

**HISTORY OF THE  
JAGANNATH TEMPLE**

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## CHAPTER ONE

### HISTORY OF THE JAGANNATH TEMPLE DURING THE MUSLIM RULE IN ORISSA

Niamat-ullah writes in his *Makhzan-i-Afghana* that Kala Pahad proceeded towards Puri from Jajpur.

*Madala Panji*, the Jagannath temple chronicle, states that on the approach of Kala Pahad, Divya Simha, the Parichha or Superintendent of the Jagannath temple removed the image of Jagannath and secreted it at Chhapalai Hathipada, an island in the Chilka lake. In a manuscript, found near Khurda, it has been mentioned that the head man of Koklo (a village near Khurda), Danpahanta Singh, met Kala Pahad. "Where is the god of the Orissa kingdom" ? asked the iconoclast. "I know where he is hidden" replied Danpahanta Singh. Kala Pahad acted according to his direction and found out the image of Jagannath. The traitor was rewarded with Jagirs in the Puri district. The *Panji* describes the desecration of the Jagannath temple as follows : "Kala Pahad brought back the image on the back of an elephant. He plundered the treasure of the Jagannath temple, damaged every idol in the temple, dug out the sacred Kalpavata tree and burnt it."

Niamat-ullah describes the desecration of the Jagannath temple with zest. "He (Sulaiman) turned his attention towards its (Jagannath temple's) destruction and marched with a corps of troops. He pulled down the shrine and ordered the image of god Krishna which was decorated in elegant and beautiful way and whose limbs were made of red gold, pair of eyes formed of Badakshani ruby, to be broken into

fragments and cast into gutter. Seven other gold images of various shape lying near and around the town each of which weighed five maunds, according to the Akbari standard of weight, were plucked out. As the people of the country did not know the art of escape, the Brahmin wives with mantles thrown upon their persons adorned with various ornaments, necklaces and pearls went for shelter in the sanctuary of Jagannath when the forces of Islam entered. In spite of their being told repeatedly that the Muslims had invaded and would take them captives and pull down the shrine, they did not believe it and said 'Oh, how could it occur and how could they have power to hurt the deity?' They were struck with great surprise when the Muslims entered the town and took them prisoners."<sup>1</sup>

Niamat-ullah took help of imagination while describing the desecration of the Jagannath temple. The image of Jagannath was made of wood and not of gold. The people of Orissa were not so ignorant about fanaticism of the Muslims. Within living memory, in 1511 A. D. Sultan Husain Shah of Bengal destroyed a number of temples in north Orissa.

Abul Fazl's statement is nearer the truth. "Kala Pahad, the general of Sulaiman Kararani, on the conquest of the country, flung the image into fire and burnt it and afterwards cast it into the sea."<sup>2</sup>

According to Badaoni, Sulaiman conquered Katak-Banaras, the mine of unbelief, and made Jagannath a home of Islam.<sup>3</sup>

It is stated in the *Madala Panji* that Kala Pahad carried the image of Jagannath as far as the banks of the Ganga. There he attempted to burn it. As his body began to crack he threw the half burnt image containing the holy object (Daru Brahma) into the

<sup>1</sup> 'The Kararani and Lohani rule in Bengal'—N. B. Roy, *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. LXXII p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ain-i-Akbari* (Eng. trans.) Vol. II, p. 128.

<sup>3</sup> *Muntakhbat Twarikh* (Eng. Trans.) Pt. II, p. 163.

Ganga. A Muslim Amir (noble) picked it up from the river and kept it in his house. Besara Mohanty, a Vaishnava mendicant from Orissa, followed the iconoclast. He procured the charred image from the Amir. He took out the holy object and secretly carried it to Kujang in the Cuttack district.<sup>4</sup>

It is not possible to believe that Kala Pahad carried the heavy image up to the Ganga from the shore of the Chilka lake. Moreover he did not immediately die in spite of the sacrilege.<sup>5</sup>

It appears that the image of Jagannath was taken to the sea shore near Kujang and burnt. Such an assumption accounts for Besara Mohanty's presence at Kujang. Towards the end of the 18th century, Danai Das made an allusion to the burning of the image of Vishnu-Jagannath in the introduction of his poem entitled *Gopi Bhasha* ('Vishnu Pratima anale dahilu'). It was at this stage that Ramachandra Deb, Raja of Khurda, came to lime-light. Ramachandra Deb ruled over a small kingdom comprising the northern portion of the Ganjam district and southern portion of the Puri district. Khurda was his capital.

The Jagannath temple chronicle says that in his 9th Anka (7th regnal year) Ramachandra Deb brought the sacred object (Daru Brahma) from Kujang and installed new images at Khurda. The image of Jagannath was installed in his temple at Puri on the 11th (should be 10th) Anka of Ramachandra Deb, 18th day of Karkataka, corresponding to 17 July 1575, with much pomp and splendour.<sup>6</sup>

It has been argued that Ramachandra took advantage of the defeat of Daud by the Mughal general

<sup>4</sup> *Madala Panji* (Prachi Edition), p. 63.

<sup>5</sup> Kala Pahad was killed in 1583, while fighting against Akbar's general Khan-i-Azam (*Akbarnama* Eng. Trans. Vol. III, p. 592).

<sup>6</sup> The *Panji* gives to Ramachandra Deb the credit of installing Jagannath in the Puri temple with the motive of glorifying him as Second Indradumnya. Raja Indradumnya, according to tradition,

Khan-i-Khanan Munim Khan and restored the image of Jagannath in his temple. The statement of the *Madala Panji* requires corroborative evidence. Qutlu Khan Lohani, at whose instigation, Daud defied the authority of Akbar, "had been in possession for a long time of the country of Jagannath and its neighbourhood."<sup>7</sup>

Daud signed a treaty at Cuttack with Munim Khan on 12 April 1575 which according to the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* left him in possession of Orissa.

There is no evidence to prove that Daud or Qutlu Khan allowed in July 1575, the restoration of Jagannath in his temple which was desecrated by the Afghan army less than a decade ago.

It has also been suggested that Raja Todar Mal, who was second in command in the Mughal army, made provision for the restoration of Jagannath in the treaty. Two factors make such a view untenable. Firstly, Abul Fazal or Nizam-uddin, author of the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, make no reference to the restoration of Jagannath in the Puri temple by Todar Mal. Secondly, Raja Todar Mal did not dictate the terms of peace, as Raja Mansingh subsequently did at the time of the final conquest of Orissa by the Mughals in 1591. In fact Munim Khan concluded the treaty with Daud without consulting Todar Mal.<sup>8</sup>

installed 'Daru Brahma'—the pristine image of Jagannath. In two contemporary Sanskrit MSS *Sri Krishna Vatsalya Charitam* and *Basantotsava Mahakavya*, Ramachandra Deb has been called 'Abhinava Indradumnya'.

The *Madala Panji* was compiled after the Muslim conquest of Orissa ('Muhammadan conquest of Orissa'—R. P. Chanda, J.B.O.R.S. 1927). "*Madala Panji* was compiled during the rule of the Bhoi dynasty towards the end of the 16th century. The compiler appears to be a contemporary of Ramachandra or of his successor."

*Legend and History (Oriya)*—Dr. K. C. Panigrahi, p. 68.

<sup>7</sup> *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* (Eng. Trans.) Vol. II, p. 431.

<sup>8</sup> Todar Mal was not present at the time of signing of the treaty

Daud revolted again. He was defeated by Khan-i-Jahan and Raja Todar Mal in 1576 and was executed. But the Mughal rule in Orissa was temporary in duration. In 1580, the Afghans killed Quia Khan, the Mughal governor of Orissa. The struggle between the Mughals and the Afghans for the possession of Orissa continued till 1584, when by a treaty, Orissa was left to Qutlu Khan. There is nothing to suggest that Qutlu Khan allowed the worship of Jagannath in his temple. It is safer to assume, till definite evidence is available, that during the reigns of Daud and Qutlu Khan Lohani, Jagannath was not worshipped in his temple at Puri.

This did not preclude Ramachandra Deb from claiming the title of Gajapati, which was used by the independent kings of Orissa. His 'Anka' year came to be used in all transactions. A bilingual inscription in Hindi and Oriya, dated 1587 refers to the 24th 'Anka'. The name of the King is not mentioned ; but we can take him to be Ramachandra Deb of Khurda.<sup>8a</sup> Ramachandra Deb was derisively called 'the Sudra Gajapati' in two inscriptions at Srijang in the Balasore district, referring to his 28th and 30th regnal years.<sup>9</sup>

Orissa was ruled by the Afghans for all practical with Daud (*Akbar Nama* : Eng. Trans., III, p. 186). He did not sign the treaty.

Depending upon some stray Persian records, which cannot now be traced, Stirling writes that Todar Mal came to Orissa again in 1580, to supervise the revenue settlement. Orissa was virtually under Afghan possession at that time.

Stirling also writes "He (Todar Mal) is said to have greatly admired the temple and the image of Jagannath" (*An Account of Orissa proper*, p. 86). Stirling cites no evidence in support of his statement. The contemporary Muslim chronicles do not mention any visit of Todar Mal to Orissa after 1575.

<sup>8a</sup> 'Bilingual stone inscription of the Baripada Museum'—S. De : O.H.R.J., Vol. III, p. 94.

<sup>9</sup> 'Srijang inscriptions', S. Patnaik—*Journal of Orissa Academy*, May 1940.

purposes from 1568 to 1589. In that year Raja Mansingh set out for the conquest of Orissa. Qutlu Khan crossed the border to oppose the Mughal army but he suddenly died. His wazir Isa Khan sued for peace. One of the terms of peace was that "the temple of Jagannath and its surrounding area should be made crownland."<sup>10</sup>

It appears that Jagannath was installed again in his temple after this treaty in 1589 and not in 1575 as stated in the *Panji*. Abul Fazl writes that after the departure of Mansingh, the Afghans defied Mughal authority and desecrated the Jagannath temple.<sup>11</sup> In 1000 A.H. (1591-92 A.D.) Mansingh again marched to Orissa. The Afghans were defeated and Orissa was conquered. Mansingh wanted to curb the power of Ramachandra of Khurda, who defied him and gave shelter to some Afghan nobles.

We now quote Abul Fazl who always justified his master's action. "The Rajah summoned him (Ramcand) and he objected. The Rajah from inappreciativeness consigned his goodness to oblivion". An army was sent to occupy Khurda. "On hearing this, His Majesty who appreciated dignities, became angry and issued censures. The Rajah recalled his troops and apologized. Ramcand on seeing the graciousness of His Majesty took the thought of paying his respects. On the 21st Bahman, he visited the Rajah and was treated with much respect."<sup>12</sup> Akbar probably wanted the co-operation of the Hindus of Orissa by generously treating Ramachandra Deva, who had built up his reputation in the eyes of the Hindus by installing an image of Jagannath at Khurda. It may just be a whim of the emperor to show generosity to a Hindu chief of Orissa.

Raja Mansingh took the cue from the attitude of

<sup>10</sup> *Akbarnama* (Eng. Trans.) Vol. III, p. 880.

<sup>11</sup> "The wicked Afghans laid hold of the temple of worship of Jagannath"—*Akbarnama* (Eng. Trans.) Vol. III, p. 934.

<sup>12</sup> *Akbarnama* (Eng. Trans.) Vol. III, pp. 967-68.

Akbar towards Ramachandra Deb. This will be evident from Ramachandra's nomination as the custodian of the Jagannath temple by Mansingh, as has been stated in the *Madala Panji*.

"In the 12th Anka (10th regnal year) of Ramachandra, a son of Telinga Munkundadeva complained to the Padhash of Delhi". The Padshah sent Raja Mansingh to Orissa : "He who is the Nayaka (leader) of Orissa should be made the Raja." Mansingh came to Orissa accompanied by the son of Mukundadeva, Ramachandra Deb also met him.

When Chandan Yatra was celebrated, the priests asked Mansingh : "whom should we give Gadi Prasada" (share of offering to the god due to the occupant of the throne). Mansingh told the priests 'Bring the Gadi Prasada'. The Priests brought the offering accordingly. Mansingh offered Gadi Prasada to Ramachandra Deb, and made him the Raja of the kingdom of Orissa. This recognition, however formal, entitled Ramachandra Deb to be the custodian of the Jagannath temple.

It is further stated in the *Madala Panji* that Gauri Mahadevi, a consort of Raja Mansingh, built the hall of the Mukti Mandap within the Jagannath temple precincts. Stirling in his history of Orissa has quoted from the revenue accounts of Raja Mansingh, corresponding to 1591 A.D., from an unknown source. It is stated that Ramachandra was appointed a Mansabdar of the commandership of three thousand and five hundred.

The Jagannath temple became the most famous Hindu temple in the Mughal empire.<sup>13</sup>

Even the Muslims came to believe that Jagannath

<sup>13</sup> "All the idolaters in the domain of the great Moghals and other princes, at least once in their life go on pilgrimage most generally to Jagrenaut, as being the first and most considerable of the Pagodas."

*Travels of Tavernier* (Eng. Trans.), p. 432.

Tavernier visited India towards the middle of the 17th century.

possessed miraculous powers. The *Makhzan-i-Afghana* was probably written during the reign of Jahangir, as reference is made to his reign. After describing the desecration of the Jagannath temple, Niamat-ullah writes : "Strange still was the fact that those who had carried off the idols as booty, suffered from misfortune, affliction and disaster and died within a year."

Ahmad Razi author of the *Haft-Iklim* or Seven Climates wrote his work either towards the end of Akbar's reign or in the beginning of Jahangir's reign. He writes : "In village Purstom, there is a temple of most wonderful idol which they call Jagannath. And the people of India have great faith in Jagannath ; and in this temple the Hindus inflict upon their persons deep injuries and cut off their tongues. When they rub the injured part on the idol, it is immediately healed up. And believer or non-believer, whoever shows disrespect to the idol meets with instantaneous death."

The author's grandfather has recorded one story. Maulana Lutful-ullah of Nishapur, went there with a number of his friends and persuaded the Brahmans to allow them to have a look at the idol, of course on condition that they would not show any disrespect to the idol. When the party entered the temple, one of them threw spitoon towards the idol and he instantaneously died. The Maulana says at this incident that he was utterly shocked as to what might have been the underlying cause of the exhibition of so great a feat on the part of a motionless idol.

"He got the answer while visiting the holy shrine at Najaf. There somebody told him 'The wonderful power exhibited by Jagannath is due to the fact that it is long since people have been attributing this wonderful power to the idol and in course of time, it is actually exhibited'."<sup>14</sup> The author of the *Riyaz-us-Salatin* writes with the help of his ima-

<sup>14</sup> Asgar Ali, *Orissa Historical Research Journal*, Vol. II, pp. 81-82.

gination : "Jagannath, which is a big temple of the Hindus, is in the Subah of Odissa. It is said the Hindus reach Parsutam, where Jagannath is, in order to worship Jagannath, : first they shave their heads like Musalmans and at the first door of the house of Shaikh Kabir, who was a great saint of his time, and whose parents were weavers, they eat and drink his food and water, which is called in the language of that country "Torani". After having done so, they proceed to worship their god Jagannath. At Parsutam, the Hindus, unlike their practice elsewhere, eat together with the Musalmans and and other races. And all sorts of cooked food sell in the Bazar and Hindus and Musalmans buy them and eat them together and drink together."<sup>15</sup>

We shall now refer to two Hindi poems in adoration of Jagannath, written by Muslim poets. The *Padmavati* by Malik Muhammad Jaisi was written during the reign of Sher Shah. The poet took his hero Ratansi of Mewar to Orissa. Ratansi offered worship in the Puri temple, where cooked food ('Rinda Bhat') was sold.

Osman, a poet of Gazipur, wrote a mystic love poem, *Chitravali*, in the reign of Jahangir. There is a part called 'Jagannath Khand' in the poem. The boat of Sujan Rai, prince of Nepal, was ship-wrecked on the Orissa coast. As soon as he touched the shore, he asked a Brahman who was bathing, "whose city it

<sup>15</sup> *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, p. 18. There is a small Math of 'Kabir Panthis' at Puri. In Oriya 'Torani' means rice water.

The community eating without caste distinction has also been pointed out by an early English writer. "At the pagoda of Juggernaut, peoples of all castes and ranks eat at the same board without distinction or pre-eminence. This is peculiar to that place being no where else allowed".

*History, Religion and Learning and Manners of the Hindoos—*  
I. Crawford, 1790, p. 38.

is?" The Brahman peevishly replied, "Are you blind? It is the city of Jagannath, the light of the whole world, who is worshipped by the people of the earth, a touch of whose feet takes off the whole load of sins". The prince went to the Jagannath temple to worship the deity.<sup>15 a</sup>

To return to sober history. Jagannath passed through bad days during the reign of Jahangir, who wanted to extend the Mughal authority in south Orissa. Throughout his reign, the temple of Jagannath became a target of attack by the Mughal Subadars of Orissa. Hashim Khan was appointed Subadar, when Orissa was made a Suba in 1607.

During his rule, Keshodas Maru, a Rajput chief, seized the Jagannath temple. The story of his raid is given in detail by a contemporary writer, Mirza Nathan in his book *Baharistan-i-Gaibi*.

"Keshodas Maru and his followers entered the Jagannath temple as pilgrims and forcibly occupied it. He plundered the temple property worth two or three crores and scourged the Brahmans to disgorge more property. The news reached Rajah Purshootam. He thought that before the end of the rainy season and the arrival of the imperial officers, he would chastise Keshodas Maru. He marched from Khurda with a force of ten thousand cavalry, three or four lakhs infantry and a large number of chariots (Raths). He made five hundred to one thousand men ride in each Rath which was pulled by two to three thousand men.

"Keshodas and his soldiers threw lighted cloth ball. The Raths were burnt in hundreds. Meanwhile imperial officers from Bengal were sent to help Keshodas. Purshootam was now frightened. He sent

<sup>15 a</sup> "We find spiritual sympathy with the far-famed Jagannath of two Muslim poets of modern Uttar Pradesh". 'A ramble in the Hindi literature in search of Orissa and Jagannath'—Dr. K. R. Qanungo : O.H.R.J. (Orissa Historical Research Journal), Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 40.

an envoy offering his daughter in marriage to the emperor and a Peshkash of Rs. 300,000.”<sup>16</sup>

It is difficult to separate the kernel from husk out of this highly embellished account. Purushottama, the Raja of Khurda, hardly possessed even one lakh infantry. The Oriya army did not use chariots. The infantry could have easily walked to Puri, a distance of about fifty miles from Khurda. Lastly, the walls of the Jagannath temple were not constructed to serve the purpose of bastions of a fort.

The statement of the *Madala Panji* (Prachi edition p. 65) seems to be more cogent. Keshodas Maru came on pilgrimage to Puri. Jagannath was then staying in the Gundicha temple. Keshodas burnt the three chariots and took the image of Jagannath to the main temple by a palanquin. He held the temple for a month, till a settlement was reached with the Raja of Khurda.

The *Madala Panji* also states that Hashim Khan attacked Puri and the images had to be removed from the Temple till his departure. According to the *Baharistan-i-Gaibi*, Purushottama, the Raja of Khurda, cast to the winds the humiliating treaty which was imposed upon him by Keshodas Maru, when Raja Kalyan succeeded Hashim Khan as the Subadar in July 1611. He hoped that the son of Raja Todarmal would

<sup>16</sup> *Baharistan-i-Gaibi* (Eng. Trans.) pt. I, pp. 35-38. “The siege could have taken place in 1609 or 1610. The fact that present of a horse was sent to Keshodas Maru in the fifth year, 6th April 1610, places this meritorious service of the Mughal commander at the end of the year 1609 or the beginning of 1610. This was the only honour he received. The statement of Nathan—that as a result of the desecration of the Jagannath temple, Keshodas was raised to the command of 4000 horse, and given a standard is entirely without foundation”. Sri Rama Sarma, *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. XI, p. 396. The only promotion Keshodas got was a rank of 2000 horse from that of 1500, which he held in the first year of Jahangir’s reign.

be friendly to a Hindu chief. But he was sadly disillusioned.

Raja Kalyan emulated the exploits of Keshodas Maru. He plundered the territory of Khurda, forcing Purushottama to comply with the terms of peace which were imposed by Keshodas. Purushottama had to offer his daughter to the imperial harem, to pay a large Peshkash and to send his best elephants for the service of the emperor.<sup>17</sup>

The *Panji* also refers to the conflict of the Khurda Raja with Raja Kalyan but wrongly states that Raja Kalyan was killed by the soldiers of the Khurda Raja in a tumult. It is unreasonable to accept the statement of Nathan without reservation. Jahangir writes in his *Memoir* that he reviewed eighteen elephants which were brought by Raja Kalyan from Orissa after his recall in 1617, but makes no mention of the Khurda princess.<sup>18</sup>

Mukurram Khan, the successor of Raja Kalyan, completely curbed the power of the Raja of Khurda.<sup>19</sup>

The *Panji* states that Mukurram Khan, destroyed some Hindu temples. The image of Jagannath was again removed to the Chilka coast by the Temple priests in fear of the iconoclast.

During his rebellion, prince Shah Jahan entered Orissa from the south in October 1623. According to

<sup>17</sup> *Baharistan-i-Gaibi* (Eng. Trans.) pp. 144-45.

<sup>18</sup> *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* (Eng. Trans.), p. 433. "The forests of Telingana immediately west of Orissa was famous for elephants and these elephants formed the usual present for the governors of Orissa to please the Padishah".

J. N. Sarkar : J. B. O. R. S., Vol. VII, p. 338. Raja Mansingh brought elephants from Orissa for Akbar. Shah Jahan received elephants from the Subadars of Orissa—Baqar Khan and Mutaqad Khan.

<sup>19</sup> The Raja of Khurda was now reduced "to the status of a mere zamindar".

J. N. Sarkar : J. B. O. R. S. (Journal of Bihar & Orissa Research Society), Vol. VII, p. 435.

the *Panji*, Narasimha Deb, the successor of Purushottama, sided with the rebel prince.<sup>20</sup> It is also stated in the *Panji* that Bhim Singh, a Rajput chief accompanying the prince, helped the restoration of the deity in his temple. During the reign of Shah Jahan, the Jagannath temple was spared by the Muslims. According to the *Panji*, the temple was renovated and plastered. The date of renovation is 1636-37 A.D.

In 1660, Khan-i-Dauran was appointed the Subadar of Orissa by Aurangzib. His hands fell heavy on Mukunda Deb, the Raja of Khurda,<sup>21</sup> and other turbulent chiefs of Orissa who defied the imperial authority during the war of succession.

During the rule of Khan-i-Dauran, the temple of Baladeva at Kendrapara was destroyed and a mosque was built in its place. But the temple of Jagannath escaped destruction because of the large amount of pilgrim tax it yielded.

In 1676, Shaista Khan became the Subadar. It is stated in the *Panji*, that Abu Nasir, son of Shaista Khan, advanced towards Puri with a view to attack the Jagannath temple. But at Pipli, his camp was struck by lightning and he returned to Cuttack. This story requires corroborative evidence.

In 1687, Ekram Khan became Subadar. Dr. Rajendralal Mitra has quoted from the *Tabsirat-ul-*

<sup>20</sup> Nathan, author of the *Baharistan-i-Gaibi* joined the rebellion. He does not refer to the Khurda Raja's allegiance to the rebel prince.

'Prince Shah Jahan in Bengal': Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. XI, p. 92.

<sup>21</sup> "Rajah Mukund Deo was the leading zamindar of this country whose orders are obeyed by all zamindars" and "whom all other zamindars of this country worship like god"—"Disobey to whose order, they regard as great sin": *Muraqat-i-Hasan* quoted by J. N. Sarkar: J. B. O. R. S., Vol. II. But the records of the 19th century show that some Rajas and zamindars in Orissa did not show much respect to the Rajas of Khurda.

*Maizirin* regarding the desecration of the Jagannath temple by the order of Aurangzib. It is stated that the emperor ordered Ekram Khan to destroy the Jagannath temple and to despatch the image of Jagannath to him. The Raja of Khurda agreed to send the big idol to the Nawab. He sent an idol of Jagannath which was made of sandal wood and had two valuable jewels set in the eyes. The idol was carried to Aurangzib at Bijapur where it was destroyed and thrown on the steps of a mosque.<sup>22</sup>

The incident has been narrated in the *Madala Panji* : "There was a great disturbance in the country caused by the Moguls. At night, all the deities were removed to Chandanpur. Nawab Ekram Khan came with his brother Marstam Khan and fifty soldiers. The top of the main gate was pulled down and the disc of the Bhogamandapa was broken. A Jagannath image made of wood was also taken away by the Moguls. The Nawab's brother got upon the sacred pedestal (and desecrated it). The gates of the temple were closed (permanently)". The raid is dated in May 1692. Jagannath was secreted at Banpur on the Chilka coast for fifteen years till the death of Aurangzib. In 1713 Shuja-ud-din became the Deputy Subadar of Orissa under his father-in-law Murshid Quli Khan I. He was a man of liberal disposition and he permitted the restoration of Jagannath in his temple.

Taqi Khan, son of Shuja-ud-din, became the Deputy Subadar of Orissa in 1727. He was a fanatic like Ekram Khan. Taqi Khan captured Ramachandra II, the Raja of Khurda, whom he forcibly converted to Islam.

After his release from captivity, Ramachandra II

<sup>22</sup> *Antiquities of Orissa*—R. L. Mitra, Vol. I, p. 112, Aurangzib was staying at Bijapur between March 1691 and May 1692. (*Aurangzib*—J. N. Sarkar, Vol. V, p. 6.) But J. N. Sarkar does not mention the incident narrated in the *Tabsirat-ul-Maizirin* in his book.

alias Hafiz Qadir, continued to be the Superintendent (Malik) of the temple of Jagannath.<sup>22a</sup>

But he suffered from religious disabilities, because of his conversion to Islam. To avoid sacrilege by Taqi Khan, Jagannath was again secretly taken across the Chilka lake to Banpur, and thence to the zamindari of Athgarh.<sup>23</sup>

After the death of Taqi Khan in 1734, his brother-in-law Murshid Quli II became the Deputy Subadar of Orissa. The absence of Jagannath from his temple caused annually a loss of Rupees nine lakhs, which the pilgrims paid as tax. So Murshid Quli II, by the advice of his trusted officer, Mir Habib, allowed the Temple priests to bring back the image.<sup>24</sup>

The ordeal of Jagannath was at last over. In 1741 Alivardi Khan, after usurping the throne of Bengal, defeated Murshid Quli II and drove him away from Orissa. Mir Habib joined the Marathas and persuaded them to invade Bengal.

Bir Keshari Deb, son of Ramachandra II, espoused the cause of Murshid Quli II. When in March 1743, Raghuji Bhonsle marched towards Cuttack, Bir Keshari Deb sent his Peshkar or Agent named Bahadur Khan to north Orissa to meet him. Bahadur Khan sent a 'Chithau' or letter to the priests (Sebaks) of

<sup>22a</sup> *Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin* (Eng. Trans.), p. 498.

<sup>23</sup>The *Madala Panji* (Prachi edition), p. 76—"During the commotion in Taqi Khan's time, the Rajah of Pursootum removed Jugunnath, the Hindu God, from the limits of the Subah of Odissa, and guarded it on the summit of a hill across the Chilka lake." *Riyaz-us-Salatin* (Eng. Trans.), p. 302.

<sup>24</sup>The Muslim version of the restoration of Jagannath is given in the *Riyaz-us-Salatin* (Eng. tran.), p. 303. "Establishing friendly relations with Mir Habib and paying Nazar to the Nazim Rajah Dand Deo brought back Jagannath to Puri and re-established his worship." Rajah Dand Deo appears to be Padmanabha Deb, Raja of Patia, who was placed on the throne of Khurda by Mir Habib. He ruled for about four years (O. H. R. J., Vol. III, p. 42). He was expelled by Bir Keshari who seized the throne.

Jagannath 'Mahaprabhu' advising them not to get panicky due to the Maratha raid and "to do regularly the service of Parameswara".<sup>25</sup>

Muhammad Taqi Khan would have turned in his grave, had he known that within a decade after his death, a Muslim Deputy Subadar allowed the restoration of Jagannath in his temple for the sake of revenue; and a Muslim officer showed solicitude for the worship of 'Mahaprabhu' (Lord) Jagannath.

The Muslim rule in Orissa practically ended in 1751 by the treaty of Alivardi Khan with the Marathas, though the Nawabs continued to appoint Muslim Deputy Subadars till 1759.

With the appointment of Sheo Bhat Sathe as the Subadar in 1760, "Orissa came directly under the control of the Marathas."

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<sup>25</sup> *Studies in History, Archaeology and Archives*—P. Acharya—p. 243.

## CHAPTER TWO

### HISTORY OF THE JAGANNATH TEMPLE UNDER THE MARATHAS

The Jagannath temple was left undisturbed during Alivardi Khan's conflict with the Marathas. Bir Keshari Dev (1739-1792) managed the affairs of the Jagannath temple. But a change took place when the Marathas assumed direct administration of Orissa. During the rule of Sheo Bhatt Sathe (1760-1764), Jagannath Narayan Deb, the chief of Kimedī, invaded the territory of Khurda. He claimed to be the legitimate descendant of the Gajapati kings of Orissa.

The Raja of Khurda sought the assistance of the Marathas to repel the invader and promised to pay them a lakh of rupees. The Marathas drove away the chief of Kimedī and demanded the payment of the stipulated amount. Bir Keshari however could not pay it and was forced to surrender to the Marathas four Mahals or pergunahs comprising the territory between the Chilka lake and the river Daya.<sup>1</sup> The temple of Jagannath is situated in the pergunah 'Poorsutam Chattar' (Purushottama Kshetra). The Raja of Khurda soon found that he had not only lost that pergunah but along with it, the control over the management of the Jagannath temple, situated in that pergunah.

Bir Keshari Deb went mad and murdered four of his sons. The people wanted to depose him for his frightful deeds.

Rajaram Pundit, the Subadar of Orissa (1778-

<sup>1</sup> Hunter, Collector, Jagannath to Fortesque, 21 December 1804, B. R. A. (Board of Revenue Archives) : 1804.

1793) imprisoned Bir Keshari at Cuttack and recognized his grandson Divyasingh as Raja of Khurda, on his agreeing to pay tribute to the Marathas.<sup>2</sup>

This led to further elimination of the influence of the Raja of Khurda in the affairs of the Jagannath temple. Divyasingh Deb was succeeded by his son Mukunda Deb in 1797.

The Maratha Subadars guarded the interests of Jagannath. The Mohunt of a Math at Puri had appointed one Brindavan Das to collect the offerings made to Jagannath by his devotees in Calcutta. Brindavan Das died in Calcutta. Before his death, he left the money, which was collected from the devotees, in the custody of Keshu Potdar, an inhabitant of Calcutta. As Keshu Potdar refused to hand over the money to the authorized agent of the Mohunt, the Subadar Sadashiva Rao (1793-1803) wrote to the authorities in Calcutta to recover the money from Keshu Potdar.<sup>3</sup>

The Maratha chiefs liberally endowed the Jagannath temple, restoring its glory after two hundred years. When Chimna Sau Bapu visited the Temple, he offered jewels, an elephant and costly dress to the deity.<sup>4</sup>

Mohun Bhog was established in the Temple by the mother of Raghujji Bhonsle. To furnish the means of defraying the expenses Raghujji Bhonsle granted Pergunah Kodhar to Mohunt Jayram Das.<sup>4a</sup>

<sup>2</sup> An *Account of Orissa Proper* : Stirling, p. 93.

<sup>3</sup> Public Consultations, 31 August 1795 : Quoted by Dr. B. C. Roy, *Orissa under the Marathas*, p. 68.

<sup>4</sup> "The villages of Swanlo and Mohuree were added to Sattais Hazari Mohuls about 35 years ago. They were given by Chimna Bapoo for the purpose of defraying the expenses of an elephant presented by him to the idol."

Trower, Collector, Cuttack to Commissioner, 2 October 1818, O. S. A. (Orissa State Archives).

<sup>4a</sup> Collector of Pilgrim-tax to Board of Revenue, 29 December 1807., J. T. C. (Jagannath Temple Correspondence), Pt. 1.

The *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* refers to the pilgrimages to Puri.

1. Vol. IV, No. 1097 : 7 June 1774—Sambhaji Ganesh, the Subadar of Orissa, was informed that the family of Raja Rajballabh was going on pilgrimage to Poorsutum Chattar. He was requested that the facilities might be afforded to the pilgrims during their journey.

2. Vol. IV, No. 1224 : 10 June 1774—Dustack was granted in favour of Gopal Gosain who was going on a pilgrimage to Jagannath with travelling requisities.

3. Vol. IV, No. 1367 : 2 November 1774—Jasrat Khan, the Naib Nazim of Dacca, informed that his Dewan Ram Kunwar was proceeding on a pilgrimage to Puri. He requested that a Dustack might be issued in favour of his Dewan.

4. Vol. IV, No. 1395—Madhaji Hari, the Subadar of Orissa, was informed that Ram Kanta Ray, the Dewan of Jasrat Khan, was going on a pilgrimage to Sri Jagannath. The Subadar was requested to afford him assistance during the journey.

5. Vol. V, No. 1475 : 13 December 1774—Dustack was granted in favour of Rangalal and twentyfive persons who were proceeding from Calcutta to Jagannath on pilgrimage.

6. Vol. V, No. 1658 : 24 March 1775—Dustack was granted to Rangalal Bishnoo (Vaishnava) and others of Banaras who went to Jagannath. They would return to Banaras by boat from Calcutta.

7. Vol. V, No. 494 : 3 January 1776—Dustack was granted to Radhagovinda Ray who was going on pilgrimage to Jagannath with 5 or 6 companions.

8. Vol. V, No. 604 : 4 August 1777—Beniram Pundit notified his intention of proceeding to Jagannath and of his resolution of waiting on the Governor General at Calcutta.

9. Vol. V, No. 1247 : 16 December 1778—Kashi Rao, Rajaram and Hirdai Ram were intimated that Rao Ananta Ram, the brother of Raja Govinda Ram,

was going on a pilgrimage to Jagannath. They were requested to help him in the performance of his religious duties.

10. Vol. V, No. 1386: 5 March 1779—A letter from Beniram Pundit. Having taken leave from his master the Maharaja, he, in company of Ramakanta Ray, reached Cuttack on 24th February. The latter had proceeded to Jagannath and the writer had been detained at Cuttack on business with Rajaram Pundit (the Maratha Governor).

11. Vol. VI, No. 927 : 18 December 1783—Dustack was granted to Ram Sunkar who was proceeding from Calcutta to Jagannath on pilgrimage. He had with him food, clothes, two hundred men and women and fifty horsemen.

12. Vol. VII, No. 38 : July 1784—Mudhoji Bhonsle instructs Rajaram Pundit to pay one lakh of rupees in charity to Motiger and other Gosains who had proceeded towards Cuttack for the performance of religious ceremonies at the temple of Jagannath.

13. Vol. VII, No. 189: 29 April 1785—Rajaram Pundit was informed that Shanker and Bishannath were going on pilgrimage to Jagannath with sixty companions. They had with them twenty horses and same number of coolies. The Governor was requested to give the pilgrims every facility. After pilgrimage they would proceed to Bombay.

14. Vol. VII, No. 201 : 5 May 1785—Dustack was granted to Sahu Gopal Das, who was going from Banaras to Jagannath. He had with him two hundred men, 15 Bahangees (Palanquins) and 16 bullock carts.

15. Vol. VII, No. 634 : 14 August 1786—Madhaji Sindhia requested that peremptory orders be issued to the authorities in Orissa to give every facility to the mother of Bissambhar Pundit, one of his worthy dependents, to enable her to perform pilgrimage to Jagannath and other holy places in its neighbourhood.

16. Vol. VII : 4 October 1786—Babu Ausan

Singh requested for a passport for pilgrimage to Jagannath.

17. Vol. VII, No. 1428: 4 July 1787—Mohunt Sukhdeo Das of the temple of Jagannath writes that Raja Rajnarayan, the zamindar of Kasijora in the Midnapore district, assigned 960 Bighas of land for bhog to be offered to Jagannath two years ago. His estate had been confiscated by the E. I. Company. The Mohunt had written to the Government to release the aforesaid property which was a charity grant. Rajaram Pundit, the Subadar of Cuttack, also wrote to Macpherson, officiating Governor-General of Bengal, in this connection. But no action had been taken so far.

The letters show that during the Maratha rule, the road to Puri was not safe. Rich persons like Ram Shankar and Bishannath took with them armed retainers, coolies, horse and carried food materials. The Maratha officers were requested to give them facilities during their journey to Puri.

The Maratha Government opposed any attempt of changing the age long customs prevailing in the Jagannath temple. An image of Bhairava was kept at the edge of the pedestal of Jagannath, which was grudged by the Byragees (Vaishnava mendicants), Bhairava being a Tantric image. On the occasion of the repair work of the pedestal of Jagannath under the supervision of Brahmachari, the preceptor of the Marathas, the image was removed from its position on the pedestal. The Byragees seized this opportunity and secretly took away the image of Bhairava from the temple, probably with the connivance of Brahmachari. They knew that the Dandi Sannyasis would make agitation for the restoration of the Bhairava image. Consequently they broke it and threw away the pieces in to the sea. The Dandi Sannyasis of the Svami sect (the followers of Sankaracharya) left the Temple in protest. But they did not dare to take any action as they were afraid of the influence of Brahmachari. When Chima Bai, the mother, and Vyankaji Bhonsle, the brother of Raghujai Bhonsle visited the temple of

Jagannath "they represented to those personages the wicked proceedings of the Bishnoos".<sup>5</sup>

Chima Bai took up the cause of the Dandi Sannyasis and represented the matter to her son. In 1201 A.H. (1792-93) Raghujee Bhonsle issued an order to Enkajee Sukdeo, the Naib Subadar, to make a new image of Bhairava to replace the image which was destroyed by the Byragees and to reinstate it in its proper position. He also ordered the priests to take care of the image which would be put up by Enkajee. The Sants (holy men) and Vaishnava Mohunts sent letters to the Maharaja and to Sadashiva Rao alias Sadaseo Rajaram (the Subadar of Cuttack, then staying at Nagpur) protesting against the restoration of the image of Bhairava. They stopped taking the consecrated food (Bhog) of the Temple.

At that time Harbans Ray, the Dewan, returned to Cuttack from Nagpur. He was won over by the Vaishnavas and at his instance the execution of Raghujee's order was deferred. It appears that he represented to Raghujee about agitation of the Sants and Mohunts against the installation of the image.

Raghujee now changed his opinion. In 1207 A.H. (1798-99 A.D.) he issued a 'Hukumnama' to two Maratha officers at Cuttack, Raghunath Krishna and Lachhman Janardan, informing that the Dandi Sadhus 'very improperly' wished to put an image of Bhairava on the throne of Jagannath which would be contrary to the established usage. He also directed that the image, constructed by Enkajee, should not be worshipped.

Sadaseo Rajaram informed Debi Singh Patjosee,

<sup>5</sup> Petition of Ram Shankar Bharati to Governor General : 1 May 1806, Bengal Revenue consultations—National Library.

The *Madala Panji* wrongly states that the Vaishnavas destroyed the image of Sankaracharya and of his disciple Padmanabha Acharya which had been removed from the pedestal of Jagannath during the repair work.

the Deul Karan, that it was the desire of the Maharaja that the usage that had long been established in the temple of Shree Jagannath Jew be upheld and that nothing new be introduced. Debi Singh was asked to keep the image of Bhairava in the 'large court' and to persuade the Sants and Mohunts to partake the consecrated food. To Madhoji Naik he wrote that he would do 'whatever necessary' after his return to Cuttack.<sup>6</sup>

But shortly afterwards, the British conquered Orissa and he never returned.

The Maratha Government were lax in their supervision of the affairs of the Temple, with the result that internal administration deteriorated.

Groome wrote : "From the time, the superintendence of the affairs has been under the control of the former (the Marathas) the discipline of the Temple has gradually relaxed and now all order and regulations are at a stop. Every servant of the Temple does as he pleases and most of them amass wealth by plunder of pilgrims."

"Since the time of Rajaram Pundit, the Sewuks or temple servants have taken up themselves to defer the duty entrusted on them till they had carried into effect any point which they had mediated."<sup>7</sup> Groome further pointed out that the daily ceremonies of the Temple were delayed and sometimes not observed at all.

The management of the Temple during the Maratha rule was vested in the Parichhas. "About a hundred years ago, there was a Dewl Purcha who was denominated Bur Dewl Purcha. After which, the Soobah(dar) of the province appointed four Purchas for the better management of the Temple. In 1210 Umlee, a short time before our coming to the province, the fourth Purcha was away to Nagpur and has never returned. The three Purchas in office, object to the

<sup>6</sup> Report of Hunter to Board of Revenue : 6 December 1806, J. T. C., Pt. I.

<sup>7</sup> Report of C. Groome, Collector of Cuttack : 10 June 1805.

appointment of the fourth because they take themselves his portion.”<sup>8</sup> Morar Pundit, a Maratha priest, was the seniormost Parichha and was styled ‘Wahadadar’ or custodian, in a letter addressed to him by the Board of Commissioners. He realised fees from the Pratiharis. Jagannath Rajguru was the second Parichha, holding hereditary right for the post of Parichha. The third Parichha Sewajee Pundit was also a Maratha. He was the most powerful Parichha having appropriated most of the functions of the Bada Deul Parichha. Sewajee was known as ‘Deul Parichha’. He was also called the ‘Satais Hazari Parichha’ because he made collections from the Satais Hazari Mahals.<sup>9</sup>

He was in charge of the receipts and disbursements of the Temple. Sewajee Pundit was also the Amin (revenue agent) of ‘Poorshuttum Chuttur’.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Hunter, Collector of tax to Board of Revenue : 15 March 1806, J. T. C., Pt. I.

The Fourth Parichha acted as Bada Deul Parichha. “For the management of the land rents attached to the Temple and in fact general superintendence of the receipts and disbursements and controlling authority respecting the regular discharge of the respective duties of the officers attached to the Temple, a person always presided on the part of Government.” Melville to N. B. Edmonstone : 26 September 1803, Bengal Secret and Political Consultations : 1 March 1804, No. 15.

<sup>9</sup> “These Mahals were designated ‘Satais Hazari Mohul’ in consequence of their revenue being set aside to defray a portion of the bhoges of Juggernath, which amount to Rs. 27,000 per annum”.

W. Melville, Jt. Magistrate, Puri to Commissioner, 1818, O. S. A.

“The Satais Hazari Mohul appears to have obtained its name from the fact that it used to pay 27,000 Kahans of cowries. It is now revenue-free and is unique in character.”

Collector of Puri to Commissioner, 28 March 1825, No. 2080 : Puri Collectorate Records.

<sup>10</sup> “In former times, obedience to the directions of the Purchhas was enforced from the circumstance of the Amin, who was stationed at Poorshuttum, being one of the Purchhas, who always had

The main sources of the income of the Jagannath temple during the Maratha rule were (i) Revenue from the Satais Hazari Mahals (ii) Sayer or town duties<sup>11</sup> (iii) Tax on professions (iv) Sale of Mahaprasad or sacred food (v) 'Kot Khanjah' or assignment of land revenue.

Owing to the slackness of the Maratha Government and corruption of the Temple Parichhas, the annual demands from the Satais Hazari Mahals were not properly collected and no proper accounts were kept. The Matdharis in charge of the assigned lands misappropriated the proceeds from those endowments. As the income of the Jagannath temple from the endowments, 'Khanjahs' and the Sayer duties were inadequate to meet the expenditure of the establishment of the Temple, the Maratha Government had to reimburse the deficiency. As Mills observed "They supported the temple of Juggernath with becoming munificence. They took the superintendence of its affairs under their control and paid every attention to the appropriation of its assets, agreeably to the intention of the officers of the temple for the two years preceding to the accession of the British power. In 1801/02, the sum of Khawans 97132-10-15 of cowries equal to Rs. 24,283-6-3 and in 1802|3, Khawans 87228-10-0 of cowries or Rs. 21,807-2-2 were disbursed by the Marhatta Government to cover the deficit of the receipts over the disbursements. The practice of the Marhatta Government was to have the accounts of receipts and disbursements annually adjusted and to

at his command three or four hundred peons or Burkandazes"  
—Grome's Report

<sup>11</sup> "If the collection from the villages and Sayer duties fell short of the sum, the deficiency was made good from the Sulki Mohul, which was  $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the collections on the pilgrims at Jobra ghaut and Atharanulla ghaut, being set aside for various other expenses attendant on the Idol and the Temple."

Trower to Secretary to Commissioners, 2 September, 1818,  
O. S. A., December 1817—September 1818.

supply the deficiency from its own treasury ; and this practice was continued for some years by the British Government."<sup>12</sup>

Apart from re-embursing the deficiency, the Maratha Government also provided money in connection with the observance of important Jatras and for the construction of the Rathas.<sup>13</sup> Any complaint against the conduct of the Parichhas was made to Enkajee Sukdeo Tirumal, Deputy Subadar, whose decision was final.<sup>14</sup>

The Maratha Government recouped the money spent on the Jagannath temple by continuing the Pilgrim tax which was imposed by the Muslims. They also levied a tax on the Pratiharis who were allowed to collect from the pilgrims a fee of six annas.

The pilgrims from upper India passed through the territories of the Rajas of Mayurbhanj and Nilgiri, both of whom levied fees from the pilgrims on their own account, paying the Maratha Government 10|16th of the collection.

"The collection of tax on behalf of the Marhattas commenced at a place called the Khunta ghaut on the border of Mohurbhunj. Along the route from that place to the Aturanulla ghaut, Tahsildars were stationed to collect tolls from the pilgrims passing through each station. The rates for payment by several classes of pilgrims were fixed by Government but were never strictly adhered to and much extortion was practised by the Tahsildars."<sup>15</sup> Groeme writes

<sup>12</sup> Mills, Commissioner to Board of Revenue : 26 August 1843, J. T. C., Pt. 3.

<sup>13</sup> "At the annual celebration of two particular festivals, the extra expense is defrayed by Government. This may amount to thirty to forty thousand rupees annually".

Melville to Edmonstone, Secretary to Govt. : 26 September 1803, Bengal Secret and Political Consultations, No. 16.

<sup>14</sup> Hunter to Board of Commissioners : 2 March 1804, J. T. C., Pt. I.

<sup>15</sup> Groeme's Report.

that the Maratha system of collection was oppressive. Sometimes tax was collected from the same pilgrims at different ghats. The tax-paying pilgrims were divided into two classes. Affluent pilgrims from the north were charged Rs. 10 each at Atharanulla ghat. Such pilgrims coming from the south paid Rs. 6 each at Lokanath ghat.<sup>16</sup> There was a general cess or poll tax of 15 annas for admission into the Temple. The lower class of the tax-paying pilgrims were called 'Bhurrungs'—a Marathi word.

In conformity with long established usage, the Sannyasees (mendicants), the Desees (pilgrims who lived in the holy land between the Baitarani and the Rishikulya) and the Kangals (paupers) were exempted from the payment of the tax on the pilgrims resorting to the temple of Jagannath. William Laurie, writing within fifty years after the end of the Maratha rule, had a kind word for their treatment of the pilgrims.

"During the administration of the Marhattas in Orissa, they treated the pilgrims to Juggernath with a degree of attention and consideration. It was of course their interest to do so. To take particular care about the collection of the pilgrim tax—to entice as many pilgrims as possible—to afford them the protection of the State, while they enjoyed their devotion in the holy land. It was a portion of their policy. The

<sup>16</sup> "There are only two inlets to the town, and at each of these inlets, the Marhatta Government kept a guard and an office where a tax was levied on the pilgrims who were on the way to Jagger-nath temple. The rates which were fixed, were higher on those who came from the northward than on those who came from the South. Eleven rupees and three annas was the sum payable by a pilgrim from Bengal; and pilgrims notoriously poor were exempted and subjected only to a small exaction from the priests and the guards. The amount of annual collection of Government from those inlets is estimated from 2 to 5 lakhs of rupees."

Melville to N. B. Edmonstone: 26 September 1803, India Office Records.

pilgrim hunters of the latter half of the 18th century must have found little difficulty in causing multitude to undertake pilgrimage."

In conclusion, Laurie observed "Yet these people in the gradual sunset of their glory, even with their rapacity and violence must have commanded a considerable portion of their veneration. They adhered strictly to the rule of Brahma. This, in the eyes of the people of Orissa, must have covered a multitude of sins."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Orissa, The garden of superstitions and idolary*, Laurie, (1850), p. 24.

According to the Jagannath temple chronicle, the Marathas brought stones from the ruins of the Konarak temple to repair some portions of the Bhogamandapa and the walls of the Temple. They also brought the Aruna pillar or more probably the base of it, from Konarak.

## CHAPTER THREE

### JAGANNATH TEMPLE UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF THE E. I. COMPANY

Lord Wellesley needed the possession of Orissa to connect the British territories of Bengal with the Northern Circars. This was one of the indirect causes of the Second Maratha war. It was arranged that the main body of the army for the conquest of Orissa would start from the Ganjam side under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Lionel Campbell, commanding the Northern Division of the Madras army. In the Despatch to Campbell, the Governor General intimated to him, his "general views and intentions with respect to the occupation of the province of Cuttack." Campbell was told : "You will use every possible means to conciliate the inhabitants. You will promise protection to the persons and property of all those who shall not act against the British authority, declaring that no person shall be molested except such as may appear at arms."<sup>1</sup> But Wellesley went one step further in his effort to conciliate the people of Orissa. He wanted to occupy the province with minimum resistance, as he was preparing for a trial of strength in the Deccan and in the Gangetic Doab.

He wanted to secure the goodwill of the people of Orissa by appealing to their religious susceptibilities. He was aware of their deep veneration for Jagannath. The temple of Jagannath is probably the most cele-

<sup>1</sup> Col. Harcourt, Military Secretary to the Governor-General to Lt. Col. Campbell : 8 August 1803.

Bengal Secret and Political Consultations : 1 March 1804, No. 46, India Office records.

brated temple in India, to which resort pilgrims from all parts of the country.<sup>2</sup>

Col. Campbell was warned not to wound the religious sentiments of the people. He was told : "The question of pilgrims passing to and from Jaggernaut will require your particular attention. You will be careful to afford them the most ample protection and to treat them with every mark of consideration and kindness. On your arrival at Jaggernaut, you will employ every precaution to preserve the respect due to the Pagoda<sup>3</sup> and to the religious prejudices of the Bramins and the pilgrims.

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<sup>2</sup> (i) The influence (of the temple) extends to the remotest region where the worship of Brahma prevails.

Collector of Pilgrim-tax to Board of Revenue : 11 November 1806, Jagannath Temple Correspondence (J.T.C.), Pt. 1.

(ii) The temple of Juggernath is esteemed to be the most sacred of all the religious establishment of the Hindoos and pilgrims annually resort it from every part of India—Secretary, Court of Directors to Secretary Board of Commissioners (Board of Control) : 8 February 1809. Bengal Revenue Consultations, National Library.

(iii) A considerable degree of importance has been attached to the possession of Cuttack from the connexion which it has with the religion of the Hindoos whose reverence for the Temple of Juggernath infinitely surpasses all that has ever been known in the history of ancient or modern superstition of the extravagance of local sanctity.

This celebrated structure may be said to constitute the centre of Bramanical devotion absorbing all the proud and invidious distinction of that extra-ordinary system"—*Memoir of war in India* (1818), Major Thorn, p. 261.

(iv) "Pooree is the principal seat of Hindooism"—Collector, Puri to Commissioner : 31 December 1838, J.T.C., pt. 2.

<sup>3</sup>The Pagoda of Jaggernaut was well known to the British sailors. Some references are quoted below :

(i) Diary of Sir Stryensham Master, Governor of Fort, St. George, dated 23 December 1676 : "He sailed at the sight of the black Pagoda and the White Pagoda. The

“You will furnish the Bramins with such guards as shall afford perfect security to their persons, rites and ceremonies and the sanctity of their religious edifices; you will strictly enjoin those under your command to observe your orders on this important subject to the utmost degree of accuracy and vigilance.” The Governor General wanted to conciliate the Brahmans and priests of the Jagannath temple, though he had no high opinion about them. Campbell was informed by Lt. Col. Harcourt, the Military Secretary to the Governor General “The Bramins are supposed to derive considerable profit from the duties levied from the pilgrims. It will not be therefore possible at the present moment to interrupt the system which prevails in the collection of those duties. The measures calculated to relieve the exactions to which the pilgrims are now subjected by the rapacity of the Bramins would necessarily tend to exasperate the persons whom it must be an object to conciliate.”

“You will therefore signify to the Bramins that it is not your intention to disturb the actual system of collection at the Pagoda; at the same time you will be careful not to contract with the Bramins any engagement which may limit the powers of the British Government to make such arrangements with respect to the

latter is that place called Jaggernat to which the Hindues from all parts of India come on pilgrimage”;

- (ii) In 1712, the ship ‘Marlborough’ went to Jagrenaut on its way to Ganjam, (*Early annals of Bengal*, Vol. I—Wilson);
- (iii) In 1746, the ship ‘Wake’ passed the Black Pagoda and the Jakrenot Pagoda, (*Indian Antiquary*, 1901, p. 342);
- (iv) The Jagarnaut Pagoda is an excellent sea mark on a coast which...exhibits continued sameness”, *Memoirs of a Voyage of Hindostan*: Capt. Reynolds, 1791, p. 242 ;
- (v) The sailing Directory of Dunn (1780) refers to ‘Jagrenot Pagoda’.

Pagoda and to introduce such a reform of existing abuses and vexations as may hereafter be deemed advisable."

"You will assure the Bramins at the Pagoda of Jaggernaut that they will not be required to pay any other revenue or tribute to the British Government than that which they may have been in the habit of paying to the Marhatta Government<sup>4</sup> and that they will be protected in the exercise of their religious duties" Campbell was further instructed : "No part of the property, treasury or valuable articles of any kind contained in the Pagoda of Jaggernaut or in any religious Edifice or possessed by any of the priests or Bramins or persons of any description attached to the Temple or any religious institutions are to be considered as a prize to the Army".

"All such property must be respected as being consecrated to the religious use or by the customs and prejudices of the Hindoos. No account is to be taken of any such property nor is any person to be allowed to enter the Pagoda or any sacred buildings without the express desire of the Bramins."

"You will leave an influential force in the vicinity of Jaggernaut under the command of an officer, in whom you can place perfect reliance for the due execution of the directions contained in these instructions."<sup>5</sup>

For the first time, a Christian Governor General dictated a policy to be pursued regarding a particular Hindu temple. To allay all suspicions from the minds of the custodians of the Jaggannath temple regarding the disposition of the English towards the Hindu religion, the Governor General got a letter written by

<sup>4</sup> "We conquered the country with so little a difficulty by conciliating the people, particularly the Brahmins of the Juggernath temple, by a promise to take the place of the late Government."

Mills, Commissioner to Board of Revenue : 26 August 1843  
Jagannath Temple Correspondance, (J.T.C.), Pt. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Lt. Col. Harcourt to Lt. Col. Campbell : 8 August 1803,  
Bengal Secret and Political Consultations, No. 46.

Jagannath Tarkapanchanan of Triveni in Bengal to the priests of the Jagannath temple.<sup>9</sup> The abstract of the letter states : "From the knowledge which he possesses of the character of the English, he is enabled to assure Ramchaund etc., that they need not be afraid to form a connection with the British Government which is distinguished for its peculiar benevolence to its subjects. Thus satisfied of this, they must exert all their power of persuasion to inspire the respectable characters in that quarter with the same degree of confidence. It is impossible adequately to express the sense of excellence which characterises the disposition of the English. The English Government not only permits the Hindoos the free exercise of their religion but manifests the greatest degree of benevolence and indulgence known to them to all persons of whatever persuasion, or rank or condition in life."

As Lt. Col. Campbell fell ill at Pyaghee, the border outpost of the province of Cuttack, he was replaced by Lt. Colonel Harcourt, the military Secretary to the Governor-General. Harcourt and Melville, the Commissioner for the affairs of Cuttack, arrived at Pyaghee on the 11th September. Campbell informed the Governor-General what a Brahmin told him that day: "That the Bramins at the holy temple consulted and applied to Jaggernaut to inform them what power now was to have this temple under its protection; and

<sup>9</sup> "I am directed by His Excellency the most noble the Governor General to transmit to you the enclosed letter from Jugunnath of Triveny, the oldest and the most eminent of the pundits of Bengal, to Ramchaund and other Bramins residing at the temple of Jaggernaut, encouraging those Bramins to place the Temple and themselves under British protection".

N. B. Edmonstone, Secretary to Government to J. Melville, Commissioner for the affairs of Cuttack : 3 September 1803.

Bengal Secret Persian Correspondence (Eng. Trans.), No. 180., India Office records.

that he has given a decided answer that the English Government was in future to be his guardian.”<sup>7</sup>

Melville utilised this news as a divine message worth communicating in his letters to the ‘chieftains’ of Orissa in order to encourage them to submit to the British authority.<sup>8</sup> Harcourt reached Manikpatna on the 14th September. From that place he despatched a letter to the principal Brahmins of the pagoda of Jaggernaut encouraging them to place the pagoda under the British protection.<sup>9</sup>

“The letter which Col. Harcourt wrote to the priests of the Jaggernaut temple gave them much satisfaction and they sent a deputation of some of their principal men to meet him one march distance from the Temple, and on this subject I shall only say that they appear to consider their being placed under the protec-

<sup>7</sup> Melville to the Governor General : 11 September 1803.

Bengal Secret and Political Consultations : 1 March 1804, No. 13, “Possession was taken of the town and the Temple by the British on September 18, 1803 ; the sacred will of the idol having been first ascertained through the medium of the officiating priest”.

*Description of Hindostan*—Hamilton (1820), Vol. II, p. 51.

<sup>8</sup> “I have sent by special messengers to some of the principal Rajahs letters as my judgment tells me were best adopted to the mentioned purpose and the circumstance of Jaggernaut’s decision (which was a fact) was not omitted”.

Melville to the Governor General : 19 September 1803.

Secret and Political Consultations : 1 March 1804, No. 14, India Office Records.

<sup>9</sup> *Notes relative to the Transactions in the Marhatta Empire* (1804), p. 180, “The promise of Harcourt of direct and active support to their religion has not been forgotten by the Brahmins, and he appears to have had great latitude allowed to him by the instructions published in Marquis of Wellesley’s Despatches”.

Collector, Cuttack to Mills, Commissioner : 10 January 1839, J.T.C., pt. 2.

tion of the British Government as the blessing of the Providence".<sup>10</sup>

From Puri, Harcourt wrote : "Upon application from the chief Bramins of the Pagoda, I have afforded them guards (of Hindoos) and a most satisfactory confidence is shown by the Bramins, priests and officers of the Pagoda and by the inhabitants of Jaggernaut both in their present situation and in the future protection of the British Government".

"From the general good conduct of the troops under my command and from the strict attention which has been paid to my orders for preventing all interference with the inhabitants and natives, framed under the express injunctions of His Excellency the most noble the Governor General, not a single complaint has been made to me, though I have, by every possible means invited a direct communication of the least deviation from this important duty."<sup>11</sup>

The rich Brahman priests of Puri cared only for their own interests. To placate the British, they even utilised the name of Jagannath. "The Bramins at Jaggernaut have this day given the most unequivocal proof of their confidence in us by waiting on me and begging that their wives and families may be permitted

<sup>10</sup> Melville to the Governor General : 19 September 1803.

(i) "On the 15th September, a deputation of venerable white-robed Brahmins begged that the religious key to the province might be placed under the protection of the British. The possession of the god had always given the dominion of Orissa and on the 18th September our army encamped within the shadow of his walls." *Orissa*—Hunter, Vol. II, p. 56.

(ii) "The peaceful occupation of the town of Pooree forms the first stage of our being mixed up in the affairs of Juggernath"—*Orissa, the garden of superstition and idolatry*—W. Laurie, p. 56.

<sup>11</sup> Col. Harcourt to Armstrong, Military Secretary to Governor-General : 18 September 1803.

*Wellesley Despatches*, Vol. III, p. 321.

to be sent to the Ganjam district, there to remain until we shall wholly dispose the Marhattas".<sup>12</sup>

The British army moved towards Cuttack after making arrangements at Puri.<sup>13</sup> Melville deferred the appointment of a chief Parichha after 'personal discussion' with the 'head Bramin of the Temple', because "an appointment so important in all its consequences and relations, is to be made by the supreme authority itself".

As he received no instruction, he again wrote : "I am anxious to receive the command of the most noble His Excellency Marquis of Wellesley in answer to my letter of the 26th ultimo respecting the appointment of Dewl Purcha or person on the part of Government who has the control of the receipts and disbursements etc., of the temple of Jaggernaut. Sewajee Pundit, the person who last represented the Marhatta Government in that situation has lately asked permission to wait upon me but I declined his visit."

"I wish also his Lordship's instructions on the subject of continuing the system of making collections from the pilgrims to the temple of Jaggernaut and on this occasion after the most mature deliberations, I venture to propose the continuance of the collections under

<sup>12</sup> Melville to Military Secretary : 21 September 1803.

Bengal Secret and Political Consultations, No. 15, India Office Records.

<sup>13</sup> "I have the honour of acquainting you for the information of the most noble the Governor General that the Temple and the town of Jaggernaut are placed under the happy protection of the British army and the immediate command of the party has been most judiciously been given by Col. Harcourt to an officer peculiarly qualified for this important trust."

The letter was written from the camp, ten miles north of Jaggernaut.

Melville to Military Secretary to the G.G. : 26 September 1803.

Bengal Secret and Political Consultations, No. 16, India Office Records.

positive restriction that not an anna shall ever in any shape be taken from any pilgrims except those denominated Laal Jatrees in appellation which they willingly give themselves as exempting them from the disgrace of being considered indigent. The annual collections may be expected to amount from two to three laacs of rupees and I consider the established checks as affording security against embezzlement."<sup>14</sup> N. B. Edmonstone conveyed the Governor General's instructions on the points referred to by Melville in his letters dated 26 September and 23 October.

"On the subject of restoration to the office of Sewajee Pundit, the person who controlled the receipts and disbursements of the temple of Jaggernaut under the Marhatta Government, I am directed to observe that in the opinion of His Excellency that measure is calculated to confirm the confidence of the Bramins and officers of the temple of Jaggernaut in the liberality and protection of the British Government."

"On the other hand the restoration of an officer who exercised the superintending authority at Jaggernaut under the Marhatta Government may possibly open a channel of intrigue with the enemy, eventually injurious to the British interests."

"If, however, you should be of opinion that this objection is ill founded and that Sewajee Pundit by character and ability is duly qualified for the trust, you are authorised to restore him to the station which he held. In any case, you will report the circumstances for the information of H.E. the Governor General and wait His Excellency's final order on the subject".

"With regard to the question of continuing the system of making collections from the pilgrims to Jaggernaut, which was practised under the Marhatta Government, I am directed to inform you that if these collections have ceased since the occupation of Jagger-

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<sup>14</sup>Melville to N. B. Edmonstone : 23 October 1803.

Bengal Secret and Political Consultations : 1 March 1804,  
No. 25, India office Records.

naut by the British authority, the Governor General does not wish that those collections should at present be renewed. If the collections have not ceased, they are to continue under the superintendence and control of the Civil local authority."

"I am further directed to observe that it is impracticable to frame a final arrangement for the regulation of the temple of Jaggernaut until the Governor General shall have been furnished with a detailed statement of the system of management which had hitherto prevailed in that Temple, and His Excellency directs that you will transmit that information at the earliest practicable period of time."<sup>15</sup>

The Board of Commissioners replied : "We do not find after the most diligent enquiry the character of Sewajee Pundit sufficiently respectable to make it appear to us desirable that he should continue long in the office of Dewul Purcha in the temple of Jaggernaut; but as some person in that capacity is immediately wanted to keep the different establishments of the Temple from falling in to confusion, we have given the temporary charge to Sewajee Pundit, on his promising to act justly and faithfully and that he will in the space of seventy days deliver to us all the accounts of the Temple for the whole year and we are in hopes that in the accounts, materials will be found for proposing the informations required by His Excellency the Governor General."<sup>16</sup>

The Board of Commissioners informed the priests of the Jagannath temple : "Be it known to the Dewul Karn and Sewuks of the 36 departments of the temple of Sree Jaggernaut Jew that whereas it has come to our knowledge that from the want of Dewul Purcha

<sup>15</sup> Edmonstone, to Harcourt and Melville : 1 November 1803. Bengal Secret and Political Consultations : No. 26.

<sup>16</sup> Board of Commissioners to Edmonstone : 12 November 1803.

Bengal Secret and Political Consultations : No. 32.

on the part of the English Company in the temple of Sree Jaggernaut Jew, much confusion has been arisen in the service of the Sree Jew above mentioned. Therefore Sewajee Pundit, the former Dewul Purcha, has been now appointed. It is therefore ordered that according to former customs it is incumbent on you to be present with the Purcha above mentioned and with controlled minds to attend at the fixed times to the services of the Sree Jew."<sup>17</sup>

During the peace talk between Jaswant Rao Ramachandra, the agent of the Raja of Nagpur and Col. Wellesley which began at Deogaon on 30 November 1803, the agent made objection to the cession of south Orissa to the British on the ground that "Jugunnath was his (the Raja's) own Pagoda, he was desirous of retaining it, that his honour was involved in this point."<sup>18</sup>

Col. Wellesley made it clear that the possession of the whole of the province of Cuttack was absolutely necessary for the establishment of direct communication between Bengal and the Northern Circars. That purpose would be defeated if the Raja of Nagpur were to retain the southern part of the province. The Governor General pointed out that "the loss of Jaggernaut must deeply affect the consideration of the Raja of Berar in the eyes of all native powers."<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Quoted by F. Halliday, Secretary to Government of Bengal to Secretary, Government of India : 11 March 1844.

Bengal Revenue Consultations : West Bengal Archives, No. 177, "The order published by the Commissioners on this occasion identified the Government more closely with the institution of Juggernath and proves incontestably...the position which the British Government ought to hold in relation to the Temple." Halliday

<sup>18</sup> *Home Miscellaneous*, fol. 623. Quoted in *Orissa under the Marathas*—Dr. B. C. Roy, p. 126.

<sup>19</sup> *Selections from the Wellesley Despatches*, Vol. III,—Owen, p. 410.

The designation 'Raja of Berar' was a misnomer. Probably

**Administration under the Board of Commissioners**

The Governor General appointed J. Melville as the Civil Commissioner for the affairs of Cuttack on the 3rd August 1803. James Hunter was appointed assistant to J. Melville. Lt. Col. G. Harcourt was designated Commanding in Cuttack and Commissioner for the settlement of the Province. Melville was required "to act in conformity to the opinion of that officer" (N. B. Edmonstone to Melville, Letter No. 24: 1 March 1804). George Hartwell took charge as Secretary to the Board of Commissioners. In June 1804, he was succeeded by Thomas Fortesque. On 16 June 1804, the province was divided into two Divisions. The Board of Commissioners deputed James Hunter, as acting Collector of Jaggernaut or South Division "to collect revenue and to superintend the Temple concern". Krishnachandra Mahapatra, head Punda, and the three Parichhas were confirmed in their posts.<sup>20</sup>

The Commissioners were anxious for smooth celebration of the Car festival to be held for the first time under the British rule in July 1804. They wrote to Hunter: "We have thought that great public benefit will arise during the approaching festival from the appointment of an impartial disinterested person acquainted with the approved usages on such occasions, whose character is held in respect by all ranks." Accordingly, they appointed Govinda Ray Mahasay, "in whom all the above qualities are represented."<sup>21</sup>

The Board of Commissioners again wrote to

Warren Hastings first described the Raja of Nagpur as the Raja of Berar, though over Berar the Bhonsles had 'no exclusive territorial control'.

<sup>20</sup> A Sunnad was granted to Krishnachandra Mahapatra by Melville and Harcourt (Trower to Board of Revenue: 26 November 1817, O.S.A.).

<sup>21</sup> T. Fortesque to J. Hunter, 2 July 1804, O.S.A., Vol: 1803-04. On 3 July 1804, Fortesque informed Hunter that

J. Hunter, acting Collector of Jagannath. "It has been the anxious solicitation and desire of the Commissioners, founded upon the express orders of His Excellency the most noble the Governor General that no interference or innovation should be experienced at the pagoda of Jaggernaut by any act of their authority and that former ceremonies and customs should be permitted and supported on every occasion as affecting in the utmost degree the peace and happiness of so vast a portion of the inhabitants of the British dominion in India. I am therefore directed that you will immediately issue particular instructions to all persons concerned in the arrangements respecting the pagoda that they are to implicitly follow the established and approved usage of former years and that you will confine your interference and authority within the limits of that which may appear to have been the former practice during the late Government."<sup>22</sup>

The priests of the Jagannath temple found that the new rulers were sincere in their solicitude for the Temple, and they tried to exploit the ignorance of the foreigners regarding the customs of the Temple. On the 30th June, 1804, Hunter forwarded a petition to the Board of Commissioners from the Parichhas of the temple of Jagannath, requesting for a variety of articles as presents for several priests and persons attached there, in order to avert the evil consequences of famine and mortality which were dreaded from the calamity of an adjutant bird having alighted upon the head of the goddess Bimalakshi, and her Saree having been wet by its perspiration.<sup>23</sup> The Board's reaction

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Govinda Ray Mahasaya 'a venerable character' would meet him with a letter of introduction from Melville.

[B.R.A. (Board of Revenue, Archives) /

<sup>22</sup> Fortesque to Hunter, 3 July 1804, B.R.A., Vol. December 1803—December 1804.

<sup>23</sup> It is stated in the Jagannath Temple Chronicle that during the reign of Gopinatha Deva (1720-27) an owl sat on the head of Jagannath and defiled it. This necessitated special purifica-

to this novel method of extortion was cautious. The Collector was informed : "Although the Board are anxious on all occasions as far as may be consistent with propriety and due regard to the maintenance of interests entrusted to them, to yield to the religious prejudices and opinion of the priests and Bramins of the temple of Jaggernaut, yet they cannot view the above transaction in any other light than a direct attempt to impose upon and extract money from Government; and while they deem to be requisite, from the principles of policy as well as just regard to the happiness of so vast a proportion of the people, to respect and afford very liberal aid towards the support of established customs and privileges, as connected with the dignity of their religious institutions, and the influence and authority of their priests and Brahmins; they at the same time feel it to be their duty to uphold the credit of the British Government from the insult of imposition, neither permitting the prostitution of its extensive principle of toleration and benevolence, nor of the sacred and religious opinions of the Hindoo sect, by any undue extension of the authority on the part of the priests and Brahmins, originating in the effusions of the bounty and protection of the British Government."

"In the present instance the Board might have deemed it proper to withhold their compliance in the request of the petitioners now presented, nor it not for the alarm which has already been excited in the minds of the people and their belief that the measure proposed by the priests and learned men of Jaggernaut is the only remedy by which these apprehensions can be subdued."

"You are accordingly directed to communicate to the priests and the Brahmins of the temple of Jaggernaut the acquiescence of the Board in the request of

tion of the Temple with three baths of the image of Jagannath. But there is no reference to presents of a variety of articles to the priests.

their petition; but you will acquaint them privately that in doing so the Board was actuated solely by a desire to save them from the blame and reproach they would necessarily be subjected, in consequence of the late unfortunate occurrence, were it to become evident that the cause of the misfortune originated in their inattention and neglect in the discharge of their religious functions and ceremonies.”

Hunter was requested to communicate the foregoing observaton to the priests of the Jagannath temple; and at the same time to promulgate the intention of the Government “neither to interfere nor to permit the least deviaton whatever in the rites and ceremonies appertaining to the Pagoda.”<sup>24</sup>

The Mohunts who supplied cloth to Jagannath's Rath sent a petition for payment of the price of the cloth. The Collector was asked by the Board to make enquiry and to recommend payment ‘by the Chief Officer’ of the temple of Jagannath.<sup>25</sup>

Mukunda Deb, Raja of Khurda, hoped that the Christian Government would hand over the administration of the temple of Jagannath to him. But he was soon disillusioned. The Dewan of the Raja of Khurda wrote a letter to Morar Pundit, threatening him with punishment for alleged oppression of the Brahmins, who were under the protection of the Khurda Raja.<sup>26</sup> The Raja of Khurda wanted to establish his right over the Jagannath temple which

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<sup>24</sup> Fortesque to Hunter : 19 September, 1804,  
O.S.A., Vol. September—November 1804.

<sup>25</sup> Fortesque to Hunter : 11 October 1804,  
O.S.A., Vol. December 1803—December 1804

<sup>26</sup> Dewan to Morar Pundit : 23 March 1804,  
O.S.A., Vol. December 1803—December 1804.

Harcourt secretly wrote a letter to Hunter that a ‘very improper’ letter was written by the Dewan threatening punishment ‘for some supposed act of oppression of some Brahmins’. Harcourt suspected that the alleged act of oppression was a pretext for inciting the Brahmins.

the British rulers were not prepared to admit. The Raja had claimed Nuzar from the Jagannath temple and the Government conceded his demand. The Board of Commissioners directed Morar Pundit, the Wahadadar or custodian of the Temple to pay 9 gold Mohurs and 10 rupees to Mukunda Deb which he was 'getting every year from Poorshuttum Chutter' on the Suni day.<sup>27</sup>

The Raja now made further demands. He sent a letter to Morar Pundit, asking him to collect a number of sheep and goats from the pergunahs of Serain, Chabiskud and Rahang which had been "regularly done till this year at the time of Ruth Jatra".<sup>28</sup> There was special reason for the Raja's liking for the sheep and goats of those particular pergunahs. Serain, Chabiskud and Rahang belonged to the Rajahs of Khurda before they were ceded to the Marathas. Now that the Marathas had gone, the Raja hoped that the British Government would restore the pergunahs to him. But the Government had no intention to do so. Acting under the instruction of the Board of Commissioners, Morar Pundit did not comply with the Rajah's request. In October 1804, armed retainers of the Khurda Raja raided some villages near Pipli (40 km. from Puri) and carried away some cattle. The Board of Commissioners decided to punish the Khurda Raja for his hostile attitude.<sup>29</sup> In November 1804, military operations were conducted against the Raja of Khurda. On the 9th December, Morar Pundit was directed not to use the the name of Mukunda Deb at the time of prayer to Jagannath, he being the "enemy of the British Government." Purwanas were

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<sup>27</sup> Fortesque to Morar Pundit : 11 September 1804,  
B.R.A., Vol. December 1803—December 1804.

<sup>28</sup> Hunter to Fortesque : 12 September 1804,  
B.R.A., Vol. February—December 1804.

<sup>29</sup> Fortesque to Collector, Jagannath : 3 November 1804,  
O.S.A., Vol. December 1803—December 1804.

sent to the Collectors intimating the expulsion of the Khoordah Rajah, followed by the annexation of his country.<sup>30</sup>

On 29 October, 1804, Charles Groeme assumed office as the Judge, Magistrate and Collector of the Southern Division. Sewajee Pundit sent a petition to the Board of Commissioners asking for money to meet the expenses of the Temple. Charles Groeme was directed to pay the balance of the last year (1211 Umlee : September 1803-September 1804) to Sewajee 'Ungtes' on account of the expenses of the Temple

<sup>30</sup> T. Fortesque to Collectors : 19 December 1804,  
B.R.A., Vol. December 1803—December 1804.

It is difficult to explain why the Rajah of Khoordah was considered 'rebellious'. No reason was adduced at that time. Harcourt wrote that "the example that has been made of the rebellious Rajah of Koordah will effectively prevent the occurrence of these difficulties we had already experienced."

Harcourt to Shawe : 24 December 1804,  
Addl. MSS, British Museum, p. 193.

After fifty years it was stated that Khurda was confiscated "in consequence of the then Rajah having sided with the Marhattas and opposed the march of the British troops through the Khoordah territory".

E. A. Samuels, Commissioner to Board of Revenue : 24 March 1854, B. R. A., Vol. 1854.

But the Khurda Raja in his petition while a prisoner, stated that he allowed the British troops 'safe passage through his territory'. (B.R.A., 1806-07.)

After the British conquest, three zamindars, the Rajas of Kanika, Kujang and Khurda suffered for their hostilities against the new Government. Balabhadra Bhanja, the Raja of Kanika, and Chandradhaja, the Raja of Kujang, were imprisoned, but their territories were not annexed. There was a feeling that the annexation of Khurda was too harsh a punishment for the Raja's contumacy. The superintendence of the Jagannath temple was indirectly a compensation for the wrong done to the Raja of Khurda.

and to advance Rs. 10,000 to meet the expenses of the present year.<sup>31</sup>

The Board of Commissioners directed Groeme to make arrangements for the construction of the Raths in time for the smooth celebration of the Car festival in 1805. Groeme was asked to advance Rs. 10,606 to Dol Govinda, the Rath Parichha, "to enable him to commence the Ruth."<sup>32</sup>

The Board passed the 'Jumma Kharch' account of the construction of the Raths for 1211 Umlee and directed Groeme to pay the balance to Dol Govinda. Groeme was informed: "In the preparation of the Ruth for present year, it is the desire of the Board that you will render every customary and necessary aid to Dolgobind."<sup>33</sup>

The Commissioners addressed the Secretary to the Government of Bengal: "We have the honour to acquaint you for the information of His Excellency the Governor General in Council that repeated applications have been made to us by the officers and the priests of the Juggernaut temple requesting the renewal of the Toll which has under the former Government in Cuttack been levied on the pilgrims arriving at Juggernaut. It appears that heretofore

<sup>31</sup> Fortesque to C. Groeme: 1 December 1804,

O.S.A., Vol. August 1804—August 1805.

"The Commissioners found themselves called by the Brahmins in virtue of previous negotiation, and as it would appear according to the responsibility of its predecessors in respect of the Temple, which the British Government had purposely assumed, to disburse—as has been done by the previous Government, the usual sums required for the expenditure of ceremonies".

F. Halliday, Secretary to Govt. of Bengal to Secretary to Govt. of India: 11 March 1844.

Bengal Revenue Consultations: W.B.A., No. 177.

<sup>32</sup> Fortesque to C. Groeme: 18 January 1805,

J.T.C., pt. 1.

<sup>33</sup> Fortesque to C. Groeme: 11 March 1805,

O.S.A., Vol. August 1804—August 1805.

the sum of rupees eleven was levied by Government on local Jattreys of a certain class and description on their reaching Juggernaut. Previous to their arrival at Juggernaut, a sum of rupees two was given to the officers of the Temple, making the whole sum thirteen rupees."

"The sum of eleven rupees, collected by the Government, was supposed to constitute a fund by which the State was reimbursed for the heavy charges incurred by Government for the support of the Pagoda and altho the annual amount of the expenses defrayed by Government was very great, the yearly revenue arising from the Toll did more than cover the ordinary expenditure".

"We have been applied for the customary advance of Rs. 16,000 to provide supply of ghee and rice for the consumption of the priests and their families and of the pilgrims during their residence at Juggernaut at the approaching festivals."

"If these donations are denied, it is to be apprehended, in addition to the great distress it will occasion, the Pagoda will be deserted. If these disbursements are to be continued, without establishing the former sources to meet so heavy an expenditure, we beg to be honoured with the command of His Excellency the Governor General in Council for appropriation of the required sum from the Territorial revenue."

"It is further our duty to submit for the consideration of His Excellency the most noble the Governor General in Council not only the expediency but the policy of renewing the tax on the pilgrims proceeding to Juggernaut. It would appear that the priests and officers of the Temple would be highly pleased with the renewal of certain source of revenue on which their livelihood depends; and it is not on the other hand less reasonable to suppose that they had considerable doubts at present, as to the continuance of donations, while no appropriate provision is to be made to meet the expenditure."

“On this ground, we beg strongly to recommend the renewal of the tax on local Jattreys under strictest regulations to secure its being levied with every degree of mildness, humanity and care”.<sup>34</sup>

The Governor General wanted a report on the internal administration of the Temple before making legislation for the pilgrim tax and management of the Temple. The Secretary to the Government wrote to the Board of Commissioners, “In His Excellency’s instructions to you for the establishment of the authority of the British Government in the province, he directed that all collections levied on the pilgrims proceeding to Juggernaut should be abolished. Great oppressions had been exercised by the Marhatta Government in levying those collections and as it was impracticable to enquire into them or reform them, during the progress of the British army in the conquest of the province, His Excellency in Council judged it preferable to order a general abolition of those duties in the first instance, instead of attempting to regulate them under the principles of their original establish-

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<sup>34</sup> Quoted by Halliday, Secretary, Govt. of Bengal to Secretary, Government of India : 11 March 1844.

Bengal Revenue Consultations : West Bengal Archives No. 177. Date of the letter was not given. Halliday observed :

“The Brahmins with characteristic suspicion were doubtful whether the English would keep faith on this vital point and were eager that by the re-establishment of the tax, levied by former Government on the pilgrims, the interests of the new rulers might be brought in, and of their veracity to their former promise renewed and corroborated as it were a public and manifest seal to the engagements”. xxx

“The Commissioners on their part expressed no doubts of the responsibility of Government, but on the contrary treated it as a matter of indispensable obligation, and it was evidently on that account, having actually incurred on the part of Govt. the liability to provide funds that they readily adopted the suggestion of the Brahmins as to the source from which re-embursement might be made”.

ment, leaving it for further consideration, whether these duties should be wholly or partially established under a better regulated system of collection."

"From the information of the First Commissioner (Melville) on this subject, His Excellency in Council is satisfied that it will be, in every point of view, advisable to establish moderate rates of duty or collection on the pilgrims proceeding to perform their devotion at Jaggernaut."

"Independently of the sanction afforded to this measure by the practice of the late Hindoo Government in Cuttack, the heavy expense attendant on the repair of the pagoda, and the maintenance of the establishment attached to it, renders it necessary, from considerations connected with the public resources, that funds should be provided for defraying the expenses."

"His Excellency also understands that it will be consonant to the wishes of the Brahmins attached to the pagoda, as well as of the Hindoos in general, that a revenue should be raised by Government from the pagoda. The establishment of this revenue will be considered both by the Brahmins and the persons desirous of performing the pilgrimage to afford them a permanent security, that the expense of the pagoda will be regularly defrayed by Government, and that its attention will always be directed to the protection of the pilgrims resorting to it." xxx

"There can be no objection to the British Government of relieving itself from a heavy annual expense and of providing funds to answer the contingent charges of the religious institutions of the Hindoo faith maintained by the British Government."

"His Excellency in Council therefore desires that you will proceed without delay to establish duties to be levied from the pilgrims proceeding to Jaggernaut, taking advice of the principal Brahmins attached to the pagoda, as to the rates which may be collected from the several description of pilgrims, without subjecting them to distress or inconvenience. Previously however to the collection of any duty on the pilgrims pro-

ceeding to Jaggernauth, you will report the rates of duties and the rules which you may propose to levy on them for the consideration of the Governor General in Council, under whose further orders you will empowered to regulate this important question.<sup>35</sup>

On 11 March 1805, Groeme was directed by the Board of Commissioners to proceed to Puri and was given the following instructions: "They deem it highly desirable that you should obtain such informations in regard to the establishments and customs thereof as shall enable you to form a report on the same, calculated to assist us in proposing to His Excellency the most noble the Governor General, the adoption of such arrangements as may be deemed expedient and advisable for the permanent regulation and support of the important religious institution of Juggernauth." xx

"You will therefore proceed to ascertain and examine the former customs of the Marhatta Government in levying and collecting duties upon pilgrims coming to and from Juggernauth and the principles upon which they acted, taking advice of the principal officiating Brahmins attached to the Pagoda, as to the rates which may now be collected from the several descriptions of pilgrims, without subjecting them to distress and inconvenience, and the rules and the places at which you recommend these duties be collected with requisite establishment for that purpose, and finally such restrictions and precautions as will be necessary to adopt for the efficient and regular collection of the duties."

"You will state any description of persons whom it may have been customary to exempt from the payment of duties together with the reasons for so doing."

"You will endeavour to ascertain the different ceremonies within the Temple and the amount of customary fee to the officiating Brahmins at each cere-

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<sup>35</sup> Secretary to Government to Board of Commissioners : 4 March 1805, Parliamentary Papers, 1845 : National Library.

mony but you will be careful to avoid making any open enquiry in to the nature of them." xxx

"It is highly desirable that an account should be obtained of the lands appropriated to the temple resources or revenue thereof and the amount of annual demand established by customs or otherwise on certain pergunahs and villages, stating as correctly as possible the period of their origin, and generally all information descriptive of the resources of the Temple." xxx

"In presenting your enquiry you will be careful to avoid any apprehension which may possibly tend to excite jealousy or alarm in the minds of Brahmins or pilgrims as affecting their rights and privileges, or the real and ostensible object of your enquiries which are directed to the establishment of a permanent and suitable provision for the various and necessary expenses attendant on the Pagoda and of a regular system for the performance of important duties and ceremonies connected with the religious establishment of the Temple." xxx

"You will further report on principal Brahmins of the different sects or classes who perform the various ceremonies and duties of the Temple, whom you will consult in proposing such arrangements as may be deemed requisite for the regulation of the affairs of the Temple." xxx

"The foregoing are the general points to which your enquiries are to be directed. Much however must be left to judgment and discretion in prosecuting these enquiries."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> T. Fortesque to C. Groeme, Collector, Zilla Jagannath : 11 March 1805,

O.S.A., Vol. January 1805—June 1806.

There were other causes for the impositions of the Pilgrim tax. By imposing the tax, the Government wanted to restrict the admission and duration of the stay of poor pilgrims during the important festivals. There were no sanitary and Police arrangements at that time. A few Burkandazes could not control the crowd specially during the Car festival. Groeme wrote that a

The Board of Commissioner instructed Groeme, the Collector of Zilla Jagannath, to make necessary advances, so that the worship of Jagannath might not suffer due to lack of funds.<sup>37</sup>

Sewajee Pundit made a petition to the Board of Commissioners seeking the assistance of the Government to collect revenue for the Temple.<sup>38</sup>

Groeme submitted his Report on the 10th June, 1805; He acknowledged the assistance he received from Jagannath Rajguru, the second Parichha. Jagannath Rajguru, who wanted the restoration of the

number of pilgrims were trampled under feet and crushed to death during the Car festivals.

The Government also hoped that the tax would be an additional source of income after meeting the expenses of the Temple. Immediately after the conquest, the Board of Commissioners reported that the annual collection from the Pilgrim tax fetched two to three lakhs of rupees during the Maratha rule.

Melville to Government : 23 October 1803,

Bengal Secret & Political Consultations.

<sup>37</sup>“The Board desired that every requisite and authorized allowance according to the established custom and usage and practice of the Temple be granted and proper attention be given to the due appropriation of the sum so granted”.

Fortesque to C. Groeme : 9 April 1805,

O.S.A., Vol. January—June 1805.

Fortesque again reminded Groeme “The Board deem it to be a matter of considerable importance that no cause should operate to delay the necessary advance for the use of the Temple administration”.

Fortesque to C. Groeme : 30 June 1805,

O.S.A., Vol. January 1805—June 1806.

<sup>38</sup> “Till the year 1216 Umlee or 1808, it was the custom of the Purchas to collect revenue from the lands and the same to be appropriated to the support of the Jagannath temple and to expend it in the service of the idol like any other Lakheraj lands, Government making up deficiencies whatever might be”.

Collector, Puri to A. J. Mills, Commissioner : 10 January 1842, No. 18 : J.T.C., pt. 3.

authority of the Khurda Raja over the Jagannath temple, gave a description of good administration in the Temple, when it was under the control of the Rajas of Khurda. Groeme depended on hearsay evidence, when he referred to the Temple administration under the Khurda Rajas, as the authority of those Rajas over the Temple ceased wellnigh sixty years ago.

Groeme wrote: "During the period that the affairs of the Temple were under the immediate control and management of the Rajahs of Khoordah, even the slightest deviations from the prescribed duties were severely punished either by fine or corporal punishment; but from the time the superintendence of the affairs has been under the control of the former (Maratha) Government, the discipline of the temple had gradually relaxed."

"Two are of greatest importance—the attendance of the Sewuks (servants) and the articles required for each ceremony. Any deviation from these duties was punished by the Khoordah Rajahs with utmost severity. Now utmost confusion prevails, and the ceremony which should be performed before day light is sometimes postponed to the advanced hours of the day, and consequently many of the numerous daily ceremonies must be set aside together. The former Governments punished these offences by depriving the offenders of their shares of sacred food for a day." xxx

"The Akhand Meheep or persons charged with lighting the lamps in the Temple, care for their own interests and since all the fear of punishments has ceased, are keeping up so very faint a light in the Temple that the pilgrims are almost entirely precluded from seeing the idol." xxx

"It has always been customary for the Swars or cooks whose appointments are hereditary to sell or mortgage their chooly's or cooking places. . . . Other servants of the temple whose situations are hereditary, likewise dispose of their places in the same way—on which account frequent disputes arise in the Temple

between the heirs of the Shewuks and the mortgagees and purchasers." xxx

"The principal Brahmins are not considered to be sufficiently learned or by any means capable of giving advice on matters of importance, such as explanation of omens<sup>39</sup> and the best mode of averting them or any other business deemed necessary for the proper management of the temple." xxx

"The confusion which at present exists in every department of the Temple precludes the possibility of the principal Brahmins of different sects from having that complete control over the subordinate officers which is so essentially necessary for the due and regular performance of the ceremonies."

"It is contrary to the established custom of the Temple to sell Mahapershad anywhere but on the twenty-second step of the Temple and near 'snan munch' ; but now for want of attention, Mahapershad is sold everywhere indiscriminately. Half the ingredients of the bhoges are embazzled either by the cooks or by persons supplying them." xxx

"It was customary for opulent people who wished to give a permanent bhoge to the Deity to purchase lands the resources of which were to be appropriated for the use of the god. The donor of such lands generally gave the lands to the Mutdharees. To prevent embezzlements of their resources, the Rajahs of Khoordah used to examine the accounts, but for the last fifteen or twenty years, no trouble has been taken and the consequence is enormous embezzlement by these Mutdharees instead of appropriating the resources of these lands to the purposes for which these were designed." xxx

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<sup>39</sup> On the appearance of bad omen, it was customary for the Pundits, Brumcharees, and Sannayeesees of the Poorshutum Sasan to assemble in the Mukti Mandap, where the Purchas and principal Sewuk Brahmins likewise attended. 'Niladri Mahododhi' and 'Mayur Chitter' were consulted. Those 'Pottees' contain all bad omens that may occur.—Groeme's Report.

“The Pundahs and other servants of the Temple have lately made it a practice to ask for horses and other things in the name of Jugunath, but during the Marhatta Government the fear of punishment deterred them. It is considered improper to deprive the Deity of any present in his name. Notwithstanding all this, it is very well-known, such is the impiety and disorder which reigns throughout every department of the Temple that even the principal servants such as Kishenchunder Mahapatar Singharee and others take horses in the name of the Deity and keep them. Sewajee Pundit the third Parichha, from his having the sole management of the Temple receipts, contrary to ancient customs, puts even the keeping of his horse to the account of the Temple.”

“Pilgrims have lately been plundered by the Singharees at the head of whom is Kishenchunder Mahapatar. It is customary for the pilgrims to make offerings of cloth to the idol and to pay a fee but the amount was left entirely to the discretion of the donors. Kishenchunder positively refuses any offerings of cloth unless cash nearly equivalent to the value of the cloth is offered.”

Groeme also observed that it was a practice of many of the Shewuks of the Temple whose business was to show the idol to the pilgrims to extort more than what they were willing to pay.

Groeme's Report made it clear that the posts of the priests of the Jagannath temple were hereditary but they were liable to be dismissed on the ground of misconduct. “In former times, attention was paid to the due performance of duties and neglect of it was sure to bring punishment to the offender.”

“Any servant of the Temple who was guilty of an enormous offence either towards God or man, or committed theft in the temple was dismissed from his situation, whether hereditary servant or otherwise, by the Rajah of Khoordah.”

Groeme proposed that the British Government should retain the right of dismissal of the Temple

priests who were guilty of misconduct. The Pundahs were answerable for taking improper persons into the Temple. Groeme suggested that in cases of detection of admission of improper persons, "the Pundahs be heavily fined and the persons going in is to receive corporal punishment."

To prevent misappropriation of presents to Jagannath, Groeme suggested deterrent punishment. "To prevent such impious abuses and as they are of a very atrocious nature in the eyes of the Hindoos, it is proposed that any servant convicted of it, be dismissed with disgrace."

The former Government punished irregularity in the performance of daily ceremonies by depriving the offenders of their quota of sacred food. Groeme proposed that the punishment should continue for the first offence of this kind committed by the priests. "For the repetition of the offence, they should be fined rupees five and for the third offence committed without sufficient reason they were to be dismissed."<sup>40</sup>

Groeme recommended imposition of the Pilgrim tax after modifying the system of collection that prevailed under the Marathas. The Board of Commissioners submitted a Draft of a Regulation for the management of the temple of Jagannath to the Board of Revenue. They recommended imposition of the Pilgrim tax and appointment of a Collector of Pilgrim tax. They also suggested that a Committee of three Pundits be appointed to superintend the affairs of the Temple. The Board of Revenue, on the 17th June, forwarded the Draft to the Bengal Government which received the approval of the Governor General in Council.

In July 1805 Harcourt visited Puri to witness the Car festival. He wrote "The Pilgrims and the priests appeared to be highly gratified by the attendance of

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<sup>40</sup> C. Groeme to T. Fortesque, 10 June 1805, O.S.A., Vol. January-July 1805.

European gentlemen and received us with shouts and clappings of hands." xx

"The general impression both among the priests and the pilgrims is highly favourable to the British Government. The gratitude they have expressed for the protection afforded to them, the confidence they feel that it will be continued, and the relief they experienced from the oppression of the Marhattas are powerful reasons to believe their sincerity, and in every instance they have manifested the strongest feelings of respect and attention to all of us."

"When I recall that two years since I was insulted (?) at this place and compare that treatment with the respectful zealous and feeling attention, I have met from all principal priests and other descriptions of people assembled here, it is quite astonishing to me."

"I was principally induced in determining to be present at this principal festival by the wish to establish that respect which at a future period they might object to show for the principal authorities in the province, and having fully accomplished this object, I shall return to Cuttack tomorrow."

"I hope by the information we will obtain here we will be enabled to lay before His Excellency, a report upon which some arrangements may be formed for the levy of some duty or tax on the pilgrims."<sup>41</sup>

Harcourt took back with him a complimentary letter, written on paper over laid with gold leaf, containing signatures of eighteen Mohunts of Puri and of two priests of the Jagannath temple.

The complimentary letter was addressed to One, who like Sun, caused to blossom the lotus, representing the English people ; who is the protector of Deva, Brahmanas and Vaishnavas—Nawab Mustaq-ul-Mulk (? ) Asraf-ul-Asraf (?) Markois Balasalli,

"Lt. Col. Harcourt to Major Shawe, 11 July 1805, Addl. MSS 13610, British Museum (London).

'Goranara' General Bahadur. It was represented that under the benign rule of the English Government, and by the order of the Nawab Sahib, they were given every support. They prayed for the perpetuation of the British rule, which was better than the previous rule. The people were happy in the present kingdom of righteousness, like one which had been established before by Brahma.<sup>42</sup>

Among the signatories were Krishnachandra Mahapatra, the Chhatisa Niyog Nayaka and Jagannath Rajguru, the second Parichha—the two most powerful priests of the Temple. Radhakrishna Goswami and two other persons signed in Bengali. Tirumala Venkatachari signed in Telugu and Ratna Simhachari did it in Kanarese. Gurmuk Das, a signatory, was the Mohunt of the Jagannath Ballabh Math. Many of the signatories came in the wake of the Maratha rule. They hailed the advent of the British rule in the complimentary letter, expressive of their servile mentality.

On 5 September 1805, Regulation XII of 1805 was passed, making provision for the collection of tax on the pilgrims resorting to the Temple of Jagannath. Two of the sections of the Regulation were intended to conciliate the Hindu sentiments.

"Nothing herein shall be construed to authorize the resumption of the established donation for the support of the temple of Juggernath, the charitable donation to the officers of certain Hindoo temples called Annochatrees and allowance granted for the support of the Hindoo temple at Cuttack called Seetaram Thakurbaree."

"Nothing contained in the Regulation shall be construed to authorize the resumption of the rents of any lands assigned under the grants from the Rajah of Berar or from any zamindar, Talookdar or any actual proprietor of lands in the Zilla of Cuttack as endow-

<sup>42</sup> *Sanskrit Documents* : Dr. S. N. Sen & U. C. Mishra, No. 25 : 24 July 1805.

ments of the temple of Juggernath, or of the Muths in the vicinity of that temple or for similar purposes ; provided however that any fixed quit rent which the holders of such lands are bound to pay by the condition of their grants, shall continue to be paid agreeably to former usage.”<sup>43</sup>

#### **Administration under a Collector and a Magistrate**

In the second half of 1805, important administrative changes took place. On the 14th September 1805, the Commission for the affairs of Cuttack was dissolved. The two Divisions of the province of Cuttack were amalgamated into one District which was placed under the charges of one Judge-Magistrate and one Collector.<sup>44</sup>

On 23 January 1806, a petition was received from Morar Pundit, ‘Jaggernath Rajekowar’, and Sewajee Pundit, stating they had been employed on the part of the Government and that all the moneys allotted to them in the preceding year, were spent for the use of the Temple ; and that during the four months of the present year, nothing whatever had been paid for the same purpose which compelled them to borrow money.

In consequence of the above representation, the

<sup>43</sup> In Regulation XII of 1805, “Without any reference to the tax on pilgrims, not then established, the donation to the Temple is distinctly called ‘the established donation for the support of the Temple of Juggernath’ and is at the same time specially exempted from the operation of laws regarding the resumption of religious pensions and allowances”.

Secretary, Government of Bengal to Secretary, Government of India : 11 March 1844.

Bengal Revenue Consultations : W. B. Archives.

“Up to 1816, the Collector’s headquarters was at Puri.

“Puri was doubtless selected on account of its importance in connection with the pilgrim tax and the Temple”. *A Sketch of Orissa*—Toynbee, p. 13.

acting Collector of the Pilgrim tax was authorized to make such advances of cash, as might be necessary for the support of the Temple and for the maintenance of its ministers and officers, conformable to former usages.<sup>45</sup>

The Secretary, Board of Revenue was intimated : "The Vice-President in Council desires that you will make it an object of your particular attention to establish such rules respecting the admission of the pilgrims to the Temple, as may be calculated to preserve good order and prevent accidents."<sup>46</sup>

In November 1805, the Board of Revenue prepared the draft of a Regulation in conformity to the provisions contained in Section 31 of Regulation XII of 1805, for the collection of a tax on the pilgrims resorting to the temple of Jagannath. The Vice-President in Council 'was pleased' to depute J. Hunter of the Judicial department at Purneah to officiate as the Collector of the Pilgrim tax.<sup>47</sup>

He was appointed on 21 November 1805 on a salary of Rs. 500 per month with a commission of 1 per cent of the gross collection of the Pilgrim tax. Hunter reached Puri towards the end of December 1805. The Pilgrim tax was collected from January 1806 even before the draft regulation regarding collection of the Pilgrim tax was passed by the Governor General in Council. The Pilgrim tax was

<sup>45</sup> Board of Commissioners to Hunter : 30 January 1806. Bengal Revenue Consultations : Papers relative to E. I. Affairs, National Library.

In 1212 Umlee, Sewajee Pundit received Sicca Rs. 30,000 to meet the expenditure of the Jagannath Temple.

Hunter to Board of Revenue : 8 November 1806.

<sup>46</sup> Secretary, Revenue Department to Board of Revenue : 21 November 1805.

Bengal Revenue Consultations : Parliamentary Papers, 1813.

<sup>47</sup> Hunter was selected "because of his residence last year at Juggernath and his intercourse with the people".

O.S.A., Vol. January 1805—June 1806.

imposed on 22 January 1806. But on the first day, the pilgrims were allowed to enter Puri without making any payment. Next day five Bhurring Jatrees paid Rupees two each. The number of pilgrims considerably increased within a few days. Hunter, the Collector of the tax, wrote to J. Dowdeswell, Secretary, Revenue Department that he had found it necessary to station four 'Batpeadas' to control the crowd at Athura Nulla Ghat.

Hunter explained that Batpeadas were road-peons who were formerly employed by the Marhatta Government to prevent accidents and also to act as a check upon the Pundahs and Purharees for the purpose of preventing them from bringing Laljatrees under the appearance of Kungals. These persons were 'the most necessary' because very few pilgrims indeed had passed who were not called Kungals both by their conductors and by themselves until upon enquiry many of them proved to be Laljatrees and paid accordingly. Hunter was of opinion that some punishment should be inflicted upon the Pundahs who knowingly attempted to deceive the Government 'in the above respects'.<sup>48</sup>

Hunter ordered the Pundahs not to take presents from the pilgrims without the knowledge of the Collector of the tax and suspended one Purharee for violation.<sup>49</sup>

The Collector of the Pilgrim tax was informed that the Governor General in Council approved his proposition for printing certificates required for the

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<sup>48</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 3 February 1806.

Bengal Revenue Council : Parliamentary Papers, National Library.

<sup>49</sup> He held proceedings against Dyanidhee Gunes, a Purharee, for receiving two gold Mohurs and seven rupees from the Jatrees. One Mohur was expended for the holy food and the rest was lodged in the treasury. As ordered by the Governor General, he reinstated Dyanidhee and restored the gold Mohur and seven rupees to him—Hunter to Board of Revenue : 7 March 1806.

admission of the pilgrims. On the publication of the Regulation, the Magistrate would conform to the provisions contained in it regarding admission of the pilgrims to the Temple.

The Governor General in Council was of opinion that it would be from every point of view advisable to ascertain the fees hitherto received by the officers and ministers of the Temple. He wanted to know whether such fees are to be paid separately or whether they are to be included in the tax leviable from the pilgrims on the part of Government."<sup>50</sup>

On the 19th February, Hunter sent forms of 'Shoomarees' or certificates and 'Rowannas' or passes for printing. He wanted one lakh copies of each. Hunter was informed that the Governor General in Council had sanctioned "a sum of Rs. 10,000 or such part of that amount as may be indispensably required on account of the expenses of the temple of Juggernath."<sup>51</sup>

On the 7th March, Hunter wrote to the Board of Revenue that on account of 'Gobind Dooadushee' (a holiday which occurs only once in about 25 years) there was a large influx of pilgrims, specially of the 'Desees' (who came from the holy land between the Baitarani and the Rishikulya). Arrangement was made for the construction of the Ruth. The required quantity of wood was brought from the Mahanadi banks at Cuttack, where it was sent by the Raja of Duspalla, according to usage, by the river route. In former years, the Government furnished one hundred to three hundred Burkandazes 'for taking care of the Ruth' and he needed their assistance that year also. Finally

<sup>50</sup> Secretary, Board of Revenue to Hunter: 6 February 1806, Bengal Revenue Council, Parliamentary Papers: National Library.

<sup>51</sup> Secretary, Revenue Department to Board of Revenue: 13 February 1806.

Bengal Revenue Consultations.

Papers relating to E.I. Affairs: National Library.

he made a suggestion : "As the pilgrims will never be well treated by their conductors unless they receive a present from their own hands, I beg leave to propose that the fee of the Pundahs be publicly fixed and collected by the Pundahs themselves separate from the tax, as was formerly done under the Marhattas."<sup>52</sup>

The Board of Revenue intimated "The Governor General in Council approves your proposition for permitting the Pundahs to collect a fee from the pilgrims exclusive of the tax payable to Government. You will accordingly fix the rate at which such fee should be levied and publish the rates for general information."

"The Governor General in Council sanctions the advance of cash which you have made for the support of the Temple with respect to the Ruth. You are desired to specify the amount claimed by the officers of the Temple on account of the Ruth in the last year, at the same time reporting whether according to the established usage that expense should be defrayed by Government or from the produce of the lands or other funds already assigned for the support of the Temple."

Hunter was also asked to send "a statement of sums annually required for the support of the Temple and for the maintenance of the ministers and officers attached to it."<sup>53</sup>

On the 27th March, 1806, Hunter, the Collector of Pilgrim tax, was "vested with authority over the Pagoda."<sup>54</sup> He was assisted by Govinda Ray Mahasay, who sent "a Report to G. Webb after

<sup>52</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 7 March 1806,  
Bengal Revenue Consultations,  
Parliamentary Papers : National Library.

<sup>53</sup> Board of Revenue to Hunter : 20 March 1806,  
Bengal Revenue Council,  
Parliamentary Papers : National Library.

<sup>54</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 6 June 1806, J.T.C., pt. 1.

examining the charges of Bhog, given by Sewajee Pundit during 1211."

The Commission for the affairs of the province of Cuttack, before its dissolution, sent a draft legislation to the Board of Revenue for the management of the temple of Jagannath. It suggested the appointment of a Committee of Pundits to superintend the affairs of the Temple, under the supervision of the Collector of the Pilgrim tax, who would scrutinise the receipts and disbursements of the Temple.

G. Udney, one of the members of the Governor General's Council, gave a note of dissent on the proposed Regulation for the management of the Jagannath temple. "I approve the following Regulation 'he wrote' with the exception of parts of it, which provide for the superintendence and management of the temple of Juggernath, and payment of its officers." Udney remarked: "I would leave the Temple and its whole economy to the direction and management of its own officers, allowing them to collect the regular established fees, they have hitherto been accustomed to do; securing the pilgrims at the same time, everything of a vexatious nature, from the extortion and oppression of those officers."

"If the revenues of the Temple were insufficient for its support, a tax should be levied to meet the deficiency; but that Government should have no direct concern with matters related to the maintenance of the Temple or payment of the officers. The making of provision by law for such purposes, it appears to me would operate to sanction and tend to perpetuate a system of gross idolatry which Government is neither bound nor does it seem becoming in it to do."<sup>55</sup>

But in spite of his objection, Regulation IV was passed on 3 April 1806. It was stated: "Whereas.

<sup>55</sup> Bengal Judicial Consultations: 3 April 1806, Parliamentary Papers, May 1813, p. 41, National Library.

it is provided by Section 31, Regulation XII of 1805 that a tax shall be levied from the pilgrims resorting to the temple of Juggernath and whereas it is essentially necessary that provision should be made for the protection of the pilgrims from undue exactions on the part of the officers of Government or of the Temple and also for the preservation of good order, tranquillity and regularity in the town of Juggernath-pooree and its dependency." xx

"A tax shall be levied on the part of Government (as was heretofore done under the late Marhatta Government) on pilgrims resorting to the temple of Juggernath. The collection of the tax shall be entrusted to an officer being a covenanted servant."

"The general superintendence of the collection and the control of the officers employed in the performance of their duties, shall be vested in the Board of Revenue. A tax at Athuranullah shall be fixed at ten rupees and at Lokanath, six rupees on each person of the class of pilgrims, commonly called 'Laal Jautreys'."

"The tax on all other pilgrims shall be levied at the rate of two rupees from each person. The above mentioned rates of tax on pilgrims are to be considered to include the usual fees of the officers of the Temple, and these fees shall in future be paid to them out of the funds which have been or may be assigned for the support of the Temple; provided however that this rule shall not be considered applicable to the officers denominated Pundahs and Puharees, who shall be entitled to receive in conformity to the established usage, a fee from the pilgrims according to a table of rates which shall be kept fixed at the temple of Juggernath."

"The officers attached to the Temple are strictly forbidden from making any demands of money, exclusive of the tax and the fees specified. This restriction however shall not preclude the said officers from receiving presents or voluntary gifts."

"An officer is liable to be dismissed from his

employment by any deviation from these rules. It shall be the duty of the Collector of tax on pilgrims to establish, with the approbation of the Board of Revenue, such rules as may be necessary for due collection of the tax and for keeping regular and clear accounts of the receipts." xx

"The superintendence of the temple of Juggernath and its interior economy, the conduct and management of its officers and the entire control over the priests, officers and servants attached to the idol and to the temple, shall be vested in an assembly of Pundits or learned Brahmins, who on all occasions, shall be guided by the recorded rules and institution of the Temple or by long and established usage."

"The assembly of the Pundits shall consist of three members to be recommended by the Collector of Pilgrim tax through the Board of Revenue to the Governor General in Council. In the selection of persons to fill that situation, it shall be the particular duty of the Collector to consult the opinion of the most respectable Hindoos."

"The Governor General in Council reserved the right of removing a Pundit on proof of misconduct, made to the satisfaction of Government. The Pundits shall hold their situations so long as they will continue to conduct themselves with integrity, diligence and propriety."<sup>56</sup>

The Governor General in Council sent a Despatch to the Court of Directors, relative to the establishment of a tax on pilgrims resorting to the temple of Juggernath. It was stated :

"Your Honorable Court will receive copies of a Regulation passed for the defining of the rates of taxes, for the guidance of the officers of Government in the performance of that duty and for the superintendence of the Temple."

"We have modified certain clauses of the

<sup>56</sup> Bengal Judicial (Civil) Proceedings : 3 April 1806,  
Regulation IV of 1806.

Regulation. The principal alterations which we have in contemplation to adopt are, to permit certain officers of the Temple to collect fees directly from the pilgrims, agreeably to former usage, instead of receiving the amount of those fees from the public treasury, to vest in the Pundits the entire control of the Temple and its ministers and officers, as well as over the funds allotted for its expense; restricting the interference of the officers to the preservation of peace of the town, to the protection of the pilgrims from oppression and extortion and to the collection of tax. We have appointed J. Hunter to be Collector of tax on pilgrims on a salary of 500 rupees." xx

"We are at present unable to furnish to your Hon'ble Court with any estimate which can be depended to, on probable receipts from the tax on pilgrims."<sup>57</sup>

Regulation IV of 1806 made an experiment which limited the direct control of the Christian Government over the Jagannath temple. The superintendence of the Temple was proposed to be vested in a Council of Pundits, to be nominated by the Government.

On 1 May 1806, Ram Shankar Bharati, a follower of Sankaracharya of Puri, made a petition for the installation of a new image of Bhairava on the pedestal of Jagannath. The old image was destroyed by the Bairagees during the Maratha rule.

Hunter, the Collector of the Pilgrim tax, was asked by the Board of Revenue to send "a statement of rice and ghee annually required for the Pagodah and the estimated amount thereof". The officers of the Temple "objected with some justice" to attending upon the Collector "during the hurry of Snan and Ruth Jatras".<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Bengal Government to the Court of Directors: 15 March 1806, Revenue Letters from Bengal: National Library.

<sup>58</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue: 21 May 1806, J.T.C., pt. 1.

"In authorizing the Collector to incur the expenses necessary for the support of the Temple—it was never intended that he

Hunter was also asked by the Board of Revenue to recommend the names of persons to be appointed as Pundits. Hunter replied : "I shall immediately proceed to the selection of three persons qualified to perform the important duties to be entrusted to them. I take the liberty of recommending that the present Dewul Purchhas be continued in their places until the conclusion of Rath jattrra and until rule have been laid down for their conduct."<sup>59</sup>

The members of the Board of Revenue were influenced by Udney's powerful advocacy of non-interference in the affairs of the Jagannath temple. The Board observed : "Considering the small amount of surplus which remains after discharging the expenses. it appears to merit consideration whether the present system of drawing a revenue from the pilgrims may not be changed for the better, both with reference to the advantage of Government and also to the convenience and prejudice of the Hindoos."

"We think that the interference of the public officers, in superintending the general concerns of a Hindoo temple, so far from being calculated to promote economy in the expense, to increase the reputation and prosperity of the Temple or to augment the public revenue is likely to be attended with contrary effects."

"From the accounts we have received we apprehend that the receipts from the pilgrims will scarcely prove sufficient to defray the expenses of the Temple, for we imagine that the period of the heaviest collection has expired."

"The Collector has already reported that Rs. 19,000 are due on account of fee to the officers of the

should interfere in the details of disbursement in the internal economy and administration of the Temple."

Secretary to Govt., Revenue Department to Board of Revenue : 19 June 1806, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

<sup>59</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 22 May 1806, J.T.C., pt. 1.

Temple. Under the circumstance—we would recommend that the whole of the internal economy management of the temple be left entirely to the Hindoo priest-hood in like manner as is done at Gya and at Allahabad.”

“From the pilgrims resorting to Gya, Government derives an annual revenue of about 150,000 rupees. No interference whatever is practised by the officers of Government with the priests of the temple.”

“With reference to the substantial benefits arising to Government from the tax on pilgrims resorting to Gya, and on the other hand to the inconsiderable receipts to Government from the temple of Juggernath, since it has been under the British Government, we consider ourselves fully justified in recommending that the rules regarding the concerns of the Juggernath temple should be brought as near as possible to those at Gya.”<sup>60</sup>

On the 14th August, J. Hunter, the Collector of Pilgrim tax was asked by the Board of Revenue to give his opinion regarding “the final settlement of the affairs of Juggernath.”

The Bengal Government did not like to abolish the taxes which were imposed on the pilgrims for visiting the temple of Jagannath at Puri and for bathing in the Ganga at Prayag.

To the Court of Directors they wrote : “We do not possess any accurate data by which we can judge the amount of gross or net revenue which may be derived from the tax on pilgrims at Juggernath and at Allahabad.”

“The revenue which may be derived from any source of that nature can never be an object, compared with the high importance of consulting on all occasions the religious opinions and civil usages of the

<sup>60</sup> Board of Revenue to Governor-General : 19 June 1806, Bengal Revenue Consultations.

Papers relative to the Juggunat temple : May 1813, National Library..

Natives. But as both these taxes had been established during the Nawab's and the Marhatta Governments. We are not aware of any substantial objections to the continuance of the duties, under proper rules for the collection of taxes."

The gross revenue from both these sources was estimated to be Rs. 200,000.<sup>61</sup> Hunter informed the Board of Revenue that the late 'zamindar' of the Temple was the Rajah of Khoordah, now a pensioner and the chief hereditary priest or Sewuk was at present a minor, whose representative Kishenchunder Mahapatar was a man of little or no respectability and who did not appear capable of conducting the affairs of the Temple, if left to himself."<sup>62</sup>

In its letter to Sir John Barlow, the officiating Governor General, the Board of Revenue observed :

"It would be proper to appoint the Assembly of Pundits but that in other respects Government or its officers should not at all interfere either in regard to the internal affairs of the Temple or to the appointment of any other officers. The Assembly of Pundits with the priesthood at present should be left to manage all concerns of the Temple in the manner they think best calculated for promoting the interests of it."<sup>63</sup>

The Secretary, Revenue Department, informed the Board of Revenue : "The Governor General concurs generally in the sentiment expressed by you respecting the expediency of withdrawing interference of Government as far as may be practicable in the

<sup>61</sup> Bengal Government to the Court of Directors : 21 August 1806, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

<sup>62</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 22 August 1806, Bengal Revenue Consultations.

The word 'zamindar' carries no sense. Hunter probably meant 'zimmadar' or custodian. There was no chief hereditary priest in the Jagannath temple, as reported by Hunter.

<sup>63</sup> Board of Revenue to the Governor-General : 6 October 1806, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

internal administration of the affairs of the Temple. On that principle, the Governor General is entirely of opinion that it would be advisable to leave the superintendence of its concerns to the hereditary priests in case any fixed order of succession is established among them, which shall ensure a due control over the Temple." xx

"It remains to be ascertained whether there is any other (not Dewul Purchas) class of persons or any particular family in whom that power consistently with the constitution of the Temple, could be properly vested."

"The Governor General does not think it advisable to make any immediate alteration in the rules contained in Regulation IV of 1806."

Barlow was not willing to hand over the Temple administration to the priests. He considered the management of the Temple by an elected or nominated body like the Assembly of the Pundits to be contrary to the precedent. If the internal administration were handed over to any particular class of persons or family, it would prevent dissatisfaction among the great body of the people at any neglect or irregularity in the administration of its affairs.<sup>64</sup>

Hunter, the Collector of Pilgrim tax, fully supported the opinion expressed by the Governor General. "I think it very desirable that all interference on the part of Government should be withdrawn as far as respecting the interior management of the Temple and in lieu of that the entire management of the ceremonies and internal authority over the priests be vested in one person, on whom and on whose heirs the proprietary right and patronage of the Temple be gratuitously conferred. The right was partly usurped by the late Government be conferred and it would appear that the restoration of it will be considered by the Hindoos as a special mark of favour."

<sup>64</sup>Secretary, Revenue Department to Board of Revenue : 9 October 1806, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

“The late proprietor was the Rajah of Khoordah whose caste is bughela, a distinction of the Cheyts” (Kshatriya).

In Hunter’s opinion, “The priests are very far from being qualified to conduct the affairs or keep up the respectability of the Temple.”<sup>66</sup>

On 20 March 1806, Hunter was asked to submit a statement of produce of the lands which had been appropriated for the support of the Jagannath temple. After six months, Hunter submitted a list of lands which had been brought to the account of the Government in the ‘Jumma Kharch’ of the Temple, for 1211 and 1212 Umlee. It would appear that those lands were managed in very improper manner or their resources were not wholly brought to the credit. He pointed out that there were lands under the custody of the Mutdharis which did not appear in the accounts of the Temple, though they certainly formed part of its revenue.

Hunter concluded : “I have paid in cash nearly Rs. 35,000 as was done in each former year since the capture of the province. The acting chief hereditary priest strongly accuses the Purcha (Sewajee Pundit) of embezzling greater part of the resources. No enquiry is being made, it being the wish of Government not to interfere in the details of disbursement.”

“The expenses of the Temple are at present under no control. The Purcha is fully aware that he is not considered amenable for mismanagement and extravagance, and has no object in doing his duty with attention to interests either of Government or of the Temple.”

Hunter in his letter referred to the ‘Jumma Kharch’ account produced by Sewajee Pundit for the year 1210 Umlee :

Disbursement about	Rs. 50,000
Additional expense for Mohunbhoge about	Rs. 5,000

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\* Hunter to Board of Revenue : 11 November 1806, J.T.C. pt. 1.

Collection by Sewajee Pundit about	Rs. 31,000
Receipt by Sewajee from Government	
treasury	Rs. 34,000

In Hunter's opinion, "the expenditures which ought to be allowed amount to less than 60,000 rupees."<sup>66</sup>

In December 1806, Hunter gave his opinion regarding the installation of a new image of Bhairava on the pedestal of Jagannath as prayed by Ram Shankar Bharati in his petition dated May 1806. He wrote to the Board of Revenue that the installation of the image would create trouble, as it would be opposed by the Vaishnavas. He concluded: "The parties acknowledge no superiors of their own religion which forms a strong obstacle to the amicable settlement of the dispute. I am convinced that it would not be settled but by an order of Government."<sup>67</sup> But the Board of Revenue was not prepared to interfere in such disputes of religious nature.

It informed the Governor General that "The dispute between the Byragees and the sect to which the petitioner belongs will not be amicably settled. The Collector writes that nothing satisfactory is likely to be obtained from Hindoo arbitration. From the Collector's letter it appears that the idol of the Sunnyasees was not entitled to be placed on the throne of Juggernath."<sup>68</sup>

Sir John Barlow, the officiating Governor General, concurred with the opinion of the Board, which was intimated:

"The Governor General thinks that it is not desirable that Government should interfere in reli-

<sup>66</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue: 8 November 1806, J. T.C., pt. 1.

<sup>67</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue: 6 December 1806, J.T.C., pt. 1.

<sup>68</sup> Board of Revenue to Governor General: 5 March 1807, Bengal Revenue Consultations: National Library.

gious disputes among the different sects of the Hindoos at Juggernath."<sup>69</sup>

The Board of Revenue forwarded a petition from the Raja of Khurda, who was kept confined at Midnapore, to the Governor General. After expressing loyalty to the British Government, he pleaded that his 'Mukhtyar' Jayi Rajguru virtually ruled the estate and it was Rajguru who instigated the Paiks to raid the British territory.

The apologetic tone of the petition served its purpose. The Bengal Government informed the Board of Revenue that "The Governor General in Council has in its contemplation, in the event of its being judged advisable to release the Rajah of Khoordah from confinement, to reinvest the Rajah with the control and superintendence which he formerly possessed over the internal management of the Temple."<sup>70</sup>

The Board of Revenue asked Robert Ker, the

<sup>69</sup> Secretary to Government to Board of Revenue : 1 May 1807, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

From 1807 to 1867, nothing was done for the restoration of the image of Bhairava. In that year, Jagat Bandhu Mahapatra and Dasarathi Praharaj, two Puri Brahmans, possibly priests of the Jagannath temple, wrote a letter to Pundit Gangadhar Kaviraj of Murshidabad. It was stated that formerly there was an image of Bhairava—a 'lila Murti' of Siva—complete with its vahana, affixed to the wooden pedestal of Jagannath. About sixty years ago, the Byragis destroyed it completely. Now an attempt was being made for restoration of the Bhairava image and for which an exposition of 'Bhairavi Chakra' was deemed essential. Gangadhar was requested to explain the real import of the Chakra, along with the deities associated with it, as well as their particular forms of worship.

'A document relating to the worship at the Puri temple' *J. N. Bannerjee commemoration volume*—Sisir Mitra.

The image of Bhairava was however not restored on the pedestal of Jagannath.

<sup>70</sup> Secretary, Revenue Dept. to Board of Revenue : 1 January 1807, J.T.C., pt. 1.

Judge and Magistrate of Cuttack, to furnish the Board with his 'sentiments'. Ker sought the opinion of Hunter, the Collector of Pilgrim tax. Hunter wrote : "From every information I possess, it would appear that the Rajah's authority was very limited during the Marhatta Government, who had, I understand, assumed almost the entire control, and that of the Rajah's being confined to his influence which was very high from the circumstance of his ancestors being the founders of the Temple."

"The control and superintendence of the Temple for a period of about sixty years were in the hands of the Marhatta Government and may now be vested to the Rajah as it existed antecedent to that period, which, I am induced to believe, is the wish of Government."<sup>71</sup>

The Raja of Khurda was the obvious choice when the Christian Government decided to hand over the internal management of the Jagannath temple to the Hindus. The family of the Raja of Khurda was long associated with the management of the Temple. The Raja did not entirely lose his influence even when the management was taken over by the Marathas. There was no other alternative, as Hunter's letter dated 11 November 1806 made it clear that the internal administration of the Temple should not be handed over to the priests who were unfit for such a responsibility.

The Government released Mukunda Deva from confinement. He was allowed to stay at Puri and was granted 'Malikana' amounting to one-tenth of the revenue of the Khurda estate from 1808-09. The Raja of Khurda wanted to settle at Puri, in anticipation of his appointment as the Superintendent of the Jagannath temple.

On May 6, 1807, the second Parichha, Jagannath Rajguru, submitted a petition to Hunter. It was stated in the petition that "the Sattais Hazari (who was the third) Purcha had collected and expended the

<sup>71</sup> Hunter to Ker, Magistrate : 31 January 1807, J.T.C., pt. 1.

whole of the Khanjahs and there are several months of 1214 remaining for which he refuses to continue the expenses and claims a balance from Government."

Jagannath Rajguru wanted to undermine the power which was exercised by the Maratha Parichha Sewajee Pundit in the Jagannath temple. He tried to prejudice the mind of Hunter against Sewajee, and he succeeded in his effort.

Hunter forwarded the petition of the second Parichha to the Board of Revenue, intimating that Sewajee Pundit, the third Parichha, in his capacity as the Tahsildar and cash keeper of the Temple "had refused to continue his duty unless supplied with money."

Hunter objected to his conduct and suggested : "Instead of paying money to the Purcha, I think the most advisable is immediately to invest the Rajah of Khoordah with authority, advancing to him, whatever money may be absolutely required for ensuing festivals."

In his opinion the Rajah of Khoordah "should be invested with the control of the internal affairs of the Temple."<sup>72</sup>

He also enclosed a petition of Jagannath Rajguru, expressing his willingness to pay "every expense of the Temple and conduct every necessary ceremony without requiring any allowance from Government". But the Government did not agree to his proposal.

The Board of Revenue on receipt of a Report from the Collector of Pilgrim tax observed :

"On consideration of the accounts submitted by the Collector, the principal object that presents itself is the very great increase in the expenses of the Temple in the last years."

The Board pointed out the payments had increased after the establishment of British rule. "On referring to the payments made by Government in

<sup>72</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 26 May 1807, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

1213, it will be found that the actual payments together with the amount of the balance claimed, are nearly double the amount of payment and balance of 1208." xxx

"With respect to the funds of the Temple, the resources of the lands, assigned for the expenses, have not been ascertained by the Collector. The present Report therefore, both in respect of the funds of the Temple and the expense actually required to be disbursed on account of it is very incomplete." xxx

"It appears that from April 1806 to May 1807, the gross collection of the Pilgrim tax was Rs. 1,17,253. The total charge incurred by Government in this period is stated to be Rs. 42,666 leaving a net revenue of Rs. 75,587. Out of Rs. 42,666, Rs. 20,168 are the salary of the Collector and Amlahs, and Rs. 1200 for Cutchery of the Collector." <sup>73</sup>

The Board was of opinion that the advances to the second Purcha should be regulated according to the standard of the advances made in 1209 (Umlee).

The letter contained adverse remarks against Hunter, and he suffered in consequence. The Board of Revenue was informed : "In consequence of unsatisfactory accounts rendered by the Collector of tax, of the receipts and disbursements of the Temple and the very imperfect information obtained—the Governor General is of opinion that an alteration is indispensably necessary with respect to the constitution of the office."

"The Governor General is accordingly pleased to vest the superintendence of the collection of tax and of the Temple in the Collector of Cuttack, subject of course to your control."<sup>74</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Board of Revenue to Sir John Barlow : 4 June 1807, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

<sup>74</sup> Secretary, Revenue Dept. to Board of Revenue : 14 June 1807, Bengal Revenue Consultations.

The new designation of the Collector of Cuttack was 'the Collector of land revenue and that of tax on the pilgrims'

In June 1807, the Board of Revenue informed the officiating Governor General that "many respectable Hindoos have been experiencing great inconvenience owing to the scrutiny which take place, under Regulation IV of 1806 whether they are Lal Jatrees or not. It was most distressing to them as it obliges them to remain at Athura Nulla for days in exposed condition."<sup>75</sup>

The Board recommended a uniform rate of Rupees three for each pilgrim who was in a position to pay. But the officiating Governor General did not agree to the proposal for imposing a uniform rate. He 'invested' the Collector of Cuttack, with the power of reducing the tax payable by the Jatrees.<sup>76</sup>

George Webb, the Collector of Cuttack, was "asked to bring up the accounts of the receipts and disbursements and to make a full enquiry respecting the lands assigned for the support of the Temple". He was also asked "to settle an amount for the expenditure of the Temple".<sup>77</sup>

On the 19th December 1807, Webb submitted his Report to the Board of Revenue. He pointed out that several Khanjahs (fixed money assignments) have been brought under the Jumma of the District. Excepting a tax paid on the sale of Mahapershad within the Temple—"the whole of the collections under the head Sayer had been resumed."<sup>78</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Board of Revenue to Sir John Barlow : 30 June 1807, Proceedings, Board of Revenue : National Library.

<sup>76</sup> Secretary to Government to Board of Revenue : 2 July 1807, Proceedings, Board of Revenue : National Library.

<sup>77</sup> A.J. Mills, Commissioner to Board of Revenue : 26 August 1843, J. T. C., Pt. 2.

<sup>78</sup> The Temple earned revenue from Sayer or town duties on washermen, fishermen and betelnut sellers, during the Maratha rule. It amounted to Khawuns 10536 (One rupee—four Kahans of cowries).

The general result of his enquiry was as follows :

1. Average expenses of the Temple of every kind for the last six years (two years of Maratha rule and four years of British rule)	Rs. 65,999-5
2. Average receipts during the last six years	— Rs. 30,884-0
3. Cash advanced	— Rs. 29,335-11
4. Aggregate amount proposed	
Sicca —	Rs. 56,342-9

According to Groeme's Report, the revenue of the Temple at the time of the British conquest was derived from the following sources :

1. Eleven Mauzas comprising twenty villages in the Satais Hazari Mahals. <sup>79</sup>	—	Rs. 11,848
2. Small plots of land	—	Rs. 157
3. Khanjahs or fixed moneytary assignments in Mogulbundee or British Orissa	—	Rs. 17,177
4. Khanjahs in rent free lands in Mogulbundee	—	Rs. 7,262
5. Khanjahs in certain killas		Rs. 778
6. Resources of the Temple under various heads such as Sayer, Poll tax	—	Rs. 10,638
Sicca Rupees —		47,877-7 -6

<sup>79</sup> There were originally five villages Kapileswarpur, Batgaon, Bir Pratappur, Salejoree, Ootarkona, which were given three hundred years ago by the Rajas of Khurda. Subsequently, Swanlo, Purohitpur, Alsurrang (Astarang) and Mohuree etc., were granted by other persons. Majority of the villages were situated in pergunah Rahang.

The revenue of the Satais Hazari Mahals was much less than rupees twenty-seven thousand. Groeme in his Report pointed out that taking advantage of the change in the administration the

Webb recommended the supply of 484 guz of woollen cloth to decorate the Cars.<sup>80</sup>

The Board of Revenue wrote to the Governor General in Council : "With respect to the future, we concur with the opinion of the Collector that excess in the charges should not hereafter be allowed. The aggregate amount proposed by the Collector to be allowed is Rs. 56,342-9-8. That amount is more than that appears to have been expended in 1209 and 1210, but less than the average expenditure of the six years, even after deducting the charges deemed by the Collector as inadmissible. As it appears to us to be desirable that so long as the Temple shall be managed in the mode in which it is done at present, the expense should be limited within a certain sum."<sup>81</sup>

In their letter to Lord Minto dated 8 April, 1808 the Board fixed the annual 'donation' (allowance) at Rs. 56,342 (exclusive of the broad cloth for decorating the Cars) and wrote that there would be a deficiency of Rs. 25,458 to be paid by the Government for resuming the endowments of the Temple.<sup>82</sup>

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Matdharis "shamelessly practised embezzlement" and appropriated the lands which were given to them as 'Kothkhanjah' or supply of bhog to the Temple.

An endowment of the temple of Jagannath known as Math Rajoo was held by Narain Das, who sold a portion of it to a Muhammadan named Latif Khan, for a small sum. The property known as 'Latif Jumma' was sold by the owner after four years to a person named Sivaprasad Singh. Scott Warring, Offg. Collector, held all these transactions to be illegal in 1811.

<sup>80</sup> G. Webb, Collector to Board of Revenue : 19 December 1807. O.S.A. Vol. July 1807—December 1808.

<sup>81</sup> Board of Revenue to Lord Minto : 29 December 1807, O.S.A., Vol. July 1807—December 1808.

<sup>82</sup> (i) "From the conquest till the year 1216 Umlee or 1808 A.D. it was the custom for the Purchas to collect the revenue from the lands and the same be appropriated to the support of

The Secretary to the Revenue department informed the Board of Revenue : "On a consideration of the account of receipts and disbursements of the temple of Juggernath, the Governor General in Council approves your proposition for limiting the expense of the Temple in future to a sum not exceeding Rs. 56,342-9-8. His Lordship in Council accordingly desires that you will issue necessary instructions on this point to the Collector."<sup>83</sup>

The Governor General in Council also passed the 'Jummakhurch' accounts of the Jagannath temple for the Umlee years 1212 to 1214, both inclusive.

The Board of Revenue asked George Webb, the Collector of Cuttack, to suggest rules for regulating the Pilgrim tax. Webb suggested that 'Laal Jattreys' should be allowed access to the Temple for 16 days "It will induce every man who can find ten rupees to pass the ghaut as Laal Jattrey".

He suggested provision for a second class of pilgrims to be called 'Nim Laal'. They would be allowed access to the Temple for a week, paying Rs.5 at Athura Nullah and Rs. 3 at Loknath ghat. "This

the Juggernath temple. . . . . In the year above mentioned, on the application from the Purchas, the land was taken under the management of Government and the expenses of the temple defrayed from the collection of the pilgrim tax, the revenue of these lands under the name Sattais Hazari Mohul being carried to account in that office".

Puri Collector to A. J. Mills, Commissioner : 10 January 1842, J.T.C., Pt. 2.

(ii) "The management of these lands was retained by the Revenue department because the net proceeds of the lands amounting to Rs. 17,000 go to the reduction of the annual amount paid by the State as donation".

Board of Revenue to Secretary, Revenue Deptt. : 21 January 1842, J.T.C., Pt. 2.

<sup>83</sup> Secretary, Revenue Deptt. to Board of Revenue : 29 January 1808, O.S.A., Vol. 1807-08.

intermediate class" he observed "is necessary and will be productive".

The Bhurrangs, paying Rs. 2 at either ghat, would have access to the Temple for 4 days, instead of 5 days, as was hitherto allowed. The fourth class, commonly called the Kangals, "being pilgrims in actual state of poverty" would have access to the Temple for one day.

Webb insisted that the Nim Lal, Bhurrang and Kungal pilgrims must be attended by the Pundahs, whose attendance "is necessary to guide the pilgrims through the ceremonies".<sup>84</sup>

The Board of Revenue, while forwarding the letter of the Collector of Cuttack to the Governor General reiterated : "To us, it seems highly desirable that the affairs of the Temple should be entrusted as soon as possible to the Rajah of Khoordah."<sup>85</sup>

The Board of Revenue was informed that the Governor General in Council "entirely approves the division of pilgrims into three classes. He also approves the suggestion of the Collector of Cuttack for authorizing certain officers in different parts of the Company's provinces to issue licences on receipt of the tax at the prescribed rates to the pilgrims to be exchanged after their arrival at Juggernath for pass."

"In the proposed new Regulation it is advisable that the Collector of Cuttack should be vested with general control over the Temple and of the collection of tax on the pilgrims."<sup>86</sup>

In September 1808, the Bengal Government sent a statement containing abstract of expenses, incurred for the support of the Temple and accounts of the

<sup>84</sup> G. Webb, Collector to Board of Revenue : 7 March 1808, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

<sup>85</sup> Board of Revenue to the Governor General : 18 March 1808, Bengal Revenue Consultations.

<sup>86</sup> Secretary, Revenue Department to Board of Revenue : 8 April 1808, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

Institution in 1211-1214 Umlee to the Court of Directors.

1. Charges as stated in the accounts				
	1211	1212	1213	1214
	69,605	72,050	71,107	73,476
2. Deduct charges disallowed or not having incurred				
	1211	1212	1213	1214
	<u>7,294</u>	<u>6,090</u>	<u>10,706</u>	<u>4,335</u>
Total	<u>62,311</u>	<u>65,960</u>	<u>60,401</u>	<u>69,141</u>

“It is not to be inferred that the whole of the above charges have been paid from the treasury of Government. The accounts will show that during the period above specified about the sum of Rs. 33,891 have been annually contributed by Government for the support of the Temple.”

“The remaining charges have been defrayed from the produce of the lands held free of assessment and other established endowments of that institution.” xxx

“The expenses of the Temple may be computed at about Rs. 56,000 per annum. To provide for this expense it is proposed to grant in addition to the established endowments of the institution which are insufficient for its support, an allowance at the rate of 20 per cent upon the net receipt arising from the tax on the pilgrims.”

“By this arrangement, the remainder of the receipts, after defraying the charges of collection, will become a net revenue to Government. It is possible that this tax, considered as a source of revenue to the State, may on former occasions have been over-rated.” xxx

“Final arrangements now in contemplation will among other advantages be productive of some increase in the public revenue. The Court will consider the revenue which may be obtained by these means as of little moment, compared with importance of

consulting the wishes and religious opinions of the natives in a case affecting with so lively an interest the support of their most celebrated place of worship." <sup>87</sup>

The Governor General asked Charles Buller, who had been sent as Settlement Commissioner to Cuttack, to submit a scheme for collection of tax. Charles Buller, a member of the Board of Revenue, consistently insisted on the appointment of the Raja of Khurda as the Superintendent of the Temple. Like Udney, he was opposed to any direct concern 'with a system of gross idolatry'.

He wrote "As considerable delay must, I imagine, occur before any well digested plan for the collection of tax can be submitted to your Lordship in Council, I would beg to suggest that a regulation be immediately enacted for vesting superintendence of the temple of Juggernath in the Rajah of Khoordah. The necessity of the early publication of a rule will appear obvious when it is considered that the assembly of Pundits, directed to be appointed by Section II, Regulation IV of 1806, has not yet been appointed." <sup>88</sup>

The draft of the proposed Regulation was sent to the Court of Directors for confirmation. The Court wanted that the Government should disassociate itself from the affairs of the Jagannath temple. The Court had criticized the proposed administration of the Temple by a committee of Pundits to be nominated by the Government. In their draft despatch to the Board of Commissioners (commonly known as the Board of Control) for the affairs of India, Parry, the Chairman and Grant, the Deputy Chair-

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<sup>87</sup> Bengal Government to the Court of Directors : 15 September 1808, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library. The Board of Revenue considered the charges incurred in 1211-1214 Umlee to be 'excessive'. The Board of Revenue to Lord Minto ; 29 December 1807 ; O.S.A. Vol. 1807-08.

<sup>88</sup> C. Buller to Governor General : 28 September 1808, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

man, of the Court of Directors observed that the Government "should not interfere in matters which cannot be proper or competent for that Government to regulate. For a Government which is not Hindoo, to elect the priests who are to superintend the affairs of a Hindoo temple, or to exercise control over its ministers and officers, or to take the management of its funds would seem to us to be a direct invasion of the most revered of the Hindoo institutions: and for a Government professing Christianity to do these things would be to act incompatibly with its own principles."<sup>80</sup>

The Directors were of opinion that the Government should not make contribution for the management of 'idolatrous institutions'. But Robert Dundas, the President of the Board of Commissioners for the affairs of India pointed out that the Company being the sovereign power was under the obligation to maintain the public institutions.

He observed: "The Board are sorry that they are not able to accede to the position laid down in para 14 in respect to the temple of Juggernaut. They concur with the Court in their approbation of the proposed amendment in Regulation IV of 1806 as accounced in the letter; and they are fully convinced of the propriety and expediency on every account of avoiding all unnecessary control or interference on the part of Government in regard to the management of the Temple; but they cannot sanction a paragraph denying competence of a Government professing Christianity, to regulate such matters and withdrawing the religious concerns of the Hindoos from the province of the civil Magistrate."

"It appears to the Board on the contrary to be the duty of the Magistrate (and as such, in no wise inconsistent with the principles of our religion) in a country in which the worship of the Hindoos must

<sup>80</sup> Draft No. 33 : 18 January 1809. Bengal Draft Despatches, Vol. 33, pp. 80-82.

be suffered to prevail under its protection, to interfere so far in the direction or superintendence of the religious establishments of that people, as may be necessary for the maintenance of public tranquillity or for the preservation of peace and government order among Hindoos themselves."

"Upon the subject of taxes on pilgrims resorting to Jugernauth and Allahabad which the usage of former governments had established and of which those who are the object of them do not complain. The Board agree on the opinion expressed in the letter from Bengal in the Revenue Department of 21st August 1806 that there is no substantial objection to their continuation; and that they are not prepared to assent to the introduction into India, the principle of taxation proposed by the Court, with reference to the Hindoos, which would measure the amount of tax connected with establishment or observances of the Hindoo religion, by the exact limits of the expense occasioned by them to our Government."

"The Board are not aware of any reason why a Government administered by Christians may not derive a revenue applicable to ordinary purposes from a tax on persons performing superstitious rites or pilgrimage, in a case in which these practices are not introduced or tolerated for the sake of the tax, but have been found among the ancient usages of the country, and must be permitted to continue in a case therefore in which the operation of the tax in regard to such practices (as far as it can be supposed to operate respecting them) must be to diminish rather than to increase their frequency."<sup>oo</sup>

The Court of Directors replied explaining "the sentiments by which they have been influenced." They wrote: "According to the Hindoo laws, it may have been allowable for a Hindoo Govern-

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<sup>oo</sup> G. Holford, Secretary to the Board of Commissioners to W. Ramsay, Secretary, Court of Directors : 28 January 1809, Parliamentary Papers, 1813 : National Library.

ment to interfere in the appointment of the ministers of that Temple and management of its affairs; but for our Government to elect its priests and officers, to assume control over the official conduct of those persons, to take the direction of its funds and the charge of preparing its annual processional Car, whose emblems are so well known, was, in the opinion of the Court, to furnish to the ill-intentioned, pretexts incomparably more plausible than some alterations in the dress of the Sepoys."\*\*\*

"And if an alarm were to be excited by our interference in the matters now mentioned, it could not be confined to a particular class of men or be appeased by the plea of military regulation, but might extend to all the Hindoo people."

"The Court therefore, thinking the interference of our Government in these matters generally improper at such a time, judged it right for the prevention of such interference in future, to express their disapprobation of it." x x x

"The Court beg leave respectfully to state that they still deem it their duty to propose the prohibition of such things beyond the care of the Police, the administration of justice, the collection of a tax requisite for the due attainment of these ends . . . instead of having an universal interference in all matters without exception opened to them on the ground of securing public tranquillity; because it is to be presumed that there must be some point at which the interference of Government, not Hindoo, in the religious concern of a people, so remarkably separated and scrupulous in matters of that kind must stop."

The Court suggested that the Magistrate should be left with the care of Police and administration of justice. "Instead of interfering by a direct exercise of the authority of Government in such matters as contests between the priests, and different sects, about the expenditure and provision of its funds, the possession and pre-eminence of particular images; with other questions of that nature which have

already arisen and are likely to arise in the internal administration of the Temple."

"With regard to imposing a tax on the Hindoos for admission to a religious privilege, where the imposer believed as the Hindoo Government did, that the privilege to be a real and solid good. It was in his principle, allowable for him to put a price upon it but when Government knew the supposed privilege to be a delusion, the Court must question the propriety of its continuing the practice though it may be ancient ; that reason not having been deemed by our Government, in other instances sufficient to sanction customs repugnant to the principles of justice."

"And with respect to disbursing out of public treasury anything towards the support of religious establishments, Hindoo or Mahomedan, beyond what their own endowments furnish, the Court cannot but deem the principle objectionable and the practice to be preferred which have been lately adopted by the Madras Government, who have determined not to receive in their hands the funds belonging to such institutions, nor to be concerned in the expenditure of them."<sup>m</sup>

The Court referred to the Mutiny of vellore in 1807. It was believed that Government measures were misunderstood as attempts to introduce Christianity.

But Dundas upheld his former decision inspite of the 'representation' on the part of the Court of Directors, which was informed: "with respect to the temple of Juggernaut, the Board are fully sensible of the great importance of avoiding, either to give real cause of offence to the Hindoos or to furnish grounds of misrepresentation in regard to our views and intention concerning their religion by any un-

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<sup>m</sup> W. Ramsay, Secretary, Court of Directors to G. Holford, Secretary, Board of Commissioners : 24 February 1809, Parliamentary Papers, 1813 : National Library.

necessary interference in the religious concerns of that people." x x x

"The Board are not prepared to accede to the denial of the competency of the civil government to interfere, under any circumstances or to any extent, however limited, in matters of that nature." xxx

"The universality of the maxims which would exclude all interference in these matters from the province of the Magistrate, may be considered as following rather from a desire of disclaiming all connections between our Government and the religious establishments of the natives of India (a principle in the policy and propriety of which the Board cannot acquiesce) than from a conviction of the danger of giving offence to the Hindoos, a danger against which the Board will be equally ready with the Court."

It appeared to the Board "to be impracticable to define the degree of interference which should be exercised by the Governor General in Council upon these subjects by any precise rules." x x x

"Neither are the Board prepared to concur in the position laid down by you that the principle of disbursing out of public treasury anything towards the support of religious establishments, Hindoo or Mahomedan, 'beyond what their own establishments furnish' is objectionable, when they consider that the revenues by which that treasury is supplied are wholly derived from persons of those religious persuasions."

"If it is contended that the East India Company are at liberty to withhold a fair and adequate support to their religious establishments, because the people do not profess Christianity, the Board must object decidedly to any such doctrine. They conceive that the Company have virtually contracted an obligation before they draw a single rupee of revenue from the country to support and maintain on proper footing and proper regulations, these establishments which have immemorially been laid in reverence and deemed sacred by their native subjects."

“As long as the East India Company were permitted to retain political power and authority over the British territories in India, their Directors will be held responsible for their adherence to those maxims of government on which the preservation of national character for good faith, justice and moderation must in these countries mainly depend.”<sup>m</sup>

Buller, the Settlement Commissioner at Cuttack, informed Lord Minto that he proceeded to Juggernath, to complete the enquiry for rules to be adopted in the new Regulation.

In his letter, Buller referred to the internal administration of Temple. “I have provided for vesting the Rajah of Khoordah with superintendence of the ceremonies and affairs of the Temple, but not with an uncontrolled power on all officers. The three Purchas ought to be appointed by Government and not removed without their sanction.” xxx

“The Purchas, I find, were always appointed by the Marhatta Government and not by the Rajah . . . The third Purcha should continue to do so and it should be his duty to give an account to the Collector of all presents made to the idol.”<sup>m</sup>

Buller also suggested the modification of existing rules, which required the Collector of tax to be a covenanted servant.

The Bengal Government accepted Buller’s recommendations regarding the administration of the temple of Jagannath. The Government had no objections to the rules “for the guidance of the Rajah of Khoordah.”

A Regulation for rescinding Regulations IV and V of 1806 and for substitution of rules in lieu of those enacted in the said Regulations, for levying duties from the pilgrims resorting to Juggernath,

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<sup>m</sup> G. Holford to Ramsay : 4 March 1809, Parliamentary Papers, 1813 : National Library.

<sup>m</sup> Buller to Lord Minto : 17 March 1809, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

and for superintendence and management of the affairs of the Temple was passed by the Governor General in Council on 28 April 1809, (1224 Higgree, 1216 Fassili).

It was stated in preamble: "Whereas it has appeared that the rules at present in force for levying duties from the pilgrims and for the superintendence and management of the affairs of the temple of Juggernath have been in some respects attended with difficulty and inconvenience, the Governor General in Council with a view to afford every facility to the different classes of Hindoos in the performance of their religious ceremonies and with a view to the better management of the internal affairs of the Temple" passed the following Regulation.

The clauses were : First "The superintendence of the temple of Juggernath and its internal economy and management of the affairs and control over the priests and servants attached to the temple are hereby vested in the Rajah of Khoordah who on all occasions shall be guided by the recorded rules and institutions of the temple or by established usage."

Second: "The Rajah of Khoordah and his successors shall have the charge vested in them . . . so long as they shall continue to conduct themselves with integrity, diligence and propriety; but nothing contained in the Regulation shall be constrained to preclude the Governor General in Council from removing the present Rajah or any of his successors on proof of misconduct in such person made to the satisfaction of the Governor General."

The third Clause is unimportant.

Fourth: "Three Dewl Purchas are to be appointed by the Collector of Cuttack subject to the confirmation by the Governor General and they are not to be removed from the office without the sanction of the Governor General."

"In the event of any orders issued by the Rajah being inconsistent with the recorded rules and institutions of the Temple or with its ancient and

established usages, the Purchas are to represent to the Governor General in Council, if it should appear that the interposition of Government is necessary for the restoration of good order and the prevention of disputes and irregularity."

"The Third Dewul Purcha shall execute the duty of the Sattais Huzzaree Purcha, and it shall be his duty to give an account to the Collector of the tax of all offerings and presents made to the idol."

Fifth: "A tax shall be levied on the part of Government (as was heretofore done under the late Marhatta Government and as also been done under the British Government since the conquest of the province of Cuttack) on the pilgrims resorting to the temple of Juggernath."

"The collection of the tax shall be entrusted to an officer with the official designation of the Collector of the tax on pilgrims, subject to the authority of the Collector of Cuttack."<sup>11</sup>

An intermediate class known as Nim Lal was introduced. The Regulation IV of 1809 prescribed a certain number of days to different classes of pilgrims for access to the Temple. The Regulation IV of 1809 ended the direct administration of the Jagannath temple by the East India Company. It was a comprehensive measure, changing the system of the

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<sup>11</sup> *The Regulations and Laws in Bengal*, Vol. VI : Regulation IV of 1809. "The Regulation prescribes the rules for the management of the internal affairs of the Temple under the superintendence of the Rajah of Khoordah and specifies the Collector of Cuttack and Collector of tax as the European, authorized to interfere in the nomination of officers and to act as a check on the Rajah on the conduct of his duties subject to the orders of the Governor General in Council—the direct interposition of Government when necessary to restore good order appears to be throughout contemplated".

R. Ker, Commissioner, to Government of India, Territorial Department : November 1818, Bengal Revenue Consultations, No. 21 : National Library.

management of the Temple. It took into consideration the problems which arose after the imposition of the Pilgrim tax. It sought to restore the conditions which existed before the Marathas took over the management of the Temple. The Regulation vested the superintendence of the Temple; and its internal economy and the control over the Temple priests to the Raja of Khurda.

The British Government thus gave up the idea of appointing a committee of Pundits to supervise the administration of the Temple. At the same time, restrictions were imposed on the authority of the Raja of Khurda. The Raja and his successors were to hold the position so long as they conducted themselves with integrity, diligence and propriety and were liable to removal by the Government on the ground of misconduct. The Raja was to be guided by the recorded rules of the Temple.

It was evident that the Raja of Khurda was mistrusted. It was apprehended that he might abuse the power which would be vested to him. The Government retained the power of appointing and dismissing the chief temple priests—the Deul Parichhas. They were given the right of checking any deviation from the customary usages and recorded rules of the Temple on the part of the Superintendent by making representation to the Collector of Cuttack. The Government also questioned the discretion of the Superintendent to exclude the persons whom he disliked from entering the Temple.

Though the Raja of Khurda was given the management of the Temple affairs, the Government did not give up its close association with the Temple. It realised money from the pilgrims resorting to the temple of Jagannath, and fees from the 'Pilgrim hunters'—the Pundas and the Pratiharis. It paid money for the establishment charges of the Temple and scrutinised the accounts.

Thus the Regulation of 1809 was a compromise between the views of the Board of Revenue supported

by the Court of Directors, and of the Board of the Commissioners for the affairs of India. It introduced a Dyarchy in the administration of the Jagannath Temple. The superintendence of the Temple was vested in the Raja of Khurda. But the Government reserved the right of supervision for the restoration of good order and prevention of irregularity in the Temple administration.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DYARCHY IN THE JAGANNATH TEMPLE ADMINISTRATION FIRST PHASE (1810-1825)

The collection of the Pilgrim tax in the beginning fell far short of expectations. The average annual collection from January 1806 to the end of April 1808 was only Rs. 76,891. In 1808, Buller, the Member on deputation, as the Settlement Commissioner at Cuttack, suggested that the post of the Assistant to the Collector of the Pilgrim tax (who was also the Collector of Cuttack) be filled by an uncovenanted servant, by modifying the existing rules.

On 29 April 1809, Buller recommended the name of Samuel Busby, 'at present employed as the Superintendent of Bunsden Berrdwan' for appointment as the Assistant to the Collector of the Pilgrim tax. The Government accepted his suggestion.<sup>1</sup> Busby was appointed on a salary of Rs. 300 per mensem with a commission of two per cent on the collection. Samuel Charles was appointed the English writer on a salary of Rs. 100 per mensem.

On the conquest of the province, the Government abolished the tax which was realised from the pilgrims by the ruler of Mayurbhanj at Khunta ghat, on the ground that it was a Sayer or transit duty. Rani Sumitra Devi of Mayurbhanj "who was at that time in possession, on account of the prohibition to levy the

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<sup>1</sup> "The covenanted service has been abolished and a person with reduced allowance and reduced establishment has been appointed." Bengal Government to the Court of Directors : 30 December 1809. Revenue letters from Bengal : National Library.

above tax, claimed not only exemption from the tribute ; but made demand for a considerable sum on the British Government, as an equivalent for the loss she had sustained."

The Commissioner of the Cuttack province was informed that the Government "was not prepared to admit the claim of the Ranee of Mohurbunge to compensation on account of the loss of duties. It was pointed out that "it would induce His Lordship in Council to admit the claim of the Rajah of Neelgury to compensation on the same account. Previously however to passing any final orders, the Governor General in Council thinks that the compensation may already have been granted by fixing the tribute at a lower sum, in consequence of the deprivation of the duties, in question, than that would have been otherwise demandable from the Rajah."<sup>2</sup>

The Bengal Government informed the Court of Directors that they had "reason to believe that the new rules established under Regulation IV of 1809 are perfectly satisfactory to the natives."<sup>3</sup>

On 27 April 1810, Regulation XI of 1810 was passed which exempted the native military officers and sepoy and the servants of the European officers on duty from the payment of the Pilgrim tax. It also restricted the exemption hitherto allowed to the local pilgrims called the 'Desees'.

Groeme's Report about the maladministration in the internal affairs of the Temple worried the Christian Government which was aware of its limitations in the affairs of a Hindu temple. The Board of Revenue believed the statement of Groeme that the Temple administration was good when it was under the authority of the Khurda Rajas before the Maratha rule. The Board wanted to restore the Raja's autho-

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<sup>2</sup> Secretary to Government to Commissioner : 5 November 1809 : O.S.A. Vol. 1808-1809.

<sup>3</sup> Bengal Government to the Court of Directors : 30 December 1809 : Revenue Letters from Bengal : National Library.

city, under the impression that Raja Mukunda Deb like his ancestors, would be able to remove all the evils that had crept in to the Temple administration.

But the Government was soon disillusioned. Mukunda Deb was a pussillanimous young man who had no scruples in condemning the actions of his faithful followers, Jayi Rajguru and Jagabandhu Vidyadhar, in order to save his own skin.

The Raja of Khurda immediately misused his power. Probably he had a personal grudge against Raja Padmanabh Narayan Deo of Kimedi who came to Puri for 'darsan' of Jagannath along with his three wives and mother. They were not allowed darsan for three days. "The Rajah was chiefly instrumental in insulting and degrading him." The priests supported the Raja, "with most refined chicanery". Padmanabh Deo represented his case to Buller, the Settlement Commissioner, who forced the Raja to allow the Kimedi Chief access to the Temple along with his family. The Raja now persuaded the cooks of the Temple to refuse to do their work.

"Upwards of four to five thousand of souls are now starving for want of necessary Mahapersad including Rajah Padlabh Deo and his followers as it is not proper nor conformable with their religion, to cook victuals at Pooree when they come on pilgrimage but only to live on Mahapersad."<sup>4</sup>

Busby collected the tax on the pilgrims and transmitted the receipts to the Collector, Cuttack. Raja Mukunda Deb was paid Rs. 9849 being the expenses of the Temple up to the end of Aswin 1012 Umlee.<sup>5</sup>

The collections from the Pilgrim tax were disappointing. The average income in the first decade was Rupees fortyone thousand while the collection and

<sup>4</sup> Busby, Collector of Tax to B. Mitford, Collector, Cuttack : 17 May, 1810 J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Mitford, Collector to Busby ; 2 November 1810 : O.S.A. Vol. January 1810—November 1812.

contingency charges amounted to Rupees thirty-two thousand on average.

The deplorable condition of the Jagannath Road from Puri to Calcutta discouraged the upcountry and Bengali pilgrims from undertaking the journey. The Bengal Government wanted to construct a good road over the old route extending it to Midnapore—a distance of about 300 miles. But the expenditure involved discouraged the Government from undertaking the work. The proposal materialised due to the munificence of Maharaja Sukhamoy Roy, a zamindar of Calcutta.<sup>6</sup>

“A very liberal offer has been made by Maharajah Sukhmoy Roy to contribute the sum of Rupees one lack and fifty thousand for the construction of a road from Calcutta to the celebrated temple of Juggernath in the District of Cuttack. A road in that direction is an object highly desirable, considered only with respect to the reputed sanctity of the Temple, the great number of pilgrims who annully resort to it, and to the general convenience of the community. It is however still more requisite in a military point of view.”<sup>7</sup>

On 14 March 1811, the Raja of Khurda submitted a petition to the Board of Revenue for money to repair the Jagannath temple. After investigation by the Collector of the Pilgrim tax, money was advanced

<sup>6</sup> “He died soon after the payment of the money, but the undertaking had been prosecuted in conjunction with his heirs. *Hindustan*: Hamilton: 1820 p. 236.

Secretary Dowdeswell in his letter dated 3 December 1810 agreed to Sukhamoy Roy’s condition that his name should be inscribed in Sanskrit, Persian and Bengali languages on all bridges to be built during the construction of the new Jagannath Road.

Military Board to the Territorial Department: 1 November 1825: J.T.C. Pt. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Bengal Government to the Court of Directors; 12 February 1811: *Revenue letters from Bengal*: Parliamentary Papers 1813.

to him to undertake the repair work, probably of the walls of the Temple.

In March 1811, the Raja of Khandpara intimated the Board of Revenue his desire to visit the temple of Jagannath. Order was passed to receive him at the Temple according to his rank.<sup>8</sup>

The disbursements of the Temple were entrusted to all the three Parichhas.<sup>9</sup> In January 1812, the Parichhas "discovered and complained of the robbery of an appendage of the idol". The Rajah of Khurda wrote a letter to the Collector, implicating the Parichhas for the loss of the appendage. The Collector disbelieved his statement and observed : "It was manifest to me that the robbery and loss had proceeded entirely from the Rajah's want of care and from his employing persons in the Temple who were untrustworthy, and to his preventing others whose duty it was to superintend."<sup>10</sup>

The Court of Directors after a long silence approved the imposition of the Pilgrim tax, observing : "It is certainly equitable that Government shall be indemnified for expense of supporting the Temple."<sup>11</sup>

The Bengal Government informed the Court of Directors : "On the grounds stated in a letter from the Board of Revenue we have authorised the disbursement of a sum of Rs. 10,200 for the construction of a wall in the vicinity of the temple of Juggernath. The work was stated to be necessary for the purpose of preventing the pilgrims from forcing their way to

<sup>8</sup> Board of Revenue to Collector, Cuttack ; 19 March 1811 O.S.A. Vol. January 1810—November 1812.

<sup>9</sup> E. S. Warring, Collector to Board of Revenue ; 13 May 1811 O.S.A. Vol. January 1810—November 1812.

<sup>10</sup> E. S. Warring to Board of Revenue : 1 February 1812 O.S.A. Vol. May 1811—May 1812.

<sup>11</sup> Court of Directors to Bengal Government : 29 January 1812 *Revenue Letters to Bengal*.

the Temple and by these means evading payment of established tax."<sup>12</sup>

The Court of Directors approved the construction of the Jagannath Road, "materially assisted by the very liberal contribution" by Maharaja Sukhamoy Roy. They wrote to the Bengal Government : "Every attention will be paid to the wish of the donor to have his name transmitted to the posterity as the original promoter of so laudable an undertaking."<sup>13</sup>

The pergunahs of Rahang, Chabiskud and Serain, formed a zamindari called 'Purshutum Chutter' (Purushottama Kshetra). Some portion of the Puri town was included in that zamindari. Krishnachandra Singh, a rich Bengali zamindar, formerly the Dewan of the Cuttack Collectorate, purchased the zamindari of Purushutum Chutter. He claimed title to certain lands in the immediate vicinity of the Jagannath temple which were in possession of the Temple priests.

Krishnachandra got decrees in his favour in the Civil Courts. When his men tried to obtain possession of the lands, the priests opposed them. An affray ensued "in which a Brahmin of respectability was so severely beaten by Kishen Chunder's people that he died."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Bengal Government to Court of Directors : 21 March 1812 *Revenue Letters from Bengal, 1813.*

<sup>13</sup> Court of Directors to Bengal Government : 9 September 1812 *Revenue Letters to Bengal.*

In October 1812, the construction of the Jagannath Road began under the supervision of Capt. Sackville. The road between Puri and Cuttack was declared as 'passable' in 1817. The construction of the road, extending from 'Juggernath Pooree to Rajghat Jellisor' (19 October 1821 O.S.A.) was completed by Capt. Broughton, who succeeded Sackville as the Superintendent of the Jagannath Road in 1825.

<sup>14</sup> Trower to Board of Revenue : 3 February 1813 *Loose Papers B.R.A.*

Trower blamed the Raja of Khurda for instigating the priests.

The Raja of Khurda sent a petition in Persian to the Cuttack Collector "of exalted dignity, the bestower of favour and the mansion of hope for the needy." In this petition he stated that the Temple priests had been harassed by the agents of Kishen Chunder, "who hoped to possess their Lakeraj tenures."<sup>15</sup>

Trower forwarded the petition of the Raja of Khurda to the Board of Revenue. The Board asked John Richardson, Member on deputation to Cuttack, as the Settlement Commissioner, to make enquiry. In his letter Richardson recommended that the lands being attached to the Temple should be appropriated for the residence of the priests. He observed that "any infringement of the just rights of the Brahmins will be productive of most injurious effects from the political point of view for I conceive on the security of these rights, depends the respectability of the priests."<sup>16</sup>

The Board of Revenue instructed Richardson not to allow Kishen Chunder to take possession of the lands "until he should have established a title in the property" in the Sadar Dewani Adalat.<sup>17</sup>

But Krishnachandra Singh did not contest for his title to the lands and left Orissa for good. Probably the Puri incident which led to the death of a Brahman shocked him. He settled at Vrindavana, where he became known as Lala Babu.

The Raja of Khurda did not pull on well with

<sup>15</sup> Raja of Khurda to Trower : 6 February 1813 No. 8. B.R.A. Loose papers.

<sup>16</sup> Richardson to Board of Revenue : 15 April 1813 Bengal Revenue Consultations : W.B. Archives.

Government was aware of the influence the Brahmins in Orissa. "The pensions enjoyed by the Brahmins under the Marhatta Government for the support of the religious institutions and maintenance of religious ceremonies were continued under the British rule." Richardson to Board of Revenue : 14 December 1813, Bengal Revenue Consultations : W.B.A.

<sup>17</sup> Sudder Board of Revenue to Richardson : 4 June 1813, Bengal Revenue Consultations : W.B.A.

William Trower who succeeded E. S. Warring as the Collector of Cuttack District in February 1812. In 1811, Mahadeb Mekap, the master of wardrobe in the temple of Jagannath died. He was succeeded in his office by his son Dayanidhi Mekap. "Deondhee being incapable of performing the duty (from what cause the Collector was ignorant) Raja Mookund Deo, without any authority from the Collector, appointed three Deputies to perform his duty."

In September 1813, an inventory of the articles in the store room was made and some articles were found missing. The Collector in his letter to the Settlement Commissioner dated 13 December 1813 blamed the Raja of Khurda for his negligence.

In his letter, the Collector referred to the "constant habit in which the Natives of rank and wealth are, in sending from all parts of India, valuable presents to Juggernath, some of which are entrusted to Mutdharees, who most frequently keep these to themselves. Others are presented at the throne of the idol and sometimes consist of valuable articles, diamonds, pearls and various precious stones and cloths of the most rich and valuable texture. Then after the ceremony of presentation, the idols were once or twice-decorated with those articles and then locked in the store room."

Richardson wrote to the Governor General that the Rajah "was an unfit person for personally superintending or to conduct the affairs of the Temple". Richardson observed: "I am disposed to think that the appointment of a Deputy Superintendent—while the present system shall be continued—would be an expedient measure; but I have already given my sentiments to your Lordship in Council on the necessity of removing the Rajah of Khoordah from the superintendence of the Temple."

He also suggested that his colleague in the Board of Revenue, Colebrook, "who has profound knowledge of the Gentoo religion" might be consulted

whether the Europeans can enter in to the interior of the Temple."<sup>18</sup>

The friction between Trower and the Raja of Khurda became acute towards the end of 1813. The Raja of Khandpara, a tributary State, came to worship Jagannath with his family, entering the town of Puri "with insignia of Rajahship". This could not be tolerated by the Raja of Khurda, the Superintendent, who did not allow him to enter the Temple. The Raja of Khandpara made representation to the Collector "stating that Rajah Mackoondeo prevented him from making darsan with his family in the mode he has been accustomed and that he is agreeable to the customs and rules of the Temple."

William Trower, Collector, issued orders to the Raja of Khurda and to the Parichhas not to offer objection to Rajah Murdraj Bowerbur Roy performing his religious ceremonies in the usual mode.<sup>19</sup>

The Raja of Khurda remained adamant and sent a letter to the Collector through Samuel Busby explaining the causes of his objection to the admission of the Raja of Khandpara into the Temple.

This infuriated Trower, who intimated Busby : "I have passed a final order on the subject and any further reference was not only unnecessary but improper. You will please deliver the accompanying Purwanah to the Rajah in which I have informed him that if he any longer offers objection to the admission of Kundeaparra Rajah and his family, I shall take myself to suspend him from his situation as Superintendent of the Temple, reporting his conduct to the Governor General through the Member on Deputation."

Busby was requested by Trower to see that "the

<sup>18</sup> Richardson to Earl of Moira : 12 February 1814, No 37, Bengal Revenue Consultations : W. B. Archives.

<sup>19</sup> Trower to Samuel Busby : 29 January 1814, O.S.A. Vol. January 1814—December 1818.

Kundeaparra Rajah and his family meet with no insult from the creatures of the Rajah (of Khoorda).''<sup>20</sup>

Mukunda Deva gave way but did not keep quiet. He made a representation to the Board of Revenue against the conduct of the Collector of Cuttack. The Board requested John Richardson, Member on deputation, to make investigation.

Richardson admitted that by threatening suspension, "the officer was exceeding the bounds of his authority". He however held that the Khurda Raja's conduct towards the Raja of Khandpara was 'objectionable.'

Richardson wrote that he had been told by the principal officers of the Temple that there could be no objection, existing on the score of religion, to the Khandpara Raja's entering the Temple with the insignia of Rajahship. He concluded: "The resistance and unwarranted interference thus assumed by the Rajah of Khoordah must be therefore supposed to be on personal enmity or some other equally untenable grounds". Richardson had not heard about the departure of the Raja of Khandpara from Puri "where he was detained by the dread of the Superintendent offering some insult on his attempting to quit the town of Pooree".<sup>21</sup>

In January 1814, Richardson wrote a letter to the Governor General, forwarding with it a copy of the letter from the Collector dated 16 August 1813 intimating the loss of thirty-six human lives in stampede at Atharanulla\* at the time of the Car festival. He wrote: "I deem it my duty to suggest the abolition of the tax on the pilgrims." xxx

<sup>20</sup> Trower to Samuel Busby: 12 February 1814, O.S.A. Vol. January 1814—December 1814.

<sup>21</sup> Richardson to Board of Revenue: 4 April 1814 J.T.C. Pt. 1.

\* Atharanulla is an old bridge consisting of eighteen arches over a small stream. The Puri town begins from the other side of the stream. The Pilgrim tax was levied here.

“I am satisfied that Your Lordship’s acknowledged humanity and benign principles of the British Government would consider the sum total of the advantage derived by Government from this source of revenue, but a paltry and contemptible consideration, if obtained at the expense of the loss of a but single human life annually.” xxx

“I am decidedly of opinion that every principle of humanity, reason and sound policy strongly advocates the total abolition of this source of revenue by a Christian nation and the removal of all those obnoxious restraints under that source of revenue. I am confident that the abolition of the tax entirely would have a happy effect, not only in putting a stop to the annual shocking effusion of human blood but on the increase of our revenue and the enhancement of our reputation for liberality and tolerance among the Hindoos, the main body of the Indian people.” xxx

“It would be not only enlightened policy to strike off the duty collected at the Juggernaut temple altogether, but I am satisfied that would be most expedient and salutary measure which would greatly increase the reputation for liberality and tolerant beneficence amongst the Hindoo masses of Hindostan, who are in fact the great body not only of our own subjects but of all the people who are inhabiting many States of which Hindostan is composed.”

“The only argument and opposition to the abolition of the duty now levied on the idolatrous worship alluded to, is the loss of revenue to the British Government that ensues. Let us examine what would be the loss. Formerly, under the Marhattas, lands were granted free from all dues by Government for the support of various institutions incident to the Temple and the ceremonies performed there.” xxx

“After the resumption of the lands in question the British Government took charge of the whole expenses of the Temple upon itself. The expenses amount annually to the sum of Rs. 72438-6.”

Richardson calculated the collection charges to be

Rs. 34661, "which deducted from the present entire expenses of the Temple, namely, Rs. 72438-6 leave only the sum of Rs. 37,777-6 to be defrayed by Government in the event of abolishing the duties."

Richardson quoted from Trower's letter : "I find that the collections from January 1806 to the end of April 1813 amount to 5,30,655-18. The expenses including the Collector's establishment etc. amount to 528141-11-11, leaving a balance in favour of Government 2514-6-5."

"The surplus amount remaining to Government on the account of the receipts and disbursements of the Temple for the past seven years and four months is the trifling amount of 2514-6-5 too trifling for consideration."

"It may be argued that abolition of the duties would increase the number of votaries and that a Christian people's religious scruples ought rather to prevent the adoption of any measure likely to produce such effect. But the true religion is best promoted by the fair and universal operation of truth and not by restraining other religions, that almost savours of persecution." xxx

Rishardson in his letter, which was already sufficiently lengthy, next attacked the Raja of Khurda. "It becomes my duty to state that in my opinion it is expedient to remove from superintendence Mookund Deo, the Rajah of Khoordah. The considerate and benign policy of the British Government led to grant the superintendence of the Temple to this chief as a situation highly honorable and gratifying to his feelings, but its importance is merely honorary or ought to be so, for there is no salary or emolument annexed to the office of the Superintendent and therefore any pecuniary advantage that may be derived from it must be illicit and an abuse of authority." xxx

"I am also informed by creditable authority sufficient to obtain my entire belief that the Rajah entertains and inculcates the belief that he will one day, through the power and influence of Juggernaut,

be restored to the supreme command and authority of the province of Cuttack, which tradition and family (oral or written) history state to have been invested in his ancestors previous to the establishment of the Musalman authority some centuries ago."

"These hopes however chimerical, delusive and obtrusively viewed apparently innocent, have not only present ill effects, but they might possibly in the course of events at some critical juncture, have further bad significances."

"In their present effects, they render the Rajah extremely haughty and dispose him as the Superintendent of the Temple to treat all the native Hindoo princes, Rajahs and chiefs or men of rank with disrespect and contempt ; which treatment, I am adequately informed, is one great excuse of the smallness of the number of pilgrims of First class which have resorted to this far famed Temple of Hindoo worship since the Rajah's investiture in the superintendence of the Temple."

"I refer to three instances of offensive, contemptuous and disrespectful treatments which have been stated to me, in the case of Rajah Pudlabh Deo of Keemundy, 2ndly with respect of the Rajah of Khundeapurrah and 3rdly in the instance of the Rane of Sumbulpur".\* xxx

"I understand that liberal motives of feeling and humanity induced my predecessor Mr. Buller to recommend that the superintendence of the Temple should be vested on the Rajah of Khoordah, not from his having any claim to that situation which he never possessed under the Marhatta Government but in consideration of the rank and to add a graceful dignity to the situation of the change that transformed the authority and control of the Province to the British Government." xxx

\* Rani Mukta Debi of Sambalpur left Sambalpur in 1805 when the control of the Sambalpur-Patna region was restored to the

In conclusion Richardson stated : "On the above grounds I do not hesitate to recommend whether it shall be the determination of Your Lordship in Council to continue to make the taxes a source of revenue or to abolish the taxes now levied for the benefit of a Christian nation on an idolatrous worship ; that the present Superintendent be removed—and a learned Brahmin of known sanctity thoroughly acquainted with the Shasters be appointed Superintendent."<sup>22</sup>

On 11 February 1814, Dowdeswell, Secretary to the Government, wrote a letter to Richardson expressive of the disapprobation of the Governor General in Council at the Collector's instituting an enquiry into the property of the Jagannath temple. "The arrangement of 1809 was founded", Richardson was told, "on the principle of leaving everything connected with the interior management of the temple of Juggernaut to the native Superintendent and the officers of the Temple. It is unnecessary to state the urgent consideration, both of policy and propriety, which rendered the adoption of that principle in the mind of the Governor General indispensably necessary. It is sufficient to remark that the motives which influenced Government at that time, apply equally to the present time."

"Under the circumstances noted above, the Governor General in Council cannot but regret that the Collector should have deemed it necessary or advisable to enter in the enquiry described in his letter, respecting the articles belonging to the Temple : the enquiry in question appearing to Government to be not only at variance with the principle above noticed but even with section 2, of the Regulation of 1809, which vests the superintendence of the temple of Juggernaut and its interior economy, the conduct and management of its

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Bhonsles. She was granted the pergunah of Panchgarh in the Khurda estate for her maintenance.

<sup>22</sup> Richardson to Earl of Moira : 8 January 1814 No. 29, Bengal Revenue Consultations : W. B. Archives.

affairs and the control over priests, officers and servants attached to the Temple in the Rajah of Khurda."

"In explaining these sentiments the Governor General in Council is not unmindful of the opinion which you appear to entertain regarding the conduct of the Rajah of Khoordah. At the same time it is manifest that, if it be necessary, to restrict the powers confided to that person, such restriction should have taken place with the knowledge and sanction of Government before any deviation from the principle noted in the preceding part of the letter had been admitted."

"After the above expression of sentiments of Government it is almost superfluous to desire that you will instruct the Collector to withdraw all interference in the interior economy of the Temple and confine himself strictly at least for the present to the duties chiefly to the collection of the tax on pilgrims." xx

"Should the Collector on further experience deem it advisable to give stability to the suggestions already made by him by a legislative enactment, he is desired to submit thru' you the draft of a Regulation for amending the rules at present established. In the like manner should any modification of the rules appear to be necessary or advisable, the Governor General in Council will be ready to consider, which you and the Collector may deem necessary to prevent the abuses of which the Rajah is supposed to be guilty." xxx

"Should you consider it advisable any modification of the existing rules regarding the tax on pilgrims or the interior management of the Temple, the Governor General in Council will of course take the opinion of those persons in authority whom it may be deemed advisable to consult."<sup>23</sup>

Trower was admonished by the Governor General in Council for interfering in the affairs of the Jagan-

\* Dowdeswell to Richardson : 11 February 1814 No. 31, Bengal Revenue Consultation : W.B.A.

nath temple. Nevertheless, in his letter to Richardson, he made adverse remarks against the conduct of the Raja of Khurda.

“The officers of the Temple themselves are constantly complaining against the Rajah’s conduct and every pilgrim that enters the town, of any respectability, is expected to gratify the Rajah by some pecuniary donation, or he cannot perform the ceremonies with comfort and satisfaction. It would be tedious to relate the many instances which have occurred of the complaint of this nature ; it is sufficient to state that the conduct of the Rajah has given special disgust and has prevented the southern Rajahs and from the Garhjats from visiting the temple for several years, and I am of opinion that as long as he retains any power in the Temple it will not only continue to prevent their visits but also those of many other persons.”

“The Rajah of Khoordah on all occasions when he wants to give trouble, quotes the *Madala Panjis* or records of the Temple but whenever his interest is concerned, he forgets them. The *Madala Panjis* properly speaking, are rules for the duties to be performed to the idol, by the priests and shewuks and have nothing to do with the visits of the pilgrims. In ancient days it was customary to enter on the records of the Temple, the day and the year on which any of the neighbouring Rajahs visited the idol and the mode in which he did it ; but I am informed by the Purchas that this has long been discontinued. The Rajah wishes every order issued by him to be considered as the *Madala Panji*.”

“The Rajah not infrequently talks of his dignity and sacredness of his character, but Government may be somewhat surprised to learn that he has condescended to stoop so low as to invite the Portuguese writer in the Collector of Tax’s office to be present at a nautch on the occasion of marriage of his daughter. This may appear a trifling circumstance to introduce in this letter but I conceive it may have its due weight and serve to

show that he is altogether not a fit person to exercise such extensive authority as is now vested in him."

Trower considered appointment of a Deputy Superintendent "to be very desirable". He added : "The Rajah of Khoordah from his rank and station does not trouble himself to superintend in person the conduct of the officers of the Temple, but deposes his dependents and domestics who are generally speaking men of little character and respectability. A Deputy Superintendent of high cast and independence would operate to ensure a faithful discharge of the duties of the office."

In conclusion, Trower observed : "It is said to be the source of very general complaints that the indulgence (of carrying the chowry and the torch inside the Temple) now rests with the Rajah, and that it prevents the resort to Juggernath of many persons of rank who are unwilling to subject themselves to the caprice and extortion of Rajah Mookund Deo and impertinence of his underlings. During the Marhatta Government, this indulgence was always granted when applied by respectable persons."<sup>24</sup>

Richardson, the Member on deputation as the Settlement Commissioner, submitted for the 'attention' of His Lordship in Council, the 'draught' of a Regulation, proposed by the Collector of Cuttack, for better management of the collection of tax and internal affairs of the Temple, suggesting "salutary restriction on the authority of the Superintendent of the Temple."<sup>25</sup>

### *Trower's Draft of a Regulation*

"Whereas, it has appeared that the rules at present in force for collecting the duties resorting to Juggernath and for the superintendence and management of

<sup>24</sup> W. Trower to J. Richardson 18 March 1814 J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Richardson to the Governor General 4 April 1814 J.T.C.

the affairs of the Temple are in many points essentially defective and have not been attended with the salutary effects expected, and whereas it is the wish of the British Government to afford to different classes of pilgrims every comfort and convenience in the performance of their religious ceremonies and protect them from the oppression and extortion by the officers of the Government employed in the collections as well as from those in whom the internal management and economy of the Temple is vested."

"The superintendence of the temple of Juggernath and its interior economy, the conduct and management of its affairs under the restrictions hereafter specified, shall be vested in the Rajah of Khoordah or such of the persons as shall be appointed by the Governor General in Council, who shall on all occasions be guided by the rules of the Temple or by ancient established customs." xxx

"The Superintendent shall be assisted by a Deputy Superintendent who shall be appointed by the Board of Revenue subject to the confirmation by the Governor General in Council." xxx

The Secretary to the Government acknowledged the receipt of Trower's 'draught' of a Regulation for better management of the Temple. He wrote to Richardson : "From the circumstances stated by you, it appears indispensably necessary to impress upon the Rajah of Khoordah more correct notions than he at present appears to entertain of the nature of the situation held by him, as the Superintendent of the temple of Juggernath."

"The powers and duties of the Superintendent are defined in clauses 1 & 3, Section 2 of Regulation IV of 1809, in which it is stated that superintendence of the Temple and its interior economy are vested in the Rajah." xxx

"From the whole tenor of these rules it is manifest that it was the intention of Government that the control of the Rajah should be confined to the interior economy of the Temple. In consequence, it follows

that he has been guilty of great misconduct in endeavouring to prevent the Rajah of Khunpurrah from residing in the town of Pooree and bearing on his Palki any insignia which he might judge proper. Whether this insignia was properly assumed or not . . . could certainly be none for the Rajah of Khoordah to decide either as Superintendent of the Temple or in any other capacity."

"It has occurred to the Governor General in Council that it may be convenient that the view taken by Government of the Rajah's conduct as above noticed, should distinctly be stated to him in a letter from the Persian Secretary to Government, to the Rajah who will be at the same time informed that should he again furnish any ground for dissatisfaction at his conduct either by assumption of authority which does not properly belong to him or by any failure in the respect due to any public office, the Governor General in Council will deem it necessary to remove the Rajah from the office of the Superintendent of the Temple in conformity with the powers reserved to Government by clause 2, Section 2 of the Regulation above noted."<sup>28</sup>

But the Governor General was not prepared to accept the amendments in the rules as suggested by Trower and recommended by Richardson. The Board of Revenue was accordingly informed: "The Governor General in Council observes that great circumspection shall be observed in introducing any alternation in regard to the internal management of the affairs of the Temple. Your Board are no doubt informed that the object in appointing the Rajah of Khoordah to the office of the Superintendent of the Temple, was to remove from the European officers of Government a control over matters of which they could not be possibly competent judges, and in which errors might have led to embarrassing consequence."

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<sup>28</sup> Secretary to Government to John Richardson: 14 April 1814 No. 1440 J.T.C. Pt. 1.

It was pointed out that "the arrangements" proposed by the Collector "have a tendency to remove that control". Dowdeswell concluded : "In expressing these sentiments, the Governor General in Council is not by any means insensible to the misconduct of which the Rajah of Khoordah has been guilty, but if the inconveniences arise not from the nature of the existing arrangements, but from the misconduct of person by whom they are administered it is quite clear that another remedy shall be applied to the evil, quite different from the alteration of the arrangements themselves."<sup>27</sup>

On the 5th February 1814, Lord Hastings in his Minute on the administration of the Cuttack province referred to the "celebrated temple of Juggernath, an institution affecting strongly the passion and feelings of the great body of the Hindoos on one side and the character of the British Government on the other."<sup>28</sup>

The Minute of Lord Hastings influenced the decision of the Board of Revenue. Colebrook, a member of the Board, opposed any change. "It was obvious" he observed that the "active interference of an European officer in affairs of this nature was by all means to be avoided on every account; lest offence should be given to the people in some very tender point by mistakes into which an European officer might be easily led in matters very foreign to him, and lest the British Government and its officers should be held forth in the light of direct promoters of an odious superstition."

"Were that superstition less obnoxious it would still be a natural conclusion that the care of religious worship is most fitly entrusted to persons of the same religious persuasion and that Government shuns the occasion of being mixt in affairs with which it has no

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<sup>27</sup> G. Dowdeswell, Secretary to Board of Revenue : 30 April 1814, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Minute of Lord Hastings : 5 February 1814, B.R.A. Vol. February 1814-March 1815.

concern and by any erroneous management of which most serious differences might be excited very gratuitously among its native subjects."<sup>29</sup>

In July 1814, Dowdeswell, the Secretary to the Government wrote to Richardson, acknowledging his letter dated the 8th January which "embraced two questions viz., the tax levied from the pilgrims resorting to the temple of Juggernaut and the superintendence of the Temple itself."

"With respect to the former question, that the tax shall be altogether abolished, this suggestion appears to be founded for the most part on the consideration for the casualties which arise in admitting the pilgrims in the Temple. Secondly, the benefit which would arise from it by the enhancement (to use the term of your letter) of our reputation for liberality and tolerance and thirdly the incompatibility of a tax of that nature with the principles of our religion."

"With respect to the first mentioned point, the Governor General in Council must necessarily lament the fatal casualties which happened from the eagerness of the people to obtain admission in the Temple. At the same time the Governor General in Council finds it difficult to believe that the evil might not be effectually prevented in future by proper arrangements and precautions in regard to the admission of the pilgrims. The Collector himself has suggested some rules to obviate the existing evil. So long as a well founded presumption may exist that casualties may in future be prevented by reforms of that description, any sacrifice of public revenue must be deemed unnecessary."

"With respect to the second objection, the supposed enhancement of the credit of Government from the proposed abolition of the tax, the Governor General in Council has never understood that its character

<sup>29</sup>G. Dowdeswell to Richardson: 1 July 1814 No. 24: Bengal Revenue Consultations: W.B.A. In his letter, Dowdeswell quoted the opinion of Colebrook.

for liberality or tolerance was impeached by the tax in question."

"It should be borne in mind that the tax in question was not established by us; that it existed under the late Marhatta Government and that the increasing object of the British Government has been to free it from the exactions and oppression with which it was attended under the former Government."

"The argument regarding tolerance is of still less weight. If a Hindoo Government thought it consistent with the principles of religious persuasion to provide in some sort for the exigencies of the State by tax of that description, it is impossible to discover any substantial reasons why another Government professing a different religion should discontinue a tax which had already received the sanction of authority most competent to judge a question of that nature."

"Supposing however the argument to be well-founded, it would equally apply to Gyah and Allahabad and of course equally suggest the expediency of abolishing the duties at those places yielding according to the account of the last year, a net revenue of 454,505." xxx

"The resort of the pilgrims to Juggernaut and the performance of the superstitious rites of the Temple would be materially promoted by the discontinuance of the tax, but His Lordship in Council cannot discern how the interests of another and more pure religion would be enhanced." xxx

The Note of the Secretary referred to the observation of Richardson that the surplus amount of 7 years and 4 months was only Rs. 2514 and remarked: "You cannot be insensible to the difficulties which arose in regulating the rates and the disbursements of the Temple for a long time after our acquisition of the District and which are partially removed at the present hour."

"It has long been a subject to regret and even surprise to Government, considering how celebrated the temple of Juggernaut is throughout India, that

the Temple has not been more productive than it has been, and these impressions must necessarily be felt more strongly when the limited amount of the tax is compared with the revenue from a similar source at Allahabad and Gyah."

"Compare the revenue of receipts and disbursements of the last two years' account of 1812-13.

Receipt	49794
Charge of establishment	4659
	45135

Supposing that the tax not to have existed during those two years, Government instead of deriving a net revenue of 45135 from the source must have submitted to the alternative of withdrawing all pecuniary support to the Temple, of incurring an annual expenses of about 64,000 on that account."

"It naturally occurs to you that His Lordship would be very unwilling that the general resources of the State should be burdened with a charge of that nature."

"On the other hand to withdraw all pecuniary support from the Temple would certainly not reflect credit either in the minds of most of the surrounding States or of our subjects under the British Government, and might even excite impressions the effect of which cannot be exactly forecast." xxx

"By continuing the tax, the local officers have a direct and constant incentive to protect that class of persons from all exactions beyond the amount of the payment of regulated duty to Government. The Governor General in Council does not deem it advisable to abolish the tax on pilgrims at Juggernath."

"In like manner it is necessary to decide, previously to entering on the consideration of any arrangements regarding the management of the Temple, whether the present Superintendent Mookund Deo should be removed from the office. You are no doubt aware of

the difficulties which attended the management of the institution by regular officers of Government."

"Those difficulties, more than any other consideration, suggested the expediency of appointing the Rajah of Khoordah to the situation, for which it was supposed that he was peculiarly fitted by his rank in life, by the connection which his family had long maintained with the Temple and by his Brahminical character, which was understood to be of the highest class."

"It is evident that strong grounds would be necessary to justify the removal of the Rajah from his present situation. It occurs to the Governor General in Council that the abuses of which the Rajah is stated to have been guilty, might be in future, prevented by suitable checks to the excess of his authority and by reasonable admonition."

"We must also be careful not to admit the complaints of a few individuals as the general expression of feelings. It seems scarcely credible that if the Rajah has misconducted so generally as you appear to suppose, complaints of this nature should have reached the Governor General from any opulent native at Calcutta."

The letter next dealt with the proposed appointment of a 'learned native' as Superintendent and observed: "This however is in a great degree the principle on which the Rajah of Khoordah was appointed to the situation, and if he had failed in the obligations of his duty, such failure, coupled with the general character of the Natives, cannot but solicit some doubt whether the laudable object to be effectually realized by any change in the individual."<sup>80</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Dowdeswell to Richardson 5 July 1814 No. 36 Bengal Revenue Consultations : W.B. Archives. Richardson again pleaded for the abolition of the Pilgrim tax.

Richardson to the President, 20 December 1814, Bengal Revenue Consultations : W.B. Archives.

Richardson was reprimanded by the Vice-President in Council. He was informed : "The Honorable Vice-President does not deem it necessary to continue the discussion regarding the temple of Juggernath. . . He cannot but regret that you should have converted your mind to the contrary opinion entertained by Government and the arguments by which the opinion was supported into an implication of absurdity on your part. The Vice-President in Council does not discern anything."<sup>31</sup>

The controversy regarding the abolition of the Pilgrim tax was postponed, till it was revived by the Missionaries.

In 1817, the Paiks of Khurda revolted against the oppression of the British Government, under the leadership of Jagabandhu Vidyadhar, the commander of the Khurda Raja. On 14 April 1817, the Khurda insurgents led by Jagabandhu Vidyadhar entered Puri. Captain Wallington with only 200 Sepoys under his command, could not resist the insurgents numbering more than 5000. On 14 April night, the British officers, including Samuel Busby, retreated to Cuttack, taking with them the money in the treasury.<sup>32</sup>

The money in the tax office, amounting to Rs. 13619-8 in silver and copper coins, was abandoned for want of conveyance. The insurgents burnt the Government buildings and even destroyed the shed which was erected at Atharanullah for 'the convenience of the Kungals' (Trower to Board of Revenue 4 February 1818, O.S.A.) Busby 'lost everything he possessed of'.

Trower wrote "It is notorious that every Pundah in the town of Pooree accompanied Jugbundoo, when he pillaged the remaining treasure."<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Dowdeswell to Richardson : 18 March 1815, Bengal Revenue Consultations No. 31 : W.B. Archives.

<sup>32</sup> E. Impey, Magistrate to Bayley, Chief Secretary : 15 April 1817, Bengal Judicial Consultations : W.B.A.

<sup>33</sup> Trower, Collector to Board of Revenue : 30 August 1817

According to Toynbee, "the priests of the Temple openly proclaimed the fall of the English rule and the restoration of the authority of the ancient line of sacred kings."<sup>34</sup>

But the senior Oriya priests like Krishnachandra Mahapatra, the head Punda, did not join the insurgents. "Kishenchunder was seized and taken before him (Jugbundoo) at the Rajah's house where he was very ill-treated and his house and property plundered to a very considerable amount."<sup>35</sup>

Jagannath Rajguru, formerly the head Parichha, was away in Calcutta to represent his case before the Calcutta Council. His property was plundered by the insurgents.

In his letter to the Government, Impey, Magistrate of the Cuttack province, expressed "strong suspicion" of the Khoordah Rajah's guilt which, in his opinion, "calculated to encourage and foment the existing disposition to oppose the authority of Government."<sup>36</sup>

The Bengal Government ordered for the arrest of Mukunda Deb, the Raja of Khurda. Captain Le Fabre reached Puri on the 18th April 1817. On his approach, the insurgents withdrew. The Raja and his son were arrested and kept as prisoners in the Barabati fort at Cuttack.

Mukunda Deb submitted a petition to the Government pleading his innocence. In his petition, he recounted how 'Jugbundoo the detested' tried to persuade him to rise against the English, 'the Lords of Hindostan'. But the Raja refused to follow 'a course

O.S.A. Vol. March 1817—May 1818.

Subsequently a portion of the money, amounting to Rs. 4053.2 was recovered by searching houses.

<sup>34</sup> *A sketch of the History of Orissa* : Toynbee p. 18.

<sup>35</sup> Trower, Collector to Board of Revenue ; 26 November 1817  
O.S.A. March 1817—May 1818.

<sup>36</sup> Impey to Secretary to Government : 7 April 1817, O.S.A.  
March 1817—May 1818.

of wickedness' by rising against the English who had conferred 'many benefits' upon him.<sup>37</sup>

The Raja of Khurda unexpectedly got an ally to support his cause. The Government asked everybody to account for the Paik rising. Eric Watson, Judge of the Calcutta Court of Circuit, landed at Puri in January 1817. The Raja of Khurda, met him and narrated his grievance. To substantiate how the Collector interfered in the Temple administration, he mentioned that in 1813, the Board of Revenue blamed Trower for interference when some articles in Jaganath's wardrobe were found to be missing. Trower had charged the Raja for negligence.

Watson in his Report to W. B. Bayley, Offg. Chief Secretary observed: "The treatment of the Rajah, every injury to whom is from the sacredness of his character, felt by the people as done to themselves, may, I think, be considered as a cause, perhaps the main one, of the disturbances in Khoordah". xxx

"The Rajah of Khoordah" he pointed out: "was fixed as the head of his religion in his hereditary office in the temple." xxx

"I entertain grave doubts of the policy as well as the legality of the officers of Government interfering with the internal economy of the Temple of Jugger-nauth. I really think that a Collector of land revenue is the most improper of all persons to be the keeper of the Idol's wardrobe. It appears to me to be a shameful and insulting mockery of their own idolatrous superstition that an European officer should have any interference or control in such matters as airing of the Idol's wardrobe and if the wardrobe itself had been damaged or pillaged, it was manifestly the duty of the Magistrate on complaint, and not the Collector, to detect and punish the thief."<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Letter from G. A. Molony, Persian Secretary to Secretary, Territorial department: 15 July 1817.

Territorial department: 15 July 1817.

<sup>38</sup> Watson to Bayley: 3 May 1817 *Gulde to Orissa Records* :

The main causes of the disturbance were however oppression and exploitation. The people felt no injury when Mukunda Deb was deposed and sent to Midnapore as prisoner.

The opinion of Watson and the submissiveness of the petition had the desired effect and the Raja of Khurda was held to be 'entirely innocent' by W. Ewer, Special Commissioner for enquiry, in his letter to the Government dated 8 December 1817.<sup>39</sup>

Mukunda Deb died in 1817 and was succeeded by his son Ramachandra Deb. He proved to be incompetent. W. Melville, Joint Magistrate, Puri, wrote to the Collector of Cuttack, Pakenham, that the Raja was under the influence of Sumnat (Somnath) Pat-joshi and Sumnat Vahiniputti "who were appointed at the Rajah's request to assist him in the management of the affairs of the Temple. They, it is said, abuse his confidence and appropriated his allowance. They have kept him in such a state of ignorance that I understand he is unable to write although within a year of attaining majority."

In conclusion, the Joint Magistrate observed: "The Rajah is said to be not ill-disposed but seduced by corrupt and depraved advisers."<sup>40</sup>

The Paik rising proved to be a boon in disguise to the Raja of Khurda. Henceforth, the Government did not like to interfere in the internal affairs of the

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"The temple of Juggernath attracts Mr. Watson's attention and the Idol and wardrobe haunt his imagination but Mr. Watson does not explain himself and only hints dark things against the Collector and the Wardrobe."

Trower to W. Ewer, Commissioner : 3 April 1818 O.S.A.

<sup>39</sup> For the history of the Paik Rising of 1817, see my book '*History of Orissa in the 19th century*' chapter IV.

<sup>40</sup> Melville to Pakenham : 22 October 1819, J.T.C. Pt. 2.

"Mooktyars were appointed to discharge the duties of the office of the Superintendent, who were also principal servants of the Temple." Melville to Pakenham : 31 May 1820, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

Jagannath temple, lest any mistake would lead to another outburst of unrest. The Court of Directors recognized 'the propriety' of the 'liberal policy' adopted by Pakenham, the Collector of Cuttack, towards the Raja of Khurda, who was assigned an allowance of Rs. 2,000 per month with a Malikana of ten per cent of the jumma of the pergunah Lembai (Despatch dated 10 December 1823 : O.S.A.).

Pakenham, Collector, wrote to the Commissioner that he had received a petition "from a person named Bydinath Chowdharee stating that he is desirous of repairing the temple of Juggernath at an expense of forty to fifty thousand Rupees, provided he obtains authority for so doing and such assistance from the officers of Government as may be required, in the course of carrying on the work."

Baidyanath Chaudhury deposited the sum of Rupees ten thousand in the treasury and wanted to advance money from time to time to complete the work. He asked the Collector to recommend a person to superintend the work, whom he was willing to pay up to Rs. 250 per month. Pakenham recommended Sub Lieutenant MacGregor, formerly of the Cuttack Legion.<sup>41</sup>

Mills, Commissioner, wrote in 1839 that Baidyanath Chaudhury contributed Rs. 24,000 for repairing the Jagannath temple.

<sup>41</sup> Pakenham to Commissioner 19 July 1823 O.S.A. Vol. 1823.

In 1805 Krishnachandra Singh, Dewan of the Cuttack Collectorate, solicited 'permission and assistance' from the Board of Commissioners to repair the inside portion of the Temple. The Board was willing to give 'reasonable aid'. (T. Fortesque to C. Groeme, Collector Zilla Juggernath 11 March 1805 : O.S.A. Vol. January 1805-June 1806).

But the priests of the Temple, with whom Krishnachandra Singh did not pull on well, objected and the proposal was abandoned.

## SECTION ONE

## THE SERVANTS OF THE JAGANNATH TEMPLE

"In former times the establishment of the temple of Juggunath consisted of thirty-six and they were in consequence called 'Chuteesa Nijog'. But for a period of at least two hundred years, others have been added to these thirty six, and the number now belonging to the Temple amount to two hundred and fifty. Besides these establishments denominated as the establishment of Juggunath, there are others who are called the Bahar Dewul Shewuks serving the Thakurs which are in the Temple" (Groeme's Report).

"The Dewul Purchas are at present the controlling authorities on the part of Government. Other priests are the Pundahs, Purharees, Dytas, all of whom are permanently attached to the Temple, and their appointments are hereditary."<sup>42</sup>

"By their appointments and former usages, they are servants of Government, subject to the immediate control of the Government at Cuttack."<sup>43</sup>

## 1. The Parichhas

"The Purichas are the head priests under the Rajah of Khoordah. They see that worship is conducted in an orderly manner. Every officer and priest of the Temple, as far as the performance of his duty is concerned, is placed under their control. They superintend the collection and disbursement of its revenue and receive the allowance of Government to the Temple."<sup>44</sup>

Hunter criticized the Parichhas for maladministra-

<sup>42</sup> Hunter, Collector of tax to Board of Revenue : 11 November 1806 J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>43</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 6 June 1806 J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>44</sup> Collector, Puri to H. Ricketts, Commissioner : 26 October 1838, No. 397 : J.T.C. Pt. 3.

tion of the Temple affairs. "The authority of the Purchas in the Temple was always absolute. But now from their inattention to their duties and want of superintendence of their conduct by the ruling power, no obedience whatever is paid to their orders. The consequence is that people go into the Temple at times when they should not, and remain there when they ought to go out."<sup>45</sup>

To the Board of Revenue he complained against the conduct of the Parichhas. "The Dewul Purchas are very negligent in their duty viz., not to permit the pilgrims to enter the Pagoda without my Rowanna.

The Purchas receive fee on all presents to the god, and it is therefore their interest that pilgrims should escape the tax, as by their doing so they are enabled to make greater presents to the god."<sup>46</sup>

The post of Parichha used to be hereditary before the Maratha rule. Jagannath Rajguru's ancestors were Parichhas. The Marathas modified the custom. Though they retained Jagannath Rajguru, they appointed three Maratha Parichhas. Two of them, Morar Pundit and Sewajee Pundit continued as Parichhas even after the conquest.

Morar Pundit, the head Parichha, died in the beginning of 1811. Sewajee Pundit, the third Parichha, made a representation for appointment to that post on the ground that he was performing more important duties than the second Parichha. But the Government rejected his petition, and in July 1811,

<sup>45</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 15 March 1806 J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>46</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 18 March 1806, Bengal Revenue Consultations : National Library.

"The provisional government of the Dewul Purchas was discovered to be one curious piece of machinery, in which every member does the best to enrich himself and rob his brother. There was plenty of oil for the wheels, but it always contrived to find its way into a wrong channel."

'Pooree and the temple of Juggernaut'—*Calcutta Review* 1840.

Jagannath Rajguru was appointed the head Parichha. Sewajee Pundit now became the second Parichha.

Lokanath Rajguru was appointed the third Parichha after depositing security for the post. But he died after few months, and in April 1812, the Collector recommended the name of his brother Raghunath to fill the vacancy.

During the first settlement of Khurda in Umlee 1220 (1812-13) the Government consulted Jagannath Rajguru as he had "been formerly employed in the management of the pergunah of Khoordah and possessing intimate knowledge of the resources of the pergunah."

The Sarbarakars complained to the Government that the Dewan of Khurda, the local Tahsildar and Jagannath Rajguru took money from them, 'on condition of their settlements being confirmed'. Petty Ward, the officiating Collector, deputed the Tahsildar of Cuttack to make enquiry. On the basis of his Report the Government held them to be guilty. The Dewan was removed from his post and the Tahsildar of Khurda was dismissed and convicted. The case of Jagannath Rajguru was referred to the Governor General in Council.<sup>47</sup>

The Secretary to the Government informed the Commissioner: "The enquiry held by the acting Tahsildar of Cuttack appears to the Governor General in Council to fully establish the guilt of Juggunath Rajgooroo. His Lordship in Council directs that he may be immediately dismissed from the situation."<sup>48</sup>

Sewajee Pundit, the second Parichha, was promoted to the post of the first Parichha. The officiating Collector of Cuttack, Scott Warring, selected Lalchand Banerjee as the second Parichha. Trower, after re-joining his post, objected to the appointment

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<sup>47</sup> Secretary to Government to Earl of Moira, Governor General : 24 December 1814, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>48</sup> Secretary to Government to Board of Revenue : 1 March 1816, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

of Lalchand Banerjee, on the ground that the appointment of an outsider to that post, would cause resentment among the priests of the Jagannath temple. He also suggested re-appointment of Jagannath Rajguru.<sup>49</sup> The Board of Revenue forwarded his letter to the Government.

The Board of Revenue was informed : "I am directed by the Right Honorable Governor General in Council to acknowledge the letter of the Collector on the subject of appointments recently made to the situations of the first and second Purchas. Under the circumstances, proposed by the Collector, His Lordship in Council has deemed it proper to rescind the appointment of Lalchand Banurjee to the position of the second Purcha and adopts the suggestion of the Collector that the nomination of a successor to fill that situation be left to a certain number of principal officers attached to the Temple."

"On the case of Juggunath Rajgooroo, His Lordship in Council sees no ground to suspend the order under which that person was removed from his situation as head Purcha and Sewajee Pundit appointed to that post."<sup>50</sup>

The Raja of Khurda and the Temple priests recommended the appointment of Mahadeb Mahapatra as second Parichha. But the Sants and Mohunts sent a petition to Trower, the Collector of Cuttack, objecting to the appointment of Mahadeb Mahapatra on the ground of moral turpitude. Trower with his bias against the Raja of Khurda, argued against the appointment of Mahadeb Mahapatra. Mahadeb was the nephew of Jagannath Rajguru, who could probably influence the Board of Revenue. On the 16th December 1816, the Governor General in Council, acting according to the advice of the Board of Revenue, sanctioned the appointment of Mahadeb as the second

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<sup>49</sup> Trower to Board of Revenue : 19 July 1816, J.T.C. Pt. 2.

<sup>50</sup> Holt Mackenzie, Secretary to Govt. to Board of Revenue : 26 July 1816, J.T.C. Pt. 2.

Parichha. In spite of the direction of the Board of Revenue, Trower refused to allow him to work as Parichha.

Luckily for Mahadeb, Trower went away and the next Collector of Cuttack, T. Pakenham, exonerated him.

Mukunda Deb died while under surveillance at Puri. He left a minor son and the question of appointment of a guardian arose. Trower wrote : "The young Rajah without any hesitation expressed his wish that Juggernath Raj Guroo, late head Purcha of the Temple, should fill the situation, as he had formerly been his father's Dewan and from the situation which he himself and his ancestors held in the Temple, he was peculiarly calculated for the office."

"I beg leave to state that Juggernath Raj Guroo is the very person whom I myself should have fixed, convinced as I am that he is the only person in the District (that I am acquainted with) fit to perform the duty required."

"Sewajee Pundit, the present head Purcha is old and infirm and has no control over the affairs of the Temple, the other two Purchas are equally inefficient and the affairs of the temple since the removal of Raj Guroo have been terribly neglected."

"The control over the affairs of the Temple as connected with its internal management, which it is proposed to be vested in the guardian, requires that he should be a man well acquainted in the rules, ceremonies and established customs, which he is called upon to direct, and Raj Guroo from the situation he has previously held and the respectability of his character is peculiarly fitted to exercise that authority."

Trower was so convinced of 'Raj Guru's innocence', that he had recommended Jagannath's "going to Calcutta and petitioning the Council that his case might be investigated—so that his character might be cleared which for fourteen years under the British Government remained unimpeached."

Trower mentioned in his letter that Jagannath Rajguru did proceed to Calcutta, but 'the unhappy disturbance' broke out and Rajguru" was obliged to return to Pooree to look after his property which had suffered from the visit of Jugbundoo to Juggernath"<sup>51</sup> Trower recommended that Jagannath Rajguru should act as the guardian of the minor Raja and the Superintendent of the temple of Juggernath.

But Ker, the Commissioner, was not convinced inspite of the eloquent pleading of Trower in favour of Jagannath Rajguru, and held Rajguru "ineligible for the situation of guardian and Superintendent of the Temple."

The young Raja did not want to suggest the name of any other person as the guardian. To conduct the Temple affairs, he nominated Somnath Patjoshi and Somnath Vahinipati without the title of Superintendent. Trower argued that the proposal of the Raja should be immediately accepted to end "the constant disputes and irregularities" in the Temple affairs, as "the three Purchas are entirely independent of each other."<sup>52</sup>

The Government consequently vested Somnath Patjoshi and Somnath Vahinipati with the authority of the Superintendent without the title acting for and under the Rajah.

In 1824, Sewajee Pundit, the last of the Maratha priests in the Jagannath temple, died and the post of the first Parichha became vacant. The Collector, Thomas Pakenham, recommended Jagannath Rajguru for the post of first Parichha while admitting that he was removed from that post by the order of the Government on March 1, 1816.

The Governor General in Council wanted to know the 'sentiments' of the Commissioner in respect

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<sup>51</sup> Trower to Stirling, Secretary to the Commissioner, 28 May 1818, O.S.A. December 1817—September 1818.

<sup>52</sup> Trower to Stirling : 17 June 1818, O.S.A. December 1817—September 1818.

of the recommendation of the Collector. "His Lordship in Council presumed that the situation is one of great respectability and considerable emoluments and it is obviously desirable that other things being equal, to bestow it on a person of unimpeachable character."<sup>53</sup>

The Commissioner recommended Mahadeb Mahapatra for the post of first Parichha, which was approved by the Governor General in Council.

Pakenham, nevertheless, tried to justify, "the nomination of Juggernath Raj Guroo under the conviction that he was better qualified by talents and education for the situation, than any other person within my knowledge and from being aware of the favourable opinion that was entertained of him by Mr. A. Stirling whose researches into the literature and customs of the province afforded him opportunities of judging acquirements of different individuals."

Pakenham also pointed out : "It is likewise due to Juggernath Raj Guroo to bring to the notice of Government that the first intimation of the possibility of Jug Bundoo Vidyadhar Bakshee attempting to disturb the peace of Khoordah was reported by me, while officiating as Commissioner in November last."<sup>54</sup>

In 1825, Raghunath Brahma Rajguru, the third Parichha, died. Pakenham, the Collector of Cuttack, recommended for that post Janardan Rajguru, son of Jagannath Rajguru, so that he might "secure the assistance of Juggernath Raj Guroo's talents and influence in the management of the temple."<sup>55</sup>

Padmanabh Patjosee Mahapatra 'one of the head

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<sup>53</sup> Secretary to Government to Commissioner : 14 January 1825, J.T.C. Pt. 2, No. 25.

<sup>54</sup> Collector of Cuttack to Commissioner : 28 January 1825, J.T.C. Pt. 2.

<sup>55</sup> Collector of Cuttack to Commissioner : 24 August 1825, J.T.C. Pt. 2.

Pundahs of the Temple' made a petition seeking appointment as Parichha, in the vacancy caused by the vacancy caused by the death of Raghunath Rajguru. Pakenham in his letter observed : "From little I know of his character and the estimate in which he is generally held, he is not a fit person, I would recommend for the situation he aspires."<sup>56</sup>

The correspondence regarding the appointment of Parichhas showed the solicitude of the Christian government for the appointment of persons with integrity as Parichha. Jagannath Rajguru was qualified by talents and education. He tried to gain the confidence of the Collector by acting as a spy. Nevertheless he failed to secure his re-appointment. The claim of 'Pudlab Putjose Mahapater' was summarily rejected.

## 2. Mutdharis and the Mohunts

The Mathdharis and Mohunts, though not directly servants of the Jagannath temple, were closely associated with the Parichhas, who collected revenue from the Jagannath temple endowments. The Mathdharis were in charge of the lands which were appropriated for the services to Jagannath. The Sants and Mohunts of Puri prevented the restoration of the Bhairab image on the dais of Jagannath.

Webb wrote : "The Mutdharis and Mohunts in possession of the lands assigned for the support of the temple of Juggernath under denomination of Koth Khanjah pay no attention to my Purwana requiring them to produce their Sunnads with a view to ascertain the conditions on which they are held."<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Collector of Cuttack to Commissioner : 9 March 1825, J.T.C. Pt. 2.

Padmanabh succeeded his father Krishna Chandra Mahapatra as head Punda at the recommendation of Trower (O.S.A. 26 November 1817).

<sup>57</sup> Webb, Collector to Board of Revenue : 19 December 1807, O.S.A. Vol. July 1807—December 1808.

They influenced Trower against the appointment of Mahadeb Mahapatra.<sup>58</sup>

### 3. Pratiharis

“The Purharees are one of the thirty six classes of Chuttes Nijog or servants of god Juggernath. Their duty consists in guarding the seven inner doors of the Temple. They attend in the Temple during the day and watch it during the night. They conduct the pilgrims through it and present them to the god, from which last act they derive the appellation Parihari.” xxx

“The expense of purification acts as a fine for every violent death that occurs therein. This circumstance makes the Purharees most active and useful in preserving order and preventing rushes in great festivals; and but for their exertions on these occasions, the loss of life would be very great.”

“Their emoluments are principally derived from the portion of the tax that is bestowed by the present Government on the servants of the Temple in conformity to the ancient practice. In number, they exceed four hundred.” xxx

“Enticing the Hindoos however to undertake the pilgrimage to Juggernath, for which this class takes so great a credit, forms no part of their duty, but is a privilege they monopolise to the exclusion and envy

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The family of Raghujī Bhonsle gave pergunah Kodhar to Jayram Das, Mohunt of the Uttarparasa Math for the purpose of furnishing a certain quantity of articles of which Mohun Bhog was composed. “Notwithstanding the stipulated and specific purposes for which the Pergunah was granted to the idol, Jayram Das refuses to give accounts” (Groeme’s Report).

“I fearlessly assert that a more worthless set than the generality of the Sants and Mohunts of Pooree with their train of Chellas and Adhikarees is nowhere to be found without the slightest insinuation against Trower.” Collector, Cuttack to Commissioner : 24 August 1825, J.T.C. Pt. 2.

of other classes., and which they maintain by the power they possess for organisation movement.”<sup>59</sup>

“The Purharees are governed by four Sirdars. They have a great number of agents who travel in search of pilgrims and bring them to Juggernath. They are called Butwa. Generally each set has a head pilgrim, who takes care of the rest. The Butwa on his arrival at Poorsuttum reports to his Purharee, who takes charge of the pilgrims before their arrival at the ghaut, and is their sole conductor.”<sup>60</sup>

Hunter, the Collector of the pilgrim tax, wanted to check the power of the Pratiharis over the pilgrims “The money paid by the pilgrims” he wrote “for giving a bhog to Sri Jew is paid by every one according to his ability and inclination. This is the principal source of support for the Purharees. The Jatrees are not required to pay more than what suit their inclinations, but it seems to be the practice of the Purharees to use violence for the purpose of extorting money from them.”

Hunter “ordered the head Purharee to desist from flogging except when the jatrees should begin to make disturbances which from their numbers it is sometimes difficult to prevent otherwise by the terror of punishment.”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Collector, Puri to Ricketts, Commissioner : 26 October 1838, No. 347 : J.T.C. Pt. 2.

“The Purharees act a species of Police for the entries to the Temple. It is their duty to guard the sacred precincts from everything of pollution, and if any such occurs, they have to bear the expense of purification.”

Board of Revenue to Revenue department : 19 June 1839, No. 2431 : Home-Revenue letters to the Court : National Archives.

<sup>60</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue, 27 March 1806, *Bengal Revenue Consultations*. Parliamentary Papers 1813 ; National Library.

<sup>61</sup> Hunter to G. Hartwell, Secretary to the Commissioners : 2 March 1804, O.S.A. Vol. August 1804—August 1805.

“The Purharees were subjected under the Marhatta Government to the payment of 11,400 Khawuns in consideration of which they were allowed to levy from the pilgrims a higher rate than the Pundahs, who being servants of the Temple, were exempted from any such demand.”<sup>62</sup>

It was further stated in Blunt's letter that during the year 1803 to 1806, the Pundahs and the Purharees collected the fees themselves. But after the promulgation of Regulation IV of 1806, the fees were fixed by Hunter. During the Rath Jatra, each Lal Jatree paid Rs. 1-8 to a Purharee or Rupee one to a Pundah.

The Pundas, who are in charge of the Temple ceremonies also began to procure pilgrims. This was naturally resented by the Pratiharis. During the Maratha rule, there was an agreement between them and the Pundas agreed to pay a perquisite called 'Surbarah' or 'Rosom' to the Pratiharis for encroaching in to their rights. The Pundas took advantage of the advent of the Christian rule in Orissa, and refused to pay 'Surbarah' to the Pratiharis.<sup>63</sup>

The result was that the Pratiharis also stopped the payment of the Lal Bunde tax to the Government. When Morar Pundit, on behalf of the Government, asked them to pay the dues, the Pratiharis pleaded that the Pundas had not paid their fees.<sup>64</sup>

Until 1816, the Pundas and the Pratiharis colle-

<sup>62</sup> Blunt, Commissioner to Territorial Deptt. : 1 February 1821, J.T.C. Pt. 2.

The fee of 11,400 Kahans or Rs. 2850 was known as 'Lal Bunde'.

<sup>63</sup> “The Pundahs are determined not to give Surbarah if they can possibly avoid it.” Hunter to Board of Revenue, 22 May 1806, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>64</sup> “The real cause of the non-payment of their arrears arise from a desire to procure remission from Government.” Groeme to Fortesque, 22 March 1805, O.S.A. Vol. January—June 1805.

cted their fees from the pilgrims, inspite of the fact that "Regulation IV of 1809, which rescinded the whole of the previous Regulation IV of 1806, omitted all mention to the fee to be paid to the Pundahs and the Purharees."<sup>65</sup>

In 1816, it was decided to levy a duty of Rs. three from a Lal Jatree and six annas from a Bhurrung on account of the fee of the Pundas and the Pratiharis, in addition to the regular tax demanded on behalf of the Government.<sup>66</sup>

Groeme was soon involved in a dispute between the Singharees and the Pratiharis, which he tried to solve with the help of Morar Pundit. Groeme held that the Singharees were formerly making payment to the Purharees 'according to established usage' and ordered them to pay Rs. 4627 to the Purharees. But Kishen chunder Mahapatra, the chief Singharee and "his brethren refused to pay one rupee of the amount awarded against them". They advised other Singharees "to prevent the duties going on". Groeme suggested that the Singharees should be punished for their contumacy.<sup>67</sup>

But the Board of Commissioners hesitated to take any drastic action.

Hunter was "engaged for six days in the inves-

<sup>65</sup> Board of Revenue to Revenue Department : 19 June 1839, No. 2431 : Home-Revenue letters : National Archives.

<sup>66</sup> Blunt, Commissioner to Territorial Deptt. : 1 February 1821, J.T.C. Pt. 2.

"The oppression exercised by the unscrupulous and grasping priests in collecting their dues, was the cause of our depriving them of the power to collect and of doing it ourselves through the tax office."

F. Garrett, Collector, Puri to Commissioner : 7 November 1845, *Papers relative to Juggernaut* : National Archives.

<sup>67</sup> Groeme to Fortesque : 18 September 1805, O.S.A. Vol. July—December 1805.

Fortesque was Secretary to the Board of Commissioners.

tigation of a dispute between the Pundahs, Purharees and the Daitas for the distribution of bhog". He settled the dispute with the help of the Parichhas. He wrote that the bhog was distributed according to 'my direction'.<sup>68</sup>

The temple priests quarrelled when their interests clashed and they were not ashamed of getting their disputes settled by Christian foreigners. The history of direct British administration of the Jagannath temple is a sickening tale of the activities of a corrupt priestly oligarchy.

#### 4. The Pundas

"The Pundahs whose chief is Kishen Chunder Mahapatra, are servants of Juggernath and their duty is principally in the Pagodah. They do the same duty as the Purharees at the ghauts."<sup>69</sup>

"The Pundahs are in habit of introducing the pilgrims in the Temple. In the (Umlee) year 1214, the number of the Pundahs as given by Hunter amounted to about 230; since then they have nearly increased to 1200, independent of about 500 authorized Purharees." xxx

Throughout the second decade, the Pratiharis and the Pundas of the Jagannath temple quarrelled. "The Pundahs and Purharees have constantly been at variance and each has assumed the right of collecting the dues. The consequence is that a regular

<sup>68</sup> Hunter to Secretary to the Commissioners : 2 March 1804, O.S.A. August 1804—August 1805.

<sup>69</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 25 March 1806, *Bengal Revenue Consultations* : National Library. Mills in his letter to the Sudder Board of Revenue dated 11 May 1839 refers to the Pundas and the Pratiharis "appropriately called the Pilgrim hunters". Mills points out : "The Purharees are the guardians of the Temple, the Pundahs exclusively perform the ceremonies of the Temple." In 1839 the number of the Pundas increased to about 2000.

system of plunder has been established by these people.”<sup>70</sup>

There was dispute for the division of the fee of six annas which was levied from the Bhurrag pilgrims.<sup>71</sup>

The Board agreed with the opinion of the Collector and recommended “equal division of the fee of six annas now collected with the Government tax” between the Pundas and the Pratiharis.<sup>72</sup>

The Governor General in Council decided against “the relinquishment by Government of the assessment demandable from the Purharees stated to amount Rs. 2850”, and directed that it should be levied “from the date on which the collection was made by its officers.”<sup>73</sup>

The fees payable to the Pratiharis and the Pundas were long withheld pending decision by the Government. Pakenham, the Commissioner, was authorised to pay the Pundas and the Pratiharis Rs. 30,208-14-1 “being the balance due to them”.<sup>74</sup>

Even outside Orissa, Brahmottar lands were granted to the Pundas to defray the expenses of offering worship to Jagannath in the donor’s name. ‘Kaiballa Brahmottar’ land was granted in the Rajasahi district in Bengal from the proceeds of which Basudeb Panda of Purushottama Kshetra was paid Rs. 808 as ‘khairat’ per annum (Basudeb’s petition in Persian dated 1818 in O.S.A.).

<sup>70</sup> Trower, Collector to Board of Revenue : 2 October 1816, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>71</sup> Trower to Board of Revenue : 10 January 1817, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>72</sup> Board of Revenue to Collector, Cuttack : 21 January 1817, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>73</sup> Secretary, Territorial Deptt. to Commissioner : 10 August 1821.

<sup>74</sup> Board of Revenue to Pakenham : 20 September 1821, J.T.C. Pt. 2.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE PILGRIMS

“Pilgrimage to reputed holy places have ever been so popular in India. But no pilgrimage was ever so extensively practised and so generally famed as that of pilgrimage to Juggernaut. By what fortuitous circumstances that idol became so celebrated, it is difficult to imagine.”<sup>1</sup>

“This national reverence for holy places has been for ages concentrated on the city of Puri . . . On these inhospitable sands, Hindu religion and Hindu superstition have stood at bay for 18 centuries against the world. Here is the national Temple whither the people flock to worship from every province of India.”<sup>1a</sup>

Groeme in his Report on the Temple gives an account of the pilgrims resorting to the temple of Jagannath. “The collection from the pilgrims coming from the north began at a place called Khunta on the border of Mohurbunj country, and continued up to Autura Nullah at the entrance of Poorshuttum.”

“Pilgrims coming from the south-ward were subject to the same restrictions as those from the north-ward and paid their respective taxes at the stations situated near the principal one at Autura Nullah.”

“It is usual to examine whether the pilgrims were Lal Jatrees who could pay the fixed rate. They were named and numbered and delivered over to respectable Pundahs or their agents to whom the list was entrusted. On their arrival at Autura Nullah, they

<sup>1</sup> *Orissa and its Evangelization*, Rey Sutton, p. 59.

<sup>1a</sup> *Orissa*—Hunter, p. 83.

were again counted. All pilgrims of an inferior rank passed the ghaut after being numbered." xxx

The poorest classes were detained at each station about half a day, and after getting their clothes well examined if nothing was found, they were allowed to go to Autura Nullah, except at the time of different Jattras."

The ordeal of the destitute pilgrims was not over. "At the time of near approach of several Jattras, they were prevented from passing, until the very day of the Dool Jattras, and until the Ruth, at the time of the Ruth Jattras, should have reached the Goondicha Mundup." <sup>2</sup>

The Snan and the Rath Jatra attracted a large number of pilgrims from Bengal and upcountry. Most of the pilgrims came to Puri during the last two or three days before important festivals and were detained at Atharanulla for checking.<sup>3</sup>

"For about 50,000 to 200,000 persons, the major part being Desees and Punjkosees, gather at Autura Nullah, which entirely impede collection to the great loss of Government." xxx

"The Punjkosees suddenly arrive in a large body on the day and a day before the holy day, mixing with the pilgrims liable to pay the duty, and with other description of pilgrims exempted from the payment of the tax, all of whom crowd themselves in such an immense number in and about Autura Nullah." <sup>4</sup>

In 1813, the Car festival took place on the 30th June. Pilgrims of all descriptions. Desees, Kangals and Bhurrungs crowded at and in the vicinity of the

<sup>2</sup> Groeme's Report.

<sup>3</sup> "From the place where I now stand, I have a view of a host of people like an army encamped at the outer gate of the town of Juggernaut, while a guard of soldiers is posted to prevent them from entering the town until they have paid the tax."

*Christian Researches*—Rev. C. Buchanon, p. 37.

<sup>4</sup> Busby, Collector of Pilgrim tax to Trower, 30 October, 1813.

Atharanulla ghat, "mostly from the 28th to 30th ultimo, so much so on the last day."

The Collector of the tax proceeded to the spot and ordered the Daroga to open the gate, "having reason to suppose that as there were and in the environments upwards of one lack pilgrims waiting, there was not the least possibility of collecting the tax, even if they were inclined, either from the Bhurrungs or Desees."

As soon as the gate was opened, there was a great rush in which thirty-six persons, eighteen men and eighteen women, were trampled to death.

Busby wrote that when the gate was opened, "the pilgrims in their eagerness to prostrate before the idol, trampled on one another, and were not restrained even by the cries and groans of the sufferers, one man falling and then some followed. Had I not been present on an elephant and forced my way round to close the gate and the current of the crowd, I fear instead of thirty-six, one hundred would have been added to the number,"

Busby's explanation was that "the above evil annually prevailed from the time of the Marhattas to the present, as no method could be adopted to prevent it." He pointed out that the pilgrims would not be checked even by military force during the Asnan and Ruth Jatras, as they did not value their lives when lost at Juggernath.<sup>5</sup>

Trower forwarded Busby's letter to Richardson, the Settlement Commissioner. He remarked: "Mr. Busby is greatly mistaken in supposing that a life thus lost is a subject of rejoicing to the relatives of the

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<sup>5</sup> Busby to Trower: 15 July 1813, J.T.C. Pt. 1. .

"The greater the number of deaths, the greater are the honour and satisfaction of Jugunnath, in their opinion—all dying within the sacred precincts of the Kshetra are supposed to secure immortality."

J. B. Mactier, Collector, Puri to Commissioner: 25 January 1859.

sufferers. I never before heard that an involuntary death on entering the town even before the sufferer had obtained the sight of the idol entitled him to a seat in the paradise. That the relatives of the sufferers do not express joy, I can positively affirm, for I never witnessed sorrow more acute than was witnessed on the occasion."

Trower proposed that sepoy soldiers be employed to control the crowd. "What activity, zeal and humanity can make, will be heartily applied to prevent the loss of lives." The Collector suggested alterations to the existing barriers and a medical establishment at Puri for the treatment of sick pilgrims. "It appears that such an establishment was supported for the above purpose by the Marhatta Government and humanity certainly pleads for such a provision." <sup>6</sup>

Richardson in his letter to the Governor General in Council dated 8 January 1814, described the loss of 36 human lives as 'shocking to humanity'. But he agreed with Busby that it would be impossible to prevent the pilgrims from entering the town during the festivals "in spite of the most penal ordinance and the strictest prohibition."

He further observed: "It cannot be reasonably expected that the religious devotees, periodically raised to a degree of frenzy by religious enthusiasm will pay regard to the rules and ordinances of Government, when they value not their lives on such occasions, when no orders or threats are sufficient to restrain them. In contrary they deem it a blessing ensuing them future happiness."

As large number of pilgrims crossed the Atharannulla ghat during the last two or three days before important festivals there was a great rush for darsan in the Temple. "During the Jattras, the pilgrims were with greatest difficulty prevented from breaking (in a body) the barriers, to which, should they by

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<sup>6</sup> Trower to Richardson: 16 August 1813, Bengal Revenue Consultations: W.B.A.

chance succeed, their next step would be to repeat the same violence at the gate of the Pagoda, from forcing which it would be impossible to prevent, without really endangering persons." <sup>7</sup>

The number of pilgrims was very great if the Car festival was held early, or if the year was considered auspicious. In 1806/07, 113,266 persons attended the Car festival. The British Government hoped that the Pilgrim tax would be an additional source of income after meeting the expenses of the Temple. The Board of Commissioners reported that the annual collection from the Pilgrim tax fetched two to three lakhs of rupees during the Maratha rule.

But the number of pilgrims did not come up to expectation in the first three years after the imposition of the Pilgrim tax. The average annual collection from January 1806 to 30 April 1808 was only Rs. 76,891.

The construction of new Jagannath road from Jaleswar to Puri to attract the pilgrims began in 1812. It was completed in 1825. The total expenditure for the construction of the road was Rs. 8,19,158-11 excluding Maharaja Sukhamoy Roy's donation of Rs. 150,000. In 1804, the Court of Directors intimated that the Pilgrim tax should not be treated as a source of revenue.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, the surplus proceeds of the Pilgrim tax were spent towards the construction of the new road and for amenities of the pilgrims.

In 1812, a well was constructed at Atharanulla for the convenience of the pilgrims at a cost of Rs. 6809. The Government sanctioned construction of two rest sheds for the pilgrims at Puri in 1827 (O.S. A. 24 April 1827).

In 1827, Sarais (Pilgrim shelters) were erected

<sup>7</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 10 June 1806, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Court of Directors to Governor General, Revenue letters to Bengal, 1813-15 Vol. III, p. 191.

at Balasore, Akhuapada, Basta, Bhadrak and at Rajghat near Jaleswar from the donation of a Hindu zamindar of Bengal.<sup>9</sup>

Shady trees were planted on roadside to afford rest to the pilgrims. The zamindars were asked to plant such trees where the road passed through their estates.

These amenities encouraged the pilgrims to visit Puri during the festivals in large numbers. "A Pundah said that before the Company took care of the idol's establishment, the idol had not the glory, he now saw. The people said 'There is no road, no shelter; there are robbers abroad, and how can they go so far?' Thus saying, they stayed at home. But now the thieves are taken, good roads are made, sheltering places built. The people have no excuse and therefore they come."<sup>10</sup>

#### NUMBER OF PILGRIMS IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 19TH CENTURY

(i) Table I—*In the first three days in 1806.*<sup>11</sup>

Date	No. of pilgrims	Free	Kangal	Byragee	Bhurrang	Lal Jatree
22.1	96	96	70	26	x	x
23.1	125	120	99	21	5	x
24.1	226	221	207	14	3	2

(ii) Table II—*22nd January to 30th April 1806 at Atharanulla.*<sup>12</sup>

Number	Free	Kangal	Byragee	Desee
48720	26841	19140	3124	4577

During this period 7097 pilgrims passed through Lokanath ghat.

<sup>9</sup> *A sketch of the History of Orissa* (1803-28) Toynbee p. 83-84.

<sup>10</sup> 'Calcutta Literary Gazette' : August 1820.

<sup>11</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 1 February 1806, *Papers relative to E. I. Co. affairs* : National Library.

<sup>12</sup> G. Webb, Collector, Cuttack to Board of Revenue : 7 March 1806, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

(iii) Table III—22nd January 1806 to 30th April 1814<sup>18</sup>

Average number of pilgrims	90,273
Average number of admission by Atharanulla	75,712
Average of admission by Lokanath ghat	14,561
Average of Lal Jatrees	2,185
Average of Bhurrung Jatrees	23,565
Average of Khyratee Pilgrims	64,523

(iv) *Between 1817/18 to 1821/22*<sup>19</sup>

	Tax-payers	Exempted person	Total
1817-18	35,941	39,720	75,661
1818-19	36,241	4,870	41,111
1819-20	92,874	39,000	1,31,874
1820-21	21,946	11,500	33,446
1821-22	35,160	17,000	52,160

## SECTION ONE

## CLASSIFICATION OF PILGRIMS

There were checkpoints at the Atharanulla and Lokanath ghats (bridges) to regulate the admission of pilgrims in to the holy city of Puri. There were two Darogas, one at each ghat, getting a salary of Rs. 40 per month. They were assisted by Potdars or Accountants.

The Butwa or Pilgrim canvasser handed over the pilgrims whom he brought to his Pratihari at the Atharanulla ghat. The Pratihari reported their arrival to the Daroga. "After making many difficulties, he agrees that he has so many Lall, so many Bhurrungs and so many Kangal jatrees and receives a Shoomaree not signed. This he shows to the Potdar, pays the money and gets it signed by him; and on returning to the Daroga he also signs it."

<sup>18</sup> Trower to Richardson, Settlement Commissioner : 16 March 1816, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>19</sup> *An Account of Orissa*—Stirling. p. 83.

“The Pilgrims are then passed and they come to the Sudder Katcherry where the Shoomaree (Certificate) is lodged and a Rowanna (permit) with the tax Collector's signature is given in exchange. The Rowanna is the passport for admission in to the Pagoda (I have ordered the Dewul Purchas to admit no person without one) and after making dursan i.e., seeing the god as often as they wish, they present a petition at the Sudder Katchery, stating that they wish to return and receive a 'Khalas Chithee' (Certificate of release) by which they are allowed to leave the town.”<sup>15</sup>

“I believe that the Purharees refuse to procure the Khalas Chithee until they had taken everything they possess from the pilgrims. Such is their power.”<sup>16</sup>

The pilgrims were provided with a form mentioning the names of pilgrims, places of residence, caste, class, and lastly, the amount paid by them.

The form contained the following particulars :

A . . . the inhabitant of . . . in the district of . . . is entitled to perform the customary ceremonies under the charge of . . . during . . . days, from the . . . day of the month of . . . until the . . . of the month of . . . ; and for that period you will afford the holders free access to the temple of Juggernath; at the expiration of which you will return the license at the office of the Collector of Pilgrim tax.

There was a form permitting the extension of the duration of stay at Puri. In case of Lal Jatrees, there was another form, mentioning the names of attendants, amount of tax paid respectively and the periods of visit to the Temple.

<sup>15</sup> Collector of Pilgrim tax to Board of Revenue : 27 March, 1806. *Bengal Revenue Consultations* : Parliamentary Papers National Library.

There were three Persian knowing Mohurrirs one at each gate of the Temple to check the Rowannas.

<sup>16</sup> Collector of Pilgrim tax to Board of Revenue : 15 March 1806, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

## 1. Lal Jatree

Affluent persons from the north paid Rs. ten at Atharanulla and Rs. Six at Lokanath ghat. They had also to pay Rs. two as fee for the Pundas and Pratiharis.<sup>17</sup> The pilgrims were given red tickets and were consequently known as Lal Jatrees.<sup>18</sup>

A Lal Jatree was allowed to stay at Puri for 30 days. The Regulation IV of 1809 laid down that "in case a pilgrim of first class may be desirous of visiting the Temple with his family and attendants, not exceeding twenty persons, they will be admitted to remain in the Temple so long as the master does, provided they at the first instance pay the prescribed fee, either as Bhurrang or Nim Laal, but they will not be allowed to enter the Temple for a longer period of time than they may respectively be entitled to".

With the previous sanction of the Collector, a Lal Jatree was allowed to enter the Temple with Chauris in day time and with Masals at night.<sup>19</sup> He was to be attended by a Punda or Pratihari during his visit to the Temple, but was allowed to enter the Temple without being escorted by a priest, on further payment of Rs. ten.

## 2. Nim Lal Jatree

The Regulation IV of 1809 provided for a pilgrim of second class. Those coming from the north were required to pay Rs. five, while the pilgrims from the south passing through Lokanath ghat paid Rs. three.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 25 March 1806, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue : 16 June 1806, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Chauri—'Chamara'. In 1846, Lacey, a Missionary, described it as 'Blue cow tail'. 'Masal' is lighted torch.

<sup>20</sup> Nim Lal ticket did not attract the pilgrims. "The class denominated as Nim Laal is very unproductive. Indeed that seldom pilgrims enter the town under that class." Trower, Collector to Richardson : 18 March 1814, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

As the Collector of Pilgrim tax pointed out : "Bhurrang Jatrees paying Rs. 2-6 are allowed access to the Temple for four days, and after that period, if they choose to pay Rs. two again, they were allowed access for a further limit of four days : while a Nim Lal Jatree pays five rupees and is allowed for seven days only, whereby he loses the privilege of one days' darsan besides the loss of a rupee."<sup>21</sup>

### 3. Bhurrang Jatree

Those pilgrims who paid Rs. two as tax and annas six as fee, were called Bhurrang or Bhuranga. They paid the same amount at either ghat.

Hunter, pointed out the loophole in the classification of pilgrims. "The pilgrim who states his means at twelve rupees is assessed agreeably to the present rate of Rs. 2-6 including (the Pundah's) fee, which leaves the balance at Rs. 9-10, to be expended in the Temple; while one possessing thirteen rupees were assessed the full amount."<sup>22</sup>

### 4. Pancha Tirthee

The low caste people were despised, but not their money. They visited 'Pancha Tirtha'\* "in and about the town under the charge of 'Bata Peada' (Chowkidar). After visiting the Tirthas on payment of Rs. four, they were given a 'Punjtirthee' certificate. On the production of this certificate at the Kutchery of the Collector of Pilgrim Tax, a 'Panchatirthee' was given a pass which entitled him to perform the customary ceremonies "without the gates of the Temple within 16 days (Report of Groeme).

<sup>21</sup> Busby, Collector of Pilgrim tax to Trower 30 October 1813, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Hunter to Board of Revenue, 26 July 1806, J.T.C. Pt. 1.

\* Swarga Dwar, Sweta Ganga tank, Markandeya tank, Indradumnya tank, and Chakratirtha.

Persons of the following professions were not allowed to enter the Temple.

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Ghooski—Private Woman          | 10. Machua—Fisherman                           |
| 2. Kusbee—Prostitute              | 11. Yogee—Weaver                               |
| 3. Sooree—Liquid seller           | 12. Bagdee—Bengali low caste                   |
| 4. Pano—Basket maker              | 13. Majur—Labourer who carried basket on head. |
| 5. Tiar—A class of fisherman      | 14. Dhobee—Washerman                           |
| 6. Hadee—Scavenger                | 15. Chandāl—Bengali low caste                  |
| 7. Kahar or Bauri—Palki bearer    | 16. Tantric Sadhus like Aghorepanthi           |
| 8. Chamar—Shoe maker              |  |
| 9. Raj Bunshee—A class of boatman |  |

The list was not exhaustive. Some more low castes, such as, the bird-catcher, the snake-charmer were also excluded from the Temple.<sup>23</sup>

From the crowd of pilgrims, specially after the abolition of the Pilgrim tax, it was difficult to distinguish a well-dressed woman or man as prostitute or liquor-seller. It is said that even a European managed to enter the Temple.<sup>24</sup>

Groeme wrote that it was not difficult for well to do Punjtirthees to get into the Temple after palming the hands of the Temple priests.

Low caste men from Nepal and the Mug Country sought admission into the Temple. "Their caste prevented their entering the interior of the Temple,

<sup>23</sup> "Vasu, the Fowler, would now be driven out from the doors of the Temple dedicated to his god." *Orissa Vol. 1* : Hunter, p. 356.

<sup>24</sup> "We have read somewhere of one solitary case in which a Major Carter managed to enter along with the pilgrims the famous shrine of Juggernaut."

'An account of Juggernaut'—Col. Phipps. *Asiatic Journal* : March 1824.

but they entertain hopes that their liberality to the Pundahs will gain their admission." <sup>25</sup>

The Punjtirthees abstained from entering the Temple due to the complex of lowliness which they imbued from the centuries of caste Hindu oppression. Thus only the lowest and most impure castes did not enter the Temple.

### 3. Special type of Pilgrims

There were two special types of pilgrims, prostrating and water carrying. When Dr. Buchanon visited Puri in 1806 he noticed a devotee "laying himself down at every step measuring the road to Juggernaut by the length of his body as a penance or merit to please his god."

Rev. Lacey asked a pilgrim "How far you have arrived by in that manner by constant prostrations" ? "750 miles". "How long have you been on the road" ? "About eight months". The Gungajalees carried water of the Ganga to be poured on the image of Lokanath before darsan of Jagannath.

### 6. V.I.P. Pilgrims

There are references to V.I.P. pilgrims also. As intimated by Mr. Secretary Edmonstone, the Board of Commissioners wrote to Groeme : "you will conform to the desire of His Excellency the Governor General in Council in regard to your manifesting every degree of attention towards Juggat Seth on his arrival at Cuttack and that you will facilitate his progress towards Juggernath."<sup>26</sup>

Pakenham, Commissioner, was informed :

<sup>25</sup> Facquier, Collector to Buller, Commissioner : 28 September 1808 *Bengal Revenue Consultations* : National Library.

<sup>26</sup> The Board of Commissioners to Groeme : 12 January 1805 O.S.A Vol. 1804—1805

“Gossain Damodarjee Maharaj of Sri Nath Dwar of Mewar being about to leave the Presidency, in which he has met with a highly favourable reception from the Governor General, is in progress to Juggernath. You will manifest towards him every degree of civility and attention, suitable to the respectability of his character and the high estimation in which he is held by a large class of our Hindoo subjects.<sup>27</sup> The Governor General exempted him and his one hundred followers from the payment of the Pilgrim tax.

Similarly, the Maharaja of Vizinagaram and his attendants (O.S.A. 14 December 1827) : the zamindar of Bobbili (O.S.A. 24 June 1826) : the Chief of Gheroulee in Bundelkhand (O.S.A. 30 April 1827) : Nirmal Giri Goswami and his followers (O.S.A. 20 November 1827) : and Seth Bishan Chand (O.S.A. 27 June 1827) were exempted from the payment of the Pilgrim tax.

Busby, Collector of the tax,<sup>28</sup> was informed that His Lordship in Council had been “pleased to a grant a remission of duties on pilgrims at Juggernath in favour of Seetaram Banerjee, an officer of His Highness the Rajah of Nagpore”. The letter added “should the followers of Banerjee be arrived, you are to intimate in terms not to calculate offence that it is a standing order of Government that all arms are to be given into the charge of guards at Pooree, but they will be returned to himself and his followers on quitting the town.”<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> A stirling, Fort William to Pakenham, Commissioner : 11 November 1825 O.S.A Vol. 1825

<sup>28</sup> Though officially Busby was Assistant to the Collector of Pilgrim tax who was also the Collector of land revenue, Cuttack up to June 1828, he was generally called in the Records at the Collector of the tax on the pilgrims. (O.S.A. 1828, No. 313)

<sup>29</sup> Trower to Busby :

9 January 1817

O.S.A Vol. April 1814—December 1818

## SECTION TWO

### KHYRATEE (EXEMPTED) PILGRIMS

Groeme in his Report gave a list of persons who were exempted from payment of the Pilgrim tax. "Among exempted were the principal Suthoos whose business it was to induce the Hindoos from all parts of the country to perform pilgrimage to Jugunath and for this they were not only exempted but were permitted to bring pilgrims, some one and some two who were likewise exonerated from paying the tax. Besides this, Government allowed all Suthoos without distinction, four annas two pies for every pilgrim brought by them exceeding eleven."

"Pantooreas (Patta daurias) are likewise exempt from duties from the circumstance of their bringing with them at their own expense silken ropes by which the idol is hoisted into the Ruth. Several pensioners in lieu of receiving cash are allowed to bring some one, some two, pilgrims who instead of paying the established duty at the Auturanullah pay it to the pensioner."

"Why the professional musicians and singers were exempted from duties, I am unable to learn; but the sick who had no hope of recovery and were poor-withal, were exonerated on religious consideration." The Government servants who were "continually going forwards and backwards" were also exempted.

A large number of pilgrims were exempted on religious grounds.<sup>80</sup> "Dundee Sunnaiseses and their attendants were supposed to be wholly devoted to the deity and had no concern with worldly affairs—

<sup>80</sup> Hunter, Collector of Pilgrim tax, observed that many of the pilgrims—who might have paid the tax evaded it by taking up the dress of mendicants. He calculated that the loss of the Government for such evasion amounted to about Rs. 30,000 annually.

besides the veneration paid to them by all ranks of Hindoos—which was the main reason of their exemption from duties.”

The list of exempted persons, given by Groeme, contained more names. “The Mutdharis and their attendants are likewise exempt as they have charity lands in Bengal and elsewhere. As they reside at Poorshuttum it is necessary to go themselves or send their servants occasionally to collect rents; therefore as these people were supposed to be employed in the service of Jugunath, they were exempted from the duties.”

“There are twelve principal Jattras to each of which a Brahmin on the part of certain Tributary Rajas is admitted free of duty—for what reason I cannot learn. Beoparis with articles of trade and inhabitants of Poorshuttum are likewise exempt from the payment of duties.”

The Regulation IV of 1806 exempted the ‘Gungajallees’ and the “Persons resorting to the town of Juggernath for trade.”<sup>31</sup>

Section 17 of Regulation IV of 1806 allowed the ‘Desees’ (the persons residing in between the Baitarani and the Ganjam or Rishikulya rivers) to

<sup>31</sup> Groeme’s Report.

Hunter, the Collector of Pilgrim tax, objected to this concession to the trades.

“Any pilgrim may declare that he does not intend to visit the Temple, or he may procure a few cheap articles and pass free as trader. Having once crossed the Ghaut, a ticket will be easily borrowed under the rules at present without any real loss to the proprietor of the ticket.”

Hunter to Board of Revenue : 29 December 1806 J.T.C Pt. 1

Subsequently, the Beoparis or merchants were excluded from admission to Puri for 12 days from the beginning of the Car festival.

visit the Temple without paying the Pilgrim tax.<sup>32</sup> This exemption was found to be 'detrimental to public revenue' and was restricted by Regulation XI of 1810.

During the Rath and The Dol festivals, the exemption was confined to the persons who were called (Punjkooses) (Pancha Koshi)—living between Pipli in the north and Manikpatna in the south—within 5 Kos or 10 miles from Puri.

To relieve congestion, they also were required to pay a tax varying from four annas to one rupee during the Rath and the Dol festivals, unless they arrived at least 3 days before the commencement of those festivals. At all other times, the exemption hitherto granted to the Desee pilgrims continued.<sup>33</sup>

The Gungajalees poured water of the Ganga on the image of Lokanath and then visited the temple of Jagannath. The Regulation of 1809 modified "the existing rules respecting persons exempted from the payment of the tax, as frauds have been committed by persons professing themselves to be the carriers of the water of the Ganges."

Under the modified rules, a person professing to be a Gungajalee was allowed to pass the Atharanulla ghat under the charge of a Punda, who was to see him pour water on the image of Lokanath, before his admission into the Jagannath temple to perform religious ceremonies.

<sup>32</sup> "It being the holy land of Juggernath according to the Shelokes or sacred records of the Hindoos." Webb to Board of Revenue : 7 March 1808 J.T.C Pt. 1

<sup>33</sup> Ramachandra Modi made an application complaining that he was harassed at the Atharanulla ghat for the payment of Pilgrim tax. In his petition he stated that he remained at Puri for 12 years and that he had to go frequently to Cuttack as he owned a shop there. He added that he paid usual taxes at the time of Ruthjatra and Doljatra. He prayed that he and his family might be exempted from payment of taxes at Atharanulla (Petition in Persian dated 1825 A.D. in O.S.A.)

The following classes of persons were fully or partly exempted from the tax.

(i) The Sepoys in the services of the Company, producing certificates from their commanding officers.

(ii) The servants of the European Officers on duty at Jagannath.

(iii) The Amlas of the Puri Collectorate or of the Police establishment. "On paying on the first day of January every year the tax payable by Bhurrangs, they shall receive from the Collector's office a Mafee (exemption) Chithi bearing his seal and signature, which shall entitle them free access to the Temple for the whole year."

(iv) Bonafide residents of Puri. They were exempted from the tax on payment of rupees twenty-five to the Collector which entitled them to free access to the Temple throughout the year.

The British government, like the Maratha Government, exempted the destitutes, called 'Kangals'. According to Section 9 of Regulation IV. of 1806, pilgrims in a state of poverty were required to sign a form. It was stated in the Regulation. "Persons likewise in actual state of poverty, shall be exempted from the payment of the established tax on declaring that they cannot contribute the tax of Rs. two, and that they have not in their immediate possession more money than is absolutely necessary to defray their expenses for their return from the pilgrimage." The Kangals were allowed to stay at Puri for three days only, so that the place might not be congested with destitutes during important festivals.

Busby, the Collector of the Pilgrim tax after Hunter, found flaws in the provisions relating to the Kangals. He pointed out that great many pilgrims pretended to be Kangals "to evade tax and who on examination found to be well clothed with various gold and silver ornament."

In his opinion, the Bhurrang Jatrees were tempted to pass as Kangals. "The Bhurrang pays Rupees two and has access to the Temple for four days ;

when a Kungal pays nothing and has access for three days, which makes one more day of dursan for a Bhurrang. In consequence, many pilgrims that can afford to pass as Bhurrangs call themselves Kangals and pass accordingly after waiting two or three days at the ghaut." <sup>34</sup>

Toynbee has vividly described the lot of the Kangals : "At the principal jatras of Ruth, Dol, Asnan, those who claimed exemption as Kangals were detained outside the barrier until the principal day of each festival. The consequence of this restriction can be imagined. Huddled together in crowds, without proper food or shelter from the weather, in a place surrounded by jheels and noxious vegetation, thousands have fallen victims to disease endangered by exposure and privation. Of those who escaped the pernicious consequences of their detention, numbers perished in the rush which always ensued when the barriers were at last opened to them." <sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Busby, Collector of tax to W. Trower, Collector : 30 October 1813 J.T.C Pt 1

<sup>35</sup> *A sketch of the History of Orissa*—Toynbee p. 60

### SECTION THREE

## PILGRIM TAX IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE 19TH CENTURY

The collection of the pilgrim tax began on the 23rd January 1806. On the 22nd January, ninety-six pilgrims entered Puri without making any payment. On the 23rd January the tax was realized from five Bhurrang pilgrims paying Sicca Rs. two each.

Table 1

23 January—30 April 1806	
23-31 January	Rs. 1,229
February	Rs. 46,880
March	Rs. 12,980
April	Rs. 11,599
	Rs. 72,688
Sicca	
Expenditure :—	
Establishment	Rs. 26,300-14
Collector's salary	Rs. 1,035
Collector's Commission	Rs. 1,089
	Rs. 28,424-14 <sup>86</sup>

Table 2

22 January 1806—30 April 1807	
Pilgrim tax	Rs. 1,90,211-6
Other receipts	Rs. 15,397-9
	Sicca Rs. 2,05,608-15
Collection charges	Sicca Rs. 20,309
Contingency charges	do Rs. 12,279
Temple charges	do Rs. 36,378-7 <sup>87</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Board of Revenue to Offg. Governor General : 30 May 1806 *Bengal Revenue Consultation* : National Library

<sup>87</sup> G. Webb, Collector to Board of Revenue : 7 March 1808  
J.T.C Pt 1

Table 3  
1812/13

Receipts from the Temple land	Rs. 15,102
Receipts from the sale of Bhog	Rs. 5,364
Pilgrim tax	Rs. 51,024
	<hr/>
	Rs. 71,490 <sup>38</sup>
Expenditure on a well	Rs. 6,804
Temple charges	Rs. 30,660
	<hr/>
	Rs. 37,464

Table 4  
*Pilgrim tax in Sicca Rupees*

*1805/1806	72,684-
1806/07	1,17,527- 6
1807/08	40,500
1808/09	38,436- 8
1809/10	44,891-12
1810/11	70,499- 6
1811/12	93,240- 4
1812/13	51,024-10
1813/14	87,084-12
1814/15	2,08,037-12
1815/16	53,652-10
1816/17	60,255- 8
1817/18	93,434-10
1818/19	80,708- 2
1819/20	2,63,724- 3
1820/21	58,811- 4
1821/22	1,00,013- 5
1822/23	2,30,063-14 <sup>39</sup>
1823/24	1,65,779
1824/25	73,968-10
	<hr/>
	Rs. 18,02,741-15

Pies are omitted. The financial year began from the 30th April.

<sup>38</sup> Statement of accounts of the temple of Juggernath Accountant General's office : 13 March 1813 J.T.C Pt 1

<sup>39</sup> "The cause of the decrease in 1820/21 is that the number

Table 6

*Total Collections and charges from 1806 to 1825*<sup>40</sup>

(i) Collections	Sicca Rs.
Proceeds from Dhaja Binding	5,118- 7
Sale of elephants received as gifts	2,336- 4
Rosoom and fines on the priests	27,854- 7
Sale of holy food	77,607-10
Fixed assignment of pergunah Kodhar	77,509- 1
Revenue of 27 Hazari Mahals	2,05,905- 4
Total :	21,99,073- 1
(ii) Charges	Sicca Rs.
Establishment and Commission of the Collector	3,23,848- 4
Hospital	16,443- 5
Saraee	434- 8
Jagannath Road	8,19,158-11
Miscellaneous Charges	2,47,980-15
	Rs. 14,07,864-15

“In 1825, the tax collected and the amount realized are largest than ever had been known since

of pilgrims resorting to Juggernath was very small owing to the lateness of the season at which the principal festivals took place. In 1822/23 the Snan and Ruth fell in comparatively early dates and in consequence the concourse of the pilgrims was unusually large.”

Commissioner to Secretary, Territorial Department : 11 November 1824 J.T.C Pt 2

<sup>40</sup> Office of the Accountant General : 6 October 1825 No. 742

From the Collection of the Atharanulla ghat, “pensions were given by the former government and are continued to 4 Sannaisees, 45 Brahmins and 5 Bishnoos (Vaishnavas)”

Hunter to Board of Revenue : 16 June 1806

this Province became a portion of the territory of our 'Government'".

In one day, the sum of Rs. 28,000 was collected from the tax office though the number of pilgrims was only 7,000. The pilgrims who arrived previously to the Snan Jatra were allowed to pay double the tax which entitled them to remain until the Ruth Jatra 'without molestation'.<sup>41</sup>

#### SECTION FOUR

### PILGRIM MORTALITY IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE 19TH CENTURY

The two most important festivals of the Jagannath temple are the Snan Jatra and the Rath Jatra. The Snan Jatra or the festival of sacred bath is held during the month of Jyestha on the full moon day. After the festival, the deities are kept away from public view for fifteen days. The first ceremonial appearance of the deities is called 'Nava Yauban' which attracts a large number of pilgrims.

The Rath Jatra is observed on the second day of full moon in the month of Ashada. Jagannath with his brother and sister leave the Temple on that day. They are placed on chariots and taken to the 'Gundicha' temple in a mile long procession. The deities come back to the Temple after a week's sojourn in the Gundicha temple. This appearance of Jagannath in public gives thousands of pilgrims, irrespective of caste, the opportunity of beholding him. Moreover, the pilgrims cherish the belief that the darsan of

<sup>41</sup> Collector, Puri to Commissioner : 21 July 1825 O.S.A. Acc No. 25

#### *Pilgrim tax*

1825/26

Sicca Rs. 2,71,022 — 14

1826/27

Sicca Rs. 68,826 — 4

Office of the Accountant General : 15 March 1828 J.T.C Pt 2

Jagannath, Balarama and Subhadra on their chariots will spare them from the misery of re-birth.

Pilgrims who come to Puri during the Snan Jatra are tempted to stay for a few more days to witness the 'Nava Yauban and the Car festival. The festival generally takes place in the first week of July, when coastal Orissa is generally in the grip of monsoon.

There was 'a very heavy and unprecedented fall of rain' in 1821 which damaged the Jagannath road (Letter of C. Broughton, Superintendent, Jagannath road). The intermittent rainfall in 1825 caused cholera epidemic.

The journey to Puri was hazardous. Pilgrims coming from the north crossed unbridged rivers swollen with flood water. They trudged their way for several hundreds of miles under scorching heat or heavy rainfall. As they could not get sufficient food on their way, they depended mainly on parched rice.

In the first quarter of the 19th century, there were no shelters for them on the Jagannath road before they reached Cuttack. They could not get medical assistance in cases of illness. Nevertheless the people suffered willingly because they believed that the merit of pilgrimage would increase in proportion to the hardship they endured on the way. The darsan of Jagannath was a spiritual yearning which drew the faithful to the sands of Puri.

At last they reached Puri with "feet bound in rags plastered with dirt and blood." With the end of the grim determination which sustained them during their journeys many pilgrims physically broke down and died, "being lulled to their last sleep by the roar of the eternal ocean" (Hunter).

Captain Phipps who attended the Car festival in 1822 gave a vivid description of their suffering ; "The aged, the sick, the weak are persuaded to attempt the pilgrimage as a remedy for all evils. The number of women and children are also very great. The pilgrims leave their families and occupations to travel immense distance with the delusive hope of obtaining eternal

bliss. Their means of subsistence on the road is scanty and their light clothing and little bodily strength are ill calculated to encounter the clemency of weather." xxx

"Their difficulty is more severely felt as they approach the Temple till they find scarcely enough left to pay tax to Government and to satisfy rapacious Brahmuns. The pilgrim on leaving Juggernaut has still a long journey before him and his means of support are often almost if not quite exhausted. The work of death then becomes rapid and the route of the pilgrims may be traced by the bones left by jackals and vultures."

"The country near the Temple seems suddenly to have been visited by pestilence and famine. Dead bodies are seen in every direction. Parriar dogs, jackals and vultures are observed watching the last moments of the dying pilgrim and not unfrequently hastening his fate." <sup>42</sup> .

Feeble and sinking for want of nourishing food and way-worn with heat and fatigues of journey, without means of subsistence the poor pilgrims were decimated by epidemic diseases during their return journey. <sup>43</sup>

The Maratha Government, and the British

<sup>42</sup> *The Missionary Register*, 1824 p. 578

<sup>43</sup> (i) "At this place, Bhudruck, there are more than a hundred skulls. The dogs, jackals and vultures seen to live here on human prey. Wherever I turn my eyes, I meet death in some shape or other."

Buchanon's *Christian Researches*, p. 93.

(ii) "The road to Juggernath for about fifty miles is strewn with human bones—This however cannot exact surprise when J.T.C Pt 2

it is considered that about a million of pilgrims resort hither annually from the remotest part of India, some for fulfilment of vows to expiate anything but moral transgressions, other from the delusive idea that to behold the fane and its idols, is the attainment of a high degree of perfection, and many aged persons

Government in the first quarter of the 19th Century concerned themselves only with the collection of tax from the pilgrims resorting to Puri. They were indifferent to the miserable condition of the pilgrims.

*The epidemic in 1825*

The mortality among the pilgrims in the year 1825 was appalling due to the outbreak of cholera in epidemic form. Thomas Pakenham, Collector of Cuttack informed the Commissioner that there was a very large gathering of the pilgrims that year at Puri, even before the Snan Jatra.

The crowd was controlled by erection of barrier at the entrance of the Temple "on the day of nobo-jauban when not only the pilgrims but every resident in and about Pooree hurries to make dursan". But at the time of the Rath Jatra, "mortality to a very lamentable extent" took place, as cholera broke out just before the festival. "The ravages committed by this dreadful disease are really most melancholy."

Pakenham in his letter explained the cause of the high mortality. "Up to the period of the setting of the rains the heat was unusually oppressive. Many of the pilgrims were carried forward by their anxiety to reach Jugunnath and urged to exert themselves when taken ill by the fear of being deserted by their fellow travellers, until their strength completely failed." xxx

"Exposed to the intense heat during the day and

are impressed with the belief that death in the sight of Juggernath is a passport to supreme felicity."

*Memoir of wars in India* (1818) Major Thorn p. 261

(iii) "At Cuttack and at Juggernaut, I have seen numbers of dying and dead pilgrims; and one morning near the Temple I counted between twenty and thirty skulls. At one place on the last stage to Juggernaut, I counted thirtyseven bodies or skeletons, x x x Where the Suttee has slain its hundreds, the pilgrimage (to Juggernaut) has slain its tens of thousands."

*India's cries to British humanity* (1830)—Peggs p. 124

to the damp at night, worn out by the fatigues of a long journey and subsisting principally upon food (parched rice) which is unwholesome, there must exist a great predisposition to disease, which their exhausted strength is unable to resist and consequently the cases are generally fatal."

The pilgrims left Puri in great numbers (estimated between twenty and thirty thousand) on the 19th July and continued to move off for several days. The rains set in Puri on the 20th July and for three days, there was heavy downpour.

Cholera, which was raging at Puri, soon overtook the pilgrims during their return journey. Pakenham wrote that the greater part of the pilgrims "must have been unable to procure shelter in the villages where they stopped at the end of their day's journey".<sup>44</sup>

The desire to reach their homes and the same dread of being left behind by their relatives when attacked by illness hurried them forward on their return—as fast as the desire to pay their devotion had carried them down—in such weather as prevailed; the greater part of those who were at last compelled from sheer exhaustion to halt, never moved from the spot where they fell."

Those sick pilgrims who were 'within reach of assistance' were removed to the hospitals at Cuttack and Puri.<sup>45</sup>

"Pakenham wrote that at Puri there was a large building called 'Dhurumsala' in which the well-off people took shelter. From Puri to Cuttack, there were several 'Bazars'—"which afforded accommodation for a moderate number of pilgrims". But beyond Cuttack, there were no shelters for the pilgrims at that time.

<sup>44</sup> There was no hospital for the pilgrims at Cuttack till 1823 Pakenham suggested the establishment of a native hospital at Cuttack, "which might be the means of saving the lives of many jatees travelling during the rainy season, who could not reach Pooree". (Pakenham to Blunt, Commissioner, 28 July 1823 : O.S.A)

Pakenham suggested "erection of Seraees at convenient distances for the accomodation of the pilgrims and travellers generally", and temporary sheds during the important festivals, "to afford comfortable shelters from the sun and the rains."

He made the recommendation "in the fullest conviction of its being the anxious desire of Government to prevent the recurrence of such misery, as the residents of this District have witnessed in the present season."<sup>46</sup>

The Bengal Government considered Pakenham's proposal of providing accommodation "with a view of alleviating the suffering of the pilgrims" to be 'judicious'. At the same time the Government pointed out that the available money should be carefully spent, "considering the extent of accomodation required, so as to do the greatest possible good."

The letter from the Government concluded with the remarks: "If the residents of the District, and specially the holders of endowments would be particularly induced to take an active part in affording relief to the pilgrims, benefits might be expected to result beyond what can be anticipated from the best exertions of the officers of Government."

"Indeed, if the pilgrims themselves abandon their sick relations and friends to perish on the road side, the utmost efforts of Government must prove a very partial remedy for this evil. It is nonetheless however to do what humanity requires."<sup>47</sup>

The Missionaries described the mortality in 1825 with zest. Rev. Lacey wrote: "The mortality did not much appear before the 16th (July). On the 19th, it was exceedingly bad, for the day before, the rain began to fall and more came on the 19th and 20th, and for the next three days it fell in torrents.

<sup>46</sup> Pakenham to Commissioner Blunt: 21 July 1825 O.S.A. Vol. October 1824 June 1826

<sup>47</sup> Secretary, Territorial Department to Commissioner: 25 August 1825. O.S.A. October 1824—June 1826

At this time, the scene has reached its height. In every street corner and open space—in fact wherever you turn your eyes—the dead and dying meet your sight. On the evening of the 19th I counted upwards of sixty dead and dying, from the temple down to the bottom end of hospital (about half a mile) leaving out the sick that had not much life. At a corner opposite the hospital, on a spot of ground I counted ten dead and five sick.”<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> ‘Reflection on the incidents which occurred this year at the Rath Jattrra of Juggernath in Orissa’ *‘Friend of India’* October 1825.

Peggs, ‘the Cuttack Missionary’ referred to this article and did not miss the opportunity of vilifying Jagannath. “There is a most harrowing account of the miseries suffered by poor creatures who crowded to Juggernaut to attend the Satanic festival of Rath jattrra. It is humiliating to read such things. These are degrading to us as men, degrading to our character as Christian masters of the Country”

*India’s cries to British humanity* p. 169

It was indeed degrading to the Christian masters of the country who realized tax from the pilgrims and remained indifferent regarding their fate.

## CHAPTER SIX

# DYARCHY IN THE JAGANNATH TEMPLE ADMINISTRATION

### SECOND PHASE (1825-1840)

The Missionaries blamed the Government for collection of tax from the pilgrims visiting the Jagannath temple. They argued that the idolatrous worship in that temple would lapse without the Government support implied in the collection of the Pilgrim tax.

At last they could persuade J. B. Harington, member of the Governor Generals Council, to advocate their cause. On 1 July 1827, Harington recorded a Minute dissenting against the levy of that tax. He considered it a desirable principle that "a Christian Government should not directly or indirectly derive revenue from its sanction of idolatry".<sup>1</sup>

Since Harington made an issue of the Pilgrim tax, the Vice-president in Council explained the Government policy regarding that tax. The pilgrim tax was collected, it was stated, "as a consideration for facilities and convenience afforded to the pilgrims on their routes."<sup>2</sup>

While forwarding the Minute of Harington to the Court of Directors, the Governor General observed that the points raised by Harington had been brought under discussion by Richardson, the Settlement Commissioner at Cuttack in January 1814, and was replied by Secretary Dowdeswell in his letter to

<sup>1</sup> Bengal Revenue Consultations 1 July 1827 India Office Records Vol. 27

<sup>2</sup> Council Resolutions Bengal Revenue Consultations : India Office Records

Richardson dated 5 July 1814. The Court of Directors concurred with the opinion of the Governor General and observed in their Despatch of 11 September 1829 that "in 1814 and in 1827, the arguments in favour of the continuation of the Pilgrim tax appeared to be conclusive."

One of the first acts of Lord Bentinck after his assumption of office was the circulation of a questionnaire among thirteen Civilian servants of the Company, asking for their opinion concerning the abolition both of Suttee and the Pilgrim tax."<sup>3</sup>

The verdict in response to the Circular was decidedly negative so far as the Pilgrim tax was concerned. Only Andrew Stirling and Thomas Pakenham supported the proposal. But they pointed out that the abolition of the Pilgrim tax would not have much effect in reconciling the great body of the Hindus to the prohibition of Suttee.

Bentinck in his Minute dated 8 November 1829 to the Directors referred to the Pilgrim tax "which in England has lately excited very great reprobations, forming an additional motive for enquiry."

He added that he had collected opinions of officers in charge of the districts where the tax was collected. "It will be seen that the opinions vary; but upon a review of the whole my conviction is that it is inexpedient to repeal the tax."<sup>4</sup>

The Editorial article in the *Morning Herald*, London, dated 25 September 1830 thanked the Home Government for the suppression of Suttee. It criticized 'cruel Juggernath' and observed that "Our Anglo Indian Government legalizes its atrocities by making it subject of a tax." Such appeal to religious sentiments

<sup>3</sup> Circular on Suttee and the Pilgrim tax 15 February 1829. Bentinck Papers, Nottingham University.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in the Despatch of the Directors 20 February 1833 No. 33 of 1833 : *Miscellaneous Revenue department Parliamentary Papers* 1837 : National Library

aroused public indignation against the continuation of the Pilgrim tax.

The Directors again sought the opinion of the Governor General, Lord Bentinck, with regard to the abolition of the tax. Lord Bentinck however saw no reason, why the tax should be abolished. In his Minute dated 25 March 1831, he remarked : "He deems it to be the bounden duty of Government ruling over Hindoo and Musalman community, and professing respect for their religions and customs, to protect and aid them in the exercise of those harmless rites, which are not opposed like Suttee, infanticide and self-immolation to the dictates of humanity, and religious creed ; that he therefore thinks that all those places of pilgrimage, with those who frequent them, are upon principle entitled to our special care ; that a tax upon pilgrims is just and expedient."<sup>5</sup>

But Charles Grant, President of the Board of Control in Lord Grey's ministry, differed from his views. In his opinion, the Government, "with best of intentions had allowed its toleration to fructify into active patronage of idolatry." He asked the Court of Directors to take decisive steps towards the abolition of Pilgrim tax at Puri, which in his opinion, would not involve in any breach of existing obligations of the Government towards the Jagannath temple.

On the 27th July 1832, the Sudder Board of Revenue communicated to the Government their opinion regarding the Pilgrim tax. They expressed their general disapprobation of the system of levying tax on pilgrims resorting to the temple of Jagannath and recommended immediate abolition of the tax.

But the Vice-President in Council in his letter

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in the Despatch from the Court of Directors to the Governor General : 20 February 1833 No. 33 of 1833, *Miscellaneous Revenue Department Parliamentary papers 1837* : National Library

dated 4 September 1831 decided against the immediate abolition of the tax without due enquiry.

The Board of Revenue was requested to ask the Collector of Puri to state whether he was "aware of any objection to the cessation of the interference of Government in the internal management of the Temple and to report in what way the control hitherto exercised by the officers of Government can most easily be withdrawn and to whose hands and under what restrictions it should be entrusted and in general in what manner the views of Government as expressed can be best carried in to effect."

Though the Board of Revenue communicated the decision of the Vice-President in Council to William Wilkinson, the Collector of Puri, on the 1st October 1832, he took time to reply.

The Collector in his letter to the Commissioner observed : "Judging from the experience of the first two years after the acquisition of the province, when no tax was levied, I should think that the abolition of the tax would greatly increase the resort of the pilgrims to the temple of Juggernath : as long as the Hindoo faith is looked upon by the natives of Hindostan as a true religion."

"I am also of opinion that the Temple could not be left to the support yielded by its own endowments without Government being guilty of a breach of faith, as by section 30 of Regulation XII of 1805, it is bound to supply the deficiencies of them. The words are as follows 'Provided also that nothing heerein contained be construed to authorize the resumption of the established donation for the temple of Juggernath'".

"Perhaps the Board in suggesting the above arrangement considered the donation as a part of the endowment of the Temple. Had their recommendation for the abolition of the tax been adopted, Government would then have had to pay out of its revenue annually a sum averaging Rs. 36,000 ; as the revenue

from the lands appropriated to the Temple amount to Rs. 20,000 only, the expenses of the Temple being about Rs. 56,000."

The Collector pointed out that there would be increase in the Police charges due to the influx of 'larger masses of people' in case of abolition of the tax, as there would be 'no check on their resort to and stay in the town of Pooree'. He concluded: "As long as the Hindoo religion is to be looked by the great body of the people as the only true faith, so long will British interference be mingled with the affairs of idolatry. As Christians we look upon the natives as blinded by grossest superstition; but we should endeavour to convince them by education and not by abandoning their temples and breaking words with them as a nation." <sup>6</sup>

Hunter, the Commissioner, forwarded the letter of Wilkinson dated 7 May, to the Board of Revenue. He agreed with the opinion of Wilkinson that if the tax on the pilgrims be abolished, payment "should be made from the Government treasury of the donation stipulated by Regulation XII of 1805."<sup>7</sup>

Lastly, he suggested that if the Pilgrim tax be converted to a toll "it should be exacted from all persons, whether devotees or mere travellers."<sup>8</sup>

In 1833, in response to the evangelical critics, the House of Commons called for evidence on the subject of the Pilgrim tax, for examination by a Select Committee. The majority of the Company's servants in England came to the conclusion that the Pilgrim tax did not identify the British Government with the

<sup>6</sup> Wilkinson to Commissioner Hunter: 7 May 1833 J.T.C Pt 2

<sup>7</sup> "Mr. Wilkinson appears to have been the first who proposed money mode of payment from the British treasury."

'Pooree and the temple of Jugernaut'—*Calcutta Review*, Vol. X.

<sup>8</sup> R. Hunter to Sudder Board of Revenue: 8 June 1833 J.T.C Pt 2

idolatrous worship and some of them even asserted that the Pilgrim tax discouraged idolatry.<sup>9</sup>

The members of the House of Commons Select Committee were sufficiently discouraged by the conflicting opinions of the servants of the E.I. Company. They refrained from taking any decision and referred the matter to the Board of Control and the Court of Directors.

The Revenue Despatch dated 20 February 1833, allegedly produced by the Court of Directors, was the handiwork of the President of the Board of Control, Charles Grant. Left to themselves, the Directors would have retained the Pilgrim tax. But Grant had bias towards the Missionaries and he used the authority of his position to abolish the Pilgrim tax. For him, Juggernath was a provocative symbol "of the connexion of the British power with unhappy superstition."

In the Despatch he wrote "We conceive that the principle of toleration does not require that we should promote the growth and popularity of superstition, the prevalence of which, every religious and rational mind must lament. We are therefore of opinion that any system which directly connects the pecuniary interests of the State with the extension of such superstition is for the reason objectionable and ought to terminate."

In support of his decision to abolish the Pilgrim tax Grant pointed out : "The Hindoos would view the abolition as a boon and a new proof of toleration, and that in this view it would tend to increase the popularity of the British administration."

"Though the chief motive of the arrangements connected with the Pilgrim tax may have been a liberal ambition to conciliate the natives, the natural desire of procuring financial benefits to the Company has always mixed itself with the former sentiment."

<sup>9</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on the affairs of the E.I. Company ; (Parliamentary Papers 1831-32) India Office Records*

In this Despatch dated 20 February 1833, to 'our' Governor General in Council, the Directors referred to the Minute of Lord Bentinck dated 25 March 1831. They admitted that the Governor General adopted the interpretation which had been put to their orders of 1814, namely, that the revenues (from the Pilgrim tax) should be first applied to the repair of the temples connected with the comfort of the pilgrims, and that the surplus be properly expended on the roads and Seraees, contributing no less to the convenience of the pilgrims than that of the public."

The Directors observed: "We are aware of the orders to which the Governor General alludes as having been formerly issued by us, but in reconsidering it, we feel the duty of availing ourselves of the light which subsequently have been thrown on it by experience, reflection or the suggestion of the individuals, and shall state therefore our present views as they occur without any immediate reference to past discussion." xxx

"Behind the civil protection (the providing of Police to enforce order and to ensure the safety of individuals during the celebrations) however we do not see that the maxim of toleration enjoins us to proceed. It is not necessary that we should take part in the celebration of an idolatrous ceremony or that we should assist in the preparations for it or that we should afford to it such systematic support as shall accredit it in the eyes of the people and prevent from expiring through the effect of negligence or accident."

"Arrangements which implicate Government, be it in a greater or lesser degree, in the immediate ministrations of the local superstitions of the natives, might well be objected—as much as they exhibit the British power in such intimate connection with the unhappy and debasing superstitions in question, as almost necessarily to inspire the people with the belief either that we admit the divine origin of their superstitions

or at least we ascribe to them some peculiar and venerable authority." xxx

"Although it is possible that the Hindoo rites or atleast those of Juggernaut, are less liable than formerly to the charges of cruelty their essential character is ofcourse not changed. They are at variance with the precepts and spirit of Christianity and they seem opposed even to the plain injunctions of a natural religion."

"This, however is not a reason for prohibiting them by law, and if they are not prohibited, they must receive from the civil power that measure of protection which it affords to any other act. To this extent we entirely concur with Lord William Bentinck."

"On the other hand, we cannot conceive that a Government which believes these rites to be deeply founded in error and to be productive even in a civil view, of serious evil, is obliged or is at liberty to show to them any degree of positive sanction or support." xxx

"At Juggernath, a very considerable portion of the entire revenue raised and in fact a sum much larger than the whole amount of the Pilgrim tax appears to be applied for the purpose of keeping in repair the shrines, idols and other edifices which form the local objects of pilgrimage." xxx

"From being simply conservator of public peace at numerical assemblages of the people, we have become the chief agents in sustaining an idol establishment." xxx

"But this is not all, For the effect of such a surplus so applied, is to mix up Government with the entire concern of the idol establishment to a much greater extent than is at first sight apparent. The provisions of the funds which are to be employed in supporting the establishment creates at once a right and a motive to watch over the expenditure." xxx

"In every way we have become parties of the accounts and general management of the establish-

ment, including the supervision and disposal of its revenue, whether derived from fines, endowed lands or from other sources." xxx

"Even the Regulation IV of 1809 (which abandoned that degree of superintendence which they had previously exercised in the affairs of the Juggernath temple) seems to have left so many links of the connection which it aimed at severing. The Rajah himself was to be responsible to Government and might be removed by it for misconduct. The three Dewul Purchas were to be appointed by the Collector subject to the confirmation by Government. An account was to be rendered to the Collector of tax of all offerings and presents made to the idol. All this left in the hands of Government a large degree of control over the interior concerns of the establishment." xxx

"We agree with the opinion of Stirling, whose premature death is to be deplored—'It has always appeared to me that if we abolish the tax at Juggernaut, throw down the barriers which encircle the town and at the same time withdraw from the system of patronage and interference, the certain eventual consequence would be a gradual decline in the sanctity of the Temple and the cessation of its peculiar fame and attraction as a place of religious resort.'"

"We should abandon the special care and protection of the interests of the temple of Juggernath, which are manifested throughout the provisions of Regulation IV of 1809. We should cease to provide guards from our regular Sepahees, to appoint its head priests and to supply broad cloth which decorates the Car at the great annual exhibition. The Rajah of Khoordah who is the Superintendent would be left to settle as best as he might, in concert with the council of Dewul Purchas." xxx

"Doubtless under the new system, matters would not be so well managed at present. Numerous abuses and open irregularities would prevail and the whole concern would gradually sink into neglect ; but for the result the British Government would not be res-

possible and it is assuredly not one which should have any cause to regret."

Finally, the Court of Directors arrived at certain conclusions, which were communicated to the Government of India.

First, that the interference of British functionaries in the interior management of native temples, in the customs, habits and religious proceedings of their priests and attendants, in the arrangement of their ceremonies, rites and festivals, and generally in the conduct of their interior economy shall cease."

Secondly, that the Pilgrim tax shall everywhere be abolished.

Thirdly, that fines and offerings shall no longer be considered as sources of revenue by the British government and they shall consequently no longer be collected or received by the servants of the East India Company.

Fourthly, that no servant of the East India Company shall hereafter be engaged in the collection, or management or custody of moneys in the nature of fines and offerings under whatever name they may be known or in whatever manner obtained, or whether furnished in cash or kind.

Fifthly, that no servant of the East India Company shall hereafter derive any emoluments resulting from the above mentioned or similar sources.

Sixthly, that in all matters relating to the temples, their worship, their festivals, their religious practices, their ceremonial observances, our native subjects be left entirely to themselves.

Seventhly, that in every case in which it had been found necessary to form and keep up a Police force, specially with a view to the peace and security of the pilgrims or the worshippers, such Police force shall hereafter be maintained and made available out of the general resources of the country.

But the Directors did not insist on any precipitate action. They made it clear : "In stating to you"

said the Despatch "our distinct opinion respecting the abolition not only of the Pilgrim tax, but of the practices to which we have referred to, we desire to repeat that we are rather holding up a standard to which you are ultimately to conform your policy, than prescribing a rule which you are instantly and without respect of circumstances, to carry in to accomplishment."<sup>10</sup>

"The Despatch expressed in language too clear, and unmistakably the desire of the Home Government, to sever the existing connection of the State with idolatry in India. But it did contain certain passages in which an unwilling local Government might find pretexts for indefinite delay."<sup>11</sup>

The Supreme Government took advantage of the concluding remarks of the Despatch: "As to the details of any measure regarding it, the time, the degree, the manner, the gradations, those must in a special sense rest with the local Government."

As Kaye pointed out: "The good deed of the Despatch fell upon a stubborn soil. Practically it was long disobeyed by those whose business was to give effect to its instructions. It remained all but a dead letter. The Directors with their 'old Indian' prejudice subsided in the old state of indifference or timidity." xxx "But the Press was active. Pamphlets began to be published."

In 1837, the Court of Directors issued a Despatch gently admonishing the Supreme Government in India for its dilatoriness in the implementation of the Despatch of 20 February 1833. The Directors intimated: "It is desirable that no 'unnecessary delay should take place in bringing forward the whole subject, fully and intelligibly in all its bearings on the

<sup>10</sup> *Parliamentary Papers relative to religious ceremonies*: 20 February 1833 No. 3: National Library

<sup>11</sup> *Christianity in India*—Kaye pp. 418-19

financial interests, on the political obligations and on the moral character of our Government."<sup>12</sup>

On 3 April 1837, the Supreme Government communicated their orders to the Sudder Board of Revenue. It was stated in the 13th para: "His Lordship in Council would withdraw from the inhabitants of Cuttack no advantage, which, respected even by the their Marhatta conquerors, was adopted by the British Government and which must be in good faith preserved to them."

"He would sanction no measure which would have the effect of shaking their confidence in that protection and toleration which stands among the first principles of the British Government in India. But His Lordship in Council feels that direct interposition in the ceremonies of one religion by those professing another is revolting to those on whom it is interposed and cannot be pleasing to those who are subject to it."

"He is of opinion that his own views in this respect coincided with those which have been strongly enjoined by the Court of Directors, may be safely acted on; and the opportunity of the resettlement of the province may be fairly taken, for entirely separating the public treasury and the officers of Government from all personal religious interference, by placing on native hands and under native management, equivalent means for this purpose under the usual legal responsibility in the event of any abuse."

The Sudder Board of Revenue in their letter dated 9 May 1837, communicated to the Commissioner the decision of the Supreme Government and sought his opinion.

On 6 June 1837, Ricketts, Commissioner, wrote a letter to Wilkinson, Collector of Puri, regarding the proposed abolition of the Pilgrim tax and withdrawal of the Government interference in the affairs of the temple of Juggernath; calling on him to propose

<sup>12</sup> Bengal Revenue Despatches 22 February 1837, India Office Records E-4/748

specific arrangements necessary for the occasion, concluding that it was the intention of the Government to rescind the Regulations IV of 1809 and XI of 1810.

In his reply, Wilkinson wrote : "By section 30, Regulation XII of 1805, Government are bound to pay annually a certain donation for the support of the above temple, which by the orders of the Hon'ble President in Council dated 29 January 1808, was found at Sicca Rs. 56,342-9-8 or the Company's Rs. 60,098 annas 12 and 484 yards of woollen cloth from the Warehouse (to decorate the Cars)".

Wilkinson informed that after the abolition of the Government Warehouse in 1830, the woollen cloth had been procured by one of the Parichhas at an expense of about the Company's Rs. 1080.

"This last mentioned sum being added to the Company's Rs. 60098-12 gives a total of Rs. 61178-12 as the annual allowance but from this must be deducted Sicca Rs. 5000 or the Company's Rs. 5333-5 the sum hitherto appropriated to defray the expenses of Mohun bhoge established by the mother of Raghoojee Bhonsle, and for which the pergunah of Kodhar was considered to have been assigned."

"It was however been decided by the Special Commissioners that the possessor of the pergunah is only entitled to the Company's Rs. 3466-10 out of the revenue, the surplus derivable therefore being declared the right of Government."<sup>18</sup>

"The sum of Sicca Rs. 2500 or the Company's Rs. 2666-10-8 paid to the Udhikaree of Juggernath Bullubh Muth for the purpose of distributing food to the starving and destitute pilgrims should also be

<sup>18</sup> It was held that the Mohunt had no proprietary right in the estate of Kodhar and that Raghujee Bhonsle had only made over to him a portion of the collection amounting to 13,000 Khawuns, the average collection being 23,501 Khawuns, Cockburn, Commissioner to Board of Revenue : 20 June 1859 (O.S.A.).

excluded from the allowance. For some years the bills furnished by the Civil Surgeon for feeding the sick in the Pilgrim hospital have been paid from this money. The two sums now sanctioned, viz., the Co's (Company's) Rs. 3466-10-8 to Mohunt Debraj Das and Co's Rs. 2666-10-8 to the Udhikaree of the Juggernath Bullabh should be paid separately to these individuals" xxx

"There will still remain the sum of the Co's Rs. 53178-12-2 to be made good and to meet which there are assets only to the amount of the Co's Rs. 25144-9."

"I am however decidedly of opinion that it is not advisable that any lands should be appropriated to meet the expenses of the Temple and in preference to the proposing any additional estate for that purpose, as I can conceive to be suggested by the order of Government dated the 3rd April last, I strongly recommend that the Sattaees Hazari Mahal be brought to the new rent roll of the district and that the sum of Rs. 44776-6 be paid to Maharajah Ram Chunder Deo, the present Superintendent of the Temple." xxx<sup>14</sup>

According to Wilkinson's calculation, the annual payment by the Government would be in the Company's rupees—

Rs. 60,098- 9

Rs. 1,080- 3

Rs. 61,178-12

Deduction for items paid from the revenue of Khurda—

Rs. 5,333-5 —To defray the expenses of Mohun bhog from the assignment of Kodhur.

Rs. 2,666-10—Payment to the Udhikaree of the Juggernath Ballabh Math for the

<sup>14</sup> Wilkinson to Commissioner Ricketts : 26 July 1837 No. 192 : J.T.C Pt 2

purpose of feeding sick or destitute pilgrims.<sup>15</sup>

Rs. 53,178-12 "to be made good"

Rs. 25,144- 9 "assets"

The assets of the Jagannath Temple consisted of  
Rs. 16,738-9—Revenue from Satais Hazari Mahal<sup>16</sup>  
Rs. 8,406-0—Various receipts.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Two other items, the grants for Mohunbhoge and to the Udhikaree of Juggernath Bullubh, though forming parts of the grant of Sicca Rs. 56,342-9-8, are unconnected with the temple of Juggernath."

Ricketts to Sudder Board of Revenue : 15 September 1837  
J.T.C Pt 2

(ii) 'Sadaburt' Jugunath Bullubh was a sum granted to Goormuk Das Adhikaree. "The village of Bulpore was originally assigned to him for this purpose, but was resumed by the Soobah, and the amount was paid in cash from the treasury of the Government. It is a charitable grant for the relief of the distress of the indigent pilgrims, who are not allowed to pass the ghaut."

G. Webb, Collector to the Board of Revenue : 19 December 1807 O.S.A Vol. 1806-07

<sup>16</sup> "Satais Hazari Mahal is an endowment of the Temple managed by the Officers of Government, but the proceeds after meeting the expenditure of the collection are appropriated to the Temple."

Ricketts, Commissioner to Sudder Board of Revenue : 15 September 1837 No. 2133 : J.T.C Pt 2

<sup>17</sup> The sources of revenue left to the Temple were :

(i) Sale of Holy food—Average income from 1810 to 1816 was Rs. 5,795.

(ii) Dhaja binding—Some pilgrims bound silk or cloth banners on the wheel on the top of the Temple, paying a fee of one rupee for each rupee worth of cloth or silk.

(iii) Presentation of jewel and cloth—Rich pilgrims made offerings of jewels and costly cloths to the deity. They also paid a large fee in their discretion, half of which was appropriated for the use of deity. The Pundas received half the amount (Hunter to Board of Revenue—22 March 1806).

A grant of Rs. 483-12 per annum was confirmed to a Math by the Governor General as 'Devottur Amrit Manohi' or allowance for daily bhog to Jagannath (23 August 1822 : O.S.A.)

Ricketts forwarded the letter of Wilkinson, Collector of Puri, to the Sudder Board of Revenue, with his opinion. He summed up the suggestions made by Wilkinson in respect of the future administration of the Jagannath temple.

That the officers of the Government shall be relieved from interference in the internal affairs of the Jagannath temple, by abolition of the Pilgrim tax. That the Sattais Hazari Mahal be brought to the rent roll of the district. That an annual donation of Rs. 44,776-6-6 shall be paid for the support of the Temple. That the Superintendent Rajah Ramchunder Deo be vested by the Government with full powers in every thing connected with the Temple and its ceremonies and that small increase shall be allowed to the Police establishment at Pooree.

He pointed out that Section 30, Regulation XII of 1805 clearly stated that the established donation for the support of the temple of Juggernath, the charitable donation to the officers of certain Hindoo temples called 'Annuchuttree' and the allowance granted to the temple at Cuttack named Sitaram Thakurbaree shall not be resumed.

"The question whether the allowance to Seetaram Thakurbaree should be discontinued was lately fully discussed and it was ruled by Government on the 15th ultimo that the grant cannot be resumed. Neither can the donation for the support of the temple of Juggernath be discontinued, both having been authorized by the same rule as quoted above."

"The law says established donation ; the orders of Government dated 29 June 1809 determined that

(iv) Circumambulation—The upcountry pilgrims went round the pedestal of Jagannath, paying a small fee.

(v) Sale of wood of old chariots.

“established donation’ was and should continue to be Sicca Rs. 56,342-9-8 and 484 yards of woollen cloth amounting to the Company’s Rupees 1080 per annum.”

Ricketts referred to the payment to Debraj Das ‘out of the revenue of Killah Khoordah’ for Mohun bhoge and to the Jagannath Ballabh Math for the support of the pauper pilgrims. He observed that “To meet the charge we have assets estimated at the Co’s Rs. 25,140-15-6, viz., the proceeds of the Sattais Hazari Mahals—Rs. 16,738-9-10 and the extra receipts at the temple—Rs. 8,406-5-8=Rs. 25,140-15-6, leaving an amount of Rs. 28,037-12-8 to be actually made good”.<sup>18</sup>

Ricketts opposed the abolition of the Pilgrim tax “from the fund out of which, the deficiency in the assets of the endowment to meet the Temple charges was made good, the expenses of the hospitals at Pooree and at Cuttack defrayed and the Juggernath road kept in repair, is to be given up and all the expenses to be borne by the State. I cannot see the necessity of the relinquishment of all that is advantageous and the retention of all that is disadvantageous in our relation with the Juggernath temple.”

“It has also been ruled out that the donation guaranteed by Section 30, Regulation XII of 1805 cannot be resumed, the only question therefore appears to be how the tax can be continued without the interference of European officers and the public treasury be separated from all connections with the Temple.”

“Rajah Ramchunder Deo, the Superintendent, is willing to release Government from obligation contained in Regulation XII of 1805, if allowed to collect the tax. All that is desired would be effected by this arrangement. The Government will neither give nor

<sup>18</sup> Liability Co’s	Rs. 53,178-12-2
Assets Co’s	Rs. 25,140-15-6

Rs. 28,037-12-8

receive and the Temple will depend for support exclusively on the continuance of faith in Hindooism and the virtue of pilgrimage."

"The average receipt of the tax for the last ten years has been Rs. 91,526."

Lastly, Ricketts observed : "Supported entirely by its hold on the superstition and affection of the Hindoo people, tolerated but neither endowed nor countenanced by the State, the temple of Juggernath will increase or decrease in splendour, and ultimately stand or fall in general reputation among the Hindoos. Endowed it might have flourished inspite of infidelity ; unendowed, lukewarmness will cause decay." <sup>19</sup>

Auckland, the Governor General, evinced no particular urgency in his attitude towards the implementation of the 1833 Despatch. In his letter to Sir John Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control, he wrote : "The abolition of the Pilgrim tax I hesitate upon, for the question is of entire fallacy. The public protection of Native religious trusts is often grossly misrepresented." <sup>20</sup>

In his Minute dated 1 April 1837, he observed : "The directions in the Despatch must be acted upon in a spirit of guarded prudence and justice, so as to confirm to all classes of people the assurance, that, in the exercise of their religions, a real toleration and perfect protection will ever be extended to them". He pointed out that "something of paganism may be traced in our English feasts of May Day and Harvest Home."

In conclusion he remarked : "I would deprecate in these matters all overstrained fastidiousness of feelings and a sternness of action which must tend to

<sup>19</sup> Ricketts to Board of Revenue : 15 September 1837 No. 2133 : J.T.C Pt 2

<sup>20</sup> Auckland to Hobhouse 17 November 1836 India Office Records Home Miscellaneous 838

create a feeling of alarm and to alienate the people from Government.”

The Court of Directors appreciated Auckland's 'Go slow' policy. In the Madras Presidency, there was agitation against the Government participation in the Hindu ceremonies like consecration of cocoanuts by showing marks of respect or making customary salutes.

The matter was referred to the Directors for their decision. They remembered what Sir Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras, wrote in his Minute in 1822 "In this country, where the rulers are so few and of a different race from the people, it is the most dangerous of all things to tamper with religious feelings."

They now reversed the Court orders contained in the Despatch of 1833 and left all initiative with the Supreme Government. They advised against the discontinuation of customary salutes. or marks of respect. It was made clear : "No change should be made relative to the native religions except under the authority of the Supreme Government." (Bengal Revenue Despatch : 18 October 1837).

This Despatch from the Court of Directors raised a storm of protest in the Madras Presidency. The Bishop of Madras, William Corrie, sent a Memorial to the Governor General asking for the immediate implementation of the Court orders of 20 February 1833. More than half of the signatories were military men.

Frederick Adam, Governor of Madras, censured the Bishop of Madras and the conduct of the Military officers who had signed the Memorial. Sir P. Maitland, Commander-in-chief of the Madras army, 'a known friend of the evangelicals', and Robert Nelson, a Civilian, resigned in protest.

"The Madras Memorial slowly made its way to England. . . There was an outcry of what appeared to be un Christian retrogression of those who had pledged themselves to go forward against the viola-

tion of the promise made five years ago, by the voice of authority to Christianity of Great Britain." <sup>21</sup>

The question was again raised in Parliament and several members of the House of Commons criticized the vacillating policy of the Court of Directors regarding the implementation of the Despatch of 1833.

On the 26th July 1838, Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control, gave assurance in the House of Commons that he would use his discretion, which belonged to him in his position as the president of the Board of Control, to direct a Despatch to be sent to India for immediate implementation of the Despatch of 1833.

On 8 August 1838, the Court of Directors sent a Despatch to Lord Auckland. They instructed the Governor General: "We have again to express our anxious desire that you should accomplish with as little delay as possible, the arrangements which we believe to be already in progress for abolishing the Pilgrim tax, and for discontinuing the Government connexion with management of all funds which may be assigned for the support of the religious institutions in India".

"We more particularly desire that the management of all temples and other places of religious resort, together with revenue derived therefrom, be resigned into the hands of the natives; and that the interference of the public authorities in the religious ceremonies of the people be regulated by the instructions conveyed in our Despatch of 20 February 1833." <sup>22</sup>

A meeting of the Supreme Council in India was held on 20 August 1838. William Morrison, Senior member of the Council, presided in the absence of the Governor General who was on tour. It was resolved to make over to the Rajah of Khoorda, the Superintendent of the Temple, the management of the Sattais

<sup>21</sup> *Christianity in India*—Kaye p. 421

<sup>22</sup> Bengal Revenue Despatch 8 August 1838 India Office Records E/4/756

Hazari Mahal. It was also decided in the meeting, "to hand over to the Rajah of Khoordah and to the priests, the entire management of the religious ceremonies and affairs of the Temple."<sup>23</sup>

By the time Auckland received the Court's orders, he was encamped at Ludhiana to arrange for the invasion of Afganistan. In his letter to Hobhouse, Auckland criticized the Missionaries. "For the abolition of Pilgrim tax" he wrote "there is no reason of any kind, but that of saving you and me from the clatter of nonsense with which we are assailed. You may as well abolish the gin tax to make men sober, as the Pilgrim tax to convert the Hindoos to Christianity. . . . Perhaps the collection might be gradually discontinued, but I am ashamed of the foolishness of the subject."<sup>24</sup>

When it became mandatory for him to carry out the Court's orders, Auckland sent a Minute to the Court of Directors. He referred to their Despatch dated 8 August again urging withdrawal "of all unnecessary and objectionable interference with the religious affairs of the natives". He pointed out that Pilgrim tax was realized at Allahabad, Gaya and at Juggernath. "The loss from the relinquishment of pilgrim tax at Gya will be considerable."

"To go to the case of the temple at Juggernath. It is first to be observed that the management of this institution has now devolved in Government and must be transferred by it as a trust for the use of the whole Hindoo community." xxx

"It is certain that they (the Rajahs of Khoordah) did not possess and have never been recognized as holding anything like a right of private property in it. Nor is there a body of hereditary priests charged exclusively with its control. The superintendence of

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<sup>23</sup> Memorandum 10 June 1842 Home (Revenue) Records National Archives

<sup>24</sup> Auckland to Hobhouse 23 August 1838 Auckland Papers British Museum Add 36473

the Temple has been assigned to the individuals, judged the most proper by the ruling power."

"The first Regulation of the British Government on the subject (Regulation IV of 1806 sec. II) enacted that superintendence should be vested in an assembly of Pundits or learned Brahmins to be selected and removed by Government. The subsequent Regulation (IV of 1809 sec. 1 to 4) which is still in force, transferred the duty of general superintendence to the Rajah of Khoordah and his successors, subject to removal on proof of misconduct by Government; but provided also for appointment of three Dewul Purchas or chief priests by the Collector of Cuttack, subject to confirmation by Government."

"In practice, the Dewul Purchas appear to have considerable independent functions. The money allowance given instead of tax, having been paid directly to them and not to the Rajah." xxxx

"In order to explain clearly the position of Government in regard to the Juggernath temple, we find that sections 8 and 30 of Regulation XII of 1805 guarantee in absolute and unqualified terms the lands and money allowance which have been assigned for the Temple. The money allowance has been specified, not as a grant to any individual or priesthood but as the established donation for the support of the temple of Juggernath. This money allowance, according to an adjustment made by Government in 1808, is in excess of Rs. 60,000 of our present currency."

"Two methods have been proposed for relieving Government from all further connection with the Temple; one is simple abolition of the tax on pilgrims; the other the relinquishment to the Rajah of Khoordah, the Superintendent, and to the chief priests of the Temple, of the income from the tax and the charge of its collection; those authorities on their side relinquishing all claim to the money allowances, which Government is at present bound to make for the expense of the Temple."

The first plan would absorb the net profit of the Temple, which may be rated at about 18,000 rupees a year, and Government would be liable for an annual sum of 30,000 rupees a year, being the difference between the amount of established donation above referred to and the proceeds of a Mohul (Sattais Hazari Mohul) connected with the Temple, the rents of which are collected by the revenue officers of Government with the receipt from some other minor miscellaneous sources. By the second plan, Government would be relieved from all connection with the Temple, sacrificing only net profit of 18,000 rupees before stated."

"It is objected to the first plan that Government will still be connected with the Temple, in as much as it would still be required to contribute a sum of money for its maintenance. I cannot however admit the force of the objection which is stated to the continuance of such a payment."

"We took forcible possession of the Cuttack province. We conciliated submission by binding ourselves to the accustomed maintenance of the temples of the country, and the same principle which would withhold the pledged payment, would, if followed out pluck its endowment from every religious institution of the country. We ought not hold India on such terms."

"An argument might, as it seems to me, which with more reason be raised, whether any such payment would be necessary. The contributions of the pilgrims consist at present of money given in the shape of compulsory tax to Government, and of further sums nominally given of their free will, but also compelled by the powerful influence of the priests."

"It can scarcely, it might be said, be doubted that as the Government tax shall be relinquished, the religious offerings and the subsequent gains of the priests will increase ; and it might thence be contended that no payment by Government will be required.

But I would not deal upon speculations of this kind, so as to shake the confidence of the people in our good faith."

"Our *promise of the allowance for the support of the temple is distinct and unconditional*, and I would fulfil it to the letter." xxx

"Upon the second plan, the question arises whether Government can properly make over the collection of the tax, as a tax fixed by law, to the Superintendent and the priests of the Temple for their own benefit : for it is said that to protect the people from extortion, it would be necessary that rate of fees (an impost to be levied by the priests) should be fixed. But there can be no limit to the amount of gratuitous offerings and the priests can render any rate of fees negatory." xxx

"I am disposed consequently with the President in Council to give a clear preference to the plan of wholly abolishing the tax and all authoritative demands on the pilgrims. But for the reasons which I have mentioned, I would not seek to obtain the relinquishment by the Superintendent and the priests, of the claim to the fixed money, payable by Government, from our pledge to continue which, to the Temple."

"It appears obvious indeed that the Superintendent and the priests of our own appointment, are in no respect competent to release us. Our *pledge was of course not to the individual priests but to the Hindoo public*, "to whom the Temple is an object of religious veneration, and its support a matter of universal interest."

"I would therefore wholly relinquish the tax, making over to the Rajah of Khoordah and to the priests the entire management of the ceremonies and affairs of the Temple, upon the understanding of the continuation of the established pecuniary donation."

"I would retain the Sattais Hazari Mohul in the management of our revenue officers, paying over the net collection to the Superintendent of the Temple,

Government, or that they would be grateful for our liberality in leaving their endowments.”

“The Hindoos are well satisfied with the existing laws and are averse to all changes. The priests complain that none of the old Sahibs who used to give such active and direct support to their religious institutions are left, and they pretend not to understand the tendency of the innovations of the present day.”

“I am convinced that they apprehend in them nothing less than the undermining of their religion by allowing their temples to be ruined by misappropriation of the funds.” xxx

“Everything connected with the religion of the people must necessarily be a matter of utmost importance, and everything that arouses the fear of the people about things they consider most sacred, and value more than life, ought most rigidly be guarded against.”

“An unhappy decision following an innovation by law may arouse the spirit of the people—even so apathetic as the Hindoos are supposed to be; and marks the difference between the conquest of a country when the people are not against us, and putting down the insurrection of the people.”

“The province affords a most memorable instance—Col. Harcourt entered the province at the end of August 1803; the British authority dates from the 3rd October 1803, and by the end of December 1803, the average portions of land revenue of the year have been collected. The rebellion of Khoordah was not put down under two years and the revenue of a large tract of the country was entirely lost during that time, besides the expense of attending the waging of war against an excited people.” xxx

“The extent of the power of the Brahmins is unknown as also the method by which their power is exercised and maintained. I have repeatedly been informed by the officers that military rank and discipline are not equal to Brahminical influence and that they therefore reject the Brahmins to the

utmost extent that the regulations of their service will allow. It is not then to be supposed that the Brahmins will not exert the power they possess to the utmost pitch and at all risks, should the erroneous impression once unfortunately seize them that Government had a design against their religion.”<sup>20</sup>

The Sudder Board of Revenue again wrote to Mills, Commissioner, on the subject of abolition of Pilgrim tax on 9 April 1839. Mills submitted the draft of a proposed Act for giving effect to the orders of the Supreme Government.

Mills was of opinion : “Much though we deprecate all personal interferences with the ceremonies of a religion which we cannot but look on as of the most degrading and demoralising character : it is yet in my opinion our bounden duty not only to tolerate the religion but to provide for its free exercise by our Hindoo subjects, to secure the due appropriation of the proceeds by which its endowments are supported and lastly to maintain public tranquillity in all places to which its votaries resort.”

“The double object can in this case be best and most effectively attained by withdrawing the direct exercise of Government authority in all matters connected with the administration of the Temple,”xxx

“We should, in short, interfere not a little more with Juggernath than we do at Bhubaneswar.”

Mills accepted the amount of the Company’s Rupees 44776 “as the established allowance payable to the Superintendent”. For Mohun Bhog, Mills

<sup>20</sup> Collector, Puri to Mills, Commissioner 10 January 1839 J.T.C. Pt. 2 : No. 208

\* Mills did not read or did not care to read Colonel ‘Hindoo’ Stewart’s *Vindication of the Hindoos by a Bengal Officer* which was published in London in 1808. Stewart contended that the Hindu pantheon of gods “appears to be the most complete and ample system of Moral Allegory that the world has ever produced.” (p. 9)

suggested the payment of the Company's Rs. 3466-10 under the provision of the decree of a Court.

Mills referred to the demands made by the Temple priests. "The Pundahs desire that they may be allowed to collect their fees themselves, while the Purharees contend that Government is bound to collect theirs."<sup>30</sup>

"The Purharee's right to levy fees is abrogated by the remission of the tribute they paid to Government. The Pundahs should be content with their own gains ; the fee is but a very trifling portion of the pilgrim's expense ; for, to use the words of Harington's *Analysis*, he is fleeced by the Pundahs not only of all money he brings with him, but writes promissory notes for future payments."

"Indeed, it is a well-known fact that the pilgrims are in habit of burying outside the town or leaving in the hands of the shop-keepers on the road, enough money to take them home ; so well they know that those extortioners will turn them out naked and penniless."

Mills stated that he summoned the Rajah of Khoordah who gave him the following conditions :

(1) That the Government will defray the expenses of making new images of Juggernath. Mills pointed out that in 1216 and 1235 Umlee, new images were made and the Government sanctioned Rs. 5,500 on both occasions out of the proceeds of the Pilgrim tax. It was remade in 1836 at an expense of Rs. 2,822-1.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> The Pratiharis in their petition in August 1838 asked the Government to collect their 'customary dues' even after the abolition of the Pilgrim tax : 'so that our rights and privileges will be saved from destruction.' J.T.C. Pt 2

<sup>31</sup> Naba Kalebara of the Puri Triad takes place when two New Moon happen in the month of Ashada, an event which occurs about once in 17 years. In Hindu almanac, provision is made for dual Ashada. Such occurrences took place in 1714,

(2) That the Government will bear out the expense for repair of the Temple. Mills pointed out that the repair work was formerly defrayed by an *Abwab* (impost). There was only one recorded instance of this levy. The mother of Raghuji Bhonsle, Chima Bai, came to Puri to offer worship. Finding the inner walls of the Temple falling to pieces, she persuaded her son to levy an impost called 'chou-gundee' that is  $\frac{4}{5}$  of a pie on every rupee of land revenue.

Mills wrote that the Temple buildings had never been repaired at public cost. About eleven years ago, one Baidyanath Chowdhury gave Rs. 24,000 for repairing the Temple. An amount of Rs. 1,084, being the savings of the salaries of two Purchas was also appropriated for that purpose by Wilkinson, the Collector of Puri, in 1232 Umlee.

Mills observed: "We are not bound to defray the expenses of remaking the idol or repairing the Temple."

Mills wrote that the Rajah wanted permission "to expend Rs. 44,776 in the manner that seems to him to be most fitting, being of course bonafide appropriation."

Mills observed that the Collector should be autho-

1733, 1744, 1752, 1771, 1790, and under the East India Company in 1809, 1828, 1836 and in 1853.

On 28 February 1828, the Collector of Cuttack wrote to Thomas Pakenham, officiating Commissioner, to sanction Rs. 5,500 to meet the expenses of Naba Kalchbara.

The Collector pointed out: "The renewal of the bodies of the three idols takes place so often as Ashardh is an intercalary month, which happened only once since our acquiring possession of the country, and may not occur again for many years. On the last occasion, the above ceremony being necessary, Commissioner Buller was in the District and in compliance with the recommendation contained in his letter dated 21 March 1809 for a sum similar to that now applied for, was authorized by Government for disbursement." J.T.C. Pt 2

rized to report any misconduct on the part of the Rajah to the Governor General. "Interference on the part of the local agents will be restricted to the cases of misapplying the money to personal use."

Lastly, the Rajah claimed the rights and privileges of a Tributary chieftain. Mills wrote in this connection. "As the Jungle Rajahs think derogatory to be placed on a level with the subjects of Mogulbundee, the objection cannot be attended to."<sup>32</sup>

Mills suggested that the Cuttack Pilgrim Hospital to be kept up. He wrote: "During large festivals, the town of Pooree is crowded to utmost degree, and the pilgrims are glad to make their escape. Cuttack is their first good retiring place, and to Cuttack do the sick and dying hasten for succour."<sup>33</sup>

The Sudder Board of Revenue wrote to the Revenue department: "The appointment and removal of all persons subject to the control of the Superintendent shall rest with that officer<sup>34</sup> whose decision shall be conclusive, until reversed by the decree of a competent Court. All persons considering themselves aggrieved by the act of Superintendent or other officers may sue for redress in the ordinary Courts of justice."

In conclusion, Sudder Board of Revenue remarked

<sup>32</sup> Mills to Sudder Board of Revenue 11 May 1839, J.T.C. Pt 2 No. 1304

<sup>33</sup> Mills refers to the patients in the Cuttack and Puri hospitals during the five years ending with 1836

	Admitted	Died	Discharged	Remaining
Cuttack Hospital	2944	635	1975	334
Puri Hospital	4417	1514	2253	650

<sup>34</sup> "In this letter, the Superintendent has been treated as 'an officer'. In the letter of the Collector of Puri to Commissioner Mills dated 10 November 1842, it has been pointed out that the 'ex-Rajah and the Government Superintendent are one and the same person.'"

That is the only letter in which the Superintendent properly was called 'ex-Rajah' instead of Rajah of Khoordah.

that if they, rightfully understood the intention of the Resolution of the Governor General, it implies that the net proceeds of the Sattais Hazari Mohul were to be paid to the Superintendent in addition to the established donation, which had hitherto not been done. The profits of the Mohul went to the reduction of the annual amount paid by the State as donation.<sup>35</sup>

On 17 October 1839, the Council of the Governor General recorded a Minute regarding arrangements connected with the discontinuance of the interference of the Government in the affairs of the Jagannath temple. A copy of the Minute was sent to Lord Auckland, the Governor General, who was camping at Agra. He noted: "We must not lose sight of the engagements in regard to the Temple. The Government in taking possession of Cuttack succeeded to the superintendence of the great temple of the province in which there was no right of personal property or direction."

"Though it is indeed fitting that Government should divest itself of this trust with the duty of general interference, and transfer from itself to those who profess the Hindoo religion it would not be right or honest for us to throw up the charge entirely at the mercy of a merely nominal trustee subjected without responsibility to objects of waste or self interest."

Lord Auckland pointed out that the Government of India were not "desired or expected by the authority at Home to go so far and it may be that the words of Clause 1, Section 2 of Regulation IV of 1809—by which the Rajah is bound on all occasions to be guided by recorded rules and constitutions of the Temple, and by ancient and established usage—create of themselves such a trust, as would give the Hindoo community a remedy in a Court of justice."

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<sup>35</sup> Sudder Board of Revenue to the Revenue department 19 June 1839 No. 2431: Home—Revenue Department: National Archives.

“The measures which release Government from responsibilities must also be a guarantee on part of Government of the future conduct and affairs of the Temple.”<sup>36</sup>

In 1840, the Pratiharis sent another petition to the Collector of Puri stating that from the proclamation of the Legislative Council dated 2 March 1840, they had known that the tax on the pilgrims would be abolished.

The Pratiharis, who were about five hundred in number, argued that if no provision was made for them : “how can we guard the seven gates inside the Temple, maintain our families and Gomastahs, about four thousands in number, and pay for ‘Bhogapoota’ (fine for uncleanliness and other injury to holy food) ‘Mahasana’ (purification of the images for uncleanliness) and ‘Ruth Khanjah’ (the daily preparation of food when the images were on the Cars).

They were afraid that the Superintendent of the Temple would impose fines when occasions would arise but would not pay them their dues. This petition was rejected. On 20 April 1840, Act X of 1840 was passed, which abolished the tax and fees upon the pilgrims resorting to Puri. It was provided in the Act that ‘the superintendence of the temple of Juggernath and its interior economy, the conduct and the management of its affairs and the control over the priests, officers and servants attached to the Temple, shall continue to be vested in the Rajah of Khoordah for the time being.’

The Rajah of Khurda “shall not receive or allow to be received by any person connected with the said Temple, any payment, other than such voluntary donations, as may be freely offered from any person resorting to the said Temple for the performance of religious ceremonies.”

<sup>36</sup> Minute of Lord Auckland 21 December 1839 Revenue department proceedings : 2 March 1840 National Archives.

<sup>37</sup> Petition of the Pratiharis 2 April 1840 J.T.C. Pt 2

The Act provided that the Raja of Khurda, priests, officers and servants attached to the Temple "shall be liable to be sued or prosecuted by any interested party in any civil or criminal court of competent jurisdiction for any breach of trust committed in the conduct of their duties or for any extortion or illegal violence exercised upon the pilgrims."

The Pilgrim tax at Gaya was simultaneously abolished. The tax on the pilgrims at Allahabad was abolished on 17 November 1840 by an order of the Governor General in Council.

The Collector of Puri wrote to Commissioner Mill on 6 May 1840 : "acting upon the provision of Act X of 1840, as published in the Gazette of 29 April, I prohibited the collection of any tax from the pilgrims from 3 May, on which date I received the Gazette.

"At Puri, on the 3rd May, amidst the most tremendous storm in which the sacred wheel on the summit of the Pagoda tower was bent, the Gate was thrown open and the pilgrims entered the barrier free."

## SECTION ONE

# CONNECTION OF THE CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENT IN INDIA WITH SOME HINDU SHRINES

### I. PILGRIM TAX

Tax from the pilgrims was realized not only at Puri, but also at other places. Pilgrim tax was first imposed on persons visiting the temple of Balaji Venkatesvara at Tirupati in 1800. In 1803, a tax was taken from the pilgrims to the shrines at Gaya. The Pilgrim tax was imposed on the persons bathing at the sacred ghats of the Ganga at Prayag or Allaha-bad in 1812. "Unlike the willing Brahmins of Puri, the Prayawallahs were very much dissatisfied with the tax."<sup>38</sup>

The rates of the Pilgrim tax varied from annas six to twelve rupees twelve annas. A small amount was collected from the pilgrims to the shrines at Dhar-war and Poona in western India.

#### *Government profits from the temples*

#### Jagannath temple

	Rs.
From 1810 to 1830—	
Sicca ..	12,83,130
From 1831 to 1839—	
Sicca .	5,49,909
	18,33,039 or 203,671

<sup>38</sup> The Government connection with idolatry in India 'Calcutta Review'—1852

Gaya temples	
From 1803 to 1839	97,23,307 or 10,80,367
Prayag	
From 1812 to 1839	2,76,429
Tirupati	
From 1800 to 1842	4,37,600
Dharwar and Poona	
From 1809 to 1839	30,000

Sir John Poynder, member of the Court of Proprietors made a statement in the Court that in cases of four temples (at Tirupati, Puri, Allahabad and at Gaya) the worshippers paid as a tax on their religion in 22 years upwards of 1,500,000 sterling and the Company had netted a clear profit of 1,000,000 sterling. He chided the proprietors as 'patrons and abettors of idolatry'.<sup>39</sup>

"The pilgrim tax was taken off from Juggernath, Gyah and at Allahabad in 1840 unconditionally and at one stroke. The Juggernath tax was comparatively a small portion of the whole financial loss."<sup>40</sup>

## II. CUTTACK TEMPLES

After the British conquest, the temple of Sitaram at Cuttack was taken under the Government patronage. In 1837 there was a discussion whether the allowance should be paid any longer to that temple. The Collector of Cuttack acknowledged that there was no record of how and why it was granted. It was decided to continue the allowance, as discontinuance would look like breach of faith.<sup>41</sup>

The Directors of the East India Company were

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<sup>39</sup> Speech of Poynder 21 December 1836 Cited in '*The Times*' 16 March 1837.

<sup>40</sup> Note of J. P. Grant, Secretary, Govt. of India 19 November 1852. Pilgrim tax at Allahabad was abolished in November 1840.

<sup>41</sup> Ricketts, Commissioner to Board of Revenue 15 September 1837 J.T.C. Pt

informed by Lord Canning, the Governor General, in August 1857, that in the opinion of G. F. Cockburn, Commissioner of Cuttack, the charitable donation to the priests of certain Hindu temples in Orissa, called 'Annochatter' and the allowance granted to the Sitaram temple might be resumed by rescission of law.

On the other hand, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal was of opinion that "the law could not be rescinded consistently with good faith". He could not perceive any moral distinction between grant of money, and of land, as suggested by Cockburn. He differed from the opinion of Cockburn that the grant should be resumed because it is "unbecoming on the part of Government to support idols." He wanted that the 'Annachatter' donation should continue. The question of allowance to Sitaram 'Thakur Barea' (temple) also arose.

The Government of India referred the matter to the Court of Directors. The Directors, while regretting that the payment of these allowances had not previously brought to their notice, and wishing to be disassociated from such payments to idolatrous institutions as far as possible, concurred with the opinion of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. The Directors rejected the proposal to resume the payments, which in their opinion would involve breach of faith.

At Cuttack, twenty two temples were receiving grants from the Government.<sup>42</sup>

The important temples were :

Name of temple and locality	Amount of grant
	Rs. As.
Sitaram Thakur, Telenga Bazar	522. 8
Gopaljee, Alishah Bazar	76.15

<sup>42</sup> Collector, Cuttack to Commissioner 28 May 1858. Probably Sitaram Thakur is now known as Raghunathji and Bithal Thakur as Ganesh.

Name of temple and locality	Amount of grant	
	Rs.	As.
Bithal Thakur, Mahidas Bazar	63.	13
Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Muhammadia Bazar	55.	8
Kali Thakurani, Balu Bazar	26.	12
Gangeswar, Ganga Mandir	26.	12
Jalesvar, Dagarpara	26.	12
Amaresvar, Baxi Bazar	26.	12
Jagannath, Chaudhury Bazar	26.	12

## SECTION TWO

## MISSIONARY PROPAGANDA

The Missionary propaganda in England and India, which began in the first decade of the 19th century, was largely responsible for the severance of the East India Company's connection with the administration of the Jagannath temple, by putting pressure on the Home Government.

The Company's association with the Jagannath temple was a sheer anathema to the evangelical fanatics. They considered the Pilgrim tax to be a tax of profit, providing the East India Company with 'wages of idolatry'. The Missionaries asserted that the Pilgrim tax implied 'official sanction of superstition' and thereby encouraged an ever increasing number of pilgrims to flock to the temple of Juggernath.

But the Government did not like to encourage the Missionary activities. In 1806, the Sepoys mutinied at Vellore. Both in India and in England, the Mutiny was attributed to the Missionary attacks on the religious beliefs of the Hindus.<sup>43</sup>

The religious policy of the Government was "to support the natives in the undisturbed exercise of their

<sup>43</sup> *British Baptist Missionaries* : Potts pp. 177-179.

religious rites and ceremonies and to preserve their places of worship inviolate."<sup>44</sup>

The Christian Government in India continued the State patronage of the Hindu and Muslim religious institutions, which was formerly extended by the Indian rulers.

"Before the publication of Buchanon's account of the transactions at Juggernaut, the English people were considerably ignorant of the real character of Hindooism. They had rather been attracted by the excellent morality of the Hindoos."

"Zephania Holwell, the Black Hole survivor, wrote treatises on the Gentoos, in which he commended in the highest strain of eulogy, the simple, the rational, the sublime religion of Brahma."

"People had heard of Juggernaut and had encouraged exaggerated ideas of the wholesale slaughter committed by the crushing wheels of the great Idol car. Every child's book, illustrative of the manners and customs of foreign nations had an impressive picture of Juggernaut, making high holiday at the expense of hundreds of prostrate worshippers. But it was little known to what extent the great Pooree temple or any other idol home of the same kind were supported and patronised by the British Government."

"Little had been heard until the early part of the present century, when Claudius Buchanon set it agoing."<sup>45</sup>

In 1806, Reverend Claudius Buchanon, Chaplain of the East India Company, during his visit to South India passed through Puri and witnessed the Car festival which took place on 20 July 1806.

The obstreperous Chaplain wrote letter 'regarding the atrocities at Juggernaut' to George Udney, member of the Governor General's Council. He also wrote to the senior Chaplain in Bengal "in which he penned

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<sup>44</sup> *Bengal Revenue Proceedings* No. 24 : 1 July 1814 National Library.

<sup>45</sup> *Christianity in India*—Kaye (1859) p. 397.

graphic statements respecting the gigantic outrage upon all that is dear to God and Man, which had since made thousands of Christians mourn over the connexion of Britain with those abominations."<sup>46</sup>

In his letter, written on the Chilka coast, Buchanon condemned the 'blood lust' of Juggernath, "in the name of the Church of God." He referred to two cases of self-immolation under the wheels of the Car of Juggernath, which was actively encouraged by the priests. He also described the exhibition of indecent gestures by the priests during the Car festival.

Buchanon bitterly criticized the Government for levying tax on the pilgrims, thereby associating with idolatry. Lastly, he suggested the formation of a Christian institution to undermine "the wide and extended empire of the Moloch in the heathen world."<sup>47</sup>

Kaye corroborated the statement of Peggs. "The Europeans were first awakened to the sense of enormities of Hindooism by the revelations of Claudius Buchanon, who visited Orissa in 1806, and there first made acquaintance with the giant idol known as Juggernaut. Within the influence of the salubrious sea breezes of Pooree, he found the idol holding high carnival and straightway noted the proceedings." xxx

"The picture was a terrible one. There on the sand coast of Orissa is a stately Pagoda, grand against the sky, shrine of a mighty Moloch, tended by hundreds of priests and venerated by millions of worshippers."

Buchanon's letters "directed special attention to the idolatry of Juggernaut, which by reason of its gigantic proportions and its excessive monstrosity had always stood forth in the sight of the European nations as the great representative of idolatry in India."<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> *India's-cries to British humanity* : J. Peggs p. 132

<sup>47</sup> Buchanon's letters No. 15 : Ganjam 29 June 1806. India Office Records Mss D. 122 fol 25.

<sup>48</sup> *Christianity in India*—W. Kaye p. 387.

Buchanon addressed a Memorial to the Governor General bitterly attacking the Government for its association with the temple of Juggernath. The Court of Directors in their letter dated 26 August 1808, objected to the "improper style" of the Memorial and were relieved at the departure of Buchanon from India.

The voice of the evangelical conscience gained a wide forum with the growth of a verbose Missionary press. The Missionaries of Serampore published a tract entitled *Rise of Wisdom* condemning the folly of the Government by extending support to idolatry.

Lord Minto interrupted the circulation of this tract thereby to "restrain the commendable zeal of the Missionaries within limits, the transgression of which would, in our decided judgment, expose to the hazards of public safety and tranquillity without promoting its intended object."<sup>40</sup>

The Missionaries vividly described 'the carnage' at Puri without caring for truth. Dr. Carey of Serampore Mission wrote: "I only mention one idol, the famous Juggernaut, to which twelve or thirteen pilgrimages were made every year." xxx

"I suppose at the lowest calculation, 120,000 persons attend. Now if only one in ten died, the mortality caused by this one idol would be 12,000 a year."

Rev. Smith and Rev. Green visited the Car festival in 1809. They wrote that there was a stampede and one hundred fifty or thereabout had been killed. "They trod upon each other in approaching the Temple gate."<sup>50</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Governor General to the Court of Directors 2 November 1808

The Court of Directors 'entirely approved' the action taken by the Governor General.

<sup>50</sup> Periodical accounts of the Baptist Missionaries (1808-1810) quoted in *Christianity in India* p. 369.

But the Pilgrim tax collector or the Collector of Cuttack made no such report.

The Missionary accounts of the 'great holocausts' at Puri stirred the public imagination in England. They blamed the Home Government for not interfering to put a stop to the practise of self-immolation under the wheels of the Car of Juggernaut. In 1813, the House of Commons took evidence of some of the servants of the East India Company who had retired.

Charles Buller, formerly Member, Board of Revenue and Settlement Commissioner, Cuttack, was at that time a Member of Parliament. On 19 March 1813, he wrote a letter to the Court of Directors, which was laid on the table of the House of Commons. In this letter, he refuted "the very exaggerated and unfounded opinions which appear to be entertained in England in regard to the conduct of the British Government at Jaggannath and in respect of the atrocities said to be practised."

"It has been suggested to me" he wrote, "as I was so long on the spot and I had so much to do in framing the existing regulations, relative to the tax levied from the pilgrims, that I should take an opportunity of giving such information." xxx

"The object which I have in view is to correct the erroneous opinion which seems to prevail in regard to the conduct of our Government with reference to the Temple, and to remove the exaggerated ideas entertained in respect of the atrocities said to be practised there." xxx

"It seems to be supposed that our Government in Bengal is busy in the control and regulation of Hindoo worship and that it is actively employed in the encouragement of idolatry for the purpose of revenue. With regard to the encouragement of idolatry, most assuredly nothing of the kind occurs on the part of Government; unless it be supposed that the liberal wish to protect and secure its native subjects in the due exercise of their religious as well as civil liberties be pronounced to be an encouragement of idolatry."

“With regard to the revenue, that seems to me a question which has been considerably misunderstood. . . Many consider the revenue to be taken as a price for the permission of idolatry and consequently they seem to think that if Government would consent to give up the revenue, the idolatry would of course cease. Surely, nothing can be more erroneous in the above opinion ; for I suppose none would venture to say that the ruling power in Hindostan, what ever its religion may be, should interfere to prevent the Hindoos access to their own temples.” xxx

“It seems that the question of revenue lies within a small compass. If it be thought that it is inconsistent with our religion to permit the Hindoos to resort to their temples, the tax in that case is obviously improper ; but if it be the duty of the Christian Government to allow its native subjects to worship according to their own ideas, I should regret to see the tax abolished, as the abolition of it would render it difficult to restrain and regulate the enormous bodies of pilgrims who resort to that place.”

Buller next contradicted Buchanon’s report about the atrocities at Puri. “In respect of the atrocities said to be practised at the place, they refer to the immolations under the wheels of the Car on which the idol is carried. That such things occur, there can be no doubt ; but certainly not to the extent as seems to be supposed by many in England. It would appear to be a private opinion that these immolations are of frequent occurrence, that they are duly prescribed to the Hindoos by their religion, and often consequently such a duty is carried into performance.” xxx

“I believe it to be no part of their religion. Indeed the infrequency of the act is the fullest proof, I conceive, that it is not an act of duty prescribed by any sects of the Hindoos whatever. I was at Juggernath, during the whole of Ruth Jattrra (In 1809 I think it was) and I heard but one instance of immolation under the wheels of the Car, and it is possible that

another instance could have happened during that period without my hearing it."

"But instead of one, supposing, there were ten times the number, what it would amount to? That out of a proportion of nearly two hundred million of Hindoo population, there are to be found ten fanatics, fools and mad men doing such an act at Jaggannath." xxx

"I believe that the Brahmins have no concern in encouraging the fanatic to destroy himself, and that in point of fact are as ignorant of any one's having the intention of destroying himself as we are here."

While concluding, he observed: "With respect to the indecent gestures, said to have been exhibited in the Car, all I can say is, that if such things are done, I never saw them, and what is more, I never heard of them till I came to England."

Such a forceful argument, penned by a member of Parliament, who had served in Orissa, convinced other members of Parliament about the fallacy of the statements of Buchanon. In vain, he addressed two letters to the Court of Directors on 25 May and 8 June 1813, 'concerning the idol Juggernaut'. He published a book entitled *Apology for Christianity in India* in which he referred to the immolations under the Car of Juggernaut—"that ecstatic mockery of martyrdom"—and asked 'should we endeavour to extenuate the moral turpitude of our subjects in India by excluding the pure religion of Jesus Christ?'

In his letters to the Court of Directors, Buchanon argued that the immense gatherings of the heathens from all parts of the country at Puri was a golden opportunity for preaching Christianity. He advocated free distribution of ten thousand copies of the Bible annually at Juggernath among the pilgrims and asked: "Is it possible that the shadow of an objection should arise against such a measure, innoxious as it is, human and heavenly in its tendency. Are we afraid that the wretches, who come to lay their bores

within the precincts of Juggernaut would mutiny and take away our dominion?"

But the Directors showed no interest in the salvation of the idolatrous pilgrims resorting to Puri. Buchanon now reminded the English people that idolatry is a crime against God, as the Bible says, 'Thou shalt have no gods before me.' Such an appeal to the religious sentiment of the people had the desired effect. Public subscription was raised to fulfil the desire of the Lord : 'Go : Preach the Gospel to every creature'.

The Charter of 1813 officially admitted the Missionaries into India. In 1816, General Baptist Mission was established in England. William Bampton and James Peggs were ordained for service in the Bengal province. The establishment of the Mission, "destined to undermine the idolatry at Juggernaut and to blot out its atrocities was an event of great importance to the church of Christ." (Peggs)

In 1821, Bampton and Peggs with their families embarked for India and arrived at Serampore. Orissa was selected for their Missionary labour. Permission was necessary to preach Christianity in Orissa. "A previous application from two Missionaries was unsuccessful on account of the unsettled state of the country" (Peggs). Bampton and Peggs met Lord Hastings, the Governor General. As peace was restored after the Paik rebellion, they were given permission by the Governor General to work in Orissa.

They landed at Patamundai in the Cuttack district on 12 February 1822, and proceeded by boat to Cuttack. The first chapel was opened at Cuttack on 6 November 1826. The first converts were a Jewess and a Portuguese named De Sozo. The first Oriya convert was a Brahman of the Cuttack district named Gangadhar Sarangi.

Bampton proceeded to Puri in September 1823. A centre was opened at Puri under the impression that "a blow at idolatry here will prove a blow at the root." (*History of the General Baptist Mission : Peggs :*

p. 371). Bampton converted the first Hindu, a Telugu named Erun. In July 1828, a conference of the Baptist Missionaries was held at Puri.

In December 1828, Bampton "feel asleep in Jesus". Peggs lost his children Francis, Eliza and Mary at Cuttack. Worn down "by bodily and mental afflictions", he left Orissa in July 1825, and returned to England. Peggs became the Pastor of the General Baptist Church at Bruton-on-Trent.

For a period of a quarter of a century, this evangelical pamphleteer, who styled himself as 'Cuttack Missionary', carried on a campaign of vilification against Jagannath, by distorting facts, to sever the connection of the East India Company with the Jagannath temple.

In 1828, Peggs published a pamphlet entitled *Pilgrim taxes in India* in which he condemned the Christian Government in India for collecting taxes from the pilgrims resorting to Gaya, Allahabad and Puri.

In 1830, he published *India's cries to British Humanity*, a diatribe against the religious policy of the East India Company. This book attracted public notice and the third edition was published in 1832. Peggs tried to prove that the celebrity of the Jagannath temple depended on the collection of the Pilgrim tax by the Government, the abolition of which would lead to the decline of that great emporium of idolatry.

The exaggerated statements made by the Missionaries were not challenged by the Government, and were consequently believed by the public in England. They were convinced that it was un-Christian on the part of the Government to associate itself with the idolatrous institutions in India.

The Missionary propaganda influenced the Despatch of 20 February 1833. This 'Christian Epistle' superseded the Court orders which had defined the religious policy of the Company since 1814.

Peggs could persuade John Poynder<sup>51</sup>, one of the proprietors of the East India Stock, to take up the cause of the Missionaries. On 13 March 1827, the Hon'ble proprietor Poynder made a speech on 'Human sacrifices in India.' He condemned Suttee and 'read the details relative to the sacrifice at Juggeranut.' He opined that, "of these sacrifices however, the most woeful is at Juggernaut" and he referred to the cases of immolation cited by Buchanon in his letters to the Court of Directors ('*Asiatic Review*', January-June 1827).

A motion was passed in the meeting of the Court of Directors asking the Government "to prevent all rites and ceremonies in India involving the destruction of life."

On 13 May 1837, a deputation of General Baptist Missionaries met Sir John Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control, to whom Peggs dedicated one of his books. The Christian religious Societies took part in politics and influenced the election of the Directors. "Many indeed, conceiving that the source of evil lay in indifference, if not impiety, of the Court of Directors criticized in no measured language the delinquency of that body and even the placid dullness of the India House election was for a time disturbed by the appeals to the religious sensibility of the languid proprietors. . . . The year was a great year for Christianity in India." (Peggs)

On 26 July 1838, Hobhouse gave a pledge to the House of Commons about the abolition of the Pilgrim tax. In 1840, Peggs published *History of the General Baptist Mission*. His campaign against the association of the East India Company with the Jagannath temple obtained success, and in 1840, the Pilgrim tax was abolished.

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<sup>51</sup> "That devoted friend of humanity"—*The present state of the British connection with idolatry in India and particularly the established Government donation for the support of the temple of Juggernaut*—Peggs p. 35.

In Bengal, Captain Phipps, though not a Missionary, carried on propaganda on their behalf. Captain Phipps of the Bengal Native Infantry was posted at Puri in 1822.

Some extracts are quoted below from books and magazines of the Missionaries to give an idea of the Missionary propaganda, which was mainly responsible for the severance of British connection with the temple of Jagannath.

#### I. GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION WITH JAGANNATH

##### ( I )

“The idol of Juggernath is probably the coarsest in the country. When a new idol is made after an interval of 17 years, one man is selected to take out of the old idol, a small box containing the spirit. The man who does it, is always removed from the world before the end of the year.”—Captain Phipps : *Asiatic Journal*, March 1824. This statement is baseless.

##### ( II )

“But which most feels the mind with distrust is the use which these ministers of deception make use of the British name throughout the country. In proclaiming the greatness of Juggernaut, they of course affirm that he has so fully convinced the conquerors of his divinity, that they have taken the Temple under their superintendence, and that to provide him with an attendance worthy of its dignity, they expend nearly 60,000 rupees from year to year, inspecting with care every department, and punishing any negligence in the service of the god. xxx

“In reality, they worship him, and although from their being Mlechhas (unclean) the god cannot permit

their approach within his temple, yet at his festivals they testify their veneration. xxx

When these victims of delusion come to Juggernaut, they see his Car adorned with the finest English woollen, the officers of Government in attendance to keep order and perhaps some English gentlemen present. Then, they transform in a moment into the representative of the Governor General in India. Those who live to return, propagate this among their neighbours."

*Friend of India, October 1825.*

( III )

"The dreadful scenes which occur annually on all the roads to Juggernaut would soon cease—if that Temple were placed on the same footing as numerous other places of idolatrous worship, which are left without any kind of interference on the part of Government."

Captain Phipps: *'Missionary Register'* (1824), p. 580

( IV )

"Will not the heathen think that Christianity is similar to idolatry which amasses wealth at the price of blood? Will not the Hindoo think highly of his idolatrous rites when he sees the solicitude of his Christian rulers lest they should grow into disuse?"

*India's cries to British humanity* (1831), p. 140

## II. PILGRIM TAX

( I )

"The tax on the idol adds strength to the delusion and increases from year to year those scenes of death at which human mind shudders. That the British

should be represented as in reality the worshippers of the Log; and employing their superior knowledge in securing order in the service of the Temple and adding splendour to its public festivals is sufficiently degrading; but that they should be represented as employing a band of deceivers to beguile the unwary and persuade them to undertake the pilgrimage; so that they may in reality enrich themselves by the tax they levy, before they permit the Hindoo to behold his idol—is sinking the British name to the lowest pitch of degradation.”

*Friend of India*, October 1825

( II )

“The Pilgrim tax increases the celebrity of places of idolatrous resort. The tax on pilgrims at Juggernaut, while it encourages the emissaries of idolatry to wander to the distant parts of Hindostan to collect its deluded votaries (a stipulated sum is received by them from each individual passed to the town) by its sanction of idolatry, not only adds to the celebrity of the pilgrimage: but confounds Christianity with idolatry in the sight of the Hindoos.

A native enquired of a Missionary: ‘If Juggernaut be nothing, why does the Company take so much money from those who come to see him?’<sup>52</sup>

*India’s cries to British Humanity*, p. 129

“Peggs did not read the letter of Dr. M. D. Short, who had served in Orissa, in the *Asiatic Review* London (July-December 1830) Dr. Short wrote that the surplus of the Pilgrim tax, after meeting the expenditure of the Jagannath temple, was utilised by the Government which maintained the ministers of the established Church. “The Christian Ministers receive the wages of idolatry.”

( III )

“A further advantage will be the decrease of the popularity of the places of pilgrimage, and consequently diminution in the number and mortality of the pilgrims. xxx

Let the Pilgrim tax be abolished and few will be induced to collect the pilgrims. Let the premium for bringing pilgrims be at once dropped. Let all British interference with the idol and its tax be withdrawn, and it is certain that their popularity cannot last long. If it does, the reproach and the guilt of blood would be for ever rolled away from the British nation.”

*India's cries to British humanity, pp. 138-39*

### SECTION THREE

## THE CAR OF JUGGERNAUT

Self immolation under the wheels of the Car of Jagannath has applied an evil repute to the appellation, 'Car of Juggernaut'. Self immolation was practised in various forms by the Hindus.<sup>53</sup> The most common form was to sacrifice oneself before the goddess Kali. Until 1824, devotees threw themselves from a height to the rocky bed of an island in the Narmada river, which was thought to be the abode of Kala Bhairava, the consort of the goddess Kali.

Another favourite method of ending life was by throwing oneself under the wheels of a large car, carrying a deity. It was believed that such a mode of death was very acceptable to the deity and would save the victims from the misery of re-births. This belief in salvation influenced specially those who were suffering from painful diseases. They threw themselves under the wheels of a large car to earn merit and to put themselves out of pain.

Such cases of self-immolation occurred not only at Puri but also in other places where the deities came out in procession. Some instances are cited below :

C. 1321—"In Cathay, the pilgrims fall before the Car which passes over them, and crushes them and so they perish on the spot."—Friar Oderic

<sup>53</sup> "The persons who devote themselves to death have entire confidence that they shall by this meritorious act of self murder attain happiness."

History, *Religion and Literature of the Hindoos* : W. Ward  
Vol. II p. 73 (1815)

C. 1430—"At Bisnagar, many cast themselves on the ground, before the wheel of the Car so that they may be crushed to death."—Nicolo Contisa

C. 1581—"In Negapatam, the Car of the Pagoda is drawn on the annual feast day. Some persons from desire to make devoted end, cast themselves down under the wheels of the Car and so perish."—Gasparo Balbi

1636—"The most important temple in the kingdom of Bengals is the temple of Gagarnate, in the kindgom of Ouria, which stands on the sea-shore." xxx

"Among the ceremonies connected with this idol are included sumptuous and magnificent processions, in which many idols are borne in triumphal chariots of rich and costly workmanship. Vast crowds of pagans of both sexes come in pilgrimage at that time from the surrounding as well as from far distant places " xxx

"Some of the jogues and ministers of hell, seized with a demonical frenzy and excited by the acclamations of the barbarian heathens, voluntarily offer up their wretched lives, throwing themselves down in the centre of the road along which the procession passes with its chariots full of the idols. They pass over their unhappy bodies, leaving them crushed and mutilated. Such men are looked on as martyrs though they are rather adherents of the Devil."

—Sebastian Manrique

1662—"Vnto this Pagoda or house of Sathen doe belong 9000 Brahminnies or Priests which doe dayly offer sacrifice vnto their great god Jaggarnath from which idoll, the city is so called . . . and when it (the chariot of Jaggarnat) is going along the city there are many that will offer themselves a sacrifice to this idoll and desperately lye down on the ground.

that the chariott wheeles may runne over them, whereby they are killed outright. Some get broken armes, some broken legges and by this meanner they thinke to merit Heauen."

—W. Bruton in *Haklyut*, Vol. I, p. 57

Bruton was quartermaster of the ship 'Hopewell.' He visited Puri.

1667—"Into this town of Jagannat, situated on the gulf of Bengale and containing the famous temple of that name, a certain annual festival is held, which continues, if my memory fails not, for the space of eight or ten days. At this festival are collected, an incredible concourse of people. The number, as I am told, some times exceed one hundred and fifty thousand."

"A superb wooden machine is constructed, such as I have been in other parts of India. The idol Jagannat placed conspicuously in the middle, richly altered and gorgeously adorned, is conveyed from one place to another."

"The first day in which this idol is formally exhibited in the temple, the crowd is so immense and the press is so violent, that some of the pilgrims, fatigued and worn out in consequence of their long journey are squeezed to death. The surrounding throng give them a thousand benediction and consider them highly favoured to die on such a holy occasion, after travelling so great a distance."

"And when the chariot of hellish triumph persues its hellish march, persons are found (it is no fiction which I recount) so blindly credulous and so full of wild notions as to throw themselves upon the ground in the way of its ponderous wheels, which pass over and crush to atom the bodies of the wretched fanatics, without exciting horror or surprise of the spectators."

No deed, according to their estimation is so heroic or meritorious as this self immolation; the victims believe that Jagannat will receive them as children."

—Bernier : A letter to Chapelaine-

1727—"His (Jagarynat) effigy is often carried abroad in procession mounted on a coach four stories high. They fasten small ropes to the cable two or three fathoms long, so that upwards of 2000 people have room enough to draw the coach; and some old zealots, as it passes through the street, fall flat on the ground, to have the honour to be crushed to pieces by the coach wheels."—Alexander Hamilton

1809—A thousand pilgrims strain

Arm, shoulder, breast and thigh, with  
might and main  
to drag that sacred wain  
and scarce can draw along the enormous load  
Prone fall the frantic votaries on the road  
and calling on the god  
Their self-devoted bodies, there they lay  
to pave his chariot's way  
OH JAGU-NAUT they call  
The ponderous car rolls on, and crushes all  
Through flesh and bones, it ploughs its  
dreadful path  
Groans rise unheard, the dying cry  
and death and agony  
Are trodden under foot by you mad throng  
who follow close and thrust  
the deadly wheels along  
*'Curse of Kehama', XIV*

Robert Southey (1774-1843) in this fictional poem describes how Kaiyal was abducted by mendicants from her father Ladurlad, and taken to Puri to marry Juggernath. She sat on a chariot by the side of the wooden effigy of Juggernath—her would be husband—and watched the ghastly sight of people committing suicide under the wheels of the chariot of Juggernath.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> *Hobson Jobson* : A. C. Burnell ('Car of Juggernath') I am indebted to this book for materials.

The editorial article in the *'Morning Herald'*, London, dated 25 December 1830, criticized the Moloch\* of Hindostan "the cruel Juggernaut, who demands and receives like the Cretan Monster, his periodical allowance of victims."

Popular impression in regard to immolations under the Car of Jagannath to please him, has made Jagannath or Juggernaut, a standing metaphor for an engine of oppression.

A few quotations are given below :

1. Poor Johny Tetterly staggering under his Moloch of an infant, the Juggernaut, that crushed all his enjoyments. *Life of Dickens*—Forest Vol. II p. 415 (1871)

2. What was once a thin grey line of brave Israeli soldiers has become a ruthless Juggernaut. *'Reader's Digest'* : June 1970, p. 30

3. 'Do not talk to me about knaves : Yogi Tulsiram Jaginath ; (Malayasian slang English) *Ring for Jeeves* : P. G. Woodhouse, p. 70

4. 'I felt like some unfortunate Hindu beneath the wheels of Juggernaut'. *Heavy Weather* : P. G. Wodehouse p. 57.

As Dr. Rajendralal Mitra observes : "No Indian divinity has a more unenviable notoriety in English literature than Jagannath. Alike in poetry and prose, in works of imagination as in sober history, he forms a never-dying illustration of all that is cruel, all that

\* "Moloch, horrid king  
Bcsmeared with blood  
of human sacrifices  
and portent tears" —Milton

Moloch was a Semitic god of Canaan to whom children were sacrificed. The Semitic people are the descendants of Sem (Genesis-X)

The name Moloch was subsequently applied to a deity who demands human sacrifice for his pleasure. It does not appear that Moloch was worshipped in Crete.

is horrible, all that is most revolting to every sense of humanity." xxx

"Human conception has never realized a more innocent and gentle divinity than Jagannath : and the tenets of its votaries are the very reverse of sanguinary or revolting. In fact, never was opprobrium more unjustly cast on an inoffensive subject than in this instance, and none merited it less."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The *Antiquities of Orissa* Vol. II : R. L. Mitra (1880)

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# SEVERANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT CONNECTION WITH THE TEMPLE OF JAGANNATH

### (FIRST PHASE)

The provision in Act X of 1840 for financial support to maintain the establishment of the Jagannath temple was bitterly criticized by the Missionaries.<sup>1</sup>

Their agitation again bore fruit and hardly before the ink was dry, the Directors thought of modification of the Act. In their Despatch to the Governor General, they wrote : "In our Despatch on 2 June 1840, we adverted to your Resolution to retain the lands belonging to the temple of Juggernaut, under the management of the revenue officers, which you had considered expedient so that protection and justice might be secured to the ryots."

"In all cases however, where the revenue has been or may be fixed for a number of years, as has been done at Cuttack, we think the collection of revenue so fixed belonging to the temples or other religious institutions may safely be transferred to the agents to be appointed by the parties in whom the management of the affairs and funds of such institutions may be vested, subject only to such penalties against exactions and other abuses of their trust, as the native servants similarly employed on the part of Government would be liable to".<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Friend of India*, August 1841

The Missionaries held out that the Government never made a promise to maintain the Temple, as argued by Lord Auckland.

<sup>2</sup> Court of Directors to the Governor General : 25 August 1841, No. 25 : *Legislative letters from the Court*, National Library

The Secretary, Revenue department intimated the Sudder Board of Revenue that "the Hon'ble Court's Despatch recommends the withdrawal under certain circumstances of the Government management from lands belonging to the Juggernath temple, which for the sake of ensuring justice and protection to ryots, it had been considered by the Supreme Government to retain".

The Board was asked "to communicate with the Commissioner at Cuttack upon this subject and report his opinion, how far consistently with the existing pledges, expressed or understood, the Government management can now be fairly withdrawn without injuring the ryots".<sup>3</sup>

While forwarding the letter from the Government, the Sudder Board of Revenue wanted further information from the Commissioner, "regarding retention of the management of the Sattais Hazari Mahal by the revenue authorities". The Commissioner was asked to inform the Sudder Board of Revenue "at what period and under what circumstances the net proceeds of the Mehals were first applied to the reduction of the amount granted as a donation to the temple of Juggernath".<sup>4</sup>

The Commissioner wrote to the Collector of Puri on the 14th December for elucidation. The Collector replied in his letter dated 10 January 1842.

"It will be observed that the revenue of the Sattais Hazari Mahal was not applied as a reduction of the amount paid by Government, but the said amount which varied at different times was given as an excess by Government having been so done by the Marhattas before the conquest".

But the Commissioner was of opinion that after the abolition of the Pilgrim tax, the revenue of the

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<sup>3</sup>Secretary, Revenue Deptt. to Sudder Board of Revenue : 16 November 1841 No. 1512 : J. T. C. Pt. 2

<sup>4</sup>Sudder Board of Revenue to Commissioner : 8 December 1841 No. 303 : J. T. C. Pt. 2

Satais Hazari Mahal should be deducted from the annual donation.

After receiving the report of the Commissioner, the Board wrote to the Government : "In regard to the second head of the Hon'ble Court's Despatch which recommends the withdrawal of the Government management from the lands belonging to the temple of Juggernath, the Board observe that there appears some misapprehension either on the part of the Home authorities or the Supreme Government respecting the ground on which it was proposed to retain the management of these lands in the hands of the revenue authorities. They are not aware that this plan was ever considered necessary for the purpose of securing protection and justice to the ryots."

"The management was retained by the revenue authorities because the net proceeds of the lands amounting to about Rs. 17,000 per annum go to the reduction of annual grant paid by the State as donation." xxx

In conclusion, the Board observed "with reference to the wishes of the Hon'ble Court it is certainly desirable that the management of these lands should be transferred to the Superintendent of the Temple and this arrangement can easily be effected by making over to that person the Satais Hazari Mahal, and by deducting from annual donation the amount which upon an average of the last ten years has been carried to the credit of that donation on account of the profit of the Mahals".<sup>5</sup>

Mills, Commissioner, in his letter to the Board of Revenue intimated the willingness of the Superintendent of the Jagannath temple to undertake the management of the Satais Hazari Mahal.

In this connection he observed : "The Rajah of Khoordah bears the character of being an avaricious and thrifty landlord, utterly indifferent for the rights

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<sup>5</sup> Secretary, Sudder Board of Revenue to Revenue Deptt : 21 January 1842 No. 21 : J. T. C. Pt 2

and interests of the peasantry. He has been excluded from the management of the Limbai pergunah, talook Delang, because of the fear which was entertained that his management could be detrimental to its prosperity”.

Mills pointed out that the Sattais Hazari Mahal was “the principal source of revenue for the Temple” and was the only remaining portion of the temple lands. The expenses of the Temple varied from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 60,000, averaging about Rs. 53,000. Mills took it as Rs. 53,178. His calculation was :

Annual donation	Rs. 53,178
Deduction on account of Satais Hazari Mahal . . .	Rs. 17,001
Deduction on account of repair . . .	Rs. 418-9-6
	Rs. 35,758-9-6

He suggested payment of Rs. 35,758-9-6 to the Superintendent after the transfer of the Satais Hazari Mahal.

Mills also suggested that the Raja of Khurda should be vested with full powers in everything connected with the Jagannath temple, “removable on proof of misconduct to the satisfaction of Government”.<sup>6</sup>

The Collector of Puri in his letter to the Commissioner dated 7 August 1842, pointed out that the land first must be measured and the measurement must be followed by a detailed settlement before the Mahal is handed over to the Rajah of Khoordah as the Superintendent of the Juggernath temple.”

The Secretary, Government of India acknowledged the receipt of a letter from the Government of Bengal, dated 3 September 1842, regarding the proposed

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<sup>6</sup> Mills to Sudder Board of Revenue : 2 April 1842 J. T. C.  
Pt. 2

transfer of the Sattais Hazari Mahal to the Rajah of Khoordah "under the instructions received from the Hon'ble Court for withdrawal of all interference with the lands which belonged to that endowment" (Letter dated 31 May 1843).

On 31 October 1843, the Board of Revenue wrote to the Commissioner to issue orders for the immediate transfer of the Satais Hazari Mahal to the Rajah of Khoordah. Ramachandra Deb, Raja of Khurda, took charge of the Satais Hazari Mahal on 25 November 1843 by executing an Agreement (Commissioner to the Collector, Puri 31 August 1886).

"In 1843, the estate of Satais Hazari Mahal yielding an annual allowance of Rs. 17,420, was made over to the Rajah of Khoordah and the annual money payment by the Government was therefore reduced to Rs. 35,758-9-6". (Petition of the Khurda Raja dated 22.8.1848).

The Collector of Puri sent to the Commissioner an Urzee of the Raja of Khurda, complaining against the conduct of the Raja of Dhenkanal who had come to Puri on pilgrimage.

"The case is simply this. The Dhenkanal Rajah wishes to perform darsan (himself and his females separately) and to have the Temple cleared—the term is Poora Shood. The Rajah has performed his part but there is a hitch about the females."

"The ex-Rajah of Khoordah (who is now the Superintendent of the Temple only) urges that the custom is to procure a Sunnad from him, and to get a copy of it entered into the Temple records and then for anybody to go through the darsan."

"Again, when the party may at any future period wish to perform darsan, he gives notice of his intention and presents a Nuzzar to the Rajah—after which enquiry is made in the Rajah's office and orders are passed."

"As it was found after enquiry that the former Rajah of Dhenkanal had performed darsan, the

Superintendent issued orders allowing the present Rajah to perform darsan."

The Khurda Raja complained that the Dhenkanal Raja wished to act contrary to these customs and insisted upon a Poora Shood for his females which was not permissible. "The second complaint of the Khoordah Rajah is that no person is at liberty to open Chatree (an umbrella peculiar among the Rajahs and Thakoors) within the town of Pooree except the idols and the person over whom the idols' Chatrees are carried (meaning himself) and that no one is permitted to use the Kahalee (a peculiar wind instrument) on entering the town and further, person bringing his Chatree into the town must bring it shut up. But the Rajah of Dhenkanal has acted contrary to these rules."

"The third complaint is that whenever females come to darsan, they put up at the southern gate and they are entitled to half a shood . . . and that no more than two Musals (torches) are allowed to accompany them." It was stated in the Urzee that the Raja of Dhenkanal refused to comply with this procedure.

The Collector considered the complaints made by the Raja of Khurda to be frivolous and observed : "It is a great pity in my opinion, that when Government did abolish the Pilgrim tax, they did not at once throw open the Temple to the Hindoos to manage it and its affairs among themselves, in the way they might deem best, without appointing the ex-Rajah of Khoordah to superintend its concerns ; as in the present instance there must always be disputes when great people come to Pooree, for they ofcourse have no objection to pay every possible respect to Jugger-nath, but they are and ever will be averse to acknowledge the Khoordah Rajah as the Lord of all and superior to every body, to make him obeisance and present him Nuzzar."

"The ex-Rajah and the Government Superintendent being one and same person, must convey an erroneous idea among the people and continue our con-

nection with the idols of the Temple, whether Government wish it or not. The honours, privileges and titles due to Juggernath cannot and should not be in my opinion claimed as privileges belonging to the ex-Rajah of Khoordah, but where the latter superintends the former—it is difficult to draw a distinction.”

“I would inform the Khoordah Rajah that in his capacity as Superintendent, he is not entitled to prohibit the use of Chatrees music etc., by the Rajahs or others entering Pooree, and that he has now no authority from Government to issue Sunnads or demand Nuzzars. If respectable persons want ‘Shood’ for their families, he is bound to permit it to take place.”

xxx

“It is preposterous to suppose that respectable people would do anything if it was disrespectful to Juggernath or contrary to their creed. And though it might hurt the feelings of the Rajah and cause him to be indignant, he should not be allowed to mix up his name and any honours due to him with his office as the Superintendent of the Juggernath Temple. If the two are not compatible, let the Rajah resign his post. The Government can never wish or intend to force the pilgrims to pay respect to the Rajah when they worship at Juggernath, as this is a matter of conscience to be settled by the pilgrims themselves.”

xxx

“It is moreover absolutely necessary that some positive rules should be adopted for other Rajahs on their way here and if they are to be put to the same inconvenience, it would become a serious matter.”

“It might be argued that matters will find their own level by letting them take their own course, but this cannot be, whilst the Government Superintendent of the Temple prohibits pilgrims from performing their ceremonies at Juggernath, until they pay respects and offer Nuzzar to the ex-Rajah of Khoordah.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Collector, Puri to Commissioner : 10 November 1842  
No. 583 : J. T. C. Pt. 2

In April 1843, the Court of Directors of the East India Company acknowledged the receipt of a publication from the Government of India, "respecting the present state of the Juggernath temple and the arrangements for withdrawing the interference of Government and its officers in the affairs of that temple".

The Directors referred to the following passage in that publication : "If we are not to expect the interposition of Government to abolish practices which every human mind condemns. we are entitled to demand that at least its patronage and support may be withdrawn."

"That patronage and support, notwithstanding the abolition of the Pilgrim tax are still afforded ostensibly and substantially to Juggernath by the annual payment for the perpetual maintenance of the establishment of the Temple."

The Court of Directors required the following informations from the Supreme Government : "Firstly, what are the specific grounds on which it was stated in Lord Auckland's Minute of 17 November 1840 : Our promise of allowance for the support of the Temple is distinct and unconditional."

"Secondly, what is the authority under which the established donation for the support of the temple of Juggernath mentioned in Regulation XII of 1805 was first granted and the period during which it may have known to have been received."

"Thirdly, is the assertion correct that the lands belonging to the Temple ever constituted the only known endowments pertaining to it ?"<sup>8</sup>

The Government of India acknowledged the letter from the Government of Bengal "regarding the proposed transfer of the Sattais Hazaree Mahal to the Rajah of Khoordah, under the instructions received from the Hon'ble Court for the withdrawal of all

<sup>8</sup> Court of Directors to Supreme Government : 4 April 1843  
No. 6 : Public Consultations, National Archives

interference with the lands belonging to that endowment”.

“The Hon’ble President in Council approved the arrangements for making the transfer in question, the ryots being in the first instance furnished with Pottahs from the Collector.”<sup>9</sup>

The Home Secretary of the Supreme Government forwarded a copy of the Despatch from the Court of Directors to the Bengal Government. Mills, Commissioner, was asked by the Bengal Government to give the informations, sought in the Despatch. Mills brought together a variety of evidence in support of Lord Auckland’s statement regarding the Jagannath temple.

Mills pointed out that the Marhatta practice was to make good the annual deficiency in the management of the Temple from the State treasury and this practice was continued by the British Government for some years after the conquest of the province. “Thus the allowance to the Temple was a continuation of the Marhatta practice”.

“The allowance, there can be no question, was considered permanent, though the amount was variable.” Moreover after the British conquest of Orissa, the Governor General instructed Colonel Harcourt to respect the Pagoda and the religious prejudices of the Brahmins. The Pagoda was consequently taken under the protection of the British. Hunter was deputed to Puri to collect revenue and superintend the Temple concern. The Pilgrim tax was abolished.”

“At the same time authority was given to the Collector to incur the expenses necessary for the support of the Temple, on the scale on which it was maintained by the late Marhatta Government.”

Mills reminded the promise of the British Government “of respecting and affording every aid towards the established customs and usages and the mainten-

<sup>9</sup> Secretary, Government of India to F. H. Halliday, Secretary, Government of Bengal : 31 May 1843, No. 37 : J. T. C. Pt. 2

ance of the temple of Juggernath." He maintained that such a promise was "implied in the instructions issued by the Governor General in Council for the guidance of Colonel Harcourt."

Mills pointed out : "Our acts after we had taken possession of the country did not belie our promise. We not only supported the institution with pecuniary donations but interfered in the details of the disbursement and in the internal economy of the administration of the Temple ; and so far as words are binding, Government bound itself by declaring to pay the donations which the late Government appropriated to the support of the Temple ; and so far as human justice is to be regarded, our violation of the pledge seems to me beyond all powers of explanation."

Mills observed that "the settlement of Lord Auckland in as much as the abolition of the tax has given satisfaction to the people, but this is not the case with that part of the arrangement which vests the superintendence of the Temple in the Rajah of Khoordah."

"The body of the Hindoo people not only object to this man who is a person of thrifty character and endeavours to limit the expenditure to the lowest possible amount but they urge that Government has violated the profession which it avowed when we took the country, by withdrawing our interference, with the management of the Temple concerns. This interference secured a just administration of its affairs and no doubt increased the celebrity of the Temple and its withdrawal is unpalatable to them".

"The withdrawal of our interference has been, in their eyes, in a great measure redeemed by the faith we have kept, in continuing the payment of the established donation." xxx

"We are bound in faith and justice to pay the established donation for the support of the Temple and this is now done in a manner which I think is least objectionable to our feelings as Christians, and truly has Lord Auckland remarked 'Our pledge was

not to the individual priests but to the Hindoo public' who alone can release us from obligations."

Mills concluded with the observation : "The plan advocated by some to continue the donation and to permit the Rajah and their priests to collect in lieu thereof the usual fees, would not only involve the violation of the pledge which has been given to the Hindoo public, but the voluntary contribution would gradually degenerate into a source of exaction and oppression on the pilgrims and would create a great feeling of discontent amongst our Hindoo subjects".<sup>10</sup>

The Board of Revenue enclosed the reply of Commissioner Mills with their letter to Halliday, Secretary, Government of Bengal. The Board differed with the opinion of Mills and observed that "inspite of utmost research' the Commissioner "had not succeeded in describing (nor have the Board after careful search of records) on what specific grounds Lord Auckland's statement has been made. Mills had, however, brought forward together a variety of evidence affording in his estimation, conclusive proof of the correctness of that statement and of his concurrent opinion that Government were bound in faith and justice not to discontinue the payment of the established donation for the support of the Temple". xxx

"After the most attentive and deliberative consideration of the circumstances above stated and the arguments which Mr. Mills has deduced from them, the Board arrive at a conclusion different from that of the Commissioner. They have endeavoured to examine the question of "Pledge or no Pledge" abstractly and apart from all religious considerations, and they have no hesitation in declaring that they cannot find that the British Government have ever bound themselves by a pledge, conditional or unconditional, not to discontinue the allowance paid to the Temple. On the contrary there is nothing in the in-

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<sup>10</sup> Mills to Sudder Board of Revenue : 26 August 1843, No. 1943 : J. T. C. Pt. 2

formation before them which shows that the allowance has had any origin or character than that of a boon gratuitously bestowed and continued ; and they are clearly of opinion that Government might fairly and honestly have stopped, simultaneously with the abolition of the Pilgrim tax."

"A glance at the history of the period supported as it is by the information given by Mr. Mills—shows that there was no political necessity for the pledge. The conquest of Cuttack from the Marhattas in 1803 was a very easy achievement, being rather a cession than a conquest, and any pledge, that had been given, might therefore have been altogether gratuitous, for nothing was or could have been given in return." xxx

"But this point, the Board observe is not left on conjecture, for Lord Wellesley's instructions expressly interdicted him (Harcourt) from contracting any engagement and allowed him to promise only that the Brahmins should not be required to pay any tribute or revenue than they had been in the habit of paying and that they would be protected in the exercise of their religious duty. Thus the chief circumstances adduced by Mr. Mills to establish the existence of a pledge affords in the Board's judgment the most powerful argument against any engagement having been contracted."

"Having thus got the province free of pledge, as it is certain we did, the Board are of opinion that the passage quoted by Mr. Mills from Regulation XII of 1809, on which he lays so much stress to be quite conclusive as to the perpetual condition of the established donation, cannot be continued."

"It is therefore manifest . . . that Government at that time did not intend to resume the donation and not that a promise or pledge was given to continue the Government payment in perpetuity. The Board entertain no doubt that Government with perfect consistency, propriety and justice could have discontinued

the donation simultaneously with the tax on the pilgrims."

"It is true that the allowance is styled 'an established donation'. But 'an established donation' and 'a donation in perpetuity' are, the Board remark, widely differing terms, the former being merely indicative of having been conferred indefinitely as to time, and the other making specifically its duration." xxx

"The Board consider that the word 'established donation' having manifestly referred only to the donation having existed previous to the acquisition of the province by the British Government and that its payment was always defrayed from the tax on the pilgrims. The donation and the tax being the ingredients of the same system established by the preceding native Governments and not originating with or confirmed in perpetuity by the British Government; and it follows that the tax having been abolished, the payment of the donation made from the tax ought of necessity be stopped." xxx

"Mr. Mills has not been able to trace nor have the Board, the authority under which the established donation was first granted, nor the exact period during which it has been paid, but from the correspondence it appears probable that it was continued and paid by the British Government from the commencement of its connection with the province conformably to the practice of the Marhatta Government. The amounts during the Marhatta rule and the first quarter of the British Government appear to have been variable and dependent on the receipts, the practice having been to check the accounts and make good from the treasury the excess in disbursements and receipts."<sup>11</sup>

After receiving the Board's letter dated 27 October, Halliday, Secretary, Government of Bengal, communicated the opinion of the Government to the

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<sup>11</sup> Board of Revenue to Halliday : 27 October 1843 No. 350 : Bengal Revenue Consultations W.B.A.

Government of India. Halliday in his letter pointed out that the Pilgrim tax was based on a contract. "There were two parties in the negotiation, the Commissioners on one side and the Juggernath Brahmins on the other. The British Government had taken up a position which authorized the priests to look to it, as a matter of course for the full amount of pecuniary assistance which they had been accustomed to receive from their own national Governments." xx

"When the British Government undertook to provide funds in the shape of an annual donation for the contingent expenses of the Temple, it was never intended that the said donation should be a charge on the general revenues of the country. We agreed to provide, as had been done by the preceding native Governments, the means of defraying expenditure of the ceremonies—on the understanding that the State was to be reimbursed by the revival of the Pilgrim tax."

"Such being the circumstances, the Deputy Governor is clearly of opinion that when Act X of 1840 of the Government of India resolved that the Pilgrim tax should be relinquished and the Temple with all its concerns delivered to the Rajah of Khoordah and the priests, with no responsibility whatsoever except to the established tribunals, we might with perfect propriety have required that we should in future be relieved from the payment of established donation in question."

"The question is now somewhat complicated. Unfortunately Lord Auckland took a different view and considered that we were pledged to the continuance of the donation, under erroneous supposition that the pledge could not be get rid of without a breach of faith and it is the assurance implied by the donation having been continued since the tax was abolished; and not any original promise, that it should be everlasting which, in the Deputy Governor's opinion constitutes the difficulty." xxx

"It appears to the Deputy Governor that it was

neither necessary nor proper nor consistent with the object in view that the donation should be continued. It will therefore be for higher authorities to determine whether or not, as the case at present stands, the donation (now reduced by relinquishment of the Sattais Hazari estate to Rs. 36,178-12-2) can with propriety be resumed."

"But if it cannot be, means might be devised less objectionable than the present system of keeping faith with the Brahmins and yet severing more completely, that connection with the institution. which caused such just animadversion." xxx

"It might be possible to convert the present money donations into lands and thus get rid for ever of all connecting ties with the institution and its officers. At all events, the experiment is worthy of consideration."<sup>12</sup>

On 27 November 1843, the Collector of Puri informed the Commissioner that the Satais Hazari Mahal had been transferred to the Khurda Raja. "An engagement has been taken from him in which he acquiesces in the terms of the transfer."

The Governor General in Council approved the Board's decision in making it known that "the Rajah was bound to give Pottahs" to the ryots of the Satais Hazari Mahal.<sup>13</sup>

At the quarterly meeting held in December 1844, the Chairman of the Court of Directors said "The necessary documents have been forwarded to India to complete the severance of the Government of India from the idolatrous worship of the Natives in the temple of Juggernath."

The following Despatch was sent : "we are convinced that the employment of the Purharees or the

<sup>12</sup> Halliday to Secretary, Government of India : 11 May 1844 Bengal Revenue Consultations : W.B.A.

<sup>13</sup> Davidson, Secretary, Government of India to Halliday, Secretary, Government of Bengal : 3 August 1844 No. 32 : J.T.C. Pt. 2

Pilgrim hunters is not sanctioned by Government and the authority of the Police is never exerted in forcing the labouring class to drag the car at Juggernath".

"It appears that the records of your Government do not enable to show upon what specific grounds it was stated in Lord Auckland's Minute of the 17th November that 'our promise to the allowance for the support of the Temple is distinct and unconditional'. The nature of the pledge under which it was considered incumbent upon us to continue the established allowance seems to have been held out by Sir Arthur Wellesley in his negotiation with the Marhatta Vakils, and by Lord Wellesley and officers acting under his authority at Cuttack that the Temple and the Brahmins attached to it should be taken under the protection of the British Government."

"This assurance was in strict conformity with the principle on which the affairs of our empire in India has uniformly been administered."

"The allowance was fixed at Rs. 60,000 per annum but is stated in the Report of the Bengal Government dated 11 March 1844 to have been reduced to Rs. 36,178-12-2\* in consequence of the relinquishment of the Sattais Hazari Mahal to the Temple. We are of opinion that it would be very advisable according to the suggestion offered in the same Report to commute the remainder of the allowance in the same manner by restoring any other lands of equal value, which may formerly have belonged to the Temple."<sup>14</sup>

On 31 March 1845, the Government of Bengal wrote a letter to the Board of Revenue enclosing copy of a Despatch from the Court of Directors, calling for "a Report respecting any land that may have formerly

\* The charges for the repair of the embankments amounting to Rs. 420, have not been deducted.

<sup>14</sup> The Court of Directors to the Governor General—relative to the discontinuance of pecuniary payment towards the maintenance of idol worship : 18 December 1844 No. 25 : *Parliamentary Papers Relative to Juggernath* National Library.

belonged to the Juggernaut temple and which may now be made over for the purposes of the Temple in commutation of the present annual allowance of money paid by Government”.

“As precise information on the subject was not to be found”, the Board of Revenue wrote to Mills, the Commissioner of the Cuttack province.

Mills replied that with the exception of the Satais Hazari Mahal, already made over to the Temple “there are no lands of which any record is now extant that has been set aside for the use of the Temple”.

In his letter to the Board of Revenue, Mills stated that at the time of the British conquest, apart from the Satais Hazari estate, there were Khanjahs or assignments of lands in Mogulbundee, fetching a revenue of about Rs. 25,000. A portion of it with a Jumma of little more than Rs. 7,000 was rent-free land. There were also Khanjahs in certain killas. After the conquest, all these were either brought to the rent roll or incorporated with the Jummas of several estates.

The whole of the collection from the sayer and the town duties had been resumed with the exception of a tax on Mahapersad consisting of six bhogs. The only other source was the fee for the privilege of displaying cloth on the wheel on the top of the Temple. The Lal Jatrees formely used to pay a general cess of fifteen annas.\*

In conclusion Mills wrote : “Touching the commutation of money allowance now paid by Government by the assignment of revenue of the Rajah’s zamindari, Talook Delang, Pergunah Limbai, I regret to state that my endeavours have failed to obtain the Rajah’s consent to the proposed arrangement”<sup>15</sup>.

\* “After the conquest of the province, the general cess of 15 annas on the Lal Jatrees has never been realized” (Garett to Mills : 7 November 1845)

<sup>15</sup> Mills to Board of Revenue : 15 May 1845 No. 1016 : *Papers relative to Juggernath* : National Library

The Board of Revenue forwarded the letter of the Commissioner to the Secretary, Revenue Department, along with their 'sentiments'.

The Board observed that the British policy should be of "entire toleration of all creeds in the performance of their respective religious rites and duties, and cannot be the principle of giving pecuniary support to any of the religious establishments of the country."

"In the absence therefore of any pledge on the part of Government to continue the donation to the Temple and in the absence of all evidence showing any necessity, whether of expediency or otherwise, for persisting in a measure, satisfactorily shown to be obnoxious and considered generally derogatory to the political character of our Government, the Board earnestly advise the unreserved abolition in perpetuity of the donation in question."<sup>16</sup>

The Board of Revenue also pointed out: "The Court of Directors approved the view which we took. Beyond the general promise of protection given in conformity with the principles on which their empire in India has been uniformly administered, no distinct and unconditional pledge to support the Temple exists."

"It may be argued however that the neither the Sudder Board, nor Government nor the Hon'ble Court is fit to judge on this point, all being interested parties or it may be said that a Government dealing with its subjects, should not, like a debtor of doubtful honesty, take advantage of a mere technical flaw in the execution of an agreement, under which payment

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As the Raja of Khurda did not agree to the proposal of commutation of the revenue of his Delang estate the Collector recommended the assignment of two other estates "with Jummas almost equivalent to the donation of Rs. 35,758-9-6 to the Temple". Garrett, Collector to Commissioner: 10 May 1845 No. 169: J.T.C. Pt. 3

<sup>16</sup> Board of Revenue to Government of Bengal: 29 July 1845, *Papers relative to Juggernath*: National Library

for above forty years has been regularly made. In fact it has been said that 'pledge' according to Lord Auckland, as quoted by Mr. Mills was not to the individual priests but to the Hindoo public."

"These objections have been obviated by the prompt liberality of Government. The tax upon the pilgrims to Juggernaut has been abolished ; the Government have bestowed upon the Hindoo community a money boon of much larger amount than the allowance which it is proposed to stop."

The Board pointed out that the net gain to the Government from Pilgrim tax from average of three years 1837/38 to 1839/40 was Rs. 54,372 only. xx

"The assurance given to the Marhatta Vakil by Sir Arthur Wellesley and Government was that of absolute protection for the Temple and the priests." xxx

"But it meant the tolerance and protection of all creeds and not the principle of making payment from the Government treasury for the support of a particular religious institution." xx

"The payment of the Juggernaut allowance was known to be contrary to uniform principle and general rule and the reason set up for the exception was the special and particular pledge said to have been given to the priests by Government. It is now therefore no reason for exception and the only question which remains is whether the unprincipled exception is to continue without a reason."

"Thus for Government, it is right to recede at any rate to the limit of the principle (only to tolerate and not to encourage) in case of Juggernaut."

The Sudder Board observed that "even the Hindoo sovereigns would not give gratuitous encouragement to the pilgrimage observing the vast interruption to the labour of the community, the waste of money, the disruption of family ties, the immorality and the misery, disease and death annually entailed upon multitude by the pilgrimage".

"This condemnation does not apply to those who advocate the continuance of the allowance on

the ground that there was some pledge expressed or implied or an indefinable understanding between Government and the Hindoo community, which would cause a stoppage of allowance to savour of dishonesty." xxx

"The excessive punctiliousness may be fairly held to have been fully satisfied by the relinquishment in favour of the Hindoo community of the tax on pilgrims including Rs. 36,000 paid to the priests and Rs. 54,000 net revenue, and if Government be not pledged to support by any special countenance this particular temple and if it be clearly contrary to the sound principle uniformly acted on the administration of the empire to give such countenance, then it surely behoves Government to look at the question in another light, and to determine whether, in continuing the allowance to Juggernaut, they are fulfilling or betraying their duty to their subjects." x x x

The Board further observed : "Our present interference with the Temple is circumscribed to this one point ; we pay annually to the Superintendent Rs. 36,000. According to Commissioner Mills, we shall be held not to interfere if we present the Superintendent an estate yielding the same annual income for the support of the Temple." x x x

"If support implies interference, then one sort of support does so much as the other. But in the quality of the support itself, there is the greatest difference and that which is now sought to be substituted is comparatively more stable and more honorable. In all countries an endowment in land is held with good reason to be better than dole in money."<sup>17</sup>

G. A. Busby, Secretary to the Government of India, acknowledged the letter of the Government of Bengal dated 13 August 1845 respecting the proposed commutation of the money allowance made to the temple of Jagannath.

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<sup>17</sup> Board of Revenue to C. Beadon : 29 July 1845 *Papers relative to Juggernaut*, 1848 : National Library

Busby informed that the Governor General "suggests to the Honorable Governor of Bengal the expediency of effecting settlement on the undermentioned basis."

"The Hon'ble Court of Directors in their Despatch of 15th March suggested that any land yielding the amount in produce, equal to the present money payment viz., Rs. 35,758.9.6 per annum, which may formerly have belonged to the Temple should be retransferred to it." x x x

"It occurs to the Governor General in Council that the most reasonable course will be to place the endowments of the Temple as nearly as possible on the same footing as we found them on the acquisition of the province and to discontinue the payment of any sum in excess of the funds as then existing."\*

Busby pointed out that the total income from the Khanjahs, custom duties and Poll tax were rescinded excepting the duties of six bhoges and Dhaja Pindika (Temple offerings).

Busby observed: "Supposing the present money allowance being discontinued, the British Government should still have to make good to the Temple annually Rs. 22,860 in lieu of Sayer duties abolished and assignments in revenue which have long since being appropriated by the State." x x x

"The Governor General in Council thinks that there will be little reason for complaint of the withdrawal of the present money payment of Rupees 35,758 and the substitution for it of Rupees 22,860 or thereabout as restoration of the former funds of the Temple."<sup>18</sup>

The Board of Revenue wrote to the Commis-

\* This decision of Lord Hardinge was characterised as "singularly objectionable and anti-Christian in conclusion". Letter of Rev. Peggs to G. Tucker, Chairman of the Court of Directors, 1848

<sup>18</sup> Busby to C. Beadon, Under Secretary to Government of Bengal: 6 September 1845, J.T.C. Pt. 4

sioner on the 10th September 1845 regarding the proposed reduction in the Government donation to the Jagannath temple. The Commissioner sought the opinion of Garrett, Collector, Puri.

Garrett stated that the Jagannath temple derived income from the following sources :

Sale of Mahapersad	.	Rs. 4043-6
Dhaja Pindika	.	Rs. 667-12
Sale of old Ruths and Cloths	. .	Rs. 651-3
		<hr/>
		Rs. 5362-5

Garrett fixed the compensation to be Rs. 23,321 after deducting the existing sources of revenue.<sup>19</sup>

J. P. Grant, Secretary, Government of India, wrote : " The orders of the Government of India dated 5 September 1845 and 20 December 1845 were intended by Government of that day as a final settlement, both of the long agitated question of principle and of the question of account concerning the payment made to the Rajah of Khoordah as the Superintendent of the temple of Juggernath." x x x

" The Government of India held that it had finally terminated the connexion of Government with the temple of Juggernath. Whether the settlement of

<sup>19</sup> Garrett to Commissioner, Mills : 7 November 1845, *Papers relative to Juggernath* : National Library

The Missionaries in their pamphlet in 1852 entitled 'Rights of Jagannath' stated the former sources of revenue of the Jagannath Temple :

Khanjahs	..	..	Rs. 17,177
Khanjahs in Mogulbundee	..	..	Rs. 330
Khanjahs in Killas	..	..	Rs. 538
Sayer duties and Poll tax	..	..	Rs. 10,638

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Rs. 28,683

See also the Minute of Lord Dalhousie : 8 June 1853

1845 was accurate or not ; it is manifest that making a payment of what in good faith to be no more than a debt, which Government is bound to pay, cannot by any reason be treated as constituting a connexion with the recipient. " x x x

" In stopping the donation, we give back to the institution without the addition or reduction of a pie, the very property we found then it was endowed with. "<sup>20</sup>

Busby, Secretary, Government of India, informed F. J. Halliday, Secretary, Government of Bengal that the President in Council had added the Company's Rupees 461 to the amount of Rupees 22,860, which was fixed by the Government. Thus the annual payment was reduced from Rupees 35,758-9-6 to Rupees 23,321. <sup>21</sup>

The Government of India replied to the Court of Directors who wanted to know the extent of the association of the Government of India with the religious institutions.

"The only case of direct interference" the letter stated, "on the part of the European officers of Government with the administration of a native religious institution in the Bengal Presidency was that of the temple of Juggernath, the lands belonging to which have been made over to the Rajah of Khoordah."

With reference to the Despatch of the Court of

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<sup>20</sup> Minute of Grant : 19 November 1852 *Correspondence relating to the Missionaries and idolatry* "The administration of 1845 considered that it had practically terminated all connexion with the temple of Juggernath." Minute of Lord Dalhousie 8 June 1853

<sup>21</sup> Busby to Halliday : 20 December 1845 *Parliamentary Papers relative to Juggernath* (1845-46), National Library.

Busby could not clearly explain why the allowance was reduced. The Directors in their Despatch dated 12 November 1856 referred to the factors which led to the reduction of the allowance. -

Directors dated 25 December 1844, the Government of India informed that there were no other particular Mahals exclusively set aside for the support of the Jagannath temple besides the Satais Hazari Mahal, which had been already restored to it.

It was further stated : " We have adopted the computation of the local authorities according to which the annual payment would be Rupees 23,321 in lieu of the Sayer abolished and assignments of revenue which have long since been appropriated by the State. "<sup>22</sup>

On the 23rd January 1845, the Board of Revenue communicated the decision of the Government to the Commissioner who wrote to the Collector, Puri on 4th February 1846 that the order reducing the annual donation from Rs. 35,758-9-6 to Rs. 23,321 would take effect from the commencement of 1254 Umlee.

On 19 March 1850, Ramachandra Deb, the Raja of Khurda sent a Memorial to the Court of Directors on the following grounds :

1. That the British Government after their conquest of Cuttack resumed all lands attached to the temple of Jagannath and allowed in return for its maintenance a yearly sum of Rs. 53,178.11.10.

2. That the management of the Temple according to Act X of 1840 was restored to the Petitioner to whom the above mentioned sum was given yearly up to 1842.

3. That subsequently on the 26th November 1843, the estate called Satais Hazari Mahal, formerly attached to the Temple, was given to the charge of the Petitioner for Rs. 17,420-2-4 which arrangement reduced the amount of donation to Rs. 35,758-9-6.

4. That this allowance was, however, under the orders of Government dated 6 September 1845,

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<sup>22</sup> Government of India to Court of Directors : 7 January 1846 No. 1 : *Parliamentary Papers relative to Juggernath* National Library.

reduced to Rs. 23,321 and in the account adjusted, the above mentioned estate was credited for Rs. 19,191.

5. That, while the Petitioner was bound to spend yearly a sum of Rs. 47,874 of which only Rs. 23,321 were then allowed in cash, he, under the orders of the Collector dated 26 July 1846, was not permitted to realize from the estate accredited to him more than Rs. 17,420-2-4, from the ryots, thus incurring yearly a loss of Rs. 2,000.

The Governor General declined to forward the memorial.<sup>23</sup>

In 1850, the Court of Directors acknowledged a Despatch from the Government of India, which furnished 'much information regarding the affairs of the Pagoda' which were so long "imperfectly understood, in particular the nature of assurance held out to the Brahmins of the Pagoda when we took possession of Cuttack".

The Directors wrote : "From the correspondence of that period, the Bengal Government have correctly drawn the following information—it seems to be established that in the opinion of the two parties to the negotiation which had preceded or accompanied the advance of the British army, the Commissioners on one side and the Juggernath Brahmins on the other—the British Government had taken a position which authorized the priests to look to it, as a matter of course, for the full amount of pecuniary assistance which they have been accustomed to receive from their own national Governments." x x x

"It was never intended that the said donation should be a charge on the general revenues of the Country but was agreed to, as had been done by the preceding native Governments, for the purpose of providing the Temple with the means of defraying the expenditure of the ceremonies, on the understanding

<sup>23</sup> *Papers on connection of the Government of India with idolatry* : House of Commons, 1851

that the State was to be reimbursed by the revival of the Pilgrim tax."

They referred to the Report of the Commissioner dated 26 August 1843 stating that after the abolition of the Pilgrim tax the number of Pilgrims had increased.

The Director concluded : " Under these circumstances we think proper that an enquiry should be instituted whether considering the revenues derived by the Pagoda from its own various sources, our annual payment to the Rajah of Khoordah on this account may be discontinued."<sup>24</sup>

Lord Dalhousie wanted to pass an Act to assign lands to the Jagannath temple in lieu of annual payment.

The Governor General wrote to his Council : " I think we should pass at once the proposed Act that we should make no further grants to the Juggernath Temple, that we should leave to the shrine the land of which it is the owner—that we should abstain from all interference directly or indirectly with the offerings or fees and shall thus dissolve wholly and for ever all connection between the British Government and the chief engine of a hideous superstition."<sup>25</sup>

After a few months he wrote another letter : "The Government collects certain revenues on which the Temple holds assignments and it pays accordingly to the Rajah of Khoordah as the Superintendent of the Temple. The Rajah himself pays revenue for his estate to Government. I would propose that lands held by the Rajah should be exempted from the Government demand to the extent of Rs. 32,231 of revenue per annum ; for so long as the Rajah shall continue to be the Superintendent of the Temple. A

<sup>24</sup> Court of Directors to the Government of India : 27 February 1850 No. 5 : Legislative Consultations : National Archives

<sup>25</sup> Letter of Governor General Lord Dalhousie 11 April 1851 Legislative Consultations : National Archives

Sunnad should be granted to the Rajah specifying that the lands should be made over to him so long as his family retains the superintendency, in lieu of assignments to the amount of Rs. 18,045 and of compensation for Sayer duties of Rs. 5276. belonging to the Temple.<sup>26</sup>

F. J. Halliday, Secretary, Government of India forwarded four petitions for the consideration of the Governor General. The first two were from the Raja of Khurda urging for the continuation of the grant. The third one was from the priests of the Temple praying for the safeguard of their rights. The fourth dated 27 June 1851 came from ninetythree 'inhabitants of Orissa' ! They protested against the stoppage of the grant and they prayed that the superintendence of the Temple should be taken away from the Rajah of Khoordah and made over to a Panchayat.<sup>27</sup>

The Council informed the Court of Directors with reference to their Despatch dated 27th February 1850 : " A reference was made to the Government of Bengal as to whether, as supposed by your Honourable Court, there had been, since the abolition of the Pilgrim tax an increase to the number of pilgrims and in the gains of the Temple ministers."

" The reply stated that there were no means of ascertaining with accuracy whether the income of the Temple had increased. But that, judging from the increased resort of the pilgrims, it was reasonable to suppose that it had."

The Council also referred to the proposed Act to repeal Act X of 1840, with the intention of with-

<sup>26</sup> Letter of Governor General : 8 June 1851, Legislative Consultations : National Archives

<sup>27</sup> Halliday, Secretary, Government of India to Sir H. M. Elliot, Secretary to Governor General : 29 August 1851 No. 511 : *Correspondence relating to the Missionaries and idolatry* (1858). Board of Revenue Library, Cuttack.

drawing the annual allowance "immediately on the enactment of the law".

"The Governor General concurs with us in adhering to our opinion in regard to the propriety of passing the Act with some alterations, but adverting to the controversial discussion which the enactment of the law is likely to excite, adverting further to the interest which is taken publicly in this subject in England, and to the inconvenience of subsequent legislations, his Lordship recommends that the draft Act should be submitted to your Honourable Court, in order that you may have the opportunity of making any remarks or suggestions or alterations that you may deem necessary."<sup>28</sup>

The Court of Directors acknowledged the letter from the Council dated 29 November 1851 "on the question of maintenance of allowance still made from the Government treasury to the temple of Jugger-nath."

"We continue to be of opinion" wrote the Directors: "that it is desirable finally to dis sever the British Government from all connections with the Temple and we therefore authorize you to make arrangements for accomplishing this object by discontinuance of any periodical allowance to it, in lieu of which some final payment, in the way of compensation to any parties who may appear, upon a liberal construction of the past engagements or understandings, to be entitled to any such indemnification."

"Under this arrangement, there may be no necessity for any legislative enactment which we think desirable to avoid."<sup>29</sup>

On receipt of this Despatch, the proposed Act to repeal Act X of 1840 was dropped.

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<sup>28</sup> Members of the Council to the Court of Directors: 29 November 1851. *Correspondence relating to the Missionaries & Idolatry* (1858) o

<sup>29</sup> The Court of Directors to Government of India: 5 May 1852 No. 7: Legislative Consultations: National Archives.

In 1852, Rev. D. Ewart and thirtythree Missionaries of Calcutta sent a Memorial to Lord Dalhousie, forwarding a pamphlet entitled 'Rights of Jagannath'. The Memorialists requested the Government to give effect to the proposed Act for "separating the Government of India from the Temple of Jagannath by withdrawing donation annually paid to the shrine." Such a separation they pointed out "will greatly promote the interests of morality and religion by removing a serious evil which has existed for many years .<sup>30</sup>

In connection with the Memorial, Lord Dalhousie "solicited Mr. Secretary Grant to analyse closely and accurately the voluminous proceedings of the several administrations upon the long controversial question—the donation to the Juggernath temple" (Minute of Dalhousie dated 8 June 1853).

Grant in his note wrote: "The settlement of the question of principle to which the Government of India came in 1845 was to withhold for all future time every particle of allowance before paid which consisted of donation". The settlement of the question of amount to which the Government of India then came, was that of the allowance before paid viz., Rupees 35,758, the sum of Rupees 12,437-9-6 had been donation and Rupees 23,321 had been payment of what belonged to the institution.

"Up to this time, all objections taken to the allowance paid annually had been founded on the ground of propriety of the British Government supporting by an annual donation a Hindoo temple".

"The difference between the receipts of the Temple apart from the donation, at different times in the early years after the conquest, arose from the gradual assumption of the sources of revenue of the Temple into the possession of Government. In Webb's time they were less than that of Mr. Groeme's time and after Mr. Webb's time they were reduced almost to

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<sup>30</sup> *Memorial of the Missionaries* : 12 August 1852 No. 220 : Public Consultations : National Archives.

nothing, as the Government had taken possession of all the Temple's land assignments by the year 1809."

"The Memorialists object to the allowance of compensation for the Sayer revenue abolished. The Temple probably from its foundation had a right to levy and levied itself a poll tax, a tax on trades and other such Sayer duties, exactly as was done by the zamindars and other all over Bengal." xxx

Grant observed that the principle on which the Government of 1845 proceeded was to make calculation without knowing or caring to know whether the profits of the Juggernath temple (any more than of other temples) was more or less than in 1803.

"All could be reasonably charged against the land revenue. When this is done, the last traces of any apparent connexion or favour shown to Juggernath will be effaced."<sup>31</sup>

Lord Dalhousie wrote a Minute to the Court of Directors referring to the Despatch of 5 May 1852. "The instruction of the Honourable Court" he wrote : "occasioned me much perplexity. In 1851, I declared my opinion that it was greatly to be lamented that any consideration of the policy should have induced the Government of the day to identify itself so far with native religious institutions."

"It was even more regretted that the connexion was not entirely dissolved, when it was partly dissolved some years ago. No considerations either of the established practice or of the supposed policy should induce us in prolonging the present system for a moment longer."

"But the instruction of the Honourable Court appeared to me to compel the Governor General in Council to do the very reverse of all this. Regarding the periodical disbursement to the Temple as a free grant, I conceived that to make a final payment to it,

<sup>31</sup> Note by J. P. Grant : 19 November 1952, *Correspondence relating to the Missionaries and Idolatry*.

by way of compensation, would not be to sever the connexion but to perpetuate it."

"To execute the orders of the Court would not be to withdraw support from Juggernath, but permanently to endow it. It seemed to me that a severance of the Government of India from the idolatrous institution at Pooree, would be as though as Her Majesty's Government, announcing an intention to dissolve all connexions with the Maymooth, should propose to discontinue the annual allowance of 30,000 £, making at the same time by way of compensation a grant to the College of a million sterling in the Three per cents."

"Entertaining very strong sentiments upon this question of public principle, I felt that personally I could not consent to execute the orders which the Court had enjoined, and that, if they were insisted upon, it would be necessary for me to retire from the office which I have the honour to hold."

"Before recording a resolution to that effect, I thought it right to re-examine carefully the whole question. I solicited Mr. Secretary Grant to analyse closely and accurately the voluminous proceedings of the several administrations upon this long controversial question." xxx

"An anxious examination of the question, aided by note of the Secretary, has convinced me that—I have been under an erroneous impression as to the nature of the periodical payment which has been made to the Temple since 1845."

"My mind has been satisfied by the papers that disbursement in question is not of the nature of a grant or 'donation' as I believed it to be, but of the nature of a 'compensation' made to the Temple for property which belonged to it, but which had passed into the hands of Government and enjoyed by it. The distinction is of vital importance." xxx

"The periodical payment now made to the Temple by the Government of India amounts to 23,321 Rupees. Is that sum a donation to the Temple by Government or it is compensation to the Temple for

revenue rights of which Government has long since deprived it ? In former case, it would in my judgment be the imperative duty of Government to discontinue the payment wholly at once and without compensation. In the latter case, it would be equally the duty of the Government to continue it, or to make over a final equivalent of it, as the Hon'ble Court has enjoined."

"The payment of 23,321 Rupees is a compensation and that as such it should be continued periodically or should be replaced by an equivalent in some preferable form." xxx

"On the fourth November 1843, the Hon'ble Court expressed an opinion that it would be desirable to commute the remainder of the allowance in the same manner by vesting any other lands of equal value which formerly may have belonged to the Temple." xx

"Though it was found that there were no other lands except the Sattais Hazari Mahal, it was established that the Temple had possessed at the period of the conquest other properties and rights besides lands."

Assignment on certain pergunahs resumed about 1807	17,177
Assignment on certain rent free lands	330
Assignment on certain Killahs	538
Sayer duties enjoyed by the Temple	5,276
	<u>23,321</u>

"The excess of the annual payment was a free gift from the treasury, to which the Government of that day, as the present Government, did not consider the State to have bound itself by any pledge. Accordingly the Government of India in 1845 directed that the entire sum of 35,758 Rupees should no longer be paid to the temple of Juggernath : that

the sum of 23,321 Rupees being the proceeds of the actual property of the Temple in assignments of revenue and compensation for Sayer duties should be continued but the balance of 12,437 Rupees being a free donation from Government should be discontinued.

"The direction was carried into effect the sum of 12,437 Rupees was discontinued, the sum of 23,321 Rupees only annually has been paid since that time and the administration of 1845, considered that it had practically terminated all connexion with the temple of Juggernath." x x x

"The Court of Directors is of opinion that all connexion between the Government of India and the temple of Juggernath should be dissolved even in appearance as it had been in substance since 1845, and that a final payment should be made for that purpose."

In conclusion, Lord Dalhousie observed : "The Government of India will have restored to the temple of Juggernath every item of property of which it found itself possessed, when the conquest of Orissa was effected ; and this perfect good faith will have to be observed. The Government will have withdrawn even a farthing of donation, which directly or indirectly, it has, at any time, bestowed upon the Temple. It has long since abandoned the tax, which it derived from the pilgrims to Juggernath."

"The very name of the institution will disappear from the annual charges of the public treasury and henceforth all connexion of the Government of India and the temple of Juggernath will disappear, not only in name but also in truth<sup>32</sup>

The Memorial of the Missionaries was circulated among the Members of the Council. F. J. Halliday, in his Minute dated 7 December 1853 observed "I consider it would be unbecoming to the character and position of the British Indian Government to question

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<sup>32</sup> Minute of Lord Dalhousie : 8 June 1853, *Correspondence relating the Missionaries and Idolatry*.

the validity of the endowment for the support of the temple of Juggernath after the title had been tacitly admitted for nearly half a century."

He referred to the Governor General's Minute dated the 8th June last and concluded "His Lordship is correct in stating that the so called grant is not a donation but merely a compensation for the revenue of which the British Government has for a long time deprived it. It is quite clear that we cannot honestly keep the money to ourselves."<sup>33</sup>

The Government informed Rev. D. Ewart with reference to his Memorial dated 12 August 1852 : "The Governor General in Council after careful scrutiny of the reports furnished respectively in 1805 and 1807, is satisfied that there is no ground for questioning the general correctness of the former or for reducing the sum of Rs. 23,321 now paid to the Superintendent of the Temple. That sum is not in the nature of donation but simply compensation for the Khanjahs and Sayer resumed, as ascertained and finally settled in 1845".<sup>34</sup>

In 1853, as in 1842, there was again a dispute regarding performance of the Shood ceremony by ladies belonging to Raj family. This time, Raja Munea Raj Deo from Ganjam complained to Drummond, Magistrate, Puri, against the conduct of the Superintendent of the Jagannath Temple. On 30 April 1853 he wrote to the Magistrate that the Superintendent in contravention of a Sunnad which he produced, would not allow the facilities of worship called the Shood to the females of his family, without payment of large sum of money.

The Magistrate forwarded the letter of Munea Raj Deo to the Superintendent. After a few days, Munea

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<sup>33</sup> Minute of J. Halliday : 7 December 1853 No. 215 : Public Consultations. N.A. : 28 February 1856

<sup>34</sup> C. Beadon, Secretary, Government of India to Rev. E. Ewart. No. 208 : Public Consultations : N.A. 28 February 1856- A copy of this letter was sent to Stubbin and Sutton.

Raj Deo again petitioned to the Magistrate that he had not been allowed to perform the Shood ceremony in the Temple and that he would be disgraced, if he went away without performing the worship.

Finding the Superintendent to be still adamant, Drummond fined him Rupees two hundred for breach of Act X of 1840.

The petitioner and his females were allowed to perform the Shood ceremony in the Temple. The Superintendent instituted an appeal in the Court of the District Judge, Cuttack, who upheld the order of the Magistrate. He then appealed to the Sudder Nizamat Adalat against the judgment of the District Judge J. R. Colvin, Judge of the Adalat, held that the circumstance of extortion or intimidation by the Superintendent had not been sufficiently proved.<sup>35</sup>

In 1853, a serious accident again occurred inside the Jagannath Temple. E. Drummond, Magistrate, reported, to the Superintendent of Police, Cuttack, the occurrence of an accident, "attended with a lamentable loss of lives" during the Nava Yauvan festival.

"At the time of accident, the court in front of Satpahach Durwazah was crowded with pilgrims, though not to a dangerous extent, but Jagmohan contained a body of at least 2,000 persons and a rush having been made into the Jaybijay gate, some of the pilgrims fell upon the stone steps thus causing the fall of others. By the time the door was closed, 18 women and 3 men lost their lives and one man died in the hospital."

The Magistrate after enquiry found that there was culpable neglect on the part of those who were on duty at the gates. Before the doors were opened there were between five to seven hundred pilgrims inside who had obtained illicit admission by bribing the priests. Then a body-of 2,000 or 2,500 pilgrims were allowed admission at the Singh Durwaza and that owing to the neglect of the Purharees at the Satpahach door, the

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<sup>35</sup> *Districts of Balasore and Pooree*—H. Ricketts 1859

Jagmohan became filled with the pilgrims and the accident occurred.

The Magistrate wrote : "The Superintendent of the Temple is clearly guilty of culpable remissness and inattention to his duties in not having taken measures to ensure greater care on the part of the Purharees and the interference of the Police when the crowd become dangerous, as also in not having lights in so dark and dangerous a place as Jaybijay door."

"Under the circumstance of the bad feeling existing among the Pundas and Purharees, it was his bounden duty to have reported the fact to the Magistrate and to have taken unusual precautions against accidents—whereas he appears to have done less than usual."

"The priests generally are not free from blame since all pilgrims are introduced by them, and any extraordinary crowd is caused by their cupidity and breach of the Temple rules."

The day after the accident, the Temple doors were closed on the ground that another might happen. The whole body of pilgrims, which assembled for the Rath Jatra were prevented from performing the worship. They reported to the Magistrate, who intervened and ordered the doors to be opened.

The Magistrate recommended a fine of Rupees two thousand "and other marks of displeasure as may seem to be expedient" on the Superintendent.

According to the Magistrate, "culpable neglect of the Purharees at the door was established". Five Purharees were each sentenced to imprisonment for two months and fined Rupees 200 each. Five Purharees were fined Rupees 100 each.

The Magistrate also criticized the Police "over whom the Rajah had no control". He charged the Daroga for neglecting his duty and dismissed him. The Temple Jamadar was also dismissed.

The Magistrate thought that the Government should resume the sum now given to the Temple and to apply it for other purposes, such as, the establish-

ment of proper police force, both within and without the Temple and along the line of roads approaching to it. This Police force should be entirely independent of the Superintendent and the priests.

"The real expenses of the Temple" he pointed out, "did not exceed Rs. 36,000 per annum for which the revenues independent of the Government contribution amount to Rs. 17,420 and it is well-known that between fifty to sixty thousand Rupees are realized annually by the Temple treasury in donation from the pilgrims in addition to what is exacted by the priests and the Pundahs".<sup>36</sup>

The Magistrate in his letter to the S.P., Cuttack, in this connection also referred to the Purharees. "They have gradually encroached upon the duties of the Pundahs and now take as many pilgrims into the Temple for worship as the Pundahs themselves. The suit in the Civil Court was decided about a fortnight ago before the festival and the claim of the Purharees having been dismissed they became indifferent."<sup>37</sup>

The Secretary, Government of Bengal, was desired by most noble the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal to acknowledge the receipt of the letter from the Superintendent of Police, Cuttack relative to the occurrence of an accident in the temple of Juggernath by which twenty two lives were lost.

"The accident is known to have been caused by the overcrowding of the Temple and its avenues, owing to the neglect of the Police and the Officers of the Temple, allowing too many people to enter at once; and partly to the oversight of the Rajah of Khoordah, the Superintendent, to keep the doors and railings in repair, and to exercise proper supervision over the others." xxx

"His Lordship will not allow the Rajah to escape

<sup>36</sup> Magistrate to Commissioner : 3 August 1853, J.T.C. Pt. 3

<sup>37</sup> Magistrate to Superintendent of Police, Cuttack : 7 July 1853 J.T.C. Pt. 3

from the responsibilities imposed on him so far as it is in the power of Government to enforce them, for the purpose of maintaining order and preventing bodily injuries to the pilgrims who resort to the Temple."<sup>38</sup>

The Raja of Khurda threw up the Delang estate in 1816 on the ground of over assessment and from that period it remained under the Government management till 1844. In that year the Raja requested that the estate might be restored to him. In spite of objection from Wilkinson, Collector, Puri, the Board of Revenue in their letter dated 12 July 1844 ordered the restoration of the Delang estate to the Khurda Raja.

Ramachandra Deb, the Raja of Khurda, then pressed for the return of his ancestral estate of Khurda.

Ramachandra Deb wanted to be the Raja of Khurda not only in name but also in fact, so as to utilise the tradition of the Khurda Raj family's close association with the Jagannath Temple for three centuries. The Rajas of Khurda once claimed and to a certain extent enjoyed the allegiance of the tributary chiefs, which Ramachandra Deb hoped to revive after the restoration of Khurda to him by the British Government.

The Government of India wanted a Report on the relation of the Khurda Raja with the Government and "the exact position of the Rajah of Khoordah in respect to his estates and their management."<sup>39</sup>

E. Drummond, Collector of Puri, wrote: "At a time when the province of Cuttack came into possession of the British Government the hereditary property of the Rajah of Khoordah, consisted of Killa Khoordah among the hill estates, and Talook Delang in Limbai Pergunah in Mogulbundee. Khoordah

<sup>38</sup> Secretary, Government of Bengal to S.P., Cuttack : 27 August 1853 No. 1670 : J.T.C. Pt. 3 .

<sup>39</sup> G. Flowden, Secretary to Government of India to C. Beadon, Secretary, Government of Bengal : 13 January 1854 No. 73 : J.T.C. Pt. 3

appears to have been attached by Government on account of treachery on the part of Rajah Mookund Deo, the father of the present Rajah, who after promising his aid joined the Marhattas and was the cause of much trouble".\*

Killa Khoordah included Panchghar, which formed a separate estate under orders of Government dated 18th September 1807, when it was bestowed on the Rani of Sambalpur, but reverted to the Government in 1819.

Drummond opposed the restoration of Khurda to the Rajah after the settlement in 1264 Umlee or September 1856. He pointed out that since 1819, the Rajah had been receiving an annual allowance of Sicca Rs. 24,000 or the Company's Rs. 25,650 in lieu of the Malikana of Khoordah.

He quoted para 32 of the Report of Wilkinson. In his Report on settlement of Delang dated 20 October 1837, Wilkinson delineated the character of the Rajah.

"The Rajah is prejudiced against all reforms and improvement and so attached to the customs of his forefathers, as not to allow his son and successor to leave the walls of his palace before his own death, let it be ever so protracted. He considers himself a sovereign and would be looked upon as such by the rayats of Limbai; and though he is thrifty of money and has, I understand, accumulated a considerable sum, yet he has no aptness for business and would entrust the entire management of the zamindari to agents."

Drummond observed "The character thus portrayed in 1837 remains the same in 1854, and his son is now about 20 years of age, has never yet passed the limits of his palace, and though it is said that he possesses better abilities than his father, he has but received

\* The accusation of treachery against the Raja of Khurda was a conventional one and not based on facts. The Raja made a petition for the restoration of Khurda in 1819, which was rejected.

little education and is afflicted with an incurable disease".<sup>40</sup>

The barriers, doors and railings in the Temple were not put in proper order by the Superintendent inspite of the direction from the Magistrate. Consequently, the amount allowed to the Superintendent in support of the Temple was attached "until the works above alluded are executed".<sup>41</sup>

In 1854, Raja Ramachandra Deb died and was succeeded by his son Bir Kisor Deb (also called Bir Kesari Deb). In 1855 an accident again took place within the Jagannath temple precincts. A. S. Anand, the Magistrate, wrote to the Commissioner "A serious accident took place at the opening of the Temple gates to admit the pilgrims to the shrine of Juggernath on the morning of Sunday last, the 15th instant, in which three men and four women were killed".

"My assistant Clarke with the town Darogah and a body of Police were in charge of the main entrance before which double barriers of greatest strength had been vested."

"I believe every precaution in my power had been taken both within and without to guard against accidents of any kind. The great majority of the pilgrims this year was upcountrymen amongst whom there are said to have been upwards of 1,800 Sepoys and when the gates were opened these people being too impatient to enter through the doors in the barriers swarmed over them in immense numbers and make a rush at the Temple gate which our Police were unable to resist. The foremost fell or were pushed down in the narrow passage by the multitude pressing them from behind and I regret to say that 3 men and 4 women were crushed to death." xxx

"I was at the Temple almost immediately after

\* Drummond to Commissioner Gouldsbury, 20 February 1854 No. 46 : J.T.C. Pt. 3

<sup>a</sup> Magistrate, Puri to Commissioner : 7 March 1854 J.T.C. Pt. 3

the accident and finding that the doors had not been properly closed and that we had not adequate force I ordered that they should remain closed throughout the day." xxx

"You are aware that a new image of Jugunnath had been made this year and that in consequence the number of pilgrims had been more than double than what it usually is. They had been estimated at two lakhs, 2/3rd of these being upcountrymen."

"The small Police force at my disposal was wholly inadequate to keep them under control. They were borne down by the numbers and impetuosity of the mob which led to this catastrophe."<sup>42</sup>

The Commissioner in his letter to the Government suggested increase of the Police force from the annual allowance to the Temple. The Secretary to the Government of Bengal in his letter to the Commissioner dated 24 September 1855, No. 2555, expressed the concern of the Lieutenant Governor for the "two serious accidents which have occurred this year in course of the celebration of religious ceremonies connected with the temple of Juggernath".

The Commissioner was informed that the 'precautionary measures' suggested by him were entirely approved by the Lieutenant Governor. The Lieutenant Governor was also disposed to concur with the Commission's proposition for an increase in the Police force and for the maintenance of that force out of the annual allowance to the Temple.

The Court of Directors wrote to the Government of India in connection with the accident which took place in the Temple in 1853 and the measures subsequently undertaken by the Government to prevent such accidents. The Court observed: "This unhappy accident was attributed to the neglect on the part of the Superintendent of the Temple and the servants attached to the Institution." xxx

"A. S. Anand, Magistrate, Puri to Commissioner: 18 July 1855, No. 131: J.T.C. Pt. 3

“You very properly directed cases to be instituted against them in the Court of Law and for the prevention of similar accidents attended with fatal consequences. The Rajah and the officers of the Temple were rightly required to erect and strengthen the requisite fences and other appliances out of the allowance paid from your treasury.”

“We doubt however the propriety of employing the officers of Government in executing works of this description, consistently with the resolution to withdraw as much as possible from the interference in the concerns of the Hindoo temples and places of pilgrimage.”<sup>43</sup>

The Magistrate, Puri, wrote to the Commissioner about the proposed Police arrangements to prevent accidents. “The town of Puri” he wrote “contains ordinarily 23,000 inhabitants and the number is increased from eight to ten folds at the time of the Ruth Jatra”.

He pointed out that the entire Police force for the Temple consisted of 47 Burkandazes under the order of a Darogah and five Jamadars. The Magistrate wrote : “We have not men enough to guard the Temple when it is opened at the time of the Ruth Jatra to admit eager pilgrims who swarm over the barrier and rush at the narrow entry by thousands. I propose 100 Burkandazes and 2 Jamadars be at once added to the Police establishment. The cost of the guard should be deducted from the payment made to him.”<sup>44</sup>

The Commissioner in his letter dated 13 January 1856 to the Government of Bengal made it clear that the expenditure for the Police force should be defrayed

<sup>43</sup>Directors to the Government of India : 22 August 1855, No. 23 Judicial Department, *Correspondence relating to the Missionaries and Idolatry*.

<sup>44</sup>Anand, Magistrate, Puri to Commissioner : 6 November 1855, J.T.C. Pt. 3

from the annual Government donation to the Jagannath temple.

The Secretary to the Government of Bengal informed the Commissioner : "The Lieutenant Governor sees no objection to its being carried out and is pleased to authorize that a Police force at a cost of Rs. 6804 per annum be entertained for the prevention of accidents and for maintenance of peace during great festivals occurring annually in the town of Pooree".<sup>45</sup>

E. A. Samuells, Commissioner, in his letter dated 16 February 1856, informed the Collector of Puri that a Police force consisting of upcountrymen had been sanctioned by the Lieutenant Governor. The force was in substitution of the existing Temple guard (whom the Commissioner in his letter to the Secretary, Government of Bengal dated 27 November 1845 described as 'underpaid and useless') which would be disbanded.<sup>46</sup>

On the 4th July 1855 (No. 9) the Directors wrote : "In our Despatch in the Legislative department dated 5 May 1852 No. 7, we authorized you to make arrangements for severing the British Government from all connexion with the temple of Juggernath and in replying to that you informed us that the subject was under consideration."

"We desire that you will lose no time in reporting to us the proceedings that may have been adopted by you for the purpose in question, and we hope to learn that they have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion."

The Governor General, Lord Dalhousie, informed the Court : "We have directed the Government of Bengal to discontinue from the 1st of May, the

<sup>45</sup> Secretary, Govt. of Bengal to Commissioner : 31 January 1856, No. 451 : J.T.C. Pt. 3

<sup>46</sup> E. A. Samuells to Collector, Puri : 16 February 1856, J.T.C. Pt. 3

annual money payment of Rs. 23,321 at present made to the Superintendent of the Temple in compensation of the Kunjahs and Sayer revenue resumed, and to substitute in its stead an endowment of land of the value of Rs. 16,517 per annum, the difference (Rs. 6804 per annum) between that amount and the sum appropriated for the maintenance of an efficient Police by Government."<sup>47</sup>

On the same day, C. Beadon, Secretary, Government of India wrote to W. Grey, Secretary, Government of Bengal about the decision of the Government of India regarding the discontinuance of the Government donation to the Jagannath temple.

The Bengal Government was asked "to make over so much lands as will wield an annual profit of Rs. 16,517 according to the present valuation, to the Rajah of Khoordah as Superintendent to be held in trust for the Temple and also by his successors to the Raj, so long they continue to hold the office of the Superintendent".

"The transfer deed should recite the circumstances under which the annual payment, then determined, is now commuted for an endowment of land."<sup>48</sup>

The Magistrate, Puri, requested the Executive Engineer to prepare two strong turnstiles 3 feet high and 4 feet wide, to be joined at either side to the barricade to be erected in front of the Temple, at the time of the next Ruth Jattrā. "They will certainly not be efficiently made, if left to the Superintendent of the Temple."<sup>49</sup>

The Under Secretary to the Government of Bengal wrote to the Secretary, Board of Revenue on 11

<sup>47</sup> Government of India to the Court of Directors: 28 February 1856, *Correspondence relating to the Missionaries and Idolatry*, Printed in 1858 by the House of Commons.

<sup>48</sup> C. Beadon to W. Grey: 28 February 1856, No. 30:

<sup>49</sup> Collector, Puri to Commissioner: 19 March 1856, No. 42: J.T.C. Pt. 3

March 1856 requesting the Board of Revenue to issue necessary instructions for discontinuing the payment of the annual grant of Rs. 23,321 to the temple of Juggernath and to adopt the measures directed by the Supreme Government. The Commissioner, on receipt of a letter from the Board of Revenue, asked the Collector, Puri, to discontinue the annual grant and to purchase in lieu thereof lands in the Killa Khoordah, wielding an annual net profit of not less than Rs. 16,517.

The Commissioner wrote : "The direction to purchase lands in Killa Khoordah, has, I conclude, originated from the fact that lands in that district is already the property of Government. Your duties are, under the orders now conveyed, therefore will be to select a suitable portion of Khoordah, such as, under the previous settlement, may be expected to yield this net profit mentioned above, and to make over this estate to the Rajah of Khoordah under the precautions stated in the letter from the Secretary, Government of India."

"It is obviously desirable that the lands now about to be placed under the management of the Rajah of Khoordah, in one hand, be as near to the Temple estate of Satais Hazari Mahal as possible, and that on the other, they should be selected to by-pass the position of Khoordah which remains in our hands compact and undivided."<sup>50</sup>

E. A. Samuells, Commissioner of the Cuttack province, in his letter to the Government suggested the extension of the time limit of 1st May next.

The Under Secretary, Government of India informed the Secretary, Government of Bengal that the Governor General in Council agreed "to prolong till 1 May 1857, the compensation money payment to the Rajah of Khoordah in connection with the Temple of Juggernath, in order to allow sufficient time for

<sup>50</sup> Commissioner to Collector, Puri : 24 March 1856, J.T.C., Pt. 3

the settlement of the Khoordah estate from which it is intended to transfer certain portions of land in substitution of the said money payment".<sup>51</sup>

The Court of Directors wrote a long letter to the Supreme Government regarding the commutation of the annual donation. The letter from the Directors alluded to their previous despatch in the Legislative department dated 5 May 1852, authorizing the Supreme Government, "to take measures for the discontinuance of the periodical payments made from the public treasury towards the support of the temple of Juggernath".

The Directors 'briefly reviewed' the proceedings which had taken place in this connection. "Previous to 1840, Government seems to have been regarded as responsible for all expenses of the Temple varying from Rs. 50,000 to 60,000 per annum, and apparently averaging about Rs. 53,000. The whole of the former endowments of the Temple which had been gradually resumed within a few years after we obtained possession of Cuttack in 1803, were in the hands of Government; and in addition tax was levied on pilgrims to Juggernath which produced a revenue exceeding Rs. 90,000 per annum."

"In 1840, the Pilgrim tax was totally abolished. At the same time the charge of the affairs of the Temple was made over to the Rajah of Khoordah, the Superintendent of the Temple."

"No change has been made in the amount of the annual payment to the Temple. In 1843, an estate called the Sattaees Hazari Mahal, the then only remaining portion of the endowments of the Temple, which consisted of lands at the time of our taking possession of the province of Cuttack, was relinquished to the Rajah of Khoordah as the Superintendent of the Temple."

"The revenue of the estate amounted to Rs. 17,

<sup>51</sup> Under Secretary, Government of India to the Secretary, Government of Bengal: 9 May 1856, No. 797: J.T.C. Pt. 3

420 per annum ; and on occasion of the transfer, the annual payment was reduced to a fixed sum of Rs. 35,758-7-6."

"In 1845, an investigation was made to the nature of payments to Juggernath. It was then established that Rs. 23,321 of the above amount represented partly certain assignments of revenue which, having been formerly granted by the former Rajahs of Berar had constituted a portion of the endowment of the Temple and partly contained Sayer duties formerly collected on behalf of the Temple and for which it was entitled to compensation precisely in the same way as other landlords of the province."

"The balance of the sum was found to be a more donation only, which, after the example of the former rulers of the country had continued for so many years by the British Government, partly, in consideration of a supposed pledge by the Marquis of Wellesley, and partly in respect of the revenue realized by the Pilgrim tax ; but very much also because the real nature of the payment had never been brought distinctly under the notice of Government."

"It was decided that this last named sum should cease to be paid and the future payment to the Temple was thus thenceforth limited to Rs. 23,321, the amount of resumed endowment and of compensation for Sayer."

"All the steps above mentioned were taken either under our orders or with our subsequent approval as tending to sever the connection which previously to 1840 had existed between the British Government and the temple of Juggernath. The object of our Despatch of the 5th May 1852 was to render that severance complete in appearance as well as in reality by the discontinuance of all payments to the Temple from the public treasury."

"Notwithstanding the partial elucidation which the question received through the investigation of 1845, great misapprehension continued to exist as to

the real nature of the payment still made to the Temple."

"The Directors praised John Peter Grant, then Secretary to the Supreme Government, for elucidating the views in the Despatch of the Directors with 'force and clearness' as a result of which "the Marquis of Dalhousie was convinced of the erroneusness of his former impression and was satisfied that the disbursement in question was really of the nature of a compensation made to the Temple for property which had belonged to it, but which had passed into the hands of Government and is now enjoyed by it." xx

"Your Government having concurred with the sentiments of the late Governor General, the only question which remained was the manner in which effect should be given to our orders for the commutation of annual payments to the Temple from the treasury. After an accountably long interval, which is much to be regretted, this question was decided by you on 28 February last in favour of transfer of land to the Rajah of Khoordah as the Superintendent of the Temple, to be held in trust by him for the Temple, and also by his successors so long as they continue to hold the office of the Superintendent."

"We entirely concur in your conclusion that the assignments and Sayer duties, formerly received by the Temple, constituted property for which compensation was justly due. We also approve your determination that the commutation of the annual allowance formerly paid on this account should be made on the basis of transfer of land."

"In consequence of accidents attended with loss of life which occurred at successive festivals of the Temple and which in the opinion of the local authorities resulted from the culpable neglect of the Superintendent to make proper provisions for the protection of the pilgrims, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal was induced to sanction a largely increased

Police Establishment for the prevention of accidents and maintenance of peace both within and without the Temple."

"The force is to be kept as a Government Establishment but the expense is to be borne by the Temple funds. The cost of it will be Rs. 6804 per annum and a reduction to this extent being made from the compensation to which the temple of Juggernath had been adjudged to be entitled, the value of land to be provided for transfer to the Superintendent is reduced to 15,517 Rupees."

The Directors observed : "In sanctioning these measures you appear to have acted on the principle while the responsibility of the Superintendent of the Temple to preserve order and to guard against accidents is strictly enforced, Government cannot under any such arrangement divest itself of its obligation to maintain the public peace and to protect the persons of its subjects."

"We assent to this proposition and as a case for interference of Government in consequence of the neglect of the Superintendent seems to have arisen we approve the order for the maintenance of an efficient Police Establishment at the cost of the Temple."

"It is however to be understood that the Establishment is to be employed only outside the Temple and that the preservation of order in the interior must be left to the Superintendent and other officers of the Temple."

In conclusion, the Directors intimated that in the proposed deed of transfer, provision should be made "for the protection of the ryots as was made on the transfer of the Sattais Hazari Mahal."<sup>52</sup>

On 29 January 1857, the Secretary to the Government of Bengal forwarded to the Board of

<sup>52</sup> Court of Directors to the Government of India : 12 November 1856, No. 122 : Public Department, *Correspondence relating to the Missionaries and Idolatry* (1858)

Revenue a copy of the Despatch No. 112 of 1856, from the Court of Directors on the subject of commutation into a grant of land of the money payment to the temple of Juggernath and the maintenance of an efficient Police force at the Temple. The Commissioner received a copy of the letter which he forwarded to the Collector, Puri.

The Collector, in his reply pointed out the difficulties in giving effect to the suggestions made by the Court of Directors.

"Assaults and robberies" he observed "will occur within its precincts, and I fear that if the guards would be removed the interior would be unsafe for the pilgrims and others who resort there, and after a short time it would be absolutely necessary to re-establish it."

"The Rajah is a feeble individual who has little or no power and is not feared by anybody. His guards, if he had any, would be under no dread of punishment and would do just as they choose, which would always be to collude with all the scoundrels who could pay them and allow them to rob and ill-treat the pilgrims in the Temple with impunity."

"If we were to have no Police inside the Temple it would be taken possession by the thieves and vagabonds of all kinds whom the Rajah would have no power to expel without the aid of the Magistrate and the result would be thus discreditable to Government, who are, I submit, bound to protect their subjects within as well as without the precincts of the shrine."

"At the time of Ruth Jattrra, a large Police force (Last year it amounted to 164 men) under the orders of a Hindoo Deputy Magistrate is invariably posted in the Temple to keep peace and to prevent accidents which frequently occur inside the Temple, for there are narrow ways with steep steps at interval and they are slippery and wet as is generally the case in June or July at the time of the great festivals". xxx

"In 1853, twentytwo men were killed in one

part of the Temple. To prevent such accidents strong parties of Police are placed at the turnings, steps and dangerous places and they generally succeed in getting the people through, without their suffering any injuries."

"If however we are to take all our force out of the Temple and leave the Superintendent to manage everything at the time of the Ruth Jattrā, I am certain we shall have first to deplore a most serious loss of life and then be compelled to revert to the system which we have abandoned."<sup>53</sup>

The Collector of Puri wrote : "In making over to the Superintendent lands with a Jumma of Rs. 16517, some time must necessarily elapse. The whole operation will be accomplished shortly after the completion of the Khoordah Settlement". xxx

"I would however recommend that the money payment be continued until the close of the Umlee year 1264 in September next, by which time the transfer will certainly be completed."<sup>54</sup>

R. B. Chapman, Under Secretary, Government of India wrote to A. R. Young, Secretary, Government of Bengal that in compliance with the recommendations of the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, the Governor General in Council authorized "the continuance of the compensation money payment to the Rajah of Khoordah in connection with the temple of Juggernath till September next, on the clear understanding that the final completion of the arrangement for the transfer of land in lieu of money payment must not be postponed beyond this month"<sup>55</sup>.

A. R. Young, Secretary, the Government of Bengal, was also informed : "Subject to the sanction

<sup>53</sup> Collector, Puri to Commissioner G. F. Cockburn 2 March 1857, No. 36 : J.T.C. Pt. 3

<sup>54</sup> S. Anand to Commissioner : 13 April 1857, J.T.C. Pt. 3

<sup>55</sup> B. Chapman to A. R. Young : 19 June 1857, No. 1154 : J.T.C. Pt. 3 .

of the Court of Directors, the Governor General in Council approves the authority given by the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Bengal for the retention of Police within as well as outside the temple of Juggernath for preserving the peace and for maintaining order."<sup>56</sup>

In July 1857, A. S. Anand, Collector, Puri, wrote to the Commissioner that the settlement of the Khurda estate was over and he proposed "that Killa Tappang for which there are no objections of any kind should form the basis of the transfer and that the Jumma should be made up by adding Mauzas from the Killa Rameswar which adjoins Tappang. The latter is very little farther from the temple estate of Sattais Hazari—while it is on the verge of Khoordah and leaves it compact and undivided".<sup>57</sup>

Bir Kisor Deb, the Raja of Khurda, sent a Memorial to the Governor General in Council praying that the Police force entertained at the temple of Jagannath be withdrawn and the deduction of Rs. 6804 annually made for the maintenance of the Police force from the amount of Rs. 23,321 be stopped.

In his Memorial to the Lieutenant Governor, previously made, he had protested against the "alienation of the funds of the Temple". He had also pointed out that the Police force was sanctioned without consulting him. The Memorial was however rejected. After the rejection of his first Memorial he was given to understand that "orders have been received from the Hon'ble Court of Directors for withdrawing the force from the Temple". He represented: "Your Memorialist therefore begs to submit the following circumstances for moving your Lordship in Council to enforce the orders of

<sup>56</sup> R. B. Chapman to R. B. Young : 26 June 1857, No. 109 : J.T.C. Pt. 3

<sup>57</sup> A. S. Anand, Collector, Puri to Commissioner : 14 July 1857, No. 196 : J.T.C. Pt. 3

the Hon'ble Court of Directors and to relieve the lands of the Temple from the expenses of the Police force."

"That according to immemorial usage, the temple of Juggernath is guarded by a body of priests, Purharees and Pundas whose duty it is to conduct and attend the pilgrims in the Temple and to assist and provide for the safe discharge of their religious ceremonies". xxx

"The service of these hereditary officers of the Temple is rewarded from the offerings to the deity and Bhogs and other perquisites of their office. Your Memorialist therefore submits that it is opposed to the institution of the Temple to entertain any other class of men for the protection of the pilgrims within the Temple and the duty should be enacted, under suitable rules, by the body of hereditary priests established and retained for the purpose."

"The employment of a permanent body of Police in the Temple will revive the interference of Government with the Temple from which it has discontinued itself, and lead to much annoyance and exaction from the pilgrims and interference with their performance of religious ceremonies." xxx

"The expense of the Police force has been sanctioned from the donation of Government to the Temple. The sum of Rs. 23,321, now annually paid by Government to the Temple is however the compensation for its funds which has been appropriated by Government and forms an integral part of the endowment." xxx

"No part of the income of the Temple has ever been employed to entertain any Police force of the kind in question. It is therefore unjust to expend any portion of the endowment on the Police force. It will disorganise the Temple."

"Under these circumstances, your Memorialist prays that the Police force be withdrawn from the Temple, that the Purharis and Pundas be allowed to discharge the duties of guarding the pilgrims, under

strict rules of responsibility, that the funds of the Temple be accounted to the Temple without any deduction."

The Memorialist "deeply implored" the accident that took place inside the Temple. But he pleaded that "none of the accidents did arise from any cause over which he had any control or from the fault of the officers of the Temple". He also blamed the Magistrate for compelling him to open the gates of the Temple after the accident.<sup>58</sup>

The petition of the Raja of Khurda objecting to the annual deduction of Rs. 6804 from the grant of Rs. 23,321, was sent to the Magistrate, Puri for his comments. A. S. Anand wrote: "I have perused attentively the petition of the Superintendent and I fail to find any reason whatever for complying with the demand that he makes for the removal of the guard which is, in my opinion, absolutely necessary and was established on my recommendation under the following circumstances".

"At the Ruth Jattrā in June 1855, although double barriers had been erected at the door of the Temple with the strongest guard to keep them which my small force could supply—three men and four women were crushed to death at the entrance and it was evident to me from what I witnessed that we had no force at command at all adequate to keep a disorderly mob in check, and prevent the most frightful accidents both at the entrance gate and in the Temple; and the priests, Pundahs and Purharees, whose duty as the Rajah states in his petition was to provide safety for the pilgrims, either could not or would not give any assistance, everything having been done by the Magistrate and his subordinates both within and without the Temple."

24 July 1957, No. 1438: J.T.C. Pt. 3

"I found also that at the Ruth Jattrā of 1853,

<sup>58</sup> R. B. Chapman, Under Secretary, Government of India to the Government of Bengal, enclosing a copy of the Memorial:

no less than 22 unfortunate individuals had been trampled to death inside the shrine, owing solely to the want of a stronger force for their protection that Police could offer."

"Under such circumstances, I considered my duty to propose that 100 Burkandazes and two Jamadars should be raised and quartered at the Temple and recommended that as this Police force was entirely for the Temple, and only necessary on its account the wages of these men, Rs. 6288 a year, should be deducted from the revenue of the Superintendent who received from Government, including the rent of the Sattais Hazari Mahal, Rs. 40,741 per annum for the maintenance and guarding of the shrine."

"My proposal was approved by the Commissioner and sanctioned by Government and no accident of any kind has happened at any of the festivals since this extra force has been appointed."

"If the Rajah's people had done their duty, the accidents we had to lament, would not have happened; but as they either could not or would not do so, it became necessary for Government to interfere in some way to prevent the sad catastrophes which are happening year after year." xxx

"The only party who could justifiably be called upon to pay for that increase was the Superintendent through whose neglect of duty the extra force was rendered necessary."

"The Rajah states in his petition that when there was a great accumulation of pilgrims at the Ruth Jatra he has applied to the Magistrate to be allowed not to open the gate of the Temple on the day of Nobojoban, and he has been overruled.

"It is a very disagreeable part of the duty of the Magistrate of Pooree to have anything to do with the Temple or with any part of the religious ceremonies of the Hindoos; but it is necessary for him to see that the peace is not broken, if he can help, at the town under his charge. If the doors were closed without any reasons on the day of Nobojoban, the

great day of the festival, on which every pilgrim expects to see the idols in the Temple when multitudes have come from the extremities of Hindostan to do so, there would be in all probability a serious riot, which the Magistrate would have no power to quell without the aid of troops, and if this did not occur, a report would be speedily circulated through the length and breadth of the land, that the Hindoo religion had been attacked by the English in its most holy sanctuary and that the first step to the forcible conversion of the Hindoos has been taken in the suppression by Government of the most important part of the Ruth Jattrra festival."

Thus he pointed out, he had "good reason not to order the doors to be closed on the first day of the Ruth Jatra, without occurrence of some serious accidents, and as they cannot be closed, they must be guarded".<sup>59</sup>

The Commissioner wrote to the Board of Revenue that the Settlement of the Khurda estate had been completed and he was prepared to transfer lands yielding an annual sum equal in amount to that of the reduced money allowance at present made to the Superintendent of the temple of Juggernath.

Killa Tappang and the adjoining villages of Parichhal, Mantree and Madhupur out of Killa Rameswar were proposed to be transferred yielding Sudder Jumma of Rs. 16827-4-10 being an excess of Rs. 310 on account of expense of collection and inundation."

In conclusion, he wrote : "The Settlement of the Khoordah estate is for 24 years commencing with the present Umlee year 1244, so that for that period at least, the Superintendent of the Temple will have no right to demand or exact any increased rents". He observed that there would be increased rental after the expiry of the period, "The benefit of which I

<sup>59</sup> A. S. Anand, Collector, Puri to Commissioner : 26 August 1857, No. 191 : J.T.C. Pt. 3.

presume will belong to the Rajah of Khoordah for the purposes of the Temple and that Government will have no right to interfere and claim any part of it”.

The Commissioner informed the Secretary, Board of Revenue that “the transfer of land is proposed to take effect from the commencement of 1265 Umlee corresponding to 1st October 1857.” xx

“The Collector of Pooree has submitted a deed to be executed on the occasion of the transfer. The orders of Government on this point were that the transfer deed should recite the circumstances under which the compensation was settled in 1844 and under which circumstances the annual payment then determined is now commuted for an endowment in land.”

The draft of the deed was enclosed with the letter of the Commissioner : “Whereas in accordance with the letter of Government No. 890 dated 20th December 1845, the annual Khairat allowance of Rs. 35,758-9-6 formerly granted by this Government for the maintenance of the temple of Juggernath was diminished to Rs. 23,321 which latter amount has continued to be paid in lieu thereof to you, and whereas subsequently in accordance with the intent and orders of the Government of India, the amount of Rs. 6804 appropriated with the sanction of Government of Bengal in their Secretary’s letter No. 451 dated 31st January 1856 for the maintenance of a Police force within and around the Temple with a view to provide for the safety of the pilgrims has been deducted from the annual payment, leaving a total net Khairat allowance payable annually to the Temple of the Company’s Rs. 16,517 and whereas by the Government orders certain lands have been directed to be transferred in lieu of the above payment of Rs. 16,517—it is hereby directed that so long as the office of the Superintendent of the Temple aforesaid shall continue to be vested in you or your successors in the Raj—the assets of these lands shall

be devoted to the expenses of the Temple aforesaid, commencing from the beginning of 1265, and that you or your successors in the Raj will have no authority to enhance the rents fixed on these lands by Government.<sup>60</sup>

The Pratiharis also sent a petition to the Governor General in Council on August 27, 1857. In their petition they represented that "from time immemorial, one generation succeeding another, which by prescription acquired the force of law"—they were officiating as principal Shebaites or Pratiharis, both before and after the accession of the British supremacy, discharging their duties as custodians of lives and property of the pilgrims, with satisfaction of the ruling power, to whom the wise dispensation of divine providence has been pleased to confer the sovereignty of India".

They objected to the appointment of additional Police force on the following grounds :

(i) "It is a large staff of native menials selected from the lowest class."

(ii) "The members of this new Police do invariably usurp the occupation of the Petitioners and surreptitiously extort which is their privileged gain."

(iii) "These men conscious of their authority as servants of the State interfere with the internal economy of the Temple to be performed by those alone who are privileged to do so by the dictates of the Hindoo religion, and such interference is viewed by those who resort to the Temple as a direct insult to the religion."

(iv) "The present deduction for the support of the Police establishment for the whole year whose services are required only for a day is not only opposed to immemorial custom but is also a direct breach of that implied promise of good faith which has always characterised the sound policy which was ob-

<sup>60</sup> The Commissioner to Board of Revenue : 28 August 1857, No. 60 : J.T.C. Pt. 3.

served towards the Temple, its votaries and ministers vide the Hon'ble Court of Directors' letter to the address of your Lordship No. 112 of 28th February 1856".

(v) "The appointment of a host of Burkandazes of an inferior caste with liberty to interfere in every duty connected with the Temple, whether religious, ministerial or secular, is directly contrary to the direction of the Hon'ble Court who have always respected the religious feelings and prejudices of their subjects".

(vi) "Their number being too large, they for lack of employment delegate to themselves, the duty of showing the god to the pilgrims and quietly pocketing the voluntary fees technically called Dana or Dakshina—a duty peculiar to the Brahmins of your petitioners' class and which a Shooder is prohibited from performing under the penalty from the Shasters."

In conclusion they pointed out: "Your humble petitioners are upwards of four hundred families which depend for their livelihood on duties in the Temple assigned to them by ancient ruling families of the country, the right to perform these duties and to receive eleven annas shares of the Dakshinas or offerings to the god."

"The fundamental maxim of justice is that who bears the burden receives the benefit holds good in this case. A host of licenced interlopers has been forcibly thrust upon them—who sometimes offer violence to the religious ceremonies sanctioned by the Hindoo Shasters."

The petition shows a knowledge of the Despatch of 28 February 1856 which was not expected from the Pratiharis. An appeal was made to the religious sentiments to prevent the encroachment of the Sudras in the privileges of the Brahmins. The truth was distorted by stating that the Burkandazes showed the god to the pilgrims and received Dakshina from them.

The Court of Directors in one of their last Despatches dated 28 August 1857 objected to the spend-

ing of Rs. 260-10 for erecting three guard houses by the Government for the Temple and desired that the expense be charged on the Temple funds.\*

On 30 October 1857, the Junior Secretary to the Government of Bengal conveyed to the Board of Revenue the approval of the Lieutenant Governor to the proposed transfer of Killa Tapping and three villages from Killa Rameswar, yielding a total Jumma of Rs. 16,827, taking into account collection charges and loss due to inundation.

The Junior Secretary wrote : "The Lieutenant Governor approves of the settlement of this portion of the Khoordah estate and authorizes the transfer of land to the Superintendent from 1st October from which date all payment to the Juggernath Temple by Government will cease."

The petition of Ganesh Mahapatra and other Pratiharis was sent to the Commissioner by the Government of Bengal for report. H. R. Clarke, the officiating Magistrate, Puri, in his letter to the Commissioner denied that the new Police "interfere with the ministerial, religious and secular duties of the Temple".

He pointed out that the new Police force was appointed by the Magistrate with the sanction of the Government in 1856 in consequence of the failure of the duty of protecting the lives of the pilgrims during the Ruth Jattrra in 1855 when 3 men and 4 women were knocked down and trampled upon by

\* On 27 March 1856, the Collector of Puri asked the Commissioner to sanction the expenditure of Rs. 260 annas 10 to construct three guard houses for the accommodation of the Temple Police force. The expenditure was sanctioned by the Lieutenant Governor (Letter from the Bengal Government to the Commissioner dated 2 April 1856).

On 5 April 1858, the Commissioner forwarded to the Collector, Puri, a letter from the Government requesting him to deduct the amount spent on the construction of the guard houses from the payment made to the Raja of Khurda.

the crowd, "which the Puharees could not or would not restrain".

The Magistrate observed that at the time of that festival in 1855 he was on duty at the principal entrance with all the available Police force at command numbering about thirty men, for the purpose of assisting the Puharees in keeping the crowd back. "I urged them strongly to do what they could do to aid in this object, but the largest number I saw at one time was six or seven, and they came to me and throwing down their caves, declared their utter inability to perform the duties which they now pray to be restored to them."

The Magistrate pointed out that since the appointment of the Police force in 1856, no new accidents had occurred. He wrote: "In my opinion, should the Temple force be removed, there will be annually serious accidents. If there will be a large assemblage of pilgrims, the Rajah will request the doors be shut on those great days of the idol, for the purpose of seeing which, thousands of being travel from the ends of the land and perhaps expend their last farthing."

"The odium of the order for closing the doors would be thrown by the Rajah on Government, and his words would be taken by the pilgrims much sooner than that of the Magistrate."

"The Petitioners object that the Police are of the lowest caste of natives. This is not strictly true. Some are of good caste and others are generally of the usual caste of Hindoo Chaprassees, but I firmly believe that even if all the Police are Brahmins, the dissatisfaction would not be removed."<sup>61</sup>

Raja Bir Kisor Deb did not like transfer of lands from the Khurda estate. He also wanted lands yielding more Jumma. He sent a petition to the Government. The Board of Revenue asked the Commissioner to inform the Raja that his petition

<sup>61</sup> H. R. Clarke, Magistrate, Puri to Commissioner : 7 October 1857, No. 234 : J.T.C. Pt. 3

had been rejected by the Government. "Nothing therefore now remains to be done but to execute the conveyance. You will make the Superintendent understand that money payments shall cease from the 1st of October under the orders of Government, and consequently no possible advantage can accrue from procrastination on his part."<sup>62</sup>

On 28 November 1857, T. B. Mactier, officiating Collector, Puri informed the Commissioner that pending sanction he had suspended all payments to the Superintendent of the Temple. On the 2nd December 1857, he again wrote to the Commissioner that no allowance had been paid to the Rajah of Khoordah on account of the Jagannath temple in the current Umlee year 1265, which commenced on 1st October 1857. On 21st December 1857, Mactier sought permission of the Commissioner for deducting the salary of the Temple guards from 1st October from the Superintendent's allowance.

The Raja of Khurda successfully resisted the proposal for the commutation of the revenue of his estate of Delang in lieu of the payment to the Jagannath Temple. Next he declined to take Killa Balabhadrapur on the ground that it was a 'Dhoi' (liable to inundation) area and got Tappang which he wished for \* He again made objections which annoyed Commissioner Cockburn. Unlike his predecessors, Gouldsbury and Samuells, Cockburn was indifferent to the sentiments of the people over whom he ruled.

Raja Birkisor Deb cherished the hope of getting back the ancestral estate of Khurda. He hesitated to sign an agreement which would permanently alienate a portion of the estate of Khurda.

<sup>62</sup> Board of Revenue to Commissioner : 11 November 1857, J.T.C. Pt. 3.

\* The Collector of Puri to the Commissioner 12 August 1857, No. 219.

Cockburn wrote to the Board of Revenue: "The Superintendent objects to Killa Khoordah being called a Government estate, it being his own hereditary zamindari—an assertion which appears to be exceedingly impertinent one. It is a bonafide estate belonging to Government, through whose kind consideration only that a sum of Rs. 2000 a month is given to the Superintendent of the Temple. In support of his assertion, the Superintendent refers to some Purwanah, given to his father, stating that when disturbances cease, he would be allowed to settle for the estate."

"Of this circumstance, I have no information. But even if Government should be induced to entertain any intention of allowing the Khoordah estate to revert to the Petitioner, Government has surely a right to do so on its own terms, even by reservation of any portion assigned or to be assigned for money allowance, previously paid for the support of the Juggernath or other Temples."

"The claim to the Khoordah estate put forward as a ground of objection to the transfer of a portion of its lands in lieu of money allowance hitherto paid appears to be improper."<sup>63</sup>

As there was delay in signing the agreement, Gockburn again wrote to the Collector, Puri, on 2 February to expedite it. The Collector in reply stated that the agreement in question had not been signed by the Raja, who had made objections.

The Raja of Khurda was informed by the Collector that no money would be paid to him until the agreement was signed. The Raja made another petition to the Government on 15 February 1858. This annoyed Cockburn, Commissioner, who ordered the Collector, Puri, to ask the Raja of Khoordah to attend the Court of the Collector and to sign the Agreement.

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<sup>63</sup> Cockburn to Board of Revenue : 12 January 1858. O.S.A. Vol. 1855-59

The Raja was to be told that if there would be much delay on his part to execute the Agreement "then Government would be forced to oust the Rajah from the superintendence of the Temple."<sup>64</sup>

Bir Kisor Deb, the Raja of Puri, still hesitated to sign the Agreement. Cockburn now took a stern attitude. "Finding that the Superintendent did not sign the Agreement drawn in words approbated by Government" the Commissioner warned the Raja that continued neglect on his part would lead to recommendation of his removal from the office of the Superintendent of the Temple. But he was informed that "he was welcomed to do what was required under protest".

On 3 April 1858, Raja Bir Kisor Deb, Superintendent of the Jagannath temple signed the deed before the Collector "under a protest to which no attention will be paid".<sup>65</sup>

The agreement gave legality to the transaction by which by transferring land in lieu of money allowance, the Government discontinued payment to the Jagannath temple from the treasury, retaining only the control over the Jagannath temple Police establishment.

The end of the East India Company's rule in India synchronised with the end of direct connection of the Christian Government with probably the most celebrated Hindu temple in India.

<sup>64</sup> Cockburn to Board of Revenue : 22 February 1858  
O.S.A. Vol. 1855-59

<sup>65</sup> Commissioner to Board of Revenue : 3 April 1858 J.T.C.  
Pt. 3

## SECTION ONE

### THE MISSIONARY PROPAGANDA (1840-1857)

The Missionaries were bitterly opposed to the provision of financial assistance to the Jagannath temple in Act X of 1840. In their writings, and in the petitions to the Court of Directors and the Government of India, they criticized the Government patronage of Jagannath, which they characterised as anti-Christian. The Missionary propaganda led the Court of Directors to decide to sever the Government connection with the temple of Jagannath.

Rev. Ward of Serampore condemned the continuation of the annual donation "to the shrine of Juggernaut with its golgothas of disease and death".

In his article in '*Friend of India*' of August 1841 Rev. Ward pointed out that there was no need to support the Jagannath temple which received contributions and endowments from all parts of India. He wrote: "The Temple has been endowed by several rich Hindoos. Raja Ramakrishna Deb gave two villages the rents of which amount to about Rs. 4000. It is supposed that not less than Rs. 100,000 per annum are drawn from the Hindoos by the Brahmins of the Temple."

(i)

"It is true that Government have abolished the Pilgrim tax, but Government do, still in fact, though in another form, contribute more largely than before to the support of the idol ; in as much as they have not only relinquished the lands and other emoluments of the temple for which they were formerly receiving a revenue but have added an annual donation of 35,000 rupees."

Resolution of the Missionary Conference held at  
Cuttack, November 22, 1845.

(ii)

“The main question is whether Lord Auckland was borne out in affirming that our pledge to the temple was distinct and unconditional.”

“It is not denied that within a very short period after taking possession of the country the British Government in its anxiety to conciliate the people by leaving everything in status ante bellum found itself identified with the shrine. But it is impossible to discover any pledge whatever in our early proceedings or indeed in any proceedings at all except those of Lord Auckland.” xxx

“He advocates of our continued connection with Juggernath placing great reliance on an expression in Regulation XII of 1805 which refers to the continuance of pensions of a religious character and declares that nothing therein contained should ‘be construed to authorize the resumption of the established donation for the support of the temple of Juggernath’. This has been interpreted as an irrevocable pledge to grant this donation in perpetuity. But this is a forced construction which neither the plain meaning of the terms nor the analogy of our legislations will justify.” xxx

“The attention of the public in England was drawn to the subject, and the identification of the British Government with idolatrous institutions in India roused the indignation of the nation.”

“At that time Lord Auckland was at Simla separated from the members of his Council. The members of his council advised that the Pilgrim Tax and the donations which had been paid out of it should cease. Unfortunately for his own credit and for the best interests of his country, Lord Auckland turned a deaf ear on the advice of his council and opened his mind to the views of local authorities. The

advice of his Council was in direct opposition to that of the Cuttack Commissioner." xxx

"The priests have the same opportunity as before, of magnifying the dignity of the idol to the votaries by representing it as directly supported and encouraged by the liberality of the British Government."

*'Friend of India'*—June 25, 1846.

(iii)

On 13 May 1847, members of the General Missionary Society went on deputation to Sir John Hobhouse, President of the Board of Control, and presented a Memorial, in which they referred to the frustration of the 'Christian Public' for the grant of Rs. 36000 from the 'British Treasury' to support Juggernath. They stated "Your Memorialists submit that as God has in the Bible so strongly revealed His hatred for idolatry, its support by incurring His displeasure, who rules above the nations, must more fearfully compromise the safety of the British empire in India, than all machination of its foes."

(iv)

"Supported by the donation, the idol appears in great glory but the chief evil is the argument it furnishes to the people and specially to the Pundahs on behalf of the idol ; who say that they will deny that the enlightened Government of Britain does not respect Juggernath while it supports him so amply. To facilitate pilgrimage a splendid road has been built, the tax is abolished so that no impediment may exist to the approach to the shrine of the world's Lord. This is all done by Europe under the inspiration of Juggernath."

Rev. Lacey, quoted in the Memorial to Tucker, Chairman, Court of Directors : 1848.

(v)

“No pledge is anywhere given to maintain the Temple ; on the contrary it is everywhere supposed that the temple would be a source of emolument to the Government far beyond all expenses incurred for its management. It is evident that that the temple of Juggernaut was ever regarded by our predecessors, whether they were the native Oriya sovereigns, the Musalmans or the Marhattas as a legitimate source of revenue and not as a burden on the State.” xxx

Here then was a pledge involved viz while the Government took the whole proceeds of the Temple, they were bound to pay the expenses of it. It was a fair bonafide transaction—a bargain between the Government and the Temple authorities. What was objectionable in it arose from the contriety of the whole matter to the law and spirit of Christianity. It was encouraging abominations, and making money from all that was hateful to God and injurious to man.

The natives constantly urge the Government connexion as a proof of the divinity of Juggernaut.

When therefore the voice of Christianity was heard, and Government desired to withdraw from its connection with the idol, the plain simple course was to throw back all the revenues and perquisites of the Temple to the hereditary guardians of the shrine and stand clear of all connections with it as in the cases of other temples.

From this obvious course, however, they were diverted by the representations of the then Collector of the tax at Juggernaut, supported by the then acting Commissioner.

“It was at their instances, Lord Auckland encumbered the settlement of the matter with a grant which is now contested. That gentlemen contended that there was a pledge to support the idol, which is now proved to be incorrect.”

Rev. A Sutton—*Orissa and its Evangelization* (1850).

(vi)

“The annual pecuniary grant from the Government treasury to the temple of Juggernath perpetuates and in no ordinary degree encourages the vile characteristics of Hindu idolatry, as connected with that shrine.”

“Your Memorialists with deep pain and sorrow beg to direct the attention of your Honourable Court to the pernicious effect of Government donation in impeding and too frequently rendering unavailing their endeavours to rescue the people of the province from the curse of idolatry and to bring them under the benign influence of the true and holy religion of Christ.”

“The great mass of unhappy men and women gathered from all parts of India round the shrine think that the British Government not only believe the divinity of Juggernath but that it is anxious that the worship of the idol should be celebrated on a magnificent scale and the priests and the Pundahs connected with the Temple who fatten on the credulity and misery of the pilgrims do everything in their power to strengthen them in their conviction.”

“They rebuke the Missionaries publicly and represent them as factious opponents of Government and they triumphantly appeal to its annual pecuniary donation as an unanswerable proof, that it approves its superstition and desires that idolatry should be maintained as the religion of the land.”

“Your Memorialists cannot but deeply regret that Government or the Court by its support of the temple of Juggernath should thus naturally throw the weight of its influence in the scale of idolatry and thereby, without intending, impede the progress of Gospel of peace and love.”

“Your Memorialists would therefore respectfully remind you Honourable Court that not a few of the vast number of the pilgrims who flock to Juggernath Pooree are drawn in a great measure by the celebrity

which the annual Government grant confers on that shrine—a distinction which it alone enjoys and which is the best and one of the strongest arguments of the pilgrim hunters, a body of men whose business it is to traverse the country in all directions for the purpose of enticing persons to undertake the pilgrimage.”

“It is a fact, which considering the magnitude of the evils, physical as well as moral, following directly from this pilgrimage can never be sufficiently deplored.” xxx

“Certain of the Memorialists have witnessed them and have seen with their own eyes scenes of demoralization, wretchedness which baffle description. While the Suttee numbered hundreds, pilgrimage in a more protracted form slays thousands of human lives.”

“Your Memorialists also draw attention to the apparent inconsistency of endowing at the same time the schools and colleges for the intellectual and moral improvement of the people, and a large idolatrous establishment which tends to perpetuate their intellectual and moral debasement.”

“Your Memorialists, as servants of loving God—respectfully remind you that idolatry is not only a curse to mankind—but that any approval, sanction or countenance to it, directly or indirectly is represented in the eyes of God as a grievous offence against His Majesty in Heaven.”

Respectful Memorial of the Protestant Missionaries labouring in Bengal and Orissa to the Court of Directors 29 March 1850.

Among the signatories were Charles Lacey, Stubbins and John Buckley from Orissa : Bengal Revenue Letters 6 May 1850.

No. 7 : National Archives.

(vii)

“When the English Government does not compensate farmers for the abolition of the Corn Laws at the time of the abolition, must the temple of

Jagannath now be compensated for the antiquated poll-tax, abolished forty years ago?"

"The Rights of Jagannath"—*Calcutta Christian Observer* July 1852.

(viii)

"Leave the temple of Jagannath to be sustained by its own votaries, till the time (which your Memorialists pray may not be distant) when the idols 'shall be banished from the earth' and the true Lord of the Universe 'whose right is to reign' shall establish the peaceful kingdom throughout the world."

Memorial from Rev. David Edwards and other Missionaries to Lord Dalhousie : 12 August 1852.

Public Consultations : 28 February 1856.

National Archives.

(ix)

"The Orissa Baptist Missionaries consider themselves in consequence of their position in the province, especially called upon to leave no means untried in order to effect a severance of the connection between Government and the idol Juggernath." xx

"Not only does the Government patronage of idolatry spread immorality misery and death far and wide in India but tends to deepen degradation and rivet the chains of suffering humanity to the end of the earth."

"Your petitioners are informed that measures are about to be submitted to your Excellency which will in another form still perpetuate the Government connection with the temple of Juggernath and thus fail to meet the pledge given in Parliament and elsewhere that the Government connection with the idol shall entirely end for ever."

Petition to Lord Dalhousie from J. Stubbin. Chairman and A Sutton, Secretary of the Orissa Baptist Missionary Committee : December 1853.

Public Consultations : 28 February 1856.

No. 220 : National Archives.

## SECTION TWO

### CAR FESTIVAL UNDER THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

Descriptions of the Car festivals held during the rule of the East India Company are quoted below. Some of the statements made by the Missionaries are undoubtedly biased.

(i)  
1805

"I went to the Pagoda at the hour appointed for the idol to quit it. Soon after I had reached the Gates of the Pagoda the different idols were brought out. The head (of Juggernaut) was covered with flowers, some of which—I suppose by order—were presented to me." xxx

"The concourse of the pilgrims exceeded anything I ever witnessed. It is generally believed that at least five lacks were present. As far as Eyes could reach, nothing could be seen but the heads. I was astonished at the order and regularity preserved. There was not the least tumult or disposition to violence."

"The images being placed in their cars, the multitude drew them on and the facility with which these stupendous carriages proceeded is wonderful. Each idol much resembles the other and the cars are also very much alike. They move on sixteen wheels and are about sixty feet high. They are handsomely ornamented. They are now about half way on their journey and it has been the practice not to finish it under four stages. They add that yesterday, He moved the car Himself."

Lt. Col. Harcourt to Major Shawe, Military Secretary to the Governor General : July 1805.

(ii)  
1806

“I have witnessed a scene which I shall never forget. When the Car had moved about 20 yards on the first day, a pilgrim was exhibited ready to devote himself to the god. He placed himself before the Car, lying on his face and one of the wheels crushed him to death. A shout of joy was raised to the god, and the multitude threw rice and cowries on the body of the victim.”

Buchanon—Letter No. 13, Plain of skulls, Juggernaut India Office Records fols 17-20 20 June 1806.

(iii)  
1809

“A multitude of men, women and children must have been at the Temple, for one hundred and fifty have been killed by the crowd. They trod upon each other in approaching the Temple gate.”

Rev. Smith and Rev. Green—*Periodical Account of the Baptist Mission*—1809.

(iv)  
1814

“One woman had devoted herself under the wheels and a shocking sight it was. Another woman intended to devote herself, missed the wheels with her body and had her two arms broken. Three people lost their lives in the crowd.”

A letter from an eye witness *Asiatic Journal*—25 June 1814.

(v)  
1817

“On the occasion of a partial insurrection, about two years since, the priests gave out that Juggernaut would no longer suffer the English to remain in India,

and would not return to the Temple (in quitting it at the annual procession) till they were expelled, and mentioned a certain day for their overthrow. This was justly considered by the General Commanding the District as an attempt to aid the insurgents against Government, and he sent a private order to the officer in charge, that if the idols were not carried back as usual on the stated day, he should replace it by force and take military possession of the Temple. The Natives about Government gave notice to the priests and Juggernaut returned before his time."

Archdeacon Currie's letter from Pooree—1823.

*Missionary Register*—1824. P. 582.

The venerable Archdeacon manipulated this story. The Paik insurgents took possession of Puri from the 12th to 18th April 1817. Some Pundas joined them and plundered a portion of the money that was kept in the Pilgrim tax treasury.

But the Paik rising was practically suppressed in the Puri district even before the Car festival in 1817 (Letter from Impey, Magistrate to the Government, 29 May 1817).

(vi)  
1821

"The attendance was thin on account of the lateness of Ruth Jattrā. Mons. Jug was almost deserted and Messers Brahman Pundit and Co. threatened to remove his worship to a more central situation in India (in the neighbourhood of Moradabad)."

Correspondent from Cuttack to the *Asiatic Journal London*—March 1822.

(vii)  
1823

"Fifteen days after the Chaund Jattrā or the new Moon of the month of Āssaur, the grand festival of

the Ruth Jattrā is celebrated. The platform to receive the idol of Juggernaut is 23 feet square and the whole car is 38 feet high from the ground. The wood work is ornamented with images and painted ; the car has a lofty dome covered with English woollens of the most gaudy colours ; a large wooden image is placed on one side as a chariot driver of the car ; and several wooden horses are suspended in front of the car with their legs in the air. Six strong cables are fastened to the ruth by which it is dragged on its journey." xxx

"On the 14th June 1822, the temple was opened for the worship of Juggernaut for the first time after his retirement. The concourse of the pilgrims is always very great and the British authorities have taken every precaution to guard against accidents ; but as only the Hindoos are admitted within the temple, it was necessary to trust the priests, to prevent the ingress of too many pilgrims at once. Unfortunately they neglected this precaution. Men, women and children all rushed in the moment the gates were thrown open. When they reached the square building next to the grand tower, they had to descend three steps which were slippery from some holy food having been spilt ; eighteen women were thrown down at the foot of the steps and were trampled to death by the crowd in the rear before any assistance could be rendered."

"At last with great difficulty, the gates were again closed and the bodies were examined but it was too late. A singular difficulty occurred. The bodies of strangers are touched by men of very low caste and the people of this description are not admitted into the temple. If a corpse were carried through one of the gates, it would have been a bad omen for whoever might pass through afterwards. To obviate all these difficulties whilst the temple was emptied, the dead bodies were removed with hooks and poles and thrown over the boundary walls."

"The car festival was delayed for a week. On the 21st June 1822, the town of Pooree was filled with

pilgrims. All the European ladies and gentlemen assembled close to the cars on elephant back to observe the ceremony. Six pilgrims stationed close to the car of Juggernaut were aiding to pull a rope which suddenly yielded, having been slacker than others. These men fell on the ground unheeded by the shouting mob. Four were instantly crushed to atoms ; the fifth had a leg dreadfully mangled and the sixth fell between the wheels and escaped unhurt."

Correspondent from Cuttack to *Asiatic Journal* January-June 1824.

(viii)  
1825

"The excess of fanaticism, which formerly prompted the pilgrims to court death by throwing themselves in crowds under the wheels of the car of Juggernaut has happily ceased to actuate the worshippers of the present day. During the four years that I have witnessed the ceremony, three cases only of these cases of self-immolation have occurred. One of which I may observe is doubtful and should probably be described to an accident. In the two other instances the victims had long been suffering from severe excruciating complaints and chose this method of ridding themselves of the burden of life in preference to other modes of suicide."

Andrew Stirling—Account of Orissa *Asiatic Researches* 1825.

(ix)  
1826

"The body of a poor man was crushed to pieces by the car of Juggernaut. The massive wheels had passed over his loins and had nearly severed his upper limbs from his lower parts ; his bowels and blood had gushed out and presented a sight too shocking to look upon. It was one of the most horrid spectacles I ever

beheld. The wheels of these cars are made for this work of death most effectually. The poor wretch threw himself in front of the car and so became a voluntary sacrifice. He seemed to be a respectable man, apparently a Hindoostanee and a Brahmin. Some hardened wretch said 'See the glory of Juggernaut'."

Rev. Lacey in July 1826 quoted in *History of the General Baptist Mission*.

(x)  
1827

"The idols have been replaced on the cars to return. I cannot refrain from noticing the gestures and lascivious songs which were again employed to animate the draggers and to spread an infernal enthusiasm throughout the gazing assembly. The following day a poor wretch threw himself under Juggernaut's car and was crushed to death."

Sutton's narrative quoted in *India's cries to British Humanity* by Peggs (1830).

Referring to this case of suicide, Rev. Peggs bewailed: "When shall Britain cease to promote idolatry? When shall Christianity abolish the miseries of heathenism?"

M. D. Short who served in Orissa replied in the '*Asiatic Review*' London (July-December 1830): "The cases of voluntary sacrifice are exceedingly rare. I am inclined to think that there are more cases of suicides in this country than arising out of religious fanaticism in our Indian possessions. I am certain from all the cases that there are more suicides recorded in London in one year than immolations at all the cars in ten years."

(xi)  
1840

"There were three deaths under the car of Juggernath. These were cases either of accident or suicide."

Mills to Sudder Board of Revenue : 5 August 1840.

(xii)  
1841

Reverend Lacey witnessed the Car festival, this being the first Rath Jatra after the abolition of the Pilgrim tax. There were fewer pilgrims from a distance due to almost cessation of rain. Lacey calculated that not more than thirty thousand pilgrims attended the festival.

“Though the concourse of the pilgrims was small than formerly, the horrors of idolatry were no less apparent. One miserable pilgrim immolated himself under the wheels of Juggernaut’s Car. His brains were dashed out and he immediately died. At another time during the festival, in consequence of a sudden rush of the frantic crowd, many persons were entangled in the ropes of the car which rolled over dozens. Six were taken quite dead, several more insensible were sent to the hospital. This caused a perfect ecstasy of delight among Juggernaut’s worshippers.”

Account of Lacey, quoted in *History of the General Baptist Mission*, p. 179.

In this connection, Rev. Ward wrote in *Friend of India* August 1841 : “Apart from religious consideration, the pilgrimage of Juggernaut must be regarded as the greatest scourge in India. The loss of life it annually entails far exceeds that which is occasioned by all murders perpetrated throughout the country.”

“The loss of property, the distress and misery which flow from it is greater than which results from all the robberies and burglaries throughout Bengal and Bihar, to prevent and punish which so vast a Police and Magisterial establishment is maintained by the State.”

Rev. Ward estimated annual mortality of the pilgrims resorting to Puri from disease and accidents to be 4,000 to 5,000. Such irresponsible statements

greatly agitated the public mind in England. The Government of Bengal asked A. J. Mills, Commissioner, to send a Report.

Mills wrote on the 26th August 1843 : "It is impossible to form even a guess which has any approach to accuracy of the number of deaths among the pilgrims. When the Ruth Festival is late in the year, the mortality from cholera, exposure to wet weather and bad food is great, but 'four or five thousand per annum' is, in my opinion, a grossly exaggerated estimate. During the last three years the deaths amongst the pilgrims at Pooree are calculated by the Civil Surgeon at 484 per annum ; but this does not include the mortality at the last Ruth Jattrra which upwards of 50,000 upcountry and Bengallee pilgrims attended and of whom it is reckoned about 700 died."

(xiii)  
1846

"On the 25th June, the three cars were drawn up abreast close to the Sing Dwar or Lion gate and were clothed with spangled English broad cloth and adorned with various tensil ornaments and insignia of Hindoo mythological deities. By five O'clock in the afternoon an immense crowd of certainly not less than 180,000 worshippers were jammed together at the southern end of the large road, around the cars and before the temple doors ; while the roofs of adjacent Muths, small temples and roofs of houses, the trees and every elevated place were thickly crowded with pilgrims and spectators all stretching their sights to witness the egress from his temple of the fabled Lord of the World and his sister and brother."

"Aged female devotees near at hand and afar off waived the tail of the cows (chamaras) and stirred their heavily flounced Punkahs in honour of the god and in expression of their devotion. About six O'clock, a silver zone which ornamented the head of the elder-brother began to appear under the arch on

the door amidst the waving of punkah and chowrees and the hurry and bustle of the serving priests. The car of Bulbhudra stood farther from the temple door and consequently the idol had to travel far and labour much, ere he reached his splendid wain."

"On his journey he rested several times. The devotees ran forward and with greater zeal opened the way through the mass of the people and swept the road ; the flies were warned to keep at a distance by constant waving of the blue cow tails. The warm air was displaced from the heated and sacred vicinity of the god by the industrious action of the large and deeply founced Punkahs."

"Officers with chuprasses hung in red cloth to resemble the Company's servants, zealously kept back the eager crowd. By jumping and rocking Bulbhudra reached and then mounted his splendid car and very soon after him came out Juggernaut who proceeded by the same means of exertions to his throne."

Early on the morning of the 26th, the vicinity of the car was a scene of great bustle and excitement. The idols commenced their journey to the Goondicha temple."

Account of Lacey, quoted in *History of the General Baptist Mission* by Rev. Peggs.

So long we have depended on the accounts of the Missionary fanatics like Buchanon, Ward, Peggs, Lacey and Sutton. We will now quote a scholar. Fergusson probably witnessed the Car festival which was held in 1847. In his book, *Picturesque Illustrations of Ancient Architecture in Hindostan*, he gives a description of 'his godship's journey by car' (p. 43)

(xiv)  
1847

"The Fate was however not propitious to the poor god in the year I witnessed the festival. His

car had advanced only a few yards and stuck fast in the mud.—The road was heavy, the god took three days to reach his country house, the Goondicha Noor."

"This fashion of giving the gods an airing in cars is by no means peculiar to the worship of Jugunnath at Puri. In the south of India, all the gods and goddesses keep their carriages. But in nowhere I have seen cars so large as these, nor is any festival that I have seen is so well attended."

Fergusson writes about his disillusionment regarding the horrors of the Car of Juggernaut: "So much has been written about the horrors of the festival—of the hundreds of dead and dying pilgrims that strewn the roads and of their bones that whiten the plains—and of the victims that threw themselves under the wheels of the cars that I was most agreeably disappointed to find the pilgrims hurrying to the spot, talking and laughing like the people going to a fair in England, which in fact it is."

"There were fanatics measuring the road with their lengths and others rolling along and devotees doing absurd things of all sorts, but not more than one sees in every town in India; and as for victims, none had heard for many years before that time. Many tried to throw themselves down before the cars, it is true, but a kick or slap from those whoever standing startled them long before the wheels came near amidst laughter and shouts of derision of the people."

Nor were the bones more plentiful than the victims. I looked everywhere for a pilgrim's skull to examine his bump of veneration, and to keep it as a curiosity if I found it, but neither skulls nor bones were to be found anywhere that I could see. Still the authorities are so respectable, that it is but charitable to believe that a different state of things did once exist, and if the Missionaries and talkers of India House have their own way, probably will return."

“They clamoured till they got the Pilgrim tax and Government interference done away with, and the consequence was that eight victims were sacrificed the very first year after the abolition ; not willing victims, but it is said, by a mistake, getting entangled among the wheels, probably forced there by the priests, so that their god might again have a sacrifice.”

“According to these strange reasoners, there is nothing wrong in our interfering in all the civil and political affairs of the idolaters, and governing them as best we may. They find no fault with our taxing their honest industry till we have destroyed their manufactures and ground the agriculturists to dust ; but they are horrified if we interfere with the dishonest gains of a priest or tax the superstition of an ignorant pilgrim.”

Fergusson ridiculed self-immolation under the wheels of the Car of Jagannath. Dr. David Smith in his Report *Pilgrimage to Juggernaut* correctly writes : “It was in moments of maddening excitement, that in former years, devotees were inflamed with a desire to die beneath the wheels of that great car, casting themselves down before it as it advanced, and being crushed beneath its weight.”

(xv)  
1855

“While the cars were dragged through the main street, a number of people said to be about fifty fell or were pushed down by the mob and before they could all recover themselves or to be rescued, one of the cars passed over five of them, killing three and severely mutilating two others. A large body of Police headed by the Darogah and a great many of the Rajah’s people were around the cars for the purpose of preventing any accident of the kind, but the mob was restive, and the pressure was so great, that it was impossible to stop the Ruth before it had

passed over the unfortunate individuals. I believe no exertion was spared by the Police." xxx

"A large body of people rushing up to get near the car and help to drag it onwards fell in the confusion and others were immediately thrown upon them in the rush. The car was going on at that time, drawn by some 2,500 or 3,000 men, and it was quite impossible that it can be instantly stopped. It passed over limbs of those who had fallen near to it, and they were inevitably crushed to death."

"Our Police force was wholly inadequate to do the work they had to perform. A handful of 150 Bengallee or Oriyah Policemen are necessarily almost powerless amongst 200,000 fanatics, the third of whom were upcountrymen."

Magistrate, Puri to Commissioner: 8 July 1855.

(xvi)  
1860

"The festival has ended without the slightest injury to life or limb and without disturbances of any kind whatsoever. This is very satisfactory. I think there was unusual number of pilgrims this year. My own estimate is 60,000 but the Rajah's Dewan states that the estimate made at Atharanullah gave a total of 60,000 Bengallee pilgrims only, and I myself should certainly think that on the third day at least 100,000 were in the great street."

"On the first day of the reopening of the temple, the crowd was so great and heat was so oppressive that after a little less than two hours, I yielded to the request of the Dewan and others who represented that the people were fainting and closed the Temple."

"The next day, Messers Blunt, Dalmaye and Sacey helped me and after four hours of tremendous exertion on our part, every person who desired had been admitted into the Temple. To the aid of above gentlemen and thirty of the Military Police, I

am indebted in a great measure to protect the lives of the people.”

“I think the barriers quite sufficient protection to prevent the overcrowding of the Temple. The use of brute force and prodigal application of cane is rather degrading but with the present arrangements gentleness and order are impossible, when the people seemed mad to get into the Temple.”xxx

“One of the great cause of there having been no loss of life was my having introduced a line of Burkandazes proceeding on each side of the Car holding a rope in their hands.”

Magistrate, Puri to Commissioner: 5 July 1860.

The Commissioner approved the use of ropes on either side of the Car and the utilisation of the Police Battalion stationed at Puri. He however disliked ‘the prodigal application of cane’. He considered it improper to ask the European officers to attend, “except to give order to their men”.

## IMMOLATIONS UNDER THE CARS IN OTHER PLACES

(i)

Poynder stated in the debate of the Court of Proprietors in March 1827 that “about the year 1790, no fewer than twentyeight Hindoos were rushed to death at Ishera\* on the Ganges under the wheels of Juggernaut.

‘*Asiatic Journal*’—1827 Vol. 23.

(ii)

Three persons threw themselves at Rishra during

\* Ishera or Rishra is adjacent to Mahesh (Hooghly District, West Bengal) where the Car festival actually takes place.

the Car festival in 1864. It was afterwards stated to be accidents.

(iii)

“This year (1841) a European who witnessed the festival at Kinderparah south east of Cuttack, says that he saw five persons thrown down just by his side and crushed beneath the trumpery car. It is not the Old Block alone who had his victims. True, they were thrown down by the scuffle, but it is not difficult to avoid such scuffle if parties are so disposed.”

Account of Lacey, quoted in *History of the General Baptist Mission*, p. 179.

### SECTION THREE

## JAGANNATH TEMPLE DURING THE MUTINY

The Mutiny which broke out at Meerut in May 1857 had its shadow cast on Orissa. There was every reason to believe that some of the disbanded Sepoys of the 19th and 34th Bengal Native Infantry would visit Puri before returning to their homes. As the Car festival was approaching, the Commissioner advised the Magistrate of Puri to warn the Thana and Road Police to become alert and to keep watch over the disbanded sepoy going to Puri; who would probably be armed and might commit outrages.<sup>66</sup>

The Magistrate of Puri reported that about fifty disbanded Sepoys came to Puri and most of them had gone away. "The Pundahs of the Temple with whom they resided had been held responsible for the conduct of the men during their stay at Puri."<sup>67</sup>

The Government of India decided not to prevent the disbanded Sepoys from going to Puri on pilgrimage because any such restriction might be given the colouring of religious persecution. Acting under the instruction of the Government, Cockburn directed the Magistrate of Cuttack not to detain the Sepoys of the disbanded Regiments on their way to Puri. At the same time the Magistrate was intimated that every Sepoy on pilgrimage who was a deserter from the army or supposed to have belonged to a Regiment 'which had been guilty of treachery' should be arrested.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Circular of Cockburn, Commissioner 27 May 1857

<sup>67</sup> Cockburn to Secretary, Government of Bengal : 6 June 1857 B.R.A. Vol. 1857

<sup>68</sup> Cockburn to Magistrate, Cuttack : 23 June 1857 No. 49 : O.S.A. Vol. 330

Cockburn intimated the Secretary to the Government of Bengal that there were upwards of 100,000 pilgrims that year during the Car festival at Puri. He asked the Magistrates to establish strong pickets at every important place for the purpose of apprehending the deserters and the mutineers.<sup>69</sup>

He asked the Magistrate of Cuttack (with copies to the Magistrates of Puri and Balasore) to take prompt measure to ensure the stoppage of every pilgrim who was or might have been a soldier in order to examine his certificates. In case of suspicion, the pilgrim was to be detained under Act XVII of 1857.<sup>70</sup>

Even during the peak months of the Mutiny, some Sepoys came from Bengal to Puri. During the months, August to November 1857, one hundred and sixty seven Sepoys from the Regiments posted at Jalpaiguri and Berhampore came to Puri.

All Sepoys, whether on leave or discharged, were thoroughly searched by the Police at Puri and their movements were carefully watched so long as they stayed at Puri.<sup>71</sup>

The Magistrate of Puri was vested with power to try the Mutineers and deserters who posed as pilgrims. Strict watch was kept on all religious mendicants at Puri who might be ex-Sepoy in disguise.

Cockburn apprehended that even before the final suppression of the Mutiny, lawless bands might seek to escape from 'the deserved punishment' in the disturbed districts.

In his letter, Cockburn also pointed out that 'on the dispersion of the rebels upcountry' many of them would proceed to Puri and 'finding an insurrection

<sup>69</sup> G. F. Cockburn to Secretary, Government of Bengal : 29 June 1857 B.R.A. Vol. 1857

<sup>70</sup> Cockburn to Magistrate, Cuttack : 18 July 1857 O.S.A. Vol. 330 : No. 180

<sup>71</sup> Magistrate, Puri to Magistrate, Cuttack : 24 July 1857 O.S.A. Vol. No. 317

going in Sumbalpore' would join it. For all these reasons he suggested that the road to Juggernath might be closed to all upcountrymen.<sup>72</sup>

## CHAKI KHUNTIA

The panic which overtook the Government ruined the career of Chaki Khuntia, a 'Sepoy Punda' by profession. These Pundas used to visit the up-country military stations to induce the Sepoys to visit the Jagannath temple. Chaki Khuntia appears to have had contact with the 13th Bengal Native Infantry which mutinied at Lucknow. The Regiment was posted at Bhagalpur and Danapore before it moved to Lucknow. On the complaint of the 'Magistrate of Bihar' probably of Danapore, Chaki Khuntia was arrested at Puri. The Commissioner wrote to the Magistrate, Puri, that from the proceedings drawn against Chaki Khuntia he hardly found sufficient evidence for detaining the accused on a charge of sedition.

At the same time, the Magistrate should explain Chaki Khuntia "of suspicion entertained against him in respect of his recent conduct, being so strong that on no account he would ever be allowed to resume his profession as Sepoy Pundah or to live in the Division."<sup>73</sup>

But Chaki Khuntia was not immediately released due to the objection of the Puri Magistrate. His property was also confiscated. He was released after the Mutiny.

<sup>72</sup> G. F. Cockburn to Secretary, Government of Bengal : 12 December 1857 No. 345 : O.S.A. Vol. 330

<sup>73</sup> Cockburn to Magistrate, Puri : 14 August 1858 No. 67 : B.R.A. Vol. 1858-59

## CHAPTER EIGHT

# SEVERANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT CONNECTION WITH THE JAGANNATH TEMPLE

(LAST PHASE)

The retention of the Police force by the Government for Jagannath temple annoyed the Court of Directors' who sent a strongly worded Despatch. They wrote : "The employment of a Police establishment within the temple of Juggernath, especially during the festivals and commemorations is inconsistent with the total disconnection of the Government from the religious observances of the natives, which it has been our desire for many years to accomplish and which under our Despatch of 12th November 1856 would be rendered complete".

"We cannot consent to modify our orders limiting the employment of the Government Police to the exterior of the Temple. The Superintendent of the Temple who has ample funds at his disposal must be warned of the responsibility, which lies on him to make proper provision for the prevention of outrage and the avoidance of accidents within the Temple."

"On the occasion of an accident attended with loss of life in 1854, the consequence of defective arrangements by the Superintendent, his responsibility was affirmed, and his negligence was punished by a pecuniary fine."

"The Superintendent will clearly be made to understand that he will be personally held responsible for all the consequences resulting from an insufficient establishment of servants or from other deficiencies in his arrangements." xx

"If after due trial the expectation shall not be realized, it will be the duty of your Government to

consider what steps should be taken for the repression of crime and outrage, consistent on one hand with the full toleration afforded to the exercise of their religions by the natives and in the other, our determination to abstain from any measure by which the Government may be connected directly or indirectly with a religious ceremony either Hindoo or Mahomedan."

"At the same time it must be understood that in holding the Superintendent responsible for the proper discharge of his duty, as stated in our Despatch of 12th November 1856, does not divest itself to maintain the public peace and to protect the persons of its subjects. It will still rest with the proper authorities to take cognizance of any violation of the law that may occur within as well as without its precincts, and if necessary to interfere by means of the Police force in cases of criminal violence and serious disturbance."<sup>1</sup>

On 20 April 1858, the Commissioner of the Cuttack province wrote to the Collector, Puri, directing him that the Police force might be withdrawn from the Temple from the 15th May.

J. B. Mactier, Collector, Puri, replied to the letter from the Commissioner, proposing the measures he would adopt for the maintenance of public peace on the abolition of the Police establishment to guard the interior of the Temple.

He wrote : "During the great Jattras or festivals my hands must be strengthened to prevent such loss of lives as occurred previous to the entertainment of the present Police".

"Were the loss of life within the Temple precincts alone, the matter would be a easier settlement but there is as much danger outside as inside. The

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<sup>1</sup> Despatch of the Court of Directors to the Government of India : 3 February 1858 (No. 12)

*Correspondence relating to Missionaries and Idolatry* printed in 1858 by House of Commons.

rush outside before the gates are opened is nearly as dangerous as that inside after they are opened."

"As to the arrangements for preservation of accidents inside the Temple the sole question to be looked to are whether under the law the Rajah has power to compel attention to his orders, and whether we have the power to punish if accidents occur through defective arrangements. The Rajah is powerless; the hereditary servants of the Idol regard him as a mere cipher and no attention is paid to his orders." xxx

"The hereditary servants of the Idol are the chief causes of every accident which has occurred. Surrounded or followed by their band of clients (Pilgrims) they are ever the most active in trying to break through the line of Police cordon. As to the loss of life, they are perfectly indifferent."

"If the Rajah is to be regarded as responsible for the welfare of the pilgrims when inside the Temple, he must be empowered to compel attention to the arrangements."

"In other words, the disconnection of Government with the Temple must be extended to the Civil as well as to the Criminal. If it is inconsistent with Christianity to interfere to protect the lives of persons engaged in practices abhorrent to its tenets, it is still more inconsistent for a Christian Judge to be called to decide whether the right to sell Mahapershad or food offered to the Idol shall belong to Pundah A or B; or in any other of the numerous quarrels relating to the so called hereditary rights connected with the Temple, which are severally nothing more than a license to plunder the pilgrims."

"As to our policy to punish under the law if accidents do occur, Government can certainly practically abolish the office of the Superintendent, by dismissing the Rajah from the office (his family can alone perform certain ceremonies connected with the Temple) and the payment of a fine can be enforced

by the threat of dismissal, and this is the only punishment that can be inflicted."

"I fear we could never procure such proof as would satisfy the Court that the refusal of Pundahs A, B and C to obey some regulation of the Rajah's Police had been the cause of injury to life or limb."

"The local authorities should be vested with power to punish as accessories to homicide all persons who, by a wilful infringement of the arrangements of the Temple, have been even indirectly the cause of deaths."

"To reamplify this—after passing through the gateway, there is a sudden drop of a few steps—a short passage and a rising flight of steps. It is here that the accidents principally occur. Pundah A pushes through the line of Police at the door, carries a crowd of clients principally old women with him. Not knowing the road, and it being nearly impossible to see the way, one woman falls, another trips over her and the pressure from above renders it absolutely impossible for either to rise. They are literally, trampled to death. Pundah A, as well known to the Police, will bring a dozen witnesses to prove that he was fifty miles away from the Temple on the day of the accident and another dozen to prove that he and the Police have a private quarrel. The Pundahs though quarrelsome, drop all private animosity when the bodypolitic is likely to be injured. The fate of such a case in appeal, there could be no doubt." xxx

The Collector pointed out that on the occasion of an accident in 1854, the Superintendent was held guilty. He was fined but it was not actually imposed. "But the management of the Police was taken away from the Superintendent, the cost being deducted from the allowance paid by Government."<sup>2</sup>

The Commissioner of the Cuttack province wrote to the Secretary, Government of Bengal that

<sup>1</sup> J. B. Mactier to Commissioner : 24 April 1858 J.T.C. Pt. 4

he had informed the Magistrate of Puri that "the Police must be immediately withdrawn from the Temple, within which their influence or interference is prohibited and that the public Police are never to interfere in any way what ever within the precincts of the Temple excepting when absolutely necessary to do so in cases of criminal violence or serious disturbance".

"The Superintendent of the Temple will be informed of the nature of the Honourable Court of Directors' instructions and given clearly to understand that he will be held responsible to make proper provision for the prevention of outrages and avoidance of accidents within the Temple and personally liable for all the consequences arising from keeping an insufficient supply of servants or from other deficiencies in his arrangements."<sup>3</sup> xxx

"A. R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, in his letter dated 4 May 1858 intimated the Commissioner of the desire of the Lieutenant Governor that Police should be withdrawn from the interior of the Temple and "if their cost was deducted in making over land to the Superintendent it would now be made good by a further assignment of land."

The Commissioner intimated the Secretary to the Government of Bengal that the Magistrate of Puri had been directed to discharge the present Police establishment from 15 May. He also called for information on the subject of land "which can be best transferred to the Superintendent of the Temple in lieu of Rs. 6804 per annum which had been deducted on account of the Police establishment from the authorized money allowance payable to the Temple." The Commissioner wrote :

"It will be wholly impossible however to make any new arrangement with effect prior to the commencement of the new Umlee year on 19th September

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<sup>3</sup> Commissioner to Secretary, Government of Bengal : 28 April 1858 No. 188 : J.T.C. Pt. V

1859, as several weeks must be taken up in ascertaining the lands most suitable for transfer."

"The monthly cost of the establishment was Rs. 567 and it will be proper to pay this amount to the Superintendent until the transfer of the lands is arranged."<sup>4</sup>

The Secretary, Government of India acknowledged the letter from the Secretary, Government of Bengal dated 10 May. The Secretary, Government of India summed up in his letter "the final arrangement for disconnecting Government from all concern with the Temple."

It was stated that a sum of Rs. 6804 was deducted from the annual payment to the Superintendent and applied to the maintenance of a Police force to prevent accidents and to keep peace both within and without the Temple.

The Secretary wrote : "The Court in their Despatch dated 12 November 1856 approved of that arrangement but desired that the Police force should be maintained only outside the Temple and that the preservation of order inside should be left to the Superintendent and other officers of the Temple."

"On the representation of the Commissioner of Cuttack that the withdrawal of the Police force from the interior of the Temple would be followed by loss of life and the resort there of thieves and vagabonds, whom the Superintendent would be unable to expel without the Magistrate's assistance, the Lieutenant Governor suspended this part of the order and retained Police within as well as without the Temple. This was approved by the Government of India."

"The Hon'ble Court however declined to modify their order limiting the employment of the Government Police to the exterior of the Temple. They desired that the responsibility of the Superintendent might be strictly enforced, but they added that while

<sup>4</sup> Commissioner to Secretary, Government of Bengal : 10 May 1858 J.T.C. Pt. V

Government does not divest itself of its obligation to maintain the public peace and to protect the persons of its subjects and that while it will look to the Superintendent to keep order within the Temple as a matter of domestic arrangement, it will rest with proper authorities to take cognizance of any violation of law that may occur within as well as without its precincts and if necessary to interfere by means of the public Police in cases of criminal violence or serious disturbance."

"The order has been construed by the Commissioner of Cuttack to authorize or require him to discharge the Temple Police altogether and he now submits a proposal to making over the Superintendent more land in lieu of annual payment of Rs. 6804; and for making payment in money till the transfer is completed."

"The Lieutenant Governor submitted this for sanction. It appears to the President in Council that it was not the intention of the Court that all the Police be discharged or made over to the Superintendent. On the contrary they said distinctly: 'as a case for the interference of Government in consequence of the neglect of the Superintendent seems to have arisen, we approve the orders for the maintenance of an efficient Government establishment at the cost of the Temple,' and it seems clear from their subsequent Despatch that all they desire that the Police shall not ordinarily or habitually remain inside the Temple. It shall remain outside and be ready to interfere within as well as without in cases of criminal violence or serious disturbance."

"The difficulty of the case is this. At the time of the great festivals, there are particular parts of the Temple, which thousands of pilgrims desire to visit at the same time. The difficulty of preserving order there consequently is very grave and can be overcome only by persons accustomed to such duties."

"The intention of the Court is that the Superintendent is to be held responsible for the preservation of

the peace inside the Temple; and their orders limit the ordinary employment of the Government Police to the exterior, though if necessary, interference in cases of criminal violence or serious disturbance within the Temple is authorized."

"A Police force sufficient for this purpose must therefore still be maintained at the expense of the Temple." xxx

"As much therefore of Rs. 6804 per annum as will suffice for the pay of this diminished number should be retained and the remainder be converted into land and made over to the Temple."<sup>5</sup>

The Commissioner in his letter No. 61 of 10 August 1858 requested the Magistrate of Puri to forward a statement for a Police establishment which would be sufficient for the preservation of peace and order in the temple of Jagannath.

On the 19th August 1858 (No. 215) the Magistrate sent a statement for an establishment involving an expenditure of Rs. 2782 per annum "to be employed at the expense of the Superintendent of the Temple". They were proposed to be armed with the Constable staves instead of "the useless spears now in use". On the 18th of August 1858, an order was issued appointing a new Police force to the temple of Juggernath consisting of 30 Burkandazes, 1 Jamadar and 3 Duffadars.\* "Thus making a deduction of Rs. 2782 from the sum of Rs. 6804 formerly deducted from the amount of compensation made to the Temple and that for the balance of Rs. 4022, value in land is to be hereafter to be given".

A. R. Young, Secretary, Government of Bengal in his letter dated 17 September 1858 informed the Commissioner that the Lieutenant Governor had

<sup>5</sup> C. Beadon, Secretary, Government of India to A. R. Young, Secretary, Government of Bengal : 28 July 1858 No. 1739 : J.T.C. Pt. 3

\* 1 Jamadar—Rs. 20 per month ; 3 Duffadars Rs. 10 each month ; 30 Burkandazes on average Rs. 5 each, per month.

sanctioned the appointment of a Police force at a cost of Rs. 2782 per annum, "to be deducted from the amount, the equivalent of which is to be assigned in land, to the Superintendent of the Temple in lieu of money allowance hitherto received by him from Government."

The Despatch of the Court of Directors encouraged the Superintendent of the Temple to make another representation to the Commissioner, from his residence situated in 'Khurda Bentsahi,' Puri, in September 1858.

He observed "At all the celebrated places of pilgrimage within the territories of the Honourable Company, Government pays for the Police force. No where are they paid from the Temple funds. Wherever festivals are held, there the Police are ordered to assist in keeping the peace. This being the case, it is unjust that the funds of Juggernath should be taken for that purpose."

The Raja stated that he had been asked to pay the Police force at a high rate of salary. He represented: "This is very unjust to take so much of Juggernath's allowance to pay the servants. Let it be considered that the Honourable Company is Lord of the earth and Lord of the Country; but never has it been heard of that in one of its territories the Police receive such pay as this".

"Only as loss to Juggernath and trouble to me, this allowance has been sanctioned for the support of the Police."

The Commissioner in his letter to A. R. Young, Secretary, Government of Bengal referred to the Raja's objection to entertaining the Police force at a cost of Rs. 2782. He took it for granted that all arguments made by the Superintendent were wrong. So he observed that "there was nothing in the petition that appeared to require any particular notice."

In his petition the Raja complained against the high rate of salary fixed for the Temple Police. Cockburn pointed out that the Temple Police was

given the pay of the Police all over Bengal. He also rejected the complaint that the numbers of temporary Burkandazes were too many.

Cockburn wrote that the Honourable Court of Directors decided that the Superintendent of the Temple would be responsible for the interior management of the Temple. The Police officers would render duty outside the Temple precincts "excepting when their presence inside is absolutely necessary for the preservation of order".

Lastly he observed: "I do not perceive that the Superintendent has have any good grounds for altering any of the arrangements, which after due consideration, have been done by Government. That he is dissatisfied and discontented appears evident from the tone of his petition and he will continue to express himself accordingly, while there remains the most distant chance of recovering the full amount of money allowance previous to the establishment of the Temple Police".<sup>6</sup>

A. R. Young, Secretary, Government of Bengal, received a letter from the Government of India 'on the subject of petitions from the Rajah of Khoordah and certain officers of the Temple regarding the Police arrangement in the Temple of Juggernath'. He was directed to communicate the substance of the Despatch of the Hon'ble Court of Directors, (No. 141 of 1 september 1858) to the Petitioners, through the Commissioner of the Cuttack province.<sup>7</sup>

J. F. Cockburn, Commissioner, communicated the decision of the Government to the Rajah of Khurda. The Raja was informed: "It has been decided by Government, entrusting all Police arrangements inside the Temple, excepting when special and urgent circumstances render interference absolutely necessary

<sup>6</sup> Commissioner to A. R. Young : 25 October 1858 No. 100 : J.T.C. Pt. 3

<sup>7</sup> Under Secretary, Government of India to A. R. Young : 4 November 1858 No. 2438 : J.T.C. Pt. 3

to the Superintendent, and of maintaining the service outside the Temple as a reduced establishment”.

He informed that Rs. 2782 the balance of Rs. 6804, which was formerly deducted, would be converted into an equivalent of land and transferred to the Superintendent.

On 29 November 1858, A. R. Young, Secretary, Government of Bengal wrote a letter (No. 2554) to C. Beadon, Secretary, Government of India in which he stated that the Lieutenant Governor felt some doubts regarding the views of the Hon'ble Court as conveyed in their last Despatch.

“His Honor was uncertain whether it was intended that the Magistrate should exercise control or interference in such matters as the closing of gates of the Temple of Juggernath on certain occasions, the removal of the barriers after the celebration of festivals and the like.”

Charles Beadon, Secretary, Government of India was desired by the President in Council “to observe the following principles of action which are clearly laid down in the Hon'ble Court's Despatch.” xxx

“First, the Magistrate is not to prohibit or to punish or in any way to regulate or interfere with any of the observances or ceremonies connected with the Temple, whether in relation to the opening or closing of the doors or in any other respect.”

“Second, that all such arrangements are to be left to the unfettered discretion of the Superintendent, who will be held responsible for any breach of peace arising therefrom within the Temple.”

“Third, that the Superintendent is to be made to understand and to cause it generally understood by others that all proceedings regarding the worship by the pilgrims or their admission or exclusion from the Temple are regulated not by the Magistrate but by the Superintendent himself on his sole responsibility.”

“The Hon'ble Court observe that the Magistrate was quite right in refusing to allow the Superintendent to adopt any innovation of an established

practice (that is to say, in refusing to allow him not to open the gate of the Temple on the day of Nobojiban) under the authority of his (Magistrate's) sanction."

"But this is not to prevent the Magistrate, if he has reasons to believe, either from the report of the Superintendent or otherwise, that a loss of life or riot or a serious breach of peace is imminent, from taking such measures as he may think necessary, to prevent it."

"In such cases, the interference of the Magistrate, acting promptly in good faith for the purpose of keeping the peace and proceeding no further than is plainly necessary under the circumstances of the moment, even though it involves entrance within the Temple precincts, the closing of doors and barriers, the restraining of the crowd within the bounds of order and safety to life and limb and other like measures is no more than his bounden duty in this as well as other cases, and cannot be deemed to be participation in the ceremonies of the Temple."

"Although the Hon'ble Court say only the Superintendent will be held responsible for any breach of the peace, which may arise within the Temple, that being the place especially under his superintendence, yet in the opinion of the President in Council, it cannot be doubted that for what he does as Superintendent, he is equally responsible through the consequences of his conduct, manifested outside.<sup>8</sup>

J. B. Mactier, Magistrate, Puri informed the Commissioner that the Police establishment under the order of the Hon'ble Court of Directors of 3 February 1858 was no more maintained within the Temple precincts. He pointed out "that the Court's order did not appear to diminish the now existing duties or jurisdiction of the Magistrate, viz, the general care of life and property outside the Temple gate".

<sup>8</sup> C. Beadon to A. R. Young : 11 January 1859 No. 92 : J.T.C. Pt. 4

The Magistrate pointed out that the barriers being outside the Temple were naturally under the jurisdiction of the Magistrate. If the Rajah had the charge of the barriers, he would neglect that most important duty and the people would be squeezed to death outside the Temple gate.

He further observed : "The pilgrims look on the arrangement of the barriers as a Police one, made solely from the desire to save life and decidedly not to do honour to the idol". xxx

"If the barriers are withdrawn as an indirect interference with idolatrous rites, with what argument can be defended the Police regulation in regard to the Bathing festival and the nets before the Cars to catch the persons falling, the fenders to put them out of the way of the wheels, the drags to stop and the arrangements made solely from the most Christian motives." xxx

Mactier argued that if the barriers and other 'Car arrangements' which were 'most distasteful to the Rajah' were given up—"what follows is an annual deluge of blood, a consequent annual increase to the celebrity of the idol but worst of all, a conviction in the native mind that those measures by which Government wished to mark its desire to sever its connection with idolatry—are dictated by a desire to do honour to the idol."

"Her Majesty's Government is a Christian one and their motives will be understood and appreciated by the Christians. It is to the native idea we must look into this case and to understand that we must argue as a Native would."<sup>9</sup>

Mactier wrote again to the Commissioner that the Superintendent had agreed to furnish per annum sixty men for one month at Rupees four to assist the Police in preserving the peace of the town, and to keep the barriers to the satisfaction of the Magistrate. He soli-

<sup>9</sup> Mactier to Cockburn : 25 January 1859 No. 27 ; J.T.C.  
Pt. 4

cited the permission of the Commissioner to discharge the Temple guards at once.<sup>10</sup>

On 28 June 1859, Mactier informed the Commissioner

“The total deduction to be made from the Jumma of Killah Khoordah is Rs. 6887-13-3 to have effect from 1266 Umlee.”

The Commissioner informed the Secretary, Government of Bengal, that agreeably to the order of the Government dated 4 March 1859, the Police establishment entertained at the cost of the Juggernath temple, had been discharged.”<sup>11</sup>

The Commissioner stated that the monthly sum of Rs. 567, paid to the Superintendent would continue till transfer of the land.

On 13 December 1859, Mactier, Collector, Puri, informed the Commissioner regarding the death of Bir Kishore Deb, the Raja of Khurda (now called the Raja of Puri) on 11 December 1859. A few hours before his death, he adopted a boy, four years old, named Divyasingh Deb, the second son of the Raja of Kimedi. By a will his wife, Suryamani Patmahadei was made guardian of all his property and empowered to conduct the affairs of the Jagannath temple during the minority of the adopted son. She was also authorized to adopt another son in the event of the boy's death.

The death of the Raja created problems. Besides the landed property, belonging to the Temple and personal, the Raja received Malikana allowance at the rate of the Company's Rs. 2333 per mensem in lieu of the proprietorship of the Khurda estate.

Mactier suggested that Radhasyam Narendra, a zamindar of Kendrapara, be appointed to manage the

<sup>10</sup> Mactier to Cockburn : 12 February 1859 No. 49 : J.T.C. Pt. 4

<sup>11</sup> Commissioner to Secretary, Government of Bengal : 20 September 1859 No. 82 : J.T.C. Pt. 4

Temple affairs. "He is universally respected by the Europeans and Natives for his probity."

But Cockburn, Commissioner, recommended Suryamani Patmahadei to be the guardian of the minor and to conduct the affairs of the Temple.

On 31 December 1859, Cockburn wrote to the Board of Revenue that considering the peculiar connection of the Rajah with the Temple he would prefer that the Court of Wards did not take charge of the property although he considered "their management would be more efficient than that of the Rani's."

The Secretary, Board of Revenue, wrote to the Government of Bengal that the Board agreed with the Commissioner that "the superintendence might properly be left to the Rani in accordance with the terms of the will".

The Board also suggested that "the Rani may have at present charge of the boy".<sup>12</sup>

The Government of Bengal informed the Board of Revenue on 5 March 1860, that the Lieutenant Governor agreed with the Board that the interference of the Court of Wards would not be advisable.

On 15 May 1861, W. Money, officiating Collector of Puri informed the Commissioner that the commutation proposal remained in abeyance pending a final decision on the question.

On 16 July 1862, Money submitted a list of 29 villages "proposed to be given to the Superintendent of the temple of Juggernath in commutation of the remaining sum of Rs. 6804 still paid to him from the Government treasury". The Collector wrote that the Rajah's objection to the list of villages had been 'summarily disposed of'. He informed that the villages proposed to be given to the Rajah had a Jumma of Rs. 6888—"the excess compensated for the collection expenses".

The Government also severed its connection with

<sup>12</sup> Secretary, Board of Revenue to Government of Bengal : J.T.C. Pt. 4, 7 February 1860

the Jagannath Ballabh Math.

On 22 July 1862, No. 122, the Board of Revenue sent the draft of a deed to be signed by Ramachandra Das the Adhikaree of the Jagannath Ballabh Math. It was stated in the draft : "It has been for many years the desire of Government that the connection directly or indirectly with the temple of Juggernath and with other Hindoo religious institutions should entirely cease".

"Previous to the British rule, the village of Bulpore was transferred as rent free tenure to the Adhikaree of the Juggernath Ballabh Math, to supply Mahapersad and to maintain the Dharamsala or house of refuge for the poor pilgrims."

"The Soobah(dar) at a subsequent period resumed the aforementioned village of Bulpore and established annual money payment instead and whereas after the accession of the British Government the money payment was continued to be paid from the tax on the pilgrims."

The sum of the Company's Rs. 2666-10 was paid according to the Regulation XII of 1805 as being part of the established donation, for the support of the Juggernath Bullabh Math. According to the terms of the Agreement, the payment would cease from the commencement of the Umlee year 1260, and that in lieu of it, land would be transferred to the Adhikaree. It was decided that "the entire annual proceeds of the lands in question with the deduction of the actual expenses of collections shall be expended in the manner contemplated in the original grant".

On 27 November 1862, the Board of Revenue wrote to the Commissioner, Orissa, expressing their approval of the transfer of 29 villages to the Superintendent of the Jagannath temple bearing a Jumma of Rs. 6888.

The Commissioner submitted a draft Deed for the commutation of a donation to the temple of Juggernath to a grant of land, which the Board of Revenue approved on 2 February 1863.

*Draft Deed*

“First—Whereas it has been for many years the desire of Government that its connection with the temple of Juggernath should cease entirely and for ever, and in persuance of such desire various measures have at different times been taken for the severance of such connection direct or indirect and whereas it has been considered necessary for the purpose of carrying out the said desire of Government that the money allowance now annually paid from the treasury of Pooree should be commuted for an equivalent in land, the following recital of the measures is hereby recorded.” XXXX

“Second—Previous to the enactment of Act X of 1840, the expenses of the Temple averaging about Rs. 53,000 per annum were paid by the Government who levied a tax on pilgrims, and was also in possession of the former endowments of the Temple which had gradually been resumed soon after the conquest of the province of Orissa in 1803.”

“Third—By the Act in question, the Pilgrim tax was abolished and the management of the affairs of the Temple, made over to the Rajah of Khoordah for the time being, the annual payment on account of the expenses being continued as before.”

“Fourth—In 1843, the estate of Sataees Hazari Mahal, yielding an annual revenue of Rs. 17420 and which was the last remaining portion of the landed endowment of the Temple at the time of the acquisition of the province in 1803, was made over to the Rajah of Khoordah as Superintendent of the Temple, and the annual money payment by Government was then reduced to Rs. 35738-7-6.”

“Fifth—In 1845, an investigation was made into the nature of payments to the Juggernath Temple, it was decided that the annual payment should be reduced to Rs. 23,321 being the amount of the resumed endowment and compensation for Sayers.”

“Sixth—In 1856, owing to the culpable neglect

of the Superintendent of the Temple, it was found necessary for the protection of the pilgrims to appoint a Police establishment at an annual expense of Rs. 6804 which being deducted from the annual payment by Government, this latter sum became reduced to Rs. 16517."

"Seventh—In 1858, Government decided on making no more annual payments after the close of the Umlee year 1264, but to transfer from the commencement of 1265 Umlee, certain lands yielding an equivalent to the sum of Rs. 16517."

"Eighth—These lands were transferred by a deed dated the 3rd day of April 1858 between J. B. Mactier, Esquire, Collector of Pooree on one part and Rajah Beer Kishore Deo, Superintendent of the Temple on the other part."

"Ninth—Subsequently in conformity with the orders of the late Honourable Court of Directors, it was in 1859, decided that in future the Superintendent shall be held responsible for the preservation of peace inside the Temple<sup>13</sup> and that he shall himself maintain such extra Police as may be necessary outside the Temple on the occasion of the great festivals, and the sum of Rs. 6804 hitherto paid direct to the Police shall be made over to the Superintendent".

The Tenth and the Eleventh clauses are not important.

"Twelvth—The arrangements for commuting to land the sum paid to the Superintendent for Police purposes having been completed, the following lands including those formerly transferred in exchange of

<sup>13</sup> "The experience of forty years has fully demonstrated the utter impracticability of the orders of 1858 enjoining Government non-interference, which has since been more honoured in their breach than in their observances, not from any spirit of muddlesomeness, but for the imperative necessity of saving life and limb, which no civilized Government can ignore."

K. G. Gupta, Commissioner, to Govt. of Bengal 18 September 1902 J.T.C. Loose file.

the annual sum of Rs. 16517 and those transferred in exchange of the annual sum of Rs. 6804 are hereby declared to be made over to the Rajah of Khoordah as Superintendent of the Temple of Juggernath to be held in trust for the Temple and also by his successors to the said office of Superintendent." xxx

"Thirteenth—No enquiry will hereafter be made by the officials of Government under any circumstances whatever regarding alleged injury to the crops or to the lands by draught, inundation or other causes."

'Fourteenth—No further payment will be made after the execution of this deed." xxx

Lastly, it was mentioned that "from the time of of the transfer of the said lands, Government will have no further connection direct or indirect with the affairs of the Temple of Juggernath, its management, revenues or otherwise and the Rajah of Khoordah in his capacity of Superintendent, is solely responsible for the due application of its revenue and administration of its affairs."

The Ikrarnamah (Deed) was signed by Suryamani Patmahadei with two witnesses and by G. N. Barlow, Collector of Puri, on March 30, 1863.<sup>14</sup>

Thus on 30 March 1863, the direct connection of the Christian Government in India with the famous Hindu temple of Jagannath terminated after sixty years.

<sup>14</sup> G. N. Barlow, Collector, Puri to the Commissioner : 7 May 1863 No. 457 : J.T.C. Pt. 4

## CHAPTER NINE

### DIVYASINGH DEB—A MAHARAJA WHO BECAME AN ANDAMAN CONVICT

On 30 March 1863, Rani Suryamani Patmahadei signed the deed of transfer of lands in commutation of payment on behalf of the minor Raja Divyasingh Deb. On 2 April 1863, R. N. Shore, the Commissioner, informed Barlow, the Collector of Puri, that the lands in commutation of payment to the Temple should be at once made over to the Rajah.

The Board of Revenue informed the Commissioner that "the superintendence of the Temple, the care of the estates both appertaining to the Temple and to the minor and charge of the minor himself, in conformity with the late Rajah's will, be vested in his widow, the Ranee."

The Dowager Rani obtained a certificate from the Civil Court appointing her the guardian of the minor and his estates under Act XI of 1858.

While the matter was still under consideration, the minor's father, the Raja of Kimedya (Bodokhimedi in the Ganjam District) applied to the Government, to allow him to take charge of the minor's estates. R. N. Shore, the Commissioner, did not forward the application to the Government.

The Commissioner reported : "Since then it came to my knowledge that the Ranee had fallen into the hands of bad advisers, the child was neglected, and that the property was being wasted. Information was given to the Raja of Kimedya, who was alarmed at the news which he received. He came to Pooree to enquire into the matter. Being thoroughly disgusted of the Ranee's misconduct and mismanage-

ment, he is about to petition to the Civil Court to revoke the certificate and to restore to him his child."

"I apprehend that the Civil Court will not have the power to grant his request or in any way to interfere with the Ranee".

The Commissioner in conclusion observed. "It appears to me in every point of view, that it is desirable and indeed necessary that the Collector should take charge of the minor under the Court of Wards. Without entering into details, I must say that I believe that the Ranee is wholly unfit to retain the charge of the boy, the sooner he is removed from her care, the better."

"It cannot be however denied that considerable embarrassment will result from the assumption of the charge of the minor's property in consequence of the superintendence of the Temple being vested in the head of the family." xxx

"It will be easy on the other hand to make over the duty with adequate security to the Rajah of Kimedya or some other qualified member of the Hindoo community but the objection will always remain that Government in its capacity of the Court of Wards is in the last resort the real manager of the Temple."

"We have therefore a choice of evils. Of the least will, I think, be to leave the Temple and its lands with the Ranee and if she neglects or abuses her trust, the Rajah of Kimedya or any other member of the Hindoo community can, I presume, replace her according to Act XX of 1863."<sup>1</sup>

The Government of Bengal did not want to alter the existing arrangement. Divyasingh Deb grew up as a neglected child, with the result that he became wayward and addicted to drugs while in his teens.

Ravenshaw, the Commissioner, informed the Government about the donation of Rs. 5,000 by Kanhaiyalal Pundit, the Zamindar of Darpan, for the

construction of a Dharamasala on the bank of the Kathjuri, and a couple of wells for the pilgrims to Puri. The Government of Bengal thanked "the Babu for his human and liberal gift" (Secretary to the Government to the Commissioner, 27 July 1870).

The Commissioner informed the Board of Revenue on 25 June 1871 on the subject of position of the Government in those portions of the Puri district which had been assigned to the Raja of Pooree in support of the Jagannath Temple. He wanted to know whether the impending settlement in the Puri district would also be extended to those lands.

But in the opinion of the Member, Board of Revenue, "the entire disassociation of Government from all connections with the Jagannath Temple can only be carried out by refraining from all interference in the management of those lands, which should vest in the Rajah to the extent to which the management of estates held by private individuals is vested in their proprietors".

It was pointed out that by the deed of transfer, the lands therein specified were made over to the Rajah of Khoordah as the Superintendent of the Jagannath Temple, to be held in trust by him for the Temple.

"The conditions attached to the transfer are that no enquiry hereafter would be made by the Officers of the Government under any circumstances whatever while the concluding clause declares that from the time of the transfer of the said lands, Government would have no connection, direct or indirect, with the affairs of the Jagannath Temple, its management, revenues and otherwise."

It seemed to the Member in charge that "the terms of the Deed clearly prove that the Rajah was not merely to receive a rent charge from the lands (their management and collection of revenues resting with Government) but the lands themselves are to be made over to and managed under certain reservations by the Rajah in trust for the Temple and that all con-

nections of Government with those lands (which in fact were the source of a part of the revenue of the Temple) should cease".<sup>2</sup>

But the Lieutenant Governor differed from the opinion of the Member, Board of Revenue. The Secretary to the Government wrote : "In the opinion of the Lieutenant Governor the revenue and not the rents of certain lands were made over to the Rajah in trust for the Temple". x x x

"On the expiry of the present Settlement, the rights of the holders of the land must be protected and as the Agreement is to secure to the Rajah a specific sum, he would, in His Honor's opinion be entitled only to the revenues (as distinguished from the rents) of so much land as would yield the specific sum."

"The Dowager Ranee was left to manage all the property and so very badly did she manage that in 1872, the Government of India was urged to sanction a resumption of the lands and a return to cash payments for the maintenance of the Temple. That proposal was however negatived by the Secretary of State (Despatch No. 14, 16 April 1874) on the ground that the assignment of lands to the Rajah as a Trustee of the Temple was meant to be a final settlement of the question and that no strong reasons were shown for setting it aside." (Secretary to the Government of Bengal to Secretary, Revenue Department, 28 August 1878).<sup>3</sup>

The Board of Revenue held that the allowance to the Raja of Khurda should be treated as Political pension instead of 'Malikana', "as the latter term implies a claim on the part of the Rajah to the Settlement of Khoordah which is not desirable in any way to countenance."

The opinion of Armstrong, Collector of Puri,

<sup>2</sup> Secretary, Board of Revenue to Secretary, Government of Bengal : 22 July, 1871. No. 158 : J.T.C. Pt. V

<sup>3</sup> Secretary, Govt. of Bengal to Board of Revenue : 25 September 1871, J.T.C. Pt. V

was sought in this connection. Armstrong in his letter dated 26 October expressed the view that "nothing is clearer that the allowance is properly called 'Malikana'." He pointed out that a letter from the Secretary, Territorial department dated 24 December 1819, announced the fixation of the Malikana at ten per cent.

The Commissioner differed from his opinion. He observed that "the use of the phrase Malikana is certainly objectionable as it implies that the Rajah has still a right to the estate which is not a fact. Although originally called and calculated as Malikana, the allowance is undoubtedly a Political pension."<sup>4</sup>

The Malikana was declared to be a Political pension inspite of the protest of Raja Divyasingh Deb (Junior Secretary, Government of Bengal to the Board of Revenue, 24 March 1875).

During the visit of the Prince of Wales, many Zamindars and Chiefs of Orissa went to Calcutta. "Foremost among them was the Rajah of Pooree, who for the first time in history, crossed the sea. The Rajah's pretensions to sanctity and exclusiveness prevented his association with the native chiefs present in Calcutta."<sup>5</sup>

In 1874, a serious mishap involving loss of life was averted. After the departure of the images during the Rath Jatra, three large blocks of stones fell from the inner roof of the main Temple. Fortunately the great hall was deserted at that time. The images on their return, were placed in another part of the Temple pending the execution of the repairs to the main structure.

"A strong and hotly contended dispute arose as to whether the bhog or food offered retained its purity and efficiency while the idols were absent from their accustomed place. By the majority it was decided

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<sup>4</sup> Commissioner to the Board of Revenue : 29 October 1873, J.T.C. Pt. V

<sup>5</sup> Administrative Report, Orissa Division : 1874

that the sacred food was unimpaired but a minority held an opposite opinion."<sup>6</sup>

On 26 July 1875 the Secretary, Government of Bengal, wrote to the Commissioner : "His Honor requests you to ask the Magistrate to call on the Rajah of Pooree as the Superintendent of the Temple to have the necessary repairs to the building to be executed at once."

The Raja of Puri wrote to the Collector, Puri on 18 October 1875 informing him that the broken parts of the inner roof had been under repair. He requested the Government to send a Hindu overseer immediately to supervise the repair work.

He wrote : "It is evident from the account of the Temple that the income derived from the revenues of the Mahals allotted for the purpose at the time of the Settlement is quite insufficient to meet the expenses and the deficiency in income to the excess in disbursement. The quantity of articles is the same now, as was fixed then, but the present rate of prices on each article has been increased by two or three times, as compared with the rates at the time of the Settlement."

To meet the heavy cost required for the repair of the Temple and the excess expense referred to above he suggested that all the sums collected from the lodging houses standing on the Temple lands should be given to him instead of being credited to the lodging fund. He also claimed the 'Atika' money given by the pilgrims, pointing out that "the Pundahs instead of giving a single pice for the offerings apply them to their private use". The Raja incurred the displeasure of the Pundahs for criticizing them.

Purnachandra Sarkar, Assistant Engineer, was deputed by the Works department to inspect the condition of the Temple. Purna Sarkar reported that the stones fell when the building was struck by lightning. In his letter to the Collector of Puri dated

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<sup>6</sup> Administrative Report, Orissa Division : 1874

5 July 1876 he pointed out : "The Temple should be thoroughly repaired as large number of iron beams were decayed. The general condition of the Temple is not good : standing as it is for ages without any repairs resulting to a large number of cracks all around the Temple which can be seen from outside. There is probability of danger any day." The images were restored to their proper places after the repair of the roof.

After taking over the administration of the Temple from his adoptive mother, in 1875 Divya-singh Deb totally neglected it. He did not pull on well with the priests of the Temple who sent a petition to Ravenshaw, in 1876, complaining against the "mismanagement of the affairs of the Temple by the Raja of Puri". They alleged that the Raja had appointed other persons whose families had no hereditary rights, to the offices of hereditary Sebaks by taking bribe from them.

It was also stated that no accounts were kept of the fees paid by the pilgrims for binding 'Dhaja' or flags on the wheel of the top of the Temple and of presents given by the pilgrims on the throne of Jagannath in the shape of money or gold mohurs.

A further complaint was that the Raja was mixing bad articles in the preparation of bhogs offered to the gods. Lastly, the priests observed : "The Raja is a mere puppet and tool of oppression in the hands of his low, ignorant and menial servants. They blamed him for 'his utter inefficiency and mismanagement' and added that it was "high time that Government may be pleased to reconsider the matter of superintendence of the Temple being continued to be vested in the Raja".

Ravenshaw refused to interfere. In his order dated 5 August 1876 he observed : "This is not a matter in which this office can interfere. The Raja is responsible for the proper management of the Temple which is infested by the Sewuks or attendants who set the Rajah's authority at defiance".

The question of Government jurisdiction over the 'Ekhrajat' tracts, or the lands assigned to the Temple in 1858 and 1863 came up in 1875 when the Raja of Puri instituted suits against permanent ryots in those tracts.

The Commissioner expressed the opinion that the transferred lands no more belonged to the Government. He pointed that the first Deed assigned lands with a rental of Rs. 16,517. The amount of Rs. 6804 was retained for the Police purpose. The second Deed declared that the lands previously held and those then transferred were made over to the Rajah and the following words were added 'So long as they shall continue to hold the office of the Superintendent'.

Ravenshaw wrote : "The Deeds appear to convey in every respect a complete transfer . . . In my opinion those lands should be considered as Lakheraj transferred in perpetuity to the Temple, or if what perhaps more than the Deeds warrant, to the Superintendent and his successors in trust for the Temple so long as they hold the office of the Superintendent."

He concluded with the observation : "The Government may resume the lands and renew the money payment after a legislative enactment empowering it to do so."<sup>7</sup>

Divyasingh Deb, when he grew up, lived a life of dissipation. In his letter to the Commissioner dated 1 June 1878 Armstrong, the Collector of Puri wrote : "It was during 1876, that the temper and conduct of the Rajah became deteriorated. He neglected his duty in the Temple and quarrelled with the attendants over whom he finally lost control."

"Laterly, the Rajah, who was known to be addicted to the use of drugs became very apathetic and consequently unmanageable. He associated with ill-conducted persons and avoided the society of respectable persons."

<sup>7</sup> Ravenshaw to Collector, Puri : 19 March 1876, No. 29 : J. T. C. Pt. V

Soon Nemesis overtook him.

Eleven persons were crushed to death during the Doljatra and Govinda Dwadasi festivals which took place in February 1877. The Commissioner submitted a Report to the Government of Bengal on 23 April 1877, 'upon the lamentable loss of life in the Puri Temple.

The Secretary to the Government conveyed to the Commissioner the opinion of Ashley Eden, Lieutenant Governor. He wrote : "Mr Eden notices that you acquit the local civil officers of all blame, though they cannot be held entirely free from blame on the ground of want of foresight and of unpreparedness."

But he admitted that "they exerted themselves to the utmost for which they deserve commendation. It is only to be regretted that from insufficient means of controlling the internal arrangements of the Temple, they were unable to prevent such loss of life."

"The responsibility for failure rests mainly, in your opinion, with the Rajah of Pooree, and the Lieutenant Governor concurs with this view. He is the Superintendent of the Temple and has sole authority and control over the internal arrangements."

"To him it must have been known that the two festivals coming in close proximity to each other, would bring together a most unusual concourse of pilgrims, for even if the Oriya Pundits were not prepared to recognize in the day all the conditions that go to make up a true Govind Dvadasi<sup>8</sup>, yet it was

<sup>8</sup> "I was not aware that the Govinda Dwadasi festival would take place in the town. No mention whatever was made to this effect in the local Oriya papers or almanacs, although a Sloka has been written in Bengali almanacs—All of a sudden a numberless crowd assembled. Aged people say that such a gathering did not take place since last sixty or seventy years."

Urzee of Divyasingh Deb to the Commissioner. But Tarakanta Vidyasagar, a reputed scholar of Puri, wrote to the Collector of Puri on 11 April 1877 : "The number of people of Orissa assembled here on the occasion, I believe, was about

known to the Hindoos generally and to him necessarily as the head of the Hindoo community at Pooree that throughout Hindoostan the festival would be observed, and consequently that pilgrims from a distance would come in unusual numbers to the shrine of Juggernath, yet notwithstanding this knowledge and this responsibility the Rajah simply did nothing."

"He closed the doors of the Temple on the 19th February but only on the 21st did he send to the Magistrate any information that an unusual concourse was probable. The Magistrate was out in the district, which however at such a time should not have been the case. Not until his return with the Superintendent of Police on the 23rd did he learn that the gates had been closed for days and that there was an enormous gathering of highly excited pilgrims in the town."

"On that very day, the Joint Magistrate with forty Policemen had gone down on the Rajah's requisition and had opened the gates, but finding that with such a small body of Police it was impossible to keep order and after being knocked down and severely handled in the throng himself, he had found it necessary to close the gates."

"The Rajah's people on this occasion was not present and gave no assistance and there can be little doubt that from the beginning and throughout the difficulties of subsequent days the Rajah, finding that proper arrangements would cost money, labour and responsibility, endeavoured to throw the whole duty on the Magistrate." x x x

"The first serious accident occurred on the 24th February. On that day at noon, there being a force of 100 Policemen ready, the Hindoo Deputy Collector went to the Rajah to ask that the gates might be opened. The Rajah excused himself on the ground that the sacred food must be prepared with the gates shut and would not be ready till the afternoon. As a matter

two lakhs. Besides this, the Pundas sent their Peons to various parts of India to invite the Pilgrims."

of fact it appears that the Rajah had made no preparations at all. There seems to have been a real necessity for opening the gates and allowing the pilgrims in to the Temple." x x x x

"The multitude was excited and there was every danger of a disastrous tumult. Armstrong, the Magistrate, accordingly determined to open the gates at midnight, when he thought that the throng would be lessened but it appears that it was an important object with the pilgrims to see the idol on that particular night before the bathing and the special and auspicious time for bathing was just before the sunrise."

"The pilgrims rushed into the temple with utmost excitement when two persons were crushed to death. The doors were instantly closed." x x x

"The events of the 25th, the day of Dol Jattrā, was almost repetition of those of the 24th, save that they were more disastrous, nine persons being killed, by the crash that followed the opening of the gates. Here again the crash increased by the Rajah keeping the gates shut for some hours under the pretence of preparing sacred food, while the numbers waiting to enter the Temple were increasing and becoming more impatient."

The Lieutenant Governor gave a 'serious warning' to Armstrong for 'habitual curtness in official communication'. As desired by the Lieutenant Governor, the Secretary to the Government wrote to the Commissioner: "There remains the conduct of the Rajah, to whose neglect and want of control over his subordinates in immediate charge of the Temple, the disaster is mainly due." He agreed with the suggestion of the Commissioner that "to mark the displeasure of Government, the Sunnad and Khillat which are to be conferred upon him should be temporarily withheld—until the Rajah as proposed by you submitted in consultation with a Committee of Hindoo gentlemen, a scheme for regulating the visits of the large bodies of pilgrims in such

a manner as shall make such lamentable loss of life impossible.

Meanwhile the Lieutenant Governor desired that in future the Commissioner in his annual administration Reports should notice how the affairs of the Temple were conducted.<sup>1</sup>

Armstrong wrote to the Commissioner on 1st June 1878 : "It was some time before I could prevail on Rajah Divyasingh to comply with those instructions. He had no inclination to exert for the benefit of the pilgrims, and he feared that the appointment of a Committee might cause him loss of power and influence. Nevertheless he yielded to my solicitations and named a Committee."

The Raja drafted certain rules "to which several persons objected". Armstrong convened a meeting "to give all concerned an opportunity to give their opinion". It was decided to appoint a new Committee to frame rules. But as there was difference of opinion among members of the Committee, Armstrong asked Mohunt Narain Das and Tarakanta Vidyasagar to frame rules, as they were, in his opinion, "well acquainted with the Temple and all that goes on within."

The Committee suggested certain draft rules for conducting the services and rituals of the Temple. It was also suggested that at the beginning of each Umlee year, the Pundas and other Sebaks of the Temple would enter their names in the Superintendent's Register, which would be inspected by the Magistrate. If the Superintendent would refuse any person of rank to see the images by special arrangements, the Magistrate might pass orders for 'Durshan'.

The draft rules suggested the appointment of a Hindu Manager for the Temple, preferably a retired officer. Before the draft rules could be considered by the Magistrate, there was a dramatic change in the

<sup>1</sup> Bayley, Secretary to the Government of Bengal to Commissioner : 21 May 1877, No. 143. J.T.C. Pt. V

situation by the arrest and conviction of Raja Divyasingh Deb on the charge of homicide.

The Government of India accepted the suggestion of the Government of Bengal and postponed the presentation of the Sunnad of Maharaja to Divyasingh Deb.<sup>10</sup> After the conviction of the Raja the conferment of the title was cancelled.

Divyasingh Deb, who received the title of Maharaja in 1877,\* received the sentence of transportation for life in 1878. From a Maharaja, he became an Andaman convict.

In February 1878 he was charged with the murder of a Sadhu named Siva Das. This old man was held in considerable esteem for his piety. He was the Byragee of a Math at Damodarpur, six miles from Puri. He was reputed to be possessed of skill in healing art. The Dowager Rani had sent for Siva Das, and requested him through her servants to prescribe some medicine for the Raja, her adopted son. She believed that the Raja had lost his senses, as he used to beat his servants with heavy sticks. Siva Das occasionally visited the Dowager Rani in this connection. He promised to cure the Raja. The news reached the Raja's ears that he would be treated for lunacy by Siva Das. He was also told that the Sadhu had spoken slightly of him by calling him as 'Telenga' (Telugu settled in Orissa. Bodokhimedi was situated in Andhra area at that time) and therefore alien to the Raj family of Khurda.

The Raja sent two persons to Damodarpur who told the Sadhu that some one was sick in the Raja's house and he was wanted there to prescribe medicine. He was accompanied by four disciples. He alone was admitted into the Raja's house. That was 23rd February night. Siva Das was taken to the garden

<sup>10</sup> The Governor General in Council to Government of Bengal : 18 June 1877, No. 1630 : J.T.C. Part V

\* The Commissioner informed him about the conferment of the title. *Utkal Dipika* : 20 January 1877

where he was tortured for four hours by the Raja's men. Fortyone pieces of cork were forced into his intestine. Ordure was thrust into his mouth. He was suffering from elephantiasis of the scrotum which was roasted with a torch. He was silenced by a cloth in his mouth. The servants of the Raja dragged the unconscious body of the Sadhu into the lane adjacent to the garden of the palace.

It was argued by the prosecution that the prisoners had imagined that Siva Das would die after undergoing the cruel torture without revealing the horrors he had undergone and accusation against a man of the Raja's position would not be credited.

Siva Das however regained consciousness and crawled to the main road with his remaining strength from whence he made his way to the Lion Gate, not far from the Raja's house. He called out for his disciples who were waiting near the gate of the Raja's house. He was carried to the hospital. After undergoing great suffering, he developed symptoms of Tetanus and died. Before his death, he gave a deposition, accusing the Raja and some of his servants. According to the Magistrate, it was a case of murder and he drew up a charge under section 302 against the Raja and nine of his servants.

On the 9th March, the accused persons were committed to take trial.<sup>11</sup>

A special trial was held at Cuttack. Kishori Mohan Ghoshal and Biharilal Pundit, Assessors, held the Raja to be not guilty, giving him benefit of doubt. The District and Session Judge Dickens rejected the verdict of the Assessors and sentenced the Raja and four of his servants to transportation for life. He held that the accused persons inflicted cruel bodily injury on the deceased, fully knowing that they were

<sup>11</sup> Superintendent of Police to the Magistrate, Puri : 5 March 1878

Magistrate, Puri to the Commissioner. 12 March 1878

doing an act, sufficient on the ordinary course of nature, to cause death.

An appeal was made to the Calcutta High Court by the accused persons who were defended by Barristers Evans and Handley. The High Court gave benefit of doubt to two of the servants of the Raja and acquitted them. The convictions of the Raja and of two other accused persons Sujan Upadhaya and Narayan Vahinipati were upheld. The Court could have shown lenience to the Raja. It is difficult to believe that Divyasingh Deb personally inflicted injury on the person of the Sadhu though he undoubtedly ordered the crime, and was present when the torture was inflicted. Had there been a pre-meditated plot for murder, the accused persons would not have allowed the disciples of the Sadhu to accompany him up to the Raja's house. They would have killed Siva Das and removed his body secretly to a remote place.

Bengal papers like the 'Indian Mirror' criticized the District Judge and the High Court for showing no consideration for the Raja's age and status. Due to his addiction to intoxicating drugs at an early age, the Raja was mentally unbalanced. He subsequently became mad in the Andamans. It appears that the punishment of the transportation for life was inflicted upon the Superintendent of the Jagannath Temple to lower the prestige of the Temple in the eyes of the Hindus.

In September 1878, Divyasingh Deb reached the Andamans as a convict. He did not come back.

The exile of the Raja created problems in the administration of the Temple. On 11 March 1878 T. E. Ravenshaw, the Commissioner, wrote to the Board of Revenue proposing the appointment of a Committee to supersede the Superintendent. The Board wrote to the Legal Remembrancer for his opinion. The Legal Remembrancer wrote on 8 April that without legislative sanction, the powers vested in the Rajah under Act X of 1840 could not, even

in the event of his inability to exercise them himself, be transferred to a Committee except by legislation.

The Commissioner was accordingly asked by the Board of Revenue whether he would recommend legislation with a view to the appointment of a Committee to manage the Temple administration, as proposed by him.

On 17 April 1878, Ravenshaw, the Commissioner, forwarded a copy of his correspondence with the Board of Revenue to Armstrong, the Collector of Puri, and sought his opinion.

Armstrong wrote in reply : "In my opinion, it is perfectly clear that the Rajah may justly be considered to have made for the failures of his rights and privileges under the aforesaid Act."

"He has by his own act disabled himself from performing his part of the contract. He was placed in charge in order that he might satisfy the Hindoo community by a decent and orderly management of the affairs of the Temple. Since 1876, he neglected his duties and now he stands convicted of a criminal offence for which he was convicted to transportation beyond the sea. This agreement in my opinion is at an end."

"But it may be said that his son has full rights under that agreement and must succeed to his father's place. This question is of a difficult nature. In my opinion, as matter stands, no claim can be maintained on behalf of the infant to the property and rights of management."

"The land is not like ordinary landed property which descends from father to son. It is land held on conditions one of which is certainly the ability to perform certain functions. Misconduct of nature mentioned above on the part of the head of the family involves all members in its consequences. This is clearly in the spirit of the law which attached forfeiture of property as a penalty to certain offences."

"If I am right in this opinion, then the landed property given to the Rajah to enable him to carry on

the services of the Temple is now entirely at the disposal of Government. The Act X of 1840 is now a dead letter and that no further legislation of any kind is necessary in any event."

Nevertheless he admitted that the Hindu gentlemen, whom he consulted, advocated the recognition of the infant son of the exiled Rajah as the future Superintendent of the temple of Jagannath.

He wrote : "If this wish is to be gratified the proper course is to bring the minor and the property under the Court of Wards."<sup>12</sup>

The Commissioner in his letter to the Board of Revenue submitted a communication from the Magistrate of Puri in which he reported on two topics. (1) the arrangements for the conduct of the ceremonies in the Temple, securing the safety of the pilgrims visiting it and (2) general management of the affairs of the Temple.

With reference to the first question, the Magistrate after repeated failures on the part of the Raja of Puri and different Committees formed to frame rules submitted an elaborate set of rules by himself with the advice of persons said to be qualified to judge the matter, defining the duties of all persons concerned in the ceremonies of the Temple. The Magistrate observed that only by such a complete code regulating observances, the safety of the worshippers could be observed.

The Commissioner was of opinion that the Magistrate's rules went beyond what the Government had intended. He also differed from the Magistrate who wrote that the Government were not bound to recognize the Rajah's son as his heir. The Act according to the Magistrate was a dead letter and the Government could act according to its discretion by enacting legislation.

The Commissioner did not like to bring the estates

<sup>12</sup> Armstrong to Commissioner : 1 June 1878 No. 678 : J.T.C. Pt. V.

of the Rajah under the Court of Wards. He recommended that the Dowager Rani should manage the estates of the Rajah and of the Temple, during the minority of the Rajah's son. He pointed out that after the death of the adoptive father of the present Rajah, it was decided by the Government not to bring the estate under the Court of Wards owing to the peculiar connection of the Raj family of Khurda with the Temple.<sup>13</sup>

The Board of Revenue forwarded the copies of correspondence relating to the future management of the Jagannath Temple to the Government of Bengal.

A. Mackenzie, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, in his letter to the Board of Revenue referred to the rules proposed by the Collector, defining the duties of all persons concerned in the ceremonies of the Temple. He informed that the Lieutenant Governor Sir Ashley Eden\* was of opinion that nothing short of such rules would afford a satisfactory guarantee against the disorders among the masses of pilgrims but such rules should be kept in abeyance until a decision was reached as to the future management of the Temple.

He agreed with the Commissioner that the Collector of Puri was wrong in considering that Act X of 1840 was a dead letter. He observed "The Act absolutely makes the Rajah of Khoordah (now Pooree) for the time being Superintendent and gives no power to remove him or set him aside. Till the Act is rescinded, Government is bound by it."

The Lieutenant Governor also accepted the recommendation of the Commissioner that the estate should not be brought under the Court of Wards and that the Dowager Rani should manage the estate during the minority of the Raja's son.

<sup>13</sup> A. Smith, Commissioner to the Board of Revenue : 18 June 1878 J. T. C. Pt. V

\* Sir Ashley Eden became to the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal in January 1877. He was knighted in 1878

This decision was influenced by the fact that "when the present Rajah's adoptive father died, it was decided by Government not to bring the estate under the Court of Wards owing to the peculiar connection of the Rajah's family with the Temple".

The letter from the Secretary, Government of Bengal, referred to the question of the assigned lands in the Khurda estate. It was pointed out that in 1871-72, the Rajah and his adoptive mother were willing to give up the assigned lands for a cash payment that would secure a revenue of Rs. 21,317 for the Temple.

The letter from the Secretary further stated that in the opinion of the Lieutenant Governor: "The Rajah's conduct also warrants the revision by Government of the arrangements under which the lands in question were made over to him as Superintendent of the Temple; but Government is not warranted in handing over the lands to the Ranee who mismanaged them before nor they can be managed by a Committee. If the Collector manages them for the Temple, the connection of Government with idolatry will be closer than ever".

"On these grounds the Lieutenant Governor would be disposed to take this opportunity of again moving the Government of India to sanction the resumption of the lands and payment of the lump sum they represent to the Temple management, whatever that might be."<sup>14</sup>

It may be recalled that the Ikhrajat lands were assigned to the Raja of Khurda because the Court of Directors in their Despatch dated 4 November 1843, held the opinion that it would be desirable to commute the remainder of the allowance paid to the Superintendent of the Temple by vesting lands.

The Government of Bengal permitted Rani Suryamani Patmahadei the 'Mahafiz' (custodian) of the Jagannath Temple to appoint Ram Prasad Singh,

<sup>14</sup> Secretary to Government of Bengal to the Secretary, Board of Revenue, 28 August 1878 J.T.C. Pt. V

Sheristadar of the Commissioner's office, to act as the Manager of the Jagannath Temple.

In the first part of January 1879, Hon'ble H. L. Dampier, Member, Board of Revenue, visited Orissa and discussed the Temple affairs with the Commissioner of Orissa. He took the opportunity of eliciting the opinion of some Hindu gentlemen. Before his departure for Calcutta, he asked the Commissioner to elicit certain information from the Collector of Puri. The Commissioner wrote to him on 17 February 1879, enclosing a letter from the Collector of Puri.

The Collector's letter referred to the management of the property of the Temple, by the Dowager Rani during the minority of Raja Divyasingh Deb, subsequently by the Raja and then again by the Dowager Rani after the transportation of the Rajah.

He wrote : "It is well to remember that the family have the control of funds amounting to more than Rs. 80,000 a year. How much they apply to the maintenance of the Temple and how much they appropriate to their own use, no one knows outside their own circle. I take no account of the gifts received from the pilgrims.\*

"It is clear that neither Government nor the Board of Revenue approves of the results of the management of the estate as carried on by the Dowager Ranee in former years."

The Collector pointed out that in the Khurda lands alone the arrears in rent amount to about Rs. 25,000 while in satais Hazari estate about Rs.

\* Raja Divyasingh Deb's income was (Letter from Sreenath Bose, Deputy Magistrate 9 October 1871)

Annual income from the Zamindari and lands	Rs. 17,000
Annual income from Paddy	Rs. 2,000
Money interest—Temple gifts and others	Rs. 1,600
Pension from Government	Rs. 25,600

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Rs. 54,200

40,000 have been due from the tenantry for the last five years.

Armstrong wrote: "When the mode of management is scrutinised the unfavourable results are readily explained. The Ranee is not really managing. She exercises no control. She is entirely inaccessible and neither seen nor spoken by her people of business. Even her native agents never hear her voice."

"Her wishes can be only known at third hand. She speaks only to her maids, who report her commands to a set of male servants called Bisoyees, a peculiar fraternity of the cowherd caste, who are to be found nowhere else. Through these men, Mookhtars or agents learn her pleasure and inform the world without."

Armstrong admitted that "She is by no means incapable, but her position is such as to make it absolutely impossible for her to manage successfully."

Armstrong wrote: "I must speak of the Temple management. The successor of the present Rajah might be negligent of the Temple as he was, and yet it might be difficult to supersede him on a charge of incapacity. There will be no security for good administration without a permanent Manager selected for ability and honesty." x x x

"It remains only to define the positions of the Superintendent, Manager and the Committee. Of the Superintendent I would make a Morevingian king, and vest all authority in the Manager. The Committee should be chiefly consultative. The Superintendent should be empowered to report against the Manager for misconduct provided the Committee agreed."

The Collector would have no connection with the management. He would only pay the allowance every month after seeing that the Committee passed the previous month's accounts."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Armstrong to Commissioner : 30 January 1879 No. 183 : J.T.C. Pt. V

The Commissioner, A Smith, endorsed Armstrong's opinion. He wrote to Dampier: "The agreement entered into between Government and the Rajah did not stipulate that he was to have whatever revenue might be got from the villages named in the document, at that time those villages yielded, but exactly the sum required. Only the rentals of them were made over to the Rajah. I am strongly opposed to the Rajah's having any hand in the management or collection of revenue."<sup>10</sup>

Dampier acknowledged the letters from the Commissioner and from Armstrong. He agreed that the management of the Temple was not efficient under the former Rajah who was entirely wanting in capacity for business. The Dowager Rani, though personally capable, was incapacitated by the seclusion on her part from acting with efficiency.

Dampier was of opinion that the Dowager Rani, in the absence of the transported Raja, was the 'ostensible Manager' of the affairs of the Temple. She was only authorized to exercise the functions of the Superintendent of the Temple. Even if it be held that the Rajah, as trustee, was legally competent to alienate the lands, which formed part of the Temple endowment, no such power is vested in the Dowager Rani. Under existing circumstances it would not be proper to seek the consent of the Rajah to the arrangement.

Dampier examined how far lands could be retransferred to the Government, in exchange for the money payment. He doubted whether the Superintendent, as trustee, was authorized to transfer the Satais Hazari Mahal, a perfect endowment of the Temple, without legislative sanction.

But the case of lands transferred in 1858 and 1863 was different. Dampier referred to the 'general opinion' prevailing at Cuttack that no transfer of those

<sup>10</sup> A. S. Smith, Commissioner to Board of Revenue : 17 February 1879 No. 105 : J.T.C. Pt. V

lands, but only an assignment of revenue, had been made and that they remained the property of the Government, which has a right to re-settle and re-assess them, appropriating any increase of revenue which might result therefrom.<sup>17</sup>

Dampier found nothing in the terms of the Deeds of transfer to support the view that only the revenue and not the rents of the lands were made over to the Rajah in trust for the Temple. It seemed clear to him as it did to the Board of Revenue in 1871 that the Deeds effected an out and out conveyance of the proprietary rights of the lands to the Rajah in trust for the Temple.

Dampier further stated : "Act X of 1840 which vests the superintendence of the Temple in the Rajah of Khoordah (now styled Rajah of Pooree) for the time being, makes no provision for the exercise of the functions of the office during any period in which the Rajah for the time being is incapacitated from acting by minority, insanity, absence or other causes. An occasion has arisen which makes necessary to supply this defect in law. The machinery for management during the Rajah's incapacity will be first suggested, leaving for subsequent consideration the more difficult question of providing a more satisfactory permanent agency in combination with the Rajah for the management of the Temple arrangements."

<sup>17</sup> In a Memorandum dated 25 September 1877, Beames, officiating Commissioner, replied to the following question of the Settlement Officer :—

"The Rajah at present collects the rents of certain villages in Tappang and Rameswar, but the total rent exceeds the allotment of Rs. 23,000. What is to be done. Is the Rajah to have the excess or not?"

Beames replied "Certainly not. Of the various ways of settling this point, the best is, for us, to manage the villages and collect the revenue in future, paying the Rajah annually the sum stipulated. The agreement did not stipulate that he was to have whatever revenue might be got from the villages."

“It is recommended that an Act be passed empowering Government to provide for the performance of the duties of the Superintendent of the Temple in consequence of the incapacity of the Rajah of Pooree for the time being, and then to appoint a Committee of Hindoos in whom shall be vested, and who shall be required to perform all the duties which are required of the Superintendent by Act X of 1840.”

Dampier added that he had explained the scheme to a meeting of the native gentlemen who gave “some what vapid and inert general assent”.

But some Hindoo members pointed out that “a Committee selected entirely out of the residents of Pooree would not give satisfaction, and some of the probable nominees of the Committee would not be above taking advantage of their position to make money. The Cuttack gentlemen mistrust certain persons who have the confidence of the Collector of Pooree”.

Dampier observed that mutual distrust existed among the prominent members of the Hindu community which made impossible for the Government to appoint a Committee which would command general confidence.<sup>18</sup>

The Secretary, Revenue Department, Government of Bengal, wrote to the Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, regarding the mismanagement in the Jagannath temple affairs by the Superintendent. It was stated that in June 1877, the Government of India sanctioned postponement of the presentation of the Sunnad of Maharajah until the Rajah of Pooree, in consultation with a Committee of Hindoo gentlemen, submitted a scheme regulating the visit of large bodies of pilgrims to the Temple and preventing such catastrophe (as took place in 1877) in future.

The Secretary, Revenue Department, wrote: “The Rajah was further warned that if he continued to

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<sup>18</sup> Secretary, Board of Revenue to Secretary Revenue Department: 26 Februarv 1879. No. 117 A: J. T. C. Pt. V

show himself incapable of managing the affairs of the Temple, it would be necessary for Government to consider whether the duty should be transferred to other hands”.

“Committees were formed to frame rules, but the members failed to reach an agreement. In 1878 the Rajah was convicted and sentenced to transportation for life.”

“It was brought to notice that Act X of 1840 which vested the superintendence of the Temple in the Rajah ‘for the time being’ contains no provision for his removal from the office on account of misconduct.”

Lands from the estate of Khurda were transferred to the Rajah as Superintendent partly in 1858 and partly in 1853, “in lieu of certain cash payments, which had up to those years made by Government, the intention being that Government should in this way disassociate itself from all direct connection with the endowment”.

“From the Board’s Report it will be seen that the local authorities have held that the lands in question were not actually transferred but their revenues only were assigned to the Superintendent in lieu of direct cash payment.”xx

“This was the view taken by Sir George Campbell in 1871, but the Lieutenant Governor\* thinks it is conclusively shown in the Report of the Board of Revenue that it cannot be supported. There can be however no doubt that of late years it has been acted upon locally, apparently with the full acquiescence of the Rajah himself.”

“The arrears of the ryots’ rents have been (most improperly) realized for the Rajah by the Collector under Bengal Certificate Procedure, Act VII of 1868, and the lands have actually brought under survey and settlement, along with the rest of Khoordah. This re-settlement, if completed, will probably result in a very material increase of the rental.”

\* Sir Ashley Eden

“Although therefore the Secretary of State in the Despatch dated 6 July 1874 had observed that sufficient cause had not been shown for opening the question, the Lieutenant Governor feels bound to submit that, under the present circumstances, it is not only possible but imperatively necessary to reconsider the matter of Transferred lands.” xxx

The Board of Revenue were informed that the Lieutenant Governor would like to resume the lands, transferred from the Khoordah estate “because it is from all points of view—revenue, political and moral—undesirable to leave them under the Rajah or his representatives and separate from the rest of the estate of which they form an integral part.” xxx

“The Government was, in 1863 and for some years previously, in deference to very strongly expressed views in England, almost morbidly anxious to divest itself of all connection with, and control over, the religious endowments of this country. Rather than, even in name to be associated with their support or management, it was ready to hand over any number of cultivators to the tender mercies of such a man as Rajah of Pooree and his associates.”

“It substituted for an effective Government check, a system of private management which has proved unworkable, and under which the income of many charities have been with impunity misappropriated or embezzled, it has succeeded in creating in the minds of its native subjects the conviction that it has no care or regard for the discharge of duties, which represent, in their minds, one of the most essential functions of the State.”

“There is no subject upon which the native community feels more strongly than this, and the conviction that the policy of non-interference with the pecuniary affairs of the religious and charitable endowments have been carried too far is, as the Government of India are aware, gaining considerable ground at the present day.”

“The Lieutenant Governor is clearly of opinion

that no consideration of false sentiment should prevent us from doing in the present case what is best for Government and best for the people. He thinks it is necessary in the interests of Government to re-amalgamate with its estate of Khoordah, the lands that were separated from it in 1858 and 1863. There has been so much doubt and confusion locally as to the precise position of these lands, that it will lead to serious complications now to withdraw all the connection with them. At the same time the local recognition of the continuing Government right over them simplifies greatly the practical question of their resumption."

"The Lieutenant Governor would so far defer to the prejudice against Government contributing directly from its annual revenue towards an idolatrous Trust, so as to substitute for the lands, not an annual cash payment, but an investment in the Government paper or book debit yielding an annual income of Rs. 30,000 equivalent to that now derived from the land. This arrangement can no more be said to bring Government into direct contact with idolatry than the fact of its managing the Syaidpore trust estate and the Mohsin fund can be said to make it a supporter of Islam."

On the question of future management of the Temple itself, the Lieutenant Governor gave his general support to the scheme, sketched by the Board of Revenue. According to that scheme, Act X of 1840 would be amended to provide for the formation of an honorary Committee of which the Rajah of Puri for the time being, if not incapacitated by age, infirmity or the orders of Government, should be the titular President. There should be a Deputy Superintendent or Manager appointed by the Government after consultation with the Committee and paid from the Temple funds.

In conclusion it was stated: "The Lieutenant Governor would not delay legislation in respect of the Pooree endowment until the general question of the

better management of the endowments throughout India or Bengal can be taken up or settled ; nor would he confine the legislation that must take place with reference to Pooree to a mere temporary provision to meet the circumstances of the present Rajah's temporary disability. It would be in every way better to pass an Act providing finally and fully for the better control of this important endowment."

"The Lieutenant Governor thinks it will be better now to have legislative sanction though he has no doubt originally that Government might have made all the necessary arrangements as an act of State." x x x

"The general measure for regulating endowments may take years to pass. The Lieutenant Governor is entirely in favour of immediate and special legislation for the Pooree endowment.<sup>19</sup>

C. Bernard, Secretary, Government of India, acknowledged the letter from the Government of Bengal regarding future management of the temple of Juggernath and resumption of certain lands in the Khurda estate which were transferred to the Rajah of Pooree in 1858 and 1863, in lieu of cash payments which up to these years had been made by the Government.

He wrote : "With reference to the future management of the Temple it is shown that Act X of 1840, which vests the superintendence of the Temple in the Rajah of Khoordah 'for the time being' contains no provision either for removal from the office for misconduct or for the conduct of his duties in the event of his being incapacitated. The present Rajah has been sentenced to transportation for life and it has consequently become necessary to make fresh arrangements for the future management of the Temple."

"As regards the nature of arrangement the scheme recommended by the Bengal Government appears to

<sup>19</sup> Secretary, Revenue Dept. to Secretary, Government of India, Home Dept. : 16 April 1879 J.T.C. Pt. V

the Governor General in Council to be generally suitable ; but His Excellency in Council considers that it would be preferable to leave the appointment of the Deputy Superintendent or Manager in the hands of the Committee subject to the confirmation by the Lieutenant Governor."

"The Governor General in Council concurs with the Lieutenant Governor that the necessary legislation should be of a permanent nature and should not be confined to a temporary provision to meet the circumstances of the present Rajah's disability."

"His Excellency in Council also agrees that legislation need not be delayed, but in as much as the provisions of the proposed Act will conflict with Section 22 of Act XX of 1863, it appears necessary that legislation should be undertaken in the Council of the Governor General."

"As regards lands transferred to the Rajah as Superintendent of the Temple in 1858 and 1863, in lieu of certain cash payments, I am to observe previous correspondence up to the Despatch from the Secretary of State dated 16 April 1874 which shows that a very serious feeling had in past times existed against the Government of India subsidizing the temple of Juggernath. The force of this sentiment, whatever be its nature, is undeniable."

"The Secretary of State in his Despatch, above cited, declined to sanction the resumption of those lands and the return to a system of money payments on the ground that the circumstances afforded no sufficient reason for reopening a long vexed question, which was settled so long as in 1858 in accordance with the views of a large and influential section of the Community."

"Nor does the Governor General in Council see in the arguments now put forward by the Bengal Government any sufficient reason for asking the Secretary of State to reconsider the decision thus given. So far as therefore the resumption of the lands is concerned, and the substitution for them of an

investment yielding an annual sum of Rs. 30,000, His Excellency is of opinion that the proposals made in your letter must be abandoned." xxx

"The Governor General in Council would prefer not to resettle the lands. The arrangement made for the transfer of lands to the Rajah as Superintendent was clearly intended to be the final arrangement and His Excellency in Council does not understand why it was considered necessary to carry the Settlement operations into these lands, unless, as was apparently the case, it was due to a misunderstanding on the part of the local officers of the circumstances under which the transfer was made and the effects of the transfer."

"If the reassessment of these lands is not carried out, His Honor the Lieutenant Governor is apprehensive that the Sarbarakars and the ryots of the rest of Khoordah may give much trouble before they consent to accept the increased rents arising out of the resettlement of the Government portion of the estate. But it appears to the Governor General in Council that there need not be any great practical or serious difficulty in this respect, and His Excellency in Council is of opinion that if it be decided not to resume the lands or reamalgamate them with the Government estate, it will be better to leave them as they are and not to attempt resettlement." xxx

"In concluding, I am to request that if His Honor the Lieutenant Governor assents to the above views, a draft Bill may be submitted for the consideration of the Governor General in Council."<sup>20</sup>

Lord Lytton, the Governor General, was in favour of a legislation regarding the Temple lands and administration. He resigned his office within a year. Lord Ripon, his successor, was against a legislation concerning the administration of the Jagannath Temple.

<sup>20</sup> C. Bernard to Secretary, Government of Bengal, Revenue Dept. 22 November, 1879 No. 2192 : J.T.C. Pt. V

H. J. Reynolds, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, wrote to the Secretary, Board of Revenue, with reference to the letter from the Government of India dated 22 November 1879 No. 2192, "finally disallowing the proposal to resume the lands made over to the Rajah of Pooree".<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Secretary, Government of Bengal to Board of Revenue  
4 December 1879 No. 2569 : J.T.C. Pt. V

## CHAPTER TEN

### ASCENDANCY OF RANI SURYAMANI PATMAHADEI

After the conviction of Raja Divyasingh Deb in 1878, the Dowager Rani Suryamani Patmahadei became the 'Mahafez' (custodian) of the Jagannath Temple and of the family property on behalf of Divyasingh Deb's minor son Jagannath Jenamani. She knew she would be in power for about two decades and she did not like the return of the convicted Raja.

In July 1879 she made an application to the District Judge, Cuttack, on behalf of Jagannath Jenamani for a certificate under Act XL of 1858 as the father of the minor was undergoing life sentence at the Andamans. The Applicant's pleader argued that "owing to the Rajah's offence and punishment inflicted, he has suffered such degradation as would under Hindu law cause forfeiture, and vest the whole of the estate in the minor."

On 12 August 1879, the District Judge granted this 'unopposed application'. He observed: "Unless some one is appointed to act for the minor, his interest is wholly unprotected and the whole property will be sacrificed. There can be no doubt that if the minor was of age, he could have during his father's banishment from the country under a sentence of transportation, exercised all the necessary powers of management as regard the family property. There being no male member to exercise this power there seems no reason why the minor should not exercise it through a person appointed to act in his behalf. On these grounds I grant the certificate of administration asked for. This order does

not of course in any way affect the right of superintendence of the temple of Juggernath, which is regulated by Act X of 1840."

He made no reference to the contention that the convicted Raja had lost his right in the family estate. He also made it clear that Divyasihgh Deb continued to enjoy his right as the Superintendent of the Temple.

F. F. Handhy, officiating Magistrate of Puri wrote to Charles Metcalfe, the Commissioner, on 19 March 1880, forwarding a letter of the Dowager Rani regarding the retention of the service of Ram Prasad Singh, the Manager of the Temple for another six months, "as the Babu a genuine native of Orissa, was doing well".

The Magistrate emphasised on the need of a competent Manager to look after the affairs of the Temple. He observed "The Sewuks of the Temple are a difficult body to manage and very tenacious of their rights. Only the other day, the whole town was without food on Sivarathri till 1 P.M. because a Sewuk forcibly resisted the performance of some ritual which he asserted he had a right to perform."

Handhy used to take part in the arrangements for the Car processions. As he wrote to Metcalfe: "The Hindoos seemed to be pleased to get some assistance from me and they always want me to come down and encourage the people to pull". Without me, the car will not be well-dragged." (Letter dated 14 August 1880).

On 15 December 1879, the Secretary, Board of Revenue asked the Commissioner of Orissa to send the draft of a Bill to provide for the future management of the affairs of the Jagannath Temple.

While sending the draft, the Commissioner observed: "Local feeling is strongly in favour of the continuance of the management in the hands of the Rajah of Pooree and his family. I have endeavoured in the draft bill to meet the wish by naming the Rajah, when not incapacitated, as Superintendent of the

Temple and Chairman of the Committee. I have also provided that Local Court may appoint any member of his family to perform his duties. As circumstance might make it desirable to cancel such an appointment, I have also provided for its cancellation and for the management of the Temple by the Committee and the Deputy Superintendent in the event of the Rajah being incapacitated and there being no member of his family to take his place."

"Deputy Superintendents after the first appointment are to be nominated by the Committee and approved by Government which is empowered to appoint directly if the Committee does not nominate. The Deputy Superintendent and the members of the Committee must be professors of the Hindoo religion."

"The Deputy Superintendent is to be the Executive Officer and is to keep up the accounts but I have provided that he is to be under the control of the Committee but like the Superintendent he is removable by Government only. Members of the Committee are to be removable by the Civil Court."

"A record of the proceedings of the Committee is to be kept and to be open to inspection by members of the Hindoo religion. The Committee is to meet and consider the accounts monthly and an annual account is to be published yearly in the Ooriyah Gazette, so as to bring it before the public."

The Commissioner enclosed with his letter the draft of a bill for the administration of the temple of Jagannath. The bill consisted of 23 sections. Some of the sections are quoted below :

1. "The Act may be called the Pooree Temple Act 1880. It shall come into force from such date as may be fixed by the Governor General."

4. "The superintendence of the Temple of Juggernath shall ordinarily be vested in the Raja of Pooree, who shall be assisted by a Committee of management, and by a Deputy Superintendent, who

shall be in all matters be subject to the control and guidance of the said Committee of management."

5. "The local Government shall, as soon as possible after the passing of the Act appoint a Deputy Superintendent and the members of the Committee of management. The said Committee shall consist of not less than seven and not more than ten members."

6. "Every member of the Committee appointed as above shall hold his office for life, unless removed for misconduct or unless he shall resign his appointment, and no such member shall be removed except by an order of the Civil Court as hereafter provided."

9. "The Superintendent or the Deputy Superintendent may be removed by the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal on proof of incapacity or misconduct or for sufficient reasons."

10. "When the Superintendent is minor or has been removed as aforesaid, or is for any cause pronounced by the Local Government to be disqualified for carrying on the affairs of the Temple of Juggernath, the Local Government may appoint any member of the family of the said Rajah to perform the duties of the Superintendent ; and may, if it thinks fit, cancel such appointment. If no such appointment be made, or if such appointment after being made be cancelled, then the said affairs shall be carried on and administered by the Deputy Superintendent in consultation with the Committee."

12. "It shall be the duty of the Deputy Superintendent to manage the landed property of the temple of Juggernath and also to superintend the ceremonies and to maintain order within the Temple of Juggernath."

13. "It shall be the duty of the Deputy Superintendent to have charge of all the moveable property of the Temple of Juggernath and to keep accounts of all moneys and properties received for the support thereof, and to produce the said accounts monthly before the Committee."

14. "The Committe shall assemble once every

month and not less than three members shall be required to form a quorum."

15. "The Rajah of Pooree for the time being, if not disqualified for any of the reasons indicated in Section X of this Act shall ordinarily be the Chairman of the Committee. When the Rajah be absent, the Committee shall select from among themselves a Chairman for the occasion of the meeting. A record of the proceedings of every meeting shall be entered into a book, kept for the purpose."

16. This Section provided for the payment of Rs. five to each member present, "who may desire".

18. "The control of the Temple servants of all degrees, whether employed in the Temple or in the management of the Temple lands or in keeping accounts, shall be vested in the Deputy Superintendent, who is empowered to appoint and dismiss them. The Committee shall determine from time to time how many servants are necessary and what amount shall be allowed for the expenses of the worship, provided that the said expenses shall not exceed the available income of the Temple fund."

19. "In carrying out the affairs of the Temple of Juggernath the Superintendent, the Deputy Superintendent and the Committee shall be guided as far as possible by the religious usages and customs already in force in the Temple."

20. "The Temple fund shall be in immediate charge of the Deputy Superintendent, subject to the general control of the Committee."

21. "Any person or persons interested in the Temple of Juggernath or in the performance of worship or the service thereof or the trusts relating thereto, may sue before the Civil Courts, the Superintendent, the Deputy Superintendent or all or any of the members appointed under the Act for malfeasance, breach of trust or neglect of duties committed by the Superintendent, the Deputy Superintendent or members of the Committee, in respect of trusts vested in or confided to them respectively."

23. "All sums of money and all articles of value received by the Superintendent or by any person on his behalf for the benefit of the Temple shall be considered to be a part of the Temple fund; and shall be accounted for to the Committee by the Superintendent and the Deputy Superintendent."<sup>25</sup>

The Secretary, Board of Revenue forwarded the draft of the bill to provide for the management of the Jagannath temple affairs to the Government. The Board of Revenue observed that the draft bill had been proposed in general accordance with the scheme already laid before the Government of Bengal and consequently approved by the Government of India.

The Board of Revenue drew the attention of the Government to two points in which the Bill appeared to vary from the scheme which the Government of India had approved. The Government of India apparently contemplated the appointment of a Deputy Superintendent or Manager only in the event of disqualification of the Rajah.

"The Board desire and represent that it is essential that the Committee should have an executive officer to undertake the duties of administration and that these duties could not be conveniently performed by the Rajah himself."

"In the next place, the Government of India desired that the appointment of a Deputy Superintendent should be left in the hands of the Committee, subject to the confirmation of the local Government, whereas the Bill provides that the first appointment shall be made by the Government and that subsequent vacancies shall be filled up by the Committee. The Board are inclined that the plan proposed in the Bill should be adopted."

The Board desired that that the Committee should not be composed exclusively of the residents of Puri."

<sup>25</sup> Commissioner to Board of Revenue : 21 May 1880 No. 1167 : Proceedings, Revenue Department. Board of Revenue records, Writers' Buildings, Calcutta.

“A wider range of selection would be more acceptable to the Hindoo community.”<sup>26</sup>

In June 1880, Lord Lytton resigned and Lord Ripon became the Governor General. The Government of India which at first suggested legislation for better management of the Jagannath Temple, changed its mind. It suggested institution of a suit under section 539 of the Code of Civil Procedure, reducing the power and status of the Superintendent. This raised a storm of protest in Orissa and ultimately the Government climbed down.

The monotony in the Jagannath Temple affairs had a break in 1881 due to the Alekh disturbance. These Alekhists, popularly known as Kumbhipatias, probably belonged to the sect of Bhima Bhoi. Those who made crusade against Jagannath were residents of Chandrapur in the Sambalpur district. Dasaram, the leader of the party, imagined that he was commanded to bring out the images of Jagannath, Balarama and Subhadra on the road and there to burn them, so that the Hindus would be convinced of the futility of image worship. Some other members of the party also supposed that they had heard the voice of the Guru.

A large body of men and women left their homes taking their children with them. When within a few miles from Puri, twelve men including Dasaram and three women separated themselves from the main body and reached the Temple on 1st March. Before entering the Temple, they partook cooked food. The men wore only loin cloth. They shouted ‘Mahima Alekh’ before entering the Temple. The door keeper tried to prevent them but they succeeded in forcing their way in to the courtyard of the Temple. Many pilgrims followed the band of the Alekhists to prevent them from doing mischief.

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<sup>26</sup> Secretary, Board of Revenue to Revenue Department : 7 July 1880 No. 468 A : Board of Revenue Records, Writer's Buildings, Calcutta.

The Alekhists then proceeded to break down the door of the Bhog Mandap which was empty at that time but they failed. They then made their way into the great hall in front of the shrine. The door called Jay Bijay was shut and the fanatics rushed like mad men to find an entrance by some other means into the shrine. The crowd of pilgrims swelled to about a thousand. They now used violence. The fanatics were pushed into the court yard with blows and use of cane sticks.

Dasaram was jammed against the stone wall. There he fell or was pushed down on the stone floor of the courtyard. He was taken out of the Temple by his companions. Shortly afterwards, he died out of injury on the platform before the Lion Gate. The fall might not have been fatal, had not the man just taken a heavy meal. The companions of Dasaram including three women were tried for causing disturbance inside the Temple. The men were sentenced to short terms of imprisonment.

Dasaram believed that by burning Jagannath, he would be able to propagate the glory of Alekh—the Absolute Being. We may have sympathy for this misguided men who walked a great distance in furtherance of his mission, which was wrong and cost him his life.

A police patrol arrested six men and eleven women Alekhists with children on the road. They spoke of burning Jagannath. The men were placed on trial but were acquitted as there was no definite charge against them.<sup>27</sup>

In his letter dated 11 July 1881 No. 962, the Secretary to the Government of India suggested to the Government of Bengal that suit might be instituted for the purpose of appointing trustees to administer the endowment of Jagannath. The Board of Revenue held a conference on 20 July 1881 to "consider

<sup>27</sup> A.S.P. Puri to Magistrate, Puri : 11 March 1881 Commissioner to the Board of Revenue : 19 March J.T.C. Part. VI

the management of the temple of Juggernath might be carried out by the institution of a suit under section 539 of the Code of Civil Procedure."

G. G. Paul, Advocate General, T. T. Allen, Legal Remembrancer and W. C. Bonnerjee, Standing Counsel, were present in the conference.

G. G. Paul "thought that it was perfectly clear that an endowment like that of the Juggernath Temple was not a trust created for public charitable purposes within the meaning of the section 539 of Act X, 1877."

The Secretary, Board of Revenue wrote to the Government : "Mr. Allen was of the same opinion. He thought it certain that the Courts would hold that the Temple of Juggernath did not come within the scope of the section. The endowment was spent on religious ceremonies or on the support of the priests and servants of the Temple. Even the feeding of the pilgrims was not an act of charity but a ceremony of religion." xxx

"Mr. Bonnerjee pointed out that the Court would have no power to grant the desired relief. One of the main objects of the Government of India was to obtain the appointment of an additional trustee or trustees to administer the endowments, and it was intended to vest the property in such trustees. So long as Act X of 1840 remained unrepealed, Mr. Bonnerjee thought it was impossible for the Court to make such an order. The present law distinctly declared that the superintendence of the Temple, the management of the endowments and the control over the Temple officers and servants, should vest in the Rajah of Khoordah for the time being. So long this was the law, the Court could not sanction a scheme which should vest the superintendence in any other person other than the Rajah, or even in any person conjointly with him."

Reynolds, Member of the Board of Revenue, agreed "that it would be useless to apply to the Court under section 539. The Court would not act unless

it were satisfied that it possessed jurisdiction and it does not seem possible for Government to adduce evidence to show that the endowments of Juggernath constituted a trust created for public charitable purpose. He can find nothing to support the hypothesis that a part of the Temple endowments was devoted to charitable purposes." xx

"Even if the evidence could be adduced which would justify the Court in entertaining the application, it would seem that the object with which the Government of India desires to institute the suit, would be as far as ever from being realised." xx

"It therefore appears to the Board that the desired reform cannot be carried out into effect unless recourse is had to legislation. It would perhaps be possible to amend Act X of 1840, instead of repealing it. A single section might be added, giving the local Government power to suspend the operation of Section 2 of the Act, and to vest the superintendence of the Temple and the management of the endowments, in such persons or body of persons, other than the Rajah of Khoordah." xxx

"It would be better to do this than to leave matters in their present state of anarchy and disorder. But it would be better still, the Board are inclined to think, for the Government to replace Act X of 1840 by the Bill which has already received the approval of the Government of India."<sup>28</sup>

The proposed management of the affairs of the Temple by a Committee of Trustees, depriving the Raja of Puri from exercising power as Superintendent, wounded the religious sentiments, and the cry of Hinduism in danger was raised.

Govinda Parichha and other Sebaks of the Jagannath Temple sent a Memorial to the Collector of Puri on 6 July 1882. In their Memorial, they pointed

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<sup>28</sup> Secretary, Board of Revenue to Secretary, Government of Bengal, Revenue Department: 29 August 1881 No. 530 A: J.T.C. Pt. V

cut that the Sebas and the Pujas of the Jagannath Temple had been conducted from time immemorial by the Raja of Puri.

"We now hear" they stated "that ten Trustees are to be appointed for conducting the Temple affairs, as is the case with the Temples of Bhubaneswar or Satyabadi which are now managed by Panchaits. The Sebas and Poojas of god Jagannath are performed on a grand scale. How it is possible that it will be managed by ten persons joined together?"

"These persons are generally covetuous. It is unjust to deprive the Raja of Pooree of the Temple management for no fault".

It may be recalled that these Sebaks wrote to the Commissioner in 1876: "It was high time that Government may be pleased to reconsider the matter of superintendence of the Temple being continued to be vested in the Raja."

The Sebaks were afraid that the Trustees would encroach upon their privileges and they preferred the lax administration of the Raja of Puri particularly the administration by a purdah lady till 1897.

Rani Suryamani Patmahadei made a spirited protest in her petition to the Lieutenant Governor on 18 July 1882 on behalf of the minor, against the Government proposal to conduct the affairs of the Temple of Juggernath 'by a committee to be appointed by Government'. She pointed out "I am conducting the Sebas and Poojas just as they were performed by our former dynasties. None of the Hindus of Bharatbarsha has raised any objection towards our management. None can understand why under these circumstances the Temple management is to be taken away from our family."

"It is for you to decide, whether it is not a matter to be regretted that the British is going to adopt a measure which not only interferes with the Hindoo religion but lowers our family dignity as well as puts an obstacle in conducting the Sebas and Poojas of our family god Jagannath."

“It will be clear on a reference to the Hindoo community at large, how painful and obstructive to the cause of the Hindoo religion will be the interference of the British Government with the management of the honoured Sebas and Poojas. Specially the opinion of all Pundits and Byragees of Bharatbarsha should be taken before any action or interference is taken on this matter.”

She pointed out that in consideration of the Raja's family dignity and rank, the Government was pleased to vest in his family, the superintendence of the shrine by Section 2 of Act X of 1840. Lastly, she prayed that the minor Raja should not be deprived of his status as the Superintendent of the Jagannath Temple.

The Mohunts of Puri, headed by the Mohunt of Emar Math submitted another petition to the Government. In their petition the Mohunts represented: “The Temple had been well managed during the minority of the Rajah. Under the circumstances, if the management of the holy Temple be taken away from the Raj family of Pooree and entrusted to a Committee, the whole Hindoo community will be aggrieved and the dignity of the Pooree Raj family will be lowered.”

On 8 July 1882, the Sebaks of the Jagannath Temple sent a petition to the Commissioner. It was argued that the superintendence of the holy Temple had been vested from a very long time in the Raj family of Puri. The Maharajas had been voluntarily performing the duties in connection with the Sebas and Poojas of Jagannath. The Temple was now well managed by Rani Suryamani Patmahadei. It would be degrading and painful to the feelings of the Hindoo public at large, if the Raj family be deprived of the management.

It was further stated: “The Maharajah of Pooree is the most respectable person among the Hindoos of India. Though there are wealthier Rajas in Hindusthan, none is held by the Hindoos with

equal veneration and therefore the petitioners (the Brahmin servants of the Temple of Juggernath) do not feel it a degradation to conduct the Sebas and Poojas under his guidance. But they feel it degradation to their honour and position to be guided by a body of men."

In conclusion it was pointed out that it would be impossible for all the members of the Committee to be present at the Temple and to supervise the work daily and to take a prompt decision in case of emergency. There was no regularity in the daily services in the temples of Lingaraj and Satyabadi, which were managed by Committees.\* Thus the Sebaks were afraid that in case the Government would insist on the exclusion of the Puri Raja from management. "the Sebas and Poojas of god Juggernath will suffer and consequently the cause of Hindoo religion will incur a loss."

Gopinath Misra and other Pundits of the Puri district submitted a petition on 22 July 1882. The languages of the petitions of Gopinath Misra and of the Sebaks of the Jagannath Temple were almost identical in many places. Gopinath Misra argued in his Petition :

1. The assignments made for the Sebas and Pujas, proving inadequate, the Raj family had been paying the extra cost from their own resources.\* "From what source the members of the Committee will meet the extra cost?"

\* By Act XX of 1863, local Committees were appointed for the management and supervision of religious endowments of Lingaraj and Satyabadi.

\* In 1875 the Raja of Puri submitted an account of the receipts and expenditure of the Temple. The total income of the Temple was -Rs. 46,573 and the expenditure was Rs. 61,253-6. The Raja had to meet the balance of Rs. 14,679-10 from his own resources.

But the Raja got Rs. 8500 from the offerings of the pilgrims, sale of Mahaprasad and rents of Kitchen room. "Thus is of-

2. According to the *Niladri Mahodaya* and *Kshetra Mahatmyam* "the Sebas and Poojas of Jagannath cannot be performed in the absence and without the orders of the Raja of Puri. If any one other than the Raja is entrusted with the Temple management, it would be derogatory to the Hindoo public at large."

All the petitions were submitted from Puri and its neighbourhood.

The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Revenue Department wrote to the Secretary, Home Department, Government of India on the 16th February 1882, enquiring about the orders passed on the subject of measure necessary to provide for the proper superintendence and management of the temple of Juggernath.

The Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, replied that legislation had been undertaken in order to bring any trust, created for religious purposes, within the purview of Section 539 of the Civil Procedure Code by the addition of the words 'or religious' after the word 'charitable' in that section. Lastly, in order to remove any technical objections that might, in view of Section 2 of Act X of 1840 be raised to the application of Section 539 of the Civil Procedure Code to the case of the temple of Juggernath, necessary steps would be taken to repeal or amend Section 2, Act X of 1840.<sup>29</sup>

On the 14th December 1882, W. Warren, District Judge, Cuttack granted the application of the Dowager Rani to administer the estate of her grandson who was named Mukunda Deb. The note appended

course is in exclusion of the handsome offerings made by the big pilgrims such as Maharajas, Rajas when they visit the Temple from time to time."

Kumud Mukherjee, Deputy Magistrate to Commissioner :  
23 August 1880.

<sup>29</sup> A. Mackenzie, Secretary, Government of India to Secretary, Government of Bengal : 1 March 1882. No. 333 : J.T.C. Pt. VI

by the District Judge stated : "The minor having been since named Rajah Mumund Deb according to the custom of his family, his guardian Rani Suryamani Patmahadei's application for the substitution of the name of Rajah Mukund Deb in lieu of Juggernath Jenamani is granted for the protection of the minor's interests in the management of his estate and in the conduct of suits."

In this connection, F. C. Grant, Collector, Puri wrote to the Commissioner : "A certificate was granted to Ranees Suryamani by the Judge of Cuttack and also a note was appended by the Judge of Cuttack on the 14th December 1882."

"It will be seen that the certificate appoints Ranees Suryamani to administer the estate of Juggernath Jenamani, minor. The note substitutes the name of Rajah Mukund Deb for that of Juggernath Jenamani."

"I do not understand how any one can administer the estate of Juggernath Jenamani, for the estate in question belongs to his father who is still alive."

"Nor do I understand how Juggernath Jenamani with propriety be styled Rajah Mukund Deb during the life time of his father."

"Lastly, I would point out that the title of Rajah has not been recognized by the British Government as belonging to the Pooree family. In 1877 the Government were on the point of conferring that title, but as a mark of their displeasure at the misconduct of Divyasingh Deb on the occasion when 11 people were crushed to death, abandoned the intention. I think it probable that Government might not wish the withheld title should be recognized and used in

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\* The third Anka of Mukunda Deb began in October 1882. "Considering the fact that Dibyasingh Deb is still alive, it is ludicrous and matter of regret."

'*Utkal Dipika*' Weekly : 7 October 1882

public camp as difficulty would arise from treating the father's estate as if it were the property of his son."<sup>30</sup>

The Commissioner referred the matter to the Government. He wrote that the Dowager Rani complained to the Collector that two of her rent cases were hanging merely because she appeared in the plaint as the guardian of Rajah Mukund Deb instead of the guardian of Juggernath Jenamani.

The Collector had declined to proceed with the cases holding that the title of Rajah had not been conferred or recognized by the Government. Secondly, the title of Rajah could not according to family custom belong to the son while the father was alive. Thirdly, the estate belonged to the father and not to the son.

The Commissioner informed the Government of Bengal that the title of Rajah assumed by the Rajah of Khurda or Puri, though not formally conferred by the Government, had been used in the official papers from time to time and used even in Act X of 1840.

But the use of the title of Rajah during the lifetime of exiled father would not be justified according to official usage. In order to avoid the suits from being barred, he told the Collector to allow the substitution of the name of Juggernath Jenamani in place of Rajah Mukund Deb.<sup>31</sup>

On 12 and 20 July 1883 Suryamani Patmahadei submitted two petitions to the Collector. To prove that the title was hereditary she referred to the fact that on 16 July 1877, the Government was pleased to grant her adopted son the title of Maharaja. "Only those who hold the title of Raja are invested by Government with the title of Maharaja. There is no instance of titling with Maharaja unless he is not Raja in the first instance."

<sup>30</sup> Collector, Puri to Commissioner : 25 January 1883 No. 118 : J.T.C. Pt. VI

<sup>31</sup> Commissioner to Secretary, Political Department, Government of Bengal : 4 April 1883, J.T.C. Pt. V

She also appealed to religion. She pointed out that according to *Niladri Mahodaya*, Chapter VII, some particular rituals and services of Jagannath can be performed only by the Raja himself and in his absence by the Agni Sharma (Mudiratha) nominated by him.

In her petition she pleaded "if the Raj Guddee will remain vacant and Mudiratha does not officiate, Nitis will not be performed. As this will undermine the religion, we have according to family custom (Kulapratha) been compelled to put our grandson on the Guddee as Mukund Deb. If the Government does not recognise our grandson, we will be put to shame and the Hindu religion will be undermined."<sup>81a</sup>

In her second petition, the Rani appended an extract from the *Madala Panji*, stating that in 1727, Raja Ramachandra Deva, because of his association with the Muslims, was not allowed to perform the services of Jagannath or to enter the Temple. He was replaced by his daughter's son who was installed as the Raja during the life-time of the former.\*

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<sup>81a</sup> Petition of 'Maharani' Suryamani Patmahadei in Oriya with English translation of extracts from the *Niladri Mahodaya* (O.S.A.).

*Niladri Mahodaya* is a Sanskrit treatise which deals with the 'Nitis' (rituals) of the Jagannath Temple. The authorship is ascribed to Loknath Vidyadhara who lived towards the end of the 18th century. "Some of the Sebaks doubt the genuineness of this work contending that it was got prepared by the Puja-Pandas to suit their own needs" (Report of the Special Officer under the Jagannath Temple Act. P.30).

Mudiratha or Mudirasta officiates for the Raja if the Raja is unable to perform the 'Raj Seba' such as 'Chera Pahara' (sweeping on the three Cars during the Car Festival).

The Raja has some duties to perform during the Chandan Yatra, Snan Yatra and Doj Yatra. He offers worship to Jagannath when the deity wears 'Raj Besh' (Royal dress).

\* The statement of the Rani was wrong. Ramachandra Deva, II alias Hafiz Qadir was released from imprisonment

She also attached letters from the Puri Pundits and Mohunts, who expressed the opinion that the transported Raja, if he would return, would be disqualified from performing the Temple services 'having associated with and taken food cooked by the Mlechhas i.e., persons other than Hindus'. She pleaded that she was compelled to instal her minor grandson in accordance with the family usage and the dictates of the Shastras.

Fortunately for the Dowager Rani, K. G. Gupta became the Officiating Collector of Puri, owing to the sudden death of the English Collector. To a Hindu Officer, her appeal in the name of religion did not go in vain.

K. G. Gupta wrote to the Commissioner that Rani Suryamani Patamahadei, guardian of the minor, was called upon to state her case which she did in her two petitions.

"In the first place she claims that the title of Rajah is hereditary in the family. On this point, it may be said that the title though not formally conferred by the Government has all along been recognized in official usage." xxx

"In the list of the title holders called for by the Government of India in their circular dated 20 June 1859, the Rajah of Khoordah was included as enjoying a hereditary title. But the fact that the title of Rajah in a manner has been recognised by the Government as belonging to the family could not justify

after his conversion. After his death, Mir Habib, Dewan of Murshid Quli Khan II, placed Padmanabha Deba, Raja of Patia, on the throne. He ruled for four years. The throne was then seized by Bir Kesari Deva, son of Ramachandra Deva II.

The Dowager Rani also wrote that Ramachandra Deva, even after his conversion to Islam, expressed the desire to worship Jagannath. So the 'Patita Pabana' image was set up near the main gate of the Temple for Durshan by the fallen Raja. It appears that the Patita Pabana image was set up for Durshan by the low caste people, who were not allowed to enter the Temple.

the unauthorized assumption of that title by the minor son during the life-time of his father, and the present difficulties are due to the hasty and ill advised proceeding of the guardian in causing the investiture of the minor without reference to the Government."

In her petition she had stated: "As Superintendent of the Temple the Rajah has to perform certain services to the idols, but instead of doing them all himself, he is permitted by the Shastras to appoint a substitute who goes by the name of 'Mudiratha' who must be formally installed by the Rajah himself."

The guardian stated that the post of Mudiratha had fallen vacant. "But before the minor could make the necessary appointment it was indispensable that he himself should be formally installed Raja for none but a Raja could appoint a Mudirath."

"The guardian corroborated her contention by citing the opinion of some learned Pundits of Puri."

"The guardian and the Pundits go further, for they hold that the convict Raja by his banishment has become permanently incapacitated for the service of Juggernath and should he be ever allowed to return to the country, he would on no account be permitted to resume his duty in the Temple. An extract has been given from the *Madala Panji* or the historical record of the Temple narrating the circumstance under which Maharaja Ramachandra Deb who had lost his caste by his association with the Musalmans was deprived of his service of the Temple and was replaced by his grandson, who was formally installed Raja during the life-time of the former."\*

\* The Rani did not actually quote from the *Madala Panji*. Ramachandra II continued to be the Raja even after his conversion till his death. The Panji clearly states that Bir Kesari Deva, son of Ramachandra Deva, drove away Padmanabha Deva, who usurped the throne after the death of Ramachandra II, and ascended the throne. (*Madala Panji*, Prachi Edition pp. 76-77).

The Government should have consulted the Persian records of the Sudder Qanungo of Cuttack, containing the genealogy of

“According to the established usage and the sacred writings of the Hindoos, it seems therefore necessary that there should be a duly installed Raja to carry on the services of the Temple and appoint a Mudirath on a vacancy arising.”

“Under the circumstances the recognition by the Government of the title and appellation of Raja Mukund Deb would be an act of grace which would not only be welcome to the family, but be appreciated by the Hindus generally. The title may be conferred upon him as a personal distinction to be enjoyed by him during the life-time of his father at whose death he would inherit the family title.” xxx

“The point in question was not whether the title of Raja was hereditary in the family but whether the minor could adopt it during the life-time of his father.”<sup>32</sup>

The Commissioner forwarded the letter of the Collector to the Government of Bengal. He wrote : “There is no doubt that the installation of the minor Rajah would be immensely popular with the Hindoos in general and inhabitants of Orissa in particular.”<sup>33</sup>

J. B. Peacock, Secretary, Political Department, Government of Bengal wrote to the Secretary, Foreign Department, Government of India that the minor son of the convicted Rajah, according to the custom of the family, took the title of Rajah to perform the religious services and ceremonies of the Temple. His guardian then applied to the District Judge that her grandson might take the name of Rajah Mookund

the Khurda Rajas. These records were sent by the Collector of Cuttack to the Settlement Commissioner with his letter No. 1869 dated 11 October 1809. According to this genealogical table, Bir Kesari Deva, son of Ramachandra II, became Raja of Khurda in Umlee 1147-1739-40 A.D.

<sup>32</sup> K. G. Gupta, Collector, Puri to Commissioner : 21 August 1883 No. 1134 : J.T.C. Pt. VI

<sup>33</sup> Commissioner to Secretary, Government of Bengal : 10 August 1883 No. 1407 : J.T.C. Pt. VI

Deb. That application was granted by the Judge 'for the protection of the minor's interests'.

"As the Judge had given countenance to the family idea that the title of Raja was hereditary, the Commissioner sought the opinion of the Government of Bengal. The title of Rajah assumed by the zamindars of Khoordah had never been formally recognized by the British Government."

"In the notification of the Government of India in the Foreign Department dated 1st January 1877, conferring the title of Maharajah on Divyasingh Deb, he was called the 'Rajah of Pooree'. The higher title was subsequently cancelled, but nothing was said about the minor title of Rajah because it had never been formally recognised."

Peacock in his letter referred to the opinion of the officiating Collector of Puri, K. G. Gupta "affecting the direction of the religious service and ceremonies of the Temple of Juggernath". The Collector observed that according to the established usage and sacred writings of the Hindus, it seemed necessary that there should be a duly installed Rajah to carry on the services of the Temple and to appoint a substitute when he was unable to perform the ceremonies himself. He thought that the recognition of the title of Rajah would not only be welcome to the family but would be appreciated by the Hindus generally. The Commissioner agreed with him.

Peacock intimated the concurrence of the Lieutenant Governor. "Leaving therefore the question of hereditary title in abeyance for the present, the Lieutenant Governor would recommend that the name and title of Rajah Mookund Deb be conferred as a personal distinction on the minor Rajah. This would validate the action of the minor's grandmother in installing him as the Rajah and would enable the religious ceremonies of the Temple to be properly carried on."<sup>84</sup>

<sup>84</sup> J. B. Peacock to Secretary, Government of India, Foreign Department; 14 December 1883 No. 1467: J.T.C. Pt. V

In March 1884, Lord Ripon, the Viceroy, conferred the title of Raja as personal distinction on Jagannath Janamani. Rani Suryamani informed the Collector, Puri that she was willing to present to the Government, a Nuzzar of Rs. 1500|- in gold mohurs.

Thus ended the dispute regarding the recognition of Jagannath Jenamani, minor son of Dibyasingh Deb, as Raja, during the life-time of Divyasingh Deb.

We may express sympathy for the father, a convict in the Andamans. He grew wayward due to the neglect of Rani Suryamani, his adoptive mother. His relations with the Dowager Rani were strained. Suryamani Patmahadei was afraid that Divyasingh Deb might be released one day and she would lose power as the 'custodian' (Mahafez) of the Jagannath Temple.\*

So she insisted that the title of Raja be conferred on Jagannath Jenamani,\* making Divyasingh Deb

\* In July 1879, she made an application to the District Judge to 'vest the whole of the estate' and consequently the Jagannath Temple administration in the minor, because of the conviction of Divyasingh Deb. The Judge rejected the contention.

Some Chiefs made a petition to the Government to show clemency to the convicted Raja on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the queen (*Utkal Dipika* : 17 August 1878).

The Bodokhemidi Raja deposited Rupees 5000 for an appeal against the conviction of Divyasingh Deb before the House of Lords (*Utkal Dipika* : 22 February 1879).

\* The editor of *Utkal Dipika* commented on Jagannath Jenamani's assumption of the title of Raja.

"There seems to be no harm if the Guddee remains vacant for some time. Though the convicted Raja had been transported for life, he might come back one day due to the rules of the prison or the clemency of the empress. It cannot be said that considering his age and status his crime does not deserve condonation. The Rajkumar is an infant and will remain minor for a long period and the affairs will be conducted by the Mahafez."

"Was there actually any need, to put the minor on the

disqualified even after his return. But Divyasingh Deb did not return. He became mad and subsequently died of tuberculosis in the Andamans on 25 August 1887.

The draft Bill of 1881 for conducting the Jagannath Temple affairs was dropped as the Government of India did not like to introduce, under the existing circumstances, legislation in connection with the religious institutions in India.

The Government of India wrote to the Government of Bengal on 11 July 1881 that a suit regarding the Jagannath Temple affairs should be instituted in the Court of the District Judge, Cuttack. The High Court should be asked to transfer the case to Calcutta, to be conducted by the Advocate General assisted by the Standing Counsel.

A. Smith, Commissioner of Orissa, in his letter dated 20 August 1884, objected to the transfer of the case to Calcutta on the ground that it would involve great delay, considerable expense and inconvenience to the witnesses of all classes. The Board of Revenue agreed with the opinion of the Commissioner.

The Secretary to the Board of Revenue wrote to the Secretary, Revenue Department : "The Court of the District Judge (at Cuttack) is vested with full authority under the proposed scheme of management and for this reason, it will be convenient that the case, should in the first instance, be disposed by that Court. The suit is one which will to some extent depend on the nature of the oral evidence, and it will certainly be more convenient to the witnesses and more conducive

guddee? It appears that indirectly an attempt has been made to remove the popular sympathy for the convicted Raja." xx

"We request that those Hindus who are interested in the good administration of the Temple and welfare of the Puri Raj family, will petition to the Government to bring the estate under the Court of Wards."

*Utkal Dipika* : 13 May 1882

to the satisfactory hearing of the suit that the witnesses should be examined locally."

The Board of Revenue hoped that there would be little opposition but in any case it was of utmost importance that the form of the plaint should be carefully considered. The Board suggested that the plaint should be drafted by the Government pleader for approval by the Legal Remembrancer, who, should he deem it advisable, consult the Advocate General.

The Board accepted the scheme of management as prepared by the officiating Collector, K. G. Gupta, with some modification. The Board suggested a Managing Committee of five Trustees and a Manager. The Raja of Puri would be the hereditary President of the Managing Committee. The position of the minor Raja under the scheme was a question of some difficulty. The Board suggested that the mother of the deposed Rajah should be asked to nominate someone to represent Mukund Deb, till he would attain majority. The nomination would be subject to the approval of the Court, which would be the controlling authority under the scheme.<sup>35</sup>

In January 1885, A. P. Macdonell, Secretary, Government of Bengal in his letter to the Government of India referred to the proposed suit to provide for proper superintendence of the Jagannath Temple.

Macdonell wrote : "Legal opinion was sought in regard to the prospect of such a suit as proposed by the Government of India, the manner and the form in which it should be brought, the arrangements that should be made for conducting it and the scheme to be suggested to the Civil Court for the management of the Temple and its endowments."

"The Advocate General and the Legal Remembrancer were decidedly of opinion that a suit cannot be instituted. The Member of the Board was of opinion that it would be useless to apply to the Civil

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<sup>35</sup> Secretary, Board of Revenue to Secretary, Revenue Department : 20 October 1884 No. 872 A : J.T.C. Pt. VI

Court under Section 539, as it would not be possible for the Government to adduce evidence to show that the endowment of the Temple constituted a Trust created for public charitable purposes. As the revenues of the Temple were expended on other than religious purposes, the endowments did not come under the scope of Section 539 of the Civil Procedure Code which applied to the charitable endowments only."

"Secondly, the Civil Court would have no power to vest the superintendence in any other person other than the Rajah of Khoordah (Pooree) while Act X of 1840 which made the Rajah the sole Superintendent of the Temple remained unrepealed."

"In the face of so decisive an expression of opinion by the law officers of Government, it seemed useless to seek a remedy for the existing state of affairs in the manner proposed."

"Legislation was unavoidable and on a further representation from the Bengal Government, the Government of India removed the difficulties arising from the law as it then stood, by amending section 539 of the C.P.C. as to bring within its purview all trusts created for the religious as well as charitable purposes and by repealing Section 2 of Act X of 1840 in order to confer on the Civil Court power to appoint additional trustees for the management of the Temple of Juggernath."

"In the mean time a question was raised by the local officers regarding the status and title of the minor son and successor of Rajah Divyasingh Deo which required early settlement in order that the services and ceremonies of the Temple might be properly conducted in his name. The title of Rajah was conferred on him as a personal distinction on 1 April 1884. But he will not come of age for fourteen years, and as his own affairs are looked after by the Dowager Rani, who being a Purdah Lady is incapable of personally superintending the management of the Temple and its endowments, the necessity for the appoint-

ment of additional Trustees continued to exist as before."xxx

"The Government of India had directed in the orders of 11 July 1881, cited above, that the suit should be instituted in the Court of the District Judge, but that the High Court should be asked to exercise the power of withdrawal and transfer conferred on it and that the suit should then be instituted in the High Court by the Advocate General."

"The Commissioner of Orissa has however pointed out that this course would involve great delay, considerable expense and great inconvenience to witnesses of all classes. The Board of Revenue agree with the Commissioner in his opinion that the case will be more satisfactorily disposed of by the District Judge."

"The Lieutenant Governor is inclined to think that the suit will to a considerable extent depend on the oral evidence of numerous witnesses, mainly residents of Orissa, and that it will be more convenient to them and more conducive to the satisfactory conduct of the case, if these witnesses be examined locally."

"Under the scheme of management now under consideration the District Judge's Court will, in many respect, exercise full authority in connection with the Temple. Sir Rivers Thompson is therefore of opinion that the suit be, in the first instance, disposed of by the District Court."xxx

"The Lieutenant Governor desires to say that although he anticipates no very strong opposition on the part of the Rajah's people, he still considers it of utmost importance that the form of the plaint should be drawn up carefully."xxx

"The scheme which has generally been accepted as the best under the circumstance of the case, closely follows the Draft bill submitted to the Government of India in 1881, and the Board had only to make a few alterations in it, in matters of detail. The Lieutenant Governor approves the scheme."

"The scheme contemplates vesting the superintendence of the Temple in a committee of respectable

Hindoo gentlemen to be appointed by the Civil Court with the Rajah of Pooree as the President, the actual management being conducted by a paid Manager who will act under the immediate control and supervision of the Committee." xxx

"These gentlemen will be at first selected by the Court but subsequent vacancies will be filled up by persons nominated by the Committee and approved by the Court. The appointment of the Manager will also be made by the Court at the recommendation of the Committee. The position of the young Rajah involves some difficulty. The Rajah being a minor of about four years of age is unable to discharge the duties of the President of the Committee; nor can the Dowager Rani, who manages his affairs, undertake these duties. The functions of hereditary President must therefore be performed for many years by a representative."

"Sir Rivers Thompson agrees with the Board that the appointment of the Rajah's representative in the Committee should be subject to the approval of the Court rather than that of the Commissioner."

"Should these proposals meet with the approval of His Excellency the Governor General, the Lieutenant Governor will issue necessary instructions for the institution of the proposed suit."<sup>30</sup>

D. Fitzpatrick, Secretary, Government of India, Home Department, acknowledged the letter dated 13 January 1885 from the Government of Bengal, submitting for consideration and orders of the Government of India, certain proposals to provide for the proper superintendence and management of the temple of Juggernath. The Secretary informed that the Governor General had approved the proposals made by the Lieutenant Governor. It was desired that before any action was taken the scheme

\* A. P. Macdonell to Secretary, Government of India, Home Department : 13 January 1885, No. 114 : J.T.C., Pt. VII

should be laid before the Advocate General for his opinion.<sup>37</sup>

The opinion of the Advocate General was solicited by the Government of Bengal. The Advocate General wrote : "I am unable to say that the proposed scheme is the best that could be devised. As a scheme it is worthy of being put before the Court in which the suit is to be filed." xxx

"The number of Trustees is to be five. It is necessary to empower the Court to add a fifth Trustee during the incapacity of the Rajah. The decree of the Court should vest the property in the Trustees."<sup>38</sup>

F. C. Daukes, Under Secretary, Government of India, wrote to the Secretary, Government of Bengal: "Subject to the modifications suggested by the Advocate General, the Governor General authorizes the institution of the proposed suit in connection with the proper superintendence and management of the Temple of Juggernath."<sup>39</sup>

The Secretary, Board of Revenue, forwarded to the Commissioner of Orissa a copy of the correspondence. It was pointed out the plaint was to be drawn by the Government pleader at Cuttack. After the approval of the plaint by the Legal Remembrancer, a suit would be instituted in the Court of the District Judge, Cuttack. The Advocate General should be consulted from time to time.

The Commissioner deputed Ram Prasad Singh, late Sheristadar of his office, to enquire and report regarding the affairs of the Jagannath Temple. Ram Prasad Singh had worked for a year on deputation as the Manager of the Jagannath Temple.\*

<sup>37</sup> D. Fitzpatrick to Secretary, Government of Bengal, Revenue Department : 19 February 1885, No. 236 : J.T.C., Pt. VII

<sup>38</sup> G. C. Paul, Advocate General to Secretary, Government of Bengal : 30 March 1885 : J.T.C. Pt. VII

<sup>39</sup> F. S. Daukes to Secretary, Government of Bengal, Revenue Department : 5 May 1885, No. 694 : J.T.C. Pt. VII

\* R. P. Singh was appointed the Manager of the Temple in

In his Report, Singh wrote : "It appears that some of the ornaments and jewels and money received as Pindika or presents by the pilgrims, are kept with the Superintendent of the Temple, viz. in the house of the Rajah of Pooree."

"The accounts of all the articles, ornaments, jewels, clothes etc. and other valuables belonging to the Temple in both Store rooms (new and old) and all its treasure including the Pindikas or presents by the pilgrims are kept by the Deul Karan, the Tarahu and the Baithakaran."

He pointed out that formerly one Amin was employed to superintend all the business of the Temple. The Deul Karan now did the Amin's duty in addition to his own work. Singh observed that the Temple officers, the Deul Karan, Tarahu Karan and Baithakaran together received Rs. 705 annually. "These ill-paid servants should not have been entrusted with the accounts." Similarly, the keys of the Store rooms should be kept by the Superintendent instead of minor Temple Officers, the Muduli and the Mekup. "This arrangement will avoid room for strong suspicion."

Singh wrote that Rani Suryamani Patmahadei was managing the Temple affairs "in a manner". "But she never personally sees as to how and in what condition the valuable articles belonging to Jugger-nath are kept."

"Singh complained that the Dewan Ananda Mukherjee and the Deul Karan refused to show him the list of ornaments, jewels and other valuable

1879. F. Handhy, Collector of Puri, in his letter to the Commissioner dated 19 March 1880 forwarded a letter of the Rani of Puri regarding retention of the service of Ram Prasad Singh for another six months, when the period of six months would expire. Handhy observed "The Babu is managing well."

But after one year "The Mahafiz did away with the service of Ram Prasad Singh and managed with underlings ('Samanya loka')": *Utkal Dipika*—4 June 1881.

articles. "I understand that strict orders were issued by the Rani to all the officials not to show me any of the papers."

Singh in his Report threw light on the administration of the Temple by the Dowager Rani. "The Dewan himself or any other gentlemen have not the privilege to come near the Rani. When there is necessity for informing her of any matter, it is carried to the inner compartment of the Rani, only through the Bisoyee or Parichha—servant drawing pay of less than Rs. 4. per month—who conveys it to the female attendant of the Rani, called 'Nanima' who breaks the matter to the Rani."

"The order which the Rani is pleased to pass has the same course to run before it is made public. It is conveyed by word of mouth to the Bisoyee or Parichha who comes out and proclaims it to the Dewan and the public. This being so, it may be judged if it is at all possible to say whether any proclaimed orders are always correct, viz. they are real orders of the Rani."

Singh wrote : "The ornaments of gold and silver, jewels and diamonds are in the hands of the low-paid servants of no moral training. It seems absolutely necessary that a fresh list should at once be prepared of these articles."

He pointed out that the list was prepared long ago (the last list was made in 1819). "Many ornaments have undoubtedly been made or received in the meantime. It seems to be the intention of the Rani and her officials not to allow Government to know the exact value of the valuable property in the Temple."<sup>40</sup>

After reading the Report of R. P. Singh, the

<sup>40</sup> R. P. Singh to Commissioner ; 27 October 1885 : J.T.C. Pt. VII.

R. P. Singh exaggerated the Purdah system prevailing in the Raja's house. The Dowager Rani sent for M. S. Das, and consulted him about the Temple case, behind a curtain, without the help of the intermediaries.

Commissioner C. Metcalfe decided to press for the appointment of a Receiver to take charge of the ornaments and valuable articles in the Jagannath temple.

The Government Pleader, Hari Ballabh Bose, in his letter to the Commissioner, dated 23 August 1886, wrote that the Collector of Puri had made a prayer to the Court to take charge of such movables which are not used in the services of the deities, or to appoint a Receiver who will take charge of them.

In his opinion, the Plaintiff should apply separately for an interim order, for having such moveables, not used in the services of the images, to be deposited in the Court or taken charge by the Receiver, "so that such moveables might not be removed or concealed".

The suit, No. 3 of 1886, was filed on 15 December 1886 in the Court of J. B. Dragan, the District Judge, Cuttack. The officiating Collector of Puri, J. H. Savage, was the Plaintiff in the suit. Raja Divyasingh Deb was named as the defendant. After his death the defendants were Rani Suryamani Patmahadei, Rani Niladri Patmahadei (mother of Mukunda Deb) : Ramchandra Santra (Deul Karan) : Yogi Mekup (Bhandar Mekup) ; Gopinath Patnaik (Deul Karan) and a few other persons. A claim was made in the plaint.

### CLAIM

"That the valuables detailed in the plaint and such other articles of jewellery, gold and silver, belonging to the Temple which are not constantly in use in the services of the idols might be deposited in the Court, or otherwise preserved and taken care of, and that, if necessary, a Receiver might be appointed for their preservation and custody ; that the Defendants might be required to submit a full, true and particular account of all such articles of jewellery, gold and silver, as well as of all money, coins and moveable property, and accounts belonging to the endowments which

were within their possession, custody and power; that the defendant Rani Suryamani might be required to submit a full, true and particular account of all estates which were in her possessions, appertaining to the said endowments ; and that an account might be taken from her of all the revenues, profits and income and receipts whatever, whether received from the aforesaid estates and lands or from gifts and presents made to the idols—and all incomes and receipts whatsoever appertaining to the said trust received by her or for her use, from the time she took possession of the estates and took upon herself the charge of the said trust, and the said Rani might be required to account as how the money or things so received, have been applied or disbursed.”

The Plaintiff moved to the Court asking the Defendant to submit “a list of all properties moveable and immoveable belonging to the Trust, and that for that purpose all proper directions might be given and enquiries be made by the Court, and that new Trustees might be appointed by the Court to exercise the same powers that were conferred on the Superintendent by Section 2 of Act X of 1840.”

“The Court was moved to vest all properties of the Jagannath temple, moveable and immoveable, in such Trustees and to settle a proper scheme for the further management of the Trust.”

Hariballabh Bose, the Government Pleader and Lal Behari Ghosh were pleaders for the Plaintiff. Madhusudan Das assisted by Ramsankar Ray argued for the Defendant.

The Collector of Puri prayed for the appointment of a Receiver, an Assistant Receiver and a Tahsildar to take charge of the Temple property. He also asked the Judge to make an inventory of the immoveable property of the Temple. The Judge granted the prayer. On December 18, the Nazir of the District Judge began preparation of a list of costly articles in gold and jewellery.

Raghunandan Ramanuj Das, the Mohunt of Raj

Gopal (Emar) Math was appointed honorary Receiver by the Civil Court, at the recommendation of the officiating Collector H. Savage (Letter from H. Savage to the Commissioner dated 15 February 1887). Nadia Chand Dutta, Sub-Deputy Collector, was appointed Assistant Receiver on a salary of Rs. 150 per month. Ram Prasad Singh was appointed Tahsildar on a salary of Rs. 100 per month.

Metcalf, the Commissioner, wrote to the Government, "The object of the suit in which the Rani amongst other persons was defendant, was to obtain through the Civil Court a scheme of Temple management, which could not be arranged by any other means. All that the Rani under the suit could claim was to retain all the privileges that she enjoyed hitherto. The suit did not intend to deprive any one of her privileges, but was directed to regulate the control over the Temple. The control was immediately necessary if the Temple management was to be improved. The Rani has no immediate control over the Temple priests. They are independent of her and cannot be dismissed by her, holding hereditary appointments. With a view to bring discredit on Government and create popular discontentment, the priests might suspend the ceremonials."

"The local view was that such a contingency would be a serious one, and should certainly be provided against by the appointment of a Receiver from among the Mohants of Pooree—a man of influence who would undertake to carry on the ceremonials.

"The Committee of management was to take place of the Superintendent and till that Committee was formed, it was thought expedient to move the Court to appoint a Receiver, because (1) There was alleged mismanagement of the Temple endowments and it was advisable to provide for their collection and safe custody. (2) There was alleged misappropriation of collections made in the Temple from the pilgrims. There were many valuable moveable properties in the Temple, which, it was suspected, would be removed

on the institution of the suit. "So an application for a Receiver was made."<sup>41</sup>

The appointment of a Receiver was a blunder. The Editor of the *Utkal Dipika* wrote (18 December) that the Government moved for the appointment of a Receiver apprehending that the Raja of Puri or his guardian would misappropriate valuable articles of the Jagannath Temple. "Jagannath is the tutelary deity of the Raja and nobody would believe that forgetting his status, he would stoop to such misappropriation."

The conduct of the Government servants created unrest. Constables with "unclean and unwashed dress" moved inside the Temple precincts (*Utkal Dipika*—4 January 1887). The Chaprasi of the Receiver left his napkin on the throne of Jagannath, making bath necessary for the deity (*Utkal Dipika*—5 January 1887).

A Brahma Sub-Deputy Magistrate while inside the Temple offended the religious feelings of the priests by refusing to take oblations of the deity. A Government officer went inside the Temple wearing socks.

Meetings were organized to protest against the seizing ('Kadhi neba') of the Temple management from the 'Thakur Raja'.

In the second week of December 1886, a meeting of Utkal Sabha was held at Cuttack. Baidyanath Pandit moved a resolution which was seconded by Ram Sankar Ray that there was nothing wrong in the management of the Jagannath Temple so as to justify the interference of the Government.\*

"C. Metcalfe, The Commissioner, to Secretary, Revenue Department : 3 March 1887 J.T.C. Pt. VI

\* Strangely, after 12 years, in a meeting of the Utkal Sabha, a Committee was formed, consisting of M. S. Das, Ram Sankar Ray and Baidyanath Pandit to prepare a scheme for the Temple administration so as to prevent mismanagement of the Temple property by Raja Mukunda Deb.

It was pointed out that the Puri Raj family once ruled over Orissa. The removal of the 'Thakur Raja' from the office of the Superintendent thus lowers the dignity and status of the family, which wounds the sentiments of the Hindus. Copies of the Resolutions were sent to the Governments of India and Bengal. Ram Sankar Ray was the Assistant Editor of the *Utkal Dipika* and defended the Rani in the Court of the District Judge.

In the last week of December, a meeting was held in the temple of Gopalji at Cuttack. Jagneswar Chandra, Pleader, presided. The meeting was largely attended. It was resolved that the services of the Temple cannot be performed without the Raja. The speakers expressed the opinion that there was no serious irregularity in the Temple administration so as to justify the interference of the Government.<sup>42</sup>

A meeting was held at Bada Akhada Muth at Puri in January. It was pointed out that the 'Nitis' (Rituals) would not be properly performed, if the administration was taken away from the hands of the Raja, as the Raja or his representative Mudiratha is required to perform certain services ('Rajaseba').

The Rani sent for M. S. Das who advised her to file a writ petition in the Calcutta High Court against the appointment of a Receiver, praying that the Government be restrained from interfering with the administration of the Temple, till the disposal of the case in the Court of the District Judge, Cuttack.\*

<sup>42</sup> "The Puri temple suit was the subject of meetings in different parts of the district, and one large meeting said to have been attended by 5000 men was held in one of the principal Muths of the town, presided over by a Pleader of the local Bar." (Administration Report—1884-85 ; Orissa Division)

\* A letter from 'Wonderer' regarding the 'Shrine of Jugger-nath' was published in the *Statesman* dated 15 March 1887. The writer referred to the declared policy of the Government to sever all connection with the Jagannath Temple. "How then can it be pretended in the face of this, that Government is interested

The Calcutta High Court heard the writ petition filed by Rani Suryamani Patmahadei in the first week of March.

John Woodroffe, Evans and Sandell, Barristers, and Vakeels Dr. Gurudas Banerjee, Amarnath Bose and Karunasindhu Mukherjee appeared for the plaintiff. The Advocate General and Nanda Prasad Banerjee represented the Collector of Puri.

Woodroffe argued that Section 539 of the Civil Procedure Code was not applicable to the Jagannath Temple. He quoted records to prove that the Raja of Puri had proprietary rights in the worship of Jagannath. He pointed out that there was no need for the appointment of a Receiver because a year ago the Commissioner ordered that the store room of the Temple be sealed, which was done under the direction of Ram Prasad Singh. So there was no question of misappropriation of the valuable articles. In his opinion the Commissioner had no authority to pass such an order.

After Woodroffe, Evans argued. He pointed out that the Raja of Puri had been made the Superintendent of the Jagannath Temple, first in 1809 and then in 1840. He argued that the Government had admitted the Rani to be the legally competent Custodian of the Jagannath Temple. So there was no justification to seek the interference of the Court to compel her to submit accounts.

The Advocate General replied that the Custodian misused the property of the Temple, and consequently the appointment of a Receiver had become necessary. He added that the Government had no vested interest in the case. It had been instituted on behalf of the public to protect the Temple property from misappropriation and for proper management of the Temple services. The Court gave judgment towards the end of March (2 April 1887—*Utkal Dipika*).

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in the Temple. Can there be appearance of connection?" The letter was probably written by M. S. Das.

*HIGH COURT JUDGMENT IN POOREE  
TEMPLE CASE*

“We think that the order appointing the Receiver in this case must be set aside for the reason that in our opinion no necessity has been shown for the appointment. The suit is a suit which is brought by the Collector representing the public for the purpose of having a scheme fixed for the management of certain religious endowment of a very extensive character on the ground that it is being mismanaged by the persons who are managing it. Now as to whether that suit can be maintained, or as to what the rights of the parties in this suit may be, we have no knowledge and no means of forming or expressing any opinion whatever, but this we do say that upon the affidavits before us.”

“It does not appear that there is any reason for supposing that the property of this endowment is being made away with or wasted in any way. What does appear is that there is a suspicion that there might be better management and it is charged that the managers of this endowment are mismanaging it. But no trace whatever is there of any specific charge of dishonesty or misconduct against them in the sense of dishonesty. Under these circumstances and having regard to the fact that the case on both sides is that the object of this endowment is to provide for a particular form of religious worship, and that it is not denied that this form of worship is carried out.”

“We think that this matter of the Receiver ought to stand over until the decision of the suit when the rights of the parties will be finally decided, and when it will be seen what is the proper scheme under which the endowment ought to be carried out ; and therefore without expressing the slightest opinion to the merits of the case as to whether a prima facie case has been made out by the plaintiff or on the other hand a bonafide defence has been set up. On the part of the present Manager, we say that in our opinion there

is no ground for the order appointing the Receiver in this case ; and therefore we decree the appeal against that order and direct that that order will be set aside. The result will be that the rule and other proceedings will fall through because in as much as the order appointing a Receiver is gone. The action of the Receiver will also be gone and therefore it is unnecessary for us to say anything with reference to the rule except that the rule will drop ; and especially we say that because we do not think it necessary to say anything about the costs in this case. If we deal with the costs we should have to assess them and it is impossible for us to assess them at anything like the actual costs which have been incurred and in as much as we could only assess them at a sum which will be very inadequate we think in the interests of justice. We should best not say anything about the cost.

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Woodroffe openly acknowledged the assistance he received from the junior lawyer M. S. Das in the preparation of the brief of the case. The judgment of the High Court was welcomed by the people of Orissa, who thanked M. S. Das.<sup>43</sup>

The Editor of the *Statesman* criticized the retiring Lieutenant Governor, while referring to the High Court judgement regarding the Jagannath Temple case.

“The extent to which Sir Rivers Thompson was in the hands of his subordinates receives a very strong illustration from the permission presumably he must have given to the distant officers at Cuttack, to take summary possession of the entire property, and the

“A Cuttack correspondent wires us on Thursday last that the public are extremely glad at the decree of the High Court, stopping the attachment of the estate of Juggernath by the Receiver. The Oriya public was much annoyed at the attachment of the said properties and tend their thanks to Babu Madhusudan Das, Pleader, who has successfully exerted himself in this case.” *The Statesman* : April 2, 1887, Saturday.

whole administration of the great shrine of Jugger-nath."

"There can be no reasonable doubt that the administration of the Temple and the charge of its property have from time immemorial been vested in the Rajah of Khurda who is supposed for certain ceremonial purposes connected with the daily worship of the great shrine, to be the incarnation of the great MAHADEV JUGGERNATH himself."

"Without enquiry of any kind and in direct contravention of the whole tenor and spirit of our connection with the Temples of the country, the Collector and the Judge of Cuttack, by a manifest understanding between them, summarily ousted the Maharanee of Khurda from the charge of the shrine and the custody of all the property connected with the Temple."

"The record of this proceedings is before us and remembering that State interference of any kind with the affairs of the Temple is in the direct teeth of the course which the Government has followed for the last thirty years under the order of Parliament."

"We say advisedly that the proceedings are incredible. There is the strongest reason to believe that the Maharanee of Khurda—who is the guardian of the minor prince—is not open to any blame for her management of the shrine, her administration has been marked throughout by great unselfishness, self sacrifice and devotion."

"That the Collector can legally initiate proceedings of this kind is open to gravest question, while with such fervour did the Judge second him that it is positively entered in the record that the judge directed his Sheristadar to lend the Collector's Vakeel the stamp fees required for the proceeding which the Vakeel had not forthcoming."

"The whole case seems to have arisen from the District authorities constituting the champion of Roghund Romaney Das and of a man named Ram Parsad Singh. Listening to the representation of these

men, the Collector, summarily and in the most tyrannical manner, ousted the Maharanee, custodian of the Temple from its charge, and made it over to these two men, who, so far as can be seen at present, have no right to the custody of the shrine, than the Collector or Judge who have acted in this extraordinary way. The slightest enquiry by Sir Rivers Thompson would have prevented the scandal."

The Editor again repeated the charge "We permit a Collector of revenue suddenly to oust the ancient and hereditary and princely custodian of the shrine from all connections with it."

In conclusion the Editor observed : "Her Majesty's Judges very properly set aside the 'orders' of the District Judge, a fortnight ago, but the outrage is an illustration of what officials will venture upon, under a weak ruler like Sir Rivers Thompson." xxx

"We were warned some days ago by a European official on tour in Gya of the uneasiness which these proceedings were awakening in his neighbourhood, and it is marvellous that Sir Rivers Thompson should have countenanced this."<sup>44</sup>

The Editor of the *Statesman* distorted facts and utilised the religious feelings of the Hindus to serve his purpose of criticizing the administration of Sir Rivers Thompson. He extolled the status of the Raja of Puri.

The Editor did not know that the suit was instituted for better administration of the Jagannath temple under the direction of the Government of India. There was no question of 'ousting' the 'princely custodian of the shrine from all connections' with the Jagannath temple, because the Raja was made the President of the proposed committee of management.

Metcalf made a mistake by pressing for the appointment of a Receiver. But there is no justification

"The *Statesman*'—April 5, 1887

for assuming that he did it for the sake of Mohunt Ramanuj Das and Ram Prasad Singh.

The Editor did not know that the Collector of Puri and not the Collector of Cuttack instituted the case in the Court of the District Judge, Cuttack. The statements like manifest understanding between the Collector of Cuttack and Judge of Cuttack, and the loan of stamp fees by the Judge's Sheristadar to the Collector's Vakeel would have amounted to contempt of Court, had the Editor been an Indian. There was no such Vakeel of the Collector of Cuttack.

Sir Stewart Bayley became the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal in April 1887. He wanted a compromise in the Jagannath temple case. He sent for M. S. Das, the agent of the Dowager Rani of Puri and Metcalfe, the Commissioner of Orissa.

Nolan, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, held a discussion with M. S. Das and Metcalfe regarding settlement of the Temple suit. In this connection, M. S. Das wrote in the columns of the *Statesman*, dated 20 April 1887 :

"The public are anxious that our new Lieutenant Governor should himself look into the suit regarding the Pooree Temple, and I am glad to tell you that His Honor has already taken up the matter. On Saturday last Mr. Nolan, the Secretary, who has the management of the case, Mr. Metcalfe, the Commissioner of Orissa, and I talked over the matter, and it was decided that the case should be amicably settled."

"I understand from Mr. Nolan, that Government did not intend to take away the management of the Temple from the Rani's hands, that it was not the intention to interfere with the financial arrangements and that Government did not know anything about the attachment, appointment of Receiver\* and

\* It is not a fact that the Government had no knowledge about the appointment of a Receiver. Metcalfe informed the Board of Revenue about the application for a Receiver in his letter dated 1 September 1886. The Board made a reference

other proceedings connected with the matter, till the Rani appealed to the High Court."

"The terms proposed by Mr. Nolan are reasonable and I am sure the Rani will agree to them. But as this cannot be done without the formal sanction of the Indian Government, the Indian Government will shortly be written to and on the receipt of such sanction the matter will be settled."

"As the public are anxious about the case, I think it proper to inform them of this and accordingly I send a copy of this letter to several papers for the information of the various classes of people, who are evidently watching the suit with interest."<sup>45</sup>

After consulting Rani Suryamani Patmahadei, M. S. Das wrote to the Commissioner: "The Rani wishes to have loan of the services of a Government officer to manage the affairs of the Temple, till the Raja is of age. You are aware of the difficulty in getting an efficient Manager in a peculiarly constituted institution like the Temple of Jagannath."

"The conflicting interests of the diverse classes of the people interested in the worship of the idols make the duty of the Manager not only difficult but a tedious one too. In addition to the integrity and education requisite for success in the discharge of his responsible duties, the Manager should be a Native of Orissa and believer of the orthodox Hindu faith. The Rani wishes to appoint Baboo Harekrushna Das as Manager."

"As regard the control of the priests, the Rani

to the Legal Remembrancer in respect of Metcalfe's letter. An application for the sanction of the appointment of Nadia Chand Dutta as Assistant Receiver, was approved by the Government, as communicated in the letter to the Commissioner dated 21 January 1887 (Metcalfe to Secretary, Revenue dept, Government of Bengal 25 June 1887)

"Pleader for Rani of Khoorda to the Editor, *Statesman*; April 19, 1887.

hopes that the authority of the Manager will be backed by the traditional punctuality and regularity in the discharge of their respective duties."

"The Rani is very anxious that the proposed scheme of Management should not extend beyond Rajah Mookund Deb's minority. She is anxious to avoid the responsibility of allowing her acts to bind the Rajah after he is legally competent to judge and act for himself. She feels grateful to His Honor for the kind concessions made to her wishes in the matter."

"In your office Memorandum No. 1597 of 1 September 1887 you ask me to submit a new scheme of management. I am directed by the Rani to submit that it is not desirable to lay down rules touching upon the details of management, as the effect of such rules will be to hamper the good sense and discretion of the Manager. The duties of the Manager will be to see the collection of rents in the estates belonging to the Temple and to manage the worship at ordinary times as well as on the occasions of the festivals to the satisfaction of the worshippers."

"The details of the ceremonies are laid down in the ancient records of the temple, and these records must be strictly followed and to embody them in the decree will not only be a useless repetition of an elaborate code of rituals but will hardly be agreeable to the feelings of the orthodox class of the people. I annex hereto the scheme of management to be embodied in the decree."

"The superintendence of the Temple of Jagannath will continue in Rajah Mookund Deb ; as it had continued in the Rajahs of Khoordah for the time being under Regulation IX of 1809 and Act X of 1840."

"Rajah Mookund Deb being a minor, Rani Suryamani Patmahadei, his legal guardian, shall have the superintendence of the Temple during the minority of Rajah Mookund Deb."

"The Rani shall appoint a competent and suitable person to look after the collection and due appropriation of the rents of the Temple estates."

“The Rani should delegate to such Manager the powers which she exercises as defacto Superintendent.”

“The Manager shall have the power to punish in the manner he thinks fit the Sebuku for dereliction of duty on their part, provided that the Manager should not dismiss any Sebuk for misconduct without the previous sanction of the Rani.”

M. S. Das referred to the maintenance of law and order inside the Temple. “Under the existing arrangements” he wrote : “the Superintendent has a large number of Burkandazes to preserve order within the precincts of the Temple.\* On occasions of great festivals, when there is an unusual influx of pilgrims, the services of a Police force are annually secured by applying to the Magistrate and this force is paid from the Temple fund.”

In conclusion, M. S. Das wanted “to say a few words” regarding the Temple lands.

He pointed out that when the Temple lands were made over to the Rajah of Khoorda in lieu of cash payment, a condition was laid down in the Deed of transfer to the effect that any interference on the part of the Rajah with the Sarbarakars or the tenantry, with whom engagements were recently entered, would be illegal. “No one can be ousted so long as rent is paid according to such engagements and no increase in rent can be demanded.”

“The fact that the Government made a survey of the estate for the purpose of re-settlement makes it clear that in the opinion of the Government, the

\* Temple Police Establishment in 1885 :

(1) One Daroga	@ Rs. 15 per month
(2) Four Duffadars	@ Rs. 4 per month
(3) Twentyfive Burkandazes	@ Rs. 3 per month
(4) Twelve Dwaris	@ Rs. 2 per month

Total Expenditure—Rs. 130 per month or Rs. 1,560 per year. (*Report of Ram Prasad Singh.*)

tenants of the Temple estates are not free from the liability of enhancement of rent under the rent law".

"I think the Rani has a right to enhance the rents of the estates. The tenants of other Temple estate, Satais Hazari, do not enjoy any such immunity from the liability to enhancement, and I do not see any reason for the invidious distinction in favour of the Temple estates which lie in Khoorda."<sup>46</sup>

Hariballabh Bose, the Government Pleader, wrote to the Commissioner on 28 February 1888 that "the Rani's agent has left out a provision which was suggested by the Government letter dated 19 May 1887 to the effect that when the Rani would dismiss the Manager, she should appoint another within seven days."

Metcalf wrote to the Government of Bengal : "I have the honour to forward copies of correspondence containing the conditions, which, if approved by Government will bring the Puri Temple suit to a satisfactory conclusion."

"The conditions as agreed are as follows : The Rani as the guardian of the minor Rajah acting on her grandson's behalf, till the minor Rajah comes of age, undertakes to appoint a Manager for the management of affairs, delegating to him all the powers which she exercises over the Temple Sebaks, save that of dismissal which she retains till the minor Rajah comes of age."

"The Rani wishes to avoid binding the Rajah on his coming of age or laying down rules touching upon the details of management ; but she is willing that the Temple ceremonials as laid down in ancient records of the Temple should be strictly followed."xxx

"The Rani selects as her nominee for the post of Manager, Harekrushna Das, Sheristadar of the Judge's Court at Cuttack. He is willing to have the post as

\* M. S. Das to Commissioner : 9 December 1887, J.T.C. Pt.

a tentative measure, as he is not sure whether he will be able to fill the office to the satisfaction of all parties."

"The Rani agrees to pay him a salary of Rs. 350 a month including contribution to pension."

"The Rani undertakes to carry through her Manager all lawful and proper orders issued by the Magistrate for the preservation of public health, safety and security of the public and for the conservancy of the interior and exterior of the Temple."

The Commissioner referred to the question of the enhancement of the rents of the estates which were transferred to the Raja of Khurda by the Government for the maintenance of the Temple.

He observed: "Whether the Rani can now enhance the rents, the settlements having expired, is really a question for the Civil Court to decide. The Government Pleader is of opinion that without the execution of fresh Deed by Government giving the Superintendent for the time being, such power or an order from Government vesting in the Superintendent the necessary authority for enhancing the rent, nothing in this behalf can be done at present."

"The Pleader for the Rani, however does not ask for any action to be taken by Government in this matter, so the point may be left for the decision of the Civil Court, should the Rani hereafter desire to enhance the rent."<sup>47</sup>

On 26 July 1888, the Government ordered the Commissioner to move a compromise petition in the District Judge's Court. The Collector of Puri moved the compromise petition on 3 October 1888.

## PETITION

"The humble petitions of the Collector of Puri, Plaintiff and of Rani Suryamani Patmahadei, De-

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<sup>47</sup> Metcalfe to Chief Secretary, Government of Bengal: 7 March 1888 No. 527: J.T.C. Pt. VII

pendant No. 2 for self as well as the guardian of minor Rajah Mookund Deb Respectfully sheweth—

1. That the Petitioners have compromised the above suit on terms agreed between them and mentioned herein below, they pray the Court to pass a decree on those terms.

2. That the right of superintendence over the Temple of Juggernath at Pooree which formerly vested under Regulation X of 1840 in the Rajah of Khoordah for the time being, continues in Rajah Mukund Deb but during the minority of the said Rajah his grandmother and guardian Rani Suryamani Patmahadei shall exercise on behalf of the minor the rights of superintendence over the Temple till the minor comes of age.

3. That during such minority i.e., the period during which the Rani Suryamani Patmahadei acts as the de facto Superintendent of the Temple she shall appoint a competent Manager to manage the affairs of the Temple. That she shall delegate to such Manager all the powers which she exercises over the Sevaks of the Temple, provided that the Manager shall not be competent to dismiss any Sevak from his office without the sanction of the Rani.

4. That in case the Rani dismisses the Manager, she should appoint another within a reasonable time failing which the Civil Court shall appoint a competent person to the vacant office.

5. The duties of such Manager shall be :

(a) To see the due performance of their respective duties by the Sēvaks of the Temple.

(b) To make proper arrangements for the ingress and egress of the pilgrims at all times and for the comfort and safety of life and property of the pilgrims.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> The inclusion of this clause was necessary because in 1887, "a young man and a woman with a child were trampled to death amongst the crowded jatees or votaries who went to see Juggernath."

(c) To see that the offerings made to the idols and offered for sale within the Temple precincts are wholesome food.

(d) To carry out all lawful and proper orders issued by the Magistrate of Pooree for the preservation of public health, safety of the public and for the conservancy of the interior and exterior of the Temple.

6. That the said Suryamani Patmahadei shall authorise and does hereby authorise the Manager for the time being, Baboo Harekrushna Das, to do the duties which under the abovementioned terms of compromise the Manager is required to do.

7. That the decree which the petitioners ask the Court to pass shall cease to have force on the minor Rajah coming of age.

8. That each party shall bear his or her costs.

9. That in the decree to be passed by the Court, there shall be a provision, that the plaintiff shall be at liberty to file any further application in this suit, which he may consider necessary during the minority of the defendant No. 2".

The decree was passed on the 15th December 1888.

### ORDERED

That the suit be decreed on the terms mentioned in the compromise petition filed by the parties and that as stated in the petition, the Plaintiff be at liberty to file any further application in the suit which he might consider necessary during the minority of the Defendant.<sup>49</sup>

nath inside the Temple on the 7th March". The *Statesman* : March 10, 1887

On 20th October 1901, Mahashtami day, three persons were trampled to death and two were seriously injured near the throne of Jagannath.

<sup>49</sup> Commissioner to Secretary, Revenue Department : 31 January 1889 No. 129 : J.T.C. Pt. VII

The compromise shows indecision on the part of the Government. The labour of many years was wasted in two months. Immediately after the assumption of office, Sir Stewart Bayley ordered for a compromise in the Jagannath Temple case.

He took the decision without consulting the Board of Revenue and the Commissioner of Orissa, which his predecessors used to do. The Commissioner Charles Metcalfe reported to the Government about the institution of the suit in the Judge's Court on March 3, 1887. By the end of April, the case was compromised after consultation between the Secretary to the Government of Bengal and M. S. Das.

The predecessors of Sir Stewart Bayley felt the need of appointing a committee for the better management of the Temple. Ram Prasad Singh's Report pointed out the defects in the Temple administration. The Temple estates were not properly managed. The long administration by a Purdah lady also created problems. So the Government decided to set up a committee of management with the Raja of Puri as titular President.

The draft of a legislation was prepared by the Commissioner and approved by the Bengal Government. It was submitted to the Government of India for approval. But the Government of India during Lord Ripon's rule advised the Government of Bengal to institute a suit in the Court of the District Judge. It is difficult to understand why the purpose of a legislation was sought to be served by a suit. When the Orissa Government brought the management of the Jagannath Temple under a Committee, it did not take recourse to a suit.

It is generally believed that the Government lost its case in the High Court. The Calcutta High Court simply ordered that "the matter of Receiver ought to stand over until the decision of the suit."

The appointment of a Receiver was certainly an ill-advised step. The conduct of some subordinate officers and of some Police constables gave rise to the

feeling that the Government wanted to destroy the sanctity of the Jagannath temple.

There was no justification for the feeling that Hindu religion was in danger. Committees were appointed for the management of the Bhubaneswar temples in November 1864. Committees were also appointed for the management of the temples of Baladeva at Kendrapara and of Sarala Chandi at Jhankar without any protest from the Hindus.

The Government should have given wide publicity to the Report of Ram Prasad Singh regarding maladministration in the Jagannath temple.

It is not a fact that the Christian Government wanted to take away the administration of the Jagannath temple from the Raja of Puri without consulting the Hindu public. The scheme was framed by K. G. Gupta, officiating Collector of Puri, "after consulting the Hindoo residents of Pooree and of other places who take interest in the affairs of the Temple. A meeting was convened by the Collector for the purpose of discussing freely the merits of the scheme."<sup>50</sup>

K. G. Gupta had no prejudice against the Raja of Puri. In fact, he recommended that the title of Raja be conferred upon Mukunda Deb, though he was a minor, as a special case.\*

The compromise was *not* a complete surrender on the part of the Government. It only spared Mukunda Deb. The legal position was pointed out by R. P. Singh in his Report to the Commissioner: "By the enactment of Act XIII of 1882 amending Section 539 and repealing Act X of 1840, the Rajah of Puri is no longer the recognized Superintendent of the Temple."

<sup>50</sup> Macdonell to Secretary, Government of India, 13 January 1885, J.T.C. Pt. VII

\* K. G. Gupta worked as the S.D.O. of Kendrapara before he became officiating Collector of Puri. In 1902, he became Commissioner of Orissa. In 1907, he was appointed Member of the Council of the Secretary of State.

Metcalf in his letter to the Government dated 25 June 1887, made it clear : "There was no Superintendent of the Temple, an appointment which was made by a Regulation and which Regulation was purposely repealed in order to bring the suit."

According to the Decree passed by the District Judge, the right of superintendence over the temple of Jagannath at Puri, which formerly vested under Regulation IX of 1809 and Act X of 1840 in the Rajah of Pooree for the time being, "continues in Rajah Mookund Deb."

There is no reference to his successors. It is to be noted that the Government considered Divyasingh Deb as the de jure Superintendent of the Temple. Divyasingh died in August 1887 and Mukunda Deb succeeded him as the de jure Superintendent, before the Court of the District Judge gave any judgment.

Mukunda Deb, when he came of age, proved to be weak-minded and inefficient. He took no interest in the Temple administration. In 1901, two persons died and five persons were seriously injured within the Jagannath temple on the day of Mahashtami. The Magistrate of Puri blamed the Raja for the accident. There was again a proposal to take away the superintendence of the Jagannath temple from the hands of the Raja of Puri.

K. G. Gupta, the Commissioner, in his letter dated 18 September 1902 to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, wrote that the Government of India amended Section 539 of the Civil Procedure Code in 1882, so as to bring within its purview all Trusts, created for religious and charitable purposes, and repealed Section 2 of Act X of 1840 in order to confer on the Civil Court power to appoint additional Trustees for the management of the temple of Jagannath.

"The suit was filed and the cry of religion in danger was so successfully raised in the Vernacular Press that the case was abandoned under a deed of compromise which stipulated that the right of superin-

tendence be continued in Mukunda Deb." Thus he doubted whether a suit could be instituted during the rule of Mukunda Deb, "though it might be different after his death, as the above declaration does not extend to his heirs."

In his opinion, any arrangement to improve the administration of the Jagannath temple should be temporary, "and must terminate with Mukunda Deb's death. For, his heir would have no legal status in connection with the Temple."

Mukunda Deb died in 1926, and the Government of Bihar and Orissa unconditionally transferred the administration of the Temple to his adopted son.

Lastly, there was no reason for such a volte face on the part of the Government without waiting for the judgment in the District Judge's Court. The Government even conceded that the Manager would be appointed and dismissed by the Dowager Rani, for which the consent of the Government would not be necessary.

The compromise encouraged the propaganda that the 'Thakur' Raja of Puri has inalienable right in the Jagannath Temple and that the Government deliberately wanted to reduce the prestige and power of the Raja of Puri by taking away the administration of the Temple from his hands.<sup>51</sup>

The compromise was a victory of the Dowager Rani. She retained her hold, on behalf of the minor Raja, on the administration of the Jagannath Temple. The move for the appointment of a Managing Committee was abandoned by the Government. It was decided that a Manager of her choice would be ap-

<sup>51</sup> Probably M. S. Das himself under the pen name of 'A Lunatic' wrote in the *Utkal Dipika* (9 April 1887).

"Policy indeed would suggest that the remembrance of the former rank and power of his family be obliterated from the minds of himself and all the natives of the district; at least that no positive measures should be taken tending to keep alive the impression of his high rank."

pointed. The Manager was liable to dismissal if he would go against her wish.

It is to be noted that the minor Raja was not bound by the compromise ("The Rani wishes to avoid binding the Rajah on his coming of age"). Rani Suryamani was undoubtedly a woman of keen intelligence and strong personality. Though a Purdah lady, she revived the prestige of the Puri Raj family which the male members of the Raj family failed to do in the 19th century. She practically forced the Government of India to confer the title of Raja on Mukunda Deb, during the life time of his father. She united all sections of people to rally round the cause of the Raja of Puri. She effectively roused the feeling that religion was in danger due to the Government interference in the affairs of the Temple.

Unhappy in her married life because of a husband suffering from an incurable disease, Rani Suryamani Patmahadei became widow at an early age. She was expected to live sixty six years in recluse. But destiny ordained otherwise. She became the custodian of the Jagannath temple and of the Puri Raj estates from 1860 to 1897, except for the brief period, 1875-1878, when Divyasingh Deb took charge.

She was a Purdah lady and could not directly manage the affairs of the Temple and of the estates. During the minority of Divyasingh Deb, there was mismanagement of the Temple property and the Government of India was urged by the Government of Bengal to sanction the resumption of the Ekhrajat estates and to restore the old arrangement of cash payment.

But she learnt from experience. During the long minority of Mukunda Deb, there was not much complaint regarding the Temple administration. The relation of the Temple Superintendent with the Sebaks, which deteriorated during Divyasingh Deb's time improved under the Dowager Rani. Even Ram Prasad Singh, who bore a grudge against Rani Suryamani Patmahadei, because of the termination of his

service as the Temple Manager, admitted that the Rani was managing the Temple affairs 'in a manner'.

In 1897, Mukunda Deb came of age and Rani Suryamani faded away from the pages of history. She lived long and died in 1926.

The Jagannath temple case made M. S. Das, a young Oriya lawyer, famous overnight. He was called 'Madhu Barrister' and he became spokesman of the Oriya public. He was accorded a grand ovation when he visited Puri, after winning the case.

M. S. Das thwarted the attempt of the Government to reduce the power and prestige of the Superintendent of the Jagannath temple, by bringing the Temple administration under a Committee. But after a decade 'he laid the axe at the root of the tree he planted himself' (Correspondent, '*Utkal Dipika*' 2 July 1898).

The Temple administration during the last decade of Rani Suryamani's authority after the compromise was uneventful. The compromise stipulated that the Rani should appoint a Manager. "The success of the arrangement depended upon the entertainment of a suitable Manager, and for the first few years, this part of the compact was fairly observed" (K. G. Gupta, the Commissioner to the Government of Bengal : 18 September 1902).

Harekrushna Das joined as the Temple Manager in October 1889. He died after six months. Krushnachandra Mohanty became the Manager and he worked for three years. In February 1894, Jadabendra Nath Das Chaudhury, worked as the Manager. In 1895, Nityananda Das succeeded him as the Manager.

On 11 march 1891, Madhusudan Das, Raja Baidyanath Pundit and Biharilal Pandit were given a general power of Attorney on behalf of the Raja of Puri. They supervised the Temple administration and the affairs of the Raj estates. In 1897, M. S. Das went to England and Gokulananda Chaudhury, Pleader, substituted him ('*Utkal Dipika*' 3 April 1897). The Committee broke up when Mukunda

Deb came of age. Rani Suryamani extended co-operation to the Committee which was formed in 1893, with Hariballabh Bose, the Government Pleader, as the Secretary, to repair some portions of the Jagannath temple by raising public subscription. The Committee got repaired some of the shrines within the Jagannath temple precincts.

In 1893, the Naba Kalebara ceremony took place. It was attended by about two lakhs persons. Many up-country pilgrims came by trains upto Calcutta and from Calcutta to Cuttack by steamers. The Temple servants and the Magistrate did not dare open the gates of the Temple on the Nava Yaubana day for Durshan by such an abnormal crowd, remembering the sorrowful events which took place on the Govinda Dwadasi day some years ago.

In 1895, Rani Suryamani had the Sweta Ganga tank cleansed for the benefit of the public. In 1891, the Settlement operations were in progress in the Khurda estate. On 6 May 1891, Krushnachandra Mohanty, the Temple Manager, wrote to the Collector of Puri requesting that the Satais Hazari and the Ekhrajat estates of the Temple should be surveyed and settled for which the Rani 'the de facto Superintendent' was prepared to pay the costs.

In his letter, he pointed out that a large part of the waste and fallow lands in these estates had become cultivable. A revision of the settlement of these estates had become necessary, because of the rise in the prices of the food grains and other articles which were necessary for the Temple.

As the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 was extended to Orissa, the Collector of Puri wrote to the Commissioner on 3 January 1892 recommending the survey and settlement of the Satais Hazari and Ekhrajat estates.

The Commissioner forwarded the letter of the Collector to the Board of Revenue on 11 January, expressing concurrence with the opinion of the Collector. On 22 February 1892, the Board of Revenue

asked the Superintendent of the Puri temple to deposit the cost of settlement. Rani Suryamani deposited the cost and the settlement of the Satais Hazari and Ekhrajat estates was undertaken by the Government.

Mukunda Deb took over the administration of the Temple when the members of the Managing Committee resigned. *Utkal Dipika* criticized the Raja's administration and praised Madhusudan Das in this connection. The Editor wrote "The Puri Rani did not forget the service rendered by Madhusudan Das and managed the Temple affairs with his advice. Madhu Babu helped the Raja to a great extent. He got the Raja treated at first at Puri and Cuttack and then took him to Calcutta for treatment. But his efforts failed. The Raja was not cured. He now refuses to be treated by competent Doctors".

"Though he is incompetent to manage the Temple affairs and affairs of the estate, due to lack of intelligence in money matters ('Bishaya Buddhi') he is guided by flatterers. The inevitable result of this is going to happen. xxx

"The Niti Bhogs (customary oblations) of the Temple are now managed by incurring debt. Thus it is evident that the income of the temple is wasted. The Mahajans may institute a case against the Temple. Many respectable persons are thinking that the Raja is mentally retarded ('Mati sthira nahni')."<sup>52</sup>

A meeting of the Utkal Sabha was held on 2 May 1898 to consider what steps should be taken to put the management of the Jagannath temple on a satisfactory footing "the present management being highly unsatisfactory". Madhusudan Das, who presided, stated that he had laboured hard for the last ten or twelve years to maintain the dignity of the Puri Raj family. He cited some instances of waste ('apabaya') of the Temple property by Raja Mukunda Deb and

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<sup>52</sup> *Utkal Dipika*

he suggested the formation of a Committee to investigate the present condition of the Temple affairs.

A committee consisting of M. S. Das, Ram Sankar Ray and Baidyanath Pundit was set up for investigation. The Committee was also asked to prepare a scheme for the future management of the Temple in consultation with the Temple priests and prominent citizens of Puri.<sup>53</sup>

On 28 May 1898, *Utkal Dipika* again wrote about the mismanagement prevailing in the Temple. The Editor suggested that the Raja should be 'forced' to improve the administration of the Temple.

On 2 July 1898, *Utkal Dipika* published a long letter from a Correspondent. He wrote: "It is, I think, a stubborn fact that the state of things has of late grown from bad to worse and the verdict of the people is unanimous that the management is miserable to the extreme."

"Pilgrims from northwest carry talks to their country that the rites which ought to be performed at Sundown are often performed at Sunrise in the following morning. Great hardship is caused to the devotees whose daily routine is dependent on the rites of the Temple. The Lord of the world is already on the verge of bankruptcy."

In the end of his letter, the Correspondent commented; "The ruin of a shrine is not preferable to the fall of an individual, confined to the four walls of his room. Controlled by unworthy creatures the weak man has seldom time to consult his conscience and discharge his duties."

As during the time of his father in 1877, Mukunda Deb's mismanagement of the Temple administration led to the loss of human lives.

The Commissioner, K. G. Gupta, wrote to the Chief Secretary, the Government of Bengal, on 1 November 1901 regarding an accident within the precincts of the Jagannath temple. He informed that

on 20 October 1901, which was the Mahashtami day of the Durga puja, there was a large gathering of pilgrims from Bengal, North-west provinces and Central province and these pilgrims were waiting to approach the throne of Jagannath.

“The general body of the pilgrims were anxious to go to the innermost sanctuary known as Pakhoria around the throne of the idol. To approach this hollow space, the pilgrims have to go down some descending steps from the Hall of audience. People, coming and going after visiting the throne, have all to pass through a single door.”xxx

“On that day, between 7 and 8 A.M. some pilgrims who had private passes had entered the Pakhoria, and were about to come out. The body of pilgrims found admission in large numbers and a struggle for life ensued between the newcomers and those who were going out. The Magistrate’s Report shows that the outgoers were overcome by the rush of the eager incomers and several persons were thrown down and trampled upon. Two persons are reported to have succumbed to their injuries and five others were seriously injured.”

“As far as I could gather from the imperfect materials before me, the Temple authorities appeared to have acted irregularly in giving admission to the pilgrims inside the sanctuary to touch the throne of the idols. As the day being Mahashtami day, this ceremony was not permissible on that day, and in fact during the two other days of the Durga Puja, according to the usual custom.”

“It further appears to me that the accident could have been prevented, if the gates and barriers for regulating the ingress and egress had been worked properly.” xxx

“I have asked the Magistrate to take further evidence about the conduct and behaviour of the Temple servants and to ascertain how far they are individually responsible. I have also instructed him that if he finds a *prima facie* case, he should not hesitate to take

proceedings under Section 394. It will be then time to consider whether steps should be taken against the superior Temple authorities such as the Manager or the Superintendent."xxx

"Coming to the question as to who is responsible for the present accident, the Magistrate reports that the Raja as the Superintendent of the Temple is bound to maintain order within it. He did not apply either to the Magistrate or to the Police for assistance to maintain order, although as a matter of fact such help is asked for and most willingly given on other important occasions to strengthen the hands of the Temple officials in the work of maintenance of order and prevention of accidents."

xx"The Magistrate remarks that the catastrophe would not have occurred if the Temple authorities had taken the slightest precaution regarding the rules of their own religion which prohibits any approach to the holy of the holies during the Maha Ashtami".

The Commissioner in his letter dated 18 September 1902 to the Government suggested the appointment of a Manager for the Temple by the Government. The Bengal Government accepted his recommendation and forced Mukunda Deb to appoint Rai Bahadur Rajkishor Das, a senior Deputy Magistrate, as the Manager. "The Management of the Temple, which was entrusted to the Raja before, is now placed into the hands of the Manager who is responsible to the Government for its administration." (Puri Raja adoption case judgment, 1921).

Thus after a century, the Government again established control over the administration of the Jagannath temple, though for a short period of 23 years.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### PILGRIMAGE TO JAGANNATH IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY

(1)

“It is to this place Pooree and to this temple and idol of Juggernath that for several centuries Hindoos have thronged—wearing, footsore and feverish, yet ever patient under fatigue and hardship—to get the sight of their god, which they believe obliterates the transgressions of a whole life. Their belief being what it is, we can scarcely wonder at that invincible enthusiasm which urges them to a place so sacred.”

Rev. Lacroix—*Calcutta Christian Observer* : 1849

(2)

“Orissa is to India what Jerusalem was to the land of Israel. It is the holy land of the Hindoos. As the Israelists went up to worship at Mount Zion, so do the inhabitants of the various provinces of India go on pilgrimage to the great temple of Juggernath. The Car festival of Juggernath is the greatest meeting place of the Hindoos of all India.”

Sutton: *Orissa and its Evangelization* (1850),  
p. 8

(3)

“These numberless men and women had come together from every bit of the compass—many of them from very distant places—all actuated by one burning desire, to reach Juggernath. Here at last they accomplished their desire and weary with the ac-

cumulated fatigue of many marches, they lay in perfect stillness on the ground—an army of religious enthusiasts, who in the fervour of a fanatical creed, had completed a pilgrimage, which, in the Hindoo mind, is the surest viaticum to a happier state of being.”

Dr. Smith : *Pilgrimage to Juggernath* (1868)

(4)

“The worship of Jagannath is for the highest minds among the Hindus, a pure system of Theism. To the polytheistic multitude it offers the infinite phases of divinity as objects of worship, and provide for their delectation, an infinite number of rituals and ceremonies. In a word, it supplies the spiritual requirements of different classes of Hindus in different stages of their intellectual development. Under its broad and receptive roof, doctrines, the most divergent, find a resting place.”

“Jagannath is an unsectarian name. All Hindu sects worship at its shrine. The followers of Sankaracharya, Ramananda, Kabir, Chaitanya and Nanak are to be seen doing homage to the great god. Even the Jains of the Digambar sect flock to the Temple at a certain season of the year. The common link of all these sects is their belief in the supremacy of Jagannath.”

N. K. Bose (Collector of Puri), *Calcutta Review*, 1891

## I. PILGRIMS

The abolition of the Pilgrim tax in 1840 tempted pious Hindus to visit Puri and this led to the influx of pilgrims in the fifth decade of the 19th century. Brij Kishor Ghosh in his *History of Pooree* wrote that about six lakhs pilgrims resorted to Puri between 1843 and 1847. According to his estimate, 189,912 pilgrims came in 1844-1845, and 210,325 pilgrims

came to Puri in 1846-47. This estimate, based on guesswork, seems to be exaggerated.

The introduction of Railways in Upper India induced the rich Hindusthani pilgrims to visit the shrines such as Vrindavan and Banaras, thus avoiding the ordeal of long journey on foot to Puri.

Prices of daily necessities of life gradually rose and poor people from Upper India could not afford to spend money on pilgrimage. In the second half of the 19th century, majority of the pilgrims came from Bengal.

We quote from the Reports of the Orissa Baptist Mission. 1863—Fortyfive thousand pilgrims were present during the Car festival, of whom more than thirtyone thousand were Bengalis. 1864—Not more than forty thousand persons, inclusive of the residents of Puri, attended the Car festival. 1865—The number of pilgrims fell far below forty thousand. 1866—As famine condition prevailed, the Government warned the people and 'turned back hundreds of pilgrims from Ulubaria'. The attendance was so small that it was found difficult to drag the Cars.

The great famine of 1866 and subsequent flood created panic and number of pilgrims further decimated. Frequent outbreaks of cholera and dysentery at Puri also discouraged the people.

In the last quarter of the 19th century, the number of pilgrims during the Car festival never exceeded twentyfive thousand, except on special occasions like Govinda Dvadasi and Naba Kalebara. We learn from *Utkal Dipika* that due to 'Kala asuddhi' (inauspicious time) only ten thousand pilgrims attended the Car festival in 1882. In 1883, the attendance of the pilgrims on that occasion was 'very small'. In 1894, the number of pilgrims during the Car festival was estimated to be about fifteen thousand. The number dwindled down to about ten thousand in 1897.

The opening of the Railways resulted in constant flow of pilgrims in all seasons instead of in certain specified festivals.

### *Roads From Puri*

There are 3 roads from Puri. One goes to Ganjam by the side of the Chilka lake. Another goes to Sambalpur skirting along the banks of the Mahanadi. The third is the Jagannath Trunk road. The construction of the new Trunk road began in 1812. It retained the old route from Puri to Cuttack via Pipili and Bhubaneswar. The old Pilgrim road extended from Chowdwar via Padampur to Lakhanpur on the Birupa. From Lakhanpur the pilgrims went to Baruan (10 km from Jajpur) via Arakhpur on the Gengoti, to the east of Badachana. The new Trunk road passed through Jagatpur to Badachana. From Badachana the road was extended to Baruan, a distance of 27 km. The Trunk road passed through Jajpur, Dhamnagar, Bhadrak Soro,<sup>1</sup> Balasore, Basta, Amarda to Danton. The road from Danton to Midnapore was repaired and there was a new alignment from Midnapore to Ulubaria on the Hooghly.<sup>1a</sup> Before the construction of the Railway, Ulubaria was an important pilgrim centre. The pilgrims from Puri reached Calcutta by boats or steamers from Ulubaria.

In the second half of the 19th century, the pilgrims enjoyed more amenities. The number of the rest sheds along the Trunk road increased. Maharaja Baikunthanath Deb of Balasore repaired the rest sheds

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<sup>1</sup> Half way between Bhadrak and Soro there is a tank called Rani Talao, which is associated with the memory of a Rani of Burdwan, who lived in the first half of the 18th century. "This good old woman, going on a pilgrimage to Juggernaut and finding her attendants suffered much for want of water between Shoroo and Bhudruc, sent money on her return to dig a pond."

<sup>1a</sup> 'A Narrative of a journey in 1766'—Thomas Motte (Reprinted in O.H.R.J., II).

<sup>1a</sup>—The old route to Calcutta extended straight from Dan on to Ulubaria. (*Tables of roads to all parts of Bengal and Bihar, 1779*). Jadabendra Adhya wrote in his book *Nilachala Madhuri* that in 1848 he went from Ulubaria to Danton via Narayangarh.

at Bhadrak, Busta, Balasore and Rajghat and enclosed with masonry walls, the wells near the Trunk road in the Balasore district (Orissa Administration Report 1877-78).

*Return journey by the pilgrims*

Pilgrims suffered most during return journey. Many of them came long before the Car festival. But all of them were eager to return immediately after that festival.<sup>2</sup>

Thousands of pilgrims started on their return journey during the fury of the monsoon. They tramped all the way to Ulubaria "across unbridged rivers, through pestilential jungles and swamps."

As Rev. Lacroix pointed out: "Weakened by their long stay at Pooree and its many miseries, the roads in a bad state, their previous excitement all fled, their little stock of money greatly reduced, the pilgrims group themselves again in their little companies and start for home. Being anxious to proceed, they travel very long stages everyday, and walk on till they drop from sheer fatigue."

"For instance, the foremost of the Jattrees reached Bhadrak this year on the fourth day after the Ruth, having travelled at the rate of forty miles a day."

"It is not an uninteresting sight to see them walking along the road on a fine morning. They form a continuous stream for many miles; men and women, the strong and the feeble, thousand and thousand in number, all pressing on together. But they are no longer light handed. Almost every one carries a basket, containing not only their Dhoti and other clothes but large quantity of sacred Prasad. These baskets are a heavy burden to poor women." xxxx

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. Smith, the Sanitary Commissioner, wrote that in 1866 19,209 pilgrims left Puri between the 25th and 30th June. Out of them almost one half left on the 25th, creating problems of ferry crossing and accommodation.

“But interesting as these masses of travellers appear by day, their misery is apparent at night. Travelling in such large numbers, no sooner do they arrive in a village or Bazar, than all the lodging houses are immediately filled up, and by far the greater number have to pass the night under open sky. The fact is often aggravated by scarcity of food in the Bazar, so that while willing to purchase the necessaries, there are none to be sold.”\*

“When it rained, it aggravated their misery beyond all calculation. Every house was full and so there was no shelter from rain. Hence they spent the night under the trees. With bruised and bleeding feet, scantily clothed with dirty rags, suffering in many cases from dysentery and tottering under the influence of prolonged physical fatigue, they trudged again. Soaked by heavy rains and exhausted by scorching heat, their bodies become more and more attenuated. At last they reached their homes, appearing like apparitions.”<sup>3</sup>

### *Law and order*

“Before the Railway was opened, the place (Danton) was infested with thieves and dacoits who robbed the pilgrims passing on the Trunk road and escaped in the neighbouring Mayurbhanj State, if pursued.”<sup>4</sup>

The Nilgiri State inside the Balasore district also sheltered the thieves, who particularly attacked the rich persons travelling in palanquins. Ten or twelve palanquins used to move together in day time, escorted by Footmen.<sup>5</sup>

\* Bachelor, a Missionary of Balasore, informed Dr. Smith that some years ago, about twenty thousand pilgrims arrived at Balasore between sunrise and sunset one day.

<sup>3</sup> *Calcutta Christian Observer* : September 1849

<sup>4</sup> *Midnapore District Gazetteer* 1911

<sup>5</sup> *The autobiography of the mother of Keshab Sen* (1892)

*Conveyance*

Rich persons travelled in palanquins. Dr. Smith, Sanitary Commissioner, went to Puri by the sea and canal route. On his return journey, he went in palanquin. He started from Puri on 2nd July evening. He halted at Pipli, Cuttack, Dharamsala, Bhadrak and reached Balasore on the 10th July afternoon.

The mother of Keshab Chandra Sen, the Brahmo-reformer, wrote that her return journey in palanquin up to Ulubaria and then by boat to Calcutta took twenty days. Hindusthani and Bengali pilgrims, belonging to the middle class, made journey to Puri in bullock carts from Ulubaria.

*Ferry*

The pilgrims used to start in thousands immediately after the Car festival. Large rivers like the Kathjuri, the Mahanadi, the Brahmani, the Baitarani and the Subarnarekha were swollen with flood water by the time. The pilgrims were detained and harassed at the ghats.

The Naba Kalebara festival took place in July 1874. The Collector wrote to the Commissioner : "We are to look to their crossing the rivers as quickly as possible in as much their long detention on the river sides beneath showers of rain and under pressure of want of food causes Cholera to break out and carry thousands to the region of death. It is expected that two or three lacs will pass in four or five days. Each day, twenty to thirty thousand souls are expected to cross a ghat at the time of Ruth. The Ghat people are a notorious band of oppressors. A cart will be detained for three days for the sake of a rupee."<sup>6</sup>

In the Balasore district, the Ghats at the Subarna-

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<sup>6</sup> Collector, Puri to Commissioner 9 May 1874

rekha, the Baitarani and the Salandi were farmed. Consequently, the pilgrims were required to pay more, than at the Ghats in the Cuttack and Puri districts. The rates were.

	Cuttack & Puri districts	Balasore district
Palki and bearers	1 anna 6 pies	4 annas
Hackery and bullocks	1 anna 6 pies	3 annas
Horse	6 pies	3 annas
Passenger	2 pies	6 pies

## II. COMMUNICATIONS

### *Steamer and Boat service*

The Steamship ('Dhuan kala jahaja') communication began in 1869 and to a great extent relieved the hardship of the pilgrims who had to walk the whole distance. Ravenshaw established a port at Chandbali on the Baitarani, about twenty miles from Bhadrak. Pilgrims from Calcutta went to Chandbali by sea-going steamers and thence to Cuttack by the High Level canal in barges, pulled by steam launches. There was also a Government steamer service between Bhadrak and Cuttack.

The steamer service between Calcutta and Chandbali was inadequate to cope with the crowd during important festivals. *Utkal Dipika* (23 July 1893) quotes from the newspaper, Bangabasi of Calcutta, about the plight of the pilgrims who wanted to attend the Nabakalebara ceremony in 1893.

"Thousands of pilgrims had taken shelter in open places during this rainy season. Before the steamer was ready at the ghat, the booking of tickets commenced. Those who bought tickets had to wait for seven or eight days. No consideration was given to the paucity of accommodation in those steamers. The crowd in the steamer was so abnormal that the port

officers could not control them. So they used physical force by beating mercilessly with cane. The innocent travellers suffered due to their negligence and greediness."

There was another route from Calcutta to Cuttack via the False point and the Taldanda canal. Dr. D. Smith in 1866 and Ravenshaw in 1870 landed at the False Point and started for Cuttack. Commissioner Cook took the same route. He started from Cuttack in 1898 on a Wednesday evening and reached Calcutta on Sunday morning.

The pilgrims to Ganga Sagar festival during 'Makara Sankranti' used to come to Puri for the Durshan of Jagannath. The steamers halted at some distance from the Puri sea coast. A ship carrying more than a thousand passengers halted off Puri for three days (*Utkal Dipika*, 25 January 1896).

### *Canal steamers*

When the Coast canal was opened to traffic in 1887, it was believed that the people would take advantage of it in large numbers, so as to avoid the perils of the sea. But the journey from Calcutta to Cuttack took four to six days with transshipment at Geonkhali\* and at Nalkul near Balasore. As amenities were not provided during the boat journey, few pilgrims travelled by the canal route.

### *Railway*

The East Coast Railway was extended up to Barang from Waltair and from Khurda Road to Puri in 1896. The construction of the bridges over the Kathjuri and Mahanadi took time, as the Railway Company first wanted to take the line via Naraj,

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\* Geonkhali is situated at the junction of the Rupnarayan and the Hooghly rivers. There was daily steamer service between Calcutta and Ulubaria.

thus avoiding the bridge over the Kathjuri. But the alignment was changed because the Commissioner supported the demand of the people of Cuttack to extend the Railway line to Cuttack. After the construction of bridges over the Kathjuri and the Mahanadi, and over the Rupnarayan in Bengal, direct communication between Calcutta and Puri was established in 1901.

### III. ACCOMMODATION

Puri could scarcely give accommodation to a large gathering of pilgrims. There were about 7,000 houses at Puri in which twentyfive to thirty thousand residents of Puri lived. There was a Dharamsala in a 'tumble-down' condition. The lodging houses could not provide sufficient accommodation to the large number of pilgrims. Dr. Smith, the Sanitary Commissioner, quoted the Superintendent of Police, and Dr. Mouat, the medical Officer.

The Superintendent of Police wrote in November 1867 "I went into a house in the town in which 45 pilgrims were putting up in one room. The place had two doors (one door was locked up) and no window. It measured 12 by 20 feet."

Dr. Mouat wrote "I was shown the pilgrim hotel of the place in which eighty persons were said to have passed the night. It was thirteen feet long, ten feet broad with side walls six feet and half in height and a low roof over it. It had one entrance and no escape for effete air. It was dark, dirty and dismal. If this be the normal state of the best of the lodging houses in the broad main street of Puri, it is not quite difficult to imagine the condition of the worse in the narrow undrained back-slums of the town."

Dr. Smith suggested a Bill for better regulation of the Lodging houses at Puri. Accordingly, the Puri Lodging Houses Bill, Act IV of 1871, was passed in the Council of the Lieutenant Governor. The Civil Medical Officer of Puri was authorized to exer-

cise the power of the Health Officer. The purpose of the Bill was not served as the Medical Officers were mostly Europeans. They were not allowed to enter into the Maths and in some Lodging houses with which shrines were attached.

To prevent overcrowding, the Lodging house keepers were required to take licenses. In 1886, 685 licenses were issued to the Lodging house keepers. Some Pundas were fined for keeping pilgrims in their lodging houses without making payment for the licenses (*Utkal Dipika*, July 1886).

In 1900, an Act provided periodical inspections of the Lodging houses by the Health officers of the Puri Municipality.

#### IV. SANITATION

In the second half of the 19th century, not much attention was paid to sanitation at Puri. The pilgrims, who resorted in large numbers during the festivals, suffered from dysentery by drinking impure water of the Swetaganga and Markandeya tanks. "All the conditions which facilitate the rapid spread of epidemic diseases and facilitate their mortality", were found at Puri.

In 1870, the Lieutenant Governor expressed satisfaction for the arrangement to set apart a tank within the Jagannath Ballabh Math for the supply of drinking water to the pilgrims, and thanked the Raja of Madhupur for his contribution to cleanse the tank.

In 1895, the Swetaganga tank, 'which was not cleansed within living memory and emitting foul smell' was renovated.

Cholera and dysentery were caused not only by drinking impure water, but also by taking unhygienic food, like stale Mahaprasad (offering of boiled rice). "This food was the chief subsistence for the pilgrims and the sole subsistence for the destitutes who flock in hundreds during the festivals." People

had blind belief in Mahaprasad, which cannot be thrown away. It must be consumed to the last.\*

The result was that the pilgrims consumed Mahaprasad even in the stage of putrefaction. Moreover, it was sold in exposed condition within the Temple precincts.

The pilgrims spread Cholera in the town. As the Collector of Puri wrote to the Commissioner : "It is important to get the pilgrims out of the place (after the Car festival) so that they may not spread any more Cholera than is absolutely necessary." (Letter dated 14 August 1880)

To provide money for conservancy measures, the stall keepers on the main street of Puri were assessed eight annas each per mensem. The proceeds of the tax were applied to the payment of the scavengers to keep the town clean and to remove the dead bodies of the destitute pilgrims who had died in the town. Sanitary conditions improved when the Municipality was established towards the end of the 19th century.

### *Hospitals*

In the first half of the 18th century there were hospitals for the pilgrims only at Cuttack and Puri. In 1859, a hospital was built at Balasore. Subsequently, hospitals were built at Bhadrak and Jajpur. A Cholera hospital was built at Akhuapada.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Lieutenant Governor, visited Puri in 1897. He deplored the condition of the pilgrim hospital, which was badly equipped. He blamed the zamindars and the Mohunts who took no interest for the improvement of the pilgrim hospital.

\* In the Telugu work, *Purushottama Mahatmyam*, the Lord says "If my Prasada is given to a Brahman by a Svapacha (Chandala) the former need not hesitate to take it with due respect.

## V. GIFTS TO THE JAGANNATH TEMPLE

Pilgrimage was considered to be incomplete, unless after the Durshan of the deity, Dakshinas (gifts) are not made to him and to the Pundas.

Hunter wrote in this connection : "No one comes emptyhanded. The rich pilgrims heap gold and silver at the feet of the god or spread before him charters and title-deeds, conveying rich lands in distant provinces.\* Everyone, from the richest to the poorest gives beyond his ability, and many cripple their fortune for the rest of their lives in a frenzy of liberality.

"Thousands die on their way back, for not having left enough to support them on the journey. But even when the unhappy pilgrim has given his last rupee, the priests do not suffer him to depart. Some shrines still remained to be visited, some ceremony to be witnessed or some blessing to be obtained. The devotee, in apprehension lest any of the objects of his pilgrimage should remain unaccomplished, gives a bond to be paid on his return home.

An engagement of this sort is so inviolable, that the priests do not think it needful to take it upon stamped paper. The poor pilgrim probably never reaches his native country. But the next time a pilgrim hunter visits the dead man's village, he produces the bond and it is paid."<sup>7</sup>

The nephew of the Maharaja of Banaras aged 25 years visited the Jagannath temple in 1841. He had

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\* A pilgrim named Tolaram made a will bequeathing his property at Almora to Jagannath. The will was challenged. It was declared invalid by the Deputy Commissioner, Nainital. (Letter of Balmukunda Kanungo, Manager, to the Collector, 8 November 1917)

Rai Bahadur Sakhi Chand, Manager, took over a village in the Palamau district, Bihar. It was 'a valuable property' (letter to the Collector, Puri, 29 October 1921)

<sup>7</sup> The *annals of Rural Bengal* : W. Hunter, Vol. I, pp 126-27

in his train 500 men, six camels, fifteen horses and a large number of palanquins, one being laid with gold and was highly ornamented.

He made the following donations : Rupees two thousand and a Cashmere shawl to the deity ; Rupees one hundred each to eighteen indigent Brahmins : Rupees five hundred in the shape of presents. He had also given to the deity an endowment in land measuring five hundred acres.

"Thus he allowed himself to be filched of Rupees four thousand three hundred rupees, besides endowment worth Rupees one thousand five hundred a year. After all liberality he was so beset with begging by importunate Brahmins, that he was obliged to leave the town by stealth. The Rajah's fee for Dursan was so exorbitant that he refused to pay it."<sup>8</sup>

The Missionaries sent a pamphlet in 1852 to the Government, opposing the continuance of the donation to the Temple. They pointed out that the Temple had a large income "The pilgrims give something to the Temple and promise to give more after returning home. Rich Babus, zamindars and Rajahs pay their visits to the shrine. Sardar Lena Singh travelled to it from Lahore and the Rajahs of upper India followed his example."

The Pundahs are often misjudged. Some of the Pundahs are rich but most of them are not. "It is undeniable that they labour hard to secure the personal comfort of the pilgrims and to show them the Tirthas and have the due ceremonies performed with least inconveniences possible."<sup>9</sup>

## VI. THE PILGRIM GUIDES

The Pilgrim guides or the agents of the Pundahs

<sup>8</sup> Letter of Rev. Lacey, quoted in the representation to Sir John Hobhouse, the Secretary of State : 1837

<sup>9</sup> Puri District Gazetteer (1908) p. 124

visited Bengal, Bihar and the North Western Provinces in search of pilgrims. They offered sacred food to the townsfolk and the villagers, whom they visited, persuasively appealing to their religious feelings. If some body in a family had gone before to Puri for the Dursan of Jagannath, it was taken for granted that his descendants would follow his example.

A Bengali weekly described the pilgrim guides who visited the Bengal villages : "Heads shaven, half bald, wearing caps that cover their ears, holding an umbrella of 'golaputti' (palm leaves) in one hand, clad in a semi-achkan (robe) of Madras cloth, bent forward under the weight of knacksaps which they carry on their back, they trudge from the month of Chaitra (March-April) to the middle of Jaistha (May-June) from one village to another."

The pilgrim guides could easily persuade the women due to their impulse for the Dursan of Jagannath and the desire to break down the shackles of purdah.

"A short time before the festivals, the pilgrims leave home on an auspicious day under the guidance of the Pundah's agents in a party of five to twenty persons. Females predominate, and among the females the widows.

"The Pundahs are in all attention to the pilgrims as far as Oolobariah which place no sooner they leave, they assume a different nature. They possess frames of hardest iron. They travel regularly forty miles a day which is beyond the power of females to do for sixteen or seventeen days together. But these Pundahs must drag them on."

"At dawn of the day the Pundah is ready to resume the journey and the pilgrims must leave their beds. The way is dangerous, skirted on both sides by woods infested with beasts of prey. Neither is delay possible.

The pilgrims commence to move. The day grows

and the sun shows his glaring rays. At noon, they halt at caravan sarais."<sup>10</sup>

## VII. NABA KALEBARA FESTIVAL

Naba Kalebara took place in 1893. About two lakhs pilgrims attended the ceremony. The last one took place in 1874. A large number of Vaishnava mendicants came to Puri for the Dursan of Jagannath.

*Utkal Dipika* writes : (15-7-1893) "Fiftytwo different classes of ascetics belonging to four different sects have come to Puri. The total number of these Sadhus will be about eighteen thousand. Among the Sadhus, some are staying in the Maths, while others are halting in the gardens, on the roads, and on sandy grounds. Vaishnavas of different sects are treated as guests by the Mohunts of their respective sects. But those Mohunts who are unable to provide shelter to the Sadhus belonging to their sects, are adversely criticised."<sup>11</sup>

*Utkal Dipika* reports about the distress of the pilgrims who came from other provinces. The charges of the Lodging houses went high and even then hardly a fraction of the pilgrims could be accommodated. Most of the pilgrims took shelter in the gardens and on the sandy grounds. Ordinary shop-

<sup>10</sup> 'Soma Prakash' 8 May 1868

<sup>11</sup> Vaishnava Maths at Puri according to the sects :

<sup>1</sup> Ramanandi—20 : Badachhata, Sana Chhata, Punjabi etc

<sup>2</sup> Vishnusvami—3 : Vishnusvami Akhada etc

<sup>3</sup> Nimbarka—5 : Radhaballabh, Chikiti, Ramji etc

<sup>4</sup> Madhva—1 : Balabhadri Akhada

<sup>5</sup> Gaudiya—23 : Radhakanta. Tota Gopinath, Kothbhog, Jagannath Ballabh etc

<sup>6</sup> Ramanuji—12 : Emar or Rajgopal, Uttarparsa, Trimali etc

<sup>7</sup> Achari—2 : Nrisimhachari, Venkatachari

<sup>8</sup> Miscellaneous—2 : Bada Oriya etc

keepers and owners of the sweetmeat shops earned a large amount of money by selling their materials at 400% increased prices and still the stock was found inadequate and could not meet the demand. As most of the pilgrims came from the western part of India, they required wheat and ghee, the stock of these articles was quickly exhausted.

After the Car festival, about 3/4th of the pilgrims immediately left for their destinations.

### LAST WORD

The opening of direct Railway communication between Howrah and Puri in 1901 made pilgrimage to Jagannath convenient and comfortable. In the 19th century, the pilgrims trudged their way to Puri or travelled in palanquins or bullock carts.

The poor pilgrims used to leave Puri in large numbers after the Car festival during the fury of monsoon, walking about twenty to thirty miles every day. Soaked by heavy rains, and without proper nourishments, they fell victims to privation, fatigue and diseases.

Pilgrimage to Jagannath by train from Howrah now takes a day. Previously it took about a month to reach Puri on foot. That religious fervour which actuated the pilgrims to endure hardship is now probably gone. The writer pays his respect to the memory of some thousands of pilgrims who sacrificed their lives in the 19th century for their spiritual yearning. They believed that Dursan of Jagannath would bring them salvation. May their souls rest in peace !

## GLOSSARY

**Adalat**—Court of Justice

**Adhikaree**—The Mohunts are assisted in the management of their properties by Adhikarees, who may be described as their Managers

**Amin**—Revenue clerk

**Anka**—Regnal years of the kings of Orissa. The Anka year begins on the 12th day of the bright half of the month of Bhadra (August-September). "Certain figures are considered inauspicious and left out in counting. These figures are all numbers ending in zero (excepting 10) and ending with six." J.A.S.B. 1893, p. 89

**Asharh**—June-July

**Butwa**—Pilgrim guide

**Bairagi**—Mendicant : Vaishnava monk

**Batpeada**—Peon

**Bahangee**—Palanquin

**Bazar**—Market

**Barkandaz**—Matchlockman : Guard

**Bepari**—Trader

**Bhurrung**—A class of pilgrim

**Bhog**—Offering to the deity

**Bisoyee**—A class of servants of the Puri Raja

**Chaprasee**—Messenger : Peon

**Chela**—Disciple

**Chowkidar**—Watchman

**Dafadar**—Head constable

**Dana**—Gift to a deity or to a Brahman

**Dakshina**—Payment to a Brahman for religious service

**Daroga**—Police or Excise Officer

**Dhaja Pindika**—Temple offerings

**Dhoi**—Liable to inundation

**Dhoti**—Cloth

**Dewan**—Chief Executive Officer under a Raja : Chief Revenue Officer under a Collector

**Dursan, Darsan**—Sight of a deity

- Dustak**—Passport
- Ekhrajat**—Lands assigned for the maintenance of Police establishment of the Jagannath temple
- Gadi, Guddee**—Throne
- Gomastah**—Revenue agent
- Ghat, Ghaut**—A place where customs duty or tax is levied
- Hukumnama**—A written order
- Hurri, Hadi**—Scavenger class
- Ikrarnamah**—Agreement
- Jagir**—Revenue free land
- Jatra**—A religious festival
- Jatri, Jatree**—Pilgrim
- Jumma**—The total amount of revenue
- Jyestha**—May-June
- Kahan, Khawun**—A measure equal to 1280 cowries
- Kangal**—Destitute
- Kanungo**—A Revenue Officer
- Khairat**—Free
- Khalas Chithee**—A certificate of no demand
- Khanja**—Monetary assignment in land
- Khas**—Managed by the Government
- Khas Mahal**—Land under the management of the Government
- Killa**—Fort : A small group of villages
- Lakheraj**—Revenue free temple land
- Lal Jatree**—A class of pilgrims
- Mahafez**—Custodian
- Mahaprasad, Mahapersad**—Temple oblations specially of the Jagannath temple
- Mafee**—Exempted
- Malikana**—Proprietorship
- Math**—A religious establishment
- Mathdhari**—Head of a small Math
- Mauza**—A group of villages
- Mogulbundi**—Orissa comprising the districts of Balasore, Cuttack and Puri
- Mohurrir**—Scribe
- Mookhtyar**—Law agent
- Mohunt**—Head of a big Math or of a Hindu religious community
- Muquddam**—A village proprietor who pays through a superior
- Naib Nazim**—Deputy Governor

- Nawab—Muslim ruler**  
**Nuzzar—Present or tribute to a superior**  
**Pagoda—Temple**  
**Paik—Foot soldier holding land on tenure of military service**  
**Patta, Pottah—Title deed of land**  
**Parichha—High priest of the Jagannath temple**  
**Parihari, Pratihari—Jagannath temple guide**  
**Peon—A Footman**  
**Pergunah—Sub-division comprising a group of villages**  
**Peshkush—Tribute : Quit rent**  
**Punda—A temple priest**  
**Pundit—An oriental scholar**  
**Purwana—A written command**  
**Putwari—A village accountant**  
**Rowanna—Permit for a pilgrim**  
**Ryot—A tenant**  
**Sadhu, Sannyasee—A mendicant**  
**Sarbarakar—Underholder**  
**Sayer—Transit duty : An impost**  
**Seba—Service to a deity**  
**Sebak—Priest**  
**Shaster—Shastra (Hindu Scriptures)**  
**Sheristadar—Record keeper**  
**Shood—An exclusive visit to the Jagannath temple**  
**Shoomaree—Certificate**  
**Sicca—In Arabic 'Coined money'. In 1793, the Government of Bengal ordered that all coins coined in the Presidency should bear the impress of the 19th year of Shah Alam. 'The Company's Rupee' which introduced uniformity in coinage over British India was introduced in 1835. It contained slightly less silver than the Sicca coin.**
- Singh Durwaza—Lion gate. Main gate of the Jagannath temple**  
**Sloka—Sanskrit verse**  
**Sooniya—First day of the Oriya regnal year**  
**Subahdar—Governor of a province**  
**Sunnad—A document conferring privileges**  
**Tahsildar—Revenue officer**  
**Taluk—Estate : Division of a district**  
**Thana—Police station**

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Tirtha—Holy place

Umlee—The Umlee year is reckoned between 14th Bhadra and  
15th Aswin (27th August—26th September)

Urzee—Petition : Representation

Vakil—Agent : Law Officer

Wahadadar—Officer in-charge

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