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### KSHATRIYAIZATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

#### A Study in Orissa Setting

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IN HIS famous book "Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India" M. N. Srinivas in 1952, for the first time, used the term "Sanskritization" in a way which has very much influenced the course of social anthropological research.\* He states: "The caste system is far from a rigid system in which the position of each component caste is fixed for all time. Movement has always been possible, and especially so in the middle regions of the hierarchy. A low caste was able, in a generation or two, to rise to a higher position in the hierarchy by adopting vegetarianism and teetotalism, and by Sanskritizing its ritual and pantheon. In short, it took over, as far as possible, the customs, rites and beliefs of the Brahmins and the adoption of the Brahminic way of life by a low caste seems to have been frequent, though theoretically forbidden. This process has been called 'Sanskritization' in this book, in preference to 'Brahminization', as certain Vedic rites are confined to Brahmins and the two other 'twice-born' castes. The tendency of the lower castes to imitate the higher has been a powerful factor in the spread of Sanskritic ritual and customs, and in the achievement of a certain amount of cultural uniformity not only throughout the caste scale, but over the entire length and breadth of India."<sup>1</sup>

\*This paper is based on my field work in Orissa in 1970-71 as a member of the Orissa Research Project, sponsored and financed by the German Research Foundation. I should like to thank our friends in Orissa whose help has been most valuable to the project.

1. M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (2nd ed., London, 1965), p. 30.

From a historical and Indological point of view one may feel that the main merit of Srinivas' theory lies in the fact that it created a theoretical framework which helped to link the research on the "little communities" of Indian villages with the traditional field of Indology, the Sanskritic All India tradition or, to use another controversial term, with the "great tradition" of India. The term "Sanskritization" thus became a helpful transmission-belt between history-oriented and social anthropological research. It also provided a sound basis for the discussion to what extent values were, and still are, influencing social change in India. Srinivas' theory also gave a further impetus to destroy the myth of India's village being an "isolated whole."<sup>2</sup>

It is not the aim of this paper to enter into a detailed discussion of the usefulness of the term Sanskritization. Its aim is to make only a few remarks on using the terms Sanskritization and Kshatriyaization in their socio-functional context.

One of the main difficulties in accepting and using the term "Sanskritization" is that it denotes "pars pro toto" a complex process after only one of its aspects, i.e., the language. The term, therefore, was bound to become as controversial as similar terms, i.e., "Aryanization,"<sup>3</sup> "Hinduization," and "Brahmanization" which are derived from the aspects of race, religion and caste, respectively. The difficulties which originate from the necessity to subsume a complex process under the name of one of its aspects are multiplied by the fact that even none of these different terms is sufficient to describe fully only the corresponding aspect; e.g., Sanskrit has never been the only medium through which Sanskritization developed. In many parts of India local languages sometimes were far more important than any other language in the process of Sanskritization.<sup>4</sup> The agents of "Brahmanization" likewise were not always Brahmins and many Brahmin habits differed from time to time and area to area. Lastly, "the word (Hinduization) suggests that many of the lower castes are not Hindus which is not true."<sup>5</sup>

Despite such difficulties with the term "Sanskritization" the relevance of the *process* itself for social change in India (whether medieval or contemporary) has not seriously been challenged by scholars, especially if

2. McKim Marriot, "Little communities in an indigenous civilization" in McKim Marriot, *Village India*, Chicago, 1955, pp. 174-176. M. N. Srinivas and A. M. Shah, "The myth of the self-sufficiency of the Indian Village" in *Economic Weekly*, 12 (1960), pp. 1375-78.

3. In his book *A History of South India* K. A. Nilakanta Sastri wrote a chapter about this process in the early phase of South Indian history under the headline "The Dawn of History: Aryanization" (2nd ed., Madras, 1958), pp. 65-78.

4. J. F. Staal, "Sanskrit and Sanskritization" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 22 (1962/63), pp. 261-275.

5. A. P. Barnabas, "Sanskritization" in *Economic Weekly*, 13: 15 (1961), p. 613.



we take "westernization" as a complement rather than a dichotomic antithesis. The usefulness of the theoretical framework has even increased from suggestions and criticisms of various scholars, besides Srinivas himself. Three of them, at least, are important for this paper. In 1955 an important contribution was made by McKim Marriot who emphasized that "while elements of the great tradition have become parts of local festivals, they do not appear to have entered village festival custom 'at the expense of' much that is or was the little tradition."<sup>7</sup> In 1959 E. B. Harper in an article, "A Hindu Village Pantheon,"<sup>8</sup> came to the conclusion that the distinction between Sanskritic and non-Sanskritic village deities could be *functional* rather than historical.

The third point to be mentioned here concerns the "Brahmanical model" of Sanskritization. After Srinivas had been criticized by various scholars, in 1966 he frankly admitted: "I now realize that in both my book on Coorg religion and my 'Note on Sanskritization and Westernization', I emphasized unduly the Brahmanical model of Sanskritization and ignored the other models — Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra."<sup>9</sup> Srinivas then goes on to refer to the studies of D. F. Pocock and Milton Singer.<sup>10</sup> They stress the Kshatriya model of Sanskritization (or "Rajputization").<sup>11</sup> In connection with social mobility in pre-British India Srinivas stresses the fluidity of the political system. He then turns "briefly to a secondary source of mobility in that system — the king or other acknowledged political head of an area. The latter had the power to promote or demote castes inhabiting his kingdom. The Maharaja of Cochin, for instance, had the power to raise the rank of castes in his kingdom, and the final expulsion of anyone from caste required his sanction."<sup>12</sup> Referring to H. J. Maynard's study on the "Influence of the Indian king upon the growth of castes"<sup>13</sup> he gives two possible reasons why rajas or zamindars promoted the status of a caste: support during war and payment for the permission to wear the sacred thread.

6. "The lower castes have a tendency to take over the customs and rites of the higher castes, and this ensures the spread of Sanskritic cultural and ritual forms at the expense of others". M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (2nd ed., London, 1965), p. 209.

7. McKim Marriot, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

8. In *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 15 (1959), 227-234. Quoted by Staal, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

9. M. N. Srinivas, *Social Change in Modern India* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966), p. 7.

10. D. F. Pocock, "The Movement of Castes" in *Man*, 1955, 71-72; Milton Singer, "Social Organisation of Indian Civilisation", *Diogenes*, 45 (1964), 84-119.

11. Surajit Sinha, "State Formation and Rajput Myth in Tribal Central India", *Man in India*, 42 (1962), p. 35.

12. M. N. Srinivas, (1966), *op. cit.*, p. 41.

13. In *Journal of the Panjab Historical Society*, Vol. 6, p. 93.

In 1963 S. K. Srivastava in an article gave an interesting example of how both lower castes and even Brahmans in rural Agra are "kshatriyaizing" their way of life, due to the dominating position of Kshatriya groups. "When the Brahmans became the land-owning class or the zamindars, they tried to imitate the Kshatriya groups, in order to acquire the status of the landlord rather than of the Brahmin priest."<sup>14</sup>

So far Kshatriyaization has largely been considered as a process of social and cultural change following the "Kshatriya model", thus being a complementary process to Sanskritization of the "Brahmin model." The term Kshatriyaization, however, should not be confined to those cases of Sanskritization where other castes are merely imitating the Kshatriya way of life. The term should be used in its functional sense rather than in terms of Kshatriya rites and status symbols adopted by other castes. In its functional sense Kshatriyaization could be called social change "from above" which was initiated in tribal areas by the Kshatriyas, i.e., zamindars, chiefs or rajas to strengthen their claims to legitimacy in the society and to broaden the basis of their economic and political power.

In the following pages I shall try to illustrate this hypothesis with a few examples which I came across in 1970-71 while doing research on the political aspect of the Jagannatha cult in Orissa. In this discussion I use historical data mainly referring to 18th century Moghul and Maratha period in Orissa. Bernard Cohn differentiates four levels of the political system in eighteenth century India as follows: a) imperial, b) secondary (successor states), c) regional, and d) local.<sup>15</sup> After the final destruction of the last independent Hindu empire of Orissa in A.D. 1568, the four corresponding levels in Orissa are: a) the Moghuls (followed by the Marathas from 1751-1803), b) the Nawabs of Bengal (followed by the Bhonslas of Nagpur), c) the Moghul and Maratha Subahdars respectively, and d) the rajas and local chiefs of the Garhjat (Gadajata) Mahal or feudatory states of Orissa.

The peculiar political situation of post-sixteenth century Orissa is based on the existence of the Rajas of Khurda-Puri who had been recognized by Raja Man Singh, Akbar's famous General, as the successor of the last Hindu dynasty in Southern Orissa. Their political status was that of a raja of the regional level, thus being in direct competition

14. S. K. Srivastava, "The process of Desanskritization in Village India" in Bala Ratnam (ed.), *Anthropology on the March* (Madras, 1963), p. 266. It is astonishing, however, that Srivastava takes the Kshatriyaization of certain aspects of the life of the Brahmans for a case of Desanskritization, an assumption which is only possible if we identify only the Brahman tradition with the Sanskritic "great tradition" of India.

15. Bernard Cohn. "Political systems in the eighteenth century India: The Banaras Region" in *Journal of American Oriental Society*, 82 (1962), pp. 312-320.



with the Moghul and Maratha Subahdars in Cuttack. Consequently during the end of the Moghul rule in Orissa and finally under the Marathas the power of the Khurda Rajas was reduced to political status of the local level. Regarding their legitimacy in the traditional hierarchy, however, they were recognised throughout this period by most of the Garhjat rajas as the legitimate political power of the secondary level.

The high esteem in which the Khurda Rajas were and are still held is a direct result of their relationship with the cult of Jagannatha and his temple in Puri. This temple was at the time of its construction (12th century) the largest in the whole of India.<sup>16</sup> Its famous Jagannatha trinity which was strongly influenced by the dynastic *istadevata* cult of the Gangas and by tribal cults<sup>17</sup> even today draws easily a million pilgrims to the town every year. Under the Ganga and Suryavamsa dynasties (ca. 1112-1540/68) Jagannatha became the state deity (*rastradevata*) of the powerful empire of Orissa. King Anangabhima III (1211-1238) and Bhanudeva II (1306-1328) in inscriptions and in the *Madala Panji* (the temple chronicle of Puri) were mentioned as *rautta* (viceroys) who were ruling Orissa under the *samrajya* (universal sovereignty) of Jagannatha.<sup>18</sup> The *Madala Panji* describes how kings of these dynasties were legitimising their tax collections and their actions against the priest of Puri with the "will" of Jagannatha.<sup>19</sup> This political-ideological aspect of the Jagannatha cult reached its culmination under the kings of the Suryavamsa (1435-1540) who threatened their opponents that any resistance against them would be a treacherous attack (*droha*) on Jagannatha.<sup>20</sup> The kings of the Ganga and Suryavamsa dynasties seem to have had "monopolized" the Jagannatha cult in the religious and political centres of their dynasties: Puri and Cuttack. Despite the enormous building activities of both the dynasties all over Orissa, up to the late 15th century we have definite proof of only one Jagannatha temple outside Puri — in Cuttack.<sup>21</sup>

16. G. S. Ghurye, *Religious Consciousness*, (Bombay, 1965), pp. 333-337.

17. Hermann Kulke, "Some Remarks about the Jagannatha Trinity" in Herbert Hartel (ed.), *Indologentagung 1971* (Wiesbaden, 1973).

18. *Madala Panji*, ed. by A. Mohanti, Bhubaneswar, 2nd ed., 1969, pp. 28, 49.

19. D. C. Sircar, "Two Lingaraja Temple Inscriptions" in *Indian Culture*, 6 (1939), p. 72; D. C. Sircar, "Ganga Bhanudeva II and Purusottama-Jagannatha"; in: *The Kalinga Historical Research Society*, 1 (1946), 251-253; *Madala Panji*, p. 27; P. Mukherjee, *The History of the Gajapati Kings of Orissa and their Successors* (Calcutta, 1953).

20. Another good example is known from the Jagannatha temple inscription of Govinda Vidhyadhara, who was a successor of the Suryavamsa. "The kings of Garhjat (Feudatory States of Orissa) will obey. He who violates this order rebels against Jagannatha," Quoted by R. D. Banerji, *History of Orissa* (Calcutta, 1930), Vol. I, p. 340.

21. There was a slight "liberalization" of this policy under Purushottama and Prataparudra in the late 15th and early 16th century. Under Prataparudra (1497-1540) this was mainly due to the influence of Caitanya.



It is one of the least known but most striking facts in the development of the political aspect of the Jagannatha cult that only after the collapse of the central power (1540-68) which had "monopolized" the cult did it spread to the capitals of the Garhjat states in Orissa. In most of these cases the independence of local Garhjat states from the regional power after 1540-68 coincided with the establishment of Jagannatha temples in their capitals. The spread of the cult in Garhjat states and especially the construction of numerous Jagannatha temples cannot be explained only by Caitanya's influence. The sequence of events was: 1) collapse of the central power which had "monopolized" the Jagannatha cult; 2) the former Samanta Rajas in the Garhjat states becoming independent; and 3) construction of Jagannatha temples in the new capitals. Under the Ganga and Suryavamsa kings the Jagannatha cult had grown into a symbol of Hindu kingship and royal authority in Orissa. The construction of Jagannatha temples in the Garhjat states of Orissa (e.g., Mayurbhanj, Sambalpur and Keonjhar), therefore, has to be regarded also as a symbolic declaration of independence.

Most of the existing Jagannatha temples in the capitals of the Garhjat states of Orissa, however, were constructed during the British period, mainly in the second part of the 19th century.<sup>22</sup> This activity is found most remarkably in those princely states whose rajas constructed entirely new capitals with a new Jagannatha temple and palace in the centre (e.g., Daspalla, Khandpara, Baramba, Tigeria and Athgarh). These buildings, whose construction meant an enormous tax burden and using of forced labour (*bethi*), up to 1860, indicate a definite change in the ideological basis of legitimation of the rajas in the tribal hinterland of Orissa. Up to the early 19th century the legitimacy of suzerainty of most of the Garhjat rajas over the tribal hinterland was mainly based on their position in the cult of the tribal "thakuranis," who usually had become the *rastradevatas* of their states (e.g., Bhattarika in Baramba and Maninagesvari in Ranpur).<sup>23</sup> Thakuranis were a direct link between the Garhjat rajas or chiefs and the tribes. The patronage of these powerful goddesses secured the kings the support of the tribes and thereby the safety of their states: in their wars with each other they depended on the goodwill of "their" tribes. In this period, i.e., 17th and 18th centuries, the Jagannatha cult and its temples in the Garhjat capitals were of minor importance. In the tribal areas during the Moghul and

22. After the confiscation of Banki and Angul in 1840 and 1848 respectively 16 states remained which were recognized as the Feudatory States of Orissa. At least in 11 capitals of these states Jagannatha temples were constructed between ca 1850 and 1930.

23. Hermann Kulke, "Religious Cults and Royal Authority: The Case of the Chiefs of Orissa." Paper read at the Third European Conference of Modern South Asian Studies, Heidelberg, July 1972 (mimeo.)



Maratha period Jagannatha temples were symbols of a political (semi-) independence rather than an institution which influenced the legitimation and position of the raja-chiefs *within* their tribal society.

After the immediate danger from hostile neighbours had been removed by the "Pax Britannica" (after 1803) the cult of the tribal goddess increasingly lost its central function in the ideology of Garhjat rulers. No longer depending on the voluntary support of the tribes, feudal loyalties became a "burden" for the rajahs and an obstacle in their efforts to be recognized by the British Government and by other feudatory rajahs all over India as full Hindu Rajas. During the 19th century it was again the "Puri model" which influenced the feudatory rajahs of Orissa. In Orissa the rajahs of Khurda-Puri were the most excellent examples of how the loss of political power could be substituted by religious authority. After the Khurda Rajahs had lost Puri to the Marathas in the second part of the 18th century, Mukhunda Deva II was even deprived of his Khurda territory after a futile revolt against the British Government in 1804. Through Act IV of 1809, however, the superintendence of the Jagannatha temple was vested in the Rajahs of Khurda who — since then being Rajahs of Puri — in the following decades regained the pre-eminent position in the traditional hierarchy of the feudatory rajahs of Orissa.

Kshatriyaization, as stated above, (or Sankritization according to the Kshatriya model) was initiated mainly by the authorities of the local level of the traditional political system. The model of kshatriyaization in Orissa was mainly the traditional Hindu power of the regional level, i.e. the Khurda dynasty, whose legitimation was derived from their status of being the successors of the Thakur-Rajahs of the Suryavamsa dynasty (of the secondary level).<sup>24</sup> For sociologists it is certainly not astonishing that this model was adopted by the political authorities of the local level only after their "declaration of independence" which followed the downfall of the central Hindu dynasty of Orissa, i.e., after the distance, which had separated the imperial rajahs of the late Suryavamsa from their samanta rajahs in the hilly tribal areas of Orissa, was diminished.

Under the kings of the great Hindu dynasties the adoption of their values, rites and status symbols was not only hindered through a policy

24. The Rajputs were another model, after Man Singh, Akbar's general had come to Orissa. Since that time most of the ruling families of the Garhjat States claimed to be of Rajput origin. Such spurious claims are most surprising since already an old but *local* Kshatriya genealogy was existing (e.g., Bhanja dynasty of Mayurbhanj). See R. D. Banerji, "Rajput Origins in Orissa" in *Modern Review*, 43, (1928), pp. 285-329. (Partly reprinted in his *History of Orissa*, Calcutta, 1931, Vol. II, App. VI.) See also Surajit Sinha, *op. cit.* For a functional interpretation of a "royal" South Indian legend in a Sanskrit Mahatmya, see Hermann Kulke, "Funktionale Erklärung eines südindischen Mahatmyas. Die Legende Hiranyavarmans and das Leben des Cola Königs Kulottunga I" in *Sacculum*, 20 (1969), pp. 412-422.



of restriction (as seen in the case of Jagannatha temples outside the centre) but also through the above-mentioned social distance between the two levels. This situation changed rapidly after the fall of the last Hindu dynasties in 1540-68 and the growing self-assurance of the former samanta rajas and chiefs of this dynasty. The kings of the medieval central Hindu dynasties, however, had placed certain symbols of their legitimization-ideology in the centre. The Khurda Rajas, on the contrary, having lost the actual power to "monopolize" these symbols, tried to gain the support of their subordinate kings by "sharing" their position in the Jagannatha cult with their samanta rajas and their allies. Usually these rajas were granted certain rights in the Jagannatha cult and privileges (e.g., status symbols like royal *palankis*) during their visits to Puri. A sanad (charter) of Birakesari Deva (1737-1781/93) to the Samanta Raja of Athagada in Southern Orissa is quite illustrative of how far the Khurda Rajas were allowing their subordinate kings to "share" their position in the Jagannatha cult in order to survive politically: "As you have been engaged in a very difficult task in our favour, Baksi Hamir Khan has been sent to Banapur. You should join him and help him to accomplish the work entrusted to him on our behalf. Showing favour to you, we have appointed you as the Pariksa (superintendent) of the temple of Sri Jagannatha."<sup>25</sup>

No doubt, the Khurda Rajas (especially during the most dangerous 17th and 18th centuries) had encouraged Kshatriyaization "from above" by granting special rights and status symbols to Khandayats whose way of life often was that of tribal chiefs rather than of Hindu rajas.<sup>26</sup> The usual way of transmission of Kshatriya values, rites and status symbols, etc. from the regional level to the local level was, however, not "from above." Adoption (in the sense of Srinivas' Sanskritization according to the "Brahmanical model") was certainly more frequent. We have already mentioned about the construction of Jagannatha temples in the Garhjat states immediately after the downfall of the central Hindu power, an evolution which has to be explained (inter alia) in terms of adoption of a status symbol which had been withheld by the central Hindu dynasty.

The adoption of status symbols which are not mere items (e.g., a royal umbrella) but social institutions like a Hindu temple or a Brahman (*agrahara* or *sasana*) village, however, initiated further Sanskritization

25. *Jagannatha Sthalavrttantamu*, Ms. D. No. 2612. Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras (Descr. Cat. of Telugu Mss.) The Orissa Research Project is grateful to Sri S. N. Rajaguru, Ex-Government Epigraphist, Bhubaneswar, for translating this difficult Telugu Ms.

26. T. Dalton, "Notes of a tour made in 1863-64 in the Tributary Mehals under the Commissioner of Chota Nagpur, Bonai, Gangpore, Odeypore, and Sirgooja" in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1865, pp. 1-31; F. G. Bailey, *Caste and the Economic Frontier — A Village in Highland Orissa* (Bombay, 1958), pp. 178-183.



both "from below" (adoption) and "above" — in order to create for this adopted social institution a social context which is similar to the one to which it belonged. In other words, adoption by local chiefs and rajas of status symbol, rites etc. from regional rajas has to be viewed as Sanskritization "from below." But this process at the local Kshatriya level promoted or even initiated Sanskritization below this level. The reason for this subsequent Sanskritization process "from above," as already mentioned, is the simple fact that a Hindu social institution which was "imported" into a tribal area required a minimum of Hindu social context which enables this institution to survive in a tribal area. In the beginning, endowments granted by the local rajas enabled the temple and its priests to be economically "independent." But, after a few generations, the Brahman temple priests of lower status, and their family members, were economically forced to build up their own clientele which could be found only among members of Hindu castes. This fact influenced both vertical social mobility of tribes "entering" the Hindu caste fold and horizontal or spatial mobility.<sup>27</sup> Spatial mobility was promoted by Brahmans in tribal areas who encouraged Hindus to settle down in "their" area in order to enlarge their clientele. Even more important for our thesis is the fact that in tribal areas Brahmans, in their own interest, tolerated or even encouraged vertical social mobility of tribes through Sanskritization by accepting their invitation to become their priests.<sup>28</sup> Thus, these Brahmans seem to have had a different attitude towards Sanskritization "from below." Whereas higher castes usually strongly opposed Sanskritization in order to maintain the status quo, Brahmans sometimes depended on the success of this type of social change.

There are a few more observations which should be mentioned in connection with our reflections on post-medieval social change in tribal areas, which took place under the direct influence of ritual requirements of local political authorities. The family histories (*Rajavamsa Itihasa*) of the Garhjat dynasties, though mostly products of the 19th and early 20th century, nearly without any exception have preserved the tradition

27. Burton Stein, "Social Mobility and Medieval South Indian Hindu Sects" in J. Silverberg (ed.), *Social Mobility in the Caste System in India, Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Supplement III, 1968, pp. 78-94.

28. Surajit Sinha, writing on "Vaisnava influence on a tribal culture" in Milton Singer (ed.), *Krishna, Myth, Rites and Attitudes*, Honolulu, 1966, p. 72, describes a different aspect of this mechanism which seems to have been most important for Sanskritization and to some extent for the spread of or even creation of castes in tribal areas: "The Vaishnava gurus are ... not concerned with replacing the traditional rituals of their clients; they are mainly interested in superimposing a few rituals of their own in order to make their presence as ritual specialists essential in the life of the Bhumij (tribe). The Vaishnava guru is not moved by a reformist's zeal to save the heathen souls of his clients but he is very much interested in increasing the number of his clientele."

that the original *istadevatas* (family deity) of the legendary founders of their dynasties were tribal thakuranis. They usually worshipped several thakuranis in different localities, having their own "histories" and special functions in the "royal pantheon" and its ideology.

Generally speaking there existed one "martyr-istadevata" (a ritually-killed member of the tribe) which represented the *primordial violent force* to establish the power. Most important was a powerful and dangerous tribal thakurani who, as *rastradevata*, symbolized the aspect of *infinite power* over the state as a whole. Thirdly there were "subsidiary" *rastradevatas* — "temporary" istadevatas — who represented the *regional* aspect of power over a certain part or group of the state.<sup>29</sup>

In the course of development of these dynasties the "martyr istadevata" usually was pushed into the background by the cult of the great tribal thakurani. Her temple or place of worship was usually some kilometers away from the palace. The power (*sakti*) of this goddess was too strong and dangerous for the king to live right next to her. In many cases, however, the rajas had a "sanskritized" sculpture of this tribal thakurani constructed — in its place of origin it has the shape of an unhewn level cone — and set up in their palace and venerated under various names of Durga. Ritual change of this nature at the local level of the political system has to be regarded clearly as a case of "Sanskritization" by adoption, usually following the model of the "regional" king. However, what is quite important in connection with our hypothesis is that the "metamorphosis" of the dangerous tribal goddess into a Hindu Durga was usually connected with the election of new priests. While the priests of the tribal goddess in her place of origin remained tribals, i.e., non-Brahmans, the priests of the "new" Hindu form of the goddess inside the fort became Brahmans (either invited from outside or "created" by the raja).<sup>30</sup>

This clearly proves the existence of one type of Sanskritization which is initiated through the ritual requirements of local rajas or chiefs. Sanskritization of this kind which usually followed the "Kshatriya model" of the regional raja is either directly connected (as in the case of the "metamorphosis" of tribal deities), or followed by (as in the case of the foundation of a Hindu temple or a Brahman agrahara-village) social

29. The Ex-Feudatory State of Baramba (Badamba) is a good example: Bhattarika as "Great Mother" ("Brhad-amba") is the powerful tribal Thakurani; Sabaruni is the tribal (Sabara) "martyr-istadevata" and Mahakali of Kharodgarh is the subsidiary *rastradevata*. (Kharodgarh is the central village of a former independent chief. Mahakali was his "rastradevta".) *Badamba Rajavamsava Itihas*, 31-89 (Oriya, Ms. in possession of Kavichandra K. Pattnaik, Cuttack).

30. Sometime the status of a tribe rose after its deity became the state deity. In this regard the Saora Daitas of Puri are well known. See G. S. Ghurye, *The Scheduled Tribes* (2nd ed., Bombay, 1959), p. 15.



change which was not, so to say, the original intention of its initiator.

It is this type of Sanskritization "from above" which could be called in its functional context Kshatriyaization rather than Brahmanization even if its agents were Brahmans. It is to be noted that social change of this category has to be regarded as a consequence of the ritual-political ambitions of a local chief or raja.

The above-mentioned "metamorphosis" of a tribal thakurani is of some importance from another point of view. It shows that Sanskritization does not necessarily mean a change "at the expense of" local traditions. "Sanskritization does not consist in the imposition of a different system upon an old one but the acceptance of a more distinguished or prestigious way of saying the same things."<sup>31</sup>

One reason behind the unbroken tradition of the worship of tribal goddesses in the capitals of Garhjat states of Orissa in the form of Sanskritized *rastradevatas* is that it is the cult of the Devi "which bridges the gulf between the folk and the elite", as G. S. Ghurye rightly observes.<sup>32</sup> It was mainly the sakti cult which both represented and guaranteed "vertical solidarity"<sup>33</sup> which is thus a most essential condition for the legitimation of a ruler in a tribal society. Under the influence of British paramountcy "vertical solidarity" and its cult in the form of the tribal thakurani ceased to be an indispensable part of the legitimacy. The formation of a rigid caste society in and around these "royal" *gadas* in the hinterland of Orissa emphasized more and more the necessity of a "horizontal solidarity." It was in this situation that Vishnuism (the mythology of which contributed most of all to the Hindu theory of the divinity of the king<sup>34</sup>) had its strongest impact on the tribal highland of Orissa. As already mentioned above, in 11 capitals out of the 17 Ex-Feudatory States of Orissa, between 1850 and 1930, huge Jagannatha temples were constructed, not to mention various other "royal" Vishnu temples like those of Raghunatha, Gopinatha (Krishna), and Baladeva.<sup>35</sup>

It is interesting to note that Vishnu temples (and their priests) which had been built by the rajas of the Ex-Feudatory States of Orissa as symbols of their new legitimacy as Hindu Rajas are strongly affected by the

31. L. Dumont and D. Pocock, "On the different aspects or levels in Hinduism" (critical essay on M. N. Srinivas', *Religion and Society among the Coorgs*) in *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, III, 1959, p. 45.

32. G. S. Ghurye, *Gods and Men* (Bombay, 1962), pp. 238-263. (Chapter XIV titled "Devi: Female Principle Bridges the Gulf Between the Folk and the Elite".) Ghurye shows the importance of *patron goddesses* in the religion of the royal families of Rajasthan.

33. M. N. Srinivas (1966), *op. cit.*, p. 9.

34. V. P. Varma, *Studies in Hindu Political Thought and its Metaphysical Foundations* (Delhi, 2nd ed., 1959), pp. 217-252.

35. e.g., Athgarh (Cuttack Dt.), Baramba and Dhenkanal.

abolition of the privileges of the rajas and their expropriation. Some of these temples are already in a very deplorable condition (e.g., Tigeria, Narsinghpur). On the other hand, the temples of the powerful tribal thakuranis and Siva temples regain their previous dominating position. From a first, superficial observation one may see a process of de-Sanskritization or even re-tribalization. However, we should bear in mind at least two facts. Firstly, the tribal thakuranis (like Carccika or Bhattarika), underwent a genuine process of Sanskritization without losing their former identity. Through the process of Sanskritization the tribals of the surrounding area have in the meantime reached a level which enables them to follow their Sanskritized thakurani. Secondly, and this seems to be most important, the above-mentioned process of de-Sanskritization affects the ritual and social institutions of the "Kshatriya model" which had been introduced by Sanskritization "from above" and which had not been reached by the respective process "from below". Thus the surmised process of de-Sanskritization actually is a process "de-Kshatriyaization" which seems to lead towards "democratization" and a more equal distribution of the ritual resources of the Hindu society.<sup>36</sup>

36. It is the main intention of this paper to give further evidence to the fact that 'changing India' need not necessarily be 'modern India'. It will be a fruitful step to examine the relevance of traditional channels of mobility for contemporary India — for instance the role of planned social change 'from above' in the legitimation-ideology both of a Hindu raja ('kshatriyaization') and of the ruling Congress party ('protective discrimination').