



ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SURVEY REPORT

Prachi Valley

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BHUANESWAR

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SURVEY REPORT
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PRACHI VALLEY

EDITED BY
SHRI P. K. RAY, M. A. Dip-in-Arch.,
Superintendent, Orissa State Archaeology

ORISSA STATE ARCHAEOLOGY
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P R E F A C E

I took up the detail survey and exploration work of the Prachi Valley from the year 1969 and continued the work up to the year 1972-73. In spite of my official engagements, I had always paid more attention to the survey work of the Prachi Valley.

I acknowledge with gratitude my indebtedness to Shri A. N. Tiwari, I.A.S., Secretary to Government, Department of Cultural Affairs, who has shown special interest in publication of this report.

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Bhubaneswar
The 1st January 1975

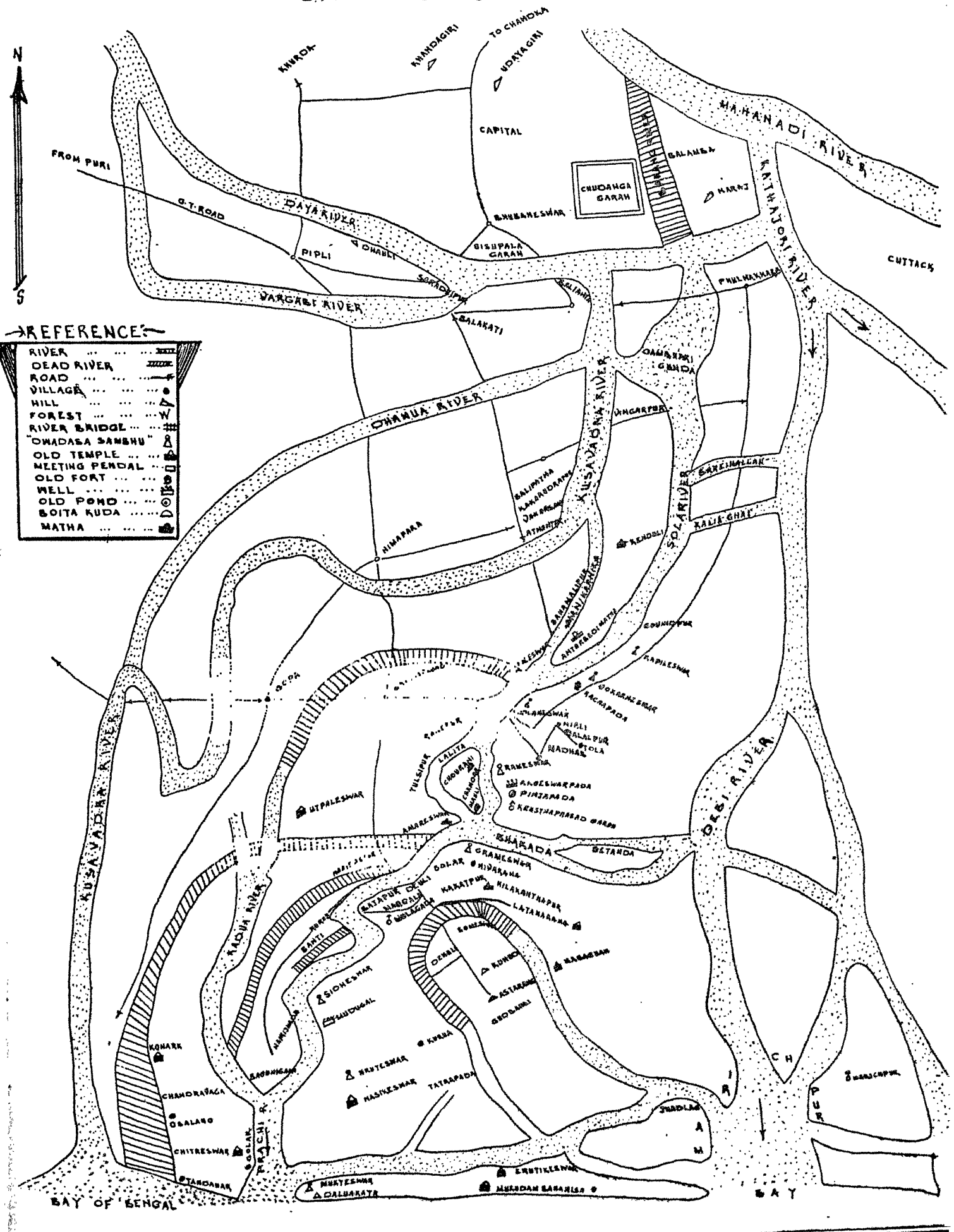
P. K. RAY



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SITUATION OF PRACHHI RIVER



CHAPTER I

Introduction

The origin of the Prachi is still wrapped in mystery. The Historians of Orissa are silent about the glorious civilisation that flourished in the Prachi Valley. No one can imagine about the affluence of such a glorious civilisation on the valley of a small river in comparison to the Mahanadi, Brahmani, Birupa, Bhudhabalanga, Suvarnarekha and Tel, etc. However, a thorough investigation has revealed the fact that it originated from the Mahanadi and took its course from 'Dakamba' near Naraj. To the south of Kuakhai the Prachi is known as the Gambhariganda and at this stage it is connected with the Kushabhadra, a branch of the Kuakhai near Bhinzarpur. The Gambhariganda may be traced from Fulnakhara up to Bhinzarpur and to the south of it, the Prachi is known as the 'Sola' river as far as Govindaramapatna. The Sola river is connected with Devi river, the lower course of Kathajodi, and two streamlets called the Banrei and the Kaliaghai. The (flow) tide of the sea enters into the Prachi river as far as Kundheihat, ten miles from its mouth, and so the Prachi in this portion remains navigable throughout the year. Though small in size, it contains the hidden treasure of a magnificent past. Dr. Radhacharan Panda carried out the survey works of the Prachi Valley and published a book titled "Prachi Nadira Aeitechashika Bivaba". Historians like late Prof. Ghanashyama Das, Shri K. N. Mohapatra (Retired Superintendent of State Archaeology), Dr. N. K. Sahoo (now Professor and Head of the Department of History, Sambalpur University), conducted some sort of survey works in the Prachi Valley and a report in this connection was published by the Utkal University. In the year 1969-70, Shri P. K. Ray, now Superintendent of State Archaeology, took up the detail works of survey, exploration and excavation of the ancient sites and monuments in the Prachi Valley.

Traditions corroborated by local chronicles reveal that most of the monuments of the Prachi Valley which are now in all stages of decay were erected during circa 7th Century A. D. to circa 15th Century A. D. The greatness of these religious edifices were left to decay with time and most of them are ruined today. We see not more than a hundred splendid monuments which attract and retain attention since their foundations have remained as places of worship. We

know that firm foundation of the temple architecture was laid in the Gupta rule in India. This witnessed the logical emergence of the basic elements of the Indian architecture, generally comprising a square sanctum for housing the deity and a small pillared porch for sheltering the worshipper. But Orissa has distinctive regional style which started in the 6th-7th Century A.D. and ended in 13th Century A. D. with the Sun Temple at Konark. All the characteristics of the temple architecture beginning from 7th Century A. D. to 13th Century A. D. are found in the ruined as well as existing monuments of the Prachi. The 6th-7th Century A. D. temple architecture has been reflected on the ruined Siva Temple, known as Sopanesvara at Adasapur and the 13th Century A. D. architecture can be traced from the famous temple of 'Madhava' at Madhava and the Sobhanesvara Temple at Niali in the district of Cuttack. The most important peculiarity is the numerous ancient brick monuments of circa 9th-10th Century A. D., mostly dedicated to God Siva, and no such monuments, in large numbers, are to be found in other parts of India. Though most of these monuments are extremely in ruined condition, yet they demonstrate the artistic capability of the Oriya sculptures of those days.

A systematic study of the Prachi Valley civilisation creates an impression that Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism, Saktism and Vaishnavism flourished chronologically without injury to the religious and philosophical speculations of the people of those days. A number of Jaina and Buddhist images are to be found on the surface at various places in the Prachi Valley. A beautiful image of Rishava Deva (1'9"×11") has been kept inside the dilapidated Sopanesvara Temple at Adasapur. Pairs of Yaskha and Yaskhini images, pertaining to Buddhist and Jaina pantheons, are also found in several places in the Prachi Valley. The Sakta cult had a predominant influence over the religious life in the region of Prachi. Sakta images pertaining to Mahishamarddini Durga, beginning from four hands to twelve hands are to be found abundantly in different sites of the Prachi Valley. The region is famous for the worship of Dashabhuj Mahisamarddini Durga. The engraving of Dashabhuj Mahisamarddini Durga with two lines of inscriptions, palleographically assignable to Ganga period, at Ambapada on the eastern bank of Prachi give a clear indication about the popularity of such form of worship in the region. The terrific Barabhujee-Mahishamarddini Durga found at Amanakuda near Niali clearly suggest that the worship of Dashabhuj Mahisamarddini was subsequently converted to Dwadashabhujee-Mahishamarddini Durga. Simultaneously with the worship of Durga in different forms, the different types of Chamunda based on Tantric cult were also worshipped. Both Saivism and Vaishnavism ran parallel as appear from the existing

remnants of both the creeds on the scared soil of Prachi river. The findings of four handed Vishnu images from the Prachi Valley, popularly known as the Madhava, corroborates the description given in the Sanskrit literature that four handed images of Vishnu are earlier than two handed images of Vishnu known as Krishna-Gopinath. The celebrated Sanskrit poet Jayadeva was born at Kenduli, an ancient site of the Prachi Valley, when the Madhava cult was in vague and he was a great devotee of Madhava.

The report deals with a brief description of the sites and monuments starting from Fulnakhara up to Astaranga. The descriptions of different Tirthas such as : Go-Tirth, Arkka-Tirtha, Agni-Tirtha, Mukte-Tirtha, Manikarnika-Tirtha, Pururaba-Tirtha, etc., have been enumerated in this report.

Trial excavations were conducted by Orissa State Department of Archaeology as per the direction of Shri P. K. Ray at Chaurashi and Chhahat of the Prachi Valley. The excavation of the Lakshminarayana Temple site at Chaurashi exposed the buried Jagamohana made of ancient bricks and the lower portion of Natamandira and Bhogamandap made of ancient bricks. An image of Narashingha-Vishnu was recovered while taking up the excavation of the temple site of Nilamadhava at Chhahat in the Prachi Valley. Besides, the trial excavation conducted in the vicinity of Mallikeswar Temple at Adasapur revealed some antiquities such as pottery of red ware and a terracotta Kamandalu with the image of Saraswati on its neck, assignable to circa 9th Century A. D.

Thus Prachi, one of the most ancient and sacred rivers in Orissa, witnessed the rise and development of various types of sculptures from early times to the present day. Almost all the religious communities of Orissa are known to have been attracted by the sanctity and importance of the Prachi Valley and established their settlements and strongholds on its valley in the past. The vally is so rich in antiquarian remains in its varied forms, that the Prachi Valley can be regarded today as a varitable Museum in Orissan History and Culture through the Ages.

CHAPTER II

Explored and Surveyed Sites

PHULNAKHARA

The present Cuttack-Bhubaneswar road bifurcates the Prachi at Phulnakhara. A Siva temple known as the Lakhesvara stands amidst cornfields near the eastern bank of the river Prachi very close to Phulnakhara about 16 kilometres from Bhubaneswar. The present Siva Temple of Pidha type has been built on the ruins of the original temple. The side deities are *in situ*. Both the sanctum and the Jagamohana are plastered and limewashed. The temple is also known as the Vila-Lakhesvara since another Siva temple of the same name exists about 5 miles away at a place called Barimunda on the left bank of the Kuakhai.

SUNDERGRAM

Sundergram is 28 kilometres from Bhubaneswar connected with metalled road under P.-S. Govindpur, district Cuttack. In the middle of the village there is a Siva temple known as the Gatisvara built in modern times. Close to this Siva temple is an image of Varahi, installed in a modern temple and worshipped as Vilasuni.

About 2 kilometres from Sundergram on the northern bank of the Prachi, at one isolated place, stands a ruined Siva temple of Svapnesvara where only the lower portion of the garbhagriha along with the Sakti-pitha (without Linga) exist. The temple was built with the admixture of ancient bricks and laterite blocks as the newly constructed brick walls on the three sides of the Garbha-Griha contain old bricks. Laterite stones as well as pillars are lying scattered and half exposed. The finding of another Sivalinga nearby gives a clear indication of the existence of a Siva temple in the same compound. The mound also gives a vivid picture of the collapsed temple along with the compound wall in course of centuries. A great ancient tank known as the Svapnesvara Pushakrini is to be found on the southern side of the temple. A miniature image of Trivikrama Vishnu brought from a nearby Vishnu temple is placed near the Sivalinga.

A few yards to the North-West of the temple, under a great banyan tree, is the Jagamohan-gadi.

DAKSHINESVARA

The Siva Temple, known as the Dakshinesvara, in the village Bagalpur, P.-S. Govindpur, contains loose sculptures of Buddha, Varahi, Trivikrama and Ganesha set on the outer walls of the shed. The Vaishnavite images were brought from the Vishnu temple which stood in the compound of the Dakshinesvara as appears from the existing lower basement of a temple said to have been dedicated to Vishnu. A Yajurvedi is also to be found.

NADIAGURUDI

The site Nadiagurudi near the eastern bank of the Prachi and very close to the Phulanakhara-Kakatpur road contains a Siva Temple called Siddhesvara. The places for side deities are blank. As the temple stands below the embankment of newly dug Niali canal, the Bada portion of the temple is sinking down due to accumulation of mud.

KANTAPARA

Kantapara standing near the northern bank of Prachi, 30 kilometres from Bhubaneswar on metal road, is full of antiquities. It finds mention in the Dhenkanal C. P. of Tribhuvana-Mahadevi, a devotee of Hari of Bhuama Era 110. The following sites are notable :—

- (a) *Sisua*—The square sized half ruined Siva Temple of Gatisvara built with laterite blocks is located in the village Sisua near Kantapara. A loose sculptures of Trivikrama Vishnu is kept inside the temple. A great ancient tank is to be found to the South of the temple.
- (b) Not very far from this temple an image of Bhairavi standing under a tree, is locally worshipped as the Kshetrapala.
- (c) About one kilometre from Kantapara near the side of the main road, the basement of a ruined temple exists. The presiding four-armed female deity (1'3"×6") with seven serpent hoods above her head holding Akshyamala in right and left hand in Abhayamudra, has been removed from the ruined temple and is being worshipped as Vilashuni inside a thatched cottage.

- (d) About 3 kilometres from Vilashuni amidst cornfields and near the north bank of the Prachi, there is a Sivalinga without temple known as the Somanath.
- (e) About two kilometres from Somanath just on the northern bank of the Prachi under a tree is lying the Sivalinga known as Valunkesvara without any temple.

KUANARA

Kuanara is 32 kilometres from Bhubaneswar connected with metalled road up to 30 kilometres and 2 kilometres earthen road near the northern bank of Prachi. It contains the Vishnu Temple known as the Dadhivamana with a great compound wall of laterite blocks. It is a Panchayatanakshetra with four subsidiary shrines as indicated from their ruins at four corners. The main temple is Pancharath in plan. But the inside of the sanctum has been totally blocked and plastered, the reasons of which are not known. The presiding deity Jagannath, made of wood instead of being installed in the sanctum, is placed in the Jagamohana and worshipped as the Dadhivaman. The outer structure of the main temple is covered with plants and cracks of great dimensions.

The images of Trivikrama, Varha and Nrisinghvisnu, once Parsvadevates of the main temple, have been placed inside the recently constructed Bhogamandapa. The Garuda is found in front of the temple. The existence of a Sivalinga known as Lokanath, probably indicates the existence of three other subsidiary Saiva shrines.

As discussed above, the existence of a Vishnu Temple in the vicinity of Kantapara is corroborated from the Dhenkanal copper plate grant of Tribhubana Mahadevi, a devotee of Hari.

VARAHAPUR

Varahapur is 36 kilometres from Bhubaneswar and 4 kilometres from Kantapara connected with metalled road. The place is well known as Gupta Manika Tirtha. Very close to the north bank of Prachi and near the main road, there is a great ancient tank which goes by the name of Gupta Manika. This according to tradition, current in the locality, was also known as the Gupta Ganga, where the Pandavas stayed for some days during the course of their secret banishment.

Near the Gupta Manika Tirtha, is a Matha, where inside a Vishnu Temple of medieval period and of Pidha type, chlorite images of Shrikrishna, Anthua-Gopala, Gajalakshmi and the wooden image of Jagannath are being worshipped. Not very far from this place, under a banyan tree, inside a small modern shrine a two-handed Bhairava is being worshipped as Kshetrapala.

ADASAPUR

It is an ancient site on the eastern bank of the Prachi, 37 kilometres from Bhubaneswar, under P.-S. Govindpur in the district of Cuttack.

- (1) The ancient Siva Temple of Svapnesvara deserves consideration for its architectural speciality. Both the sanctum and undeveloped Jagamohana is adorned with a standing image of Rishabhanath (1'-7" × 0'-0").
- (2) The temple of Madhavananda in the heart of Adasapur contains an image of Vishnu, worshipped as Madhava.

The medieval Pidha temple of Dasabhuja Mahishamarddini Durga, worshipped as the Budhi-Thakurani, is built on the ruins of the original temple near the north bank of Prachi. It contains the Navagraha slab at the entrance, while the front facade of the temple is furnished with Naga images, erotic sculptures and elephant procession. The Jagamohana has fallen into ruins.

The temple of Varaha Nrishingha, built of laterite blocks, consists of the sanctum and the Jagamohana. Inside the sanctum the beautiful images of Varaha Vishnu and Narasingha Vishnu are installed and worshipped as Varaha Nrisingha. The chlorite image of Shrikrishna and bronze image of Radha are to be found by the side of the Varaha Nrisingha.

The present renovated Pidha Temple is built from the Pada portion of the original temple. Curiously enough the Navagraha slab has been wrongly set on the northern wall of the temple. A loose sculpture describing a king's discussion with his subjects is placed inside the Jagamohana.

Unlike the Sobhanesvara Temple of Niali, the Natamandira and Bhogamandapa have fallen into ruins as demonstrated by the existence of the portions along with the pillars. The great compound wall of laterite blocks has fallen down at some places.

This splendid and gigantic monument was no doubt the achievement of the Ganga rulers of Orissa.

Not far from this temple and close to the newly dug Niali canal near the Prachi under a tree is a Sivalinga known as the Gramesvara. The trial excavation conducted by Shri P. K. Ray in 1969-70, brought to light the Garbhagriha of the collapsed temple together with half exposed images of Nrusingh and Siva as Mahayogi. Besides, the discovery of a Kamandalu of red ware with the image of Saraswati on its neck speaks about the antiquarian merits of this site.

Very close to this site, in a horizontal line, is the temple of Nilakanthesvara Siva built of laterite blocks and plain in structure. It is a piece of monument which witnessed the logical emergence of the basic element of Gupta style of temple architecture comprising a square sanctum for housing the deity. A small pillared porch for sheltering the worshipper in the earlier age is indicated from the existing ruins in front of the sanctum of the temple. Another peculiarity is to be noticed in the rude execution of the images of Lakulisa appearing as side deities of West and South. Probably this form of Lakulisa, inferior in execution, is earlier to that of the same appearing on the Satrugnesvara group of temples of Bhubaneswar, assignable to circa 7th Century A. D.

KENDULI

Kenduli (Kenduvilva), on the eastern bank of the Prachi under P.-S. Baliana, district Puri, is the birth place of Jayadeva, the celebrated Sanskrit poet who flourished in 12th-13th Century A. D. The site is enriched with ancient remains, the antiquity of which goes back to 8th Century A. D. The cleaning works of the site conducted by Shri K. N. Mohapatra, retired Superintendent of Archaeology has brought to view two beautiful images of Chandi known as Amba and Ambalika, supposed to have been worshipped inside the dilapidated brick temple (now conserved by the State Department of Archaeology). The proper identification of these two images is still to be decided since no such images have been so far discovered in Orissa. Besides, the place contains ruined Siva Temple, the temple of Lakshmi-Nrusingha, the images of Vishnu. Astika Jaradakar, Maruka. Bhairava and Kankala Bhairava, etc. Curiously enough the Buddhist images of Avalokitesvara and Tara (now lying under a tree) create an impression that the site was not only enriched with Sakta, Saiva and Vaishnava sculptures of different ages but also of Buddhist pantheons prevalent in Orissa in 8th Century A. D. Shri P. K. Ray and his party during the course of their Prachi valley survey have found out an inscriptional slab palaeographically assignable to 12th-13th Century A. D. The State Department of Archaeology has already

organised an Archaeological Museum exhibiting the scattered sculptures in the building of the Jayadeva Culture Centre (constructed by the State Department of Archaeology) set in an area of about six acres of land.

GOVINDARAMAPATNA

The present Siva Temple of Kasi-Viswanatha stands just on the eastern bank of the Prachi at a distance of 5 kilometres from Adasapur. It is connected with metalled road of 3 kilometres up to Sarai and 2 kilometres on the earthen embankment of the Prachi, the village Govindarampatna, P.-S. Govindpur, district Cuttack. It was built on the ruins of the original temple.

KAPILA MUNI ASHRAM

Kapila Muni Ashram is a solitary site on the eastern bank of the Prachi about seven kilometres from Adasapur. The Siva Temple known as the Kapilesvara is of a peculiar Pidha type which clearly demonstrates the double system of Mastaka portion of the sanctum connected with a straight projection of 5' in length. Half of the Bada portion of the temple is under the debris as a result of which the lower portion of the side deities of the lower Junghas also remain half exposed. Inside the sanctum the Siva Linga is always submerged under water which is about 5' deep.

The Jagamohan, the lower portion of which exists, has the images of the Astika-Jaradkaru and the great Vrishabha. But on the platform of the Natamandira, a modern thatched house with brick walls, a six-handed seated image of Chamunda is being worshipped as Charchika. The image is a noblest specimen of plastic art characterised by sensitive modelling, gliding outline, spiritual serenity. On the platform of the ruined Bhogamandapa is to be found a Kankala Bhairava. The plain octagonal pillars of the Natamandira and the Bhogamandapa are lying scattered.

To the North-East of the temple inside a cornfield there is a row of nine miniature temples depicting Linga Puja, which according to local tradition mark the memorial stones commemorating the death of nine monks (Nava Muni) who once lived in this site. According to tradition it was also the hermitage of Kapila Muni and accordingly the place is known as the Kapilamuni Ashram.

Trial excavation of the site is indispensable so that Pishta and the half portion of the Bada may be exposed and after clearance of water, inside the temple proper, means will be employed to protect the monument from the weathering effects.

JAMU-GORADI

About one kilometre from the Kapilamuni Ashram on the same embankment of the Prachi, stands the Siva temple of Gokarnesvara in the village Jamu-Goradi, P.-S. Govindpur, Cuttack district. It is a Pidha type temple built of dressed sandstones. The floor portion of the Jagamahana only exists and the walls are demarcated by the placing of rectangular pillars horizontally. The side deities are in order.

One loose sculpture of Vishnu (2'×1') and another Trivikrama Vishnu are placed on the floor of the Jagamohana near the entrance to the sanctum. These two Vaishnavite images were brought from a temple which existed nearby.

In the sanctum near the Siva Linga, is placed a chlorite image of Shrikrishna.

TRIVENI

Triveni is the confluence of the Prachi, Manikarnika and the Saraswati. At present the Prachi and the Manikarnika exist but no traces of the Saraswati is visible. Antarvadi is the place in between the Manikarnika and the Prachi and here the bathing ghat is known as Triveni Ghat, where on the new moon day in the month of Magha thousands of people take their sacred bath. Just near the Triveni Ghat is the Yajnakunda (sacrificial altar) in a dilapidated condition. There is a Matha where a chlorite image of Shrikrishna and wooden image of Jagannath are worshipped as 'Antaryami'. To the northern side of the Matha is a Sivalinga known as Lokanatha, which according to local tradition was worshipped by Ramachandra during the period of his banishment.

Near the Antarvedi, is the Siva Temple known as the Vilesvara in the village Bhopur, P.-S. Balipatna, district Puri. On the ruins of the Pada portion of the original temple, the present Pidha temple has been built. Inside the sanctum near the Siva Linga are placed the images of Chaturmukha Brahma and Parvati. On the frontal facade of the temple, the image of Chaturmukha Brahma is also to be found. The side deities are in order. A loose sculpture of Varaha Vishnu is placed near the entrance wall. The Dolamandapa is to be found on the South-Eastern side of the temple.

To the West of the temple of Vilesvara is a Small Pidha temple, known as the Trivenisvara. The great Sanskrit poet Jayadeva is said to have performed his sacred bath here on the 'Triveni-Amavasya' day.



NIALI

Niali is 50 kilometres from Bhubaneswar on the Eastern bank of the Prachi. It is a site of the Prachi Valley containing the temples of Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and Sakta Cults. The iconographical features of Brahma and Ashtabhujā Chamunda deserve special attention since they belong to the time when the temples of Vishnu and Siva were not in existence. The Ashtabhujā Chamunda can tentatively be assigned to about 8th Century A. D. when the Kapalika form of worship was in vogue in Orissa.

But the place is famous for the Siva temple, known as Sobhanesvara, consisting of the sanctum, the Jagamohana, the ruins of the Natamandapa and Bhogamandapa. The main temple is of Rekha order and Saptha Rath in plan. The Jagamohana, which is of Pidha type, contains the images of Vishnu, Kartikeya, Kalavikala and wooden image of Jagannath. Shrines have been constructed for the 'Parsvadevatas', i.e., Parvati, Kartikeya and Ganesh as we find at Konark. The Dikpalas along with their counterparts are found *in situ* in this temple. Notable sculptures on the body of the temple are Surya and Ajaikapada Bhairava. The temple is also adorned with erotic sculptures. Loose sculptures such as Varaha Vishnu and Astika Jaradkaru are lying inside the compound. Besides, the eight Vishnu images, popularly known as the Madhava and arranged in a row near the northern wall of the temple, are now exhibited inside a sculpture shed constructed by the State Department of Archaeology. Inside the compound the existence of the following Lingas locally named as Suryesvara, Paschimesvara, Sankaresvara, Dhavalesvara, Garudesvara and Mukundesvara are to be seen.

The inscriptional slab has been affixed on the southern entrance wall of the Jagamohana. The inscription opens with an invocation to Lord Siva, the presiding deity of the temple. The inscription mentions Nialisashana, famous in Utkal where the vassals of the Ganga Emperors of Orissa were ruling. It also mentions about Devadasis which indicates the performance of dances by a class of female dancers in front of the Siva Temple. The composer of the inscription is Udayana Acharya, a contemporary of the celebrated Sanskrit poet Jayadeva. The date of this temple can be fixed within 1170—1190 A. D. when the poet Udayana flourished.



MADHAVA

Madhava is 8 kilometres from Niali under P.-S. Govindpur on the eastern bank of the Prachi. The place is so called

because of the unique deity of Vishnu worshipped inside a temple of 13th century A. D. as Madhavananda. The dazzling and rare Garuda image is adorned with Ashtakulanaga so finely and artistically carved that no such Garuda is to be found elsewhere in Orissa. The temple consists of the sanctum, Jagamohana, Bhogamandapa and Natamandira. By the side of Madhavananda a miniature image of Durga is placed and as such Madhavananda is also known as the Durga-Madhava. The main temple is Saptharatha in plan. Shrines have been made for the Parsvadevata as we find in the Sovanesvara temple at Niali.

The Jagamohana is of Pidha type and its frontal facade is adorned by the Naga images as found in the Jagamohana of the Rajarani Temple. The upper Jangha of the Jagamohan contains the image of Nara-Narayana deep in meditation. In addition to erotic sculptures, the Dikpalas along with their counterparts are depicted on the body of the temple. The Sudarshana Chakra has found place on the top of the temple. It is carved with the meditating pose of Nara-Narayana and he is identified as Anangabhimadeva. Probably the monument was built by Anangabhimadeva of the Ganga dynasty.

Inside the compound is a Siva Temple known as the Budhesvara.

PITAPARA

The famous Siva Temple known as the Angesvara, located 61 Kilometres away from Bhubaneswar (55 Kilometres metal road and 6 kilometres un-metal road on Niali-Charichhak road) and built of ancient bricks of the size of those used in the Durga Temple of Motia, stands on the bank of the Prachi in the village Pitapara, about 5 kilometres from the temple of Madhavananda or Madhava, in the P.-S. Govindpur, district Cuttack. It is a Panchayatana-kshetra as marked by the ruins of four temples in the four corners. The temple is Pancharatha in plan and the Angasikharas appear on the Kanikapaga of the temple. The miniature Pidamundis are to be found on the body of the temple. The side deities are in order.

The Jagamohana, a dilapidated one, is covered with large trees and plants. The southern wall of the Jagamohana is totally broken. The following loose sculptures are placed inside the Jagamohana:—

- (1) Two Vishnu images
- (2) Two images of Uma-Mahesvara

- (3) A lady with a child
- (4) Astikajaradkaru
- (5) Siva in Yogasana
- (6) Astabhuja Chamunda
- (7) Navagraha Slab

The existence of Natamandira and the Bhogamandapa which were also built in ancient bricks can be traced from the lower portions and the long scattered pillars.

To the south-eastern corner of the temple in another ancient temple of Pidha type an image of ten armed Mahishamardini. Durga is being worshipped as the Durga Narayani.

To the east of the temple is a thatched shrine where two Vishnu images of 3' height are installed and worshipped. These two Vishnu images must have formed the presiding deity of a Vishnu Temple which once existed on the bank of the Prachi in the vicinity of Pitapara.

There is also an ancient brick bowl inside the compound of the temple. The temple is demarcated by a brick compound wall, the existence of which is traceable at some places. The cleaning of the site by the State Department of Archaeology has exposed the general view of the sanctum and the Jagamohana. The splendour of this artistic brick monument is no doubt a great achievement of the Somavamsi Kings of Orissa.

The site Pitapara is fortunate to have contained a half ruined temple built in sandstones where an image of eight-handed Chamunda, whose hands are broken from the elbow position, is worshipped as Churchikai. It had a Jagamohana now hidden under the debris which can be exposed to view by excavation.

Not very far from the temple of Angeswara, on the north bank of Prachi inside a thatched cottage, are installed in a row four images of Ganesha, collectively worshipped as the Kutama-chandi and a new temple for the deities is under construction by the villagers.

There is a bathing ghat of the Prachi in Pitapara known as the Manikarnika Tirtha where in the day of 'Triveni Amabasya' thousands of people take their sacred bath. Near the Manikarnika Tirtha on the bank of the Prachi there is a Matha known as the Uttaravani Matha where the head of a lion is worshiped as the Uttarayani. Inside the Matha a chlorite image of Krishna along with the bronze image of Radha is being worshipped.

Thus the site Pitapara is full of antiquarian remains.

MOTIA

The unique Durga Temple stands on the northern bank of the Prachi in the village of Motia, 65 kilometres from Bhubaneswar (65 kilometres metal road and 10 kilometres un-metal road) under P.-S. Govindpur, district Cuttack. The main temple is of Pancharatha in plan and is built of ancient bricks of the size 1.5"×9". The temple faces west and inside the sanctum a four-handed Mahishamardini Durga is worshipped. The image, carved in chlorite stone, is a rare specimen of Orissan Art. By the side of the Durga, a very beautiful image of Surya and a four-handed Chamunda are being worshipped.

The Jagamohana, built of ancient bricks, is demarcated by the existing walls only. The brick compound wall of the temple is indicated by the existence of its lower portion at some places which can further be exposed after proper excavation. The foundation of the sanctum as well as the Jagamohana are built of laterite blocks unlike other brick temples of Orissa.

There is a great tank, to the north-east of the temple with a dilapidated temple in the centre known as the Dvipdandi.

On the north-western bank of the tank, already mentioned, under a banyan tree an image of a six-handed Goddess, seated in padmasana, is being worshipped as Kutamachandi. Probably this deity was one of the Parsvadevis of the Durga Temple of Motia.

KRISHNA-PRASADGARH

The ancient site known as Krishnaprasad garh is 52 kilometres from Bhubaneswar by bus up to Amaresvara and from there 7 kilometres by foot, under P.-S. Govindpur district Cuttack. It contains a Siva Temple made of ancient bricks known as Visvanatha standing near the northern bank of the Prachi. The temple, facing west, is similar in construction to the Durga Temple of Motia. The entrance of the sanctum is decorated with a stone door frame having nine planets, Gajalakshmi and Saivite dvarapalas on it. The temple is Pancharatha in plan. Just by the side of the Linga is placed a six-armed deity seated in padmasana with upraised hands and holding different weapons. Probably this image was brought from the Sakta Site of Motia. Both the foundations of the sanctum and the Jagamohana are built of sandstones.

The right and left sides of the Jagamohana, made of ancient bricks, exist up to Gandi and Bada portions, respectively. It has got a stone-door-frame. Inside the Jagamohana loose sculptures

of Vishnu, Varaha Vishnu and Parvati are to be found and these two Vaishnavite images were brought from a nearby Vishnu temple which once existed in this Valley. It appears from the existing structural condition that the Jagamohana is of a Pidha type. The upper Jhangha of both the sanctum and the Jagamohana are relieved with miniature Pidha-mundi and Khakaramundi which are noticed on the brick temple of Angesvara at Pitapara.

The ruins of both Natamandira and Bhogamandapa are to be noticed at present. A bowl of ancient bricks is to be found in front of the temple. The temple is surrounded by a brick wall.

Unfortunately the body of the temple is covered with large trees and plants, the roots of which have penetrated deep into the structure, and are causing gradual deterioration and fall of such a splendid brick monument which should have been preserved from all points of view.

TOLA

Tola is 54 kilometres from Bhubaneswar on the Nakhara-Madhava road and just on the northern bank of the Prachi. It contains a Siva Temple known as the Ramesvara, demarcated by a brick compound wall with houses of the village on four sides. The temple as well as the Jagamohana, built of laterite stones, stand on a platform. The sanctum is of Rekha type while that of the Jagamohana is of Pidha. The side deities are in situ. The temple is re-plastered and relieved with erotic sculptures and images of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra.

Inside the Jagamohana, on the left entrance wall, is set an image of Panchamukhi Siva holding Kuthara and Japamala in the right hands and parsu and counting Mala in the left hands.

On the northern side of the temple inside a modern shrine is the image of Manasa seated in padmasana who is being worshipped as Marchikei. Among the side deities the image of Vaishnavi is worth mentioning.

JALLARPUR

The Siva temple known as the Somanatha stands at the very outset of the village Jallarpur close to the northern bank of the Prachi, about 53 kilometres from Bhubaneswar on the Nakhara-Madhava Road, under P.-S. Govindpur, district Cuttack. The temple has been recently renovated and finely plastered. The

side deities of the temple are disfigured due to overplastering. It had a brick compound wall. The body of the temple is also relieved with modern erotic figures unlike the temples of Ramesvara at Tola.

NUAPATNA

The site Nuapatna is 54 kilometres from Bhubaneswar on the Nakhara-Madhava Road near the southern bank of the Prachi, under P.-S. Nimapara. It contains a unique broken temple of laterite and sandstones where the image of Lakshmi-Nrusingh was the presiding deity. The Gandi portion of the temple exists up to Jangha with lotus pedestal as Pabhaga. The temple is akin to the Varahi Temple of Chaurashi in construction forming a special entity of its own with octagonal pillars springing from the lotus Pabhaga. The body of the temple is covered with trees. The side niches are left blank. There is no demarcation of the compound wall at present. Many sculptured stones are lying outside.

At a distance of 28' from the existing ruined monument, a modern temple has been built containing the image of Lakshmi-Nrushingha, once installed and worshipped in the original temple. The image bears resemblance to that of Lakshmi-Nrushingha worshipped inside the Lingaraj compound. The side deities of the west and the south are Varaha and Trivikrama, respectively while that of the north deserves close study due to its special iconographical features. The image (2'×1.2'') wearing Kirtimukuta and standing in Samabhanga pose has eight hands. The right hands hold arrow, sword, wheel and Mushala (flag) while the left hands hold Bow, Gada and Pasa. Garuda is depicted below. Two male attendants are found standing on either side. The image may be identified as Vaikunthanath as its description tallies with the accounts mentioned in the Brihatsamhita. Similar images have been found in northern and eastern India which are assigned to the 6th Century A. D. The unique image, a masterpiece in art, is a notable discovery in the valley of the Prachi as no such image has yet come to our notice elsewhere in Orissa.

This Vaishnavite monument no doubt flourished during the Ganga rule in Orissa.

AMARESVARA

The monument of Amaresvara stand very close to the Nimapara-Astaranga Road and near the southern bank of the Prachi river. It is 60 kilometres from Bhubaneswar. The Siva Temple, made of ancient bricks and known as Amaresvara, stands amidst ruins. The main temple is of Pancharatha design while that of

the Jagamohana is of Pidha order. The Jagamohana, made of ancient bricks, has been conserved by the State Department of Archaeology. Inside the Jagamohana a four-handed image of Vishnu is being worshipped as Madhava. The temple is a north facing one. The place of the side deity in the north is occupied by Uma-Mahesvara while that of the west and south are occupied by Kartikeya and Ganesha, respectively.

To the east of the main temple there is a brick temple where a four-handed Chamunda is worshipped as Charchika. Attempts are now being made by the villagers to renovate this brick temple.

The temple of Lakshmi Nrisingha, made of sandstone blocks, is located to the west of the temple of Amaresvara. Inside the temple is an image of Nrisingha, Lakshmi sitting on his lap, as we find of the same deity inside the compound of the Lingraj Temple. Curiously enough an image of Avalokitesvara measuring 1'6" × 0'10" and containing two lines of inscriptions relating to the Buddhist Dharani was kept inside the sanctum. This has been brought to the State Museum.

Two Siva Lingas, without temples, known as the Kapilesvara and Buddhanatha are found worshipped inside a very small modern shrine in the northern side of the main temple.

Just close to the Kapilesvara is another Siva Linga, known as the Ishanesvara, without any temple and the open air system of worship, too, prevails here. The existing Garbha-griha measures 6' × 4' and image of Nrisingha and Trivikrama Vishnu are placed as Dvarapalas. On its four sides are found ten terrific bust of human heads and locally they are known as the Ravana-munda. According to the local tradition Ravana, practised here severe austerity to get boon from the Siva and accordingly Siva granted his prayer.

CHAHATA

The temple of Nilamadhava at Chahata—Chahat or Chhabati as it known today, about 2 kilometres from the temple of Amaresvara, is fortunate to have contained the brick temple in ruined condition (measuring 5'3" in height and of the size of 7' × 7') in which the image of a fourhanded Vishnu measuring 3'5" × 1'10" is worshipped as the Nilamadhava. The pedestal of the deity measures 2'8" × 1'9". His upper right hand holds Chakra while the lotus is represented symbolically in lower right hand and the left hands hold Conch and the Gada. One female figure stands on either side and the Garuda is found praying near the feet of the deity. The upper portion of the temple has fallen

down and ancient bricks of 1'2"×9"×3" measurement are lying scattered around the temple. The present stone door jamb of 9'×4', probably brought from somewhere, has been set hurriedly as the Navagraha slab, which is generally placed in front above the doorjamb, is found inside the temple. As a result of cleaning and trial excavation conducted by Shri P. K. Ray, an image of Nrisingha-Vishnu was discovered at a depth of 3' from the western side of the main temple.

An eight-handed image of Chamunda inside a small modern shrine is worshipped as the Jagulai. The four right hands of the deity hold Dambaru, Sward, Kharpara and Khetaka while the first left hand is shown in Varada mudra, the fingers of the second hand touches her teeth, the third one holds a head and the last one rests on the body of the corpse. Two jackals, as if attacking the corpse by their mouth, are shown below. Probably this was worshipped inside a temple made of stones as appears from the existing mound and the debris containing sculptured stones. Two sculptures are found buried under the debris.

CHAURASHI

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Chaurashi is about one kilometre from Amaresvara connected by an unmettled road from the main road of Astaranga.

The temple of Lakshmi-Narayana—At the outset of the village Chaurashi stands the temple of Lakshmi-Narayana in ruined condition. The sanctum (7'7" in height) exists up to the Bada portion. Inside the ruined temple the worshipping deity Lakshmi Narayana of 5'×2'9" is found carved in chlorite stone and placed over a Pitha measuring 3'10"×2'3"×1'2". This unique image of Lakshmi Narayana is a rare finding so far as its iconographical and sculptural aspects are concerned. The trial excavation conducted by Shri P. K. Ray has exposed the buried Jagamohana up to its Bada portion) and the plat-forms of the Nata-Mandia and Bhogamandapa made of ancient bricks. The conservation of this temple has been taken up by the State Department of Archaeology.

The temple of Gramesvara—The Siva Linga without any temple known as the Gramesvara is very close to the temple of Lakshimi-Narayana. Probably and a brick temple was here as appears from the existing portion. The lower portion of the garbhagriha measures 2'9"×3'7½".

The Varahi temple—The temple of Varahi stands at the outskirts of the village Chaurashi amidst corn field. The frontal facade of the Jagamohana, carved in scroll designs, and of Naga figures reminds at once of the Jagamohana of the Rajarani temple at Bhubaneswar. The Jagamohana has latticed windows on both the sides. The three sides of the Jagamohana are decorated with war scenes specially of the story of the Ramayana. The eastern panel depicts the scene of the golden deer and Ramachandra running after it. The southern panel contains the scene of the discussion of the four monkey heroes deputed in search of Sita. The northern panel depicts the battle fought by Rama and Hanumana with the demons.

Every piece of stone of the main temple is artistically and beautifully carved. Erotic sculptures are also depicted on the body of the temple. Inside the Jagamohana two images of Varahi made of rough sandstones are lying.

The presiding deity of the temple, Varahi, is made of chlorite stone and measures 5'4"×2'9". Fish and blood pot are to be found in her right and left hands, respectively. The pedestal on which the deity is installed measures 5'4"×3'. She sits on a buffalo. This is a unique image of Varahi so far discovered in Orissa. This is a protected monument of Archaeological Survey of India.

V A N D E S V A R A

Vandesvara is located about 7 kilometres away from Charichhak just on the south bank of the Prachi. The present Siva Temple known as Vandesvara has been built on the ruins of an ancient temple. On the ruins of the original Jagamohana a long pillared hall has been constructed. An image of Vishnu has been affixed to the left of the entrance. Varaha Vishnu and Ganesha appear as the side deities of north and west respectively. The image of Varaha and Vishnu were brought from other ruined temples.

According to local traditions, it was a harbour (Vandara) in bygone days when ships were plying on the Prachi and the deity has been named accordingly.

P A N I C H H A T R A

The Siva temple known as Ramesvara stands just on the left bank of the Prachi on an isolated place called Jangalaveri, about 3 kilometres from Panichhatra, under P.-S. Kakatpur, district Puri. The temple consists of the sanctum, Jagamohana and the

Natamandira. Though the sanctum is of Rekha order, it is unusually small in height being almost half of the total height of a Rekha deul in general. The Jagamohana and the Natamandira have been renovated on the original ruins. Inside the Natamandira there is a chlorite image of Vishnu (4'×2'). This beautiful image of Vishnu was the presiding deity of a Vishnu temple which existed on the bank of the Prachi in the remote past. Such images are to be found at Chahat near Amaresvara and at Nilakanthapur near Kakatpur where they are worshipped as Nilamadhava. The side deities of the temple are Ganesh in the south, Manasa in the north and Vishnu in the west. A figure of Ashtika Jaradkaru remodelled in modern fashion has been set on the northern niche. Loose sculptures of an Ashtabhuja Mahishamardini Durga and a Ganesha are to be found.

According to a local tradition this Siva Linga was installed by Ramachandra when he was moving in quest of Sita and the present name Jangalaveri justifies itself as it was previously a jungle. A great festival is observed here on the 'Akshayatruitiya' day of the month of Vaishakha.

KAKATPUR

The famous temple of the Goddess Mangala stands on the eastern bank of the river Prachi about 35 miles to the south-east of Bhubaneswar and about 10 miles from Konark. The present temple as well as the Jagamohana of about 15th Century A. D. were built on the ancient ruins and the Bhogamandapa and the Natamandira were of later additions. The main temple as well as the Jagamohana measure 50'×27½', 45'×27½'×27½', respectively. The temple is guarded by a great compound wall consisting of four gates.

The Goddess Mangala carved in chlorite stone is in Lalitasana on a double lotus pedestal. The upper right hand holds the wheel while the Japamala is shown in the lower right hand. Her upper left hand holds a bunch of lotus buds and the lower left hand holds an object (still to be identified). The same object is also held in the same hand by the fourhanded goddess locally known as the Ambika inside the Chandi temple at Kenduli. The visitor is at once pleased to glance attentively at the dazzling appearance of this unique deity.

The side deities of the temple are Vishnu, Varaha Vishnu, Nrisingha Vishnu and the Chamunda. The image of Chamunda belonged to the original temple while that of the other Vaishnavite deities, brought from a collapsed Vishnu temple, were affixed in the present temple.

There is a 'Vishrama Prasthara' lying in between the two doors inside the compound to the south of the Jagamohana where according to the local tradition the Goddess Mangala was taking rest in the mid of the night after returning from the 'darsana' of the Lord Jagannath at Puri.

The temple of Kakatei—The temple of Kakatei is to be found outside the compound of the Mangala temple. The deity is fourhanded and made of chlorite stone measuring $6' \times 4\frac{1}{2}'$. She sits in lalitasana holding wheel and japamala in her right hands while the left two hands engage in counting the Japa. She is worshipped as Kakatei and accordingly the village is known as Kakatpur.

LATAHARANA

The village Lataharana is about 3 kilometres to the southwest of Kakatpur and the river Prachi. The Siva Temple of this place is known as the Gramesvara, which consists of the sanctum containing the Saivite Dvarapalas with nine planets on the lintel. Inside the Jagamohana the following loose sculptures are lying :—

- (1) Two Vishnu images
- (2) Trivikrama Vishnu
- (3) Varaha Vishnu
- (4) Garuda
- (5) Ashtabhuja Durga seated in lalitasana

Among the side deities the dancing Ganesha in the south deserves attention. A small image of Chamunda has been set in the sourthen niche. The temple is in Pancharatha plan while that of the Jagamohana is of Pidha type.

At some places of Lataharana bowels made of ancient bricks are to be found. The accumulation of so many images of Vishnu along with the Garuda gives a clear picture of the existence of a Vishnu Temple in the close vicinity of Lataharana.

NILAKANTHAPUR

The Temple of Madhavananda is to be found to the west of the Vishvamitra Asrama in the village called Nilakanthapur near the present Kakatpur Block Office. Built on the ancient ruins of an

ancient temple, it contains the unique image of Vishnu measuring 5'-6"×2'-6". His upper right hand holds Chakra while the lotus is symbolically represented in his lower right hand. His left hands are shown with Conch and the Gada. The side deities of the temple are Varaha Vishnu, Nrisingh Vishnu and Trivikrama Vishnu.

SOMESVARA

Somesvara stands near the left bank of Prachi close to the Astaranga mainroad and about 3 kilometres from Kakatpur. Once upon a time the place was full of ancient monuments as indicated by the debris and mounds. Besides, it is a store-house of images. The present Siva Temple, known as the Somesvara, under went demolition followed by successive reconstructions when loose sculptures such as Naga images, Ashtadikpalas, Nritya Ganesha, Brahma, Happy Couples, Varahi and erotic sculptures are set in the southern, western and northern walls of the temple. The image of Kapalamochana is lying outside the temple.

The Jagamohan is under construction with modern bricks where the old stone door jamb carved in scroll works and having the Saivite Dvarapalas have been set. The following loose sculptures have been set on the brick walls of the Jagamohan:—

- (1) Hari-Hara
- (2) Vishnu
- (3) Astika Jaradkaru
- (4) Trivikrama Vishnu
- (5) Varaha Vishnu
- (6) Nrisingh Vishnu
- (7) Andhakasuramurti
- (8) Yama

Besides, inside the Jagamohan images of Uma-Mahesvara, Surya, Hari-Hara and the Anantasayana Vishnu are to be found

The temple of Kali is located to the east of the main temple in the same area. The present ancient brick temple of 9'×9' exists up to the height of 11'. The presiding deity is eight-handed Chamunda holding Khetaka, sword, Dambaru and blood

vessel in her right hands while the left hands are shown with Japamala, Abhayamudra, head and touching the mouth. The depiction of the left hands are similar to that of the same image worshipped as Jagulai at Chahata of the Prachi Valley. Another image of Dashabhuja Durga is also placed near the Chamunda.

Visvamitra Ashrama—The Vishvamitra Ashrama is located just on edge of the left bank of the Prachi near the Kakatpur-Nimapara main road and about 2 kilometres from Kakatpur. It is a suitable place for hermitage chore and at present in a modern shine the wooden image of Jagannath, Trivikrama Vishnu and Varaha Vishnu are collectively worshipped as Patitapavana.

MUDGALA MADHAVA

The site Mudgala Madhava is located about 5 kilometres away from Jiunti. At the end of the village, inside a renovated Pidha temple, an image of Vishnu (5'-6") is being worshipped as Nilamadhava. It is holding Chakra and Sankha in upper right and upper left hands while the lotus is represented in the lower right hand and the Gada is being held in the lower left hand. The image resembles in every respect to that worshipped as Nilamadhava in the village Nilakanthapur near Kakatpur and another image of the same description kept inside the Natamandira of the Ramesvara temple at Suhagapur of the Prachi Valley. It seems that the name Nilamadhava was very common among the image of Madhava, worshipped in the Prachi Valley.

Very close to this temple inside a dilapidated temple, without roof and made of ancient bricks and laterite block, a very beautiful image of Vishnu (4'·2"), holding Chakra in upper right hand, Padma in lower right hand, Sankha in upper left hand, Gada in lower left hand, along with a composite image of Hari Hara, is being worshipped. The image is similar to that of a similar image worshipped as Nilamadhava at Chahata of the Prachi Valley, while the image of Hari Hara, popularly known as the Mudgalarishi, according to which the site is known as the Mudgala Muni Ashrama, resembles to that of a similar image kept near the Ramachandi temple at Nadara on the bank of the Brahmani in the district of Dhenkanal. The antiquarian remains of the site Mudgala Madhava may be assigned from circa 8th Century A. D. to 12th Century A. D.

KUHUDI

The site is located near the main Kakatpur-Astaranga road and contains an ancient brick temple dedicated to Siva. The people of the locality have constructed a modern temple of Pidha design over the ancient ruins.

GUDUVANEI

The place Guduvanei is situated 3 miles to the south-east of Astaranga in the coastal region. A dilapidated Siva Temple made of ancient bricks assignable to circa 10th Century A. D. is to be found at this place.

MULAGARH

This ancient site under P. S. Kakatpur previously contained an ancient brick temple. The finding of ancient bricks and other sculpture, on the basis of iconographical features, would place the site to the period of circa 10th Century A. D.

SIDDHESVARA

The Siva Temple known as the Siddhesvara is situated at the outskirts of the village Mudgala-Madhava. The original temple datable to circa 10th Century A. D., had collapsed and on its ruins stands the present temple, reconstructed recently by the efforts of the villagers. The images of Uma-Mahesvara, Astikajardkaru and Vishnu, now fixed inside the Jagamohan, testify to the period to which the collapsed temple belonged.

NASIKESVARA

The Siva Temple known as the Nrityesvara stands in the village Nasikesvara under P. S. Kakatpur. The site is approachable from Kakatpur on the newly constructed road from Kakatpur to Nasikesvara. The temple, made of ancient bricks, is in a dilapidated condition. The temple, pancharatha in design, has a Jagamohana of Pidha character.

MUKTESVARA

The Siva Temple known as Muktesvara which once stood on the eastern bank of the Prachi close to the seashore in the village Daluakani, has now collapsed.

SANKARESVARA

The Sankaresvara Siva Temple stands on the southern bank of the Prachi in the village of Narua-Sankarpur, under P. S. Kakatpur. The site is also approachable from Kakatpur. The temple, made of ancient bricks, is now in a dilapidated condition.



JIUNTI

The Isvaradeva Śiva temple, made of ancient bricks, is situated in the village Jiunti about 5 miles from Kakatpur. The temple consists of the sanctians and the porch. The platform of the Natamandira existing up to a height of 4' along with octagonal pillars, indicates that it was of later addition. A survey of the temple site brings to light that it was a Panchayatana-kshetra. The temple as well as the Jagamohana are in extremely ruined condition and can be assigned to circa 9th Century A. D. There is every possibility that the site was once a Buddhist establishment of 8th Century A. D. which was subsequently converted to a Saiva site. This temple has been declared as State protected and the conservation work is likely to be completed in the financial year of 1974-75.

NAIGUAON

The site Naiguaon is close to Jiunti on the Kakatpur-Astaranga Road. The original brick temple enshrining the image of Ganesha has been collapsed and on its ruins stands a renovated temple built by the villagers. The present temple house an elephant figure worshipped as Ganesha by the local people.

CHAPTER III

Brick Monuments of the Prachi Valley

The temple building activities started in India from the commencement of Gupta rule. The construction of the temple in true sense was very plain. There was no artistic design as we find today. Stones were placed upon one another to house the deity. In the first stage, there was no Jagamohana. In front of the temple, there was an open verandah supported by pillars. The worshippers or the devotees were sitting in this open pillared verandah to pray the deity. During the Gupta rule, the construction of brick temples also started simultaneously with the stone temples. The brick temples bear close resemblance to those of the stone temples of earlier groups. The Jagamohana of the earlier group made of stone had a flat roof with an open verandah, but this method of construction was not applicable to the brick temple. The Jagamohana of the brick temple had a flat roof made of bricks, but it had plain walls in three sides.

The following are the characteristics of the brick monuments so far survived in the Prachi Valley :—

- (i) The sanctum is of rekha order
- (ii) There are places for side deities like the stone temples. But there are no carvings on the outer walls of the main temple.
- (iii) The construction of the main temple is plain, though there are Pada-kumbha design similar to those of the stone temples.
- (iv) The Jagamohana has a flat roof, the outer wall of the Jagamohana is also plain in construction.
- (v) The Natamandira and the Bhogamandapa which are of later edition are also plain in construction.
- (vi) It has generally compound wall made of ancient bricks.
- (vii) In front of the temple, there is a bowel made of bricks.
- (viii) In some places, there are also double compound walls.

The brick monuments in the Prachi Valley have all these above characteristics. Other brick monuments of Orissa, though built in same characteristics, have some terracotta sculptures and carvings on the outer walls of the Jagamohana. The unique brick monument known as Indralath assignable to circa 7th-8th Century A. D. at Ranipur-Jharial and the Kosalesvara temple at Vaidyanath circa 8th-9th Century A. D. bore a close testimony to the facts that these brick temples can be dated earlier to those brick temples flourished in the Prachi Valley.

These following are the brick monuments of the Prachi Valley :—

- (i) Amaresvara Temple (circa 10th Century A. D.) at Amaresvara.
- (ii) Angesvara Temple (circa 10th Century A. D.) at Pitapada, Block Niali.
- (iii) The ruined Nilamadhava Temple (circa 10th Century A. D.) at Chahata.
- (iv) Durga Temple (circa 9th Century A. D.) at Motia, Block Niali.
- (v) Viswanatha Temple (circa 9th Century A. D.) at Krishnaprasadgarh, Block Niali.
- (vi) The ruined Gramesvara Temple at Chaurashi.
- (vii) The dilapidated Dasabhuja Durga Temple (circa 12th Century A. D.) at Ambapada.
- (viii) The Barabhujee Durga Temple at Amanakuda.
- (ix) The dilapidated Bhavakundalesvara Temple at Amanakuda.
- (x) The Chandi Temple at Kenduli.
- (xi) The Gramesvara Temple (circa 9th Century A. D.) at Lataharana.
- (xii) Iswaradeva Temple (circa 9th Century A. D.) at Jiunti, P.-S. Kakatpur.
- (xiii) Ruined Ganesha Temple at Naiguan.
- (xiv) Sankaresvara Temple at Narua.

- (xv) Siva Temple at Nashikesvara
- (xvi) The ruined Siva Temple at Guduvane
- (xvii) Dilapidated Siva Temple at Kuhudi
- (xviii) Collapsed Siva Temple at Mulagada
- (xix) Sabhamandapa (circa 11th Century A. D.) at
Tulsipur.
- (xx) Gramesvara Siva Temple at Nivarana.

The survival of so many ancient brick temples in the Prachi Valley, give a clear picture that the brick temples were constructed simultaneously with the stone temples. Nowhere in India, so many ancient brick temples can be found in one belt.

Forts in the Prachi Valley

The remains of ruined forts in some places in the Prachi Valley give a picture that these forts were used to defend respective areas in those earlier days. The archaeological remains so far exist would tentatively suggest the dates of the forts ranging from 12th Century A. D. to 18th Century A. D.

The origin point of the Prachi contains a dilapidated fort known as the Chodangagada, supposed to have been constructed by Chodaganga Deva, the famous king of the Ganga dynasty. The fort is built of sandstone. Plans of residential buildings, temples and tanks, etc., are still to be found inside the fort. The other forts which have been collapsed are the Amaraprasadgarh near Tulasipur, Amanakudagarh near Niali, Krishnaprasadgarh near Pitapada, Nipaniagarh near Nayahal, Mulagarh near Kakatpur and the Golaragarh near Kuruma. It appears from the survey that the fort of Golaragarh was made of bricks. It survived up to the Paika rebellion in Orissa. Most of these forts were in working stage during the period from Marahatta rule up to the Paika rebellion. Inside the fort areas temples dedicated to God and Goddess were being constructed in those days. Though the forts have collapsed, yet the dilapidated temples have survived in some places. Inside the Amanakudagarh, the unique image of Barabhujee Durga along with the ruined temple of Bhavakundalesvara still survives. So also the Amaresvara Temple and the Sabhamandapa, covering the area of Amaraprasadgarh are still to be found. The plans of Amaraprasadgarh was very peculiar. It was constructed where the Prachi is joined by Lalita river. The Golaragarh fort once stood in the strategic point of the Prachi Valley. At this place the river Prachi and the river Kadua a branch of Prachi has jointly merged with the Bay of Bengal. The place contains the famous ruined temple of Utpalesvara, now in dilapidated condition. Here the unique four-handed image of Parvati with a line of inscription above is being worshipped as Chitresvari. Since, this fort was situated on the seashore, there was also a lighting post which acted as a signal of the sea plying in the Bay of Bengal and Prachi. Most probably, from this fort

of Golaragarh, the soldiers were transported to other places. At present the site is full of jungles. The Nipaniagarh as well as Mulagarh near Kakatpur contain only ancient remains of the fort area made of bricks. These areas are also full of jungles.

The existence of so many forts in the Prachi Valley indicate the military strength of those rulers who ruled over the areas of the Prachi Valley.

Sacred Tirthas in the Prachi Valley

G O-T I R T H A

Among sacred Tirthas of the Prachi Valley the Go-Tirtha comes first in the list. This Tirtha is located where the river Lalita, a branch of the Prachi river joins the Prachi again. According to tradition the place is sacred like the Ganges. It is described in the Prachi Mahatmya that once, the sacred Ganga became a sinner somehow and after being advised by Vishnu to take a dip in the Prachi river at its confluence point with Lalita, only she could rid of her sin. Still a beautiful image of Vishnu is being worshipped as Lalita-Madhava, very close to this site, at Chahata.

To the east of this Go-Tirtha stands the ancient site of Amaresvara enshrining the Siva Linga of the same name. Tradition corroborated with local chronicles reveal that Ravana, the Lord of Lanka, practised severe penance to get boon from Siva and ultimately sacrificed his ten heads. A Kunda to the north-eastern side of the temple is still known as the Ravana-Kunda and ten human busts are locally called as the ten heads of Ravana. Besides, it is also known that Vivisana, the younger brother of Ravana, at the instance of Rama Chandra used to take bath in this Go-Tirtha each year on the day of "Akshaya Tritiya" in the month of Baisakha. In commemoration of this a great festival is being held there, commencing from the day of "Akshayatriya" for a period of fifteen days and hundreds of people take their bath at this place.

The hermitage of the sage Matanga is located to the west of the Go-Tirtha. According to the tradition, the sage fell in love with Urvasi and spent his time in merry-making in this hermitage. Once, he went out for collecting Puja materials and in the mean time two hunters came there and quarrelled with each other for the possession of this hermitage and ultimately they killed each other. After his return the sage Matanga, having seen this destruction of his hermitage, became furious and cursed Urvasi to become a stone and subsequently Urvasi was converted to a stone. Still there is a long stone lying at Go-Tirtha which is locally known as the '*Urvasi Sila*'.

ARKA-TIRTHA

Arka-Tirtha of the Prachi Valley is a beautiful place. It consists the temple of Sobhanesvara. This Arka-Tirtha and other historical as well as religious sites around Arka-Tirtha can be reached either from Bhubaneswar or Cuttack by boarding the Kakatpur bus and getting down at Niali. There is a new temple which enshrines a four-headed figure of Brahma sitting on a lotus pedestal. Iconographically the image can be dated to the 6th Century A. D. Such an image of Brahma has been traced by the author at Nuasahi near Kenduli in between the Prachi and Kushabhadra rivers. Very near to the temple of Brahma is the Pundaresvara Siva Temple. A new temple has been erected in place of the old broken temple and the lingam is being worshipped there as Pundaresvara.

According to tradition once upon a time Parvati frequented the place in guise of Mohini. Her mohini figure attracted many men who were ultimately devoured by the goddess. At this the Devas prayed to Lord Siva who then came and stayed on the bank of the Prachi disguised as a handsome person. When Parvati came to know this she became affraid and shed her Yoginirupa and wore her normal charming rupa. Due to his most handsome quality, Siva was worshipped there as Sobhanesvara.

Now to the west of the Sobhanesvara Temple, on the bank of river Prachi an eight-armed image of Chamunda is being worshipped as Chandi-banti or Harachandi. The image is mutilated with a fearful face and has a sword in its raised hand. From iconographic point of view this is the oldest of the Chamunda images so far discovered in Orissa. There is such a contemporary Chamunda image found in the Trilochanesvara Siva Temple at Jajpur. A line of inscriptions in Devanagiri script reading "Rani Balcha Devi's Kirti" is to be seen on the lower portion of the image. The letters of the script can be dated to 7th-8th Century A. D. For all this the Chamunda image known as Chandibanti is considered important.

Regarding the name Arka-Tirtha, it is believed that the Sun God had attained siddhi after performing penance at that place and as such it is known as Arka-Tirtha. Whereas tradition says that Siva cut the head of Brahma and the forehead of Brahma struck to his palm, so he visited many holy and religious places but the forehead of Brahma could not be dislodged from his palm and at last he reached a hermitage on the bank of river Prachi.

The ladies of the hermitage were attracted by Siva's personality. When the sages of the hermitage came to know this, they cursed Siva and made him an elephant. Parvati became unhappy after knowing all this and herself came to the place in the guise of a milk-woman. The ladies of the hermitage daily brought milk, etc., from her. Once the sages became enchanted by her youth and beauty and asked her identity. She narrated the whole thing at which the sages immediately cured Siva from the curse and requested both Siva and Parvati to make the place a holy one. Siva and Parvati made the place sacred and ordered that who would practise penance there would become free of all his sins.

From architectural point of view the discussed Sobhanesvara Temple is a Pancharatha Temple. It consists of a sanctum, Jagamohana, Natamandira and a Bhogamandapa. But now only the pillars and the lower portions of the Natamandira and Bhogamandapa are there. On the frontal wall of the Jagamohana there is a stone inscription described in Devnagiri script in Sanskrit. This epigraph has been edited by Shri Sudhakara Pattanaik. From this we know that the Sobhanesvara Temple was built during the rule of a king called Vaidyanatha at Niali, who was a contemporary of the Imperial Ganga king Anangabhima Deva (1190-98 A.D.) But perhaps king Vaidyanatha was ruling as a subordinate ruler of the Ganga King. Still now the descendants of the generals of the king Vaidyanatha are living at Niali. The inscription further reveals that Devadasis is used to dance in the temple during the worship of the God. This system of Devadas in a temple is known to us from the Brahmesvara temple inscriptions of Bhubaneswar.

Inside the compound to the east of the temple there is a Lingam known as Suryesvara. After finding two faint lines of inscriptions in Devnagiri script on the lower portions of the Lingam, it was excavated towards its bottom and consequently 8 lines of inscriptions were discovered. Palaeographically this inscription is older than the Sobhanesvara temple inscription. Due to the faint condition of the letters, it would take some time to decipher the inscription. According to the tradition the Suryesvara Siva Lingam was established here to mark the penance undertaken by Surya at this place.

The eight Dikpalas or the Gods of the eight directions with their respective consorts are carved at their proper places on the body of the main temple. Besides these, the temple is full of various other sculptures. They include a sage discoursing with his disciples; Royal court; Male and female figure, probably

husband and wife, talking on a couch; Gana purusha; image of Parasurama with hairs tied over the head and Parasu and Kamandalu in the hands. There are many female sculptures generally known as Alasakanyas in different motifs. They are one female figure holding a tree's branch while standing; one breast feeding her child; one kissing the child on her lap; one lady donating a child to a Sanyasi; another motif depicts a lady standing with her right on a man's shoulder; one lady is fondling her child; at one place a lady carries a basket on her head and so on. A female figure having a pot on her head reminds us about Parvati's disguise as a milk-maid referred to above. Another scene on the wall of the temple is carved according to the Sunasepha episode in Ramayana. In this scene we see a hermitage before which sits a Rajarishi. There are three Rishi figures and a Rishi and his wife. One of the male figures is bowing to the king. There are some cows standing nearby with their downcast heads.

There are eight four-armed beautiful Vishnu images being worshipped as Madhava, to be found inside the temple compound. They all hold conchs; disc, chubs and lotuses in their respective arms. These Madhava images along with the two Vishnu images restored from the pond near to the Brahma temple of Niali (they are now inside the Jagamohana of the above temple), and the Vishnu image found in the Jagamohana of the Nilakanthesvara Temple would lead us to believe that once the Prachi Valley civilisation was influenced by Vaishnavism to a great extent. Kenduli, which is a short distance away from Niali and was the birth place of the poet Jayadeva, was too a seat of Madhava cult. This is evident from the four-armed Vishnu image found there. From iconographical point of view four-armed Vishnu images were worshipped earlier than two-armed Krishna or Gopinath images. Before Jayadeva's time Madhava worship was popular and during his time Gopinatha worship became popular. In Jayadeva's writings, we read about the Gopinatha or Krishna cult. Four such images of Lord Krishna are to be found in the Radhakanta Matha, the biggest Matha of the Vaishnavism in the Prachi Valley, at Nuagaon sects situated to the north-west of the Arka-Tirtha.

Thus Arka-Tirtha was respectively a seat of Saura, Saiva Sakta and Vaishnava sects during the earlier times.

AGNITIRTHA

The place where Ramesvara Temple of Tola stands at present is known as the Agni-Tirtha. It must have been a very beautiful place in remote past. According to tradition Ramachandra, Lakshmana and Sita passed through this place and

stayed here for some time, being impressed by the natural surroundings of the site. Dasaratha who had expired during the exile of Ramachandra, appeared in this place in the form of a sprit and advised Ramachandra to perform the Pindadana ceremony at this place (Agni-Tirtha). Accordingly, Ramachandra along with Sita performed the Pinda-dana ceremony. The tradition further reveals that Ramachandra also performed a sacrifice (Yanja) in this Agni-Tirtha. Still a Yanja bedi and stone pillars are to be found inside the deep waters of the Prachi. These stone pillars might have been the Yanja stambhas of the ancient days. As a commemoration to these events of the past, people at present, on the day of Magha-Saptami in every year, assemble here and take their bath at this sacred Tirtha.

MRITYU TIRTHA

The village Gramesvara is situated on the bank of Prachi where it takes a northern course. There is a Siva Temple known as Gramesvara located in this village. According to tradition, being bored of staying at his father-in-laws house for a long period, Siva and Parvati decided to go elsewhere and settle for a family life. After wondering a lot, they came to the bank of the Prachi river at last. There they took their bath in the river and settled for family life. At that time the place was a dense forest. From that day the place came to be known as Gramesvara.

The Gramesvara Siva Temple can be dated to 10th-11th Century A. D. The temple has a porch. From architectural style it can be compared with the Natabudha-Ramesvara Temple located exactly two miles away on the bank of river Prachi. There is a Vishnu image inside the Jagamohana of the Gramesvara Siva Temple. Such Vishnu image have been located at some other place of the Prachi Valley. There is a Jaina-Parasurnatha image to be found here which would indicate that Gramesvara was once a seat of Jainism. The outside walls at north and south sides of the Jagamohana contain the images of Ganesha, Nrishinga, Vamana, Vishnu, Astikajaradkaru, Kartikeya, Parvati, Trivikrama Vishnu and Varaha. All these images would tend to indicate that once this place allowed all religious sects to flourish equally.

There is a Parvati Temple to the south-western corner of the Gramesvara Siva Temple. Eight-armed Mahishamardini Durga is enshrined here as the presiding deity. There is another eight armed Durga, being worshipped as Harachandi, in the Sobhanesvara Temple at Niali on the bank of the Prachi. This image can be dated to the 8th Century A. D. The Parvati image at Gramesvara was probably established during the rule of Somavamsis.

There is a place called as Pururava-Khetra on the bank of the river Prachi. It is mentioned in the Puranas that in the Treta Yuga, a pious king named Pururava was ruling over Prasthan. Once, while on a hunting expedition, he lost his way and finally reached the river Prachi and rested for a while. When he took his bath in the river a bright light entered his heart. He then saw a beautiful place to the north of the river and found Uma and Mahesvara there. Thereafter he worshipped Gramesvara daily after taking his bath in the Prachi river. One day he was advised by a heavenly voice that there were only images of Siva and Parvati established at Gramesvara that he should establish a Vishnu image there. The king happily established a Vishnu image at Gramesvara. After the establishment of a Vishnu image king Pururava went to heaven in person. From that day onwards this place has come to be known as Pururava-Kshetra-Tirtha. The above mentioned Vishnu image is worshipped as Gadadhara inside the compound of the Siva Temple. This image measures 3' × 2'4" and is four-armed with conch, disc, club and lotus in the respective arms. Probably this image was discovered from the bed of the river as mentioned in the traditional accounts. We have many similar traditional accounts. Once Bhima restored the fourth Vishnu image from the bank of Prachi which was worshipped by the demon Erandaka and gave it to Yudhistira, because Yudhistira used to take food only after worshipping Vishnu. That Vishnu image is known as Madhava today. According to tradition the Gadadhara image of Vishnu was established by Yudhistira at Ramesvara. This happened when the Pandavas came to the shore of Prachi while on exile. There is a Siva temple near this Gadadhara Temple known as Balukesvara. Trivikrama Vishnu and a Naga image are being worshipped there.

From Prachi Mahamtya it is known as that Brahma had a daughter named Mrityu. She became an ascetic during her young age and went to practise penance without informing her father Brahma. At last she arrived at Gramesvara by the side of Prachi and practised penance observing strict austerity. Due to her penance Brahma became concerned and came to Gramesvara to dissuade her from her penance. Brahma advised her to worship Lord Siva or Mrityunjaya (conqueror of death) in order to get him as her husband. Mrityu agreed to this and worshipped Gramesvara with great devotion. From that day the place came to be known as Mrityu Tirtha.

Near the Gramesvara Mrityu Tirtha there is another place called as Sudarsana Tirtha. This Tirtha has its own traditional accounts. Once there was a brahmin known as Sudarsana. He was practising austere penance and was entertaining guests with

great reverence. No guest ever returned from him dissatisfied. Once lord Indra came to test his charity in the guise of a Brahmin and asked for rice. By that time Sudarsana was doing penance by the side of Prachi and it was difficult for him to arrange rice then. So he offered water from Prachi to the disguised Indra, who said that it was not enough to satisfy his hunger. Now Sudarsana was in a predicament and lord Vishnu being pleased with his devotion appeared before him and asked the disguised Indra to accept the water. Indra now bowed to Vishnu and went away after praising Sudarsana. From that day onwards the place was named as Sudarsana Tirtha.

There is a beautiful Krishna image on the outer wall of the temple. The image holds a flute in its hands and it can be dated to 13th Century A.D. Such Krishna images are worshipped in Nuagaon Matha at Niali and Pandavakuda. From this it is known that Shri Krishna the lord worshipped by Jayadeva was being worshipped in the Prachi Valley since 13th Century A. D. So many temples of Siva and Vishnu at Gramesvara leads us to believe that it was a seat of Hari and Hara as described in the Puranas.

ANGA-TIRTHA

The Anga Tirtha of the Prachi Valley is located at present in the village Pitapara under Niali Block. The place is associated with the life history of Karna of the Mahabharata fame, the king of Angadsa. Karna is said to have practised penance to get boon from Siva and ultimately his desire was fulfilled and at the instance of Siva he established a Siva Linga which came to be known as the Angesvara. The Angesvara Siva Temple made of ancient bricks, can be assigned to 9th-10th Century A. D. This place is also simultaneously known as the Pitru-Tirtha, where ritual rites pertaining to the 'Pindodaka-Kriya' are performed. People after taking dip in this sacred Tirtha, not only worship the Angesvara Siva but also the image of Krishna, kept inside a Matha, on the Bank of the Prachi and the Astabhuja-Chamunda known as Churchika, at the very outset of the village. The antiquarian remains of the place do justify the testimony of the traditions and Puranic accounts.

MANIKARNIKA-TIRTHA

The confluence, where the Prachi, Saraswati and Manikarnika meet, is known as the Manikarnika-Tirtha. At present the Saraswati has lost its course. The place is also known as the Antarvedi. Thousands of people take bath on the Amavasya day in the month of Magha at this sacred place, which is also

known as the Triveni-Ghat. People after taking dip in this holy water visit the Antarvadi Matha, where the image of Krishna is worshipped and the nearby Siva temple is known as the Vilespara.

PANADAVA-TIRTHA

The Pandava-Tirtha is very close to the Manikarnika Tirtha of the Prachi valley. The present lonely site gives a clear indication of the possibility of a dense forest once being located here, where the Pandavas, during their period of 'Vanabasa', probably spent a few days. It is said that in order to have water inside this dense forest. Bhima threw his 'Gada' and where it fell a tank was formed which came to be known as the Pandava-Pushkarani. The place, where the Pandavas dwelt, is known at present as the Pandava-Kuda. The sanctity of the site upto now is maintained and further enhanced by the installation of a stone image of Krishna, in the pose of Vanshidhari, and the images of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra.

SUDARSANA-TIRTHA

The site, where the present temple of the Madhava stands on the eastern bank of the Prachi, is known as the Sudarsana-Tirtha. According to the events narrated in the Vana-Parva of Sarala Mahabharata, the Pandavas during their course of exile, settled in this place. Yudhistira, a great devotee of Vishnu, was in the habit of daily worship of the image of Vishnu. They came to know that a beautiful image of Madhava, brought by the demon Arasura was deep inside the tank and the said demon was worshipping the image daily without the knowledge of others. Bhima traced out the image merged in deep water and brought it to surface to be worshipped by Yudhistira. The combat, for the occupation of the image, between Bhima and Arasura ultimately took a furious shape when the head of Arasura was cut off by the Sudarsana-Chakra of lord Vishnu. Since both Arasura and Pandavas were the devotees of Madhava, the Sudarsana-Chakra did not return to the hand of Vishnu and remained there to practice penance in this sacred place of Prachi and accordingly the site was called as the Sudarsana-Tirtha. The present unique image of Madhava worshipped inside the temple, was said to have been established by Yudhistira and the Sudarsana Chakra now kept inside the Jagamohana of the temple, was believed to be the same Chakra, which did not return to the hand of Vishnu, after killing Arasura.

MUDAGALA-MUNI-ASHRAMA

The Ashrama of Mudagala is situated on the bank of the river Prachi. Once upon a time Mudagala Rishi had a trip to Lanka. He became happy to observe Bibhisana worshipping Madhava and thought to worship a similar image on his way back. In his dream he was told by the God to proceed to the bank of the Prachi and to worship the image of Madhava there. Accordingly the sage Mudagala came to the river Prachi and in his Ashrama constructed a similar image of Madhava and worshipped it. The God Madhava appeared before him in divine form and told everything. From that day on wards, the place is famous as 'Mudagala Madhava.'

The present beautiful image of Vishnu made of chlorite stone and installed inside a renovated temple might have been constructed by Mudagalarishi of the tradition enumerated above. The image measures 5'-7". His upper right hand holds Chakra and lower right hand holds Padma while upper left hand holds Sankha and lower left hand holds Gada. Very close to this image is found another image of Hari-Hara similar in every respect to that of the Hari-Hara image found under a tree at Nadara Ramachandi, on the bank of river Brahmani in the district of Dhenkanal. The possibility of connecting this site with tradition is to some extent, justified.

APSHARA-TIRTHA

Apashara-Tirtha is situated towards the South of Mudagala-Madhava. In ancient times Chiramuni practised severe penance which led Indra to create troubles for him. Indra sent an Apashara named Pramnochha to the bank of the river Prachi to break the penance of the sage. The sage became overwhelmed by the beauty and loveliness of Pramnochha and was attracted towards her. At last the Muni spent his days in the Ashrama with Pramnochha Apashari. One day the Muni came to know that Indra had sent this Apashara Pramnochha to break his penance. He became furious and cursed Pramnochha that she would become a female Crocodile in the river of Prachi and on requests of Pramnochha, he said that she could go to heaven only after being killed by Lakshamana during the period of Tretaya-Yuga. Pramnochha remained as a female Crocodile and went to heaven herself when killed by the arrow of Lakshamana. From that day onwards, that place of Prachi is known as Apashara-Tirtha. One has to visit Madhava after taking bath at that Apashara-Tirtha. The Sidhesvara Siva

temple stands nearby. Now the ancient temple has been demolished and a new temple has been built on it. The image of Uma-Mahesvara, enshrined here, is a fine specimen of Orissa Art.

MUKTI-TIRTHA

The Mukti-Tirtha is located at the mouth of the Prachi near the sea. The Siva Temple standing at this place is known as Muktesvara. According to the legendary accounts the sanctity of the Mukti-Tirtha occupied a predominant position in ancient times. It is described that there lived a Brahamana named Narayana at Kasi (Banaras). He died when his son attained the age of five. His wife leaving her son alone, moved to various places and spent her days as a prostitute. After some days she finally settled at a place near the Mukti-Tirtha. Meanwhile the boy lived in his house until the age of sixteen and after which he, too, left his homeland. At last he reached the place in the Prachi Valley where his mother lived. Both of them were attracted to each other and spent their time merrily as husband and wife. Due to this sexual relationship with his own mother, the son used to suffer from leprosy during the night. But at the day break after taking bath in the Mukti-Tirtha, he used to get cured from the disease. Once, sage Gautama who happened to witness this, was astonished at this peculiar events and the sanctity of the place, converting a man in to a lepor during the night and making him fully cured during the days. The sage came to know the past events and appeared before them. He instructed them to take their bath jointly everyday in the month of Magha and to worship the Muktesvara Linga so as to be freed from their evil action resulting from their sexual union without understanding the native of their actual relationship. At the instance of the learned sage, they repented for their past action and wanted to lead a spiritual life. Both the mother and the son took their bath in the Mukti-Tirtha of the Prachi in the month of Magha and ultimately the son was cured. Then they went back to their original homeland.

This Mukti-Tirtha is also associated with the events of Samba, the son of Lord Krishna, who was attacked with leprosy and at the instance of Narada, after taking bath in this sacred Tirtha went to the Arka-Tirtha (Konark near the Mukti-Tirtha) to practice penance to get boon from the Sun-God.

Mathas in the Prachi Valley

The Prachi Valley is not only popular for the existence of so many ancient monuments dedicated to various cults but also of the establishment of the Mathas where mainly the images of Vishnu, Krishna and Jagannath (known as Patitapavana) are being worshipped. These Mathas were established during the period of 15th-16th Century A. D., when the sacred soil of Orissa was swayed with the flood of Vaishnavism. Prior to the existence of such Mathas in the Prachi Vally, there were various Ashramas, like Mudgala-Muni Ashrama, Viswamitra Ashrama, Bharadwaja Ashrama, Kapilamuni Ashrama and Karnnamuni Ashrama, etc., which would date back from the period of circa 10th Century A. D. to circa 13th Century A. D. on the basis of present antiquarian remains of the above site. A brief descriptions of the Mathas in the Prachi Valley is given below :—

- (a) *Antarvedi Matha*—It is located at the place known as the Trivenighat, the confluence point of the Prachi, Saraswati and Manikarnika. Inside a thatched house the images of Krishna, carved in chlorite stone, along with the image of Jagannath, known as Patitapavana, are worshipped.
- (b) *Radhakanta Matha*—It is the greatest among the Mathas in the Prachi Valley which has survived up till now. The presiding deity is the image of Krishna as Vanshidhari along with the bronze image of Radha and accordingly the Matha is known as the Radha-Kanta Matha.
- (c) *Arkatirtha Matha*—The Arkatirtha Matha is located on the eastern bank of the Prachi, about one mile to the west of Niali.
- (d) *Ahnuria Matha*—The river Prachi has turned north at the place called Ahnuria Matha, about one kilometre from Niali. According to local traditions, it was the Ashrama of various Rishis who were practising penance on the sacred soil of the Prachi.

- (e) *Siddha Matha*—There are no traces of this Matha. But this Siddha Matha was once located at the confluence of the Prachi and Chandramati, another branch of the Prachi.
- (f) *Gopala Matha*—The Gopala Matha is located at a place called Kudapatana, where inside a renovated temple of Pidha design the image of Vishnu is being worshipped as Gopala.
- (g) *Gurudeva Matha*—On the southern bank of Prachi, very close to the temple of Vandesvara, inside a thatched house the image of Jagannath is being worshipped as Gurudeva.
- (h) *Rohana Matha*—Near the village Bolara under P.-S. Kakatpur on the eastern bank of the Prachi, the Rohana Matha is to be found.
- (i) *Viswamitra Matha*—Inside a thatched shed on the eastern bank of the Prachi, near Kakatpur, the images of Varaha Vishnu, Trivikrama Vishnu along with Jagannath are collectively worshipped. This Matha is known as the Viswamitra Matha.
- (f) *Chakia Matha*—The image of Jagannath is worshipped as the Patitapavana at the village Haridaspur, P.-S. Kakatpur, on the eastern bank of the Prachi in the Chakia Matha.
- (k) *Deuli Matha*—The Deuli Matha is situated on the eastern bank of the Prachi, about two miles from the Chakia Matha.
- (l) *Ativada Matha*—An image of Jagannath is being worshipped inside a thatched shed as the Patitapavana on the western bank of the Prachi. The place is called as the Ativada Matha.
- (m) *Panchavati Matha*—The Panchavati Matha has been established by some monks on the eastern bank of the Prachi near Ativada Matha.
- (n) *Vanta Matha*—It is located about three miles to the south of the Ativada Matha.
- (o) *Apsara Matha*—The Apsara Matha is to be found on the eastern bank of the Prachi about three kilometres to the south of the Vanta Matha.

Ports in the Prachi Valley

When we see the festival of "Boat Worship" early in the morning on the day of Kartika Purnima, it reminds us "were actually Oriya fetching away wealth from foreign countries through trade and commerce"? Utkal was predominant in Naval trade. It is said 'Lakshmi remains in business'. Lakshmi's native place is the sea. Our ancestors imagined the ocean to be the seat of 'Lakshmi, the goddess of riches and had thought that prosperity comes from business. So they had justified the necessity of marine trade. Truly, countries which are skilled in trade and commerce, are prosperous. One day Utkala was also prosperous due to this reason. It is apparent from the story of "Taapoi", prevailing in the villages that sons' of "Sadhabas" were bringing huge amounts of valuable things from foreign countries.

There were many harbours in the river Prachi, though it was small in size. Through this river "Sadhabas" were sailing their ships to the Bay of Bengal. Now the river Prachi and Sola have become shallow. There were many business centres in the valleys of these rivers. A big banyan tree located to the west of the village Jharillo, under Govindpur P. S. is called as 'Boita Bandha' banyan tree, where boats were said to be taking shelter. On Niali Madhava Road a large number of mounds are to be found which give an indication of the location of the harbours on those places. On Amaresvara Road a site containing such mounds is known as 'Kudapatna' where ships were taking shelter while on their way to their respective destinations. Now under a banyan tree a hermitage has been built and Lord Jagannath is being worshipped there. Very close to this place 'Kudapatna', another mound called 'Gopalakuda' is to be found. Here, there is a very beautiful statue of Ramachandra in a thatched house, and according to local tradition the 'Sadhabas' on their way used to halt for a while here and pay homage to the God for a safe journey.

Chahata, near Chaurashi, contains a mound 'Boyitadiha', form where at present ancient pottery are being traced out. Except this a portion of an iron pillar, which was used for fastening the ship, is still to be seen in the place where the river

Prachi and its tributary Lalita have joined. At the confluence of this place a beautiful statue of Vishnu is being worshipped in the name of Lalita-Madhava. In between Chahata and Tulasi-pur, on the bank of Prachi, an ancient Siva Temple known as Bandaresvara is found. The river Prachi is very deep here and its water never becomes dry. This was probably the centre place of all ports for which reason the Siva Linga is known as the Bandaresvara. Sadhabas were sailing their ships after worshipping this God.

In the vicinity of Kakatpur in the Valley of the river Prachi some mounds are found known as the Boyitakuda and an field is called "Jahaja-pariya" (ship field). Near the sea beach, in Astaranga some Boyitakudas are to be found. There was also a port formed by two piles of soil, which is a tank now. There was link between this tank and river Prachi through a water course. The boats coming through the river were entering to this tank for safety. As Astaranga is near to sea-shore, here was a harbour and even passenger carrying boats were starting journey from this place. People say there was a very rich Sadhava named Dadhibamana Sahu in this area. He had owned some boats. He was carrying on his business especially with Cylone. Once at the time of returning from Cylone, he had brought a stone image of Goddess 'Mangala' with him and that image is the famous Mangala of Kakatpur'.

Trade and Commerce was also carried on in the river Chitrotpala, tributary of Prachi. It is known from the famous Greek traveller Ptohemy's statement, that there was a great port at Konark which might have flourished in 1st Century A. D. The Kadua, a tributary of Prachi has merged with the Bay of Bengal at a place called Chitresvari. This site is so named after the Goddess, seated in padmasana, being worshipped as Chitresvari. Near to this temple, the Siva temple known as Utpalesvara stands in a dilapidated condition. Amidst heaps of sand a light post is seen. This post was acting as a signal to the ships sailing on the Bay of Bengal and Prachi. Chinese traveller, Huen-Tsang, probably had visited Chitresvari amidst the forest. Here one broken palace is found. It is known as Gollargarh. People say that king of this Gollargarh was a tyrant. Here lived pirates who robbed the wealth of Sadhabas and even they killed Sadhabas and sailors for wealth.

In the 16th Century A. D. Marahatta's used to come to Machhagaon port in river Devi, in the east of river Prachi. They were transacting up to Hariharpur (Jagatsinghpur) though the river Alaka, a tributary of river Devi. They had built a trade

centre. Portuguese and Olandas traders were transacting in the river Prachi and Devi. They had also adopted the occupation of pirates. They were looting boats and properties from the mouth of Prachi and Chitrotpala.

As such a number of boats were moving in the river Prachi some markets were established along the river coast. Those markets still now hold their old names such as:—Kundheihat, Nuahat, Nuapalamahat, Ratanapurhat, Tulasipurhat, Narasinghapurhat, Banamalipurhat, Nialihat, Kakatpurhat, etc.

In the 18th Century A. D. Temples were built following the ideal model of Utkalian's boats. In 16th Century A. D. Orissan ports were filled up with external trade. Italian visitors had visited factories that manufactured these cargo boats.

So, there were many ports in the river Prachi and navigating this river Oriya traders were more wealthier than others. Today it reminds the past, when we see the worship of boat in the river Prachi.

CHAPTER VIII

Muslim Monuments of the Prachi Valley

The Survey of the Valley reveals that the Muslim monuments have survived uptill now in places like Niali, Madhava, Banamalipur, Mukundaprasadpur, Giripair, Venga, Jaringa, Gasalpur, Bhangapur, Sujagarh and Lataharana. The mosques assignable to circa 17th century A. D. at Madhava and at Nuagaon near Tola, stand as monumental evidence of the period. But the most living monument, which has gained popularity, is the Mukadam Jahania-Pitha located on the Seashore about nine miles from Kakatpur. This was established by the Mukaddam Jahania, a Muslim saint of Persia who lived, according to various traditional accounts, in the court of Feroz Tughalok. According to one legendary theory, he is said to be the grandson of Muhammad The Prophet. In absence of any logical theory in support of his age, it can be said that Mukaddam Jahania was a Muslim saint who propogated the Muslim religion in the Prachi Valley and established his pitha in this coastal region. According to one tradition connecting with the establishment of the Pitha, it is said that the Pitha was located inside the sea and Jahania was daily visiting the place for the performance of religious rites. During the time of such visits wonderful things used to happen—such as the creation of a path of sand, right through the water dividing the sea from the shore to the place where he used to worship. One day his son desired to accompany him to the site. He was strictly prohibited not to turn backward while passing through the sea. But on the return journey from the site, his son as a matter of curosimy turned backward and immediately they were drowned in deep water. As a memory of this sort of miraculous incident, people have established a Pitha on the sea shore. But the former Pitha has not yet been traced out. Over this sandy heap at present a very small cottage, made of palm leaf and bamboos, has been established where two wooden sandals representing the memory of Mukaddam Jahania are being worshipped by the Muslims daily. This has now been converted to a place of religious importance by both the Hindus and the Muslims. Since the sanctity of the place is being maintained by both the sects. This site should be connected from Astaranga with a suitable approachable road.

CHAPTER IX

Archaeological Activities in the Prachi Valley

The State Department of Archaeology have conducted the following excavation and conservation works of ancient sites and monuments in the Prachi Valley from 1969 to 1974.

(i) *Adaspur*—As a result of excavation of a site on the eastern bank of the Prachi near Adaspur, the lower portion of a collapsed Siva temple alongwith the images of Siva in Yogasana pose and Trivikrama-Vishnu were recovered from the trial pits. Besides, a very beautiful terracotta Kamandalu with a figure of Saraswati on its neck, lamp and pottery of redware were discovered from the site. These antiquities can be dated to circa 9th century A. D.

(2) *Chahata*—The ruined temple of Nilamadhava stands about 2 kilometers from Amaresvara on Nimapara-Kakatpur road. During the course of clearing and digging works of the temple site, an image of Nrushing-Vishnu made of sand stone was discovered from a depth of one metre to the west of the temple site. This image can be assigned to circa 10th century A. D.

(3) *Chaurashi*—The dilapidated temple site enshrining the unique image of Lakshmi-Narayan in the village Chaurashi under P.-S. Nimapara, was selected for trial excavation. The excavation brought to light the burried Jagamohana, previousiv made of ancient bricks up to the height of 5' alongwith a window. Besides, the lower portion of the platforms of both the Natamandira and Bhogamandapa made of ancient bricks. These give a clear picture that the sanctum, the Jagamohana, the Natamandira and Bhogamandapa, made of ancient bricks, were exposed. These give a clear picture that the sanctum, the Jagamohana, the Natamandira and Bhogamandapa, were all made of ancient bricks and can tentatively be assigned to circa 11th-12th century A. D. The Jagamohana, Natamandira and Bhogamandapa collapsed incourse of centuries while the sanctum of the main temple went through subsequent reconstruction in sand stone blocks.

The conservation works of the dilapidated main temple have been taken up from the year 1972. The whole temple has been dismantled and the plinth level has been filled up with stone and cement mortars to strengthen the foundation. All the dismantled stones were properly numbered and have been re-set in their respective positions. The renovation work has gone upto the gandi portion.

(4) *Amaresvara*—A group of temples with the temple of Amaresvara in the middle can be seen in the village of the same name on the Nimapara-Kakatpur road. The conservation work of the Siva temple, known as the Amaresvara and assignable to circa 9th-10th century A. D., was taken up in the year 1971-72 with an estimated amount of Rs. 4,000 and was completed in the same financial year.

(5) *Construction of Sculpture Shed at Niali*—Inside the temple compound of the Sobhanesvara temple at Niali, eight Vishnu images popularly known as the Madhava were kept carelessly. In order to preserve these images of iconographical importance, a sculpture-shed has been constructed inside the temple compound in the year 1971-72 with an estimated cost of Rs. 8,000 (eight thousand). Inside the shed, images have been exhibited on the pedestals.

(6) *Kenduli*—This site of Prachi Valley, having archaeological and historical back-grounds and being the birth place of the celebrated Sanskrit poet Jayadeva, contains a ruined temple made of ancient bricks enshrining two goddess having special iconographical peculiarities. Barbed wire fencings have been done on five acres of land acquired by the State Department of Archaeology. A building has been constructed in the area and has been named as the Jayadeva Cultural Centre. The conservation work of the ruined Chandi temple was taken up by Shri K. N. Mohapatra, retired Superintendent and was completed by Shri P. K. Ray, Superintendent during the year 1972-73 with a cost Rs. 40,000

In order to utilise the above building, built in the memory of Shri Jayadeva, a scheme pertaining to the collection of loose sculptures inside the compound and to preserve those in the building with an estimated amount of Rs. 2,000 was completed during the year 1972-73. This has now been converted to Jayadeva Archaeological Museum.

(17) *Pitapara*—The Siva temple known as the Angesvara and made of ancient bricks, is datable to circa 10th century A. D. It stands on the eastern bank of the Prachi, in the village Pitapara under Niali Block and was covered with wild plants and trees. The cleaning works, conducted in the year 1972-73, brought the temple to full view alongwith the lower portions of the Jagamohana and loose sculptures consisting of Siva as Mahayogi, Ganesha and Uma-Mahesvara buried under the debris.

An estimate amounting to Rs. 7,500 was framed to take up the conservation work of this temple. The conservation work of the main temple has been taken up since 1973-74 and will be completed during the financial year 1974-75.

(8) *Motia*—The ancient brick temple, datable to circa 9th century A. D., housing the deity of fourhanded Mahishamardini Durga stands in the village Motia, under Niali Block. The cleaning works of this ruined temple were taken up during 1972-73 which brought the temple to full view, previously covered with trees and wild plants. An image of Surya was recovered during the course of work. The conservation work of this ruined temple will be taken up during the financial year 1975-76.

(9) *Krishnaprasad Garh*—The Visvanatha temple, made of ancient bricks and assignable to circa 10th century A. D., stands in the village Krishnaprasadgarh under Niali Block. The cleaning work of this monument was taken up during the year 1972-73. Huge trees has spread their roots in to the structure of the temple causing deterioration to the monument. The cleaning work of the whole temple as well as the site have brought the monument to full view.

(10) *Jiunti*—The ancient site of Jiunti under P.-S. Kakatpur contains a dilapidated Siva temple known as Isvaradeva. The temple, made of ancient bricks can be assigned to circa. 9th century A.D. The cleaning work of the whole monument and excavation of the temple site were taken up during the financial year of 1973-74. As a result of these works, the lower portion of the temple alongwith loose sculptures of Parvati and Ganesha were brought to view. The conservation work of this monument will be taken up during the financial year 1974-75.

PROTECTED MONUMENTS IN THE PRACHI VALLY

The following monuments in the Prachi Valley have been declared as State Protected:—

- (1) Amaresvara temple at Ameresvara. P.-S. Nimapara.

- (2) Lakshmi-Narayan temple at Chaurashi, P.-S. Nimapara.
- (3) Chandi temple at Kenduli, P.-S. Baliana
- (4) Sobhanesvara temple at Niali
- (5) Madhava temple at Madhava
- (6) Isvaradeva temple at Jiunti, P.-S. Kakatpur

There is a proposal to declare more monuments of the Prachi Valley as State Protected and to take up their conservation and renovation work in a phased manner.

CHAPTER X

Religions of the Prachi Valley

(a) *Buddhism*—Sixth Century B. C. marks a cardinal epoch in the history of the world. Buddhism was but a natural reaction to the stiff and high philosophy of the Upanishadas which was quite un-intelligible to the ordinary mind. The leaders of Hinduism had prepared the ground which proved very fertile, for the new religion—Buddhism—to thrive on. From the survey of the Prachi Valley, it is clear beyond doubt that in spite of the wordly duel, sometimes culminating in bloodshed, Brahminism and Buddhism flourished side by side. But the process of borrowing and intermingling never stopped. The important Buddhist images of the Prachi Valley are the images of Buddha in Bhumisparśa-Mudra, now fixed on the outer wall of the Siva temple at Dakshinesvara near Kantapara Block; Tara image kept inside the Isvaradeva temple at Jiunti, P.-S. Kakatpur; Avalokitesvara image at Mudgala; Avalokitesvara image at Iataharana; inscribed Avalokitesvara image kept inside the Lakshmi-Nrishinga temple at Amaresvara (now shifted to the Orissa State Museum; Avalokitesvara image worshipped under a tree in the village Kenduli Sashana; Tara image worshipped under a tree in the village Phiriphira; Vajraghanta image worshipped under a tree at Kantikula across the Prachi river near Chaurashi; Marichi image at Astaranga; the image of Jambala at Arkavata near Nuagaon and the image of Buddha in Yogasana fixed on the outer wall of the temple of Gramesvara at Nivarana.

Among the Tantric images mention may be made of a very beautiful and unique image of Vajraghanta worshipped under a tree at Kantikula near Chaurashi. The image is three-faced and has six arms. Two of the arms carry Vajra and the bell cross with one another against the breast in Vajrahunkara style. The eight armed Marichi at Astaranga may be identified with Samkshipta Marichi. The finding of so many Buddhist sculptures in the Prachi Valley creates an impression that the Brahminism was for the time being pushed into oblivion and confined to a small section of the people. We find that at

the time of the rise of Buddhism, the worship of the popular deity 'Shri' the goddess of luck and success, spirit of the earth and the great mountains; the Digpalas; tree worship; serpent worship; river worship etc. were prevalent. The depiction of the tree and serpent etc. on the Buddhist sculptures would suggest the hypothesis of such ritualism. As for example the image of Buddha sleeping over the lap of her mother under a tree known as the Gautami and Sakshya Singha, indicates the position given to the tree worship. Such sculptures are to be found inside the compound of the Angesvara temple at Pitapada and as side deity on a Siva temple near the road from Ambapara to Jogesvarapur of the Prachi Valley.

The Buddhist Vihara and Chaitya also existed in the Prachi Valley. The Isvaradeva temple in the village Jiunti, P.-S. Kakatpur and the Angesvara temple at Pitapara, Block Niali, were built on the Buddhist Stupas as appear from the remnants of the ancient brick structures. Kuruma, an ancient site 8 kilometres to the North-East of the Sun temple, on the Valley of Kadua, a branch of the Prachi, is a Buddhist site which can be assigned to 9th Century A. D. on the basis of surface findings. The unique image of the Buddha in Bhumi-sparasa Mudra and the image of Heruka, now worshipped inside a temporary shed built on the Buddhist Chaitya, indicate the Buddhist affinities of the place. Not very far from this site is a place called Chitresvari where the river Kadua has merged with the Bay of Bengal. At this point stands half buried a light post greater in height, which might have acted as a signal, when ships were plying from the Prachi river to the sea. There is every possibility that this place Chitresvari on the sea may be Chi-li-Ta-Lo of Hiuen Tsang's accounts. Hiuen Tsang during his visit to Orissa might have come through this route.

Thus Buddhism exercised a great, almost overwhelming, influence on Hinduism of the Prachi Valley. It gave birth to neo-Hinduism which absorbed the best elements of Buddhism. It was the result of this influence that the Saivas borrowed the monistic and contemplative elements of Mahayana Buddhism; the Vaishnavas borrowed devotional and humanitarian elements and the Buddha was given a place in the Hindu Pantheon as the tenth Avatara. The image of Buddha is worshipped at many places in the Prachi Valley, somewhere as Vishnu, somewhere as Siva and somewhere as some Goddess. Thus, before the dawn of the seventh Century Buddhism lost its entity as an independent faith and Vaishnavism finally incorporated the faith of the Buddha in to its present stock.

(b) *Jainism*—A systematic exploration work conducted in the Prachi Valley, reveals that Jainism and Budhism flourished simultaneously with Saivism, Saktism and Vashnavism. A number of Jaina images are lying scattered in various parts of the Prachi Valley. At some places they are kept inside the Siva temples of the Valley. Visitors as well as scholars are in confusion when they see the Jaina images inside the ruined temples of the Prachi Valley. These Jaina images can in no way be connected with the dating of the temples where they are found.

The findings of Jaina images inside the Siva temples of Adasapur of the Prachi Valley creates an impression that Jainism flourished side by side with Saivism. A very beautiful image of Rishabhadeva (21"×11") has been kept inside the ruined Swapanesvara temple, assignable to circa 7th Century A. D. at Adasapur. He is being surrounded by twenty-four Tirthankaras, twelve on either side. The peculiarities of the image will lead one to identify Rishabhanath as Mulanayaka. This indicates that Adinatha was the temple cult of this locality and a temple enshrining this deity might have been situated in the vicinity of the Sovanesvara temple. The temple dedicated to this unique Jaina image might have been collapsed incourse of centuries. The Lanchan bull is depicted below. The pedestal of this image has been carefully carved at and flanked by two lions. Just above the lion throne, three lotus pedestals have been placed and on the middle one the image stands in Kayostavarga posture. He is completely nude but is bestowed with a divine grace and with anatomical perfections. On the two other lotus pedestals, placed on the lion throne, are found two standing images of Bharata and Bahavali with fly whisks in their heads and busy in rendering services to the Adinatha. Divine musicians with musical instruments have also been depicted.

It may be said that this image is one of the perfect representation of Rishabhanatha, depicting most of his divine attributes. These attributes were noticed in the Jaina image which is slightly damaged and has been kept inside the Nilakanthesvara temple of Adasapur. Eight Jaina divinities have been depicted on both the sides of the image. A female attendant stands to his left side with some indistinct objects. An umbrella has been depicted just above the head of the image. Divine musicians have been depicted on the top playing with musical instrument, Vina. These above two images, found in two Siva temples of contemporary date, suggest that Adasapur of the Prachi Valley was the principal centre of Jainism during 6th-7th Century A. D.

A miniature image of Rishabhanatha was noticed in the Visvamitra Ashrama near Kakatpur and a similar type of small mutilated image was lying near the Bharadwaja Ashrama (both the Ashramas situated in a horizontal line of the Prachi Valley). It creates an impression that Jainism of this area was not in the state of decay when Shaktism predominated the place during the 9th century A. D. and the goddess Mangala (the temple of Mangala near to the site) was worshipped as the Pistha Devi of the Valley from that time.

A very beautiful image of Parsvanatha is to be found inside the temple of Gramesvara of the Prachi Valley 5 kilometers from Nayahat. This image has been disfigured and locally called as the Kamadeva. Pairs of Yakshya-Yakshini images pertaining to Jainism is to be found in several sites of the Prachi Valley. An image of Yakshya associated with Neminatha, one of the Jaina Tirthankaras, is to be found in the Antarvedi Matha (at the place where the Prachi, Saraswati and Manikarnika meet) near Banamalipur of the Prachi Valley.

Jainism got a strong footing on the sacred soil of Orissa during the reign of her worthy son Kharavela who extended the Kalinga Empire from the Ganga to Godavari. Towards the last part of his life he became a staunch devotee of Jainism and like Chandragupta Maurya spent his last days as an ascetic by excavating caves in Khandagiri and Udayagiri hills for himself and Jaina monks.

We have numerous remains of Jaina art and architecture scattered all over Northern India. It has been aptly remarked that "the Hindu art owes to them a great number of its most remarkable monuments. In the domain of architecture in particular that have reached a degree of perfection which leaves them almost without a rival". (Studies in Jainism and Buddhism in Mithila, Page. 99). Like the Buddhist tradition, the Jaina traditions also refer to the practice of erecting stupas over the ashes of the Jainas. One such stupa existed at Vaisali dedicated to the Jaina Muni Suvrata and another at Mathura dedicated to Suparsvanatha. Thus, stupa worship in Jainism seems to have been a predominant feature. So there is a possibility that the loose Jaina sculptures found in the Prachi Valley might have been installed inside such Jaina Stupas.

(c) *Saivism*—Prior to the development of Vaishnavism on the sacred soil of the Prachi, the entire valley was flooded with rapid flow of Saivism from one end to other. The findings of so many images of Siva in different poses of Ardhanarisvara, Uma-Mahesvara, Hari-Hara, Vairaba, Siva as Mahayogi and

Siva-tandava, etc., would give a full picture of the development of this religion. The minds of the rulers most of the Buddhist establishments were subsequently converted to Saiva institution. The present dilapidated brick monument known as Isvaradava at Jiunti, P.-S. Kakatpur and the Angesvara Siva temple made of ancient bricks datable to circa 10th century A. D., at Pitapara are the living examples, where Buddhists institutions have been converted to Saiva pitha. Besides, the tide of Saivism also affected the Jaina institutions of the valley. It is evident from the Sopnesvara Siva temple and the Malikes-Siva temple in the village Adasapur. The finding of so many Jaina images in these areas would no doubt suggest that these Jaina institutions were later on converted to Siva temples. Many of the Siva temples have survived uptill now in dilapidated condition and some of them have survived uptill now in perfect condition as a witness to the rising and development of Saivism in this valley. No other religion was so popular as that of the Saivism in this Prachi Valley.

From the point from where it originates, till it merges with Bay of Bengal, the entire bed of the Prachi contains so many Siva Lingas, which would be out of human imagination. The places like Tinisulia, Phulanakhara, Mahidharapada, Nadiagurudi, Sundargrama, Kantapara, Kuanrpur, Gangapada, Kurangasasana, Jharilo, Dhakhinesvara, Bagalapur, Adasapur, Kenduli, Trivenighat, Kantapara, Gobind-ramapatna, Kapilesvara, Amanakuda, Niali, Pitapara, Krishna-prasadgarh, Bandesvara, Amaresvara, Chaurashi, Jogesvarapur, Paidapatna, Bolaragarh, Nilakanthapur, Somesvara, Jiunti, Lataharana, Nivarana, Suhagapur, Tola, Utpalesvara, Nashikesvara, Muktesvara, Narua-Sankarapur, Kuhudi and Guduvanei, etc. are full of antiquities relating to the rise and growth of saivism.

Besides, a brief description is given below about the Dwadasha Sambhu.

Dwadasha Sambhu

(1) *Kapilesvara*—The Siva temple made of sand stone blocks in Pidha character stands on the eastern bank of the Prachi in the place called KTPILA-MUNI-ASHRAMA. (Detail description in Chapter II).

(2) *Go-Karnesvara*—The Siva temple known as the Gokarnesvara is to be found on the eastern bank of the Prachi in the village Kantapara, Block Niali (See Chapter II).

(3) *Vilesvara*—The renovated Siva temple built on the ruins of the collapsed ancient brick temple known as the Vilesvara is on the western bank of the Prachi in the village Paidapatna near Banamalipur (See chapter II).

(4) *Sobhanesvara*—The famous Sobhanesvara temple datable to circa 12th century A. D. stands on the northern bank of the Prachi at Niali (See chapter II).

(5) *Ramesvara*—The renovated Siva temple known as the Ramesvara is in the village Tola, on the northern bank of the Prachi, is said to have been established by Sri Ramachandra of the Ramayana (See chapter II).

(6) *Angesvara*—The ancient brick temple known as the Angesvara is situated on the northern bank of the Prachi in the village Pitapada (See chapter II).

(7) *Amaresvara*—The ancient brick temple datable to circa 10th century A. D. is located in the village Amaresvara on Nimapara-Kakatpur road (See chapter II).

(8) *Gramesvara*—The renovated Siva temple known as the Gramesvara is situated in the village Nibharana, P. S. Govindpur. (See chapter II).

(9) *Somesvara*—On the ruins of collapsed temple a renovated temple known as the Somesvara has been built very close to Kakatpur-Astranga road (See chapter II).

(10) *Siddhesvara*—The original temple known as the Siddhesvara in the village Mudgala Madhava, assignable to circa 10th century A. D., has been collapsed. Recently, the villagers have constructed a new temple (See chapter II).

(11) *Nrityesvara*—The dilapidated brick temple known as the Nrityesvara is to be found in the village Nasikesvara on the eastern bank of the Prachi (See chapter II).

(12) *Muktesvara*—The temple of Muktesvara is located at the confluence of the Prachi and the Bay of Bengal (See chapter II).

Among the large number of Siva images lying in the Prachi Valley, mention may be made of the images of Uma-Mahesvara. The image of Uma-Mahesvara (1·3" × 11") carved in sand stone and kept inside the Vilesvara Temple at Paidapatna is the representation of artistic expression of Orissan sculptures. This image

can be assigned to circa 8th-9th century A. D. A similar image has recently been discovered inside the compound of the Bhavani Sankara Temple in Bhubanesvara. Another beautiful image, kept as side deity of the Amaresvara Temple at Amaresvara, carved out of black chlorite stone can be assigned to circa 10th century A. D. Besides, other loose sculptures are to be found in the compound of the Angesvara Temple at Pitapara. Vandarswara Temple at Vandeeswara, Dhakhineswara Temple at Dhakineswara, Jayadeva Archaeological Museum at Kenduli, Svapnesvara Temple at Adasapur, Gokarnesvara Temple at Kantapara, Niali inside the compound of Mangala Temple at Kakatpur, Gramesvara Temple at Nivarana, Isvaradeva Temple at Jiunti, Somesvara Temple, Somesvara, Sidhesvara Temple near Mudgala-Madhava, etc.

The Ardhanarisvara images are also to be found in this valley. Other Ardhanarisvara images are to be found in the Gramaspara Temple at Lataharana and is in damaged condition, inside the compound of the Angesvara Temple at Pitapara. The images of Bhairava holding blood pot in one hand and danda in the other hand have also been found in this Valley. Such images are to be noticed in the temple compound of Somesvara near Kakatpur, Amaresvara Temple at Amaresvara, Gramesvara Temple at Nivarana, etc. Besides, there are also instances of findings of the images of Siva as Mahayogi in this Valley. Two such images have been found during the course of cleaning and excavation work of the temple site of Angesvara in the village Pitapara. Besides, an image of three-faced and four armed Siva seated in Yogasana posture have been depicted on the outer wall of the Somesvara Temple at Somesvara near Kakatpur.

All these facts would no doubt suggest that Saisism achieved a strong footings in the sacred soil of the Prachi river.

(d) *Saktism*—Saktism has a special characteristic, merely the worship of the Saktis of the female deities with its necessary matter (of the "Five true things" the worship in the Chakra or "Circle" of the initiates and so on). For the rest, its dogmatics or if it be preferred, its metaphysics as well as its ethics are altogether those of Brahminism, of which also the essential ritual institutions have been preserved. In dogmatics it is the teachings of the orthodox systems of the Vedanta and Samkhya, which meet us also in the Tantras clearly enough, sometimes even under the trash senseless magic formulas. And as far as ethics are concerned, the moral teaching in the chapter viii of the

Mahanirvana Tantra reminds us from beginning to the end of Manu's Code, the Bhagavata Gita, and the Buddhist sermons. Notwithstanding, the fact that in the ritual proper of the Sakta, there are no caste differences but in Sakti worship, all castes as well as the sexes are equal, yet, in harmony with Brahmanism, the castes are recognised with this modification that a fifth caste is added to the four usual ones, which springs from the mixture of the four older ones, namely, the caste of the Samanyas.

Saktism played a predominant role in the Prachi Valley. The inhabitants of the Valley underwent different experiences of the cult images dealing with various aspects of the gods and goddesses. The different forms of Durga beginning from two hands to twelve hands were worshipped in the Prachi Valley through Ages.

Chronologically and from iconographical points of view, the two handed image of Mahisamardini Durga is older and can be assigned to the Post-Gupta period or even earlier. The findings of two handed Mahisamardini Durga are very rare in comparison to other forms of Durga. Unlike Jajpur of the Vitarani Valley becoming predominant for the worship of two-handed Mahisamardini Durga as Viraja, the place Somesvara, close to Kakatpur previously containing the image of two-handed Mahisamardini Durga might have occupied the same position.

The four-handed image of Mahisamardini Durga begun to be worshipped as Pistha-Devi. A very beautiful image of four handed Mahisamardini Durga is being worshipped inside a dilapidated ancient brick temple assignable to circa 9th century A. D. in the village Motia, P. S. Govindpur, Block Niali. She holds Chakra and Cunch in her upper two hands while the remaining two lower hands are engaged in piercing the trident into the heart of Mahishasura. The dazzling appearance and the pose of attacking the demon create sensational feelings in the minds of the visitors. There is also a four-handed Mahisamardini Durga measuring 8" × 6" worshipped alongwith the Madhava at Madhava and accordingly the god Madhava is known as Durga-Madhvy. The Prachi Valley was also enriched with the worship of Sadabhuja-Mahisamardini Durga. One such image is to be found at Astranga worshipped as the Gramadevati. The image measuring 22'-7" × 1'-3" holds swords, arrow, bow, shield, pierces the trident by one of her right hands and presses the mouth of the demon by one hand.. The appearance and other characteristics of this image is different from that of the Sadabhuja Mahisamardini Durga worshipped as Dwaravasini on the bank of Vidusarovara in Bhubaneswar.

The worship of Astabhuja Mahisamardini Durga become popular during the Bhauma rule in Orissa. Most of the Ashtabhuja Mahisamardini Durga were being worshipped according to Tantric rites, due to the predominance of the Vajrayana cult of which Orissa was one of the chief centre of such activities. The Astabhuja Mahisamardini Durga are to be noticed at Mangalapur near Kakatpur. Amanakuda near Niali and outer wall of the Ramesvara Temple near Nayahat. In her right hands, she holds Sankha, Chakra, Vana, Dhanu and Sula, Khadga, Khetaka and dhalla in the left hands.

But the worship of Dasabhuja Mahisamardini Durga was very common and popular in the Prachi Valley. The findings of so many Dasabhuja Mahisamardini Durga either as Pistha-Devi or as side deity bear close testimony to the popularity of such worship. Most of the images so far found in the Prachi Valley are common in iconographical features. In right hands, she holds Khadga, Ankusa, bow, chakra, trident while in left hands she holds khetaka, parsu, arrow, bell and snake. Sometimes, she is depicted as piercing the trident into the heart of the demon by her two hands. The Dasabhuja Mahisamardini Durga is worshipped as Pistha-Devi at Ambapara, Somesvara, Adasapur, Dalavada, Pitapara, Jatabarana and Nivarana and as side deity inside the Sobhanesvara Temple at Niali and at Jogesvarapur. But the Dasabhuja Mahisamardini Durga worshipped as Pistha-Devi at Ambapara near Chaurashi not only suggests the date of the image but also of the artistic representation of the Orissan craftsmanship. The image measuring 2'-6"×1'-2" and made of chlorite stone is worshipped inside a thatched house built on the ancient ruins of a collapsed brick temple at the very out set of the village. She holds in her five right hands sword, arrow from the quiver, trident pierced into the head of the demon, Chakra and Sakti struck to his back while in the five left hands, she holds bow, dagger, shield, pasa and snake. Two lines of inscription, palaeographically assignable to circa 9th -10th century A. D., are engraved below the pedestal. The inscription runs as follows:— 'Yubarakin Anna Bhagarika Utakirnni' indicating that this image of Bhattarika was carved out by the sculpture Yubaraka. The name Bhattarika is also applied to Durga, particularly to her Dasabhuja forms. The Dasabhuja Mahisamardini Durga is worshipped inside a temple as Bhattarika on the bank of the Mahanadi near Baramba.

So far as the Sakta cult is concerned, the Prachi Valley is famous for the worship of the goddess Mangala which uptill now has retained the sanctity of the place Kakatpur, the antiquarian

remains of which may go back to 9th century A.D. The popular deity Mangala is unique in every respect and very rare in iconographical world. She sits in Lalitasana on a lotus pedestal. In her upper right hand, she holds the full-moon (purnnachandra) while the lotus flower is being held in the upper left hand. The rosary consisting of twenty-seven beads (probably representing twenty-seven Nakhyatras) is being held by the lower right hand while the lower left is shown in pose of counting. The whole body of the deity is artistically carved. The iconographical features of the goddess Mangala do not tally with the iconographical descriptions given in various texts and as such represents the unique specimen of Orissan Art. The bronze bell hangs inside the Jagamohana of the temple is engraved with a legend-dated 15th May, 1927 indicating the Portuguese interference in the religious affairs of the place during their course of trade in coastal areas of Orissa and their settlement at Kakatpur via Prachi river. Kakatpur must have been a predominant place of religious centre of Orissa, which attracted the Portuguese sailors to reach the place through the river Prachi. The kirtimukha design is depicted just above the tri-foil torana. This image of iconographical importance is considered to be the Ista Devi of the Prachi Valley and one of the Sakta Pithas in Orissa. She is worshipped as Parama-Vaishnavi.

The ideas based on traditional accounts about the import of this image from the Singhala Deepa or Cyclone are not based on any historical background. The carvings of the image is purely of Orissan Art. Though the iconographical features of this unique deity do not tally with the descriptions given in the various religion texts of the Mangala, yet there is every possibility that the Orissan sculpturers might have concentrated wholeheartedly to make this image more successful and more artistic uncommon in other images of the same name.

The Prachi Valley was also famous for the different Chamunda images scattered in different areas. In some places these Chamunda images are worshipped as Pitha-Devi and in some places as side deities and in some places are lying carelessly. The Dashhuja Chamunda worshipped as Jagulai in the village Chaurashi deserves close study. She sits in Ardhaparnyanka attitude or a dead body over a double lotus pedestal. She holds in her four right hands Dambaru, sword, skull-cup, dagger and one hand represented in abhayamudra. She is in the pose of counting rosary with upper most left hand while in the remaining Left hands she holds khatvanga, trident, chhinna, Mastake and one hand in the pose of Varada-Mudra. Two Jackles are depicted near the dead body.

The Astabhuja Chamunda worshipped as Charchikei at Amaresvara, bear close resemblance to that of the same image worshipped in the village Kundesvara in the district of Cuttack.

Unlike the various forms of the Mahisamardini Durga, the images of Chamunda range from fourhanded to twelve handed. The four handed images of Chamunda are to be found at Pitapara, Motia and Lataharana. The Sadabhuja Chamunda images have been located inside the temple compound of Kapilesvara at Kapila-Muni Ashrama and under a Mango tree near the Sabha Mandapa of Tulasipur. The eight armed images of Chamunda are seen at Somesvara and the northern wall of the Mangala temple at Kakatpur. The Dasabhuja image of Chamunda is to be found under a thatched shed worshipped as Chanda-Ghanta near the Sobhanesvara temple at Niali. The worship of this image of Chamunda is based on various traditional accounts and notable description in the Prachi Mahatmya about her disguise as Gopaluni.

The findings of so many Chamunda images in the Prachi Valley, clearly suggest the prevalent of Tantrism, particularly of Kapalika form of worship during 8th-9th century A. D.

Another Tantric Goddess of the Prachi Valley is the unique image of Varahi (4'6"×3'4") worshipped in the village Chaurashi. She sits in Lalitasana upon her mount the buffalo. Her whole body is decorated with ornaments of artistic designs. The wearing of a cloth is beautifully depicted. This sort of the image of Varahi is not to be found in any part of Orissa. Generally, the images of Varahi, with a baby on her lap, is to be found among the Sapta-Matruka groups datable to circa 9th-10th century A. D. But this depiction of Varahi without holding any baby may tentatively suggest its earlier representation. Besides, the temple in which the image is enshrined is similar to that of the Vaitala temple of Bhubanesvara datable to circa 8th century A. D. The depiction of the Ramayana stories on the outer wall of the Varahi temple may also date back the temple to the earlier group temples in Orissa. All these facts and the existence of this unique monument, give a clear indication of the popularity of the Varahi cult in the Prachi Valley.

The worship of Dwadasabhujee Mahisamardini Durga is later in period and rare in comparison to the Dasabhuja Durga. The present temple of Mangala at Kakatpur is a monumental evidence to the popularity of Saktism in the Prachi Valley up till now.

(e) *VAISHNAVISM*—The concept of Vishnu and the ramification of the iconographic forms of this deity constitutes one of the noblest themes in the realm of Indian images. The development of the concept during the millennia right from the time of the Vedic hymns to the time of later day Silpa texts presents a large and colourful picture of the deity in different forms to which a sculptor and painter from the earliest times have added their visual interpretation in different media, creating sometimes their own interpretation of ideas recording concepts for which texts do not necessarily supply a literary picture, meticulously sometimes conforming to contemplation hymns and keeping understanding of the texts better than they exist.

The history of Vashnavism had a long history of evolution before it attained its final state in the medieval period. Various petty cults and thought processes had contributed to it and their synthesis finally brought into existence a religious system which was destined to play a very important role in the religious life of the whole nation. It is true that the whole religion derives its name from the God Vishnu, but that is only a later development. Besides his connection with several Gods in the Vedas and the Brahmanas, the most important phase in the evolution of this religion is his identification with Vasudeva in the Mahabharata—an assimilation with a cult that centred round bhakti or devotion.

The usual emblems, associated with Vasudeva or Vishnu are the conch, the disc, the mace, the lotus, the abhaya or the Varada-mudra. The conchshell, being a precious object in itself, is considered to be a nidhi or treasure, signifying prosperity in the Mahabharata (MBH, XIV, 1924). The disc, a symbol of universality and power is also prominently adopted in Buddhism so also the lotus, a mark of divine purity. The mace, a very prominent weapon signifying strength, was also attributed to him. The abhaya and the Varada-Mudra would naturally find their place in the iconography of a beneficent God, like Vishnu. Stylistically the early images of Vishnu invariably have the lower right hand represented in a very peculiar way. The palm is stretched out as in the Varada-Mudra and only the last pores of the fingers are bent to support a roundish object, presumably the lotus. The Krishana and early Gupta images are stout and short and all the four hands are held up above the shoulders. In the Gupta period the position of the hands underwent certain changes. The main two hands are lowered down to the waist and with the introduction of the ayudha-Purusas the upper two hands also came down to the rest on the head of

the Ayudha-Purushas so much so that they look like the lower most pair of hands. The main pair of hands is always considered to be the lower in the four armed images of Vishnu. The images of the medieval period tend to be more ornamental than Gods of the Gupta period. The representation of the emblems is very stylised and a definite attempt can be seen to make them very decorative and beautiful. The presence of the Ayudha-Purushas becomes very frequent. The Ayudha-Purushas are represented in a pot-bellied dwarfish form holding the emblems in their hands, standing in a tribhanga posture. According to the description given in different texts, the four-armed images are supposed to hold the four usual emblems of Vishnu, viz., the conch, the lotus, the mace and the disc, but as is clear from the images the sculptures very often take the liberty to represent the lower right hand of the God in the Varada of Abhaya-Mudra.

In all probability the earlier Vishnu images were two handed as the early texts have described him with two hands only. The earliest reference is in the Adiparvam of the Mahabharata where Narayan is described as holding the disc and the mace only, implying thereby the possession of only two hands. The Brihatsamhita also refers to the two handed variety together with the multiple handed ones. If the God is two handed the right hand should be in the Abhaya-Mudra and the left one should be holding the Conch. The Vishnudarmottaram also describes the type similar to that of the Adipurana. The Matsya Purana and the Samarariganasutradhara also suggest that the image of Vishnu could be two handed.

The early four-handed images of Vishnu date back to as early as the Kushana period. The majority of the Vishnu images of the Gupta period have their lower right hand in the Abhaya-Mudra the upper right holds or rests on the mace, the upper left rests on the disc and the lower left holds the Conch. The later texts on iconography have acknowledged twenty four varieties of standing Vishnu images, giving each of them a particular iconographical pattern. In fact the concept of the twenty-four forms of Vishnu seems to have been conceived right from the time of the Mahabharata. The only distinguishing point of difference between these images being merely the order of emblems held by the four hands, each variety deserves a separate description. The names of all the twenty-four forms of Vishnu are mentioned in the list of the thousand names of Vishnu enumerated in the Mahabharata, but their emblems etc. are not

described. The order in texts does not tally with one another and hence the choice of the right order becomes difficult to determine. The earliest descriptions of the twenty-four forms appear in the Agni Purana. The Rupamandana and the Aparajita-preeha lists are the same as the Agni Purana, and hence that list could be considered more popular than the lists of other texts.

The Prachi Valley is rich in findings of fourhanded images of Vishnu in different forms of iconographical features as described in various religious texts. The iconographical features of the majority of the Vishnu images run as follows: Upper right hand holds Chakra, Sankha in the upper left hand, Gada in the lower left hand and the Padma is symbolically represented in the lower right hand. These sort of images possessing the above iconographical feature are worshipped as Madhava in different sites of the Prachi Valley. Such images are so common that it appears that the Madhava cult had a predominant influence in the religious life of the people of the Prachi Valley. Ten such images are to be found inside the temple compound of Sobhane-svara at Niali (now preserved inside a sculptured shed constructed by Orissa State Department of Archaeology). Besides, the following sites of the Prachi Valley contain the images of Vishnu as per the above description and commonly known as Madhava—Two Vishnu images affixed inside the Jagamohana of the Brahma temple at Niali; Vishnu image kept under a tree at Korakara; the unique Vishnu image worshipped as Lalita-Madhava at Chahata; two Vishnu images kept inside the Jagamohana of the Amare-svara temple at Amaresvara; two Vishnu images worshipped inside a thatched room at Pitapara; the Vishnu image (4'-6") inside the Natamandira of the Ramesvara temple at Suhagpur; Vishnu images worshipped in miniature temple inside the compound of the Gramesvara temple at Nivarana; the Vishnu image worshipped inside a renovated temple as Nila-Madhava at Nilakanthapur. Vishnu images inside the temple compound of the Mangala at Kakatapur; Vishnu images inside the Jagamohan of the Gramesvara temple at Lataharana; the beautiful Vishnu image worshipped as Mudgala-Madhava at the village Mudgala-Madhava; the Vishnu images inside the Jagamohana of the Somesvara temple at Somesvara; the Vishnu image inside the Jagamohana of the Visvanatha temple at Krishnaprasadgarh; the Vishnu images at Kenduli; the Vishnu image worshipped as Madhava at Adasapur; the Vishnu image inside the Gokarne-svara temple at Kantapara; the Vishnu image in the village Bolara; the Vishnu image worshipped as Madhava in the village Raghunathpur, P.-S. Kakatpur; the Vishnu image known as the Madhava inside the ruined Siva temple at Gambharipada, P.-S. Kakatpur; and the Vishnu image inside the Siva temple at

Nasikesvara. All these images give a clear picture of the popularity of Madhava cult in the Prachi vally, which has survived uptill now. There is every possibility that the place in between Niali and Madhava was the principal centre of the Madhava cult of the Prachi Valley. The Madhava temple built during the Ganga rule in Orissa enshrining the unique and dazzling deity worshipped as Madhava stands as a monumental evidence of the predominance of such cult not only in the Prachi Valley but also in whole of Orissa.

But from the point of view of descriptions of emblems in different texts held in the four hands of Vishnu, it would be difficult on the parts of the students of iconography to identify such images as per above description as Madhava. Such descriptions of Vishnu images would tend to identify them as Vasudeva on the basis of descriptions given in the Agni Purana, Rupaman dana and the Aparajitaprccha lists. If these images are identified as Vasudeva, a form of Vishnu, it would suggest that the worship of Vasudeva was prevalent much earlier to the worship of other Brahminical deities in the Prachi Valley. It is the Vasudeva concept of Vishnu that has the earliest representation in sculptures and description in inscriptions mentioning temple dedication of the deity and soforth. The Vasudeva was differently designated as Bhagabata, Sattvata, Ekantika or Pancaratra. The earlier reference profounding this religion is the Narayana section of the Mahabharata. Other literary evidences also corroborate the prevalence of the Vasudeva worship before the beginning of the Christian era. According to Curticua the soldiers of King Puru carried the image of Heracles and instatalled it in front of the river Vitasta. This Heracles refers to the image of Vasudeva-Krishna according to some scholars (Bhandarkar, R.G. Vaisnavism, Savism and minor Religious sects, p. 26). The people arround Vitasta were worshippers of Vasudeva as indicated by Ptolemy (Mc Crindle, Ptolemy, p. 121). Panini in his Astadhyayi refers to the worship of Vasudeva. In the Budhist literature we find references to this cult. (S. Jayaswal, Early History of Vasnavism). The Besnagara Garuda pillar inscription at Vidisa records the memorial Garudadhvaja, set up in honour of Vasudeva by Heliodorous, who must have ruled in 2nd century B. C. This would suggest the prevalence of the Bhagavata cult and specially of the worship of Vasudeva. The Nanghat Cave inscription of Naganika corroborates the fact that the worship of Vasudeva was strongly prevalent in India a couple of centuries before the Christian era (D.C. Sircar Select inscriptions). In the third century B. C., Asokan edicts, specially No. 12, command the people to pay due respect to the other religions. According to Dr. Banerjee, the conclusion that the Bhagavata

cult also existed in the time of Asoka, may not be far-fetched (J. N. Banerjee, *Pancopasana*, in Bengali, 1960, pp.-57-58).

All these evidences amply justifies the prevalence of Vaisnavism in the form of Vasudeva worship. In such case the Vaisnavism in the form of Vasudeva worship played a predominant role on the sacred soil of the Prachi Valley. Later on this importance was reduced and was gradually incorporated with the Madhava form of worship which has survived uptill now.

According to the descriptions of other texts the images of Vishnu are of six, eight, ten, twelve and fourteen hands. The *Brihatsambhita* and the *Matsya Purana* give description of eight handed Vishnu images. The right hand should hold the dagger, the mace, the arrow and the lotus while the left hands hold the bow, the shield, the conch and the disc. The eight handed images of Vishnu have been preserved in the Mathura Museum, belonging to early Gupta period. Though the images of six-handed, ten handed images of Vishnu have not so far been found in the Prachi Valley, yet I have come across an eight handed standing image of Vishnu appearing as side deity in north in the Lakshminarayan temple at Nuapatna across the Prachi river near Tola. The image measuring 2×1.2" stands in samabhanga pose. The four right hands hold sword, arrow, wheel, club while the four left hands hold bow, conch, mace and pasa. The Garuda is depicted below. I have indentified this image as Vaikunthanatha. The *Visnudharmottara Purana*, another text belonging to the Gupta period, describes the eight handed variety of the Vaikunthanatha image as follows:— "Vishnu, the gods of the gods, should be represented as seated on Garuda wearing a celestial yellow garment with Kaustubha brightening his bosom and with all sorts of ornaments. His complexion should be like that of a cloud ladden with water. He has eight arms. Some times he has four faces. He wears Vanamala and carries in his right hands the arrow, the rosary and the club etc. and in his left hands the shield, the bow etc.". The textual and the iconographical evidence point to the fact that Vaikunthanatha might have originated in the Gupta period. Most of the stone images are the standing images of Vaikunthanatha.

The Association of Vishnu with the serpent Sesa has its roots in the concept of Narayana referred to in Mahabharata. In the Santi Parva of the Mahabharata, Vishnu is depicted as reclining on the coils of the serpent. The serpent Sesa is recognised as a form of Vishnu (*Mahabharata*, XII, 47, 48) In short "Vishnu sleeps on Sesa and Vishnu is Sesa, Sesa is the form of supreme

being (Gonda Aspects of Early Vaisnavism. p. 152). The theme of Sesasayi was quite familiar to the people and the artists of the Gupta period. A very fine example of Sesasayi Vishnu has been preserved on the Gupta temple at Deogaon. The sixth century image of Vishnu-Sesasayi is still surviving on the top of the gateway of the main shrine of the Rajivalochana temple at Rajim. A very beautiful image of Sesasayi Vishnu is to be found inside the Jagamohana of the Somesvara temple at Somesvara near Kakatpur of the Prachi Valley. Vishnu is shown elegantly reclining on the serpent bed with his right leg slightly bent and his upper left hand supporting the head, canopied by seven serpent-hoods. His lower left hand is resting on the bed, the upper right is touching the canopy and the lower right is supported on his right knee. His right leg is stretched on the lap of Bhudevi, Brahma sits on a small stalk issuing from the navel of Vishnu. This image can be assigned to 6th century A. D. on the basis of its iconographical features. The Sesasayi form of Vishnu found in the Dasavatara temple at Deogarh and the similar image in the Udayagiri Cave at Bhubaneswar have led D. Allain to place these images as early as the 5th century A. D. suggesting thereby the prevalence of this iconographic form of Vishnu in that period. (D. Allain., Hindu Polytheism, London, 1964, pl. XI).

The Prachi Valley was fortunate to have the Varaha Cult, a form of Vasnavism, which was prevalent in India from the time of Guptas, as clear from the iconographic representations of the Varaha images. Temples dedicated to the worship of Varaha came into existence. The Stone Pillar inscription from Eran in Central India, belonging to about 5th century A. D., mentions a temple of Varaha (ASIAR, 1923-24, pp 29-30). The copper plate inscription of the time of Buddhagupta, found from Damodarapur in Bengal records the creation of Sveta Varaha Temple, some where in Nepal (I.H.Q. Vol. XXI, p. 56 ff). The shrine of Varaha temple of the Gupta still exists at Deogarh (MASI No. 70, p 2). It is also clear from other records that the Varaha Cult had attained the royal patronage and was able to maintain its high position continually till the late Medieval period.

It appears that the Varaha Cult gained the royal patronage during the Ganga rule in Orissa. The Varaha Temple assignable to circa 12th century A. D. at Adasapur of the Prachi Valley, stands as a monumental evidence of the prevalence of such cult in those days. The Varahanath temples on the bank of Vaitarani at Jajpur and on the bank of the Bhargabhi in the village Singhapur, near Chandanpur, corroborate the above suggestion

The renovated Varaha Temple of Adasapur built on the ancient ruins contains a very beautiful image of Varahanatha measuring 4' in height. In comparison to other Varaha images worshipped in the above two temples, the Varaha Image of Adasapur surpasses them so far as iconographical aspects are concerned. The Varaha cult was so much popular in this area, that the present village of Varahapur, close to Adasapur exists as a token of memory to that effect. The Prachi Valley is abundant in finding of other Varaha images in places like, Kuanapur, Sundergram Niali, Madhava, Kakatpur, Visvamisra Ashrama, Somesvara, Nibharana, Trivenighat, Kenduli etc. All these findings clearly indicate that there were other Varaha Temples in the Prachi Valley which have Collapsed in course of centuries.

The Prachi Valley has also witnessed the Lakshmi-Narayana Cult. The sculptural evidences show that Lakshmi was first associated with the Sesa-Narayana form of Vishnu, and only in the later period her association with Vishnu was emphasized. A Lakshmi-Narayana image of excellent workmanship in chlorite stone is to be found in the village Chaurashi. Lakshmi and Narayana richly ornamented are seated on a double lotus pedestal. He holds in his upper right hand a full bloomed lotus stem while his left hand (though some of the fingers are broken) is shown in Varada-Mudra. His upper left hand holds Chakra while the lower left hand delicately touches the left breast of his Consort. Lakshmi embraces her Lord with her right arm and in her left hand, she holds lotus. Her head is adorned with a very peculiar type of Coiffure. Her right leg is hanging down the throne while the left one is a little tucked up. Below are the depiction of elephant, Garuda in the pose of prayer, attendants holding swords and few attendants in the mood of praying the image of Lakshmi-Narayana. The artistic ornamentation of whole bodies of Lakshmi and Narayana are of excellent craftsmanship demonstrating the artistic skill of Orissan sculptures. Similar images of Lakshmi-Narayana have been preserved on the Verandah of a matha at Thakurapatna near Tola of the Prachi Valley. A detailed survey has led to the conclusion that the seated image of Lakshmi-Narayana are more popular and common than the standing images. The Skanda Purana describes Lakshmi seated to the left of Narayana who holds the Disc and the Conch in his hands with the other left arm he embraces Lakshmi. Though there are earlier images of Lakshmi-Narayana assignable to circa 9th-10th century A. D., the images found in the above places of the Prachi Valley can be assigned to circa 12th-13th century A. D.

The worship of Rama, prevalent in ancient days, too survived in the Prachi Valley. A very beautiful image of Rama measuring 2' in height holding bow and arrow is worshipped inside a thatched house near Kudapatna. The image is carved of black chlorite stone. The facial expression is very much interesting to observe. The iconographical features of Rama have been described in the Vishnu Dharmottara, Agnipurana and Ramayana. There is every possibility that the Rama images might have been carved during the Gupta period in India. The Ramayan scenes depicted in various ancient temples can be dated to Gupta and Post-Gupta period. In this connexion, it may be mentioned that there might have been a temple in this Prachi Valley enshrining the image of Rama described above. The temple has collapsed but the image worshipped inside it has survived as a token memory to the Rama cult of those days.

The Prachi Valley was also popular so far as the Krishna Cult concerned. Unlike the four handed image of Vishnu, popularly known as Madhava, two handed images of Krishna carved out of black chlorite stones and in the pose of holding Vanshi are still to be found in the different sites of the Prachi Valley. The living monument enshrining such deity is the Radhakanta Matha of Nuagaon near Niali. Inside this Matha a very beautiful image of Krishna measuring 4' in height in the pose of Vanshidhari is being worshipped along with the bronze image of Radha. There are also two other subsidiary images of Krishna kept inside the Matha. There are other images of Krishna which are found worshipped along with the image of Jagannath in places like Kurangasasana, Pratapanagara, Barahapur, Antarvedi Matha (Triveni), Pandavakuda, Nivarana and Manikarnika Matha near Pitapara. All these images of Krishna can be dated to circa 13th century A. D., when Vaisnavism had got a strong footing in the soil of Orissa.

The Prachi Valley is famous for the finding of Dasavatara images in different places. The finding of Dasavatara images had great influence in the mind of Sri Jayadeva, who propagated the doctrine giving topmost place to Shri Krishna as an Avatara. In the theory of Sri Jayadeva, Krishna has been given the place of an Avatara and round him the other incarnations have started. Thus it appears that the Prachi Valley was famous for the worship of Dasavatara images in various forms. There is every possibility that the celebrated Sanskrit poet Jayadeva was born at Kenduli at Prachi Valley when the worship of such images were already prevalent in this valley. Though he was a great devotee of Madhava, yet his depiction of the theory of ten incarna-

tions suggest that he gave top most priority to Shri Krishna, who is taken as Avataree by him not as Avatara. There is every possibility that he was influenced by the Vasudeva Krishna Cult prevalent much earlier to that of other forms of Vaisnavism in Orissa. We have already discussed that the four-handed image of Vihsnu holding Chakra, Sankha, Gada and Padma may be identified as Vasudeva on the basis of various iconographical texts. So it appears that, the four handed image of Vishnu known as Madhaya (Vasudeva) was subsequently converted to two handed. image, known as Krishna-Gopinatha, which became the favorite detity of Sri Jayadeva.



Amba (Chandi) image of Kenduli

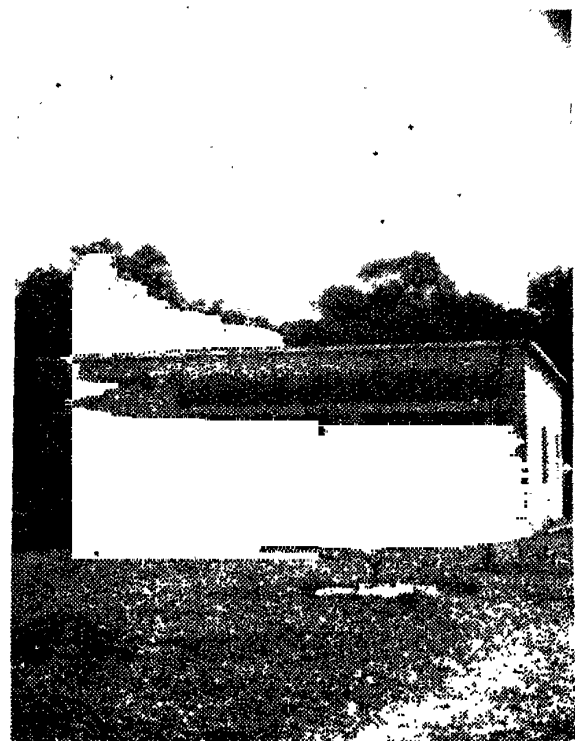


Chandi Temple, Kenduli, before Conservation

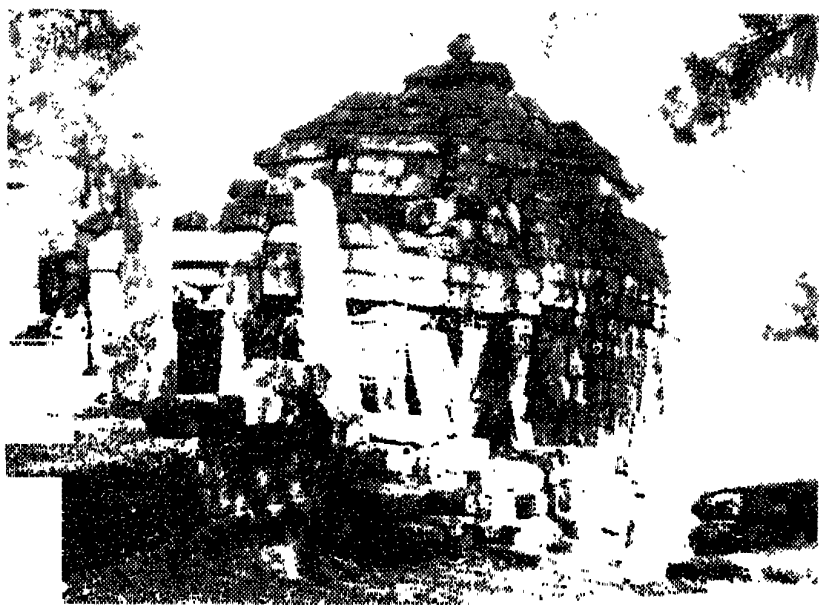
Chandi Temple, Kenduli, after Conservation



Archaeological Museum, Kenduli

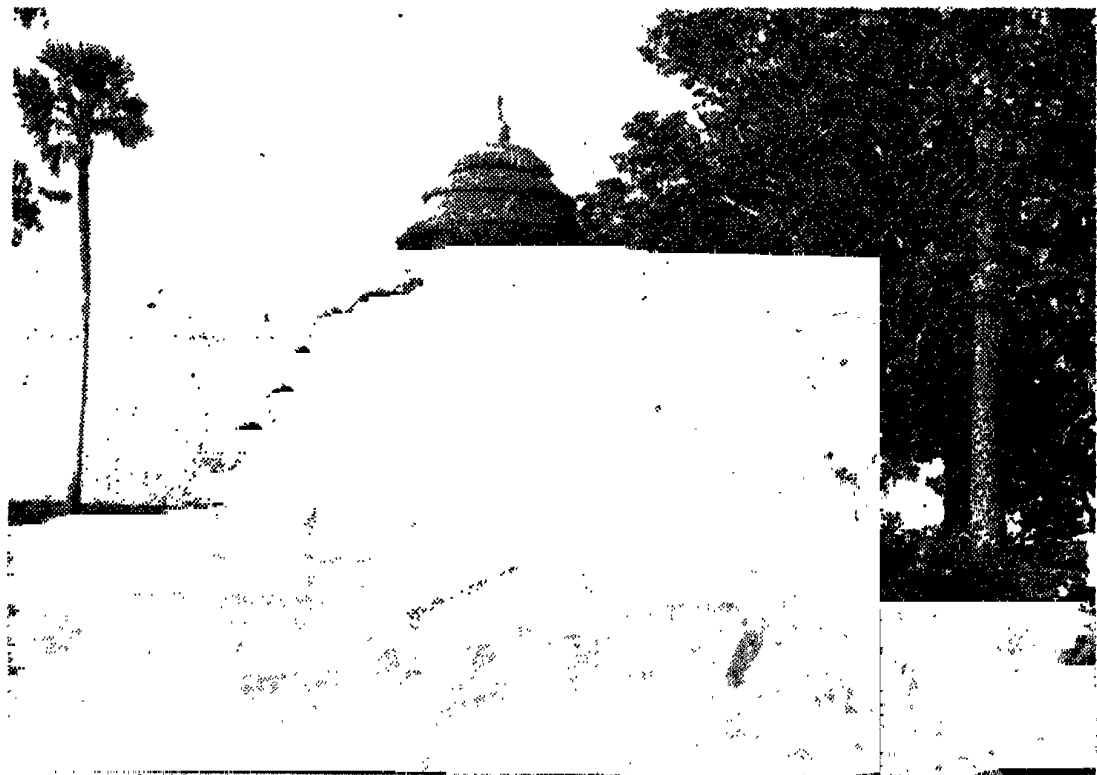


Svapnesvara Temple, Adaspur, before cleaning



Svapnesvara Temple, Adaspur, after cleaning

Kapilamuni Ashram

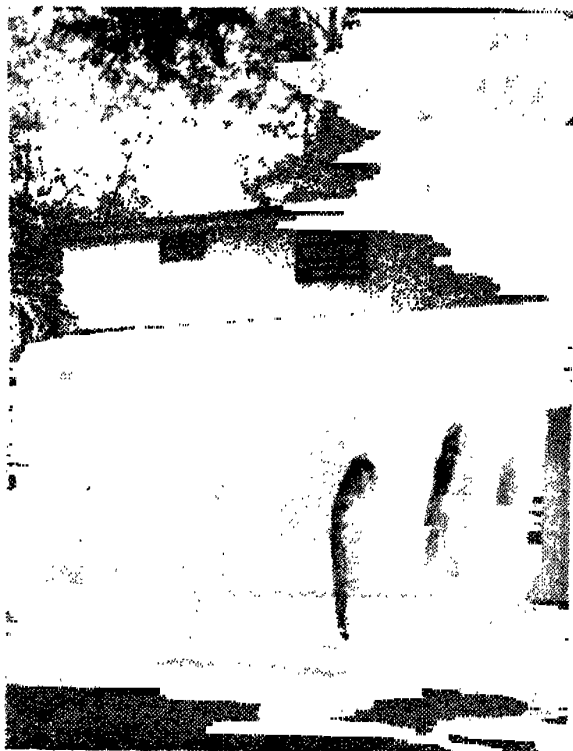


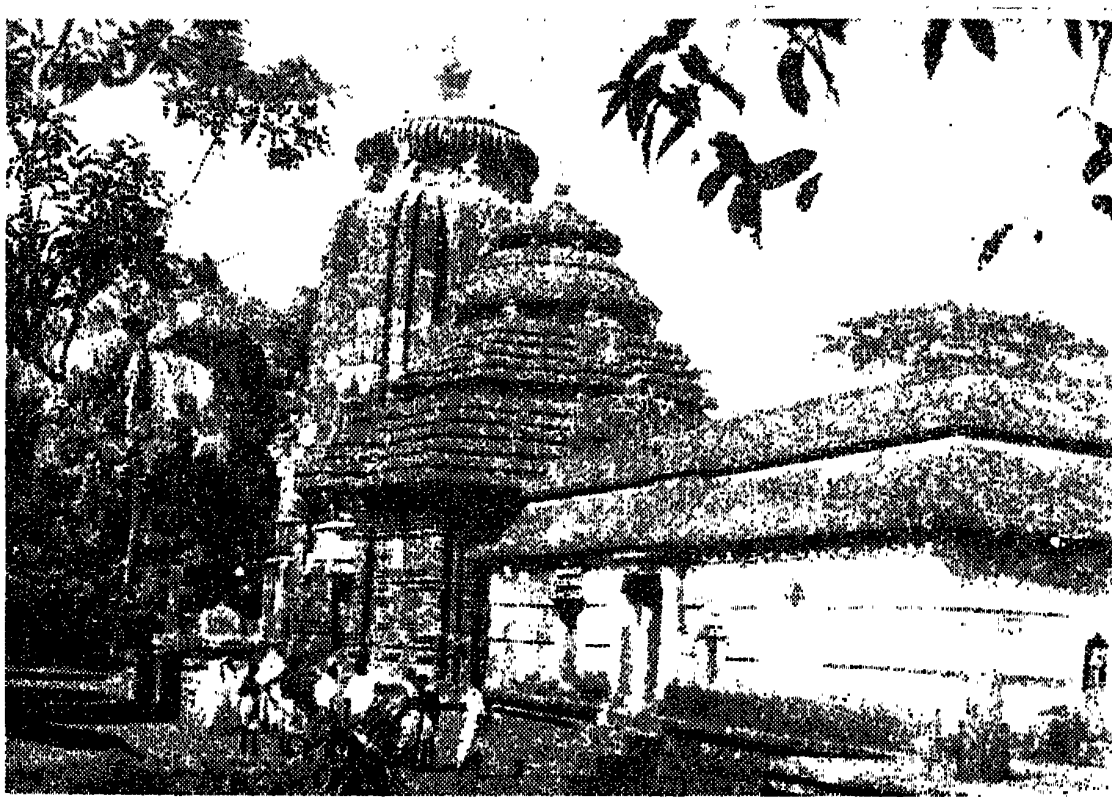


Sobhanesvara Temple, Niali

Archaeological Museum, Niali

Vishnu, Archaeological Museum, Niali





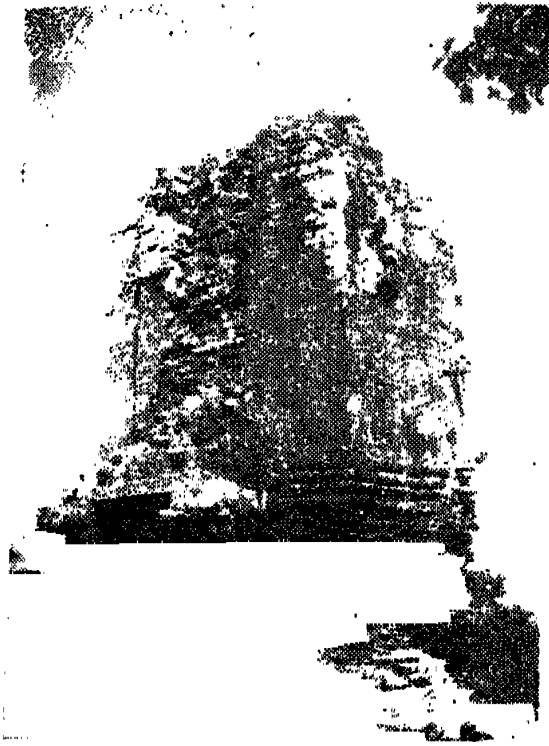
Madhava Temple, Madhava

Angesvara Temple, Pitapada



Angesvara Temple, Pitapada, after cleaning





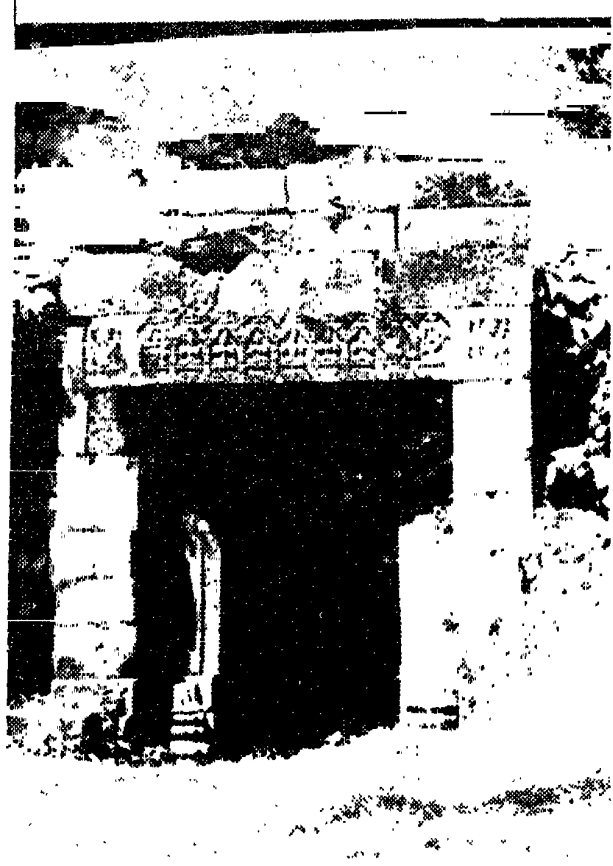
Durga Temple, Motia



Durga, Motia

Barahi Temple, Chaurashi



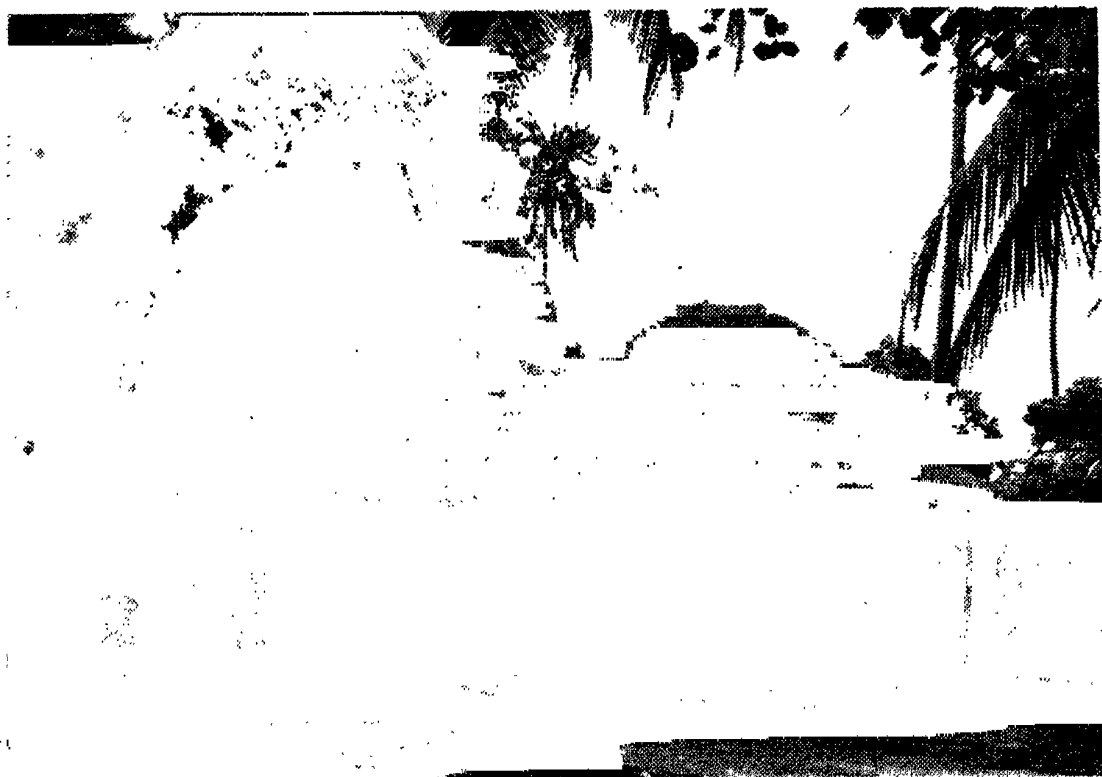


Lakshmi Narayan Temple
Before Conservation (Chaurashi)



Lakshmi-Narayan Temple (Chaurashi)
Conservation work in progress

Amaresvara Temple, Amaresvara





Nilamadhava, Chahata



Dasabhuja Durga, Ambapada

Mangala, Kakatapur



Chamunda, Somesvara Temple





Somesvara Temple, Somesvara

Gramesvara Temple, Lataharan



Mudgala Madhava

