



Astride the Wheel

By Chandrasekhar Rath; Translated from Oriya By Jatindra Kumar Nayak

Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India. Paperback. Book Condition: New. First Edition. Astride the Wheel is a quiet tale of the last years of a temple priest in rural Orissa and his acceptance of monotonous poverty--the fate of most Indian villagers. Sanatan Dase dimly senses that a great freedom lies beyond his wife's continuous complaints, the petty social insults he bears, and the endless shortages in his life. The first half of the novel is set in a village in Orissa. In its second half, the reader leaves behind the claustrophobic brahmin settlement, its caste hierarchies, trivial preoccupations and repetitive rituals to travel with Sanatan Dase to Dakhineswar, Varanasi, Vrindavan, and finally to Puri. The protagonist's outward pilgrimage coincides with a journey into an inner world of profound mystical experience. Often described as a Hindu novel, the work hints at a secret and flawless happiness that is attainable through simple piety and devotion.



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