

RATHAS AND RAJAS : THE CAR FESTIVAL AT PURI

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The ratha yatra of Puri is India's "car festival" per excellence and the temple car which carries Jagannatha, Lord of the Universe, every year in the month of Asadha (June/ July) from his temple to his summer residence is the most famous in India.

Jagannatha and his car festival have been reported by numerous European travellers since the 14th century.¹ The 17th century descriptions of Bruton, Bernier,² and Tavernier are the most detailed and well-known. However, Thomas Bowrey is equally informative :³ "In that great and Sumptuous Diabolical Pagod, there Standeth their greatest God Jno. Gernaet,⁴ whence the Pagod received that name alsoe. This Imadge is of massy Gold very richly wrought, and in the full Stature of a man, kept in a large dark roome of it Selfe, but by the lustre of his Eys which are two Diamonds of Exceedinge Value, the place is by relation as light as though there were more than 2 Candles lighted . . ."

"Sundry Festivall times they keep here with great Splendour, One amongst the rest continueth 7 or 8 days, to which Devilish feast resorteth many very rich Merchants and Brachmans, with many Others from the remotest Parts of Hindostan, in soe much that it is very rare if fewer than 150,000 persons resort to one of the festivalls at the great Pagod, and noe few thousands to the Subordinate Pagods in the whole Empire. The maine Spectacle and purpose is to behold their graven God

Jno. Gernaet, which at Such times is carried in a Chariot (richly adorned and of curious and costly Workmanship) round the Pagod and through the broadest Streets of the towne in great triumph and with great Solemnitie."

"This Chariot is of Exceeding great weight, beinge made of Very Solid wood, very rich, with much iron worke thereon and finely Engraven, with the Shapes of men and women dancinge, as alsoe many hideous Shapes of Satyrs, bulls, bears, Tigers, Elephants, Rhinocerots, etc., in soe much that it is soe Ponderous, that although it be fitted Upon 6 or 8 Good Axletrees, with good wheels on each Side, yet requireth more then an hundred Stronge men to draw it alonge Upon hard and Smooth ground (and this they accompt the Arke of God)."

"In the Middle of that great Diabolicall Chariot, is placed their great Patron Jno. Gernaet, having the foremost end Open, fairely to be beheld by many of the people, which in Generell they Endeavour to doe, but more than one halfe are prevented by the infinite multitude, in soe much that many of them are pressed downe by the crowde ... And which is both Stranger and more incredible, many of them come a great many miles to End their days here, Under the wheels of this ponderous but, accompted by them, holy Arke."

"They Voluntarily and with great Courage castinge themselves Under the wheels thereof, as it is drawne alonge, and are there

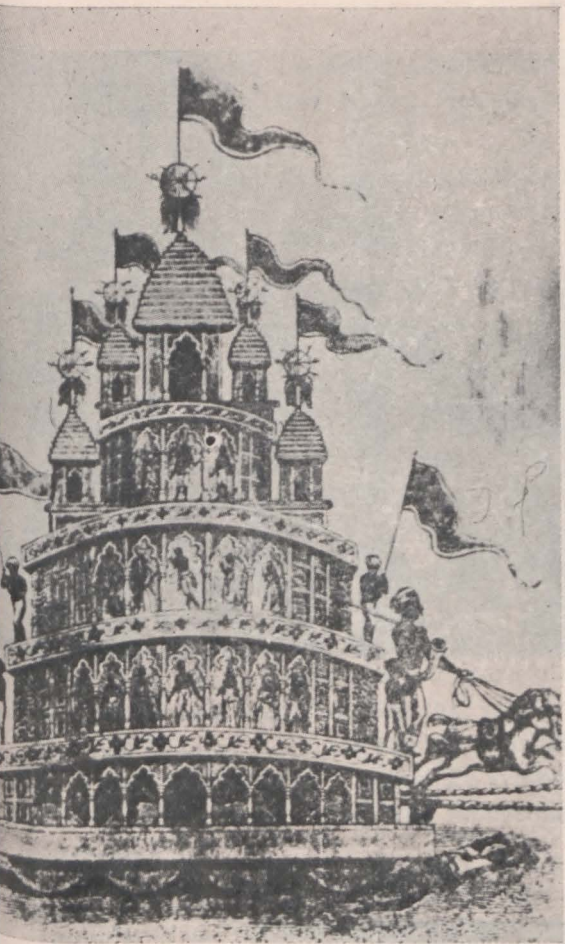


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

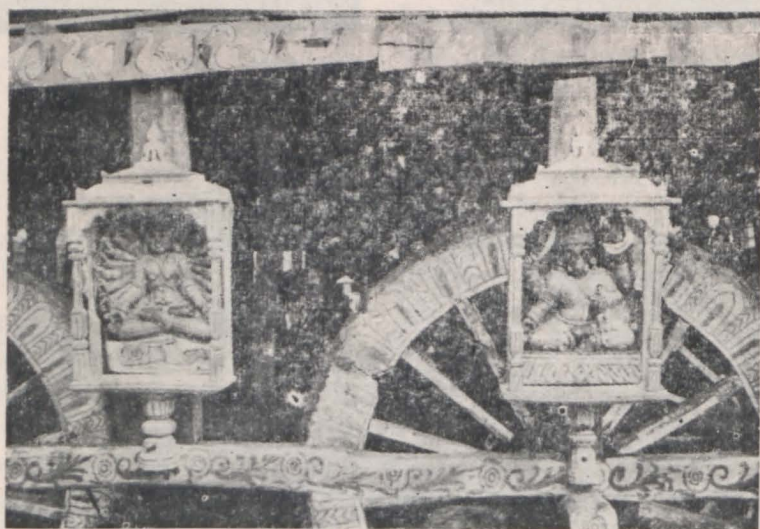


Fig. 6

crushed to death, the which is accompted by all of this Sect a most Noble, Heroike, and Zealous death."

Self-immolation under the wheels of Jagannatha's car was stressed in these early descriptions (Fig. 1). Though by 1818 a young government officer reported only three such incidents during the preceding four years of which one at least was an accident,⁵ the common belief in the frequency of these self-immolations and the propaganda of missionaries⁶ against this "stronghold and fountain-head of idolatry" made Juggernaut a standing metaphor⁷ synonymous with "anything to which persons blindly devote themselves, or are ruthlessly sacrificed".⁸ Ironically it was the very zeal of the missionaries that contributed to the resurgence of the Jagannatha cult, particularly in the late 19th century when the yearly car festival became again the most famous religious event of Eastern India and a symbol of Oriya Nationalism during the independence struggle.⁹

There can be no doubt that the fame and popularity of "the Lord of the Universe" both among foreigners and in the Hindu world are largely due to the car festival with its three cars which carry Lord Jagannatha and his divine sister and brother, Subhadra and Balabhadra, from their "Great Temple" (*bada deula*) through Puri's "Great Street" (*bada danda*) to the Gundica temple, their summer residence for about nine days.

Most probably, the earliest literary evidence for the existence of the car festival at Puri occurs in the period of Somavamsa rule over Orissa. This was the first dynasty to be connected by the legendary accounts of the temple chronicle of Puri¹⁰ with the Jagannatha cult. A drama of the 10th or 11th century mentions the festival (*yatra*) of the god Purusottama (=Jagannatha) at the sea shore.¹¹ Although no final proof is possible, scholars agree that

this description most likely refers to the Puri car festival, also at the sea shore.¹² The oldest iconographical evidence of the festival and its temple cars (*ratha*) comes from the later Ganga period (13th/14th centuries). A frieze of a dilapidated temple at Dhanmandal in Northern Orissa depicts a sequence of three temple cars, each drawn by a large number of devotees.¹³ The best preserved relief (Fig. 2) contains a number of interesting iconographical details. It depicts a car with 12 wheels (6 visible) without spokes. On the platform of the car rises a *mandapa* adorned with a typical Orissan arched doorway (*torana*) which forms the frame for the deity.¹⁴ The roof of the *ratha* has a very clear pyramidal shape with four horizontal cornices and a typical ribbed finial (*amalaka*) crowned by a potshaped *kalasa*-stone. This frieze thus clearly shows that the early *rathas* of Puri were modelled after the *pidha* temple type known mainly from the *jagamohan mandapas* or frontal halls of the Orissan temples. Their characteristic pyramidal roof made its first full appearance at the Muktesvara temple in the early 10th century and found its classical design in the Lingaraja temple at Bhubaneswar (late 11th century). The frieze also depicts, before and behind the *ratha* two umbrellas (*chakra*) and two standards (*trasa*) which are carried to indicate the royal status of the deity on the car. These symbols of royalty are still carried before the Raja of Puri when he approaches the *rathas*.

Today, the *rathas* of the three deities are distinguished by size, colour and number of wheels. Jagannatha's *ratha* (*Nandighosa*) is 13.5m high and is supported by 16 wheels; it is covered by red and yellow cloth; Balabhadra's *ratha* (*Taladhvaja*), adorned by red and green cloth, stands on 14 wheels and has a height of 13.2m (Fig. 3); Subhadra's car (*Darpadalana* or *Deviratha*) in red and black is supported by 12 wheels, and is 12.9m high.¹⁵ The wheels of

all three cars have 16 spokes like their stone counterparts at the sun temple of Konarak. Other temple cars in Orissa, e.g. the chariot of Lord Lingaraja in Bhubaneswar, usually have wheels of solid wood like the *rathas* depicted in the early reliefs at Dhanmandal.¹⁶ It is likely, therefore, that wheels with spokes are a later invention in Puri, imitating Konarak.

One characteristic of the *rathas* of Puri and elsewhere in Orissa is their decoration with large pieces of differently coloured cloth. In Puri the changeable sea wind modifies the contours of the cars. At times they are puffed up (Fig. 4), or the cloth may be heavily pressed against the inner wooden framework; at noon, the cover may hang down slackly.

Contrary to the earliest depiction on the Dhanmandal frieze, the present *rathas* of Puri appear to resemble the *rekha* temple type of Orissan architecture. This type is characterised by the grand design of the curvilinear spire (*gandhi* or *śikhara*) of the main temple tower "greatly enhanced by the vertical lines of strongly emphasised ribs"¹⁷ (e.g. the Lingaraja or Jagannatha temples). The resemblance is most evident on pictures which show the *rathas* in front of the Jagannatha temple (Fig. 4), but it is mainly due to the coloured cloth covering with its distinct vertical lines. The wooden framework, which is visible only during the time of construction, reveals in the upper portions of the *rathas* clear horizontal cornices (Fig. 5) characterising the *pidha* temple. For an architectural model of the *rathas* we have to go to Bhubaneswar, to the 14th century Bhaskareśvara temple which encloses an alleged Asokan pillar.¹⁸ However, it is still not clear whether the Bhaskareśvara temple was constructed after the model of a *ratha* or *vice versa*. It is worth noting that the roof of the Bhaskareśvara temple seems to combine the *pidha* and *rekha* types of Orissan temple architecture; the clearly discernible cornices, characteristic

of the *pidha* temples, recede on the Bhaskareśvara temple not, as in the case of the usual *pidha* roof, uniformly to a pyramidal roof but progressively to create the characteristic curvilinear shape of the *rekha* temple tower. The shape of the "roof" of the Puri *rathas* combines both architectural model similarly (Figs. 4 and 5) and thus unifies by architectural means the main temple of the deity and the three *mandapas* meant for priests and devotees.¹⁹ During the *ratha yatra* when "the Lord of the Universe" leaves his "jewelled lion throne" (*ratnasimhasana*) in order to appear to his devotees, even the most humble, the *ratha* thus transforms the separate temple buildings of the "divine palace" into one, drawn by devotees from all social strata and pilgrims from all quarters of the Hindu world.

Puri's *rathas* are thus an example of "mobile architecture" in a double sense. Their consecration on the eve of the *ratha yatra*²⁰ and their outer shape identify them as the main temples during *ratha yatra*. Moving from the "Lions Gate" (*simhadvara*) in front of the Jagannatha temple (Fig. 3) to the Gundica temple, a distance of about 3 km, they extend the ritual and sacred sphere of the temple into major parts of the town, thus transforming Puri (= town) into a veritable temple city.

They are also "mobile" in a more metaphorical sense. Each drawn by several hundred devotees, the *rathas* and their divine occupants move many more thousands of devotees into a state of excitement. It is not only the appearance of the god outside his temple which excites his devotees,²¹ it is also the crowd's fascination with the movement of the *rathas* itself along *bada danda* street. The moment when the first of the three chariots starts to move through the joint efforts of the devotees is the climax of the whole *ratha yatra*. Each car is drawn with four ropes by hundreds of

pilgrims who are further incited by the rhythmic sound of brass gongs beaten by priests standing in two rows on each car. In previous days, dancing girls (*devadasi*) performed their art at the same time in front of the 'Lord of the Universe'. This mass religious excitement sometimes caused accidents²³ and, in rare cases, may have induced devotees to perform the act of self-immolation under the chariot wheels.

Among the major car festivals of India, Puri's *ratha yatra* has a unique feature. Firstly, contrary to the practice particularly in South India, Puri's cars are newly constructed each year and then, after the *ratha yatra*, demolished. Only their uppermost portion (*kalasa*), the nine small painted wood carvings (see Fig. 6) and the wooden horses attached to each car,²⁴ are retained to be used again. Secondly, the Jagannatha cult of Puri is more directly associated with kingship than most of India's great places of pilgrimage since the kings of Orissa recognised Jagannath in the early 13th century as the overlord of Orissa. Both peculiarities had direct economic and political implications. Economically, they required the regular procurement of an enormous quantity of wood as well as iron and ropes, and their sale after the gods had returned to the main temples. Politically, they meant the partial inclusion of the temple cars into the scope of royal legitimation and, in some cases, even into the power struggles among the rulers of Orissa.

The association of the kings of Orissa with the Jagannath cult became very close after king Anangabhima III recognised Jagannath as the sole state deity of Orissa in 1230 A.D.²⁵ and claimed to rule under his supreme overlordship (*samarj*). It is therefore surprising that the first known reference to the relation of the Gajapati kings of Orissa to the car festival of Puri is contained in the report of a European, Friar Odoric, in the year 1321 :

"Annually on the recurrence of the day when the idol was made, the folk of the country come and take it down, and put it on a fine chariot; and then the King and Queen, and the whole body of the people, join together and draw it forth from church with loud singing of songs and all kinds of music."²⁶

The lack of other references in the sources on the participation of the early Gajapati kings in the yearly car festivals leads to the inference that, initially, the king's role might have been confined to casual visits. This situation changed fundamentally under the Suryavamśi kings in the 15th century. The first two kings of this powerful dynasty, Kapilendra and Purusottama, were both usurpers. In the year 1434 Kapilendra overthrew the last legitimate king of the Ganga dynasty and his son Purusottama usurped the throne in spite of the legitimate claims of his elder brother. Both kings, therefore, needed a special legitimation of their rule which they wrought through an intimate association with the Jagannath cult of Puri. Kapilendra threatened his opponents in many of his inscriptions with the wrath of the "Lord of the Universe", stigmatising attacks on himself as treason (*droha*) against the Lord of Puri and calling himself a servitor (*sevaka*) of Jagannath.²⁷ After his son Purusottama had established himself on the Gajapati throne, he knew no bounds in pouring gifts over the god and priests of Puri. Furthermore, he was the first king to become associated with the important ritual of cleaning the cars (*chera pahamra*).

Still today, the car festival cannot start before the raja or his representative (*mudaras-ta*) has sprinkled (*chera*) the three cars with water and cleaned (*pahamra*) them with a broom. From a 17th century source we know that the raja, after finishing the ritual *chera pahamra* cleaning, put a silk-covered pillow (*pata mucula*) on his head and symbolically

pushed the cars from behind, thus starting the car festival.²⁸ The *chera pahanra* ritual has firstly to be interpreted as a sign of great devotion to Krishna with whom Jagannatha had become completely identified. But it is still a matter of controversy whether the powerful kings of the Suryavamśi dynasty agreed to perform this self-abasing ritual out of a position of weakness²⁹ or in order to check the growing influence of the priests.³⁰ It has been established, however, that the *chera pahanra* of the *rathas* of Puri became the main source of legitimacy of the Suryavamśi kings of Orissa. Today, the grand ceremony of sweeping the cars remains the most important "royal duty" (*rajaniti*) which bears the proud name "Gajapati Maharaja Seva". It makes the "Maharajas" of Puri indispensable to the festival even now, long after they have lost all their ancestral territory around Khurda (1804) and, a few years ago, their remaining royal privileges at Puri.³²

The special relationship between the Gajapati kings of Orissa and the Jagannatha cult of Puri culminated under the rajas of Khurda (about 50 km northwest of Puri) who had been able to establish themselves as local successors to the "Imperial Gajapatis" after the latter's extermination by Muslim armies in 1568 A.D. The legitimation of the rajas of Khurda was mainly based on the renewal of the Jagannatha cult by Ramachandra I in the years 1590-91 and—initially—on the recognition of Khurda's semi-autonomous status by Emperor Akbar. But under his successor Jahangir (1605-27), Cuttack became the capital of the newly established Province of Orissa and within a few years Khurda lost its privileged status after three devastating attacks by the new rulers of Orissa.

The first attack was led by Keśo Das Maru, a Hindu Rajput in the service of Jahangir. A history of early Moghul rule in Eastern India

contains a detailed description of Keśo's surprise attack on Puri and makes an interesting reference to the use of temple cars for military purposes.³² Under the pretext of pilgrimage, Keśo entered Puri during the car festival with a small band of followers in order to loot the famous temple treasure of Jagannatha "worth more than 20-30 millions". When the Raja of Khurda arrived with his army, Keśo entrenched himself in the Jagannatha temple. The raja of Khurda "made five hundred to one thousand men ride on each rath which was pulled by two to three thousand men, and thus, carrying the raths in tens and twenties, he pushed them on to the outer wall of the temple and put the inmates into a very serious plight,"³³ But when the soldiers on the cars began to shoot, Keśo Das and his men in the Jagannatha temple returned the attack with burning sticks and arrows, setting fire to all the temple cars and killing hundreds of Khurda's soldiers. Although details of the description are untrustworthy, particularly the large numbers of temple cars, there seems to be some truth behind the story because the temple chronicle of Puri, too, mentions fierce fighting with "Keśomaru" during which the temple cars were completely destroyed.³⁴

After the Rajas of Khurda had lost their military and political power during these fights, they turned their attention to Puri and systematically enlarged their influence in, and control over, the Jagannatha cult during the peaceful reign of Emperor Shahjahan. Since then an intricate set of temple-palace relations has evolved, which became the main basis for Khurda's influential position during its power struggle with the various feudatory states and the Muslim Governor of Orissa. The car festivals played an important role during this struggle. With the exception of a few iconoclasts, the Muslim governors of Orissa were genuinely interested in enlarging their control over the *ratha yatra* because of the pilgrim tax

which formed a substantial part of their revenue.³⁵ The Rajas of Khurda, on the other hand, used the car festivals to maintain their influential position in Puri. The festivals afforded an excellent opportunity to display their role as successors to the Imperial Gajapati and "First Servitors" of Lord Jagannatha among the various Hindu rajas and princes in attendance.

Beginning in the 17th century, the Rajas of Khurda issued "royal letter" (*chamu cithau*) to the feudatory rajas of Orissa, granting them certain privileges in the Jagannatha cult in order to gain their loyalty and political support. A study of these letters provides an interesting picture of Khurda's ritual-political relations with the other feudatory states of Orissa.³⁶ All the following documents,³⁷ but a few of the hundreds that existed, were issued by King Virakeśari Deva (1737-93) during whose long rule Khurda's political power finally collapsed after the Marathas had conquered Orissa in the year 1751. During the preceding fights between the Muslim armies of the Nawab of Bengal and the Marathas of Nagpur, and even after the Marathas had deprived Khurda of its feudatories and taken over the administration of the Jagannatha temple in 1760, Raja Virakeśari of Khurda desperately tried to maintain his leading position among the Hindu rajas of Orissa. For this purpose he issued "royal letters", permitting feudatory rajas to contribute to the yearly construction of the *rathas* and rewarding them with special privileges in the Jagannatha cult during *ratha yatra*.

The regular supply of wood for the construction of the three *rathas* played an important role in this connection. It was the privilege of the Rajas of Daspalla, whose territory comprised large jungles at the southern bank of the Mahanadi, to provide the wood in lieu of tributes. This privilege was acknowledged

even by the East India company in its treaty with Daspalla in the year 1804.³⁸ The wood was rafted down the Mahanadi river and its Katchuri branch up to the Arthanalla bridge at Puri. In cases of severe drought, when the waterway on the Mahanadi became unpassable, the Rajas of Khurda had to organise an alternative. On March 3rd., 1749, King Virakeśari therefore sent a royal order (*ajra*) to the superintendent (*pariksa*) of the Jagannatha temple: The timbers required for the construction of the cars of the deities could not come up to Atharnala (bridge). So people have been deputed to Banpur for procuring the required timbers. These timbers will be cut from the forest on the boundaries of the two states Ghumsur and Athgarh (in South Orissa). Sarhis (turbans, as sign of honour) should be sent from the temple store for the two chieftains. The sarhis similar to those sent on previous occasions at the time of procurement of timbers should be sent through the royal messenger.³⁹

Iron, necessary for the construction of the cars, was procured from the feudatory Rajas of Dhenkanal and Talcher in Central Orissa.⁴⁰ On May 1st, 1744, Virakeśari issued a royal order (*hukum*) to the temple officers at Puri to send sarhis and mahaprasada (sacred food offered to Jagannatha) to the Rajas of Dhenkanal and Talcher for supplying the iron for the cars.

Ranpur, another feudatory state in Central Orissa and an important ally of Khurda, provided ropes for constructing and drawing the cars. On April 9th, 1749, a letter was issued from the palace: *For the construction of the Nand'ghosa ratha (Jagannatha's car) seasoned simuli ropes will be brought. So the royal messenger Jamai Atibuddhi should be deputed to Nalendra the Raja of Raupur with sarhi and mahaprasada from the temple store.*⁴¹ Other documents from the temple records of Puri

show that Virakeśari's father had already rendered in return for Ranpur's military and economic support several important privileges in the Jagannatha cult⁴² and tax reduction for Ranpur's monastery at Puri.⁴³ In return, Ranpur's rajas donated valuable gifts to the temple treasury.

Other chiefs and rajas of Orissa received special privileges during the car festival as a reward for their support of the Khurda Rajas. Most desirable in this connection seems to have been the permission to serve the god Jagannatha with a special *camara* fan (prepared by hairs of a yak tail), during *ratha yatra*. In 1760, Virakeśari granted this among other privileges to the Raja of Tigeria of Central Orissa and in 1778 to the *mahant* of the Chikiti monastery in Puri. Chikiti was an important princely state in South Orissa and the abbot of its monastery in Puri played the role of ambassador at the court of the Gajapatis.

Another rare document from the collection of the temple scribe of Puri (*deula karana*) is of great value. It contains a continuous, though short, narrative about the attempt of the Raja of Parlakhemundi in South Orissa to capture the Gajapati kingship through occupation of Jagannatha's *ratha* and through performance of the *rajanitis* (or *upacara*) of the Gajapatis of Khurda on the *ratha*. The Rajas of Parlakhemundi, claiming to be descendents of the imperial Gangas who ruled over Orissa until 1434, had never accepted Khurda's claim to Gajapati kingship⁴⁴

In 1753, two years after the conquest of Orissa by the Marathas of Nagpur and before their rule was finally established there, Raja Jagannatha Narayana Deva of Parlakhemundi saw an opportunity to come forward with his claim to the Gajapati throne. With a troop of 2000 followers and the trappings of royalty he visited the *ratha yatra* at Puri: On

that day [July 12th, 1753], Jagannatha Narayana Deva of Parlakhemundi had come together with his brother to see the return festival [of the cars] from the Gundica temple [to the main temple]. On his elephant there was a royal nagara drum....and also a flag-staff and a royal seat. The elephant was placed in front of [Jagannatha's] car and [the two brothers] ascended the ratha [from the back of the elephant] to have darśana (worship). The presents offered by them were taken by the Daitapati priests. During the darśana of the Great Lord on the Nandighosa car a necklace fell from the holy body of the Lord. Narayana Deva asked to be given the necklace but in this moment all priests hid the necklace, gave him tulasi and prasada (offerings) and sent [secretly] the divine necklace to King. [On the next day] the cars reached the Lion's Gate of the Temple towards the close of the night. Being dressed in royal robes, Narayana Deva and his brother sat on the ratha. On the same day all the priests had a confidential discussion because of the darśana [of the Raja of P. and his brother] in full royal dress on the ratha and the possibility of their entering into the temple [in royal dress]. It was dawn before the discussion was over. Because these two people (*jane*, sic), sitting on the car, demanded to be allowed to discharge the duties (*upacara*) of the King during the time of the ceremonial return [of the deities cars into the temple], this ceremony did not take place. Consequently the three incense offerings (*dhupa*) were performed on the car and Narayana Deva went away. [On the next day] the deities stayed on the cars . . . After the three incense offerings had been performed, the ceremonial return of the deities to his temple began at 10.30 in the night. Wearing a royal turban and a belt Narayana Deva followed the Great Lord and walked majestically [into the temple].

Narayana Deva returned to the temple the

next day in royal dress and, together with the Maratha General Mahana Singh, worshipped Lord Jagannatha. But he did not succeed in his attempt to win acceptance as the legitimate Gajapati king, mainly because of the passive resistance of the priest of Puri. As a compromise, he seems to have been allowed to enter the temple with full royal robes; obviously he was not allowed to perform the royal duties of the Gajapati king on the temple car.

The generous distribution of privileges to their feudatories by the Khurda Rajas during car festivals and the attempt of another raja to capture the *ratha*, proves to what extent the temple cars could also assume a definite political role. Temporarily they combined the functions of palace and temple, and in a modern sense—being at the centre of mass communication in traditional society—they functioned like a radio or TV station. The message that rajas and priests announced through them was carried home by thousands of pilgrims even to the remotest villages.

Due to the impact of the impressive ritual policy of the Rajas of Khurda the Jagannatha cult of Hindu royalty spread to the capitals of the former Feudatory States of Orissa during the 18th and 19th centuries.⁴⁵ Several new capitals were constructed during the 19th century with a Jagannatha temple and a palace in their centre and with a *bada danda* leading to a usually rather small Gundica hut outside the town (e.g. Tigeria, Baramba, Ranpur, Daspalla). They were imitating the model of Puri where the present palace was constructed at the *bada danda* near the Jagannatha temple in the middle of the 19th century. In most capitals of the former Feudatory States of Orissa, Jagannatha's car festival became the main event in the religious calendar. The cars usually imitated the *ratha* of Puri.

Excellent, though small, examples are the three cars at Ranpur and the great *ratha* of

Balabhadra at Keonjhar. The latter has 16 wheels like Puri's but it remains undemolished throughout the whole year, without its cover, outside Balabhadra's temple until the next *ratha yatra*.

During the car festivals, several rajas of former Feudatory States engaged tribes with an uncertain loyalty to the capital, similar to the way Rajas of Khurda gave a share to feudatory rajas. One example occurs in a script of the *rajaguru* of Keonjhar :

The Raja placed on the Bhuiyans (tribe) the responsibility for making the ropes by which the chariot is dragged. He also engaged them in the dragging, and during Deva Snana and Shri Gundicha (the car festival) they are to prepare the Chara (-steps) on the Singhasana inside the temple and on the chariot for ascending and descending of the Thakurs. Before that time the Bhuiyans enjoyed rent free land and there was no land settlement for them. So the Raja directed them to pay oil-seeds. This has been imposed on them in the name of Pahikia. Even today, the Gada Majhi (a Bhuiyan who engages them in different works) gives them notice to come before each car festival for making the ropes. Even the Juangas (tribe) were directed to make the ropes. They bring the ropes in procession, shouting the slogan 'Hari Gola'. They come carrying it on their shoulder just before the car festival and tie it to the chariot. They must also be present during the dragging of the chariot to connect the rope in case it becomes disconnected. For this they receive an honorarium and clothes from the temple. In this way the Raja made Bhuiyans and Juangs engage in affairs of the temple.⁴⁶

NOTES

1. For a comprehensive compilation (under "Juggernaut") see the Hobson-Jobson. The Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, ed. by H. Yule and

- A. C. Burnell, repr, New Delhi 1968, p. 466-8 and L. S. S. O'Malley, Puri (Bengal District Gazettees), Calcutta 1908, p 107ff for Bruton (1633), Bernier (1667) and A. Hamilton (1727).
2. See note 33.
 3. Thomas Bowrey, A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669-79, ed. R. C. Temple. Cambridge: Hakluyt Society 1905, p. 16f.
 4. R. C. Temple: 'This is the most interesting variant I have come across of this much-corrupted name. The word is Jagan-nath, by metathesis such as is common in India, Jagannath, hence, of course, John Garnaet' op. cit., p. 7.
 5. A. Stirling, 'An Account, Geographical, Statistical and Historical, of Orissa Proper, or Cuttack', Asiatic Researches, XV, 1822, pp. 163-338 (see p. 324). See also P. Mukherjee. History of the Jagannath Temple during the 19th Century. Delhi 1977, pp. 294-307.
 6. J. Peggs, Pilgrim Tax in India; Facts and Observations Relative to the Taxing of Pilgrims—Paying a Premium to those who Collect Tax for the Worship of Jaggernaut London, 1830; F. B. Laurie, Orissa the Garden of Superstition and Idolatry: Including an Account of British Connections with the temple Jagannath, London, 1850.
 7. Hobson-Jobson, op. cit., p. 466.
 8. The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, third rev. ed., Oxford 1964. The abuse of poor Jagannatha has not yet died out. In a long article on German lorries ('Gentle' German Juggernaut invades Britain) the Sunday Times wrote on 25-11-73 'Continental juggernaut have their multi-axle monster lorries ready to roll into Britain.'
 9. G. N. Das, 'Jagannatha and Oriya Nationalism' The Cult of Jagannath and the Regional Tradition of Orissa, ed. A. Eschmann, H. Kulke and G. C. Tripathi, Delhi 1978, pp 359-74. P. Mukherjee, History of the Jagannath Temple during the 19th Century, Delhi 1977.
 10. Madala Panji, ed. by A. B. Mohanty, repr. Bhubaneswar 1969, p. 4, See also H. Kulke, 'Early Royal Patronage of the Jagannatha Cult', in A. Eschmann op. cit., p. 140ff.
 11. Anargharaghave of Murari, see G. C. Tripathi, 'On the Concept of "Purusottama" in the Agamas', A, Eschmann, op. cit., p. 38ff.
 12. G. C. Tripathi, op. cit., p. 37. See also Kedarnath Mahapatra. 'The Antiquity of Puri-Jagannatha as a place of Pilgrimage', Orissa Historical Research Journal, III (1954), pp. 6-2 .
 13. The frieze, now in front of the Orissa State Museum at Bhubaneswar, belonged to a temple at Dhanmandal on the main pilgrim road to Puri. The temple is of late Ganga origin (13th-14th century A.D.). Of the three cars only the middle one has been preserved undamaged. Of the third group only the devotees are still existing.
 14. The deity does not conform exactly to the Jagannatha image as depicted in several excellent reliefs at the Surya temple of Konarak (1250 A.D.). Contrary to the images of Konarak, which more strongly resemble wooden pillar deities (as the hypothetical prototypes of Jagannath), the image on the Dhanmandal shows a clearly discernible waistline, chest, head and pendent arms.
 15. K. C. Mishra, The Cult of Jagannatha, Calcutta 1971, p. 132.
 16. A rare exception from the wheels of Balabhadra's car at Keonjhar in North Orissa (see below).
 17. A. Coomaraswamy, History of Indian and Indonesian Art, 1927, p. 115.

18. K. C. Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains of Bhubaneswar*, Bombay, 1960.
19. The characteristic architectural assemblage of Orissa's temple consists of the main deula (temple), the jagamohana, natamandapa (dance hall) and the bhogamandapa (hall of offerings). The deula follows the rekha type, whereas the mandapas follow the pidha type.
20. The Niti, a manual of 17th century of Jagannatha's ritual (niti) gives a detailed description of the pratistha ceremony. The edition of the manuscript is planned by Dr. G. C. Tripathi, Director of the G. Jha Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth at Allahabad.
21. There is a great difference between the excited reaction of the people at Puri during rath yatra and the devoted 'observation' during snana yatra (bathing festival) when Jagannatha and his brother and sister also appear outside their main temple on a special platform on top of the temple wall.
22. In Chidambaram in South India, the innermost quadratic street which surrounds the temple is called 'Car Street'.
23. Even in the year 1855, when the car festival was under the full control of the police stationed at Puri, a tragic accident happened : A number of people said to be about 50 fell or were pushed by the mob and before they could all recover themselves or be rescued one of the cars had passed over 5 of them killing three and severely mutilating two others : A. S. Anand, Magistrate of Puri to Commissioner of Cuttak. 9. 7. 1855 (*Jagannath Temple Correspondence*, vol. III, p. 631, Orissa State Archives).
24. The Record of Rights of Shri Jagannath Temple also mentions wooden images of drivers which now-a-days no longer seem to exist, (*Record-of-Right*, 1953, vol. II. p. 69).
25. H. Kulke, *Jagannatha-Kult and Gajapati-Konigtum. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte religioser Legitimation hindu-istischer Herrscher*, Wiesbaden 1979, p. 49ff.
26. Quoted in Hobson-Jobson p. 466.
27. Puri inscription of the year 1464 A.D. ; K. B. Tripathy, *The Evolution of Oriya Language and Script*, 1962, p. 272.
28. Niti, p. 85 (See above note 20).
29. This position is championed by G. N. Dash, 'The Evolution of Priestly Power : The Suryavamśi Period', A. Eschmann 1978, p. 202-21.
30. As advocated by the present author, op. cit., p. 74f.
31. Record of Rights of shri Jagannath Temple comp. by L. Panda, vol III, p. 12, published in the Orissa Gazette (Extraordinary), Cuttack 14. 10. 1955. See also H Kulke, 'Kings without Kingdom. The Rajas of Khurda and the Jagannatha Cult', Southasia, IV (1974) 76f.
32. *Baharistan-i-Ghaybi. A History of the Moghul Wars in Assam, Coock Behar, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa during the Reigns of Jahangir and Shahjahan*, by Mirza Nathan transl. by M. J. Borah, vol. I, pp. 35-8.
33. *Ibid.*, Mirza's fantastic story reminds one of the description of the temple cars given by F. Bernier who travelled in India in the years 1656-68 : A superb wooden machine is constructed, such as I have seen in several other parts of the Indies, with I know not how many grotesque figures. This machine is set on fourteen or sixteen whe-

- els like those of a gun-carriage, and drawn or pushed along by the united exertions of fifty or sixty persons. F. Bernier, *Travels in the Moghul Empire A.D. 1555-63*. Translation by A. Constable, 2nd ed. London 1916, p. 304.
34. Madala Panji, p. 65.
35. During their struggle with the Muslim Governors of Cuttack, the Rajas of Khurda often removed the images of Puri to the mountainous south, causing a loss of 900,000 Rupees to the imperial revenue. In 1736, therefore the strange event happened that a Muslim Governor forcibly brought back the images and reinstalled them at Puri. (Riyaz-us-Salatin : A History of Bengal by Ghulam Hussain Salim, transl. M. A. Salam, Calcutta 1902-4, p. 302). See H. Kulke, 'Ein hindu-istischer Tempel unter muslimischer Herrschaft', *Saeculum*, XXVII (1916) pp. 366-75.
36. See H. Kulke, 1979, p. 197-204 and map 2.
37. These documents are part of a selection of 'royal letters' of the Khurda Rajas, edited by the author in collaboration with Mr. Kedarnath Mahapatra and Mr. Satvanarayan Rajaguru.
38. According to the treaty of the year 1804, Daspalla had to pay 'no peshcus, or tribute or payment or nuzzur' (Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, Calcutta, 1864, p. 194). According to Cobden Ramsay, 'Feudatory States of Orissa', Calcutta 1910, (*Bengal Gazetteers*, vol. 21) the concession to supply timber for the rathas of Puri in lieu of taxes, was granted by the Marathas only for a part of the state (p. 159).
39. See note 37.
40. Both places seem to have produced iron locally. Today Talcher is known for its coalfields.
41. Another short royal order on the same effect is known from April 19th, 1741.
42. A Raja of Ranpur was appointed body-guard of Jagannatha by performing the honourable 'dagger and sword service' (curi khanda seva).
43. Jagannatha Sthalavrttantam, p. 95 (Madras Oriental Manuscript Library, folios D. No. 2612-R. No. 1220).
44. S. N. Rajaguru, *History of the Gangas*, vol II, Bhubaneswar 1972.
45. H. Kulke, 'Kshatriyaization and Social Change : A Study in Orissa Setting', *Aspects of Changing India*. Studies in Honour of Prof. G. S. Ghurye, ed. S. D. Pillai Bombay 1976, p. 403f.
46. Madan Mohan Mishra, *Data on the Ex-State of Keonjhar*, manuscript prepared for the Orissa Research Project, Heidelberg, 1974.

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All photographs except for Fig. 1 by the author.