CHAPTER- V

SAIVISM
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ŚAIVISM

Śaivism is one of the oldest religious systems of India and its origin can be traced back to the Indus Valley civilisation\(^1\). The archaeological findings of Harappā and Mahenjodāro clearly reveal that Śiva was worshipped both in phallic and anthropomorphic forms. A large number of stone pieces resembling the Phallus have been discovered\(^2\). The finding of the figure of a male god with three faces, with horn head dress, sitting crossed legged in a yogic posture surrounded by animals like buffalo, rhinoceros, deer, tigers etc. This figure has been identified with that of Śiva; Trimukha (three faced), Paśupati (lord of animals) and Mahāyogin. The non-Āryan God Śiva during Indus Valley civilisation has been identified with Rudra Śiva\(^3\) of the Āryans. In the Vedic period Śiva was worshipped in the form of Rudra who is described in the Rig Veda as a terrible God (Ugra) whose wrath could be appeased by prayer, praise and offerings\(^4\). In the Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad\(^5\) Śiva is regarded as supreme God (Mahādeva). The Kena Upaniṣad\(^6\) refers to the name of the Goddess Umā-Haimāvalī, who became the consort of Śiva. The Rāmāyaṇa\(^7\) mentions “Śītikaṇṭha, Mahādeva, Rudra, Trayambaka, Paśupati, Śaṅkara” as the name of Śiva. In the Mahābhārata, Śiva is described as snake
wearer and club bearer with many forms who bears a trident in his hand and who has a bull as his ensign. The text like Harivamśa mentions the names of eleven Rudras – Hara, Vahurupa, Trayambaka, Aparājita, Vrkapi, Śambhu, Kāpārdina, Raibata, Mrigavyādha, Sarpa and Kāpālin. The Matsya Purāṇa also refers to the names of eleven Rudras – Ajaikapada, Ahirbudhya, Virupākṣa, Raivata, Hara, Vahurupa, Trayambaka, Savitra, Jayanta, Pināka, Aparājīta. The Vāyu Purāṇa described Śiva as the lord of the Rudras. In course of time Rudra grew in importance bearing the feature of Śiva. The Purāṇas like Śiva Purāṇa, Skanda Purāṇa, Liṅga Purāṇa, Kālikā Purāṇa, Vāyu Purāṇa etc. coined interesting legends to highlight the importance of Śiva and his worship.

Historically, the existence of Śaivism may be traced as early as the third century B.C. Megasthenes, the Greek ambassadors to the court of Chandragupta Maurya in the 3rd century B.C. gives the name of two deities, i.e. Herakles and Dionysus who has been identified Vāsudeva-Kriṣṇa and Śiva respectively. The Mahābhāṣya of Pāṇijnali, 2nd century B.C. refers to Śiva Bhāgavata with trident as the emblem. Thus it indicates the popularity of the Śiva worship in pre-Christian era. The earliest coins bearing the image of Śiva with trident in hand on the obverse and his bull on the reverse belonged to the Kuṣāṇas of the 1st century A.D. Lakulīśa, the founder of the Pāśupata sect rose to
prominence by this time in western India. He is regarded as the last incarnation of Lord Śiva. The Mathurā pillar inscription of Chandragupta II of Gupta dynasty mentions the name of Uditācārya who was the tenth Guru after Kauśika, direct disciple of Lakulīśa. The followers of Pāśupata school of Śaivism do not believe in the personal attributes of Śiva. Probably they worship Śiva only in his phallic form. Mattamayūra, another important sect of Śaivism flourished in Haihaya king Tripūrī. This sect popularized the worship of Śiva with crescent moon, matted hair, river Gahgā, garland of skulls etc.

Thus, in view of the above references, we come to conclude that Śaivism got wide acceptance all over India and became the religion of the masses during the period of our study.

ŚAIVISM IN ODISHA

Śaivism is one of the oldest religions of Odisha. Lord Śiva is considered as a great God or “Devādhīdeva Mahādeva” which means the God of the Gods. The Hāṭhigumpha inscription of Khāravela, Kuṣāṇa coins discovered from Śiśupālgarh near Bhubaneswar as well as Bhadrak inscription of Mahārājā Gaṇa provides some stray reference to the prevalence of Śaivism in Odisha since the first century B.C. But its history can be traced back to the 4th/5th century A.D. This fact is proved by
the Āsanpat stone inscription\textsuperscript{20} of 4\textsuperscript{th} century A.D. which is the earliest known epigraphic evidence of Śiva worship in Odisha.

The rise and growth of Śaivism in Odisha can be known from the Mauryan period on the basis of epigraphic & literary evidences\textsuperscript{21}. Before the Kaliṅga war (261 B.C.), Aśoka was a votary of traditional Brāhmaṇical religion and according to Kalhana his favorite deity was Śiva\textsuperscript{22}. Aśoka in the Rock Edict XIII\textsuperscript{23} has expressed his remorse and regret at the sad plight of the innocent Śramaṇas and Brāhmaṇas caused by the Kaliṅga war. It seems that Śiva being the prominent Vedic God, his worship must have prevailed among the Brāhmaṇas of the pre-Aśokan period.

In the post-Aśokan period, Khāravela the greatest ruler of the Chedi dynasty (1\textsuperscript{st} century B.C.) wanted to please his subjects whom there were large number of forest tribes who were traditionally the worshippers of Śiva. It is mentioned in the Hāthigumpha inscription\textsuperscript{24} that Khāravela patronised both orthodox Jaina school and heterodox Brāhmaṇical School with the construction of temples of Brāhmaṇical gods and goddesses. It seems that Śaivism must have received due patronage from Khāravela and Śiva was enshrined inside the religious compounds in phallic form during this period.

In the first century A.D., Śaivism must have developed in a sound condition but there is scarcity of epigraphic sources to know about the
religious condition of Odisha during this period. The earliest Odishan coins containing the image of Śiva and bull, are the Kuśāṇa coins of Haviṣka belonging to 2nd century A.D. The figure of four-armed Śiva has been found on the coins of Kaniṣka (Plate No.118). We also find the figures of phallic Śiva on the coins of Haviṣka. It is known from the study of these numismatic evidences that the Kuśāṇas were the worshippers of Lord Śiva and during this period Śiva was worshipped both in phallic and anthropomorphous forms in Odisha.

Similarly, under the leadership of Sātakarni of Sātavāhana dynasty had also a great influence on Kaliṅga territory during this period. The sculpture, art and paintings of the Uttareśvara Śiva temple at Bhubaneswar reveal the influence of their artistic style on the growth of Śaivism in Odisha in the 2nd century A.D.

The 3rd century A.D. is considered as the dark period so far as political and cultural history of Odisha is concerned. However, the Bhadrak stone inscription of Mahārājā Gaṇa, palaeographically assigned to 3rd century A.D. provides some stray references about the religious history of Odisha. This inscription reveals that Mahārājā Gaṇa who was a patron of Brāhmaṇical form of Hinduism established the images of three Brāhmaṇical Gods (Trisrāḥ deva Pratimāha Utsargitah). We are inclined to believe that one of the images was dedicated in the
name of Lord Śiva as the expression “Trisrah Devapratimāha” may possibly refer to the Brāhmaṇical Trinity i.e. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

ŚAIVISM AS GLEANED FROM INSCRIPTIONS

In Odisha, we have a number of inscriptions in the form of copper plate grants issued by the royal dynasties and their feudatories right from the Māṭharas (350 A.D.) to the end of the Somavarmiśis (1110 A.D.) throwing light on the political and cultural history of Odisha. Many inscriptions are religious grants made in favour of priests and temples which supply us information about Śaivism in Odisha during the period under study.

The Māṭharas (c. 350 A.D. - 500 A.D.)

The epigraphic evidences reveal that the Māṭharas of Kaliṅga championed the cause of Brāhmaṇical Hinduism and were the followers of Vaiṣṇavism. Though the Māṭharas had embraced Vaiṣṇavism as their personal religion, they had not dislike for Śaivism rather they allowed Śaivism to prosper in their territory along with Vaiṣṇavism31.

The Vāśiṣṭhas

The Vāśiṣṭha, who simultaneously rose into prominence with the Māṭharas in Kaliṅga, are known to have patronized Śaivism as their
personal faith and adopted the Śaivite epithets like *Parama-Maheśvara*. In the Srunga-varapukota plates\textsuperscript{32} issued from Piṣṭāpura (modern Piṭhāpura in the East Godāvari district, Andra Pradesh), the reigning king Mahārāja Prabhāṇjanavarman and grandson of Gūṇavarman of Vāśiṣṭha family, lines 8-12 refer to the grant of the village Kindeppa, situated in the viṣaya of Tellavali, for the sake of increasing the religious merit by the king, in favour of the Brahmačārin Māṭrśarman of the Kauśika gotra, a student of Taitriya (Śākhā) and a Bhogika of Acaṇṭapura by making it a permanent agrahāra.

Again, in the Siripuram copper plate\textsuperscript{33} charter issued from Devapura, the reigning king Kaliṅgādhipati Śrī-Anantavarman has been described as a devotee of Maheśvara (Śiva). This charter refers to the grant of the village Tontāpura in favour of 18 brāhmaṇas belonging to the Ātriya gotra on the full moon day in the month of Māgha. Among those Brāhmaṇas some belonged to the Pāśupata school of Śaivism. It seems that the Pāśupata school of Śaivism was very popular in Kaliṅga during the period of the Vāśiṣṭhas.

The Nāgas

The Nāgas of Northern Odisha also seems to have patronized Śaivism in the 4\textsuperscript{th} century A.D. The Āsanpat stone inscription\textsuperscript{34} is the
earliest known epigraphic evidence indicating Śiva worship in Odisha. It reveals that Satrubhaṇja, the Nāga king was an ardent devotee of Lord Śiva. In the said inscription we find the image of Naṭarāja Śiva (Plate No.4) with all his personal attributes. This image is a naked Urdhaliṅga Śiva with eight hands. Two upper hands hold a snake, two hands play on the lute, one hand is in the Varada-mudrā and the other three hands hold Trīśula, Akṣanālā and Dambaru. Śiva is seen with his two attendants Nandi and Bhṛktuṭi. The image depicts the Tāṇḍava pose of Lord Śiva. Naṭarāja is usually expected to dance over the prostrate body of an “apasmāra puruṣa” but here the image has followed the local style of “tāṇḍava” accompanied by a “Vīṇā”. The above references indicate that Śaiva Siddhānta (Mattamayūra) school of Śaivism was very popular in Northern Odisha during the reign of the Nāgas in the 4th century A.D.

The Nalas

Śaivism received a great force to flourish under the royal patronage of the Nalas in South Kośala. The early Nala rulers like Vṛṣadhvaja35, Varāhrāja36, Bhavadattavarman37 and Arthapatiṛāja38 all were ardent votaries of Maheśvara (Lord Śiva).

It is known from Keśarībeḍā copper plate charter39 that Arthapatiṛāja of Nala dynasty has been described as one who dedicated
his kingdom and wealth to God Śiva and Mahāsenā (Skanda) (Mahā Mahā Mahesvara Mahasenāśrita rājya-vibhavas). Lines 1-6 refers to the grant of the village Keśalaka in favour of the Brāhmaṇas named Durgārya, Ravirārya and Ravidattārya of the Kautsa gotra. It is mentioned in the Riṭhāpur plates⁴⁰ that Mahārāja Bhavadattavarman of Nala dynasty who acquired the kingdom through the grace of the gods Maheśvara (Śiva) and Mahāsena (Kārttikeya) (Mahāmaheśvara Mahāsenāśrita rājya vibhavas).

The Śaiva Ācārya of Pāśupata School who came to South Kośala and Kaliṅga from the north after Samudragupta’s South Indian campaign seems to have exerted great influence on the early Nala kings who embraced Śaivism as their personal faith and granted villages to Śaiva Ācāryas of the Lakulīsa-Pāśupata cult.

The Eastern Gaṅgas / Early Gaṅgas

The Eastern Gaṅgas or the Early Gaṅgas, who established their political power over Kaliṅga in 498 A.D. were the devout worshippers of Lord Śiva and adopted Śaivite epithets like Parama Maheśvara. Gokarṇeśvara was their tutelary deity whom they installed on the crest of the mount Mahendra.
The Jirjingi copper plate charter\textsuperscript{41} of Indravarman I dated in the Gaṅga Year-39 (537 A.D.) declares that the king had obtained virtue by his constant obeisance to God Parameśvara, who is the creator, preserver and destroyer of the entire world.

According to Ponnuturu copper plate charter\textsuperscript{42}, Sāmantavarman worshipped Gokarṇeśvara as Śaśāṅkaśekhara, Sacharācharaguru and the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe.

In the Narasiṅgapālli copper plate charter\textsuperscript{43} dated in the Gaṅga Year-79 (577 A.D.) Hastivarman has been described himself as \textit{Paramamaheśvara}, a devotee at the feet of the God Gokarṇasvāmin. This charter refers to the grant of a village named Rohaṇaki in the viṣaya of Varāhavartani in favour of the worship of the God Nārāyaṇa. Ulam copper plate charter\textsuperscript{44} of Hastivarman dated in the Gaṅga year-80 (578 A.D.) refers to the grant of a village named Honḍevaka and he has been described as a devout worshipper of Maheśvara (Śiva) and endowed with the epithets \textit{Raṇabhita} and \textit{Rājāśirha}.

In the Sāntabommāli copper plate charter\textsuperscript{45} dated in Gaṅga year-87 (585 A.D.), the reigning king Indravarman II of Gaṅga dynasty has been described as a devout worshipper of God Rāmeśvara-bhaṭṭāraka. The charter refers to the grant of a land for meeting the expenses of
offering regular worship and repairing the temple of God Rāmeśvara- 
braṭṭāraka situated in Dantayabhagu (village Haribhaṭṭāraka Kṣetra).

It is known from the Achutapuram copper plate charter\textsuperscript{46} dated in 
the Gaṅga year 87 (585 A.D.) that the reigning king Indravarman II of 
Gaṅga dynasty has been described as a devout worshipper of Maheśvara 
and also the worshipper at the feet of the God Gokarṇeśvara (Śiva). King 
Indravarman II in his Pāralākhimeḍi copper plate charter\textsuperscript{47} dated in the 
Gaṅga year 91 (589 A.D.), who has been described himself as a devout 
worshipper of Maheśvara (Śiva). He had acquired the whole of Kaliṅga by 
performing obeisance to the God Gokarṇāṃsāvāmi (Śiva) enshrined on the 
peak of the Mahendra Mountain.

In the Chicacole copper plate charter\textsuperscript{48} dated in the Gaṅga Year 
128 (626 A.D.), the reigning king Indravarman III of Gaṅga family has 
been described as Parama-Maheśvara, devout worshipper of Lord Śiva. 
Again Indravarman III has been described as Parama-Maheśvara, a 
devout worshipper of God Maheśvara (Śiva) and is a devotee at the lotus 
feet of the God Gokarṇāsvāmin in the Andhavarm copper plate charter\textsuperscript{49} 
dated in the Gaṅga year 133 (631 A.D.). The charter refers to the grant of 
the village Tōṭavāṭaka in favour of the Brāhmanaś of different gotra.

The Chicacole copper plate charter\textsuperscript{50} of king Indravarman III dated 
in the Gaṅga Year 146 (644 A.D.) was issued by the king himself,
described as *Parama-Maheśvara*, recording the grant of the village Tālamula attached to Korosotaka-Pañcali in favour of two Brāhmaṇas namely Skandaśarman and Lalitaśarman of the Kautsa gotra. Further the reigning king Indravarman III has also been described himself as *ParamaMaheśvara* and the glorious son of Dānarnava of the Gaṅga family in the Tekkāli copper plate charter dated in the Gaṅga year 154 (652 A.D.). The charter refers to the grant of a land situated in the village Turīgannā attached to the viṣaya of Rūpyavati in favour of a Brāhmaṇa named Skandaśarman of Sāndilya gotra.

It is known from the Chicācole copper plate charter dated in the Gaṅga Year 183 (681 A.D.) that Maharaja Devendravarman I, son of Guṇāṇava of the Gaṅga family has been described as *Parama-Maheśvara* and has acquired the sovereignty of the whole of the kingdom of Kaliṅga. The charter refers to the grant of village Popparṅika (present village of Voppangi in the Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh). The other copper plate charters like Tirliṅgi copper plate dated in the Gaṅga Year 192 (690 A.D.), Siddhatam copper plate charter dated in the Gaṅga Year 195 (693 A.D.) refers to the reigning king named Devendravarman I who described himself as *Parama-Maheśvara* and acquired the sovereignty of the whole of the kingdom of Kaliṅga.

211
Anantavarman I in his Andhavaram copper plate charter dated in the Gaṅga Year 216 (714 A.D.) described himself as a devout worshipper of Maheśvara (Śiva). The charter records the grant of the village Kālamandambi-Śakuna attached to Varāhavartani in favour of Brāhmaṇa resident of Ānandapura belonging to various gotras.

Devendravarman III, son of Rājendravarman I of Gaṅga dynasty in his Bangalore copper plate charter described himself as Parama-Maheśvara and donated a land in the village Siddhata situated in Varāhavartini for the worship of Parameśvara Paramabhattāraka in favour of the preceptor (guru) named Vinitaśasi of Śrīparvata. Further, another copper plate of the same ruler i.e. Maheśvaravāta copper plate charter contains the reference to Gokaneśvara (Śiva). In this charter king Devendravarman III has been described himself as Parameśvara by granting a village called Maheśvaravāṭagrāma attached to the viṣaya of Bhokara-bhoga in favour of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa of Kāśyapa gotra.

The Gaṅga rulers like Rājendravarman II, Devendravarman, Satyavarman, Anantavarman, Bhupendravarman calls themselves as a devout worshippers of Śiva as revealed from their copper plate charters like Dantapura copper plate charter of Rājendravarman dated in the Gaṅga Year 338 (836 A.D.), Chicācole copper plate of Devendravarman dated in the Gaṅga Year 351 (849 A.D.), Chicācole copper plate charter.
of Satyavarman dated in the Gaṅga Year 351 (849 A.D.), Chicācole copper plate charter61 of Anantavarman, Māṇḍāśā copper plate charter62 of the time of Anantavarman and Nāpitavatākaka copper plate charter63 of Devendravarman. Thus, during the rule of the Eastern Gaṅgas Śaivism had become a popular religion and spread to almost all parts of the Kaliṅga territory. A large number of Śaiva temples were constructed all over the country under the patronage of the Gaṅga kings. The Śaiva temples like Gokarnēśvara (Plate No.48), Madhukeśvara, Jogeśvara Bhaṭṭāraka, Rāmeśvara Bhaṭṭāraka, Mukhaliṅgeśvara, Someśvara etc. constructed over the extensive Gaṅga territory.

The Śailodbhavas

The Śailodbhavas rose to power in the beginning of 6th century A.D. in Koṅgoda Maṇḍala corresponding to some portions of modern Gaṅjām and Puri districts of Odisha64. Almost all rulers of this dynasty were devout worshippers of Lord Śiva as known from their copper plate charters. With the rise of the Śailodbhavas of Koṅgoda, Śaivism not only received the royal patronage but it also became widely popular throughout the length and breadth of their kingdom.

Pulindasena65, the illustrious tribal Chief of Kaliṅga is known to have worshipped Svyambhu Śiva on the submit of Mahendragiri which is
reputed in the purāṇas as one of the seven Kulagiris of Bhāratavarṣa. In the verses 3-12 of the Buguḍā copper plate charter of Mādhavaraman⁶⁶, it is recorded that on the submit of Mahendragiri Pulindasena worshipped the Lord Śiva with his matter hair, besmeared with ashes and associated with Gaṅgā and the crescent moon on his head, embracing Pārvatī in the āliṅgana pose. This is the earliest reference to the worship of Śiva in the form of Umā-Maheśvara in Odisha. In the lines 9 & 10 of the Cuttack Museum charter of Mādhavaraman⁶⁷ of the same dynasty, it is known that Pulindasena have offered his worship to Bhagavān Śambhu who responded to the prayer of his devotees. Again in the line-12 of the Buguḍā plate, it is narrated that Pulindasena controlled his chitta and focused all his inner qualities (Guṇa) in his sincere and serious worship. Chitta and Guṇa are two technical terms as used by the Śaivite teachers of the Mattamayūra sect of Śaivism.

It is known from the Khaṇḍipada Nuāpalli plates⁶⁸ that Śrī Charamparāja, the donor of the plates was a devout worshipper of Lord Śiva. He praises Trilochana Śiva whose head is decorated with the flowers like Kamala and Kumuda and whose matted hair is adorned with the shining gems of the serpent tied to it.

In the Gaṅjām copper plate grant⁶⁹, Mādhavarāja II describes himself as a Parama Brāhmaṇya and devotee at the feet of the blessed
Lord of the three worlds (namely Śiva) who is the cause of existence, creation and destruction, whose arms are placed on the hump of the great bull namely (Nandi) and on the pillow of a couch and whose matted hair is illuminated by the crescent of the moon. We learn from the Chandreha Inscription of Prabodhaśiva⁷⁰ that Lord Śiva is to be worshipped according to the Mattamayūra cult, with all the personal attributes which are mentioned in the Gañjām and Bugudā copper plate charters of Mādhavarāja II.

In the Khurda copper plate grant⁷¹, Mādhavarāja II describes himself as devout worshipper of Mahēśvara (Bhagavāna Mahēśvara Caranā Yugalaika Saranyah). He is also known to have performed several Vedic sacrifices like Vājapeya and Aśvamedha⁷² in course of which he seems to have offered oblations to Lord Śiva. Mādhyamarāja, the son and successor of Mādhavarāja describes himself as a devotee of the great Lord of the divines whose inevitable luster is the root cause of the world’s rise, existence and decay⁷³. The same Lord Śiva is described as both Vyakta and Avyakta in the Bāṇapur copper plate charters⁷⁴. In the verse-2 of the Bāṇapur copper plate charters Mādhyamarāja I, Nilakaňţha Śiva is represented as greater than the sky and superior to the lord of immortal divine beings, winner of powerful demons, more luminous than the sun, more pleasant than moon and as the ruler of the three worlds⁷⁵.
Lines 38-50 of the Pārikud copper plate charters⁷⁶ of Mādhyamarāja dated in the 26 regnal year deal with the grant of land and credit the king himself with the performance of the Vājapeya and Aśvamedha sacrifices, who assumed the title of Parama-Maheśvara and who was ornament of the family of Śailodbhava.

Dharmaraja, son of Mādhyamarāja in his Raṇapur plates⁷⁷, regnal year 3 (lines 39-51), Nivina copper plate grant⁷⁸, regnal year-9 (lines 34-37), Bāṇapur grant⁷⁹ (lines 36-46), Puri copper plate grant⁸⁰, regnal year-12 (lines 40-55), Chandeśvara plates⁸¹, regnal year-18 (lines 21-23) has been described as Parama-Maheśvara, a devout worshipper of God Śiva and a devotee at the feet of his parents. He is also described as an ornament of the family of Śailodbhava and the performer of the Aśvamedha and Vājapeya sacrifice.

During the time of the Śailodbhavas several independent kings ruled over different parts of north Odisha. Most of the rulers had embraced Śaivism and patronised its cause. According to the Kāṇasa plate dated in Gupta Era 280 (600 A.D.), Lokavigraha is known to have made rich endowments for the temple of Maṇināgeśvara Bhaṭṭāraka seems to have ideological affinity with that of Lakṣeśvara installed in the monastery of Maṇibhadra⁸² of the time of Śatrubhaṇija. We further learn from the Pāṭiākelā grant⁸³ that in the Samvat 283 (603 A.D.)
Śambhuyasa, the overlord of Śivarāja of Dakṣiṇa Tosāli, was a devout worshipper of Śiva. It is known from the Olāising plate that Mahāpratihara Mahāsāmanta Bhanu-vardhana during that period donated richly for the temple of Maṇināgeśvara Bhaṭṭāraka.

Under the royal patronage of the Śailodbhavas a number of temples dedicated to Lord Śiva sprang up in different part of their territory. The early Śiva temples of Bhubanēśvara like Śatrughaneśvara, Bharateśvara, Laxmanēśvara and Svarṇajaleśvara have been ascribed to the Śailodbhava period. Scholars are of opinion that the Gokarṇēśvara Śiva temple (Plate No.48) situated on the submit of the Mahendragiri was constructed during the time of the Śailodbhavas. Thus the rule of the Śailodbhavas opened a brilliant epoch in the history of Śaivism in Odisha.

The Bhaumakaras

In the 2nd quarter of the eighth century A.D. a new dynasty called the Bhaumakara rose to power in Toṣāli. The epigraphic records of the Bhaumakaras provide us with interesting piece of information about their religious learning towards Buddhism, Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism.

Śaivism, however suffered a great set back in Odisha in the eighth century A.D. because of the patronage of the early Bhaumakaras to Buddhism. But the Śaivite activities did not completely disappear from
Odisha, as Śaivism has got support from some members of the Bhauma royal family. It is interesting to note that in spite of the rise of Buddhism in Odisha during that period the Śaivite teachers continued to popularise their cult. Thus we find that although Śubhākaradeva I was a devout worshipper of Buddha, his queen Mādhavidevi under the influence of the Śaivite teachers extended her patronage for the construction of the temple of Mādhaveśvara Śiva and appointed a Śaivacārya to conduct the worship. This is known to us from an inscription engraved in the temple of Hameseśvara at Jāipur, not far from the temple of Virajā and Trilochnā. The invocatory verses of the verses pays symbolical obeisance to Ālī and seek the blessing of Lord Śiva. The Panegyrist of the inscription compares the temple of Mādhaveśvara with Śiva's residence on the mount Kailāsa, which was dedicated for the enshrinement of the God 'Bhava' (Śrīmān Bhāvasya Ālaya). Obviously in order to perpetuate the memory of her name she installed the Liṅga called Mādhaveśvara inside the sanctum in the capital of the territory.

According to P. Mukharji, Saṅkarācārya who visited Puri in the 9th century A.D. was responsible for the introduction of the Śaivite form of worship in the Jagannāth Temple. His teaching "undoubtedly stimulated the growth of Śaivism" and might have exercised tremendous influence on the later Bhauma rulers, who embraced Śaivism. Śivakara II in his
Chaurāsi grant dated in the 12 regnal year styled himself as Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājadhīrāja and Parameśvara in place of Parama Saugata, although he has been refereed to as Parama Saugata in the Teruṇḍiā plates.

Śāntikaradeva I, the successor of Śivakara II also gave up the epithet Parama Saugata as recorded in the Ganeśa Gumphā and Dhauli cave inscription. We learn from the said epigraphs that Bhimata, son of Nannata, constructed an image of Ganeśa in the Ḫaṇḍagiri and excavated a cave at Dhauli probably for the meditation of the Śaiva ascetics.

Subhakaradeva II in his Teruṇḍiā plate (Line 8-13) has been described as Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājadhīrāja, Parameśvara and a Paramasaugata. He patronized both Śaivism and Buddhism as reflected in the copper plate charter.

Subhakaradeva III has been endowed with the titles of Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājadhīrāja and Parameśvara in the lines 9-14 of the Hindol plate. We further observe in lines 30-32 of the same plate the reigning king would continue to exist as long as the rays of the moon issue from the head of god Śiva who holds the crescent on his head. In the lines 15-25 of the same plate reveals that one Pulindarāja has built the temple of Pulindeśvara in the Bhauma territory. He seems to be a
tribal Chief of Mahendragiri, distantly associated with Pulindasena, the progenitor of the Šailodbhava family. We know from the Šailodbhava charter that Pulindasena had worshipped Svayambhu-Śiva on the submit of Mahendragiri and all the Šailodbhava monarchy of Koṅgoḍa were professed Śaivite. In fact, the Dharakote grants97 of Šubhākara III has registered the gift of a village in the Jayakaṭaka Viṣaya of Koṅgoḍa manḍala. Thus Šubhākara III must have come in touch with the cult which was initiated by the Šailodbhavas. Pulindarāja of the Hindol plate was obviously a tribal Chief who was recognized by Šubhākara III as a Mahārāja Mahāsāmanta.

At the request of Pulindarāja Šubhākara III donated the village Nadilo of Kanakavira Viṣaya of Utṭara Toṣāli for the establishment of the temple of Vyadhyanātha Bhaṭṭāraka inside the campus of the temple of Pulindaśvara built by Pulindarāja. This gift was meant for the offering of ablution, sandal-paste, flowers, lamp, incense, vali, charu of Vaidhyanātha Bhaṭṭāraka98 and also for the maintenance of the acāryas of the Śaivite order who were engaged in penance.

In the lines 30-31 of the Tālcher plate99 dated in Samvat 141, the reigning king Šubhākaradeva IV and the donor of the plate styled himself as Paramamaheśvara and Paramabhaṭṭāraka, a devotee at the feet of his parents.
Śivakaradeva III in his two Tālcher plates dated in Samvat 149 styled himself as Paramamaheśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārajādhirāja and Parameśvara and is described as a devotee at the feet of his parents.

The Bhauma queens like Dandimahādevī and Vakulamahādevī were a great devotee of Lord Śiva and adopted Śaivite titles.

The reigning queen Dandimahādevī in her Śantiragrāma grant, year 180 (lines 25-26) styled herself as Parama-Māheśvari, Paramabhaṭṭarikā and Mahārajādhirāja-Paramesvari. This grant refers to the grant of a village called Śantiragrāma together with another locality called Komyosāṅga situated in Paścima Kāṇḍa within the Viṣaya of Talamura in Dakṣiṇa Toṣāli in favour of Bhaṭṭa Mākyadeva, the son of Jālladeva and grandson of Puruṣottamadeva, who belonged to Bhāradvāga gotra.

In the lines 22-36 of Gaṇijām grant dated in the Bhauma Samvat 180, Dandaṃmahādevī the donor of the grant was a devout worshipper of Mahēśvara (Śiva) and assumed the titles as Paramamāheśvari, Paramabhaṭṭārikā and Mahārajādhirāja-Paramesvari. The charter refers to the grant of the village called Villagrāma (present Belagrama in the Athagarh taluk of the Gaṇijām district which is situated on the eastern side of river Baḍanai or the ancient Mahānādi) in favour of Dhavala of Viśvamitra gotra.
Another grant issued by her in the plate-B of Gaṅjam grant\textsuperscript{103} assumed herself the same titles as indicated in the plate-A of the grant. The grant refers to the village Garasāmbhā in favour of the Brāhmaṇa named Bhaṭṭaputra Puruṣottama of Kāśyapa gotra.

In the lines 24-25 of her Arabala Grant\textsuperscript{104}, year 183 styled herself as \textit{Paramamāheśvarī, Paramabhāttārikā and Mahārajadhīraja- Parameśvarī} and a devotee at the feet of her parents.

The Kumuraṅga plate\textsuperscript{105} of Daṇḍimahādevī (year, 187) has also indicated the title of "Parameśvarī" and "Paramamāheśvarī".

Vakulamahādevī, another reigning queen of Bhauma kingdom of Toṣāli was a great devotee of Śaivism as indicated in her grant\textsuperscript{106} dated in the Bhauma Samvat 204. In the verses 13-16 of the grant describing the reigning queen Vakulamahādevī as \textit{Paramamāheśvarī, Paramabhāttārikā} and \textit{Mahārajadhīraja Parameśvarī} and devoted at the feet of her parents.

From the above epigraphical sources it is indicated that the later Bhauma rulers like Śivakaradeva II, Śāntikaradeva I, Śubhākaradeva II, Śubhākaradeva III, Śubhākaradeva IV, Daṇḍimahādevī and Vakulamahādevī all professed Śaivism as their personal faith and adopted Śaivite titles. They also constructed a number of Śaiva temple through out their territory. Śaiva temples like the Śiśireśvara, Markaṇḍeśvara,
Tāleśvara, Uṭṭareśvara and even Paraśurāmeśvara (Plate No.45) were constructed during their rule.

In the Śaiva temples of Bhauma period there is a synthesis of thought of Lakulīśa-Pāśupata school, Mattamayūra School and tāntrik Buddhism on the face of sculptures. We find the representation of the figures of Lakulīśa in the panel of the temple of Bharateśvara¹⁰⁷ at Bhubaneśvara. According to K.C. Panigrahi the Lakulīśa images (Plate No.78) are modified form of Buddha in the Dharmacakra-Pravartana Mudrā. In the temple of Paraśurāmeśvara, we notice the representation of Lakulīśa¹⁰⁸ in two images on the front facade of Jagamohana of Paraśurāmeśvara temple; the other significant Śaivite sculptures are Nāṭarāja, Ardhanārīśvara (Plate No.79) and marriage of Śiva Parvati etc.

This archaeological evidence indicates that the followers of the Lakulīśa-Pāśupata school joined with the Śaiva Siddhānta school in Odishan Śaivism in 8th century A.D. and Lakulīśa was accepted by the Śaiva Āchārya of Mattamayūra cult (Śaiva Siddhānta) as an incarnation of Śiva.

In some of the Bhauma inscriptions we notice references to Kauśika gotra¹⁰⁹ associated with one of the four disciples of Lakulīśa.

The Bhairava cult (Tāntrik form of Śaivism also seems to have gained popularity under the patronage of the later Bhauma rulers. The Angul copper plate grant¹¹⁰ of Śaṅtikaradeva provides some information
with regard to this system of Tantra & Yoga, adopted by the Śaivites in Odisha. This grant is the earliest epigraph which refers to Ekāmra and Vindusarovara, as a centre of tantric Śaivism.

Feudatories of the Bhaumakaras

Some of the feudatories of the Bhaumakaras like the Bhaṇjjas of Khiṇjali and Khijiṅga maṇḍalas, the Śulkis of Kodālaka maṇḍala, the Tūṅgas of Yamagarta maṇḍala and the Nandodbhavas of Airāvatta maṇḍala extended their royal patronage to the growth and development of Śaivism in their respective territories.

The Śulkis, the feudatories of the Bhaumakaras, were ardent devotees of Śaivism. Though Stambheśvari was their tutelary deity, yet the rulers like Raṇastambha\textsuperscript{111}, Jayastambha\textsuperscript{112} and Kulastambha\textsuperscript{113} were all devoted worshippers of Maheśvara. Almost all the Śulki inscription beginning with an invocation to Śiva and the seal in it contains the figure of a bull. Raṇastambha in his Jayarām grant\textsuperscript{114} and Dheṅkānāl grant\textsuperscript{115} describes himself as a great devotee of Lord Śiva. He has assumed the title of \textit{Parama-maheśvara}. Kulastambha II was also a great devotee of Lord Śiva. He has assumed the title of \textit{Parama-Maheśvara} in his Dheṅkānāl grant\textsuperscript{116} and the Puri grant\textsuperscript{117}. Jayastambha was a great
patron of Śaivism like his predecessors. He also assumed the title of *Paramamaheśvara* in his three Dhenkānāl grants\(^{118}\).

The Tūṅgas of Yamagarta maṇḍala were the feudatories of the Bhaumakaras Vinitaturūga of this dynasty has been described as *Parama Maheśvara* in his Boṇāi\(^{119}\), Talcher\(^{120}\) and Khadga Prasād grants\(^{121}\). Besides, being the devout worshipper of Lord Śiva, Vinitaturūga was a great patron of Buddhism Gayāda Tuṅga, son of Salaṇa Tuṅga and grandson of Vinitaturūga in his Tālcher Grant No.1\(^{122}\) styled himself as *Paramamaheśvara* and a great devotee of Lord Śiva.

The Nandodbhavas of Airāvatta maṇḍala were also great devotees of Lord Śiva. The king like Devānandadeva in his Tālmaul copper plate charter\(^{123}\) describes himself as the devout worshipper of Maheśvara (Śiva). The Jurerpur copper plate charter\(^{124}\) informs us that Devānandadeva of Nandodbhava dynasty was a devout worshipper of the God Maheśvara.

Under the Bhaṅjas of Khiṅjali and Khijīṅga maṇḍalas, Śaivism gained much popularity along with Vaiṣṇavism in Odisha. In the copper plate inscription of Ranabhaṅja\(^{125}\), we find the emblem of a semi-full-blown lotus, a standing bull, a trident and crescent moon. The Bhaṅjas worshipped Bhairava, one of the eleven Rudras, under the influence of the Tāntrik form of Śaivism of Mattamayūra School. In the Sonepur
grant, Satrubhanjadeva was the first Bhanja king to invoke the grace of Bhairava (Tad Bhairavam Harapuh bhavataḥ prapatāh). Nettabhaṅja of Ghumsar region has invoked the grace of Sadāśiva decorated with matted hair, crescent moon, garland of skulls and the great serpent. After that the Bhaṅjas were the followers of Hari- Hara cult. The twin temple of Nilamādhava and Siddhēśvara at Gandhārdī (Plate No.51) in the district of Baud bear a testimony to the growth of the cult of Hari-Hara during the time of the Bhaṅjas.

The Somavāṁśīs – Golden Age of Šaivism

The Somavāṁśīs rose to prominence as a powerful ruling dynasty in South Kośala towards the close of the 7th century A.D. The Somavāṁśī rulers starting from Bālārjuna to Karnađevas were devout worshippers of Lord Śiva (Parama-Mahēśvara) and championed the cause of Šaivism in Odisha.

It is mentioned in the Senakapat inscription of the time of Śivagupta Bālārjuna enjoyed the epithet Parameśvara and had the Šaivite emblem of the bull on his seal. The inscription refers to one Durgarākṣita, who was a devoted servant of king Bālārjuna and devout worshipper of god Šambhu (Śiva) built a temple of Šambhu. The Sirpur inscription of Śivagupta Bālārjuna begins after paying obeisance to God Śiva, with an
invocatory verse in favour of Śambhu (Śiva). The Gandheśvara Temple inscription¹²⁹ (Plate No.6 to 11) of the time of Śivagupta Bālārjuna begins with the invocation to God Hara (Śiva) and records that one Jorggarāka instituted the offering of a garland of flower measuring a puruṣa in height for the worship of the God Gandharveśvara. Flowers for this purpose were to be supplied by all the garland makers residing at Navahatṭa as long as the moon, the sun and the stars exist.

Mahābhavagupta, the immediate successor of Bālārjuna is the donor of Kiserakellā charter also known as the Mahākośala Historical society plates¹³⁰. In this charter the reigning king Mahābhavaguptarājadeva who is described as Mahārājadhīrāja-Parameśvara-Paramabhattārka-Soma-Kula-Tilaka and Trikalirādhīpati. It refers to the grant of the village Liṅgira-grāma include in the Pirthurā-bhukti (modern Pithorā of Padampur sub-division of Bargarh district) in favour of a Brāhmaṇa named Bhatṭa, the son of Cakradhara of Kapiṣṭhala gotra.

Like his predecessors, Janamejaya I called himself Parama-Maheśvara in his Vakrāentuli grant¹³¹, Kalibhāna plates¹³², Pāṭnā plates¹³³, Sonepur plate¹³⁴ and Chaudwār plates¹³⁵, Gopālpur plates¹³⁶ and Gaitala plate¹³⁷. Under him although there was peaceful co-existence of the various religious sects Śiva occupied the prominent place in the
religious life of the people. In lines 30 & 31 of the Vakratentuli plate Aditya, Varuna, Visnu, Brahma, Soma and Hutashaana are shown as minor deities where as Sulapani is referred to as Bhagavan138. Probably, Sulapani disciple of Bhagavata Sri Pramathacharya of the Lodhi plates139. We further learn from the Jatesinga and Dunguri plates of Mahaśivagupa Yayati II that Bhagavat Pañchāmvari Bhadrāmbikā140 was the established deity of Suvarṇapura and in all probability she was also the tutelary deity of the Somavarmśī kings right from the time of Janamejaya I. This evidence indicates that the Somavarmśī kings championed the cause of Šaivism and Šaktism simultaneously. In Rāṇīpur Jhariāl, the Somavarṁśīs worshipped Umā-Maheśvara (Plate No.80) and the 64 yoginīs surrounding them. At Suvarṇapura they were the worshippers of Vaidyanātha Bhattaraka and Pañchāmvari Bhadrāmbikā.

Yayati I assumed the title of Parama-Maheśvara or a devout worshipper of Śiva in his Pāṭnā Museum plates141, Cuttack plates142, Nivina charter143, Pāṭnā plates144 of the regnal year 24 and 28. This great devotee and patron of Šaivism may be reasonably associated with the construction of the Šaivite monuments of 10th century A.D. The temple of Mukteśvara was built by Yayati I at Ekamra after his conquest of the coastal tract of Utkala. The temple of Mukteśvara (Plate No.42) has been designated by Fergusson145 as the “gem of the Odishan architecture” and
by R.L. Mitra\textsuperscript{146} as a charming epitome of the perfection of Odishan architecture. According to the tántrik tradition, Yayāti I was associated with the construction of Jagannāth temple. In tántrik tradition Jagannāth is considered to be identical with Bhairava.

Under Bhīmaratha patronage for Śaivism and Śaktism seems to have been extended as far as Puri. He is credited to have extended his patronage for the construction of the image of the Divine mothers which are now located inside the compound of the Mārkaṇḍeśvara temple at Puri. It is further revealed from Cuttack plates\textsuperscript{147} that Bhīmaratha made substantial donation in a place called Devī-bhoga. In all probability, Devībhoga was a locality connected with the worship of divine mother. According to this place Bhīmaratha has been described as \textit{Parama-Maheśvara}, \textit{Paramabhāṭṭāraka}, \textit{Mahārājadhirāja}, \textit{Parameśvara}, \textit{Somakula-Tilaka} and \textit{Trikalīṅgādhipati}. The Kudopāli copper plate charter\textsuperscript{148} of the time of Bhīmaratha dated in the 13\textsuperscript{th} regnal year refers to the conventional titles of \textit{Paramamaheśvara}, \textit{Paramabhāṭṭāraka}, \textit{Mahārājadhirāja}, \textit{Parameśvara}, \textit{Trikalīṅgādhipati} and \textit{Somakula-Tilaka}. One Rāṇaka Puṇja, one of the feudatories of Bhīmaratha who belonged to the Māṭhara family has been described as \textit{Paramamaheśvara}. He was also especially devoted to goddess Kāleśvarī (perhaps a form of Kālī).
After Bhīmaratha his son Dharmaratha was also a devout worshipper of Lord Śiva. In the Mahulpara copper plate charters Dharmaratha has been described as Parama Maheśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājādhirāja, Paramēśvara, Somakula-Ṭilaka and Trikaliṅgādhipati.

Indraratha, the eldest son of Bhīmaratha is known to us from his Bānapur plates and his patronage for the progress of Śaivism in Utkala. Like his predecessor he was also a devout worshipper of Lord Śiva. It is recorded in the plates that he is considered to be the builder of the temple of Indreśvara, now called Rājārāni (Plate No.44). This fact is proved by purāṇic evidences also.

Mahāśivagupta Yayāti II, the successor of Indraratha was also a great devotee of Lord Śiva. Like his predecessors, he has been described in the line-16 of Jatesīṅgha and Dūṅguri plates as Paramamaheśvara. According to local tradition, Yayāti II or Jayātikeśari is taken to be the builder of gigantic temple of Liṅgarāja, the climax of Śaivite architecture. Mādalā Paṇji records that Yayātikeśari started the construction of Liṅgarāja Temple (Plate No.52) at Bhubaneswar. Late P. Āchārya holds the view that the construction of the temple was started by Yayāti II towards the close of his reign and completed by Udyotakeśari at the beginning of his reign.
Udyotakesari, son of Yayati II occupies a significant place in the history of Śaivism in Odisha. His reign makes the climax of Śaivite art and culture. Udyotakesari in his Narasinghpur plates\textsuperscript{154} has been declared himself as *Paramamaheśvara*, the Brahmaśvara temple stone Inscription\textsuperscript{155} of his time also refers to the same title. During his reign the famous Brahmaśvara temple (Plate No.43) at Bhubaneswar was constructed.

Karnadeva was the last known king of the Somavarna dynasty who is known from his Ratnagiri plates dated in the 6\textsuperscript{th} regnal year. In this plate, he is described as *Paramamaheśvara-Paramabhaṭṭāraka-Trikalīṅgaḥdhipati-Mahārājādhirāja-Parameśvara*. During his reign the Gaṅga ruler Chodagaṅgadēva had attacked his kingdom i.e. Utkala and occupied it after defeating him. This fact is proved by the references of Korni plates\textsuperscript{156}, Liṅgarāj temple inscription\textsuperscript{157} and Mārkaṇḍeśvara temple inscription\textsuperscript{158}. As a result of the occupation of Utkala by the Gaṅga king Chodagaṅgadēva the Somavarna rule in Odisha came to an end and after that Śaivism had lost its popularity with the spread of Jagannāth cult in Odisha.

Thus, on the whole, Śaivism became a popular and widespread religious sect in Odisha during the period of our review on the basis of epigraphic sources.

231
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232
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238


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