

APPLIQUÉ CRAFT IN ORISSA, INDIA: CONTINUITY, CHANGE, AND COMMERCIALIZATION

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Introduction

THE term 'appliqué', of French origin, describes a technique whose decorative effect is obtained by superimposing patches of coloured fabric on a base fabric, the edges of the patches being sewn on with some form of stitching. The appliqué technique has been adopted by people all over the world to provide bold, brightly coloured, sometimes three-dimensional designs for use in various situations. The work is generally done by hand.

Many places in India are renowned for producing such appliqué work, the important regions being northern Gujarat, Bihar, Orissa, Tanjore and its surrounding areas, and Rajasthan. In Orissa, appliqué work is carried out at Pipili, Puri, and other places connected with religious festivals and processions.¹ It is the development of appliqué work in this area up to the present day that I want to concentrate on here.

In the past, such work was confined to the Darji or tailor caste, whose surnames are mostly Mahapatra and Maharana. 'Darji' is an Urdu word for professional tailor and indicates that a group of people who previously earned their living by tailoring came to be recognized in the course of time as a caste of the

1. Pipili is a small town situated on state highway 8, on the Jagannath trunk road, nearly twenty kilometres from Bhubaneswar, the state capital, and forty kilometres from Puri, site of the famous temple of Lord Jagannath on the coast.

name 'Darji'. The development and maintenance of appliqué work in Puri and Pipili has to a great extent been due to the presence of the Jagannath temple at Puri. The Rajas or kings of Puri appointed artisans as *sevak* (servants) for the regular supply of articles required for the day-to-day *seva* (rituals) performed in the temple. There is written evidence to show that appliqué craft was present in the Jagannath temple as far back as AD 1054, as *sevak* were appointed by the king at that time (Mohanty 1980). The duty of members of the Darji caste in Puri to supply the requirements of stitched articles for Lord Jagannath and for festivals was later laid down in the Record of Rights for Shri Jagannath Temple, Puri, under the Orissa Act of 1952. This link with the temple is a very close one and is supported by much written evidence, as well as figuring in legend and folklore. Here I shall deal with the most famous legend, which relates to the origin of appliqué craft in Pipili.²

It is said that a Badshah (Muslim emperor) of Delhi (the people do not remember the name) once ordered a resident Darji to make him two pillows. The result pleased the tailor so much that he thought it would be better if the pillows were given to Lord Jagannath of Puri, as only he ought to own things of such exotic beauty. The next morning, when the Darji came to resume his work, he was surprised to find that one of the pillows was missing. When the emperor was informed about the missing pillow he immediately imprisoned the Darji, thinking he had stolen it. But Lord Jagannath appeared before him in a dream and told him that the Darji was innocent and that he, Jagannath, had performed the miracle in which the pillow had transported itself overnight to Puri. The next day, the man was released and resumed his work. After completing it he came to Pipili and taught his craft to the people of his caste, so that the art spread to many other parts. Ultimately, good artisans were selected to render service to Lord Jagannath at Puri.

It was common practice for kings and rulers in India to patronize traditional craft and skills, selecting renowned and talented artists from various fields and housing them in their respective capitals. Similarly, when temples, mosques, and other places of worship were constructed, these crafts and skills were exploited to endow them too with religious merit. Over time, these craftsmen from different places, housed in the precincts of a temple or mosque, helped preserve the autonomy and sanctity of religious traditions. This is thought to have happened too in the case of appliqué craft artisans. There is a popular belief that appliqué craft started or rather originated in Pipili, which is famous for it today, and that itinerant craftsmen carried it to Puri. This is only an assumption, as opinions vary: informants are not certain about their place of origin. Pipili was later seized by Muslim rulers, and some Muslims settled there. In the course of time the essentially Islamic word 'Darji' seems to have been applied to the Hindu Suchika caste. As affinal relations gradually developed between the Suchika of Puri and Pipili, the artisans were influenced by the outstanding work of Muslims residing in and

2. *Editors' note:* a companion article, by Mamata Tripathi on the *patta* painting of Orissa, will appear in a future issue of *JASO*.

around Pipili. These craft items were subsequently added to local appliqué designs, thus making the craft more attractive and commercially significant.

Appliqué Techniques

Technically, appliqué is based mainly on three items: stitches, strips, and patchwork. The motifs that are cut out and patched on to the base cloth can also be divided into three categories, depending on shape and appearance: (i) plants, (ii) animals, and (iii) celestial bodies and symbols. The arrangement of structural patterns and the combination of different colours form the main theme.

A. Stitches

Appliqué craft is mainly based upon the *chikana* or chain stitch (see 10, below), but other stitches are also used, as listed below:

1. *Bakhia* (stem stitch)

The stem stitch is a simple running stitch used to fix patches temporarily on to the base cloth. Several stitches can be picked up at each insertion of the needle. It is one of the most important stitches in appliqué work.

2. *Taropa* (hem stitch)

The *taropa* stitch is like a hemming stitch and is used for stitching appliqué patches on to the base cloth, where the edges of the patches are turned in and then stitched, the stitch being almost concealed beneath the patch. It is one of the stitches used to provide a neat finish.

3. *Guntha* (run stitch)

Here the needle passes above and below the fabric, making stitches of equal length. The stitches below should also be of equal length, but generally they are half the size or even less of the upper stitches.

4. *Khanja* (tag stitch)

This stitch is used to keep the motif in position on a piece of fabric. It is applied to the base cloth in appliqué, a primary stitch that is taken out after the main stitches have been inserted.

5. Button-hole stitch

This stitch is used for the *mudi* or rings that are attached to large canopies in order to fix tiny round mirrors to them. Here the needle passes over the edge of the inner surface of the cloth.

6. *Ganthi* (similar to button-hole stitch)

This stitch is worked in almost the same manner as the button-hole stitch, with the difference that in the latter the stitches are close together, whereas in the *ganthi* stitch they are somewhat apart and not as uniform. The thread is brought out on the lower line, the needle being inserted in position on the upper line, taking a downward stitch with the thread under the needle point, then pulling the stitch up to form a loop and repeating the process. This stitch is used to produce attractive embroidered motifs.

7. *Kitikitia* (variation on button-hole stitch)

This stitch is a variation on the button-hole stitch. Here, after two regular stitches, one half-stitch is inserted.

8. *Baiganomangia Kitikitia*

This is a combination of *kitikitia* with a grouped button-hole stitch and is used in a similar fashion to *kitikitia*, with a variation in the half-stitch, which is taken in.

9. *Ruching* (running stitch)

This is an essential stitch in appliqué craft in which the stitch is used to gather a strip of cloth to make an appliqué motif. These stitches are generally circular in form.

10. *Chikana* (chain stitch)

As already noted, the most important stitch in appliqué work is the chain stitch, an embroidery stitch built up by looping threads and used to bind the edges of the appliqué patch without turning. It is also used for textural and ornamental effects on motifs.

B. Strips

Types of *patti* (strips) are described below along with their colour combinations and measurements.

1. *Phula patti* (flower motif): black background with flower of red, yellow, white, or green, 7–9 inches.
2. *Sadha patti* or *naali patti* (plain red strip): always red, 5–6 inches.
3. *Nahara patti* (right-facing cone pattern): white, red, and black combination, 5–6 inches.
4. *Kalaso patti* (pitcher strip): black background, white pitcher pattern, 6 inches.
5. *Beliri patti* (strip from left to right): white and red strip, 4–4½ inches.

6. *Mooda patti* (strip from right to left): white, red, and black or blue combination, 5–6 inches.
7. *Gula patti* (wavy strip): black background, chain stitch with red or white thread, 5–6 inches.
8. *Hirana patti* (*mogra* flower strip): red background, flower of white cloth, 3 inches.
9. *Chaina patti* (strip of embroidered patterns in chain stitch): 3 inches.
10. *Khandiyali patti* (diamond-shaped strip): red and black square (*chauka*) *pania* (triangular strip on top and bottom edge) cloth, 5–6 inches.
11. *Chauka patti* (square strip): background of black and blue, with chain of white thread, 5–6 inches.
12. *Sua patti* (swan strip): background of red with green *sua*, 5–7 inches.
13. *Hansa patti* (swan strip): black background, with red and yellow *hansa*, 5–7 inches.
14. *Chidiya patti* (clubs strip): black background with *chidiya* of red and yellow or red background *chidiya* of black and yellow, 4 inches.

C. Patchwork

Motifs used in appliqué include trees, creepers, leaves, flowers, birds, animals, fish, celestial bodies, symbols and other motifs, which are given in detail below:

1. Tree: *belagaccha* (tree of Bael or Aegle marmelos correa).
2. Leaves (*patra*): *bela* (leaf of Bael); *banka*; *pana* (betel leaf); *suji*.
3. Flowers: *malli* (*mogra*); *padma*, *tarup*, *guntha* (types of lotus); *surya mukhi* (sunflower); *utha phula* (raised flower); *sunsuniya*.
4. Birds: *sua* (parrot); *bataka* (duck); *hansa* (swan); *mayur* (peacock); *ganda maurya* or *bhairaba* (double-headed peacock).
5. Creeper: *tohi* or *dali*.
6. Animals: *hati* (elephant); *singho* (lion).

7. Fish: *matsha*.
8. Heavenly bodies: *surya* (sun); *chandra* (moon).
9. Other: Rahu (demon who swallows the sun and moon during eclipses); *kangula* (triangular-shaped motif); flag.

Appliqué and Religious Traditions

Hindu religious texts prescribe different festivals for different times of the year, which prepare devotees for encountering and experiencing the divine. When *yatra* or festivals are being performed, people come from remote parts of the country to glimpse the deities in procession. Sometimes devotees express a lifelong desire to see the deities, especially if they are barred from the shrine on account of old age, disease, or disability. Festivals are accordingly provided for those who cannot witness the deities in the temple precincts themselves. The performance of festivals in the temples is said to remove fear of fire, famine, floods, and epidemics, as well as saving devotees from other acts of nature.

The appliqué craft is closely connected with these religious traditions. A canopy and flag are essential for every temple. In every village at the Dola ('to play with colours') festival, where the images of Devi Radha and Lord Krishna are led in procession, the divine chariots are covered with appliqué work, and ritual umbrellas, *trash* (fans), etc. are also carried before the deities. The temple of Lord Jagannath (the 'Lord of the Universe') at Puri³ sees many festivals around the year, during which images of the *archa* (representative deities) are often taken out in procession. The taking out of the deities is called *mulabera* and is especially associated with this temple. The important festivals where appliqué items are required are listed below.

1. *Devasnana Purnima*

The name of this festival is derived from *deva* (God), *snana* (bathing), and *purnima* (full moon). It is celebrated at the *purnima* of the month of *jyestha* (May–June), in which Lord Balabhadra was born. The Snana Yatra (bathing festival) is performed on this day. The images of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra, along with Lord Sudarshana and Lord Madanmohan, are brought in procession to the *snana vedi* (bathing platform). The procession is called *pahandi* or *pahandivijaya*. A canopy called *indragovinda chandua* (from Indra, king of heaven, rain and thunder, plus Govinda, an alternative designation

3. The word Puri may be a shortened form of Jagannath Puri, literally 'the abode of the Lord of the Universe'.

for Lord Jagannath) is tied on to the *snana vedi*. The name of this *chandua* also makes reference to its minute pores: Lord Indra showers rain in such a manner that it falls on the *chandua*, which is tied over the trinity of deities, providing protection from rain and only allowing the required amount of water to percolate through. In this way, water is sent from Indra to Govinda. A new canopy is made only after the old one has become torn. Formerly the raw material was donated by devotees, but now the temple administration provides it, and the canopy is tied on every year on this occasion. The platform is decorated with pictures of jewel trees, flower gardens, flags, and a *toran* (an appliqué panel over the doorway, which is a good omen). The images are all decorated with beautiful flowers, and *dhupa* (incense) and perfumes of many kinds are offered. This famous *pahandi* of the deities takes place accompanied by music and the beating of various types of indigenous musical instruments, in the midst of thousands of people jostling to obtain a glimpse of them.

The day before the festival, 108 gold and copper pots are filled with water from the *sunu kuan* (golden well) and kept on the *bhoga mandap* (offering platform). These vessels are brought to the *snana vedi* on the day of the Snana Purnima in a ritual called Jalad Hibasa. The deities are first offered red powder and then taken to the *snana vedi*, their bodies being covered with silk clothes. This is the only occasion when water is poured on the images themselves; at other times it is poured on the copper mirror the deities use. Along with the rituals, the pouring of water is accompanied by the chanting of a *pavamana* (a Sanskrit hymn). After the bathing ceremony, the deities are dressed up as Ganesha (the god of learning and wealth) in a ritual called Gajanana Vesa (*vesa* meaning 'dress'). For Lord Jagannath this is the first annual *yatra*. Generally Ganesha is worshipped at the beginning of every rite, the reason for the deities being dressed up as Ganesha at this time.

Following the Snana Yatra, the images are kept on the *ratna vedi* (the throne of the Trinity in the inner sanctum of Lord Jagannath's temple) for fifteen days, away from public view, without any proper daily worship. This period is called *anabasara* ('improper time for worship'). For these fifteen days the *daita* (descendants of Visvabasu, the *savar* chief) paint the images with original colours, since they have been washed clean by the bathing festival. On the sixteenth day, the deities are taken out for worship, following their renovation. The festival of Lord Jagannath's first appearance to his devotees is called Navayauvan ('new life'). During *anabasara*, the *daita* offer the deities fruits and water mixed with cheese. During this period they are considered to be ill and resting, and the Raja Vaidya, the king's physician, gives them a specific medicine.

2. Rukmini Harana

The name of this festival is derived from Rukumini (the wife of Lord Krishna) and *harana* ('abduction'). It is celebrated on the eleventh day of the bright fortnight of *jyestha* (May–June). A particular *sebayat* (servant) dresses as Sisupal (a mythical king who was a suitor of Rukumini), while Madan Mohan, sitting on a *rath*

(car) in the temple, fights with Sisupal. The entire *rath* is covered with appliqué craft. Madan Mohan wears *juddha posaka* (war attire). Ultimately, Sisupal is defeated and Rukumini elopes with Madan Mohan.

3. *Rath Yatra, or Car Festival*

The world-famous Car Festival of Lord Jagannath is held at Puri on *ashadha sukla dwitiya*, that is, the second day of the bright fortnight of *ashadha* (June–July), every year. It attracts people from all over the world. A legend about the origin of the *rath* (car) tells that the Lord's car was in heaven for a long time. It originated on earth from the battle between Indra and the demon Bhuturasura, during which Indra violently flung lightning on to the body of the demon. This weapon broke into four parts, the third of which took the shape of the *rath*. From that day on, the name *rath* was heard on earth, and gradually its construction was undertaken. In Hindu mythology Indra is the king of heaven, rain, and thunder. As the *rath* originated as a part of his weapon, the fact that the Car Festival takes place at the beginning of the rainy season is mythically justified.

Great religious significance is always attributed to the construction and final consecration of the *raths*. The colour of the cloth covering the *raths* is similar to that of the dresses the deities wear. Some regard Jagannath as a manifestation of Lord Krishna, who wears *pitambara* or yellow cloth. The corresponding covering cloth is made of red and yellow appliqué, the design near the entrance being originally of *rupa* (silver) and later of *pittala* (brass), but now it is done in *zari* (gold or silver thread). Here, in front of the deity, a canopy called *uda chandra* ('canopy which flies') is tied, displaying the appliqué work of the Darjis. Lord Balabhadra's *rath* is covered with red and blue appliqué work. The blue colour represents Lord Balabhadra, who is also called Nilamber ('clothed in blue'). Devi Subhadra is conceived as Sakti (the red-robed mother goddess). The covering of her *rath* is of appliqué on red- and black-coloured fabric. The deities, decorated with golden garments, which are also prepared by the appliqué craftsmen, are installed inside these cars.

Afterwards, the deities are given a particular kind of *bhog* (offering) and are brought to the *raths* one by one. The *raths* are kept ready in front of the *singhadwar* (lion's gate) facing north the day before Rath Yatra. The cars are placed in a row, that of Lord Balabhadra being in front, followed by those of Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath. Just before the deities are carried from the temple to the *raths* they are adorned with floral crowns. The cars do not start immediately after the deities have been installed. The Raja (king) of Puri, who is said to be the descendant of the builders of the Jagannath temple, comes in a palanquin to pay homage to them by sweeping the platform of each car in turn. This is called Chhera Panhara ('sweeping the floor of the *raths*') and is done using a gilded broomstick after holy water mixed with sandalwood paste has been sprinkled on the floor. Then follows the most auspicious moment, when thousands of people seize the ropes and begin to pull the cars. The motion should be slow along the *bada danda* (the main road) till the journey ends at Gundicha Mandir (Lord

Jagannath's summer house). Since Lord Balabhadra is the eldest, his car moves first, followed by Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath. If the cars do not move in a slow, punctuated motion, and if any part of a car is damaged, it will lead to disaster for the country and for humanity in general.

After seven days at Gundicha Mandir, the deities return to Bahuda Yatra. On the *ekadasi* or eleventh day in the bright fortnight of *ashadha* (June–July), the deities are ceremonially dressed in a rite called Suna Vesa ('golden dress').

4. *Shayan Yatra*

Shayan Yatra (the 'sleeping festival'), is also celebrated on *ashadha shukla ekadasi*. The representative images (small golden images) of Lakshminarayan, Anantabhadra and Bhubaneswari, representing Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra respectively, are taken into a well-decorated sleeping chamber made of wood and decorated with different types of appliqué work, such as *sejo* (three mattresses) and *mandi* (twelve pillows), which are made by the Darji in different colours. The Darji also provide, well in advance, the dresses which the deities wear at the time of going to bed. This festival displays different appliqué items in association with the different Lords. They are then laid on their respective cots till *kartika shukla ekadasi*, the eleventh day of the bright fortnight of the month of *kartika* (October–November).

5. *Jhulan Yatra*

The Jhulan Yatra (swing festival) is celebrated for seven days from *srabana shukla dashami*, the tenth day of the bright fortnight of *srabana* (July–August) up to *puṇnima* (full-moon day) in the same month, in the precincts of Lord Jagannath's temple. Here Madan Mohan, an image of Jagannath, along with the goddesses Lakshmi and Viswadhatri, is placed in a swing on the *mukti mandap* ('platform for learned Brahmins') called *jhulan mandap*. The Darji have an important role in the Jhulan Yatra, supplying decorated saris with pleats for Lakshmi and clothes with pleats and shawls for Lord Madan Mohan.

6. *Krishna Janma*

Krishna Janma, the birthday of Lord Krishna, is celebrated on the eighth day of the dark fortnight of *bhadra* (August–September). The deities put on new garments, such as pleated clothes and shawls made in different types of appliqué craft by the Darji, who supply the temple administration with these articles at least one week before the festival.

7. *Saptapuri Amabasya*

This takes place on the new-moon day of *bhadra* (August–September). On this occasion the different items which are offered to the deities are placed on a *taato* (tray for offerings made of bamboo), which is covered by a piece of appliqué cloth made by the Darji.

8. *Radhastami*

The birthday of the goddess Radha (the fiancée of Lord Krishna) is celebrated on the eighth day of the bright fortnight of *bhadra* (August–September). The new garments for the goddess are supplied by the Darji. This includes a small pleated sari and a shawl decorated in different colours with appliqué work. The different colour combinations and the sizes of all items are laid down in different sacred texts of the temple.

9. *Sahasra Kumbha Abhisek*

This festival, the coronation (*abhisek*) of the goddess Durga, is carried out on the eighth day of the dark fortnight of *aswina* (September–October), on which day Shola Puja (worship for sixteen days) of the goddess Bimala also begins. A small canopy is made for this purpose by the Darji.

10. *Kumar Purnima*

This is held on the full-moon day of *aswina* (September–October). For this festival a *luga* (covering for the lower part of the body), *chador* (covering for the upper part of the body) and *khandua* (raw silk) are provided for the deities. The colour of Lord Balabhadra's attire is green, of Lord Jagannath's yellow, and of Devi Subhadra's red. Again these garments are made by the Darji and supplied to the temple administration well before the festival. On this occasion the goddess Lakshmi and Lord Vishnu play *jua* (gambling with cards).

11. *Odhanasasthi*

This takes place on the sixth day of the bright fortnight of *margasira* (November–December). From this day *ghodalagi* ('the Lords wear their winter garments') is observed, as this festival is celebrated at the onset of winter. These clothes, made of raw silk and called *chador*, are prepared by the Darji and supplied to the temple before the festival. The size of the *chador* for Lord Jagannath is seven metres, for Lord Balabhadra eight metres, and for Devi Subhadra six metres.

12. *Pushyabhiseka*

This takes place on the full-moon day in the month of *pausa* (December–January). Pots filled with perfumed water are taken from *bhoga mandap* (the offering platform) to the *ratna vedi*, and sacred water is sprinkled for the well-being of the deities. This *abhiseka* is performed for different deities such as Lord Ram, Devi Sita, and Lord Lakshmana, the festival therefore being called Ramabhiseka. On this occasion Lord Jagannath is worshipped as Lord Ramachandra, the epic hero of the Ramayana, along with his brother Lakshmana and consort Sita. The Darji make *chhati* and *ularo* (types of umbrella) for this occasion.

13. *Makara Sankranti*

This is celebrated in the month of *pausa* (December–January). Boiled rice mixed with candy and some fruit juice are offered to the deities. For this purpose the

Darji make the *makara taato*, the cloth covering on the tray meant for the offerings, along with a *makara chhati* (type of umbrella).

14. *Dola Yatra*

This is celebrated from the tenth day of the bright fortnight of *phalguna* (February–March) up to the full-moon day of the same month. The *arcabera* (deities) are taken out to the *dola vedi* (swing), and the swinging festival is performed. The goddess Lakshmi and Lord Madan Mohan play *holi* (spraying of colours). For this purpose a *dola chandua* (type of canopy) is made.

Besha

Besha means dress or adornment. Daily, from Mangala Arati (the earliest ritual in the morning) to Ratri Pahuda ('to retire at night'), the deities on the *ratna vedi* wear different types of dress, decorated with cotton and silk fabrics, gold ornaments studded with precious stones, flowers of different varieties, *tulsi* (basil or *occimum sanctum*) leaves etc., while sandalwood paste, camphor, and sometimes musk are used in the rituals. Some important *beshas* are described below.

1. *Abakasha* or *Tadapa Uttari Besha*

Abakasha is the term for the teeth-brushing and bathing rituals of the deities. *Tadapa* is the clothing for the lower part of the body of the deities, while *uttariya* is the clothing for the upper part. This *besha* is carried out every day after the Mangala Arati for the Abakasha rituals.

2. *Chandana Besha*

This *besha* ritual is performed for 42 days starting from *akshya trutiya* (third day of the bright fortnight of *baisakha* (April–May)). In this *besha* the deities Lord Rama and Lord Krishna travel to the tank in a palanquin, while Lord Madan Mohan, Devi Saraswati, and Devi Lakshmi travel on a *moni fiman* ('divine vehicle'), the covering of which is newly made each year of cloth and *zari* (gold). They *chapo* ('go boating'). This boat has a *chan dan bento* (sandalwood handle) and five *alata* (hand-fans for religious use) with *bento* (handles of silver). A *hati ghoda* ('elephant covering') of *zari* work is also used. From this day onwards, construction of the deities' *raths* for the Car Festival begins. Chandan Yatra is celebrated for 42 days, divided into two periods of 21 days each. The first period is known as *bahar chandan* ('outer *chandan*'). During this period, the representative images of Rama, Krishna, Madan, Lakshmi, and Biswadhatriare are taken in procession to Narendra tank. Images of Siva from five Siva temples—Jameswar, Lokanath, Markundeswar, Nilakantha, and Kapaloms Chano—also go on *biman*. The five Sivas are known as the *panch pandavas* ('five Pandavas', the famous

brothers in the Mahabharata). The procession makes use of *chhati* (umbrellas used in religious functions and processions) with a *chandra* (moon) and *surya* (sun), which were formerly made of silver, later of *pitalo* (brass), and are now of cloth. The cloth used to be made of *makhmal* and now is of velvet. The *chhati* of Lord Balabhadra is black, of Devi Subhdra red, while Lord Jagannath has a white *ularo* (a type of *chhati*) and a red, yellow, and white *alata* (fan). In the Narendra tank, the images play in well-decorated *chapo* (boats) and are worshipped. The second period of 21 days, known as *bhitar chandan* ('inner *chandan*'), is celebrated inside the temple.

3. *Suna Besha*

This *besha*, whose name derives from *sunā* (gold) and *besha* (dress), is also known as *raja besha* ('king's dress'). It is worn on the eleventh day in the bright fortnight of *ashadha* (June–July), when the deities are in their respective *raths* near the *singhadwar* (lion's gate) of the Jagannath temple. In this *besha*, *fahada* (*Terminalia bellerica*) and *padma* (lotus) of gold are tagged into the cloth of the goddess Subhdra. This work is done in the *bhandaro gharo* (the treasure room of the temple). The deities are adorned with many gold ornaments. Lord Balabhadra appears with hands and feet made of gold, Lord Jagannath holds a gold *chakra* (disc) in his right hand and a silver conch in his left hand, and both Lord Balabhadra and Lord Jagannath hold a plough in their left hand and a gold mace in their right hand.

4. *Kaliyadalan Besha*

This *besha* is worn on the eleventh day of the dark fortnight of the month of *bhadra* (August–September), when Lord Jagannath is dressed like Lord Krishna for killing Kaliya (a large serpent). For this *besha* a cane and wooden frame are required. The snake has seven *phona* (hoods), and the Darji make its scales out of cloth in order to cover the snake. The deities' hands and legs are of wood and are coloured every year. Lord Jagannath and Lord Balabhadra wear a *kiriti* (crown). Here Lord Jagannath as Lord Krishna stands on the snake while Lord Balabhadra as Lord Balaram stands cross-legged. They wear *luga*, *chador*, and *kuncha* (pleated material) of silk made by the Darji. Lord Jagannath as Krishna is dressed in yellow, Balaram in blue, and Subhdra in red.

5. *Pralambasura Badha Besha*

This *besha* is held on the twelfth day of the dark fortnight of the month of *bhadra* (August–September). It depicts Lord Balabhadra's killing of Pralambasura (the demon). Lord Balabhadra is dressed as Balaram and Lord Jagannath as Krishna. Lord Jagannath's hands and legs are made of cane covered in appliqué work.

6. *Krishna–Balaram Besha*

This *besha* is associated with an important rite held on the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight of the month of *bhadra* (August–September). Lord Jagannath and

Lord Balabhadra are dressed like Lord Krishna and his brother Lord Balaram. The *posako* (dress) they wear is included in the services (*seva*) owed by the Darji. Every year new *posaka* are made on this occasion. One of the *zamindars* (landlords) of Cuttack District used to donate the necessary raw material for the preparation of these dresses, but today it is provided by the temple administration.

7. Nagarjuna (Parsurama) Besha

This *beshha* is held only rarely. It is performed in the month of *kartika* (October–November), when there are six days of *panchuka* (fasting) in place of the usual five days. The Lords are dressed as warriors, with the *handia* (headdress) and *dhanu* (bow) worn by the Nagas, a tribe of north-east India. They also wear the traditional dress of *dhoti*, *lungi*, and *chadar*.

8. Ghodaagi Besha

This is observed from the sixth day of the bright fortnight of the month of *margasira* (November–December) to the fifth day of the bright fortnight of the month of *magha* (January–February). The deities wear winter cloths and *ghoda* (covering). Every year new clothes are made for them and for Sudarshan. Formerly the materials were supplied by the king, but now they are provided by the temple administration.

9. Jamalagi Besha

This is observed on *basanta panchami*, the fifth day of the bright fortnight of *magha* (January–February), and continues until *dola purnima*, the full-moon day of *phalguna* (February–March). The deities wear a new *jama* (shirt), *kuncha* (pleated cloth), and *chador* (shawl).

10. Padma Besha

On any Saturday or Wednesday between the new-moon day of the month of *magha* (January–February) and *basanta panchami*, the clothes worn by the deities are decorated with *padma phula* (lotus flower) made of *solo* (cork). Lace, *zari*, and paper are supplied by Bada Chhata Matha, a monastery in Puri.

From the material presented above it is clear that the Darji and their appliqué craft make a major contribution towards the Jagannath cult and have a close ritual relationship with the Jagannath temple. All apparel, from daily wear to dress for ritual occasions, is supplied by the Darji, together with other appliqué work, such as canopies, *chhati*, and *trasa* (heart-shaped banners), which are used on different ritual occasions and form a part of the ritual traditions of this major temple.

Change within the Craft

Originally, appliqué craft was undertaken to provide items of religious and ceremonial importance only. The main items are listed below:

1. *Chandua* (canopy)

Originally all the deities were stored with a piece of cloth over their heads for protection. This piece of decorated cloth is called a *chandua* and is a sign of respect to the deity. Huge *chandua* also feature in large gatherings such as weddings and meetings.

2. *Chhati* (ritual umbrella)

As the name indicates, this item is used for ritual journeys and royal outings. These umbrellas are not allowed inside the Jagannath temple precincts. In earlier times a procession, whether religious or royal, was unthinkable without this article, but today its use has become limited to the former context. The *chhati* has also evolved new, more commercial and secular uses, such as garden umbrellas and decorative ladies' umbrellas.

3. *Trasa* (banner)

In the past this was used frequently for religious purposes and in royal processions, but at present it is restricted to the former, being seen in royal processions only rarely. Specific categories of people carried this item, and without its presence a procession was not considered complete.

4. *Alata* (hand-fan for religious use)

When the deities are in procession, *alatas* give them protection from the heat. Originally these may have been of plain cloth, but gradually decorated *alatas* were made for this purpose.

5. *Adheni* (banner)

From traditional to modern times this article has been very much in use in both religious and, more rarely, royal processions.

6. *Dola Mandani* (covering for celestial vehicle)

Originally meant for ritual use, this covered the top of the divine wooden chariot or *bimano* (vehicle). In its present form it has been modified as a door decoration or *jhalar* (literally 'frill') and is used as such in domestic households.

7. *Tilaka Kothali* (letter-holder)

In earlier times, when travelling from village to village by foot, bullock cart, etc., a *tilaka kothali* was used for storing sandalwood, vermilion, money etc., these being essential when staying somewhere overnight. With the faster modes of communication of modern times, the *tilaka kothali* has lost this function. In

modern households it has found a new function as a letter-holder, as well as continuing to be a piece of decoration.

8. *Bairakha* (flag)

The presence of a flag at the pinnacle of a temple signified that it was a Hindu temple. Originally these flags were made mainly for Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra, gradually coming to be used too in other temples and shrines in Orissa.

9. *Bachkani* (a garment for men covering the upper portion of the body)

Also called *phatei*, this was normally used by kings and *zamindars* (landlords) but is no longer in fashion, due to the availability of milled cloth and changes in dress design. Formerly people wore a *dhoti* or *chador*, the *bachkani* being attire for an outing. On formal occasions, a *dhoti* or *chador* along with a *bachkani* or *phatei* were worn.

10. *Batua* (cloth bag of semi-circular shape)

Formerly, when money was scarce, it was kept in a container called a *batua*. Initially *batua* had no designs and were of plain cloth, but gradually embroidery and figures were added to them. From this model a variety of ladies' bags have developed.

11. *Sujini* (embroidered quilt)

This is said to be an artefact belonging to the remote past. Present-day artisans just talk about it and none of them possesses one. Since ordinary people could not afford them, its use was restricted to the *zamindars*.

Formerly only religious items were made, but slowly, due to its magnificent craftsmanship, appliqué craft has grown in demand and is now patronized by pilgrims and tourists, thus starting to flourish commercially. As a result, it has ceased to be restricted to religious purposes alone and has gradually given way to articles such as the *bachhani*, *batua*, *sujini*, and *kothalimuni* (letter-holder) for day-to-day use. To meet this growing demand the Darji, mainly those of Pipili and Puri, started making modern items, some deriving from traditional forms and functions, others being created for specific purposes. For example, at some point the idea arose of converting the age-old *chandua* into wall hangings. The central flower underwent a number of changes in this process. Originally a *tikili* (plain round shape cut out of cloth) was placed at the centre. Later this was replaced with a *bhundi* (raised centre made of cloth). Later still a *kancha* (mirror) was used instead, which now has a plastic frame. In the medieval period the *utha phula* (raised flower) and *gaddi* (miniature *utha phula singada* or stuffed triangular motif) were all made of cotton, covered on both sides with cloth. The place of the *utha phula* has been taken by the *suryamukhi* (sunflower), which takes less time and has proved more fashionable. Similarly, beautifully embroidered appliqué



FIG. 1 *Adheni* (banner), traditional item

door hangings may be seen generally in traditional Oriya households. The success of the *batua* in former times has given an impetus to the production of various types of ladies' bags in appliqué, which are very much in demand and circulate widely in India as well as abroad. The garden umbrella has an immense demand around the world and can be seen decorating beaches and the lawns of private houses both in India and abroad. It provides protection from the sun but not the rain. Fancy appliqué hand-fans are also made.

Other items owe nothing to tradition. Cushion covers are thoroughly modern items, on which the use of appliqué work is a most recent development. Many people have a complete drawing-room set made of appliqué. Other items include tablecloths, door screens and *toran* (embroidered appliqué door hangings, both used to provide privacy), sari borders, fancy shopping bags, purses, television covers, lampshades and file carriers (these days it has become traditional to present



FIG. 2 Garden Umbrella, modern item

appliqué file covers and filebags to invitees to seminars and meetings). In modern times this craft has therefore gained fame worldwide, and from having a purely ritual purpose it has become highly commercial in nature. It is also in a state of flux, as new items are frequently added to the range.

The production and marketing of appliqué is controlled by the Government of Orissa Directorate of Handicraft and Cottage Industries. There is also the Orissa State Co-operative Handicraft Corporation Ltd., which was established in 1959 to market the products of the artisans in the state. There are two main objectives. The first is procurement of the products of the artisans, and the second is to expose them to market channels in different areas through its sales emporia known as *utkalika*. The Pipili Appliqué Works Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd., a registered organization of the Directorate of Handicraft and Cottage Industries, came into existence in 1957. Presently its main function is to secure orders and to market products. Members of the craft use both traditional and modern skills

and methods of production. This has been facilitated by the training programmes conducted from 1970 onwards. Members of the society are given preference by financial institutions when they apply for short- or long-term loans. The marketing of the products is done through the society's showroom directly to the Orissa State Handicraft Board. Other channels for marketing are exhibitions and selling to middlemen and traders. To keep up with the growing demand for the craft, the government has accorded privileges to artisans in borrowing from financial institutions such as the Orissa State Financial Corporation, the Puri Gramya Bank, and the State Bank of India.

Appliqué craft, intended initially for purely religious use, has thus, with the passage of time, become modernized and commercialized in nature, due to its attractions to a wider clientele. Religious uses have been maintained, but this further development has led to a growing national and international as well as local market for the products of the craft.

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