The World of Gangadhar : birth of everyday life in colonial cuttack

Autor(en): **Satpathy, Siddarth**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Asiatische Studien : Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft = Études asiatiques : revue de la Société Suisse-Asie**

Band (Jahr): **67 (2013)**

Heft 4: **Biography Afield in Asia and Europe**

PDF erstellt am: **29.06.2024**

Persistenter Link: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-391497

THE WORLD OF GANGADHAR:
BIRTH OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN COLONIAL CUTTACK

Siddharth Satpathy, KIIT University

Abstract [1]

The General Baptist Missionary Society of England began its work at Cuttack, a provincial town on the east coast of India, in 1822. It engaged suitable adult native converts as itinerant preachers. It encouraged them to maintain journals and describe their everyday life in rich detail. This paper offers a reading of three crucial concerns of the everyday life these journals construct: *time*, *interiority*, and *public good*. Constituted by simultaneously pursued dialogues with English and Oriya discursive traditions, these notions and attendant practices helped the formation of a small Christian middleclass that nurtured a new understanding of being human. The paper concludes by arguing in favor of local cultures of selfhood: a history of the particular discursive negotiations undertaken by the Oriya preachers accomplishes a fuller understanding of colonial modernity at Cuttack.

Writing Everyday Life: Time, Interiority and Public Good

Gangadhar, Ramachandra and Shiva were itinerant preachers of gospel in early nineteenth-century Cuttack. Cuttack was the principal trading town and center of British colonial administration in Orissa, a province on the east coast of India. The General Baptist Missionary Society of England established a station in the town in 1821. The mission emphasized the role of native evangelists in the propagation of the good word, and engaged suitable adult converts as itinerant preachers.

Oriya preachers scrupulously cultivated a habit of writing journals. They diligently narrated their everyday life in rich detail: the evangelical work they performed on the streets of the town, and in the *bazaars* of the surrounding countryside; the minor and major discomforts of health such as a seasonal cold

1 I am grateful to Henning Trueper and Gaganendranath Dash for their comments on the paper. I am also thankful to Dwiti Vikramaditya for his help in securing study leave to write the paper. The author teaches at the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences, and the School of Law, KIIT University, India.

or a life threatening fever; domestic joys and travails like the birth of a baby or the urgent chore of house repair, etc. English missionaries at the station encouraged the project of life writing: they taught Oriya preachers how to write their life in the European genre, kept a close eye on what the natives wrote, and edited it frequently. They also regularly translated these journals, originally written in Oriya, into English and serialized them in Baptist denominational periodicals in England.

It is quite possible that these journals were never published in Oriya. Nevertheless, they constitute a crucial moment in a genealogy of discursive traditions in Orissa. The alien literary genre of *journal* enabled native preachers to conceive *everyday life* as a subject of narrative reflection and enquiry. In pre-colonial Oriya traditions of biography, everyday life did not attract the narrative scrutiny, which it received with the advent of the evangelical practice of keeping a regular journal. As a discursive event, everyday life was born at Cuttack in the journals of the Oriya preachers in the first half of the nineteenth-century.[2]

This paper offers a reading of the everyday life these journals construct. The evangelical everyday is marked by three crucial concerns: time, interiority and public good. The Baptist mission brought a capitalist notion of clock time and work discipline to the pre-industrial town. Oriya preachers received a monthly salary for their work.[3] In a very basic sense, their journals were records of the amount of time they spent in working for the pious cause, and thus, served to justify the salary they received from the Victorian middleclass. A constant pre-occupation with time marked the evangelical everyday. So did a serious re-flection on the experience of working for the pious cause. The mission brought a powerful technique of Protestant self-fashioning to the colony: it encouraged Oriya preachers to examine and narrate their inner feelings and impressions in these journals. A constant attendance to their interiority helped the preachers to fashion themselves as proper Christian subjects in their everyday lives. The mission also brought a Victorian notion of public good to the town. It trained the preachers to make sense of their everyday work through the conceptual lens of public welfare: that is, they worked for the good of their fellow countrymen. Conversion to Christianity meant conversion to a public life of labor. Thus, a

2 On Oriya traditions of life writing, see, NAYAK, 1988.

3 In 1832–1833, for instance, native preachers received a salary of seven rupees a month. This apart, they received a travel allowance of one rupee a month and were supported to hire the services of a *coolie* to carry their luggage during the seasons of itinerancy. See, *The Report of the General Baptist Missionary Society*, 1833: 13.

capitalist sense of time, a Protestant cultivation of interiority, and a Victorian notion of public good provided the conceptual frame work with which Oriya evangelists nurtured a new understanding of what it means to be a human being.

Pastoral Modernity: A History of Mediation

This new conception of being human was the result of a process of cultural mediation. Most of the preachers hailed from highly literate sections of the local caste society. They were well conversant with Oriya discursive traditions. Their everyday engagement with English notions of time, interiority, and public good was mediated through their awareness of how Oriya religious and secular discourses had imagined these categories in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Baptist mission encouraged this everyday mediation. Quite self-consciously, it promoted Oriya and Sanskrit as the medium of instruction in its schools. Education in English, it was thought, would prevent the formation of an Oriya Protestant theology, and would produce a class of native ministers who would face difficulties in engaging the general population around them. In its desire to embed itself in the Oriya life world, the Baptist mission promoted cultural translation, though, of course, it was never in full control of the process of mediation.[4]

These processes of mediation created a form of modernity that I describe as *pastoral*. A number of recent studies trace histories of co-operation between Christian pastoral and secular governmental forms of disciplinary power in the constitution of modern social and political order in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries.[5] Christian evangelism and Imperialism brought these European disciplinary practices over to non-European societies. Using the word *pastoral* in this sense of a disciplinary power, the paper aspires to write a short history of cultural translations the Baptist pastorate inaugurated at Cuttack.

4 For a discussion of the Baptist mission's education policies see, SUTTON, 1850: 271–289.

5 Philip S. Gorski, for instance, shows how Calvinism inaugurated a disciplinary revolution, that is, the introduction and diffusion of disciplinary practices, which, along with the better-known industrial revolution helped the formation of the early modern state in Europe. Similarly, Charles Taylor argues that the governmental state and the Christian pastorate forged successful alliances to constitute a disciplinary society where wars internal to the social body – the wars of religion, for instance – were banished to the edges. GORSKI, 2003; TAYLOR, 2007. See also FOUCAULT, 2009.

I propose to proceed in three steps. First, I locate specific Oriya words the pastorate mobilizes to construct its sense of time, interiority and public good. Then, I construct genealogies of these specific words in early modern Oriya literary traditions. Finally, I show how older histories of these words inform their everyday usage in early nineteenth-century. The paper, thus, reconstructs particular "transcultural biographical situations," as Henning Trüper's introduction to the volume calls them, where Gangadhar, Ramachandra and Shiva negotiate dialogues between English and Oriya discursive traditions. Constituted by such negotiations, always local and provisional in nature, pastoral modernity at Cuttack was not about choosing any one tradition over the other. Rather, it was about the formation of a middleclass that imaginatively inhabited both the life worlds.

The Language of Pastoral Modernity

This small Christian middleclass espoused the task of constructing a specific type of writing, a kind of literary discourse that could articulate pastoral modernity. The practice of writing itself was an additional site where cultural translations and mediations took place, where the question of vocabulary, literary genres, and narrative conventions acquired crucial importance. The mission establishment devoted itself to preparing this site: it compiled first grammars and dictionaries of Oriya language; it translated classics of English protestant literary tradition into Oriya, it compiled, edited and published important works of Oriya medieval literature; it developed modern Oriya prose, and brought out collections of Christian moral short stories. Through the eighteen-thirties and -forties, this project of constructing a literary discourse where pastoral modernity could form and articulate itself continued apace at Cuttack.

The journals of Oriya preachers were part of this larger project. Baptist pastorate perceived the practice of writing as a disciplinary exercise. The author-function of the journals, to use a Foucauldian premise, was to establish their Oriya preacher-writers as disciplined members of the church. Original manuscripts of these journals are no longer available. My attempts to trace them in public libraries, private collections and archives at Cuttack, London, and Oxford have not been fruitful. Consequently one needs to rely on the larger literary

discourse the Baptists developed in Oriya to reconstruct the language the journals mobilize to articulate their everyday.

For an access to the larger Christian literary discourse, the paper relies on some contemporary works that were an integral part of Baptist pedagogy at Cuttack. *Manusyara Manare Dharmara Utpatti O Bruddhira Bisayare* was an abridged translation of the non-conformist educator Phillip Doddridge's eighteenth-century classic, *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*. A section of the text provides a conduct manual on how an Oriya Christian should regulate his everyday life. Nearly two thousand copies of the Oriya translation were in circulation in the town and its vicinity. Of similar importance were *Atmadarsha* a popular collection of short moral stories, and *Tracts in the Oriya Language*, a three-volume compilation of evangelical pamphlets. Taken together, these important works provide a reliable window on to the language of the Oriya Christian middleclass in early nineteenth-century.[6]

Important categories of the Baptist discourse – those of time, interiority and public good – had their genealogies in early modern Oriya literary traditions. The paper constructs some such genealogies with the help of a twentieth-century Oriya lexicon, the seven-volume *Purnachandra Ordiya Bhasakosa*.[7] Compiled at the height of Oriya language nationalism in the third and fourth decades of the century, the lexicon provides examples of "popular" and "genteel" usage (*sista prayoga*) of important words in pre-colonial as well as colonial Oriya literature. One can reconstruct how, or in what context, specific words were used in literary discourse in the sixteenth, seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. This allows us to chart how words change over time: how they discard older meanings and acquire new ones, or remain tenuously attached to older meanings while new ones gain in prominence, or alter the contexts of their usage, etc. The lexicon, of course, may not help us to understand why the transformations happened, but it will help one to describe what the interesting transformations were. Through its practice of citing examples of usages, the lexicon constructed what it considered to be a quintessential Oriya literary canon. That is, it drew its examples from a select set of texts it considered canonical. This literary canon was mostly produced in a *bhakti* religious culture, and catered to a middleclass nationalist

6 *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul: Manusyara Manare Dharmara Utpati O Bruddhira Bisayare*, 1840. Henceforth, *Manusyara Manare. The Mirror of the Soul or Atmadarsha*, 1840. Henceforth, *Atmadarsha. Tracts in the Oriya Language*, 1843–44, vol.1–3.

7 PRAHARAJ, 1930–1940. Henceforth, *Purnachandra.*

taste for the popular as well as the genteel. The paper relies on the *Purnachandra* to reconstruct genteel and popular pre-colonial genealogies of time, interiority and public good, three everyday concerns of pastoral modernity at Cuttack.[8]

Time: Between Routine and Abakasa

The Baptist mission created a time-oriented society at Cuttack where industrial capitalism was historically absent. The town had been a seat of Mughal and Maratha administration and trade in pre-colonial times, and its political economy was driven by mercantile capitalism. Only towards the very end of the nineteenth-century, some rudimentary form of industrial capitalism took roots in the town.

Of the many debates on the formation of a time oriented society in England one is about its sources and components. While an older and influential account, like that of E. P. Thompson, argues that industrialism played a significant role in the formation of a time-oriented society in late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, more recent models of analysis, such as the one forwarded by Paul Glennie and Nigel Thrift, argue that time-orientation of everyday life in England did not await the imposition of industrial work discipline. Trade, marketing, and church played vital roles in shaping time awareness and time competence in pre-industrial England. Industrial time discipline involved simultaneous operation of three regulating procedures. First, standardization, that is, "the degree to which people's time-space paths are disciplined to be same as one another's." Second, regularity, "the degree to which, people's time-space paths involve repetitive routine." Third, coordination, "the degree to which people's time-space paths are disciplined to smoothly connect with one another." Pre-industrial systems of time discipline did not require all three procedures to be part of a single disciplinary force. It allowed diverse permutations and combinations. For instance, commercial sources of time discipline promoted coordination more than regularity. Monastic discipline emphasized standardization and regularity, without a great stress on coordination as such.[9]

8 See the "Introduction" and "*Abataranika*" in the first volume of the *Purnachandra*. For the compiler's views on popular Oriya language, see DASH, 2008: 98–129.

9 GLENNIE/THRIFT, 1996: 275–299. See also THOMPSON, 1967: 56–97.

The pastorate at Cuttack mobilized its literary discourse to create a pre-industrial form of time discipline that emphasized regularity and standardization. *Manusyara Manare*, the conduct manual, constructed an ideal routine of everyday life, and encouraged all sincere Christians at the station to conform. The manual taught a reader how to conduct himself in the three principal parts of a day: mornings should be spent in prayers, scripture reading, and preparations for the day ahead. Middle part of the day should be spent in earning a livelihood, and in evangelical preaching and conversations. Evenings should be devoted to self-examination; prayers seeking forgiveness for lapses and errors should accompany a retrospective scrutiny of one's conduct through the day.

The regularity and the standardization of Christian behavior *Manusyara Manare* promotes rest on a Protestant understanding of time. On the one hand, it involved a reminder of the brevity of human life, and the constant spiritual preparations one needed to make so as to face the last judgment that awaits all. On the other hand, it entailed mundane prescriptions about everyday time thrift: rising early from bed, dressing up as quickly as one can, resting only as much as barely necessary, etc.[10] The conduct manual encourages Oriya Christians to cultivate this twofold Protestant moral rhetoric on time in their everyday life. Every night, before retiring to bed, they are encouraged to reflect on inevitable human mortality, and how to prepare for it. The manual has an entire section devoted to "*shayanara kala upasthita huante mrutyura bisayare chinta karibara kartabya tahari upadesha*," that is, "Advices on the Duty of Reflecting on Death at the Time of Retiring to Bed." It also reiterates the necessity of everyday time thrift. It impresses on the reader a connection between time and money: "*dekha samprati aji gotiye dina ambhara aya kshaya hela*," that is, literally, "Now see, today, we earned and spent one day." The passing of a day is thus to be understood as earning and spending the time. If time is money, it needs to be spent with utmost care, and its wastage creates anxieties. The everyday self-examination, which the conduct manual promotes, involves precisely an enquiry into wastage of time. For instance, native Christians are trained to ask themselves the following question: "*aji sharirara bishramara nimante jaha jaha kariachhu taha pramana rupare puni dosa rahita hoi achhi ki naahin*," that is, literally, "for the sake of resting the body, whatever we have done today, is that

10 THOMPSON, 1967: 88.

truly free of guilt?" Anxieties about wastage of time infiltrate the Baptist sense of everyday bodily rest and leisure in the colony.[11]

Thus, integral to the pastoral time oriented society at Cuttack was the idea of an everyday routine. The pastorate sought to promote regularity and standardization of Christian behavior at the station by inculcating in the Oriya converts a sense of daily routine. *Manusyara Manare* uses the word *abakasa* – to be more precise *abakasa-krame* – to translate the English idea of *routine* into Oriya.[12] It is this process of mediation between routine and *abakasa* that Gangadhar had to negotiate in his everyday life at Cuttack. A full appreciation of this mediation and negotiation rests on a reconstruction of a short genealogy of the word *abakasa* in Oriya literary discourse.

Abakasa in Oriya Literary Discourse

Purnachandra suggests that the word *abakasa* is of Sanskrit origin: etymologically, it combines the verb *kasa* (to be visible) with *aba* (negative particle) to mean something or somebody who is not visible or present. This primary meaning informs several crucial forms of usage the word has had in Oriya literary discourse. At different points in time, it is used to refer to "something not visible," "the interval between two events," and "leisure."[13] The first and the oldest instance of usage can be traced back to the fifteenth-century. In his cosmogony, Sarala Dasa, composer of the Oriya *Mahabharata*, imagines such a time when the sun, moon, air, day, night and evening are not present or visible:

11 *Manusyara Manare,* 1840: 84–85. The connection between time and money is also repeated in a moral short story, "Ghadira Ghosana." It is about a king who has a clock (*ghadi*) placed in his assembly hall. Pointing it out to the assembled poets, the king poses the central question of the story: what does the clock say? Immediately, a principal poet comes up with the correct answer in Sanskrit verse: "*alabhyam yadaya palam svarnabharai / rahotasya dando brutha jati jamah / idanimapi srisware matta cheto / bita nvityalam ghosayanti ghadiyiam.*" The right response is then explicated in plain Oriya prose: in short, even if one offers a hundred measures of gold, one cannot buy a moment's worth of time. Why then to waste such a precious thing? Rather, every moment should be spent in the contemplation of God, in pursuit of salvation. See *Atmadarsha,* 1840: 56–57.

12 *Manusyara Manare*, 1840: 79. "*dinara tini prakara kalare arthat purbanhe, madhyanhe, aparahne ehi tini kalare abakasa krame jetebele jerupa sehi sabu byabahara karibaku hoye taha kramashe lekhi suna.*"

13 PRAHARAJ, 1930, vol. 1: 415–416.

"*nahin surya, nahin chandra, nahin je pabana / nahin diba, ratra sandhya je abakasana*." The second form of usage dates from the late seventeenth-century: it refers to the intermediate time between two events, and roughly translates into English as "in the meanwhile." Thus, the narrator in Bhupati Pandita's *Prema-panchamrita* says, "*e abakase ebe suna / vijaya vyasanka nandana*," that is, "in the meanwhile, listen to this, / the son of Vyasa arrives." The narrator interrupts what he was narrating to begin a new thread in the story and will eventually return to what he was telling first. The third and last form of usage, where *abakasa* means leisure, vacation, and holiday, is perhaps the most recent development in the history of the word. Though it retains an older sense of interval or recess, *abakasa* as rest-from-work surfaces in mainstream Oriya literary discourse, possibly for the first time, in early twentieth century: Gopabandhu Das famously uses the word in the title of his poetry collection *Abakasa Chinta*.

Purnachandra also cites a specific sense in which *abakasa* is used locally in Orissa: it refers to the everyday routine of the deity Jagannatha in the temple at Puri, or the everyday routine of a king. When used in the sense of a divine or royal routine, *abakasa* retains some traces of its primary meanings such as invisibility and interval. At Puri temple, for instance, there are five specific periods in a day, known as *abakasa*, when the deity is not accessible to the pilgrims for a *darshan*. During these fixed intervals, everyday rituals of the deity – brushing of teeth, washing, and dressing etc. – are performed. These intervals are followed by periods of time, known as *sahana mela*, when pilgrims have a most free and easy access to the deity. Baladev Ratha, a popular poet of *vaisnava bhakti* leanings, retains a similar note of inaccessibility when he employs the word to refer to the daily routine of a king: "*dvitiya majana abakasa jana hoe gheranti parichari*," that is, "with the onset of the time for the second bath, valets and attendants surround the king." The king is not accessible to the outside world during this fixed period of the day known as second bath. Usage of *abakasa* as a royal routine dates from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Its usage as a divine routine is perhaps older.

Manusyara Manare, the Baptist conduct manual brings the word *abakasa,* in the sense of a routine, from the realm of divinity and royalty to that of ordinary human beings. One wonders how, the sense of interval, interruption, invisibility and inaccessibility, which animates the divine and royal routine, operate in the ordinary everyday world of the Christian preachers?

Everyday Routine and Its Interruptions

Gangadhar was a zealous preacher of the gospel. His journals that we have access to carefully describe the Oriya minister's everyday evangelical labors between 1830 and 1835.[14] The missionary who translated his journals into English for serialization in Victorian Baptist periodicals described the Oriya preacher as "an invaluable man," and observed in an editorial preface that "nothing distresses him more than to be obliged to cease for a time from labor." For a man who found it distressing to cease from labor, it is interesting to note that his journals delineate numerous instances of interruption in his everyday routine of evangelical preaching. One comes across instances of intervals and interruption more frequently in Gangadhar's narratives than in the journals of Ramachandra and Shiva. Instances of interruption also carry a greater narrative depth in his journals: Gangadhar spends more time than his contemporaries in describing each one of his absences from work.

Gangadhar's narrative treatment of his absences has several notable features: we have space to discuss two of them. First, the Oriya preacher takes pain to explain the interruptions in his everyday routine of evangelical labor. The reasons he assigns to the intervals in his work range from personal illness to familial responsibilities and social concerns, from inclement weather conditions to lapses on part of the missionaries. "12th January, 1832 – My body was indisposed with a cold, and my throat was sore; therefore could not go to bazaar." Besides cold and other seasonal setbacks, Gangadhar's journals complain of one serious affliction, a large boil, which persists to trouble him through much of his life. "9th May, 1830 – A large boil in my body, and sorrow in my mind. To find peace, visited a brother. He read and prayed." Procedures of healing often went beyond sympathetic fellowship and prayers. Gangadhar displays no hesitation in taking recourse to western medication administered by kind missionaries: "1st to 9th April, 1834 – Went not out, because ill from fever. Mr. and Mrs. Brown, having mercy, gave me medicine, which taking, I became well. By the grace of the Lord, from illness I live." Familial responsibilities and social concerns constitute another set of reasons Gangadhar offers for not going to work. "19th to 25th January, 1832 – These days my child being born, I could not leave the house, as I had no one who could assist my wife. I had not even a person to fetch

14 These journals were serialized in *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer*, a denominational periodical that was published from London. The following are a few specific references: idem., 1831: 31; idem., 1833: 194; idem., 1835: 317.

a cup of water for me." Following his conversion to Christianity, his family and relations excommunicated Gangadhar. Along with his wife, the native preacher left his ancestral house in the rural countryside and migrated to the nearby town of Cuttack so as to be closer to the Baptist mission establishment. The *angst* of social isolation surfaces in his delineation of everyday life in the town. Social isolation also meant that Gangadhar had to perform tasks that he may not have performed before. If midwifery was one such responsibility, working as a thatcher and a repairman was another. "22nd and 23rd May, 1834 – Was kept at home, repairing my house; having been injured by the storms." In the caste based society he was born into, Gangadhar, a male *brahmin*, may not have had to perform these menial tasks that are usually performed by women and lower caste men. The Oriya preacher's excommunication from caste society was compensated for, however poorly, by his membership in a fledgling evangelical community. Concern for the moral and social reputation of his new community also features in Gangadhar's explanations of interruptions in his daily routine of work. " 24th February, 1832 – One Christian's house concerning I heard a bad report. My mind was feverish and not steady. I weeping, cried unto the Lord. And spoke onto him. Spoke to none this day." The bad report was about a fellow preacher who, it seems, was falsely accused of stealing money from his English employer.

Second, Gangadhar narrates how he manages the interruptions in his everyday routine of evangelical labor. As an itinerant evangelist who preached on the streets and in the markets of the town, Gangadhar's performance was peculiarly at the mercy of weather conditions, and people's willingness to listen to him. Several times we hear the narrator complain about rains, storms, heat waves and people's sheer refusal to lend him their ears. "19th May, 1834 – Great bazaar, standing an hour, calling the people, they came not to hear: making excuses, they went away. Rain coming, I went home." "22nd May, 1830 – Was ready to go to the bazaar but it rained fast." "12th May, 1830 – In Buxibazaar; went to preach; ten men heard, and others stood and went away immediately. Raining I ran home. On this day, I thought I would say a deal, but because I could not say it I was sorrowful." However, on occasion, Gangadhar manages these everyday disappointments by being inventive in his manner of raising an audience and creating a space for conversation. "4th June, 1830 – In the Buxibazaar; storm rain and wind prevented me, but I got into a shop and spoke to five persons, who heard well." Faced with the task of making the most of an unfavorable situation, Gangadhar takes liberty with the routine of standing in the market place, raising a large audience by singing aloud a hymn or two, and en-

gaging them in a conversation about salvation afterward. His journals narrate the everyday challenge of managing interruptions, and the quick creativity the preacher displays in response.

The Oriya preacher's narrative preoccupation with interruptions in his everyday routine tells us not only about his dedication to time and work discipline but also, more importantly, about his conceptions of everyday routine. These conceptions retain some of the older meanings of the word *abakasa*: interval and interruption. In early modern Oriya discursive traditions, the idea of routine includes instances of its interruptions. Thus, the everyday routine of Jagannatha includes intervals when regular visits by pilgrims are interrupted. During such intervals, the deity is not visible or accessible to devotees. The everyday routine of a king also includes precisely such intervals when regular visits by seekers are interrupted. During such intervals, the king is also not accessible or visible. Mediated as it is through the idea of *abakasa*, Gangadhar's imagination of an everyday routine frequently turns to those moments when it is interrupted, to the days he does not go preaching to the bazaar.

Interiority: Between Self Examination and *Guhari*

The Baptist pastorate encouraged Oriya evangelists to cultivate themselves as ideal Christian subjects. Not surprisingly, the question as to who is an ideal Christian is frequently raised and answered in contemporary Oriya public sphere. *Manusyara Manare* engages with the issue. So does a prose pamphlet, suitably titled – "Satya Christian Ke?" – that is, "Who is a Real Christian?" These discussions invariably encourage the reader to turn to serious introspection. Constant examination of his own inner feelings and experiences, it is put, helps the reader to cultivate his Christian interiority. A carefully cultivated inner life marks the ideal Christian self. As opposed to the nominal one, the ideal Christian is pious from within. The pamphlet impresses this important distinction on the reader: "*enimante nama matrare christian, aau antahkaranare christian ehi duira madhyare atishaya dura jaaniba*," that is, "thus, know for sure, the nominal Christian and the one who is Christian within stand far apart."[15]

15 The pamphlet is included in the *Tracts in the Oriya Language*, 1843–1844.

Christian interiority is then cultivated through serious self-examination (*bibechana*). We have space here to discuss one particular question *Manusyara Manare* expects the sincere Baptist reader to ask himself. The inner life of an ideal Christian, the conduct manual submits, is marked by the experience of a new birth. He comes to hate the sinful behavior he used to know intimately. Conversely, he begins to love those holy pursuits he used to loathe positively. In heart, words and actions, he becomes a completely new man: he loves God, and cherishes the well being of others just as much as he appreciates his own prosperity. He becomes truthful, sympathetic, polite, honest, and pious. After delineating how the new birth normatively looks like, the conduct manual puts forth the question:

> O reader, do not think that by giving up only some of your earlier sinful behaviors, and following only some of the injunctions of Christ you will find salvation. Only when you have a whole new character, and you conduct yourself constantly in imitation of Christ, will you be worthy of liberation. Hence I say, examine and see if your character and religious conduct is turning wholly anew (49).[16]

Practice of constant self-scrutiny leads to a vigilant and composed inner life that marks the ideal Christian self.

It is true that prayers (*prarthana*) play an important role in the constitution of protestant interiority. However, in *Manusyara Manare*, prayer is symbiotically connected to examination as a tool of self-fashioning. The conduct manual acknowledges that prayers are more helpful than close scrutiny – "know this, a moment's prayer is more fruitful than hundreds of days' examinations" (83) – and exhorts the reader to cultivate a prayerful demeanor. But then, prayers, more often than not, are offered seeking divine help in self-examination. Here is a prayer for a new birth:

> [O Lord,] you reside inside every human being, and examine (*pariksha*) their minds. Hence, O Merciful, have pity, and examine my mind and its ways (*gati*) so that it gains momentum

16 The original in Oriya reads: "*ahe pathaka khristara dharma grahana kari je kichhi kichhi purbare dusta svavaba tyaga ki kichhi kichhi khristara nyaya acharana kalei paritrana paiba emanta manare hen nakara. Tebe kina sampurna rupare nua svavaba pai abirata khristara tulya acharana kara tebe paritranara jogya patra hoiba. Ehetu kahiachhu tumbhara svabhaba o dharmacharana ebe nua heuachhi ki nahin taha bibechana kari dekha.*" Unless otherwise noted, translations are mine.

> in following your path. O Merciful Lord, cleanse my impure interior, bless me with a new heart that yearns for salvation [...] (59).[17]

Thus, it is safe to assume that self-examination is the mode in which Christian interiority is constructed in *Manusyara Manare*. Now, *antahkarana* is the Oriya word used in Baptist sources to refer to the interior self. A combination of two words – *antara* (interior) and *karana* (faculties) – *antahkarana* literally refers to the internal faculties of an individual, that is, mind, heart, and memory. In early modern Oriya moral-aesthetic discourse, the interior self is typically constituted through a particular kind of narration known as *guhari*. *Guhari* means a prayer for redress, an appeal for justice. It also means lodging a complaint against someone. Usually, a devotee makes a *guhari* to God seeking redress. One also makes a *guhari* to a king, or to a lover. Hence, when it comes to cultivate an ideal interiority, Ramachandra needs to negotiate between examination and *guhari* in his everyday life at Cuttack. It is this negotiation that we need analyze to better understand a particular feature of the native preacher's journals.

Antahkarana and *Guhari* in Oriya Literary Discourse

As a mode of narration *guhari* established itself firmly in Oriya literary traditions towards the end of the seventeenth-century. Usually, the act of *guhari* is associated with the ordinary human world. One makes a *guhari* not for salvation, but for ordinary worldly benefits. The act involves no self-examination: *bibechana* or *pariksha* has no place in a *guhari*. It is a personal and intimate narration of one's grief. One does not examine the grief. Also, *guhari* does not involve a radical self-disclosure. Others may well know all about the grief or sorrows. What *guhari* attaches value to is the act of personal narration. Two examples will make my argument clearer: the first is from Jagannatha Dasa's sixteenth-century *Bhagabata*. The second one is from Rama Dasa's eighteenth-century *Dardhyata Bhakti Rasamrita*, a collection of brief hagiographies of famous devotees (*bhaktas*). Both narratives are immensely popular, and in fact, were among the earliest and most often printed texts in Oriya in the nineteenth-century.

17 The original in Oriya reads, "*puni lokamanankara antarastha hoi samastankara mana pariksha karuachha. Ehetu he karunakara karuna kari ambhara mana o manara gati pariksha kara jemanta tahinre ambhara mana tumbhara satya batare bege jaaye.*"

In the sixteenth century narrative, Aditi, mother of the divine *devas* is devastated that demoniac *daityas*, sons to her co-wife Diti, have driven out the former from the heavens, and are lording it over the world. She gets an audience with Visnu, the supreme Lord, describes the sorry plight of her sons who are in hiding in forests, prays for their protection, and seeks redress. She concludes, "*sapatni duhkha ki najanu / tu natha antaryami jenu*," that is, "O Lord, you who has access to the interior, don't you know, the grief of having a co-wife?"[18] Oriya devotional discourse in the sixteenth-century often imagines God as *antaryami* one who knows what happens in the interior of the devotee. If God already knows the grief of having a co-wife, the purpose of Aditi's narration of her suffering, then, is to establish her identity as a *bhakta* or devotee. Being a *bhakta* is the value that is attached to the act of making a *guhari*.

Bandhu Mahanty, a *bhakta* in the eighteenth-century narrative makes a similar *guhari*. Two significant developments since the sixteenth-century needs our attention. First, as I mentioned earlier, *guhari* has now established itself more firmly in Oriya literary discourse. All the early modern examples of the usage of the word *guhari* that I can find date from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth-centuries: it is employed in Bhupati Pandita's *Prema Panchamrita*, Viswanatha Khuntia's *Vicitra Ramayana*, and Krusnasimha's *Mahabharata*. Second, *guhari* has now become more closely associated with the ordinary human world. Aditi's *guhari* in the *Bhagabata* is not at all about salvation; it was about ordinary human sentiments, sorrows of a co-wife, and anxieties of a mother. This older connection with the ordinary human realm is more firmly pronounced in the eighteenth-century hagiography of Bandhu Mahanty.

A genuine devotee of Lord Jagannatha, Bandhu, along with his wife, and three children, leads the life of a mendicant. Onset of a terrible famine makes it difficult for him to find sustenance. The five of them set out for Puri to meet with the Lord, who is described as a "friend," and pray for *anna* and *bastra*, that is food and clothes. On reaching the temple town, the family somehow manages the first night by finding something to eat in the temple kitchen wastes. That night, Bandhu makes his *guhari*:

> A content Bandhu Mahanti, with his mind focused on the Lord, said, "O Hari in the wooden form, to you I bow. You are present everywhere. You are generous to all living beings. No one is more powerful than you. I belong to no one else. O Lord, do what you wish. If you ignore now, my vessel will drown in an ocean of worries. For no reason, five of us will be burned to death in the fire of starvation. Sprinkle your cooling mercy O Lord, you who looks

18 DASA, 2006, vol. 5: 194–195.

after a devotee's feelings." Thus saying, he pleaded, and fell fast asleep, tired from the long journey."[19]

The rest of the story is about how the Lord comes to his devotee's rescue. Bandhu Mahanti's *guhari* for food and clothes establishes him as a particular model of being human: a *bhakta* devoted to Lord, and a family man leading a life full of ordinary human concerns and comforts. Just as examination helps to constitute an ideal Christian's interiority, *guhari* helps the formation of a *bhakta*'s inner self. Ramachandra's journals, thus, operated under the demands of two distinct modes of constituting interiority, one that the Baptist pastorate promoted, and the other that the author inherited.

Less than Full

Ramachandra, and other early native preachers had considerable difficulty in mastering the journal mode of autobiographical narration. We hear the English missionaries who translated these journals constantly complain about the lack of variation in them. This fact, more than anything else, determined their editorial policies: "There must necessarily be *considerable sameness* in these narratives of native labor, and on that ground it might appear sufficient to furnish extracts from them" (1830); "There is frequently an entry for every day in the week; we give the whole for the first ten days, and afterwards *some of the more interesting*" (1831), and "There is *little variation* in [the] journal through March, and, therefore I will omit it and give April, and indeed, in general, perhaps I will miss one month and give another" (1832). The editorial voice is caught up between an acknowledgement of the necessarily repetitive nature of the everyday and a desire for variation in its narration. Missionaries sought for and did not find in these journals a narrative mode that imagined a sequence of days denoting passage of time where each day had an inherent novelty.

19 DASA, nd: 101–102. The original in Oriya reads: "*bandhu mahanti ati tose, laya lagai prabhu pase / boila namo daru hari, chara achare achha puri / sakala jibe padi data, tumbhuhun nahin na karata / mu ethu nuhain kahara, tu natha jaha ichha kara / prabhu ethare kale hela, budila chinta jale bhela / kshudha anale pancha jana podi maruchhu akarana / tora karuna bari dei, shitala kara bhabagrahi / emanta boli stuti kala, patha shrama re nidra gala.*"

There are two features to the way early modern Oriya literary culture narrates everyday time. First, notions of *day* or *today* (*aji*) are tied to a sense of what is unique or unusual about them. That is, where we find the word *today* used in Oriya poetry, it is often to emphasize what is different about today. For instance, "today, your moon-like vivacious face looks utterly devoid of radiance" or "today, I will humble your arrogance." If radiance of face constitutes the usual, today deviates from the norm. The humiliation of an arrogant adversary in battle distinguishes today from the rest of the days.[20] Second, the notion of a sequence of days or passage of time does not imagine each day as constituting or contributing something new or novel. That is, when phrases like 'day by day' (*dinaku dina*) or 'passing the days' (*dina katiba*, *dina neba*) are used, it is usually to convey an unchanging condition. For instance, "this body decays day by day / just as do old clothes" or "about earning riches he knows not, / spends his days as an ascetic." In both instances, we come across sequences of time where each day is no different from the other: if natural decay is the unchanging condition in the first, a spirit of asceticism is in the second.[21] Advent of evangelical modernity precisely demanded that these two discrete modes of narrating everyday time be coalesced. It demanded that the Oriya preachers of the gospel narrate in their journals of everyday life a sequence of days denoting passage of time where each day had an inherent novelty, had something unique to articulate.

Missionaries saw narration of interiority as a solution. As a record of the native preacher's ever changing interior life, the journal form could at once conceive *today* as marked by an inherent novelty, and simultaneously insert this *today* in a sequence of days denoting passage of time in the life of an unchanging Christian subject. The missionaries at Cuttack made a conscious effort to educate Ramachandra in narrating his interiority. Here is a missionary writing to the metropolitan publisher of the native preacher's narratives,

20 PRAHARAJ, 1930, vol. 1: 722–723. Baladeva Ratha, *Kishorichandrananda Champu*, "*nipata nisteja dishuchita aja niralasa chandramukha*," (early 19th century). Jagannatha Dasa, *Bhagavata*, "*Tohara matta bhaba muhin ajahun dura karibain*," (16th century). Krusnasimha's *Mahabharata* furnishes another example from the 18th century: "*Pochhaibi ta panji jama hate aji.*"

21 PRAHARAJ, 1934, vol. 4: 3762–3766. Krusnasimha, *Mahabharata*, "*dhana arajana kathaku na jaanai / jitendriya hoina dinaku niai*," (18th century). Jagannatha Dasa, *Bhagabata*, "*dinaku dina tanu kshina, jesane puruna basana*," (16th century).

> Ramara's Journal is filled up as above, only noticing his preaching in the bazaar. I therefore refrain to enter more, and have desired him to *write more fully*, and to introduce notices of his own religious experience; his domestic afflictions and joys; any encouraging or discouraging occurrence in his work, and etc., and he has promised to commence as directed […].[22]

Ramachandra did try to write more fully; here are three entries from his journal just after he makes the promise:

> October 1st, 1831: My wife miscarrying, I was greatly concerned for the consequence. I prayed to the Lord and he delivered us from all danger. On this account I could not go to preach. October 2nd, Sunday: Heard the sermon of the Cities of Refuge from the Padree, and, in the evening, we had the Lord's Supper. October 3: My mind was agitated about the affliction of my wife; but I went down to Telinga preached in parables; sixty people heard. The brahmuns opposed but I showed their evil ways and answered them. They obtained shame, and others heard the Lord's word.[23]

Immediately after promising to write more fully, Ramachandra resorts to the narrative mode I have called *guhari*: he talks of the miscarriage his wife suffers, his own anxieties and eventually his prayers to God who delivers them from all danger. Only, in the Christian preacher's journal, the mode is much condensed. And, it is soon replaced by realistic reportage of events in the bazaar, which seems to be more like the norm. Appearance of *guhari* in a curt and condensed form needs explanation. Two possible reasons present themselves: first, the journal form encouraged the use of realist prose whereas poetry had been the predominant medium of expression in Oriya literary discourse. Baptist missionnaries fashioned modern Oriya prose as a literary medium. It is possible that modes of narration like *guhari* did not travel well from poetry to prose. Second, the inner self that *guhari* helped to constitute was intimately associated with the ordinary human world, its comforts and concerns. In contrast, the Baptist pastorate encouraged the formation of an inner life that was deeply invested in salvation. It is possible that *guhari* found a less than congenial climate to flourish in evangelical narratives.[24] So, to write more fully in his journals, Ramachandra had to learn to constitute interiority in a narrative mode other than *guhari*. This early native preacher, however, did not take to the Baptist mode of

22 *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer*, 1833: 235. Italics mine.

23 Ibidem.

24 But, if it did thrive, then, it probably went on to shed some of its this-worldliness, and created room for poetry in the Oriya evangelical public sphere.

cultivating interiority. Self-examination held no particular attraction to him. Without recourse to *guhari*, the journals of Ramachandra appeared less than full.

Public Good: Between Pastoral Labor and *Shrama*

"He has called you, dear brother," a metropolitan Baptist minister wrote to a native preacher at Cuttack, "to labor for the good of your countrymen."[25] Oriya evangelists adopted a Victorian discourse of pastoral work and the public welfare it supposedly produces to make sense of their everyday life. As a subject of critical reflection, pastoral work has a long history in English religious culture. Richard Baxter's *The Reformed Pastor*, George Herbert's *A Priest to the Temple or the Country Parson*, Jeremy Taylor's *Rules and Exercises for Holy Living* are some of the early modern attempts at formulating the discourse. However, the discourse acquired an unprecedented currency in England only with the evangelical revival, and the rise of mass literacy and print culture in the second half of the eighteenth-century.[26]

In Victorian Baptist public sphere, pastoral work operates simultaneously as an aesthetic and political discourse. First, pastoral work is distinguished from secular labor. The distinction rests on the argument that pastoral work, often described as "self-denying labor," is not meant to produce property. Rather, it aims at fashioning an ideal Christian subject who has an ever-vigilant inner life. He examines and narrates his own private experience of the profound transformation, which takes place in his character through the influence of God and his word. The pastor first fashions himself as an ideal Christian and sets himself up as an example for others to emulate. His office is to assist others in this project of self-fashioning.[27] In so far as pastoral work aims at fashioning human life, it carries aesthetic connotations.

Second, pastoral work is also concerned with public welfare. Desire for public good is the nature of an ideal Christian's political interest. Politics is

25 "Letter to Bamdabe by the late Rev. J.G. Pike, February 19, 1849." In: *The General Baptist Magazine*, 1866: 314.

26 BEBBINGTON, 1989: 11.

27 See "On the Combination of Secular labor with Ministerial Pursuits." In: *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer*, 1835: 87–90; "Education for the Ministry." In: idem., 1842: 75–77; "Christian Experience." In idem., 1850: 249–253. Also see, "An Essay on the Pastoral Office." In: *The General Baptist Repository*, nd: 241–257.

understood to be an extension of the Christian principle of vigilance from the realm of the self to that of the polity and civil society. The Christian closely examines the ways of the state and civil society, and employs his influence to create public opinion favorable to ideals of justice, equality and improvement. A proper and successful management of the pastoral office leads to the prosperity, security, growth and perfection of the society. Absence of careful pastoral work leads to confusion and disorder: people grow faint, wounded, hungry, and diseased. Public good is ultimately understood to be human happiness, and the nineteenth-century Baptists emphasize the role of pastoral work in ushering in happiness.[28] The political intent of the discourse of pastoral work lies in the critique it launches of political economy: that is, without pastoral work, political economy, by itself, cannot produce a good society.

Tracts in the Oriya Language chose the Oriya word *shrama* to describe the work of the pastor. Derived from the Sanskrit root "to labor," *shrama* has a range of meanings, both religious and secular: "toil," "exertion," "practice," "studying religious scripture," and "spiritual austerities." [29] If *shrama* is the word chosen to delineate pastoral work, *hita* is the word frequently employed to articulate the sense of public good, and human welfare. Baptist narratives, thus, combined the concepts of *shrama* and *hita* to translate the Victorian aesthetic and political discourse of pastoral work into Oriya life world. It enabled Shiva Patra to respond to an everyday question he faced in course of his itinerancy: "An astronomer said to me," writes the Oriya preacher, "How many times have I seen you at this festival, and how many times have I seen the missionaries with you at these festivals? *On what account do you come and address these people thus*?"[30]

Shrama and *Chakiri* in Oriya Literary Discourse

It is a literary curiosity that in early modern Oriya poetry, the word *shrama* is frequently used in erotic contexts. *Purnachandra* cites verses where the physical

28 See "On Christian Obligation to Civil Duties." In: *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer*, 1839: 260–263. "An Essay on the Pastoral Office." In: *The General Baptist Repository,* nd: 241–257. Also see, "Christian Activity." In: *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer*, 1839: 74–76.

29 PRAHARAJ, 1937, vol. 6: 7830.

30 "Seebo Patra's Journal." In: *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer,* 1849: 567.

exertion involved in the act of coupling provides the occasion for the use of the word. Jagannatha Dasa writes in the sixteenth-century, "Seeing the *gopis* perspire due to exertion, Lord affectionately wipes their faces." Two more instances turn up from late seventeenth-century. Upendra Bhanja writes in the *Prema-sudhanidhi*, "While coupling, how sweetly does she wipe off, with her own *sari*, the perspiration due to exertion!" Bhupati Pandita continues the trend in his *Prema Panchamrita*, "Awake, and tired due to exertion, her body lies in the lap of Govinda."[31] In these usages, exertion is autonomous. It is not tied to wages or notions of servitude. The erotic context of the usage serves precisely to highlight the autonomous nature of *shrama*.

The autonomous nature of *shrama* is established in another context as well. As I have mentioned, the exertion involved in the perusal of religious scriptures is also known as *shrama*. Early modern Oriya poetry often mobilizes the notion of human welfare (*hita*) to justify the composition and reading of religious poetry. A pious poet writes for the edification of his readers. And readers peruse poetry for their welfare. In the sixteenth century, poet Jagannatha Dasa writes, addressing his readers, "Dwell thus on Lord Narahari, and swim across this world of illusions; / for the welfare of the people (*sujana hite*), Jagannatha Dasa composes the *Bhagabata*."[32] This usage persists through the following two centuries. Composed in late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century, *Parache Gita* emphasizes the welfare religious poetry produces. Dwaraka Dasa, the author, observes, "Perusal of the *Bhagavata* is beneficial to the devotees (*bhakta hitaka*), / [Hence,] I wrote a commentary on its twelfth canto."[33] In these usages, the idea of human welfare consists in salvation, and exertion for salvation has no associations with wage labor.

Chakiri is the word used in Oriya for salaried labor.[34] Derived from Persian, *chakiri* retains the meaning inherent in the original – servitude. By choosing

31 PRAHARAJ, 1937, vol. 6: 7830-7831. Jagannatha Dasa, *Bhagabata*, "*Gopinka mukhe shrama chahin, pochhanti kare bhabagrahi*," (16th century). Upendra Bhanja, *Prema Sudhanidhi*, "*Rati bele shrama jhala shadhi sese pochhi debara kede pirati*," (17th century). Bhupati Pandita, *Prema Panchamrita*, "*Jagrata, shramita sharira, bisese govinda kolara*," (17th century).

32 DASA, 2006, vol. 1: 5, 6, 15. "*e bhabe chinti narahari, ghora samsaru jiba tari / bolai dasa jagannatha, sujana hite bhagabata*," and "*Se hetu kaha suddha chitte, ambhe pacharu janahite / Samsare jara abatara, prani mangala bruddhikara.*"

33 PRAHARAJ, 1940, vol. 7: 9143. Dwaraka Dasa, *Parache Gita*, "*tatva bhagabata bhakta hitaka, dvadasa skandharu kali mu tika*," (17th century). Translations are mine.

34 PRAHARAJ, 1933, vol. 3: 2598.

to describe pastoral work as *shrama* the Baptist pastorate at Cuttack sought to dissociate salaried ministry from the negative connotations associated with *chakiri*. If the salaried nature of pastoral work in Orissa gestured towards the word *chakiri*, the designated name *shrama* gestured towards both the ideas of autonomous and spiritual exertion.

Semantic Slides

Native audience articulated their resistance to evangelization by refusing to recognize pastoral work as *shrama*. Instead, they saw it as mere salaried work, that is, *chakiri*. Shiva Patra's journal cites an everyday question the preacher faces in course of his itinerancy, "*On what account do you come and address these people thus*?" The answer that the native minister mobilizes, namely human welfare, does not satisfy all. A recalcitrant audience offers alternative explanations: "Hearing this [the question as to why the native preacher itinerates] a Brahmin answered," Shiva's journal reports, "The cause is this: he has entered the *firangi*'s (European) house, and lost his caste, and now no body will touch him; and if he were not to go round about distributing these tracts, the sahibs would not give him ought to eat, and in consequence, he would die with hunger."[35] This pragmatic explanation associates the preacher's itinerancy solely with the remuneration he receives from the mission establishment, and refuses to recognize Shiva's salaried pastoral work as *shrama* and as a source of public welfare.

One more example will make the situation clear. In response to the question as to why he itinerates, Shiva says to an adversary: "I answered, 'if a man should fall into a well, and have no means within himself of getting out, and you should see this man, would you not try and help him?'" The native preacher also records the response of his adversary: "'O,' he replied, 'I would certainly help him. But should you be paid for it, or obligated to do it?'"[36] Resistant interlocutors, for whose welfare the Oriya preachers supposedly labored, often referred to the salaried nature of ministry, and reduced *shrama* to the level of *chakiri*. For Oriya preachers of the gospel, the translational project of refashioning their lives according to the metropolitan discourse of pastoral work entailed confronting everyday semantic slides such as from *shrama* to *chakiri*.

35 "Seebo Patra's Journal." In: *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer*, 1849: 566.

36 Ibidem.: 567.

Shrama as opposed to *chakiri* enabled a particular form of public life in nineteenth-century Cuttack. Before the emergence of nationalist politics in India, aversion to the idea and practice of salaried work prompted a general withdrawal from the domain of civil and political society.[37] In contrast, the ideal and practice of *shrama* enabled a keen participation in the domain of civil society in Orissa. First members of a fledgling Oriya middleclass, the native Baptist ministers adopted the discourse of pastoral work and endeavored to work for public welfare. Their journals devote ample narrative space to those everyday conversations and debates that revolve around the issue of public good. The metropolitan discourse, however, undergoes a subtle transformation as it gets translated into the Oriya discourse of *shrama*. At once an aesthetic-political discourse, pastoral work entails the aesthetic project of fashioning an ideal Christian life on earth as well as the political project of staging a critique of political economy. When translated into the Oriya discourse of *shrama*, however, the political dimensions of the metropolitan discourse are discarded. The native ministers of the gospel are not encouraged to keep a close eye on the functioning of the colonial state or endeavor to create public opinions about its measures. In the metropolitan discourse, as I argued above, the Christian principle of intense self-vigilance gets extended to a practice of vigilance over the state. In the colony, such extensions are not encouraged. The discourse of *shrama*, consequently, remains, fundamentally, an aesthetic discourse of fashioning ideal lives. The Oriya preachers participate in the civil society aesthetically though not politically.

World of Gangadhar: everyday life and the question of colonial modernity

The world of Gangadhar, thus, consists of a series of "transcultural biographical situations" where English and Oriya discursive traditions are caught up in a dialogue. The paper has reconstructed three such dialogues, those between the notions of routine and *abakasa*, self-examination and *guhari*, and pastoral work

37 CHAKRABARTY, 2007: 215–222. This thesis has been most convincingly argued in the context of Bengal. Thus, For Tanika Sarkar, European domination in the realm of the *chakiri* prompted Bengali men to valorize the idea of "home" over civil society. For Dipesh Chakrabarty, the domain of *chakiri* or *vishayakarma*, included the state and the civil society and "was a matter of compulsion, of unfreedom, a forced interruption of more important and higher performances." I draw upon Chakrabarty's gloss over Tanika Sarkar's argument.

and *shrama*. Marked by such dialogues, everyday life of Oriya preachers at Cuttack acquired a quality of openness that the editors of this volume have helpfully described as "running afield." Instead of representing either English or Oriya cultural identities, journals of the native evangelists construct particular negotiations between the two.

A history of such particular everyday negotiations seeks to accomplish a fuller understanding of colonial modernity in India. In recent years, the question of modernity in India has invited two prominent lines of enquiry. On the one hand, advocates of "indigenous modernity" argue that crucial features usually associated with European modernity were present in pre-colonial Indian discursive traditions. The important work of Velcheru Narayana Rao, David Shulman, and Sanjaya Subrahmanyam traces the emergence of a new sense of time, new understanding of subjectivity and individual, a new historical consciousness in South India, roughly between 1600 and 1800. It defines indigenous modernity in opposition to what it conceives to be colonial modernity: colonial modernity rejects the immediate past and presents itself as distinctly different from it. In contrast, indigenous modernity does not define itself as a radical break from the past nor does it deny the significance of the past. It continues the tradition, but, as Narayana Rao would put it, marks a shift in sensibilities. The task for an advocate of this line of argument is, thus, to "trace how distinctly modern values and ideas have been articulated in non-European contexts, and examine the alternative institutions and cultural forms that supported these expressions." Satya P. Mohanty admirably performs this important task and calls indigenous modernity a project of historical retrieval and imaginative philosophical reconstruction.[38]

On the other hand, in a recent response, Dipesh Chakrabarty formulates a question for the advocates of indigenous modernity in India to think through: "Which Indian or South Asian thinkers from the pre-colonial period, then, must we still wrestle with in fabricating or thinking about democratic forms of public life?" Chakrabarty's point is: it is not adequate to locate features of European modernity in pre-colonial Indian discursive traditions. A project of historical retrieval must also explore if these indigenous discursive formulations inform contemporary life worlds. Modernity in Europe, he submits, alludes to two separate but symbiotically related projects. First, the process of building modern institutions – from parliamentary and legal institutions to roads, and capitalist businesses and factories – that are associated with what is usually called "modernization." Second, the development of a degree of reflective and judgmental

38 NARAYANA RAO, 2007: 160–161. See also MOHANTY, 2008: 3–21, and MOHANTY, 2011.

thinking about these processes, a development that is usually invoked by the term "modernity." Chakrabarty welcomes further empirical research into pre-colonial India, but wonders if there was an indigenous counterpart to what he refers to as modernity:

> If it is true that thinkers in India in the "early modern" period engaged in self-reflexive debates about institutions that eventually constituted our modernization, then historians ought to be able to bring to life such ancestors from pre-colonial India whose reflections on their own times are worthy of our contemporary passions and disagreements.[39]

Taking individual lives as a context of this modernity debate, this paper argues in favor of a local culture of selfhood. The Baptist pastorate at colonial Cuttack nurtured a local literary environment wherein a rejection of the immediate past was not the defining feature of modernity. Rather, pastoral modernity encouraged self-conscious excursions into older discursive traditions. Narayana Rao's characterization of colonial modernity as a non-traditional phenomenon that rejected the immediate past and presented itself as distinctly different from it, is based on the historically inaccurate assumption that the colonial state and its "English education system" was the sole propagator of modernity in colonial India.[40] It is more empirically grounded to recognize the state and English education as one of many agents operating in the field, and acknowledge that there were multiple colonial modernities. A non-state agent of colonial modernity, the Baptist pastorate, produced an Oriya evangelical middleclass that drew upon its immediate past to construct a new vocabulary of piety, a new understanding of being human.

This paper does not unearth self-reflexive debates in pre-colonial Oriya discursive traditions. But it argues that self-conscious everyday conversations on new notions of time, interiority and public good in colonial Cuttack were deeply informed by pre-colonial traditions. It is true that a search for modernity needs to engage with the question of self-reflexive debates as Chakrabarty puts it. But it also needs to look beyond. Confining the search to self-reflexive debates will not do justice to the important discursive continuities that enabled the construction

39 CHAKRABARTY, 2011: 663–675.

40 NARAYANA RAO, 2011: 135–152. "Colonialism in the nineteenth century eclipsed these developments [indigenous modernity]. The familiar story, which I need not repeat here, recounts how the English education system encouraged Indians to devalue most of their literature as immoral or decadent. A cultural amnesia overtook the newly educated middle-class, who rejected their immediate past in favor of colonial modernity."

of pastoral modernity in colonial Cuttack. Notions and practices like *guhari* continue to inform contemporary democratic forms of public life in Orissa.

References

Published Texts, Oriya Language

ANON.
1840 *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul: Manusyara Manare Dharmara Utpati O Bruddhira Bisayare*. Cuttack: Mission Press.
1840 *The Mirror of the Soul: Being a Collection of interesting facts, and illustrations of the Scripture doctrine, designed to enlighten the understanding and Amend the heart or Atmadarsha*. Cuttack: Orissa Mission Press.
1843–44 *Tracts in the Oriya Language*, Vol.1–3. Cuttack: Orissa Mission Press.
DASA, Jagannatha
2006 *Shrimad Bhagabata*. Nilamani MISHRA (ed.). Bhubaneswar: Orissa Sahitya Akademi, Vol. 1–7.
DASA, Rama.
Nd *Dardhyata Bhakti Rasamrita*. Cuttack: Dharma Grantha Store.
DASH, Gouranga Charan.
2008 *Gopal Praharaj*. Bhubaneswar: Orissa Sahitya Akademi.
NAYAK, Lavanya.
1988 *Odia Charita Sahitya*. Cuttack: Friends Publishers.
PRAHARAJ, Gopal Chandra.
1930–1940 *Purnachandra Ordiya Bhasakosa: A Lexicon of the Oriya Language*. 7 Vols. Cuttack: Utkal Sahitya Press.
SIMHA, Jayananda Simha.
1914 *The Rise of Christianity in Orissa and the Lives of Some Leading Oriya Converts: Odisare Khrista Dharmodaya O Keteka Adya Khristiananka Jibani*. Cuttack: Orissa Mission Press.

Published Texts, English Language

ANON.

1866 *The General Baptist Magazine for 1866*. London: E. Marlborough & Co.
1867 *The General Baptist Magazine for1867*. London: E. Marlborough & Co.
1868 *The General Baptist Magazine for1868*. London: E. Marlborough & Co.
Nd. *The General Baptist Repository, Volume V*. London: J. Srirven.
1831 *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer for the year 1831*. London: G. Wightman.
1833 *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer for the year 1833*. London: G. Wightman.
1833 *The Report of the General Baptist Missionary Society for the year ending June 30, 1833*. Derby: G. Wilkins and Sons.
1835 *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer Volume II, New Series*. London: G. Wightman.
1839 *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer, Volume I, New Series*. London: G. Wightman.
1842 *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer Vol. IV, New Series.* London: Sherwood, Gilbert and Piper.
1849 *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer, Vol IX.* London: Benjamin L. Green.
1850 *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer, Volume XII, New Series*. London: Benjamin L. Green.

CHAKRABARTY, Dipesh.
2007 *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
2011 "Muddle of Modernity." *The American Historical Review* 116.3: 663–675.

BEBBINGTON, D. W.
1989 *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*. London: Routledge.

FOUCAULT, Michel.
2007 *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France, 1977–78*. Ed., Arnold I. Davidson. New York: Picador.

GLENNIE, Paul / Nigel THRIFT
1996 "Reworking E. P. Thompson's Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism." *Time and Society* 5. 3: 275–299.

GORSKI, Philip S.
2003 *The Disciplinary Revolution: Calvinism and the Rise of the State in Early Modern Europe*. Chicago: the University of Chicago Press.

JACHAK, Rama Chandra.

1834 "A brief account of the Conversion to the Christian Faith, of Rama Chandra Jachuk; written by himself, and sent through his Minister to his Christian Brethren and Sisters in England." *Quarterly Papers: Designed for the weekly Subscribers to the General Baptist Missionary Society* 66.

MOHANTY, Satya P.

2008 "Alternative Modernities and Medieval Indian Literature: The Oriya *Lakshmi Purana* as Radical Pedagogy." *Diacritics*, 38.3: 3–21.

2011 *Colonialism, Modernity and Literature: A View from India*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan.

NARAYANA RAO, Velcheru.

2007 "The Play in Context: A Second Look at Apparao's Kanya-sulkam." *Girls for Sale: a Play from Colonial India*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

2011 "The Indigenous Modernity of Gurajada Apparao and Fakir Mohan Senapati." In: Satya P. MOHANTY (ed.): *Colonialism, Modernity and Literature: A View from India*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, pp. 135–152.

PATRA, Seebo.

1845 "Memoir Written by Himself of Seebo Patra: A Hindu Native Preacher in Orissa." *Quarterly Papers: Designed for the weekly Subscribers to the General Baptist Missionary Society* 108.

SUTTON, Amos.

1850 *Orissa and Its Evangelization Interspersed with Suggestions Respecting the More Efficient Conducting of Indian Missions*. Boston: William Heath.

TAYLOR, Charles.

2007 *A Secular Age*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

THOMPSON, E. P.

1967 "Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism." *Past and Present* 38: 56–97.