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Multiplicity and ‘Power’ of Rituals in Shri Jagannatha Temple

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Power is socio-psychologically woven into human nature and in all political, religious and social institutions there remains an essential operation of power which occurs from all arbitrary directions to give birth to a discursive notion to establish an order or mode of action in a specific territory of any institutionalized organization or body of administration. Religion is a belief which frames itself into the camouflage of age old rites and rituals, aided by the myths and legendary sustenance about God, demons or any supra-human power that man is afraid of. In the Jungian term the “Collective Unconscious” of any community of men, germinates and strengthens the myths. The rites compel people to submit themselves. Those rituals gradually become the apparatus of obedience and subjugation to that regional, ethnic or national ‘God’ and these man-made rites become the root of the multiplicities of observing, worshipping and celebrating the particular holy being.

Lord Jagannatha at Puri is one of the most famous deities in India. The institution at which He is worshipped or the holy ‘darshan’ of the God is found is the Nilmadhav Temple which has not only been a popular place but also has become one of the busiest tourist spots in India. In the Temple Hindu religious orthodoxy is autocratically ruling all over and a dictatorship of the priestly class looms large. These priests have an intra-class conflict among themselves on the issues of myth making, ritualizing and the administrative manipulation. A hierarchic power structure has been formed in this temple over the sanction of a particular class of Brahmins who can only create and perform the rites and the ‘lower Brahmins’ are left as ‘others’. The class of orthodox Brahmins were the most superior class in Indian society while in this temple there are intra-Brahmin disagreement in terms of the rites and rituals they perform and here even the descendants of nominal kingship of Orissa too is subordinate to the priestly class. Thus, such a power-‘Dispositif’ comes in the form of ritual. This not only lets them be privileged into the temple ground but the State Government also aids and employs them.

Ritual is the all-pervasive universal course of action into the sphere of celebrating religion in a blindly believable ground. It takes the opportunity of human weakness, religious heritage, age-old values and collective urge of being under the belief of getting superintended by a hegemonic meta-logical power. Foucault claims that belief system gain momentum (and hence power) as more people come to accept the particular views associated with that belief system as ‘common knowledge’ or hegemony. Puri is originally into an underdeveloped, orthodox, patriarchal and feudal set up into which it was easy to gain a platform for a God who could be the only hope for the rustic and underprivileged people of that area. The collective blind faith of people started believing on the few intellectuals present in the society and these intellectual people were none other than the Brahmins who brought forth thousand rituals to the aboriginal deity ‘Daru-Brahma’ which means the ‘Wisdom of the Woods’ (‘Daru’= wood and ‘Brahma’= wisdom) and therefore it was nothing but a God of nature which was worshipped by the tribal people. The

Brahmins were relied by the non-Brahmins and from the psychologically approximated Wordsworthian Pantheistic belief. People started relying upon 'Jagannatha' which is a conglomeration of two associated words such as 'Jagat' (the universe), 'Natha' (the Lord), and the adhered rituals are an effort of the intelligentsia to give the entire worship a larger-than-life charismatic halo and obviously a wide reputation of a 'Jagrata' deity (supra-powered awakened God) so that a large amount of disciples follow which must have an economic strong-hold as well. Its rituals and the politics of the ritual-makers have germinated a distinct class difference between the Vedic and non-Vedic class of priests. In the temple premises their 'repressive authority' over the 'lower' class of people or the devotees is metaphorically viewed as a benevolent authority of bliss and this 'willing suspension of disbelief' of the people provides this class the power of determining what is right and what is wrong, what is normal and what is deviant. In Foucauldian terms the assigned places of 'Reason' and 'Unreason' are always found altering their roles in the great Jagannatha temple ground. One such example of such diplomatic ritual in the temple ground is found in the 'Muktimanadapa' (the stage of salvation) where Sasana Brahmins have acquired a place in group to sit at a higher platform, almost of the height of a man where people submit themselves to their feet and the Sasana Brahmins bless the devotees' forehead with their feet and take money in exchange of their blessing. A person's submission to religious authority can never be such primitive and unquestionable, and more so when the blessing is given against money. Another such orthodox example of the practice is found in the ritual of 'Kalpa-bata' (the tree of wish fulfillment) where people tie up stones with a holy thread to a huge banyan tree which is marked as a blessed part of the temple where people pray and make wishes to be fulfilled and there the 'Pandas' (temple servants) play the role of guiding the general devotees to lead them to a ritualistic prayer before the tree and people blindly throng under the tree and the 'Panda' receives money for guiding to that tree. So, in the Jagannatha temple, the rituals are multiple sources of money making and a blind faith on the various forms of divine existence of God all over the temple ground is nothing but inventions of the rituals made by the temple servants to let people contribute money in the form of donation or 'daan' to the divine causes.

There remains a power clash between the priests of the Vedic and non-Vedic class and the differentiations are created by the rituals that they have to obey. These two classes are nothing but the representations of the Aryan-Brahmins and aboriginal non-Brahmins or 'Dwaita' class. In the ritualistic activities of the temple a political diplomacy has been employed through the rule of giving order by the Vedic Brahmins and the physical execution of the orders by the Dwaitas. In this method of obeying rituals the Vedic Brahmins remained intellectually superior class although in not only the temple but also the entire society while the Dwaitas with their rituals of physical labour retained at the periphery and under the domination of the Brahmins. The ritual here is a symbol of the power relation of the centre-margin binary which does not only remain restricted into a dualistic opposition of the intra-Brahmin clash of power but in the temple politics it produces a hierarchic set up from the Panda Brahmins to the Pujari Brahmins.

As the varieties of the rites such as 'mantras, meditative arts, submitting chants, 'homas, 'yagnas' and 'slokas' with the 'upakaranas'(ingredients) are the alternative methods of introducing the power of knowledge of the 'Devnagri Pandits'(Sanskrit knowing gurus) and with the help of these procedures they have institutionalized a 'god' with the aid of their Vedic knowledge. Thus, knowledge is here playing the role of taking the god much higher than the

normal level of understanding of the native Oriya people who were neither educated nor enlightened with the Sanskrit language. Therefore, the present form of Jagannatha is a politically socialized form of popular Oriya culture. At the outset Jagannatha was a 'Sabar' deity whose worship had no rituals at all and He was originated from the culture of the 'Noble Savages', so to say. Therefore, simplistic faith was an essential part of the original primitive totem 'Daru-Brahma' at the forests among the tribal which received a metamorphosed socio-political identity by the intrusion of the power of knowledge. The Indian epic *The Ramayana* claims that 'Daru-Brahma' or 'Nil-Madhav' was a God of the primitives and never of the elites of the society. The present form is a transformed one into a Hinduized God with the Hindu name- 'Jagannatha Purusottam'.

According to Herbert Spencer's theory on social evolution, there is an inherent tendency in all kinds of inorganic, organic and super-organic phenomenon, to transform from simpler substance to a compound, doubly compound and even trebly compound social forms such as homogenous to heterogeneous or uniform to multiform. In context to the regular and periodical performance of the ritual, mostly two straightforward consequences are found- the Division of labour and the socio-hierarchic class distinction among the priests. The Hinduization of the God enabled the scope of many reformations into its entire mode of worship and made it a God of the intellectual elites and imparted the culture of popular worship-rites and took it away from its germinating originality.

The common rituals of the Hinduized worships are manifold. There are various 'Upachara' or services offered to the Gods like Jagannatha as a part of the ritual. The multiple Upacharas are 'Pancho-Upachara' (five-services), 'Dasha-Upachara' (ten-services), 'Shorosh-Upachara' (sixteen - services) etc. The 'Shorosh-Upachara' is obeyed in the worship of Jagannatha as it is believed that it increases the chances to have blessings in quantitative terms. The rituals of the 'Shorosh-Upacharas' are 'Asana' or the austere seat of the deity, 'Swagata' or 'Abahana' which is invoking, 'Padya' submitting to the supreme power, 'Arghya' or the purification of the mind through elements, 'Achmaniya' or cleaning the worshipper's mouth by water from the 'kushi', 'Madhuparka' or the purgation process, 'Snana' or bathing the God, 'Basana' or clothing, 'Abharana' or ornamentation of the deity in gold, 'Gandha' or the aromas, 'Pushpa' or the flowers, 'Dhupa' or the essence to burn, 'Dwipa' or the lamp, 'Naivedya' or the edibles, 'Punar-Achmaniya', 'Tambula'. After the entire process of worship is completed the worshipper starts meditating and then the 'Vandana' or the admiring words are uttered. Somewhere the image is circumambulated which is called 'Pradakshina' and at last the deity is immersed with the 'Biswarjana' rites. The total process of worship has been made such complicated to let the general devotees believe that this is solely a work of a professional priest who is well taught in this process and thereby taking it away from the smaller spheres of domestic or aboriginal devotees and giving it a scope of celebration with larger ritualistic moulds of Hindu religion. Not only the rituals but the idol also was attributed a comparatively anthropomorphic image with eyes and a humanized face. Yet Lord Jagannatha remains partially an amalgamated form of codified Hinduism¹ and primitive Sabar tribal culture, although this respect shown to the tribes also has a political motif behind it.

As the idol of Jagannatha was not originally a Hindu conception the Hindu rulers and the priestly class for maintaining their vested interests, felt the necessity of sanctifying it by fabricating and propagating extensive myths and legendary stories along with rituals about it. The Hindus of the upper class who had now taken to worship their deities never felt quite comfortable about admitting the fact that they just took them over from the aborigin and transferred the whole into

worship of 'Vishnu' in His metamorphosis as Jagannatha. Suddenly an effort by many authors was made to prove the identity of the wooden God with Lord Krishna. They refer to the shape of the God as actually seen by the pilgrim and trace its similarity either to an earlier stone image which had disappeared according to the legend or by recognizing it in the wooden body of Krishna who was killed by Jara (a Sabara hunter), thrown into the sea.ⁱⁱ The main motivation behind manufacturing such stories was to bridge the gap between the expectation of Hindu pilgrims and the crude image of Lord Jagannatha.

The manipulative efforts of making Jagannatha confined into the microcosmic sphere of one particular religious territory were actively continuing. The Hinduization of the God again created a broader area of conflict among the intellectuals and the Hindu God now was claimed to be a Brahmanic one. The whole Jagannatha tradition was broken, remade and the Brahmanisation of the Jagannatha cult happened again in the hands of a celebrated South-Indian Vaishnava saint Ramanuja who reformed the mode of the rituals to be exercised by the priests. This reformation was successfully done along with the then political power of the monarch and thus Brahmanized rituals were finally established by a combined effort of the religious and political power. Ramanuja established the Brahmanic mode of worship at the Nilmadhav temple at Puri and that temple became the shrine of Lord Jagannatha. But the priests could not adapt the Brahmanic mode of rituals as a great section of themselves were non-Brahmins. However, royal patronage helped largely for the popularity and influence of Shri Jagannatha. The prestige, power and position of the priests of Jagannatha, who were originally non-Brahmins, grew rapidly. At the same time its growing popularity as a Brahmanic God ironically enough threatened these priests. As the name and fame of Lord Jagannatha was spreaded beyond the border of Ganga Empire, pilgrims from all over India started visiting Puri and as was popularized, they expected a Brahmanic Shrine where Brahman deity would be worshipped by Brahman priests in accordance with Brahmanic rituals and other essentials prescribed by the Brahmans themselves.ⁱⁱⁱ

The 'mantras' and 'slokas' are illustrated in an unpublished manuscript *Raajibhog*. The rituals of the worship of Jagannatha are called 'Puja Prakarana'. It is said that three priests will together sit and worship three different deities among whom Lord Jagannatha is posited at the rightmost corner. This position marks his hierarchic superiority among other Gods. At the extreme left there is 'Balabhadra' and between these two deities 'Subhadraa', a female deity is placed. The female at the centre is a symbol of the *anima*, the Mother-Archetype or the 'Janani-shakti' who represents Creation. They are worshipped by three different priests at the same time with 'mantra' or divine chanting in 'Devnagri' language. Balabhadra is worshipped in 'Basudeva Mantra'; Subhadraa in 'Bhubaneswari Mantra' and Lord Jagannatha in 'Mantraraaj Nrishingha Mantra'. King Indradyumna, according to the myths, received divine order to worship Jagannatha in Nrishingha Mantra where the word 'Nrishingha' means a hybrid of man and lion and it is told according to the Brahmanic rituals, that this Mantra invokes the devil for a good purpose. However, the knowledge of the priests and the power of the kings collaborated and established the Brahmanisation which provided worldwide identity to the Jagannatha cult.

The age old rituals of the Jagannatha or Nilmadhava are generated by a socio-religiously superior class of people who have attributed the deities a socialized, Hinduized, Brahmanized and at last a humanized form of celestial survival. The humanization of rituals is seen through the human-routine imposed upon the God and this substantiates the deity as one of us but not like us. The 'puja' or the worship should be performed in three different methods-'Vedic' (from *Vedas*),

‘Tantric’(primitive occult) and ‘Mishra’(a mixture) mode which can be witnessed in the manuscripts of *Parasurama-Kalpasutra*, *Srimad Bhagavata* or the *Bhagvata Purana*. In the latter one it is said,

“Vaidikastrantiko misra
Iti me trividhoh makkah
Trayenamipsitenaiva vidhina mam samarcayet”^{iv}

On the other hand *Parasurama-Kalpasutra* has quoted *Mahabharata* where it has referred to the mixture of Vedic and Trantic way of worshipping where the word that describes the ritual is referred to as ‘Amnayagamavedaya’ where ‘amnay’ means Veda and ‘Agama’ means Tantra.^v Even in the *Bhagvata Purana* too it is prescribed for them who want to achieve ‘Moksha’ or ‘Nirvana’ or salvation in the spiritual world should worship the Lord Jagannatha in both Vedic and Tantric rituals. Thus the Brahmanic rituals did not fully deny its primitive connections and retained few ‘Upachara’ related to the original tribal cult but this blend of rituals was obviously done from a utilitarian perspective.

However, this is how various rituals have been employed to make Jagannatha God of people and a continuous reciprocal relationship is established between the deities and the devotees and the ‘Puja’ rituals create an ideology that the pilgrims are to follow the daily rites called ‘Nitis’ (principles) which are formally maintained in the temple. It is said if the devotees are truly dedicated to those Nitis, then it must return to them in the form of blessing. Thus, devotees are made dependent and the humanization process is occurring to absorb more human beings as disciples and this ritualistic diplomacy, politicization of the divinity exploits the human faith, sentiment, dedication and compulsion.

The daily rituals obeyed at Nilmadhav temple begins from early morning and continues till late night where Lord Jagannatha is treated as a supra-human existence. Early in the morning the first rite begins with the ‘Dunduvi Badya’ or the drum sounds, after which Vitarcho Mohapatro and Talicha Mohapatro, the temple servants visits to examine the seal of the ‘Jaya Vijaya Dwara’ or the victory door which is the huge door of the room in which Jagannatha stays. It is believed that the ‘Devdutas’ or God’s messengers arrive at dawn to wake the Trio from their slumber. Then the ‘Pravati Gaan’ or the morning songs are sung. After being assured that the seal is intact and the Lord was not disturbed in the previous night while sleeping, Vitarcho Mohapatro, Palia Mekup, Pratihari, Akhanda Mekup and Muduli checks whether any impurity has touched the austere places where the Gods are installed. Then the seal of ‘Garbhagra’ is broken and the door is opened. Then they all ascend the throne of God or ‘Simhasana’ saying ‘Manima! Manima!’ praising the God, keeping the burning lamps on both sides.

These Vitarcho Mohapatro, Palia Mekup, Pratihari, Akhanda Mekup and Muduli are not only few persons, but they indicate a class of Brahmins in the temple premises who are in reality servants. When the Brahmins became the sole authority of the temple rituals, an intra-Brahmin clash of power generated the various categorizations of the Brahmins such as the Pujari Brahmins, Pratihari Brahmins etc. Besides, the consolation to servants-Brahmins, is that they can come this much close to the idol of God, they can touch the body of god and by them begins each day’s rituals, which gives them the solace that they must attain salvation.

The next ritual is to remove the 'bhoga', 'naivedya', 'puja prakarana' etc of the previous day to be supplanted with the fresh ones. Besides the deities are shown twenty one holy lamps fed with 'ghrita' or milk fat which is followed by 'paistak arati'. During this, the 'Suprobhat Stotram' is followed with the accompaniment of musical instruments which are called 'Mangala Vadyam'. Here we find a multi-cultural perspective. This entire process is followed with the Vaishnava ritual and persons. Thus, the Brahmanistic rituals include the Vaishnavas into their own ritualistic sphere which creates a hybridization of the two or is done to pay a tribute to Shri Chaitanya who for the first time declared the access of all the religions at the shrine of Jagannatha which although is not entirely obeyed now and the entrance to the Nilmadhav Temple is strictly restricted to the Hindus. The Vaisnavas are the believers of Lord Krishna and Shri Jagannatha is told to be an altered form of Shri Krishna. Therefore, here, the two different beliefs are merged in ritualistic terms.

The God is entirely given a human form and His daily schedule is followed the same way the men of society follow their necessities. At morning, two rituals are followed which are 'Danta Dhawana' and 'Jihva Lekhana' brushing the teeth and cleansing the tongue of God. The one contradiction arises that Lord Jagannatha is believed to be a sublime soul and yet He is imagined to be an infant like one of Blake's world where innocence and purity represent the Israelite "World of Beulah". Moreover, humanization to the extent of imagining Him a child whose everyday relation to the priests are like a child's to its parents and yet surprisingly, this 'child-like' character is trusted with divine responsibility. The logic may be that if the God is humanized then associating with that God will be much easier for any devotee. One more contradiction is that Lord Jagannatha is an admixture of tribal, social, royal and ritual codes of Shaivite-Vaishnavite-Buddhistic-Tantric cult and all these religions and beliefs have their own Gods in different chronological periods. In that sense, most of the beliefs about Jagannatha is nothing but an alter persona of all those individual Gods. Even the secondary God, called Elohim, of the Gnostic traditions can also be one comparable example.

However, at the time of the 'Avisheka' or the coronation, each day the painted wooden God is supposed to get bathed and purged, but there the ritual observers have become absolutely logical as the wood of the God's body will get decayed if is bathed each day and therefore it must not be watered fully in the name of making it 'sacred'. So they have created a ritual of reflecting the Gods body on a mirror and water is poured on that reflection. The logic of this ritual is that as God is a spiritual entity, He is present everywhere, in the wooden body as well as in the reflection. But a counter logic can be presented that if God is a spiritual entity then why would the priests try to find Him in the wooden block, besides God's bodyless-ness or 'Nirakara' stands opposed to the entire paganism and thereby, the rituals of waking up the God, brushing, bathing, feeding etc can be questioned vehemently. Thereby, the humanizing, spiritualizing and satisfying the God with the rituals are only institutionalizing it and giving it an imagined structure of this Godly manifestation borrowed from a tribal totem to make it a popular taboo.

However, the humanized process includes the dressing of the God in new clothing and golden ornaments which is called 'Abharana'. Sandal paste is applied on the forehead and arms of the deity just the same way priests themselves do on their own bodies. Therefore, the priests deify themselves through the same way the Gods are humanized by the process of ritual purification. All these ritualistic performances are called 'Abakasa'. Here again Vaishnavism is introduced. In the Abharana Puja, it is imagined that Jagannatha is surrounded in the form of circles, which are

seven in number, by some associated deities and theological presence that are mostly Vaishnava characters such as Dama, Sudama, Vasudama, Kinkini who are all the playmates of Krishna; then the eight wives of Krishna who are Rukmini, Satyabhama, Jambavati, Nagnajita, Sunanda, Mitravinda, Sulakshana, Susila ; the foster parents who are Vasudeva-Devaki and Nanda-Yashoda; besides, various other characters among Krishna's family, friends and attendants. Even, Lord Jagannatha as imagined to be a form of Krishna, and the other two deities Balabhadra and Subhadra are his Brother and sister consecutively. Thus, in the ritualistic convention of 'Abharanapuja' these all Vaishnava characters are derived to transform and frame its sphere into a wide multi-religious dimension. 'Ghanta Samskara' ends this ritual of Abharanapuja where the worshipper holds a bell in his left hand and its sound purifies the entire process.^{vi}

Then the devotees are allowed to have a 'Darshana' or a view and a touch of the images which is called 'Sparsana'. This is called colloquially as 'Sahanamela'. After this the deities are again dressed in new clothes.^{vii} The kitchen is cleaned and a 'homa' is performed according to the Vaishnava rites and the cooking procedure starts. Then, 'Suryapuja' starts and the 'Dwarapalas' is performed. Then, the deities are served their breakfast which again is a process of humanization of these deities and this mortal practice is called 'Gopalaballava' or 'Balabhoga'. Here, in the name we find the word 'Gopala' which is the other name of Lord Krishna and is as well the alter identity of Lord Jagannatha. Therefore, Vaishnavism and Jagannatha cult is related with each other intimately. Then, a curtain known as 'Tera' is put on the 'Chandana Argali' to prevent others from seeing the deities. Now, the morning worship called the 'Sakal Dhupa' is started and from here the day's regular worship begins. The priests who perform puja to Jagannatha also perform it to Lakshmi, Bhudevi and Sudarshana. Other two priests worship Balabhadra and Subhadra respectively. Here, with Lord Jagannatha, his sister Subhadra and His brother Balarama stays while in most cases various couples are worshipped together as spouse. In the case of Jagannatha, it is mythologically circulated that if Jagannatha is posited along with His wife Lakshmi then, the conjugal problem between the husband and the wife may intervene and hamper the fulfillment of the macrocosmic responsibilities of the entire system of survival.

The 'Mukti Mandapa' is not only a seat of blessings but also a place of justice for deciding the ritualistic disputes. It is more like a judicial court set-up where under the signature and seal of 'Gobardhana Matha' of Puri and its administrative head Shankaracharya, the temple priests are employed by the king of Puri. The king, before employing them needs to have adequate documents supporting the capabilities of the person to be promoted to priesthood. The ironic point is that there are literal documents and certificates of spiritual capability and fitness provided by the Shankaracharya and then only the ritualistic employment of a priest can take place.^{viii}

Another interesting point is that the mode of worship in Shri Jagannatha temple has a phallic perspective in its tantric ritual. In the tantric or the primitive occult mode of the rituals there are 'Panchamakaras' which says about the ingredients to be offered to the God much similar to that of the God Bacchus which include wine and sex. In Sri Jagannatha's worship as well the tantric process uses 'Madya' or alcohol, 'Maithuna' or the symbol of sexual intercourse. In the ritual of 'Maithuna' the dancing of the 'Devadasis' is a part of amorous amusement which again reminds us about the Maenads or the Greek women who belonged to the cult of Dionysus and took part in orgiastic rites. In the process of this ritual the special flowers used are 'Nilkantha' or 'Aparajita'

which looks like the female genital or 'Yoni'. Therefore, the rituals also include various sexual overtones as a mark of the Dionysian representation of Lord Jagannatha.

Besides, in the 'Shakta' mode of worship the primitiveness still prevails and in this ideology Goddess Bimala is imagined to be the supervising and superintending deity all over the temple. Bimala is a mark of 'Shakti' or power (from 'Shakta') and she is imagined to be the other form of Goddess Durga and is worshipped especially on the auspicious days of 'Saptami' and 'Nabami' which are counted on the basis of the special positions of the stars and planets by astrological calculations. Besides Bimala is dedicated a lamb each day for consecutive three days which are sacrificed brutally in front of the deity herself as a mark of primitiveness. Thus, Bimala is still, according to the tantric beliefs, at the top of the hierarchy of power among the Gods and Bimala's gaze is believed to be a highly powerful and destructive one. Therefore, the entire ritual is obeyed with its fullest perfection and sincerity each day. Thus, ritualistically, the class of the priests and the 'Sevakas' remain under a panoptical surveillance and fear to be cursed and punished by Bimala.

There is a specialty of the ritual of lighting of the entire temple of Jagannatha from Jaya-Vijaya Dwara to the storehouse called 'Kalahata'. Nine lamps are burnt from Kalahata to Jaya-Vijaya Dwara to represent and pay homage to the nine planets. Besides, twenty seven lamps are burnt from Kalahata to Ratnasimhasana to represent the twenty seven stars over the sky keeping an eye over the temple and protecting it.

The ritual of changing the temple flag is another thrilling ritual which is called 'Dhwaja'. The temple is one of the tallest monuments in Orissa of about 214 ft. The temple is crowned with Lord Vishnu's Chakra (wheel) and a new flag is tied daily to the wheel.^{ix} Two persons climb up to bring down the old flags and put up the new ones. The triangular flag is prepared everyday by a male member belonging to a non-Brahmin caste which is an effort to impart the role of the non-Brahmins through an active participation into the temple rituals retaining the supremacy of patriarchy. Besides, it is a diplomatic politicization in the sense that the intellectual innovation of the ritual of changing the temple flag each day is an order created by the Brahmins while the physical execution of the risky laborious deed, in the name of blessings, is to be carried out by the non-Brahmins. Thus, the caste-superiority of the Brahmins was retained through their power of constituting the ideas of the rituals and the non-Brahmins retained as the peripheral 'other'. Thus, the 'knowledge' of the Brahmins made them powerful in the hierarchic structure of the role playing in the temple premises where the rituals were utilized as a defense mechanism as well as a camouflage to the act of direct marginalization.

The rites and rituals in the Jagannatha Temple can be generalized as a politicization of the conglomerated age old beliefs, customs and myths. But, there are multiple researches going on the ideas of telepathic connections of Lord Jagannatha and the true devotees and the researchers are working with concrete evidences and technological proofs of those metaphysical contacts and communications. It is unsure whether the rituals are at all a medium to connect the deities or the rites observed are responsible to raise the supra-soul and bridge the gap between them and us. But the real connection with the metaphysics of divine identity does not lie in the belief of the devotees on the rituals or the myth-making of the Vedic Brahmins; it is entirely confined into the space where the devotees are in contact with the God. My perspective is never purported to spiritualize Jagannatha but the issue of spiritual bond comes in to investigate the symbolic identification of the roundness of the eyes of Jagannatha. To compare His eyes with the other

deities, Jagannatha has three circular rounds in His constitution of the eyes. It is an instrument to hypnotize, to leave one in a trance and an instigation to suspend the contacts to the external existences and concentrate at the central black circle of His eyes journeying through the red surface and then the comparatively wider white one. The central position of the mysterious black is the 'Nada', the unconscious part of mind, the non-plus ultra, while the other two are the conscious and the subconscious. The moment the unconscious is hit; the human beings are beyond their mortal existence and are elevated to a meta-mortal one. The eyes are symbolic representations of the multiple layers of human psychology and meta-human cosmology. Therefore, the visual contact with the God's eye is taken to be a contact of the human spirits with God's being. It may be claimed to be a replica of human eyes but its circularity in comparison to other Gods has a meditative significance. This is where a devotee is scientifically made to surrender to it being almost hypnotized. The minute observation of these eyes reveal that they are attributed a purpose of an eye to eye contact through which the real devotee and the 'true' identity of God communicate and reciprocate to each other. It is believed to be a bi-way communication where the deity can see through the soul of the devotees and the devotee can plunge into the deity and they both share a common platform of their own for that particular moment itself. This is never inclusive of any ritual, and although it is subject to arguments, yet it can be stated that believing in Lord Jagannatha is a way of meditation to calm one's mind and plunge into the quietness of one's own psychic tranquil and this may be interpreted as one aspect of spirituality that finds its perfection in the earthly frame of the God to give a concrete form to an abstract art for the purpose of self realization, where the rites, rituals, hierarchy and politicization intervenes as nothing more than a disturbing encroachment only to invade a sublime intra-personal communication.

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