perform *Chatrumukha* sacrifices. 47 Ramachandra Deva II (1727-1737) was released by the efforts of Paramalakshmi Mahapatra, a Brahman poet who negotiated with Taqi Khan when the former fell in love with the daughter of Murshid Quli Khan II. As Ramachandra Deva II converted to Islam (*E Rājā Nabābānka Jhiāṅku Hārila, Jāṭibhraṣṭa Hoile, Pthānāṅka Saṅge Āṭajāta Hele*) eminent Brahmans of Puri did not allow him to enter lord Jagannatha's temple and severe displeasure was shown by Balabhadra Pattanaik and Bhagawan Pattanaik of Karabada and Bandhu Mishra of Ramachandrapur against him. 48 It was Paramalakshmi Mahapatra who helped Ramachandra Deva II overcome the discontent and a welcome ceremony of Ramachandra Deva II was held by him at Rathipur. Ramachandra Deva II accepted him as the royal preceptor and donated some land from Bira Narasingapur village. 49 Some of the sanads of the time of Ramachandra Deva II state that he donated 10 *Bati* or 90 acres of land to royal preceptor Paramalakshmi for the cost of maintaining his palanquin, 25 *Bati* or 225 acres to provide drinking water to travellers and assigned him the power to collect taxes from the land (*Paramalāṅkumi Rājaguru Mahāpātraṅku Ye Pāltī Khaṅjā*

ROLE OF JAGANNATHA IN THE PROCESS OF LEGITIMACY

Regional deities played an important role in the process of legitimacy of a kingdom. The same thing also happened in case of the Bhoi kingdom of Khurda. The Bhoi legitimacy over Khurda centered on and over the cult of Jagannatha. It was Anangabhima, the imperial Ganga rule, who devoted his kingdom to lord Purushottama Jagannatha of Puri in 1230 and recognized the divinity of Puri both as the one and only state deity of Orissa and his divine overlord. His son and successor in the early part of the thirteenth century proclaimed an ideology of kingship which not only claimed to rule as sons and vassals of Lord Purushottama Jagannatha but also began to associate their own regnal years with their divine overlord, and Narasingha I (1238-1264) assumed the title Gajapati or Lord of the Elephants. This title became the most accepted name of the kings of Orissa under the Suryavamsi (1434-1542) the predecessor of the Bhoi of Khurda. The temple chronicle of Puri states that God Jagannatha ordered the last Ganga king Bhanudeva IV in a dream to nominate Kapilendra Deva as his successor. To legitimize his rule over the kingdom Kapilendra Deva proclaimed, "any opposition and attack on the king was thus an

50 Sanad Quoted by C. D. Mahapatra, Utkal Ithas Eka Agyanta Adhyaya, p. 166.
51 Patameswari for the kingdom of Patnagarh, Samalaiswari for the kingdom of Sambalpur, Bhargavi for Banapur, Hingula for Talcher and so on. For detail see Hermann Kulke, Kings and Cults State Formation and Legitimation in India and South Asia, New Delhi, 1993, p. 125.
52 For more detail see Katakarajavamsavali, G. C. Tripathi and Hermann Kulke, Verses 45-59, pp. 18-24.
offence and treachery against Jagannatha." He even sought advice of Jagannatha in affairs of the state and before embarking on a military expedition against the rebellious chiefs he paid a visit to Puri and complained against them:

Oh Jagannatha Thus prayth Thy servant [sevaka]. Throughout the kingdom, I maintained from childhood these feudal lords including the infantry and cavalry and gave them wealth. All of them have forsaken me. I shall deal with them and punish them each according to his desert. Oh Lord Jagannatha Thou judge this fact whether I am right or wrong.

His son and successor Purushottama Deva (1467-1497) donated costly presents to Jagannatha. Although Govinda Vidyadhara murdered the two sons and successors of Gajapati king Prataprudra Deva (1497-1540), he still sought the blessing of Jagannatha for his legitimacy and in an inscription at the gate of Jagannatha temple he mentioned that:

Oh Jagannatha without [my] coming in order to behold Thy Lotus Feet all is hell. In regard to the gifts of pilgrims whether belonging to this country or to a foreign country up to the vicinity of the Vindhya and Udayagiri mountains[ in Central and South India

---


respectively [. . . the Gadajata kings. . . should observe . . . He who violates this, rebels against Lord Jagannatha. 56

Even with the downfall of the Gajapati kingdom of Orissa and destruction of the wooden idols of the Jagannatha trinity by the Muslim army in 1568 the importance of Puri did not decline. It became an essential part of the Bhoi kingship of Khurda to capture Puri and uphold the sanctity of lord Jagannatha. The kings of Khurda fought the Muslim governors for their autonomy and control over the cult of Jagannatha and the Mughal governors for the economic control of the pilgrimage centre at Puri. The importance of Puri sooner rather than later was realised by Akbar who allowed Ramachandra Deva to control the cult of Jagannatha in order to make Khurda a buffer state. On the other hand:

the rise of Ramachandra Deva and the consecration of new images of the Jagannatha trinity, first in his capital Khurda and then in Puri, shows to what extent state temples of former imperial dynasty and their temple cities had become focal points of the reestablishment of local successor state a phenomenon. 57

In due course of time the Bhoi legitimacy was based upon the protection and patronage to the regional deity. They had been fighting with the Muslims for more than one and a half centuries for their autonomy and authority to control Puri and for their religious right in the cult of Jagannatha.

57 Hermann Kulke, King and Cults, State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia, p. 53.
Although the cult of Jagannatha developed far away from the capital of the Bhoi yet in due course of time, “it was drawn into the mainstream of the political evolution of Orissa to such an extent that kingship became part of the cult and the cult became part of the Orissan kingship and its main source of legitimation.”\textsuperscript{58} In the whole of seventeenth century, Jagannatha became the bone of contention between the Mughal Subahdar of Orissa and the kings of Khurda in their legitimacy. In 1606 Orissa became a separate Suba with Cuttack as its capital and all the Mughal governors of Cuttack were trying to subdue the adjacent Khurda territory whose king claimed to be a subject of the emperor only and to be the ‘sacred and secret’ ruler of Orissa.\textsuperscript{59} On the other hand, by reinstalling the idols of Jagannatha in the temple of Puri the Bhoi kings started enjoying the power and position which was once enjoyed by the Gajapati. Subsequently, the Bhoi kings of Khurda were playing the hide and seek for the idols of Jagannatha with the Muslim governors of Orissa. This started with the invasions of Orissa by Kalapahara in 1568 and ended in 1735 when a Muslim Subahdar [Murshid Quli Khan II] installed the idol of Jagannatha in the temple of Puri. Whenever they faced the invasion of the Mughals they themselves ordered the removal of the idols of Jagannatha from Puri. When Kalyana Singh (1611-1617) became the Subahdar of Orissa he attacked Khurda so the priest of Puri sent the idols of Jagannatha to Gabapadar, a small island in Chilika lake where it was kept for several years (\textit{Parameswara Gurudāithāru YāI Bānapura Simā Gabapadara Thāre Nai Bhitarē Cāpare Biji Karithile}).\textsuperscript{60} When Narasingha Deva (1621-1647)


\textsuperscript{59} Hermann Kulke, \textit{King and Cults, State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia}, p.42.

became the king of Khurda he reinstalled the idols of Jagannatha in the temple of Puri. In order to prove the 'semi-autonomous status' of his dynasty he brought some changes in the cult. He forbade daily rituals of fish offering for goddess Vimala in Puri and strengthened Jagannatha's influence on the Vimala cult through the order that she had to accept Jagannatha prasada offerings before they were distributed to the priest and pilgrims as mahaprasada (Bimalādevyāḥ Pratidinaṁ Matsyādinībedanāṁ Sītām Tadapi Niṣiddhyam Yābadabhbaggantibudiṇādikaṁ Bimalāyāḥ Samarpanāṁ Kartābyamite Nityā Ānjā Dattā). He built his own palace in the Bali Sahi of Puri to the south of the Jagannatha temple. Thus the relationship of the king and the cults improved: the Raja of Khurda know as the Rajas of Puri... the rajagura, the personal priest of the raja, became temple administrator and its great examiner (bada pariksa). Temple servants had to serve in the place and food offering for Jagannatha had regularly to be brought several time a day to the place(rajabhoga)... a most complicated system of ritual and socio-economic temple-palace relations emerged in Puri, through which the place and the temple rituals became more and more synchronized.

---


Although Aurangzeb in 1692, in a new decree, ordered explicitly the destruction of the Jagannatha temple, the king of Khurda won the good will of the Subahdar of Cuttack and stopped the complete demolition of the temple. A fake idol of lord Jagannatha was sent to Aurangzeb at Bijapur and the main gate of the temple was closed (Kāṭhara Jagannāṭha Pratimāku Mugaḷe Nele. . . Dupamānakare Ghanṭa Na Bājilā.)\(^{64}\) Aurangzeb recalled the Subahdar and sent a high officer as an examiner to Puri, but the King of Khurda won him over as a friend by giving 30,000 rupees.\(^{65}\) Till the death of Aurangzeb the temple was officially closed but the cult continued. Daily rituals of the cults was carried out by the priest secretly (Bhitara Bedāre Utara Bāde JanaMa Cakaḍāre Kāṭhi SinghāsanaRe Debasnāna Yāṭrā Hoilā . . . Guṇḍicā Yāṭrā Bhoga Manḍapare Hoilā.)\(^{66}\) The king of Khurda granted permission to the king of Ranapur in 1696 and the king of Patia in 1701 to perform traditional royal rituals in the temple premises.\(^{67}\) After the death of Aurangzeb a minister of Divyasingha Deva (1689-1716) with the help of the eighteen feudatory states forcefully opened the main gate of the temple and renewed the cult (25 Aṅka Kanyā 10 Dine Kṛṣṇa Ekādaśī Gurubāra E Mahārājāṅka Ānjū Pramāṇe 18 Gaḍa Khaṇḍāetaṅku Ghenāi Arārāmapitāmaḥa Āsi Baḍadeula Ṣinghadwāra Phīṭāi Delā . . . E Dine Saṅjadhupa Ghanṭī Bājilā, Baḍadeula Upare Mahāḍīpa Jalilā.)\(^{68}\) In order to safeguard the image


\(^{65}\) Hermann Kulke, King and Cults, State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia, p. 47.


from the wrath of Taqi Khan in 1732, Ramachandra Deva II with the help of priests took the idol of Jagannatha to the hilly area to the south of his territories (Paramānanda Kuamra Mahāpatra Sāna Parikṣa Biṣṇu Paścima Kabāṭa Mahāpatra Duījana Adhikāre Parameśwara Nilādri Singhāsana Chaḍāi Caudalare Bije Karāi Dobandhāṭhāre Cāpare Bije Karāi Cilikā Pāra Hoi Bānpura Naṭhāre Hariśvaraṅka Manḍapare Bije Karāile). Taqi Khan soon felt the financial loss of pilgrim tax and allowed Ramachandra Deva II to reinstall the image of Jagannatha in the temple. Taqi Khan once again invaded Khurda and Ramachandra Deva once again sent the idols of Jagannatha, Balabhadra and Subhadra to south Orissa, where they were kept in Athagarh for more than two years (Dhanu 29 Dine Nabāba Rasūṇa Khām Āśi Khurudhā Ghenilāku Parameśwaraṅku Nairu Āṭhagaḍa Śimāre Māradā Bije Karāile). After the death of Taqi Khan in 1734 Ramachandra Deva returned to Khurda but was driven out again after a few months by Murshid Quli Khan II. Quli Khan sent his deputy Mir Habib to Athagarh who forcibly brought back the idols to Puri and appointed Padmanabha Deva at Patia near Cuttack as the Gajapati king of Orissa. Meanwhile Birakishore Deva the son of Ramachandra Deva II negotiated with Murshid Quli Khan II for the throne of Khurda and promised to pay pilgrim tax as well as the debt of Padmanabha Deva. Murshid Quli Khan II assigned him the throne of Khurda as well as control over the cult of Jagannatha (E Birakeśarī Deba Mahārajaṅka 4 Anka Rūṣabha 1 Dinake Nabāba Musastakulikhāṃṭika Thāru

69 Ibid, p. 55.

70 According to Riyaz-us Salatin there was falling off to the tune of nine laks of rupees in the Imperial revenue of the Mughal. For more detail see Ghulam Husain Salim, Riyaz -us- Salatin, p. 302.

In 1766, T. Motte observed:

when Ragooje [Bhonsle of Nagpur] entered Orissa he found these parts divided into small zamindaries dependent on the Rajah of Pooree at whose capital is the famous temple of Jagannaut, near Chilka lake. This prince was regarded by his subjects in a religious light also, and appeared formidable to the Mahrathas, who, apprehensive, lest he might seize a favourable opportunity to cut off the communication between Nagpur and Cuttack, resolved to reduce his power by dividing it.  

In the first half of the seventeenth century the car festival of Puri became the main events for the Bhoi to acquire legitimacy. They systematically enlarged their power and authority over the car festival of Jagannatha. The festival itself had two political implications for the Bhoi rulers:

- Economically they required the regular procurement of an enormous quantity of wood as well as iron and ropes, and their sale after the gods had returned to the main temple. Politically, they meant the partial inclusion of the temple cars into the scope of royal legitimation and, in some cases, even into the power struggles among the rulers of Orissa.

---

72 Ibid, p. 56.


74 Hermann Kulke, *King and Cults, State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia*, p.72.
Birakishore Deva sent a royal order to the superintendent of the Jagannatha temple which states that, for the construction of the Jagannatha’s car seasoned simuli ropes will be brought from Ranpur. Saris (turbans, as sign of honour) should be sent from the temple store for the chieftain Narendra of Ranpur (E Mahārajānka 15 Anka Meṣa 12 Dine Śrīhansabalabha Hukuma Bhāṣā Achanti, Nadighoṣa Ratha Gaṭaṇa Nimante Kasa Simuli Āśiba, E Nimante Ranapurā Nariṇḍrānku Deulu E Sadhī Māhāprasāda Chāmuḥkaṇḍiā Jamāi Atibudha Mārphate Debe.) On 3rd March 1749, Birakishore Deva sent a royal order to the superintendent of the Jagannatha temple as follows:

the timbers required for the construction of the cars of the deities could not come up to Atharnala (bridge), So people have been deputed to Banpur for procuring the required timbers. These timbers will be cut from the forest on the boundaries of the two states Ghumsur and Athgarh (in South Orissa). Saris (turbans, as sign of honour) should be sent from the temple store for the two chieftains. The saris similar to those sent on previous occasions at the time of procurement of timbers should be sent through the royal messenger.  

76 Chamu Citau of the Madalapanji, Trans. in English by Hermann Kulke, King and Cults, State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia, p.77.
The first known reference to the relation of the Gajapati kings of Orissa with the car festival of Puri is contained in the European study, Frias Odori, in the year 1321 and it states that:

annually on the recurrence of the day when the idol was made, the folk of the country come and take it down, and put it on a fine chariot; and then the king and Queen, made the whole body of the people, join together and draw it forth from church with loud singing of songs and all kinds of music.\footnote{77 Quoted in Hobson –Jobson, p. 466. Also see Hermann Kulke, \textit{King and Cults, State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia}, p. 73.}

The Suryavamsi Gajapati king Purushottama Deva in the fifteenth century introduced the important ritual of cleaning cars in the festival. Cleaning of the cars became the main source of legitimacy of the Bhoi and seventeenth century source state that the king after finishing the ritual of cleaning the cars put a silk covered pillow on his head and symbolically pushed the cars to the rear, which marked the official beginning of the festival officially.\footnote{78 The \textit{Niti}, a manual of 17th century of Jagannatha rituals, p. 85. Also see Hermann Kulke, \textit{King and Cults, State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia}, p. 73.} Thomas Bowery gave a vivid description of the annual car festival as follows:

Sundry Festival times they keep here with great Splendour, One amongst the rest continueth 7 or 8 days, to which Devilish feast resorteth many very rich Merchants and Brachmans, with many Others from the remotest Parts of Hindostan, in soe much that it is very rare if fewer than 150,000 persons resort to one of the festivals at the great Pagod [sic.], and noe few thousands to the Subordinate Pagods in the whole Empire. The maine Spectacle and purpose is to
behold their graven God Jno. Gernaet [sic.], which at such times is carried in a Chariot (richly adorned and of curious and costly Workmanship) round the Pagod and through the broadest Streets of the town in great triumph and with great Solemnity. The Chariot is of Exceeding great weight, being made of Very Solid wood, very rich, with much iron work thereon and finely Engraven, with the Shapes of men and women dancing, as also many hideous Shapes of Satyrs, bulls, bears, Tigers, Elephants, Rhinocerots [sic.], etc. in soe much that it is soe Ponderous, that although it be fitted Upon 6 or 8 Good Axletrees, with good wheels on each Side, yet requireth more than an hundred Stronge men to draw it alonge Upon hard and Smooth ground (and this they accompt the Arke of God). In the middle of that great Diabolicall Chariot, is placed their great Patron Jno. Gernaet, having the foremost end Open, fairly to be beheld by many of the people, which in Generell they Endeavour to doe, but more than one half are prevented by the infinite multitude, in soe much that many of them are pressed down by the crowed....And which is both Stranger and more incredible, many of them come a great many miles to End their days here, Under the wheels of this ponderous but, accompted by them, by Arke. They Voluntarily and with great Courage casting themselves under the wheels thereof, as it is drawn along, and are there crushed to death, the which is accompted by all of this Sect a most Noble, Heroike, and Zealous death.79

79 Thomas Bowery, *A geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal*, 1669-79, R.C.
On the occasion of the car festival the feudatories received special privileges from the Bhoi kings. Ramachandra Deva II granted the permission of camara (fan prepared with hair from a yak’s tail) to the feudatory of Khandiapada, Mardaraja Bhramarabara (Mahāprabhuṇku Khandiapaḍā Mardarāja Bhramarabara Rāe Cāmra Sebā Khaṭibā Nimane Āṇjā Delu.) In 1760, Birakishore Deva granted the permission to serve lord Jagannatha with a special camara to the feudatory of Tigeria of central Orissa and in 1778 to the chief priest of the Chikiti monastery in Puri. Thus the festival provided an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the Bhoi as the successor of the imperial Gajapati and the leading servant of the lord Jagannatha in the presence of various Hindu kings and princes as well as large number of pilgrims.

Slowly the car festival of Puri started playing a definite political role for the Bhoi. The generous distribution of privileges by the Bhoi kings to their feudatories on the occasion of the car festival sometimes made their subordinate feudatory jealous. The king of Paralakhemundi in south Orissa made an unsuccessful attempt to capture the Bhoi kingship through occupation of Jagannatha car during the festival and by performing the royal rituals of the Gajapati of Khurda on the car. According to one of the Chamu Cita much or royal letter of Birakishore Deva:

Kakaḍā Di Ine Talapa Baḍa Parikṣā Dulabharāmaṇka Adhikāre

Sāna Parikṣā Karuṇākara Chotarāyanka Besmarane. E Dine


80 Chamu Cita. Quoted by K. N. Mahapatra, Khurda Itihasa, Appendix 2, p. 257.

81 Hermann Kulke, King and Cults, State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia, p.78.
Rathamâne Saradhâbâli Thile. E Dina Pâralâ Pâtaṅgâra
Jagannâtha Nârâyâna De E Bhâi Madhya Duijâna Bâhuḍâ Guṇḍîcâ
Daraśanaku Aile. Loka Dui Sahasra Thile. Hâthi Upare Nâgarâ
Hâthi Upare Buratha E Rupe Thilâ. Ehâra Upare Ambuivre Thile
Rathara Majhi Jhula Paḍuthilâ. Jari Cira Bâjâ, Pâgajâmâ Hoi
Hâtiki Rathaku Lagâi Ratha Uparakâ Darasana Kale. Neulachuliki
Jâhâ Dele Tâ Daitâpâtî Nele. Nandighoṣa Ratha Upare
Parameśwaranku Daraśana Karibâre Śrīângaru Mâla Goṭîe
Chîḍilâ. E Naraṇa De Baile E Mâla Mote Dia. E Gheni Samste
Sebake E Mâla Chapâile. Ehâku Tuliṣi Prasâda Dele. E Āgyânmâla
Châmuku Calile.

Kâkaḍâ Di 2 Na Talapa. Bâhuḍâ Guṇḍîcâ Caturthi Dina
Rathamâne Râtra Câriprahara Sariki Śinghadwâra Thile. Naraṇa
De E Bhâi Madya Pâgagantâ Bândhi Ratha Upare Basile. E Dina
Samasta Sebaka Adhikâri Râmajatí Sâna Parikṣâ Karunâkara
Choṭâra Gopinâtha Râutarâ. Thâmasamâ Sûrâme Madhya Thâi
Masalata Kale. Ratha Upare Sinâ Pâgagantâ Hoi Darasana Kale
Deula Bhitare Kehi Āsibe E Rupe Bicâra Karante Râtra Pâhigalâ.
Se Swakâše Pâhanḍi Bije Nohîle. E Duijâne Ratha Upare Basî
Pâhanḍî Bije Samayare Râjâ Upacâra Āme Karibu Ehi Hîngimâ
Naraṇa Deba Na.... Ka Gale.

Kâkaḍâ Di 3 Na Talapa E Dine Ratha Upare Bâhuḍâ
Guṇḍîcâ Pâṅcadina Hoîlâ. E Dine Ditiśita Neṭṭi Karâna

169
On that day [July 12th 1753], Jagannatha Narayana Deva of Parlapatana (Paralakhemundi) had come together with his brother to see the return festival of the cars from the Gundica temple to the main temple. On his elephant there was a royal nagara drum... and also a flag-staff... and a royal seat. The elephant was placed in front of Jagannatha’s car and the two brothers ascended the ratha from the back of the elephant to have darshan. The presents offered by them were taken by the Daitapati priests. During the darshan of the Great Lord on the Nandighosa car a necklace fell from the holy body Lord. Narayan Deva asked to be given the necklace but in this moment all priests hid the necklace, gave him tulasi and prasada (offering) and sent [secretly] the divine necklace to the king. [On the next day] the cars reached the Lion’s Gate of the Temple towards the close of the night. Being dressed in royal robes, Narayana Deva and his brother sat on the ratha. In the same day all the priests... had a confidential discussion because of the darshan of the Raja of P. and

his brother] in full royal dress on the ratha and the possibility of their entering into the temple[in royal dress]. It was dawn before the discussion was over. Because these two people, while setting on the car, demanded to be allowed discharge the duties (upacara) of the King during the time of the ceremonial return [of the deities from the cars into the temple], this ceremony did not take place. Consequently the three incense offerings (dhupa) were performed on the car and Narayana Deva went away. [On the next day] the deities stayed on the cars..... After the three incense offering had been performed, the ceremonial return of the deities to his temple began at 10.30 in the night. Wearing a royal turban and a belt, Narayana Deva followed the Great Lord and walked majestically [into the temple].

But due to the passive resistance of the priests of Puri he did not succeed in his attempt to perform the royal ritual and failed to win the acceptance as the legitimate Gajapati king.

In order to legitimize their rule over their feudatories the Bhoi kings granted them some space in the ritual practice of lord Jagannatha. By and large, the royal visitors informed the Bhoi king of Khurda through their agents about their arrival at Puri and the Bhoi king then issued an order to his secretary to write a royal letter to the temple administrator, the temple scribe and all the servants of the Jagannatha temple at Puri (E Māhārājāṇka [Mukunda Deva] 17 Anka Bichā 9 Dine

---

83Hermann Kulke, *King and Cults, State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia*, p.79.
Srīpruṣottama Cautarā Tahasila Karanaku Cītāu Ākhāyā Pramaṇe Lekhilu.)

These services to Jagannatha were always rewarded according to the royal order with one or several pieces of cloth from the temple store (Ehāṅku Deulū Patanī Śādiṭte Baāmi Deba.)

Eminent visitors received valuable silk saris or stoles whereas other visitors had to remain content with pieces of cotton. Usually the visiting kings had to leave their royal insignia at the entrance of the temple. However, some kings enjoyed the privilege to enter with their royal insignia till the second gate of the temple.

Ramachandra Deva (1568-1600) issued an order to Sri Hansaballhabha, an officer of the temple to allow Upendra Bhupati Harichandan the king of Sukind to visit the temple with his royal insignia to perform the golden canopy service in the sanctum of lord Jagannatha (Srī Hansaballabha Hukum... Sukindā Upendra Bhupati Haricandaṅku Je Sunābendṇa Cāmara Sebā Āgyāṁ Hoile, Ehāṅku Bhandaṅru Sunābendṇa Cāmara Dei E Dwāraṭhāre E Sebā Khatāība, E Beḍā Bhitaraku Masāla Gale Aṭaka Na Kari.)

Mukunda Deva (1657-1689) issued a royal letter in favour the king of Badakhemundi of south Orissa as follows:

E Nimante Paṭanāeku Ciṭāupaiṭhi. Srījaṅgannātha Śarana
Srīcandana Māhāpātraṅku Ciṭāu Mesa 82 Dina. Rayā Nilakanṭha
Deba Ye Jarasanaku Gale. Ehāṅka Saṅgate Paramāṇanda
Paṭanāekanku Piṭhāā Delu. E Thāiṁ Ehāṅku Jarasana Karāiīb.
Ehāṅka Pālenkī Chatī Kāhält Caara Mairajhula Khanḍā Yamadāda

84 Chamu Cītau. Quoted by K. N. Mahapatra, Khurda Itihasa, Appendix 2, p.254.
85 Ibid.
86 While the feudatory of Ghumsur received a ‘Kenduali Pata Rangina Sadi’, Paramahansa Astagrasi Gosai one monk received a ‘Khandua Sadi’ from the temple store of Puri. For more detail see Chamu Cītau. Quoted by K. N. Mahapatra, Khurda Itihasa, Appendix 2, pp. 258-259.
Translated by Kulke as follows:

for this purpose the duty of Pattanaika [an officer of the Khurda Raja] is stated. Let Sri Jagannatha protect [you all. This ] letter is to Sri Candana Mahaputra on the 12th day of Mesha. Raja Nilakantha Deva [of Badakhemundi] has gone [to Puri] for darsan. We sent Paramananda Patanaika along with him. He [Paramananda] will stay [with him] and make him perform the darsan. The palanquin, the royal umbrella (cati), trumpet (kahali), a fan (camara) made of peacock feathers (maira jhula), and the sword and dagger [of the Raja] will be kept in a place near the Lion’s Gate. He will be allowed to take his big fan (tarasa) and other necessary articles [of prestige] with him. After being carried over the seven steps of the batadvara of the Jaganmohana, all this will be kept near the Jaya Vijaya gate [inside the temple compound]. He will perform

worship at the Jaya Vijaya gate. Entering [the sanctum sanctorum] he will have darsan. Then he will perform the golden *camara seba* in the anasara pindi[mandapa]. After this he will come through the inner southern gate and after having had darsan of the *parsa devatas*, he will go [out] through the lion’s gate. Having a vermillion mark (*sindura*) he will have darsan. He is allowed to go with torches of leaves (*patra masala*) up to the Jaya Vijaya gate of the Jagamohana. The order (*talapa*) [was executed] on the 19th day of Mesha. It is reported by Paramananda Patanaika that Nilakantha Deva, the raja of Badakhemndi, was offered a sari, that is, one piece of silk (*pata*) *khandua* called *cauka naika*.89

In the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century when the Bhoi gradually lost their monopoly over the cult of Jagannatha due to the rapid invasion of the Mughal and Maratha Subahdars, they share their own state cult with their feudatories:

Rajas and chiefs who came for a view of Lord Jagannatha were granted special privileges during their visit of the temple. . . . the pharakara-seba, the body guard service, a special privilege granted to the Rajas of Banpur. Another service granted to feudatory rajas of Orissa was the churi-kanda-seba, the sword and dagger service of the Lord, which was the special privilege of the Rajas of Baramaba and Ranpur. The highest privilege granted to feudatory rajas was the appointment as administrator (*pariksa*) of the Jagannatha Temple at

---

Puri (Athagarh and Banki) and great administrator (*bada pariksa*) of the temple to the feudatory raja of Nayagarh.  

They issued royal letters to the administrator of the Jagannatha temple which announced the visit of a feudatory to Puri who applied for special privileges during his visit. Maximum numbers of royal letters were issued by Ramachandra Deva II and his son Birakishore Deva to the chief administrator of the Jagannatha temple in favour of their feudatories to grant them special privilege in the cult.  

In order to prevent the Muslim Governor to control the cult of Jagannatha and to win the support of his feudatories through ritual recognition in the cult of Jagannatha, Ramachandra Deva II issued a royal letter to his feudatories, Tigiria (*Tigirīā Mānadāṭānka Ye Parameśwara Maṇohichatra Achi... E Bāhāre Rahanī Ādhi Upādhi Madhya Ye Hoiba*), Athagada (*Āthagāda Māradāṭhāre Parameśwara Bije Karithibe... Khadu Noli Pāilā*), Dharakota (*Dharakoṭā Yāe Śīṅgha Daraśanaku Āile, Āpaṇā Yapi Mātare Pindhā Gochādi Hoi Śīṅghāsana Tale Daraśana Kale*), and Khandapara (*Khaṇḍipāḍā Madrarāja Bhramarabara Rāye Caṃṭra Sebā Khaṭībā Nimante Āṇjā Delu*) to share in the cult.  

All the kings were allowed to perform special rituals such as golden canopy service in the sanctum of lord Jagannatha and they received a sacred turban as a token of their acknowledgement. When the kingdom of Khurda faced

---


91 Out of the 14 royal letters of Ramachandra Deva 11 were dated 1733 when he faced the invasion of the Mughals and connected with the car festival. Out of the 34 letters issued by Birakishore Deva 24 dated back to 1742-1751, the period of active invasion of Marathas into Orissa. For more detail see Herman Kulke, “The Struggle Between the Rajas of Khurda And the Muslim Subahdars of Cuttack for Dominance of the Jagannatha Temple”, in A. Eschmann, H. Kulke, G.C. Tripathi (eds.), *The Cult of Jagannath And The Regional Tradition of Orissa*, pp. 339-340.

active invasions of the Marathas between 1742 and 1751, Birakishore Deva granted special privileges to fifteen feudatory states in the cult of Jagannatha. He bestowed the title of Harichandan Jagadeva upon the king of Athagarh during his visit to Puri. 93 In 1746 he issued a letter to him as follows:

Being merciful, we bestow on you the title of Harichandan Jagadeva and sanction to use vehicles run by a pair of horses along with a turban in which an elephants emblem made of silver is enshrined. Thou shall remain forever loyal at our feet with care. We have given necessary order to Balyarsimha, the manager of the temple of Sri Jagannatha, to make adequate arrangement for your darsana in the temple. You may perform the offering to the deities as you might desire by presenting any property you may like. 94

In 1747, the king of Athagarh was appointed as superintendent of the temple of Jagannatha and confirmed by a royal letter by Birakishore Deva:

as you have been engaged in a very difficult task in our favour, Bakhshi Hamir Khan has been sent to Banpur. You should join him and help him to accomplish the work entrusted to him on our behalf. Showing favour to you, we have appointed you as the Pariksha (superintendent) of the temple of Sir Jagannatha. You should maintain the services of the gods carefully and in a proper manner. 95

---

93 G. Chaudhary, Narasingapur Itihasa (in Oriya), Orissa State Museum, Acc no. OH-30, p. 23.
95 Ibid.
The Maratha who overthrew the Bhoi also realised the importance of the cult of Jagannatha. When they were planning to conquer Orissa one officer of the Maratha army sent a letter to the priests of Puri which was as follows:

_Bīraķisoradevamkara Mīna 18 Dīnetā Śrī Bāhāḍura Khāṇī

Jīnmkara Śrī Jagannāthā Mahāprabhunākara Samasta Sevaka


Rāja Ṛaghuji Miṭa Habibulā Khāṇī Ghodāre Aile. Āmbhe

Phulijharīṭhāre Mulākāta Kalu. Tāṅka Daśapallā Simāre Kari

Baḍaāmbi Āṭhagaḍa Simāre Gheni Kaṭaka Gāluṇ. Parameśwara

Sebā Karuthiba. Āmbhe Eṭhāre Thibāru Odīśā Sarahadaku Na

Yivāra Jāṅiba._

Translated in English by P. Acharya:

dated 18th Mina of the reign of Virakisoradeva is written by Badhur Khan to all the servants of Jagannatha Mahaprabhu at Puri from Padamala in Narasinghapura. Raja Raghujśi and Mir Habibullah Khan came on horseback. I met them at Phuljhar and made them to cross (the river Mahanadi) at Belpada in Dasapalla and I am on the way to Cuttack with them via. Bada-ambi in Athagarh. Please do regularly the worship of the god. As I am here, they will not enter Orissa.

[sic.]_

Thus, the cult became an integral part of the Bhoi legitimacy over Khurda.

---
