

Contributions of Dhenkanal to Odia Literature (Till Pre-Independence Period)

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ABSTRACT

This paper critically examines the contribution of Dhenkanal to Odia literature. Dhenkanal is a district of Odisha. This is situated in the middle of Odisha. It has a strong cultural and literary tradition. This paper Discuss about the literary tradition in Dhenkanal into four stages. These are Ancient Age (ancient times to the 15th century), Middle Age (16th–18th centuries), Renaissance (19th century) and Modern Age (20th century). It will also discuss the contribution of various magazines and libraries to the development Odia literature in Dhenkanal.

KEYWORDS: *Banipitha, Kapila Samhita, Tamra, Inscriptions, Natha Sahitya, Gundichabije, Mahima Literature etc*

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INTRODUCTION

Literature is a wealth of creative thought, crystal reflection of social life, a juicy artistic scene of human experiences, the ideology of society and man is reflected through it. The aim of literature is to worship truth, good and beauty. Dhenkanal being adorned with natural beauty and bounty has been well known as “Banipith” from the ancient time.⁽¹⁾ This ancient land situated on the Brahmani and to the north of Mahanadi of Odisha has been famous for its developed socio-cultural and spiritual literature. The literary works of numerous writers have immensely enriched the Odia literature.

Ancient Age: If we reflect on the history of Odisha it is obvious that Kapilash of Dhenkanal is more ancient than Bhubaneswar and Puri. Thus the spiritual consciousness and contributions are surely the oldest in Odisha during the pre-historic age. The ‘Kapila Samhita’ composed by Kapila Muni was written at Kapilash and accordingly the place was named after him as Kapilash.

“Birajeikamayomadhye Kailasam cha shrutam
dwijah
Sarba papaharodeba stastra shree
shikhareshwarah.”⁽²⁾

From fourth century to 13th century the dynasties of Naga, Bhanja, Nanda, Shukli, Kulika, Soma and Ganga reigned over this. Till date out 25 Tamra and four rock inscriptions of their regime are available. In those scripts Sanskrit, Pali, and Odia scripts used by the Odias are found and they reveal that local Odia language was the medium of communication. The rock inscription of Kapilash was carved by 1st Narasingh Dev in 1246. The scripts were inscribed with triangular and right angle instead of circular shapes.⁽³⁾ This rare rock inscription of Dhenkanal depicts the gradual development of Odia language in 13th century AD. The Odia language of Dhenkanal spoken at that time was comparatively more developed than other parts of Odisha. Natha literature is the priceless possession of Dhenkanal.

Gorakhanath wrote ‘Gorakha Samhita’ at Kapilash in 9th century. Gorakhanath and Machhendranath were revolutionaries of Nath religion. Most of the people of Nath society have been living at Kandarsinga, Barihapur, Alatuma, Smilia, Balibandha and Jualibandha. At first this Nath literature existed in spoken form. Those were: ‘Baula Geeta’, ‘Bisikeshan Geeta’, ‘Govindchandra’ and Rudra Geeta’ etc. The

people of Dhenkanal used to remember religious festivals like Sivaratrikatha, Kaudia Vinayak Brata Katha, Sidhabratakatha, Sasthibratakatha, and Somanathbrata Katha. Those existed as folk literature. In 14th century Sridhar Swami wrote the synopsis of 'Bhagawat' which was published as 'Vabartha Dipika'. Coming from Remuna of Balasore he had selected Kapilash as his main spiritual venue for his divine work. Bastha Das of 15th century wrote the 'Kalasa Chautisa' relating the marriage ceremony of Lord Siva and Parvati. Babaji Swami Dwarika Das wrote a number of volumes. 'Ramavilas' is one of them. Works of Swami Dwarika Das glorified Dhenkanal. He was a model for the poets of Dhenkanal.

Middle Age: Most of the poets of Dhenkanal enriched Odia literature being helped by the kings from 17th century. The rule of kings and nobles had been started then. From 17th century to 18th century Riti Yuga in Odia literature was in force. Dhenkanal was abode of beauty and bounty. Dinakrushna Das expelled by Gajapati Dibyasingh Dev and coming from Puri stayed at Ekagharia village on the Brahmani. He wrote 'Rasabinoda' being patronized by Balaram Samantsingh of Hadagada.⁽⁴⁾ He also wrote 'Amrutasagar', 'Muktisagar', 'Bhutakeli', 'Kaliyugasastra', 'Prastabsindhu', 'Namaratna Gita', 'Nabakeli' etc. Every work of Dinakrushna was an inclination to Lord Krishna and full of lyrical verses in simple and lucid language. 'Balabhadra Boli' of Babaji Rama Das of 16th century glorified the then the royal Bhanja family. 'Madhupa Chautisa' was written by Balarama Samant Singhara in 17th century AD. 'Madhupur Koili' of Gokula Pattnaik is a war ballad which clearly depicts the battle between Nrusingha Bhramarbar of Dhenkanal and King of Madhupur. It is the oldest war ballad in Odia literature. 'Premasila' by Kunjabihari Bhramarbar is an immortal creation. It is written in Riti Yugia style with 28 lettered on Palm leaf and is still preserved in State Museum. King Brajabihari, the son of Kunjabihari wrote 'Padyabali', divine romantic affairs of Radha and Krishna. The then verses, ballads, lyrics and couplets of Dhenkanal were simple lucid, clear and lively. The 'Bichakshyana', 'Keli Kalanidhi', 'Bidesanuchinta', 'Daspoi', 'Gopibilas', 'Shyamarasotsaba', 'Ambikabilash', 'Samarataranga', 'Chandimalashree', 'Rajannku Chhala Bhakti', 'Raja Sabha' etc. are the immortal creations of Brajanath Badajena the multi linguist and pioneer of new cult. 'Chatura Binoda' of Brajanath was the foundation of Odia literary work in prose form. His work 'Gundicha Bije' in Hindi language has made Jagannath culture famous in India. 'Manaduttam' his work in Sanskrit was published

from Mumbai. He is the first poet who had left divine multi lingual works in Odia, Bengali, Hindi, Telugu, Prakrta and Sanskrit languages.

Brajanatha's three brothers were also poets. His brother Jagannath composed the poem 'Basantaraja' and awarded the title of 'Kabi bhushana'. Another brother Lokanatha wrote the 'Gopibilasa' and promoted to 'Routray'. Another famous writer who was adorned with the title of 'Chadaka' was contemporary of Brajanath Badajena. That anonymous writer composed 'Kabi Chadaka Duha'. In addition to these, there were famous writers of religious books on palm leaf (Pothi) namely Shalagram Das the Chief of Balibo Matha, Narottam Das of Khokasa Matha, Balabhadra Mishra of Marthapur, Gadadhar Bahinipati, Ramchandra Brahma, Chandrasekhar Panda, Gopinath Rayguru, Chakradhar Brahma, Madhudusudan Bahinipati and Chintamani Pariccha Pattnaik of Dhenkanal were famous. This Pothi writing was one of the famous literary works of Dhenkanal. Janardan Bedabagish of Mundeilo, wrote 'Astadhayee Sutra Vasya of Panini' and 'Radhmohan Champu'. From this it is evident that there was a strong foundation of Odia literature in Dhenkanal.

Renaissance Age: In 19th century a new era began in the field of education, literature, culture and spirituality. The icon of this era was Maharaja Bhagirath Mahindra Bahadur under whose leadership the intellectual revolution reached its apex. For the development of education, he set up one M.E. School at Dhenkanal and eight U.P. Schools in different villages and a Sanskrit toll in the palace. In the meantime, the Mahima religion evolved in Dhenkanal. Maharaja Bhagirath set up a library in the palace for the spread of wisdom. The king declared special reward for Odiawriters to encourage them to write books on different fields of life. Maharaja Mahindra Bahadur and Banamali Singh, the first Matriculate of Odisha were the members of the committee invited by the Governor of Bengal to examine the Odia books. King Bhagirath also wrote a lot of prayers, songs, chaupadi etc. The learned king of Dhenkanal bought 3 parts of Cuttack Printing Company and gave timber for the construction of the press building. Banamali Singh translated 'Sakuntala' of Iswar Chandra Bidyasagar into Odia and wrote a booklet on 'Rasapanchak', 'Labanyabati', 'Premasudhandhi' in collaboration with Gouri Sankar Roy. During this time in 1880 Fakir Mohan, the Assistant Manager of Dhenkanal translated Sanskrit Ramayan into Odia. As a result of this a constructive and creative literary circle was created in Dhenkanal.

Modern Age: Sulakhyana Devi of Dhenkanal was the first Odia poetess who was the contemporary of Radhanath Ray, the founder of modern Odia poetry. Her 'Parijatamala' contains a series of devotional songs. It was published by Damodara Pattanaik in 1896.⁽⁵⁾ Her 'Dinabandhu Koili' is melancholy on the premature sad demise of King Dinabandhu Mahindra Bahadur. Her noble son poet Damodar Pattnaik wrote 'Sangit Sagar', 'Kapilas', 'Baliyatra', 'Jibanchampu', 'Padmamukha', 'JatiyaSangita', 'SriJagannath' etc. and published the 'Samarataranga' of Badajena. Pandit Gobinda Chandra Mohapatra wrote 'BhagirathKirtiKalpa' in 1886. Famous Pandit Chakradhar Dash of Marthapur Sasan created ornamental poetry like 'Harililamurta', 'Shyamalilamruta Champu', 'Bhagawat Mahatmya', 'Brahma Baibarta Puran', 'Malatijanma', 'Subhadra Harana', 'Chandrabati Harana', 'Atmabodha Gita', 'Bisama Rahashya', 'Gyanadoya Chautisa', 'Mukti Sopana Gita' and 'Chakradhar Padyabali' etc. King Sura Pratap encouraged publication of books by establishing printing press at Dhenkanal. Sura Pratap composed a spiritual poem 'Krushna Rasamruta' and 'Shree Shree Sakshigopal' with eighty-eight stanzas which is an incomplete poetic work. His wife Krushna Chandra Priya completed 'Shree Shree Sakhigopal' and published it in 1913. Besides this she wrote 'Sangita Puspanjali', 'Premasamapta', 'Kunjakata Prathanamruta', 'Balarama Prathanamruta' and 'Haramonium Sikshya'. Jagannath Pattnaik says it is no exaggeration to conclude that she is the Mirabai of Odia literature. Parvati Charan Das the guru of Sura Pratap wrote 'Chaitanya Charitamruta', 'Sangitaharabali', 'Prataprudra' (play), 'Rayaramananda', 'Pravasyamananda Vaktagatha' and 'Stree Sikshya' etc. Chandra Sekhar Pani was the famous playwright of that time. His plays were 'Bhaktabira', 'Balukapinda', 'Indira Parinaya', 'Raghu Arakhita', 'Chandrasah', 'Bira Trilochan', 'Kalikulachandrama', etc. Children literature 'Gunduchimusa' was one of his successful works. Pandit Baishnab Charan Mahapatra of Balabhadrapur Sasan wrote poems of higher order like 'Palli Prakruti', 'Pakhi Sanyasi', 'Bhabalahari', 'Chintalahari' etc. All the works of Nagendra Mohapatra were published in 'Nagendra Granthabali'. Pandit Rama Chandra of Dhalapur wrote 'Bhakti Binod', 'Dhenkanal Itihas', 'Ramachandi Janana', 'Astanaika', 'Dhenkanal Bhugola' etc. Pandita Basudev Pattnaik prepared a booklet on 'Kelikalanidhi' of Brajanath and wrote 'Puja Bali'. Pandit Baidyanath Dash of Marthapur wrote the 1st part and 2nd part of 'Prakruti Gatha'. Jayakrushna Mishra of that sasan wrote 'Jayadrathbadha Kabya' and 'Kapilash Mahatmya'. Pandit Niranjan Dash

composed 'Janarnaba' and Pandit Yudhisthira Mishra wrote 'Punya Parikshya' and 'Sadashiba Chautisa'. Pandit Ganeswar Mishra of Mukhtadeipur Sasan wrote 'Mangalastuti' and 'Sivaratri Katha'. Pandit Keshab Chandra of Bhuban sasan wrote 'Baitarani Kabya', 'Sovana Nataka' and 'Naiba Babu' novel. Pandit Padmanav Mishra (Bhuban Sasan) wrote 'Sarojini', 'Ushaparinaya', 'Kratudhwansa', 'Darudebata', 'Pitrubhakti', etc. and 'Pala'. Babaji Balarama Das of Dhalpur Sasan gave a poetic form to 'Ramcharita Mansa' of Tulasi Dash in Odia verse. Pandit Bhagirathi Mishra Kavyatirth of Hindol wrote 'Damayanti'. Poet Rasabihari Behera of Kualo wrote 'Tulasi Ramayan'. Ramakrushna Sahoo of Rasol wrote 'Gitatatwa'. Pandit Mukunda Mahapatra of Nandapur translated 'Sidhanta Darpan' in Odia. Janardan Singh Mardaraj, the king of Hindol wrote the epics 'Rasalata' and 'Madhabananda' poem. Kaviratna Bhikari Charan Dash of village Balikiari, Hindol wrote 'Shakrabatisa Bilasha', 'Ratnabali', 'Hindol Vramana', 'Swadesh Koili' etc. He was awarded by Odia Sahitya Academy. Poet Dhaneswar Pati (1915-1976) of village Panchupada, Hindol wrote 'Pallavi', 'Rasadhara', 'Kabyasati', 'Kirtilata' etc. Chakradhar Acharya the Dewan of Hindol wrote 'Shreebatsa' epic and translated 'Akhyata' and 'Hansabati' in Odia. Bidyadhar Mohanty of Dhenkanal wrote 'Bhugola' and 'Gaon Majlisi'. Sikandar Khan of Kamakhyanagar wrote the 'Nrutyanatika Laxmipuj' and 'Shravana Kumar'. Annada Sankar Roy one of the illustrious writers of Sabuja Yuga was born at Dhenkanal and started his literary work here and composed fourteen poems having an honourable position in Odia literature. His works are 'Pralaya', 'Prerana', 'Srujan Swapna', 'Manasi o Mun', 'JauvanThare Gale Au Asena', 'Parimahala', 'ranayee', 'Kamlavilasira Vidaya', 'Sagarapрати', 'UdvirnaJauban', 'A Jibana DelaMate Kie', 'Kaunasi Priyapрати Kounasi Priya', 'Sabita', 'Chirantanara Chan He Nari' and 'Nirav Kabi' etc. Lokanath Rath of Mukhtadeipur Sasan wrote 'Navanikunja' poem. Kabibhusan Rajkishore Pattnaik of Dhenkanal (1903-1990) one of the brightest star of the sky of Dhenkanal was the rarest creator of Odia literature. For his continuous endeavour in the field of Odia literature he was awarded by the king Dhenkanal and Odia Sahitya Academy. The bright examples of his works are 'Chaitanya Chautisa', 'Gitapadyanubad', 'Gitatatwa Chintan', 'Gayatree Ramayan', 'Shreehari Janmastami', 'Udhaba Sandesh' and 'Bhramar Geeta', 'Gopal Sahashranama', 'Sisu Sakha', 'Adarsa Manasanka', 'Barnabodha', 'JeebaniPrabaha'. He brought Brajanath to the fore front by editing his poetry 'Shyamarasotsaba'. Pandit Gangadhar Mishra of

Dhenkanal town wrote the battle story of King Surapratap and the call of the mother land. The queen of Dhenkanal Ratnaprava Devi wrote 'Scout Guide' 'Kusta Kalera O Basanta Chikitsa', 'Shishu Palana' and her autobiography '1909 rueparjyanta'. Shree Seshapratap Singhdeo translated 'Mohamudgar' of Shankaracharya and 'Our Heritage' into Odia and translated 'Samartaranga' of Brajanath in the name of 'War Waves', 'Shaktipitha', 'Amardaya', 'Jala ebanJiwanjyoti', 'Hindu Dharma O Sambhu Khetra Kapilas'. Dr. Dasharathi Mishra's thesis on Sal seeds is a priceless gift to our Odia literature and our country as well.

Mahima Literature: The contribution of Mahima Saints to the Odia literature is not less important. Prominent among them are Brahma Abhaduta Biswanath Baba 'Satya Mahima Dharma Itihas', 'Mahima Dharma Pratipadaka', 'Alekhya Parama Brahma Darshan'- Part-I and II, 'Mahima Gadi Mahima Dham Itihas', and Chinmaya Gita. Mandardhar Baba wrote 'Brahmastaka Tatwa Parichaya', 'Arghyarpana', 'Sidhabrahma Bani', and 'Gantabya Pathe Aloka Rashmi'. Mahindra Baba wrote 'Satya Mahima Dharmara Sankhipta Itihas', 'Satya Mahima Dharma Parichaya', 'Mahima Kalpataru', and 'Mahima Bhajanmala'. Gangadhar Baban wrote 'Mahima Samhita'. Kshetrabasi Baba wrote 'Satya Mahima Dharma Upadesamruta', 'Prabrudha Purana', 'Utkal Mangala Mahima Prabha'. Two magazines 'Mahima Jyoti' and 'Tapoban' edited by Shankarsan Jena and Prasanna Mohapatra have popularized Mahima Literature each and every hymn of Mahima called is a priceless possession to Odia literature. The lines of Bhima Bhoi that have conquered time are

“Praninka Arata Dukha Apramita Dekhu Dekhu
Kiba Sahu
Mo Jibana Pachhe Narke Padithau Jagata Udhara
Heu.”

This inscription on the door way of Parliament of India brings priceless pride to Odia literature.

Literary Organizations: Various literary organizations in Dhenkanal district have contributed immensely to literary awareness and inclination among the people of the district. Dhenkanal Sahitya Sansad established in 1931 is known as the first literary organization of the district. The other such organizations that have contributed in the field of literature are 1) Brabati Sahitya Sansad, Dhenkanal 2)

Brajanath Sahitya Sansad, Dhenkanal, 3) Zilla Lekhak Sansad, Dhenkanal, 4) Sandhyatara Sahitya Sansad, Dhenkanal, 5) Balakrushna Sahitya Sansad, Dhenkanal, 6) Kabi bhusan Sahitya Sansad, Dhenkanal 7) Banishree Sahitya O Sanskruti Sansad, Dhenkanal etc.

Magazines and Journals: Magazine and journals published at different times from Dhenkanal have also enriched the scope of Odia literature to a greater extent. Besides the souvenirs of those organizations a few other famous publications like Asthakila, Uparaga, Etala, Khatamitha, Jatayu, Jhalak, Desa ra Daka, Odisha Post, Desa Samachara, Bibhabana, Bahni, Baichadhei, Bharat Barta, Bhubanshree, Martya Bhubana, Rakta Chabuk, Rana Veri, Lal Mati, Loka Shakti, Sandesha, Satya Deepa, Satyaranya, Kapilas Barta, Satabdira Silalipi, Sambhra, Suravi etc.

Library: The revolution of library has started since early 19th century for the creation, publication and enhancement of creativity among the literature loving people. Before that King Bhagirath Mahendra Bahadur had set up a library in the palace. In 1896 a library containing a lot of useful books was set up at the State High English School (presently BB High School), Dhenkanal. In 1931 a Sarvodaya library was set up at Marthapursasan.

Conclusion: Besides, various libraries have been set up in different schools, colleges and literary organizations to create interest among the readers. The contemporary writers of Dhenkanal in various field of literature have tremendously contributed to Odia literature. Hence the benefaction of Dhenkanal to Odia literature is indeed unique

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