



A BRIEF OUT-LAY OF RATH AND ITS HISTORY

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ABSTRACT

It has been told that in the day of Vedic period those have the motion having all the wealthy feeling, having the sounds known as "Rath". So, the body of the living's beings known as Rath. In those days the sound giving vehicles were called as "Rath". The 'Rath' which has a motion was used by Surya, moon, Indra, Baruna (the god of water), Maruta (the god of air), Agnee (the god of fire) and other also has used. The cart driver called as Sarathi (who has skill to driving the Rath). Here the Yatra will be accept as Shree Jagannath's Rath Yatra. But without mention of time the Analyzer in doubt to accept this as Rath Yatra. The eminent historian Dr. Rajguru has pointed out about the Rath Yatra. The wooden deity of Sri Jagannath being incarnated by the dynasty of Biswabasu' known as 'Daitapati'. From that day the Rath Yatra being introduced.

KEYWORDS : Ratha, Jagannath, Out-lay, Historiography, Festival, Veda

The word Rath derives from the word 'Ram verb' with addition of 'Ta' suffix. About four thousand years before the word 'Rath' was used in the epic of veda like 'Rook veda' and 'Tajurveda'. It has been written down in 'Rook veda' that:

औहि बरतन्ते रथैब चक्र/

Besides this Agnee Dev (the god of fire), Sun, Moon, Barun (the god of water) and other gods has used the 'Rath'. In the flow of Vedic civilization, the god, gandharb, yakshya and man are chained with. The monks have explained the meanings or Rath in various directions. In the earthly view the meaning of Rath is a creation, which we can have with, touch with and move with. There are various creatures like elephant, horse and many more pictures we can have. There is a cart driver which known as 'Sarathi'. But in the in the meaning of philosophy the body of human being is compared with the Rath. The five elements of world as Air, light, Sky, Soil and water make the body which moves and works known as 'Panch tatwa'. After the death these elements returned to their original source. It has been told that

आतमानम् रथीनम बिधि शरीरं थमेबतु
बुधन्तु सारथी बिधिमनः गहमेबच/

As requires by the body there are 32 pulses are there. As like the Rath have the same. That is the similarity for the comparison of body with the Rath.

If we turn over the page of history, we can see the picture of Rath in the wall of 'Mahenjodaro' and 'Harpapaa' the ancient civilization.

What is the necessity of Rath? The 'Rath' being used in the battle field, For journey, carrying cargo and for pleasant journey and hunting also.

The 'Rath' may be called as 'Syandan', 'Sakat' (cart), or vehicle of wheels. The gods were going one place to another place using the Rath. The quality and fame of the 'Rath' are different to others. Especially the gods were used the 'Rath'. We have this phenomenon from the epics and puranas.

We first see the son in the sky at the morning. He comes accompanied with seven horses and moves from east to west. For this it has been told out in the Rook Veda that

आकृषेन रजसा बर्तमानज्ञेनबेशयन्न मृत्तं मर्त्यच
हिरण्मयेन सविता रथेन देबोयाति भुवनानि पश्यन्/(रुक्बेद-१/७/३५/२)

Means-The creator of the the world, self-incoming of himself, rounded the world showers the honey to every creator and

brings life and happiness. The son god is the creator of the living beings in the earth.

It has been described in the Rook ved, Jajurved, Samved and Atharb ved about the Rath, and known as chariot. The name of the Rath also has been seen and comes in argument.

According to the opinion of 'Sayhan' that

रमन्ते आस्विनम ईति रथः

Means- Motion. Which have the motion known as 'Rath'.

Yash' has been told in his book of 'Nirukta' that

तेषाम् रथः प्रमथगामी भवति/

Means the motion of the Rath always have the speed. In the book of 'Amarkosh', the name of Rath also used many more times. The means of Rath has been defined in the book that,

याने चक्राणि युद्धार्थे शतान्ग स्यन्दनो रथः/(२/८/५१/अमरकोष)

The body of the "Rath" made of many woods. So, the name of 'Satanga' may be appropriate. 2ndly the name 'Syandan'-means that

स्यन्दते स्यन्दु प्रसवणे ईति स्यन्दन
याने चक्राणि युद्धार्थे शतान्ग स्यन्दनो

The thing which expands itself. Moves one place to another place. Thirdly it has been said-that

रम्यते इति रथः

Means which plays as one place to other place or have the motion as known as 'Rath'.

So called Sarathi (driver) of the Raths known as--Arun' - Sarathi of Sun god 'Matali'- Sarathi of Indra as well. The vehicle -known as "puspak" was used by the demon king 'Ravan'. It has been donated to Ravan by the 'Kuber' (the god of wealth). The vehicle was driver less. (May be compare with the drone of today.) It has been moves away by the will of the owner.

Poet Murari Mishra (Nine century) has written about Rath Yatra. In the time of Rath Yatra the plays like "Anargha Raghab" and various other plays are staged for the entertainment of people. It known from the Murari Mishra's Writing that

"भागवतः पुरुषोत्तमस्य याछाया मुपस्थनीया सभासवः"

Historian Kedamath Mohapatra opined that the time of Rath

Yatra from 12th century. The establisher of Ganga dynasty Ananta Barma Chodaganga Dev named the Yatra of his wife Patta mahadevi known as "Gonda Choda" as Gundicha for the fame. According Odia the name 'Gonda Choda' used as Gundicha- So the Mandap being named as Gundicha and as well as the Yatra. The name of Pattamahadevi (First queen) has stressed on (1228) at the temple stone carving of drakshyarama. According to the Mohapatra the Rath Yatra of Puri being started at the time of Choda ganga Dev.

By the philosophy of Indians, the introduced the Rath has come from the very ancient. We are not very much aware for that. Though it is a tradition, it is connected with our daily living hoods.

The main aim of Jagannath Dharma is to liberate the poor the backward of the society. We can say it is a Yatra which can give all- the enlightenment, peace, and prosperity for life. It has been said that – one gets Moksha (Mukti) to have a Jagannath darshan in the Rath. It is the faith and believes among the devotees. It has been written in Bamdev Sahinta that, in the word of King Indradyumn

"O God! You come to liberate to the poor, to the backward who have in the dark gave enlighten to them.

The other name of Rath Yatra is Ghosha Yatra, Means the journey of Victory. The influence of Buddhism up to eight/ninth century being over powered by Brahmanism by the leading hand of Acharya Sakar dev. In the time of "Ganga dynasty it may name as victory as Gosha. Yatra over Buddhism & Brahmanism.

In other hand the consciousness of Unionism has embarrass all other dharma may be declared as Gosha Yatra. Again, the sound of the wheels of three chariots is a hint of goodness and happiness may be force to name the Yatra as Ghosha Yatra. By these all-evil wills be overpowered. The meaning of "Ghosh" according the book in Purna Chandra Bhasakosha that pulled to touch up the ground by the devotees known as Gosha Yatra. The meaning of 'Ghosh' that – (the carnor of Ishan). In this day the Jagannath is sitting at Gundicha Bedi for the Ishan may be named as Ghosha Yatra.

In Niladri Mahodaya this Yatra named as Gosha Yatra. In this book Bramha explains the rules to Indradyumn.

In the Puran of 'Indraneelamani, the Yatra has been noted as Ghosha Yatra opined by Sadasiba Rath Sharma.

आषाढस्य मळेपक्षे द्वितीया पुष्य संयुते
चराचर हितार्थाय घोषया विधीयतेस्

Dashabtar Yatra - The other name of Ratha Yatra is dashabtar Yatra. During Rath Yatra ten gods are in a Yatra. Shree Balabhadra placed in Taladhwaaja with Shree Ram Krishna. Similarly in chariot of Devi Subhadra the god Sudarsan placed in. In Nandighosh, The Jagannath placed with the Image of Madan Mohan. By this Seven gods – Nandighosh (itself as Basudev), Taladhwaaja (itself Nrusingh) and Darpadalan (itself Jayadurga counts ten. The chariots are being worshipped as God, so, no one ordinarily should not ride on it. The gods of heaven are showering flowers when the Rath are in move. From beginning to the end every ritual proved the wooden things as God. In the time of Anabasar ten pati (picture god) have been worshiped in the temple. So, it is known as Dashabtar Yatra.

Ghosha Yatra in Other Puranas- In Purusottam Mahatmya of Skandha Puran told that Sri Gunicha Yatra/ Mahavedi Mahautsab is the Important festival among 12 Yatras.

सत्यं सत्यं पुनः सत्यं प्रतिजाने दृविजोत्तमाः

नातः श्रेयः प्रदोबिष्णोरुत्सवः शास् सम्मतः/

यथा रथबिहारोऽयं महाबेदी महोत्सवः (स्कन् पुराण ३३-५६)

The view of this Yatra is a cause to free the man or the living beings from the circle of birth and death.

The festival of Rath Yatra is not famous in Odisha, but it is a Yatra which gives idea to love all. There is a belief that, the view of Shree Jagannath on the Rath being gives fruit of thousands Horse sacrifice. It is said in Puranas that, the view of God ten years in Ratna vedi is equal to the view of one day in Gundicha temple. As in Sloka

नीलाद्रो दश वर्षाणि, गुण्डिचा मण्डपे दिने

देवता दर्शनं पुण्यं रामौ दशगुणं भवेत् |

गुण्डिचा नाम देवेश भक्ति मुक्ति फळप्रदा

तस्मै किल बरञ्चासौ ददौ सः पुरुषोत्तमः (ब्रह्मपुराण)

गुण्डिचा मण्डपात् कृष्णमायान्तं दक्षिणामुखः

रथस्थं हलिनं भद्रां पश्यन्तो मुक्ति भागिनः / (स्क.पु.)

The 29 parts of the skandha purana of Odisha has describes the Gundicha Mahotsav. The king Indradyumn has said the placed temple is pure of love as well as the sacrifice place of born known as Mahavedi, where the god has spent seven days in every year. So, the god has done this system of Rath Yatra.

Whatever it may be the Rath Yatra is connected in our life. We observe it and bow down our head for ever at the feet of the Sri Jagannath.

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