

WOMEN IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ORISSA

A Thesis Submitted to the University of Hyderabad in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

HISTORY

BY

SANKARSAN MALIK

Registration No. 11SHPH10



**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD
TELANGANA -500046**

November, 2019



DECLARATION

I, Sankarsan Malik, hereby declare that this thesis entitled “**Women in Eighteenth Century Orissa**” submitted by me under the supervision of **Professor Rekha Pande** is a bonafide research work for the award of **Doctor of Philosophy in History** from the **University of Hyderabad**. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this university or any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma. I hereby agree that my thesis can be deposited in shodhganga/INFLIBNET.

A report on plagiarism statistics from the University Library (IGML) is enclosed

Signature of the Candidate

Date:
Place: University of Hyderabad

Sankarsan Malik
Reg. No. 11SHPH10



CERTIFICATE

This is certify that the thesis entitled “**Women in Eighteenth Century Orissa**” submitted by **Sankarsan Malik** bearing Registration No. **11SHPH10** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for award of **Doctor of Philosophy in History** is a bonafide work carried out by him under my supervision and guidance.

This thesis is free from plagiarism and has not been submitted previously in part or full to this or any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

Papers related to this thesis have been:

A. Published in

1. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development [IJMRD], Vol. II, No. 2, 2015, 327-334(ISSN -23494182).

B. Presented at

1. International Seminar on Indian Cultural Heritage: Past, Present and Future, organized by Jointly Utkal University and Institute of Media Studies Bhubaneswar, 18th -20th March 2017
2. National Seminar on Revisiting Odisha's Past: New Historical Prospective, organized by Department of History, Utkal University, 21st April 2018.

Further, the student has passed the following courses towards fulfillment of the coursework requirements for Ph.D. was exempted from doing coursework (recommended by Doctoral Committee on the basis of the following courses during M.Phil. programme and M.Phil. degree was awarded:

SL.No	Course Code	Course Title	Credits	Results
1	SH701	Historiography	4	Pass
2	SH702	Historical Methods	4	Pass
3	SH703	Seminar Course	4	Pass
4	SH751	Dissertation	12	Pass

Supervisor

Prof. Rekha Pande

Head

Department of History

Dean

School of Social Sciences

Acknowledgement

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Professor Rekha Pande, for her continuous support throughout my Ph.D. study and for her patience, motivation and immense knowledge. Her guidance helped me in all time of research and writing of this thesis.

I would like to thank my Doctoral Research Committee members Dr. M. N. Rajesh and Dr. Deepa Srinivas for their insightful comments and encouragement for better understanding of my research.

I would like to thank Professor Bhangya Bhukya, Head of the Department for his support and cooperation.

I would also like to thank my teachers and faculty members of the Department of History, University of Hyderabad, for their suggestions and support during this research work.

I express my thanks to Dr. Sadananda Nayak, Head, Department of History, Berhampur University, for his encouragement and support during this research work.

I would like to thank Professor L. N. Raut, Formerly, faculty, Department of History, Berhampur University and Professor Prasan Kumar Swain, Department of Odia, Berhampur University, for their valuable suggestions and encouragement during this Ph.D. work.

I would like to thank Dr. Suresh Pande, Formerly, Principal Scientist, ICRISAT, India, for his motivation and encouragement.

I am thankful to office staffs of the Department of History and Indira Gandhi Memorial Library (IGML), for their cooperation during this Ph.D. work.

I express my thanks to the Superintendents of Odisha State Museum (OSM), Bhubaneswar, Odisha State Archive (OSA), Bhubaneswar, History Department Archive and Library, Berhampur University, Odisha, Nehur Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, National Library of India, Kolkata for their help and support during field study of my Ph.D. work

A special thanks to Sasmita Rani Shasini, OAS, OES-I for her comments, suggestion and cooperation during this Ph.D. research work.

I would like to thank Tapan Sir, Jayakrushna Sir, Bharat Sir, Santosh, Dhurba, Ranjit, Beбина, Rizwan and my friends in University of Hyderabad for their help and encouragement.

I would like to thank my father and mother for their love, affection, and support during this Ph.D. study.

Sankarsan Malik

Contents

Declaration
Certificate
Acknowledgement

Chapters	Page No
Chapter – I	
Introduction	1-27
Chapter –II	
Political, Social and Economic Condition of Eighteenth Century Orissa	28- 50
Chapter –III	
Representation of Women in Eighteenth Century Oriya Literature	51- 93
Chapter –IV	
Marginalized Women in Eighteenth Century Orissa: Devadasis	94-146
Chapter –V	
Women in Eighteenth Century Painting of Orissa: Representation and Reflection	147-216
Chapter –VI	
Conclusion	217- 227
Bibliography	228-242
Appendix	243-257

Chapter - I

Introduction

Study of eighteenth century especially on Oriya women has been neglected by historians. Not even a single work is done on eighteenth century Oriya women. Very less focus has been paid on women's history of Orissa. For that Orissa is far behind in the case of gender history.¹ This thesis focuses on the history of Oriya women and their status and position in eighteenth century Orissa, by examining various primary and secondary works.

Women history is a debatable area of research for historians as well as scholars. From proto history to modern history, women have always found themselves relegated to the corner of debates. They have always been neglected and suppressed in the historical records as well as by patriarchal preachers of the society. Patriarchal hegemony and male egoism have not recognised their contribution and sacrifice towards the society. Although against this patriarchal system, women have raised their voice after industrial revolution but with meagre achievement. In mid-twentieth century, some feminist historians attracted the attention of the society and the world towards women's absence in the historical records. Indian society, characterised by the patriarchal system throughout history and also at present, too neglected women's importance in society. Women, who consists half of the total population and has always played vital role for social existence only gets passing references in historical records. Even women are portrayed as *abala*, *durbala* (weak) compare to men. Historical records maintain silence on women's role and position in the society. Even scholars argue that women are passive forces for the society and are born only for child production and family care. Why she should be in historical records?

Oriya society is also not an exception to this type of social structure where women are considered only for reproduction. The contemporary literature reveals that Oriya women were considered as subordinate class of the society. Rules and regulations have been made and feminine notions have been constructed to restrict women's freedom and rights. Patriarchal nature of the society had always provided an inferior status to the women folk. Oriya women were considered as servants of husband, family as well as society. Besides, during seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries, women were also treated as commodities of luxury. She had to obey the social traditions and customs which were created to suppress and dominate women in the society. They are less visible even in Orissa dynastic records and chronicles also.

Background of Eighteenth Century:

Eighteenth century is a remarkable period in the history of India. Its speciality lies in its positioning between the decline of an indigenous empire on the one hand and the emergence of a foreign empire on the other. On one hand, the Mughal Empire had lost its political ground with the death of Aurangzeb and on the other; the British were struggling to consolidate their position in India. In the mean time, to fill the political vacuum, there were the regional states trying to establish their all India footing. Therefore the period is politically vibrant one that saw multiple political contenders engaged in a political contest to establish their own respective state system. The successor states like Awadh, Bengal, Punjab, Hyderabad and Carnatic emerged from the jurisdiction's established by the Mughal rebels such as Marathas, Sikhs etc.²

Early historiography on eighteenth century India popularised mainly by historians like Iswari Prasad, Ram Prasad Sharma used the nomenclature 'dark age' to describe its historical significance. They formulated their argument on the basis of the decline of Mughal politics, economic system and social breakdown. However, later historiography unearthed information of economic progress and prosperity flowing out of a vibrant external trade and prioritised the rise of regional politics in the century than the decline of Mughal Empire. These regional polities played an important role in reconstructing the history of eighteenth century. Studies on these regional polities recently changed the whole method of history writing on the period. The socio, economic and political changes taking place during the period were not uniform all over the subcontinent, instead various changes took place. For example, a new group of intermediaries comprising merchants, traders, service gentry, revenue farmers and warriors emerged during this period. These, traditionally apolitical groups came to play active political role, often occupied different portfolios and provided the basis for regional political formation. The changes and subsequent developments in

social, political, economic and cultural sphere during eighteenth century have gathered enough historical evidence to refute the early historiographic assertion of eighteenth century as a 'dark age'. Thus the studies on the first half of the century suggest that far from being the 'dark age', the period was marked by significant economic and social change, resulting in the emergence of regional polities even as the edifice of Mughal imperialism collapsed.³

The studies on eighteenth century generally looks only two aspects, one is economic exploitation by the colonial government and on the other the decline of Mughal Empire. There is not much focusing on economic progress, social changes and regional polities that cannot be sidelined in order to have a fuller understanding of the period. Regional history of the Mughal period was an important feature of the eighteenth century. This study can give us clear ideas and information about the changes and continuity that occurred in the period. Though studies on regional basis have been carried out by many scholars like Muzafar Alam, P.J Marshal, Sanjay Subramaniam etc. and revealed the original face of eighteenth century, still we have to touch other regions and untouched areas to get more information on eighteenth century India.

During eighteenth century, agriculture and urbanization achieved success. Textile industry especially in the Banaras region gained spontaneous progress and small urban centres also showed their existence. There are various evidences of economic progress in North India. Even during British period, Awadh witnessed an effective revenue system.⁴ In south India, Mysore, southern Malabar, parts of Hyderabad, Maratha territories and other dry southern regions also witnessed agricultural and urban expansion. Eastern India also showed their stability in these areas. Even after the decline of Mughal system there were no sudden decline in economy, but the growth of economy had been seen in major parts of the Mughal territories. Though a continuous economic strain on the centre on account of prolonged war with Deccan was taking place, but it did not affect much to the economic structure of the states. Commercial and agricultural stability in Bengal, Punjab, Awadh, Maratha States and parts of Nizam's territories existed in eighteenth century.⁵ Eighteenth century also witnessed the rise of landlords, Zamindars, who had direct contact and relations with intermediaries and peasants. They were able to

control the peasants and motivate them against central authority or Mughals effectively. The inactiveness of the Mughal imperial authority allowed Zamindars and local rulers to establish hold over the peasantry, artisans, and inferior trading groups.⁶ In the case of Awadh, same thing had happened. Local rulers could raise large resources and invest large amounts on military. Rohila Kingdom also did the same as Awadh. Ultimately, these regional powers gave great shock to the central authority and made themselves independent.

Perlin's argument on eighteenth century is different from other debates. He argues that gradual progress in local administrative level provide a master cause to the elite-classes to become autonomous body for the regions. Maharashtra which was under the control of the Mughal had seen the evolution in the process of political systems. Powerful and rich farmers in the region set up their own semi-autonomous administration.⁷ The economic power changed the political system of the region and made a revolution and played a balancing role between politics and economy of the period. Perlin also argues that eighteenth century cannot be framed without mentioning its commercial intercontinental development. He says that money featured as a powerful element during seventeenth and eighteenth century and commercialization of economy had already started during these periods. And privatization of money became the cause for the progress of industry and productions. These changes also lead a supervisory control over market, production.

Stein in his article "Eighteenth Century India: Another View" describes that imperial historians conceived eighteenth century as a dark age and awaiting the order and modernization of British rule. Not even Marx could escape this contemporary teleology. His Asiatic mode of production both caricatured the condition of India before the British and apotheosised European capitalism as the force which would release India from its thralldom and usher it into history.⁸ Nationalist historians also argued that British emergence and conquest of India transformed India into an old structure. British created a foundation to drain wealth from India to England. It captured the power over raw material, soldiers and treasures of India to strengthen their industrial base as well as establish an imperial system in India which prevailed in Asia and Africa. Stein also analysed C. A. Bayly's work on this debate. Bayly rejects what he calls the Black Country conception of the

eighteenth century and agreed strongly for political and economic progress of the period. He says that decline of Mughal caused by various emerging factors such as progress of trade and commerce that provided a helping hand to the merchant class in the cities. Subsequently the development of cities, towns and urban areas mostly in the Gangetic region provided an economical boom to the merchants, local traders, bankers who became more powerful and felt less loyal towards imperial authority.⁹

Stein has also given importance to Bayly's argument on military and warfare system of eighteenth century India. Bayly says that there were much destruction by the invasion led by Nadir Shah and Zaman Shah in 1739 and 1797 and warfare attending the formation of Sikh, Maratha and jat states did cause destruction and bore economic costs. However he admitted that the destruction by warfare and market in India quickly recovered. Traders settled in others places, and new trade centres came out with leading role after the decline of Mughal authority in the centre. Towns and markets became the necessary hub for the small courts, soldiers, rich class people who always depended on these towns for their lavish life style. And Bayly says, eighteenth century was not a period of economic decline. Though indigo and cotton business had lost their importance but other commodities like opium replaced them. Costly trade emerged throughout the subcontinent during this period. The merchants invested their wealth on the production as well as labour market and wanted to control the whole market through revenue collection. This eighteenth century or black era was very conducive for European traders who entered by step into Indian economy and ultimately capture the political power of India.¹⁰

Stein has given another analysis of David Washerbrook's works¹¹ on Madras Presidency. During eighteenth century Washerbrook finds Indian bankers mostly from south India, Coromondal coast and even in Bengal, they were so powerful that they provided capital to the East India Company for their business in the Indian soil. These merchants and bankers earned this capital through various means like business with farmers, from commercial agents. They not only invested their money in the company but also private factory and company armies by means of bills of exchange. This continued to be the case until 1800. Then East India Company's economic as well as political policies broke down Indian merchant's legacy in the economic grounds as the company could not compete with Indian merchants.

Therefore, company established its control over system and made Indian merchants weak. But this situation arose in the beginning of the nineteenth century and during eighteenth century there were Indian merchants who produced a sound trade and commercial bazaar for Indian economy.¹²

The recent theories of eighteenth century India, basically the one by historian, M. Athar Ali argues that the small local empires emerged after the disintegration of the Mughal Empire, were strong enough that Mughal and Marathas depended heavily on these intermediary gentries. And this process, was rapidly taking place during eighteenth century. Probably the progress of trade and commerce and the rise of local merchants helped the lords and elite class people to establish their own territories as well as independent administration. Ali not only analysed the eighteenth century debates and theories of various scholars in a positive manner but also criticised them due to their weak analysis of eighteenth century. Bayly, argued that during eighteenth century trade and commerce flourished in these regions. There were economic development but he has not given details in his theory. Whether old towns emerged and remained or new towns were established while old decayed etc. Bayly has not given clear ideas and comparisons.¹³ Ali also points that S. P. Gupta's study and says that Ambar ruler strengthened his position in the first half of the eighteenth century by capturing revenue power which led to the establishment of local sovereignty.¹⁴

Eighteenth century also witnessed the cultural exchanges between India and Europe. But nobody had interest to adopt foreign ideas and the translation or institutions. Though Tipu Sultan organised his army and production and commerce on the European line, but many other ruler did not accept this. During the first half of eighteenth century Indians were following the traditional method of production, military organization and ruling systems. There were no interest to adopt European science and technology. No rulers of India tried to establish a cultural bridge between India and Europe.¹⁵

Eighteenth century can be considered a period of collaboration between Indian bankers, merchants and East India Company. When East India Company captured Nizamat power they made collaboration with Indian Zamindars, local lords for getting benefits through revenue collection. Before capturing power East India

Company also made collaboration with Indian bankers to capture power and in return the investors, bankers, were getting profit from policy made by the company. Permanent settlement can be taken as an example of the collaboration in which Zamindars became sole authority of revenue collections. However, in later period, company gain more profit and became more powerful. And subsidiary alliance proved fatal for local rulers and profit for the company. The Company cleverly hunted Indian bankers and lords by using policy making system. Indian bankers, Zamindars lost their newly achieved economic and political glory.

One thing is very clear that during eighteenth century or later part of the eighteenth century, the Zamindar class or local ruling class emerged as an unbeatable power. The Jat power near Agra and Mathura rose under the leadership of Suraj Mal (in1763) who replaced the Rajput rulers. In the case of Rohilas who were traders, immigrant soldiers, rural settlers in the Doab and Kather or Rohilakhand established an administration without a systematic way through class chieftaincies.¹⁶

Punjab remained under political instability during eighteenth century due to conflicts between Afghans and Sikhs. Bonda Bahadur's uprising was the remarkable event in Punjab history. In this uprising, all categories of people like sweepers, tanners, wretched, people and Banjaras participated. Even contemporary historians like Khafi Khan too speak about the lowly Hindus who took active participation in the revolts.¹⁷ The power of Zamindars or local rulers increased highly during this period and they became the soul authority over their regions and not giving importance to the central authorities. Social egalitarianism could not prevent the rise of leaders like nawab Kahpur Singh and ultimately in the ninetieth century under Ranjit Singh.¹⁸

Other remarkable features of eighteenth century were the use of science and technology in the production as well as in military field. Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan who adopted these new ideas put pressure on Zamindars and even jagir system was abolished by Tipu Sultan. Mysore appointed foreign military personnel's in its army. Even the state directly intervened in the production system and also looked after the trade and commerce sectors. Tipu, wanted to introduce European methods for economy as well as for production and defence system and also succeeded. But these progressive ideas of Tipu drew the wrath of English who wanted to destroy it.¹⁹

At the beginning of eighteenth century Aurangzeb was ruling over India from Kabul to Assam and Northern to southern peninsula. But after Aurangzeb's death, the centralised polity of the Mughal Empire declined giving way to the rise of numerous autonomous polities with their localised centres of power. When the East India Company was nurturing its political aspiration over the Subcontinent, it had to fight with these local polities in their power bargain. Though Marathas emerged as the most formidable political front before the British, it was not difficult for the later to suppress the former. It is through their manipulative endeavour that the British came to hold sway over the subcontinent by engaging the indigenous powers in conflict with each other by sowing distraught among them.

The second half of eighteenth century saw the transfer of political and economic power to the hand of British through a series of wars and treatises, self designed and self harvested by the British. Battle of Plassey and then the Battle of Buxar made them soul authority over Bengal and in an extension over India in the time to come. Initially reluctant to replace and overturn the Mughal administrative system, the British could ably inscribe its intention of a trading Company to exploit the country within the existing administrative machinery. Towards the end of eighteenth century, the debate ensued in the official circle to design a system of administration that would fully satisfy the aspiration of the Company in India, the policies that ensued like the permanent settlement aimed for a strong uphold over Indian economy as well as human power. They rigorously extracted revenue, increased the trade and provided boost for commercialization of agricultural production.²⁰ This began the company's policy of drain of wealth that made the Indian subcontinent poor and prone to natural calamities like drought and famine.

Eighteenth century was a period of buoyant economic condition.²¹ It was also a period of decentralization and the rise of regional polities within the frame work of Mughal structure of administration. Gradually Mughal model institutions disappeared [not fully] and overshadowed by the British system of administration. British did effectively checked the rise of regional polities like Marathas, Awadh, Punjab etc. and the continuity of eighteenth century did not get pace in the beginning of nineteenth century and broke down. The beginning of nineteenth century brought with it new centres of power and authority and along with it the associated changes in

various spheres of life. Indian society witnessed changes and revolution in the socio-economic and cultural ground though political revolution already started after the battle of Plassey.

Eighteenth Century Orissa

Eighteenth century Orissa was a period of political warfare and instability. In 1568 A.D., the ruling Afghan power of Orissa was overthrown by Akbar and Mughal rule was established in the region. Not only Afghans, the ruler of Khurda also came in the way of Mughal power in their thrust to conquer Orissa. There were continuous conflicts between Khurda rulers and Mughals and a battle between Khurda king Ramchandradeva and Mansing brought an end to the conflict by signing a treaty for peace in Orissa. According to this peace treaty, Khurda acknowledged the suzerainty of Akbar and in return, Mansingh recognized him as the ruler of Orissa or successor of Gajapatis. In the doomsdays of Mughals when its central authority gradually slackened giving way to the rise of local provincial powers, Orissa came under the rule of Nawabs of Bengal appointed by Mughals. Though Khurda kings were ruling in the state, many times wars were taking place between Nawabs and Khurda kings. Mostly during the period of Aurangzeb the situation was unpleasant in Orissa. Aurangzeb issued a decree to destroy temples in Orissa especially to destroy Jagannath Temple. But Khurda king Divyasinghdeva cleverly saved it. There were numbers of wars and conflicts between Subedars of Bengal and Khurda kings for power over Orissa. But a new change in the political atmosphere took place in the second half of eighteenth century, when Mir Habib a general of Murshid Quli Khan of Bengal fled to Nagpur and convinced Raghuji Bhonsla of Nagpur to attack on Orissa. In 1742 on 19th April Marathas invaded Orissa and captured Barabati fort of Cuttack. Orissa came under the Marathas in 1751 giving a setback to the Mughal governor of Bengal.

Marathas not only attacked Orissa but also marched towards Murshidabad, the city of Aliverdi and Mir Habib rescued his family members.²² In Orissa, Marathas did not face much opposition and Aliverdi's representative was weak and killed by Marathas. A deputy governor was appointed for Orissa by Marathas in charge of the administration of Orissa. After the departure of Marathas to Nagpur, Aliverdi

gathered his force and captured Cuttack. Then Raghuji retaliated not only by invading Orissa but also forced also Bengal to pay Chauth. In 1743 again Marathas attacked Orissa and Bengal under the leadership of Bhaskar Pandit. After some times Aliverdi khan betrayed Pandit and murdered him. For avenge, in 1745 Raghuji invaded Orissa but was defeated by Aliverdi and returned to Nagpur. But at the same time Mir Habib and Raghuji's son Januji attacked Midnapur and defeated Aliverdi. There were numbers of battle fought between two rival groups but no permanent result came out. Aliverdi's old age was also not permitting him to go for more wars against Marathas and Afghans. At last in 1751 a peace treaty was concluded between Maratha and Nawab of Bengal. From 1751 to 1803 Marathas ruled over Orissa. Both Marathas and Bengal Nawabs ruled Orissa as revenue farmers because their main motive was to extract revenue.²³ Mir Habib, Mirza Salah, Babuji Naik, Rajaram Pandit, Sadashiv Rao etc. adorned the governor's post of Orissa. During Sadshiva Rao's [1793-1803] reign Orissa history took another political turn when British occupied it in 1803. Though Orissa was surrounded by British occupied territories before, they only establish power over Orissa in 1803. It was an inevitable situation for British which forced them to capture it. However the Marathas continued to posses Sambalpur and other southern regions of Orissa till 1818 A D.²⁴

Eighteenth Century Orissa and Women

In this political background, Muslims and Marathas had been ruling this whole period and engaged themselves in a power struggle in their bid to achieve supremacy over each other. An instable political atmosphere did bring changes into the social life of the people in Orissa with the entry of multiple elements in various spheres of life. Orissa during this period saw new power structures, influx of new social groups, intermediaries, new centres of power that revolutionize the existing socio political structure. With the coming of new social elements the continuing features did not extinct but integrated itself with the old one. Medieval Oriya society was based on the patriarchal features and women were considered as an inferior and impure class in the society. Only male head of the family had the rights to take decision. Husband was considered as god for wife in Oriya society. Hindu Smritis advocated that the husband was the wife's god and her only duty was to obey and serve him.²⁵ Even women were not permitted to take her meal before other members of family. There were various

restrictions and limitations being imposed on Oriya women in the medieval period. Child marriage, widowhood, sati system, polygamy, prostitution, purdah, and tradition of courtesan were main factors for their inferior status in Oriya society. Women were barred from education especially lower class women were not getting education while women from high class could not enjoy it fully. Education was considered of no value for them as their sphere of operation is only within the four walls of the household and their prime duty was to cook, give birth to children and take care of other family members. Traditions and customs were made and promoted to restrict women's freedom and movement. Though in rare cases women enjoyed some freedom and opportunities but there were difference in the public and private sphere.

Reconstruction of Women's History:

The patriarchal attitude of perceiving and analysing history has kept women away from its anvil in every possible way. This is as if women never existed before and are very recent addition to the life on earth. The malleability of history writing and historical interpretation has overshadowed the women folk and their presence in the very society which was created and sustained by women. Some women's name and identity like queen Elizabeth of England, Razia Sultana of Delhi, princess Karubaki of Orissa etc. found place because of their royal attachment and royal upbringing. They also did not get the adequate attention as the men folk got. Besides, there is no place for other women in the historical records. Though society comprised with men and women and women also consisted fifty percent of the total population then why women are invisible in history? Was she of no value for family, society and world? History is; and has always been selective and represents very narrow records of human past in terms of time, space and numbers. The invisibility of women in available historiography is attributed to the fact that "men held power and women appeared not to have had the power to write themselves in".²⁶ However, it means not that women were not intellectual and active like men, they were forbidden to be an intellectual and forced to be a servant. Women were considered as an inferior group in the society.

The characteristics ascribed to women folk in the society are not natural but constructed. Through the institution of marriage their mind is restricted and forced to

feel and act emotionally. A soft mental quality has inculcated into her mind through the tradition and culture which branded her as inferior in the society.²⁷

Lerner says that Women are defined by male society and directed to act accordingly. Women have been placed in history as an inferior group. They are the victim of male defined society. The true history of women have neglected and never tried to bring it into the main stream history. True history of women has defined by male historians in their own terms and words. Women who have tried to react against the oppression carried out by male world always being suppressed by the patriarchal ideologies of the society. It is not only the society, economy and politics in which women were barred and restricted, in the literature she has also been depicted as an inferior group in the society. She is born to serve others and produce children. Even literature produced by women were criticized and suppressed by the male hegemony. Importance of women's history is not only confined within the traditional sources historians also responsible to give frame work to women's history. The historians of women's history have so far used the traditional method. They have applied questions from traditional history to women and tried to fit women's past into empty spaces of historical scholarship. The limitation of such work is that it ideals with women in male defined society and tries to fit them into the categories and value system which considered man the measure of significance.²⁸

Lerner also says that the ongoing and continuing contribution of women to the development of human culture cannot be found by treating them only as victims of oppression. So teaching women as victims of oppression once again places them in a male defined conceptual framework: oppressed, victimized by standards and values established by men. Thus, true history of women should b their own terms.²⁹

Female exclusion from history (like male exclusion from realm) has never, of course, been total. Women proverbially have, through their influence on children and men, made incalculable contributions of indirect, informal, anonymous kind to the growth of collective sensibility and shaped the historical processes of many new events. Throughout recorded history, exceptional women, or ordinary women under exceptional circumstances, have done so here and there. And during unrecorded (that is, pre-history) history, it is surmised that women did so, steadily and on a very substantial scale indeed. During this period, when basic technological advances could

be achieved at or near home, women seem to have managed, despite her usually heavy reproductive responsibility, to make major material changes in the environment in which our life developed.

If we will observe and analyse the paintings of pre history period we can find and realize how women were playing vital role in every sphere. When men was hunting women helping him in this work even holding baby with one arm, she was running with her male counterpart in hunting.³⁰ Pre historic paintings from Bhimbetika in India and many African and European cave paintings, reflects upon the part played by the women in leading a collective life with men. Not only hunting, women also invented basket making which was for the first time used for agriculture and domestication of animals.³¹ Also sowing and reaping were major job for women folk besides taking care of children.

There are thousands of historical work written on Kings, statesmen, politicians and war heroes. But all these works have made women invisible throughout history. How did we come to believe that women had no history? History has given importance to wars and kings and limited its scope of operation by being political in nature. Though system has changed little bit after mid-twentieth century in western world and scholars raised voice against the patriarchal understanding of historical records and history works. Indeed fifty years ago it was quite common to read biographies of famous men in which their female relatives, mother, wives, daughters were never mentioned.³²

Some historical records tell us about women who belonged to high class or famous women. But it does not give information about other women's contribution, and sacrifice for the society. The history of famous women has not described mass women. Same way scholars and historian who are from certain class and group have not focused on women of other classes. Hence the class history also playing major role for neglecting women from sources.³³

According to Myra Pollack 'Each time a girl opens a book and reads a womanless history, she learns she is worth less'.³⁴ Women are the part of society and they have equal rights like men but by neglecting women in history, we are creating discrimination and biasness against women folk. All have a right to know about their

mother and grandmother, forefather but making them invisible in history, violates women's moral right and discourage their progress. Thus study of women's history is very essential for contemporary society which is passing through a period of considerable violence against women and threat to their very survival in the society. Hence this thesis attempts to reconstruct women's history of eighteenth century Orissa.

Objectives:

- [1] To examine the condition of Orissa in eighteenth century
- [2] To reconstruct of the history of women in eighteenth century Orissa
- [3] To examine the status and position of women in eighteenth century Orissa
- [4] To examine the role of different classes of women in eighteenth century Orissa
- [5] Examine the literature, painting art and architecture to reconstruct women's history

Research Questions:

- i. Was eighteenth century a period of decline?
- ii. Did women play any role in this period?
- iii. What was the position of women?
- iv. What was the role of women of royalty, middle class and lower class?
- v. Can we get some information on women based on literature, palm leaf paintings of this period?

Significance of Study:

Eighteenth century in Orissa history is considered as a Dark Age. Political warfare and economic exploitation by the rulers of the period pushed Oriya society into darkness. No comprehensive record of the contemporary period is available. And study on women of the period again poses a challenge to the researchers. However the social history of the period was not affected deeply by this political and economical breakdown of the system. Oriya literature achieved great success and produced a considerable number of works which can be taken as major source for the historical writing. Painting of the period especially palm leaf painting which had produced a great artistic culture during seventeenth and eighteenth centuries onwards can provide a constructive idea on women's role in the society. Women who had an inferior position in others sources of history writing such as inscriptions, chronicles, travel accounts, are portrayed as playing leading role in the contemporary literary as well as illustrated works. These literature and palm leaf paintings can help us to make an analytical conclusion on Oriya women's position and status in the eighteenth century society.

Sources for the Study:

The sources on which the present study is based are literature of the contemporary period, contemporary travel accounts, inscriptions and official records. Mostly emphasis has been given on the Oriya literature of the contemporary period. *Rajbamsabali* or dynastic accounts of the period that have some importance in writing of women's history. Though these accounts are dynastic records of the period but they also depict socio-economic condition as well as the political condition of women. *Katakrjabamsabali*, *Bhoi Bamsabali*, *Madalapanji* or Temple chronicle of Jagannath Temple, *Bhanjabamsabali* of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be taken as historical sources for history writing of the period. Two copper plate grants inscriptions [found in Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar] of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, issued by Bhoi dynasty of Khurda also provides some information on women of the period.

Accounts and memoirs of contemporary European travellers throw considerable light on the concerned period. T. Motte, who visited Orissa in 1766, wrote about Mayurbhanj and Orissa. His famous work '*A Narrative of Journey to Diamond mines at Sambalpur*' is the main foreign account of the period.³⁵ W. Bruton, a foreign traveller of eighteenth century, wrote on Oriya society, culture and politics and his work "*Accounts of Bruton of Cuttack and Puri*" has been published in Orissa historical research journal.³⁶ Journals like *Bengal Past and Present*, *Orissa Historical Research Journal*, *Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, *Sahakar* (Oriya) etc. can be taken as important source for research on eighteenth century Oriya women.

Literature is the main source of reconstruction of women's history of Orissa. Eighteenth century Orissa had produced a rich literary culture. *Lavanyavati* of Upendra Bhanj (18th century) is a remarkable source of information for the study of the women history of 18th century Orissa. It contains information regarding the socio-cultural life of the people and status and role of women. Another important work of this period is *Bidagdha Chintamani* of Simhara Abhimanyu Samanta provides information about the social life, condition of women and the poet's attitude towards the king and the common people. *Subhadra Parinaya* of Upendra Bhanj deals with the aspect of love and marriage system prevailing in the society. *Kotibramhanda Sundari* of Upendra Bhanj is also a woman oriented work which was written on the theme of *Ramayan*. Basically, it describes women's quality and her influence to the society. *Samar Taranga* of Brajanath Badajena has depicted war between Marathas and local rulers. *Chatur Vinoda* written by same author of *Samara Taranga* has also dealt with various aspects of society and depicts the judicial system of the period, economic crisis, trade and commercial practices and women's position in the society. This work is divided into four sub chapters like *Harsh Vinod*, *Priti Vinod*, *Rasa Vinod* and *Niti Vinod*. Besides this, Upendra Bhanj's *Prem Sudhanidhi*, *Subhadraparinaya*, *Baidehisha Vilas*, *Kala Kautuk* are marvellous works and they are primarily reflecting the position and status of women in the Oriya society of that period. Most of his works written with a feminine title and the whole theme of the work centred on women. Purushottam Das's *Kanchi Kaveri* (18th century), Gopinath Das's *Mohan Lata* (18th century), K.V. Bramarvar's *Premasila* (18th century), Nilambar Bidyaratna's *Prastab Chintamani*, Raghunath Das's *Raghuvamsa Tika*, Ghana Bhanj's *Trilokya Mohini* (18th century), Trivikram Bhanj's *Kanaklata*.

Ramchandra Pattanaik's *Anuragbati* (18th century) etc. are indispensable sources for writing about women of Orissa during eighteenth century.

F. A. Margilin's *Wives of the God King*, has played important role in reconstructing history of devdasi of Orissa. Their socio-economic and religious life style and the process of their marginalisation in the society is the core subject of this work.

Palm leaf painting and illustrated palm leaf manuscript of the period is the major source like literature to study eighteenth century Orissa especially the study of women's history of Orissa. Women are invisible in the historical sources. They have very less reflection in the historical records. But visual art and paintings of the period has played a significant role in reconstruction of the women history of Orissa. Raghunatha Prusti's *Ragachitra* and other illustrated palm manuscripts (18th Cent), and Bidhagadha Natak, Ushaabhilasa, Gitagovinda, illustrated palm leaf paintings are contributed major information on women's status and position in the eighteenth century Orissa.

Methodology:

The present study is qualitative in nature. It used both primary and secondary sources to find out a meaningful way to discharge the researcher's thoughts and arguments. The primary sources have been used as the most effective material for this research. These include Oriya literature, travel accounts, inscriptions and paintings and of contemporary period written on Palm leaf and some of them available in print and copy version which are the main primary source for this research. Other works like traditional art and painting, official records of British government of Bengal, chronicles have also been taken as sources. This work looks at representation of women in art and architecture and hence temple sculpture are analysed. The secondary sources that has been used for this research includes published materials based on the primary sources. Then both primary and secondary sources are compared to find out the validity and reliability of the data to draw a clear picture of the position and status of women of the eighteenth century Orissa.

Review of Literature:

Literature on eighteenth century Oriya women is neglected. Till now not even a single work has been done on eighteenth century Oriya women. Though some books have been written on Oriya women but they are not giving a clear picture of women of the said period. In general, eighteenth century Oriya women have been portrayed in few pages. But some works which are written on history of Oriya women in general or medieval or modern periods have also been taken to analyse and review. Apart from secondary work there are numbers of primary works which are women oriented. These literary works have depicted women as major character of the works. By analysing these eighteenth century literature we can make a frame of women's position in the society.

Laxmipurana a feminist work was written during medieval period (16th century) by *panchasakha* poet Balaram Das. Through this book Das raises his voice against patriarchal hegemony of the society. Besides, it also describes about the social discrimination and untouchability. Woman who is the main character of this work has treated as inferior class in the society. Her free moving and outside work is criticised by the male members of the family. Even she is faced punishment for it. Apart from these social stigmas and taboos Oriya women were also facing the problem of identity. She did not have her own identity in the society, with the name of her husband or father she had been known to others. *Laxmipurana* which is a radical work against the patriarchal nature of the society also sought equality and equal respect for women's freedom. In this work Poet Das has given a clear picture of Oriya women and their position in the medieval society.

The greatness of a work like *Chatur Vinod* of Brajanath Badjena lies in its remarkable sense of tolerance in portrayal of human situations and realism. Orissa had a glorious past of trade and seafaring. The story of *Chatur Vinod* mostly related to the far way trade and commerce of the people. It also describes the practice of adultery which was prevalent in Orissa. A seafarer; because of peripatetic nature of his profession, has to stay away from his wife, making it possible for the wife to enter into an illicit relationship or making her vulnerable to enticement. On the other hand, he too can be of use to many such lonely women he would come across during his trips. The description of adultery could be direct reflection of the prevalent

immorality of the period. But point is, a husband could enjoy with other women but a wife could not do; so if she did, then many restrictions and punishment were imposed on her. Author also highlights the adolescent. And his view on illicit relation probably reflects the new feminist concerns. Badajena emphasizes on adultery of women of contemporary period. Her physical desire is not seen as something unnatural or offensive or taboo. Author views that women had totally depended on men for her economic need. Sometimes she used her beauty and body for livelihood, though prostitution was recognized as a profession.³⁷

Kotibrahmanda Sundari: An eighteenth century Oriya *kavya* containing 35 cantos, written by Upendra Bhanja. This work depicts some traditions and images of the contemporary society. Women education, sati, prostitution and women slavery has been portrayed in this work. System of dowry which was a major custom of the period also depicted with ornamental words. But there is very less information regarding lower class women though some marginal class women occupied little place in this riti literature. The story of this work is based on the prince of Pataliputra and princesses of Champanagar. It is a women oriented work. Even the father of *Kotibrahmanda sundari* (princess of Champanagar), before her birth, willed for a daughter and worshiped to God for asking to give a daughter, though he had many sons.³⁸

Kanchikaveri an eighteenth centuries work of Purusottam Das. This work based on Gajapati Purusottamdev's [1466-1497 A.D.] political warfare against king of Kanchi. Apart from the war and political bitterness author has also portrayed Oriya women's image of the period. Mostly common and lower class women characters have been occupied important place in this literature. Lower class women and their occupation indicate that women from lower strata were not restricted within the four walls of the house like high class women. They were enjoying more freedom than other class of women in the society. Das's depiction on lower class women is unique because generally seventeenth and eighteenth centuries literature are written on elite and high class women but it is exceptional in the case of *Kanchikaveri*. Although elite class women occupied some places in this work.³⁹

Utkal Itihasara Eka Agyanta Adhyaya by Chakradhar Mohapatra a valuable works on eighteenth century Orissa. Mohapatra gives a critical analysis of Orissa's

elite class society. Most important thing is two chapters of this book has described about the women's life and position during eighteenth century. Author also provides some images of eighteenth century Orissa which gives an idea on contemporary dressing style, jewellery, ornaments etc. Tradition of early marriage, the system of polygamy and other customs of high class society has been depicted in this book. This book also gives information on pre eighteenth century history of Oriya women.

“Wives of the God King: The Rituals of the Devadasi of Puri” by F. A. Marglin an epic work on devadasi culture of India. This book though largely focuses on the devadasis of the Jaganath Temple of Puri yet it has specified a wholesome picture of this temple ritual performed by devadasis for deities. The author has taken interviews of devadasis of Puri and studied their rituals through auspicious and inauspicious Hindu ideologies. Devadasis of Jagannath temple were not only performing their religious duties towards Lord Jagannath in the temple but also performing certain duties in the palace of the King. For them king was the incarnation of Jagannath, so their duty is to obey him and work for him. Marglin's analysis of temple women and their works have unearthed the polluted side of this religious observance. Devadasis of the Temple were not virtuous but they were considered pure because of the recognition and legitimization showered upon them by the priest as well as the king. Gradually devotees lost their faith and started criticizing them by categorising them as king's women or Rajadasi and Lokadasi. For the study of Devadasi culture in Orissa, this work of Marglin is a valuable source which provides reliable and authentic information on them. Author has not only seen devadasi tradition from religious prospective rather she has tried to analyze the life of god's wives through gender perspectives. Hindu women's status and position is evaluated and found that they were treated as servants of husband and victims of male supremacy in society. This work is vital for this thesis specifically as far as chapter 4 is concerned which is entirely dedicated to this devadasi culture in Orissa.

Painting culture of Orissa is very old. Since Pre historic period painting has been an important aspect of its social and cultural life. During eighteenth century palm leaf became the vital source of writing and painting. *“Illustrated Palm Leaf Manuscripts of Orissa”* by Dinanath Pathy, is a renowned work on seventeenth and

eighteenth century painting. In this book, Pathy has analysed the time period of palm leaf paintings and the themes and features of these paintings. Eighteenth century painting works such as *Bidagdha Natak*, *Ushaabhilasa*, *Gitagovinda*, *Ragachitra*, etc. are analysed and described with original palm leaf folios which gives rich knowledge about women's position and status of the period. Pictographic representations of stories are the prominent aspect of the medieval palm leaf painting. Even eighteenth century literature like Chitrakavya Bandothaya of UpendraBhanja is having pictures and drawing images. Pathy's analysis of the illustrated palm leaf works of the eighteenth century provides ideas to make out a frame work to investigate the status and position of eighteenth century Oriya women. Women were treated as beautiful and enjoyable objects in the medieval literature. This book contributes unbiased fact to analyze their status in the society. This book is like a mirror for the study of the status of eighteenth century women through the contemporary painting.

"Mural Paintings in Orissa" written by Dinanath Pathy is a unique work on mural paintings of medieval and late medieval Orissa. He has tried to bring out the painting history of Orissa through this book. Eighteenth century paintings which are still in visible condition but it is difficult for lay men to identify the characters and pictures on the walls of the temples or mathas. Pathy has given examples of eighteenth centuries paintings and describes its features and characteristics. Mural paintings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are the primary subjects of this work. Besides, Pathy has analysed some medieval paintings of the Andhra region which was once under the sway of Gajapatis. He has given details of Orissan paintings in these regions. Mural paintings in the southern part of Orissa like Buguda paintings are significant in its style and technique. Pathy has analysed the unmistakably. For the study of women in eighteenth century Orissa, this book is helpful and essential source for further research. Though the themes of these murals are based on Mahabharat and Ramayan but the Oriya culture and traditions are reflected through it. The marriage of Rama and Sita or different scenes of Ramayana and Mahabharata are illustrated through a touch of Oriya culture. Recasting Oriya women through murals of Orissa is a difficult task due to its nature, however paintings as archaeological evidences plays greater role for the

reconstruction of women's history. This book is one of them, which provides ideas to explore the picture of Oriya women of the period.

Nayak in *women in Orissa* has analyzed Oriya women's position in history. From the beginning of Kalinga war to twentieth century she has done a marvellous analysis on Oriya women's status and position in Orissa history. Not only history, even she has been provided information about Oriya women who are occupied some places in Purana and Epics.⁴⁰

According to an oral tradition in coastal Orissa, the main cause of conquest of Kalinga by Ashok was believed to be his infatuation for Karuvaki, a girl of rare beauty whom the prince of the Kalinga was married. When Ashok invaded Kalinga, the king and prince of Kalinga fought the war and were defeated. Karuvaki fought against Magadha army and was defeated and taken away as a captive to Magadha by emperor Ashok. Karuvaki the mother of Trivir was known to be the second queen of Ashok and had an edict in her name.⁴¹ But many historians reject this tradition as baseless. However, the legend of Karuvaki indicates that the women of Kalinga during ancient and medieval period were trained in martial art and able to fight against their enemies.

Nayak also gives emphasize on eighteenth century's Oriya women and their activities.⁴² Nayak throws some light on folk tales, folklores like lullabies, nursery rhymes, marriage songs, sorrow songs of festivities etc. which have been passed over orally by the women generation from that period to present day. Authorship of the many songs have identified by the historians.⁴³

Kumudin Barai has written a book name '*Role of Women in History of Orissa*'. This book is comprehensive and critical study on the women of Orissa and it reflects lucid picture of women from the earliest time to 1568 A. D. Though this book has touched up to sixteenth century but a framework on Oriya women's position in the society can be drawn from her work. Barai also gives some general ideas to study the History of Oriya women and placing them into history.⁴⁴

In the arena of socio- cultural and religious history, Utpala Nayak has also done a significant study on Oriya women in history from ancient period to modern

period. She provides vivid pictures of women society through her work “*Women’s Development and Social Conflicts*”. Nayak’s analysis of Oriya women’s position and status in the society provides valuable information on eighteenth century women. Elite class women as well as lower class women have occupied equal position in her books. Although her book has focused on vast area of study from ancient to modern but information on eighteenth century women helped a lot for further study on Oriya women.⁴⁵

The Bhumakaras and their Time, by Biswarup Das is an influential work on Oriya women and their history. Bhumakaras who has occupied a prominent place in Orissa history also witnessed the emergence of great women rulers who had ruled over a large part of Orissa during nineteenth and tenth centuries. Even seven women had been ruled out of the eighteenth rulers of Bhaumkara dynasty in Tosali (8th -10th century). Not only political background Bhumakara women also played vital role in administration as well as socio-religious life of the people. They had granted lands and engraved temples etc. Das also has given some glimpses on common women’s position and status in the society.⁴⁶

L. N. Rout presents the socio-economic condition of people during Muslim rule in Orissa. Position of women and their role in the society, religious and social customs, superstitions and other activities has been described by the author. Economic life of Orissa mainly was based on agriculture though industry was not less flourished as it had great importance in Oriya economic scenario. People of this state had established trade relations with south east countries i.e. Java, Sumatra, Malab, Bali, Indonesia, etc. During Afghan period, Europeans⁴⁷ established their trade centres in different parts of Orissa such as at Baleswar, Pipli etc.⁴⁸

Design of Thesis:

The present work has been divided into six chapters. Chapter-1, is the “**Introduction**” that describes the eighteenth century debates of India and Orissa in briefly. It also describes why women’s history is important and how to reconstruct women’s history which has been neglected by patriarchal forces. Apart from that this chapter also

depicts about the various sources which have been helped us to reconstruct a historical image of Oriya women of eighteenth century Orissa. Research questions, methodology for the research work, significance of the study and review of related literatures are the major sub chapters of this chapter and thesis.

Chapter- 2 titled “**Political and Socio-economic Condition of Eighteenth Century Orissa**” focuses on eighteenth century political and socio-economic history of the period. Eighteenth century Orissa witnessed the political anarchy. The whole period faced the war and conflict between Mughals and Marathas. Marathas occupied Orissa and ruled till 1803 when British conquered it. In another section, various aspects of the Orissan social structure and economic background have been analysed. It also described the position of women and their education, marriage system, and various customs which deprived her from the basic rights of life.

The Chapter-3 titled “**Representation of Women in Eighteenth Century Oriya Literature**” is a core chapter of this thesis. Oriya literature which originates during fifteenth century from Sarala Das’s Oriya Mahabharat Produced a rich culture of Oriya literature in Later stage. Eighteenth century which is considered as a period of dark age in Orissa’s political history achieved great success in the field of Oriya literature. *Lavanyavati*, *Kotibrahmandsundari*, *Kanchikaveri*, *Premasudhanidhi*, *Subhadraparinaya*, *samantaranga*, *Baidehibialash*, *PrastabChintamani*, *Chaturabinoda* etc. are the major works of the period. Most of the eighteenth century Oriya literatures are women oriented. Women are portrayed as major characters of the works. Hence we have succeeded to represent Oriya women status and position by analysing eighteenth century Oriya literature.

Chapter -4 titled “**Marginalized women in eighteenth century Orissa: Devadasis**” analyses the status of women from lower strata. Eighteenth century literatures and travel accounts of the period provides information on women of marginal group and lower class. They are depicted as aboriginal women, prostitutes, out caste women (in Hindu caste fold) etc. Therefore, through this thesis we attempt to construct a framework of marginalized women especially on female servants of the Jagannath temple who were being marginalised by religious customs

and social biasness, and political changes in Orissa. Even these god's wives and their activities are neglected in historical records as well as historical study.

Chapter -5 titled **“Women in Eighteenth Century Painting of Orissa: Representation and Reflection”** focuses on the women's status and position through the contemporary paintings. By analysing these paintings of the period a picture of the women's representation in the society is visible and understandable. Their reflection through the paintings especially palm leaf paintings of the eighteenth century Orissa give a clear ideas about the women's role in the society. Religious philosophy was the core subject of the painting culture of medieval Orissa, however secular literature also occupied important place in the palm leaf manuscript illustrations of the period. Mural painting of the same period is also analysed from historical perspectives. It reflects the socio cultural and religious life style of the Oriya women.

The sixth chapter titled **“Conclusion”** of this research makes a critical assessment about the role and function of women in eighteenth century Oriya society as has been depicted in the aforementioned Oriya literature, painting, travel account and art-architecture. The last chapter conclusion brings an understanding and characterising women and their social role as described and viewed by the contemporary writers and summarises the various chapters.

References:

¹ Kumkum Roy, ed. *Women in Early Indian Society*, New Delhi: Monahar Publisher and Distributers, 2001, 11.

² Om Prakash, Trade and Politics in Eighteenth Century Bengal, in *Eighteenth Century in India*, ed. Seema Alvi, New Delhi: Oxford University press, 2002, 137.

³ Seema Alvi, Introduction, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian*, ed. Seema Alvi, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002, 37-38.

⁴ C.A. Bayly, Epilogue to the Indian Edition, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian*, ed. Seema Alvi, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002, 188.

⁵ Ibid., 191

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Frank Perline, The Problem of the Eighteenth century, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, ed. P.J. Marshal, New Delhi: Oxford University press, 2003, 55.

⁸ Burton Stein, Eighteenth Century India: Another view, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, ed. P. J. Marshal, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003, 64.

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Burton Stein, Eighteenth Century India: Another view, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, ed. P. J. Marshal, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003, 66-67.

-
- ¹¹ David Washbrook, a Cambridge scholar wrote on eighteenth century India. His paper is 'The Emergency of Provincial Politics: The Madras Presidency, 1870-1920' also describes about the early colonial India and trade and commercial activities etc.
- ¹² Burton Stein, Eighteenth Century India: Another view, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, ed. P. J. Marshal, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003, 67-69.
- ¹³ M. Athar Ali, Recent Theories of Eighteenth Century India, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, ed. P. J. Marshal, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003, 93.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., 94.
- ¹⁵ Ibid., 95-96.
- ¹⁶ Irfan Habib, The Eighteenth Century in Indian Economic History, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, ed. P. J. Marshal, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003, 108.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., 109.
- ²⁰ P. J. Marshal, Introduction, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003, 34.
- ²¹ Ibid., 35.
- ²² N. K. Sahu, P. K. Mishra, and J. K. Sahu, *History of Orissa*, Cuttack: Nalanda, 1980, 256.
- ²³ Ibid., 259-260.
- ²⁴ Ibid., 266.
- ²⁵ A. S. Alteker, *The position of Women in Hindu Civilization*, Delhi: Mitilal Banarasidas, 1959, 355-360.
- ²⁶ Maitry Krishnaraj, *Writing Women' history or Writing Women into History*, in *History and Gender*, ed. K. K. Saha, 2005, 35-3
- ²⁷ Vivien Jones, ed., *Women in the Eighteenth century: Construction of Femininity*, London: Routledge, 1990
- ²⁸ Gerda Lerner, 'Placing Women in History: Definition and Challenges', *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1/ 2, 1975, 7.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 6.
- ³⁰ Bhimbhetka Cave painting which is a multi culture painting site of pre history periods portrays images of social life like hunting scene, baby born scene, death scene and rituals for it, plants, animals of different kind, hunting tools, women with baby in arm, women in hunting scene, etc.
- ³¹ Maitry Krishnaraj, *Writing Women' history or Writing Women into History*, in *History and Gender*, ed. K. K. Saha, 2005.
- ³² Sue Aarmitage, *Why Women's History?*
<http://www.washingtonhistory.org/files/library/WhyWomensHistory.pdf>. Assessed on 19.09.2013, 1.
- ³³ Gerda Lerner, Placing Women in History: Definition and Challenges, *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 3, No. ½, Autumn 1975, 5.
- ³⁴ Myra Pollack Sadker, *Why women History?* <http://www.nwhp.org/aboutnwhp/National> Women History Project or NWHP, assessed on 19.09.2013
- ³⁵ Motte, Thomas. " A Narrative of a journey to the Diamond Mines at Sambalpur in the Province of Orissa", ed. P Acharya, *OHRJ*, Vol. I, No. 3, October, 1952, 1- 49
- ³⁶ Bruton, W. (1961), *Account of Cuttack and Puri*, Orissa Historical and Research Journal, V-X, No-3, 50
- ³⁷ Lipipuspa Nayak trans. *Chatur Vinod*, (*grassroot.com*,); Brajanatha Badajena, *Chatur Vinod* (18th century), (Bhubaneswar: O. S. M.,)
- ³⁸ Upendra Bhanja (18th century), *Kotibrahmanda Sundari*, ed. Krushna C. Behera, (Cuttack: Friends Publishers, 1993), 171.
- ³⁹ Purusottam Das, *Kanchi Kaveri* (18th Cent. Oriya), ed. B Mohanty, Cuttack, 1953.
- ⁴⁰ Gitanjali Nayak, 'Women in Orissa', in *Comprehensive History and Culture of Orissa*, 2 (1568-1994), ed. J. K. Samal, 2 (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 494
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² Gitanjali Nayak . "women in Orissa", in *Comprehensive History and Culture of Orissa*, (1568-1994), ed J. K. Samal, 2, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 497.
- ⁴³ Ibid,

⁴⁴ Kumudin Barai, *Role of Women in the History of Orissa*, Calcutta: Panti Pustak, 1994

⁴⁵ Utpala Nayak, '*Women's Development and Social Conflicts: Historical perspectives on Indian Women (study in Orissa)*', (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999).

⁴⁶ Biswarupa Das, *The Bhuma-karas and their Time*, New Delhi: Oriental Publishers and Distributors, 1978

⁴⁷ Dutch, Portuguese, English, Danes, French and Ostand of Austria.

⁴⁸ L. N. Raut, "*Socio-economic life in Medieval Orissa 1568 – 1751: Orissa Study Project*, Culcutta: Panti Pustak, 1988.

Chapter – II

Political, Social and Economic Condition of Eighteenth Century

Orissa

Eighteenth century India witnessed the decline of centralised politics and emergence of new regional political powers. The period though brought with it various social and economic changes but political changes were more prominent and decisive in nature. Death of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb resulted in the decline of the Mughal Empire and the successive Mughal emperors could not protect their political unity. The massive political structure created by the Mughal rulers through Mansabdari, and Jagirdari systems had been able to sustain the Mughal administration for nearly two centuries. However, after the death of Aurangzeb, this structure went into disarray and the bureaucracy became more powerful due to the incapable rulers at the centre. This resulted into the disintegration of the central government and contributed to the growth of regional autonomous politics.

Later, eighteenth century India witnessed a clear and direct clash between two groups of power different in political consciousness, legal conceptions and economic structure. On the one hand there were the Europeans (represented by the Dutch, English, French, and Portuguese) and on the other hand there were the indigenous autonomous rulers trying to achieve an all India character. The Europeans struggling for dominating the Indian trade had a superior genius for organizing political work which the Indian leaders did not possess.¹

Feudalism which was the dominant and silent feature of the medieval society patronized by rulers, land lords, chieftains, Zamindars etc. for their economic as well as political interest now stood strong and declared their separation from Mughal state. Awadh, Hyderabad, Bengal, Mysore declared their separation from Mughal Empire. In 1739 Nadir Saha invaded Mughal Empire and totally destroyed the capital. Marathas, basically the Peshwa emerged as a strong military power during this period. Even the Peshwa attacked Mughal territories and levied taxes on them. Provinces like Gujurat and Malwa also came under the Poona administration. In 1738, the Peshwa defeated Niazam-ul-Mulk, the Subedar of the Deccan at Bhopal² that demonstrated

Marathas power and supremacy in the political sphere. Before 1750 it seemed that the Marathas were the real political ruler over the Muslim ruler of India.

The Feudal features of the Indian society always stood against the unitary administration. Indian feudal lords fought with each other for self benefit and interest. Even they were taking help from European powers to topple their opponents. The Battle of Plassey of 1757 established the British as a strong political power in India. The Battle of Buxar of 1764 laid the foundation of British rule in India. Though a triangle war ensued among the English, French and Maratha for some period, ultimately the British became the sole political power in India. In south India, Mysore gave a strong challenge not only to Marathas but also to the British power. Initially Hyder Ali stood strong against English and the breaking of the Maratha confederacy frustrated Hydera Ali. Then his son Tipu Sultan also gave a strong challenge to the British. However, the political diplomacy of the British isolated Mysore from other rulers. The Nizam of Hyderabad, Peshwa and the Raja of Tanjor became the easy prey of the English diplomacy. After 1757, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa came under their superiority, and then North India also followed some time after Buxar war.³ Tipu Sultan fought for long but could not succeed and was defeated. Then like Tanjor, Carnatic was annexed to the Madras presidency. By the end of eighteenth century, British established its authority in south India.

Political History of Orissa

Pre-eighteenth century Orissa:

Orissa was more famous with the name of Kalinga and Utkal in ancient and medieval times. It is known by different names throughout history.⁴ However, the history of Orissa has remained more or less oblivious in spite of her glorious past. (The significance of the inscriptions of Asoka in the context of the epoch making Kalinga war or the Hatigumpha inscription in relation to Kharavela or of the countless architectural edifices which are since scattered over Orissa in the background of their respective times, stands diminished in the general darkness that pervades the whole range of ancient history.)

During medieval period when the entire sub-continent was under the Islamic rule, Orissa succeeded in retaining her identity as a Hindu state. The year 1568 is regarded as the split line between the glorious period of Orissa history and the gloomy times that fell thereafter. Orissa had maintained her political vitality intact for centuries with many powerful rulers and had in the process developed a distinct identity of her own. She had been hugely successful in achieving milestones in the field of art, architecture, religion, philosophy and literature. She had been able to not only maintain her independence but register an all round increase in political strength at a time when the entire nation had given up in its fight to the Islamic rule.

Orissa's political strength was spectacular till as late as 15th century A.D., during the rule of Kapilendradeva of Solar dynasty (1435-1466 A.D.). The Oriya armies threatened and attacked the most powerful kingdoms in the neighboring regions as well as in the far south and established political supremacy over a vast territory outside the limits of geographical Orissa. Kapilendradeva ruled from Ganges in the north-east upto Kaveri in the south.⁵ His successors Purushottamdeva and Prataprudradeva, though not very powerful, retained their hold over an extensive territory, and during the rule of the latter from 1497 A.D. to 1541 A.D. His kingdom extended from the Hooghly and Midnapur districts of West Bengal to the Guntur district of Tamil Nadu.

End of the Hindu rule in Orissa:

It was not until the year 1451, that the Afghans turned their attention towards Orissa and their power did not fairly extend over any part of the province till about the middle of the 16th century. Towards the close of that century the Afghans took possession and Orissa passed into the hand of Afghan power in Bengal. The Hindu rule in Orissa ended when Suleiman Karrani of Bengal annexed Orissa to Bengal in 1568 A.D. taking advantage of the death of Mukunda Deva, the last Hindu king of Orissa. Orissa was the last Hindu kingdom conquered by the Muslims. Thus in 1568 A.D., Orissa's independence ended and an era of political subjugation began.⁶

Tradition prevailing in Orissa gives us a different story regarding the Afghan conquest. It is said that Mukunda Dev fought a pitched battle with the Afghans at Gohiritikri, four miles to the south-east of Jajpur and was defeated and killed. In the

*Madala Panji*⁷, it is stated that Orissa was invaded by two different armies of Bengal, one of which fought against Mukunda Deva on the bank of the Ganges and the other proceeded under Bayazid and Kalapahar towards his capital at Cuttack. Mukunda Deva bravely fought with the Afghan army but was ultimately forced to take refuge in the fort of Katisami, which has been identified with Katsimul on the western bank of the river Damodar in the Hugly district of Bengal. The other army under Bayazid reached Cuttack. Kani Samanta Simhar who commanded Orissan army was killed. Ramchandra Bhanj, the commander of Saranga Garh, revolted during this troubled period. After coming to terms with the invader, he rushed to Cuttack to suppress the rebellion. But in the battle that followed, Ramchandra Bhanj killed Mukunda Deva. Ramchandra in turn was killed by the invaders on the same day. Thus, Orissa passed into the hands of the Afghans of Bengal 1568.⁸

Foundation of Muslim Rule in Orissa:

Afghans: With the victory of Karrani, Orissa came under the rule of the Afghans. But the new rulers could not establish their authority in an effective manner. In areas that were inaccessible, the local chiefs declared themselves independent. Suleiman Karrani died in 1572 leading to a downfall of the Afghan rule. His son and successor Bayazid was murdered in no time and Daud Karrani, his younger brother ascended the throne as the ruler of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The Afghan occupied Orissa for 24 years from 1568 to 1592 A. D. But they neither could bring any change in the administration or push its power or have any root in the soil except perhaps collecting revenue and even that could not collect from all parts of Orissa that they occupied.⁹

Though the Afghan rulers of Bengal had earlier acknowledged the suzerainty of the Mughals, Daud Karrani assumed the role of an independent sovereign thus defying Akbar. This led to the inevitable conflict between the Mughals and the Afghans in which Orissa became an arena for their battles. With the Mughal victory in Bengal, the Afghan forces withdrew into Orissa to fight for their survival. Although Mughal supremacy was established in Bengal, the Afghans remained firm in Orissa. So Akbar sent Raja Todar mal with some other Amirs towards Orissa in order to overthrow Daud. Two armies came face to face on the plain of Tukaroi, six miles west from Jaleswar on the banks of river Suvernakha. The battle took place on 3

March 1575. This battle was one of great significance for the Mughals. It inflicted a crushing blow on the Afghans power in Orissa.¹⁰ But it could not root them out. Thus Akbar's General, Raja Mansingh proceeded to Orissa to destroy the Afghan resistance. The operation continued from 1590 to 1595 resulting in the complete defeat of the Afghans. Orissa thus was acquired for the Mughal Empire and was governed as a part of the Bengal Subah for some time.

Mughal rule (1592-1751):

In order to regain his independence Daud raised rebellion in Orissa, but the imperial army captured Daud and beheaded him and his head was sent to the Emperor Akbar. After the fall of Daud, Orissa was annexed to Akbar's empire and tagged to the Mughal province of Bengal for administrative purposes. Till the end of Akbar's reign, Raja Mansingh governed Orissa as the Subedar of Bengal. He is considered the best political administrator in Mughal Orissa.¹¹ At the commencement of Jahangir's reign, Orissa was separated from the Suba of Bengal.¹² In 1606, Hasim Khan was appointed as the governor of Orissa. Mohammad Bagar Khan was the Mughal Governor of Orissa at the time of Sahajahan's accession to the Mughal Empire. Bagar Khan imprisoned and tortured the Zamindars of Orissa. Once, at his cruel order 1700 prisoners were killed. One prisoner escaped and reported Bagar Khan's cruelty to Emperor Shahjahan. Consequently Shahjahan recalled him. From 1639 to 1660 Shah Shuja, the second son of Shahjahan was the Subedar of Bengal. From 1642 onwards, Orissa was governed by Shah Shuja through his deputy.¹³ Evidence shows that Shah Jahan took more interest in the administration of Orissa by instructing the governors to come in intimate contact with the people to redress their grievances.¹⁴ During the reign of Shahjahan, the English merchants came to Orissa. They got Parwana from the Mughal governor to carry on trade in Orissa. They established their factory at Peepli, Balasore and at Harriharpura. Emperor Shahjahan took keen interest in the administration of Orissa.¹⁵

In 1658 Aurangzeb emerged successful in the war of succession. In the following year, the Mughal general Ihtisham Khan was sent to Orissa to restore the Mughal authority by suppressing rebellious activities. Then Khan-i-Durana was appointed as the governor of Orissa by an Imperial Farman in 1660.¹⁶ The last Subedar of Orissa during the reign of Aurangzeb was Murshid-Quli-Khan. An

outstanding feature of the Mughal rule in Orissa during the reign of Aurangzeb was the destruction of temples. In 1669, he ordered the destruction of new temples and prohibited the repairments of the old ones. In 1692, Aurangzeb gave an order for the destruction of Jagannath temple. The order was not actually carried out, but the temple was kept closed till the death of Aurangzeb.¹⁷

Mughal-Maratha conflict over Orissa:

After the death of Aurangzeb, the hold of the central Mughal authority over the Suba became weak and the provincial officials started acting independently. During the period of disintegration of the Empire, Murshid-Quli-Khan was appointed as the Subedar of Orissa in 1714. In 1717 he was made the Subedar of Bengal and Orissa. During the rule of Murshid-Quli-Khan, the Chakala district of Midnapur which was so far a part of Orissa was included in Bengal Suba.¹⁸ Orissa came under Alivardi Khan in 1741 and he subdued all his enemies and established his absolute authority on the length and breadth of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.¹⁹ Meanwhile, Alivardi Khan found it difficult to maintain his hold over Orissa because of the frequent invasion of Orissa by the Maratha chief, Raghuji Bhonsle of Nagpur.

The weakness of Nawab's administration in Orissa encouraged the Maratha chief to invade it. The first Maratha invasion of Orissa was undertaken by Bhaskar Pandit, the prime minister of Raghuji Bhonsle in 1742. The Maratha plundered Panchat, Midnapore, Burdwan and Balasore and then being defeated by Alivardi's army at Katwa, they marched towards Cuttack and occupied it. But Alivardi Khan soon mobilised his troops and drove the Maratha's away from Orissa in 1743. Raghuji Bhonsle invaded Orissa and then Bengal with a view to compelling the Nawab of Bengal to pay Chauth to the Marathas. The Maratha forces seized Cuttack and marched as far east as Katwah to exert pressure to the Nawab of Bengal for recognizing their right to collect Chauth. In 1744, Alivardi Khan treacherously murdered Bhaskar Pandit, the commander of Marathas. After the treacherous murder of Bhaskar Pandit, Raghuji Bhonsle invaded Bengal and Orissa for the fourth time in 1745.²⁰ After an indecisive battle near the Mehib Alipore, Alivardi Khan defeated the Maratha forces.²¹

End of the Muslim Rule:

When Alivardi Khan was the Nawab of Bengal, frequent invasion of Maratha's took place. By this time he was an old man of seventy five suffering from physical ailment and infirmity. He was not in a mood to fight any longer. The treaty that was finally signed between the Maratha chief of Nagpur and Alivardi Khan in May-June 1751, paved the way for Maratha supremacy in Orissa. Thus Muslim rule in Orissa ended in 1751.²²

Maratha Rule:

According to the British administrator-historian, A.Stirling, the Maratha rule was detrimental to the welfare of the people of Orissa. The British administrators and historians have presented the Maratha rule in Orissa in darker colour in order to provide justification to the British rule in Orissa. B.C. Roy has shown that 52 years of Maratha rule in Orissa witnessed administrative reorganisation, economic progress and cultural regeneration.

In 1751 Marathas established their power in Orissa. After the formal session of Alivardi Khan, Orissa formed a Subedari of the Maratha Government under the Bhonsle chief of Nagpur. There were nine Subedars appointed in Orissa during the Maratha rule. Mir Habib was the first Subedar in Orissa.²³ After him Mirza Saleh was appointed as the governor of Orissa and he became more friendly and faithful to the British. The British established a residency at Cuttack with the approval of Mirza Saleh.²⁴ Then Sheo Bhatt Sathe was appointed as the first Maratha Subedar of Orissa by the Raja of Nagpur. He held this post from 1760-1764. Bhawani Pandit ruled Orissa from 1764-1768. He suppressed the rebellion of Zamindars. Sambhaji Ganesh (1768-1770) and then Rajram Pandit and Babuji Naik (1771-1773) had ruled for some time in Orissa.

Rajaram pandit was a man of bravery and sound judgment became the Subedar of Orissa in 1778 and ruled up to 1792. He defeated the Raja Birakishordeva of Khurda and imposed on him a tribute of sicca rupee 10,000 to be paid annually.²⁵ Sadasiva Rao was the last Maratha Subedar in Orissa and ruled for more than 10 years from 1793 to 1803 in Orissa. He often allowed British troops to march from Bengal to Madras through Orissa. He suppressed the hostile activities of some border Rajas of

Orissa against the British. He also allowed the British to use Barbati area in Balasore for the purpose of their factory.²⁶ Although Sadasiva Rao was quite friendly to the British, he raised his voice against such activities of the British which would hamper the legitimate interests of the Maratha Government. He protested against the undue British interference. At the time of the British occupation of Orissa, Sadasiva Rao was away from Orissa.²⁷

Under the Maratha, Orissa was divided into two political units namely the Gadjat area and the Mughal Bandi area part. The Gadjat part was entirely barren, full of rocks and forest and very thinly populated whereas the Mughal Bandi part was plain and fertile having thick population. The Garjat division was mainly held by a number of tributary chieftains and Mughalbandi was under the direct administration of the Marathas.²⁸ The Maratha Government was always in favour of the active cooperation among the tributary chiefs. But those chiefs who were often irregular in payment of tributes were treated with cruelty. The Marathas deliberately avoided interfering in the internal administration of the chieftains unless they were compelled to do so due to unavoidable reasons. The general character of Maratha rule in Orissa was military. Contemporary English writers described the Marathas as unscrupulous mercenaries as Orissa was, for them a place of military assault and plunder.

On the 3rd of August 1803, the M. Wellesley wrote to Lieutenant colonel Campbell, commanding the northern division of the army furnishing orders for the occupation of the province of Cuttack. The British army arrived at the town of Cuttack on 10th October and on 14th, the fort of Barbati fell by assault and the town was immediately occupied by the British troops.²⁹ The English then rushed forward and attacked the Maratha fort which stood on the site of the salt Gola and soon took possession of it. The Marathas appear to have made a faint resistance and quickly disappeared. The date of the capture of Balasore is 21st September, 1803.³⁰ Thus, Orissa came under British rule after a period of continuous warfare and political turmoil in 1803. Colonel Harcourt drove the Marathas from Puri. Colonel Fergusson and Harcourt jointly raided on Katak. The forts of Kanika, Kujanga and Harishpur were captured.³¹ Colonel Broughton captured Sambalpur on 2nd January 1804.³²

According to R. D. Banarjee, the British conquest of Orissa in 1803 was a premeditated event, because Orissa lay between the British provinces of Madras and

Bengal. It is true that after the fall of Tipu Sultan in 1799 strategic value of Orissa had diminished considerably in the eyes of the English East India Company.

But Motte (Clive's agent) describes that he carefully launched Clive's proposal to purchase Orissa for the English East India Company.³³

Mughalbandi and Garajat Administration:

The Marathas divided Orissa into two broad political divisions: the Mughalbandi and the Garhjat.

The *Mughalbandi*, comprised of the coastal districts and was divided into 150 *Parganas* and placed under 32 Revenue Commissioners or *Amils*. Each *Pargana* was divided into several *Mahalas*. For a systematic and better collection of revenue, hereditary revenue collectors titled as *Talukdars*, *Kanungos* and *Chaudhuris* were appointed. Attempts were also made to collect the revenue directly from the *raiyyats* or through the village headmen. The administration paid attention to the welfare of the peasants in particular.

The *Garhjr* region covered the hill tracts of Orissa and was allowed to be ruled by 24 tributary chiefs, who paid tributes to the Maratha Government. The chiefs were bound by engagements that permitted their autonomy. They administered their respective areas, maintained their forces and enjoyed autonomy by status, but side by side, they had to respect the Maratha Raja of Nagpur as their overlord. Against possible rebellions from their side, the Marathas maintained a big force at Cuttack. The Maratha relation with the Orissa chiefs was more effective and purposeful than that of the Mughals.

Thus the state of Orissa had seen many political upheavals since fifteenth and sixteenth century A. D. The Hindu rule of Orissa was disintegrated by the Afghan in 16th century who was later suppressed by the Mughals. The Mughals ruled Orissa till 1751 and were removed from power when the Marathas conquered Orissa and ruled till it came under the British rule in 1803. These political instabilities had serious repercussions on various spheres of society. The constant transfer of power from one ruler to another led to the introduction of new administrative systems and replacement of the existing systems. Apart from this, the constant invasions and plunders ravaged

the socio-economic life Orissa. Thus eighteenth century Orissa was marked by political turmoil and constant warfare.

Society in Orissa

Society of Orissa of eighteenth century was based on the principles of Hindu Sastras or systems. People of India were organized into various groups on the basis of caste, creed, religion, and economy. Caste which was a major element of social division during eighteenth century was again divided into sub castes. Even caste varied from locality to other localities. Some titles of caste also are different from each other in different regions or localities. Buchanan says that Brahmans of Smartha sect alone in south India were arrayed into about two thousand classes.³⁴ The caste system played vital role in social classification as well as social occupation. During medieval period it had great effect to decide one's occupation and profession for livelihood.

For the study of the social life of eighteenth century Orissa, the literature of the period is fairly adequate. The contemporary Oriya writers have not faithfully followed the epic texts. Moreover, literature is regarded as the reflection of the society. The poet being a sensitive and a gregarious creature, directly or indirectly portrays the picture of the contemporary society.³⁵ The Hindu law and mythology that had their composition during the heyday of the Guptas, found their outlet in Orissa. The law of Manu which was held as an authority during the Gupta Age began to regulate the society of Orissa. As a result of Hinduization, many tribal elements came within its orbit.

Eighteenth century is historically significant because Orissa under the Muslim and Maratha administration was exposed to new ideas and new cultures. We find the influx of new population like the Muslims, Marathas and Europeans into the Oriya society. During this period, Orissa could not remain away from the mainstream India's political, socio-economy and religious life. The Mughal and Maratha occupation threw Orissa in the flood gates of transition. The Hindu constituted the majority in the society and Varnashram Dharma was the basis of social stratification.

Four Varnas of societies: The eighteenth century Oriya society was divided into four castes viz- Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. The Sudras were generally excluded from the orbit of Aryan Varna system. The upper three castes were further divided into many sub-castes. The first three classes- Brahmana, Kshatriya and Vaisya were regarded as Dwijas or twice-born.³⁶ Among them, the Brahmin's enjoyed a very high position in the society and they performed duties both religious and secular. The Kshatriyas performed various administrative and military duties. The Khandayat and Karana were two other important social groups who also enjoyed many privileges entering into the charmed circle of administration and held positions nearly equal to the Kshatriyas. Within the social structure, in the next, came a large number of occupational groups. They were agriculturists, artisans and traders.

The status of the Sudras was lowest in the society as they performed duties which were unclean according to the Aryan standard. "They were sudras of impure birth, performing social duties which subjected them to constant defilement. They were condemned to permanent social degradation denied elementary civic rights and rigidly excluded from all public places, even the neighbourhood of caste Hindus".³⁷ They were not allowed to use public wells, temples, ponds, fair fields etc. Dubois says that in Indian states a pariah for his audacity to enter a Brahmin's house might possibly be murdered on the spot.³⁸ Even prostitutes and slaves of lower class and caste were not selected for high class house hold work. It was only European who patronized them.

The aboriginal tribes of Orissa remained out of the so-called Hindu social system.³⁹ The concept of these Varnas assumes some distinctive characteristics like status by birth, hierarchical ordering of social unit, the operation of the rule of endogamy and ritual purity. Obviously, it points a rigid social system.⁴⁰ During this period Muslim community who were preaching brotherhood through their religion affected and also followed Hindu social principle of caste in their community.

The Muslim Population: The Islam people who settled down in Orissa constituted a small group. The Islam society manifested a twofold division like those of the foreign extraction and those of the Indian origin. The Muslims of foreign extraction known as Ashrafs claimed superior over the Muslim of Indian origin because of their link with Arabia, Persia, Turkestan etc. They seemed to be the most privileged caste in the

society. The introduction of European community into the medieval society of Orissa was a significant event. The Hindus gradually accommodated the new comers viz the Islam people and the Europeans who became integral parts of Orissan society. The absence of racial conflicts exhibits better social understanding of the people belonging to various segments.⁴¹

Christians: During the eighteenth century, Europeans who already had established their residence in the coastal regions of India as well as in Orissa prefer to marry Indian women basically from lower class society. In 1784 it was estimated that 700 Eurasian were annually born in Madras and on the Coromondal coast alone.⁴² In 1794 it was estimated that number of Europeans in the company's army in India was about 13500.⁴³ Along with it French, Dutch and Portuguese had their settlements in the coastal regions of India and Orissa. Apart from that due to the missionary activity, Indian Christians basically from lower class and caste people converted from traditional religion to Christianity rose numerously but in later period it was decreased. Though many travellers' gives hint about Oriya wife and concubine of foreigners but the genuine information have to come through proper study of settlements and life of foreigners during the above said period.

Harmony: The marvel of the religious history of Medieval Orissa lies in the fact that there was harmony and understanding between the two communities. The occasional Afghan and Mughal raids, oppressive measures of some fanatic Subedars, the temple destruction order by Aurangzeb etc. may be treated as exceptions rather than the general rule in Orissa. The Hindu Muslim co-existence resulted in the origin and growth of popular festival called *Satyapir Puja* (*in this festival both Hindu and Muslim worshiped a god who belonged to both communities like 'satya' and 'pir'*) . *Duessehra, Diwali, Muharram, Id, Rakhi* and *Satyapir Puja* were some of the festive occasions where both the Hindus and Muslims participated freely. The striking feature of the history of Medieval Orissa under the Muslim rule was the absence of communal conflict and riot.⁴⁴ The Maratha administration did not disturb the religious life of the people and also introduced a well managed system in the temple of Lord Jagannath.

Religion: The Oriya Hindu population generally followed the old forms and practices of religious worship. The two ancient cults of Shiva and Vishnu with many

of their sub-cults which sprang of in course of time had their followers spread over the country. Apart from that Jagannath cult was the main important form of spiritualism in the land of Orissa and Bengal. In Orissa, Jagannath is considered as the State God and God of the Universe (Kulke, 1993). The Kings of Medieval period were ruling on behalf of Jagannath. The Gajapatis were the great devotees of Jagannath. The book Kanchi Kaveri of Purushottam Das depicts the grace of Jagannath in winning the battle by King Purushottam Deva over Kanchi.⁴⁵ Jagannath is considered as an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Emphasis on rituals and ceremonies, degeneration and undue influence of the priesthood specially at important centres of pilgrimage viz: Puri and Bhubaneswar, growing worship of a large numbers of popular God including Grama Devata or Devi (Village deities) were also some other features of Orissan religious life in the eighteenth century. This is what led some of the contemporary European writers to reckon the number of Hindu Gods and Goddesses more than thirty crores.⁴⁶

Family: Family consisted of not only father, mother, son, daughter but also distant relatives and relations also. Features of family in the Oriya society mostly based on religious background. Respect to elders of the family is essential. Living jointly or under one roof was a major feature of Oriya society. Women were taking care of all family members. From infant to elderly all were depended on women. Dubois says that Hindu family was an ideal family, the Hindu parents of all caste and above all, mothers' were not equalled by any people on the earth in tenderness towards their progeny and attachment to the family tie.⁴⁷ Though women were respected within the boundary of private affair but indeed they were exploited in the name of grihalaxmi. Again the birth of girl child was considered inauspicious in the Oriya society.

Oriya family life is full of ceremonies. Most of the ceremonies were religious in nature because eighteenth century was an era of religion. For religion, people could sacrifice their life without any hesitation. For example, during the time of Ratha Yatra many devotees preferred to die under the wheels of Ratha of Lord Jagannath. There were numbers of ceremonies in family such as birth rituals, giving child's name or namakaran, celebration for girl's first puberty, upanayan in high caste families, rituals for baby's first rice feeding or arnaprasan, starting education etc. Marriage in Oriya society is continued upto eight days and various rituals followed during these days. Marriage was an great occasion for amusement in the family. The whole family and

relatives and distant relatives gathered in this occasion and celebrated in a joyful mood. On the other hand the success of family life always depended on head of old matron like mother-in-law or mother in general. With the good management and care this headship transferred to daughter-in-law of the family. The sustainment of a joint family always depended on the quality of management and good leadership.

Slave system: Extensive references to the gift, sale and purchase of slaves lead us to surmise that they played an important role in the socio-economic life. The European traders especially the Portuguese encouraged trade in slaves for their commercial benefit and poor people were found to have been victims of this. Slaves in Indian families were not ordinarily subjected to harsh treatment. They were allowed to marry and to have family of their own. Slaves are treated as the children of the families to which they belong and often they enjoyed the liberty.⁴⁸

Festivals: Festivals and religious ceremonies formed an important aspect of socio-religious life of the people. Orissa celebrates thirty festivals in twelve months of a year. Among them, *Raja Parva* (worship to earth), *Ratha Yatra*, *Dola Purnima* (Holi), *Diwali*, *Akshya Tritiya*, *Nua Khai* (a harvesting festival in western Orissa), *Rakhi Purnima* (Rakshya bandhana), *Mana Basa* (Worship to Goddess Lakshmi), *Pana Sankranti* (worshipping God Hanuman and Other Goddesses), *Chandan Yatra* (a festival of lord jagannath), *Sabitri Brata* (a festival to worship God of Death, Yama for long life of husband by married women), *Sitala Sasti* (a marriage festival of Lord Shiva and Parvati), *Sudasa Brata* (worshipping Laxmi as goddess of wealth), *Khudurukuni Osa* (young girls worshipping goddess Mangala), *Bhudei Osa* (worshipping goddess Budhibaman), *Srikrushna Janmastami*, *Sasti Osa* (worshipping goddess Shasti Devi to protect children from illness and diseases), *Radhastami*, *Ganesh Chaturthi*, *Durgapuja*, *Dutia Osa* (observed by married women), *Kumar Purnima* (young girl worship early full-moon for a young and prosperous groom and happiness in life) *Jahni Osa* (worshipped by children to Brundavati Devi to protect them illness and disease), *Kalipuja* and *Deepavali*, *Kartika Brata* (widow and common people observed it for mukti and virtue), *Prathamaastami* (worship god for elder child of parent because eldest child is to manage the household affair), *Obata sa* (Women worshiped goddess Mongala to protect their husbands and other relatives who have gone to abroad), *Jagara* or *Shivaratri* etc.

Food and drinks: From the lists of the different food preparations one can well surmise the excellence of Orissan cuisine. The diet of the medieval people of Orissa, as known from the contemporary accounts, was more or less the same as today. As rice was the major crop, it was the staple food of the people. The *Dal* was prepared out of pulses like *Mung*, *Biri* and *Harada*. Milk, Ghee, butter, cheese and curd were also popular articles of food. They were also fond of non-vegetarian food like fish, meat etc. On days of religious celebration there was restriction on taking non-vegetarian items. In break-fast *bhuja*, *chuda*, parched rice called *mudhi*, *pitha* or cold rice called *pakhala* were famous. Even Oriya house-wives know 108 types of curry and 1008 cakes.⁴⁹ Orissa was famous for the production of varieties of fruits and vegetables during this time. The fruits like *banana*, *mango*, *orange*, *jack-fruit* etc. were very commonly eaten.⁵⁰

Drinking wine was not absent in Orissa. Water of green coconut was a popular drink. Chewing pan fell within the fascination of both men and women. More particularly, for women it was an item of lip decoration. It was also offered to the guests as a way of showing courtesy. Orissa's contact with Muslims and European brought forth certain changes in the food habits of the people. Food items viz. *Jilabi*, *Chhapati*, *Pulao*, *Biriyani* etc. which became popular in the medieval period was introduced by the Muslims in Orissa. The vegetables like potato and papaya used in Orissa were brought by the Portuguese. So the medieval period witnessed many changes in the food and drinks of the people in Orissa.⁵¹

Inter dining among the different castes was considered as sin. Basically high caste Hindu people were not participating in dinning with lower caste Hindu people. The food touched by lower caste people was considered as impure. Even today in Orissa inter dinning is prohibited though some changes taking place in urban area. In rural and countryside this custom is followed till today. In 1770 in Bengal there was a great famine. Many Hindu high caste people unable to resist the appetite ate food from impure hands and lost caste.⁵² Oriya and Bengali Brahmans were strict with regards to sudra and untouchables. During voyage time the Hindu high caste soldiers strictly followed the principles of purity and did not eat food prepared or touched by lower caste Hindu employee on board. They preferred to be hungry and go on voluntary fast.⁵³

Amusement: The People enjoyed their leisure time by taking recourse into many kinds of recreations. Their principal out -door games consisted of *Vana Vihar* (hunting), *nauka vihar*(water spotsa), *Jhimani khel* (dodo or kabadi) etc. they had several popular indoor games like *pasha khel* (dice play), playing cards and cowries, *Malla yudha* (wrestling), *Khkada khel*, *kite flying* etc. Dramatic performances like *Ramalila*, *Krishna lila*, *Hari lila*, *Kela- Keluni*⁵⁴ dance etc were also very popular during this period. Visits to periodical fairs and pilgrimages on festive occasions also provided the people delight and enjoyment.⁵⁵

Dress and ornaments: According to the social status and position of the people in the society, the use of dress-ornaments varied. The common man's clothing consisted of *Dhoti* and *Chadar*. Women generally wear *Sari* and jacket (*Kanchala*). The rich and well-to-do wore costly garments and Muslim society used shirt (*Gamis*), trousers, court, *Takia Gaba Lungi*, *Juma*, *Pi-jama*, *Rumal* etc. the dress used by the *Palakars* (bardic people) were of Mughal types. Even the impact of Muslim customs on the Raja's and Zamindars of Medieval Orissa seems to be significant. Nose ornaments used by Muslim women became important for Oriya women also and wearing *lungi* (used by male person) which was also a Muslim custom deeply influenced the Oriya culture.

Literature: During the eighteenth century Sanskrit and Oriya literature were greatly enriched. A number of Sanskrit and Oriya scholars and poets flourished during this period. Among them kaviraj Bhagaban Ratha author of *Mrugaya Chanydu*, Nilakantha Mishra author of *Bhanja Mohaday Kavyam* Narahari Panda's commentaries, Brajanatha Badjena author of *Chatur Vinod* and *Samar Tarnga*, Upendra Bhanja author of *Lavanyavati*, *Premasudhanidhi*, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, *Baidehishabilasa* etc, and Bhakta Charan Das author of *Kapatpasa*, Purusottam Das aauthor of *Kanchi-Kaveri*, Abhimanyu Samanta Sinhar author of *Bidagdha-chintamani*, Kabi Surya Badeva Rath author of *Kishor Chandranan Champu* etc. were most famous of that time.

Education: During the eighteenth century the love of learning had exercised a powerful influence both in the Hindu and Muslim society. But the idea of Indian education was cultural and not literacy vocational education according to one's Varna and family tradition assured specialization. Both the Hindu and Muslim system of

education was linked with learning and religion. During this period, Orissa was a reputed centre of Sanskrit learning. There were also several institutions for the education of the Arabic and Persian language. Since Persian was the court language which was learnt both by Hindus and Muslims. The elementary education was wide spread in Orissa. The Hindu elementary schools were known as *Pathshalas*, *Chatsali* (Village schools) and Muslim schools were called the *Madrassah* and *Maktabas*.

These schools were usually attached to the temples, *Mathas* (Monasteries) and the Mosques. The rich and well-to-do people granted land and money for the maintenance of those institutions. The Government often patronised such institutions, by way of granting stipend and *Madad-i-Masah* lands for their maintenance.⁵⁶ Apart from the academic education, the students were also provided with moral education emphasizing the truth, honesty, obedience to the parents and faith in religion. Though education was mainly popular among the higher classes, yet education was not denied to the children belonging to the lower stratum. Female education was not very popular and it was confined to the aristocratic class within their homes. *Devadasi* system might have extended the scope of education to the women recruits of the order, in the public arena, but they had hardly any knowledge in branches of learning other than dancing, singing and music.⁵⁷ Girl's received elementary education with boys in village schools. They attended school with *phalakam* (slates) and presumably the daughters of rich peoples were sometimes accompanied by slaves who carried their slate and stylus.⁵⁸ But higher education was imparted to them by tutors at home. However it can be said without shadow of doubt that female education was confined to the upper class of the society.⁵⁹

In general, social history of eighteenth century Orissa can be projected as complex and caste ridden. Brahmanical principles and Vedic rituals circumscribed all kinds of social and cultural life style of Oriya people. Untouchability, discrimination towards women folk, superstitions and evil customs and traditions existed in the society. Religion played a vital role in every aspects of the medieval Oriya society. Education was not well progressed and was limited to the elite class people. Poverty and rigid social laws made the situation more complex. Hence, we can say that social life of eighteenth century Orissa had suffered from gender discrimination, caste system, exploitations, blind beliefs, and evil traditions.

Economic History of Orissa

Eighteenth century which was a period of political anarchy for Orissa witnessed the instability in politics and this had an impact on economic condition of Orissa. Mughals who were ruling since 1568 could not control the economic as well as political stability in the land. Orissa which was enjoying economic prosperity in the Indian trade map lost all its credit under the Mughal and Maratha administrations. Marathas who captured Orissa in 1751 did not show any interest for the welfare of people, because their main goal was to extract revenues.⁶⁰

Industry: Though agriculture formed the main occupation of the people, it appears that industry was also existed during this period. The people were highly skilled. Among various types of industries, textile industry was most important. There were large numbers of crafts involving the employment of a good number of artisans and craftsman. Production of essential commodities by them adequately met the local needs. The various industries and crafts like textiles, boat and ship-building, jewellery, iron works, metal works, wood works and stone works were in flourishing condition. (Oil, Liquor and perfume were produced in the cottage industries).⁶¹ The presence of numerous ruins of old temples with exquisite sculpture leaves no doubt to the existence of a large number of masons and sculptors.

The rise of powerful merchant classes helped in the production of such articles which were in great demand. Even certain products of Orissa like silk and cotton clothes were sold in large quantities in foreign countries. Even for export purpose cotton from Nagpur was imported in lieu of salt on barter systems.⁶² Orissa's industrial products attracted the attention of European merchants who established their trading settlements in coastal Orissa during the eighteenth century. Not only that, the manufacturers supplied the necessary as well as the luxury articles for internal consumption but their surplus products could be exported to different parts of India and world. With her surplus products agricultural as well as industrial, Orissa could carry on internal and external trade. As testified by the European travellers of medieval Orissa, in the *Hats* or the periodical markets, trade was carried on in commodities like in rice, pulses, oil, butter, milk, ghee, fruits, clothes and other

necessaries of life in abundance. Both the system of barter and currency were in vogue. The commercial activities were intensified with the coming of host of European traders belonging to different nations and rise of merchant entrepreneurs at regional level.

European settlement and trade: The European traders like Dutch, English, Danes, French and the Ostanders (Austrians) erected factories at Harrihar pura, Peepli, Balasore, Cuttack which developed into important commercial centres.⁶³ Bruton also gives information that English and French had factory at Baleswara.⁶⁴ Baleswar a coastal districts and port town of Orissa played important role in Orissan economy. There were numbers of ports were functioning over the eighty five miles of coastal belt of Orissa. Pipil, Putom, Bibli or Shabhandear of Subrnrekha River, Sartha, Chhanua, Laichanpur, Churamani, Dhamra and Chandbali were major ports of Orissa. Since fifteenth century these ports being played vital role for Orissan trade and commerce.⁶⁵ During eighteenth century these ports were standing high in trade activities but in later period except Dhamra all started declining.

External trade: Orissa's inter-provincial trade relation did encompass places like Hooghly, Patna, Masulipatnam, Vizagpatam, Pulicat and Madras. There were also commercial contacts with some places of Kerala and North India. In the spheres of external trade Orissa was linked with Persia, Maldives, Malaysia, Burma, Ceylon, Java, Sumatra, Indonesia, Bali, China and England in Europe.⁶⁶ The ships were arriving at the Pipili, Kanika, Harishpur, and Puri during this time. Bruton who visited Orissa in eighteenth cenury found the sea sometimes to be rough causing damage to the ships that anchored there.⁶⁷ The chief commodities for which the merchants of different agencies traded in Orissa were textile products of various kinds, rice, turmeric, ginger, butter, iron, sugar, pepper, sandal-wood, salt- petre etc. Lead, quick silver, vermilion, tobacco, spices, various luxury articles and bullion were articles of import into Orissa. Internal trade must have been carried on by transporting merchandise in carts or on the backs of packed animal. Exchange of products was mainly affected through the system of barter. This period witnessed the development of local manufacturers and an improvement in the economic condition.

Agriculture: In Orissa, where land was fertile and rain was abundant, agriculture naturally remained the primary occupation of the people. The people produced a large

variety of crops like, rice, wheat, barley, pulses, cotton, oil-seeds, silk and tusser. A good variety of green vegetables and fruits were grown in Orissa. The peasant also learnt to grow new crops like tobacco, new vegetables like potato, papaya and new fruits like *kamaranga*, pine-apple, and cashew-nut.

The people of Orissa were subjected to various kinds of taxes and duties during the Mughal and Maratha period. The income of the Government came mainly from the land revenue. As the records revealed about Rs 900000 per annum was collected as pilgrimage tax during Mughal period.⁶⁸ During Maratha period the Government collected pilgrimage tax from 2 to 5 lakhs of rupees per annum.⁶⁹ The gross collection of the land revenue of Orissa on the basis of the average of twelve years collection has been estimated to be about 13,90,000 rupees under the Maratha rule.⁷⁰ During the Mughal period, the land revenue normally varied between Rs. 34, 00,000 to Rs. 56, 00,000 per annum.

The natural corollary was that the producer as well as the indigenous merchant had to be content with small profits. With the participation of the European traders, particularly the English in Orissa, though the volume of trade increased, the local merchants could not compete with them. This resulted in a gradual booster to Orissan traders from a flourishing overseas trade and also shifting of profits from their hands to the Europeans.

On the whole it can be said that people generally led a life of simplicity. Since their wants were limited, they were economically self-sufficient. Only feudal chiefs, local officers and local merchants had a luxury living.

In contrast to the general economic picture of eighteenth century India, the regional economic condition of Orissa was sound. Orissa had a flourishing industrial trade and was also agriculturally sufficient. Orissa had internal trade relations with Hoogly, Musalipatnam, south and north Indian business centres, ports etc. and external trade with Java, Bali, Sumatra, Malaysia, and Burma etc. The participation of Europeans like English, French, and Dutch in trading activities boosted the economic growth of Orissa during this time. It is also true that the constant warfare and political disintegrations might have had an impact on the economy of state and decline of it also started in this period. However, the general economic picture of eighteenth century Orissa was in a state of soundness.

In the whole, political, social and economical condition of Orissa during 18th century witnessed various changes due to the political conflicts between the Mughals and the Marathas. Mughals, who ruled Orissa since Akbar's regime in Delhi lost its say over Orissa after the death of Aurangzeb. Then Marathas captured power till 1803 when British established its Raj in Orissa. Rulers of Orissa basically from Khurda region were incapable to protect Orissa from invaders. This political instability also directly and indirectly affected the social as well as the economic condition of eighteenth century. Various changes were taking place due to the Mughal and Maratha administration in Orissa. Oriya people adopted Mughal culture and traditions in their social life. Writing on paper, foods, dress, brotherhood, property right for women etc. influenced deeply to the Oriya people. Economically Orissa was considered a prosperous state but after the decline of Hindu rule [in 1568], she lost her past glory. Mughals, and then Marathas who ruled Orissa had the aim to extract more and more revenue. They did not look after the welfare of the people or progress of agriculture. Hence we can say that eighteenth century political, social and economical condition of Orissa witnessed political anarchy, social changes and economic decline.

References:

-
- ¹ V.P.S. Raghuvansi, '*Indian Society in the Eighteenth Century*', New Delhi: Association Publishing House, 1969, 2.
- ² Ibid., 1.
- ³ Ibid 3
- ⁴ Orissa also known as '*Odra Desa*' from which the name Orissa originated. Her other names are *Toshali, Odra, Kosala. Kongoda, Trikalinga*, etc.
- ⁵ Bhavani M. Das, Muslim Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 1.
- ⁶ William F. B. Lauries, *Orissa, the garden of superstition and idolatry etc*, (Calcutta: R. N. Bhattacharya, 2000), 21.
- ⁷ Temple chronicle of Jagannath, Puri. It has been considered as an important source for Orissa history, W. W. Hunter and many scholars have written their works on the basis of this chronicle. It provides information from ancient period upto 16th century Orissa. Jagannath Temple, lord Jagannath and various rituals and kings of Orissa are the main subjects of this chronicle.
- ⁸ Bhavani M. Das, Muslim Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 3.
- ⁹ B. C. Ray, *Orissa under the Mughal*, (Calcutta: Panti Pustak, 1981), 182.
- ¹⁰ Bhavani M. Das, Muslim Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 4.
- ¹¹ B. C. Ray, *Orissa Under the Mughal*, (Calcutta: Panti Pustak, 1981), 182.

-
- ¹² *Ibid.*; Bhavani M. Das, Muslim Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 6.
- ¹³ Bhavani M. Das, Muslim Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 6-8.
- ¹⁴ B. C. Ray, *Orissa under the Mughal*, (Calcutta: Panti Pustak, 1981), 183.
- ¹⁵ Bhavani M. Das, Muslim Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 8.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁹ Monmoth Padhy, Maratha Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 17.
- ²⁰ Bhavani M. Das, Muslim Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 11.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 11-12.
- ²² *Ibid.*, 12.
- ²³ Monmoth Padhy, Maratha Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 18-19.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 20-21.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 21-22.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.
- ²⁹ William F. B. Lauries, *Orissa, the Garden of Superstition and Idolatry etc*, (Calcutta: R. N. Bhattacharya, 2000), 55.
- ³⁰ W.W. Hunter, *History of Orissa*, ed., N. K. Sahoo, (New Delhi: Bharatiya Publishing House, 1980), 314-15.
- ³¹ R. D. Banarjee, *The History of Orissa*. 2 (Calcutta: R Chattarjee, 1931), 265-266.
- ³² *Ibid.*, 207.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, 150.
- ³⁴ P. V. S. Raghuvamsi, *Indian Society in the Eighteenth Century*, (New Delhi: Associate Publishing House), 1969), 31;
- ³⁵ Baba Mishra, *Medieval Orissa and Cult of Jagannatha*, (New Delhi: Navaranga, 1995), 134.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, 135.
- ³⁷ P. V. S. Raghuvansi, *Indian Society in the Eighteenth Century*, (New Delhi: Associate Publishing House, 1969), 52; J. A. Duboise, *Letters on the State of Christianity*, (New Delhi: Asian Education Service, 1995), 8-16, 66-80.
- ³⁸ J. A. Duboise, *Letters on the State of Christianity*, (New Delhi: Asian Education Service, 1995), 52.
- ³⁹ L. N. Rout, Socio-economic Life and European Settlements in Orissa during the Muslim rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 460.
- ⁴⁰ Baba Mishra, *Medieval Orissa and cult of Jagannath*, (New Delhi: Navaranga, 1995), 134.
- ⁴¹ Laxmi Narayana Rout, Socio-economic Life and European Settlements in Orissa during the Muslim rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 461.
- ⁴² J. A. Duboise, *Letters on the State of Christianity*, (New Delhi: Asian Education Service, 1995), 175-76; P. V. S. Raghuvansi, *Indian Society in the Eighteenth Century*, (New Delhi: Associate Publishing House, 1969), 35.
- ⁴³ P. V. S. Raghuvansi, *Indian Society in the Eighteenth Century*, (New Delhi: Associate Publishing House, 1969), 35.

-
- ⁴⁴ Laxmi Narayana Rout, Socio-economic Life and European Settlements in Orissa during the Muslim rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 464.
- ⁴⁵ Purusottam Das's, *Kanchi-kaveri*, written in 18th century, describes about the lord Jagannath's role on the victory of Gajapati Purusottam Dev (16th century) over Kanchi, a south Indian kingdom and oriya king married princess Padmavati after defeating the king of south.
- ⁴⁶ Robert M. Martin, *Historical documents of eastern India*, (Montegom: 1990), 65.
- ⁴⁷ J. A. Duboise, *Letters on the State of Christianity*, (New Delhi: Asian Education Service, 1995), 200-203.
- ⁴⁸ O'Malley, *History of Bengal Bihar and Orissa*, (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1925), 359.
- ⁴⁹ B. B. Jena, *Orissa: People, Culture and Polity*, (New Delhi: Kalyani Publishers, 1980), 175.
- ⁵⁰ Laxmi Narayana Rout, Socio-economic Life and European Settlements in Orissa during the Muslim rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 461.
- ⁵¹ Ibid.
- ⁵² P. V. S. Raghuvanshi, *Indian Society in the Eighteenth Century*, (New Delhi: Associate Publishing House, 1969), 57.
- ⁵³ Ibid., 59.
- ⁵⁴ *Kela* – a male nomadic person (tribal people from Orissa) and *keluni* – a female nomadic or wife of *kela*.
- ⁵⁵ L. N. Rout, *Socio economic life in medieval Orissa, (1568-1751)*, (Calcutta: Punt Pustak, 1988), 216-218.
- ⁵⁶ Laxmi Narayana Rout, Socio-economic Life and European Settlements in Orissa during the Muslim rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 464.
- ⁵⁷ Baba Mishra, *Medieval Orissa and cult of Jagannath*, (New Delhi: Navaranga, 1925), 166.
- ⁵⁸ Utpala Nayak, *Women's Development and Social Conflicts: Historical perspectives on Indian Women* (study on Orissa), (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999), 46.
- ⁵⁹ M. Das, *Oriya Sahityar Itihasa*, (Cuttack: Friends Publication, 1987), 143-149..
- ⁶⁰ P. K. Pattnaik, *A Forgotten Chapter of Orissan History: with special reference to the Raja of Khurda and Puri (1568-1828)*, (Calcutta: Punt Pustak, 1979), 101.
- ⁶¹ O'Malley, *Bengal District Gazetter (Baleswar)*, (Calcutta: 1098), 80.
- ⁶² H. C. Ponda, Baleswar Port in the Nineteenth Century, *OHRJ*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1&2, 32-33.
- ⁶³ Laxmi Narayana Rout, Socio-economic Life and European Settlements in Orissa during the Muslim rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 467.
- ⁶⁴ William Bruton, Account of Cuttack and Puri, *Orissa Historical Research Journal*, X, No. 3:1961, 48.; R. D. Banarjee, *History of Orissa*, (Calcutta: R. Chatarjee, 1931), II, 154.
- ⁶⁵ H. C. Ponda, Baleswar Port in the Nineteenth Century, *OHRJ*, Vol. XXVIII, No. I & II, 30
- ⁶⁶ P. K. Pattnaik, *A Forgotten Chapter of Orissan History: with special reference to the Raja of Khurda and Puri (1568-1828)*, (Calcutta: Punt Pustak, 1979), 101; C. D. Mohaptra, *Utkala Itihasara Eka Agyanta Adhyaya*, 187.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ⁶⁸ Laxmi Narayana Rout, Socio-economic Life and European Settlements in Orissa during the Muslim rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 465..
- ⁶⁹ Monmoth Padhy, (2008), Maratha Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 25.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid.

Chapter-III

Representation of Women in Eighteenth Century Oriya Literature

Eighteenth century Orissa had witnessed the emergence of a new genre of literature famously known as *Riti* literature. Riti style writing of Sanskrit school of poetics had great influence on Oriya literature in that period. The riti schools in Sanskrit literature provided the inspiration for the development of riti school in Oriya literature.¹ This period replaced religious or bhakti theme by romantic or sringar rasa theme of the Oriya literature. This riti yuga achieved tremendous success due to the emergence of great scholars such as Dhannjaya Bhanja, Upendra Bhanja, Abhimanyu Samantasimhar and others. Eighteenth century was the most successful period of this literature because Kabisamrat (king of poetry/kavya wirings) Upendra Bhanja wrote number of remarkable works like Kotibrahmandasundari, Baidehisavilash, Premasudhanidhi, Lavanyavati etc. Even this riti period in Oriya literature, also known as Bhanja Literature or Bhanja era. Upendra Bhanja was extra Ordinary poet and scholar who used alankars and rhetorical usage conveyed multiple meanings to each and every stanza by different juxtaposition of words.² Woman characters received primary importance in this type of literature. Many literary works of the period were named after the women characters such as *Baidehishavilash*, *Lavanyavati*, *Sasirekha*, *Rasikaharabali*, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, *Premasudhanidhi* etc. Women played the central role in *kavya*, *kavita*, and *purana*. Women from high class or elite women were given much importance in this literature. Mostly, women, belonging to royal family, feudal lords and Zamindars family were the central characters of these literary works. Lives of the common women were rarely depicted. This was probably due to the feudal nature of the society that characterized the socio-political and economic life of eighteenth century Orissa.

During eighteenth century, Orissa was divided into tiny feudal states and *desiya rajyaas* and feudal lords were ruling in their respective regions. Mughals and Marathas were the central ruling powers of the period. Their life style, court and palace traditions had influenced these small chieftains, lords, kings who were blindly following them.

Common people (like farmers, small businessmen, petty trader, workers and untouchable people) who formed the majority of the society could not enjoy their freedom. Poets and scholars belonging to the lower classes were patronized by the kings and local rajas. They were reluctant to draw the picture of the common man in the society and life and society outside the palace. Beyond the royal society, they could write and reflect on nothing. Scholars and writers who are supposed to be the social reformers and intellectuals to protest against the irrational activities of the society actually did nothing of this sort in order to be patronized by the Kings and feudal lords. The chiefs and lords also did not want to see any protest and riots against them; thus they immediately extended their hands to patronizing scholars and diverted them into royal court. Therefore, the poets of eighteenth century mostly have depicted the status and position of elite women in the Oriya society.³ On the other hand, life and society in Medieval Orissa was deeply influenced by religion. From high class to low class, all were slaves of religion and their respective gods and goddesses. Thus the scholars and writers of the period were not out of this culture, and their works mostly portrayed the picture of religion such as *Subhadraparinaya*, *Bidagdhachintamani*, *Dardhyata Bhakti*, *Rasakallola* etc. there are very less numbers of secular works produced during this time.

Eighteenth century Oriya literature perceived women as a commodity to be enjoyed with. The literary descriptions of women characters basically concentrated on two aspects i.e. their beauty and sexuality. The sexual expressions of the poets give a hint to the readers as if the women are born in the society only to satisfy sexual desire of the men. Beyond this, they have nothing worthy to perform in the society. The poets of this period perceived women nothing more than a sex slave. In every field of life, they were granted a position of lowness. Though some poets depicted them as respected members of the society but indeed she was not. Women enjoyed some equality with men in case of religious rituals and public spheres. On other hand she was tortured and exploited by the imposition of various restrictions as well as creating and sustaining various traditions against Oriya women. Contemporary Oriya literary works have portrayed about these practices and life styles women. By analyzing these literary works we can make a framework of women's status and position in the eighteenth century Orissa. We can discuss these patriarchal traditions and custom in the following ways:

Puberty Tradition for Women:

Women were married off in early age, even before puberty in eighteenth century Orissa. But many cases mostly from elite class society women also married after puberty. We have many examples about this tradition of pre-puberty marriage and post pre-puberty marriage. There are numbers of books of the period which describe about this tradition. However most of the people were following and preferring pre-puberty marriage due to many factors. Common people were and people from lower strata they were practicing this tradition and they had a fear that grown up girl might choose a wrong path or lose her virginity before marriage which was a very important part of a women's life in Medieval Orissa. They followed the Hindu Sastras which describes that if a girl get her first puberty in parents home then the father of girl will go to hell or is committing sin. Same time the issue of social security and safety for women was concern subject for poor and lower class people. Thus pre-puberty marriage was common practice during eighteenth century Orissa. There are numbers of books which are depicting about this tradition and patriarchal relation with this system.

In *premasudhanidhi* it has been described elaborately.⁴ In this kavya, the leading character princess of Keraladesh Premasudhanidhi's marriage organized before she attained her puberty. After some days of her marriage she got her puberty. The first puberty of a girl in Orissa was celebrated with various rituals and considered as a sacred achievement of girl's life. Before puberty a married girl was not allowed to lead her conjugal life. In *Premasudhanidhi* also same thing happened. Newly married couple was not allowed to live together.⁵ After puberty ceremony of Premasudhanidhi, she was advised many things by her friends, elder persons, sakhis like how to behave with husbands and others. Shame should be a part of life. A woman should always surrender herself to her husband and should not oppose her husband in any work. Even a wife's dressing, make up, attires should be suitable for husband.⁶ Husband is like Parameswar, so a wife should be obedient towards him and act like a follower of husband. Even in the conjugal life a wife did not have any wish or right to oppose the sexual desire of the husband. Women or wives in medieval Orissa were playing a role of Dasi or slave.

Though the system of feudalism was prevalent during the period but women were the main victims of this system.

Kotibrahmandasundari of Upendra Bhanja, is an eighteenth century literary work. In this work also poet gives an elaborate depiction on puberty and its importance in the life of a girl as well as society. The main character of this work is *Kotibrahmandasundari*. When she became young and got her first puberty, the whole kingdom celebrated it as days of rituals, rites, singing song, and music. There were numbers of restrictions on puberty girls. Till the rituals to be over, she has to stay inside a secret room called andheripura. Then she was worshiped and made pure by priests and chants.⁷

In rituals, first the puberty girl had to stay seven days in a special room with restrictions. Mostly these seven days tradition was only limited to elite class society, common people only arranged the rituals and probably seven days tradition was not followed by them.⁸ Rituals like blessing her for producing quality offspring's were performed as she is eligible to produce children for family. The blind beliefs were very rampant in Oriya society. Women who were unable to produce children were stigmatized and considered inauspicious for the society. Again giving birth only to girl children was treated as a crime and the women were cursed to go to hell. When a girl attends puberty she was considered as impure and to be purified with chants and various rituals. For seven days, a puberty girl should not touch mother earth due to her state of impureness. After seven days of rituals along with seven candles and chants she was allowed to walk on earth.⁹ In canto 3 of *Lavanyavati* it has been described clearly that Premasila (a female servant) informed to the mother queen about Lavanyavati's puberty and arranged rituals for it. They prepared a stage with various items like raw coconut, new clothes, flowers etc. and Lavanyavati sat on the stage and women worshiped her with great joy.¹⁰

A young girl becomes the centre of attraction when she gets her first puberty for family members as well as villagers. She was worshiped like mother goddess due to her reproductive quality.

In *Sasirekha* kavya heroine Sasirekha is the princess of Induvatipura on the bank of Sindhu River. She is the daughter of king Bhadrasena and queen Priyavati. Once young Sasirekha slept with sakhis she realized something happening with her body. Then she got up and went alone to her room and saw her clothes with blood. In canto -7, Poet Srichandan describes this moment of Sasirekha with Ornamental words.¹¹

When her servants and caretakers knew this matter they immediately informed to queen and to king. The king arranged all kinds' ritual to celebrate this event of first puberty of princess. The king called astrologers to see the day, time, second to calculate her puberty date is auspicious or not. In this literary work, it is also observed and recorded the exact date, time, minute of Sasirekha's puberty and the priest and astrologer had to examine whether it is auspicious or not for the girl as well as the family.¹² Astrology or jyotish sastra played a vital role during this period. It is the Jyotish who sanctioned or attested the good or bad image of the girl based on her puberty. Even in the case of marriage they had important role in matching horoscope of both the girl and boy. In many cases the social and religious life of people more or less depended upon the jyotish and the priest class. Their words were words of gods. This important section of the society completely male driven probably was maintaining and nurturing patriarchal biasness towards women. Rites, rituals, traditions and customs were all constructed for her not for male class. If husband dies, she had to perform sati, or become widow and maintain celibacy. If wife keeps extramarital affair then she had to stay away from family as well as village or society. If a woman was raped or abducted then she had to become a prostitute. In early age if her husband died she could not marry second time but if a wife dies a husband could marry many times even at age of fifty/sixty. All these laws and regulations were only for women not for men. Why there were discriminations when both male and female have equal rights according to the nature? It is true that nature has created all with equal rights but this was the male society who holds and created many institutions to impose its hegemony and arrogant male ideology on the other sex to dominate and enjoy a dictatorial position in the society.

Sasirekha kavya has given a vivid description on the rituals of puberty. with great joy and happiness servants organized all kind of rituals for puberty girl.¹³ In canto seven of this kavya it has been depicted beautifully.¹⁴ For seven days various rituals were performed for new puberty girl Sasirekha. Seven candles or dipas around her lighted and worshiped for seven days as goddess. After seven days rituals puberty girl took early birth and her used cloths were taken away by one of her sakhi to dispose or through into rivers probably for some auspicious reason. In this way ritual for first puberty girl were performed during medieval and eighteenth century Orissa.

However, the male dominated society worshiped a puberty girl only for her reproductive and fertility capability nothing else. The importance of women increased when she achieved puberty because it indicates her fertility quality. But the same women if she was unable to give birth to a son or children the same society which worshiped her for seven days with dipa and flowers started neglecting and torturing. It is irony to say that the medieval behavior towards women even today also we are following. We worship women as goddess Laxmi, Kali, Durga, Sita, Saraswati and at the same time we tortured them in the name of male ego, traditions and customs, religious glory and gender bias. A girl worshiped due to her productive quality but if after marriage she was unable to produce a child or gives birth only female child then the whole society criticizes her and the family was ready to torture and abuse her. It indicates that rituals and celebration for women is not for her role in the society but for the need of male society. During eighteenth century, puberty girl was worshiped only for her reproductive quality not for her contribution and performance for social existence. All knew that without women a society could not be imagined, still they were neglected and granted a subordinate status in the medieval Orissan patriarchal society.

Marriage:

Marriage in medieval Hindu Oriya society considered as a sacred and compulsory custom. Even it is regarded that marriage is fixed in heaven means selection and matching of bride and groom is a nominal job on earth. In Oriya society it was also

considered that unmarried man is unholy and incomplete. He was himself a half man and second half was his wife.¹⁵ Marriage was most important event in a girl's life. She had to marry with the choice of parents. No individual choice was there in a groom selection.¹⁶ In *Lavanyavati*, when Princess became young the king of Krnat called his minister and told him to search a groom for princess *Lavanyavati* as early as possible.¹⁷ Marriage was also to take place in same *jati* (caste) and *gotra* (lineage). Character and the skill in household work of the bride were given importance. Marriage outcaste caste and lineage was criticized and disapproved by the society. Even society was taking drastic action against those couple who married outside caste. Sometimes they were driven out from the society and people did not keep any social relations with them. Horoscope also played a vital role in marriage. Matching of horoscope was the integral part of the marriage tradition. It was not possible to arrange marriage without horoscope matching. In canto 28 of *Lavanyavati* there is a discussion on horoscope (*jatak*) between Brahmans and Royal People (like Rituraj and secretary of the king) and they decided that they cannot go against *Jatak*.¹⁸ If there were any mismatches between two horoscopes then marriage was not possible during eighteenth century. But lower class women were enjoying more freedom in the case of marriage and other activities. They were following the traditions of *jatak*, bride selection, dowry, monogamy and child marriage but with less rigidity, unlike upper class society.

Eighteenth century literature gives more importance on monogamy tradition of the society. Wife and husband's relation was based on religious rules and regulations. They were expected to have a good sacred marital life. In *Kotibrahmandasundari*, Upendra Bhanja has portrayed the hero and the heroine as an ideal couple like Rama and Sita of the Ramayana. Poet argues that both husband and wife made for each other and they should not think about other man or woman in their marital life.¹⁹

In royal society women enjoyed some freedoms like choosing her groom. In eighteenth century this system also existed. Though it was not a common tradition of the period but swayambar marriage was ancient customs still had some importance in the royal society. In *Sasirekha kavya*, the king Vadrasena organized swayambar for his

daughter Sasirekha where she will select her groom.²⁰ But in general during medieval times selection of groom was the duty of parent; they would select and arranged all events related to marriage. Daughter had to agree with parent's choice and respected their selection. Even if groom's age was fifty years bride could not say anything against her parent. Women did not have this freedom to raise voice against any kind of injustice made against her.

The marriage which is a sacred institution of the Indian society became a tradition of discrimination and arbitrary in case of women's choice and right to select groom. In Rigvedic time women were enjoying equal rights to select their groom along with other rights like free moving, getting education, taking part in political institutions etc. but this egalitarian nature of the society turned into patriarchy and women lost their freedom and equality. This patriarchal nature of the society confined womenfolk within the boundary of male hegemony and forced them to depend on male for their entire life. This resulted into a superior position to men and a subordinate status to women. Eighteenth century Orissa witnessed the same feature of the patriarchal domination in marriage tradition.

Child Marriage:

Early marriage was a common system in eighteenth Orissa. All literature of the period describes girls were marrying at the age of seven and eight years. They could marry a person who was more than double of their age. Even pre-puberty marriage was preferred more by parents although post puberty marriage was prevalent in the society. According to Prof. Bhagaban Sahu there were mainly two reasons behind this early marriage in the Oriya society. Firstly the people of medieval Orissa were very much superstitious and law abiding. They were guided by the scriptures, samhitas and contemporary literature which laid stress on pre puberty marriages. Religious scriptures written and maintained by high class society or Brahmanas had great influence on the Oriya society. Their words and letters were like god's words and writing. Nobody had courage to disobey their handmade social rule and regulations. Secondly, loss of character means an unmarried girl if lost her virginity before marriage then she was considered as a prostitute and she could not marry further. Society looked at her as an out caste and parent had to suffer from various social discriminations and mental trauma due to the prevailing social laws.²¹

Therefore an unmarried girl must not lose her character or *satitva* before marriage. That is why, parents preferred to get her married before she got her first puberty. And if she attained her first puberty in her husband's house, then she was considered an ideal wife or woman. As a result child marriage was a common tradition in eighteenth century Orissa.

Child marriage was very popular in eighteenth century Orissa because social security and safety of young girl was the primary concern of parents. Literatures like Upendra Bhanja's *Premasudhanidhi*, has given information about this tradition.²² But in *Lavanyavati* Kavya heroine (Lavanyavati) married after her puberty.²³ Mostly rich families could arrange security for their young daughter which was not possible for a poor family. In the case of lower class society, marriageable age of girl's was not fixed. They had their liberal and flexible social policies for the marriage. However, the middle class women suffered.

Widow:

Widow re-marriage was restricted in the medieval society though lower class women were free from this Brahmanical tradition and could remarry after their husband's death. Medieval literature have given information on this tradition and depicted their tragedy and sorrowful life.²⁴ Sarala Das in his *Mahabharat* describes about this system of widowhood. In his work there are numbers of widow characters who were suffering from social taboos. A character named Sriya, wife of Sasikara, a Brahmini was a child widow. She had relation with a merchant and gave birth to a daughter. But she threw her newborn baby outside of the village.²⁵ In another example Sarala *Mahabharat* portrayed a Brahmin widow character who had sex relation with a sudra man and girl baby was born from this relation. But she could not live in the society due to this. She left for the forest and wandered there. In jungle she became mad and threw her baby into pond.²⁶ Even some time widows prefer to die on the funeral pyre of their husband rather than living a life of exploitation.

Balaram Das's (16th C) work *Dandi Ramayan* has placed a character named Tara, wife of Bali and depicted the sorrowful condition of her social life.²⁷ The forced celibacy of widows became a strict social custom in Orissa. All the more pathetic was that they

were regarded as inauspicious or even ominous and responsible for family misfortunes.²⁸ After the death of husband wife become inauspicious for the society. Various restrictions imposed on her and she had to follow some rituals in Hindu religion. White saree, dry hair, isolation and barred life, practicing celibacy and observing strict regulations made their condition more deplorable. However, widow remarriage also existed in the lower society with certain condition and limitations. A young widow could marry a younger brother of husband and if not then she could also marry to other persons.²⁹ But Brahminas, Karanas, and Kshatriyas were not following this system. They were strictly followed widowhood. In Oriya Mahabharat, Kunti's life was great example of Oriya widow's life. Poet Sarala Das in Adiparva has given a clear depiction on this social custom.

Dowry:

During seventeen and eighteen centuries 'dowry' was an honorable custom. Giving dowry to the daughter was considered as a symbol of status. Father of the bride happily presented various kinds of items such as gold, silver, land, elephant, servants, precious items etc. Dowry was not a new custom in eighteenth century. It was also prevalent during fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and it continued in the eighteenth century. Many scholars of those periods mention about dowry in their works. Sarala Das (15th century) in his *Mahabharata* portrays that besides other items, *dasis* or women servants were given to bride in her dowry.³⁰

Dowry was a common custom in medieval Orissa. The literature of the eighteenth century Orissa describes this system of dowry or jautuka as a prominent tradition in the society. Both rich and lower class people were following this tradition. Though for high class society it was a tradition of prestige or status but for lower class people it was a tradition to maintain. In *Premasudhanidhi* kavya there are descriptions of jautuka. After marriage ceremony, bride's parent had to give jautuka to his son-in-law for the betterment of his daughter's life. Apart from this giving Jautuka was a symbol of social status.³¹ During medieval time dowry was considered a system of gift for newly married couple but the definition of jautuka has changed, and became a compulsory part of Oriya marriage system. Jautuka turned into demand in modern Orissa.

Sasirekha another literature of the eighteenth century also gives elaborate explanation on system of dowry. After the marriage of Sasirekha bride and groom spent one night in the bride's home. Then they prepared to go to groom's home. At that time bride's parent presented many items like servants, horse, gold, diamond, and other precious and valuable things as *jautuka*.³²

In *Lavanyavati* *kavya*, when Lavanyavati was going to her husband's house, her father has told his secretary to show all dowry items to Yuvraj Bhanuchandra who expresses his happiness by seeing those items which were given in dowry. Gold, silver, pearls, land, elephants, horses, parrots, cows, chariots, *dasis* (female slaves) servants etc. were given in dowry by Lavanyavati's parents.³³ Female servants were presented in dowry in high class Oriya society. Lavanyavati also took hundreds of female Servants in her dowry.³⁴ These female servants or *dasis* dedicated their whole life in service to their master. But they were not forced labourer or bondage labourer. Not only rich but common and poor people were also following this tradition. Even fifteenth and sixteenth century literature describes about this male dominated system in which family of groom demanded money, ornaments, land and other valuable items for newly married couple. Literature like *chaturvinoda*, a eighteenth century work written by Brajanath Badjena divided into four parts as *hasavinoda*, *rasavinoda*, *nitivinoda*, and *priti vinoda* portyaed it elaborately. *Chaturvinoda* like other literary works is not only described about the rich and high class society it has been depicted about the all section of the society. Through his works Badjena tried to give maximum space to women characters played the important role in this work. By analysing the various traditions and women characters of this works we have found many patriarchal traditions for which the women were restricted within the home and living a life of slave.

Chaturvinod which provides ample of information on tradition and various customs prevalent in the eighteenth century Orissa also describes about the dowry system. In the beginning of the work the story starts with a conversation between a prostitute and prince. Prostitute Chanchalaksi went to meet prince Mohananga but due to *gouribrata* [worshipng goddess Parvati with sleepless night] she was not interested to entrtain the prince and she told him to wait till tomorrow. She also proposed a plan to

spend today's night by having a conversation. Then prince agreed and started telling her four stories one by one which known as Hasvinoda, Rasavinoda, Nitivinoda and Pritivinoda,

In the first part of the story there is a kingdom named Kalikat and king was Angadhara. He had a son-in-law named Chandachakra who had a daughter named Bilapmukhi. She is not looking beautiful, due to her ugly looking nobody was interested to marry her though she belonged to a royal family. In the Oriya society looks has a great importance in the society. At the same time the colour of the skin also has same importance in the society. A fair looking girl is the choice of the people. Ugly looking women had to face many obstacles and discrimination. Even an ugly looking man does not shown any interest to marry an ugly looking girl. This tradition of beauty always had been targeting women community only and due to this beauty tradition ugly looking Oriya women had to face humiliation. All the literature of the medieval period dedicated numbers of chapter to describe about beauty of women. These literatures have given importance to a women's beauty first and then talks of the other qualities. Thus historically Oriya society gave great importance to the external beauty of the women rather than internal beauty. For example, Radha, Sita, Laxmi, Sarswati, Parvati, Savitri, Draupadi all women characters look very beautiful. Eighteenth century poet Upendra Bhanja dedicated chapters to depict his heroine's beauty. As a result ugly looking women became a source of amusement for royal people as well as royal poets. Same thing happened in the case of Bilapmukhi. Nobody is interested to marry her and she crossed marriageable age. But at last a ugly looking person agreed and the marriage took place. After marriage some inauspicious incidents happened in the Kelikat kingdom. All the people blamed Bilapmukhi even her father blamed her daughter for these unfortunate matter and order servants arranged to send Bilapmukhi to her husband's home with dowry materials.³⁵

After the marriage Bilapmukhi left for her in-laws house. People of the Kelikat Kingdom became happy and relaxed as a burden has gone. Of course women during medieval period even today also considered as burden of the family or parent but if we will analyze why women were considered like this then we can find that the patriarchal

traditions like dowry made them a burden for the parent. Although in the case of Oriya tribal's they have different customs i.e. bride price means groom has to pay money and other items to bride's family and they are not following this dowry system which is prevailing in the Oriya society.

Sasirekha of Padmanava Srichandan, a remarkable work of eighteenth century. It seems Padmanava had followed the path Upendra Bhanja. His writing style is similar to Bhanja style. Through this work Padmanava has tried to portray a real picture of the eighteenth century Orissa. He was the feudal king of the Banki region of Orissa. There was no need for patrons or to exaggerate in his case of writing. Though *Sasirekha* a romantic kavya and most of the lines dedicated to describing beauty and romance between heroine Sasirekha and her beloved but poet has also given some importance to the social life of a girl. Padmanava describes about the various traditions which were made only for the women to restrict them and subordinate them prevalent in the eighteenth century Orissa. In *Sasirekha* poet has given a clear description on the system of dowry or Joutuka which was a common tradition in the society. After the marriage of Sasirekha her father provided all kind of materials which are needed for a newly married couple. Even slaves and servants are gifted to bride as joutuka.³⁶

Though dowry was a tradition of all classes of Oriya society, lower class people or poor people were suffering more due to this custom. For them giving dowry or fulfilling the demands of groom was difficult. Primarily poor families were struggling for their existence and this system of joutuka used to break their backbone. They considered it as a curse and the girl as a liability. Social security, loss of virginity, marriage before puberty etc. forced them to arrange marriage of girl in their early age. Thus early marriage was taking place. In the whole, analysis due to these traditions related to eighteenth century women had to be as protected and depended and they did not have freedom and right to live life like other sex.

Polygamy:

Eighteenth century literature portrays marital life as sacred and holistic in nature. Monogamy was a common practice of the society. But the royal and rich people adopted polygamy as an indication of their higher social status. Oriya Mahabharat of Sarala Das, a fifteenth century work gives details of polygamy prevalent in Oriya society. High class society and rich people and feudal lords were keeping more than one wives. Even some village headmen and wealthy persons of the village were marrying many times and keeping more than one or two wives. Contemporary literary works criticized this customs and prized monogamy. Upendra Bhanja in his works prized Lord Ram and Devi Sita as an ideal couple. Abhimanyu Samantasimhar depicts the eternal love between Lord Krishna and Devi Radha though extra-marital affairs affected the conjugal life of the women.

During medieval time people from royal class maintain their status by keeping more than one wife. This was considered as a royal tradition to having or marrying many women. Some wealthy and middle class people also followed this system and were keeping many wives as well as sex slaves. In the all parts of Orissa from South to North and West to East this custom of polygamy was prevailing. Apart from literature we have some inscriptions and letters which provides us some information on polygamy. Inscriptions of Chouhan dynasty of Sambalpur,³⁷ and official letter of Midnapur Collector on Bhanja Kingdom of Mayurbhanja,³⁸ and inscription of Bhoi dynasty of Khurda³⁹ are the main sources which are depicted about the system of polygamy in eighteenth century Orissa. In Sasirekha kavya the king Vadrasena the father of Sasirekha having hundreds of wives, among them he had a favorite queen named Sukumola.⁴⁰

In Orissa feudatory rajas and the local zamindars maintained large harem. Marrying more than one was considered as a custom among the kings and zamindars. They could marry as many as seven wives. Apart from this they had *Phulbibhaihi*, *poilies*, *gharjhias*.⁴¹ Phulbibhai was a medieval marriage tradition of Orissa. This type marriage took place only in the royal, rich and high class society. In generally rich people's marriage was taking place with rich or high class family. At the time of marriage bride's father along with his daughter presented another unmarried girl to groom as gift. this

tradition was known as phulbibhaihi. The girl who came with bride as phulbibhaihi gift worked as secondary wife of the bride's husband. In the absence of original wife phulbibhai acted as wife of husband. On other hand in the absence of original heir phulbibhaihi's son could be granted original successor status. However, phulbibhaihi could not live a life of other women, and was suffering from various social stigmatizations and taboos. She was living a life like a slave and did not get the recognition of wife, instead that she was considered as rakhel or poili means one for the sake of husband's sexual enjoyment and in case of successor need she had been kept in the harem. She was living a life of illegitimate wife of husband, though she had given some facilities for her livelihood inside or outside the palace. Phulbibhai girls generally motivated by force or directed by zamindars or land lords to their subordinate servants to arrange phulbibhaihi girl for his daughter. Sometimes the friends of bride who were from middle or low class families were agreed to be her phulbibhaihi. Many times the girl from poor families were interested to be phulbibhaihi but generally a girl from high class and caste along with beautiful looking was preferred for this tradition. It was not followed by all high class and royal class people of the Orissa but some families were practicing this.

Ajita Simha [1742 - 1766 AD] of Chouhan dynasty of Sambalpur had eight queens.⁴² Jayanta Simha [1782-1818 AD] of Chouhan dynasty who ruled in Sambalpur from 1782 to 1818 had three queens named Ratnakumari Devi, Mukta Devi and Rahasya Kumari Devi [daughter of Baghela family].⁴³

Thieffenthaler, a missionary who visited Orissa in 1743 and his records pointed that Last king of Orissa Mukundadeva who showed great good will towards the foreigners had four hundred wives.⁴⁴

A copper plate inscription of Ramachandra Deva II (1721-1736) of Khorda dynasty provides information about polygamy in Orissa. Ramachandra Deva II who had many wives loved a Muslim girl named Souria, daughter of Murshid Quli Khan II and married her by converting himself into Islam religion.⁴⁵

A letter wrote by Midnapur Collector to William Copper, president and member secretary of Board of Revenue. In this letter, the Collector gives details about the royal politics of

Mayurbhanja. After the death of Damodar Bhanja (1760-1796), the king of Mayurbhanja, his queens committed sati and the chief queen or Patarani Sumitra Devi ascended the throne of Mayurbhanja.⁴⁶ And King Damodar had eleven wives and four of them committed sati.⁴⁷ But all eleven queens did not have any natural sons. Hence we can say that polygamy which was prevailing in Orissa as a tradition of elite class and it also affected the other class of the society minimally.

Polygamy had a strong existence in the royal society of the Orissa. We have many traditional examples on this practice. Patarani a title only given to eldest rani while sana patarani to youngest one, and other were simple rani or queen. Like this in Denkanal kingdom eldest queen was known as bada pattamahadei and youngest one was sana pattamahadei and rest were pattamahadei. On other hand, children born from the queens had also some different designation according to their mother's position. In the states of Mayurbhanja, Keonjhar, Nilagiri the eldest son had been given a designation of Tikayat Baboo, second one Chhotrai and third one Routrai and rest were baboo only. In Khorda the eldest son of Pattamahadei was known as jenamani. In Kanika the eldest son of pattamahadei was called Mangaraj while in Kujanga state it was called beerabar.⁴⁸

Purdah:

Purdah was strictly followed by high class and upper caste society in Orissa. By the end of the eighteenth century Orissa women as a matter of rule had become Pardanashini, who invariably had a veil over their face. Particularly women from higher class society in Orissa had considered purdah as a social prestige or social law.⁴⁹ However, during ancient and early medieval time Oriya women had freedom to move without veil. There are lots of examples of women's free movement like women from Bhaumakaras dynasty which ruled over a vast territory for such a long period moved without veil.⁵⁰ Medieval stone architecture and sculpture of the period also have not depicted the veil in the engraved pictures. All women images are clear with open faces. Chousathiyogini temple of ancient Orissa, or Rajarani temple of early medieval Orissa or Konark temple of the period all are contains women figures without veil. Even many women figures on the

wall of Oissan temple showing women were wearing two piece of cloth one is upper cloth and another is lower cloth. Along with an extra cloth in many cases is used over chest of women images. It seems women were wearing cloth over the knee. Saree was there but most of the image adorned with this three piece or two piece cloths. Even the art and architecture of the Kaharavela (2nd century BC) period are also showing that women were not using purdah in public places. A sculpture on the wall of queen cave depicts, women along with male person are playing musical instruments. In another cave sculpture of Khandagiri hill shows a girl fighting with a male counterpart. In some image depicts woman riding war horse etc. In medieval Orissa women in general went to groom's house after marriage inside sitting in a palinki covered from all side. But it was not purdah. Again for marriage rituals bride was taken to merrage mndap by covering face but we can't say this was purdah. These are the customs to avoid elderly and unknown persons. In Oriya Mahabharat, Gandhari has not come in front of Pandu when she came as newly married wife of Dhrutarastra. It was Muslims who came into Orissa and observed purdah in Orissa. Most probably due to the impact of Islam, Hindu women also started maintaining purdah like Muslim women in Orissa. Muslim soldiers and rulers, many times abducted Hindu girls and women into harem. To protect themselves from the Islam rulers and soldiers Hindu women were forced to adopt this practice of Purdah. P. N Ojha argues that the high class Hindu women strictly observed purdah.⁵¹

Literature of the period also mentioned about the practice of veil by Oriya women. But there was a custom to cover face by Oriya women with her Odhani (used by new married girl) and Panata or last portion of the Saree in front of the unknown as well as the elderly persons such as husband's elder brother, son-in law etc. The women were required to avoid their presence before such elderly members of the family. In case they were to pass before the elders, they kept their face covered with a portion of the sari.⁵² But we cannot take it as purdah because it was common custom of Oriya society a newly married girl should cover her face as to show her respect to elder brothers of husband and other unknown male persons. Even a new married girl used to cover her face in front of unknown women to her. When a new married girl went out for any works like temples or relatives house or some ritual works she had to cover her face with sari. Though we can't take this tradition as medieval or modern purdah but somehow it was a custom which

controlled women in many ways. A restriction always imposed on new married girl that she should not uncover her face before unknown person and elderly people. Mostly the mother-in-laws and sister-in-laws were paying a sharp look on the daughter-in-law's walking, talking, dressing, behavior etc. one way we can say this was tradition of discipline or respect but at the same time it was system which controlled a women who joined the family newly and asked her to act according to their rule and regulations. The freedom which she had been enjoying before marriage lost after her marriage. However after some months or years these restrictions were not followed rigidly. This system was followed by both the poor and rich people of the society. But high class women were following it strictly probable due to the impact of Muslim community in the Orissa. Apart from this the Oriya women were free from so called purdah practice.

Literary works of the period like *Lavanyavati*, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, *Rasalekha*, *Premasudhanidhi*, *Chaturvinod*, *Sasirekha*, *Kanchikavery* *Vaidehisavilasa* and other works have not mentioned about purdah. Eighteenth century travel accounts and inscriptions are not giving any hints about this secluded tradition. In spite of these, *Purdah* existed among the high class Hindu society in Orissa. Somehow it was used as a custom in Hindu society. Lower class women did not follow it. This system was restricted to upper class society. But Muslim women followed it rigidly. They were covered from head to bottom. They were relating this system with their religion. It was also considered as the dignity of Muslim women and young girl. Even today they are following this medieval tradition. In the name of dignity and discipline women were treated as inferior and subordinate to men.

Sati:

In Hindu society sati was an old tradition. Since Epic age it was prevailing in the Indian society. After the death of Lord Sri Krishna, all of his queens had jumped into the funeral pyre of Lord Krishna and it is known from the *Purana*.⁵³ Eighteenth century literatures also proved that sati system existed during that period. However, it was not rampant in Orissa. Like Bengal and Northern India the people of Orissa did not follow

this system rigidly. It existed in some high caste family.⁵⁴ Literatures of the period were also not giving adequate evidences that widows were burning themselves in their husband's funeral pyre during eighteenth century. However, Upendra Bhanja, in *Kotibrahmandasundari* has described, that with husband's funeral pyre the wife was burnt.⁵⁵ Foreign travelers like Francoise Bernier⁵⁶ and Tavernier⁵⁷ have given information on this practice prevalent in the royal and high class society. Thomas Bowery visited Orissa in eighteenth century provides some information that sati in Balasore and other part of the country governed by kings was existed.⁵⁸

Samarataranga, an eighteenth century work of Brajanath Badjena provides information about Sati. Though Badjena has not given a direct picture of Sati system in Orissa but when he described a war story between Maratha ruler and the king of Dhenkanal a reference to Sati has been made. He has talked about a woman he who was burning herself in her husband's funeral pyre.⁵⁹

System of sati was not only prevailing in the coastal region of Orissa, in the tribal dominated region like in Undivided Koraput this custom was also followed by royal people. Kasinath Mishra in his book "*Itihash re Adivasi Mahila*" has been provided information on sati tradition in these hill regions. In Jeypore region Champavati, tribal girl from Kandha tribe was looking so pretty and well educated in satras, purans and rajaniti. Her father was village headmen. The king of Jeypore Biswamber Dev II [1690-1752] when heard about Champavati's beauty and talent he showed interest to marry her.⁶⁰ But it was against the tradition of Jeypore Kingdom. The whole royal families and king's zamindars opposed his wish to marry a tribal girl. However, the king did not care for anyone and married Champavati.

During the period of Biswamber Dev-II French was creating many problems for Jeypore Kingdom. The presence of French Army in the border region [in Sricacola region] of the Jeypore Kingdom forced the king to think to check them. The king Biswamber Dev-II feared that French army was technically sophisticated in warfare compare to Jeypore soldiers and any time they could attack on Jeypore. With this fear and worried the king was suddenly died when he was moving on the top of a hill. Then queen Champavati could not bear this sudden death of king and next day of king's death ritual

she along with her followers jumped into a pond called Goria Ganda and committed suicide to become sati.⁶¹ And this Goria Ganda pond named as 'Satikunda' to remember her. Even today this pond is known as Satikunda and people are worshiping this pond as a sacred place.

Arjuna Das's Kalaplata, heroine of this kavya performed sati after her husband's death. Sarala Das has praised sati women and condemned those who did not die on the funeral pyre of their husband. It seems people had great respect for this custom of sati. But it was not followed by all section and even not all high class widows of the society. Though we have many examples of lower class people had also performed it. In Mahabharat Sarala Das portrays many widow's character who are generally from higher strata or Brahmini and kshatriya class. During early medieval time also queens were not burning themselves in their husbands funeral pyre. in this regard we have concrete information that sati was not a rigid tradition to obey by high class women as well as low class women. Gopinath Dev (1720-1727), the king of Bhoi dynasty of Khurda engaged in a conflict with the feudatory of Banki. Probable he was attracted towards the widow queen of Banki named Sukadei. As he was unable to get her, he invaded Banki and killed the chief Trailokya Harichandan. But the brave Sukdei challenged him in battle field and fought with him a heroic battle and also defeated him. Gopinath Dev had been taken as captive to the Banki court. Queen warned him and freed the occupied territories.⁶²

In eighteenth century queen Sumitra Devi, a widow of king Ghana Bhanja of Mayurbhanja dynasty ascended the throne and ruled. Although some other queens of Ghana Bhanja had committed sati. Hence sati was not common and rigid tradition in Orissa.

However, sati system had some impact on Oriya society. Many times queens and high class women preferred it. Probably due to the social taboos for widows forced them to embrace this kind of inhumanic ritual. Many times widows were also forced by family members and relatives to do this. The foreign travelers who came to India describe sati ritual along with picture. In Orissa

British documents have also recorded this tradition of sati. Mentioned may be made about an official letter which was written by the Collector of Midnapur to Mr. William Cowper, President and Member of the Board of the Revenue, Midnapur, on 28th May 1796. In this letter the collector of Midnapur talks about the deceased king Damooder Bange who had eleven wives and of them four wives had committed sati.⁶³

During the time of British rule in Orissa, the system of sati was followed by Oriya people. We have already mentioned it above that sati was committed during eighteenth century Orissa and also practiced during colonial rule in Orissa. Sati was prevalent in higher class as well as other classes of Hindu society of Ganjam, Vijaynagaram and other districts of Southern Orissa and tributary Mahals of Northern Orissa. The reported cases of Sati in Orissa in from the year 1815 to 1818 were around 135. In Ganjam 81 cases of sati occurred between the years 1814 – 1819.⁶⁴ Thus the custom of sati which was started in ancient time continued in medieval period as well as modern period.

Arjuna Das's *Kalaplata* kavya has also depicted about sati. In this kavya poet describes that the heroine Kalaplata committed sati and this incident describes through narratives.⁶⁵

Performing sati is not easy for anybody. However, women of medieval time were still committing it. Probably they were forced to commit sati. In many cases family members forced widow women's to perform sati in order to secure their properties after their death. In other cases, a widow's life was made hell. Many restrictions, rules and regulations of society and restrictions on widow remarriage made their life full of misery. Thus many widows preferred to burn themselves in their husband's funeral pyre rather than living a very painful life afterwards. It seems that women were ready for dying and society was ready to make all rules and regulations to kill women. There were no ways to get respite from these patriarchal rules for a woman. Overall she was exploited and dominated by the society.

Prostitution:

Prostitution was prevalent in eighteenth century Orissa. Institution of prostitution was recognized by medieval people. They were arguing that this institution was required in the society for male community especially. At the same time scholars and writers have depicted this institution as Pramad or bringing destruction for the society. Many eighteenth century literatures represents that prostitution had a great importance in the society. Prostitutes were invited into many festivals, and marriage ceremonies of king's and feudal lord's families for certain rituals and reciting sacred songs. In *Lavanyavati*, a prostitute named Madanika of *Molhara Desha* comes to meet Chandrabhanu of Karnat.⁶⁶ At the time of marriage ceremony of Lavanyavati there were numbers of prostitutes presented and singing *mangala gita* (sacred ritual songs).⁶⁷

In canto 2 of *Kotibrahmandasundari*, Bhanja has depicted prostitution. When he is describing the beauty of kingdom of Champanagari, he portrays the women images on walls and pillars of palaces and describes them as prostitutes. The engraved wood women's looking, feeling, and posture everything depicted as prostitute making their art.⁶⁸ In canto ten of *Kotibrahmandasundari* Upendra Bhanja also portrays a picture on prostitution. Here when the heroine and her sakhis went for amusement into jungle they discussed with each other about the prostitutes art their and how to capture male persons.⁶⁹ Brajanatha Badjena's *Chaturvinoda* vividly narrates about the institution of prostitution which was prevalent in the society. He says that the institution of prostitution was recognized by the society. In Priti Vinoda part of *Chaturvinoda* the poet mentions about a prostitute called Nitambini who had easy access to the king's palace. Along with her a servant also accompanied her.⁷⁰ All the literary works of the said period is describing about the prostitution. Prostitutes were out caste and stayed outside the village or city. They were criticized for their works and profession. Even prostitute was called with some absurd words such as *dari*, *bitapani*, *barangana*, *besya*, etc.

In Pritivinoda part of *Chaturvinoda* Brajannath depicts a story which gives a clear idea about this system's existence in the society. In the story once a person named Jyotipunja was attacked by people due to certain issue, and he fled away to jungles and from there he went to a village where he found all the houses are decorated with white

painting beautifully. But he did not know in this village only prostitutes were residing. There Jyotipunja stayed for some time because he was so hungry. Here he found Nitambini whom once he criticized for her profession of dancing in the court.⁷¹ Prostitutes were not a part of common society they were like out caste and staying out side of towns or villages. They were inauspicious for society. Even male person who were the investor of this institution as well as society did not recognize their honour any status. They were marginalized from every section. Although prostitutes had certain importance in the Oriya society but they were not recognized for it instead they were exploited as sex worker and for their marginal position in the society. Thus prostitution during eighteenth century was a common tradition in Orissa. Not only *Chaturavinoda*, *Lavanyavati*, *Premasudhanidhi*, and other works gives ideas on prostitution and prostitutes who were adopting this profession for their livelihood.

The conjugal life of the upper class women was not happy due to the institution of prostitution. In many cases prostitutes were gifted in marriage ceremony of medieval period by elite class people.⁷² K. C. Sahu rightly used a word '*promada*' (disaster) for a prostitute.⁷³ This institution mainly emerged in urban areas. The main reasons for the prevalence of this profession were destitution, restriction on widow remarriage, illiteracy and of course, normal sexual urge.⁷⁴ Poverty and economic crisis probably forced the people to sell their young girl children. The merchants, traders bought them from parents and engaged in the institution of prostitution. Upendra Bhanja and other contemporary scholars have not mentioned about prostitution prevailing in the Muslim community. They have portrayed that this institution existed in Hindu society and mostly in urban society. Eighteenth century works such as *Rasapanchak*, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, *Subarnarekha* and *Lavanyavati*, *sasirekha* and folk tales describes about this public women or barangana.

William Bruton who visited Orissa in 1633 A. D. also mentions about this institution in his account of Cuttack and Puri. According to him, "most of the Orissa people have many wives, which they purchase and buy from their parents: some they keep to their vassals, to do their drudgery; others are handsome for issue sake and pleasure".⁷⁵ During seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the industry of prostitution got a

boost due to foreign traders and investors in Orissa. English, French, Dutch merchants, who established their trade centre in the coastal region, purchased and sold the beautiful young girls in their export and import business.⁷⁶

Fray Sebastine Manrique who visited Orissa in second half of seventeenth century gives information on prostitution in Orissa. According to him “in month of June in all the larger villages; held a public procession in honour of an idol named Durga [in June no Durgapuja in Orissa it may be some festival of other regions of India]. Durga was the goddess of Prostitute. This strumpet is carried as long in a highly ornamented triumphal car with a large dancing girls who besides dancing going a livelihood by prostitution. These dancers go in front, dancing and playing various musical instruments and singing festal songs”.⁷⁷

Prostitution was a common practice in medieval Orissa and it also continued in eighteenth century with a great vogue. Sometimes, Muslim administrators and soldiers abducted beautiful girls from high Hindu families to court. When abducted women returned from court, society was not prepared to receive them. Forcefully, they adopted prostitution as a source of livelihood to survive in the society.

Thus the medieval Oriya society adopted prostitution as a tradition of the society and prostitutes were the special class of women who were marginalized and excluded from the main society. These women were living within the boundary of their own society. They were most looked down upon class in the society after untouchables. Prostitutes were taken as auspicious for mangal works and they were not treated same as courtesan and devadasi were treated well in the society. They were considered inauspicious and bad luck for beginning of works and business works. Though prostitutes had some importance in medieval rituals and traditional ceremonies but they could not live a life like common women in the society.

Extra-marital Relation and women:

Eighteenth century Oriya literatures have given a major place to the extra-marital subject in the Oriya kavya or riti literature. Most of the contemporary works portrayed about this custom with elaborate depiction. Extra-marital relation is not medieval practice even it was existed in ancient Indian society. In epic Ramayan we have an episode of Ahalya where she has been tagged as impure and women of in disciple who slept with other person i.e. Indradeva. She was given curse or abhishap to turn into a stone by her saint husband. But Ahalya was totally unaware about this incident because Indradeva came to Ahalya as her husband and hiding his own appearance. However ultimately Ahalya became the victim of this incident and suffered for long time till Lord Ram's banabas episode. In Indian society it was common phenomenon that whatever problems or whoever committed mistakes it was women who were responsible for everything. In the case extra marital practice it was women who were solely responsible for this illegitimate relation. In epic Mahabharat an episode on Kunti also depicts about the extra-marital relation or sexual relation before marriage. But this relation between Suryadeva and Kunti is not highlighted in initial stage of Mahabharata writing. But at the end of Mahabharata story Kunti's relation with Suryadeva came to limelight. Probably to save the image of Khatriya clan and dignity of dynasty or kingdom to which Kunti belonged writers tried to avoid this matter and at last when all were busy with war and worried about the loss of life and property at that time this Kunti's relation before marriage came out. At same time her illegitimate son Karna was depicted great human being as well as a Great War hero. It seems to hide a relation which was not suitable for high class society writers tried to give a positive image of Kunti as well as her sexual relation with Suryadeva before marriage. On the other hand, Kunti got married to Yuvraj Pandu even after this incident. High class society they could do whatever they wanted but for common people it would have been impossible to get marriage and girl who did this probable they would have forced to adopt prostitution if she want to live on the earth.

On other hand it was common practice among the royal families as well as high class families to keep women for sexual enjoyment in outside harem. They considered it

as symbol of status. They also used to visit the prostitute house. During medieval time it was a common practice for the royal society though all are not following it.

During medieval Orissa this practice of extra-marital relation was also prevalent. The literature of the period has given plenty of information regarding this practice. In *Rasavinoda* part of Chaturvinoda author Badjena has depicted about the extra-marital relation which was prevailing in the eighteenth century Oriya society. Not Brajanath Badejena, Upendra Bhanja, Abhimanyu Samantasimhar and other contemporary poets also describes about this system in their works. In the story of *Rasavinida* a trader named Ratnasekhar went to Far East countries named Mandar. He stayed there for long time. In coastal Orissa traders and business class people used to go to the south east countries for business purpose and spent long times there for trade and commercial activities. It was a culture of Odisha or Kalinga to go for maritime activities into these regions. On the other hand the family members and wives of traders had to stay in the home to take care of family as well as children. In the absent of husbands wives were establishing extramarital relation with other male persons, though it was a serious crime and immoral act. In general girls in medieval Odisha were marrying at the age of eight/ten years. Young women could control themselves and entered into this immoral relation. In the story the wife of Ratnasekhar once proposed to a blacksmith who came to her house for some work. Then both used to meet at night in outside of her house. There they spent whole night and before morning she returns to her home.⁷⁸ In this way story ended with no conclusion. But in the end it raises some question related to morality, justice, laws which were prevalent in the society. Who is guilt? Ratnasekhar's wife or Ratnasekhar? or Blacksmith? Or society.

Sex has great importance in the human civilization. We can say that it is a integral part of the human life and an essential element of human civilization. But at the young age absent of the husband for long times like months and years forced them to adopt a way to deal with their sexual desire which is common nature of human being. Though socially this was an immoral and against the family and religious value but making her alone as guilty is not appropriate in justice. Mostly women from trader class, rich women

and women from lower strata also involved in this practice. Some time due to poverty and by force also they went into extra-marital affair.

In *Nitivinoda* part of *Chaturavinoda* also describes a story where extra-marital relation is the core subject. In the story: Gandhabakula a servant and his wife Binodini and son Bimba are the three major characters of this story. Gandhaba was a employee who was working far away from his home. Generally after six months or one years he used to visit his son and wife. In the absent of her husband Binodini established a relationship with a person named Balimukha. Then both had close relation, but when neighbor's knew about their illicitly relation they opposed it and started criticizing them. Then both decided to leave this place and go to a another country. Then along with her son Binodini and Balimukha left that town and reached in a country named Chandrabimba. There they thought that son Bimba is growing up and he can say about their relation to others, so they decided to sell him. They sold Bimba to a landlord named Manadata and prepared a document.⁷⁹ In this way story goes on and at last their affair its exposed.

Thus during medieval Orissa extra-marital system was prevalent in the society. Though social restrictions were strictly followed but probably the long absent of the husband in the house forced women to adopt this system. Abhimanyu Samanta Simhar's '*Bidgadhachintamani*' a famous work of the eighteenth century depicts about the story of Radha Krishna also gives some idea about extra-marital relation. Even fifteenth century work *Sarala Mahabharat* provides information about this system. Extra-marital relation was considered as sever crime during medieval Orissa. Gender discrimination in the name masculinity was also a common phenomenon in the Odia society. Women were solely responsible for the degradation of the social value in the society. She was the solo bearer of the culture and tradition.⁸⁰

Husband who was staying far away from home also established extra-marital relation with other women. But they were not considered as guilt and their work was not criminalized. It was women who were always blamed and punished by the patriarchal society in the name of culture and tradition which made by the male society. In *Sarala*

Mahabharat, poet Sarala Das describes about some character who were faced the fury of the society due to this extra-marital relation. A widow who had established physical relation with a sudra person was forced to go out from the society and lived in the jungles where she became mad and threw her son who was born from sudra father into a pond.⁸¹ It was women who made society ugly and impure. Women's action beyond social tradition and religious boundary were considered unfortunate. She had to obey whatever decided by traditions and customs. She could not go beyond that. However, male person was not bound to obey these traditions because it was patriarchy which excused male society and branded them as superior class and above all traditions and customs.

In another episode Brajannath also depicts about this extra-marital relation which little bit different to other story of prostitutes. Here the king involved and forced the poor people to surrender their wives to king. In the story king Kaligupta of Hemabati Kingdom once saw the wife of blacksmith and was attracted towards her. He could not tell anybody about this matter. Then he made a plan to trap blacksmith and appointed him as a palace employee. Then once he told Blacksmith that he is keeping Gouribrata [worshiping goddess Gouri without sleeping at night], for this brata a married women should stay with him to help in rituals and taking care of candles. That woman would be provided jewelleries and new clothes from the king. Then black smith said his wife will do this job. At night the blacksmith brought his wife to palace and told her about her jobs. The blacksmith who had some doubt on king secretly watching what happened in the kings worshiping room and regretted deeply his decision to send his wife alone to help king at night. King succeeded in his plan. Next day morning king dismissed blacksmith from his job and threw him out from place.⁸² During medieval time women were acting as a slave of her husband. According to their direction women were doing their jobs. They did not have any freedom to think. They wholly depended on male persons of the family. When husband asked to do a work wife had to do that. In above story same thing is happened. Even though male persons were engaged in the matter but it was female suffered a lot in the name of patibrata.

Working Women:

Working women mostly worked in the courts and palaces as *paricharika* (servants and receptionists), messengers and personal assistants of prince, princess, kings and queens. They were also appointed as personal bodyguards of princess and queens. Eighteenth century Oriya literature has given very much importance to this category. Bhanja literature cannot be imagined without their presence. Upendra Bhanja portrays them in various names in his works such as *sakhi* (friend), *sahachari* (path follower), *duti* (messenger), etc. who are described as devoted servants.

In *Lavanyavati*, *sakhis* were describing a natural scene to *kavya nayika* Lavanyavati which indicates their knowledge in language and literature.⁸³ Dr. Mayadhara Mansingh has translated those lines of *Lavanyavati* which expresses the talent of working women in literature and language. Those lines go like this:

*O' maiden, look, the pool is full of lotus and
Whirls, where the bees are roaming in madness.*⁸⁴

Kanchi Kaveri of Purusottam Das (18th Century) has given a clear idea on working women who were engaged in various economic sectors. In this *kavya* poet describes about the Orissa's southern India campaign during the reign of Gajapati Purusottam Dev. A woman named Manika from lower class was selling butter milk when the Oriya soldiers were marching towards Kanchi region of Karnatak. It indicates that women from lower class were engaged in various works for their livelihood.

Bhanja literature gives details of common working women who were engaged in different field of the society like in gardening, shelling cosmetics, bangles and other items by moving place to place and Mayabini or magical women who worked as magical doctor and treated patients by chanting secret mantras. Some Women also worked as doctor who had knowledge on Ayurvedic medicine. In *Lavanyvati* *kavya* Bhanja depicts working women who worked as malini or gardener and also magical women who cured various diseases through magical chants. Basically in lower strata of the society women were engaged in various economic fields. Women from higher strata found themselves

within the four walls of the house. Various restrictions and public traditions stood against their way.

Women's Education:

Female education did not occupy a major place in eighteenth century Oriya society. Women from feudal society and aristocratic families were well educated. Poor and lower class women did not get facilities of education. On the other hand their economic condition also did not allow them to arrange education for their girls because education in medieval period totally was a private matter. Kings and feudal lords were not taking care of education of other people or common mass. They only arranged special tutor for their girls at home. *Premasudhanidhi* of Upendra Bhanja gives information on this matter. Though this literature is mostly elite in nature and main character of this work *Premasudhanidhi* belongs to elite family, poet describes the education system of elite women. *Premasudhanidhi* a well educated women, who requested her husband to send handwritten letter to her.⁸⁵ Even *Premasudhanidhi* wrote many letters to prince before her marriage.⁸⁶ Education was a private matter of the period and lower class people also were not interested. Probably, due to various social and economic traditions attached to the roles of girls in society was responsible for the reluctance of the common people to provide education to their girl child. The stigmatized beliefs such as girls are born for cooking and child rearing so she should learn how to make cake, curry and other household works restrained the women from getting educated. On the other hand another explanation for this situation was that if the girl would be educated, then more dowries will be needed to get her married. Apart from this poverty and financial weakness were the obstacles that deprive the girl children from getting education.

Another well known Oriya poet Abhimanyu Samantasimhara (18th centuries) has also portrayed women education in his work *Bidagdha-chintamani*. In this *kavya* Abhimanyu mentions that *kavyanayika* or heroine *Radha* has sent letter to *Srikrishna*.⁸⁷ Upendra Bhanja in *Kotibrahmandasundari* also describes about women education. Prince of Pataliputra, when he writes love letter to princess *Katibrahmandasundari*, describes her knowledge in literature and music. He depicts her as best in the field of literature and music.⁸⁸ In *Lavanyavati*, the heroine was an educated woman. The poet has portrayed her

educational qualities when she (Lavanyavati) reads the letter which is sent by her beloved Bhanuchandra..⁸⁹ Again Lavanyavati writes letter to her lover Bhanuchandra which shows her educational qualities. Lavanyavati wrote letters in *kunkuma* (colours) on the white paper and describes her love feelings and emotions in it.⁹⁰

Sasirekha of Padmanava Srichandan the main character of *Sasirekha* Kavya is a well educated girl. During eighteenth century Orissa was under the administration of lords and zamidars who had loyalty towards Mughals and Marathas who had ruled over Orissa. But zamidars were the real ruler of the Orissa. Zamidars were wealthy and influential people. They provided education to their girls through home tutors. However, most of the female educated character of the eighteenth century literature belonged to high class society or royal families. Abhimanyu Samntasimhar's *Radha*, Upendra Bhanja's *Lavanyavati*, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, *Premasudhanidhi*, *Padmanava's Sasirekha* all are belonged to royal family and they were well versed with sahitya, sastras, epics, astrology, sangita etc.

In *Sasirekha* Kavya *Sasirekha*, the leading character from her early age started learning. Author describes it beautifully in canto seven when depicting her childhood.⁹¹ In canto -13 of *Sasirekha* kavya, Princess *Sasirekha's* educational ability has been portrayed nicely. *Sasirekha* sends some love letter to her beloved prince and expressed her love and feeling towards prince through this letters.⁹²

Education for medieval elite women was well known in the eighteenth century Orissa. All literature have depicted their main leading women characters as educated and even sakhis or friends of heroine are also educated during the period. Thus it indicates that women education though was not common for all but importance was given to education in the families of Zamidars and other rich people. Not only literature, women scholars like Brundavati Dasi (17th and 18th C), Madhavi Dasi and others belonged to elite families and wrote many works which are mostly religiously oriented. Nishanka Rayrani (18th century) was a great poetess of the time and she wrote *Padmavati Abhilasha* in which she describes the marriage ceremony of *Padmavati*. Typical Oriya marriage systems and rituals have been portrayed in this work.⁹³ Brundavati Dasi another well known poetess of the period wrote *Purnattma Chandraudaya*, a devotional Vaisnav

kavya. When she is describing the views and theories of religion and God, many examples from other Sanskrit and contemporary sources have been narrated.⁹⁴ She was Krishna devotee and all her works dedicated to Lord Krishna whom she is describe as nectar. Brundavati was well learned Sastras and Purans. Madhavi Dasi also wrote a drama named *Sri Purusottam Dev Natakam*.⁹⁵

We have some example of girls student who were studying with boys in gurukula. Chatta Ichhavati, a kvyā written by Banmali Das (18th Cent.) has depicted that Ichhavatti and Gurubhrma were collecting flowers to worship their teacher.⁹⁶

Education for women was also considered as a bad sign by the poor family members as well as lower class society. For them education was only for men not women. Oriya women's primary duty was to learn cooking and serving to in laws and produce children and taking care of them. *Rebati* a nineteenth century work depicted that, society was against the girl's education and they opposed it strictly.⁹⁷ Even the women characters of literatures also have scholarly talents like writing, composing songs and singing.⁹⁸ Thus eighteenth century women were well educated in literature, sastra, vedic literatures, religious philosophy etc.

But imparting education during eighteenth century Orissa, was a matter of status and prestige of high class society. Women were given education for name shake only. In rare cases the talented women came forward to show their skill in writings, singing, religious philosophy. Many times she was not allowed to expose her talents. Education in eighteenth century was not for making career but to show social image, economic status in the society. Medieval Oriya women wanted to serve to husband as Dasi or slave. They worshiped husband as god. Probably this was the reason behind the system of Sati which argued a wife should follow her husband's path in earthen life and also in heavenly life or life after death.

Women and Religion:

Religion always has had a deep impact on Oriya society since Vedic age. Then Jainism, Bhudhism , Saktaism had great influence in Orissa and it was the time of Sankaracharya who revived Hinduism and established a Matha at Puri to spread his philosophy. Adi Sankaracharya and Chaitanya's revolution in the field of religion, made Utkal a centre of religious hub and Puri came to be considered as one of the main centre of Hindu religion. Since Gupta period *Saivism* was also prevailing as a major religion in Orissa. It was more popular in the countryside and Temples of Lord Siva were founded in most of the villages of Orissa. It seems that unmarried girls and women were more favorably worshiping Lord Siva which is depicted in most of the eighteenth century literary works.

Upendra Bhanja has presented this picture in *Lavanyavati kavya* where prince Lavanyavati is expressing her sorrowful story to Lord Siva and worshiping him for solution. In canto 22 of *Lavanyavati*, the poet describes a scene of rainy season and Lavanyavati's tragic conditions. At that moment *sakhis* of princess remembered Lord Siva for help.

When the clouds gathered in the sky

and the white swans flew in a line, the

*friends of the lady remembered Lord Mahadeva;*⁹⁹

*Katakarajavansavali*¹⁰⁰ has informed us that during eighteenth century, royal women devotedly constructed numbers of temples for the gods and goddesses. Queen mother of Virakishor Dev (1660-1703) built *Muktimandap* within the precincts of Jagannatha Temple.¹⁰¹ She also excavated a tank in the west of the *Brahmini village* (agrahara village) Harekrushnapura, probably Markanda Tank of Puri.¹⁰² Lalita Devi, wife of Ramachandra Deva II [1727-1736] founded Lalitapatpur Sasan. She also Built a Vishnu Temple in 1767 and Mandap in the Jagannath Temple.¹⁰³ The queen of Birakishor Deva (1737-1793) Makarata Devi donated a village, Markatadevipur to Bidhyakar Das.¹⁰⁴ The

queens and mother queens of the king commissioned a number of temples, tanks, and step wells during this period. Rituals, traditions related to the religion were strictly followed by Oriya women. Every works of life had to be done on the basis of religious ideology. Following religious customs had been considered as the duty of the women. Beyond the religious line they could do nothing. Eighteenth century literatures also depicted the same things and portrayed them as obedient followers of *dharma*.

During Hindu period in Orissa women enjoyed some freedom and some time she was also restricted by social and religious laws. In 1568 Hindu rule in Orissa ended and Muslim rule was established. The Muslims ruled over Orissa nearly for two hundred years but could not influence Oriya culture and society significantly. Muslim rule, however brought some changes in the life of Oriya women. Purdah, slave system, polygamy which was not popular in Hindu period became popular for high class society. On the other hand, Islamic culture was influenced deeply by Oriya culture. Many Oriya and Hindu traditions were adopted by the Muslims in their social and cultural life. For that reason Oriya Muslims are not considered as pure Muslims in India. However, Oriya literature of the period has not given much information. Excepts, some Urdu and Persian words which were used in Oriya literature and changes in the food and dressing styles , there has not been much impact on Oriya society. Purdah and polygamy which were strictly followed by Muslim women could not influence Oriya women significantly though these customs had some importance in the high class Hindu society. Polygamy which was an ancient tradition of royal people became popular after Muslims conquered Orissa. Scholars and poets of the period have not depicted the tradition of purdah in their works.

There are many events, rituals, ceremonies related to women's life depicted in the eighteenth century literature. Mostly marriage ceremony, dowry, puberty rituals, sati, widowhood, female education, Purdah, women slavery, early marriage were described as important stages of a women's life. Due to all these irrational practices, women were suffering silently. Social, economic and religious restrictions and discriminations, gender biases, prostitutions etc. had forced the women to the rear corner of the household. Thus the women space was privatized with limited use of public spaces. Eighteenth century

which witnessed warfare and conflict between Maratha and later Mughals over power of Orissa produced a rich culture of literature. By analyzing these riti works, we have found much valuable information on women's past and her life as a marginalized group in the Oriya society. Although some literature gives a high position to women but indeed she was treated as secondary. She was portrayed as devi, mother, sister, wife, Laxmi, Saraswati, Sita, Savitri in Oriya literature and earned a position of high status in public sphere but in private sphere she was dominated by patriarchal mindset of the society and evil traditions of past. Eighteenth century literature portrayed women as a luxury commodity and at the same time, Hindu Sastras and religious works depicted them as Devi and Mata i.e *ya devi sarvabhutesu matrurupena sansita*. Means goddess or women should whoship and respect as mother. She is powerful and omnipresent and she is the mother of all. However women were not treated as goddesses were honoured. Hindu Sastra also describes that *yatra nari pujiyate tatra ramanti devata* means god will reside there where women are being respected, but irony was that women were treated in completely opposite terms.

References:

¹ Savitri Rout, *Women peoneers in Oriya Literature*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarassi Publisher Pvt Ltd, 1972, 34-35

² Nirmala Patra, *History of Oriya Literature*, www.importantindia.com

³ Gayadhara Mishra, *Odiya Sahitya ra Samajika O Sanskrutika Itihasa*, (Cuttack: Takshasila, 1997), 271-272.

⁴ Upendra Bhanja, *Premasudhanidhi*, canto –I, ed. By B. C. Samal, Cuttack: Friends Publication, 1992 100

⁵ Ibid., Canto – 3, 117;

Bege puspakala hebaku

Mo shiva shiva mantar japaibi

Ibid., canto -4, 124s

A samye asi bala priyabasi hasi bhasila kumaraku

Atanu aja anukula thoila taruna kula akulaku

Ranga ketan, niketan kala bandini

⁶ Ibid., canto -5, 134.

Nichola kara nichola mndana re sahi

Kante birodhi ekante birodhi nuhain je.

⁷ Upendra Bhanja, *Kotibrahmandasundhari*, canto – 3, ed. K. C. Behera, Cutack: Friends Publication, 1993, 31.

Base anusarile vungamane

Enu helata puspa anumane
Bala padmini hebar sakase
Nahin sansay ta puspa bikase
Thile sajani mali sannidhire
Nele basa sumanas bidhire
Thile tahin daibangya upadhayi
Subha subha bujhile sabudhayi.

This stanza describes on puberty tradition in the society

⁸ Ibid., Canto – 3, 34.

Kandagruhe rakhile anuchari
Bala kamakanda eha bichari.

⁹ Padmanava Srichandan, *Sasirekha*, ed. Bichhada Charan Pattnaik, Cuttack: Prachisamiti, 1933. 46-47

Sata dipa re jaha bandhaile
Sata diga re ki achi boile
.....

Sata dinantare kari bisudha
Kale chalai ashok basudha.

Ibid.;

Chari parushare sata kalsh
.....

Sat dipa chari pase madhya prabesh

Kata pata yukta kari madhyare

Kumariki basai tathipare

Sat divas jahin sesha hela

Pratakalu sunamukhi snana kala.

These lines talks about the puberty celebration

¹⁰ Upendra Bhanja, *Lavanyavati*, Canto -3, Ed. Narayana Chandra Das, Ananda Chandra Das and Prafula Kumar Das, Cuttack: Monmohan Press, 1939, 30

Premasila mata pase janai, sara mandir sambhar anai.
Mas tandulare gruha gadai, basa prakar prakare bedhai.
Charipase charigoti margana, bilambe patile sakhigana.
Narikele chheli durbarapku, vari samipe thoile sarpaku.
Madhye basaile se naribali, suva arthare dele huluhuli.

These lines describes on puberty and tradition.

¹¹ Padmanava Srichandan, *Sasirekha*, canto-7, ed. by Bichhindacharan Pattnaik, Cuttack: Prachisamiti, 1933, 45-46

Lines goes like this

Yahi samaye madhyam kalare

Soithila jema sakhi melare,

Bama deva- bama- gruha bikar

Bhaji nidra tejila bamabara,
.....

Jain ekanta sadane prabesha

Tahin phedi dekhila pindha basa
.....

Yuva jiba badha kari ananga

Rakate re karichhi kiba sanga.

¹² Pdmnava Srichandan, *Sasirekha*, canto - 6 , ed. Bichhinda Charan Pattnaik, Cuttack: Prachisamiti, 1933. 45-47

Yehi samaye suna maharasa
Asi mithun hoila prabesh
Suklapaksha ditiya somabar
Mina rebate sange nishakar
Kankada lagna sagatam kosti
Lagne subha grahanka achi drusti
Yehi samaye madhyan kalare soithila jema sakhi melare
Bamdeba-bam-gruhabiakar bhiji
Nidra tejila bama bara.

Stanza describes about the first puberty and practices, rituals.

¹³ Padmanava Srichandan, *Sasirekha* Canto-7, ed. Bichhinda Charan Pattnaik, Cuttack: Prachisamiti, 1933 47

Yete suni sakala sahachari
Kula bidhi bidhan anusari
Moti sama tandula ani kari
Gruha nirmana kaleka chaturi
.....
Chari purapare sata kalasa
Sata sara tathi Madhya prabesa.
Chuta patra upare narikela
Jatha bidhi re kaleka sakala.

¹⁴ Padmanava Srichandan, *Sasirekha*, Canto-7, ed. Bichhinda Charan Pattnaik, Cuttack: Prachisamiti, 1933 46

Lines goes like this:
Sataguna sutra tathi bedhai
Sata dipa charipase jalai,
.....
Sata divas ja a bandapana
Yehi rupe karuthanti angina,
Sata divas yahun shesa hela
Prate kalu sumukhi snana kala.

Stanzas here narrating about the puberty tradition, rituals and practices and treatment towards.

¹⁵ Bhagaban Sahu, *Cultural History of Orissa* (1435 – 1751), New Delhi: Anmol Publication, 1997, 28.

¹⁶ Bina Sharma, Social Uplift of Women in British Orissa, *OHRJ*, Vol. XXXVII, No. 1- 4, 1954, 3.

¹⁷ Upendra Bhanja, *Lavanyavati*, Canto -8, Ed. Narayana Chandra Das, Ananda Chandra Das and Prafula Kumar Das, (Cuttack: Monmohan Press, 1939), 65.

*A thu anantare rasa suna sujana
mantriki daki singhala dwipa rajana,
boile kishor dasa prapta kumara
kara bege bara deba vivaha kari.*

Here, the king called his minister and said that the princess is now a young girl, hence we should have arrange her marriage as soon as possible.

¹⁸ Upendra Bhanja, *Lavanyavati*, Canto -28, Ed. Narayana Chandra Das, Ananda Chandra Das and Prafula Kumar Das, (Cuttack: Monmohan Press, 1939), 191.

Se boile saburupe ambhara sammata

jatak birudhe nahin kebana ayat je.

In this stanza it has been said that we are agree with all things but we cannot go against *jataka* (horoscope)

¹⁹ Upendra Bhanja, *Rasikaharabali*, (18th Cent), canto -8,

²⁰ Padmanava Srichandan, *Sasirekha*, canto – 19, 137

Athuante vadrasena raye

Nrupagana purate ubha hoye,

.....

Achi mohire a kai kumara

Nama sasirekha eka sundari,

.....

Ehi karanu kali swayambar

Bali kariba tar a ichha bara.

²¹ Bhagaban Sahu, *Cultural History of Orissa* (1435 – 1751), New Delhi: Anmol Publication, 1997, 28.

²² Upendra Bhanja, *Premasudhanidhi*, canto -26, ed. B. C. Samal, Cuttack: Friends Publication, 1992, 426.

²³ Ibid., canto -3, 27

²⁴ Sarala das, *Sarala Mahabharat*, Adi parva 164; varna parva 140; varna parva 320

²⁵ Ibid., 176

²⁶ Ibid., Verna parva, 140.

²⁷ Balarm Das, Dandi Ramayan, Kiskinda Kanda

²⁸ Bina Sharma, Social Uplift of Women in British Orissa, *OHRJ*, Vol. XXXVII, No. 1- 4, 1954, 4.

²⁹ Kanika Settlement Report, 40.

³⁰ Sarala Das (15th century), *Mahabharata* (Oriya), Adi parva, 321

³¹ Juta yuta kale mana kanya purusa

Jeun jautuka dele seta asesa.

Upendra Bhanja, *premasudhanidhi*, canto – 1, ed. By Baishnab Charan Samal, Cuttack: Friends [publication, 1992, 103.

³² Sachiba-suta samasta jautuka

Drabya sangate ghenai,

Abori pacha patuare rahani

Sainya sambhare chalai.

Padmanav Srichandan, *Sasirekha*, canto – 24, ed. By Bichenda Charan Pattnaik, Cuttack: Prachisamiti, 1933, 162.

³³ Upendra Bhanja, *Lavanyavati*, Canto -35, Ed. Narayana Chandra Das, Ananda Chandra Das and Prafula Kumar Das, (Cuttack: Monmohan Press, 1939), 234.

Jautuka smbhar ghenai schibaku

presita kale turita kumar pasaku je,

chahin se sambhar yubaraj hoi tosa

deichhi dhanaja kosa pari ratna kosa,

kari haya hari chaya yana samana re

lakshya sankhyaka deichhi sahad chittare.

Above stanza depicts that the king ordered the minister to show the groom all the dowry items which were lakhs in number and the prince expressed his happiness on dowry items.

³⁴ Ibid., 235.

A bidhire padartha samarpi janaila

Sabhusana kari dasi sahasraka dela je.

This stanza describes about the dowry preparation and hundreds of female servants who were decorated with ornaments and clothes and presented as dowry item in marriage by the king Karnat.

³⁵ Brajantha Granthavali, p-605

Sandhya hela boli petakmane sanchar kale,
 janak mane bhabile a ki utpat prabesh hela.
 A hi anista katha suniari pita chandachakra bicharile,
 a kajwal hasi duhita thile ta apralaya re sansar parlay haba.
 Emanta bichari duta manku kahile
 Ambha jema deinkar bibhaha ta hela,
 Tanka jautuka samgri mana ghenai
 se duhinku nei jamata nka purva ashramare prabesh kara a
 these lines talks about the women as burdon for father as well as family members and gives details on dowry.

³⁶ Padmanava Srichandan, Sasirekh, canto -24, 163.

sabita-suta samsta jautuka

Drabya sangate ghenai

Abori pachha patuare rahani

Sainya sambhare chalai.

Above stanza describes that with all dowry items bride and groom along with other people and soldiers they are preceding towards groom's home.

³⁷ Ajita Simha from Chouhan dynasty of Sambalpur ruled from 1742 to 1766. Ajita Simha had eight queens. Jayanta Simha (1782-1818) had three queens named Ratnakumari, Muktadevi, and Rahasya Kumaridevi (daughter of Baghela family).

'Two Copper Plate Grants from the Village of Themra in the Sambalpur District' ed. By P Acharya, OHRJ, Vol. II, April 1953, 47-57;

³⁸ Selections from official Letters and Records relating to the History of Mayurbhanja, Vol. I, 1761-1817. Selected by P Chanda, Published by Dr. Achyut Kumar Mitra, 13/A Southern Avenue for the Mayurbhanja State and Printed by G. E. Bingham at the Baptist Mission Press, 1942, 276-78

³⁹ Snigdha Tripathy, Tow Cooper Plates of Ramachandra Deva, OHRJ, Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar,

⁴⁰ Padmanava Srichandan, Sasirekha, canto- 6, 37

⁴¹ Bina Sharma, Social Uplift of Women in British Orissa, OHRJ, Vol. XXXVII, No. 1- 4, 1954, 3.

⁴² P Acharya [superintendent of Orissa State Museum] ed. 'Two Copper plate Grants from the Village Themra in the Sambalpur Districts' in OHRJ, Vol. II, April, 1953, 49.

⁴³ Ibid., 50

⁴⁴ P Acharya ed. 'Province of Orissa in Geography of India by Tieffenthaler', in OHRJ, Vol. II, No. 2 July 1953, 23.[Tieffenthaler, the jesuit missionary came to India in 1743 AD and lived at Agra upto 1786 AD. He wrote a work called the geography of Hindustan in Latin. P Acharya Superintendent of OSM got this work from Library of Asiatic Society of Culcatta and arranged to translate into English.]

⁴⁵ Pattern of State Formation: The Case of Khorda: Chapter III, sodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in, 100, 116.

⁴⁶ Selections from official Letters and Records relating to the History of Mayurbhanja, Vol. I, 1761-1817. Selected by P Chanda, Published by Dr. Achyut Kumar Mitra, 13/A Southern Avenue for the Mayurbhanja State and Printed by G. E. Bingham at the Baptist Mission Press, 1942, 276-78.

⁴⁷ Mayurbhanja Records, 60-61, Report to Ernst. Collector of Midnapur, Nov. 25 1803.

⁴⁸ Utapla Nayak, Women's development and Social Conflicts: Historical prospective on Indian Women (study in Orissa), (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999), 160-161.

⁴⁹ Bina Sharma, Social Uplift of Women in British Orissa, OHRJ, Vol. XXXVII, No. 1- 4, 1954, 3.

⁵⁰ Umakanta Subhudhi, *The Bhaumakaras of Orissa*, (Culcutta: Punti Pustak, 1978), 72-79.

⁵¹ P. N. Ojha, Glimpses of Social Life of Mughal India, New Delhi: Classiacal Publication, 1979, 63.

⁵² Utapla Nayak, Women's development and Social Conflicts: Historical prospective on Indian Women (study in Orissa), (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999), 111-113.

⁵³ Gayadhara Mishra, *Odiya Sahitya ra Samajika O Sanskrutika Itihasa* (Oriya), (Cuttack: Takshasila, 1997), 296.

⁵⁴ Utpala Nayak, Women's development and Social Conflicts: Historical prospective on Indian Women (study in Orissa), (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999), 102; Kumudin Barai, *Role of Women in the History of Orissa*, (Culcutta: Punt Pustak, 1994), 132.

⁵⁵ Upendra Bhanja, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, canto – 5, 176.

Dianti je hulahuli ki aba seali

aji pati sange patni yahnu jadi.

This stanza portrays a situation that the poet is imagining when the wife is going to burn herself in the funeral pyre of her husband and the ritual sounds created by women in their mouth made this situation more furious. It is described when Lavanyavati's marriage is happening.

⁵⁶ Fancios Bernier, *Travels in Hindustan* (1655-1661), trans. By Thomas Henry Oulddinburge in 1684, reprint Cacutta, 307-14

⁵⁷ J. B. Tavernier, *Travel in India*, London, 1677, Vol. I, reprint in Calcutta, 169-172.

⁵⁸ Thomas Bowrey, *A Geographical Account of Countries, Round the Bay of Bengal*, (1669-1679). Ed. Richard Carnac Temple, Cambridge, 1905, 39.

⁵⁹ Brajanath Badjena, *Samarataranga*, ed. By Debendra Mahanty, Cuttack: Friend Publication, 1992, 113

Fauja bhitare ghoda pakai

Mare barach je nirbhay hoi

Sati paraa pasi jhasjiba

Pheri ail eta sakal a labha.

⁶⁰ Kasinath Mishra, *Itihas re Adibasi Mahila*, Jeypore: J.E.L. Church, 1977, 3-5

⁶¹ Kasinath Mishra, *Itihas re Adibasi Mahila*, Jeypore: J.E.L. Church, 1977, 9-18

⁶² N Rath, *Banki Itihas* (O), Banki: Banki Publishing, 1935, 24-25.

⁶³ Selections from official Letters and Records relating to the History of Mayurbhanja, Vol. I, 1761-1817. Selected by P Chanda, Published by Dr. Achyut Kumar Mitra, 13/A Southern Avenue for the Mayurbhanja State and Printed by G. E. Bingham at the Baptist Mission Press, 1942, 276-78.

The letter is as follows:

“In obedience to the order conveyed in your secretary's letter of the 12th ultimo I issued a parwannah to the Tannadar of Jehonpore, to make the most exact Enquiries Regarding the Heirs and relations of the deceased Raja Damooder Bange, and am informed, in reply, that the Raja Had 11 wives, four of whom were burnt with his corpse, and that before his death he had declared the Pout Ranny (pata Rani) Musumout Soomitrow (Sumitra), Heiress of the Roje (Raj) She is about 35 years of age, bears of good character, and is fully competent to the management of her Estates. The Raja died without children but he left a relation named Sarussur Bange (Suresvar Bhanja) whose grandfather was own Brother to the Rajah's grandfather, Being illegitimate he never used to eat with Rajah. He is 30 years of age, and unacquainted with the Business. Birjaggy Bange (Bairagi Bhanja) is also a relation of the Deceased, but was on no terms with him till, the Raja being near his End, adopted him as his third son. The Rank or Degree of affiliation is denominated Rauwut. He is 35 years age, is acquainted with Business, and has been appointed by the Paut Ranny as the manager of her concerns.”

⁶⁴ Bina Sharma, Social Uplift of Women in British Orissa, *OHRJ*, Vol. XXXVII, No. 1- 4, 1954, 4.

⁶⁵ Arjuna Das, Canto-13, 89-91

Pacharai Tilotam kahe kalanidhi

Kalapalata ra agni paravesa bidhi..

⁶⁶ Upendra Bhanja, *Lavanyavati*, canto -9, ed. Narayana Chandra Das, Ananda Chandra Das, and Prafula Kumar Das, (Cuttack: Monmohan Press, 1939), 71

Malika kahe sahnidhane
malharu asichhi nama madanika
ganika tara darasane.

In this stanza a slave is informing to the prince that a prostitute name Madanika has come from Mallhara country and waiting for him.

⁶⁷ Ibid., canto – 30, 201; Prasana Pattnaik, *Baibhrajre Bhanja* (Oriya), (Cuttack: Friends Publication, 1997), 95-96.

During the marriage ceremony of Lavanyavati *mangalastak* mantra (Goddess chants) was sung by Brahmanas and *mangala gita* (sacred songs) was sung by *Ganikas* or prostitutes.

Ganaka gana mangalastaka padhuchhanti
mangala gita gabanti ganika yuvati je..

⁶⁸ Upendra Bhanja, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, canto – 2, ed. By Krushna Charan Behera, Cuttack: Friends Publication, 1993, 15-16.

Rupa jiba tatswarupa hoina
Jaihin re dhanya kanya stambhagana
Karai bhrama kete raga jata
Bina sware kare alap gita.

⁶⁹ Upendra Bhanja, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, ed. Ajaya Kumar Ghos, Cuttack: Sri Jagannath Company, 1963, 83.

Thiba bele re, sumana-bandi manohare
Prakar biranchi lalasa ganika bhabe subasa haribare.

⁷⁰ S. N Mishra, ed., *Brajanath granthabali*, (Bhubaneswar :OSA, 1984..), 643.

⁷¹ Ibid., 643-650.

⁷² Utpala Nayak, *Women's Development and Social Conflicts: Historical prospective on Indian Women (study in Orissa)*, (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999), 105.

⁷³ K. C. Sahu, *Literature and Social Life in Medieval Orissa*, (Calcutta: Punt Pustak, 1986), 63.

⁷⁴ Utpala Nayak, *Women's Development and Social Conflicts: Historical prospective on Indian Women (study in Orissa)*, (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999), 106.

⁷⁵ William Bruton, Account of Cuttack and Puri, *Orissa Historical Research Journal*, 10, No. 3, (1961): 49.

⁷⁶ L. N. Rout, Socio-economic Life and European Settlements in Orissa during the Muslim Rule, in *Comprehensive History and Culture of Orissa (1568 – 1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008), 463.

⁷⁷ P Acharya ed, 'Account of Travels of Fray Sebastine Manrique in Orissa', OHRJ, Vol. XV, No. 3 & 4, 1953, 77.

⁷⁸ Brjanath Granthavali, p-609

⁷⁹ Ibid., 636-637

⁸⁰ Jones, V. (Eds),(1990), *Women in the Eighteenth century : Constructions of Femininity*, p-5

⁸¹ Sarala Das, *Sarala Mahabharat*, verna peva

⁸² Brajantha Badjena, *Chaturavinoda*, Pritivonoda Part in Brajannath Granthavali, 657-660

⁸³ Upendra Bhanja, *Lavanyavati*, Canto -6, Ed. Narayana Chandra Das, Ananda Chandra Das and Prafula Kumar Das, (Cuttack: Monmohan Press, 1939), 52.

Dekha re Nalini naline nalineere purita
Bhramanti bhramare bhramare bhramare a' sovita.

Above stanza indicates about the knowledge of servants and friends of Lavanyavati in language and literature. Words like 'nalini' and 'bhramare' are used three times each in one line with different meaning which is referring their knowledge in literature.

⁸⁴ Mayadhara Mansing, History of Oriya Literature, (New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 1961).

⁸⁵ Upendra Bhanja, *Premasudhanidhi*, canto – 8, ed. By Baishnab Charan Samal, Cuttack: Fiends publication, 1992, 167

Kirat rahiba pathauthibu tora srikara mudaku
Srikar mudaku badauthiba se dasa durbalataku.

⁸⁶ Ibid., canto- 12, 196.

Tola nohibar kusuma lata ru
Gola nohibaru chandan,
Dekhisukhi jaa mora badan
Anikare pesi niali malika patre lekhi dhana he.

These lines narrating about the women education.

⁸⁷ Abhimanyu Samantasimhara (18th century), *Bidhagdachintamani*, ed. Debendra Mahanty, (Cuttack: Friends Publication, 2000), 52.

⁸⁸ Upendra Bhanja, *Katibrahmandasundari*, canto - 12, 63; Canto – 23

Nohi sangita sahitya saman
Palaichi sarada anuman
Keli prabina kishori kanthe bina pasori
Gala ki chhannare.

It describes the deep knowledge of Lavanyavati in literature and music.

⁸⁹ Upendra Bhanja, *Lavanyavati*, Canto -19, Ed. Narayana Chandra Das, Ananda Chandra Das and Prafula Kumar Das, (Cuttack: Monmohan Press, 1939), 132.

⁹⁰ Ibid., canto -20, 139;

Ani kagaj ku nababali
anuragu na lekhila kali,
kunkume likhita barninijabarna bhali
alinka namare chhali se sundari.

Ibid., 143.

lekhi a rupe patrika bala,
mantrinandana hastaka dela.

Lavanyavati wrote letter in Kunkum (colours) for her lover Bhanuchandra in which she expresses her feelings and after writing it she gave it to the minister's daughter for despatch.

⁹¹ Padmanava Srichandan, *Sasirekha*, canto-7, 44

Lines goes like this:

Yethu utaru suna maharasa
Bidyarmbha karaile naresha,
Abhidhan byakarana sahite
Kavya natak alankar jete,
Yethu hoila kumari nipuna
Kehu kahi pariba guna

⁹² Padmanava Srichandan, *Sasirekha*, canto-13, 96

Chaturi pane aga lekhan dela
Sajani dware bahu binaya hela je,
Chitau ana boli kahi ambhaku
melani dei bije kala puraku je.

⁹³ Surendra K. Maharana, *Odiya Sahitya Itihasa*, (Cuttack: Orissa Book Store, 2001), 334-335.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 323.

⁹⁵ Utpala Nayak, *Women's Development and Social Conflicts: Historical prospective on Indian Women (study in Orissa)*, (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999), 99.

⁹⁶ Banamali Das, *Chhata Ichhavati*,
Ojhanka Chhamure Ichha Jodi venikari
Mote patha'a muhin chatta sange jibi
Phula phala toil kari
Ojha'e boile tume ja'a phula toil
Sunina anada hela ichhvati bali
Chatta ichhavati duhen chaligale khare
Pravesa hoile jai totta bhitare.

These lines describes about the coeducation and girls education during this period. Ichhavati is studying with boys in the ashram.

⁹⁷ Fakir Mohan senapati, *Rebati*, (Oriya, 19th Cent) ed. & trns. Into English by V Dev, New Delhi: Srishti Publishers, 2000

throughout the Rebati Fakirmohan argues for women education and her identity in the society.

⁹⁸ Upendra Bhanja, *Premasudhanidhi*, canto – 13, ed. By Baishnab Chaaran Samal, Cuttack: Friends Publication, 1992, 211;

Dine je uchite chite
Dhoni bhasate sate
Kete ke lekhi rangite gite.

Ibid., canto – 14, 222

Muda labhi mudaku ghenila kanta kare
Janma andha netra dana paila prakare
Nibi badha praye kari
Phedi padhi arambhila bichari bichari.

⁹⁹ Upendra Bhanja. *Lavanyavati*, canto -22 , ed. Narayana Chandra Das, Ananda Chandra Das, and Prafula Kumar Das, (Cuttack: Monmohan Press, 1939),160.

Ke kahe sakhinki chandrasekharanku puja kara a'thipain

Priya na jau jibana jau mora dukkhi nohibiti muhin.

(*Lavanyavati*, canto -22, trans. Jatindra Mohan Mahanty)

Here all friends and *sakhis* are worried about Lavanyavati's problems and somebody is suggesting to worship Lord Siva who could solve it. They all are deeply broke down due to princess's sorrowful condition and telling to die without any hesitation if their princess will be saved.

¹⁰⁰ *Katakrajavansavali*, written in sanskrit in early part of the 19th century. This text describes vividly the political history of Orissa since the beginning of the *Kali era* keeping always the temple of Jagannath in the centre.

¹⁰¹ Harman Kulke and Gaya charan Tripathy,ed., *Katakrajavansavali*, (Allahabad: Vohra Publisher & Distributors, 1981), 111-112.

¹⁰² Prafulla K Pattnaik, *A Forgotten Chapter of Orissan History: with Special Reference to the Rajas of Khurda and Puri, 1568-1828*, Kolkata: Panti Pustak, 1979, 54

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ K. N. Mahapatra, *Khurda Itihasa*, Cuttack: Grantha Mandir, 1969, 129

Chapter -IV

Marginalized Women in Eighteenth Century Orissa: Devadasis

Marginalization deprives a large section of population across the globe from participating in the process of development. It is a complex problem and there are many factors that cause marginalization. It is a system which developed through socio, economic, and cultural discriminations rooted in the society. To a certain extent marginalisation is a shifting phenomenon linked to social status. Such as a group or individuals who were enjoying high status, in later stage due to social and cultural change they lost that position and became marginalised.¹

Marginalised groups or categories generally faced irrevocable discrimination. But in Indian history there were many marginalised groups that existed in the society due to various bias and discriminative principles prevalent in the society. Among the marginalised group, most vulnerable marginalised group were women. Under different economic conditions and under the influence of specific historical, cultural, legal and religious factors, marginalization is one of the manifestations of gender inequality. In other words women may be excluded from certain jobs and occupations, incorporated into certain jobs and marginalised in others. In general, we can say that women were marginalised across different sections of the Indian society. Elite or poor all were suffering from this marginalisation disease. Thus Women don't constitute a homogenous category where members have common interest, abilities or women belonging to lower classes, lower caste, illiterate and the poorest region have different levels of marginalisation than their better off counterparts.²

Women Marginalisation process has historical roots. In history of India women had equal position with men during Rig-Vedic era; even it is considered that Rig-Vedic Era was a Golden Age for Indian Women.³ But in course of time changes occurred in the society and women became the victim of it. She had been marginalised in the name of

social, cultural and religious changes in Indian society. Various new rules and laws were enacted for the process of marginalisation. New scriptures and scholars also came forward to make women as a marginalised group in the society. It was not only the process of marginalization of women that got momentum due to the emergence of religious scriptures and rituals to restrict women, a new ideology also developed for the male society that was patriarchy or male hegemony over female. Due to the rise of male chauvinism women lost her past glory of equality and freedom of life and diminished into a marginalised community in the society. The process forced women to act as subordinate group. Then the fate of women was crushed by the dominant class which marched ahead by suppressing their voice and snatching rights which were enjoyed by Indian women in past time. Women are marginalized because of her sexuality. She is denied participation because she is mentally and physically not strong as men. They were neglected because her voice had been choked by historical records, religious scriptures, and bias traditions.

Every society holds certain values and beliefs regarding woman which has a link with the disadvantaged situation of women. These ideological features can be seen as the misconceptions about women. She was considered as polluted and impure body either in general or at a particular time. As a result women became untouchable during menstruation. Women's role in reproduction generally restricted women's participation in mainstream socio and economic as well as political process. Women's recognition as house wife also linked to the invisibility of women contribution to the society. On the other hand misconception and prejudices influences the approach of the society towards the marginalization of women.⁴ Feminist view that the labour division on the basis of gender confined women as house wife which recognized her as unpaid labour. She has to depend on men and adorned the lower status in the contemporary society. This household works has been chained her and restricted her income capability.⁵

Thus the marginalization process not only happened in the history of India and even today it continues in the society and women are marginalised in the name of history and culture. However our study is to focus on eighteenth century marginalised women in Orissa. Oriya women had witnessed marginalisation process and prevalence of

masculinity ideology in the society, emerged as second class group in the medieval Orissa. Eighteenth century Orissa had seen the same practice of marginalisation and women were marginalised in the name of sex, caste, profession, class etc.

Eighteenth century Orissa was a battle ground for Maratha and Moghul. Moghul rule declined in 1751 and Maratha emerged as super power over Orissa. Social life of the people basically women life was affected due to the anarchy and ineffective administration by Marathas. Polygamy, mahari tradition, sati, concubine practice, widowhood, purdah, child marriage, and prostitution prevailed in the eighteenth century Orissa. Women were the victim of social taboo and discrimination attitude of the society. They were subjected to various religious and social restrictions imposed by privilege group.

Oriya literature, official records and inscriptions of the later medieval period mentioned many age old traditions. These traditions were framed and introduced to control women that will create a discriminative society in which women were recognised as marginalised class. Within the marginalised women group there were different class and categories. Elite women enjoyed social status but were deprived of economic freedom and equal rights. Women from lower strata enjoyed economic freedom but suffered from social security and social status. Even the women from high class society were not free from these traditions of Orissa. Because adopting some professions like prostitution, dancing, etc. did not earn a good social status. They had their own pre determined choice or traditional mindsets to judge the humans status and class by studying their nature of profession.

Gender discrimination and patriarchal mindset of the people led to marginalisation of women. Among these marginalised groups Devadasi was the most exploited and discriminated.

Devadasis: A Marginalised Class

The Sanskrit word “Devadasi” means the female servant of God. The origin of the word as well as its practice is shrouded with uncertainty. The origin of the system could not be traced back to any particular historical time period so far. Some scholars have traced it back to Indus valley civilisation while some other places it entirely into medieval period. Whatever it may be, devadasi system was an important part of Indian culture which scholarly attention not only to reconstruct the Indian cultural study but also to represent the women history. The study of the role and status of women in 18th century Orissa will be incomplete without referring to the Devadasi system as it represent a completely opposite facet of women in Oriya society.

Prof. V. R. Ramachandra says, devadasi system prevailed during Indus period. The bronze image of the dancing girl unearthed from Mohenjodaro probably represents the devadasi of modern time. Rig-Veda provides instances that women were employed to sing in praise of the god at the time of the squeezing out of soma juice⁶. Probably this tradition became popular during sixth and seventh centuries. We have already mentioned in the above paragraph that during sixth century Keshari dynasty of south India patronised this tradition. Archaeological findings of the temple structure, the statuette of the proto type of Shiva, Natraj, the bronze image of the dancing girl and other dancing figurines and the cult of tantricism from Harappan civilization indicates the system was well known in the society.⁷

A.S Altekar says this custom had come into vogue by about the third century AD. While B. N. Sharma and R. N. Saletore said that this system existed during the time of Koutilya. Arthasastra reports that women attached to the temples were studiously taught that arts of music and dance and were employed in the shutrasala⁸ when they became old. During Sangam period there were frequent use of puja and festival, dance, music and procession accompanied by lamps.⁹ Even sangam literature like Manimekhalai of Ilangu Adigal is based on the story of a women dancer named Basavi. Other literature of the period also mentions about the dance and music culture of India. Kali Das’s Meghaduta

also narrates the sound of ankle bell of the dancing girls which echoed in the siva temple of Mahakal at Ujjain.¹⁰

Some scholars argue that devadasi system originated after the evolution of temple architecture in Hindu culture. Bhogamandap and Rangamandap or Natamndap of temple structure probably constructed for the dancing purpose. This theory was supported by H. D. Sankalia. He says devadasi system emerged after the rise of temple structure.¹¹ Ankur Sigal views 'devadasi tradition as an ancient tradition existing during sixth century AD.

Devadasis were known by regionally varied names. They were called Jogini in Andhra Pradesh, Thevardiyar in Tamil Nadu, Kudikar in the west coast of Maharashtra, Bhavanis in Goa, Tevidicchis in Kerala, Maharis in Orissa, Deva Nartaki in Bengal, Natis in Assam and Basavis in Karnataka. In Karnataka old Devadasis were known as Jogati while young ones were called Basavi. In Karnataka they were treated as public prostitute dedicated to God as well as the male community for the sake of patriarchal rituals in the society. The term basavi refers to feminine form of Basava, a bull, which roams the village without any restrictions.¹² The Basavi is a devadasi who resembles the Basava, is free to move anywhere and anyplace in Karnataka and she was treated as public prostitute who was dedicated to god as well as male community for the sake of patriarchal rituals in the society.¹³ In Sanskrit devadasis are called deva parichharika or female attendants of the Lords. Oriya sabdakosa or lexicon '*Purnachandra Bhasakosa*', termed Devadasis as female dancing attendants of the god.¹⁴

The devadasi practice is one in which low caste girls as young as five or six are married to Hindu gods. However they were enjoying a high social status in the society. Kesari dynasty of south Orissa first time patronised this system. A queen from this dynasty decided to honour the gods by marrying women to the God. The girls used to appease the God by performing classical dance as well as serving the God. That Devadasis were popular having respectable status in the society because of two reasons: firstly she was the wife of god and secondly for her quality to control five senses or

control to natural impulses. That's why devadasi were considered as auspicious women in the society.'¹⁵

Prof. Rekha Pande adds a ritual as well as a political dimension to the system. According to her, 'the institution of devadasi was an intermediary institution between two patronisers of devadasis, the king and the priests. The king legitimized the priest's ritual status and the priest protected the king's tenures. She also says that the temple girls were the link between the god and the king and served to establish the power of the lord and to give it legitimacy in the eyes of people. The temple girls were an object of ritual exchange between royal court and temple.'¹⁶ They were also sexually exploited by temple patrons and higher caste Individuals.¹⁷

Thus the devadasi system probably became popular religious culture from 10th to 18th century A.D. in South India. The custom of devadasi which originated from sacred principles of Hindu religion changed its way towards an unholy culture after 18th century. If we will look back into our religious history we will find the sacredness was the main feature of the society. After 18th century when the temple lost their patronage, God's girls became people's girls. Auspicious women converted into mysterious women in the society. The tradition lost its sanctity, living wife of heaven god forced to adopt impure men of hell to survive. Devadasi once recognised as elite class women of the Indian society became the victim of changes of politics as well as changes of society. Leading to their marginalisation Oriya society was also not exceptional from this tradition of marginality. The process of making devadasi as people's dasi was effortlessly taking place here. However, the system of devadasi of Orissa was little different from other regions. In this chapter I am going to analyse about Devadasis of Orissa and how they became marginalized in the society when they had a designation of maha-nari or great women in the society.

Dance and Music of the Devadasi:

Music and dance was a common practice of the Oriya culture. The ancient and medieval art and architectures are the living example of this tradition. Devadasi dance might have migrated from south India to Orissa but the dance culture was a well versed tradition of Oriya people since ancient period.¹⁸ Kharavela, the great king of Orissa was very fond of dance and music. Khandagiri and Udayagiri cave walls contains many scenic images of and those times. The wall of Queen's cave and other caves depicts people enjoying dance and music. Even king Kharavela along with queens is shown watching it. Hatigumpha inscription also reflects on this. It explains how Kharavela organising music and dance to entertain people. He also was organizing wrestling and theatrical performances.¹⁹

Architecture of Orissa is the living examples of dance and musical tradition. Mukteswar Temple of seventh century contains dancing figures which Percy Brown describes as undoubtedly the work of a genius.²⁰

Music was popular custom of medieval Orissa. It was deeply connected with the socio and cultural life of the people. Mostly medieval music and dancing was related to religion and religious ideas. Devadasi dancing and music was one of the important religious rituals of the period. Although singing devotional songs in front of gods and goddesses were common in the Oriya society. Medieval Oriya literature basically eighteenth century literature provides plenty of information on music and dance which dominated all kind of celebration and rituals of the society. It's not only medieval stone art on the temple wall which is speaking about the richness of the Orissan art and architecture; it is also the Oriya literature which portrayed it as heritage. It may be Khandagiri cave sculpture or Kalingan temples, everywhere, importance of music and dance signified through the engraved stone images on the temple walls. Although this culture was gradually declining towards the end of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but literary heritage continued to stand as guardian of this music culture. *Abanarasa Taranga*, an eighteenth century work on Ramayan epic depicts about the music and dancing culture of Oriya people.²¹

Lord Jagannath of Orissa represented the whole Hindu society of the medieval Orissa. Lord Jagannath also considered the state god of the Oriya People. In the Jagannath Temple of Puri there were different categories of servants. It consisted of both male and small number of female servants who were called maharis or servants of god or devadasis whose duties was to perform dance in front of the god to entertain them. This idea to entertain god may be derived from puranic Philosophy based on Krishna Lila where Radha and her sakhis are portrayed as dancers, singers. Then this idea of Bhagavatism became popular in Orissa by Jayadeva who wrote *Gotagovinda* in which Lord Krishna along with his beloved Radha danced in romance. Singing and dancing became a common feature of Krishna culture and Jagannath is the incarnation Lord Krishna. Thus dancing and singing by devadasi in Jagannath Temple was a common practice during medieval and later medieval periods.

Palm leaf illustrations also show the existence of classical dance in Orissa. All dancing figures on palm leave indicate the Odissi style and posture of modern times. Dr. Charles Febri, a western indologist who print the name of Odissi dance (probably first time) in 1953 praised it and call it one of the most perfect classical systems of Indian dancing surviving..... How did it remain so long unknown to all except Orissans? He argues that Odissi is a more pristine; a more carefully preserved primitive form of natya and is nearer to the ancient Indian classical temple dancing. The discovery of Odissi should be hailed as one of the great events in recovering a dance much lost.²²

Medieval Orissa temples were decorated with dancing figures and engraved images. Basically Saiva temples of the medieval period have these figures. The Keshari kings of Orissa who were the follower of Saivism dedicated female dancers to the temple. Even one king of the dynasty was known as Nrutya Keshari or dancer Keshari. Ananta Vasudev Temple inscription of Bhubaneswar describes about the princess Chandrika, sister of king Anangavimadeva of Ganga dynasty proudly described her as an expert in dancing and playing musical instruments.²³ The sculpture of the Ananta Basudev Temple also shows the nine nayikas in Odishi dance posture expressing the nine poetical moods of Indian dance art of which few of them have survived today. Inscriptions of

Sobhaneswar temple at Niali and Megheswar temple at Bhubaneswar dated to twelfth century tested that devadasis were regularly appointed for the service of Lord Siva. The female dancing and musical images of the temples of the period such as Brahmasvera temple, Mukteswar temple, Rajarani Temple, Lingaraj Temple, Konark Temple represents the popularity of devadasi tradition in medieval Orissa.²⁴

Orissa style temple consists of four parts such as deula or sanctum, the Bhogamandir or the hall of offering, the Natamandir or the hall of dance, and Jagamohan or the hall of devotees. But in early period Orissa temple were constructed with one part or two/three parts. Bharateswar temple in Bhubaneswar has single tall sanctum with circular top but in the later stage one more part was added with main structure like sixth century Parsuramswar Temple of Bhubaneswar. During the reign of Keshari dynasty an extra part was added to the temple structure for dance purpose because Keshari rulers were music and dance lovers. During eleventh and twelfth centuries dance performances in temple became an integral ritual of the temple because these periods onwards temple construction contains natamandap or dancing hall.²⁵

Brahmeswar Temple, Rajarani Temple and Konark Temple are the master piece of this music culture. Dancing female images engraved on these temple walls are magnificent. Though the practice of constructing temple declining after the fall of Hindu dynasty in 1568 AD in Orissa but the tradition of dance and music was recorded through the way of literature. *Gitagovinda* of Jayadeva, a medieval work is the epic of dance and music of Orissan style. Practice of dancing and music did not face obstacles and it was carried on through the institution of religion. Dance and music which had religious connection due to its sacred approach to god and goddesses also gained momentum and became the common practice of Oriya culture.

Devadasi Tradition: Patronisers and Rituals... Through the Ages

In Orissa, we have evidences of devadasi tradition since Ganga age (940 – 1435 AD). Then it continued in Gajapati period (1435 – 1541 AD) and became a part of Oriya culture. This system was also known as mahari tradition means maha nari or women with highness or high status in the women society. During the period of Eastern Ganga rule in Kalinga regions, founder of this dynasty Anantaverman Chadangagadeva who was great devotee of Lord Siva appointed female dancers permanently in Siva temple of Madhukaswar at Mukhalingam.²⁶

A rock edict of Gajapati Kapilandradeva at Lakshmi Narasimha Temple, Simachalam indicates that he had appointed devadasis in this Siva temple to perform dance in front of the god.²⁷ The process of appointing maharis in temple became more popular during Gajapati period. Because Gajapati rulers were great devotees of Siva as well as Vishnu. Sampradayas or families basically who were dedicated to perform service to god emerged in South India as well as Orissa due to the rise of devadasi tradition. Daughters of Nayak family of Kalinga Mandala were donated to the temple of Mukhalingam.²⁸ A nachuni sampradaya also developed in Orissa during medieval period, they dedicated themselves towards the music and dancing profession.

During medieval time devadasi system also became hereditary. Girls belonging to particular family like kanyasmpradayamuvaru were dedicated for temple services.²⁹ Then Kapilendra Dev had conquered vast territories from Ganga in North to Kaveri in south. To win peoples belief was very important to sustain such a big empire. And religion was a unique weapon used by Gajapatis to show their welfare work towards the masses. Even they used Lord Jagannath as their symbol of administration and ruled over Orissa as his representative on earth.

Oriya people were more religiously orthodox. Probably this was the reason, rulers used religion to maintain a hold on the people. As a result god's women became the victim of this plan and became marginalized in their own society. Though they had been

enjoying social and religious and economic status in the society but their personal life was limited and restricted by kings and priests. However, devadasi's situation became more tragic after the decline of Hindu empire in 1568. Then their life turned into hell. During seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these gods women open secretly worked as prostitute.

The process of temple dancing was continued by Kapilendradeva's successor son Gajapati Purusottamdeva and grandson Prataprudradeva. Gajapati Purusottamdeva had arranged dancers and musicians for gods enjoyment. He appointed devadasis in Nrusinghnath Temple to perform dance and music in morning and evening. Purusottamdeva also started devadasi or singing and dancing rituals by girls in the Jagannath Temple.³⁰ Gajapati Purusottam Dev was a great patroniser of the music and dance in the temple. Temple chronicle Madalapanji refers that Padmavati, wife of Gajapati Prurusottam Deva was awarded the Gopa Sudhi in honour of her service to temple as Devadasi.³¹

After the decline of Hindu dynasty Afghans captured the power of Orissa. During their reign Hindu temples in Orissa plundered and vandalised. Konarak Temple was destroyed by a commander of Sultan of Bengal. Many times Jagannath Temple was attacked but it was saved. The idols were taken away from temple and kept underground for years. During the time of Mughals rule in Orissa, except Aurangzeb other Mughals were not showing their hostile attitude towards Hindu temples of Orissa. To continue dancing culture of temple during Mughal period Ramachandra Deva the king of Bhoi dynasty of Khorda who was appointed as superintendent of Jagannath temple by Mughals engaged boys and trained them to perform dancing rituals for Lord. Boy dancer were dressed up like female dancer and perform dance. These dancers are known as '*gotipua*' dance.³² However, Aurangzeb issued farmans to destroy Jagannath Temple. But fortunately it was saved by the effort of Oriya officials of Mughal administration.

In 1751, Marathas defeated Mughals and established its domination over Orissa. Maratha occupation over Orissa was primarily to extracts revenue. That's why they did

not interfere in the matter of religion and society. On other hand they provided facilities and systematic arrangement for the smooth administration of the Jagannath Temple. However the temple which had faced serious economic crisis due to the decline of Hindu dynasty forced the temple authorities to stop many rituals and traditions of temple. Among these rituals dancing and singing ritual which was performed by temple girls since the ages was targeted first and then due to financial crunch these girls of temples were not patronised.

Devadasis had a religious and social position in the medieval society. They were considered as auspicious. They were called for social and religious ceremonies to perform music and dance. We have example of women performing dance, playing musical instruments on the wall of Khandagiri caves. A sculpture of queen's cave of this hill is showing women musician and dancers performing.

Devadasis of Orissa were divided into two categories. According to the Ganga and Gajapati records some maharis remained unmarried and engaged with palace and religious work while other dancers were married and engaged in temple work as part time basis, means with less importance they were giving their service to god.³³ But devadasi means they had to marry Lord Jagannath and act as his human wife. Harapriya Devi married to Jagannath at the age of nine.³⁴ Harapriya who was also famous as Dunguri Mahari was an educated dancer and she was engaged in reading books, palm leaf works, epics, singing, dancing.³⁵

Devadasi in Orissa not only performed dance and music in front of the gods, they also performed mahari dance or devadasi nartya in front of the goddesses. We have examples like Jhankad and Kakatpur shakta temple where devadasis were dedicated to serve in the temples.³⁶ In the same way devadasi system was not only performed in the Visnu or Vaisnav Temples, it was also performed in Saiva temples. The eleventh century Lingaraj Temple has hall structure for performing devadasi dance. The temples and sculpture of Orissa also showed that people were active in religious music and dance. Konark Temple contains many female musician figures. Single dancing female figures

adorned with jewellery and body posture indicate that dancing and singing was part Oriya life. Female dancers had great value in the society in order to her religious role and public demand for entrainment purpose.

A copper plate inscription of Purusottam Deva describes that in Orissa a category or sampradaya named as nachuni existed during medieval period. And they were performing their duties as dancers, musicians in the invitation at natamandap as well as rajamandap. Prataprudradeva also arranged music and dance in Jagannath Temple. It is said both Oriya and Telugu girls were performed dance with Jayadeva's Gitagovinda song.³⁷

Oriya devadasis had to do her job with strict direction of the temple authorities as well as king's direction. They were the sacred wives of gods. They had to maintain a life of purity for their god husband and not allowed to marry. Before they became lord's servant they had to face trainings for rituals, songs, and dancing. After completion of these trainings in the presence of king and priest they were dedicated to lord Jagannath or others gods. Before performing dance in front of the god they had to purify their mind and body. They wear new dress and ornaments for this music ritual. Even a devadasi should not look at a man's face on that day.³⁸

On the other hand devadasi culture of Orissa was a culture of high class society. Brahmins, zamindars, and king were the main patronisers of this ritual. So the selection of devadasi depended on the priest and king's wish. Before appointing a devadasi officials had to investigate the gotra, fairness, caste, class of the girl. The devadasis must be from the high caste, girls from lower caste were not allowed to be devadasis of Lord Jagannath. The king was the head of temple administration. After getting letter from devadasi family he had to send the invitation letter to the repudiated person to verify girl's knowledge in dancing and singing. Apart from that her caste must be checked. If devadasi girl was not born of a devadasi mother or brother then she must be from high caste family. She should not be from *paniasprusisya* category or a caste who cannot give water to Brahmin or untouchable community.

The newly dedicated devadasi had to visit king's palace after her appointment into temple. Along with other devadasis she will go to palace and sit near the king. Then she was taken to king's bedroom to touch king's bed which was called *sejamariba*. Then both kings and new devadasi look at each other. This was a ritual called Milana or joining of each other. Then devadasi was considered as married. Because, here the king was the representative of the god, so Milan with king means it was Milana with god.³⁹ This was the ritual fixed for the king and devadasi relation. King was the first person who had the right control over devadasis. As the head of the temple king framed the rules and regulations for devadasis. In the name of religion, king involved with this unholy and unreligious activities by calling them into palace. Generally devadasis were dependent upon king's grants, gifts and patronization. When king face the financial crisis as well as political dilemma, he stopped all assistance to the temple girls. As a result devadasis were facing the crisis. It was very difficult to live on the donation from devotees. During eighteenth and nineteenth centuries devadasis were not getting much donation as they previously secured. The devotees had a bad impression regarding devadasis due to their involvement with palace. People were thinking that devadasis were the concubines of the kings. Financial crisis also forced the king to take away the donated land to the devadasis of the temple. In this way devadasis were facing religious, economic and social negligence and marginalized in the Oriya society.

Devadasis of Jagannath had two rituals in a day. The *baharagouni*, whose duties are fixed for outside services of temple such as dance at the morning ritual or sakhal dhupa. Then they had to dance near the garuda stamba or garuda pillar of temple. They were accompanied by musicians and the rajgurus. This dance was also enjoyed by audience. Then *bhitargouni* or inside maharis who were appointed for inside work of the temple would sing at the badsinghar besa and at the time of Lord Jagannath's bed time rituals were accompanied by the dance performance with *Gitagovinda* songs. After this ritual she announced that lord has gone to sleep and the main gate closed by guard. Bhitara gaouni or inside devadasis had more importance than outside devadasis. Because

inside devadasi had to perform rituals as god's wife and give personal service to the god. Priests were the controller of these devadasis.

In Orissa, the first evidence of devadasi has been found in the Brahmasvar Temple of eleventh century (1058 AD or eighteenth regnal year of the king Udyota Keshari) . Brahmaeswar temple inscription⁴⁰ of Kolavati of Somavamsi dynasty indicates that women and girls were dedicated to the temple for singing and dancing purpose. According to this inscription Kolavati, mother of King Udyota Keshari dedicated three pretty girls to god Bhrameswar.⁴¹ Temple sculpture also attested the importance of female dancer and musician. At prominent place of the temple female musician relief is engraved with elaborate depiction. These panels are indicated the popularity of this temple dancing and musical tradition. It is first time Brahmesvar temple panels have shown the importance of deavadasi tradition in temple rituals. Kolavati's dedicated girls to the temple were beautiful and talented in profession. Inscription of the temple describes them as:

*"Kolavati, were given some beautiful women to Siva who had eyes like that of the fickle and who were bright like the sparkling and immovable lightings of the sky by the exquisite beauty of their limbs, adorned with gemmy ornaments, of lovely heavy swollen bosoms, piercing through eyes of men, like the beam of their own eye."*⁴²

Brhamesvara temple inscription which was removed from the temple have been lost forever. No evidence of this inscription has preserved except James Prinsep's records.⁴³

Meghaswar and Sovaneswar temples are also providing some evidences on deavadasi culture of medieval Orissa.⁴⁴ The Sobhaneswar temple inscription mentioned about the Devadasi system prevailing in the temple of Lord Sobhaneswar. This temple loacated in Niyali Sasan, Utkala desa or modern Cuttack region. Sobhanesvara temple was constructed by the king Vaidyanath. Accordint to the inscription the king had dedicated beautiful sweet damsel whose lips and eyes were looking like heaven dancers.⁴⁵

Madalapanji also providing information on the devotional dance and song was played in the Jagannath Temple. King Narasima Dev-I (1238-1264 AD) made this system to be performed on daily basis.⁴⁶ Devadasis also became a category of servants of Jagannath Temple among *chhatisanijogs* means thirty six categories of servants for Jagannath.⁴⁷

According to R.C. Mishra Deavadasi system was a tradition since eight century to nineteenth century known as 'Mahari' or nachuni of temple patronized by the monarchs.⁴⁸ This religious tradition became the source of status identification for the high class or royal class people who showed their image and power by dedicating girls to the temple to take care and attract the devotees through their singing and dancing qualities. During Keshari period in Orissa, saiva cult flourished in Orissa and Bhubaneswar was the centre of this cult. Shiva temples were the main centres for the dance art. Probably dance was a common ritual of the temple because all the important temples of the medieval period were having natamandapa or dancing hall. Konark Temple, Lingaraj Temple, Jagannath Temple, and some other temples situated in Bhubaneswar also having natamandapa for dance performance in front of the gods. Perhaps this was the main reason behind the construction of natamandap with main temple. After the decline of Keshari dynasty Buddhism, Jainism, Shaktism and Saivism also declined and Vaishnavism emerged on the rise of Jagannathism.

Chodagangadeva (1077-1150 AD) of ganga dynasty employed women singers, musicians at the Puri Temple and provided various grants to them. During Narasimha Deva's time temple dancers received patronage from state treasury. A temple inscription describes that Chandravati, daughter of Narasimha Deva gave instruction to the people engaged in the temple construction to decorate walls with dancing poses.⁴⁹

Madalapanji or Jagannath Temple Chronicle has recorded about devadasi tradition which was an important ritual of temple. It describes that *Gitagovinda* songs were introduced in Jagannath Temple a daily service of devadasis by Ganga ruler Narasimhadeva- I (1238-1264 AD).⁵⁰ But this tradition declined during fourteenth century AD due to the attack of Sultan Saha on Jagannath Temple. Again this tradition

emerged during the time of Surya dynasty. Sri Chaitanyadeva and his disciple Ramananda tried to reconstruct the lives of devadasis in temples. Even Ramananda, the minister of Gajapati Prataprudradeva, arranged stage for devadasis in the temple premises to play devotional Sanskrit dramas like *Jagannath Balhabha*, *Chaitanya Charitamata*. Ramanda himself played a sakhi role in one of drama.⁵¹ Devadasis were advised to only sing epic, religious poems and *Gitagovinda*. Their dance was also based on spiritual and religious principles.⁵² During fourteenth century a new sect of dance emerged in Odisha which was called '*gotipua nrutya*'. In this tradition young boys were dressed like girls and performed religious dance. However, mahari and gotipua dance could not save the mahari dance from impurity and it started declined.

W. W. Hunter in his records has given an elaborate description of the festivals and rituals of the Jagannath temple. Through his work '*History of Orissa*', he has given special focus on Jagannath of Puri and its religious importance. He also gives information about female servants and dancing girls who were integral part of the temple rituals. Dancing girls of the temple performed many roles for the god Jagannath such as mother, wife etc. during the celebration of birth festival of Lord Krishna. Jagannath is considered as incarnation of Lord Visnhu. So according to the rituals of the temple priests played the role of father and mahari played the role of mother of Lord Jagannath.⁵³ Thus the priest and Maharis had husband and wife relation in the rituals. Probably this was a cause for mahari to have sexual relation with priests.

Hunter has given details of Rath Yatra or Chariot festivals and rituals performed during the festivals. Devadasis along with priests played important role in this festival, under the king who was the chief servant and patroniser of the temple. Devadasi according to Hunter, with rolling eyes put the mutest female worshiper to the blush.⁵⁴ The female devotees or worshipers became sentimental when they saw the mahari or gods wife. Jagannath culture became the life of the Oriya culture. Religion became everything for the people of the medieval Orissa. Even people were sacrificing their lives under the wheels of chariot Jagannath at the time of Rath Yatra.⁵⁵

Jagannath cult was based on egalitarian principles; all are equal in front of god. But this tribal religious cult was polluted by immoral Brahmanical ideologies. According to the myth and chronicles of Jagannath temple, Lord Jagannath belongs to the tribal people who were living in the forest. They worshiped him in the name of Nilamadhaba in ancient period. However, Kalinga King Indradumnya saw a dream that god Nilamadhaba wanted to come to Nilanchala or Puri. Then King sent his messenger (Vidyapati) to bring god who married the daughter of Biswamitra, the leader of tribes for this. But he could not bring the Lord to Puri because god did not want to come as Nilamadhaba. He wished to come with different name and frame. Thus Lord Nilamadhab again came into the dream of Indradumnya and said he will come to Puri as Darubrahma or god of wood-trunk and these wood trunks king can collect from the sea bank. Accordingly king collected the trunks and kept in the ritual place. But the king and people of the state were confused that there was no frame of god's image or shape. They are just tree trunk only. In this mean time Indradumnya got sunyabani or direction from sky that from these trunks he should make idols of gods. Then king invited best carpenters of the state but nobody were willing to take the challenge of making the idols. At last an old and physically weak carpenter came and said he would do it with certain condition. The conditions were: till the completion of twenty one days, the doors of the rooms would not be opened. It was approved by the king. The old carpenter started his work in that closed rooms. Unfortunately after seven days when no sound of idol making came from room, the queen forced the king to open the door. When the king opened the door he found that the four idols namely Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarsan were half made. Most importantly the old carpenter had disappeared.

Thereafter, four idols are being worshiped by Oriya People since ages. It was Ganga ruler Anantaverman Chodangagadeva (1077 -1147 AD) who began constructing a temple which was completed by his son Anangabhimadeva III (1211-1238 AD). This temple is known as Jagannath Temple of Puri which is standing as tall and magnificent example of Orissa temple architecture or Kalinga style of architecture. In this way a tribal god was appropriated into the mainstream culture and merged in the cultural life of the people of Orissa. Lord Nilamadhab even today is being worshiped in the region of

Kantilo, in Nayagarh District of Orissa. Some tribes who were worshipping Nilamadhaba before Lord Jagannath's incarnation were also invited to join as servants of Jagannath Temple. But the tribal people who were worshipping Jagannath as Nilamdhab believed in equality, morality, spirituality and justice while these ideologies were not adopted in Jagannath Cult though the origin of this cult is of tribal religion. Gradually this Jagannath cult got influenced by various immoral, unholy principles made by priests and kings from time to time for their personal enjoyments and benefits.

Hunter also focuses on the discriminative attitude of the priests towards low caste people. According to the Jagannath culture, all religion, caste, creed, race is equal in front of Lord Jagannath. But in course of time some restrictions were imposed on the lower caste people. He argues that it was a gross violation of the faith of the Vaisnavite people.⁵⁶ These restrictions and bane on the lower caste or non Aryan people also extended to the women of bad character. Temple dancing girls were excluded from equal status with other devotees.⁵⁷ Thus it was not only that they violated the egalitarian feature of the Jagannath Cult but also draw a line between bad character women or prostitutes and privileged women who were having sexual relation with priest. But the difference between the bad and good women signified by priests under the banner of religion, as religion was the main weapon of the medieval period to play with the emotion of the people. That's why all evil traditions prevalent in the Oriya society are related to Brahmanical principles. On other hand devadasis who were having sexual relation with priest were granted *maha nari* or great women status in the society even after they were involved immoral works as per the Hindu shastras. The society under the lordship of Brahmins practiced double standards and this different for upper and lower castes. Thus we can say that women were not bad or good but they were designated as bad women and good women by Brahmanical principles of the period.

Devadasi for jagannath temple were adopted from various sources such as existing Devadasi could adopt a girl and train her in dance, singing to perform dance for Jagannath's entertainment. King and zamindars were also dedicated and provided girls as Devadasi. Some people in the name of religion, ritual and duty to god dedicated their teen

girls to the temple as Devadasi. Their service and dedication to god was considered as noble and status symbol for the family. These Devadasi girls married to Jagannath and acted as wife of god by using vermilion on head and bangles in ankle. Devadasis were also performing widow ritual at the time of *Nabakalebara*.⁵⁸

Nabakalebara is a festival of Lord Jagannath. This festival only happened when two *ashadh* according to the Hindu lunar calendar will fall in one year. These months are called *purusottam* months. In this *Nabakalebara* festival the old wood idols replace by new wood idols of gods. However, *brahmapadartha* or soul-substances remains the same. Means the soul or *brahma* is transferred from old idols to new idols which are generally made from Neem wood. Old idols of gods are buried under the earth at the place called *Koili Baikuntha* or one of heaven according to the Jagannath cult. This ritual called *patali* and event observed as *asoucha bidhi* or Hindu rituals for dead persons.⁵⁹ Devadasis, the wife of Lord Jagannath were observing this event by breaking bangles and removing vermilion on forehead and becoming widows.

Jagannath's wife or dasi should be fair and beautiful. Unlike South India, Oriya devadasis were not chosen from lower class family, they should be from high class and gentle and noble family. Ugly looking girls were not selected. There are some methods to select god's wife. The Sobhaneswar Temple inscription describes that devadasis as fairies from heaven in whose sweet lips there was the nectar, with large dark eyes, in whose mouth, waist and other parts of the body were stambana and mohan and other charms. They were graceful with various types of ornaments.⁶⁰ Brahmeswar temple inscription also describes about the beauty and charm of devadasis. Medieval temple of Orissa such as Konark, Jagannath Temple, Rajarani Temple contains the beautiful dancing girls image with decorative ornaments and postures.⁶¹ The beauty of devadasis seems to be very important and their selection from high class family only also makes some indication of mind game of temple authorities as well as priest of the temple. Probably it was a pre plan religious business method to attract peoples towards temple and used their beauty for earning money. Authorities also ordered devadasis to strictly follow the rules of the temple. Even officials were employed in the resident areas of devadasis to keep

watching their movements and life style. It means there were systematic vigilance and administration for devadasis. They were always under the strict guidance and direction of the authorities.

Devadasis of Orissa: Marginalized women of the period

*“Under the grab of tradition the attempt to keep alive the devadasi system at Jagannath Puri is instance of gender injustice in Orissa” – Biswamaya Pati*⁶²

Devadasis of Jagannath were dedicated servants. But due to the changes in political scenario in Orissa many changes occurred in society as well as religious life. As a result devadasis were bound to adopt such changes in their lives. With the change of society devadasis sifted their services from heavenly gods to the earthly gods like kings, zamindars, and priests. Women who were dedicated to the temple to provide religious services to the god started leading a life of prostitute with religious sanction.⁶³ Temple dancing women projected as religious and sacred women but in reality they were engaged in prostitution. Even a special category of women emerged due to the dancing culture of the temple. A fourteenth century inscription of Simachalam Temple describes, a special class of women who were related to temple dancing rituals emerged with a status and name known as kanya sampradaya or women of celibacy.⁶⁴

The devadasis had an auspicious status in the society due to her relation with god became inauspicious. Devadasis thought that king was their god and they could dedicate to him or act according to him because king was the patroniser. In the same way Devadasi also considered temple priest and servants had rights on them and they should respect their wish and orders. On the other hand, previously religion was a matter of fear and respect. In the name of religion, if someone did anything wrong, people did not believe because they had strong faith on god, priest, and king. However, frequent attacks on Jagannath Temple and decline of Hindu dynasty probably weaken the people's belief

on Jagannathism. The rise of non Hindu rule in Orissa and degradation of morality influenced the lives of female servants of Jagannath temple. They became the victims of male temple servants and zamindars of Orissa as well as Bengal. Because they lost their patronisers due to the non Hindu rulers in Orissa. Financial burden and frequent attacks on temple forced them to chose immoral paths. Devadasis were religious girls of god but all were not chaste and pure. Because they were not only closely associated with temple but also with the palace of the king who was the living god and husband for them.⁶⁵

Devadasi system faced challenges in Orissa due to political and economic changes. Devadasi girls had started marring due to uncertain future during seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Some Devadasi are engaged in teaching, nursing while some of them chosen dancing and prostitution. The age old tradition faced critical conditions and economic crisis due to Muslim rule in Orissa. Eighteenth century which was a period of anarchy in Orissa also witnessed the same condition of Devadasis. Lack of patroniser and political conflict between Muslims and Marathas created fear among the temple servants. Many times god's idols were attacked and probably idlols were burned. When god's life is in threat and god was taken away from temple and kept in unknown places many times in fear of Muslim attack at that situation who thought about Devadasi. When temple was closed and ritual was stopped Devadasis became jobless. To sustain in the society she had to choose a path of earning which was difficult for a women. However, she preferred to earn though her talent of dancing and singing and these professions were related to palace and public. As a result Devadasi became Rajadasi as well as Lokasakhi or lokadasi. After Gajapati Prataprudra Dev, Devadasi worked as courtesans in the palace and they were not treated as god's wives. The economic condition of deavadasis deteriorated during Muslim rules in Orissa and it worsened when invaders frequently attacked on Lord Jagannath Temple.⁶⁶

Due to Islamic invasion, Orissa lost many temples and some famous temples stopped services also. Then devadasis lost their patronisers and jobs and started searching new works for their livelihood. Though we do not have direct evidence about the 'Mahari dancers' entry into brothel work but we cannot deny their link with this job. Because after

losing jobs, they searched for jobs on the basis of their talent of dancing and singing. These professions were generally related to royal courts and public entertainment before it got religious sanction as devadasi. Then after losing patroniser they were again forced to choose these paths. As they were already married to God, they could not marry second time as social rules of Hindu society prohibit remarriage. Thus we cannot deny that devadasis did not adopt prostitution for their existence in the society.

The Afghan rule in Odisha (1568 – 1593) was followed by Mughals. They had issued number of farmans to destroy Hindu temples. As a result many temples were destroyed in Orissa. Even Aurangzeb issued order to destroy Jagannath Temple.⁶⁷ Jagannath Temple was invaded and plundered eighteen times in history.⁶⁸ Before Aurangzeb, in 1340 AD Illias Saha sultan of Bengal invaded Orissa during the reign of Narasinghadeva-III. Firoj Saha Tughlaq attacked Orissa in 1360 AD. In 1509 the sultan of Bengal again invaded. Then Kalapahad attacked Jagannath Temple in 1568 AD and this year was marked as the end of Hindu rule in Orissa and beginning of Muslim rule in Orissa. During Mughal reign in Orissa, temples were also attacked by Muslim soldiers as well as Hindu commanders. Mukkaram Khan, appointed as governor of Orissa by Jahangir, attacked the temple in 1617 AD. Then Mirza Ahammad Beg, the nephew of Nurjahan attacked and plundered it in 1621 AD. In 1647 Amir Fateh Kahan attacked and plundered the temple. In 1692 Aurangzeb ordered to destroy Jagganth Temple. Taqi Khan, the governor of Orissa invaded the Temple in 1731 and 1733 AD.⁶⁹ But it was saved by Khorda kings cleverly. Then devadasis survival started dancing in the court of zamindars, land lords, and royal courts for their survival. Devadasis had different life styles and social as well as political status in the Oriya society. Due to the designation of god's wife and servant they could not go back to the society and live like common people. Therefore, they preferred to perform dance in the courts and private functions. Their position and status started declining. Devadasi who was once considered gods women now became kings or zamindars women. Even they were called public women.⁷⁰

Jagannath Temple was the centre of devadasi tradition in medieval Orissa. During mid eighteenth century, Marathas came to power in Orissa by dethroning Mughals. They

had rearranged this devadasi system and also other rituals of Jagannath temple which was stopped during Muslim rules in Orissa. But these steps could not save them from declining. Due to the Muslim invasion, many Islamic traditions influenced Oriya society and of them purdah tradition had great impact on Orissa Culture. Gradually Oriya women lost their freedom. Society became more rigid in case of women's free movement and public participation. On other hand political anarchy and patriarchal hegemony of priests in temples did not allow them to sustain their past position and glory in the society. The Orissa Gazette of 1956 lists nine devadasis and eleven temple (Jagannath) musicians. In 1980 only four devadasi were left.⁷¹

According to Marglin in 1955 Jagannath Temple had thirty three Devadasis and it come down to nine in 1975. Then it came down to four and the last four devadasis were: Amrapali, Brindavati, Radha, and Lalita. In 1986 it had four devadais – Kokilaprabha, Haripriya, Indumati, and Sasimani.⁷² And after the death of Sasimani (2015), the last devadasi of Jagannath Temple this religious music cum dance came to an end in Orissa. The legacy of this devadasi culture can be seen through Odissi dance.⁷³

Mahari or maha nari or great women of Puri were getting special attention from temple administration. For them special and separate colonies were constructed at Puri. A *Mina Nayak* or vigilance officer was appointed who was residing at the end of colony to look after their moral behaviour.⁷⁴ According to Pandit Sadashiva Rath Sharma there were strong royal orders for the maharis of the colony and they had to follow it. Strong orders were given to the Pretty dancers at the time of recruitment who committed to remain unmarried. It is indicating that devadasis or maharis were appointed in the name of god and enjoyed by god's representative like king and servant priests.

Mayadhara Mansingh states that there were six categories of devadasis and of them one category was *raja angila*. These Devadasi's bodies were for the king only. The other category was Gahan mahari. These maharis were only for the inner apartment service and were not sacred servants of the god.⁷⁵ Although maharis were motivated and thinking that service to king is like service to god because he was the shadow of

Jagannath. Priests were the servant of Lord Jagannath so they were also part of god. However, Leslie's view on devadasi ritual is different. She says that the ritual performed by devadasis can be interpreted as tantric ceremony where sexual relation or union was a ritual in tantra.⁷⁶

Devadasi colony at Puri was also known as *anga-alas-patana* or the place where people may enjoy relaxation. It is the clear evidence of the sexual exploitation by the authorities in the name god. A sexual institution in the premise of religious and spiritual place like Puri was established by the people who were sacred and very close to the Lord Jagannath. Devadasi were not only appointed for god's service they but also directed to serve non-gods who were the special guests of the king and priests. The king and zamindars were secretly arranging plan for sexual pleasure and business through their people and officials targeting and manipulating temple devadasis who were the soft pray for them.⁷⁷

Wives of the God King written by F A Marglin who visited Puri many times for her research project on Devadasis of Jagannath. She was also trained in Bharatnatyam, Kathkali and Odissi. This work is a marvellous piece as far as devadasi culture of Orissa is concerned. At the time of her visit to Orissa Jagannath Temple had a numbers of devadasis who were rendering their service to god. During her field work, she had taken interviews from devadasis and many devadasis become friend of Marglin. This friendship provided her opportunities to collect primary information through interviews and friendships. According to Marglin most famous devadasis of the period were Amrapalli, Brundavati, Radha, and Lalita who shared their life experiences with her. Thus this work is a reliable one for research on devadasi women of Orissa. Apart from this Sadashiv Rath Sharma, of the same period provided many documents related to devadasi tradition to Marglin.

Marglin argues that every temples of India engaged devadasis according to their size and fame. They performed temple rituals such as dancing and singing. During their performance, devadasi used grace and lascivious attitude. Besides, two time rituals for

god they also helped at other events and occasions such as public ceremony where they can dance and sing. Immediately after the public business is over devadasi opened their cells of infamy and convert the temple itself into a stew.⁷⁸

Devadasi performance was a part of temple earning tradition. Through this graceful and seductive dance performance, temples were able to attract devotees from other states like Bengal. This tradition was working as a source of revenue generation institution for authorities and patronisers. Abdul Razzaq, a Persian traveller who visited the Vijayanagar Kingdom in fifteenth century remarks that the prostitution of dancing was a great source of revenue to the kingdom and out of the income of the dancing girls the entire of the upkeep police was paid.⁷⁹

To attract devotees devadasi were well trained in seductive postures and dancing movements. Even teen aged devadasi were trained to whom they will seduce.⁸⁰ Duboise in his work '*Hindu Custom, Manner Tradition*' also criticized this temple tradition. He says that such is the outline of the religious ceremonies of the Hindu and such the spirit of idolatry which prevails among them. A religion more shameful or indecent has never existed among a civilized people.⁸¹

Devadsis were gods slave and they dedicated themselves to serve the god. Their chastity and purity was the main feature of this system. However, subsequently due to the political changes in Orissa and the rise of non Hindu rulers in Jagannath state, kings, zamindars, and rich class people wielded their debasing influence on them and forced the temple girls to embrace prostitution to survive. Rekha pande's view on these sacred prostitutes is different. She argues that it is doubtful that all devadasi of the temple practiced prostitution.⁸² She also says that 'we don't have evidences that devadasis were prostitutes but after Britishers came to India they were all practicing prostitution as the temples had lost their patronise.'⁸³

Devadasi were engaged into sex work in religious institutions in Orissa. We have many examples regarding this system. Mayadhar Mansingh, a notable literary figure of Orissa in his work '*The Saga of the Land of Jagannath*' has mentioned about devadasis

involvement in prostitution. In this work Mansingh describes that in 1969 January he met a god's servant named Radhesyam Patri of Baldevajiu Temple, Kendrapara and from him he came to know that the prostitution of young Devadasis continued. Common people as well as temple servants were involved in this immoral act of Temple Prostitution.⁸⁴ Benudhara Patra also argues that devadasi system was gradually affected by immoral and unholy ideology. This institution lost its pious character and rituals became a daily duty rather than a devotional ritual. He also states that poverty ridden devadasis of Orissa forced to chose other sources of income for their survival. They were only provided food. The gifts and grants by the kings and Zamindars also stopped. In this condition, devadasis enter into immoral acts like prostitution to earn money for their need.⁸⁵

Sukumari Bhattacharji also argues that 'Temple prostitutes were bought and given to the temple. It was a practice of the ancient period of India. Donors of prostitutes became rich. The host of prostitutes of sun god went to the region of the sun after death, this was a belief.'⁸⁶ Ancient work *Lalitavistar* provides some information regarding temple girls. It describes that women who carried full pitchers, garlands, jewellery, and ornaments, the throne, the fan jars full of perfumed water etc. and pretty damsel were giving light personal service to the king are projected to heaven where the earthly prostitutes figure as celestial nymphs serving the gods whether in earth or in heaven monarchs or wealthy potentates used such women to enhance their glory and pleasure.⁸⁷

Devadasi system which had a noble cause and religious sanctity changed its ideology to serve priests and patrons and worshipers. Historical study reveals that sacred prostitution was established and grew in Indian society. *Anagabhoga*, *Rangabhoga*, *sayanbhoga* all words were developed during medieval times, and these words are related to the devadasi tradition which indicating that sexual exploitation of devadasis was prevalent.⁸⁸

Devadasis were performing dance in front of the Jagannath where Chaitanya was sitting near the *garudastambha* and praying Lord Jagannath with full of tears in eyes every day for eighteenth years.⁸⁹ This place had a special importance where Devadasi

performed rituals for god. The place where Devadasis performed dance was considered sacred and auspicious land. After dance was over devotees, young, old men and women were rolling over the ground where devadasis had performed dance.⁹⁰ During medieval time, mahari dance was considered as heavenly art and maharis were the goddesses of the temple. The ground touched by their foot turned into holy ground. To see their performances was considered as a blessing of god. However, in course of time, the decline of spiritual mentality influenced the life of devadasis. The devotees who were watching their dance inside the temple became vocal outside. The priest and servants of Jagannath who were taking care of them as wives of god started making them illegitimate wives. The king who once considered as god of devadasis begun to act like legitimate husband of devadasis.

Maharis of the temple had only relation with priests and kings. They were not allowed to live a normal life in the society due to their relation with gods' as wife. Devadasi of lord Jagannath were treated as state employee and enjoyed the land grant by kings and zamindars. They were granted landed properties for their livelihood and also given money annually.⁹¹ According to the temple rules, maharis were forbidden to marry and have sexual relation. But they were allowed to adopt a daughter from high caste who could be next devadasi. However, the impurity and unethical principles affected this holy tradition.

During sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, devadasis were not only engaged in the temple service and rituals, they were also diverted to work in the royal court. It was the time of Ramchandra Deva's (1568-1598 AD) reign in Orissa when Orissa was captured by Muslims in 1568 AD. Then Jagannath Temple and some other important temples and Hindu religious places were destroyed due to the Islamic power in the state. Devadasis lost their jobs during these times. Ramachandra Dev ordered that devadasis were needed to entertain the royal court and palaces. Then it extended to Zamidar class and lastly into public sphere.⁹²

Ramayan and Mahabharat have not mentioned about the temple girls or dancers of temple. But we have examples of female dancers who were performing dance in the public functions. Courtesan culture or dancing in the royal court was prevalent. But dancing to entertain the god was not prevalent. While Lord Ram and Sita returns from exile to home for their welcome *ganikas* were instructed to dance with musical band. But Devadasi culture did not existed during epic era. Probably these public dancers or prostitutes inculcated into temple culture and as a result, devadasi tradition emerged. Although it is a debatable topic that devadasis were drawn from impurity to purity or they were diverted from purity or religious girls to impure women.

Dhirendra Nath Patnaik in his books on Odissi dance analyses that Muslims established their power over Orissa and Oriya kings and zamindars worked under the Muslim chiefs. The moral degeneration started in Hindu temples as well as in temple rituals. During Muslim reign Orissa maharis who were only entitled to work for god and temple rituals employed in royal courts. The devadasis who were called maha-nari or human wife of the god came to be associated with concubinage.⁹³

There were many factors which led to the decline of this institution. Though some other reasons such as poverty, strict principles for devadasis and rigorous training in childhood were responsible for the decline of this tradition as well as maharis life and position in the society. On the other hand political turmoil that started after the decline of Hindu dynasty in 1568 AD and religious immorality forced to an artistic community towards degradation and prepared a platform for the Afghan and Mughal rule until 1751, and at last till British occupied Orissa in 1803. This devadasi practice was stopped in 1993 when the devadasi of Jagannath Kokilaprabha died. But the final curtain of this custom had drowned in 2015 with the death of Sasimani, the last human wife of Lord Jagannath.

Research on Devadasi system of eighteenth century Orissa is a difficult task. Non availability of sources on devadasis and women folk of Orissa was a big challenge to do research on it. On the other hand eighteenth century was a period of anarchy in Orissa.

Secondly non Oriyas were ruling over Orissa. Thirdly, the outsider rulers primary objectives was to collect revenues as much as possible. So they were not looking after the social and economic progress of the people. During this period, Jagannath Temple had many devadasis and female servants of god. According to the post independent records of Orissa government on devadasi of Puri temple, thirty devadasis were involved with temple at this time. In 1975 only nine Devadasi were working in temple.⁹⁴ But during those times Devadasi were not enjoying any religious or social status in Orissa. According to Marglin, priests of temple did not fully cooperate with them. Even during the time of chariot and nabakalebar festivals Devadasis were neglected and some rituals were omitted knowingly. Devadasis did not have courage to raise voice against these arbitrary changes of temple rituals. But still devadasi were continuing their duties in the temple. Though, they were famous during these times as concubine and courtesan. Due to their bad reputation, temple priests and authorities were against devadasis working in temple. Previous devadasis had performed widowhood when nabakalebar festival occurred and but they were not considered as inauspicious as widows but auspicious because she was the wife of Jagannath. But in post independence era they were not allowed into inner sanctum where they were performing dance in past to entertain lord. This kind of discrimination with devadasis establishes their link with prostitution and royal court. It led to the decline of this community and made them a marginalized group in the society.

Marglin provides some evidences regarding devadasi practice in the society. Through her research she narrates all her experiences with maharis of the god king and information about the reality of devadasis. Marglin has good relation with temple devadasis. She used to go their home and taking interviews with them. As an Odissi dancer devadasis also liked her and shared many things which are untold and secret for common people. Amrapali was a devadasi of Jagannath during later part of the twentieth century. She had four adopted daughters whom she married by avoiding tradition of devadasis daughter could not marry. One of her daughter married within the group of devadasis and married Pankaj Charan Das⁹⁵ son of devadasi Brundavati. Pankaj became a teacher of a government music school and dance in the capital. But elite class and urban

people did not send their daughters for training to the school of Pankaj because he belongs to devadasis family. Even people were passing comments by calling him as a son of prostitute devadasis.⁹⁶ It is not only the king and temple servants who were involved to make devadasis prostitute but also society did not allow living with them. These gods' wives knew as prostitute of temple and palace. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries period social boycott to this devadasi community confined themselves to reside in particular area like modern days prostitutes stay. It was the society and politics as well as religious diplomacy to force these temple dancers into prostitution and made them as a marginalized community in the eighteenth century Orissa.

We have information regarding devadasis community's marginalization process. Devadasi Amrapali of Jagannath was expelled from service for one year by the king. Her fault was that she married her daughter off to a man without informing the king. This led to her *deula basanda* or being expelled from the temple services. According to Marglin she was once called by the king Ramchandradeva to the palace and he asked her to have sex with him. But Amrapali refused and thus the king removed her from temple service. At age of twenty Amrapali retired from temple service. Even she was not interested to continue in the service after her insult by king. Other devadasis were also criticised for Amrapali's decision by refusing king's words. They argued that it was the insult to king because he was the god, and they could not refuse him.⁹⁷

Devadasi knew that they were patronized by the king for the sake of sexual exploitation and business in the name of religion. Denying the king meant losing their job. This was the real picture of devadasis system prevalent during these times in Orissa. Zamindars and many rich people from Calcutta and other regions of India were frequently visiting Puri for sexual enjoyment with temple dancers. For this they were paying heavy amount to the patrons.

Radha was another Devadasi of Jagannath temple and contemporary of Amrapali. Radha had told to Marglin all secrets of devadasi while other devadasi did not. She said that it is the tradition to keep relation with Brahmins of the temple and the king.⁹⁸ She

also explained that her mother dedicated her to the Lord Jagannath as devadasi. Her mother did not belong to devadasi community. At the age of eleven she achieved her puberty. According to the tradition, she had exchanged garlands with a panda of Jagannath temple who provided her shelter to stay. It was custom for devadasis to keep relation with temple servants only and not with outsiders. But other devadasis are not following it and keeping relation with outsiders to earn money.⁹⁹ This was the condition of devadasis who were facing financial crunch and shelter problems. They had to depend on their adopted mother's property or help from priests to get a house for staying and earning money through other ways. Even through sexual relation she was arranging her house to stay in Puri. These were the reasons devadasi daughters were not showing any interest to adopt this tradition because it was no more a prestigious custom like in the past. Now they were known as prostitutes of the temple and palace.

Like Radha, Brundavati the contemporary of Radha and Amrapali also argued to have first sexual relation with the king because he was the living god for them. So after first puberty a devadasi should offer her to king for sexual relation. If the king wished to have sex relation with devadasis then they had to obey his order and fulfil his wish. Even king sometime called temple girls to palace and asked them to have sexual relation with his guests.

Devadasis of the period were facing severe financial problems. Even the king was not providing help for rituals of Jagannath. Devadasis had to arrange it by their own or asked help from rich people. Though it was the king's duty to provide all support to organize festivals and rituals of the temple but they were not in condition to do this. Since 1568 AD Orissa kings were under the Muslim rule. During eighteenth century, the conflict between Muslim and Maratha over Orissa led to instability. In this situation Oriya kings were not in condition to provide financing help to the devadasis. On the other hand, political instability and frequent attacks on Jagannath Temple by Muslim soldiers made the situation more volatile. Devadasis who depended on the temple rituals and patronisers faced economic crisis due to this attacks on temple. The numbers of devotees coming from across the country started declining. Thus the gifts and money devadasis

were getting from devotees also stopped. So financially, maharis were in critical situation. Probably these were the reasons behind their marginalization status. Once in Jagannath Temple more than fifty devadasis were working but in 1977 it came down to only nine. And in 2015, the last devadasi passed away. Along with financial problem the decline of social dignity and religious status did not encourage the children of devadasis to adopt this tradition. The entry of sexualism into devadasi tradition brought degradation in the institution. Negligence of temple authorities and the king forced the devadasis to choose work in public domain. To survive in the society they adopted various ways to earn. Even they earned money by welcoming their guest into their house. A holy and sacred women who was once worshiped as wife of god was forced to be marginalized in the society.

Lalita the contemporary of Radha has given some logical reason behind their marginalization. In a conversation with Marglin she said that now a day's people were thinking of devadasis are prostitutes. They are no more the wives of god or sacred. That was the reason she had left the temple rituals. Even many of the elder devadasis are not performing rituals due to shame and financial problems. Their children were also facing embarrassment due to their mother's involvement with temple rituals. On the other hand, people were giving gifts and money at the time of performance but that gift system also stopped. Patronisers were giving land grant for the maintenance of devadasis. But these days land given to devadasis has been taken away by the king. They did not have land, home, and money to survive in the society?¹⁰⁰

Thus the process of marginalization of devadasis happened just after the decline of Hindu dynasty in Orissa. Muslim attacks on Jagannath Temple forced to close the temple many times. Then the Hindu kings and patroniser of devadasis stopped patronising devadasis due to the financial crisis after losing power to Muslims. Devadasis were not chaste because they had relations with temple servants, king and public.¹⁰¹

There were various reasons responsible for the adoption of immoral activities by devadasis. Exploitation, poverty, and no regular payment and donation from king and

other sources forced them to adopt unholy jobs. Although biological necessity was a cause for their diversion but poverty and social and religious restrictions brought them into marginalized category. Some scholars argue that the *Sakti* cult had some role in the rise of sexualism in devadasi tradition. Because sexualism was a part of their rituals in *Sakti* cult. Then the rise of Saivism in which goddess Paravati depicted as *sakti*, incorporated into this cult. Devadasis of Saiva temple of Orissa were not playing the role of yogin as in South India, but they were approachable by any common devotees who wished to enjoy them. Sexual intercourse with a dancer prostitute attached to a saiva temple was held outside the temple premises. Devadasis of Saiva temple were considered as *sakti* and union of *sakti* with Lord Siva is divinity of life and love.¹⁰² Sexualism in Saivism was also considered sacred and religious. Thus devadasis of Saiva temples of Orissa such as Brahmesvara temple, Muktesvara temple, Lingaraj temple probably were not free from this practice. Because the erotic sculpture of these temples represents the contemporary traditions related to the temples. Sculpture engraved on the temple walls and inscriptions of temples indicates that the devadasis were not free from this sacred prostitution. We also have other examples in connection with temple prostitution. The priestesses of Ishtar in ancient Babylon and Aphrodite in the ancient Greek colonies in Sicily were married to the god which granted them an unlimited sexual freedom.¹⁰³ So marrying god means getting religious legitimacy to perform sexual rituals.

During seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, devadasis were living a miserable life. They had lost their past glory and socio-religious status. During these times, they were fighting with poverty and religious identity. Even after independence the condition of devadasis did not change. Though Temple administration and Orissa government provided financial help but it was not sufficient for them. We can take the example of Sasimani Devi the last Devadasi of Jagannath temple who died in 2015. She was living in a very small house of the panda of the temple. She had got only three hundred rupees as monthly pension from Odisha Government as an artist.

However, many scholars and priests are of the opinion that the devadasi system of Orissa did not adopt impurity in the traditions like south India. Jagannath's devadasi were

pure and sacred. They did not indulge with sexual activities and established immoral relation with others. Surprising thing is that a tradition which was influenced by south Indian devadasi cult was not affected by their sexual rituals of sacred women. The yogin cult, basava cult and some other cults in which devadasis were treated as prostitutes and public women, in Orissa devadasis did not follow or practised it. But A K Biswas's analysis of Oriya devadasi cult provides different and somehow authentic information on it. He argues that women dedicated to the temple were actually a temple prostitute. She pondered to the carnal desires of the priests; guides the rich and wealthy visitors who undertook the journey to those places under the religious pretext. These women were a source of attraction which enhanced the reputation of many temples. The Jagannath Temple Puri, Somanath Temple Gujarat, and some temples in south India, to mention a few had these unhappy women to serve the priest and visitors.¹⁰⁴ A record of Francois Bernier who visited Puri during his Mughal service on Jagannath Temple disclosed that every year prior to the rath yatra Jagannath took a new young wife. She used to be deflowered on the first night for consummating the marriage by one of the temple priest intruding inside a room where she was sheltered.¹⁰⁵

In March 1912, Bal Krishna Sahaya, representing the Chotanagpur division of Bengal legislative council raised the questions on the custom of dedicating female children to the temple of lord Jagannath in Puri; who, when grown up, lead immoral life. He demanded government intervention to abolish the immoral custom. Government told the council; would view with favour and lend its support to any organised attempts made by Hindu society at large to eradicate the evils which have grown up around the system at Puri. But British authorities refused to initiate reforms on its own motion in a matter so closely connected with religious observance.¹⁰⁶

Jagannath Temple chronicle 'Madalapanji' is not giving any information on immoral act of devadasis. Regional records and literature are silent on this point of immorality. But the medieval architecture and sculptures such as temple walls, pillars, relics bears many female dancing figures whose dressing style and posture indicating

towards sexualism in the tradition. Their attires and seductive appearance and art of attraction all showing that mahari dance were not at all pure and sacred.

Female musicians on the temple walls of Konark, Rajarani, Lingaraj, represents the temple girls, there is no doubts. Apart from that medieval temple sculpture dominated by erotic figurines and sexual scenes. Almost all temples of the period have contained this type of nude sexual scenes and seductive, charming half nude stone girl's images. The smile and glow on the face of these depicted figures has an attraction and a shakti which can drag the devotees and peoples towards mohamaya or her love. This type quality of bimohana or attracting others with her beauty and seductive actions was the characteristics of the devadasis and rajadasis.

Devadasi Sculpture: medieval sculpture of Orissa is unique in this category. Most of the structures built during these period have common features of sculptural richness. Temple walls were decorated with socio-religious, cultural, warfare, and erotic scenes. Mostly the female figurines were engraved with charm and warm. Images of dancers, half naked female figures with attractive smile and look dominated over other images. This attractive female figure depicted with seductive postures named as alasakanya or indolent damsels. Sculptures in both Shiva and Vishnu temple walls were based on these themes. Female figures dominated the decorative programme of the Orissa temples. Alasakanya and female musical figurines on the walls of the temples of Orissa provides a clear indication of devadasis or dancing girl's involvement with sexual activities. Their beauty in stone is unimaginable. Images smile lighting up their faces with soft and warm trait. ¹⁰⁷ The power of love, postures, seductive appearance, and gestures of women figures of the temple indicating the art of dancing in medieval period. Dance during those periods was performed in two places in general. One is royal court and other one is god's court. Royal dancers or courtesan were directly or indirectly involved with prostitution. We have many examples in this regard those courtiers were not at all only dancers but also prostitutes whose duty was to entertain the royal gatherings and royal guest and royal peoples.

God's dancers were sacred and dedicated in nature. But the sculptures of the temple show something else. It depicted erotic and sexual scenes and images. Temple is a place of holiness and sacredness. Its land also considered as holy land but how erotic figures were portrayed on the walls of temples. Some scholars argue that the effect of shaktism on vaisnav cult or Saiva cult was main reason behind the rise of sexualism in medieval temple sculpture of Orissa. On the other hand, women were considered as shakti or powerful like goddess Durga and Kali. Even she is depicted in the Hindu mythology more powerful than men. Saivism principles were also based on the ideology of saktism, because it was considered that the union of sakti with Lord Shiva created the universe. That's why in Saivism, Linga and Yoni contacted to each other worshiped in the temple. Thus women's erotic figures were also worshiped by devotees

The engraved female dancers and musicians of Konark and Rajarani temple are pure examples of dancing culture which was popular in those periods. Without proper evidences, it will be irrational to say that women dancers engaged in the temple service were prostitutes but the temple sculpture of sexualism and erotic scenes indicates that these temple damsels are the reflection of women dancers, musicians and female servants of the temple. It is important to understand as to why temple walls were selected to depict sexual scenes when it was considered the most sacred and holiest place for Hindu religion. Secondly without permission of king it would not be possible for artists to portray these sexual figures on the walls of temples of the medieval period. So there are some connections of temple's devadasi ritual with erotic and seductive women figures of the temple, because these figures reflects the posture, charming face, attractive smile, and seductive attitude of devadasis. On the other hand to attract the devotees towards the temple to increase temple's revenue probably motivated the king along with its religious legitimacy by priest to introduce nude women figures and erotic scenes on the walls of the medieval temples. Just like modern day advertisement and propaganda for business, probably the king and priests jointly adopted this unethical policy for their temple business as the temples were the epicentres of business of the medieval periods. Besides this according to Hindu philosophy in a human life artha (fiancé) and kar (tax) is also important and may be figures depicted this.

The king Ramachandradeva's plan to divert devadasis of the temple to royal court was a reliable example of exploitation of devadasis. Some scholars argue that the devadasis who were attached to the court and wealthy people, finally ended up with anybody and everybody who could pay and at last this system of devadasi turned into the prostitution of this institution.¹⁰⁸

Devadasis of Orissa were performing special rituals other than dancing and singing. They had important role in Lord Jagannath's rituals. Even they used to act as god's mother in *janmstami* or birth day of Lord Krishna, because Lord Jagannath is considered as incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Sasimani the last devadasi of Jagannath who passed away in 2015 said that devadasis of other parts of the country were exploited but here we had respect from the people. We are the loving wives of Jagannath.¹⁰⁹ She was a second category devadasi who was engaged in outside rituals of Jagannath temple. Probably she was not aware about the inside story or *bhitar gouni's* life style and rituals. As devadasi system in Orissa which was generally influence by south Indian culture of devadasi, it is not possible to maintain its sanctity when the later was corrupted by immoral acts and guidance. According to devadasi tradition of Orissa, a girl can become devadasi before her puberty. Pre puberty girl is suitable for this job. Again devadasis should not live like other women in the society. They should not establish social relation and lead a common life. They had to work under the guidance of priests and live inside the temple compound and rooms closed to the temple. If we believe Sasimani's words, then Oriya devadasi did not adopt impurity in their work and were pure in contrast to south Indian religious girls.

Rekha Pande and S Jeevanadam state that Girls from noble families were coming to serve as devadasis. Even many times king appointed devadasis enjoyed more privilege in the society. On the other hand the king himself attached to the temple service. Thus devadasis might not have involved in prostitution work.¹¹⁰ They had a great respect in the society. If this is true then why devadasi's were living in a secluded place and leading a segregated life? Why they did not establish social relation with society? Why they were

staying in rooms closed to the temple and those rooms were barred to others? These are the questions that arise when we are not thorough regarding authentic sources on this religious tradition.

Devadasis of Lord Jagannath had a special role in the Rath Yatra or car festival and Navakalevara or making new idol of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and goddess Subhadra. But what special role they had nobody had knowledge. However, Francis Bernier's record on Puri Jagannath provides us some facts about the role of devadasis towards Lord Jagannath and the temple. His records describes that the priest of the temple had sexual relation with new young pre-puberty wives of god. It means after the marriage with Jagannath, the young wife of god used to be deflowered on the first night for consummating the marriage by one of the temple priest inside the rooms where she was staying.¹¹¹

The contemporary literary works and records are not giving much information on devadasis rights but duties that were fixed by the temple authorities and priests. Devadasis were controlled by the temple priests and patronisers. Priests were the one class in India who were most privileged in the society and enjoyed immunity from the penal code and that's why they were free to exploit devadasi girls of the temples.¹¹² Sukumari Bhattacharji through her work on *Prostitution in Ancient India* argues those priests were enjoying privilege status due to their control over temple prostitutes.¹¹³

It seems that devadasi system which is based on religious rituals and became the integral part of temple rituals of Orissa. But it could not maintain its purity in it. Because devadasi rules and regulations telling us about this immorality they had been following in secretly. For example, devadasi after the purification bath on the seventh day of her puberty the girls picks up some sand with folded hands and recites the following lines 'may I have as many husband as there are grains of sand in my hand'.¹¹⁴ It indicates that devadasis were not staying away from sexual activities. They were involved in sexual relation with temple servants and devotees. Radha, devadasi of Jagannath temple

admitted that this practice was followed and adopted by devadasis. She said that when she was first got puberty she was given a pot with nuts and asked to recites above mentioned lines. Thus this ritual indicating that devadasis must probably were having many husbands. Devadasi tradition was a tradition which justifies sexual relation with king and temple servants in the name of ritual. Though Ganga kings, Somavamsi kings then Gajapatis dedicated female servants to the temples of Orissa to perform rituals like singing, dancing and other services to the temple. But in later stage, probably temple authorities modified the rules for the female servants and made them *dasis* of kings, priests and devotees for the sake of sexual pleasure and attracting devotees to earn money from wealthy devotees like zamindars of Bengal.

According to Marglin, the king had first rights to have sex with newly purified devadasi. She has described it with many examples and portrayed some interviews with devadasis in her book '*Wife of God King: Rituals of Devadasis of Puri*'. Radha, devadasi of the Jagannath Temple, after her puberty purification went to palace for *anga sparsa* or *angalagi*¹¹⁵ there the king invited another king of Talacher to sleep with Radha or establish sexual relation with her. While Radha was only eleven years old the king of Talacher was sixty years old with whom Radha had consummation. After this relation the king gave her gold ornaments as gift.¹¹⁶ Even devadasis were considering that Gajapati kings are their god, they give us food and water, so we offer our body to him.¹¹⁷

Temple priests have admitted this ritual of angasparsa. Even they argue that the priest has the first right to have sex with devadasis. But if king wants he can call them. Temple servants who bear all expenditures of the puberty ceremony of the girls have the first right to have sex relation with her and he will be the first husband of her. Apart from that, the king can have sexual relation with pre puberty girls for sexual enjoyment. The king and priest of the temple had a band to run the temple business through devadasi system. Both of them had their own devadasis to attract devotees and earn money through prostitution.

Jagannath Temple devadasis had to follow the rules and regulations fixed by the king and the priest. Devadasi can have sex relation with pandas and kings not with others. If they had sex relation with other persons then they should not be from *aspursiya* or non water giving class. If devadasi had relation with lower caste or non water giving class then there was an officer who was looking after the devadasis can inform the king on this matter and king will give punishment to them.¹¹⁸

In August 8, 1853, in the *New York Tribune*, in a dispatch, Karl Marx had charged the British government by saying “did they not, in order to make money out of pilgrims streaming to the temple; take up the trade in murder and prostitution perpetrated in the temple of Lord Jaggernaut”¹¹⁹

In 1927, Mahatma Gandhi precisely said “there are, I am sorry to say, many temples in our midst in the country, which are no better than brothels”.¹²⁰ *The Young India*, in September 22, 1927 quoted him as saying “in calling them devadasi we use these sisters of ours to serve our lust.....”¹²¹

Karl Marx and M. K. Gandhi were not wrong in their views. In Hoogly district of West Bengal a priest of Tarkaswar Temple involved in the brothel work which grown up around the temple. The priest or Mahanta Madhav Chandra Giri had the notoriety of kidnapping, seducing or procuring innocent women for illicit relations with him by deploying his muscle man. According to Tanika Sarkar, ‘after these women could not return to their families; their only sanctuary lay in the growing brothels of Tarakeswar. Newspapers in 1873 were full of lucid descriptions of the temple pandas of Puri and Tarakeswar..... Tarakeswar has been a place for illicit assignation’.¹²²

It was not only the temple and priests who were involved in this immoral act, but rich land lords, wealthy peoples of Bengal Bihar and Orissa flocked to Puri under the pretext of pilgrimage with desire not so pious indeed. Some of the zamindars levied illegal imposts or abwabs for health care, *mahaprasad*¹²³ *barunisnan*¹²⁴ to defray expenses for their prolonged visit to Puri. John Beams, the Hoogly district collector of

Baleswar reported this to the Bengal governor in 1871, many zamindars from Calcutta spent lakhs of rupees on their visit to Puri spanning over two to three months.¹²⁵

Lala Lajpat Rai in his '*Unhappy India*' stressed on uncommon and non Indian diseases called Syphilis. He quoted a contemporary medical authority Dr. Awan Bloch, who notes that Syphilis was first found in France in 1494. Then due to the sea trade and military activities this disease spread to Europe, America, Far East, India, China, Japan etc. Prof. Gilbert Slater, Madras University, in his work showed how priest of twelve great temples stocked with devadasis in Kumbakonam, critically infected their wives back home with Syphilis.¹²⁶ This disease not only found in south India, it was also found in other parts of India, basically high class and elite people who had access to the house of the gods, were infected by this disease.

On the other hand devadasis lived a life of tragedy and sorrow because a devadasi could get patronage until she could attract devotees and zamindars. Dancing was their profession but she could not practice dance in old age. Temple authorities and priests did not patronize them and it would be reduced into a destitute position. Their profession prevented them from having family of their own. They were kept isolated from the society. In old age, devadasi became helpless and faced old age sufferings. Thus at the end of a long career, devadasi faced double exploitation as temple dancers and as priest concubines. She did face complete destitution for neither state nor the temple had showed any obligation for them.¹²⁷ Devadasis spreading across India led intolerable lives. They have been quenching the thirst of millions of upper caste Indian male's lusts. Since the inception of this deplorable system, the devadasis have been subjected to merciless subjugation and injustice.¹²⁸

We have another example of English missionary William Word's records which tells us about the devadasi culture in south India. According to him Canjee-Varam the shiva temple was in dilapidated condition, nobody was repairing it. An English official pressured the company to repair and he himself also gave some gift to the temple. People admired his welfare and secular gesture. By doing this the official had earned permission

to enter into the sanctum. Their sympathy towards Hindu temple easily allowed them to have sexual relation with devadasis.¹²⁹ Devadasi system is still prevailing in south India even after it has been declared illegal since 1982.¹³⁰ The people are following and obeying this old age tradition. *The Gurdian*, newspaper has published an article on 21 January 2011 describing that lower caste people at the age of four five dedicating their girls to Yallemma temple in south India to became god's wife. And when she gets her first puberty then her virginity was auctioned in the public to the highest bidder. After that she will work as a religious prostitute for the people.¹³¹

Many officials from England and European region were coming without their wives. They infected the Indian women with Syphilis through intercourse. The temple priests and British officials shared the same women. Thus priests were getting infected and carried this home and infected their wives. British occupied Orissa in 1803; the Jagannath temple also came under them. British Government managed all temple activities. Even devadasis and priests were depended on them for their salaries till 1841 when the company withdrew from management of Jagannath Temple.¹³² However, we don't have any records and information of any kind of immoral and sexual offences made by British officials.

How far the temple devadasis were sacred prostitutes or pious dancers is a debatable issue because we don't have direct evidences on devadasi's involvement in prostitution from the eighteenth century. Marglin's work provides some reliable information on devadasis of Lord Jagannath but other works are silent on this issue. Oriya scholars like Prof. L. N. Rout, Vinodin Das argues that devadasis were not at all sacred and pure women. Again devadasi tradition in Orissa was influenced by South Indian tradition of devadasi in which devadasis were designated as sacred prostitutes. Thus we can't deny that devadasi custom of Tamil Country did not influence the devadasi tradition of Orissa. We have many examples regarding the cultural exchange between these two kingdoms. In first century AD Orissa King Kharavela invaded and conquered many South Indian kingdoms. Then Chola king Rajendra-I (1014-1044 AD) marched through Orissa upto Bengal and defeated Pala king.¹³³ Then Eastern Ganga ruler of

Kalinga Chodangagadeva had South Indian connection. He originally belonged to the Ganga dynasty of South India. Later he established Eastern Ganga dynasty in Kalinga regions. During fifteenth century, Suryavamsi dynasty was established by Kapilendradeva (1435-1467 AD) in Orissa. He got many victorious titles during his reign and these titles (Navakoti, Karnat, Kalebargesvar, Goudesvar) are remarkable for his political career basically his victories over South Indian countries such as Rajmundry, Kondavidu in Guntur, Telengana (1458 AD), Bahamani Kingdoms (Bidar, Hahur and other regions) Vijayanagar Empire (Tanjor, Trichinapalli, etc) in 1464. There are number of inscriptions like Udayagiri Hill inscription, Chintapallipadu (Guntur) inscription and Gangadasa-Vilasa Charitam work that confirms Gajapati Kapilendrudev's conquest over Tamil Lands.¹³⁴ P C Mishra also argues that devadasi tradition was influenced by South Indian devadasi culture.¹³⁵ Thus the cultural exchange between Orissa and South Indian kingdoms was there. Devadasi tradition which was generally believed to have come from South India to Orissa probably adopted the South Indian practice of religious prostitution. However, devadasi patronisers of Orissa were not ready to accept these facts even in contemporary India. In 1995 when congress government started the process to appoint devadasis in Jagannath temple, women organisations, news, media opposed this idea of government. To suppress their voice, they argued that Orissa devadasi system is different than other devadasi systems of India. Biswamaya Pati's point of view indicates that "a Puri devadasi who leads a vegetarian life as a kept woman of Jagannath, symbolises degradation of women as much as a prostitute devadasi of Karnatak".¹³⁶

Dancing and Music beyond the temple ritual: Courtesan

Courtesans according to the "Batsayan, a pleasant disposition, beautiful and otherwise attractive, who has mastered the arts...has the rights to a seat of honour among men. She will be honoured by the king and praised by the learned and all will seek her favours and treat her with consideration."¹³⁷ In Buddhism, there is an episode of a courtesan named Amrapalli. She was a courtesan of Vaishali influenced by Budha and she became the

great nun of Buddhism.¹³⁸ Thus devotion and dedication can brought any person from lower level to legendary position. Courtesans acted as concubine of the kings and nobles. They were kept in strict vigilance by authority.

We also get reference to courtesan tradition from Orissa. Orissa kings, nobles had maintained this tradition as a symbol of status and enjoyment. We have lots of evidences regarding this tradition of music and dance. Udayagiri and Khandagiri cave contains many scenes of music and dance of the Kharavela period. Inscriptions of Janmajeya Mahabhav Gupta of Somavamsi dynasty of Orissa has mentioned about the courtesan's importance in the society and politics. Sobhaneswar temple inscription of Gangas of Orissa provides information on courtesan's and their status within the society.¹³⁹

An Eighteenth century literature provides some information on dance and music performed by female artists. *Prastaba chintamani* of Nilambar Bidyadhara gives an elaborate description of courtesan culture. It is written in prose style with vivid depictions of society, village markets, prostitution, courtesans, female dancers, geographical locations, hunting scenes various traditions and customs, marriage, festivals of the south Orissa and Royal life style. Story of this work is based on king and prince of the Khalikot Zamidar or Kingdom of south Orissa. In first part of the work is totally dedicated to the life style of the regions. Descriptions of social categories, castes, Brahman peoples importance, profession of the people, items were selling in the village markets, etc. Second part of the work based on the story of King and his son Yubaraj. In the story, the prince along with his friends went for hunting to the dense forest. There he hunted a big tiger and deer for feast. After feast there are some arrangements by royal house for entrainment of prince in the forests. Some servants of royal house along with prostitutes cum dancers went to the forest for it. Here the writer has given an elaborate depiction of royal prostitutes. Rasatarngani, the main prostitute of royal house and her own daughter Kandarpamanjari and other four adopted daughters came to the forest for dance and entrainment for yuvaraj. Rasatarangini had bought these four adopted daughters from Orissa or ancient Kalinga regions. Bidyadhara also describes their dancing style and seductive attitudes and postures of dance.¹⁴⁰ These prostitutes are also experts in musical

instruments and singing. Just like temple damsels of Orissa, Bidyadhara has portrayed them accurately.

Courtesans of Orissa were enjoying political status with social importance. In Oriya culture courtesans were considered as auspicious women for all rituals and society. Although prostitutes were considered as auspicious for mangal works but they not treated same as courtesan and devadasi were treated in the society. They were considered inauspicious and bad luck for beginning of works and business works. However courtesans due to their relation with royal court and kings, they enjoyed special status in the palace as well as in the society. In Orissa courtesans were presented in front of the palace when king was going out for journey. This was considered auspicious if king saw the face of a courtesan at the beginning of his journey.

Karpurshri, according to an inscription, was a dancer of a Buddhist Monastery with her mother and performed as devadasi in the institution.¹⁴¹ An inscription of Somavamsi period (882 -1110 AD) also describes that rent free village was granted to a dancing girl probably to Karpurshri for her artistic talent.¹⁴² The music and dance which were generally performed in the court of kings, Zamindars etc. was also patronized by the high class society. Dancing in the court was a royal custom performed by courtesans for the enjoyment of royal gathering or for guests of kings.

Eighteenth century literature provides ample evidences about courtesans of palace who were not only dancing in the court but were treated as prostitutes of the royal house. Brajanatha Badejena's Chaturvinoda has given a vivid description on the courtesans who were also prostitutes.¹⁴³ Kabisamrat Upendra Bhanja, in his works such as *Lavanyavati*, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, *Abanarsataranga*, *Premasudhanidhi* depicted about this custom of courtesans and courtiers who were prostitutes of the palace. In *Lavanyavati* kavya poet Upendra Bhanja has given elaborate depiction on court culture of kings. Most of his works related to the kings, prince, princess and elite class society who were lead characters of his poetic works. *Premasudhanidhi*, *kotibrahmandasundari* , another two secular works also depicted about the courtesan culture.

But the system of dancing and singing in front of gods and goddesses became a popular tradition of medieval period which also continued till the death of Sasimani the last mahari or devadasi of Jagannath Temple. But how this system of dancing for god and serving to god began nobody knows. Probably it was well planned by kings, priests to drag beautiful women into the colourful stage of patriarchal enjoyment. Kings, priest, nobles patronised them to act as god's servant or immortal wife of god and stayed inside the temple campus without having common relation with society and people. Managing them through religious institutions and religious rituals was a good plan to avoid hesitation of people and keep them for long time in the name of god. Because girl's from high class family who became god's servant or earthen wife of god could not marry in her life time. In Orissa, gods dancing girl were chosen from high caste and high class family, because low class girl were not suitable for this job though in south India, god's women were from lower strata.

From the above information and analysis, it can be concluded that the devadasis or maha naris of temple were not pure and sacred in nature. Directly and indirectly they were forced to be a part of this immoral act carried on by the temple authorities as well as the servants of the temple. Of course the aim and objective of this ritual is to entertain the god but in course of time the divine ritual was affected by impurity of priests and kings who made it a religious business. God's wives became prostitutes. Devadasis were a class of women who were struggling to live on their artistic qualities. They were different from other women and their life was different than others life. They were privileged but in course of time they became marginalized.

Though we don't have exhaustive sources particularly to analyse eighteenth century devadasis of Orissa but 'through the process of inference and deduction'¹⁴⁴ If we look at the later stage evidences of the temple girls of Lord Jagannath like nineteenth and twentieth century sources which are reliable and in plenty we get some information. Absence of sources regarding devadasis of Orissa of the above said period is a common issue in historical writing and research. Absence of women in written records is a case in point. Because those recorded history or writing about society had assumption that

women's natural work is to stay at home and do house hold work and history is only taking place in battle fields, court, and royal class society. Therefore, women are not part of the history or do not make history. That's why in sources related to women are not part of archives.¹⁴⁵ Thus when we are going to study marginalised class of women or specifically devadasis of eighteenth century Orissa, the paucity of sources on this subject creates hurdles in research. The sources prior to this period and later period provide evidences to contextualise this social problem to build a framework on the eighteenth century marginalised women like devadasis.

References:

-
- ¹ Mark Bruton and Carolyn Kagan, *Marginalization*, Chapter –XIII, 4- 41, www.compsy.org.uk
 - ² Devesh Saksena, The Problems of Marginalization Group in India, *Academic Lawctopus*, Law Journal, lawctopus.com
 - ³ Geraldine Forbes, *Caged Tigers: First wave Faminists in India*, in Colonial India ed. by Geraldine Forbes, New Delhi: Chronicles Books, 2005, 12 (11-27)
 - ⁴ Women's Marginalization and models of women's Development, Chapter-II, 27 www.shodhaganga.inflib.net.ac.in
 - ⁵ Ibid., 24
 - ⁶ Origin of the Devadasi System, 12, www.sodhaganga.inflibnet.ac.in
 - ⁷ Ibid., 13
 - ⁸ Weaving department in Chandragupta Mourya's administration
 - ⁹ Origin of the Devadasi System, Chapter –2 , 11, www.sodhaganga.inflibnet.ac.in
 - ¹⁰ Ibid.
 - ¹¹ Ibid., 9
 - ¹² Manjula Pradeep, *Forced Prostitution in the Name of God*, 1, www.idsn.org
 - ¹³ Ibid.
 - ¹⁴ Purna Chandra Mishra, Mahari Tradition of Sri Jagannath Temple, *Odisha Review*, July 2013, 49-50. [49-53]
 - ¹⁵ Ibid., 109
 - ¹⁶ Rekha Pande, Devadasi, in *Religious Movements and Institutions in Medieval India*, (History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization) ed. by J. S. Grewal, New Delhi: Oxford University Publication, 2006, 495-496
 - ¹⁷ Ankur Singhal, *The Devadasi System: Temple Prostitution in India*, UCLA Women's Law Journal, Vol. 22, I,, 2015, 108.
 - ¹⁸ Benudhara Patra, *Studies, History and Archeology of Orissa*, Kolcutta: Punt Pustak, 2008, 261
 - ¹⁹ Mayadhar Mansingh, *The Saga of the Land of Jagannath*, Cuttack: J Mahapatra & Co, 121-122
 - ²⁰ Ibid.
 - ²¹ Hastabalaya padakatakar svan prakhar mardal jharjar
Srasa bachan panchamsvar, ikshana nartak nartanakara,
Basan pananta, challan ranjan anchal sata
Nayanat manamadhya, udaya nabam lagna sangar,

-
- Upendra Bhanja, Abanarasataranga, ed. Sridhara Rao, Cuttack: Sri Rdha Publication, 1904, 87
- ²² Mayadhar Mansingh, *The Saga of the Land of Jagannath*, Cuttack: J Mahapatra & Co, 232
- ²³ Ibid., 128
- ²⁴ Fancesco Brighentic, *Shakti Cult in Orissa*, Theses submitted to Utkala University, in *History*, 1997, 159
- ²⁵ Mayadhar Mansingh, *The Saga of the Land of Jagannath*, Cuttack: J Mahapatra & Co, 131-132
- ²⁶ Fancesco Brighentic, *Shakti Cult in Orissa*, Theses submitted to Utkala University, in *History*, 1997, 159
- ²⁷ Utpala Nayak, *Women's Development and Social Conflicts: Historical perspectives on Indian Women* (study on Orissa), (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999), 103; Bina Kumari Sarma, Contribution of Women to the Devolpment of oriya literature, in *Exploring Orissa History*, ed. Nihar Ranjan Patnaik, (Cuttack: Kitab Mahal, 2005), 260
- ²⁸ Rekha Pande, Devadasi, in *Religious Movements and Institutions in Medieval India*, (History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization) ed. by J. S. Grewal, New Delhi: Oxford University Publication, 2006, 494, www.academia.edu
- ²⁹ S. Jeevanandam and Rekha Pande, *Devadasi and Gift Giving in Medieval South India*, Zenith, IJMR, Vol. II, No. V, May, 2012, 185 [181-191]
- ³⁰ Utpala Nayak, *Women's Development and Social Conflicts: Historical perspectives on Indian Women* (study on Orissa), (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999),103; Bina Kumari Sarma, Contribution of Women to the Devolpment of oriya literature, in *Exploring Orissa History*, ed. Nihar Ranjan Patnaik, (Cuttack: Kitab Mahal, 2005), 261
- ³¹ Ramachandra Mishra, Odissi Dance Through Ages, *Journal of Berhampur University*, Vol. IX, 1988, 133
- ³² Ibid., 131
- ³³ C. V. Ramachandra Rao, Administration and Society in Medieval Andhra 1038-1538[under later Eastern-Gangas and the Suryavamsi Gajapatis, Nellore: Manasha Publication, 1976, 103. www.sodhaganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/94396
- ³⁴ Utpala Nayak, *Women's Development and Social Conflicts: Historical perspectives on Indian Women* (study on Orissa), (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999),176-77
- ³⁵ Bijayin Das, Harapriya Devinka saha Ketoti Muhurta, *The Saptahiki, Oriya Weekly*, 8th to 14th March 1990, 20
- ³⁶ Utpala Nayak, *Women's Development and Social Conflicts: Historical perspectives on Indian Women* (study on Orissa), (New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999),104
- ³⁷ Ibid. ; M. N. Das, *Sidelights on History and Culture of Orissa*, Cuttack,: Vidyapuri Pub, 1977, 785
- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ F. A. Marglin, *Wives of the God King: The Rituals of the Devadasis*, Newyork: Oxford Publication, 1985, 69-70
- ⁴⁰ Brahmhesvar Temple inscription initially attached with temple removed to the Calcutta and in 19th century it was lost forever. James Prinsep first time edit the inscription first time and published in *The Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol VII, No. 78, June 1838, 557-562
- ⁴¹ Fancesco Brighentic, *Shakti Cult in Orissa*, Theses submitted to Utkala University, in *History*, 1997, 1159
- ⁴² Sourabha Sexena, *Brahmesvara Temple: start of Devadasi Tradition*, www.puratattva.in/puratattva.in/2018/11/21/brahmeswara-temple-5047
- ⁴³ Brahmhesvara Temple inscription slab was removed from the temple and taken to Calcutta in nineteenth century. But in later stage this inscription lost forever. James Princep was the first scholar who edited this inscription and published it in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Voll. VII, No. 78, June 1838, PP- 557 -562
- ⁴⁴ Benudhara Patra, *Studies, History and Archeology of Orissa*, Kolcutta: Puntipustak, 2008, 262-63.

-
- ⁴⁵ Bharati Pal, The References of Devadasis in the Inscription, *Odisha Review*, June 2012, 124-125
- ⁴⁶ Benudhara Patra, Studies, History and Archeology of Orissa, Kolcutta: Puntipustak, 2008, 264
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., 265
- ⁴⁸ Ramachandra Mishra, Odissi Dance Through Ages, Journal of Berhampur University, Vol. IX, 1988 , 131.(130-135)
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., 132-33
- ⁵⁰ Benudhar Patra, Devadasi System in Orissa: A case study of the Jagannath Temple of Puri, *Annals of Bhandarkar Oient research Institute*, Vol. 85, 2004, 163 www.jstor.org/stable/41691949 [159-172]
- ⁵¹ Ibid., 166
- ⁵² Aparmita Sahu, Devadasi in Orissa, *Orissa Review*, vol. 1..
- ⁵³ W.W Hunter, *Jagannath*, in *History of Orissa* ed. By N. K. Sahu, Delhi: Bharatiya House, 1980, 36
- ⁵⁴ Ibid., 38
- ⁵⁵ Ibid.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid., 39
- ⁵⁷ Ibid.
- ⁵⁸ Benudhara Patra, Studies, *History and Archaeology of Orissa*, Kolkata: Puntipustak, 2008, 266
- ⁵⁹ Nabakalebara Event History, www.nabakalebara.gov.in Assessed on 19.06.2018
- ⁶⁰ Benudhara Patra, Studies, *History and Archeology of Orissa*, Kolkata: Puntipustak, 2008, 270
- ⁶¹ Ibid.
- ⁶² Biswamaya Pati, Of Deavadasis, Tradition and Politics, *EPW*, Vol. 30, No. 43, October 28, 1995, 2728
- ⁶³ Devadasis, chapter – 8, 234 www.sodhganga.com.10603/
- ⁶⁴ Laxmi Narashimha Temple Inscription, Simachalam, S.II, Vol. VI, AR No 273 1899
- ⁶⁵ F. A. Marglin, *Wives of the God King: The Rituals of the Devadasis*, Newyork: Oxford Publication, 1985, Note
- ⁶⁶ G. P. Patnaik, *Devadasi Pratha*, Bhubaneswar: Sangita Natak Akademi, 1983, 28
- ⁶⁷ Aurangzeb, as he was according to Mughal records, www.aurangzeb.info.2008/06
- ⁶⁸ Invasion on the Temple of Lord Jagannath, Puri, *Orissa Review*, July, 2011, 1, orissa.gov.in/emagazine/Orissagovt.
- ⁶⁹ Ibid., 82-89.; Narayan Mishra, *Annal and Antiquities of Temple of Jagannath*, Sarup & Sons, 2007, 154-161
- ⁷⁰ Aparmita Sahu, Devadasi in Orissa, *Orissa Review*, vol.
- ⁷¹ Ibid.
- ⁷² F. A. Marglin, *Wives of the God King: The Rituals of the Devadasi of Puri*, Delhi: OUP, 1985, 18
- ⁷³ Rekha Pande, Ritualized Prostitution: Devadasis to Jogins – a few case studies, in *Prostitution and Beyond: An Analysis of Sex Work in India*, ed. by Rohini Sahni, V Kalyan Shankar, Hemanta Apte, New Delhi: Sage Publication, 2008, 102, www.academia.edu
- ⁷⁴ Bendhar Patra, Devadasi System in Orissa: A case study of the Jagannath Temple of Puri, *Annals of Bhandarkar Oient research Institute*, Vol. 85, 2004, 164 www.jstor.org/stable/41691949 [159-172]
- ⁷⁵ Mayadhar Mansingh, *The Saga of the Land of Jagannath*, Cuttack: J Mahapatra & Co, 132
- ⁷⁶ Lasilie C. Orr, *Donors, Devotees and Daughters of God: Temple Women in Medieval Tamilnadu*, New Delhi: Oxford Publication, 2000, 199 -200
- ⁷⁷ Mayadhar Mansingh, *The Saga of the Land of Jagannath*, Cuttack: J Mahapatra & Co, 133
- ⁷⁸ F. A. Marglin, *Wives of the God King: The Rituals of the Devadasis*, Newyork: Oxford Publication, 1985, 4
- ⁷⁹ Rekha Pande, Devadasi, in *Religious Movements and Institutions in Medieval India*, (History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization) ed. by J. S. Grewal, New Delhi: Oxford University Publication, 2006, 500

-
- ⁸⁰ F. A. Marglin, *Wives of the God King: The Rituals of the Devadasis*, Newyork: Oxford Publication, 1985,
- ⁸¹ J. A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, (At Clarendon Press : Oxford, 1906), 211-212
- ⁸² Rekha Pande, Devadasi, in *Religious Movements and Institutions in Medieval India*, (History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization) ed. by J. S. Grewal, New Delhi: Oxford University Publication, 2006, 500
- ⁸³ Ibid.
- ⁸⁴ Mayadhar Mansingh, *The Saga of the Land of Jagannath, Cuttack*: J Mapatra & Co, 1971, 132-133
- ⁸⁵ Bendhar Patra, Devadasi System in Orissa: A case study of the Jagannath Temple of Puri, *Annals of Bhandarkar Oient research Institute*, Vol. 85, 2004, 169 www.jstor.org/stable/41691949 [159-172]
- ⁸⁶ Sukumari Bhattacharji, Prostitution in Ancient India in *Early Indian Societies* ed. By Kumkum Roy, New Delhi: Monahar, 1999, 199 (197-228)
- ⁸⁷ Ibid., 208 (197-228)
- ⁸⁸ Devadasi Practice in India: An Overview, 55 -56 [43-70], www.sodhaganga.inflibnet.ac.in
- ⁸⁹ Mayadhar Mansingh, *The Saga of the Land of Jagannath*, Cuttack: J Mahapatra & Co, 132
- ⁹⁰ Ibid., 133-34
- ⁹¹ Kamala Rathi, *Mahari Sevayats of Lord Jagannath*, <https://jagannath.quora.com/Mahari-Sevayats-of-Lord-Jagannath-Devadasis>
- ⁹² Benudhara Patra, *Studies, History and Archaeology of Orissa*, Kolcutta: Puntipustak, 2008, 272
- ⁹³ F. A. Marglin, *Wives of the God King: The Rituals of the Devadasis*, New York: Oxford Publication, 1985, 11
- ⁹⁴ Ibid.
- ⁹⁵ Pankaj Charana Das, founding father of Odissi dance or known as father of Odissi dance born in 1925 and awarded Padmasree and Sangeeta Natak Academy award for his contribution to the Indian classical dance.
- ⁹⁶ F. A. Marglin, *Wives of the God King: The Rituals of the Devadasis*, New York: Oxford Publication, 1985, 30-31
- ⁹⁷ Ibid., 32-33
- ⁹⁸ Ibid., 36-37
- ⁹⁹ Ibid., 37-38
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 40-42
- ¹⁰¹ Ibid., 60
- ¹⁰² Fancesco Brighentic, *Shakti Cult in Orissa*, Theses submitted to Utkala University, in History, 1997, 160
- ¹⁰³ Ibid., 161
- ¹⁰⁴ A. K. Biswas, The Last Devadasi: does her death brings down curtain on a disgraceful temple customs? *Mainstream*, Vol. III, No. 16, April 2015, 11-12
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁷ Fancesco Brighentic, *Shakti Cult in Orissa*, Theses submitted to Utkala University, in History, 1997, 158
- ¹⁰⁸ Bendhar Patra, Devadasi System in Orissa: A case study of the Jagannath Temple of Puri, *Annals of Bhandarkar Oient research Institute*, Vol. 85, 2004, 168 www.jstor.org/stable/41691949 [159-172]
- ¹⁰⁹ A. K. Biswas, The Last Devadasi: does her death brings down curtain on a disgraceful temple customs? *Mainstream*, Vol. III, No. 16, April 2015, 11-12
- ¹¹⁰ S. Jeevanandam and Rekha Pande, *Devadasi and Gift Giving in Medieval South India*, Zenith, IJMR, Vol. II, No. V, May, 2012, 185 [181-191]

-
- ¹¹¹ A. K. Biswas, The Last Devadasi: does her death brings down curtain on a disgraceful temple customs? *Mainstream*, Vol. III, No. 16, April 2015, 11-12
- ¹¹² Sukumari Bhattacharji, *Prostitution in Ancient India* in *Early Indian Societies* ed. By Kumkum Roy, New Delhi: Monahar, 1999, 218 (197-228)
- ¹¹³ Ibid., 218 (197-228)
- ¹¹⁴ F. A. Marglin, *Wives of the God King: The Rituals of the Devadasis*, Newyork: Oxford Publication, 1985, 74
- ¹¹⁵ Anga sparsa or angalagi means a devadasi after her first puberty she will go to the palace to have first sex relation with king who had the first right to establish sexual relation with new devadasi inducted into temple service.
- ¹¹⁶ F. A. Marglin, *Wives of the God King: The Rituals of the Devadasis*, Newyork: Oxford Publication, 1985, 75
- ¹¹⁷ Ibid., 90
- ¹¹⁸ Ibid., 91
- ¹¹⁹ Karl Marx, The Future Results of British in India, *New York Daily Tribunes*, August, 8, 1853, collected from *On India*, (12-19), 18
- ¹²⁰ Ibid. A. K. Biswas, The Last Devadasi: does her death brings down curtain on a disgraceful temple customs? *Mainstream*, Vol. III, No. 16, April 2015, 11-12
- ¹²¹ B.B. Sahoo, Revival of the Devadasi System, <http://ijsw.tiss.edu/collect/ijsw/import/vol.58/no.3/361-370.pdf>
- ¹²² Tanika Sarkar, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation: Community, Religion and Cultural Nationalism*, Hyderabad:Orient Blackswan, 2003
- ¹²³ Mahaprasad is ritual food offered to the Lord Jagannath and distributed to devotee by priests after offering rituals to god.
- ¹²⁴ Holy bath on a special occasion.
- ¹²⁵ A. K. Biswas, The Last Devadasi: does her death brings down curtain on a disgraceful temple customs? *Mainstream*, Vol. III, No. 16, April 2015, 11-12
- ¹²⁶ Ibid.
- ¹²⁷ Sukumari Bhattacharji, *Prostitution in Ancient India* in *Early Indian Societies* ed. By Kumkum Roy, New Delhi: Monahar, 1999, 218(197-228)
- ¹²⁸ Devadasi Practice in India: An Overview, 55 [43-70], www.sodhaganga.inflibnet.ac.in
- ¹²⁹ Ibid.
- ¹³⁰ Palak Bhambri, Prostitution – With A Religious Sanction, *Youth Ki Awaz*, 8, June 2011, www.youthkiawaz.com
- ¹³¹ Nash Colundalur, Devadasi are Cursed Community, *The Gardian*, 21, January 2011; Indian's Prostitute of God, *The Telegraph*, 20, September 2010, www.telegraph.co.uk
- ¹³² Ibid.
- ¹³³ Fancesco Brighentic, *Shakti Cult in Orissa*, Theses submitted to Utkala University, in *History*, 1997, 160
- ¹³⁴ Odisha History: Kapilendradeva, www.historyofodisha.in , July 7, 2017.
- ¹³⁵ P. C. Mishra, Mahari Tradition of Sri Jagannath Temple, *Odisha Review*, July 2013, 51
- ¹³⁶ Biswamaya Pati, Of Deavadasis, Tradition and Politics, *EPW*, Vol. 30, No. 43, Octeber 28, 1995, 2728
- ¹³⁷ A. S. Alteker, *The position of women in Hindu Civilization*, Delhi: 1978, 181
- ¹³⁸ Ibid.
- ¹³⁹ S. N Rajguru, *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol. IV- 135
- ¹⁴⁰ Nilambar Bidyadhara, *Prastabchintamani*, (18th Century Oriya work), Bhanjabihar: Berhampur University, 1976, 68-72

¹⁴¹ J. N. Dhar, The Story and History of Odissi Dance and Sree Gitagobinda, *Orissa review*, May, 2007, 43 [43-45]

¹⁴² Benudhar Patra, Devadasi System in Orissa: A case study of the Jagannath Temple of Puri, *Annals of Bhandarkar Orient research Institute*, Vol. 85, 2004, 160 www.jstor.org/stable/41691949 [159-172]

¹⁴³ Brajanath Badajena, Chaturavinoda, (18th Cent. Oriya) ed. by Sudhakara Patnaik, Cuttack: Prachisamiti 1946, 87-89

¹⁴⁴ Devika Rangachari , *Invisible Women and Visible History: Gender Society, and Polity in North India*, New Delhi: Monahar Publisher, 2009, 87-89

¹⁴⁵ Anne Firor Scott, Making the Invisible Women Visible: A Essay Review, *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 38, No. 4, Nov. 1972, 629-238, www.jstore.org/stabled/2206153

Chapter-V

Women in Eighteenth Century Painting of Orissa: Representation and Reflection

Study on medieval history of women always has some problems due to paucity of sources. On the other hand the study of regional history of the same periods again is more difficult. Though regional literature and other records have provided a base to construct the pillars of history but the patriarchal nature of the medieval society of India had neglected women's history in the literary as well as in historical records. Thus it is difficult to study women's history which is not part of the records or writings. So writing on women or writing women into history is a challenge. To reconstruct women's past we need to find new methods as well as new source of study.

Though we have new sources to study on women who were marginalized in historical records still it is a matter of acceptance by the scholars as well as academicians. Feminist movement through writing started long back but there are very less works on women and art history.¹ It is difficult to defend that women were neglected in the historical records, so they cannot be placed in the mainstream records. In the name of paucity of records related to women, we can't omit them from historical studies. Thus our approach needs to be more inclusive given the nature of historical writings. On the other hand we do have some historical works on women but they have certain limitations because they depicted women as object of representation not as subject of representation.²

In this endeavor painting of medieval period is a source which can provide us valuable platform to analyze the women's position, status and contribution to the society.³ Like literature, painting has given a wide touch to the Oriya tradition, and customs where women occupied major place, because tradition and customs in India is generally legislated and implemented for women. In rare cases some flexible rules and laws were there for male person of the society. They might follow or disobey, but in the

case of women social rules and religious laws for women were strictly implemented and if anybody disobeys punishments were prescribed. Therefore, palm leaf paintings of eighteenth century Orissa which has depicted women with different character and circumstances provides the idea about the position and status of Oriya women in the contemporary society.

Promada Chandra states that medieval painting has greatest vitality and richness. These painting are being treated as sources of historical writings. Like literature painting of the periods also contains the same value what archaeological evidence has for history reconstruction.⁴

Art history has now been accepted as a major branch of knowledge for historical studies. Art as a manifestation of human thought and spirit has valuable implication for a historians to conduct a thorough investigation into the intricacies of past. Thus paintings are being played an important tool of historical investigation.⁵

But palm leaf painting, mural painting may not be appeal to some historians who rigidly follow the historical rules and procedures. Painting of the past or study of the painting to discover the past can be a useful tool to write history. If archaeologists study past through artifacts or stone and metal items then why can't an art historian or historian study past through paintings? Of course the present knowledge has been playing an important role in study of past and writing about the past. Marc Bloch rightly said to understand past need to look through present. On the other hand Joanna Williams argues that writing history of Africa is not easy because lack of written records make it inevitable to use of oral traditions and surviving behaviors to understand their past. Similarly painting is a major source to understand past.

However in the study of women in painting and analyzing women's place through the painting is a difficult task. Because history and historical methods does not truly embrace this as concrete source of history. Though we have a separate subject visual art to study painting but as historians we cannot ignore the importance of the painting in the study of history, specifically the study on women who are invisible and neglected in the primary historical records.

History of Indian Painting:

History of Indian Painting can be traced to prehistoric era. From Paleolithic period to the medieval period, Indian paintings represent the past. Bhimbetka rock painting of Mesolithic and Neolithic period is the best example of the Indian prehistoric painting. A primitive society with ritual life has been portrayed on the walls and ceilings of the caves. Painting like Bhimbetka is important source to study pre-history as well as history. Painting tradition has not ended there; again it flourished during proto historic period of India. Indus valley civilization achieved magnificent achievement on this art of painting and drawing. Proto historical remains of India also give authentic ideas regarding painting culture of the period. Harappan records such as seals, pots, and other items provide some information about the drawing and painting talent of the Harappan people. These people were drawing geometrical patterns on pots, tablets, and surface. O. C. Ganguly argues that these materials reveal their art quality, aesthetic merit, design technique and invention attitudes.⁶

Harappa pottery painting is marvelous in design and technique. The contemporary civilizations of Harappan could not achieve this art quality while the people of Haappa in the past achieved the horizon of art. It may be dancing bronze statue or bronze hoarding and terracotta Industry, or pottery design, every section of the art touched the sky of success. Their technique and geometrical method in drawing was significant.⁷

Vedic age was not far behind in painting culture. A new form of painting culture started during this period. Pictorial art was very common among the Vedic people. Rig-Veda provides the information on painting tradition. First mandal of Rig-Veda in a poetic circumlocution says ‘ I am painting a still portrait of the god on piece of parchment.’⁸ In later stage, this Vedic tradition of painting dominated in all times. Even Persian and Mughal school of painting influenced by this Vedic art. Apart from that the portrait of Vedic sages such as Vasista, Angira, Maharshi Atreya also provides the information of scholars and painting techniques.⁹

In Hindu sastra it is considered that painting is a great method to express feelings or understand feelings. In Rig-Veda it is said that – *Kalanna prabarra chitraa dharmakarmartha moushada*, means painting is the best of art and benefited for all.¹⁰ During pre historic period painting was the language of the people. To understand the feelings or exchange the feelings painting played vital role, because it is easy to understand the feeling of unknown person through the painting.

Buddhist and Jain paintings also played vital role in the reconstruction of the Indian history. Jain cannon Kalpasutra depicts the picture of sunrise called suryaudaya. Magadha had witnessed the progress of painting in the court of Bimbisara, who ordered a portrait of Buddha made for gift purpose. But it was Buddhists who provided the patronization of mural paintings in India. Buddhist cannon Divyavadan provided the story of painting in the court of Bimbisara.¹¹ But golden epoch was added with Indian art and painting tradition during Gupta period as Ajanta and Bagh painting. H. K. Sherwani has analyzed Percy Brown's views on Ajanta painting and says that from the time that the last painter of Ajanta threw down his brush in 650 AD until we came in contact with the art again as it was revived in the reign of the Mughal emperor Akbar in the later half of the sixteenth century.¹²

However Gupta period witnessed a marvelous development in painting traditions of India. From this era onwards Indian paintings are branded on the basis of Gupta painting. This painting culture also considered as the classical painting of India which began with the discovery of Ajanta paintings of this period.¹³ Thus Ajanta painting of the Gupta period represents the development of painting culture in India.

With the entry of Islamic culture in early medieval period, many changes were introduced in the art culture of India. Like Gandhar art which was influenced by Hellenic world, Indian painting was also influenced by Islamic painting as well as painting culture of Persia. According to Minhaj-us-Siraj records, Sultans were patronizing painting in their courts. In Tabaqat-i-Nasir, he describes that Delhi city was decorated by the portraits of Sulatan Iltutmish on the occasion of welcoming foreign guest.¹⁴ Sultan Firoz Saha also loved paintings. Barani in his work Tarik-i-Firoj Sahi mentions that Sultan Firoz Saha Tughlaq had frescoes paintings on walls.¹⁵

Indian Painting tradition is very rich and unique in its nature. Basically Rajsthani, Pahari, and Deccani Painting had domination over other paintings. Pahari painting developed in the Himalaya foot hill regions. It has some painting similarity with Rajasthan painting. But it was more sophisticated than Rajsthani. Themes of this painting are from Hindu philosophy. Kangra painting achieved success under the patronization of Raja Sansar Chand during eighteenth century. He appointed artist to illustrate Hindu works of Vaishnavism like Gitagovinda, Bhagavat Puran, Ramayan, Mahabharat etc. even lyrical painting or Ragachitra was an important feature of this school.¹⁶ Then Deccani Painting emerged during later medieval period was more poetic in nature. This style is combination of both Persian-Turkish and indigenous features.¹⁷ Indian painting was also influenced by Persian painting during Mughal reign. On the other hand painting culture of India developed when Mughals came to India and patronized it in their court. Babur was a great lover art, nature and beauty; however he did not have much time to contribute to the painting traditions of India. Akbar the grandson of Babur made special arrangement for illustration of manuscripts of India to understand the culture of India. Ramayan Mahabharat and Harivamsa were illustrated under his guidance. These miniature paintings not only represent the society, they also focus on the Hindu customs and traditions.¹⁸

During the period of Jahangiri, Mughal painting achieved the significant milestone. Like his father, he had great love and passion towards painting. He provided special arrangement for the progress and development of Painting in his court. Basically the institution of painting became a more vibrant during his period. During this period European painting which was technically more accurate and equal in proportionate had influenced Mughal painting style.¹⁹ At the same time, by the influence of Mughal painting and propaganda new painting style emerged in various parts of the India. Among them Rajsthani, and Decanni painting were prominent in its class.²⁰ However, after Jahangiri, painting tradition did not get much attention from Sahajahan, Aurangzeb and later Mughals. Thus Sahi qaulam tradition could not maintain its progress and got a setback. But eighteenth century Mughal ruler Mahamad Saha was a lover of music and painting but he was helpless due to the attack of Nadir Saha in 1739 AD.²¹ Mughal painting is not only enriched by the scholars or artist of the royal court. There were some other

evidences indicating that women of the palace, queens and princess made great contribution to the sahi qalam paintings. O. C. Ganguli argues that these paintings were made by women artist who had access to the Mughal and Rajput Zanana palaces.²² Thus women always have equal contribution to the society, culture and economy. But they are not visible in the historical writings and their work is not recognized as contribution to the society.

However painting culture of India was alive through its regional patronization. New style of painting tradition emerged in Rajsthan, Gujurat, Himalyan regions, Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Deccan part of India. They are very famous in the name of Rajsthani paintings, Dakhini qualam, Kangra Painting, Madhubani painting, Orissan Painting etc.

History of Painting in Orissa:

Orissa has a rich tradition of painting. It is also an age old tradition in comparison to sculpture and architectural art of Orissa.²³ Pathy says that Orissan Painting is very unique and different to other Indian paintings such as Deccani, Ajanta, Mughal, Rajstani etc. These Indian paintings have emerged with vitality and vigor in the history of Indian painting but at the same time they have gone into oblivion with the passage of time. However, Orissan School of painting emerged in prehistoric era, achieved millstone during medieval era and continued in present era. Painting is still active and practiced by a group of people, who are called chitrakaras or painters.²⁴ That's why Orissa painting and its antiquity itself show the glory of Orissan visual art.

Orissa is well known for its temple architecture and stone sculpture on the walls of caves and temple. But painting culture of Orissa is not being highlighted though this visual art culture has a pre historic root. Like women's history, the history of painting history in Orissa was not given priority in the historical study and reconstruction of Orissa history. Painting as a historical source is not used like archival sources and archaeological sources. They are being neglected or used in history writing as less important source. This is because of the material used in painting and this disintegrates over a period of time unlike a stone sculpture.

Orissa is very rich in pre historic painting. Rock shelter paintings of Orissa belonging to pre historic era are Yogimatha in Kalahandi district, Manikamada, and Ushakothi, in Sundergarh district and Ulapahar, Bikramkhol in Sambalpur district of Orissa²⁵. These paintings are generally found in the woods and ceiling. Themes of the painting is animal figures, sun, moon,, geometrical patterns, but no birds and reptiles are found in the paintings. Hunting scene, domesticating animals, human figures, fighting and dancing scenes are found in these rock shelter paintings.²⁶

Painting was the part of social behavior, traditions, religious rituals, festivals of Orissa. Even during the first century AD painting culture was very common in the life of Oriya society. In the second line of Hatigumpha inscription of Kharavela, references have been made to the painting tradition prevalent in the kingdom.²⁷ Udayagiri and Khandagiri which are famous for its elegant rock cut caves and sculpture of the first century BC had also contained the paintings of the period. Sir John Marshal has argued that this caves had paintings which have now vanished or disappeared.²⁸ Hatigumpaha inscription has also proved this. It refers about *lekhitani* or paintings. According to the inscription Kharavela built a palace which was decorated by artistic works and for that he renovated them.²⁹

Buddhism and Jainism have left a rich culture of art in every corner of Orissa. Decline of these religions in early medieval period have not drawn the full stop of the art culture. Saivism and Vaisnavism encouraged the tradition of art and created master pieces of artistic work which are still standing strong and attracting people towards their magnificent beauty. However painting did not get much place in the historical writings even though painting had a long and old tradition through temple painting.³⁰

Orissa painting has its own identity and uniqueness. From pre historic period to medieval period painting of Orissa has its own place in the Indian painting culture. Although it was not popular in India but it had religious identity along with its pre historic origin in Orissa. Jagannath culture was also deeply connected to the painting culture of Orissa. Because the gods image were made from wood then that wood idols are painted with different colours like black, white, yellow red etc. Thus in Jagannath culture, painting is an integral part. Not only images of gods but temples, chariots, ritual cloths

and places all are related to painting. Temple chronicle, *Madalapanji* refers about the painting rituals of lord Jagannath and festivals related to Jagannath cult. It's said that during the Narasimhadeva's rule in Orissa painters were permanently appointed for temple rituals. It was during the Ganga Period [1038 -1435 AD] and particularly its ruler Narasimha Dev who Started appointing painters in the court. Patronization began from here and it continued till the end of Gajapati Periods in Orissa. So temple had a special category servant called chitrakara niyoga or painter community whose duty was to paint walls of the temple, images of the gods, chariot painting and places related to the Jagannath festivals and rituals.³¹ J. P. Das also argues that Puri painting or patta painting originated with the emergence of Jagannath cult. A class of people who dedicated themselves for the temple rituals and these people formed a community called chitrakara originally developed in the pilgrimage town of Puri itself. From Puri they migrated to other regions of Orissa. However Fisher dismissed this theory of Das and says that painting is not unanimous work. He also says that Jagannath cult which emerged in thirteenth century always had the images painted. At the same time chitrakara have no right to paint images but it was sabar daita or tribal priest of the Jagannath. Fisher also says that painters were not part of the temple service in twelfth century. It was only in 1808 chitrakaras listed to paint images.³² Fisher says that Puri is not the origin of painter class of Orissa. Bengal census data of 1881 provides some information of painters of Orissa. According to this data most of the painters settled in Cuttack then migrated to Puri district. Ganjam district also had world class painters belonging to various caste and background. Even in present Andhra Pradesh region Oriya chitrakaras families are staying.³³

The composite Deccani culture representing costumes, manners and traditions of Hindu or Muslims, and its striking features of synthesizing in nature became a theme for many artists of the time.³⁴ Painting of the medieval period shows the aspects of social life of common people and progress and development of their society and culture. Orissa painting culture has achieved milestone during medieval time while pre historic period sowed the seeds of painting. Orissa rock paintings and mural paintings are not sophisticated like Bhimbetka rock paintings or Ajanta paintings, but its Sitabhinji paintings and temples and Matha wall paintings are not less important in this category.

Orissa has different types of paintings such as rock paintings, temple paintings, pata paintings, wall paintings, folk painting and palm leaf painting. Primarily Painting of Orissa is divided into three categories such as *bhittichitra* or Mural painting, *pothichitra* painting or palm leaf painting and *patachitra* or cloth painting.³⁵ Paper painting started in 18th century.³⁶ But Paper painting could not take the position of palm leaf painting. Palm leaf painting still occupied a major place in the Orissan painting culture. Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar has thousands of palm leaf paintings preserved in a special section of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Orissa State museum has collected and preserved more than fifty thousand palm manuscripts including Bengali, Telugu, Tamil, Sanskrit, and Oriya. It has twenty sections of palm leaf records and among the palm leaf illustration section is one. It has numerous illustrated palm leaves. It has both plain paintings and paintings with texts.

Palm leaf manuscript illustration of medieval Orissa has been treated as visual art for preserving and remembering past, even it has not been considered as history of visual art for research and study purpose. Irony is that all medieval manuscripts and literary works and kavyas were written on palm leaf and they are taken as literary source of history but palm leaf painting of the same period of literature production has not been treated as historical source. No historical research have mentioned about these painting works. Even main stream Orissa history books have not uttered a single word to praise this tradition. Further to analyze women's reflection in these painting is a difficult task. Women are represented in the palm leaf illustration as manuscript narrates them and medieval literary works were mostly religious and sexualism base. It may be Rama-Sita or Radha-Krishna story, everywhere sexuality and eroticism has dominated all the sections. Medieval scriptures were also religious in nature and Ramayan and Mahabharat theme was the major part of these illustration but eighteenth century palm leaf painting adopted sexualism in its depictions. *Gitagovinda*, *Lavanyavati*, *Ushavilash*, *Bidhaggdha Madhav*, *vaidehisavialsha*, and other illustrated manuscripts of the period has portrayed women as a element of sexualism. Their depiction on palm leaf is more seductive and visual pleasure for men. They are painted as dancing, decorative, serving to men or engaged in sex. Beyond these lines women have no identity or contribution. Thus analyzing women's representation in eighteenth century painting basically in palm leaf

painting is easy in order to show their visual attraction but it is very difficult to make a frame to paint them in because they are depicted with the brush of patriarchy and colour of sexuality. Women were seen in these two ways and painting of the period also has given same touch as mind of chitrakaras or scribes influenced by the ideologies of the contemporary society.

Palm leaf manuscripts were treated as sacred items in Orissa and people worshiped them as god and goddesses in the home. After it got damaged or eaten by ant, they were recopied and then the damaged ones are immersed them in the river like human ashes.³⁷ Jaunna says that Orissa had 5% palm leaf manuscript are painted or have the picture.³⁸ Palm leaf painting in Orissa has a hoary antiquity since they have been related with the literary creations.³⁹ However, most of the colophons of the illustrated palm leaf book have not provided the name and date of the scripts but this creates the problem to fix the date of the manuscripts.⁴⁰

Earliest palm leaf manuscript painting is discovered from Bihar and Bengal regions. These palm leaf manuscripts belong to the Buddhist and Jain cult. But no Buddhist manuscripts have been discovered so far in Orissa though it was a centre of Buddhism and Jainism.⁴¹ Pathy says that palm leaf illustration and writing existed even during the period of 3rd century BC. He argues that before inscription on stone probably they made plan on palm leaf.⁴²

Not only palm leaf mural paintings and patta paintings also followed the epic subjects and characters. Apart from these there are also some secular and romantic illustrated works preserved in the museum. This chapter includes for important palm leaf paintings related to women's history of the said period. Not only Odisha State Museum, Utkal University, Sambalpur University, Berhampur University and some other private libraries have also preserved palm leaf paintings of the period.

Tribal painting is one of the major parts of the Orissan paintings tradition but it has no records, because people used to paint on the earth walls of the house. Past tribal paintings can be seen through modern tribal paintings. Soura, Santal, Gonds, Pradhans,

Kandhas were famous for their painting talents. Theme of the painting was mostly religious and social base.

Folk painting or lokachitra painting were ritualistic in nature. This type of painting played vital role for a human from his/her birth to death. It is also connected with sanskar. It is symbolical and has deeper connection with life philosophy. Religiously and socially lokachitra had a mystical impact on the human mind and life. Festivals, rituals and occasions were the platforms to show the unique features of the painting. This folk art always has religious sanction and symbolized the goodness and auspiciousness of the home.⁴³

Eighteenth century Orissa also had folk painting. In Oriya language it is called chitta. This was a unique art form developed since ancient period. It was considered that chitta or chitra which was painted on human body like present day tattoo was the sign of auspicious symbol. It was also painted for the identification as well as beautification purpose. In another form of Chitta or Jhoti also indicates the festival of paintings and painting on the earthen walls of the house. According to Harekrushna Mahatab chitta is the creative art of village life of Orissa.⁴⁴ Chitta or lokachitra was an artistic quality of Oriya girls and womens who were expert in this art. This painting quality was considered an extra qualification for a young girl which helped her to get select for the marriage. This folk painting was generally made from white rice and other colours. All the painting works done through the raw stick brush made from tree or cloth attached with stick and banana leaf stick used for this painting.⁴⁵

Marriage, thread ceremony, birth ceremony, festivals and religious functions had the rituals of painting on the walls of house. Banana trees, pots with mango leaves and coconut, musical instruments related with marriage, butterfly, swastika symbol, oil candles, fish, cow, flower trees, parrots, peacock, green coconut, crunch, etc. were the main items of the painting. This painting art mostly carried out by women folk. Oriya women were specially getting training from the family or other members of the village women for drawing the folk painting. Even newly married women had to paint the walls of the in-laws house on this occasion. Though this rational painting on earthen wall was

temporary and for occasional purpose but it represents the social and religious picture of Orissa. Even today this folk painting is still an integral part of the village people on various occasions and celebrations.

Painting culture of Orissa is being neglected in the painting tradition of India. Orissa has achieved the mile stone in the painting on palm leaf and patachitra in medieval period. Pre historic rock shelter painting has given a strong evidence of painting tradition of Orissa while ancient Sitabhinji painting gives an idea about the progress of painting culture in Orissa.

Sitabhinji painting in Kendujhara district of Orissa belongs to fourth century AD. Huge king stoneboulder with natural frame situated in this place. These boulders have some name like lava, Kusha, Ravana, Sita etc. it is believed that Sita spent her exile life here. Along with these rock boulders, there also exists some rock shelter. They are archaeologically named as plate – IB, plate –II, plate IIA. All these shelters are known as Ravanchaya. (See plate-1& 2). Ravanachhaya rock shelter contains the painting but it has faded naturally. An original painting area is 25x10 inches, but now it is 17x10 inches.⁴⁶

Sitabhinji painting represents the idea that women during ancient period had enjoyed equal rights. This depiction also indicates the Oriya women's legacy which she had learnt from the tradition of the ancient society of Kalinga. Udayagiri and Khandagiri cave panels of first century BC have vivid depiction about women's contributions to the society. These painted panels have been shown their position and status in the society. Women were playing equal role with men for social economic and political progress in the society. Women are depicted as warriors, lion hunters, elephant masters, chariot drivers and in many more jobs in the Udayagiri and Khandagiri caves. Receiving victorious king and standing as guard near entrance gate, nursing wounded soldiers was also the features of Oriya women of the period.⁴⁷ (See plate-3). It seems that the same legacy was continuing in 5th century Orissa and Sitabhinji painting has provided that. Women attendant and dancing women with royal procession clearly shows the women's contribution to the society. But no female figures are depicted as warrior like during first century BC. Probably women's position started declining during these periods. Because from this time onwards, we don't have evidences of women's participation in the polity,

army, economy except in Bhoumakara rules of eighth and ninth centuries Orissa. During these periods one third of rulers were women and they ruled a vast territory of Orissa from their capital of Jajatinagar. However they were lucky because king did not have legal heir or princes were minor. Of course they had quality to rule and ruled for long period. Among them, Prithibi Mahadevi, and Tribhuban Devi are famous for their administrative, benevolence works and contribution to the shakta art and architecture. During this time Orissa achieved political stability and gender equality was prevalent in the society. This period onwards Orissa has not seen a woman in this position and equal status with men.

There are several texts on painting tradition of Orissa. *Abhinayachandrika*, *Ragachitra*, *Chitrasastra*, *Silpaprakash* and Other puranic works related to the painting are examples of Orissan painting culture. Painting texts of the medieval period is not only dedicated to the painting design, technique, probably sculpture design was the major theme of these texts. Some scholars argue that before going to engrave on stone, artists were designing first on palm leaf and then depicted on the walls of the temple. *Abhinayachandrika* was one of them which fully dedicated to the technique and posture of Odissi dance. Silpasatsra palm leaf illustration also dedicated to the design of sculptural art.

From pre historic period to twentieth century Orissa, paintings have been playing important role in writing history of Orissa. Though medieval paintings of Orissa were influenced by south Indian as well as North Indian paintings but it has its own originality and identity. Since the time of Kharavela, Orissa had control over some parts of south India. Vijayanagar Empire had political and cultural relation with Orissa since Ganga dynasty of Kalinga of twelfth century AD. Then relationship strengthened when Gajapati Kapilendra Dev established his power over some regions of Vijayanagar empire like Trichinapalli, Mudurai, etc. According to *Kanchikavery* work of Purusottam Das of seventeenth century, Gajapati Purusottam Dev defeated Kanchi king and married his daughter Padmavati. Till today people of coastal Orissa talk about the Padmavati and Purusottam Dev's story and Lord Jagannath and Balabhadra who accompanied with him in south India Invasion. As a folk tale of Padmavati episode in Orissa history is not

granted authenticity but some inscriptions in Kanchi related to the Gajapati Purusottam Dev justified this episode's truthness. Of course some mythological exaggeration is there but we can't deny the Purusottam dev's southern March. Some inscriptions from Southern India also proved that he invaded Kanchi regions. Then during the time of Gajapati Prataprudra Dev, Orissa lost power over Southern regions and was defeated by Krishnadev Ray. He gave his daughter in marriage to Krishnadev Roy. Thus Orissa and Deccan had deep political and cultural relation during those periods of medieval time. Devadasi culture which is believed to have been originated from south India also influenced or migrated to Orissa during seventh or eighteenth centuries.

Medieval Painting culture of Orissa, generally from southern regions is influence by Telugu painting traditions. Dressing style, ornaments, drawing designs were influenced by it. Not only painting language, traditions, food habit, festivals, marriage customs were also influenced by Telugu culture.

Binod Routray, art historian of Orissa, agreed with this point that medieval Orissa painting which was mostly religious in nature influenced by the south Indian painting style. Jagannath temple paintings, and paintings of Mathas of Puri and paintings of south Orissa followed the techniques and design style and colour combination of Telugu paintings.⁴⁸

Painting culture in Orissa developed during early medieval period when temple culture emerged as an important center of art and architecture. Probably on the shadow of temple sculpture painting culture was developed. Dinanath Pathy states that it was several centuries after the construction of temple architecture in Bhubaneswar, Konark, Puri, painting culture of Orissa was developed. Though before construction of the temple, palm leaf painting was existed because temple construction plan was first drawn on the palm leaf then sent to the king for the approval.⁴⁹

Jagannath Temple chronicle, *Madalapanji* has given information of chitrakara or painters. There are many festivals related to the Lord Jagannath which has importance of painting culture. Besayatra was one of these festival of Jagannath and in this festivals gods are to be decorated as Pralambasura Badh or killing of demon Pralambesura. To

decorate the gods, there are different categories of temple servants who have special duties to decorate the gods. Khunti, pasupala, mekapa, palia mekap etc. are specially engaged with these festivals. Pasupalak nijoga had the duties to paint the mandapa and its walls on this besayatra.⁵⁰

Orissa painting also have lyrical feature in its style. Like Ragamala painting culture of Kangra, Rajstani, Decanni and Mughal court, Orissa painting tradition had rhythm, emotion of human life and philosophy etc. Oriya literatures have provided lots of information on the painting culture of Orissa. *Lavanyavati*, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, *Premasudhanidhi*, of Upendra Bhanja, Chandrakala of Baladeva Rath, Mathura Mangala of Bhakta Charan Das, *Prastabchintamani* of Nilambar Bidhyadhar and other works of eighteenth century have described painting traditions and portrait works of the periods. Upendra Bhanja's kavya *Kotibrahmandasundari* describes painting culture of the society. In every field it had its importance and existence.⁵¹ Canto-13 and 19 of this eighteenth century work describes about the painting tradition. The lines of these cantos indicate that wall painting and portrait making was common activities of the people. For social and religious functions like marriage, festival, ritual, and religious purpose painting was used commonly.⁵² *Lavanyavati* kavya of Upendra Bhanja has described about the painting tradition when marriage proposal of princess Lavanyavati started. It was a practice to send the portraits of bride and groom to the each other's house for selection purpose. In *Lavanyavati* kavya, the father sent the photo of his daughter Lavanyavati to find the perfect groom. In another canto of this kavya, the hero holds a portrait of heroine Lavanyavati and is thinking about her. In canto thirty one, the hero imagines about Lavanyavati's figure, her beauty, then romance and erotic love with her etc. *Lavanyavati* kavya of eighteenth century also has given clear ideas about the painting culture which was prevailing in the society. it was patronized by kings and Zamindars of the periods. Mostly for the marriage proposal portrait of the bride was made to show the photo to the groom and his family for selection purpose. In this kavya, parents of Lavanyavati made a painting of her by a greatest painter of the time and sent it through mediator to find suitable groom for their girl.

An eighteenth century palm leaf work *Sangita Damodara* of Raghunath Prusti is based on the theme of musical painting. This work also called *Raga Chitra* in Orissa. Eighteenth century works are mostly based on the royal life, so women of the elite class had the talent of painting and making portraits. *Sarala Mahabharat*, the first Oriya work provides important information on painting tradition. In *Sobha parva* of this work is clearly depicted the painting art on walls and subject of the paintings.⁵³

Gopibhasa, seventeenth century work of Danei Das has given elaborate description on mural paintings which were drawn on various occasions and festivals. In canto seven of the *Gopibhasa*, the poet has narrated it clearly. In the same canto Narada asked to painters to paint the picture of lord Visnhu which will be centre of attraction. In canto twenty nine also, the poet describes about the painting culture of seventeenth century Orissa. People were also painting their house walls on various occasions. It was a ritual of religious sanction to draw the pictures and images of god and goddesses and other symbols. In *Gopibhasa* kavya in many cantos it is depicted that numbers of painters asked to go along with gopis to the village and paint the walls of houses.

Mathura Mangala, an eighteenth century kavya of Bhakta charan Das describes about mural paintings. The story of this work which based on the Lord Krishna's childhood life depicted that Krishna had many childhood activities and incidents. Once, Krishna made a plan to go to Mathura where his biological parents Devaki and Basudeva were imprisoned by his uncle Kansa. Krishna was getting into chariot and set to start journey, mother Yasoda started crying by memorizing all his childhood activities in Gopapura. She remembered how Krishna feared by seeing paintings on the walls.

Raghunath Prusti, a great palm leaf painter of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced eight illustrated manuscripts on the kavya's of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Orissa. *Lavanyavati*, *Sobhabati*, *Kundali Janana*, *Krupasindhu Janana*, *Sangita Damodara*, *Prasana Chudamani*, *Mahisasuramardini*, and *Vishnu Laxmi* are being preserved in the Meusum of Zurich, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar, Nuagan Library, New York Public Library, Elvenjem Meusem of Madison, Winsconsin and National Museum of New Delhi.

Prastabchintamani, an eighteenth century palm leaf manuscript of Nilamber Bidyadhar has given elaborate description about the painting tradition, painter caste and painting profession. In the section of trade and commercial activities of the people of the period of the Southern Orissa region, author states that painters and carpenters were the two important profession of the period. Painters were a social class and caste who dedicated for their profession. In Oriya language they were called *chitrakaras*.⁵⁴ He also describes that temple of the village was painted in colour. Apart from that from this work we have found strong evidences of painting tradition of eighteenth century Orissa. During this period boys basically from elite class society were getting education from Gurukulas or gurus. They were learning *sangitasastra*, *chitrabidya*, and *silpasastra* along with other subjects from their teachers.⁵⁵ Painting was a subject of study of the periods.

Apart from these, Orissa painting culture can be seen through mural painting tradition of mathas. These mathas are being mostly found in southern Orissa. Among them most important and famous mathas of eighteenth century are Biranchi Narayan Temple of Buguda, Ganjam. It was constructed by Srikara Bhanjadeva of Bhanja dynasty of Ghumusura Kingdom of South Orissa in 1777. The wall of this Matha contains the painting of these periods. Theme of this painting is mostly based on the epic Ramayana and Mahabharata and natural representations. However, the questions related to women through these paintings can be analyzed in the point of Mural Paintings and Women in the later part of this chapter.

Patronization of Painting:

Medieval painting culture mostly centered on the religious and social themes. Rulers of the period were also deeply attached with religion and patronizing of various religious cults. Till 1568 AD, Orissa was ruled by Hindu rulers and then after Muslims captured the power of Orissa. During Muslim rules in Orissa Zamindars and land lords were the real administrators of the regions. Even before Muslims they were also working under king as vassals. It is due to the lack of propaganda and research work on this particular area that made this visual art unknown to the world. But indeed it has achieved more than what other well know painting schools achieved today. It is the only painting culture which has continuity and development due to its religious connection.

Orissa painting has pre historic root but the progress took place during Ganga dynasty when the rulers of the dynasty started appointing painters in the court as well as for temple services. Painting art was a common practice of the Oriya society and religious life. Pre historic rock shelter painting, Kaharavela's Hatigumpha Inscription [1st century BC] and Sitabhinji Painting [6th Century AD] all are explaining the existence and importance of the painting culture in the Oriya society. However, rituals and religious festivals which are still observed by the Oriya people speak us how painting was an integral part of this society.

On the occasion of marriage all village home basically the outside walls of the house is painted with white, red, yellow, black color. The house wall of bride and groom also painted with various religious and traditional symbols like swastika symbol, pot with green coconut and mango leaves, banana trees, Jagannath image, lotus etc.(write it in folk art section)

Kings and Zamindars not only patronized the temple architecture and sculpture, they also patronized art culture of Orissa. Artists were employed in the court for painting in the palace and temples.⁵⁶ Mayadhara Mansingh, the author of *'History of Oriya Literature'* says that "from king Kharavela in the first century AD to king Narasimha Deva of thirteenth century AD, for about twelve centuries, the soul of Oriya people seemed to have been possessed by a frenzy of self-expression resulting in along chain of splendid artistic enterprises which place the Oriyas among the topmost builders in the world."⁵⁷

Orissa's painting tradition is not less important to Rajsthani, Kangra, Deccani, Mughal paintings. But it has not come to the lime light of the academic society. Indian history has not said anything about it when other paintings have their own place in the historical studies. Dinanath Pathy, J. P. Das and some foreign scholars like William Joanna, F. B. Fisher have worked in this area. After them no further study has been done on Orissa's Painting history. Though palm leaf paintings or illustrated manuscripts are being preserved in the Odisha State Museum and Universities of the state. But research on this palm painting is rare. Thus it is a challenge to study the painting of Orissa to find out the position and representation of women of the particular period. However I have

tried my best to give a historical touch to these painting and at the same time have drawn a concrete picture of Oriya women of the eighteenth century by analyzing paintings of the period.

Eighteenth Century Painting of Orissa and Representation of Women

Eighteenth century Orissa was under the rule of Mughals and Marathas. Political tussles and instability was always there. But the art and literature did not face much difficulty, because Mughals are ruling through the kings of the Khurda and chiefs of other regions of Orissa. In the same way Marathas who captured Orissa in 1751 did not interfere in the matter of culture and religion. Further they also provided facilities for the smooth function of Jagannath Temple. Their primary goal was to extract revenue. During this time mural paintings on the walls of temples and Mathas achieved great success. Though temple paintings began with the emergence of Jagannath cult in twelve century AD the records reveals that temple painting achieved milestone from eighteenth century onwards. Jagannth Temple, Puri has some painting panels which belongs to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries but these paintings were being re painted annually. Biranchi Narayan temple of Buguda, Ganjam which is famous as wooden Konark is the finest example of eighteenth century paintings. Basudeva temple of Jayantagada, Ganjam is another example of eighteenth century Mural painting of Orissa. Dharakota Jagannath temple painting of Ganjam District which was painted in early part of the nineteenth century is another example of Orissan temple paintings. Palm leaf paintings discovered from southern and central part of Orissa also points to the eighteenth century progress and development of painting culture.

Eighteenth century painting works was mostly influenced by the religious philosophy of Orissa. Because painting culture emerged as an important art after the origin and growth of Jagannath cult in Orissa. That's why; most of the painting works of the period are religious in nature. Of course the illustration of secular palm leaf manuscripts of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries depicted the social picture of the society. Eighteenth century mural painting depicted Krushna lila, Ramalila,

Anantasayan, Mahinsamardini, lotus and natural scenes. Further Jagannath philosophy dominated the painting culture of Orissa. Pata painting is the form of painting which is generally done on cloth. This painting art probably emerged due to the rise of Jagannath cult. Because Jagannath temple has the rituals related to pata painting and painters who are the servants of the temple. Though these paintings are more religious in nature and did not give importance to the social subjects but the study of this subject gives us ideas about the beliefs of the people on religion and control of religion over the people of the medieval period. Medieval religion which created the rules and regulations for women's only had the greater influence on the society. Medieval religion enacted various restrictions and imposed them on the women to make her secondary and subordinate class to satisfy male ego.

Jagannath cult is not different from this philosophy of patriarchy. According to Balaram Das's *Laxmipuran* of sixteenth century, women in this cult were treated as subordinate and low class community in the society. They did not have freedom to live their life or take decisions themselves. They had to depend on husband and obey the husband as god. Jagannath cult which is a Vaisnav cult had not given importance to the women in their philosophy. Yes, some women figures are found in the eighteenth century works which shows the women's dressing style, sringar, ornaments, etc. but not in any important position or as contributors to the development of the society. However, palm leaf painting is the main source to study women of eighteenth century Orissa.

Palm Leaf Painting and Representation of Women

Palm leaf painting or manuscripts illustration was an age old tradition of art and literature production in Medieval Orissa. Palm leaf painting of Orissa had glorious past. Since ancient time palm leaf had played the vital role in preserving historical records till modern period. Palm leaf writing and illustration in Orissa became more developed during fifteenth century, as the Oriya literary writing begun during this period. The oldest Oriya palm leaf manuscript we have found till today is not before fifteenth century. An oldest palm leaf manuscript has been preserved in Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar

dated 1494 AD while an illustrated palm leaf manuscript named *Sangita Damodara*, in the museum has been dated to 1713 AD.

Palm leaf records are considered as important source for the reconstruction of history of eighteenth century India. Writing on the palm leaf and preserving for the future purpose was a tradition in some parts of Indian territories of the period. Before the use of paper writing or development of paper culture in India palm leaf was used for records and information. Gujarat Orissa were very famous for the palm leaf writing not for only records purpose , people of these regions used it for horoscope, religious and economic purpose also. In Orissa palm leaf culture has a religious sanctity. It was worshiped by the people by keeping in Bhagavat Tungi or village mathas where every evening Bhagavat Gita or Oriya Bhagavat was read by Brahmans from these palm leaf manuscripts. During ancient and medieval period, literary works or kavyas were being written on religious theme. Thus people believed palm leaf manuscripts as god. Even today also village people or old generation worships them with god's idols or photos in home.

Orissa had a rich culture of palm leaf writings and illustrations. Beginning of the Oriya literature started with palm leaf manuscript written by Sarala Das in fifteenth century. Then the development of Oriya literature proceed through the Panchasakha age led by five lower caste or sudra scholars such as Jagannath Das, Balaram Das, Achyut Das, Sisuanata Das and Yoshavanta Das. All their works or kavyas in Oriya language written on the palm leaves. Even during eighteenth century, palm leaf writing was a common practice in Orissa. The great Oriya scholars such as Upendra Bhanja and his contemporary Banamali Das, Kabisurya Baladeba Rath and other poets were writing on the palm leaves. The classical texts and literatures were also written on this palm leaf note. Riti works also written on palm leaf. Not only for writings, palm leaf also used for paintings and illustrations. Even pictographic palm leaf works preserved in Orissa Sate museum. (See plate – 4)According to S. N. Rajguru, palm leaf writing tradition is very old, even during Gupta period it was used writing as well as record purpose. Not only kavyas king's declaration and farman was also written on palm leaf. Then Kalinga temple art and architecture achieved millstone during early medieval period and this was happening because Oriya artists were well trained and skilled. They were masters in

Silpasatras and worked under the principles of the *Silpasastras* which are the source of knowledge of art and architecture. These *Silpasatras* were written on palm leaf and preserved for the next generation or future purpose.⁵⁸

Palm leaf illustrations also reached its height during nineteenth century Orissa. This palm leaf painting was very attractive and bright due to its double blind design. First drawing through iron stylus was made on the leaf then this drawing was pasted or filled with colors which made the picture more attractive. The painting on the palm leaves looks beautiful as stone sculpture and appeared exactly same as in the stone sculpture.⁵⁹

Gujarat also had palm leaf writing tradition and illustration works of Jain school. This culture in Gujarat developed during eleventh century to sixteenth century.⁶⁰ But palm leaf painting was common in Bihar and Bengal region during tenth century. In western India palm leaf painting existed in eleventh century. Oriya manuscript painting is different to Bengal and Bihar. Oriya palm leaf painting was drawn in iron stylus and then it was pasted with colour while Bengal and Gujarat palm leaf painted with brush after drawing by steel stylus.

But in case of Orissa, palm leaf culture developed in eighth century and even continued in twenty first century for horoscope preparing and painting. In Orissa, palm leaf painting was drawn on palm leaf by iron stylo and colour was applied accordingly to the theme and characters. Eighteenth century palm leaf painting theme is based on the religion, rituals, traditions, court life, social and cultural life of Orissa. Eighteenth century painting of Orissa was influenced by the south Indian and Deccani and North Indian painting style. Though it had its own identity and features but the south and north effect is also shown in the palm leaf paintings as well as miniature painting.⁶¹ Oriya literature of eighteenth century like *Chitrakabya Bondhoday* of Upendra Bhanja is a work on painting Culture of Orissa. But representation of women is very less.

Bidagdha Madhav, a eighteenth century palm leaf illustrated manuscript is the only piece which is preserved in Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar. This palm painting is unique in both design as well as the sequence of the story. It is not a colour painting but beautiful depictions helps the viewers to understand visuals of palm leaf painting easily.

So from the above analysis it is proved that painting was a common tradition of later medieval periods. Social customs, rituals, religious functions and temple and mathas were the epicenters of this visual art. However, the painting culture was centered on the religion and religious elements such as god and goddesses images, their symbols etc.

Most of the palm leaf illustration of eighteenth century was based on the sixteenth, seventeenth and contemporary literary works. Eighteenth century Orissa witnessed the riti literature in which women played the central character. Thus the palm leaf illustration also has given same priority to the women in their painting works. Even one folio contains fourteen women figures within the two and half inch wide and fourteen inch length palm leaf. (See plate-5)

Ushabilasha palm leaf illustration is a romantic work of eighteenth century Orissa. The story of *Ushabilasha* centered on the main character Usha who is depicted as heroine of the story. She is talented in dance and her artistic talent is shown on the folios of the work. She is dancing along with other female dancers and musicians. During medieval period music, singing, dancing, painting and weaving were the extra qualities of a woman. These qualities always played vital role when groom's parent and relatives going to bride's house before marriage to see how the bride is looking and her working style and capabilities. At this time these extra qualities or talent of bride could influence the groom's family members. Though dancing was generally performed by elite class women and *nachuni* caste but other talent like wall painting and weaving was practiced by all. In *Ushabilasha* palm leaf manuscript painting, Usha is being painted with sari and dancing posture in front of the Lord Krushna's image. She is dancing in the centre and other musicians and dancers accompanied her. (See plate - 6)

Representation of women as Dancers and Musicians in the Painting

Palm leaf painting of Orissa which reached its glory during seventeenth and eighteenth century Orissa also gave importance to women in the painting. Most of the palm leaf painting of the period is manuscript illustrations. Eighteenth century was a

period of riti yuga and literary works depicted women as source of luxury items or central figure of the works. Thus palm leaf painting or folios having numbers of women figures in one single folio. *Gitagovinda* palm leaf illustration has given importance to women characters in the paintings. Radha, gopis, and other women figures are depicted on the leaves according to the story. One of the folios of *Gitagovinda* manuscript painting of Dhanajya, depicted some women dancing and some playing musical instruments. This depiction has given a clear idea on devadasi tradition prevalent in medieval Orissa.⁶² (See plate – 7)

Gitagovinda of Jayadeva, is a twelfth century composition of love story of Lord Krishna and Radha. It has twelve cantos and classical ragas. Structure of this composition is poetic in form. Gajapati Prataprudradeva made this *Gitagovinda* song compulsory in the Jagannath temple as ritual and for devadasis who were performing dance for Jagannath's entertainment.⁶³ Artists of the eighteenth century were also influenced by this poetic work. This work is the combination of songs and narratives of story of Radha Krishna. Their love, separation, union are the main features of this work. Eighteenth century illustrated palm leaf manuscript of *Gitagovinda* was marvelous. There are numbers of illustrated palm leaf manuscripts of *Gitagovinda* that preserved in Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar. Even colorful palm leaf paintings were also produced by the Oriya artists of the period.

Jayadeva the author of *Gitagovinda* probably married a devadasi of Lord Jagannath of Puri. His wife was expert in dancing. His work *Gitagovinda* which is based on Radha-Krishna's eternal love reflected through the palm leaf painting. Painter Dhananjaya's artistic talent is influenced by the poetic rhythm of his heart and shows the elegance of images and narration of the story. There are numbers of illustrated *Gitagovinda* manuscripts of the said period has been preserved in Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar. However, Dhananjaya's *Gitagovinda* palm leaf painting of eighteenth century is unique and elegant. Illustration has given pure artistic touch when drawing the story of Radha Krishna. The bhangis, abhinaya, and expression of female dancers in palm leaves made them famous and talented persons in the society. Dance in medieval period mostly related to the religion and religious institution and this connection provided a

strong platform to the female dancers to achieve high position in the society. *Gitagovinda* palm leaf manuscript illustration has given a clear picture of dance culture of eighteenth century Orissa. Dance is the major theme in this painting. Dancing girls and girls playing musical instruments, dancing postures are portrayed in this illustration. It is believed *Gitagovinda* which has written on Radhakrishna love has given priority to the dancing culture of the temple of Orissa. The illustration of *Gitagovinda* of the eighteenth century depicted two types of dance forms such as Radhakrishna dance and women's group dance. In this group dance one women dancing in the centre while others are playing musical instruments of jhanja, bina, etc. like temple sculpture of medieval Orissa. (See plate – 8)

In the *Gitagovinda* palm leaf painting women characters occupied major place in the folios of manuscripts. Radha, her companions and gopis are common characters of this illustration. Though the characters depicted on palm leaf are from Mahabharat but costumes, ornaments, traditions, behavior and activities portrayed through this painting are adopted from Oriya culture. Folio No -III of this work depicted the story of Krishna who is dancing in the midst of gopis. This scene is being watched by Radha and her sakhis. On whole we can say that this story is called Radha Krishna Lila or love affair between Radha and Krishna.

There are numbers of folios of *Gitagovinda* dedicated to the dance and music. According to the story Radha-Krishna were playing romantic games or rasakrida through the musical rythm. Music in medieval period was not just for entertainment, it was like sounds of heavens and rhythm of life. Basically the rise of Jagannath cult which directly gave importance to Radha Krishna's love indirectly encouraged the ritual dance and music. On the other hand we have evidences regarding devadasi culture prevalent in medieval Orissa. Dancing and singing was incorporated into temple service and as a result music became a holistic ritual.

Through this palm painting, a general idea of medieval Oriya women's dressing style, ornaments and their artistic nature is shown. In the folios of *Gitagovinda*, gopis or women of the village are dancing with Krishna. Dancing posture, style and gesture of the dancers indicates towards Odissi dance style. The exact version of Odissi dance form and

posture are seen in the eighteenth century palm leaf paintings of the period. It seems like Odissi dance derived from medieval dance tradition prevalent in Orissa. Palm leaf painting of the periods also portrays the female dancing tradition of the period. Literature of the period like *Prastabchintamani* of Nilambar Bidyadhara describes the classical dance form prevailed and performed in the court and entrainment purpose.⁶⁴

Not only *Gitagovinda* palm leaf painting there are also *Ushabilasha*, *Ragachitra*, *Ushaharana*, *Bidagdha Madhav Natak*, *Chitrakavya Bondopadhaya* palm leaf manuscript illustrations of the eighteenth century that have given importance to the art of dancing, dressing style and decorations. In *Gitagovinda* palm leaf painting of Dhananjaya we found that women were wearing lehenga and choli which was not an Oriya costume. This lehenga and choli culture was prevalent in the south Indian regions. In this palm leaf illustration gopis used long lehenga and choli, women are also seen wearing long plaits and buns. Most of the folios of the illustrated manuscripts have portrayed women figures and their dancing and musical qualities. Female figures are also seen playing manjira, vina etc. (See plate- 9, 10)

Gitagovinda, *Rasika Haravali*, *Ushavilas*, *Bidagdha Madhav*, *Ragachitra*, *Ratibandha*, *Vaidehisavilas*, *Lavanyvati*, etc are illustrated manuscripts, painted both colour and non colour design and have a number of dance scenes⁶⁵ Dancing painted in palm leaf dancing is same as depicted on the wall Brhmeswar Temple, Rajarani temple, Konarak Temple. It is the replica of stone art painting. It seems the palm leaf illustration or painting copied the sculpture technique which was made by using Iron chasle. (See plates – 11, 11A, 11B).

Ushabilasha kavya of sixteenth century and *Rasikaharabali* kavya of eighteenth century were illustrated during eighteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively. Both these palm leaf painting works has been preserved in the Reitberg in Zurich library. These painting have represented Oriya women and their dancing skill. Synchronization, movements, rhythm hasbeen painted with artistic vision. In this palm leaf painting women are depicted with saree without blouse. (See plate – 12)

Ushavilasa palm leaf painting has depicted women with dancing postures and rhythm. Heroine of the *kavya*, Usha dancing with female dancers and all dancers are seen wearing sari without blouse. Their bosoms bulge out when they were dancing or playing *mrudunga*. All dancers are ornamented girdles. They are dancing with the rhythm of *mangal gita* or *mangal nrutya*.⁶⁶ The depiction on folios shows that women of the period were so talented in dance as well as musical instruments. The art of dancing, style of instrument playing, rhythm and decoration of body is giving the idea of the Odissi dance that was existed in the medieval Orissa. The present day Odissi dance style, rhythm, *angabhangi* and *abhinaya* are seen in the palm leaf painting of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Dancing image of the folios of the medieval period is very similar to the modern day dancing posture and decoration. Dancer of the folio has *puspachuda* or crown on head which is very common in Odissi dance, is seen used by female dancers of the eighteenth century over their head. Thus this classical dance of Orissa which is famous as Odissi in modern time was a common dance form in the eighteenth century. (See plates -13, 13A, and 13B)

Ushabilasha palm leaf illustration has given some idea about the women's skill in music and dance. It looks like they were expert in their field of music and dancing. Palm leaf dancing figures of women also indicates that modern Odissi dance is derived from medieval dance of Orissa. *Ushavilash* palm leaf manuscript painting has depicted the life of women in the society. Women after finishing all household works spent their time indoor games. Folios of *Ushavilash* depict that Usha the heroine of the work is playing dice with her lover Anirudha. (see plate- 14). Women were spending time by doing painting, making portrait, dancing and proving service to all. It was only during Kharvela's rule, women were enjoyed equal position like men in the society and this period is a golden era for women of Orissa.

Illustrated Folio of *Bidhagdha Madhav* an eighteenth century painting book shows that two women in the middle are depicted with uncover breast. (see plate -15). Probably these women are not *gopis* and they wanted to attract Krishna through their beauty. That's why Radha and her friends are arguing with these two dancers.⁶⁷ It seems

that women dancers were performing dance in public forum. It was a tradition of the society.

Dancing was a common practice in medieval Oriya society. It might have prevalent in the temple as god's dancing women or in public as people's dancing women. But dance had its importance in the society. Women were the main characters of this art tradition. For their livelihood or religious belief, they were adopting this profession. Eighteenth century mural painting of Buguda has reflected the socio and religious life of Orissa. Dance culture of the period has been depicted through religious themes on the wall of this temple.

Reflection on Common women:

Eighteenth century painting mostly based on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries literary works. *Ushaabhilasa*, *Bidaghda Madhav*, etc are illustrated during eighteenth century. The story of these works is based on the shadow of the Puranas, Ramayan. However the illustrated palm leaf work of the period depicted common women as an important character. Their presence in every folio of the manuscripts indicates their importance in the society as well as in the life of the elite class people. But their social importance has not got attention of the poets and palm leaf painters. Common women's role in the life of royal class is depicted clearly in the literature and paintings. She is described as maid, slave, companion, and dedicated servant of the prince, princess, kings and queens. She was also depicted as either dancer or musician in royal court.

Bidaghda Madhav palm leaf painting, preserved in the Odisha State Museum with catalogue No. Ext.269 is an illustrated manuscript portraying the life style and social status of the common women of the period. One of the folios of this manuscript depicted two women with partially exposed breast are standing and Radha and her companion Lalita, Vishakha arguing with them. (See plate– 15) According to the story of this illustrated manuscript, these two girls are prostitutes or public dancers who wanted to attract Krishna. That's why Radha and her sakhis argued with them. During medieval

period prostitution was a practice prevalent and there is information available in the contemporary literature giving elaborate description of the practice.

Palm leaf painters have given a different look to these common women in their paintings. Women from this category can be identified with a common similarity like normal dressing style, fewer ornaments etc. Public women had different and seductive dressing style though male world painted them with more colour. Prostitutes were part of the society but they were treated as bad women. Painting as a source for research on eighteenth century women's history of Orissa provides solid evidence of the society.

Common women occupied an important place in the painting works of the period. *Bidagdha Madhab* of Rupa Goswami was illustrated in eighteenth century. In this palm leaf illustrated work, the story of Radha Krishan has been rendered. Here Radha and her companions are seen in most of the folios. These companions or maids generally belong to the grassroots levels of the society. Lalita and Vishakha were two main companions and dedicated friends of Radha. There are little differences in the attires of Radha who belongs to the royal family and Lalita, Vishakha belonging to common family. (See plate -16).

Folio 17 shows that an old aged woman is seen along with Radha, Lalita and Vishakha. She is known as Purnamasi who is narrating her experience to the women folk. Due to some misunderstanding, Radha and Krishna are not talking to each other. In this situation, Lalita and Vishakha have tried a lot but could not find solution. Purnamasi has taken the leading role to solve the issue between Radha and Krishna. (See plate -17). This is a very unique character in this illustrated epic story but this type of social behavior is very common in the medieval and modern period of the Oriya society. Generally if there is any issue and problems between couples or family members, elder people like Purnamasi take the prominent role to short out the issues. They seem to be very positive and confident enough to find the solution. This reflection on the moral and social behavior in the painting is the mirror of the medieval society. Dressing style and ornaments of the characters of the painting is the reflection of the eighteenth century Orissa.

Another folio of this manuscript is seen with a young girl along with Radha, Lalita, Vishakha is standing with Purnamasi. (See plate-18). It seems she is the relative or family member of the Purnamasi. This young lady's company to the old lady is indicating about the social responsibility towards aged people. Same time the Purnamasi's involvement to solve the problems between Radha and Krishna is also showing the responsibility of elder women's to establishing peace in the family as well as in the society. However her dressing style is totally different from all. She is wearing cholighagra or lehenga which was used in South India. So the cultural life of the people was influenced by the South India culture. Painting of this period also adopted Deccani style painting features which are revealed through this illustrated manuscript.

Purnamasi, Lalita and Vishakha are the characters belonging to the general public. Their life and service always dedicated for their masters or mistress. Even though they are not patronized by anybody in the name of morality they were ready to comfort others. They are common women with deep bonding with Radha. On this scene of the *Bidagdha Madhaba Natak*, Subash Pani says that maids arrange for love of Krishna Radha which gives them great joy and happiness.⁶⁸

Representation of Royal women:

Illustrated palm leaf manuscripts of eighteenth century Orissa provides a clear picture of royal women. Their life style, status in the society and palace is depicted elaborately in the palm leaf painting. Sixteenth and seventeenth century literature or the themes of the works are generally illustrated. *Ushabhilasa* of Sisusankar Das of sixteenth century is an epic poem based on the story of Anirudha, and Usha of Srimad Bhagavat. Oriya Mahabharat was illustrated during eighteenth century by unknown artist. In this illustrated work women from royal society like Usha is seen in most of the folios of the manuscripts. Her love affair with Anirudha is portrayed through this palm leaf painting. *Ushabhilasha* painting is preserved in Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar with illustrated Catalogue No. Ext-25.

Ushabhilasa palm leaf manuscript painting depicts the life style of princess Usha, daughter of King Banasura. In one of the folio it is seen that the princess, Usha is playing dice with her lover Anirudha. (See plate-19). Eighteenth century Oriya literature like *Lavanyavati*, *Premasudhanidhi*, *Chaturavinoda*, etc. have given vivid description about the royal women's life in palace. They were spending time by playing indoor game like dice and doing paintings and learning music. Although beautifying and adorning self was common practice of women during the period.

Ushabhilasa painting also reflects that royal women as well as common women were experts in painting and drawing. In the story, Chitrlekha, maid of Usha has drawn many portraits of princes of the period and showed all to Usha to find her prince whom she had seen in the dreams.(see plate- 21). Like *Lavanyavati* kavya of eighteenth century in which maids are talented in mathematics and cosmology, gandharvavidya, and Nyayasastras etc. in the *Ushaabhilasa* painting maid of Usha is expert in painting. Royal women themselves are painters and well educated. In one of the folio of Bidagdha Madhav, it is seen that Radha is writing letter for Krishna and her maids are sitting beside her giving suggestions to Radha what should be written in the letter. (See plate- 21). Education during medieval period was limited to only elite class women and they were getting education through home tutorial. Literature of the period also describes about the elite class women's education life.

Dressing style, Ornaments and Women: a Reflection

There is another palm leaf manuscript illustration of eighteenth century named *Sarvangasundari* by Dhanajay based on the seventieth century kavya of same name. In this illustrated manuscript, the painter has mostly focused on ornaments, cloth, dressing design of the female figures. Lehenga or skrit which was not normally an Oriya costume has been the part of Oriya dressing style depicted in this painting. It seems painter was influenced by the South Indian painting design. Women musicians also shown in skrits like modern day dancing girls. Women body is designed in a seductive way to attract the people. Women during medieval period basically during eighteenth century were depicted as riti style due to Upendra Bhanja's works on beauty, love and sex. In other words we say that Upendra Bhanja has depicted women as the main character of his works and

portrayed them as luxury items, sexual materials and images of love. Her beauty and body was the core part of the riti literature. Sex and love affair has given priority in these works. Palm leaf painting has reflected exact description of the seventeenth and eighteenth century's works.

Gitagovinda palm leaf painting has also provided the idea about Oriya women's dressing style and ornaments of eighteenth century Orissa. One of the folio of *Gitagovinda* (see plate-22), there are five young women. All women are seen in sari without blouse, because blouse culture was probably not followed by Oriya women but they could have adopted from it Telugu culture. In eighteenth century paintings like mural and palm painting is women were depicted in both sari and blouse. During early medieval period, temple art has not depicted blouse but kanchula or bodies are used by women engraved on the wall of the temple.

Women were fond of ornaments and hair dressing. Some women are seen as having straight hair style while some are plated in back and designed by hair pins, flowers and other ornaments. Radha and other women are seen well decorated with ornaments like necklaces, ear rings, arm and hand ornaments, anklet and waist ornaments. Nose rings adorned important role in increasing beauty of the face of women. Then sitting posture of these two women is very typical like Oriya women are sitting and having a discussion on some important issue.⁶⁹

Lavanyavati palm leaf painting mostly focused on courtly life and feudal society. This manuscript also illustrated during eighteenth and nineteenth century. It became popular kavya for the palm leaf illustrators of the period. According to the story of *Lavanyavati*, the main character Lavanyavati has depicted in almost all the folios of the manuscript. Women figures in this illustration has depicted according to their status and position. Women from elite family can be identified from their ornaments, sari, blouse, and heavy dressing style while women from lower background can be identified from their simple costumes and without blouse also. Women figures are beautiful and elegance due to the use of ornaments and hair plate at the back of head. Nose ring which was not common in the Oriya society have been depicted here. Nose rings in different types and designs also found here. Some women has worn it in one nostril while some women worn

it middle nostril. Nose ring became a common part of women beautification from eighteenth century onwards in Orissa. Women are shown with different ear rings and necklaces. Mathamani over forehead and styled hair decorated with ornaments, plated hair on back.

Folio 23 has shown the women figures are painted without blouse. (See plate -23) Probably wearing blouse is indicating or identifying the women from high class and low class background.⁷⁰ But early eighteenth century palm leaf illustration has depicted women figures without blouse. Wearing blouse or women figures with blouse became common in nineteenth and twentieth century palm leaf and mural paintings. Simply women were wearing sarees without blouse which appeared in nineteenth century probably adapted from South and North Indian culture. But in south Orissa, some murals and palm leaf paintings have depicted women with blouse. Basically the princess or leading character of the folio is shown wearing blouse while common and other lower class probably are depicted without blouse. (See plate no- 24) This effect on southern painting of Orissa was from Southern India as well as Northern Indian impacts, because blouse was a common dressing style of women of these regions. Images of Radha, Lalita, Usha, Chitralkha, Sita, gopis, servants, etc in the palm leaf manuscript painting has been depicted with sari without blouse or choli. But the palm leaf painting of late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries portrayed the women figures with blouse. This blouse culture probably influenced from the Rajstani painting culture.⁷¹

Rasikaharavali palm leaf manuscript painting of the nineteenth century depicted women from lower strata. According to Dinanath Pathy, prostitute dance is depicted on the folios of *Rasikaharavali*. Female prostitutes are dancing with the rhythm and perfect synchronization. They are wearing saree draped tightly on the thigh and legs and panata or last part of the saree passing over bosom. All women figures are seen without blouse. Ornaments like nose ring, ear pendats, necklace, enhanced the beauty of these figures on palm leaf.⁷²

Bidagdha Madhav of Rupa Goswami, a lyrical work composed during sixteenth century. This is Vaisnavite work written on Radha and Krishna. Like *Gitagovinda* of

Jaydeva, *Bidagdha Madhav* is based on the theme of Radha Krishna's love, emotion, friendship etc. here Radha Krishna love story written in a different structure like village and family life is the base of their love affairs. Gopis have been seen playing important role in this love matter while Madhumngal the friend of Krishna also played fewer roles. Even an old woman named Pournamasi (an experience lady in love matters) and women's nature towards love has been depicted perfectly.

This manuscript was illustrated in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The story of the work is very philosophical and ideal for paintings.⁷³ One copy of this non colored pictorial palm leaf book has been preserved in Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar. Depiction of the theme of this work is particular and painted with sequence of the story. A folio of the work contains scripts with painting. It is rare work due to its pictographic quality.⁷⁴

Palm leaf manuscript of the period shows that women characters such as Radha, seen in blouse while Lalita and Visaka without blouse. Important change occurred in the dressing tradition that is the use of blouse. Radha wore blouse while other companions did not. Probably it was not common that Oriya women of the period were not wearing blouse but it was used as a symbol of status or elite class which became common for women in later stage. Just like modern bra or bodies which was not used by all women but gradually it spread from elite class to village women. Although some section of women had not adopted it for the sake of their tradition and beliefs. This change in eighteenth century painting was directly influenced by Rajsthani, Deccani and Mughal painting culture. Because Orissa was ruled by Mughals for nearly two hundred years, followed by Marathas for fifty years and some of the dynasties migrated from south to Kalinga and ruled here for long time. Thus the cultural impact and the influence directly and indirectly was effected the painting tradition of medieval Orissa.

Nose ring is also treated as North Indian ornament which was not seen in the earlier paintings of Orissa. In the *Bidagdha Madhav* tree painting is very similar to Rajsthani painting style. No doubt Orissa has its original painting style but seventeenth and eighteenth century Painting was influenced by the Deccani and Rajsthani painting style.

The illustration of Bidhagdha Madhav has given some new ideas of drawing style of women figure.

The whole illustration of Bidagdha Madhav has given priority to women characters. Even one folio is seen having ten women figures. The story of the work is depicted one after another with sequence and it looks like a play is running on screen or reel of movie. Women are dominant characters in this palm leaf illustration.

Women's dressing, jewelry and hair style indicates that they were very much in love with *sringar*. Their ornaments hair style, face beauty and dress patterns and design is giving us an idea that how Oriya women were fond of these things. (See plate – 25). This attitude of women towards cosmetic was not natural but was created for them. Literature, art and nature of the society forced them to adopt this behavior and make themselves restricted within the four walls of the house. Upendra Bhanja's literature has dedicated one full canto to describe the decoration and preparation of princess or young girls.

Beautification of women and *sringar* for women became a part of their life, they believed in cosmetic use and dressing beautifully for men is essential to attract, because men could be diverted to other women if wife failed to attract them. Thus it indicates that eighteenth century women were in love with cosmetic or dressing and jewelry. Their life was limited within this, they could not think beyond this. This tradition of decorating herself and making themselves submissive is continuing till today. Women of the Sanskrit land is thinking even today that it is essential for her to decorate herself to look beautiful and attractive. It is not wrong to look beautiful but looking this tradition through gender perspective created a boundary between male and female which further divided these two into as superior and inferior.

It is said that Orissa's painting tradition developed from rock painting and through the evolution of palm leaf painting. Because it was the palm leaf where we have found the plan structure of the temple of the medieval period. Probably first plan made on palm leaves and then submitted to the king or chiefs for the final approval. However, palm leaf illustrations also show the stone sculpture of the temple depicted on the palm leaf

manuscripts. Thus this area issue needs to more study that which art originated and influenced other art forms.

Mural Paintings and Representation of women

Mural painting tradition of Orissa had a glorious past. From pre historic era to present era it has its importance and progress. Pre historic rock shelter painting of Gudahandi, Ushakothi, Yogimatha, Ulapgarh and Bikramkhol are the major pre historic sites of Orissa which contains the mural paintings (frescoes) on cave walls and ceilings. These painting are preserved naturally. Themes of these paintings are based on rituals and pre historic life of the period. Ancient Orissa also witnessed the progress of art and architecture. Sculptural and painting works on the walls of the Udayagiri and Khandagiri cave gives the idea about the artistic talent of Oriya people.

Sitabhinji mural painting of sixth century AD is the legacy of painting culture of Orissa. Although it is not elegant like Ajanta painting but provides evidences of miniature painting tradition of Orissa. Theme of this painting is a royal procession of King Disa Bhanja, according to the inscription situated under the painting panel. Through the oil painting we can see the original painting structure. (See plate -26) In this painting king sat on the back of an elephant, some cavalry soldiers and foot soldiers marching with the king. Along with this march, a female servant is also seen walking holding a box. Inscription is written in Sanskrit language.⁷⁵

Ramachandran's analysis of this painting has given a clear idea of women attendants who were also accompanied with the king's marching. He said that one woman is wearing necklace, breast band and walking behind the elephant. Two female figures one is behind the king or above the horsemen is seemed as apsara or dancing girl as depicted at Ajanta and Tanjor paintings.⁷⁶ Apsara or dancing girl painted with red deep colour. But the dancing posture of tribhanga is not shown clearly here. Female attendants who is working behind the elephant wore tight fitting necklaces painted is white colour and bangles, kuchabandha or breast band covering breast are shown in the paintings.

Undergarment extending to the knee is drawn with careful manner.⁷⁷ A woman who is walking behind the elephant probably holds something in her left hand, probably a fumery pot, or cosmetic box of her master or mistresses.⁷⁸ (See plate-27)

However the female apsara in dancing posture and female attendants holding some items making confusion that this royal process was not for battle purpose. It might have been a march for religious or hunting in jungle. An eighteenth century Oriya work like *Prastabchintamani* has given details of hunting scenes where female prostitutes were dancing after feast.⁷⁹ On the other hand no information regarding the King Dasa Bhanja has been found in the Bhanja dynasty of Kendujhar. A woman walking with military contingent probably holding ritual items which are not clearly visible. However, T. N. Ramachandran, Dinanath Pathy, L. Mitra argues that female attendants holding a box probably containing ornaments and others goods of king and queens or princess.⁸⁰

Medieval Mural painting of Orissa is based on the religious philosophy. Basically a eighteenth century mural painting which still exists in southern part of Orissa have provided some evidences about women's life style and position in Oriya society. In Orissa, Mural Painting is found in various parts of the Orissa. And all these paintings are depicted on the walls of the temple and mathas. Such as Ganganath Matha, Radhakanta Matha, Emar Math etc. Theme of these paintings is based on the epic story, Jagannath cult. Raghunath Temple - Odagaon, Srikuram Temple- Andhra Pradesh, Dharakota Jagannath Temple –Ganjam, Jagannath Temple – Puri, Kosalewar Temple- Kendujhar, Gundicha Temple-Puri are the medieval temples that contains the mural paintings etc. Although fourteenth and fifteenth centuries painting in the Jagannath temple exists today but these are painted repeatedly year after year. Budhavijaya and Kanchi Vijaya are the two mural paintings on the walls of Jagannath temple drawn by Puri painters or temple servants. Kanchivijaya painting is based on the historical event of Gajapati Purusottam Dev's march against Kanchi king of South. This story appeared in the seventeenth century literary work Kanchivijaya of Purusottam Das.⁸¹

In Jagannath cult the chitrakara has special importance. They were integral parts of the temple rituals. Every year they are being given responsibility to paint chariots, clothes, places and walls in the compound of the temple. They give life touch to the wood

images of god through colours. This caste of chitrakaras had enjoyed special status in the society and enjoyed revenue free lands for their service to the temple. In chitrakara family, it is not only men were expert in painting; female persons also had the ideas and painting quality. In Oriya society, tradition of painting on house walls on the occasions like marriage and other ceremonies was common a ritual of the functions. This painting job was done by women folk. During medieval period the art of painting was an extra quality of a girl before her marriage. According to the tradition of medieval society, girls should learn this quality of painting. Though this painting is categorized as folk or traditional painting but their talent of painting is equal to mural paintings. Difference is women painting which was drawn on earth wall of house disappear after some days while murals depicted on plaster walls of the temple and mathas of the medieval period exists today.

Women from chitrakara family had the ideas of painting. On the basis of nineteenth and twentieth century chitrakara family who were residing in the Puri, Raghurajpur, Nayagarah, Subarnpur, and Ganjam regions the assignment of painting given to her husband or father done by wife and daughter, they had command on technique and discipline. But unfortunately their name is not seen in the pages of painting books of Orissa. Women of the period considered her husband as god, so all good works done by her dedicated to the husband. She was trained up by patriarchal attitudes in a positive way. Thus all credits of her went to her husband.⁸² This was the sacrifice of women of Oriya society of the periods.

Most of the eighteenth century paintings of Orissa are found in Southern part of Orissa. Mathas, temples of the South Orissa were not destroyed by Muslim invasions and invaders. Religious architectures are undisturbed during medieval period. In North and central part of Orissa most of the Mathas and temples were destroyed and damaged by Afghans, Mughals by their frequent attacks. Then the rise of Vaisnavism in Orissa during twelfth century onwards led the foundation of Bhaktism which occupied a major place since Jayadeva wrote *Gita Govinda* in the Oriya society. Sarala Das's *Oriya Mahabharat* further encouraged the religious revolution created by five great sudra scholars known as panchasakha. All the works of this age was religious and revolutionary in nature. Their

works preached religious philosophy of Lord Krishna and Rama. Then Chaitanya's philosophy of Vaisnavism also encouraged establishing Mathas and temples in Orissa. Religious literature and spread of spiritualism and Bhaktism in the medieval society encouraged the artist and scholars to illustrate the theme and philosophy of the manuscripts. Through palm leaf, murals and pata painting the culture of painting achieved a great success. Evidence of patta painting of the eighteenth century is not available and palm leaf and murals of the period are main sources to study the women's reflection on them.

Srikuramam temple paintings in Srikakulam districts of Andhra Pradesh have contains Orissa style and Oriya features in its painting. Srikuramam temple is originally a Saiva temple of first century AD. In eleventh century Ramanuja converted it into Vaisnav temple. In this temple the kurma avatar or incarnation of Lord Vishnu as turtle is being worshiped. During eleventh century this vaisnavite temple established by Anantavarman Chodangaga Dev(1077 -1150 A.D.) of Kalinga. He also appointed devadasis to sing and dance in front of god as part of rituals. During the period of Gajapati Purusottam Dev (1467 – 1497 A. D.) this place was famous as sacred palace of the sages. Once this place was attacked by sabaras of Ganjam forest of Orissa. During Purussottam Dev, one more temple constructed in front of the Srikurmam temple. Temple inscription describes Narasimha Dasa Pandita and Purusottam Dev as the head of temple.⁸³ Temple contains more than forty two mural paintings of Vaishnav cult. Paintings on *Gitagovinda* also have been depicted on the walls of this temple. Women figures in this painting decorated in Oriya style and used Oriya ornaments and cloth. One more interesting mural painting is based on a seventeenth century Oriya work *Kanchikeveri* of Purusottam Das.

In this painting, the character of Manika, a common woman who was selling curd by moving from place to place gives an idea about the status of Oriya women in the society.(See plate-28) basically the women from lower strata were free from medieval prejudices of veil and four wall restrictions. Generally elite women of medieval Orissa were not free from these religious and social discriminations such as free mobility, veil, widowhood, child marriage, illiteracy, chastity, subordinate status in the society. Thus these seventeenth and eighteenth centuries mural paintings are the just reflection of the

social status of women. They play most important role in the reconstruction of women history of the medieval Orissa.

Apart from this, the dressing style of women in these paintings is different than Oriya women's dressing style. Women figures are depicted with sarees and blouse which was not a practice of Oriya culture. Literature of the period have mentioned about the cloth named kanchuli which covered the breast. Just like temple damsel's apparels or modern bra type. Blouse was not found commonly in the palm leaf illustration also. Wearing saree was a simple way of draping and covering the body from knee to shoulder. During medieval Orissa there was no stress on wearing garments underneath of the sarees. Eighteenth century murals of Srikurmam temple depicted the story of Krishnalila and in one frame of painting called vastraharana scene depicted that gopis including Radha are taking bath in the Yamuna River. All women are bathing naked. Krishna sitting on the branches and playing flute and sarees are hanged over the branches of the tree. (See plate -29). Here are no evidences of other clothes except sarees. A palm leaf manuscript illustration named Bhagavat also depicted vastraharana scene and there is no evidences of blouse or undergarments of women.

However medieval paintings are not secular in nature. Due to their religious quality women are depicted within the boundary of religion. Through the epic characters they were portrayed but the Oriya tradition and customs are also reflected in the contemporary paintings. Literature of the period also provides information about the mural paintings existed in the society. Eighteenth century mural painting has been found in Biranchi Narayan Temple or Wooden Sun Temple of Buguda, Ganjam and Basudeva Temple of Jayantigada in Ganjam district of Orissa. Mural paintings of eighteenth century Orissa was also influenced by the Northern and Southern Painting style of India. Not only painting, Oriya traditions, its food culture, dressing style, court life, language, rituals and administration was influenced by the Mughal culture as well as by the Telugu culture. Kings of Orissa had their domination over Vijayanagar and Andhra regions till Krishnadeva Ray defeated Gajapati Prataprudra Dev. Then Mughals ruled over Orissa nearly one hundred and fifty years. So the cultural amalgamation took place in Orissa.

Painting culture which was the oldest culture of Orissa had also seen the effect of Rajstahni and Deccani painting tradition during eighteenth century.

The most important feature of eighteenth century mural painting is women were depicted shorter in size in compare to the men. This shows that women always had a lower status when compared to men. Though eighteenth century mural paintings have not contained many women figures but the epic character like Radha, Sita, and Gopis and female servants dominated the picture. Most of the women in these painting are depicted with sarees and blouse, while other women basically in dancing posture and servants are seen in ghagra or skrits with blouse. Choli-ghagra dressing style is not an Oriya tradition but it was adopted from Andhra culture. Eighteenth century literature also talks about the ghagra and choli attire of girls prevalent in the society. Even literature of the period describes this dress type as telenga dress or like telenga dance or dakhini dance in medieval Orissa. Mural of this period also depicted some women figures shown in odhani which was a Northern Indian culture.⁸⁴

Eighteenth century Orissa witnessed the changes in its cultural and social life. As a part of Mughal India, Orissa was influenced by the political and cultural changes of the contemporary period. Eighteenth century Indian which had seen the rise of English power and decline of Mughal power brought many changes in the life of Indian people. Eighteenth century Orissa which had seen the rise of Maratha and decline of Mughal power in the land had adopted many Mughal traditions and practices in its administration and cultural life. Maratha's did not have much influence for their fifty years administration. In one way Northern Indian tradition through Mughal administration and southern Indian customs through political and regional connection on the other brought many changes in the socio-cultural life of the Orissa. From southern side, Orissa was mostly influenced by Andhra Culture of dressing style, marriage tradition, food practice and behavioral practice and artistic field also. Andhra Pradesh during eighteenth century situated in the southern side of Orissa. Before Krishna Dev Ray of Vijayanagar Empire, most of the regions of this telugu land was under Gajapatis. Even Trikinga concept in the history and Kalingapatnam Port of the maritime trade culture of India are examples of it. At the same time Kalinga style temple architecture and Oriya style art and painting on

the walls of the costal Andhra region depicts many things regarding the cultural and artistic exchange between these two countries. Fisher points out this feature of dressing style in Orissan paintings. He argues that it was the Andhra influence of wearing ghagra and blouse and odhani over chest not over head.⁸⁵ However, some seventeenth and eighteenth centuries painting shows women used odhani over head, means the influence of Rajshtani paintings over Orissa mural and palm painting was there.⁸⁶

We have examples of mural painting where women figures are not shown in blouse. Because all the temple women figures of the early medieval and medieval period are not seen in blouse. Even today in rural village women are not using blouse. Female figures of the Orissan temple are semi-nude or nude. But some women images chest is covered by kanchula or bodies. On the other hand palm leaf painting which is the most important records of eighteenth century painting have not contained women figures with blouse. However, in late eighteenth century and nineteenth century palm leaf manuscript illustrations basically from south regions of Orissa and boarder regions of Andhra Pradesh shown the women figures are in blouse. All women were not using blouse, only princes and queen and Radha, Sita are seen in the blouse. Gopis, women servants and dancers are not in blouse. Thus one is neighbor influence and other is social changes in India which are probably the major reasons of these impacts on Oriya paintings. Mural of Biranchi Narayan Temple is the best example of this eighteenth century changes. Here sita image is depicted with blouse while others are not. In the same way Srikuram temple painting in Srkakulam district of Andhra Pradaesh depicted Manika Character of the story of Gajapati Purosottam Dev's Kanchi invasion also wore blouse.⁸⁷

Dinanath Pathy rightly analyzed the eighteenth century painting and women's costumes. He also supported Fisher's arguments of Andhra influence on Oriya culture. As a result, Oriya women of the period adopted Telugu dressing style, social traditions like marriage and celebrations etc. Pathy argues that blouse culture in Orissa migrated from Adnhra regions or Northern India.⁸⁸ Thus blouse is not seen in early medieval paintings culture of Orissa but the late medieval paintings of southern part Orissa like Ganjam and Paralakhemundi have depicted women images with blouse. However, in

modern society of Orissa blouse occupies a major place in the Oriya dressing practice of women and is an integral part of it.

Women figures in these Mural paintings have been decorated with various ornaments like nose rings, ear rings, nose pendants, mathamani etc. women also depicted with decorated hair style of back of head. In legs ankle ornaments, waist ornaments called antapithia, in legs jhunta, rings in fingers are depicted in these eighteenth century mural paintings.⁸⁹

Mural painting of Orissa also have influence of Ragamala paintings. Eighteenth century painting of Biranchi Narayan Temple of Buguda has depicted a scene of musical concert. Like ancient tradition of Orissa where music and dance had the importance in the social life, medieval painters had depicted these musical traditions through their artistic talent. Raghunath Prusti's Ragachitra illustrated palm leaf manuscript of the eighteenth century is a magnificent work in this field. Stories with different ragas of Indian music are portrayed through theses folios of this work.

Murals of Biranchinarayana Temple, Buguda and Women:

Biranchinarayan temple, constructed during eighteenth century by Srikara Bhanja of Bhanja dynasty of Gumusura, has contained the mural paintings of the period. It is a finest example of eighteenth century Painting of Orissa. The entire paintings depicted on the walls of this temple are based on the theme of Ramayan and Mahabharata. Many of the paintings on the wall surface are faded now. This temple roof was constructed in wood. Except foundation and walls which are plaster, all other structures were built in wood. The structure of this temple imitated the Sun Temple of Konark. That's why this temple is known as wooden Konark. The combination of eighteenth century wooden sculpture and wall painting of Buguda temple revived the past glory of Oriya artists who built the majestic Lingaraj Temple, Jagannath Temple, Sun Temple Konark and painted the Ravanachaya mound in Sitabhinji. Rajarani temple, Muktesvara Temple and Konark Temple sculpture is not less than painting art. They are just a replica of painting or painting was depicted on the basis of sculpture engraved on the stone walls of the temple.

Biranchinarayan temple painting was painted by local painters and the painting style and technique is very similar to the palm leaf painting. However the narration of these painting is difficult. Joanna Williams argues that some narrative section of the painting is hard to explain.⁹⁰ Though the painting on the walls is in faded condition and restoration process has not been taken, some local books containing the paintings of this temple published. However, Lalita Kala Academy in 1987 tried to copy the whole paintings of this wooden Konark temple. A painter named Rama Maharana was appointed and engaged for two months to copy the deteriorating murals.⁹¹ Same time Dinanath Pathy and foreign scholars like E Fisher, Joanna Williams and others have done research on this temple painting. Orissa state Museum also published books on this temple painting of eighteenth century.

Biranchinarayan temple painting is based on religious theme but the depiction also reflects Oriya traditions and costumes. Marriage functions, love, rituals, music, dance, religion of the contemporary society were the main features of the eighteenth century murals. (See plate-30) Brajanath Badjenaan eighteenth century author of *Chatura Vinoda*, and *Samara Taranga*, describes in his works about the mural painting as well as palm leaf painting. He was also a painter and palm leaf illustrator⁹².

Monogamy was common tradition of Orissa during medieval period. People believed that monogamy should be the pledge of life like Rama-Sita, Hara-Parvati, Laxmi –Narayna, the couple gods of Hindu mythology and Puranas. Because Ramayan and Mahabharat epics had deeply influenced the society and culture of the Oriya people. Marriage system also considered as sacred ritual like god and goddess marriage. This institution of marriage was highly respected and valued by the people. Even second marriage was not permitted by Hindu sastra except on certain grounds. Buguda mural has given the same idea about the monogamy practice in the society. Most of the walls of the temple are depicted with Ramayan stories. One of the picture in these painting frame has depicted the figures of Rama and Sita both sitting face to face and Rama putting sindur or vermilion on the fore head of Sita. (See plate -31) This image frame is marvelous in this category. Theme and scene is unique and preached its quality and richness of the painting.

This Ram Sita painting reflects the marriage tradition of Orissa. In Oriya marriage system putting sindur over the forehead of bride is a compulsory ritual. Without it marriage is considered incomplete. So the marriage system of medieval Orissa was based on monogamy ideology of Ramayan story. People of Orissa were deeply influenced by this sacred scripture and adopted their life. Literature of the period has given elaborate descriptions on this feature of marriage ceremony. Biranchinarayan temple mural is an example of that social life.

In this mural frame dressing style of Sita is different than the palm leaf painting figures. Blouse was not common in Oriya costume tradition but here Sita is seen wearing blouse which is typical South Indian or Rajasthani style. And further Sita has also been depicted with lehenga which was not an Oriya dress style. This dress design and costumes indicate that women's dressing style was influenced by North Indian as well as South Indian dressing, because the painting style and design is close to the South Indian painting style. S. C. Welch states that Buguda painting is considered as an elite class painting. Its clarity, theme, quality and harmony placed this mural painting into high class painting tradition of India. This eighteenth century mural is marvelous in its category. Its design and style is close to the South Indian painting style.⁹³ Upendra Bhanja in his work describes this type of dress as Telanga dress. However putting sindur over forehead of the bride is a tradition in Oriya marriage system. The representation of women through this painting is indicating the dedication and submissive nature towards her husband as god.

Basudeva temple of Jayantigada, Ganjam district of Orissa also belongs to the eighteenth century. According to the D N Pathy and E Fischer this temple ceiling also portrayed by epic story of Rama and Krishna. These old paintings are now faded and even not visible clearly. Just like shadow and colour marks are seen. No renovation work has been taken to restore the old painting of the temple. Probably the theme of the modern painting is same as eighteenth century painting was there. According to the priests and village people of this place, paintings were there but it had faded and looked ugly, so the temple committee has painted the interior over the old pictures. In present painting women are seen with sarees and blouse and modern attires and ornaments. It is

difficult to identify women's costumes, ornaments and their status and position in the society through these modern paintings.

Eighteenth century mural painting of Orissa has an unique style and identity due to its design and themes. Women figures have been depicted in the mural paintings represent the Oriya women and their culture. Medieval paintings of Orissa might have based on religious philosophy but the characters that have been depicted reflect the socio-cultural life of the eighteenth century people of Orissa. Sita, Radha, gopis, female servant figures have been depicted on the walls of temple and matha symbolizes their position and status in the society. Their dressing style and decoration in the paintings dividing women folk into two groups; one is elite class women while other one is lower class women. Dressing styles and use of ornaments are the major criteria to identify elite women and poor women.

Palm leaf painting of the period has given a clear picture regarding the Oriya women's place and role in the society. Religious features of these paintings have not covered the socio-cultural life of Oriya people. Traditions, costumes, rituals, daily life, and life of women in the society have been depicted through the lenses of patriarchy. Most of the women figures are painted as sexual elements. Half of the breast is not covered, sex scene of Radha Krishna or Rama Sita are frequently depicted. Love, sex and women are the prime features of these eighteenth century palm leaf paintings. Although murals of this period does not contains this type nudity and seductive scenes in its theme. Representation of women in the palm leaf painting has given the ideas that women were treated and considered as luxury and enjoyable commodities, whose primary duty was to serve others and care for others.

Reference:

¹ Rekha Pande & B. Lavanya, Miniature Painting of Golconda and the representation of Women (16th -17th Centuries AD, in *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in History and Archaeology*, Vol. I, No. I , 2014, 74

² Ibid. , 74

³ Ibid., 73

-
- ⁴ Pramod Chandra, *Medieval Indian Miniature Painting*, in *Cultural History of India* Ed. By A. L. Bhasam, New Delhi: Oxford Publication, 1975, 327
- ⁵ Rekha Pande and Neeharika Joshi, Representing of Women in Garhwal Miniature Paintings, *Ars Artium: Journal of English Studies and culture*, Vol. 7, Jan. 2019, 123
- ⁶ O. C. Ganguly, *The Glorious Beginning*, in *Panorama of Indian Painting*, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt of India, 1968, 1
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 2
- ⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰ Pankaj Sahu, Odishara Sanskrutika Prabahare Chitrana Prampara, in *Odisha ra Sanskrutika Parampara*, Vol . II, ed. by Brajamohan Mohanty, S. Maohanty, Cuttack: Odisha Pathak Sansad, 1991, 185
- ¹¹ O. C. Ganguly, *The Glorious Beginning*, in *Panorama of Indian Painting*, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt of India, 1968, 3
- ¹² H K Sherwani, *Cultural Trend in Medieval India: Architecture, Painting, Literature and Language*, New Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1968, 42
- ¹³ Pramod Chandra, *Medieval Indian Miniature Painting*, in *Cultural History of India* Ed. By A. L. Bhasam, New Delhi: Oxford Publication, 1975, 327
- ¹⁴ H K Sherwani, *Cultural Trend in Medieval India: Architecture, Painting, Literature and Language*, New Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1968, 42-43
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 43
- ¹⁶ M. S. Randhawa, The Kangra School, in *Panorama of Indian Painting*, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt of India, 1968, 26-27 (25-28)
- ¹⁷ Pramod Chandra, *Medieval Indian Miniature Painting*, in *Cultural History of India* Ed. By A. L. Bhasam, New Delhi: Oxford Publication, 1975, 332-333
- ¹⁸ Moti Chandra, Mughal Painting, in *Panorama of Indian Painting*, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt of India, 1968, 14-15
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 16
- ²⁰ Pramod Chandra, *Medieval Indian Miniature Painting*, in *Cultural History of India* Ed. By A. L. Bhasam, New Delhi: Oxford Publication, 1975, 327
- ²¹ Moti Chandra, Mughal Painting, in *Panorama of Indian Painting*, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt of India, 1968, 18 ; H K Sherwani, *Cultural Trend in Medieval India: Architecture, Painting, Literature and Language*, New Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1968, 55
- ²² H K Sherwani, *Cultural Trend in Medieval India: Architecture, Painting, Literature and Language*, New Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1968, 55
- ²³ D. N. Pathy, *Orissa Painting*, in *Glimpses of Orissan Art and Culture*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984, 148
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ D. N. Pathy, *Orissa Painting*, in *Glimpses of Orissan Art and Culture*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984, 149 ; Binoda Routray , *Traditions in Paintings*, in *Art Tradition of Orissa*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa Sahitya Academy, 1983, 56
- ²⁶ D. N. Pathy, *Orissa Painting*, in *Glimpses of Orissan Art and Culture*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984, 150
- ²⁷ Pankaj Sahu, Odishara Sanskrutika Prabahare Chitrana Prampara, in *Odisha ra Sanskrutika Parampara*, Vol . II, ed. by Brajamohan Mohanty, S. Maohanty, Cuttack: Odisha Pathak Sansad, 1991, 189
- ²⁸ Sisir K Panda, *Political and Cultural History of Orissa*, New Delhi: New Age International, 1999, 371
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 371
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*
- ³¹ Pankaj Sahu, Odishara Sanskrutika Prabahare Chitrana Prampara, in *Odisha ra Sanskrutika Parampara*, Vol . II, ed. by Brajamohan Mohanty, S. Maohanty, Cuttack: Odisha Pathak Sansad, 1991, 190
- ³² F. Fisher, Puri Paintings: The Chitrakara and his work by J. P. Das, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 44, No. 2/3, 1983, 237,(236-241) www.jstore.org/stable/3244600
- ³³ *Ibid.*, 238
- ³⁴ Rekha Pande & B. Lavanya, Miniature Painting of Golconda and the representation of Women (16th -17th Centuries AD), in *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in History and Archaeology*, Vol. I, No. I , 2014, 76
- ³⁵ Dinanath Pathy, *Mural Painting in Orissa*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa Lalitakala Academy, 1981, 2

-
- ³⁶ J. P. Das, *Puri Paintings*, Jagatsinghpur: Prafulla, 1982, 163
- ³⁷ Joanna William, From the Fifth to the Twentieth century and Back, *Art Journal*, Vol. 49, No. 4, 1990, 364 (363-369)
- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ D. N. Pathy, *Orissa Painting*, in *Glimpses of Orissan Art and Culture*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984, 169
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 172
- ⁴¹ Ibid., 170
- ⁴² Ibid.
- ⁴³ D. N. Pathy, *Orissa Painting*, in *Glimpses of Orissan Art and Culture*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984, 156
- ⁴⁴ Harekrushna Mahatab, History of Orissa, Luknow University, 1949; Pankaj Sahu, Odishara Sanskrutika Prabahare Chitrana Prampara, in *Odisha ra Sanskrutika Parampara*, Vol. II, ed. by Brajamohan Mohanty, S. Maohanty, Cuttack: Odisha Pathak Sansad, 1991, 204
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 204
- ⁴⁶ T. N. Ramachandran, Find of Tempera Painting in Sitabhinji, District Keonjhar, Orissa, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 14, No. 1/2, 1951, 6 (4-25), www.jstore.org/stable/13248685
- ⁴⁷ R. P. Mahapatra, Position of Women as Depicted in the Early Sculpture of Udayagiri and Khandagiri, *OHRJ*, Vol. No. XXIV, XXV, XXVI, 1980, 61
- ⁴⁸ Binod Routray, Tradition s in Paintings, Bhubaneswar: Orissa Sahitya Akademi, 1983, 57
- ⁴⁹ Dinanath Pathy, Mural Painting in Orissa, Bhubaneswar: Orissa Lalitakala Academy, 1981, 2
- ⁵⁰ Madalapanji (temple chronicle of Jagannath temple) ed. by A. B. Mahanty, Cuttack: Friend Publication, 2001, 62
- ⁵¹ Hele su, kshoba nahin a seba deba, supatra lekha lekhaiba
Prasansi punha anugrahalingan deu gatra pabitra heba se.
Mane kala debasabha mote ta deba gati jagati byaja meru,
Khelai monodrama dola nohi upama nachai chitra rekha bhuru se.
Lines are describes about the hero Puspaketu's feeling towards heroine Kotibrahmandasundari. In his imagination he draws her picture and beauty of her face, and dance like angel of heaven.
Upendra Bhanja, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, (18th century) canto-13, ed. by Ajaya Kumar Ghos, Cuttack: Jagannath Company, 1963, 110-111.
- ⁵² Upendra Bhanja, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, (18th century) canto-13, ed. by Ajaya Kumar Ghos, Cuttack: Jagannath Company, 1963, 113
Patakahi manile jhat kahi gunile lekha a gala dekhagala,
Ajiba re sajiba karuachhi ajiba-saraku chitra chitra hela se
These lines describes about the hero's imagination where he depicted himself with Kotibrahmandasundari. Through the painting frame he portrayed both are engaged in love and colour of the body has changed just like a painting which turned into black colour .;
Upendra Bhanja, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, (18th century) canto-19, ed. by Ajaya Kumar Ghos, Cuttack: Jagannath Company, 1963, 162
Rangopajibi pata bhete a samaye
Dekhe rosana barnaka gana sobha paa
Sakhi sange sumukhi se chitra dekhi dekhi
Gata jasan puruse rakhila se akhi.
This stanga says that painters wife is expert to paint pata chitra;
Upendra Bhanja, *Kotibrahmandasundari* (18th century), canto-19, ed. by Ajaya Kumar Ghos, Cuttack: Jagannath Company, 1963, 157
Suna he kalpaka jana a charitra rasi
Mantra purahita baidya dine chanti basi
Chitrakar ani dekhaila pata phei
Ascharya se tini loka pataku anai.
Lines are telling about the painting culture prevalent during eighteenth century Orissa. Protrate of bride was sending for groom selection. If painting of bride selected then marriage proposal was taken forward .
- ⁵³ Sarala Das, Sarala Mahabharata, Sobhparva

chitrabandhu pitulimane achhanti je kanthe
tahaku chumban dei muni madan arate,
Hridayare lageina se karanti aligana
Sechitra pituliki karanti raman...

Here Poet narrates that painted figurines are on the wall in sexual eagerness the muni or sages kissed them.

⁵⁴ Nilambar Bidyadhara, *Prastabchintamani*, (18th Cent, & Oriya), Bhanjabihar: Berhampur University, 1976, 31

⁵⁵ Ibid., 48

⁵⁶ Binod Routray, *Traditions in Paintings*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa Sahitya Akademi, 1983, 63

⁵⁷ Mayadhara Mansingh, *The Saga of the Land of Jagannath*, Cuttack: 64

⁵⁸ S. N. Rajguru, *Odisha's Sanskritika Itihasa*, Vol. II, Bhubaneswar: Odisha Sahitya Academy, 1988, 77-78

⁵⁹ P. S. Rawson, Early Art and Architecture, in *Cultural History of India* ed. By A. L. Bhasam, New Delhi: Oxford Publication, 1975, 207

⁶⁰ Binod Routray, *Traditions in Paintings*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa Sahitya Akademi, 1983, 67

⁶¹ Ibid., 68

⁶² Dinanath Pathy, *Rethinking Odissi*, New Delhi: Herman Publishing House, 2009, 175

⁶³ Subash Pani, *Illustrated Palmleaf Manuscripts of Orissa: A selection from Orissa State Museum*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984, 16

⁶⁴ Nilambar Bidyadhara, *Prastabchintamani*, (18th Cent, & Oriya), Bhanjabihar: Berhampur University, 1976

⁶⁵ Dinanath Pathy, *Rethinking Odissi*, New Delhi: Herman Publishing House, 2009, 180

⁶⁶ Ibid., 190

⁶⁷ Subash Pani, *Illustrated Palmleaf Manuscripts of Orissa: A selection from Orissa State Museum*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984, 32

⁶⁸ Ibid., 30

⁶⁹ Ibid., 20

⁷⁰ Joanna William and J. P. Das, Raghunath Prusti: An Oriya Artist, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 48, No. ½, 1987, 136-137 (131-159) www.jstore.org/stable/3249855

⁷¹ D. N. Pathy, *Orissa Painting*, in *Glimpses of Orissan Art and Culture*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984, 181

⁷² D. N. Pathy, *Rethinking Odissi*, New Delhi: Herman Publishing house, 2007, 192

⁷³ Subash Pani, *Illustrated Palmleaf Manuscripts of Orissa: A selection from Orissa State Museum*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984, 30

⁷⁴ Subash Pani, *Illustrated Palm leaf Manuscripts of Orissa: A selection from Orissa State Museum*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984, 30

⁷⁵ T. N. Ramachandran, Find of Tempera Painting in Sitabhinji,, District Keonjhar, Orissa, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 14, No. 1/2, 1951, 7 (4-25), www.jstore.org/stable/13248685

⁷⁶ Ibid., 9

⁷⁷ Ibid., 10

⁷⁸ T. N. Ramachandran, Find of Tempera Painting in Sitabhinji,, District Keonjhar, Orissa, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 14, No. 1/2, 1951, 10 (4-25), www.jstore.org/stable/13248685 ; D. N. Pathy, *Orissa Painting*, in *Glimpses of Orissan Art and Culture*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984, 156

⁷⁹ Nilamber Bidhyadhar, *Prastabachintamani*, (eighteenth century Oriya work), ed. by S. N. Rajguru, Brahmapur: Berhampur University Publication, 1976, 48

⁸⁰ Dinanath Pathy, *Mural Paintings in Orissa*, Bhubanswar: Orissa Lalitakala Academy, 1981; T. N. Ramachandran, Find of Tempera Painting in Sitabhinji,, District Keonjhar, Orissa, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 14, No. 1/2, 1951, 10 (4-25)

⁸¹ Dinanath Pathy, *Mural Paintings in Orissa*, Bhubanswar: Orissa Lalitakala Academy, 1981, 2-5

⁸² Williams Jaunna, *The Two Headed Deer, Illustration of the Ramayan in Orissa*, Barkeley: University of Carlifornia Press, 1996, 59, www.jstore.com

⁸³ Dinanath Pathy, *Mural Paintings in Orissa*, Bhubanswar: Orissa Lalitakala Academy, 1981, 28

⁸⁴ Ibid., 23-24

⁸⁵ Ibid., 24

⁸⁶ Ibid., 24

⁸⁷ Ibid., 25

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 25-26

⁹⁰ Williams Jaunna, *The Two Headed Deer, Illustration of the Ramayan in Orissa*, Barkeley: University of Carlifornia Press, 1996, 62 , www.jstore.com

⁹¹ Helle Bundgaard, *Indian Art Worlds in Contention: Local, Regional, and National Discaurses on Orissan Patta Paintings*, London: Routledge, 1999, 149

⁹² Williams Jaunna, *The Two Headed Deer, Illustration of the Ramayan in Orissa*, Barkeley: University of Carlifornia Press, 1996, 70 , www.jstore.com

⁹³ S. C. Welch, *India: Art and Culture (1300-1900)*, New York: Metropolitant Museum of Art, 1985, 66

References of visual art



Plate -1 & 2

Plate 1 (above) painting showing footmen, horseman, elephant and

plate 2 (lower) showing inscription below and close view of the inscription recording the name of Maharaja Sri Disa Bhanja

(Sitabhinji Painted rock shelter called Ravanachaya, Kendujhar District, Odisha)



Plate -3

Khandagiri and Udayagiri cave relief of 1st BC showing women were acted as warrior, soldier, animal hunter, etc.



Plate-4

Pictographic palm leaf preserved in Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar



Plate-5

Bidagadha Madhav palm leaf Illustrated manuscripts -In one folio 14 figures are depicted, (Odisha Sate Museum)



Plate-6

Folios from Ushabhilasa palm leaf manuscripts showing Usha and her companions are dancing in front of Krishna (Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar)



Plate-7

Gitagovinda palm leaf manuscript depicting Krishna and gopis are dancing (OSM)

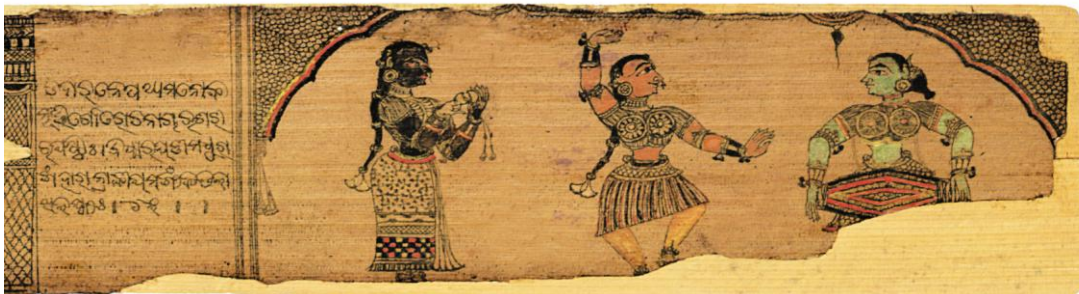


Plate-8

Gitagovinda palm leaf manuscript shows Devadasis or dancers are performing dance and music



Plate -9

Gitagovinda – South Orissa painting of female dancer and musicians instruments (OSM)



Plate-10

Ushabhilasha palm leaf painting, it depicts musical and dancing skill of women of the period (Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar)



Plate -11 - Brhameswar Temple sculpture (11th Cent. AD), Bhubaneswar – female dancing figures



Plate-11A- Konark temple sculpture- women musicians and dancing figures which are very similar to the palm leaf paintings of the periods



Plate-11B-Dancing panel of 13th century Orissa preserved in Odisha State Museum

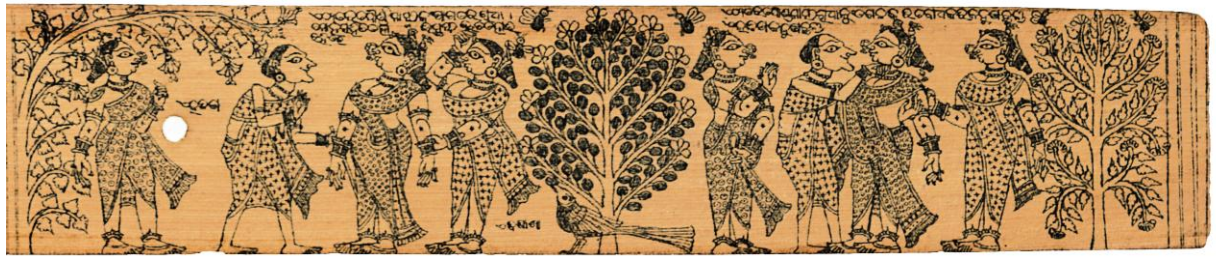


Plate-12

Bidagdha Madhava palm leaf painting Women figures are depicted without blouses (Odisha State Museum Bhubaneswar)



Plate-13

Ragachitra palm leaf painting of Raghunath Prusti (18th century), showing women dancers (OSM)



Plate-13- Ushabhilasa palm leaf painting- Female dancing folio



Plate-13A- Ragachitra palm leaf painting- showing women with musical instrument



Plate-13B: Gitagovinda palm leaf folio shows women are expert in classical dance and music



Figure-14

Ushavilash palm leaf illustration – Usha playing dice with her lover Anirudha



Plate -15

Bidagdha Madhav palm leaf painting depicts that - Two half naked women are prostitutes or public dancers, according to the illustrated story



Plate-16

Bidagdha Madhav palm leaf painting depicts Radha wearing heavy ornaments and blouse while Lalita Vishakha are without blouse

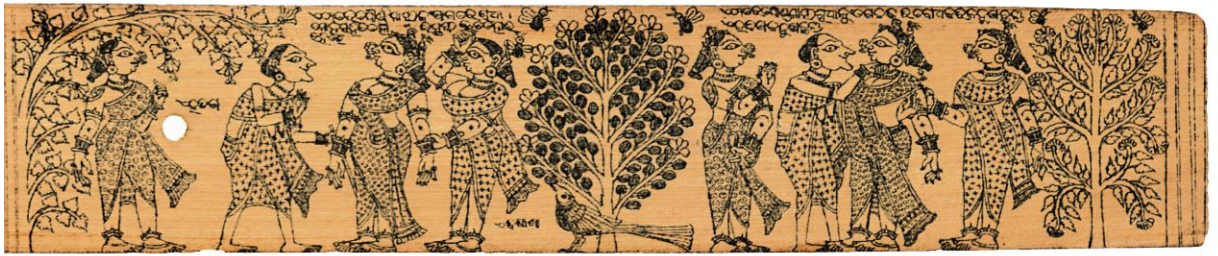


Plate-17

Bidagdha Madhav palm leaf illustrated manuscript depicts – Lalita and Vishakha and old lady Purnanamasi discussing on Radha Krishna's conflicts



Plate-18

Bidagdha Madhav palm leaf illustrated manuscript depicts – old lady, Purnamasi trying to solve the problems between Radha and Krishna



Plate-19

Ragachitra palm leaf painting of Raghunath Prusti, 18th Cent. - showing women were playing dice



Plate-20

Bidagdha Madhav palm leaf manuscript – sakhis are drawn portrait of princes of different states and showing it to the princess Usha.



Plate-21

Ushaabhilasa palm leaf manuscript – Oriya women are depicted as she is writing and reading



Plate-22

Gitagovinda palm leaf painting, showing women's dressing and ornaments (Illustrated Palm Leaf Manuscript of Orissa, OSM)



Plate-23

Gitagovinda palm leaf painting, showing women's in without blouse and different hair style (Illustrated Palm Leaf Manuscript of Orissa, OSM)



Plate -24

Bidagdha Madhav palm leaf illustrated manuscript depicts –Radha , in right side frame painted with blouse while in left side frame she is seen without blouse



Plate-25

Ragachitra palm leaf illustrated manuscript of Raghunath Prusti, (18th Cent.) -women are portrayed as beautiful figure and sringar

Mural Painting



Plate-26

Sketch of the Painting on Ravanachaya or Sitabhinji Painting (Fund of Tempera Painting Sitabhinji, by T N Ramachandran, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 14, No. 1/2 (1951),



Plate-27

Sitabhinji Painting , 6th Cent AD, Kendhujhar, Odisha

Original Painting on Ravanachaya or Sitabhinji Painting and under the painting one line inscription written as “king Disha Bhanja” (Fund of Tempera Painting Sitabhinji, by T N Ramachandran, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 14, No. 1/2 (1951),



Plate -28

Srikuramam temple painting (AP) –story is based on 18th century Oriya kavya Kanchivijaya of Purusottam Das. This wall painting depicts about the Jagannath and Balabhadra marching towards Kanchi as in guise of two soldiers and on the way they met a women named Manika who is selling curd. Here women figures is seen in south Indian dressing style or influenced by teluge culture. (Mural Paintings in Orissa, by Dinanath Pathy, Bhubaneswar: Orissa Lalita Kala Academy, 1981, History Dept Archive, Berhampur University)



Plate-29

Srikuramam temple painting (AP), depicting Krishna lila and vastraharana scene where all gopis including Radha taking bath in river Yamuna. (Mural Paintings in Orissa, by Dinanath Pathy, Bhubaneswar: Orissa Lalita Kala Academy, 1981, History Dept Archive, Berhampur University)



Plate-30

Buguda Temple painting of 18th century- Ramayan story and Rama Sita marriage function



Plate-31

Buguda Temple painting of 18th century- Rama applying vermillion on the forehead of the Sita

Chapter - VI

Conclusion

The present thesis attempts to understand the role and status of women in eighteenth century Orissa. An attempt has been made to situate women in the socio- economic and cultural framework of eighteenth century Orissa and throw light on the marginalization and subordination of women. The mainstream history research has so far neglected women and their role in society. A modest effort has been made here to bring out the contribution made by women to the progress of society as well as the historical narrative of the said period. Sources like literature, foreign travelers account, and painting have been identified and studied to make the understanding more subtle and objective.

To study women's history of this period is massive challenge, because women are largely invisible in historical records. They are only visible as mother, sister, wife, and daughter or as objects of sexual pleasure. They had no other influences to the progress of the society. The women who get some importance in the records are due to their husband, father and brother's status and reputation. Historical records are silent about women's role and contribution to the society. They are depicted as voiceless and secondary element of the society. But literature of the period provides a base to examine the historical facts about women's status and position in the society. Literature plays a vital role in the reconstruction of eighteenth century history of Orissa. Basically to reconstruct a historical frame work to study the role and status of women of the said period, we mostly depend on the contemporary literary works. There are some travel accounts and palm leaf manuscripts of the seventeenth and eighteenth century is available. This literary culture of the period which was written in palm leaf has been taken as major source of the eighteenth century study on women. In most of the literary works, women have been depicted as the central character such as *Lavanyavati*, *Subhadraparinaya*, *Premasudhanidhi*, *Kotibrahmandasundari*, *Ichhavati*, etc. Basically eighteenth century literature has portrayed the women characters vividly. Upendra Bhanja, the contemporary poet of Orissa wrote more than fifty works and most of these works are female centric.

However he describes them as subordinate and sexual elements of the society. Here women are treated as slave and husband as god. Probably medieval Oriya society had these traditions and women were treated inferior in the society. Scholars like Nilambar Bidyadhar, Brajanath Badjena and others have provided an elaborate depiction of women's position and status in the society. Eighteenth century Oriya literature portrayed women's image through a patriarchal frame work.

The period of eighteenth century is a debatable period in Indian history. This period witnessed the simultaneous fall of Mughal Empire and the rise of British Empire. Some other events which stand tall in the debate of the eighteenth century India are the rise of Marathas, invasion of Nadir Saha, emergence of regional powers, development of trade and commercial activities etc. Some historians characterized this age as Dark Age while some other scholars described eighteenth century as age of prosperity and progress. Some scholars have also highlighted the regional issues and socio-economic changes of the period. Historians like Irfan Habib, Athar Ali, Satish Chandra, Muzafar Alam have given importance to peasants issues, crisis in jagirdari system, laborers, Zamindars in their debate for the decline of Mughal empire. On the other hand Washerbrook, Parthasarathi, Chris Bayly, Andre Wink, Trovers, Bernard Cohn, Sanjay Subramaniam and Muzzafar Alam argued that eighteenth century is a period of progress and development. According to them, the decline of one empire was substituted by the rise of another empire. Though there was political instability in India but socio and economic condition remained unaffected and continued as usual even after the decline of Mughal Empire.

This period was marked by the entry of British socio-cultural system into Indian social cultural life. The Renaissance and Enlightenment ideas of the west had already laid the foundation of modern civilization in Europe. With the entry of British into India, the ideas of Renaissance and Enlightenment thinkers also arrived in India during eighteenth century. Socio-religious awareness in a rational and scientific framework started during this period. A new cultural evolution took place due to the introduction of European culture and administration. However, no big changes took place in the social and cultural

life of the people. Though the British were the ultimate power, still Marathas were a power to reckon with in some regions like Orissa.

Marathas captured Orissa in 1751 from Mughals and establish their sway over this region. Their main target was to extract revenue. They did not show any interest in the development and progress of this land. Politically they had power over Orissa but Mughal tradition continued even during the Maratha administration. Mughal revenue system still continues in revenue administration even today. Orissa did not witness any change in the social and cultural life of the people. Medieval tradition, customs and practices continued during eighteenth century. Even though European traders established their trade and commercial centers in the coastal belt of Orissa since the beginning of seventeenth century still they could not influence Oriya culture and their life styles. Like the Indian culture, Oriya culture is also deeply rooted in Vedic traditions and Hindu philosophy.

However, economic condition of the period had perceived changes due to the European trade activities in the region. The presence of ports and maritime trade activities through these ports brought influential changes in the economic condition of the eighteenth century Orissa. But this economic progress was not unanimously felt in every part of Orissa. It was only in the coastal belt of Orissa or Kalinga regions where the condition of people somehow changed due to maritime trade activities.

Eighteenth century Orissa witnessed political anarchy but culturally it was following the medieval Hindu traditions and customs. Though the Islamic culture had entered into Orissa but it could not have much impact on Oriya culture. Oriya culture was largely grounded in Hindu principles and philosophy strongly constructed on religious principles. Their life revolved around the religion. If today we see the temples like Konark, Lingaraj, Jagannath, Mukteswar etc. they are because of the patronization of the leaders and people's dedication to the religious activities.

Orissa during the period was sandwiched in the fight for political supremacy between Mughals and Marathas and later between Marathas and British. Sometimes Marathas fought with local kings and zamindars also. Mughal and Maratha

administration did not affect the social and cultural life of the Oriya people much. Zamindars and local land lords still continued as the head of the administration in their respective regions and locality. They were also patronizing the literary figures in their court as well as outside of the court. As a result, 18th century Orissa saw a rich culture of literature.

Eighteenth century society followed the same tradition and culture prevalent in medieval period. Four Varna systems, caste based classification of society and untouchability were the prime social practices continued during this period. Society was divided into many classes and castes. In the name of Gotra and profession, society had sustained hierarchy. Eighteenth century Oriya society was suffering from bias and unfair rule and regulations. Basically people from lower strata and women were the prime victims of these social practices. Some sections of people were marginalized in the name of gender, culture, caste and religion. Sati, widowhood, patriarchy, child marriage, puberty tradition and slavery etc. marginalized the women in the medieval society.

Religion, festival, rituals and Hindu beliefs and customs had the dominance in the society. Muslim culture also had some impact on the eighteenth century society. Food, dress, language and court life style of the Muslim rulers influenced the Oriya culture. Though Hindu society of Orissa was not affected deeply but the impact was seen in the Oriya socio and religious life. Satyapir culture of Orissa is an example of a religious assimilation observed by both Hindu and Islam people. This Satyapir culture was established by an Islam saint and both Hindu and Islam people were worshiping him or visiting his place. Thus religious harmony existed during eighteenth century Orissa. Zamindars and land lords were deeply affected by Muslim administration and court life style. They were investing huge amount of money to show their status and position in the society. They also adopted the policy to attract business or investment for their economic development and progress. They were relishing lavish and luxury life style. However the common people were the main victim of the revenue exploitation and autocratic administration.

During eighteenth century the economic condition of Orissa was not in waning condition. Though trade and commercial activities started declining during this period

still economic status of the land was still sound. European trade and commercial activities started decline in the Orissan region. English and Dutch companies shifted their centers to Bengal. Probably the facilities and more benefits attracted them to migrate from Orissa. Orissa ports like Hariharpur, Chandabali, Baleswar, Pipli started declining due to a reduced amount of commercial activities. Maritime trade activities could not sustain its past glory of overseas trade with south east regions.

Eighteenth century Orissa might have witnessed the political turmoil but culture of literature had achieved great success. Due to the patronization of local chiefs and Zamindars, every corner of Orissa had seen the progress of the literary tradition. Eighteenth century literature of Orissa was mostly based on Riti philosophy. Women were the central figures of the works of the period. They were portrayed as society treated them. Eighteenth century society had followed various traditions, customs and practices which were made for women. Religious principles and regulations also shaped to restrict their movements. Women were controlled by men. They were suppressed by the social and religious system of the period. Women from elite class were also not free from these evil practices. However women from lower strata had enjoyed more liberty compare to the high class society. These are pictures of eighteenth century literature painted by contemporary poets and scholars. Women of this period characterized as objects of luxury and sexual pleasure. Their birth was to provide sexual satisfaction to the men. Apart from that, she had to work for others and devoted herself to the service of others. Bearing children and taking care of children was an important duty of women in the society. Elite class women were suffering from social practices like sati, widowhood, purdah, polygamy, puberty tradition and these were well depicted in Riti literature. Prostitution was a common practice prevailing in the eighteenth century Orissa has been illustrated elaborately in the literature.

Women's body and beauty appears as the important aspects of the literature of this period. Sexual depiction of women body and her role in sexual life occupied the central theme to represent women in the eighteenth century literature. Devadasi or courtesans were the professional dancers who adopted secularism in their art to attract male. But it was considered that women and her body were for sexual satisfaction only.

Elite women of the period were educated but they were taught dance, music, reading etc. They were trained up in patriarchal ideology. It was inculcated into their mind that women are born to serve others and satisfy others. Her duty is to serve others and live for others or family. Masculine philosophy was created to motivate her to work under the supervision of the male. Literature of the period represents women as subordinate and obedient personality of the society.

Eighteenth century women who were constrained within the home and veil had to follow the patriarchal principles and hegemony of the masculinity. Their economic and political power and progress was squeezed and restricted by the male society. Their freedom and liberty was fenced in the name of women body and sexuality. Masculinity attitude stood against the equality and equal opportunity for women. Though some literature depicted women as central characters but the real intention was to portray her sexuality, beauty and body. So women of the eighteenth century had an inferior and subordinate status in the society. Their role and contribution was lessened. She is neglected in the historical records and but was given adequate place in the Riti literature because of her body and beauty.

Eighteenth century Orissa witnessed a society of prejudices and fairness towards women. In the name of gender women were suppressed in various ways. They were given dissimilar treatment on the basis of space and context. In public place she was treated like goddess but in private sphere she was treated as subordinate or second-class. Women were marginalized in the name of biological dissimilarity. The process of marginalization of women during medieval period was remarkable. Through the various irrational traditions they were forced to live a life full of sorrow. Devadasi's of this period was a marginalized class who suffered from political changes and social partialities in the eighteenth century Orissa. They were marginalized in the name of their profession. Devadasis or Maharis of the temple were female servants who were performing dancing and singing ritual in the temple. However, in the due course of time devadasi's lost their past glory and socio religious status in the society. Frequent attacks of Muslim invaders on Orissa resulted destruction of Hindu pilgrimage centers and temples where devadasis were active for temple service. It was during the Ganga period when Afghans attacked on

Orissa. Then Gajapati rule had seen the frequent invasions by Afghan after the defeat of Prataprudradeva in the hand of Krishnadeva Ray.

In 1568 AD, Hindu dynasty collapsed and Afghan power was established in Orissa. After the establishment of Islamic rule in Orissa Hindu pilgrimages centers and temple business started declining. Devotees stopped visiting to these places. Thus devadasis who were engaged in the temple service were forced to leave the job due to the lack of patronization and decline of temple business. Hundreds of women dancers and singers of the temple service became jobless. Temple authorities even took away the land or rental house given to these devadasis for their maintenance. A temple dancer used to entertain to the god and devotees but when the temple was closed they were forced to dance in the public for their livelihood. Gradually these god's wives lost their morality and adopted the practice of prostitution to survive in the society. Devadasis became lokadasis though she was known as rajadasi before lokadasi. King had the right to establish sexual relation with temple girls first. Even he invited devadasis of Jagannath temple to entertain and provide sexual favor to his guests. As a representative of god, king had the right have sexual relation with devadasis.

Priests were not free from these immoral activities. They were involved in this immoral act of the temples. Even they had patronization and supervision power like king. Nineteenth century accounts on temples have given information on priest's role in the marginalization of devadasi women of Orissa. Some scholars argue that priests were having sexual relation with maharis. In the name of tradition and rituals they were taking care of temple dancers. Priest also provided all support and facilities like house, Prasad and money for various rituals of the temple. Medieval temple art has also shown the temple dancers importance and her presence in the temple. It seems women figurines on the temple walls are the just reflection of devadasis of the period. It may be Brahmeswar, Rajarani, and Mukteswar temple all having dancing and musical women with attractive posture and bhangi. Their dressing style, angabhangi, and seductive attitude indicate the existence of devadasi culture during this period. The analysis of the medieval temple sculpture particularly women characters on the walls indicates the presence of sexualism in this musical art and rituals.

Inscription of the early medieval period also vindicated that sexuality was an important art of the female dancers who performed dance in the temple. Probably they were asked to take recourse to sexualism to attract more devotees. The Mahabharat and other Hindu scriptures also narrate about the sexual activities of devadasis or maharis. Even modern Odissi dance which is a derivative of mahari or devadasi dance has shown sexuality in a well-organized manner.

Thus this god's women or wives of god had little alternative to live their life. After losing their jobs and patronization and gift offered by devotees, they were forced to choose the path of immorality. Their profession was much-admired by the society because it was linked to god. But in general, medieval people believed that dancing was not an upright profession. On the other hand people had known them as impure due to their connection with the place where the immoral activities were practiced. However, Devadasis had a respectable standing in the eighteenth century for their service to the temple as god's wife.

Devadasi of the medieval period especially after the decline of Hindu rule in Orissa devadasis became victim of the economic crisis and religious dogmas. They became marginalized and victimized by the social and religious bias of the society. Due to the entry of immorality into the medieval society, holy places and pilgrimage centers also became unholy. Degradation of religious value and morality brought many changes in the life of devadasis. Thus women of the period witnessed degradation of their position and status in the society. Other women groups were also marginalized in the name of religious tradition and patriarchal principles of the eighteenth century Orissa.

Painting is one of the important sources to make a framework on women's position and role in the society. Eighteenth century painting of Orissa has many forms such as patta painting, mural painting, and palm leaf painting. Mural and palm leaf paintings of this period are very much helpful to reconstruct women's history. Representations of women through this art form are magnificent. Though mural paintings of eighteenth century are in poor condition but the palm manuscript illustration presents adequate information about the women's position, status and role in the society. Painting of the period depicted women in the manner literature has narrated them. Eighteenth

century palm leaf illustrated manuscripts like Gitagovinda, Ushavilash, Bidagdha Madhav, etc. have portrayed women as prominent character. Their attires, dancing and music, dressing style and social representation occupied major place in the palm leaf paintings. Painting of this period also gets secular touch. Like Riti literature of the eighteenth century Orissa, palm leaf painting has also given importance to sexualism in its subject. Women are the main characters in this art form. Religious illustrated manuscripts and religious characters are not without sexualism or sexual depiction. Radha-Krishna, Rama-Sita and other epic characters are also rendered based on these principles.

Eighteenth century palm leaf painting depicted women as wife, slave, dancers, musicians, princess etc. Dancing seems to be a common tradition for women of this period. Most of the folios of Ushavilash, Bidagdha Madhav portrayed them as dancers and playing musical instruments. Jayadeva's Gitagovinda which was illustrated during eighteenth century by Dhanajaya has given elaborate depiction of Jayadeva's Gitagovinda and his temple dancers and musicians. Dancing posture of women in these manuscripts has been depicted as today's Odissi dance. Even dressing style of dancers and female musicians is different than other female characters in the folios.

Most of the women figures of the painting are shown in sari without blouse. But some painting of late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century, women figures are drawn with sari and blouse. South Orissa paintings and illustrations are seen with blouse and sari. Raghunath Prusty's works are seen with both sari and blouse and in some places without blouse also. Ragachitra palm leaf painting of Raghunath Prusty draws women figures with sari and blouse. Probably the Rajsthani and Deccani paintings influenced Orissa painting style too as blouse was not a part of Medieval Oriya dressing style. Even medieval temple images are not seen with it.

Women as an integral part of the culture occupies key place in the illustrations. She has been portrayed as a restricted life one who hangs around the house and doing household works. Some folios depicts about her love towards make up and ornamentation. She is depicted as a piece of enjoyment and luxury. She is represented in nude and semi nude or sexual postures. Her dressing style, hair style and ornament have

also been given importance in the paintings. These palm leaf painting picture is the reflection of medieval Oriya society. The picture of women's position and role is painted in a narrative and pictographic manner which tells us the past history of Oriya women.

Mural painting of eighteenth century Orissa is limited in number. Orissa has a great culture of mural paintings since pre historic era and it continued in ancient period where Sitabhinji Painting of sixth century stands tall. The medieval period witnessed the religious paintings on walls of the temples and mathas. Eighteenth century mural paintings are mostly found in the South Odisha region like in Buguda in Ganjam region. Buguda temple paintings are very particular in the case of women and reflect light on Oriya society. The entire paintings of the Buguda temple are based on Ramayan and Mahabharat and Jagannath story. However the Oriya tradition and culture is reflected through this painting gallery. Rama-Sita relation and their dedication and duty towards each other are represented in Oriya culture and institution of marriage. Murals of the period are not secular in nature and religious ideologies depicted women's position and status in the society.

Eighteenth century and women's history are the two most debatable subjects. Study of both is not easy to examine them to reach a conclusion. Historians and scholars have given different views on eighteenth century as well as women's role and contribution to the society. Eighteenth century world witnessed the rise of feminist ideology when Marry Wollstonecraft started voicing against the patriarchal hegemony of the male society. India had seen the fall and rise of political empires and instability due to the British, Maratha, and Mughal conflicts over India. Orissa had seen same instability but it was between Mughal and Marathas and then Maratha and the British. However, women of this period were suffering not for political anarchy but for the old patriarchal traditions and customs which were followed and observed in the name culture and religion. They were restricted because of their biological construction and natural behavior which were given a stereotypical construction. In the name of gender, medieval women were dominated. Historians neglected them in their writings because the women were working inside the home or serving to the family members.

Women in eighteenth century Orissa also suffered identically as Indian women were suffering. Orissa too followed the patriarchal ideologies in its social behavior. Male dominated society had to decide the rules and regulations for the women. She did not have right to express herself or take decision on any matter. She had the right on stridhana only. Women were treated as luxury and sexual objects to enjoy. Literature of the contemporary period has also justified this ideology of sexualism and treated women as sexual item. In this process of women domination and gender bias society, some group of women was marginalized in the name of profession and constricted mental attitude. Women are also seen and depicted in the contemporary literature as subordinate and inferior class in the Oriya society.

The process of analyzing data and methodology adapted to shape women's position and status in eighteenth century Orissa is significant and historically successful. Through this process women can be seen where she was and how she was treated in the society. Marginalizing women through various means proved that they were controlled by the patriarchal hegemony and traditional beliefs. Biased medieval Oriya society introduced many principles to control women and glorify men. Thus in modern period the same ideology is also continuing and women are always valued in the name of medieval principles. Here it has been proved that how they were treated and depicted. Religious blindness and evil social rules corrupted the minds of people. Lack of rational thinking and egalitarian attitude made the society gender biased. Women who were enjoying equality and freedom in Vedic time were victimized in the name of impurity and sensitivity towards their body. Thus women of this period are restricted and their freedom is snatched away by the patriarchal society to show its masculine domination. At the same time, it fixed the rules and regulations by justifying women's subordination to patriarchy. This thesis is an attempt in this field to examine the role and status of women in eighteenth century Orissa. It has also made a fresh attempt to reconstruct women's history despite the fact that they women are mostly missing in the eighteenth century historical sources.

Bibliography

Primary works-

Inscriptions

Anantavasudeva Temple inscription, Bhubaneswar, *Descriptive Topographical Catalogue of Orissan Inscriptions*, Ed. Snigdha Tripathy, New Delhi: Monohara, 2010

Bhanjanagar plate of Nattabhanja, *Descriptive Topographical Catalogue of Orissan Inscriptions*, Ed. Snigdha Tripathy, New Delhi: Monohara, 2010

Brahmesvara Temple inscription, Bhubaneswar, *Descriptive Topographical Catalogue of Orissan Inscriptions*, Ed. Snigdha Tripathy, New Delhi: Monohara, 2010

Inscription of Sobhaneswar Temple, Niali, Cuttack, *Descriptive Topographical Catalogue of Orissan Inscriptions*, Ed. Snigdha Tripathy, New Delhi: Monohara, 2010

Laxmi Narasimha Temple Inscription of Viranarasmha III, Simachalam, *Descriptive Topographical Catalogue of Orissan Inscriptions*, Ed. Snigdha Tripathy, New Delhi: Monohara, 2010

Maghesvara temple inscription, Bhubaneswar, *Descriptive Topographical Catalogue of Orissan Inscriptions*, Ed. Snigdha Tripathy, New Delhi: Monohara, 2010

Two Copper plate Grants from the Village Themra in the Sambalpur Districts' ed. by P Acharya [superintendent of Orissa State Museum] in OHRJ, Vol. II, April, 1953

Snigdha Tripathy, Two Copper Plates of Ramachandra Deva, (18th Cent) ed. Snigdha Tripathy OHRJ, Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar,

Odia Literature

Mohanty, A.B., ed. *Madala Panji*, Cuttack: Friends Publication, 2001.

Samantasimhara, Abhimanyu. *Bidhagdachintamani*, (Oriya 18th Cent) ed. Debendra Mahanty, Cuttack: Friends Publication, 2000

Das, Achutya. *Haribamsa* (Oriya 17th Cent), ed. Ratnakar Gargabatu, Cuttack: Radharaman Pustakalaya, 1939.

Das, Arjun. *Ramavibha* (Oriya, 18th Cent), ed. K. N. Mohapatra, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1953.

Das, Balaram. *Dandi Ramayana* (Oriya, 16th Cent), ed. Govinda Ratha, Cuttack: Nityananda Pustakalaya.

Das, Banamali. *Chhata Ichhavati* (Oriya, 18th Cent)

Das, Bhakta Charana. *Mathura Mangala*, (18th cent)

Badajena, Brajanath. *Chaturavinoda*, (18th cent), Bhubaneswar: O. S. M.,

Badjena, Brajanath. *Samarataranga*, (18th cent) ed. By Debendra Mahanty, Cuttack: Friend Publication, 1992,

Brajanath Badajena, *Chatur Vinod* (18th cent), trans. Lipi Puspa Nayak, www.grassroots.com

Das, Danei. *Gopibhasa*, (18th Cent)

Das, Jagannatha. *Bhagavata* (Oriya), ed. Rajkishor Das, Puri: Orissa Printing Works, 1962.

Mahapatra, Kavi Narasihna Sena. *Primala* (Oriya), ed. K. N. Mohapatra, Bhubaneswar, 1961.

Bidhyadhara, Lokanatha. *Sarbangasundari* (Oriya), Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar. Mayurbhanja Records, *Report to Ernst. Collector of Midnapur*, Nov. 25 1803

Bidyadhara, Nilamba. *Prastabchintamani*, (18th cent. Oriya), Bhanjabihar: Berhampur University, 1976

Srichandan, Padmanava. *Sasirekha*, (17th cent. Oriya) ed. Bichhada Charan Pattnaik, Cuttack: Prachisamiti, 1933.

Das, Purusottam. *Kanchi Kaveri* (18th century Oriya work), ed. B Mohanty, Cuttack, 1953.

Das, Sarala. *Mohabharat* (Oriya), ed. A. B. Mohanty, Cuttack: Radharaman Pustakalaya, 1953.

Bhanja, Upendra. *Kotibrahmanda Sundari* (18th century, Oriya), ed. Krushna C. Behera, (Cuttack: Friends Publishers, 1993), 171.

Bhanja, Upendra. *Abanarasataranga*, (18th Cent. Oriya) ed. Sridhara Rao, Cuttack: Sri Rdha Publication, 1904

Bhanja, Upendra. *Lavanyavati*, (18th cent. Oriya) Ed. Narayana Chandra Das, Ananda Chandra Das and Prafula Kumar Das, (Cuttack: Monmohan Press, 1939),

Bhanja, Upendra. *Premasudhanidhi*, (18th cent. Oriya) ,ed. By B. C. Samal, Cuttack: Friends Publication, 1992

Bhanja, Upendra. *Vaidehishavilash* (Oriya), ed. K. C. Behera, Cuttack: Friends Publishers, 1980.

Bhanja, Upendra. *Rasalekha* (Oriya), ed. Pundit Sri Syamsundar Nayak, Cuttack, 1958.

Kaviraj, Viswanath. *Chandrakala* (Oriya), ed. S. N. Rajguru, Culcutta: PP Publication, 1999.

Paintings

Biranchinarayan Temple Painting, (18th Cent), Buguda, Ganjam, Odisha

Dhananjaya, *Gitagovinda* Illustrated palm leaf manuscripts,(18th Cent.) Ext.- 172 Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar

Gitagovinda Illustrated palm leaf manuscripts,(18th Cent.) Ext.-24,69,72, Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar

Gitagovinda Palm Leaf Illustrated Manuscripts (18th Cent.), Ext.- 271 Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar

Jayantigada Temple painting (18th Cent.), Jayantigada, Ganjam, Odisha

Raghunath Prusti, *Ragachitra* palm leaf painting manuscripts, Ext.- 38 Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar

Sitabhinji Rock Painting, (6th Cent.) Rabanachaya rock Mound, Kendujhar, Odisha

Ushaabhilasha illustrated palm leaf manuscripts, (18th Cent.) Ext.-25, Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar

Vidagdha Madhav Natak palm leaf Illustrated manuscripts,(18th Cent.) Ext.-279, Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar

Sculpture

Brahmeswar Temple Sculpture of Female Dancing in Temple (10th Cent.), Bhubaneswar

Female Dancing and musical relics (13th Cent), Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar

Khandagiri Udayagiri Cave sculpture of Dancing and Musical scenes (1st Cent BC), Bhubaneswar

Konark Temple sculpture of female dancers and musicians (12th Cent.), Puri

Rajarani Temple sculpture of Female dancing Images (11th Cent) Bhubaneswar

Travellers Accounts

Bruton, William. *Account of Cuttack and Puri*, ed. By P Acharya, OHRJ, V-X, No-3, 1963

Bernier, Fancios. *Travels in Hindustan* (1655-1661), trans. By Thomas Henry Oulddinburge in 1684, reprint Cacutta

Tavernier, J.B., *Travel in India*, Vol. II, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012

Bowrey, Thomas. *A Geographical Account of Countries, Round the Bay of Bengal, (1669-1679)*. Ed. Richard Carnac Temple, Cambridge, 1905

Sabastine Manrique. 'Account of Travels of Fray Sebastine Manrique in Orissa' ed. By P Acharya, OHRJ, Vol. XV, No. 3 & 4, 1953

Motte, Thomas. " A Narrative of a journey to the Diamond Mines at Sambalpur in the Province of Orissa", ed. P Acharya, OHRJ, Vol. I, No. 3, October, 1952, 1- 49

Tieffenthaler 'Province of Orissa in Geography of India by Tieffenthaler', ed by P Acharya, in OHRJ, Vol. II, No. 2 July 1953,

English Resources

Selections from official Letters and Records relating to the History of Mayurbhanja, Vol. I, 1761-1817. Selected by P Chanda, Published by Dr. Achyut Kumar Mitra, 13/A Southern Avenue for the Mayurbhanja State and Printed by G. E. Bingham at the Baptist Mission Press, 1942, 276-78

Kulke, Harman and Gaya Charan Tripathy, ed., *Katakarajvansavali*, Allahabad: Vohra Publisher & Distributers, 1981

Dubois, J. A., *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, (At Clarendon Press : Oxford, 1906)

Duboise, J. A., *Letters on the State of Christianity*, (New Delhi: Asian Education Service, 1995)

Malley, O., *Bengal District Gazetteer* (Baleswar), (Calcutta: 1098)

Malley, O., *History of Bengal Bihar and Orissa Gajatte*, (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1925)

Malley, O., *History of Bengal Bihar and Orissa*, (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1925)

Selections from official Letters and Records relating to the History of Mayurbhanja, Vol. I, 1761-1817. Selected by P Chanda, Published by Dr. Achyut Kumar Mitra, 13/A Southern Avenue for the Mayurbhanja State and Printed by G. E. Bingham at the Baptist Mission Press, 1942

Hunter, W. W., *Jagannath, in History of Orissa* ed. By N. K. Sahu, Delhi: Bharatiya House, 1980

Hunter, W. W., *History of Orissa*, ed., N. K. Sahoo, (New Delhi: Bharatiya Publishing House, 1980)

William F. B. Lauries, *Orissa, the garden of superstition and idolatry etc*, published in 1850, Landon, Calcutta: R. N. Bhattacharya, 2000

Secondary works-

Oriya Books

Das, Bijayini. Harapriya Devinka saha Ketoti Muhurta, *The Saptahiki, Oriya Weekly*, 8th to 14th March 1990

Das, M., *Oriya Sahityar Itihasa*, Cuttack: Friends Publication, 1987

Mahapatra, K. N., *khuruda Itihasa*, Cuttack: Grantha Mandir, 1969;

Mahapatra, C. D., *Utkala Itihasara Eka Agyanta Adhyaya*,

Mharana, Surendra K., *Odiya Sahityara Itihasa*, Cuttack: Orissa Book Store, 2001 334-335.

Mishra, Gadadhara. *Odiya Sahityara Samajika O Saskrutika Itihasa (Oriya)*, Cuttack: Takshasila, 1997.

Mishra, Gayadhara. *Odiya Sahitya ra Samajika O Sanskrutika Itihasa*, (Cuttack: Takshasila, 1997), 271-272.

- Mishra, Gayadhara. *Odiya Sahitya ra Samajika O Sanskrutika Itihasa* (Oriya), (Cuttack: Takshasila, 1997), 296.
- Mishra, Kasinath. *Itihas re Adibasi Mahila*, Jeypore: J.E.L. Church, 1977
- Mishra, Purna Chandra. *Bhanja Gabesana Sahayak Suchi* (Oriya), Raurkela: Adarsha Pathagara and Bhanja Cultural Trust, 1997
- Mishra, S. N., '*Brajanatha Granthabali*' (Oriya), Bhubaneswar: Orissa Sahitya Akademy Bhubaneswar, 1984.
- Nayak, Ranjita. 'Odiya Sahityare Narira Samajika Stiti O Swarupa' (Oriya), in *Narira Snman O Swadhikar*, ed. Orissa Sahitya Akademy, Bhubaneswar: Orissa Sahitya Akademy, 1992.
- Patnaik, G. P., *Devadasi Pratha*, Bhubaneswar: Sangita Natak Akademi, 1983
- Pattnaik, Prasana K., *Baibhrajare Bhanja* (Oriya), Cuttack: Friends Publishers, 1997.
- Rajguru, S. N., *Odisha'ra Sanskrutika Itihasa*, Vol. II, Bhubaneswar: Odisha Sahitya Academy, 1988, 77-78
- Rath, N., *Banki Itihas* (O), Banki: Banki Publishing, 1935
- Sahu, Pankaj. Odishara Sanskrutika Prabahare Chitrana Prampara, in *Odisha ra Sanskrutika Parampara*, Vol . II, ed. by Brajamohan Mohanty, S. Maohanty, Cuttack: Odisha Pathak Sansad, 1991

Books in English

- Ali, M. Athar. Recent Theories of Eighteenth Century India, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, ed. P. J. Marshal, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003,
- Alteker, A. S., *The position of Women in Hindu Civilization*, Delhi: Mitilalbanarasidas, 1959
- Baba Mishra, *Medieval Orissa and cult of Jagannath*, New Delhi: Navaranga, 1995
- Banarjee, R. D., *The History of Orissa* Vol. 2, Calcutta: R Chattarjee, 1931.
- Barai, Kumudini, *Role of Women in the History of Orissa*, Calcutta: Punt Pustak, 1994.
- Bhambri, Palak. Prostitution – With A Religious Sanction, *Youth Ki Awaz*, 8, June 2011,
- Bhattacharji, Sukumari. Prostitution in Ancient India in *Early Indian Societies* ed. By Kumkum Roy, New Delhi: Monahar, 1999, 199 (197-228)

- Bhavani M. Das, Muslim Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008
- Biswas, A. K., The Last Devadasi: does her death brings down curtain on a disgraceful temple customs? *Mainstream*, Vol. III, No. 16, April 2015
- Brighentic, Fancesco. *Shakti Cult in Orissa*, New Delhi: D K Printworld, 2001
- Bundgaard, Halle. *Indian Art Worlds in Contention: Local, Regional, and National Discaurses on Orissan Patta Paintings*, London: Routledge, 1999
- C.A. Bayly, Epilogue to the Indian Edition, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian*, ed. Seema Alvi, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002, Frank Perline, The Problem of the Eighteenth century, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian history*, ed. P.J. Marshal, New Delhi: Oxford University press, 2003,
- Chand, Ramprasad. *History of Mayurbhanja 1761-1861: Based on British Official Records*, 1, Culcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1949.
- Chandra, Pramod. Medieval Indian Miniature Painting, in *Cultural History of India* Ed. By A. L. Bhasam, New Delhi: Oxford Publication, 1975
- Colundalur, Nash. Devadasi are Cursed Community, *The Gardian*, 21, January 2011;
- Indian's Prostitute of God, *The Telegraph*, 20, September 2010,
- Craufurd, Craufurd. *Sketches: chiefly relating to the history, religion learning and manners etc.*, 1, London: T Cadell, 1792.
- Das, J. P., *Puri Paintings*, Jagatsinghpur: Prafulla, 1982
- Das, M. N., *Sidelights on History and Culture of Orissa*, Cuttack,: Vidyapuri Pub, 1977
- Das, Biswarupa, *The Bhuma-karas and their Time*, New Delhi: Oriental Publishers and Distributers, 1978
- Devadasi Practice in India: An Overview
- Devika Rangachari, Devika *Invisible Women and Visible History: Gender Society, and Polity in North India*, New Delhi: Monahar Publisher, 2009
- Dhar, J. N., The Story and History of Odissi Dance and Sree Gitagobinda, *Orissa review*, May, 2007, 43 [43-45]
- Divatia, N. B., 'Article on Nose Ornaments', *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 27, 1927

Dutta, Kalikinkar. *Survey of India's Social Life and Economic Condition in the Eighteenth Century, (1707-1813)*, Agra: M. M. Publication Ltd, 1978.

Forbes, Geraldine. *Caged Tigers: First wave Feminists in India*, in *Colonial India* ed. by Geraldine Forbes, New Delhi: Chronicles Books, 2005, 12 (11-27)

Foster, William. ed. *A New Account of the East Indies*, London: Argonaut Press, 1930.

Gandhi, M. K., *Views on Hindu Dharma*, ed. Neeraja Arjun Gupta, New York: Routledge, 2018

Ganguly, O. C., *The Glorious Beginning*, in *Panorama of Indian Painting*, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt of India, 1968

H K Sherwani, *Cultural Trend in Medieval India: Architecture, Painting, Literature and Language*, New Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1968

Habib, Irfan. *Eighteenth Century in Indian Economic History*, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, ed. P. J. Marshal, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003

Hunter, W. W., *Jagannath*, in *History of Orissa* ed. By N. K. Sahu, Delhi: Bharatiya House, 1980

Jena, B.B., *Orissa: People, Culture and Polity*, New Delhi: Kalyani Publishers, 1980

Jena, K. C., *The History of Modern Orissa*, Calcutta: Panti Pustak, 1985.

Jones, V., ed. *Women in the Eighteenth Century: Constructions of Femininity*, London, Routledge, 1990.

Krishnaraj, Maitry. *Writing Women' history or Writing Women into History*, in *History and Gender*, ed, K. K. Saha, 2005

Kulke, Herman, et al, *Orissa: A Comprehensive and Classified Bibliography*, Cuttack: Vidyapuri Publication, 1981.

Lasilie C. Orr, *Donors, Devotees and Daughters of God: Temple Women in Medieval Tamilnadu*, New Delhi: Oxford Publication, 2000, 199 -200

Laurie, F. B. William. *Orissa, the garden of superstition and idolatry: including an account of British connexion with the temple of Jagannatha: etc.* Culcutta: R. N. Bhattacharya, 2000.

Lerner, Gerda. 'Placing Women in History: Definition and Challenges', *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1/ 2 , 1975

Mansing, Maydhara. *History of Oriya Literature*, (New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 1961).

Mansingh, Maydhara. *The Saga of the Land of Jagannath*, Cuttack: J Mahapatra & Co

- Marglin, F. A., *Wives of the God King: The Rituals of the Devadasis*, Newyork: Oxford Publication, 1985
- Martin, Robert M., '*Historical documents of Eastern India*', Johannesburg: Caxton Publication, 1990.
- Martin, Robert M., *Historical documents of eastern India*, Montegom: 1990
- Mayurbhanja Records, 60-61, Report to Ernst. Collector of Midnapur, Nov. 25 1803.
- Mishra, Baba. *Medieval Orissa and Cult of Jagannatha*, New Delhi: Navaranga, 1995
- Mishra, K. C., *Abhimanyu Samanta Simhara: Makers of Indian Literature*, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1990.
- Mishra, Nrayana. *Annal and Antiquities of Temple of Jagannath*, Sarup & Sons, 2007
- Mishra, Purna Chandra. Mahari Tradition of Sri Jagannath Temple, *Odisha Review*, July 2013
- Mishra, Rekha. '*Women in Mughal India 1526-1748*', Delhi: Munishram Monoharalal Publishers, 1967.
- Mishra, S. N., ed., *Brajanath granthabali*, (Bhubaneswar :OSA, 1984.
- Mohanty, Janakiballabha. *Vrajanatha Badjena: Makers of Indian Literature*, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1991.
- Mohanty, Jatindra Mohan. *History of Literature*, Bhubaneswar: Vidya Publications, 2006.
- Mohanty, Satya P., 'Alternative Modernities and Medieval Indian Literature the Laxmipurana as Pedagogy', *Diacritics*, 38, No. 3, (2008): 3-21
- Mohanty, Kavitarani. *Later Medieval Orissa: A cultural Study*, Calcutta: R. N. Bhattacharya, 2003.
- Mohatab, Harekrushna. *History of Orissa*, II, Cuttack: Prajatantra Prachar Samiti, 1960.
- Chandra, Moti. Mughal Painting, in *Panorama of Indian Painting*, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt of India, 1968
- Nayak, Gitanjali. 'Women in Orissa', in *Comprehensive History and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008: 493-524.
- Nayak, Utpala. 'Devadasi System in Ancient Orissa', in *Society, Polity and Culture of Orissa through Ages*, ed. Raimohan Mohapatra, et al, Bhadrak: Jagannatha Pattnaik Smruti Sansad, 2008.

- Nayak, Utpala. Women's development and Social Conflicts: Historical prospective on Indian Women (study in Orissa), New Delhi: Kaniska Publication, 1999
- Ojha, P. N., Glimpses of Social Life of Mughal India, New Delhi: Classiacal Publication, 1979
- Om Prakash, Trade and Politics in Eighteenth Century Bengal, in *Eighteenth Century in India*, ed. Seema Alvi, New Delhi: Oxford University press, 2002,
- P. J. Marshal, Introduction, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003
- Padhy, Manmoth. Maratha Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008),
- Padhy, Manmoth., Maratha Rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008
- Padhy, Monmoth. 'Maratha Rule', in *Comprehensive History and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008: 17-31.
- Panda, Sisir K., *Political and Cultural History of Orissa*, New Delhi: New Age International, 1999
- Pande, Rekha. Devadasi, in *Religious Movements and Institutions in Medieval India*, (History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization) ed. by J. S. Grewal, New Delhi: Oxford University Publication, 2006
- Pande, Rekha. Ritualized Prostitution: Devadasis to Jogins – a few case studies, in *Prostitution and Beyond: An Analysis of Sex Work in India*, ed. by Rohini Sahni, V Kalyan Shankar, Hemanta Apte, New Delhi: Sage Publication, 2008
- Pani, Subash. *Illustrated Palm leaf Manuscripts of Orissa: A selection from Orissa State Museum*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984
- Pathy, D. N., *Orissa Painting*, in *Glimpses of Orissan Art and Culture*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984
- Pathy, D. N., *Orissa Painting*, in *Glimpses of Orissan Art and Culture*, Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984
- Pathy, D. N., *Rethinking Odissi*, New Delhi: Herman Publishing house, 2007
- Pathy, Dinanath. *Mural Paintings in Orissa*, Bhubanswar: Orissa Lalitakala Academy, 1981

- Pathy, Dinanath. *Rethinking Odissi*, New Delhi: Herman Publishing House, 2009
- Patra, Benudhara. *Studies, History and Archeology of Orissa*, Kolcutta: Punt Pustak, 2008
- Pattnaik, P. K., *A Forgotten Chapter of Orissan History: with special reference to the Raja of Khurda and Puri (1568-1828)*, Culcutta:Punt Pustak, 1979
- Pattnaik, Prafulla K., *A Forgotten Chapter of Orissan History: with Special Reference to the Rajas of Khurda and Puri, 1568-1828*, Kolkata: Punt Pustak, 1979
- Raghuvanshi, P.V.S., *Indian Society in the Eighteenth Century*, New Delhi: Associate Publishing House, 1969
- Rajguru, S. N., *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol. IV
- Randhawa, M. S., The Kangra School, in *Panorama of Indian Painting*, New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt of India, 1968, (25-28)
- Rao, C. V. Ramachandra. *Administration and Society in Medieval Andhra 1038-1538* [under later Eastern-Gangas and the Suryavamsi Gajapatis, Nellore: Manasha Publication, 1976
- Rawson, P. S., Early Art and Architecture, in *Cultural History of India* ed. By A. L. Bhasam, New Delhi: Oxford Publication, 1975
- Ray, B. C., *Orissa under the Mughal*, Calcutta: Punt Pustak, 1981
- Ridden, G. M., ‘Report on Discussion of Literature and History Session at Oxford History Workshop’, in *Literature and History Anniversary Issue*, II:I, spring, Manchester University Press: 1985.
- Rout, L. N., Socio-economic Life and European Settlements in Orissa during the Muslim rule, in *Comprehensive History of and Culture of Orissa (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, No 1, New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008
- Rout, L. N., ‘Socio-economic Life and European Settlements in Orissa during the Muslim rule’, in *Comprehensive History and Culture of Orissa (1568 – 1994)*, II, ed J. K. Samal, New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008.
- Rout, L. N., “Socio-economic life and European settlements in Orissa during Muslim rule”, in *Comprehensive History and Culture of Orissa, (1568-1994)*, ed. J. K. Samal, 2, New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008
- Rout, L. N., *Socio Economic Life in Medieval Orissa (1568-1751)*, Calcutta: Punt Pustak, 1988.

- Rout, Savitri. *Women peoneers in Oriya Literature*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarassi Publisher Pvt Ltd, 1972
- Routray, Binod *Tradition s in Paintings, Bhubaneswar*: Orissa Sahitya Akademi, 1983
- Roy, Kumkum. ed. *Women in Early Indian Society*, New Delhi: Monahar Publisher and Distributers, 2001
- Sahoo, K. C., *Literature and Social Life in Medieval Orissa*, Ranci: Pustak Sadan, 1971
- Sahoo, K. C., *Bhumakaras*, Calcutta: Punt Pustak, 1986.
- Sahoo, K. C., *Literature and Social Life in Medieval Orissa*, Ranci: Pustak Sadan, 1971.
- Sahu, Bhagaban. *Cultural History of Orissa (1435 – 1751)*, New Delhi: Anmol Publication, 1997
- Sahu, N. K., P. K. Mishra, and J. K. Sahu, *History of Orissa*, Cuttack: Nalanda, 1980
- Samal, J. K., ed. '*Comprehensive History and Culture of Orissa*' (1568 – 1994), 2, No. I, New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2008.
- Sarkar, Tanika. *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation: Community, Religion and Cultural Nationalism*, Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2003
- Sherwani, H. K., *Cultural Trend in Medieval India: Architecture, Painting, Literature and Language*, New Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1968
- Showalter, Elaine ed. *Women's Liberation and Literature*, New York: Hercourt Broce Javonovich Inc, 1971
- Stein, Bruton. Eighteenth Century India: Another view, in *Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, ed. P. J. Marshal, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003,
- Subudhi, Umakanta. '*The Bhumakararas of Orissa*', Culcutta: Puntipustak, 1978.
- Umakanta Subhudhi, *The Bhaumakaras of Orissa*, Culcutta: Punt Pustak, 1978
- Welch, S. C., *India: Art and Culture (1300-1900)*, New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1985
- Widdowson, Peter. 'The Acceptable Failure of Literature and History', in *Literature and History*, Anniversary Issue, II: I, spring, Manchester University Press: 1985.
- Williams Joanna, *The Two Headed Deer, Illustration of the Ramayan in Orissa*, Barkeley: University of Carlifornia Press, 1996

Article in Journals

Bhagwat, Vidyut. 'Marathi Literature as a source for Contemporary Feminism: Reviews of Women Studies', in *Economic and Political Weekly*, XXX, (1995): 24-29.

Dash, Abhimanyu. Invasion on the Temple of Lord Jagannath, Puri, *Orissa Review*, July, 2011

Fisher, F., Puri Paintings: The Chitrakara and his work by J. P. Das, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 44, No. 2/3, 1983, 237,(236-241)

Jeevanandam, S and Rekha Pande, Devadasi and Gift Giving in Medieval South India, *Zenith, IJMR*, Vol. II, No. V, May, 2012, [181-191]

Mahapatra, R. P., Position of Women as Depicted in the Early Sculpture of Udayagiri and Khandagiri, *OHRJ*, Vol. No. XXIV, XXV, XXVI, 1980

Mishra, P.C., Mahari Tradition of Sri Jagannath Temple, *Odisha Review*, July 2013

Mishra, Ramachandra. Odissi Dance Through Ages, *Journal of Berhampur University*, Vol. IX, 1988 , (130-135)

Mohanty, Satya P., 'Alternative Modernities and Medieval Indian Literature the Laxmipurana as Pedagogy', *Diacritics*, 38, No. 3, (2008): 3-21.

Pal, Bharati. The References of Devadasis in the Inscription, *Odisha Review*, June 2012,

Pande , Rekha & B. Lavanya, Miniature Painting of Golconda and the representation of Women (16th -17th Centuries AD, in *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in History and Archaeology*, Vol. I, No. I , 2004, (73-86)

Pande Rekha & Neeharika Joshi, Representaing of Women in Garhwal Miniature paintings, *Ars Artium: Journal of English Studies and Culture*, Vol. 7, Jan 2019, 122-138

Pati, Biswamaya. Of Deavadasis, Tradition and Politics, *EPW*, Vol. 30, No. 43, October 28, 1995

Patra, Benudhara. Devadasi System in Orissa: A case study of the Jagannath Temple of Puri, *Annals of Bhandarkar Oient research Institute*, Vol. 85, 2004, [159-172]

Ponda, H. C., Baleswar Port in the Nineteenth Century, *OHRJ*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1&2

Ramachandran, T. N., Find of Tempera Painting in Sitabhinji,, District Keonjhar, Orissa, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 14, No. 1 /2, 1951, (4-25), www.jstore.org/stable/13248685

Sahoo, B. B., Revival of the Devadasi System, *IJSW*, Vol.58, No. 3, 361-370, www.ijsw.tiss.edu

Sahu, Aparmita. Devadasi in Orissa, *Orissa Review*, vol. 1. No. 4, 2011

Saksena, Devesh. The Problems of Marginalization Group in India, *Academic Lawctopus*, Law Journal, www.lawctopus.com

Scott, Anne Firor. Making the Invisible Women Visible: A Essay Review, *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 38, No. 4, Nov. 1972, 629-238,

Sharma, Bina. Social Uplift of Women in British Orissa, *OHRJ*, Vol. XXXVII, No. 1- 4, 1954

Singhal, Ankur. *The Devadasi System: Temple Prostitution in India*, UCLA Women's Law Journal, Vol. 22, I, 2015,

Willam, Joanna. From the Fifth to the Twentieth century and Back, *Art Journal*, Vol. 49, No. 4, 1990, (363-369)

Williams, Joanna and J. P. Das, Raghunath Prusti: An Oriya Artist, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 48, No. ½, 1987, 136 -137 (131-159) www.jstore.org/stable/3249855

Articles in Web Sources

Aarmitage, Sue. Why Women's History? www.washingtonhistory.org

Bruton, Mark and Carolyn Kagan, *Marginalization*, Chapter –XIII, www.compsy.org.uk

Devadasi Practice in India: An Overview, 55 [43-70], www.sodhaganga.inflibnet.ac.in

Devadasis, chapter – 8, www.sodhaganga.inflibnet.ac.in.

Marx, Karl. The Future Results of British in India, *New York Daily Tribunes*, August, 8, 1853, collected from *On India*, (12-19), <http://icwfreedom.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/On-India.pdf>

Odisha History: Kapilendradeva, , July 7, 2017. www.odishahistory.com

Origin of the Devadasi System, 12, www.sodhaganga.inflibnet.ac.in

Origin of the Devadasi System, Chapter –2 , 11, www.sodhaganga.inflibnet.ac.in

Patra, Nirmala. History of Oriya Literature, www.importantindia.com

Pattern of State Formation: The Case of Khorda, Chapter-III, www.sodhaganga.inflibnet.ac.in

Pradeep, Manjula. *Forced Prostitution in the Name of God*, 1 www.idsn.org

Sadker, Myra Pollack. Why women History? www.nationalwomenshistoryalliance.org

Women History Project or NWHP: American Organization,
www.britannica.com/topic/National-Womens-History-Project

Women's Marginalization and models of women's Development, Chapter-II,
www.shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in

Appendix - I

Chronology of the Khurda Kings of Eighteenth century Orissa

Name of the Ruler	Period of Rule	Duration of Rule
Divyasimhadeva	47	1668-1715
Harekrishnadeva	05	1715-1720
Gopinathadeva	07	1719-1727
Ramachandradeva II	10	1727-1737
Virakesarideva	56	1737-1793
Mukundadeva II	19	1798-1817

- In 1803 A. D. The British occupied Orissa by defeating Marathas

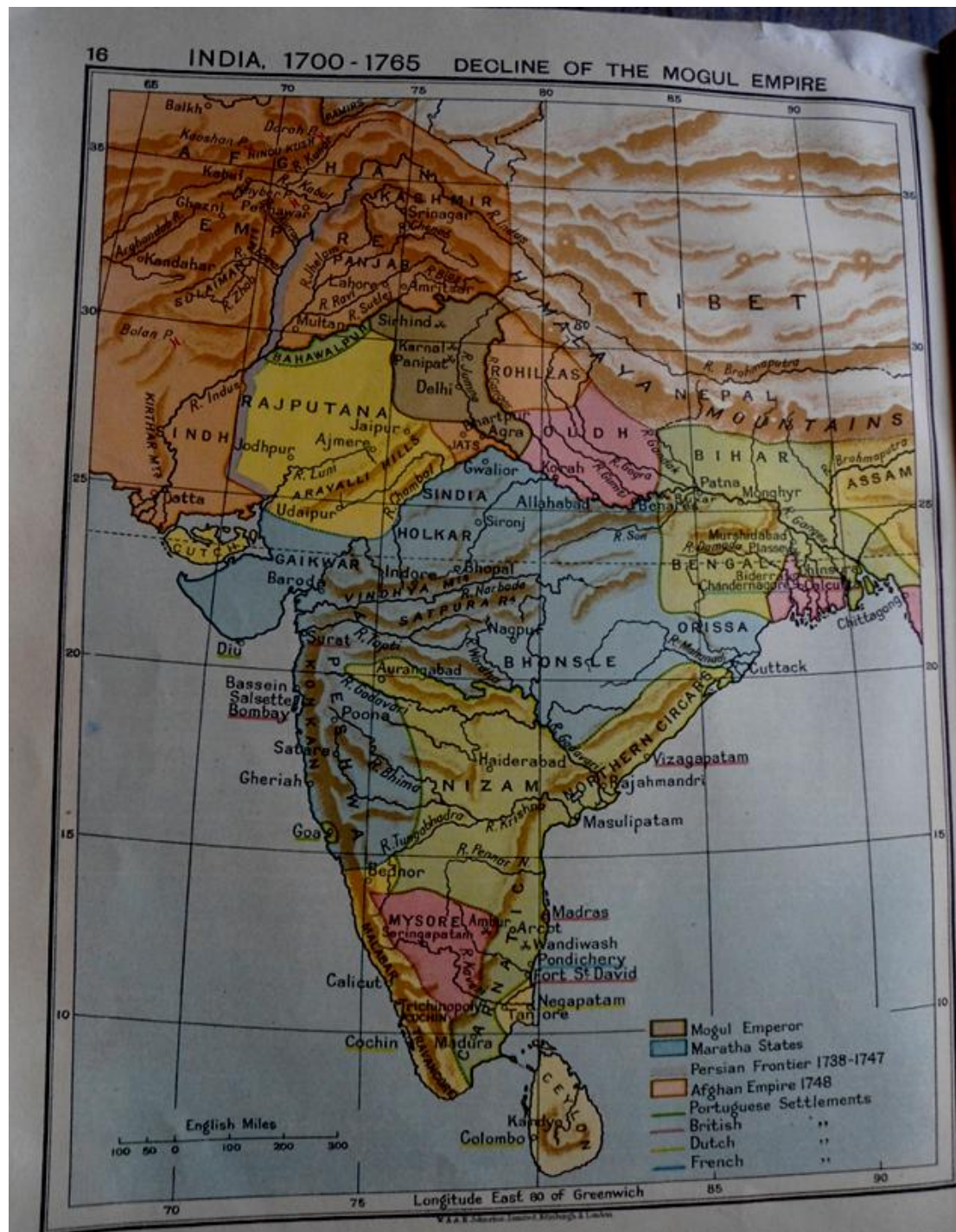
Appendix - II
Chronology of the Mughal Governors of Orissa

Name of the Governors	Periods of Governorship (A. D.)	Name of the Mughal Emperor
Askar Khan	1700-1702	Aurangzeb
Mursid Quli Khan	1703-1710	Aurangzeb and Saha Alam
Bahadur		
Khan-i-Alam Bahadur,	1711-1714	Saha Alam
		Jahandar Shah and Farrukh Siyar
Murshid Quli Khan	1714-1727	Farruk Siyar, Rafi-ud-Darajat, Saha Jahan II and Muhammad Shah
Shuja-ud-din Md. Khan	1727-1739	Muhammad Shah
Sarafarj Khan	1739-1740	Muhammad Shah
Alivardi Khan	1740-1751	Muhammad Shah

Appendix - III
Chronology of the Maratha Governors of Orissa

Name of the Governors	Periods of Governorship (A. D.)
Mir Habib	1751-1752
Mirja Saleh	1752-1759
Sheo Bhatt Sethe	1760-1764
Bhawani Pandit	1764-1768
Sambhaji Ganesh	1768-1770
Babuji Naik	1771-1773
Madhaji Hari	1773-1777
Rajaram Pondit	1778-1793
Sadashiva Rao	1793-1803

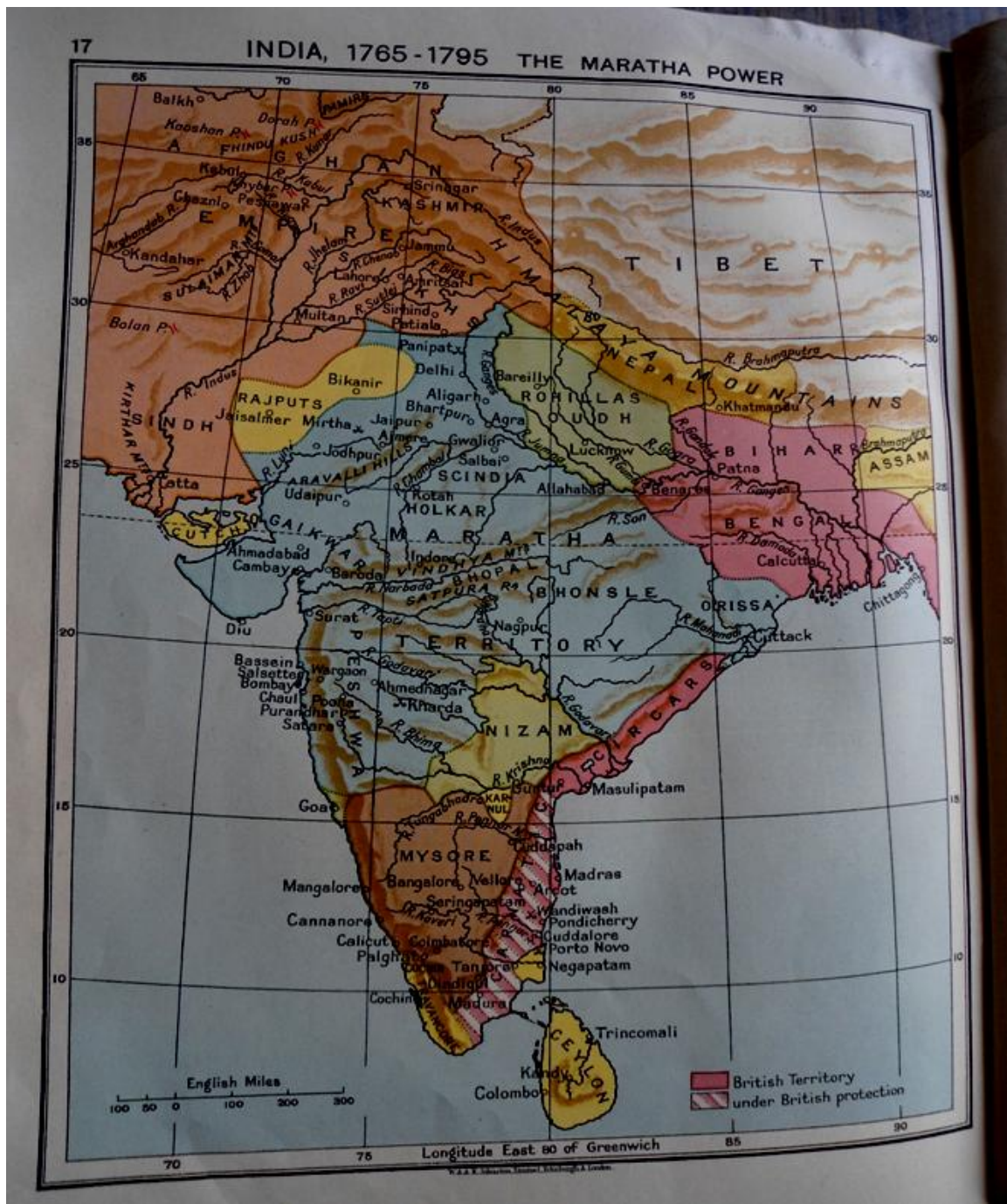
Appendix-IV



Source: E. W. Green, *An Atlas of Indian History*, Calcutta: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1937.

- Mughals had ruled in Orissa till 1751 A. D.

Appendix-V



Source: E. W. Green, *An Atlas of Indian History*, Calcutta: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1937.

- Orissa was under the control of Marathas till 1803 A. D.

Appendix-VI



Map showing Thomas Motte's route from Jaleswar to Sambalpur. Motte, a British Officer visited Sambalpur on a mission of diamond trade Orissa in 1766 AD

Source: Orissa Historical Research Journal, Vol. I, No. 3, October, 1952

Appendix-VII
Eighteenth century Oriya literature and scholars

Author	Classification of his works	Important works
<u>Upendra Bhanja</u>	Puranic works	Kunjavihar Chhandachaupadi Kala kautuka
Subhadraparinaya	Works on Lord Rama	Baidehishavila s Ramalilamruta
Abanarasataranga	Fictional works	Sholo Poi
	Other works	Lavanyavati Kotibrahmandasundar i Premasudhanidhi Rasika Harabali Bhababati Lavanyanidhi Rasapanchaka Gitavidhan Chandabhusana Suvarnarekha Chaupadi Chhanda Chitra Kavya Bondodhyaya

Authors	their important works
<u>Lokanatha Bidyadhara</u>	Sarbanga Sundari Chitrakala Rasakala

Brundaban Bihara

Kabisurya Sadanada Brahma

Prema Tarangini
Lalitalochana
Premachintamani
Prema Lahiri

Dinakrushna Das

Rasakollola
Nama Ratna Gita
Rasa Vinoda
Modhumangal
Artatrana Chautisa

Brajanatha Badjena

Samara Taranga
Chatur Vinoda

Abhimanyu Samanta Simhara

Bidagdha cintamani

Purusottam Das

Kanchi Kaveri

Nilambara Bidyadhara

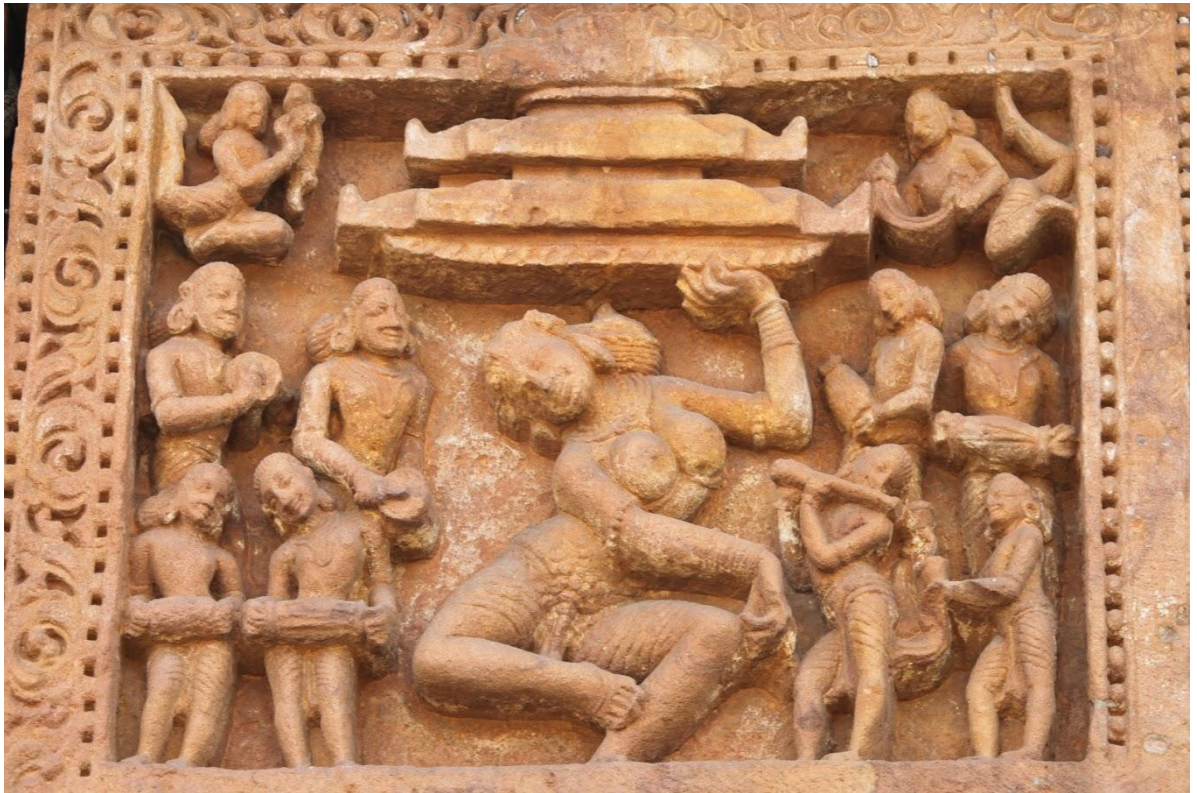
Prastabachintamani

Appendix-VIII



Brahmeswar Temple 11th century, Bhubaneswar

Appendix-IX



Brahmeswar temple sculpture - Female dancing and Musical performance showing Devadasi culture in Orissa

Appendix-X



Manuscript Section of Odisha State Museum (OSM), Bhubaneswar

Appendix-XI



Palm leaf painting folios of illustrated manuscripts (18th Cent.), Odisha State Museum (OSM), Bhubaneswar

Appendix-XII



Eighteenth Century Buguda wooden temple interior view (garva griha designs) – wooden sculpture on the Ramayan theme engraved beautifully.

Appendix-XIII



Buguda wooden temple wall view – wall paintings on the Ramayan theme painted on the outer walls of the main temple (present condition of the paintings)

Appendix-XIV



Jayantigada Temple, 18th century, Ganjam, Odisha

Women in Eighteenth Century Orissa

by Sankarsan Malik

Submission date: 01-Nov-2019 12:00PM (UTC+0530)

Submission ID: 1204817210

File name: Women in 18th Cent Orissa-Sankarsan Malik-plagiarism check-IGML.docx (220.9K)

Word count: 68751

Character count: 360391

Women in Eighteenth Century Orissa

ORIGINALITY REPORT

3%

SIMILARITY INDEX

3%

INTERNET SOURCES

0%

PUBLICATIONS

1%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1

orissa.oriyaonline.com

Internet Source

1%

2

mainstreamweekly.net

Internet Source

<1%

3

www.indianetzone.com

Internet Source

<1%

4

B. Stein. "Eighteenth Century India: Another view", Studies in History, 02/01/1989

Publication

<1%

5

shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in

Internet Source

<1%

6

baadalsg.inflibnet.ac.in

Internet Source

<1%

7

Submitted to Coventry University

Student Paper

<1%

8

frontierweekly.com

Internet Source

<1%

9

www.lawctopus.com

<1 %

10

scholar.sun.ac.za

Internet Source

<1 %

11

buddhistlk.weebly.com

Internet Source

<1 %

12

Submitted to Indian Institute of Management
Kashipur

Student Paper

<1 %

13

www.washingtonhistory.org

Internet Source

<1 %

14

Submitted to Loyola University, Chicago

Student Paper

<1 %

15

www.oodegr.com

Internet Source

<1 %

16

Submitted to Higher Education Commission
Pakistan

Student Paper

<1 %

17

Submitted to University of Durham

Student Paper

<1 %

18

Submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru Technological
University Anantapur

Student Paper

<1 %

19

www.orissa.gov.in

Internet Source

<1 %

20	wrap.warwick.ac.uk Internet Source	<1 %
21	LexisNexis Publication	<1 %
22	Submitted to Sierra College Student Paper	<1 %
23	www.murshidabad.net Internet Source	<1 %
24	Cole, Joshua, Symes, Carol. "Western Civilizations: Their History & Their Culture (Brief Fourth Edition) (Vol. Combined Volume)", W. W. Norton & Company Publication	<1 %
25	Submitted to University of Witwatersrand Student Paper	<1 %
26	Submitted to Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Student Paper	<1 %
27	Submitted to Baruch College Student Paper	<1 %
28	hinduismatoz.com Internet Source	<1 %

Exclude quotes On

Exclude bibliography On

Exclude matches

< 14 words