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Birabalabhadrapur: A Brahmin Village in Orissa

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Along with the founding of temples, one of the traditional pious duties of an Indian monarch was to look after the livelihood of the kingdom's priestly, intellectual and administrative elite, the Brahmins, through the donation of land and the establishment of Brahmin villages (agraharas). Despite the existence of numerous inscriptions from the medieval period attesting to the foundation of such villages, survival of the settlements themselves is rare. This article is an architectural analysis of the village of Birabalabhadrapur, Orissa, one of the Sasana ('royal edict') Brahmin villages near Puri.

Brahmin Settlements in Orissa

In medieval Orissa, as today, the nucleus of the region lay in the fertile coastal plains, which are bounded by hilly 'tribal' areas. An initial function of Brahmin settlements was the gradual integration of 'tribal' peoples into Sanskritic, Hindu culture, accompanied by the gradual extension of cultivated land (for an historical background see Kulke, 1978).

This task had largely been accomplished in the coastal area by the 11th and 12th centuries, a period when, as in south India, kings consolidated their claim to rule by constructing great 'imperial' temples. The main shrine of the famous Jagannatha temple at Puri, on the Bay of Bengal, was built in 1135. From this time Orissan monarchy, of whatever dynasty, was inseparably associated with this cult, the king receiving the title of Gajapati (Lord of the Elephants), as regent of Jagannatha (Lord of the Universe). Also in this period began the rise of Bhakti (popular devotional religion) and the related growth of pilgrimage, an institution that the rulers

provided for, as Puri became one of India's great pilgrimage centres. These developments required large numbers of Brahmins: not only for the Jagannatha temple itself, but also for the broader needs of court and kingdom. To fulfil these needs, the area around Puri was settled with orthodox or Vedic Brahmins who, it is claimed, were brought to the relatively peripheral region of Orissa from Kanauj (ancient Kanyakubja, now in Uttar Pradesh), in the prestigious heartland of Madhyadesa.

Today the hinterland of Puri is scattered with Brahmin villages. In theory there are 16 Sasana villages proper, founded by kings, and 32 'karbar' villages, founded by queens, princes and ministers, in addition to 64 'para villages' or menial settlements (Pfeffer, 1978, p. 423). Physically there is no distinction between the Sasana and the karbar villages, and on a sufficiently detailed map they are readily identified both by their names, after the names of their founders, and their layout along a single, straight street running east-west, with a temple at either end (Fig. 1).

None of the Sasana settlements standing today appears to have been founded before the 15th century, at the end of the 'imperial' phase of Orissan history: 'The oldest Brahmin settlement in the vicinity of Puri seems to be the large village of Kapileswarpur, established by the Suryavamsi monarch Kapilendra Deva in the 15th century' (Pfeffer, 1978, p. 423). The great majority of Sasana villages, including the one described in this article, owe their origin to the Rajas of Khurda in the late 16th and 17th centuries. The relatively tenuous power of these rulers seems actually to have been an incentive for them to seek legitimisation by founding Brahmin villages.



Fig. 1. Map of Puri and surroundings, showing Brahmin villages.

In 1568 the Gajapati monarchy and the Jagannatha cult were destroyed by the Afghans, who virtually controlled the area until 1590, when they were defeated by Mansingh, the famous general of the Mughal emperor Akbar. Meanwhile, Ramachandra, a chieftain from the mountain fiefdom of Khurda, had renewed the Jagannatha cult in 1587, and his claim to be Gajapati came to be recognized by Akbar. Through the subsequent decades the Khurda rajas, who in due course came to be known as the 'Rajas of Puri', suffered an often precarious relationship with the Muslim Subahdars (governors), whose rule from Cuttack was established by the Mughals. The power of the dynasty diminished during the 18th century under the Nawabs of Bengal, and was reduced to nominal status under the Marathas.

Nevertheless, since the end of the 17th century the cult of Lord Jagannatha has been secure, if only, at times, because revenue from pilgrimage was so valuable (Kulke, 1978, pp. 323-324). The Sasana villages, their status and traditions, though weakened, survive today.

Birabalabhadrapur (Vira Balabhadrapura Sasana: vira=hero), 5 miles north of Puri, was founded by Balabhadra Deva, ruler of Khurda from 1650 to 1659 (Mahtab, 1960, p. 464). His three queens, Malatidevi, Singhadevi and Sulabhadevi, each established a Brahmin settlement in the vicinity: Malatipatpur, Singhapur and Sulabhavipur (1). The inhabitants of Birabalabhadrapur claim that, fourteen generations ago, their families migrated here from Kanauj.

Birabalabhadrapur: Overall Form

Just before the main Puri-Bhubaneswar road reaches Chandanpur, a teeming market place of the kind familiar all over today's India, a tree-lined lane to the left winds for half a mile between paddy fields and betel gardens, their bamboo cages perched on earthen ramparts, before running along the northern edge of a large tank, with ghats and temples, marking the beginning of Birabalabhadrapur.

Typically for a Sasana village, the basic pattern is a long, straight street running, in concordance with cosmic order, from east to west (Fig. 2). The

ends of the street are marked by a pair of axially aligned temples, one dedicated to Shiva, the other to Vishnu(2). Here the latter, at the eastern end by the large tank, is a Krishna temple, the Gopinatha. From its open porch the street runs three-quarters of a mile to the Shiva temple. Behind this is another tank, a small square kund (Fig. 10), and beyond a stretch of open land leads to the river, where a ferry is rowed across to a path continuing on the other side. Partly as a result of a flood in the 1950s, the street pattern has broken down along the middle portion, for about half the length of the village, where the road is bounded by fields and individual houses, and where the village school is now sited.

The north-south cross section is equally clear. Either side of the straight road, two parallel rows of one-storey courtyard houses face one another, about 25 m apart (Figs. 3 and 4). Their cursorily demarcated front yards, some with haystacks, are cut through by a swathe of tall coconut palms: traditionally the right to coconuts, essential to rituals, lay exclusively with the Brahmins. Where the original pattern is intact, the fronts of the houses form a continuous row, raised on a platform about 0.6 m high, projecting at the front of the house to form a transitional zone between public and private, a sitting place beneath thatched eaves, and a walkway for going to visit neighbours (Fig. 5). Behind the front part of the houses are the courtyards, their unroofed parts back at ground level, with further raised rooms at the rear. From here one steps down again to twenty metres or so of backyard, a zone of trees, flowers and latrines, and of cherished cows, of cow sheds and stacks of cow dung: although the Brahmins do not work in the fields, they look after their cows, milk them, wash them and decorate them. A typical arrangement beyond this point would be a drainage channel, then the open country, but here a lush zone of coconut groves and swamps intervenes between the back yards and the emerald paddy field.

The 120 households (3) of the village belong to various gotras (clans)—Panda, Mishra, Mohapatra, Das, Nanda—who traditionally specialised in different functions (Pfeffer, 1978, p. 426). Even among the Vedic Brahmins there is a hierarchy; the lineage of the Rajagurus, the king's preceptors, is the

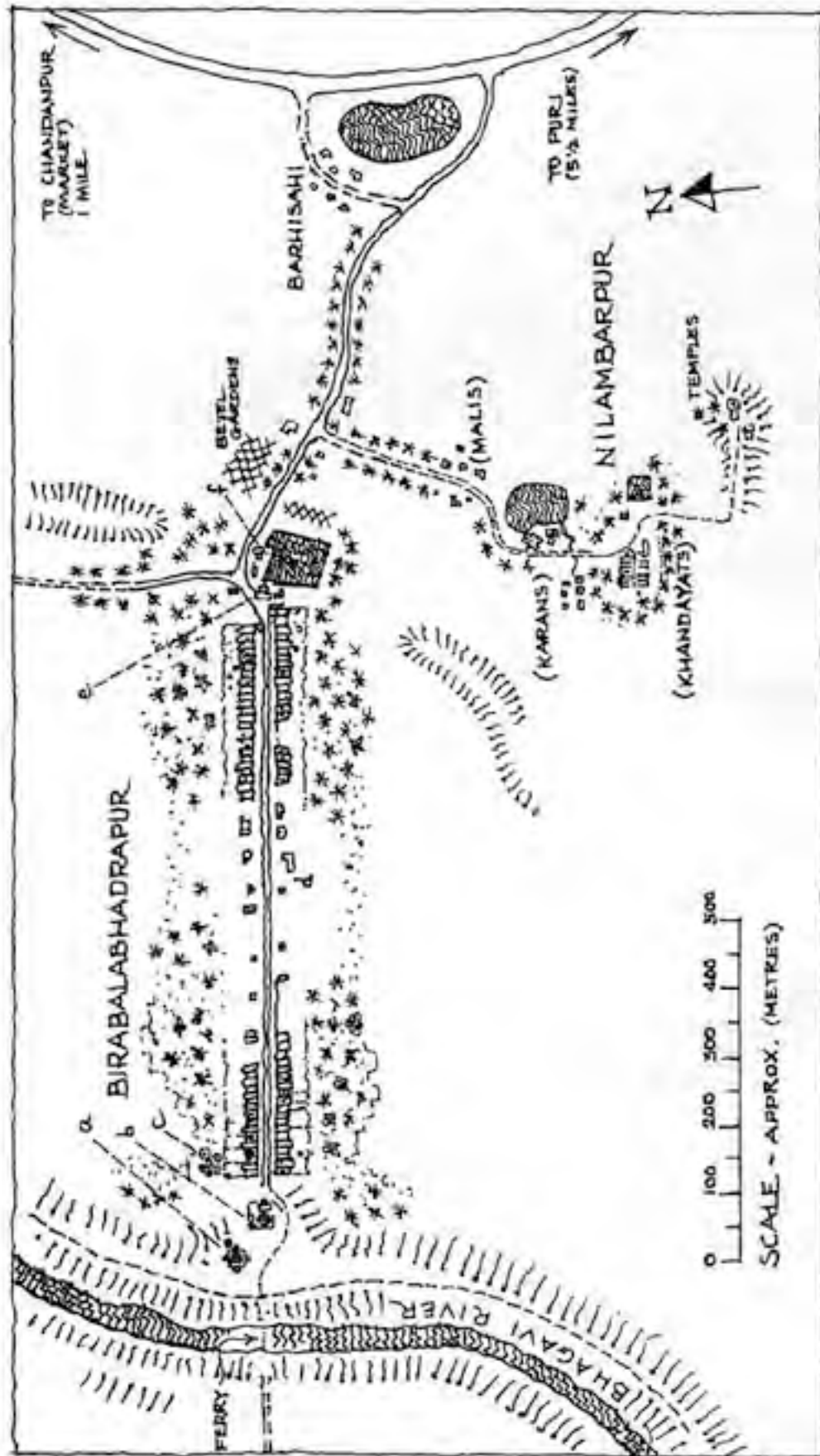


Fig. 2. Map of Birabalabhadrapur and Nilambarpur. a. kund, b. Shiva temple, c. miraculous lemon grove, d. school (modern), e. Gopinatha temple, f. Vishvanatha temple.



Fig. 3. House fronts, Birabalabhadrapur.

most prestigious [4]. Further categorization could be made according to affiliation to particular deities: apart from Lord Jagannatha, among whose devotees the whole village can be counted. Household deities include Ganesh, Lakshmi-Narayana, Surya, Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. These days five families are full time pujaris (priests) for one or other of the village temples.

These social categories do not determine, if they ever did, the distribution of families within the village of Birabalabhadrapur. Other villages, however, apparently do follow a more formal pattern: "Each of [the] two temples commands the popular attachment of the inhabitants of the eastern and western halves of the village. In most settlements, the border between these two halves (*Kandhi*) is clearly demarcated by a rectangular platform (*gramavedi*) which as a microcosm also demonstrates the opposition between the northern and southern row of houses (*danda*). So the village is quartered

into equally exalted, opposite and yet interconnected segments" (Pfeffer 1978, p. 424). At Birabalabhadrapur the *gramavedi* is near the eastern (Gopinatha) temple.

It would be difficult to date individual houses, but 150 years is not unusual. Within the households the joint family system seems to survive, certainly to the extent of caring for the old. One of the gradual changes to the form of the village has been the subdivision of plots between family members, which accounts for the narrowness of the courtyards compared with those typically found in less formal settlements. Subdivision has not precluded interconnection: while surveying one house we were ushered through a coconut leaf curtain to measure the house next door. More disruptive to the old pattern is the extension of some houses upwards to two or three storeys over their former courtyards, though a single storey has been left at the front. Mud walls have begun to give way to



Fig. 4. The village platform (*gramavedi*) at Birabalabhadrapur, with house front.

brickwork or laterite blockwork, rendered and painted when funds permit, and here and there are fragments of the exuberant cement tracery found in Orissan towns.

But what has most altered the life of the village, with the erosion of traditional Brahmin privileges and duties and the general march of modernity, has been the exodus to towns and cities. People have 'gone outside for jobs', to Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Delhi—somebody's son is in America. A number of houses stand empty.

Land

When a Brahmin village was founded, each Brahmin family was allocated a portion of land. This was not seen as a material possession, but rather a 'consideration' for the duties which the Brahmins performed: "The Material privileges of the Sasana

Brahmins were never openly expressed, but rather hidden within a system of general reciprocity in which each one was supposed to contribute according to his alleged capacity" (Pfeffer, 1978, p. 428). Agricultural labour was taboo for Sasana Brahmins, the land being worked by non-Brahmin tenants who shared about half the produce with the land holder, a social convention, rather than a legal one, that often still holds. "They cultivate", we were told, "so that the Brahmins are free, not to run after wealth, but knowledge". In turn, a tenant might take on agricultural labourers in return for a proportion of produce.

Much has changed with the extension of the market system which enables land to be bought and sold, and generally the Brahmins feel that they are not as well off: "we became poor, and sold land, so now we have no land to graze our cows." The various land reforms enacted since Independence were aimed mainly at the big landlords, rather than small



Fig. 5. The narrow verandah, forming a walkway along the house fronts.

holdings, providing for subsistence, such as those originally granted to the Sasana Brahmins. However, the latter have been affected by land ceilings and the right of share croppers to claim land. Where relations between Brahmins and tenants are good, the traditional sense of dharma, conscience, goodwill, and inter-dependence, has prevented this entitlement from being taken up.

Since the time of their foundation the Sasana villages have contained scattered common lands, ascribed to one or other of their temples, to meet the temple expenses. Fish from the tanks also form part of the temple revenues. The Gopinatha temple of Birabalabhadrapur lives from its lands, while the Shiva temple, because of financial problems some years ago, now has government involvement, a situation that is blamed for its crude concrete mandapa (hall). This temple has four trustees from the village, and one government appointee.

Temples and Public Spaces

The tank at the eastern end of the village, with the Gopinatha temple (Fig. 7) and associated structures, forms an impressive group, where everything seems in its right place (Fig. 6). A quadrilateral of roughly 100 by 80 metres, the tank has an island shrine at the centre and is surrounded by coconut palms. The Gopinatha is at the northwest corner, with a paved platform by the waterside, a pipal tree, a pedestal for the sacred tulasi (basil), and descending ghats. On the north side of the tank, by the road, is a smaller, Shiva temple, the Vishvanatha, with a Nandi in front, and again a platform with tree and ghats. A bunker-like panchayat hall only slightly mars the scene. There is also a well, beautifully constructed with rings of laterite, one of the two wells—the other being at the Shiva temple—for the village, now supplemented by two government pumps along the street.

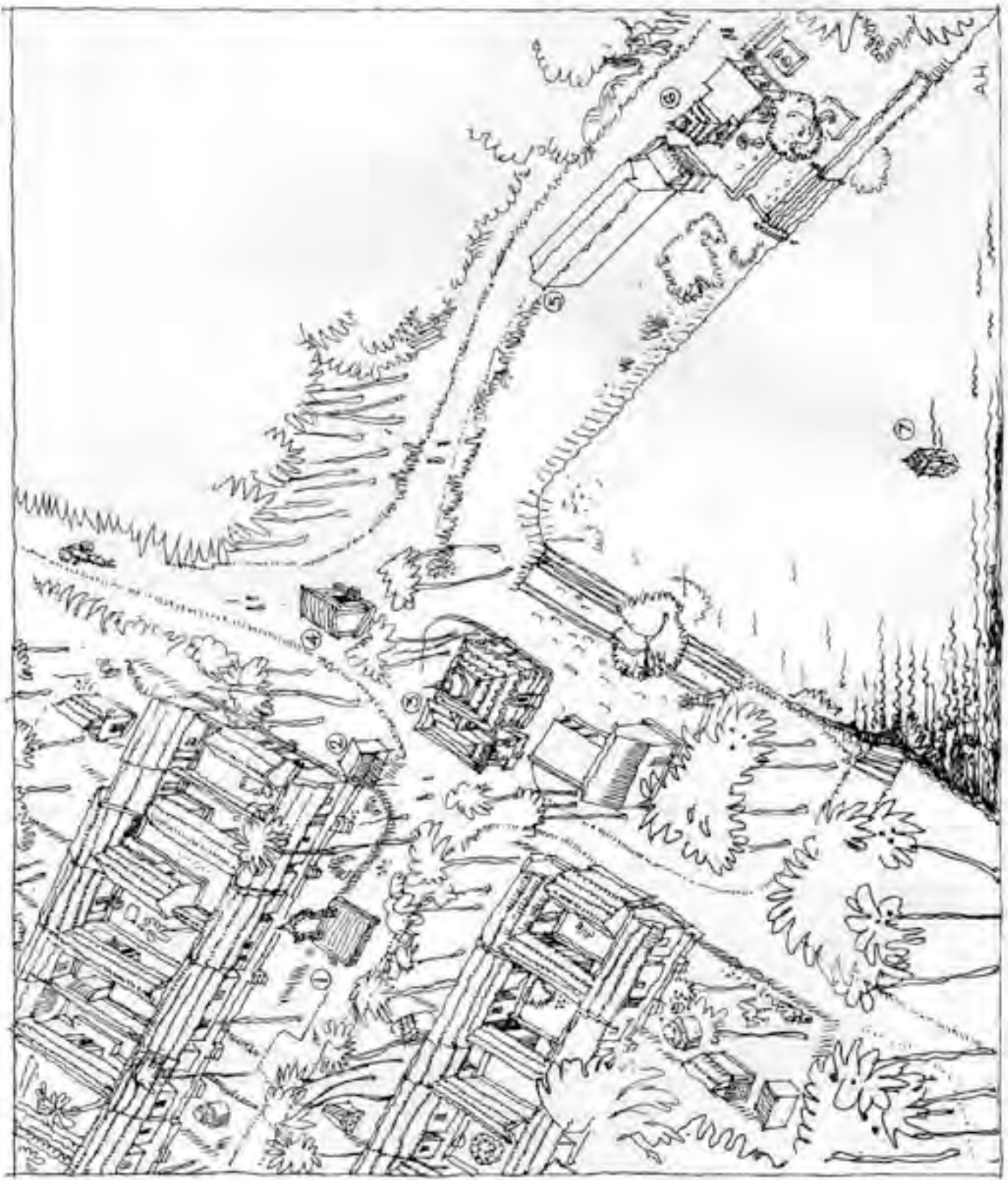


Fig. 6. Tank, monuments, public and private spaces at the eastern end of Birabalabhadrapur. 1. Village platform (gramavedi) 2. Stall, 3. Gopinatha temple, 4. Jagoli temple, 5. Panchayat hall, 6. Vishvanatha temple, 7. Island shrine.



Fig. 7. Gopinatha temple from the west, with village platform (*gramavedi*) in foreground.

The shrines of the Vishvanatha temple and the two main temples are of the relatively modest Phamsana mode, the kind with a pyramidal superstructure made up of overhanging eave mouldings. In medieval Orissan temples this form is more familiar as the *mandapa* or *jagamohana* (hall), but it was also used for the shrine itself, as at the 12th-century Bhashkareshvara temple, Bhubaneswar. The Phamsana is the type normally built in Orissan villages today, made of bricks and rendered. The Birabalabhadrapur examples, perhaps a century or so more recent than the foundation of the village, have lively stone murtis in their cardinal niches, and fine, folkish plasterwork in the niche surrounds and elsewhere on the walls (Fig. 8). The temples are freshly whitewashed at the festival of Shivaratri, and wall paintings are periodically renewed: the modern porches of the Shiva and Vishvanatha temples have paintings of the divine trio Jagannatha, Balabhadra and Subhadra, along with fierce *dvarapalas* (door

guardians), all with the black outlines and primary colours typical of Puri painting.

The thatched porch of the Gopinatha (Fig. 7), widely embracing the eastward culmination of the village street, is three bays wide and one deep, with moulded pillars supporting a magnificent wooden roof structure, with peacock brackets. A few metres away a small platform or dais (*gramavedi*) juts out, with a painted *torana* (archway) at the back (Figs. 4 and 7), and together with the porch defines a public space at the start of the village. The platform makes an everyday place for meeting, sitting and idling. This is apart from its ritual functions: at Dhola Purnima, images of Radha and Krishna are taken around in procession and given sweets, and put on a swing attached to the *torana*.

Nearby, an upright wooden stall, with a corrugated iron roof, is the only commercial structure of the village. Round the corner, north of the Gopinatha, is a small, recently built shed dedicated



Fig. 8. Central niche in south wall of Vishvanatha temple, housing an image of Ganesha.

to the goddess Jagoli, an incarnation of Durga. Even Sasana village has its Goddess shrine, where, before the practice was banned, buffalo or goats would have been sacrificed, and the meat distributed.

Ritual and Myth

The village, then, is adorned by the ritual apparatus of religious festivals, with their processions an colour, even if these are less intense now that many villagers have moved away. The island shrine central to the annual boat festival. In the porch of the Gopinatha temple sits an elaborate swing, which at Chandan Yatra, Lord Krishna's birthday, is hung from the beams, and the deity is brought out of the shrine, swung on the swing and dipped in sandalwood paste. It is then carried in procession in a wooden ratha (chariot), which each time is given a new cloth canopy, pulled by a brightly painted wooden bull (Fig. 9). Chariot and bull both stand in the sheds beside the temple. Behind the sheds lie long poles with iron rings attached, for launching rockets for Krishna's wedding procession: Champaka Duadasi in June.

Ritual has its setting and its instruments, and myth its embodiment in monuments, public space:



Fig. 9. Painted wooden bull, for harnessing to a temple chariot, at Gopinatha temple.



Fig. 10. The kund at the western end of the village, with Shiva temple behind.

sacred art and street furniture. The festival calendar of the Jagannatha temple in Puri is reflected at the level of the village, while at a yet more microcosmic scale, each household has its own cycles, with its own day for puja at the domestic shrine; and the daily round of each individual Brahmin follows its ritual rhythm, beginning with a bath at sunrise in one of the tanks [5].

At the same time, the village has its local myths: "One devotee went to Vrindavan. When he came back he missed Vrindavan. In a dream he saw Krishna, who said that he would himself come to the village. That night a red pillar appeared. They cleaned it with Ganges water." The square kund behind the Shiva temple (Fig. 10), said to be fed naturally with fresh river water, supposedly contains a natural linga (the most sacred kind)

discovered here in the river, the course of which has since moved. Miraculously, the linga was on the axis of the village street (the fact that the kund is off axis doesn't seem to matter). Just north of the Shiva temple, in the woody strip between village and paddy fields, is a magical, perpetual lemon grove. Lemon bushes, the property of Shiva (effectively of the temple) "are 1000 years old", and never cease to produce small, sweet lemons.

Houses

Traditionally, houses are built with timber and bamboo framing encased in mud [6]. Carpenters do the framing, and labourers (here the Bhois, who sometimes do the framing as well) apply the mud. The platform on which a house stands provides both a symbolic elevation and practical protection against damp and termites. Here, more often than in the walls, brick of laterite may be used instead of mud, sometimes carved into mouldings and pilasters. External walls are generally 20–30 cm thick, the mud held in place by a loose bamboo mesh, but occasionally the latter is densely woven for a wattle and daub technique. The wall framing and infill mesh can be entirely of bamboo, but more substantial houses have timber for the main posts, beams and rafters. Rough-hewn laterite posts are sometimes used. Lesser members may be of split bamboo, and tying rather than nailing is the traditional method of fixing the frame together.

It is on the smooth surface of the mud walls that appear the beautiful, lacy, rice-paste paintings which blossom in villages all over the Orissan plains (Fig. 16). A matter of great pride, these are painted by the women, to welcome the goddess Lakshmi into the home at the festival of Lakshmi puja, and with different motifs for Durgapuja. Doorways and window grilles are wooden, the latter (Fig. 11), often richly carved, originating in the days when Brahmin women were not seen in public.

While the walls are covered over with mud, ceilings are unfinished bamboo, which provides useful hanging places, and a floor for storage in the roof space. Ridge members and purlins run between cross walls; if there are trusses, these are not



Fig. 11. Carved window grilles in house facades.

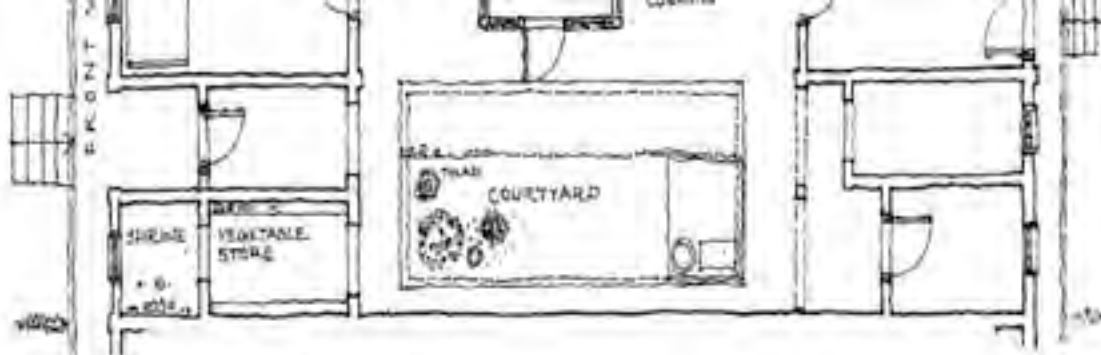
triangulated, but built up from a beam. Thatch is of rice straw, sitting on a mat of bamboo.

Examples of houses plans and sections are shown in Figure 13. Typically, the roof of the rear part of the house, as at the front, runs parallel to the street, and between these two lies the courtyard (Fig. 12). Generally, one side of the courtyard is covered by a roof; the wall on the other side is sheltered by the overhang of the neighbour's roof, while at its foot the neighbour's platform projects as a plinth to protect base of the wall, as well as forming a useful seat or a shelf. Even walls standing alone are thatched. All roofed parts of the house are raised above the ground, the open-sky part of courtyard remaining at ground level.

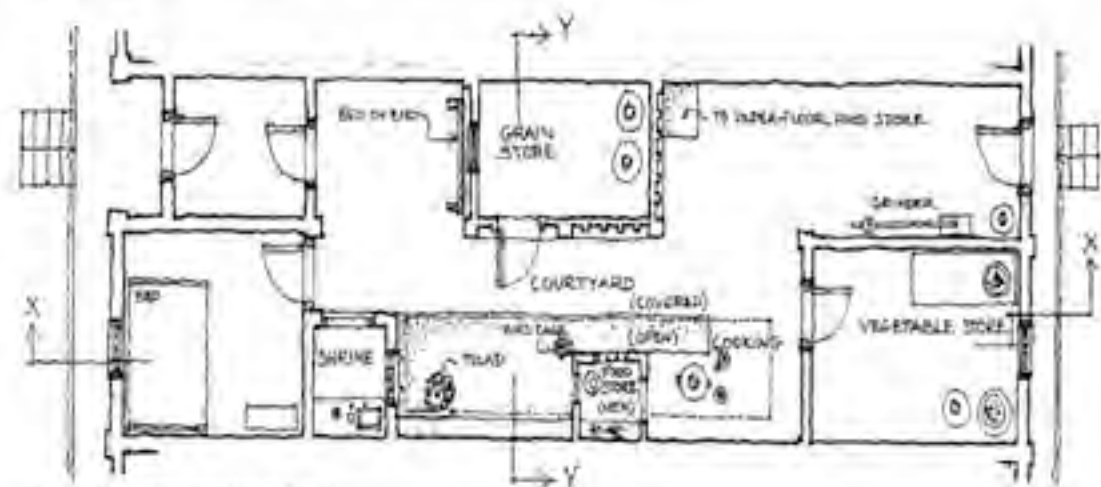
From the projecting part of the platform at the front of the house, the wall is recessed back to the front door, which opens into a further lobby or vestibule. As the courtyard is the main living room, other rooms do not need to be large. The front portion of the house contains the room of the master (mahajana) and mistress. This usually contains a large wooden carved bed; there may be other beds,



Fig. 12. Domestic courtyard (corresponding to Fig. 13A, upper part).

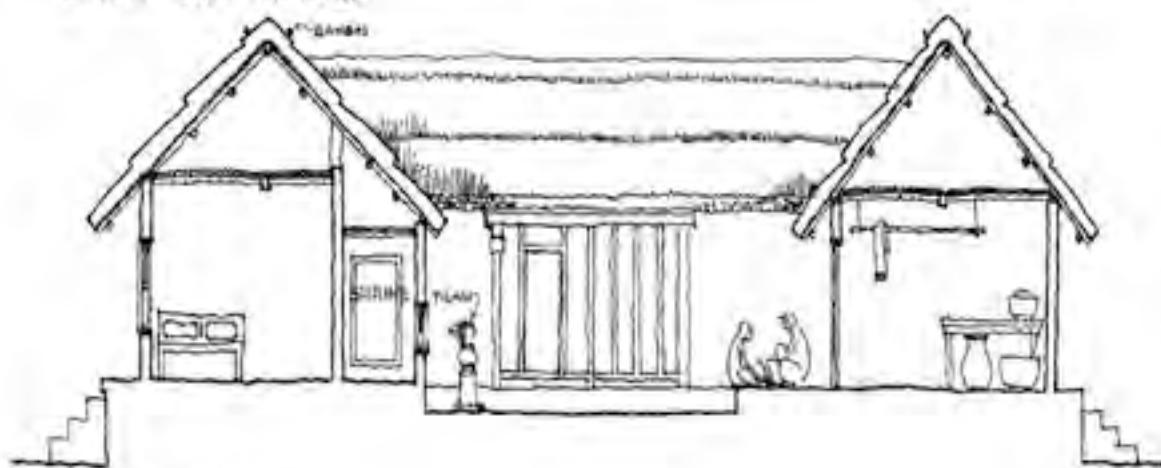
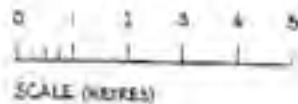


A. PLAN: TWO ADJACENT COURTYARD HOUSES

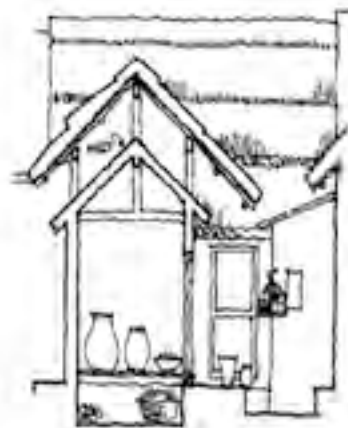


B. PLAN: COURTYARD HOUSE

Fig. 13. House plans and sections.



C. SECTION X-X



D. SECTION Y-Y

especially in the back rooms. There may be cupboards, but bamboo poles hung from the ceiling make a convenient clothes rack. The spiritual focus, the household shrine, is towards the front of the house, but its position varies: in one house surveyed it was in the corner of the main bedroom. A necessary accessory is the pedestal for the sacred *tulasi* (basil).

Mud being so mouldable, it easily accommodates such details as niches for oil lamps—though now there is electricity. For cooking, the swept earth of the floor modulates into small fire pits, with an air hole delving down from in front, and lips which bulge up to hold a pot. Cooking has two alternative places, one in the courtyard, another under shelter. As well as a pantry/vegetable store, there is a rice store, often under the roofed area of the courtyard. This employs an efficient double roof construction to keep the grain cool, with a mud roof some 300–400 mm below the thatched roof (Fig. 13d). The rice store may have a suspended floor, with a pit underneath for even cooler storage, most easily accessible to the children of the house.

We were told that the Bhois, the scheduled caste who 'are watching the coconut gardens' and are servants to the Brahmins, 'live behind' the Brahmins' houses. In one house a woman servant, helping the wife of the house with the cooking, slept in the rear store room of the house. Harijans (or Scheduled Castes, previously 'untouchables'), can prepare uncooked food and make the fire, but not cook with water. The traditional relationship between a Brahmin family and its servants is rigid but close, and giving a place to live within your fold is a good and pious deed. One view is that liberalization, in loosening the relationship, has undermined the friendship and mutual dependence.

In the middle part of the village, where the original planning has disappeared, houses are scattered and varied. A modest one, into which I was invited, set in a garden, is an 'L' shape, the part embraced by the 'L' performing the functions of the courtyard, open towards the road. The arm of the 'L' facing the road is an open shelter, and the corner room is for the cow.

Nilambarpur, 'Support Village'

Clearly a Brahmin village cannot exist on its own. Within the *mohaju* (parish) are a number of 'support villages'. Coming from the main road, just before Birabalabhadrapur, a track to the left leads to Nilambarpur, the 'support village' closest to the 'main' village. In its zoning according to caste, this settlement, on a small scale, is typical of an unplanned orissan village. The pattern for such villages is a loose network of 'endships', known as 'sahis', very often named after a caste or occupation—Brahminsahi, Mohantisahi, Sahusahi etc., whether or not today inhabited exclusively by the caste in question [7].

Reaching Nilambarpur, one arrives first at a scattered group of dwellings belonging to malis, the scheduled caste who traditionally were gardeners. The mud houses have rice-paste paintings, and the neat gardens, with swept paths and stick fences, are full of flowers that the malis grow, but which are picked by the Brahmins for use in the temples. The track now curves to the right around a lotus covered tank, with a venerable banyan tree sheltering a goddess shrine. To the right, in the trees, is a tight cluster of houses belonging to the Karans, traditionally the scribes. By a stream are a couple of *samadhis*, memorial shrines - though the cremation ground is presumably outside the village. Ahead one passes through a coconut grove, where bullocks and their carts stand shaded. Beyond is the settlement of the Khandayats, the Kshatriya or warrior caste, who are all agriculturalists. Here is another, smaller tank, and a half finished hall, being built gradually, with communal funds, 'for the youth'.

The form of the Khandayats' group of houses (Fig. 14) is in a way a microcosm of Birabalabhadrapur, more intimate and communal in feeling: its main part consists of two rows of courtyard houses facing, one another to form a short street or close 5.7 m wide (Fig. 15). Clearly the Brahmin monopoly over coconuts no longer holds: coconut palms abound, some even growing up through the overhanging eaves, which presumably were built around them. At one end of the street is a small brick hall, on the verandah of which musicians play

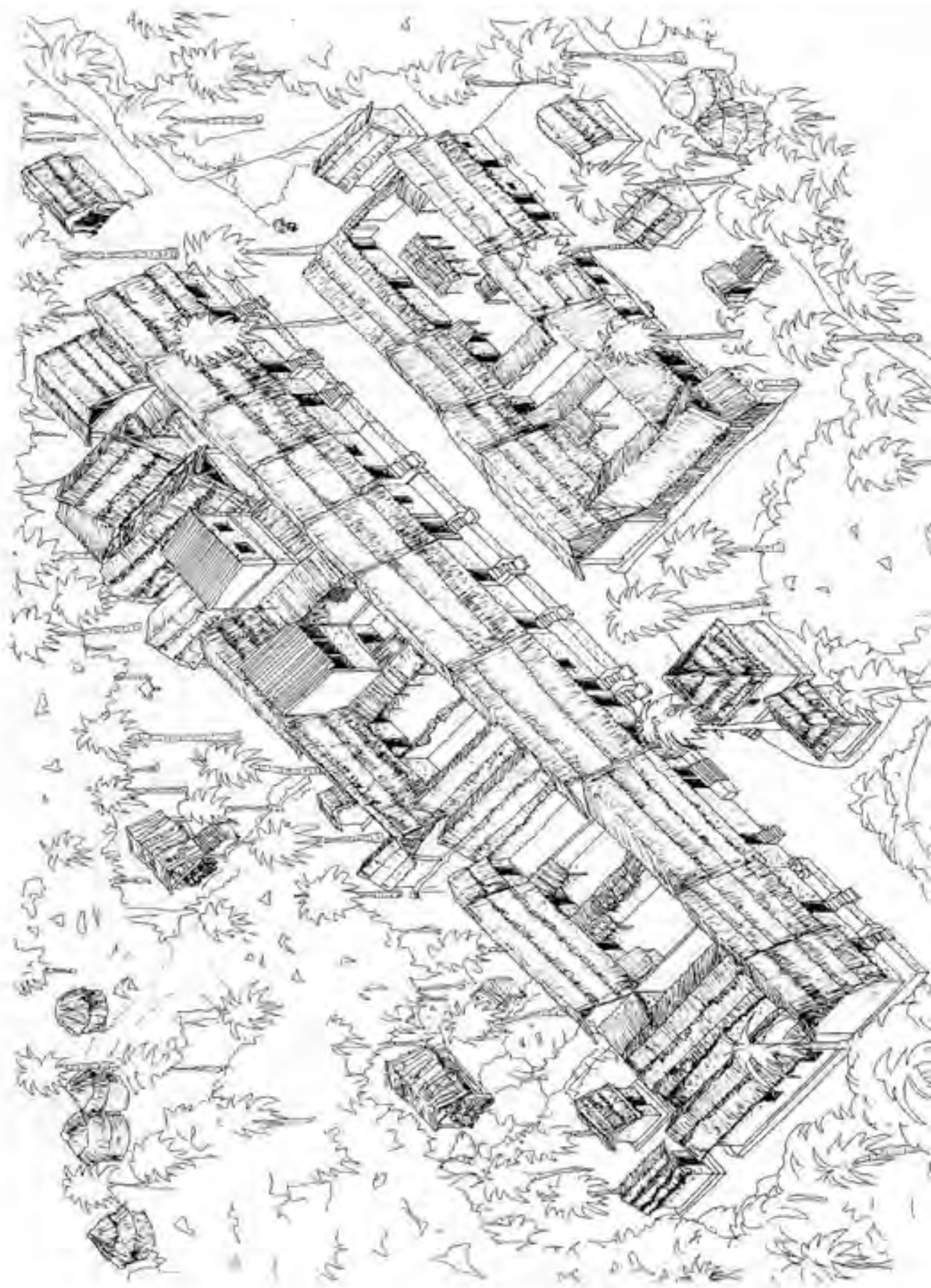




Fig. 15. The 'street' of the Khandayat settlement, Nilambarpur.



Fig. 16. Courtyard in Khandayat settlement, Nilambarpur.

Fig. 14. The Khandayat settlement, Nilambarpur.

in the evenings. At the other end is a platform with a tulasi stand, beyond which the ground dips down to a coconut grove where the servant of the people in the end house has his hut.

Construction is as in the main village, and here too bricks and laterite have been introduced in patches, and extra storeys have begun to be built up behind. The house form, too is essentially similar, though the courtyards are wider (Fig. 16). Rather than being subdivided, two houses have even been combined into one, keeping the two front doors. At the backs, among coconut palms and with only vague boundaries between properties, is a hotch-potch of structures and implements for the household chores (Fig. 17). One notable difference between here and the Brahmin settlement is that, in several cases, the front room, through which one passes to get to the courtyard, reached via a carved



front door at the head of a flight to steps, is inhabited by the cattle.

Conclusion

Despite extensive prescription in the shastras (canonical texts) for the layout of planned settlements, actual examples in India are rare. The planned village of Birabalabhadrapur, unlike most modern new towns of villages, has functioned successfully as originally intended, its physical, social and ecological structures proving remarkably durable. Though of a standard type, the village provokes a powerful sense of place, reinforced by the myths that have grown up around it. Only now may its vitality be dimming, and imagination needed to rekindle it, but the options are less obvious for a Brahmin village than for, say, the villages of potters, weavers and painters that were also founded to serve the cult of Jagannatha [8].

If completely planned villages are rare, this does not mean that elsewhere there is no planning. Without royal edict or shastric prescription, different social groups in Orissan villages, with a simple palette of materials and construction techniques, have created clusters of dwellings in a great variety of forms. The Khandayat settlement in Nilambarpur is one example.

The study of the vernacular architecture and settlements of South Asia is in its infancy, yet in many places is a matter of urgency before their traditional character disappears. Sociological and other studies often ignore the physical fabric, and it may be clear from this article that documentation of buildings and spaces is sterile without an understanding of the life which creates and animates them. Interdisciplinary studies of villages would be fruitful. But there are facets that elude a purely academic approach, and are difficult to put across in a scholarly article, which cannot treat inhabitants as individuals [9], and which can only begin to convey an essential aspect of the places studied here, their sheer beauty.

Fig. 17. Back yards at Khandayat settlement, Nilambarpur.

Acknowledgements

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NOTES

1. Information given by Sri Baidyanath Misra Sarma, who has written an unpublished history of the village, which he has in manuscript in Oriya.
2. According to Pfeffer (1978, p. 424) the opposite is standard, Lord Shiva guarding the village to the east, Lord Vishnu to the west.
3. It is not clear whether this is a theoretical number of the actual number living in the village today.
4. A ruined house in the middle part of the village apparently belonged to a Rajaguru. It was grander than many, on a laterite podium and with moulded pillars in the courtyard inside. The Brahmins who perform funeral rites are considered inferior, and live outside the village.
5. The role of the barber (barik) is important at festivals, at which he blows the conch. He lives in the village, takes messages and is paid in grain.
6. Bamboo is cured in water for 2 weeks, then in the sun for 2 weeks, then smoked indoors as protection against insects.
7. Fieldwork has also been done on a village of this kind, and an article is in preparation.
8. The village of Raghurajpur, near Chandanpur and only a few miles from Birabalabhadrapur, is a village of painters, inevitably adapting to modern tourism. Its production of patta paintings is treated in Bundgaard, 1994.
9. For people in an Orissan village see Mohanti, 1973 and 1990.

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