CHAPTER - I

The British Occupation of Cuttack and Impact of its early administration
Cuttack, the Metropolis and Central district of Orissa is situated at the bifurcation of Mahanadi and its main branch Kathjori. It is located within 20°2' and 21°10' north latitude and between 85°21' and 87°.1 east longitude.\footnote{L.S.S.O. Malley Bihar and Orissa District Gazetteers (Cuttack) Patna, 1929, P-139.}

It contains an area, according to the latest survey of 3,644 square Kilo meter and a total population as ascertained by the latest Census of 21,76,707.

The term "Cuttack" or "Kataka" is very ancient. It means an army cantonment, a small town, a rural town, capital city and even a kingdom.\footnote{Monier Williams : A Shankrit English Dictionary Southern Publication, Madras 1987, P 243} It started as a military cantonment because of its natural impregnability and in course of time developed into the capital of the State of Orissa\footnote{K.C. Dash Cuttack One thousand years (Ed) Cuttack 1990,P 12}.

The district is bounded on the north by the Baitarani river and Dhamra estuary, which separate it from the district of Balasore; on the east by the Bay of Bengal; on the south by the district Puri and on the west by the feudatory State of Orissa.\footnote{L.S.S.O. Malley Op. Cit. P. 141}

It consist of three distinct tracts differing widely in their physical aspects. The first is a Marshy Woodland Strip, from 3 to 30 miles in breadth,

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{L.S.S.O. Malley Bihar and Orissa District Gazetteers (Cuttack) Patna, 1929, P-139.}
\item Monier Williams : A Shankrit English Dictionary Southern Publication, Madras 1987, P 243
\item K.C. Dash Cuttack One thousand years (Ed) Cuttack 1990,P 12
\item L.S.S.O. Malley Op. Cit. P. 141
\end{itemize}
extending along the coast from the river Mahanadi on the north to the Devi river on the South. The second is a cultivated alluvial plain formed from the deposits of its great rivers and the third is a broken hilly region forming the western boundary of the district.⁵

The most conspicuous feature in the general aspect of the district is its system of rivers which issue in three magnificent streams through three great gorges in the mountainous country to the west.⁶ To the south, the Mahanadi debouches upon the plains just above Naraj, 70 miles from the sea; on the extreme north of the district, the sacred Baitrani emerges from a more open country, and forms the boundary between Cuttack and Balasore; and the Brahmani enters the district about half way between the two. Cuttack is thus divided into two great valleys, one of them lying between the rivers Baitarani and Brahmani and the other between Brahmani and Mahanadi.⁷

The scenery of the town on its South, West and North is very lively due to appearance of forest clad hills on the far off horizon on all the three sides as far as the eye can reach and this pleasing prospect of the town gives a permanent impression on the mind of the visitors. The geographical position of Cuttack as a town at the bifurcation of a river is unique in India, where all

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⁵ Sterling’s Orissa, Calcutta Bengal Secretariat Press, 1904, P.18
⁷ L.S.S.O. Malley Cuttack District Gazetteers, P. 2
big towns are generally situated at the junction of two rivers which was called in Sanskrit as Pattana. The geographical situation of Cuttack is such that it served as the only narrow strip of the land route of the country and as such people coming from the north to south or from south to north had no other alternative but to cross the Mahanadi at or near Cuttack. The hill range to the West and wide rivers to the east of Cuttack exclude all possibility of the alignment of the high way from East to South. Neither the Dhauli rock edict of Ashok nor the rock inscription of Kharvela mention any high way from Kalinga or Orissa to Magadha. The route of communication from Central India lay through by the valley of the Mahanadi as terminated at Cuttack.

There is a divergence of Historical opinion about the exact date of the foundation of present Cuttack (1) According to Madala Panji a powerful king of Somavamsi dynasty. Nripa Kesari, A war like and ambitious prince, who was always fighting with his neighbours is said to have first planted a city on the side of the Modern Cuttack about A.D 989. The reign of Markat Kesari was distinguished for the construction of a stone revetment, or embankment faced with the material to protect the new capital from inundation in 1006 A.D. 11

The Madala Panji, edited by Prof. A.B. Mohanty, mentions that Nripa

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8 P. Acharya, - Cuttack and its Monuments in Orissa Review. Orissa Monuments Special P. I
9 Madalapanji is the Temple chronicles of Lord Jagannath at Puri.
Kesari ruled up to Saka 875 (i.e. AD 953). But no reference is made to the foundation of Cuttack.  

His successor Makara or Markat Kesari is credited with the construction of the fort of Barabati, on the Mahanadi, while the stone embankment along the Mahanadi is attributed to one Nabaghana Singh during the reign of Ghata Kesari.  

A Sanskrit text entitled “Kataka raja Vamsavali” collected by “Colin Mackenzie” in the early part of nineteenth century, which gives the traditional historical accounts of Orissa, mentions the name of Nripa Kesari to have built Kataka in the middle of Mahanadi. The accounts of Nrupa Kesari is not fully the product of imagination. Possibly, this tradition might have originated when the real history of the foundation of the Cuttack city became the memory of the distant past. Possibly, the city was established by a Soma Vamsi Ruler Kesari Nripati for which in popular tradition, he was called Nripa Kesari.  

Andrew Stirling, the Secretary to the Commissioner of Orissa, published an article in 1925 entitled “An Account, Geographical, statistical and

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12 A.B. Mahanty, (Ed) Madala Parji (Utkal University reprinted) P. 14
14 G.C. Tripathy & Kulka Hermann (Ed), Katakara Vamsavali, P. 15
Historical of Orissa proper or Cuttack" while giving an account he mentions "Raja Nirupa Kesari, a martial and ambitious ruler is said to have first planted a city on the side of Modern Cuttack about A.D. 989.

W.W. Hunter, on the basis of the Bengali Version of Madala Panji, called "Purushottama Chandrika" by Bhabani Charan Bandopadhyya accepts Nripa Kesari as the founder of the city of Cuttack. He writes "Nripa Kesari, A warlike and ambitious prince ruled from 941 A.D. – 953 A.D. founded the city of Cuttack." 

R.C. Mazumdar stated, in the light of a sailadbhava inscription, that Cuttack was known in 7th Century A.D.

K.C. Panigrahi accepted the possibility of Cuttack being established in 8th – 9th centuries A.D.

Some other historical views given by the scholars are that Eastern Ganga Kind Anangabhimadeva III was the real founder of Abhinava Varanasi Kataka which is mentioned in his Nagari Copper plate charter dated 1230 – 1231 A.D. No real and authentic historical evidences are available to examine the limits of these interpretation. But various inscriptive informations show

15 Andrew sterling – Sterling’s Orissa, P. 71
that Modern Cuttack was known in the past through various names such as Abhinava Varanasi Kataka, Abhinava Varanasi, Varanasi Kataka and Kataka.

The Simachallam temple inscription, dated Saka 1035, makes it clear that Varanasi Kataka existed in 1113 A.D. This would suggest that it could have been an important town in 10th-11th Century A.D., during the rule of the Somavamsis. Thus taking the different historical views and available evidences it can be presumed that it was founded by a powerful king of the Somavamsi dynasty. 17

Cuttack under the Hindu Rulers

Jayati I Mahasiva Gupta founded his capital Jayati Nagar on the bank of river Mahanadi towards 920 A.D., as known from his Patna Copper plate charter. This has been identified with village Jagti near Boudh. 18 The Somavamsi rulers extended their territories towards the coastal belt of Orissa during the time of Bhima Ratha, Dharma Ratha an Indra Ratha. The Cholas invaded "Kosala" during the time of Indra Ratha and destroyed the Capital situated on the bank of river Mahanadi.

17 K.S. Behera, Cuttack one thousand years (Ed) (Cuttack 1990) P. 12.
Mahasivagupta Jayati II reconstructed his kingdom. His Coronation Ceremony was held at Suvanapura which became the capital of Somavamsis. He is said to have planted another capital at Choudwar between the period A.D. 1024 to 1040. This capital has been often mentioned as Abhinaba Jayati Nagar in the Madalapanji, the Jagannath temple Chronicles. The muslims Historians from 13th to 15th Century A.D. describe this capital as Kataka (Cuttack). It was fortified by Chodaganga Deva who occupied Utkal in 1135 A.D. Andrew Stirling describes this capital as Sarangagarh Cuttack.

Ananga Bhima III (1211 – 1238 A.D.) built a new town called Baranasi Kataka on the left bank of Mahanadi opposite to Choudwar and subsequently he transferred his headquarters from Choudwar to the new capital Kataka.

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19 N.K. Sahu, Utkal University History of Orissa, Vol. I 1960, P. 120.
20 J.K. Sahu, History of Orissa, (Oriya) 1967, P. 169
21 Ibid.
22 N.K. Sahu, op. cit , P. 122.
23 Andrew Stirling, Stirlin's Orissa, P. 71.
This is supported by his Nagari Copper Plate\textsuperscript{26} issued in the year 1231 A.D. The Nagari copper plate was issued on the occasion of the Consecration Ceremony of the temple of Lord Jagannath at his new capital.\textsuperscript{27}

The great engineering work, i.e. the protective revetment was definitely constructed some time after the foundation of Abhinava Baranasi Kataka laid by Anangavima Deva III. As known from the Chhateswar Temple Inscription of Ananga Bhima III, the muslims were defeated and repelled by general Vishnu. Narahari Tirtha with the message of Dvaitadvaita (Dualism) visited Varanasi Kataka and stayed in the capital as a State guest of the Ganga ruler.

Yayati II, the Somavamsi King had build a fort on the bank of river Vaitarani.\textsuperscript{28} This was made stronger by Ananga Vima III. This has been identified with present Jajpur and very likely the muslim historian has named the state as Jajnagar Orissa. Baranasi Kataka continued to be the capital of Orissa during the rule of Solar dynasty.

After the death of prataprudra, the last ruler of Solar dynasty, his minister Govinda vidyadhar of Bhoi family usurped the throne at Baranasi Kataka. He murdered the two sons of Prataprudra and appointed Danardan,

\textsuperscript{26} Ephigraphica Indica, Vol. XXVIII, P. 235.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid. P. 170. (Amod CoP.P.er plate of Kalachuri King, Gangeyadev)
Vidyadhara and Mukunda Hari Chandan as the Chief Minister and Governor of Kataka respectively. Govinda Vidyadhar was a man of action and he prepared to invade Golkunda with a view to revive the imperial tradition of Orissa. But during his absence Raghu Bhanj Chhotrai of Bhanja family of Mayurbhanj besieged Baranasi Kataka. When Govinda Vidyadhara heard the news, he immediately abandoned the idea of war against Golkunda and returned to encounter the rebels. The insurgents were defeated and pursued as far as Ganga. Kataka was recaptured but Govinda Vidyadhar could not sit on the throne at Kataka because of his sudden demise.

Andrew Stirling notes the political events of Cuttack following the death of Govinda Vidyadhara.

"Their being no heir left of the Raja of Orissa, a Chief named Narsingh Jena, distinguished for his bravery and conduct, stepped into the vacant seat of Government. Jealous of the influence of Danai Vidyadhar, he procured his attendance from the Deccan and then with assistance of his rival Mukunda Harichandan, threw him into chains and imprisonment at Cuttack. In the meantime Raghu Bhanj Chhotrai having recovered from his former defeat, entered Orissa again at the head of a large force to assist his claims to the
Raj. He was opposed by Mukunda Hari Chandan who took him prisoner after many bloody battles.  

Mukunda Deva Harichandan ruled the throne of Baranasi Kataka upto 1568 till Kataka was occupied by Afghan Muslim.

**Cuttack under Muslim rule (Afghan & Mughal)**

Mukunda Deva was the last independent Hindu ruler of Orissa. During his short span of Eight years ruling, Cuttack witnessed many sided developments. Abul Fazl Allami writes about Cuttack in his Ain-i-Akbari as follows:

"Kataka – The City has a stone fort situated at the bifurcation of two rivers Mahanadi & Katjuri. It is the residence of Governor and contains fine buildings. For five or six kos round the fort during the rain the Country is under water. Rajah Makand Deo built a palace here nine storeys in height, the fist storey was taken up for the elephants and stables, the second was occupied by artillery, the third by the gatekeepers, fourth by workshops, fifth by kitchens, the sixth contains public reception room, seventh, the private

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Mukunda Deva was an able ruler. He restored internal peace and security in his kingdom. During the early part of his reign he allowed shelter to Ibrahim Sur, the greatest enemy of Suleiman Karani the Sultan of Bengal. This unwise decision incurred the displeasure of the Sultan.

Secondly Mukundadeva established cordial relation with Mughal Emperor Akbar the Great. In 1566 he welcomed Raja Man Singh. For these two reasons Sultan Karani invaded Orissa in 1568. Inspite of all precaution Bengal army reached Cuttack and defeated Mukundadeva. After the fall of Cuttack, Muslim occupied Orissa, in 1568. One Qutlur Lohani was appointed as Afghan Governor of Orissa. He stayed in Cuttack.

Suleiman Karani died in 1572 and was succeeded by his son Bayazid. He was a proud and self willed young man. Soon he was murdered by Daud Karani, his own brother. Taking advantage of this political instability, Akbar launched an attack on Bengal. Consequently Daud Khan fled to Orissa. Akbar in order to chase Daud Khan, sent Todarmal. A fierce battle took place between Todarmal, Daud Khan at Tukoroi on the bank of river Subarnarekha.

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Daud was defeated and fled to Cuttack. Ultimately he was captivated in the fort of Barabati. This battle ended with his utter defeat and Munim Khan, a general of Akbar advanced upon Cuttack where a treaty of peace was concluded on 12 April, 1575. Daud Khan renouncing all claims to Bengal and Bihar allowed to retain Orissa as a fief from the Mughal Emperor. But next year Daud Khan was killed and Orissa nominally became a province of Akbar Empire. The Mughal rule had however not been established securely and the Afghans were in frequent revolt. In 1582, taking advantage of the military revolt of the Amils, they sallied forth from the hills in which they had taken refuge, recaptured the province and under the leadership of Kuttlu Khan extended their sway as far north as the Rupnarayan river. In the beginning of 1584 Kutlu Khan was defeated but shortly afterwards the Governor of Bengal made a treaty with him, by which, Orissa was relinquished to the Afghan on condition that they retire from Bengal and acknowledge themselves as tributary. In 1590, Akbar appointed his great Hindu general, Raja Mansingh, Governor of Bihar and one of the first steps taken by the new viceroy was an expedition in 1591 to reconquer Orissa. Kutlu Khan died at this time and Afghan sued for peace acknowledging the suzerainty of Akbar on condition

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33 Early European Travellers in Nagpur Territories, P. 4.
35 Andrew Stirling, An account of Orissa proper or Cuttack, P. 90
that they be allowed to retain their Jagirs. The settlement was however, temporary and hostilities broke out again leading to a decisive battle on the bank of river Subarnarekha towards the end of 1592 in which Man Singh defeated Afghan, forced them back to Cuttack and compelled them to make their submission.36

The Afghan, although defeated, were not finally crushed and during the ensuring years they revolted again and again, whenever opportunity presented itself, until finally Shujaat Khan, in 1612, after a fierce battle, practically exterminated them. This defeat virtually ended the struggle and Orissa remained henceforth simply a province of the Mughal empire until 1751 when it passed into the hands of Maratha.37

Though the muslim rule in Orissa lasted from 1568 to 1751 A.D. yet the whole of Orissa was hardly brought under complete Muslim Subjugation. From 1568 A.D. to 1575 A.D. the Afghan were in possession of Cuttack and they settled on the border district to the north of river Mahanadi. However during the Mughal rule, Orissa was included in the Subah of Bengal with five Sarkars named Jaleswar, Bhadrak, Katak, Kalinga Dandapat and Raj Mahendrai Katak (Cuttack) continued to be the capital of Mughal Orissa.38

36 James Grant, History of Maratha, Vol. II, P. 110
38 Calendar of Persian Correspondence Vol. IV Letter No. 189
Cuttack under the Maratha Rule

The disintegration of the Mughal Empire created a sort of anarchical atmosphere in Orissa. There prevailed a State of insecurity and anxiety among the people. The administrators in charge of Orissa failed miserably to counteract against Maratha invasion. The Marathas used this country as a spring board to get their economic ambition fulfilled by repeated invasion.

Mir Habib went to Raghuji Bhonsle at Nagpur and sought his help for an invasion against Bengal. Raghuji Bhonsle sent a large army under Bhaskar Pandit, who made a surprise attack upon Alivardi Khan and ravaged West Bengal, Alivardi Khan, however managed to drive the Maratha away from Bengal, but the later retreated across the jungles and fell upon the province of Orissa. The repeated Maratha incursions considerably undermine the power of Alivardi and depleted his treasury. By 1747 Orissa practically came under the occupation of the Maratha and taking opportunity of the weakness of the Nazim, the Afghan chiefs of Bengal raised a standard rebellion. Alivardi was forced to conclude a treaty with the Bhonsla in 1751. He agreed to pay annually twelve lakhs of rupees as chauth and ceded the revenues of the province of Cuttack to the South of the river Subarnarekha to the Bhonsla Raja. This treaty virtually shifted the administrative responsibility of Orissa to
the Marathas of Nagpur from 1751 to 1803 A.D.\textsuperscript{39} During this period Orissa was administered by a number of Maratha Subadars having Cuttack as their main centre of political, economic and religious activities.\textsuperscript{40}

During the Maratha rule, the fort of Barabati was improved considerably. They not only strengthened the ramparts of the fort but also widened and deepened the ditch around the fort. Magnificent arrangements were also made for strategical fighting inside the fort. Cuttack also emerged as a major centre of trade and commerce and it became the central market of exchange between the Maratha and British. The Maratha also beautified Cuttack by building some temples and Mathas. The Amareswar temple at Buxi Bazar and the Mastram Math at Shaikh Bazar were the examples of such works of the Maratha in Cuttack. Thus it goes without saying that Cuttack has all along been enjoying the unique privilege of being the administrative and commercial nerve centre of Orissa.\textsuperscript{41}

**British Occupation of Cuttack**

During the rule of the Marathas the British appear to have entered into negotiations for the cession of Orissa on more than one occasion. As early as

\textsuperscript{39} B.C. Roy, Op. Cit., P. 36
\textsuperscript{40} Jagannath Patnaik, Op. Cit. P.P. 80-81
\textsuperscript{41} L.K. Panda, A peep into the History of Cuttack (Cuttack one thousand year, Cuttack 1990), P. 46
1766 Lord Clive instructed an envoy, Mr. Motte to sound the officers of Janoji, the Raja of Nagpur on the question of his ceding Orissa for an annual tribute. In their first meeting, Thomas Motte handed over Clive’s letter to Bhawani pandit at Cuttack.

Bhawani Pandit agreed to convey the proposal of Clive to Janoji Bhonsle of Nagpur. But nothing came out of Clive’s policy to get Orissa by negotiation.

The situation took a different turn after the death of Janoji Bhonsle in 1772. Internal dissession became a regular feature of the Nagpur Kingdom. On the otherhand, Warren Hastings, who became the Governor General in 1774 took bolder steps to consolidate the British power. In order to bring Mudhoji to terms, Warren Hastings sent one of his most trusted sub-ordinates David Anderson to Cuttack in 1781. Chimnaji Bapu, the second son of Mudhoji was then at Cuttack commanding a large number of Maratha troops. David Anderson arrived at Cuttack on 28 January, 1781.42 After preliminary negotiations with Chimnaji Bapu a treaty was signed between Mudhoji Bhonsale and the English at Cuttack. By such an agreement, Warren Hasting succeeded in detaching one of the Maratha states from the general confederacy against British at a critical stage of the war. Inspite of such
development Warren Hastings could not succeed in getting possession of Orissa from the Maratha. Mudhoji died on 9 May 1788 and was succeeded by Raghuji II. Now Cornawallis took an attempt to send Forster to the court of Maratha to gain support of Bhonsla Raja but failed. Thus from Clive to Cornawallis company government had tried to get possession of Orissa by negotiation but nothing substantial could be achieved. It was left to Lord Wellesley to conquer Orissa finally during second Maratha war. The British conquest in 1803 became an easy task for Wellesley because the Maratha had no well trained soldiers and secondly the British had sound knowledge on the topography of Orissa.

The British authority under Lord Wellesley made thorough preparation for the war. He did not want to cause unnecessary blood shed. He planned troops movement from four different directions under separate command. For the local feudatory Chief he adopted a conciliatory policy and from the people he was hopeful to receiving support by ensuing law and order in the country and non intervention in their religion and religious institution. It was on 8

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42 K.M. Patra, An advance History of Orissa (Modern Period) (New Delhi 1983), P. 5
43 Ibid.
44 G.S. Das, History of Cuttack, (Cuttack one thousand year Cuttack, 1990) P. 61
September 1803, the British army under Lt. Col. Cambell began its march. He was instructed by the British authorities to take advantage of the growing discontentment of the Zamindars of Cuttack against the Marathas.

Secondly the Governor General authorised Lt. Col. Cambell to bribe the Maratha officers at Cuttack with heavy amount for surrendering the province to the British without any resistance.\textsuperscript{46} Three days after the expedition Col. Cambell was replaced by Lt. Col Harcourt due to illness. Harcourt was accompanied by a Civil Officer, John Melville for organising Civil administration after occupation of the province.\textsuperscript{47} Col. Harcourt along with his army reached near Chilika and bribed Fateh Mohammad before the beginning of the March towards Cuttack.\textsuperscript{48}

After crossing the lake Harcourt occupied Manikpatna without any resistance.\textsuperscript{49}

On 18\textsuperscript{th} September 1803, Harcourt occupied Puri. The first phase of Harcourt's task ended in complete success. Before his march to Cuttack,

\textsuperscript{46} A.C. Pradhan, Cuttack under the British rule, (Cuttack one thousand year Cuttack, 1990) P. 130.
\textsuperscript{47} K.M. Patra, Op. Cit, P. 7
\textsuperscript{48} W.W. Hunter, Orissa, Vol. II, P. 36
Harcourt made necessary arrangement for keeping the line of communication open between Ganjam and Puri. He placed his troops in two strategic places one at Manikpatna and another at Puri under the command of Major Fletehers so that Maratha army would not be able to create any trouble.\(^50\)

On 24 September 1803, Harcourt began his march to Cuttack. Harcourt faced some resistance from the Marathas on his route to Cuttack, but he succeeded to reach Cuttack. On 10 October 1803 and took possession of the town. Maratha troops took shelter in the fort of Barabati.\(^51\)

Col. Harcourt first attempted to capture the fort of Barabati by bribing Maratha Garrison. But negotiation failed. At last British troops decided to besiege the fort and to capture it by force.\(^52\) On 13 October 1803 night the troops set up a battery with one twelve pounder, two six pounders at a distance of 500 yards from the outer gate of the fort.\(^53\) They opened firing on 14\(^{th}\) morning and with heavy bombardment from all canons the outer wall of the fort cracked. A party of artillery men and Sepoys led by Clayton entered the fort and occupied it without much loss. The loss of British side was very

\(^{49}\) M. Martins, (Ed), Despatches etc of the Marquis of Wellesley during his administration in India, Vol. III P.P. - 269-70

\(^{50}\) Ibid. P. 271

\(^{51}\) Charles Fawcett, The English Factories in India, Vol. II P. - 325

insignificant during the whole operation. Only two European and thirteen Indian soldiers were killed. The Maratha fled from the fort and many of them were drowned in the ditch while escaping from British army. Thus ended the capture of the Barbati fort, the Citadel of Maratha power in Orissa.

Thus the Maratha rule in Orissa virtually came to an end and the city of Cuttack thereafter heard the footsteps of the British administrators. By the treaty of Deogaon concluded on 17 December 1803.

Raghuji Bhonsle ceded to the East India Company, in perpetual Sovereignty, the province of Cuttack.

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POLITICAL MAP OF ORISSA
(AFTER THE BRITISH OCCUPATION)
IMPACT

Immediately after the occupation of Cuttack in 1803, the English set themselves to the task of consolidation and land Revenue Administration. by means of Treaty of Deogaon, Harcourt and Melville were appointed as the Commissioner of the province\textsuperscript{56} and were stationed at Cuttack while James Hunter was sent to Puri as "Acting Collector at Jagannath Temple".\textsuperscript{57}

The Commissioners were given the charge of making a land revenue settlement with proper regard to the local custom and tradition. The old Hindu revenue system had undergone many modifications in Orissa before the British occupation. During the Maratha rule the territories were divided into two distinct political divisions. Mughalbandi and Garjat.

The "Garjat" areas comprised the hill tracts in the west and they were held by several chieftains on hereditary basis. But the Mughalbandi, the plain lands in the coastal belt was under direct administration of Maratha. After the British conquest, they followed a policy of conciliation towards the landholders in general and ordered a remission of all sums due to the Maratha Government on account of arrears of revenue for years prior to 1803 – 1804. The officers of the former Govt. were employed with fixed monthly allowance

\textsuperscript{56} G. Tonybee, A Sketch of the History of Orissa, 1803 – 1828, Calcutta – 1873. P-45
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
to collect land revenue, while steps were taken to abolish the abwabs or extra demands of the Maratha officer.\(^{58}\)

The regulation further provided that ryot should be granted "patta" and that nothing but what was expressed in the documents regarding the rent should be collected from them. The British administrators also recognised the rent free tenures as they existed during the Maratha rule. The regulation wanted that the proprietors of rent free tenures should register their grants within the year 1805-06 and the collector of land revenue was directed to prepare registers of such rent free land.\(^{59}\)

The Amils, who were native Collectors were to submit the reports of their monthly collection to the Collectors, who had general jurisdiction in all revenue matters, subject to revision and control by the commissioners. The Amils also continue to enjoy the judicial powers as they had during the days of the Marathas and civil suits were decided by them under the supervision of collector.\(^{60}\) In June 1804, Orissa was divided into two administrative Zones with the river Mahanadi as the boundary between them and Mr. Robert Ker and Mr. Charles Grome were appointed in the northern and southern divisions

\(^{58}\) G.S. Das, Op. Cit. P. 63  
\(^{60}\) BRP. No. 5 of 1 August 1822, Stirling, Secretary of Commissioner of Cuttack to Govt of Bengal, 15 October, 1821
respectively as the Judge, Magistrate and collectors. This system was however given up in the following year when two divisions were made into one under the administration of a collector. This was effected by the regulation XII of 1805, which embodies the result of the first land revenue settlement in Orissa. This regulation abolished the office of the special Commissioners and empowered the Board of Revenue at Fort William to superintend the revenue administration of Orissa.

The settlement of 1805 was soon followed by a Triennial settlement which failed to produce satisfactory results and so in 1808–09 the settlement was made annual, a policy which continued up to 1812. In 1813, an experiment was made for two years settlements but it was given up in favour of the annual one in 1815. The triennial system revived in 1816, and subsequently in 1822–23 a quinquennial settlement was adopted. This quick successions of Early English land settlement indicates the inefficiency and hasty conduct of the officers who were in charge of the revenue administration of Orissa. The officers were, no doubt, highly rapacious and corrupt, interested more in their amassing of fortune than in the lot of the poor tillers of the soil, and they were helped by a band of greedy and unscrupulous Bengali adventurers who took all possible measures to exploit the people in their own

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61 G. Tonybee, A Sketch of the History of Orissa (1803–1828), P.P. 267
62 Ibid. P. 43
interest. The result of the early land revenue settlements was naturally disastrous to the Oriya proprietors and cultivators alike, and the Govt., in its turn had to sustain great loss and to face incalculable troubles.

"The Collector had no information as to the real assets of the estates, for Zamidas and the Amils combined to withhold all papers, and he had to proceed on a very rough estimate of the quantity of land in cultivation and on the reports of interested subordinates. Arrears accumulated rapidly and in 1806 began the system of putting up defaulting estates for sale in Calcutta, a policy which proved the ruins of many old families and allowed Bengali speculators to buy valuable properties at low prices. Many left their estates to be held by the Collectors, who in their turn either managed those through Tahasildars who extorted as much as they could or farmed them out to speculators who rack rented the ryots. A large portion of revenue assessed could not be collected".

To this was added the trouble which resulted from the depreciation of the value of cowries and then sudden rise in the price of salt. In December 1812, the government issued the declaration that cowries would no longer be

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63 Ibid.

64 According to Mr. Ever two third of the Oriya Zamidars were completely wiped out and replaced by Bengali Zamidars within first fourteen years of British rule.

65 G. Tonybee, Op. Cit, P. 28
received in payment of Revenue and this came as a bolt from the blue to the poor cultivators. People were naturally led to believe that they were better off under the Marathas than under the British.66

Early British administration in Cuttack brought about disastrous changes in the economic and social life of the people. Large number of aristocrats and reputed Oriya families were reduced to destitution and their land were grabbed by unscrupulous proprietors who mercilessly exploited the Cultivators. Frequent revenue settlement by the Government greatly affected the economic condition of the Paik, the landed militia of Orissa.

"Deprived of the lands which they had enjoyed from time immemorial, they were subjected to the grossest extortion and oppression at the hands of farmers, Sarbarakars and other underlings to whom our government entrusted the collection of revenue and also to the tyrannies of a corrupt and venal police.67

PAIK REBELLION 1817

The Paik rebellion is a landmark in the history of Modern Orissa. This was the first direct challenge of the people of Orissa against the Britishers. The Paiks of Khurda were worst sufferer of first thirteen years of British

66 Ibid.
67 Quoted in District Gazetters Cuttack. P. 127.
administration. Thus, they took leading role in it. This exposed for the first time the weak foundation as well as inherent defects of the new administration. Primarily this rebellion was a pinpointed attack against the revenue policy and the defective system of land settlement of the Britishers. The people of coastal region particularly Kanika, Kujang and Khurda were adversely affected by this system. This was an agrarian revolution which alarmed the Britishers to take appropriate measures to readdress their grievances in future.

The smouldering discontent of both Paik and peasants found eruption in an open rebellion in 1817 under the leadership of Buxi Jagabandhu.68

Buxi Jagabandhu, the commander of the forces of Raja Khurda, who held the highest position of honour, next to the king became victim to the perfidy, cruelty and intrigues of some amlas of revenue department and he was deprived of Jagir Buxi Jagabandhu petitioned the British authority but it bore no result. At last he made up his mind to fight and avenge the wrongs done to him. Jagabandhu made a common cause with Paiks and peasants who were subjected to oppression and exploitation. The Paiks with the support of a body of rebellious (Khond) attacked police station, other government building and looted the treasury at Ranpur, Khurda in the last

68 G. A Tonybee, Sketch of the History of Orissa – 1803-1828 Calcutta 1873, P. 42
week of March, 1817. The rebellion gradually intensified with the participation of more Paiks and peasants and began to spread widely with all its insurrecting fury. Buxi and his followers captured Puri with the hope of restoring the Raja to his old position. The echo of the uprising spread to other neighbouring places like Pipili, Limbai, Kotdesh, Gop, Kujang, Harispur, Pattamundai and Asureswar. Having failed to Quell the rebellion initially the government took to more stern and militant measures and even proclaimed martial law.\textsuperscript{69} By the end of October the rebellion was suppressed and most of the followers of Bakshi were captured. But Buxi Jagabandhu managed to elude the government for seven years from 1817 to 1825 because of the sympathy and support rendered to him by the Raja of Nayagarh and Ranpur. Pressed by the Raja of Nayagarh under different political situation, Buxi had to surrender and conceded to the governments offers of pardon and pension. According to an undertaking given to the government Buxi did not leave Cuttack till his death on 24 January 1829. He spent his last days in Buxi Bazar of Cuttack, which has been named after him and an old tank named Buxi Pokhari indicates till today the location of the house of this great hero in the heart of Cuttack.\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{69} P. Mukherjee, History of Orissa in 19th Century, Cuttack, 1964, P.P.. 89-90
The fire of the Paik Rebellion of 1817 was extinguished but heroic leadership of Buxi and rare dedication and gallantry of his followers remained as an imperishable historical legacy for the succeeding generations.\footnote{Ibid. P. 87}

The East India Company ruled Orissa for 55 years. Within thirteen years of the conquest there broke out Paik rebellion. Which was ruthlessly suppressed. The East India Company instituted an enquiry into the conduct of their own affairs in order to avoid similar revolts in future. In fact they succeeded in achieving the said objectives. But an ominous future was stored for Orissa. Within Eight years of the end of the East India Company's rule in 1866–67, Orissa fell victim to a calamity which took away one third of her entire population, i.e. more than one million souls.

Speaking on the Orissa famine in the British House of Commons on August 2 1867, Sir Stafford Northcote, Secretary of State for India gave a remark.

"This catastrophe must always remain a monument of our failure, a humiliation to the people of this country, to the Government of this country and to those of our India Officials of whom we had been perhaps a little too proud".\footnote{Quoted in C.E. Buckland, Bengal under the Lt. Governor, Vol. I, P. 386}
The colossal loss of life and properly as well as bitter suffering of the people caused by the disastrous famine, aroused both the government and the Oriyas to a new sense of reality. The dreadful famine while bringing in its wake some remarkable socio-political and administrative changes, stirred the nationalist sentiment that led to the growth of political consciousness in Orissa as elsewhere in India in the later half of 19th Century.73

73 B.K. Samal, Comprehensive History and Culture of Orissa (Ed) (New Delhi 1997), P. 316.
Map Of Cuttack Division
(During the British occupation in 1803)