

MEDIEVAL ODISHA

Prataparudradeva (1497 -1540 CE)

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Prataparudradeva succeeded his father Purusottarnadeva on the throne. He was the realm's final Gajapati ruler. Though he was a superb warrior, misfortune befell him repeatedly. As a result, he was a spectacular failure as a ruler, paving the way for the end of Gajapati rule in mediaeval Odisha.

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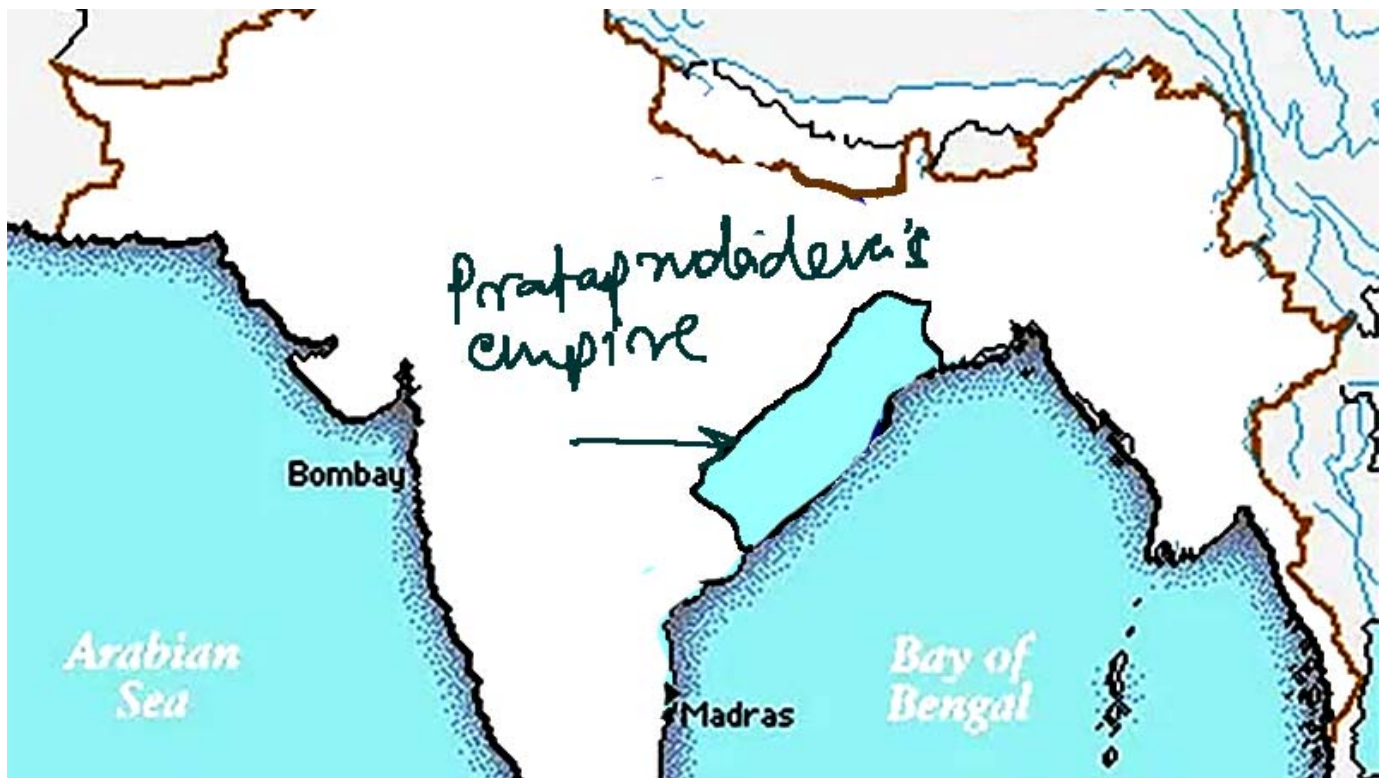
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Campaign and Conquests

The earliest expeditions to South India

Prataparudra encamped on the banks of the Krishna by 1500–1501 CE, as attested by the Anantavaram and Rajavolu plates. Perhaps he envisioned an invasion of the Vijayanagara Empire. His 1500-year-old Anantavaram plate reads: Yatram Dakshina- digvijayaya Vidadhat Samprapya Krishnatatim. Narasa Nayaka became the virtual ruler of that empire following Saluva Narasimha's death in 1419 AD. When Prataparudra was assessing Narasa Nayaka's strength, the Sultan of Bengal Ala-ud-Din Abul Muzaffar Hussain Shah's covetous gaze over Odisha compelled him to return to his capital. After Narasa Nayaka's death, his son Vira Narasimha succeeded him as regent, and in 1505 AD, he deposed Immadi Narasimha, the son of Saluva Narasimha, and established the Tuluva dynasty in Vijayanagara. He died in 1509 AD and was succeeded by Krishnadevaraya, the greatest of the Vijayanagar empire's rulers. Prataparudra's lethargy was lifted by his accession, and he led his second expedition to the south. According to the work Rayavachakamu, an inscription at Tangeda (in the Guntur district), and the Gundapalam copper plates, Prataparudra waited on the Krishna river bank until 1510 AD and took the risk of not attacking the Vijayanagara empire. Again, he was forced to retreat to his capital in order to deal with Bengal's Hussain Shah.



Conflict with Hussain Shah

Hussain Shah attempted to cross the border while Prataparudra was encamping in the distant South. There was a clash between the Odisha army and the Bengal army. Prataparudradeva's upada grant and Velicherla plates attest to this fact. Hussain Shah expanded his army and invaded Odisha in 1510 CE According to the Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Hussain Shah conquered the country up to Odisha and imposed tribute on his subjects. According to the Madala Panji, Amura (Amir) Surathana (Sultan), Gauda's Patisa (Badshah), marched up to Puri and demolished the images of God Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra. Additionally, it states that upon hearing of the Sultan's advance, Prataparudra returned to Odisha in haste and dealt a crushing defeat to the invader, pushing him back up to Bengal. Hussain Shah entered the fort of Mandaran out of fear, and the fort was besieged by the Gajapati. At this point, his capable and trusted general Govinda Vidyadhara committed betrayal by defecting to the Muslim Camp. This resulted in Prataparudradeva retreating without successfully subduing Hussain Shah.

Invasion of Odisha by Quli Qutb Shah

When Prataparudradeva became weak as a result of his defeats at the hands of Krishnadevaraya, Quli Qutb Shah invaded the southern province of Odisha. Quli Qutb Shah was a general of Sultan Mahmud Shah of the Baharnani kingdom, who had carved out an independent kingdom at Golkunda. Though Prataparudra was frail and feeble, he marched south and defeated Quli Qutb Shah with the assistance of his army, driving him back to Golkunda. On this occasion, he constructed the Mangalagiri temple on the banks of the Krishna. Prataparudradeva lived a difficult life until 1540 CE, when he died.

Prataparudradeva's Estimation

To evaluate Prataparudradeva's accomplishments, one can state categorically that he was a military genius. He had demonstrated it numerous times, for example, in dealings with Bengal's Sultan Hussain Shah and Golkunda's Quli Qutb Shah. Without a doubt, he was a failure in his attempts to wage wars against Krishnadevaraya, who was an apt warrior at the time. As demonstrated above, various circumstances weakened his mind's strength and resulted in military disasters during his career.

According to the Madala Panji, he constructed the audience hall of the Jagannath temple in Puri. According to popular legend, he constructed the Chandrasekhara temple on the Kapilasa hill in the Dhenkanal district. He was also instrumental in the renovation of the Varaha temple in Viraja, Jajpur district. He also built the Dhavalesvara temple near the village of Mancheswar in the Cuttack district.

Prataparudradeva was the patron of the Sanskrit language. He is referred to in the Undavall inscription as the master of all arts and the repository of sixty-four types of knowledge. According to the Velicherla plate, Prataparudradeva assumed the title Vidyanidhi. His *Sarasvativilasam* is a well-known Hindu law (*Vyavahara*) book. However, its authorship is disputed, with scholars attributing it to Lalla Laxmidhar, one of Prataparudra's court poets who authored commentary on *Saundarya Lahari*. Sarvabhauma, a Navadvipa native, wrote a commentary on Laxmidhara's *Advaita-makaranda*. Jivadeva was a poet who received patronage from Prataparudradeva, the author of the *Bhakti Bhagavata*. The Jagannatha

Vallabha Natakam was written by Ramananda Raya. Paramananda Sena, also known as 'Kavikamapura,' wrote a Kavya titled Chaitanya Charitamrita for the consolation of Prataparudradeva, who was bereaved following Sri Chaitanya's demise. Apart from that, Sanskrit scholars such as Markandeya and Ramakrishna Bhatta. During his lifetime, Balabhadra Mishra and several others flourished in Odisha.

The Renaissance in Odia literature peaked during Prataparudradeva's reign. That era was dubbed the 'Age of Panchasakhas' in Odia literature. Balarama Dasa, Jagannatha Dasa, Ananta Dasa, Achyutananda Dasa, and Yosobanta Dasa were the five celebrities who flourished during Prataparudradeva's reign. They were renowned in Odia literature for their immortal creations (discussed in the forthcoming pages). During this period, Chaitanya Dasa, Arjuna Dasa, Kanhai Khuntia, and Madhaba Pattanayaka were also prominent poets. Apart from being a patron of poets and men of letters, Prataparudra was well-known for his liberalism. He lavishly bestowed gifts on various deities associated with Vaisnava, Saiva, and other cults. This demonstrates his religiosity. He was a peacemaker, and his administration was characterised by a sense of tranquillity that pervaded his empire. Without a doubt, Prataparudradeva laid the groundwork for mediaeval Odisha's decline, but his reign was marked by a phenomenal growth of both Sanskrit and Odia literature, as well as the spread of Vaisnavism in Odisha.

Krishnadevaraya's Invasion of Odisha

In 1512 A. D., Krishnadevaraya launched his first attack on Udayagiri. With his mighty army, he besieged the fort. That fort was a formidable stronghold for Odisha's army in the south. Due to his inability to enter the fort, the emperor constructed new routes through stones and his army entered. At least in 1513 CE, the Udayagiri fort was captured, and Tirumala Routaraya, Prataparudradeva's uncle, was taken captive. Krishnadevaraya then turned his attention to the Kondavidu fort, another Prataparudra stronghold in the south. Saluva Timma was appointed to carry out the operation on Krishnadevaraya's behalf. Saluva Timma besieged Kondavidu's fort. According to the Amuktamalyada, the Odia soldiers inside the fort of Kondavidu "went to heaven with no wounds on their bodies." The Mangalagiri pillar

inscription also attests to this fact. Both sources provide an indirect account, and an observation can be made that while besieged by Krishnadevaraya's soldiers, the Odia soldiers inside the fort of Kondavidu perished from starvation and a lack of water. This resulted in Kondavidu's demise in 1515 CE

The Krishnadevaraya inscriptions at Amaravati, Tiruvannamalai, and Kalahasti, along with the accounts of Nuniz, contain a list of notable individuals captured during the siege of the Kondavidu fort. Balachandra Mohapatra, Narahari Patra, Mallu Khan, Udanda Khan, and last but not least, Virabhadra, Prataparudradeva's valiant son, were among them. Meanwhile, Krishnadevaraya's forces occupied a number of minor fortresses throughout the region, including Addanki, Vinukonda, Bellamakonda, Nagarjuna Konda, Tangenda, and Ketavaram. Krishnadevaraya's next objective was Kondapalli. This was the Odia soldiers' final attempt to halt Krishnadevaraya's progress. Praharesvara Patra, the fort's commandant, fought against the Vijayanagara Empire's army but was defeated. According to the Kalahasti inscription, Bijili Khan and Bodhan Mahapatra were taken captives from the Odias side. Nuniz claims that during Kondapalli's capitulation, Krishnadevaraya captured a queen of Prataparudradeva, a claim that has been rejected by almost all scholars in the absence of any other corroborating evidence. Of course, Prataparudra attempted to halt Krishnadevaraya's progress, but he was repeatedly defeated by the latter. Prataparudradeva returned to his capital Cuttack to gather a new army to confront Krishnadevaraya.

Krishnadevaraya proceeded towards Odisha and reached Simhachalam without encountering any opposition. He planted the pillar of victory there. Though he informed Prataparudra of his intention to meet him, the latter did not appear. According to the Amuktamaya and Manucharita, Krishnadevaraya travelled to Puri, worshipped the Gods, marched to Cuttack, set fire to the capital, and inflicted a crushing defeat on Odisha's Gajapati. Why did Prataparudradeva not appear to fight Krishnadevaraya? It was only because of the death of his valiant son Virabhadra in the Vijayanagara empire's court due to disgrace (as Virabhadra was directed by Krishnadevaraya to demonstrate sword fighting with a man who was not of noble birth). This weakened his mind and conquering zeal, and

he was forced to make peace with Krishnadevaraya by giving the latter his own daughter Jagamohini (Tukka). As a result of this peace treaty, the river Krishna was designated as the demarcation between the Vijayanagara and Prataparudradeva empires. Being mentally weakened by Virabhadra's death and the misfortunes of his daughter, he discovered a panacea in Vaisnavism and became an ardent follower of Sri Chaitanya. He died in 1540 CE. His demise paved the way for mediaeval Odisha's demise. Of course, Prataparudradeva marched with his army to the Vijayanagara empire following Krishnadevaraya's death in 1529 but was defeated by Achyutadeva and never returned until his death.

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Tag: Personalities of Odisha, The Suryavamsi Gajapatis

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