CONCLUSION
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The anti-Colonial movement in Orissa forms a glorious chapter in the history of modern Orissa. Its purview is widespread and all encompassing. The province which remained a tail-piece of the more influential neighbouring provinces for almost over a hundred years suffered disadvantages on many accounts. And the movement for self assertion formed the first phase of the Oriya movement.

The Oriya movement can be said to have started in 1866 when the discontent of the Oriyas gradually started taking a concrete shape. The terrible ‘Naanka’ famine which ravaged the province, revealed the backwardness of Orissa and its lack of Communication with the surrounding provinces. The feeling of negligence was aggravated when Bengali officers and scholars endeavoured to fight the backwardness of Orissa by substituting the Oriya language by Bengali. When in the Ganjam district, in Sambalpur and Chhota Nagpur areas a substitution of Oriya by Telugu and Hindi were tried respectively, the Oriya movement for the first time culminated in an organized language agitation.

During the successful language agitation it was realized that territorial dismemberment of the Oriyas was the main cause for the general backwardness of Oriyas under the British rule. It was in this historical context that the discussions about the amalgamation of the Oriya speaking tracts arose for the first time.

The agitation to protect their language forms the most remarkable episode in the articulation of the Oriya identity. The Oriyas fought tooth and nail to preserve their unique identity in a multi-cultural setup. The success story of the language agitation in Sambalpur inspired them to plan for a well-organised and
coordinated endeavour. Thus, originated the idea of Utkal Sammilani, in 1803, which for over two decades remained the mouth piece of the Oriya movement.

Until Gandhi came to Orissa in 1921, opinion regarding Orissa was shaped by the famines and the consequent economic distress caused by them. Before the Non Cooperation movement, Orissa featured very little in the proceedings of the Indian National Congress or indeed in any other outside organization. For most non-Oriyas, Orissa was a mere geographical expression.¹

At the time of the Madras session of the Indian National Congress in 1903, the Oriyas had perceived the INC to be a mere platform of the advanced races of India. Even till 1920, the old leaders believed that participation in Congress politics meant sacrificing the Oriya interest. But leaders like Gopabandhu Das argued that there was no contradiction between the ideals of the *sammilani* and those of the Congress and that joining the all India politics would facilitate the unification of the Oriya-speaking areas.²

The participation of the Oriyas in the Congress-led movements, however, should not be seen as a change of attitude by the Oriya leaders because the participation of the Oriyas in all-India politics did not mean the end of regional concerns. Instead, the relations between the regional and the national concerns entered another phase in the complex historical process of the post-1920 politics.

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¹. Young India, 12.5.1920, *there may be some* Editor, Vol.XVII, Publication Division, New Delhi, 1979, pp.403-404.
The victory of the Congress supporters in the Chakradharpur session of the Utkal sammilani meant a split in the organization which had successfully avoided it for long seventeen years. As a result, some of the old leaders such as Madhusudan Das and Raja of Kanika, Rajendra Narayan Bhanj Deo lost their power and influence.

Acceptance of the Congress creed by the Oriya leaders did not mean that the Non Co-operation movement instantly took off in Orissa. In fact, it started with sporadic incidents of protests in various towns such as spontaneous demonstrations by school and college students.

In the first few months attempts were made by the leaders to establish the Congress organisation and swaraj ashrams in various places. The visit of Gandhi in March 1921, infused new enthusiasm in the Congress ranks. The most important result of such a political campaign was the growth of political consciousness among the peasants in Orissa.

The major achievement of the Non Co-operation movement in Orissa according to some of its leaders was the entry of Orissa into Congress and its consequent entry into all-India politics. What was lacking, however, was the political motivation on part of the Congress to organize popular movements in Orissa. There were no attempts to effectively build a peasant movement during this period or to launch no-tax campaigns. In fact, on the contrary the Congress members were instructed not to organise no-tax campaigns. The Kanika peasant uprising of 1922 clearly revealed the ambivalent attitude of the Congress towards radical mass politics.

The Kanika uprising was largely a product of the political endeavour of the peasants. The Congress leaders had not approved of the peasants no-tax campaign
but it remains a fact that Congress leaders were involved in the campaigning in Kanika. Babaji Ramdas (a saint), Bhagirathi Mahapatra and Jadumani Mangaraj had visited Kanika and addressed public meetings.³

The Panchmuka region of Kanika estate came under the Balasore district but the District Congress Committee did not intervene in this region on the advice of the police. Outside Orissa, the AICC took little interest in Kanika affairs. In 1923 the Utkal Pradesh Congress committee appointed a Committee of three members- Gobind Mishra, Lingraj Mishra and H.K.Mahatab to enquire into the police firing and oppression in Kanika, But the enquiry could not start because of the indifference of some members on the Committee.

This affair clearly revealed the all political and ideological practice of the Congress. From the very beginning the Congress was caught in a dilemma: for its growth it had to mobilize vast number of peasants, but at the same time it had to control them and their politics. So it had to adopt an ideology of class compromise rather than class conflict, whenever there was scope for radical action.⁴

The activities of Congress in Orissa were shaped by various factors. The future of a large number of Oriyas living in the feudatory States and the question of the amalgamation of Oriya-speaking areas were factors which affected the activities of the Congress in Orissa. With Orissa’s entry into all-India politics there was a smooth articulation between the Oriya nationalism and the Indian nationalism. But the articulation of the regional aspirations with the Congress politics was much more complex and uneasy.

4. Ibid, p.35.
The policy of the non-Congress supporters of the Sammilani during the Non Cooperation days was to pursue their demand through Government channels and to keep their voices in the newspapers. Some even used the sammilani sessions to criticize the National Congress. However, it is to be kept in mind that along with the Gandhian movements launched by the Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC), the question of the amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking areas was also taken up by the Congress. In fact, Committees were formed to look into the question of amalgamation and to promote solidarity among the Oriya people lying scattered in various provinces. Even during the hectic days of the Civil Disobedience Movement, the issue of amalgamation was not forgotten either by the Congress or by its opponents. Immediately after the Round Table Conference S. P. O'Donnel Committee was formed to look into the boundary question of the proposed province of Orissa.

In comparison to the Non cooperation movement, the Civil Disobedience Campaign in 1930 in Orissa was much more popular in terms of appeal and participation. The failure of Gandhi's 'Swaraj in a year' programme had disillusioned many workers but the most encouraging feature of the CDM was the participation of women in large numbers. Yet another significant feature was the participation of school and college students in the Gandhian agitation.

The creation of a separate province in 1936 was widely celebrated. For the Oriya middle class it meant not only the attainment of one of their objectives but also a concrete recognition of their independent and distinct identity. It was, however, the Congress which benefited the maximum from the creation of a separate province. In the elections of 1937, the Congress captured power in the province and its leaders found that creation of a separate province provided new
opportunities for the consolidation of their power. On the other hand, such new political dispensation brought conflict and bickering within the Oriya middle class.

This conflict, tension and formation of pressure groups within the Congress was to become a permanent feature of Orissa politics. The power of a pressure group to mould, influence or dictate the Congress depended upon the effective strength of the group in the Congress organization. Of course, in Orissa politics, leftists, rightists, orthodox Gandhians and opportunists all operated within the framework of the Congress trying to use the organization to their convenience. Throughout the whole of thirties and the early forties, the socialists remained the most powerful pressure group within the provincial Congress.

The Quit India movement of 1942 was also a movement in which the socialists took the leading part. It is an irony that the movement which was launched in Gandhi's name and under the Congress banner became by nature the most violent outbreak since the revolt of 1857. In its nature it was totally un-Gandhian.

The most appealing feature of the Quit India movement was the underground movement in the province organized by S. N. Dwibedi and his band of young students. Here again, the Communists betrayed the nationalist cause and assisted the police in tracking Dwibedi's hideout thereby bringing an end to the most interesting episode in the Quit India movement in the province.

A very significant feature of the Gandhian agitation was its impact on the people in the feudatory states. The growing influence of the congress agitation in British Orissa had a telling effect on the people in the states. Unheard of torture, severe repression and forcible exactions prepared the ground for the beginning of the State People's movement in many Orissan States but the aspirations of the
people in the States couldn’t be easily linked to the all-India politics. Regional concerns could not always merge with the national concerns.

While taking up the cause of the people in the states, the Congress had its limitations. Although quite aware of the inhuman conditions prevailing in the states, the Congress adopted a more cautious, guarded and restrictive policy with relation to the princely states. Geographically, ethnologically and socio-culturally the states were so inseparably inter-woven with British Orissa or the Mughalbandi areas that the Congress could not turn a blind eye to the States question.

Total absence of civic rights in the states did not provide a conducive atmosphere for launching of Gandhian agitations. That is why Gandhi and the Congress felt that the people in the States should be sufficiently educated politically so that movements could sustain themselves in times of crisis without any external support. In short, Gandhi intended that the States people should develop organisational capability to withstand the oppressive designs of the ruler, instead of, fully depending on the Congress for assistance.

However, there were many instances where leaders going beyond the party lines participated directly in the agitation in the states and their action at times made the relationship between princely states and British Orissa more complex and tense. This happened when the Congress ministry was there in the province and large scale exodus of people forced the Congress to take up their case and intervene. From an initial hesitation in the thirties to the merger of the States in 1948, the relationship between the State peoples movement and the Congress went through many trials and tribulations.

Wading through the anti-Colonial movement in Orissa, the basic thrust of our argument is that the mainstream nationalist politics provided by the INC was
not monolithic and not necessarily free from inner contradictions. The struggle against colonialism encompassed various forms of struggle and gave rise to a vast range of aspirations among various classes. Although some Zamindars and feudatory chiefs championed the cause of Oriya nationalism and later played stellar roles in its future politics, it was primarily the middle class with a rich or middle peasant background which influenced the course of events in Orissa politics.

The limits of the Oriya middle class leadership were many. But by far the most tangible weakness was a backward economy which could not sustain an organization such as the provincial Congress which depended upon the central guidance and financial assistance from the AICC. Hence, much of the decision making of the UPCC was more or less in tandem with the directives of the AICC, even when they went against the interests of the state. This, of course, does not imply that UPCC did not have any autonomy at the regional level. But in many instances, the all-India concerns were more dominant than the regional concerns. The regional concerns created divisions in the provincial Congress but regional aspirations were not strong enough to encourage the formation of a strong regional organisation (like the ones in the neighbouring provinces of Bihar or Andhra Pradesh) which could survive this period.