CHAPTER : IV

LITERARY RENAISSANCE IN ORISSA
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LITERARY RENAISSANCE IN ORISSA

The European Renaissance which started in Italy in the sixteenth century signified the birth of the modern Europe. Similarly the Indian Renaissance which began in the nineteenth century heralded the birth of modern India. Like this the Orissan Renaissance which began in the last part of the nineteenth century signified the birth of the modern Orissa.

Orissa, the home-state of Lord Jagannath is the holy land of India. The early history of Orissa like the early history of other provinces of India begins from the vedic and puranic ages. The culture and civilisation of Orissa must have been in an advanced State during the 7th and 8th centuries when the caves of Udayagiri in Puri district and Lalitagiri in Cuttack district were cut. There was a famous seat of learning near Udayagiri and there can be no doubt that sciences and philosophy were cultivated there in 'sanskrit' and prevalent 'prakrit'. With the spread of Buddhism in Orissa there was a corresponding spread of the 'Pali' language. Orissa, because of her geographical position has developed a pattern of life, art and literature all of her own.

The Bhaumakaras and the Kesari kings in Northern Orissa, the Sailodbhavas in central and the Ganges in Southern Orissa, laid the foundation of what may be called the Oriya culture in the period between the 6th and the 14th centuries. The Oriya literature developed with the coming of the rulers of the Solar dynasty. According to the opinion of Dr. H. K. Mahtab, "It is a pity that the works of the period from the 8th to the 14th century are all lost and it is, therefore, very difficult to trace the stages of development in the Oriya language and literature."
A great number of poets and writers flourished from the fifteenth century onwards to enrich the Oriya literature in Orissa. The most prominent persons were Bachha Das, Markanda Das, Gorakhanath, Sarala Das, Balabhadra Bhanja, Nilambar Das, Bhima Dhivara, Arjuna Das, Chaitanya Das, Balaram Das, Jagannath Das, Achyutananda Das, Yasobanta Das, Ananta Das, Padmanabha Deva, Madhavi Dasi, Raya Champati and Paramananda Bhramarabara. Among them Sarala Das occupies a prominent place in the history of Oriya literature. He composed the 'Mahabharata' in Oriya which is an independent translation of the Sanskrit 'Mahabharata'. His Oriya 'Mahabharata' is still very popular in Orissa. He also wrote 'Chandipurana' and 'Bilanka Ramayana', which show the creative genius of the poet. During this ancient period the appearance of Jagannath Das, Balaram Das, Achyutananda Das, Yasobanta Das and Ananta Das constitutes a glorious chapter in the history of the Oriya literature. These five comrades were known as the 'Pancha Sakhas'.

There were also a number of writers who lived during the period between the later part of the 16th century and the middle of the 18th century when Orissa was under the Muslim administration. Most prominent and popular writers were Sudarsana Das, Salabeg, Dinakrishna Das, Banamali Das, Divakara Das, Iswara Das, Govinda Bhanja, Janardana Das, Brundavati Dasi, Jayasimha, Kartika Das, Sankara Das, Haladhara Das, Debadurlabha Das, Dhananjaya Bhanja, Lokanatha Das, Upendra Bhanja, Bhupati Pandit and Ramadasa. Upendra Bhanjha has been rightly styled the prince of the Oriya poets. He was a versatile genius and his works include Puranic and Romantic subjects. Among his literary works mention may be made of Vaidehis Vilasa, Subhadra Parinaya, Kala Kautuka, Gitabhidhana, Kotibrahmanda Sundari,
Lavanyavati, Premasudhanidhi etc. He was a master of romantic poetry and employed various kinds of literary skill in his compositions. During the Muslim period the social life of the people was little affected by the conquests and consequently literature of the province progressed. When the Muslims were driven out of Orissa by the Marathas, the latter moulded the destiny of Orissa till the end of the 18th century. A number of poets flourished during the Maratha rule in Orissa before the British conquest. Among them were Sadhu Charan Das, alias Sadananda Kavisurya Brahma, Abhimanyu Samantasimhara, Pitambara Das, Bhakta Charana Das, Viswanath Khuntia, Krishnasimha, Nisankaraya Rani and Brajanatha Badajena. Abhimanyu Samantasimhara was the most popular among them. He is well-known as the author of Bidagdha Chintamani which remains as an unrivalled piece of poetic art. His other works are Pritichintamani, Sulakshana, Prema Tarangini etc.

The very first decade of the Nineteenth century witnessed the conquest of Orissa by the English. Modernism in Oriya literature was influenced by Western education and civilisation. Orissa came under the British rule in 1803 and the Britishers gradually introduced their religion, manner, culture and customs in this land since then. This brought about a change in the taste and attitude of the people. Old traditionalism was replaced by modernism. It is therefore described that modernism or Modern Age in Oriya literature is the out-come of the cultural conflict between the East and the West. During this period of conflict or clash traditionalism in Oriya literature was not Cast off within a day and modernism did not originate suddenly from a specific point of history. The history of this conflict or clash, from certain point of view is interesting and
covered a long period. The poets of the 19th century were Yadumani Mohapatra, Kavisurya Baladeva and Bhima Bhoi. Among them Yadumani Mohapatra was the most prominent. He was a native of Athagarh in Ganjam but he spent the later part of his life in Nayagarh where he settled. He was well-known in Orissa as a wit like Birbal in northern India. His serious literary productions are 'Prabandha Purnachandra' and 'Raghavavilasa'.

Besides the spread of western education and the growth of the press, the cause of nationalism was greatly furthered by the emergence during the second half of the nineteenth century of what has been called 'national' literature. According to R. C. Majumdar it made the greatest contribution to it in Bengal during the last quarter of the 19th century. Literature produced in India during the first half of the last century was universal, its dominant note was nationalism and classicism. In the second half it became romantic and national, humanity was more or less replaced by the nation. Bengal becomes a reality. India becomes a reality and a living force. Nationalism is established as a religion, as a spiritual entity. Significant contribution in this field was made in Bengal. The Great Poet Rabindranath Tagore's songs provide the best illustration of the tremendous influence of Patriotic literature on the growth of the spirit of nationalism.

The awakening since 1870 is termed by the literary critics as the period of Renaissance in Oriya literature. Due to the influence of English and Bengali literatures, the Oriya literature remained away from unrealistic imagination and too much description of 'Adirasa' or eroticism. Oriya literature devoted itself to description of human values and realism and 'rasas' whenever needed. Nature became the prime source of
description of the literateurs. In fact, satyam, sivam and sundaram had pre-eminence in literature at this time. Different branches of literature such as poetry, drama, essays, short stories, novels, etc. were being cultivated. It was Radhanath Ray who first introduced these new tendencies in Oriya literature.

The first part of the modern Oriya literature was lovingly spoken of as the Age of Radhanath in contrast to the Ages of Sarala Das, Jagannath Das and of Upendra Bhanja. Three men of genius ushered in the modern period in Oriya literature, working together round about 1866. This brilliant trio is Fakirmohan Senapati, Radhanath Ray and Madhusudan Rao. Of the three, Fakirmohan was the oldest and Madhusudan the youngest. Fakirmohan was the real inspirer of the group.

Fakirmohan Senapati (1843-1918):

The story of Fakirmohan Senapati is indeed the story of the Renaissance of Oriya national life and of Oriya literature in the 19th century. He had no more than a primary school education. But he was a born patriot and now accepted as the Father of Modern Oriya literature. As Poet, novelist, administrator, scholar, social reformer, printer, journalist and businessman he had a romantic career. He acquired an excellent working knowledge of English, all by his own efforts. He became the Dewan of several of the ex-native states of Orissa due to his good relationship with the Britishers of the highest rank. Fakirmohan was the pioneer in propaganda for the co-operative movement which was just reaching this country from the West. He was the first among the Oriyas to set up a printing press and publish a journal7 as a private enterprise. Through his writing he laid greater emphasis upon the development of patriotism and
Fakirmohan Senapati
(1843–1918)
nationalism. He was elected President of the Utkal Sammilani at its second session. His well-planned garden house at Balasore is now a place of pilgrimage for the Oriyas.

Fakirmohan Senapati was a notable writer of Orissa. In the field of novels and short stories he stood unrivalled. His novels, 'Chha-Mana Athagunth', published in 1902, 'Lachhama' published in 1914, 'Mamu' published in 1913 and 'Prayashchitta' published in 1914 are very popular. His 'Lachhama' is a historical novel bringing to life the horrors of Maratha depredations in Bengal and Orissa in the 18th century. All the novels of Fakirmohan cover about a century of pre-British and post-British Orissa. His novels have an appeal also for their high spiritual quality. Compared to the style of Bankimchandra, the Bengali novelist and almost a contemporary of Fakirmohan, his adoption of the scorned common speech as a literary vehicle was certainly a daring literary adventure. He also wrote a number of short-stories which have been published in a collected form under the name of 'Galpa-Salpa'. They are not many, but each is a gem and reveals a strange new world. His first short story 'Lachhmania' was published in 1868 at Balasore, and is supposed by some to have been among the first modern short stories in Indian languages. All the other stories of Senapati, like this one, have a unique character of their own and each is revealing an unsuspected dark corner of society. He translated single-handed the whole of the Ramayan and the Mahabharat from the original Sanskrit language into Oriya verse for which the readers in Orissa dubbed Fakirmohan as "Vyasa Kavi". He was not only a good writer but also a great poet. His first original poem 'Utkala Bhraman" was published in 1892. His other poems 'Pushpa-mala', 'Upahar', 'Abasarbasare', 'Pujaphula',
'Prarthana' and 'Dhuli' were published in 1894, 1895, 1908, 1912, 1912 and 1912 respectively. Hence he is generally known in Orissa as "Saraswati Fakirmohan" as he has been honored with the title 'Saraswati' by Suratarangini Saraswata Samiti of Bamanda in 1916. Fakirmohan also wrote and published books on History and Arithmetic to remove deficiency in Oriya text-books. He wrote two volumes of 'Indian History' in Oriya, part one published in 1869 and part two published in 1870 and 'Ankamala' in 1870. He ordered the discontinuation of the study of Bengali in all Schools and its replacement by the compulsory study of Oriya all over the Orissa Division. His only dream, throughout his life, was to serve the people among whom he was born. He was the restless Oriya leader of all sorts of movements and ushered in the new era in Oriya literature round about 1866. Few indeed deserve such a title as much as he did. His only shortcoming was that he was born with terrible handicaps for a writer, and that too in a backward state.

Radhanath Ray (1848-1908):

Radhanath was the first Oriya student to pass the Matriculation examination of the newly established Calcutta university in the whole district of Balasore. He entered life as a teacher in Government School and by dint of his merit rose up and up in the official position, retiring as a Divisional Inspector of Schools. Radhanath was very well read in several languages and was praised both for his scholarship and his poetic talents by many of his famous contemporaries in Bengal. The most prominent were the Bengali poet Nabin Chandra Sen and Bhudeva Mukhopadhyaya. When Radhanath was about 20 and was at Balasore as Deputy Inspector of Schools, he met Madhusudan Rao and Fakirmohan Senapati there. In order to remove the
Radhanath Ray
(1848–1908)
deficiency of text-books in Oriya literature Fakirmohan wrote books on history and Radhanath and Madhusudan tried their hands at literature. Their co-operative product, Kabitabali, is comparable to the 'Lyrical Ballads', produced by Wordsworth and Coleridge which ushered in a new age in English literature during the 18th century.

Radhanath had published the Oriya translation of Kalidasa's Meghadutam and Hamsaduta from Sanskrit into Oriya. He is essentially a narrative poet, a kavya-maker par excellence. For over half a century his kavyas were more popular in Orissa than even the novels of Fakirmohan Senapati. He wrote his romantic poems like Scott and Tennyson, for the common reader, unlike Upendra Bhanja and his followers who wrote for the 'learned, the elite, and those who could understand.' For the first time in the history of Oriya literature, nature in Orissa became the main part of Orissa's national consciousness through the modern romantic poetry of Radhanath. His popular writings are 'Chandrabhaga', 'Kedargauri', 'Chilika', 'Parvati', 'Usha', 'Nandikeswari', 'Yayati', 'Mahayatra', 'Urvasi', 'Durbara', 'Dasrathabiyoga', and 'Tulasistavaka'. Many of his writings are imitations of foreign literature. As a poet of nature Radhanath has done for Orissa what Kalidas did for India, putting the geography and the topography of his homeland to splendid poetic use.

Radhanath was not only a poet, but also a great writer. His style of writing is very clear and precise. His 'Viveki' (the Man of Conscience), in spite of its archaic style, is the finest book in Oriya, of day-to-day ethics. The marvelous depicted heroic, tragic and erotic matters testify to his skillful composition. It will not be exaggerated if Radhanath is described as the Kavi Samrat for his uncommon originality.
Kavibara Radhanath has been placed on the golden throne of 'Samrat' of modern Oriya literature by the scholars and literary community of Orissa. Radhanath is, in fact, the chief architect of modern Oriya literature. The epithet of 'Kavibara' as conferred on Radhanath appears to be quite natural considering the way he has beautifully shaped and treated the modern Oriya literature. The British Government had honored him in 1896 by conferring the 'Rai Bahadur' title on him.

Many poet born in ancient Utkal or Orissa had contributed for the development of the Oriya literature in various ways. The foremost among them were Upendra Bhanja, Dinakrushna Abhimanyu and Baladev. These four poets shine like bright stars in the literary firmament of Orissa. Radhanath belongs to the Modern Age of Oriya literature. There may be difference of opinion as to whether Radhanath is to be placed at par with the above poets if talent is considered as the sole criteria. But his claim to be at par with them may be largely supported in view of his specialty.

Madhusudan Rao (1853-1912):

Madhusudan was a contemporary of Radhanath. He belongs to a devout Hindu family of Puri. From the beginning of his career he was associated with all the socio-religious activities in the land. He passed the First Arts Examination of that period and started life as a teacher in a Government School, retiring as a Divisional Inspector of Schools, like his Guru Radhanath. It was he who founded the Utkal Sahitya Samaja, now the only literary institute of Orissa. By his association with the two great friends, Fakirmohan Senapati and Radhanath Ray, he contributed much for the development of Oriya literature. In 1873 Kabitabali (Lyrical ballads), containing poems from both
Adhusudan Rao
(1853-1912)
Radhanath and Madhusudana, was published. The majority of the poems were written by Madhusudan. He was essentially a preacher and a teacher, who publicised his ideas, reflections and visions through literature. His works consist of a number of small pieces, all written in response to the call of the occasion. As a saint he laid greater emphasis upon the growth of spiritualism and nationalism through his writings. His magnificent poems signify his poetic majesty in the field of Oriya literature. His 'Rishiprane Devavataram' (Descent of the Divine into the soul of a saint) and 'Himachale Udayoschhava' (Festival of Sunrise in the Himalayas) are illustrations of such creative intuitions. His famous Odes, 'To the Sky', 'To the Earth', 'To Sound', 'To the River', etc., possess the same dictional and spiritual loftiness. He was also the only sonneteer in Oriya in his times. All his sonnets were published together under the title of Basanta-gatha or the 'Vernal Songs'. His prose, is mostly found in the essays in the text-books written by him.

Madhusudan Rao was Orissa's great modern spiritual poet. His songs, lyrics, odes, sonnets and essays have exercised an excellent purifying influence on the minds of young pupils of Orissa for years together.

He has made an excellent translation of Uttara Ramcharita of Bhavabhuti and also translated a part of Kali Dasa's 'Raghuvaamsam' into Oriya. His other important books are all collection of poems: Kusumanjali, Utkala-gatha, Brahmo-Sangita and Basanta-gatha, the book of sonnets.

Madhusudan was a great poet, prominent writer, good teacher, great patriot and educationist and was the maker of a host of good teachers in Orissa. For the purity of his life and
efficiency and religious enthusiasm, he was generally spoken of in Orissa as Bhakta-Kavi and was almost worshipped in his time by the educated masses in Orissa. 28

Besides the brilliant trio-Fakirmohan, Radhanath and Madhusudan — there were other veterans in the field of modern Oriya literature. Among them the following alone are important for having made individual contributions.

Jagamohan Lala (1838-1913):

Jagamohan Lala was the first modern Oriya drama writer in Orissa, who criticised the western civilisation in his writings. He started his career as a Deputy Collector during the British Rule. But he had direct relation with the national life of Orissa and he became the Director of 'Cuttack Printing Company', the first printing press in Orissa.

As a modern writer he wanted to represent the socio-political problems of Orissa of the then period through his writings. His first modern Oriya drama 'Babaji Nataka' was published in 1877. 29 His other works were 'Sati' published in 1886 and a historical drama 'Oriya Vijaya'. Besides, this he wrote a Kavya namely 'Kavya Bhanjana' published in 1868.

Govinda Rath (1848-1918):

Govinda Rath was the contemporary of Kavibara Radhanath Ray. He was realistic, socially conscious, humorous, fearless and an independent minded writer of Orissa. He has written about two hundred books among which his first and only prose 'Satyeswara' was published in 1875. Besides this, his popular poems were 'Kabita Kalapa', 'Padyamanjari', 'Karatali', 'Mahamela-darshana', 'Cuttack Nagari', 'Kusuma Kalika' and 'Fucher Saheb'. He has also gained popularity for the 'Varnabodhaka' 30 which was accepted as a text book at the Primary School level.
Ramasankar Rai (1858-1937):

Ramasankar Rai was a good writer and dramatist of modern Orissa. At the age of twenty he wrote his first drama in 1880 when he had just passed the First Arts Examination. It was a historical writing. Then he wrote a number of dramas and novels. The most prominent were Kanchi Kaveri, Prematari, Kalikala, Ramabanabasa, Bivasini, Yugadharma, Chaitanyalila, Visva Yajna and Lilavati.\(^{31}\) He has not left any type of drama untouched—historical, mythological, social, comic, satiric and romantic plays were woven out of his own plots. He was not only the father of modern Oriya plays, but also of the modern Orissan stage.

Gangadhar Meher (1862-1924):

Gangadhar Meher was the most popular poet of modern Orissa. He was born in a poor weaver's family in Sambalpur district.\(^{32}\) Though he had very little formal education, he acquired an excellent knowledge of Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali and some amount of English also by his own efforts. He became famous all over Orissa after the publication of his first book 'Kichaka-vadha'. His other works were 'Tapaswini', 'Pranaya-Vallari', 'Indumati', 'Utkala-Lakshmi', 'Ayodhya-drishya', 'Kavita-Kallola', 'Arghya-thali', 'Ahalya-stava', 'Mahima', 'Bharati-bhavana', 'Padmini', and 'Krishaka-Sangita'.\(^{33}\) His prose writings consist of his incomplete autobiography, essays on Nriparaja Simha, Fakirmohan and the late Kashinath Panda.

Meher not only wrote Kavyas, but also wrote odes, sonnets and lyrics on modern lines. He was a poet of Nature. He may be taken as a miniature Kalidas in Oriya literature.\(^{34}\)

Nandakishor Bala (1875-1918):

Like Radhanath and Madhusudan, Nanda Kishor Bala started his life as a teacher and retired as Inspector of Schools. For
the first time in Oriya literature, a great poet, in spite of his university education and residence in Urban areas for the most part of his official career, sang of the village and the village folk, wrote lyrics, lullabies, odes and ballads. He wrote a great number of poems and a few Kavyas. He was famous for the Pallichitra in his Poetry, for which he was known as the poet of the Orissa village. His famous works were 'Nirjharini', 'Prabhata Sangita', 'Palli-chitra', and 'Sarmishtha', 'Krushnakumari', 'Sita Vanavasa' and 'Kanakalata'.

Chintamani Mohanty (1876-1943):

Chintamani Mohanty was the most prolific writer of the modern Oriya literature. Starting life as a Primary School teacher, he spent the best part of his life as the court poet of the Raja of Surangi in Ganjam district. He wrote Kavyas, novels and short poems. As a teacher he tried to represent worthy ideals for the younger generation by placing before them poems on the 'Seven Satis', the 'Aryan Heroines', 'The Seven Heroes', and the life. His 'Visva-chitra' or 'Pictures of the World' was a collection of story poems. 'Rupachudi', 'Tankagachha', 'Jugalamatha', 'Bula Fakira' and 'Sanisapta' were his important novels. 'Ghumasara', 'Vikramaditya', 'Mahodadhi', 'Subhadra', 'Sisupalabadha', 'Meghasana' were some of his Kavyas. His works are now available in six enormous volumes.

Gopalachandra Praharaj (1872-1945):

Gopalachandra Praharaj was the greatest prose satirist of modern Orissa. Starting his life as an Advocate of the Cuttack Bar, he contributed much to the field of Oriya literature. His famous writings were 'Baimahanti Panji', 'Bhagavata Tungire Sandhya' and 'Utkala Kahani'. But his monumental work was the 'Purnachandra Odia Bhashakosh'. His
collections of the folk-tales of Orissa, as well as of its proverbs and folk-sayings were also a valuable contribution to the Oriya literature.

Pandit Mrityunjaya Rath (1882-1924):

Mrityunjaya Ratha was a Sanskrit Scholar of modern Orissa. He stood first in the Bihar and Orissa Sanskrit title examination and received a gold medal also. He started his life as a Sanskrit teacher in Government Schools. He has translated the Kumara Sambhava of Kalidasa into Oriya and has written a number of biographical essays on several ancient and medieval Oriya poets, including Sarala Das. His famous book was 'Naridarpana', a collection of Sketches on some noble women of India and Orissa. His writings were simple, clear and precise.

Sasibhusan Ray (1874-1954):

Sasibhusan Ray was the son of Kavibara Radhanath Ray. His works in prose are an excellent complement to what his father left behind in wonderful poetry. With his father he visited all the places of Orissa and acquainted himself with the hills, forests, rivers and important villages. Like his father he loved Nature with a deep spiritual passion. His popular writings were the 'Utkal-Prakrit' (Nature in Orissa) and 'Utkalara Rituchitra' (Seasons in Orissa). His essays on Orissa's Nature alone will make him immortal in Oriya literature.

Visvanath Kar (1864-1934):

Visvanath Kar was the Editor of the 'Utkala Sahitya', the prominent magazine of the Oriyas during the second half of the 19th century. At that time there was need of organisational work in the field of Oriya literature. Visvanath Kar took the leadership and 'Utkala Sahitya' was published by dint of his
organised efforts. By his efforts only a group of educated writers flourished in Orissa. From one point of view 'Utkala Sahitya' was writer-creating machine. He was a friend of Radhanath, Fakirmohan and Madhusudan and publisher of their writings as well as critic of their writings too. He was also a very remarkable orator and he was the pioneer of women emancipation in Orissa. Besides this his famous prose writing was 'Vividha-Prabandha' (Miscellaneous essays) the most thought provoking essays ever written in Oriya.

Pandit Nilamani Vidyaratna:

Nilamani Vidyaratna was the other famous Editor of Orissa. As Editor of the 'Sambalpur Hitaishini' he encouraged the rise of Oriya nationalism and development of Oriya literature in all the ex-native states of Orissa. As Editor of 'Praja Bandhu' in the district of Ganjam then in Madras Presidency, he first organised a conference of the Oriyas in Madras in 1902, demanding unification of all Oriya tracts. This gave birth to the larger Utkala Sammilani in 1903 demanding a homogeneous Oriya state, which was materialised only in 1936. Late in life, settled at Cuttack, Nilamani used to edit 'Utkala Madhupa', a unique magazine of miscellaneous knowledge.

Madhusudan Das (1848–1934):

Madhusudan Das was not a Poet or writer but he wrote some emotional patriotic songs for the growth of Oriya nationalism - this signifies his interest in literature. Mr. Das closely associated himself with Gouri Shankar Roy, the Editor of the 'Utkal Dipika' and Secretary of Utkal Sabha, which was formed in 1871 to promote Oriya language and literature and he became the Secretary of Utkal Sabha in 1885. The Utkal Sabha failed to put-forth the grievances of the Oriya people properly in spite
of the able leadership of Madhusudan. Then to organise the Oriya people for the unification of Oriya speaking tracts he formed the Utkal Union Conference or 'Utkal Sammilani' in December 1903.

At the beginning of the 20th century the Utkal Sammilani created great excitement among the people and literary field actions led to the establishment of the Utkal Sahitya Samaj. The Utkal Sammilani and Utkal Sahitya Samaj were contemporaneous and properly moulded and guided national feelings and literary efforts. This gave rise to a new mode of expression in Oriya literature - emotional and sentimental at the same time. This new mode of expression assumed a concrete shape through the writings of the Satyabadi group centering the Satyabadi School or Satyabadi Vana Vidyalaya.

The Satyabadi Vana Vidyalaya in fact, paved the way for building honest people and that was through literature. The Chhuriana grove of Satyabadi is a sacred place for the people of Orissa which was treated as the 'Nalanda of Orissa' and the Satyabadi Sahitya originated from here. The sadhakas of Satyabadi deeply realised how essential it was to create superior national literature for building kind, honest persons with an aptitude for public service and guiding the national character in the right way. So the literature which originated from Satyabadi School was not merely romantic. Rather the urge for rebuilding a great ancient nation rich in tradition and culture manifested in its writings. Taking up the heavy responsibility of building a nation the Sadhakas of Satyabadi tinted the Oriya literary horizon with a new outlook. The creation of a well-developed Oriya literature with humanistic approach could be possible due to the united efforts of the
Sadhakas of Satyabadi despite the lacunae and drawbacks of the Oriya literary works of the past.

By coming across the drawbacks of Radhanath's literary works, the Satyabadi group of literateurs had become conscious of those drawbacks and had made the gradual evolution of Oriya literature more refined, polished, correct, lively, simple and natural. This goes to the credit and glory of the Satyabadi Juga in Oriya literature.

After the Radhanath Juga in Oriya literature came the Satyabadi Juga, which began from the Satyabadi Vana Vidyalaya centering Pandit Gopabandhu Das and his colleagues and teachers in that vidyalaya Pandit Nilakanth, Pandit Godavarish, Pandit Krupasindhu, Acharya Harihara, Pandit Basudev and Pandit Lingaraj.

Many years back at a crucial period of Orissa appeared the Panchasakha - Balaram, Jagannath, Achyutananda, Ananta and Jasobanta - to enlighten the Oriya nation. Again at another critical period of Orissa came another group of Panchasakha and their association resulted in fiery nationalism and revolutionary Satyabadi Sahitya. There is inseparable and very close link between the Satyabadi Vana Vidyalaya and the Satyabadi Sahitya.

The Satyabadi Sahitya originated from the Satyabadi School in 1910, after it was founded in 1909 and the flow of the Satyabadi Sahitya became meagre after it became a National School in 1920. The writers of Satyabadi took to writing for voicing the glorious heritage and culture of the country and its people in the past. They took to the path of dedication and sadhana. They were determined to devote their lives to the service and cause of humanity. That is why, humanism and all
embracing nobleness of heart and universality of thought are indicated in the Satyabadi group of writings. Deep sympathy love and affection were as if the guiding principles of the Satyabadi group of writers.

The Panchasakhas or the five comrades—Gopabandhu Das, Nilakantha Das, Godavarish Mishra, Harihar Das and Krupasindhu Mishra who constituted the core of the Satyabadi School, dedicated themselves to the cause of Oriya nationalism. They were all alive to the personality and destiny of the Oriya nation. They were deeply devoted to the history and culture of Orissa. They were conscious, "At present the Oriyas have nothing, neither wealth, nor power, not even collective effort. The Oriya nation exists only in its past achievements. The Oriya national life lies in the Caves of Khandagiri and Dhauli hills; its pulse beats through the flutter of the flags of Nilachala and Bhubaneswar and its heart pulsates in its ancient language and literature. These elements of national life have to be studied and their message unfolded to the people with a view to inspire them with the ideal and greatness of their past. Then only we can hope to rouse the nation to its self-consciousness." For the first time the Oriya culture and civilisation found its authoritative statement through the pen of the Satyabadi Sadhakas.

The literateurs or sahitya sadhakas of the Satyabadi yuga preferred prose more to kavyas and poems to express their thoughts. Pandit Gopabandhu and his associates who were the leading personalities in the cultural, social and political movements in Orissa in the first two decades of the 20th century have expressed their original thoughts through prosaic writings of high standard. In this context, the mouth-piece of the Vana
Vidyalaya - the 'Satyabadi' (1915) and the Weekly 'Samaja' (1919) etc. may be mentioned. Like Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, who gave a new shape to the prose section of the 'Banga Vani' in the first half of the 19th century the Sahitya sadhakas of the Satyabadi period gave a new shape to the Oriya prose literature of a high standard. The Oriya prose has been enriched by their efforts and it has, in fact, influenced the prose literature of the subsequent period. According to Pandit Gopabandhu, 'The language understood by the Oriyas in the rural areas is the real Oriya language.'

The Satyabadi group has enriched the Oriya literature not by their prosaic writings but by writing many articles, literary criticisms, stories and novels on literary, historical and nationalism and the problems of the society and the country. Gopabandhu was the leader of the Satyabadi group and the source of their inspiration.

Pandit Gopabandhu Das (1877-1928):

Gopabandhu was a pioneer of the national movement in Orissa. In the cause of national awakening, he advocated the promotion of mass literature. Through his writings he came to represent the voice and conscience of the people. He understood the hopes and aspirations and agony of the human soul. To his people, suffering from an oppressive colonial rule, he was the symbol of protest against tyrannies of power and hope and promise of deliverance from its strangle-hold.

He laid greater emphasis upon the development of Oriya language. He opined that "Language is at the root of thought and civilization". He also said in course of his Presidential Address to the Utkal Sammilani, "The destruction of Oriya language will mean the destruction of Oriya nationalism. The problem of language is now a problem of life and death for us."
Literature assumes a significant role in the life and growth of the nation. "The development of literature, Gopabandhu writes, is the sinequanon to the national progress. Without change in the domain of progress, without change in the domain of thought and ideas of the nation, no progress is possible in the different walks of national life."\(^{52}\) Literature holds up high ideals before the nation, and the national character and national aspiration influenced by these ideals are reflected in literature. The works of the poets Jagannath, Balaram, and others maintained the national identity of the Oriyas. The world is gradually moving forward. Every day new thoughts and ideas are taking shape. To resuscitate to strengthen and to keep growing the national life, these have to be incorporated in the national literature and absorbed into the life-blood of the nation. The path of national progress can never be smooth until the mother tongue becomes the vehicle of knowledge in all its aspects and fit for being the medium of higher education ... For the rise of the nation, new energy has to be fused into the life, thought and deed of the entire nation. As such creation of a powerful national literature is the first pre-requisite."\(^{53}\) So the nationalists of the Satyabadi School under the leadership of Gopabandhu, in fact, dedicated themselves to the creation of a powerful literature. In style, diction and theme, Oriya literature saw changes in their hands.

Gopabandhu was not only a national leader of Orissa but also a great poet. He had written poems taking events and experiences of life as his materials.\(^{54}\) His popular writings were 'Byathita Pranara Antima Asru', 'Rela Upare Chilika Darsana', 'Pitrupakshya Tarpana', 'Karakavita', 'Dharmapada',\(^{55}\) 'Nichiketa',\(^{56}\) 'Gomahatmya',\(^{57}\) 'Bandira Atmakatha' and 'Abakasa-
chinta'. His 'Abakasa-chinta' (Thoughts of Leisure) and 'Karakavita' contain the seeds of his political ideas which blossomed forth in their full splendor later on. The poems vibrate with youthful idealism, passion for freedom, love for the country and her past determination to redeem the country from bondage and restore her pristine glory.

Gopabandhu was imprisoned in Hazaribag Jail for two years from 1922 to 1924. He wrote two small books inside the Jail. One was 'Bandira Atmakatha' and the other was 'Dharmapada'. In 1923 when leaving Orissa by train, he set down his thoughts in verses and that poetical work which was published under 'Bandira Atmakatha' is a unique treasure in Oriya literature inspiring millions of his countrymen in the struggle for the country's freedom. "Dharmapada" is a historic poem. Through this poem he has tried to put before the modern Oriyas, as the ideal for the individual citizen, the willing readiness to forget his own interests for those of the state, the community, and the nation, that Dharmapada showed when occasion so demanded. These two poems are very popular in Orissa as folk-poetry.

He believed that Nationalism fulfills itself in universalism. For which he wrote:

Let patriotism and
universal love for all
Move the heart and mind of the
people of utkal.'^58

He visualised the rise of the masses and dreamt of the establishment of a political order inspired with spirit of freedom and dedicated to the welfare of the people, where:
This shall be our Swaraja's law
People won't writhe under tyranny, suffering and woe.
None will ever bear the pangs of hunger,
The rich can't torture to death the poor.
Rule by suppression shall be a thing unknown,
Government will run according to people's opinion. According to his opinion Government is for the people. So he proclaims:

For the people, the creator creates,
For the people, it rains.
For the people, the Sun, the moon, and the stars shine.
For the people, rivers are flowing.
For the people the land and the sway,
That is what scriptures of all ages say.
To protect, preserve and please the people,
was the principle of Government in India's traditional rule."

He was a lover of Nature. In his 'Bandira Swadesh Chinta' poem he has welcomed the wind as his emissary. The poets of the Satyabadi period have not paid much attention towards 'Chhanda' (Metre) but to mass appeal. Gopabandhu used to write in 'Bhagabat Brutta' or 'Gujjari raga' while writing for the common man.

He was not only a great poet but he was also famous in the literary world as a great prose writer. The 'Samaja' and the 'Satyabadi' proves the popularity of Gopabandhu Das as a great sahityika. Instead of the complex style of the time, he advocated a form-simple and communicative, capable of taking the
high ideas to the common man in the language of his own. "In order to spread his ideas among the classes and masses of Orissa", writes Dr. Mansinha in his History of Oriya Literature "he first founded the monthly 'Satyabadi' and later the weekly 'Samaja'." In the editorial columns of these two journals Gopabandhu poured out his soul, his feelings and his agonies too. The prose that he wrote with an inimitable blend of the colloquial and the classical, easy flowing, sonorous and rhythmic, reminding the moderns in Orissa of the charm of the biblical idiom of the Bhagavata of Jagannath Das - was a revelation of the nobility which Oriya prose can attain at the touch of a master spirit."^63

Pandit Nilakantha Das (1884-1967):

Nilakantha Das was the first among the associates of Pandit Gopabandhu Das. He was famous for his vast erudition, his eloquence and his rich contributions to the creative and critical literature. To simplify the printing work and to make learning of Oriya script easier the Satyabadi group took up reformation of the Oriya script in 1913. The person who took the lead in this regard was Pandit Nilakantha.

Nilakantha, the intellectual and the crusader in the field of social reform, wrote extensively on the language, culture, and civilisation of the oriya people. He writes "Lord Jagannath is the symbol of universal truth and eternal principle. He ordains equality through out the universe. Before Lord Jagannath none is lowly, none is high. Before Him the poor, the outcasts are not unholy, nor are the Brahmins, the kings, the men of wealth, the heads of monasteries for their riches and power in the society holier than other. He represents unity in the manifold manifestations of the infinite universe and he is the expression of the diverse manifestations
of our universal principle. He is the symbol of universal concord. He is Purusottam, the promotor of fraternity. "

He enjoys the reputation of a poet, philosopher and critic in Oriya literature till to-day. His literary work 'Konarke' can be termed as a reflection of the heritage and culture of the Oriya nation. His Kavya, 'Konarke' is the most popular book with its two prologues - 'The Night of Ramachandi' and 'The Dawn at Ramachandi'. He wrote this book after his experiences during an excursion with the students of Satyabadi school at Ramachandi. The 'Kharavela', 'Dasa Nayaka', and 'Pranayini' were his other Kavyas. The 'Kharavela' is historical in nature and 'Dasa Nayaka' is a translation of Tennyson's 'Enoch Arden', and 'Pranayini' modelled after Tennyson's 'The Princess'. Like the 'Minstrel' of Lord Tennyson his kavya 'Maya Devi' was written on the basis of the information obtained from a panegyrist during his tour of Ex-Garajat.

Pandit Nilakantha was not only a poet, but also a great figure in modern Oriya prose. His 'Arya Jivana', published during the Satyabadi School days, still remains unique among its kind. It is a collection of essays interpreting the Hindu view of life and society. The angle of thought as reflected in his article 'Mo Nisa' should not be ignored. The religious and cultural views as reflected, in this article along with the zeal for social reform can be termed as an indication of the mental make-up of the Satyabadi Sadhaka for undertaking cultural and social reforms.

He was a great scholar of sanskrit. He has also earned reputation for his writings for the children or children's literatures. He has written 'Pilanka Ramayana', 'Pilanka
Mahabharat' and 'Pilanka Bhagavata'. By his ideal thought he contributed much for the development of Oriya literature.

Pandit Godavarish Mishra (1886-1956):

Pandit Godavarish, the ideal teacher of the Satyabadi School was a great poet and a writer of modern Orissa. Just like Pandit Gopabandhu he has written poems taking events and experiences of life as his materials. He has written three poems 'Nimisaka Dekha', 'Hoithaanta', 'Thaa Babu' on the death of a boy named Banshi. His experiences at Satyabadi have been reflected in his poems captioned 'Sarasi Tire', 'Jagara', 'Bakulavana', 'Aasichha', 'Jaa' and 'Jalare Anala' etc. His other compositions include 'Ousadha Dhara', 'Panjuriti', 'Anatha Sisu' and 'Nidagha Sarasi'.

He was a best artist of the Satyabadi group. His 'Alekhika' is an unique contribution to Oriya literature. His ballads are written on the glorious heritage and historical facts and traditions of Orissa. His artistry is evident through his novels like 'Abhagini', 'Ghatantar' and 'Nirvasita', life histories like 'Napoleon', 'Dasatwa Mochan' and some short stories. His 'Kankalara Artanada' is a creation of later period. He has proved his mettle in writing literatures and text-books for the children.

He has effected many changes in the Oriya Natya Sahitya. There are three divisions in his drama, the beginning, development and end. Like Shakespeare he has created 'Hasya Rasa' or humor by introducing humorous language and dialogue. His historical dramas like 'Purusottama Deva' and 'Mukunda Deva' are more famous.

As a poet, writer, novelist and dramatist Pandit Godavarish contributed much for the development of modern Oriya
literature. His writings are popular for the ideas, polish of style and homely naturalness. In the early days of Orissan patriotism his writings caused a sensation in the minds of the Oriya people for all-round development. Godavarish, the intellectual and the poet, the minstrel of Oriya nationalism, sang melodiously the heroism and velour of the historic race and of the weal and woe, sorrows and happiness of the Orissan life.

Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra (1886-1926):

Among the Panchasakhas of the Satyabadi vidyalaya, Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra was the junior most. His contributions to Oriya literature and History are unforgettable. Being inspired by Gopabandhu, he had written the 'Barabati' and the 'Konark' which have acquired a notable place in the historical and literary fields of Orissa. He has contradicted the erroneous views of Pyarimohan, Mr. Hunter and R. D. Benerjee in his 'Orissa Itihasa'. Besides this, he has written many useful articles captioned 'Adrustabada', 'Satyabadi', 'Odissaku Ingrejmananka Agamana' and 'Ka' etc. His articles were published in the 'Mukura', 'Utkal Sahitya' and 'Satyabadi'.

Krupasindhu, an intellectual and historian of great eminence, worked hard to bring to the notice of his fellow countrymen sunk in petty existence, forgetful of their history - the great achievements of the Oriya race in the past. For, "History is the chief element in the making of nationalism. It is the biography of the nation. The nation gets back its self-consciousness through the study of its history. It not only awakens the nation to the memory of its past but also shows the nation the path to its future progress." And "The ideal of the future takes its shape in the womb of the past and the tradition. This ideal is the richest wealth of the man and the nation. That which helps the nation to get at this ideal -
which stimulates ambition in the heart of the nation to realise this ideal - is the wealth of the nation, the humanity of man."

The great writer and the prominent historian Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra had died in 1926 at an early age. To the great loss of Orissa he died just when he was attaining maturity and had enough experience to produce great books in his chosen line.

Acharya Harihar Das (1881-1972):

Acharya Harihar was so to say, the last flicker of the Satyabadi period. His cardinal principle in life was public service. He can be compared with Mr. C. F. Andrews and Mother Teresa. He told, "I feel that all castes are in me. Will it be proper on my part to confine me within a particular caste? I want to be free from ego. The sacred thread even unconsciously reminds me of my birth in a higher caste when I notice it. This does not go with my way of life. I have done this not out of any ego, but for getting mental peace."

Acharya Mahasaya has no such contribution to Oriya literature. But surely he has contributed much for the creation of the Satyabadi sahitya with the nationalistic fervor. At Satyabadi he worked for some days as the Editor of the weekly 'Samaja'. He translated 'Srimad Bhagabat Gita' while detained in Berhampur Jail for joining the Quit India Movement in 1942. Besides this, the simple translation of the 'Upanishad' into Oriya language with its commentary testifies to the religiosity of Acharya Mahasaya. By 1928, the Second edition of his 'Child's Easy First Grammar' was published.

Like other Teachers of high order, he had affection and sympathy for the students. He himself was a good writer. His writings are replete with moral teachings. That is why he used to read and recite his articles and poems in the company of the
students in the Boarding. He directly advised the students for
development of their moral character.

That is all about the Satyabadi group. Flourishing in
the heyday of the Utkal Sammilani, with which the group was
closely associated, it went on creating literature that
reflected the glories of ancient Orissa so as to inspire the
Oriyas to participate in the national agitation for a united
Orissa. Besides the Panchasakhas of Satyabadi, there were also
a great number of poets and writers who flourished during that
period in Orissa to enrich the Oriya literature.

**Pandit Basudev Mohapatra (1888-1976)**

Pandit Basudev Mohapatra was an eminent writer of the
Satyabadi group. Besides writing children's literatures he has
written books like 'Santidhara', 'Bira Bharat', 'Rachana Darpan',
'Rachana Bandhu', 'Prabandh Prabesh' and 'Bhabe-bhola'. His
articles were thought-provoking and his way of presentation has
made these articles quite nice.

**Pandit Lingaraj Mishra (1895-1958):**

Another important writer of the Satyabadi group was
Pandit Lingaraj Mishra. He has written a number of children's
literature beginning from Balavir Abhimanyu, Sivaji and Guru
Govind Singh to Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and
Pandit Gopabandhu. But his translation of the Valmiki Ramayana
from sanskrit has established his scholarship and his eminence
in the literary field.

**Braja Sunder Das (1878-1937):**

As the Editor of the literary Magazine 'Mukura' he was
practically the philosopher, guide and friend of the Satyabadi
group. The scathing attacks in his editorial columns were read
and enjoyed with respect all over Orissa. He kept alive Oriya
patriotism and encouraged the cultivation of Oriya literature by associating himself with the Panchasakhas of Satyabadi and the Satyabadi sahitya developed through his literary magazine. So, as an Editor and a writer he contributed much for the development of Oriya literature.

Sasibhusan Rath (1881-1941):

Sasibhusan was the Editor of the 'Asha' which was a leading newspaper of Orissa during the Satyabadi epoch. Through his writings he contributed much for the growth of national consciousness among the Oriya people. He was the pioneer of the movement for the unification of scattered Oriya speaking tracts.

Lakshmikanta Mohapatra (1888-1953):

Kanta Kavi Lakshmikanta was a prominent poet and writer of Orissa. In early youth he was rich as well as handsome; he was coveted in society for his musical talents. He was a dancer and actor and a fine composer. Even as he was dying day by day of a hateful disease, he yet smiled on, laughed and made others laugh, sang and made the whole nation sing his songs. His work consists of only scattered songs and satires, both in prose and verse. His popular works are 'Chatak - Chandrahasa Champu', 'Budha Sankhari', and 'Kanamamu'. His devotional and patriotic poem 'Vande Utkal Janani' is the auspicious inaugural song. That is a glory indeed for any poet.

Godavarish Mohapatra (1898-1965):

Godavarish Mohapatra was the one literary man in Orissa who has successfully proved that writing can be a vocation by itself. As an ex-student of the Satyabadi School, he influenced the socio-political life of Orissa by his powerful writings. He was a poet, short-story writer, novelist, and satirist. As Editor of the 'Niankhunta', his monthly magazine, Godavarish has
set a record perhaps unique in modern Indian languages. A selection of his satires has been published in a book, 'Kanta O Phula', but it is no more than his magazine in book form. His short stories, historical novels, and stirring patriotic songs are likely to be counted among the best in Oriya literature.

Braja Mohan Panda (1890-1964):

Brajamohan Panda was a contemporary writer of the Panchasakhas of Satyabadi. As a poet he was a lover of Nature. He contributed much for the rise of nationalism among the Oriya masses through his powerful writings. His popular work was 'Jaubana Gatha'.

Kuntala Kumari Sabat (1900-1937):

Kuntala Kumari was the most sensational of the woman poets of Orissa. She was more popular for her patriotic or devotional poems, and novels also. 'Anjali', 'Archana', 'Parasamani', 'Kali bohu', 'Prema-chintamani' and 'Raghu Arakhita', 'Naatundi' were her popular works. The establishment of her 'Bharati Tapovana Sangha' was a notable step during the period of language agitation in Orissa.

The National Poets of Orissa:

Kavi Birakishore Das (1898-1973) and Kavi Banchhanidhi Mohanty (1897-1938) were the prominent national poets of modern Orissa. Both of them wrote a number of revolutionary poems for the spread of nationalism among the Oriya masses. They were not only famous for their poetic abilities but also for their spirit of patriotism which influenced the Oriya society tremendously. They directly participated in the Non-Cooperation Movement and Civil Disobedience Movement also. As the poet, patriot and saint they became the very heart and soul not only of this national agitation, but of the entire national life of the Oriyas during the Satyabadi epoch.
The Satyabadi group has given new shape to Kavya, Poetry, drama and prose in Oriya. So Satyabadi Sahitya can be accepted justifiably as a glorious chapter of the Oriya literature. The flow of the Satyabadi literatures gradually became meager towards 1921 and became completely powerless by 1925.

Like all other Kavyas in the world love is the main theme of the kavyas of the Satyabadi period. But such firmness, personality and sanctity have been associated with the love scene depicted in the writings of this period which are at least not to be seen in any other Oriya writings. The Satyabadi group also made a very creditable contribution to the development of Oriya prose.

Premchand, the famous Hindi writer had announced at a writer's conference - "Literature which does not awaken in us the desire to seek truth, which does not give us mental and spiritual satisfaction, which does not generate in us strength and which does not awaken the feeling of beauty, which does not strengthen our will to over-come difficulties, such literature is useless for us today. In fact, we cannot today call it literature at all." The Satyabadi literature has also influenced the writers of the later period. The impact and inspiration of Pandit Gopabandhu's 'Dharmapada' can be noticed in Aswini Kumar Ghosh's 'Konark' drama and Sitamani Devi's 'Ama Odia Pua'.

Once Gopabandhu had remarked as the President of the Utkal Sammilani that "Universal love is Oriya's nationalism, wholehearted-ness is Oriya's humanism, and a man is dumb without language and literature". So the Satyabadi sadhakas and their associates enriched the Oriya literature by adopting a new mode of writing.
The Satyabadi group has seen the inner image of Orissa where as Radhanath has seen its outer form. So while the feeling of nationalism is indirect and indistinct in the writings of Radhanath, it is more direct and distinct in the writings of the Satyabadi group. The 'Chandrabhaga' of Kavibar Radhanath centering the Konark Temple, the 'Dharmapada' of Pandit Gopabandhu on Konark and Nilakantha's 'Konarke' amply testify to this.

Regarding the novelty of the new element as introduced by Gopabandhu in Oriya literature Dr. H. K. Mahtab has written in the Annexure of his Orissa History: 'If the literary period of Orissa is to be divided into three parts such as ancient, medieval, and modern periods, the literature that was in vogue in Orissa before the introduction of English education, can be termed as Ancient literature, the literature that came into being since Radhanath can be described as Medieval Oriya literature and Pandit Gopabandhu Das is undoubtedly responsible for introduction of what is called the Modern Oriya literature." Late Biswanath Kara also admitted this a few days before his death.

The existence of the Satyabadi Yuga was not recognised in the Oriya literary field till 1948 when Dr. Mahtab was writing his 'History of Orissa'. That is why Dr. Mahtab has only referred to the writings of Pandit Gopabandhu and the impact of his writings on the subsequent Oriya literature. So it can be said in the conclusion that revered Pandit Gopabandhu was responsible for introduction of the Satyabadi literature.

The writings of the Satyabadi group on the various aspects of the society and the nation gave rise to a new revolution in the social and cultural fields of Orissa.
development and welfare of the country was the sole aim of the Satyabadi group in spite of their dedication to literature, social-service and zeal for reformation.85

The development in the field of literature during the Satyabadi epoch had a fervor of nationalism and patriotism which influenced the subsequent literary activities and brought about a change in the cultural history of Orissa. Hence it is apt to call this period as the "Literary Renaissance in Orissa".
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