CHAPTER II

Social and Political

Consciousness in Cuttack in 19th Century
In order to project a true and deep study of the freedom movement in Cuttack, it is felt imperative to give a brief introduction on the factors contributing to this movement. A study of Educational developments, Growth or Vernacular Press, Rapid social changes, impact of westernisation, growth of Oriya nationalism are an essential part of the study, not to be overlooked under any circumstances. In order that the freedom movement in Cuttack can be discussed in a clear perspective.

Like elsewhere in India, a new awakening was marked in Orissa after the “Naanka” Famine of 1866. The main reasons of new awakening was the growth of Western education, increase in the volume of trade and commerce. It gradually diminished the economic and intellectual backwardness of the people. Establishment of the Printing Press, publication of the periodical, journals and the growth of different cultural institutions helped general consciousness to grow. By the end of the first half of the nineteenth century, such a climate was available in the different parts of India, especially in the presidency towns of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and their neighbouring areas. But for the people of Orissa such facilities came very slowly and mostly after

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1 The Great famine of 1866, popularly known as “Naaka” famine, was attributed to the inevitable circumstances, peculiarities of the administrative system and callousness and negligence of different Individual officers. It was so severe and dreadful that the extend of mortality, as it was estimated by the Famine Commission, was no less than one – fourth of the total population of Orissa. It marked the climax of the misfortunes of the Oriya people.

the famine of 1866.³ Cuttack being situated in a commanding geographical position in Orissa played no less important role in preparing the ground for the growth of political consciousness in Orissa.⁴

**Growth of Education**

Growth of Education in 19th Century was the most important factor for the spread of political consciousness in Orissa. Before the advent of the British in Orissa, her indigenous education was not a bed of roses. The entire Oriya literature existed in palm leaf manuscripts carefully preserved and worshipped in Bhagabatghar⁵ in every village. It was however, the Christian Missionaries who first evinced interest in spreading Western education in Orissa. After their arrival in Orissa on 12 February 1822,⁶ the Baptist Missionaries of Serampur began with their educational programme for children. In June of the same year, they first established Oriya School at Cuttack.⁷

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⁴ S.C. Patra, Formation of the province of Orissa (Calcutta 1979), P. 79.
⁵ A village conference hall where the discussion on various issues are being held by the villagers.
⁷ P.K. Mishra, History of Orissa, (Sambalpur 1999), P. 290
The number of students in that school increased to 50 within first four months. By 1823, the number of such schools increased to fifteen. Most of these schools were established in the town of Cuttack and its adjacent places. The total number of students in these schools was 368 including 63 girls. In August 1923, a fund was created for the promotion of native schools. Under the auspices of this fund, the Cuttack English Charity School was established in October 1823. For a long time the missionaries alone took active interest in the establishment and management of schools in Cuttack. Thus Cuttack was most fortunate to see the growth of education through the efforts of the missionaries.

The main aim of the Christian Missionaries was to promote Christianity through their educational institutions. A missionary pointed out "We hope to promote education, as preparatory to the reception of the Gospel". But the missionary schools did not produce an educated middle class in Orissa. A lower standard of education did not attract children of intelligent section. There was also fear of conversion. And lastly, the people were so orthodox.

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8 L.S.S. O Malley, History of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa under the British rule. P. 76.
9 K.M. Patra, Orissa under the East India Company, (New Delhi 1970) P. 320
and conservative that they did not like to come to missionary schools.\textsuperscript{13} In the words of W.W. Hunter,

"Until 1838 no schools worthy of the name existed except in the two or three little bright spots within the circle of missionary influence. Throughout the length and breadth of the province, with its population of two and half millions of souls, all was darkness and superstition."\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{Progress from 1835 to 1854}

A revolutionary change took place in the field of education after 1835 when Lord William Bentinck took a historic decision regarding the introduction of English language in the country. In November, 1935 an English medium school was opened at Puri for the spread of English language.\textsuperscript{15} Ganga Narayan Bose from Calcutta was appointed as its first teacher.\textsuperscript{16} The number of students attending the school was not satisfactory. Therefore, education Committee decided to close it and to establish one at Cuttack Henry Ricketts, the education Commissioner had great admiration for the people of Orissa whom he considered more industrious and more trust worthy than their

\textsuperscript{14} W.W. Hunter, Orissa Vol. II P.145.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{16} Report of the General Committee of Public Instruction of the Presidency of Fort William Bengal 1835. P. 30
favoured neighbours. He believed that the spread of education would improve their qualities much. He advocated importing culture rather than making the students literate.

The love for English education began to increase in Orissa. The missionaries were the first to venture in this field. When the General Committee of public instruction (It was functioning from 1823) was abolished in January 1842 and a Council of Education was established in its place in April 1842, the Cuttack School came under its immediate management.

Subsequently the Cuttack School played an important role in the growth of Modern Education. The number of students in the Cuttack Schools did not increase considerably for a number of years. By 1851 the strength was only 121. The council of education managed the school with the active help and support of the officials of the Government. Various steps were taken to attract the students in large number to the school by providing them scholarships, prizes, books, financial assistance and also by tempting them with Govt. jobs after the completion of the school education.' In 1845 a higher class English School was opened which mainly became the Principal Citadel of Education in the Province. From 1851 the school was named as

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18 S.N. Mukherjee, History of Education in India (Borada 1961), P. 2
19 General Report of Public Instruction. 1844 – 45 PP 20-21
21 W.W. Hunter, op cit P. 145
the Cuttack Zilla School. Two more Zilla School were opened in Balasore and Puri district in 1853.

Vernacular Education

During the Governor generalship of Lord Harding a decision was taken to establish a number of Vernacular Schools throughout the presidency. Eight such schools were started in three districts of Orissa. The parents were still found to be reluctant to send their children to those schools run by the Christian Government. Despite public superstition and unwillingness, A.J.M. Mills, the Commissioner did not like to close those vernacular schools. His successor Gouldsbury was equally determined to spread education in Orissa. He made education free for the poor students. He also instructed the school authority to supply books at half price. He also suggested to the Board that without "any worldly prospect the progress of education was impossible". He again added that if employment in the Government offices would be answered

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22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 BRR, Letter from the Commissioner (1837), Vol. 64, No. 2955, Commissioner to the Board of Revenue, 7th December 1837
26 J. Peggs, Baptist Mission, P. 218.
27 ORR, ACC No. 133, Gouldsbury to Board of Revenue, 29 April 1848.
28 Ibid.
to the educated parents, they would gladly send their children to the Schools.  

Progress from 1854 to 1900

The Woods Despatch, 1854 of Charles Wood, the President of Board of Control was a landmark in the growth of Western Education.

The new scheme laid emphasis upon the mass education, female education, improvement of Vernacular teaching, extensive training for the teachers, Western education, creation of a separate department of education, establishment of universities, Introduction of Grand-in-aid system and encouragement of Anglo – Vernacular education.

With the introduction of the Grand – in – aid system, rapid progress was marked in the field of school education in the country. But there was hardly any improvement in Orissa, because of callousness of the Bengal Government and apathy of the people towards modern education. But after 1866 there was remarkable improvement in education in Orissa. For better improvement of educational standard, the necessity of establishing a training school for teachers was recognised.

29 Ibid.
30 GRPI, 1857 – 58, P.126.
31 Administrative Report of Orissa, 1875-76, P. 28
32 Ibid. P. 30
The Cuttack Normal school which was established in 1869\textsuperscript{33} was a pioneering institution of its kind in the province. Cuttack saw a rapid progress in school education. Instead of three school in 1856 – 57 there were as many as 50 schools in 1870 – 71 with around three thousand pupils.\textsuperscript{34} The Cuttack school was converted to a college in 1876.\textsuperscript{35} Latter this Cuttack college was renamed as Ravenshaw College after the name T.E. Ravenshaw, the Commissioner of Orissa. Subsequently it became the chief centre of learning in the state. A. Smith, the then commissioner of Orissa, made the following remarks:

"The direct administration of Orissa by the British Government dates from the year 1803, and the province has, therefore, in point of time, had half a century less of the benefits of the English rule than its more advanced neighbour, Bengal. It is, however, advancing steadily but surely, and the constitution of the College (Ravenshaw College) is not merely an indication of progress made, but of establishment of all time of the means of further progress.\textsuperscript{36} Regarding the progress of education it was stated in one of the periodicals in 1889."

\textsuperscript{33} M.C. Mohapatra, Adhunika Sikshya O Odisa, (Oriya Cuttack 1977), P. 208.
\textsuperscript{34} Report on Public Instruction in Bengal, 1875, P. 109
\textsuperscript{35} S. Mahanty, Satapdira Surya, P.409,
\textsuperscript{36} Utkal Dipika, 23 November 1889
“Every year many students come out successful in B.A., L.L.B., F.A., and entrance Examinations of Ravenshaw College. Again many students pass out from academy of Samyabandi, Town School, Mission School and other High Schools of this town Cuttack.

Therefore, the number of educated people is not so negligible. It is with pleasure we notice that the Oriya graduates, and under graduates are adorning the Country. Simultaneously a medical college was established under the patronage of T.E. Ravenshaw with the help of Dr. W.T. Steward, the Civil Surgeon of the district. During the last part of nineteenth century some elite and progressive families thought of educating their female children in Urban Schools particularly in Cuttack. The Baptist Missionary Ladies of Cuttack and Balasore were the pioneers in Managing a number of institution for girls. Subsequently the municipalities also took some interest in the progress of women education and contributed towards the support of girls school.

37 Ibid.
39 N.R. Patnaik, Op Cit. P. 235
40 Utkal Dipika, 17 August 1867.
41 Ibid.
The introduction of Women's education improved the status of Women in the society. By breaking age old seclusion, these women came forward to take a greater part in the socio-political life of the state.\footnote{N.R. Patnaik, Op Cit P. 235}

Thus, as elsewhere in India, the spread of western education brought a political consciousness among the people of Orissa. And Cuttack, being the centre of learning played a most conspicuous role in enlightening the people of Orissa. The people of Orissa after receiving higher education at Cuttack became curious to read the history of great revolutions in the world which heralded the principle of democracy and peoples rights. The more they read, the more they became politically conscious.\footnote{Ibid.}

\textbf{Growth of Press and Journalism}

The growth of press and subsequent publication of journal and periodicals in Cuttack played a dominant role in creating a powerful political consciousness in Orissa. The Baptist missionaries were the pioneers in establishing a press in Cuttack. Before the "Naanka Famine" there was a press named "Orissa Mission Press" established by the Missionaries in 1837 at Cuttack for the publication of religious books.\footnote{J. Peggs, Baptist Mission, P. 238}
They brought out three journals in Oriya language — Jnanaruna (1849), Prabodh Chandrika (1856) and Arunodaya (1861) to popularise Christianity in Orissa.\(^{45}\) They did not make any contribution towards the development of political consciousness. However, the missionary journals did not last long. After a long thirty years, in 1866, a second press was established by the initiative of the people of Cuttack known as Cuttack Printing Press.\(^{46}\) A few educated Oriyas, who were encouraged and patronised by the Commissioner and some feudatory chiefs founded the press to fulfil the local needs. Gouri Shankar Roy, a clerk in the Cuttack Collectorate published Utkal Depika¹, an Oriya periodical on 4 August 1866,\(^{47}\) it began to ventilate the suppressed feelings of the masses.\(^{48}\)

Utkal Subakari was the next journal published with Bhagabat Charan Das as its editor.\(^{49}\) Both Gouri Shankar Roy and Bhagabat Charan Das continued to edit their journal till their death. By the close of nineteenth century as many as nine presses had appeared in Cuttack. The most important of them were Utkal Hitaishini Press by Kalipada Banerjee in 1873\(^{50}\), the Victoria Press was established by Jagannath Rao, in 1885, Arunodaya

\(^{45}\) B.R.R, Letter from the Commissioner (1855), Vol 120, No. 389, Commissioner to the Government of Bengal, 22 December 1855

\(^{46}\) Two Bachelors of Arts. The Oriya Movement, PP 23-24.

\(^{47}\) M. Mansingh, History of Oriya Literature, P. 224

\(^{48}\) Utkal Depika 18, October 1866

\(^{49}\) Utkal Depika, 20, February 1869.

\(^{50}\) Sambad Vahika 30, November 1873.
press, 1893, Roy Press, 1894, Darpan Raj Press, 1899 and Utkal Sahitya Press. After Utkal Dipika the most influential journals in last quarter of the 19th Century were Bodhadayini and Balasore, Sambad Vahika. The first part of the journal contained literary writing, while the second part gave news items. In 1883 Cuttack mission press launched two periodicals, Sevak (monthly) and Sanskara (weekly) and later on two periodicals merged into one. It was intended to Champion the cause of social reforms but could not continue for a long time.

Further more other periodicals namely "Utkal Putra", "Bhagapat Bhakti Pradayini" and "Bideshi" were published at Cuttack in 1873 with Pyarimohan Acharya, Kedarnath Mitra, and Dinanath Benerjee as their respective editors. However a few more periodicals, newspaper and Magazines published in the last decade of nineteenth century appeared in the firmament with their bright flickers but faded into non – existence within no time. They were the expression of the nascent socio – political consciousness of the people. The names and years of publication of some of the papers are

- Cuttack Argus → January 1869
- Cuttack Star → February 1869
- Utkal Hitaisini → February 1869

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51 Utkal Depika, 2, April 1870
52 Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, June 1870, P. 210
53 K.M. Patra, Op Cit. P. 174
54 Ibid.
Most of these papers were published from Cuttack, the head quarters of the Orissa Division, where the educated Oriyas worked and made joint effort to reach certain common ends. Only a few journals like Utkal Depika, Balasore Sambad Vahika, Oriya and Naba Sambad etc. survived for a long time. Other met premature end due to several factors. There were not a large number of educated persons in the district who could sustain the circulation of a journal as readers, subscribes and responsible writers. The poverty of the people and also the financial instability of the journal were other major

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55 Ibid.
stumbling blocks. The management of many journals were also not upto the standard. Many editors could not sustain their enthusiasm by hard and devoted work. Fakir Mohan, the editor of Balasore Sambad Vahika, one of the earliest journal in Orissa gave a vivid picture of the situation in his autobiography as follows:

"The number of nominal subscribers ranged between forty and fifty, but the subscription was actually collected from eight or ten".

Inspite of very limited circulation of journals, they played a very significant role in the socio religious movement in Orissa in second half of nineteenth century. The language and literature of Orissa, which faced severe attack from some Englishmen and non – Oriyas, could be saved only by the sustained efforts of some of the Journals. The Journals which symbolised the awakening of the people, discussed many socio – religious and political problems. The Christian Missonaries, the followers of Brahma Samaj and other champions of social reforms utilised the pages of those journals to propagate their ideals, to rouse the consciousness and mould the views of the people. It also fostered a sense of unity in the minds of the Oriya – Speaking people under different administrative set-up of the alien rulers.

56 Ibid.
57 Fakir Mohan Senapati, Autobiography (Oriya), P. 49.
The Social Organisation and Clubs

With the growth of education, establishment of printing presses and development of journalism, several socio-political organisations gave a lot of impetus to the cause of Oriya nationalism. These organisations were the mouthpiece of rising educated class or intelligentsia who championed various socio-political and economic causes directed towards an all round improvement of the people. At the beginning some Englishmen formed an association, called mutual improvement society at Cuttack in 1859. They attended the meeting of this society and used to discussed socio-cultural problems. After the formation of this society, some leading local intellectuals of Cuttack formed a "Rice Selling Company" in 1866 with a view to serve the famine Stricken people. This company was organised by Harekrushna Das and Iswar Chandra Banerjee. But the real source of inspiration for the organising association was the desire of Oriya elite class to protect their mother tongue from Bengali Chauvinism. Accordingly, the first socio-cultural association to make its appearance in 1866 was the "Utkal Bhasa Unnati Bidhayini Sabha" of Balasore. Fakir Mohan Senapati, Radhanath Ray,

59 Name of some Organisation given in Appendix 'A'.
60 John Beams, Memoirs of a Bengal Civilian (Calcutta 1961), P.208
62 Ibid.
63 Utkal Dipika 23, July 1870
Bholanath Samantrai etc. were the member of this Sabha. Those Bengalis who were trying to introduce their scripts and language in Orissa formed the Cuttack debating Club in 1869 which sponsored the anti-Oriya Campaign of Scholars like Rajendralal Mitra. Thereby Cuttack debating club stimulated great public controversy. The Bengali Zamindars had formed the Cuttack society to serve their own interest. It patronised a library, a press and two weekly news paper, the Utkal Hitasini in Oriya and Orissa Patriot in English.

Following this, Cuttack young men’s Association was founded the same year at the residence of Laxmi Narayan Roy Choudhury at Cuttack, Where all the members were school students. A group of Brahmin of Cuttack formed Utkal Ullasini Sabha in 1880. Lalit Chakrvartty founded the “Siksa Bidhaika Sabha”. Another important association called ‘Shurud Samaj” was founded at Cuttack for initiating discussion on matters relating to the welfare of the province. T. Ravenshaw, the Commissioner made an attempt to merge together the Cuttack debating Club, Cuttack Society and Utkal

64 S. Patnaik, Sambad Patraru Odisara Katha, (Cuttack 1972), P.62
66 Ibid.
67 C.E. Buckland, Bengal under Lieutenant Governors, Part – I, P. 350
68 B.P. Mahapatra. Op Cit, P. 95
69 Utkal Dipika, 20 September 1879
70 N. Samantaray, The History of Oriya literature, P. 178
Bhasa Unnati Bidhayini Sabha under one association to be named as "Orissa Society".\textsuperscript{71} In doing this, he tried to bring harmony between Oriya and Bengali Communities.\textsuperscript{72} The "Utkal Bhasa Uddipani Sabha" which came into existence in 1867 was mostly an association of students, teachers and aristocrats of Cuttack with an objective to improve Oriya language and introduce it in Government Office and appointment of Oriya personnel in Government offices.\textsuperscript{73} For this noble endeavour, the association was highly praised by the Utkal Depika.\textsuperscript{74} This association compiled some Oriya text books, succeeded in introducing Oriya language in official business and furnished a list of Oriya writers to the Commissioner.\textsuperscript{75}

In the Oriya Society the members of the Karana Caste were the first to avail the benefits of the Government employment since 1835.\textsuperscript{76} Narasingha Charan Das, Dinabandhu Patnaik and Harekrushna Das etc who served as Deputy Collectors were of Karana Caste.\textsuperscript{77} On 1 January 1896 a meeting of the Karan was held in the house of deputy collector Narasingha Charan Das at Cuttack where discussion were held regarding the changes in their Social Custom. This came to be known as "Karana Sabha".

\textsuperscript{71} Utkal Dipika, 5, May 1874
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{74} Sambad Bahika, December 1875
\textsuperscript{75} Utkal Dipika, 23 November 1889
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid. 7 December 1889
Thus a study of the nature and objectives of various associations shows that Cuttack was the main centre of brisk Social activities where associations were formed by the Students, the Christians, the Muslim, the Brahmos, the Kayastha for the improvement of Oriya language, eradication of corruption, to enforce prohibition and to ensure the spread of education. These organisations clearly revealed the awakening of the people. Most of these organisation had short lives and they could not make sustained efforts to bring about radical Socio Cultural changes. But there was no doubt that they succeeded to rouse the people from their age long slumber and prepared the ground for bigger movements in the next century.

The Language Problem

The most important issue which deeply disturbed the Oriya elite and subsequently imbibed the Cult of political consciousness was language issue. Though Oriya was used as an official and school language, a group of Bengalis tried to prove that Oriya was a mere dialect of Bengali and therefore should be replaced by the latter in offices and school as the medium of instruction. On 4 January 1841, the Sadar Board of Revenue wrote to the commissioner, Orissa to substitute Bengali for Oriya as a language of

77 P. Mukherjee, History of Orissa, Vol. VI (Cuttack 1964), P. 427
78 Siksha Samiti, (Oriya a Nava Samvad), 19 May 1887
79 Ibid., 10 June 1887
Government.80 Again on 3 February 1841, A.J.M. Mills, the Commissioner of Orissa, in his reply wrote "I submit for the Board's consideration the accompanying original letter from the judge of the province and the collectors and magistrates of the three districts".81 Again he wrote "I am informed that there is a much closer affinity between Assamese and Bengali than between Bengali and Oriya."82 But in 1848, the Collector of Cuttack recommended to the commissioner for the substitution of Oriya by Bengal.83

He made the following remarks: "The Oriya of this district whatever it may originally have been, is now but a dialect of Bengali, from which it differs chiefly in pronunciations and in its written character. I do not know how far such a suggestion may be considered to be within my province, but I would submit as a measure of general policy, it is desirable that Oriya should cease to exist as a separate language within British territories."84

The intellectual Orissa Vehemently protested against this mischievous move and were determined to work unitedly to oppose anti-Oriya language movement. They voiced their protest in the newspaper the "Utkal Depika" and the "Utkal Barta". This mischievous move was even opposed by the British

80 BRR, Letter from the Commissioner (1841), Vol. 76, No. 286, Commissioner to the Sadder Board of Revenue, 3 February 1841
81 Ibid.
82 Ibid., Letter from the Commissioner (1849) Vol. 99 No. 583, Commissioner to the Sadder Board of Revenue, 27 June 1849
84 Ibid.
administrators like F. Gouldsbury and John Beams, the commissioners of Orissa, and the eminent,85 Bengali writer Bhudev Mukhopadhyaya. They strongly supported the claims of Oriya language. Even in 1857 E. Roer the first Inspector of School for Orissa made a scholastic statement about the Oriya language. He wrote "the Ooryah language can not be considered as a dialect of Bengalee, though nearly related to it, but it is a language of its own which has its own grammatical forms, idioms, sign for the letters and mostly translation from puranas, the Hitopdesh etc".86 He therefore rejected the idea of supplying class books in Bengali to the Oriya schools and recommended to publish Oriya class books for them. Uma Charan Haldar, a Bengali Officer, who was appointed as Deputy Inspector of Schools suggested to introduce Bengali in place of Oriya which was sharply reacted to by Oriyas. During this controversies, Rajendralal Mitra, an eminent scholar, remarked that even as a race, Oriyas were not different from Bengalis.87 On 9 December 1868, while delivering a talk in Cuttack Club, he said "the Oriya language, which is mere a dialect of Bengali and spoken by about twenty lakhs of people of the coast, would not develop on account of the dearth of books. While in Bengali three hundred books were written and published in the preceding three years, only three to four books have been published in Orissa".88 Mitra's speech provoked the sentiments of Oriyas. On this issue, the Utkal Depika of Gouri Shankar

86 GRPI, 1857 – 58, P.116
87 Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, June, 1870. PP. 210-216
and the Utkal Hitaishini of Kalipada Banerjee entered upon a hostile press campaign. Further, it took a bad turn when Uma Charan Haldar suggested that Oriya should be written in Bengali scripts.\textsuperscript{89} Rajendralal Mitra, once again pronounced “The Uriya, instead of being a self contained and independent member of Aryan Indian Vernaculars, is most closely and intimately connected with the Bengali”. Encouraged by such scholar, a group of Bengali gentleman launched a signature campaign in Orissa. They collected signature from the illiterate Oriyas on a printed form in favour of the Bengali language. They also organised meetings to convince the Oriyas to support Bengali. In a meeting held at Jajpur in Cuttack district, an Oriya Gentleman was bribed to speak for the substitution of Bengali for Oriya.\textsuperscript{90}

When Bengali made such efforts, scholar like John Beams pointed out that Oriya contained unchanged forms which were older than the oldest Bengali and Hindi. He said “At a time when Uriya was already a fixed and settled language, Bengali did not exist”.\textsuperscript{91} He condemned Kanti Chandra’s book as profoundly destitute of philological arguments.\textsuperscript{92} Bhudev Mukherjee, a scholar, criticised and contradicted the views of Kanti Chandra.\textsuperscript{93}

\textsuperscript{88} Utkal Dipika, 10 July 1869  
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid. 20\textsuperscript{th} July 1869  
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid. 14\textsuperscript{th} May 1870  
\textsuperscript{91} John Beames, Aryan Language, P. 119  
\textsuperscript{92} Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, June 1870 Vol. XXXIX, Part – I, P. 202  
\textsuperscript{93} Utkal Dipika, 30\textsuperscript{th} April 1870
The language issue came to surface at Balasore in 1870, when a Bengali teacher of Balasore Zilla School, named Kanti Chandra Bhattacharya wrote a booklet. "Odia Swatantra Bhasa Nay" (Oriya is not a separate language) in order to prove that Oriya was a dialect of Bengali. Some Bengalis at the same time very secretly carried on the signature campaign urging the introduction of Bengali as the medium of instruction in Schools.

Fakir Mohan Senapati, who was then a primary school teacher spearheaded a counter – attack against this move. A section of Bengali elite domiciled in Orissa also supported the view that Oriya was a rich language. It was supported by John Beams, the then Collector of Balasore, who established the historicity of the Oriya language by criticising Kantilal's views.

Fakir Mohan Senapati writes in his autobiography “At that time, to the good fortune of the Oriyas, the British officials and the English Christian Missionaries were in our favour. They all now supported our counter move”. Thus Oriya was allowed to remain in its former position. Fakir Mohan saved his mother tongue spoken by more than twenty lakhs of people. Thus the

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94 GRPI, 1869 – 1870, PP 63-65
95 Utkal Dipika, 26 May 1870, Shibadas Bhattacharya, Deputy Inspector of Schools at Balasore was the leader of the Move.
97 F.M. Senapati, Op. Cit. PP. 53-54
98 Ibid.
mounting language tension in the public life led to the emergence of a strong racial consciousness among the Oriyas creating an unprecedented awakening in their mind. They suddenly became aware of their backwardness and suffering. They also felt that Orissa should be for Oriyas, they alone should get employment in the Govt. jobs and their language should get official patronage of flourish.  

**The growth of Communication**

The disastrous famine of 1866 was a turning point in the history of Orissa. Before the famine there was neither a good metalled road nor railway system in Orissa. The famine commission reported "Orissa was at that time isolated from the rest of India, the only road leading to Calcutta across a country intersected by large river and liable to inundation was unmetalled and unbridged, and there was little communication by sea". \(^{100}\) This was the reason for the slow growth of socio-political consciousness. But after the famine measures were taken to prevent the recurrence of a similar disaster. The coast surveyed and canal and roads constructed. \(^{101}\) But no efforts were made to construct railways in Orissa owing to enormous cost of bridging the small and big rivers. Only the Bengal government was satisfied with the

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\(^{100}\) Buckland C.E., Bengal under Lieutenant Governors (Calcutta, 1902) Vol. I, P. 330  
\(^{101}\) Selections from the Records of Bengal Government, 1853, Vol. XXX, Section – 96
construction of high level canals, which provided a trade route between Calcutta and Cuttack.\textsuperscript{102} It facilitated to irrigate the adjoining area. Gradually the people, demanded for the construction of railway line in the province. Richard Temple, Lt. Governor of Bengal visited Balasore in 1874. The elite citizens appealed to him for the construction of railway line in Orissa.\textsuperscript{103} These efforts were reinforced by the active interest of Baikuntha Nath Dey who was an active member of railway board. He submitted an application for the purpose. Municipality commissioner of Cuttack presented a memorandum to Governor of Bengal and strongly advocated for the construction of railway by extending the East Coast and Bengal – Nagpur railways to Orissa. Government of Bengal immediately undertook the work of survey and permitted the railway companies to begin the construction of railway line in Orissa upto Puri.\textsuperscript{104} In 1892 – 93 the works of East Coast Railways commenced and the Sambalpur – Khurdha line was surveyed. In 1894 – 95, a large bridge was constructed over the Mahanadi rivers. Next year the construction of railway from Jatni to Puri was undertaken and 1887 train services started on the east coast railways.\textsuperscript{105} The construction of Orissa

\textsuperscript{102} Report of the Famine Commission, 1880, P.128

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{104} Utkal Dipika, 18.6.1892

\textsuperscript{105} Annual Administrative Report Orissa Division, 1895 – 96, P. 42
railway line of Bengal Nagpur railway and East Coast railway was completed after 1890, connecting Bengal with Madras and Nagpur through Orissa.\textsuperscript{106}

Thus, the development of transport and communication provided enough facilities for the intellectual upliftment of the people. It enabled them to go for higher studies and business outside the province. It brought a political unity among the Oriyas. The general improvement of both economic and intellectual caused by the transport and communication was reported by the commissioner of Orissa.

"There is more knowledge and education among the masses, more trade and money in circulation, more employment at high wages for the labourer, more moving to and pro in the country, less stagnation and a divided tendency to enlightenment and progress. There are more markets, more shops, and a brisk and growing export and import trade, all these items indicate undoubtedly in general the people's condition with which we ought to be satisfied. The progress of civilization may be slow, but it is, nevertheless, sure and safe, because it is not rapid and revolutionary".\textsuperscript{107}

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid. 1897 – 98, P. 132
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid. 1899 – 1900, P. 31
Impact of Oriya Literature

The growth of new trends in Oriya literature played an important role to rouse the national consciousness in Orissa. A deep analysis of the contemporary Oriya literature, shows that the poets, writers and playwrights played no less an important role in championing the national cause. Before the establishment of printing press, virtually there was no prose in Oriya except the Madala Panji, the chronicle of Jagannath Temple. Oriya poetry concerned itself mainly with religious topics. However the growth of education on Western lines had its impact on the literary trend of Orissa. Now social, economic, political and historical topics became the main themes of our literature - prose, poetry and drama. It marked the beginning the renaissance in Oriya literature which is said to have began with Fakir Mohan Senapati.\textsuperscript{108}

Fakir Mohan (1847 - 1918) had a good deal of literary works to bring about social reforms through Satire, both in prose and poetry. The conspicuous features of Senapati were love of the country. In his Utkal Bhramanam (Travel in Orissa) he sings "Orissa is a holy land in India. Virtuous people live here. Innumerable pilgrims come here for a darshana of Lord Jagannath. Last wishes of a Hindu is to be cremated in the Swargadwara. But today, this land is dismembered....."\textsuperscript{109} To create the love

\textsuperscript{108} M. Mansingh, History of Oriya Literature, P. 167
\textsuperscript{109} "Utkal Pabitra Bhumi Bharata Madhyare, Karanti Aethire Basa Punyabanta nare, Bharatara Sabu deshe aemanta prachara, Pabitra Utkalbhumi ate
for motherland, he composed a series of poems like Utkalabhumi, Janma-bhumi, Utkal Jananira Ahwan, Chhinnabhinna Utkal, Mo Janani Janma-bhumi, Matrubhumi and Utkal Sangita. Describing the vivisection of Utkal, Fakir Mohan Senapati pointed out that so long as the outlying Oriya tracts were not amalgamated all our efforts would yield no result.  

The renaissance in Oriya literature is not only the contribution of Fakir Mohan alone, but of a magnificent trio—Fakir Mohan, Radhnath Ray (1848–1907) and Madhusudan Rao (1853–1912). These three budding intellectuals met at Balasore and became lifelong friends and each of them ushered in fresh trends in Orissa literature. Radhanath's powerful pen gave a new life to the rivers, romantic hills, forest, and above all the Chilika lake. He took the themes of his poetry from legends, puranas and the history of Orissa. His Shivajinka Utsahavani, Amarshivani and Darbara are full of patriotic fervour. For the first time nature in Orissa spoke and became an integral part of Orissa's national consciousness through the romantic poetry of Radhanath.

The similar theme of the past greatness and present degradation is found in the songs of Madhusudan Rao. His poem Janmabhumi had mainly

Swargadwara, Matra aha sehi deshi bhanda khanda sakata soundraya loicachi landa blanda'. F.M. Senapati, Granthaval Vol. I, (Cuttack 1964) P. 646

110 F.M. Senapati, Autobiography, P. 647
111 M. Mansingh, Op Cit., P. 148
112 P. Kar. Op Cit., P. 28
113 M. Mansingh. Op Cit., P. 185
been composed to awaken the national spirit of the students.\textsuperscript{114} A teacher by profession, the towering personality of Orissa and the leader of the "Oriya Movement", he was associated with the Brahmo Samaj in Orissa. He also composed a number of patriotic songs like Utka\textsuperscript{1} Santana, Jananira Ukti, Santanara Ukti, Jati Itihas, Sammilani etc.\textsuperscript{115} Most of these poems were directed towards the national awakening in Orissa. Gopabandhu Das who succeeded him to lead the congress movement in Orissa wrote some poems like Chilika, Bandira Swedesha Chinta, etc. to inculcate patriotism among Oriyas.\textsuperscript{116} Most of his poems were composed when the Utkal Sammilani held its annual session at different places. Utkal Bandana\textsuperscript{117} was Sung as one of the auspicious inaugural songs of the sammilani.

**BRAHMO MOVEMENT**

The period from 1850 – 1900 may be described as the age of Brahmo Movement. The Brahmo preachers from Bengal frequently visited Orissa and preached to the people regarding their faith and organised prayers in some


\textsuperscript{115} N. Samantaray. History of Oriya Literature (Bhubaneswar 1964), P. 362

\textsuperscript{116} M.S. Rao. Granthavali, P. 238

\textsuperscript{117} "Jayaama Janama Bhumi Udara Utkal Bhumi, Sneha kole maa go Janma ambhara, to mahima to gouraba tohara punya bibhaba Sumari maa, mattrubhumi tora atita, namai ma bhakati bhare, adham akashama suta to Charanare".

M.S. Rao Granthavali, P. 238
In those days many Bengalis were serving in different offices of Orissa. They readily came under the influence of Brahmo Prachar and formed the nucleus of the Brahmo Movement in the province. One retired Magistrate Jagamohan Roy had established a branch of Brahma Samaj at Cuttack on 18th December 1869. The Samaj celebrated the annual day on 23rd January 1870. The members of the Samaj had congregated at the residence of one Bhupes Chandra Bhattacharya in Choudhury Bazar, Cuttack to conduct the worship. It was perhaps the office – room of the Samaj. The progress of the Brahmo – Samaj and its growing popularity under the guidance of Prof. H.N. Bhattacharye through the Utkal and Cuttack Brahmo Samaj have been adequately flashed in some papers. The ideology of the Samaj influenced the students and the youth to a great extent. Prof. Bhattacharya established another Samaj at Cuttack. He was a member of Brahma Samaj in India and therefore, the new Samaj was affiliated to that Branch at Calcutta. In the same year another man, who rendered great service to the spread of Brahmo ideals in Orissa and joined the Samaj was Madhusudan Rao. He played a very important role for the growth of Brahmo Samaj in Orissa. Like Bhima Bhol in the Mahima religion he

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118 N. Ghosh, The evolution of Nababadhan (Calcutta, 1830), P.23
119 Utkal Depika, 29.1.1869
120 Ram Krishna Mission – The Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. IV, P.654
121 S.N. Sastrī, History of the Brahmo Samaj, Calcutta, 1974, P. 524
122 Ibid. 525
123 Utkal Dipika, 27.1.1872
was the saint and intellectual leader of the Brahmo faith.\textsuperscript{124} As a top ranking educational officer in Cuttack he enjoyed a special social status. So he had a great influence on the educated mass of the time. He was the secretary of the Utkal Brahmo Samaj for a very long time.\textsuperscript{125} It is mostly due to his influence that, educated and learned persons like Pratap Chandra Mazumdar, Girish Chandra Mitra, Biswanath Banerjee and Govind Roy came into the fold of Brahma Samaj. Of course he was a true disciple of Keshab Chandra Sen and believed in the synthesis and amalgamation of the essence of all religions of the world.\textsuperscript{126}

In the last quarter of the 19\textsuperscript{th} Century Pyari Mohan Acharya, Sadhu Charan Roy, Biswanath Kar etc. joined the Brahmo Samaj by the influence of Madhusudan Rao. Pyari Mohan Acharya was gifted with oratorical powers and exceptional organisational ability.\textsuperscript{127} He was really the most dominating personality in the Brahmo Movement in Orissa in the last part of the nineteenth Century. He had the gifted quality and talent to explain and expound the different tenets of the religion, through a number of essays, speeches and poems. During his short span of life, he undertook a number of

\textsuperscript{124} Utkal Putra, 1.8.1973  
\textsuperscript{125} Sambad Bahika, Balasore, 24.5.88  
\textsuperscript{126} Sebaka, 2 October 1883  
\textsuperscript{127} Utkal Sahitya, November 1887
progressive work and established an educational institution called Cuttack Academy.128

Biswanath Kar was a prominent man in the field of literature and his progressive ideas attracted a number of young man, who were initiated into the new faith. Brahma preachers visited different parts of Orissa including Garjat States like Dhenkanal, Talcher, Pallahara, Baramba etc. to propagate their ideals.129 The Brahma movement helped the birth of some news papers like Bahika, Sevak, Sanskaraka and Nababidhana during 1882 – 1884. Nabasambada, Samyabadi and Ashi in 1887 – 1888.130 This movement helped the growth of Journalism in Orissa, really encouraged an inter exchange of culture between Bengal and Orissa by the missionaries of Brahma religion.131 In the year 1891, some of the devotees contemplated to establish one publicity department for the regular preaching of the Brahma – Mission.132

Thus the educated people of Orissa in the Second half of 19th Century were much inclined towards Brahma faith and its progressive ideas.133 But in Cuttack where Brahma faith took some root, it was limited primarily to a small

128 S.N. Sastri, Op Cit – P 528
130 Utkal Dipika, 7 July 1887
131 Sambada Bahika, Balasore, 24.5.1888
132 Biswanath Baba, History of Satya Mahima Dharma, (3rd Edition 1965) P. 14
middle class intelligentia. However, the movement stirred their minds and made them conscious of the limitations of their socio-religious system.\textsuperscript{134}

Thus all these developments after the "Naanka Famine" with a favourable condition created hither to paved the way for the growth of political consciousness in Orissa. And the role of Cuttack for creating this political awakening is remarkable.

\textsuperscript{133} Sambad Bahika, 15/6/1890
\textsuperscript{134} S.N. Shastri, P. 530