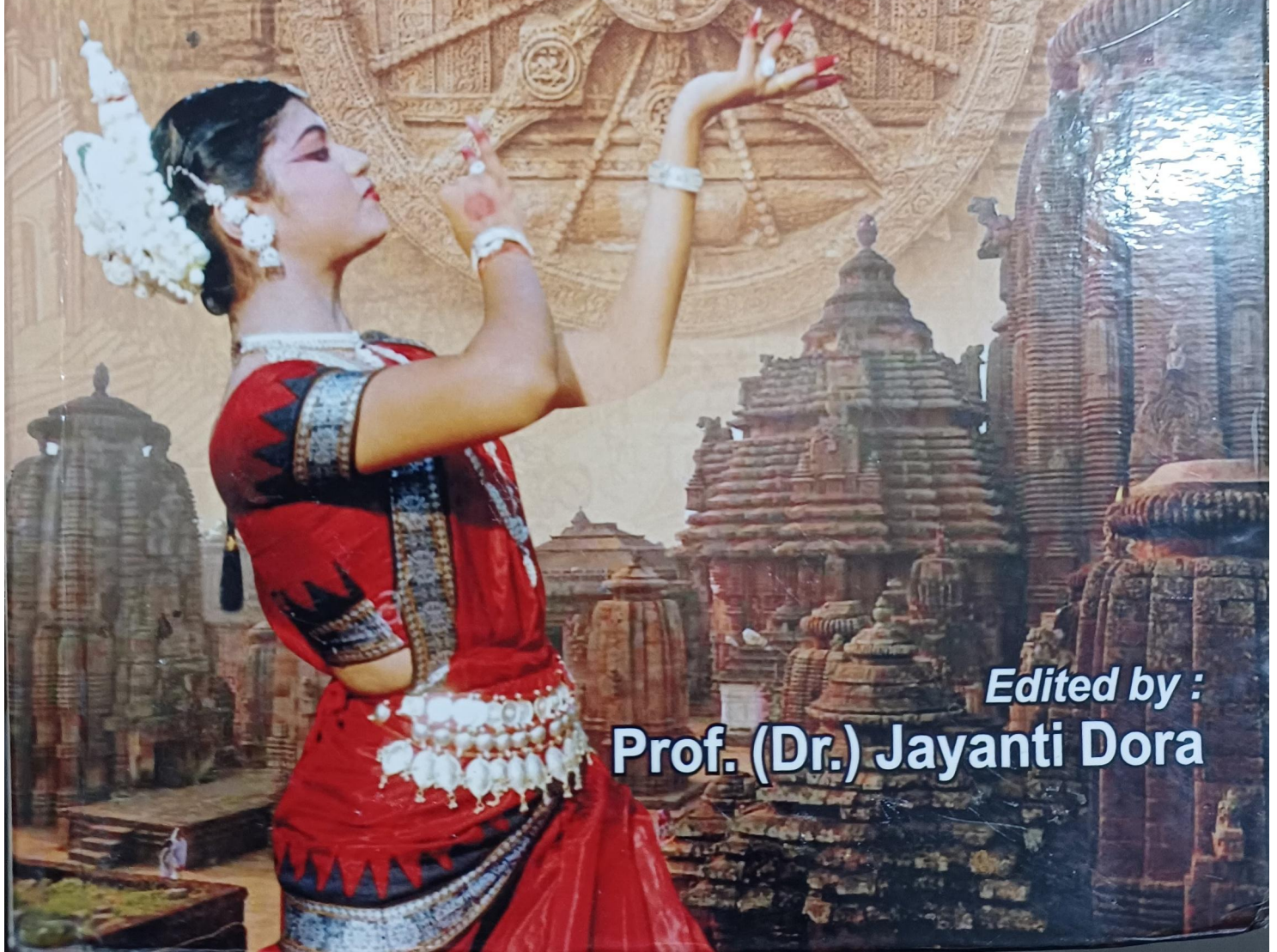


New Light on History and Culture of Odisha



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PORTS AND TRADING ACTIVITIES DURING COLONIAL ODISHA

Harendra Narayan Behera

Odisha being situated on the shore of the Bay of Bengal, Odisha has retained its distinct individuality as a great maritime power since the ancient times. Odisha has enjoyed a stupendous maritime relationship with several countries from the time immemorial. The hegemony of Odisha prevailed due in its ports which was given a huge advantage to this region. The "Arya Manjusri Mulakalpa" a text of Mahayana Buddhism refers to all islands in the Kalinga Sea as "Kalinga Dress". It seems that the Eastern Sea or modern Bay of Bengal was known as "Kalinga Sagar" in the past because of its dominance by the ships of Kalinga. Kalidas - the celebrity poet of 5th Century in his Raghuvamsh described the king Kalinga as the Mahododhipati which means the Lord of the Ocean.¹

The socio-economic condition of Odisha has been greatly determined by the transport and communication system. As Odisha situated near Bay of Bengal, the ports of Odisha has demanded a lion's share in the export and import businesses of this region as compare to other communication system. The availability of port system is important to accelerate the development of a region like Odisha. From ancient period to the modern period, the port system has retained a distinct