CHAPTER-7

CONCLUSION

LEADERSHIP OF MADHUSUDAN DAS
A STUDY IN PROFILE AND PERFORMANCE
The Leadership of Madhusudan Das: A Study in Profile and Performance

The story of his life was truly the story of modern Orissa, for he, more than anybody else, had dedicated his whole life to its creation though he did not live to see it finally emerge. Only one great idea loomed large in his mind, the moral and material progress of the Oriya people, so that they would not remain the neo-Boetians in the Indian dominion, to which depth they had been consigned through the vicissitudes and ironies of history, during the British period. According to Madhusudan, Orissa resurgent meant the resurgence of the whole of India; a thought which had been echoed by Gandhiji in 1927. Madhusudan single-mindedly devoted all his passions and energy to this task.

Otherwise, had he chosen to sail with the Indian National Congress, he would surely have come to occupy in due time its presidency, not unlike the other liberal patriarchs who dominated the Congress before the Gandhian era. But, deliberately he chose to dissociate himself from the Congress politics, in as much as in the crucial moments in the movement for a separate Orissa, the Congress had been more of a hindrance than a help. A liberal and constitutionalist that he was, the extra-constitutional methods of the post 1921 Congress did not appeal to him and he relied more on progressive enlargement of the constitutional reforms for attaining freedom than swelling the ranks of the non-cooperators, who at any rate, at the end came to repose their faith in the legislative councils and assemblies as devout constitutionalists. But nonetheless, Madhusudan was among the early pioneers of the Indian National Congress and
religiously attended its annual sessions as the leader of the Orissa delegation till estrangement came after the 1903 Madras session.

7.1 **Not narrow provincialist**

He was no narrow ‘provincialist’ as some had deliberately misrepresented and assailed him during his lifetime. Orissa, to him, was a call for sacrifice, not an object of parochial claims, exclusive benefits and privileges. ‘Not Orissa for Oriyas”. Madhusudan wrote in his weekly journal, The Oriya: “In order that Orissa may rise in the estimation of the civilized world, in order that Orissa may march abreast of the other provinces of India, it is absolutely necessary to adopt and realize the full significance of the words Oriyas for Orissa”. This was no narrow provincialism but nationalism of the highest order. Madhusudan was never tired of reminding his countrymen in his speeches and writings that as Orissa could not be imagined without India, so India could not be conceived excluding Orissa. The interests of both were complementary, and not hostile to each other. The relationship between India and Orissa was that of a mother and her daughter and not that for attention – Madhusudan was never tired of exhorting for attention- Madhusudan was never tired of exhorting his audience from the Utkal Sammilani platforms.

Administrative reorganization of India on the basis of language and culture was one of the foremost contributions of Madhusudan to the corpus of Indian Political thought. Writing in the columns of The Oriya in 1918 under the caption’ Orissa Inrridenta’ Madhusudan wrote.

If the history of British administration of the Oriya speaking tracts comes to be written at any time by an American, his reflections on the dismemberment of a nation, of the pleasant associations of their mother tongue, the attempt to dry up the spring of national consciousness, which a nation’s mother tongue is, would be a valuable exposition of the extent to which the divide et impera policy dominated British administration in Orissa. The persistent refusal by the government to place the Oriya-speaking tracts under one administration, and thus give the people opportunities for national growth under the impelling force of a national consciousness, at a time when Britain is
fighting to secure to small nations the right to shape their destiny and in the face of an admission in the report on constitutional reforms that ‘linguistic or racial units of the government afford additional facilities for the success of the reforms proposed.” would furnish to the foreign historians materials between truths taught and truths practiced. Madhusudan fought consistently throughout his life against this hiatus between the principles and practices of the British Government.

It may be recalled that it was only through his incessant struggle for unification of all the Oriya-speaking areas under one administration, that language and culture as the basis for organization of provinces of states came to be recognized as a desirable administrative principle in the Risley circular of 1903, during the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon. Subsequently reports on Indian constitutional reforms by Montague, Chelmsford and Sir John Allsebrook and Simon did not depart from that principle, even though these committees diluted it with other extraneous considerations. In the post-independence period, since the States’ Reorganization Commission of 1956, the principle of redistribution of states on linguistic and cultural basis had come to be accepted as a fixed administrative policy, for which Madhusudan had fought since the eighties of the last century in the Orissan context.

7.2 Pioneer of planned economic growth

Madhusudan was one of the early pioneers who securely laid the foundation of thoughts of planned economic growth. Since the 18th century, when India was brought within the imperial economy of Great Britain, and became subject to British colonial policy, powerful forces of disintegration had set into motion, which rapidly dislocated the old agro-industrial balance. England’s policy of developing the Indian market for her own growing industries brought about a rapid decline of rural handicrafts and industries, causing enormous exodus towards the land. Increased pressure on agriculture intensified the tendency towards division and subdivision of holdings and their fragmentation into uneconomic units. This was at the root of Indian poverty; more so of the Oriya decadence, Madhusudan therefore, clearly recognized the
fact unless the occupational structure of the people was changed and pressure on agricultural land relieved by absorption of a considerable segment of the working force in industries, both large and small, and the mode of agriculture improved by means of irrigation and scientific methods, the poverty of the people would never be mitigated. He was, therefore, sorely disappointed when his younger brother, decided to become a deputy magistrate instead of a model agriculturist, as Madhusudan had advised him.

In the late 19th and early 20th century, the Indian elites who had been visiting England and Europe returned home laden with trifles like English cutleries and crockeries, chandeliers and nude Grecian statues. But the ripples of the industrial revolution, which then had started stirring the Western societies, left them completely untouched. But from his two visits to England and other European countries, Madhusudan came back inspired with ideas of the industrial revolution. He started his Orissa Art Wares in the nineties of the last century, on returning from his first visit to England. On return from his second visit he organized the Utkal Tannery on modern Western lines. Had the swadeshi movement not started in the beginning of the present century, as a sequel to the nationalist upsurge in the wake of Bengal’s partition. Whether the industrial awakening of India would have taken place that soon or the process would have been delayed, is anybody’s guess. But in the beginning, swadeshi industrialization was secondary to the political issues involved. The bias was more towards politics than industry. This had led to the dismal failure of the swadeshi undertakings, which did more harm than good to the process of industrialization of India. Madhusudan warned the new entrepreneurs against this tendency in his famous controversial speech on “Dignity of Labour” in the following words.

The move for industrial development at the time was purely political in its character. The prime movers were men whose only contribution to the cause was platform eloquence. Eloquence roused the nation’s feelings and people who commanded cash subscribed to the industrial undertakings. The nation in its excitement lost all balance or reason and calm cool calculations
which a measure intended to improve the condition of a country, requires. The movement was a manoeuvre in a political warfare. The political storm subsided when the Partition was revoked and the industrial institutions languished and were finally closed, leaving the share-holders poorer but wiser.

He spared no words or eloquence to guard the entrepreneurs of the nascent industrial revolution against these pitfalls and wanted *swadeshi* to grow not as slogans and shibboleths, but as viable industrial undertakings, which could seriously strike at the very roots of the British colonial rule in India. He called upon the Indian capitalists to invest in industries "from motives of benevolence and patriotism" than to reap rich dividends. He advised the Indian entrepreneur to bear the loss in the experimental stage as "his sacrifice to the cause of industry". We have already noticed how in practicing these precepts, Madhusudan offered himself as a martyr at the altar of industrialization.

He truly belonged to the luminous galaxy of the 19th century patriarchs, who, through their struggle and sacrifices had paved the way for the modern India that we live in. Madhusudan was ardent nationalist, but if he had deliberately confined himself to the cause of Orissa it was for very obvious reasons. Very succinctly Sri Aurobindo wrote, referring to Madhusudan, in the issue of Vande Mataram of December 17, 1907:

Nationalism depends for its success on the awakening and organizing of the whole strength of the nation; it is, therefore, vitally important for nationalism that the politically backward class should be awakened and brought into the current of the political life. As with backward classed so with backward provinces. It is vitally important that these should awake.... We welcome any signs that the awakening has begun. It is for instance a cause for gratification that Orissa is beginning to feel its separate consciousness and to attempt to grow into an organized life under a capable and high-spirited leader.

7.3 *Separation of politics from power and pelf of offices*

Madhusudan was a liberal constitutionalist in his political convictions. That was why he could not fit himself to the era of civil disobedience and mass movements that began after 1921 under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.
Much less he believed in terrorist violence and did not hesitate to condemn these tendencies, even at the cost of his life. Speaking on a resolution condemning terrorist attempt on the life of Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, Madhusudan spoke in the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Assembly.

On a previous occasion when speaking in the Bengal Legislative Council in connection with the assassination of Sir Curzon Wylie, I used strong expressions when referring to miscreants of this type and received a letter from the sedition camp threatening me with death if I did not retract the remarks I then made. I am glad to stay that I have lived not to retract but to reiterate here it is no good keeping back our own opinion in regard to the men who commit such outrages.

But Madhusudan's enduring contribution lay in his sublimation of politics from pursuit of power and pelf to supreme self-sacrifice for the common good and in vindication of principles, which he held inviolable. In one of his memorable poems (Madhusudan was also a poet of patriotic songs- the fervour and appeal of which remain yet undiminished,) Madhusudan compared politics to the holy flame of the great sacrifice, to which he exhorted his countrymen to offer their self-interests in oblation.

7.4 Multidimensional personality

Madhusudan Das possessed a multi-dimensional personality. During his long tenure as a Legislator in the Lieutenant Governor’s Council in Bengal, and in the Legislative Council of Bihar and Orissa (1896 to 1923) and a member of the Imperial Council (1913-16) he played a very significant role in projecting the problems of Orissa and seeking redress. Not only as a lawyer, as a champion of the underdogs - the peasants, as a journalist, humanist and industrialist, he tried to serve the cause of his countrymen faithfully with a resolute will. A staunch nationalist, he always placed the country above the self. By example and percepts, by conviction and efforts he showed to his countrymen the ideal role of a patriot. He had earned a lot, spent a lot, died as a pauper; but before going to eternal sleep he saw his dream come true; Orissa became a separate political entity. The last decade of his long life represent the tragic saga of a
glorious career of achievements and sacrifice. He was undoubtedly the maker of modern Orissa.

7.5 The Legislator

Madhusudan Das had a long and glorious innings as a successful legislator in the provincial as well as Imperial Legislatures. On 14 March 1896 he joined as a member of the Council of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal having been elected from the District Boards and Municipalities constituency of Orissa and Chota Nagpur. He served his constituency creditably during 1896-97, 1900-02 and 1908-11, till the separate province of Bihar and Orissa was created. With the creation of the new province, Das served as a member of the new Legislature for more than a decade and concurrently enjoyed the membership of the Imperial Council during 1913-16. Under the Reform Scheme of 1919 he was appointed as the Minister of Local Self Government of Bihar and Orissa in 1921, but resigned from the prestigious post two years after. That put to an end to his distinguished career as a Legislator-administrator. For his wit and wisdom, unsparing criticism and deep sense of involvement, he was highly respected by his colleagues who nicknamed him as ‘Cato’. His speeches and deliberations in the floor of the Legislatures not only reveal his profound erudition and command over the subject but also his concern for the welfare of the people.

Soon after taking the oath of the office as a member of the Lieutenant Governor’s Council in Bengal, Madhusudan espoused the cause of Orissa. He argued that while appointing Munsifs for Orissa the Government should take into consideration the superior claims of candidates who had obtained their B.L. degrees from the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack and knew Oriya. He assailed the Government for transferring the Salt Department of Orissa to Madras which had resulted in closing down the local manufacturing industry and the consequent loss of means of livelihood to several thousands of men. A news item published in the Utkal Dipika brought to light the harassing and illegal proceedings of the Officers engaged to prevent illicit manufacture of salt in Orissa. Madhusudan pressed upon the Government to take early remedial
measures to stop the evil. Taking part in the discussion on Bengal Financial Statement for 1896-97, he insisted that Orissa was the most suitable place for the establishment of an Agriculture College. Since the population of Orissa was mostly agricultural, students for the college would be conveniently drawn from the agricultural class. Further, the temporary settlement of Orissa added extra weight to his arguments. Since the Government was more keen to improve the conditions of agriculture in Orissa they should provide better scientific knowledge through an Agriculture College. Next year, during the budget discussion Madhusudan again pleaded for promoting agricultural education. He would say:

"I maintain that in a year of famine any outlay for the promotion of agriculture would not be out of place. Prevention is better than cure, and therefore, by educating the people in the art of agriculture, though we shall not be able to avert famines by commanding rainfalls in proper season, it will enable the people to know what crops they can grow in a season when the rainfall is scanty."

Madhusudan was in favour of imparting agricultural training to the students of the Primary Schools by introducing Agriculture Primers. Each school should have a small farm of its own where the boys could make their experiments upon what they read about agriculture. Since majority of the pupils came from cultivating class and became cultivators themselves afterwards, the suggestion of Madhusudan appeared quite convincing.

The system of primary education was considered as impractical and unsound by Madhusudan. He wanted it to improve the conditions of the artisan and agricultural classes. "To attain this aim the hand and the head must be trained together". In a voice ringing with despair he criticised the prevailing system of education as 'subversive' and 'deplorable' because it produced "disappointed and discontented aspirants" for the post of Muharrirs, Cumasthas and petition writers. He felt that the education in the school should supplement the education derived at home, so that the ancestral education is not forgotten, nor the parental vocation abandoned. The school should train the head and the
home should train the hands of the children. An improvement of the economic condition of the country would be possible only if the educational system creates love for ancestral crafts and not aversion. Explaining this point further, Madhusudan stated; 10

"The temples of Bhubaneswar, Puri and Konarak testify to the capabilities of the people prior to the days of British rule. These monuments of past glory serve only the purpose of weeping willows under which the present generation might weep over their loss. The people of Orissa have a history worthy of any people in India. They have a glorious future in their unexploited natural resources. But these treasures lie concealed in the dark cells of ignorance. Let the light of education shine in those dark places."

As an avowed champion of higher education for the Oriya students, Madhusudan was visibly perturbed at the unsatisfactory results of the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack on which the Commissioner of the Orissa Division reported: 11

"There appears to be something wrong with the institution to account for such poor results. If the evil admits of a remedy, I would strongly advocate that the remedy should be sought for and applied. The College is the only institution of the kind in Orissa, which as a Division, is admittedly backward in higher education."

Madhusudan not only asked the Government to find out the real cause behind the miserable performance of the students of Ravenshaw College for prompt remedy, but himself investigated upon the problem. He found out that during 1892-95 the largest number of students failed in English, a subject taught by Mr. Hallward, the Principal. Hallward as the symbol of inefficiency became the main target of his criticism 12. Over the distribution of Rupees 10 lakhs of Imperial grant on education for Bengal, Madhusudan claimed a lion's share for Orissa - due to her educational backwardness. He drew the attention of the Government to the problem of accommodation in the Ravenshaw College, for its lecture rooms and teacher's common room. A separate hostel for the Muslim students was enlisted in the demand. He moved the Government for granting
further affiliation in History, Physics and Botany, appointment of lecturers, special grants for library, water supply, laboratory requirements and play ground. The Cuttack College, in his opinion was a prestigious institution where princes and children of affluent families were being educated providing a perennial flow to the growing elite class of Orissa. Since private donations were ungrudgingly given by progressive minded persons of Orissa for the development of the college, the Government should not be niggardly in their attitude, was the comment offered by Madhusudan. He was keen to raise a sum of Rupees 20,000/- towards the Initial cost of an Engineering School for Orissa. The necessity of female education equally valued by him.  

The savings which the Finance Member had announced under the head ‘Medical School’, Madhusudan would like it to be diverted for the Medical School and General Hospital for Cuttack where there was a short supply of surgical appliances. In his opinion:

“any grant to a Medical School to which there is attached a hospital is not only a grant for the noble purpose of education, but it is combined to the still nobler purpose of giving relief to suffering humanity”

The issue of recruiting the Oriyas in Government service equally worried Madhusudan. He parried the Government with searching questions whether the several Departments gave sufficient notice by advertisements in the Oriya Gazette or local newspapers inviting candidates to avail the opportunity. He would like to know how many Oriyas were appointed in the Salt Department and what steps were taken to notify the vacancies to the people of Orissa.

Orissa was linked up with Calcutta and Madras by the East Coast Railways in 1899 which ushered a new era of better communication. But without feeder roads in the Districts the people were not likely to enjoy the benefits of Hallways. Madhusudan, therefore, demanded more funds for the District Boards to construct the feeder roads so that the cultivators’ access to better markets to earn good price for his produce would be easier.

On 27 July 1909 Madhusudan asked some revealing questions to the Government on the welfare of pilgrims to Puri. The Jagannath Temple at Puri
annually drew large crowds from all over India during the occasion of car festival apart from a regular flow of pilgrims throughout the year. Congregation of the pilgrims often created problems of sanitation and health. Besides, the staggering problem of transport for Millions posed great challenge for the Government. In course of their answers, the Government stated how cholera epidemic was of common occurrence among the pilgrims for whose transportation the Railways were unable to provide passenger bogies. Passengers were brought to Puri and taken back to destinations on goods wagons having no toilet facilities. The scarcity of water enroute was another challenging problem. Such revelations forced the Government to make adequate arrangements for the welfare of the pilgrims and much human tragedies could be averted.

Before the revocation of the partition of Bengal leading to the formation of the separate province of Bihar and Orissa in 1912, Madhusudan had to play a Herculean role in thwarting a legislation on ‘Tenancy in Orissa’ in the best interest of the Oriya tenants. The proposed Orissa Tenancy Bill, 1911, was an imposition of the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1835 in an amended form which through the manipulation of Bengali Zamindars tried to perpetuate their control over Orissa peasantry. According to Madhusudan, the bill was unsuitable to the conditions and interests of Orissa. In a marathon debate he analysed the bill, clause by clause, to expose the anomalies and suggested that the bill should not be passed by the Bengal Legislature in a hurry; rather it should be left to the Legislature of the new province of Bihar and Orissa for a threadbare discussion. His arguments carried enough weight to urge upon the Governor General to withhold his assent and the bill were referred to the Bihar and Orissa Council.

As a member of the Lieutenant Governor’s Council of Bihar and Orissa, Madhusudan was at first concerned with the general interests of the “baby province”. He expressed the necessity of having a separate High Court for Bihar and Orissa, and the extension of the system of trial by Jury. From 1913 till 1923 as an experienced legislator and distinguished Minister of Local
Self on Government he gave an outstanding performance. Apart from projecting the specific problems of Orissa he participated in discussions on issues like, Amendment of the Press Act, the Benaras Hindu University Bill, Management of Hallways, Amelioration of the Depressed Classes, Representation of Depressed classes, Contamination of Ganges water, Franchise for women, Municipalities and District Boards and Development of Mineral resources etc.

Madhusudan creditably served as the Minister of Local Self Government, Bihar and Orissa from 6 January 1921 to 8 March 1923. During this period he piloted some important legislations on Health, Sanitation, Medical care, structure and administration of Local bodies, Primary education and treatment of political prisoners. He was keen on extending the frontiers of the district Boards and Municipalities and redeeming these institutions from official control. The Bihar and Orissa Municipal Bill, the Bihar and Orissa Village Administration Bill, and the Bihar and Orissa Local Self Government Bill were some of his significant contributions. In these legislations he gave a shape to the concept of direct democracy by providing for recall which empowered the voters to withdraw an elected representative from the Municipal Council if he failed to fulfill the assurances given to his constituency at the time of election. The representation of the depressed classes in the local bodies was another notable contribution of Madhusudan in keeping with the spirit of the time.

7.6 Madhusudan as the minister

It was not very congenial for Madhusudan to continue for long under the British Government as a popular Minister. The system of Dyarchy introduced by the Montagu-Chelmsford Reform was found to be unsuitable to his temperament. He felt sandwiched between the British bureaucracy and his countrymen. India was then pulsating with a new life under the spell of Non co-operation movement. There was a growing demand to be dissociated from all Government institutions. Infact, Madhusudan had to swallow bitter criticism of his countrymen for having accepted the Ministerhip. It was misconstrued that
the high salary of a Minister had allured him. Whatever be the reasons for accepting the Ministership, Madhusudan found it difficult to convince his countrymen that he was never fascinated by money. He had to go through an agonising period of mental conflict until at last a controversy cropped up between him and the Governor over the question of salary for the Minister of Local Self Government. Madhusudan expressed a desire to serve on honorary basis as Minister, which he found justified because, as people's representatives the office bearers in the Local bodies never accepted salary. He said:

"I have always looked upon gold as a handful of dust which a man might throw from his hands and still be a man, a being with a divine spark in him. He must inspire the members of the Municipalities and the District Boards, all local bodies, local authorities and the villagers with a patriotic spirit, inculcate in them a genuine spirit of self sacrifice, a genuine desire for nation building and with their co-operation discharge the responsibilities of office. In an organisation in which all the workers are honorary, a salaried Minister mars the symmetry and harmony of the organisation. The office of the Minister of the Local Self Government ought to be honorary."

Madhusudan wanted to earn his living as a practising lawyer, since the constitutional provision for a Minister was to receive payment of salaries, the Governor found Madhusudan's request unacceptable. On this controversy Madhusudan tendered his resignation on 8 March 1923. In trying to raise the position of a Minister above politics and power, with the lofty idealism of service and sacrifice, he became a martyr. Next year in June he was accepted as a member of the Provincial unit of the Indian National Congress.

7.7 The Champion of the Underdogs

Madhusudan belonged to the first generation of Indian nationalist leadership that appeared during the beginning of the nationalist struggle and belonged to the category of uadabhai Naoroji, Hanade and Rames Chandra Dutta. Like them his conception on the contemporary economic problems was
crystal clear. He was aware of the economic aspect of the colonial rule and was worried about the draining away of India’s resources.

A keen student of history and an ardent admirer of Orissa’s glorious heritage, Madhusudan was aware of the harmful effects of British economic policies upon flourishing cottage Industries. Orissa was famous for the gold and silver filigree works of gossamer delicacy. But the inroad of machines had jeopardised this artistic native craft. Madhusudan’s nationalism immediately took interest in rescuing this glorious cottage industry of Orissa from ruin. Inside his own residential premises he set up a large factory in 1897 employing over one hundred fifty craftsmen at his own expenses. The factory soon became famous as Orissa Art Wares and produced beautiful filigree works of extraordinary artistic excellence. Revival of an old native industry was not his only aim. He was eager to restore the craftsmen of Orissa to a state of economic prosperity. In 1902, on the occasion of John Weddenburn, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal’s visit to the Orissa Art wares, Madhusudan urged upon the distinguished visitor to encourage the industry by giving liberal grants and to create an incentive among the workers by awarding prizes.

Madhusudan often arranged industrial exhibitions to display the products of the Orissa Art Wares and sent large quantities of beautiful specimens as presentation to foreign dignitaries. The press was eloquent in praising the laudable efforts and felt amazed at the lavish investment made by Madhusudan.

As an avowed champion of rapid industrialisation and pioneer of a neo-industrial movement in Orissa Madhusudan observed the large quantities of raw hides being exported from Orissa and India every year and how the finished products from England were sucking the economic life blood of the colonies. Agriculture alone was not considered to be a dependable source of living for Orissa. He suggested mechanised industries to make use of the available raw materials, employ the people and retain the wealth of the nation for an economic upliftment. He invited the ruling princes and Zamindras of Orissa to invest their wealth in rapid industrialisation and himself purchased a 40 acre plot near the
Cuttack Railway Station to set up the Utkal Tannery. He brought modern appliances for processing hides and producing beautiful leather articles from the skins of crocodiles, lizards etc. In no time the Tannery earned international fame for the excellent quality of its products, providing immense joy and satisfaction to the nationalist in Madhusudan. He treated his workers well. Some of them had a criminal record behind, but now happily settled in the society through the efforts of Madhusudan. He spent millions of his hard earned money on this project showing least regard to profit making or his own financial stability either.

7.8 Exponent of Swadeshi

Madhusudan was a great exponent of Swadeshi. Before the Indian National Congress came to think of the Swadeshi movement, he launched a movement in favour of indigenous goods. His Swadeshi programme included a scientific study of the ancient and indigenous system of medicine. On the occasion of Utkal Union Conference, he advocated the use of home spun cloth with a view to revive the ancient weaving industry in Orissa. He would himself turn up with dhoti, chadar and coat made of khadi. From the rostrum of the conference he appealed for starting a charkha movement in Orissa. For such early initiative taken in revival of the indigenous spinning and weaving industries, Madhusudan was requested by Gandhi for guidance. "You will of course teach me how to spread the message of the spinning wheel in Utkal".

During the course of his visit to Orissa in 1925 Gandhi came to the Utkal Tannery and being highly impressed with the undertaking bestowed fulsome praise on Madhusudan for his admirable efforts. As a member of the Imperial Council (1913-1916) Madhusudan tried to impress upon the Government that the development of industries in the country was their obligation. Industrial development would lead to a general economic prosperity in the country. The decadent and wretched conditions of industries in India were due to the insalutary influence of the British rule. In a voice ringing with bitterness he said:
That is the feeling of the weaver who has taken to plough, leaving his loom; that is the feeling of the artisan whose hand stands paralysed to-day; that is the feeling of the artisan’s son who took to English education with a view to get employment as a clerk, but failed to secure such employment; and that is the feeling of an old man (himself) who has associated intimately with artisans during the last quarter of a century and has noticed their for existence.

7.9 An ideal theoretician in industry

In his industrial undertakings Madhusudan appeared to be an ideal theoretician. He lacked the practical outlook of a serious businessman. Explaining his economic concepts on industrial ventures he published two interesting essays on “Industrial awakening” and “Liberation from the industrial fetters” in ‘The Oriya’. Through there essays he tried to explain that Swaraj, would not be justified without economic self sufficiency. For economic progress the Government should lay equal emphasis on agriculture and industries; the hand and the brain must co-operate with each other through proper education and the Indian capitalists should come forward to start industrial projects so that the resources and the man-power of the country would be harnessed together for economic progress.

7.10 Concerned with the economic upliftment of peasants

That Madhusudan was deeply concerned for the economic uplift of the peasants of Orissa was not only evident from the speeches he delivered in the floor of the Legislature, but also from his sociopolitical activities. He believed that peasants formed the real backbone of Orissa’s economy; without their development any growth of the Oriya nation was unthinkable. During the annual sessions of the Utkal Union Conference he used to present a pathetically human picture of exploitation on a canvas. The picture depicted at the bottom an Oriya peasant digging the field with a spade. Whatever he produced part of it got into the pocket of either the trader or the money-lender; and the rest went to the Zamindar. The picture also depicted how the national wealth found its way to England, represented by a crown and an Union Jack. Madhusudan created a mass consciousness about the prevailing methods of economic exploitation.
which brought utter ruination upon the Oriya peasantry, During the period when
the Orissa Tenancy Bill was before the Bengal Council, Madhusudan convened
a meeting of the royts at Cuttack to ascertain their views on the bill. It was
attended by over five thousand royts who came from far and near. In the
meeting they expressed their hostile reaction against the proposed legislation.
They gave vent to their bitterness against the evils of periodic settlements.
Frequent settlements provided opportunity to corrupt revenue officials to
manipulate records resulting in prolonged civil suits and impoverishment. They
were so much harassed by the Amins that they said in one voice:

"If the Amin comes again to our village we shall leave our house and
hearth and migrate to distant lands where we may have rest."

His experience over the Orissa Tenancy Bill prompted him to
organise the helpless peasants through an association called the ‘Praja Pratinidhi
Sabha’. The Sabha organised Kisan rallies in various district headquarters like,
Purl, Cuttack and Balaeore, providing the peasant a common platform to
ventilate their manifold grievances. The sabha tried to articulate a vigorous
public opinion against the hateful Zamindari system which subjected the tenants
to much harassment and humiliation. Madhuaudan, along with Gopabandhu Das
and Nilakanta Das took keen interest in instilling a sense of unity among the
poor peasants, who notwithstanding the lack of education developed awareness
to their problems and sought Justice. This was no ordinary achievement of
Madhusudan.

Thus, organisation of labourers and peasants, setting up of industries on
the basis of either available raw materials or manpower, providing employment
opportunities to the members of the depressed classes formed the core of
Madhusudan’s economic programme. All this was motivated by a love for the
country, its cultural heritage and the people. It is amazing to note that whatever
fortune he had made as a flourishing lawyer was invested upon his industrial
projects, the Orissa Art Ware and the Utkal Tannery with a motive to earn
fame for the Oriya nation, and not dividend for the capital invested. He was
such a stickler for quality that for maintaining the good name of his Tannery
products, he threw away goods worth several thousand Rupees which were sub-
standard in quality. Justifying such action he would say;

"If a bad pair of shoes or badly tanned hide falls in the hands of a
foreigner he will say that the Oriyas are cheats. I cannot earn such a bad name
for my nation"46.

7.11 Bankrupt Madhusudan

Due to his non-commercial attitude these concerns became heavy
liabilities incurring huge loss47. To meet the deficit Madhusudan borrowed
indiscriminately from both friends and professional money lenders huge sums
of money which were beyond his means to repay. Ultimately this led to his
insolvency and the liquidation of the Industries in 192748. After he resigned
Ministership in 1923 and came away from Patna to cuttack, misfortune after
misfortune piled upon him. Not only the fickle fortune deserted him, his health
also began to deteriorate. Politically, he had already cast himself into the
wilderness by declining to contest for the ensuing Council elections on
Congress ticket. After Joining the Congress in 1924 though he had accepted the
Congress creed as a loyal member, the young Congressites were unwilling to
accept him as their leader. Madhusudan therefore, wisely cleared himself from
the political arena.

7.12 The Last Breath

Despite his insolvency, illness and old age, Madhusudan was still
regarded as the foremost public man of Orissa with heavy responsibilities for
his countrymen. The announcement of the Simon Commission49 was like a
soothing balm to his anguished mind. It rejuvenated the Moderates and the
Swarajists alike to brisk activities. for all and sundry the time of attaining a
separate political status for Orissa was not far off, Madhusudans constant
guidance to an enterprising group of Moderates50 and his unshakeable faith on
the policy of Moderation at last bore fruits. But the appointment of Boundary
Committee51 for the proposed province was both a threat and a challenge to the
proponents of amalgamation, There were Oriya-speaking tracts in Bengal
(Midnapore), Bihar (Singhbhum), the Central Provinces (Phuljhar, Khariar etc.)
and Madras (Ganjarm, Jeypore and Vizianagram) where public opinion should favour their amalgamation with the new province. Without these areas the leaders felt that the new province would be a truncated one leaving a substantial portion of the Oriya-speaking tracts under the neighbouring provinces. The challenge prompted Madhusudan to pay a visit to Jamshedpur and address public meetings propagating the cause of amalgamation. The inclusion of this industrial city in Orissa, he hoped, would facilitate economic progress. An association of the Oriyas was formed to systematically work out a popular movement. J.L. Kennan, the General Manager was persuaded by him to use his influence upon the Oriya workers and tender favourable evidence before the Boundary Commission. From his own resources Madhusudan sent five thousand propaganda leaflets and some money for distribution among the workers of the factory.

The Boundary Committee headed by Sir S.P.O’ Donnell with H.M. Mehta and T.k. Phukoon as members came to Cuttack in November 1931. Inspite of acute illness Madhusudan received them at the railway station and appealed for justice for his countrymen. The Commission were to examine and report on the financial and other consequences of setting up a separate administration for Orissa and to make recommendation regarding the boundaries. After completing investigation the Commission submitted their report on 19 April 1932 recommending a boundary for the proposed province which fell far short of the expectations of the Oriya leaders. Several protest meetings were held in the outlying Oriya-speaking tracts against the decision of O’Donnell Committee.

The exclusion of Singhbhum district and the Parlakimedi estate (Ganjam) caused great anxiety and disappointment for which some young leaders argued that the proposed province should better be rejected by the people and a vigorous movement launched. Some even suggested that the Utkal Union Conference be revived to spear-head the movement. As the O’Donnell Committee had expressed their apprehension regarding the economic viability of the new political setup Harekrushna Mahtab and some other Congress leaders...
opposed the Government’s proposal for separating Orissa from Bihar. Under the circumstance a Leader’s conference had to be convened at Cuttack on 12-13 February 1933 with Bhubanananda Das as the Chairman. To sort out the differences among the leaders Madhusudan attended the conference and delivered a long impassioned speech tracing the history of the Oriya movement for amalgamation of the scattered tracts and the results of his untiring efforts. Emphasising upon unity and sacrifice he called upon the leaders to wage an undaunted struggle till the goal was achieved and blessed them well in their noble endeavour by saying;

"Knock, knock, but don’t kick and it (the door of Justice) shall open."

After much thought and careful deliberation at the third Hound Table Conference (17 November to 24 December 1932) the British Government published a White Paper on the proposals for constitutional reforms in India. The White Paper also declared the boundaries of the new Orissa province and that it would be headed by a Governor as the executive authority. A Joint Parliamentary Committee was appointed to examine certain controversial issues like the non-inclusion of Parlakimedi and Jeypore in the new province. The Raja of Parlakimedi led a delegation to London to meet the Ministers, important Parliamentarians and the Chairman of the Joint Committee seeking Justice. Scores of telegrams sent by the people of Orissa were piled upon the Viceroy’s table on the same issue. For a while the hopes and aspirations of the Oriya-speaking people appeared to be hung on a delicate balance. Popular pressure began to mount upon the local Collectors and Commissioner whose attitude seemed to be quite favourable. A correct appraisal of the situation led the Joint Committee to decide:

"that portion of Jeypore estate which the Orissa Committee of 1932 recommended should be transferred to Orissa; xxx and a small portion of the Parlakimedi estate including Parlakimedi town".
They further suggested that the anticipated deficit of the proposed province “must be made good by federal subvention”\textsuperscript{67}. Since further concession was out of question, the people of Orissa accepted the decision.

But before the creation of the new province another question which concerned the Government of India was its administrative structure. The Viceroy felt that it would be unfair to ask the new province to take care of itself; it was essential to provide Orissa with an experienced administrator who would find easier to organise the new departments, assign duties to the officers of various cadre and run the routine administration on a conventional manner. In fact, there was not to be much difference between the pattern of administration in Bihar and Orissa and the proposed province\textsuperscript{68}.

Lord Willington, the Viceroy suggested the Home Government to take prompt measures to select the Governor of the new province who prior to the separation of Orissa from Bihar should be posted as a Special Officer for doing the spade work as prelude to separation. Further, he suggested the appointment of an Administrative Committee to enquire into the problems peculiar to the separate province\textsuperscript{69}. A Government of India notification therefore, declared:\textsuperscript{70}

“Preliminary administrative preparation is a necessary condition in the establishment of a new province particularly when, as far as the future Orissa province territories would be taken from three separate provinces (Bihar and Orissa, Central Provinces and Madras), the Governor General of India considers it on advantage that administrative problems incidental to the creation of the new province should be brought under early examination. They have therefore decided with the approval of the Secretary of state to set up a Committee of Enquiry for the purpose”.

The Administrative Committee\textsuperscript{71}, set up under the Chairmanship of Sir John Austen Hubback with eight other members; Madhusudan Das, Laxmidhar Mohanty, Birabara Narayan, N.R. Naidu, W.O. Newsam, Senapati, Lokenath Mishra and Gourchandra Deb was to consider and recommend on: \textsuperscript{72}
i) The location of headquarters of the new province,
ii) The site, extent and the approximate cost of new accommodation required at the headquarters and districts,

iii) The question of affiliating Orissa with neighbouring High Court, University of one or more of the adjoining provinces,

iv) Territorial changes and their headquarters in the districts or Sub-divisions.

v) Whether the new province should have its own cadre for administrative and Police Services,

vi) Any other subject which may be referred to it by the Government of India.

The Committee met at Ranchi to hold discussion with various Departmental heads on the issue of separation. They circulated questionnaire for eliciting information on the above terms of reference and visited different towns and places of Orissa in October 1933 to examine witnesses. Soon after the report was ready all members put their signature at the beginning and at the end. This was Madhusudan’s last public work. Appreciating the Grand Old Kan’s tenacity, perseverance and keen interest in the proceedings. Sir John Hubback wrote:

"I hope that your association with the Committee has been as agreeable to you as it has been with me. I greatly appreciate the help which you have given. You must be very much grateful to think that the object which you had at heart for so many years is now in sight of fulfilment."

The remaining few months of Madhusudan’s life were an agonising period of physical suffering; it witnessed a grim battle against the inevitable to which he finally succumbed on 4 February 1934. He could not live to see the creation of the separate Orissa province on 1 April 1936. With his death Orissa plunged into profound sorrow and grief, but she reached a definite milestone of her history; the search for an identity was over. As a result of Madhusudan’s life long struggle Orissa province at last became a reality.

7.13 The Epilogue
Madhusudan Das was the greatest leader that Orissa has ever produced, perhaps one of the great sons of India who could not blossom to full glory on account of his provincial involvement. Had Orissa been a separate political entity, connected by railways, provided with equal educational facilities like Bengal, situation would have been entirely different, with Madhusudan surpassing the stature of Gopalkrishna Gokhale and Surendranath Banerjea. The insular existence of Orissa circumscribed his image. As a product of the political renaissance in India, he served as the beacon light of hope to the Oriya-speaking people for over half a century. This was no mean achievement for a man who struggled against heavy odds of the contemporary society to curve out a dignified place for himself and his country-men. His rise to prominence was primarily due to his own resolute will, outstanding ability and uncommon public spirit. From very early life the indomitable zeal to be a man of eminence took him through various stages of—first Oriya Graduate, first Oriya Post-graduate, Law graduate, Advocate, Member of the provincial and Imperial Councils and first Oriya Minister under the Reform scheme.

As a politician he had no apprenticeship under any receptor; he was his own mentor. He was a liberal who nourished moderate views and favoured gradual constitutional reforms for the country. Though a loyalist and staunch admirer of the Crown, he never spared the Colonial Government for their numerous lapses. As a converted Christian he followed a secular and humane approach to religious issues. He was neither shy nor reticent in public life; rather felt always at home, irrespective of whether he was in a Court, on a public platform, in the legislature or with the Viceroy. The problems of the Oriya-speaking people were upper-most in his mind. While assailing upon the Government for a rightful cause he always exhibited rare clarity, conviction and courage. In matters concerning education, industries, land reforms, local self government, budget and any issue that came across his way, he spoke with rare ingenuity. As a linguist he was equally at home in English, Bengali and Hindi and could cite innumerable stories and episodes from the epics of both East and the West. The sharpness of his mind was proverbial.

261
Madhududan Das was the most sought after local practitioner in Orissa who earned lakhs of Rupees per year and defended many without charging fee. With the fabulous wealth he lived like a Lord lavishly entertained friends and visitors, though himself was a very poor eater in deference to his abdominal ulcer. In a bid to revive the artistic activities of the past and earn renown for his countrymen he invested a substantial portion of his income in industrial undertakings, He had an insatiable desire to help others and generously donated money to individuals and organisations for any social programme. His residence at Cuttack Chandi Road was a social rendezvous apart from being a congenial place for political discussions. Rajas, Lieutenant Governors, Commissioners and VIPs of all categories visited him to be entertained lavishly and to carry art works of silver filigree as mementos. As the self appointed ambassador of his country Madhusudan went abroad twice (1897 and 1907) to draw the attention of the British public and Parliamentarians towards discontented India”. He was a through nationalist who incessantly strove to glorify the Mother land.

His patriotism was pure gold with no element of dross in it. Economic liberation from colonial exploitation and patronage of Swadeshi were other manifestations of his patriotism. As an optimist, he remained undeterred against unexpected setbacks, and fought with relentless vigour to achieve the set objectives.

Exceptionally sharp in mind, extraordinarily affluent in wealth, the accredited leader of the Oriya people - Madhusudan personified humility. On the Occasion of the award of C.I.E. he was thinking of declining the honour which would not sit kindly” on him. His study chamber was open to all; both the Rajas and the peasants in Orissa took him as their best friend. The vigour and zeal, which he showed in defending the interests of the Rajas of Puri and Keonjhar before the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal was exhibited with equal gusto in case of the poor peasants. He played politics with his cards on the table and had a remarkable ability for organisation. He was given to trusting his friends and followers; he gave them love and loyalty and in return got both in abundance. Though he strode like a colossus in the political arena of Orissa he
was not without critics. With a proud and sensitive spirit he tried his best to remain away from acrimony and feud, because the critics were his one time disciples and he felt that the criticism was primarily on caste considerations. He was himself above caste, community and self interest. His faith in the virtues of moderation was admirable. Though he believed in the economic aspect of the Gandhian movement, he disapproved of its political objectives.

Madhusudan had begun his career as a teacher, for a very brief period though; and all through he posed as the teacher of the Oriya-speaking people, imparting them the lessons of nationalism, hammering them together to one nationality, inspiring them with the glorious incidents of history and emphasizing upon their intellectual development through education. He loved literature, music, academic discussions and had an irresistible fascination for the students and students’ organisations. He never shunned any request from the students. The ‘National School’ of Gopabandhu Das at Satyabadi evoked unstinted admiration from his critical mind. Himself an intellectual giant, he could spot out easily the spark of genius in any man he had the occasion to come across.

Madhusudan was the maker of modern Orissa. His achievements and limitations can be correctly assessed through a historical perspective, because he alone served as the stimulating force behind the historical developments of Orissa during the most formative period of 19th and 20th centuries. Any nation would feel justifiably proud of such a great man.

7.14 For a fair deal for Orissa peasants

Madhusudan was returned to the Bengal Legislative Council for the third time in 1909 and continued as a member till the creation of the new provinces of Bihar and Orissa in 1912. This term of his membership contributed a memorable chapter to the legislative history of Bengal; nay, of India in as much as a Bill on Orissa tenancy duly passed by the council was refused assent by the Governor-General. Lord Hardinge, under pressure from the lonely yet powerful opposition of Madhusudan, an acknowledged expert on the agrarian affairs of Orissa.
Though Madhusudan was born in a feudal, aristocratic family and as an intellectual had no living contact with the peasantry, he was passionately committed to their well being, and both professionally and politically left no stone unturned to safeguard their best interests. There were two causes particularly dear to the heart of Mr M.S. Das, " writes Sir Huge McPherson, Acting Governor of Bihar and Orissa, one was the welfare of the cultivating ryot and the other was the independence (separate statehood) of Orissa," Sir Hugh continued: " Although he was the retained legal adviser of many Orissa chiefs and zamindars of the Moghulbandi, he never wavered in his support of the cultivators right,". In the usual, accepted parlance, Madhusudan was no slogan-mongering progressive; but his economic thought had a breath-taking sweep of radicalism beyond the ken of his contemporaries.

In fact, his was the earliest strident voice raised for the abolition of the zamindari system, which according to him was alien to Indian traditions.

At a time when the Orissa Tenancy Bill was on the legislative anvil in the Bengal Council, Madhusudan, in a memorandum submitted to Sir William Duke, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, on behalf of the Orissa peasants analysed the evolution of the zamindari system as prevailing in Orissa and irrefutably established the fact that it was an innovation of the Moghuls and was unknown to the Indian traditions, prior to Moghul rule in India, Throughout the ages land belonged to the ryots who enjoyed inalienable ownership rights over the land they tilled, so long as they paid the rent. Relying on the authority of the ancient Smrutis, Madhusudan said, " As the hunter’s claim was irrefutable on the game he killed, so the right of the peasant was inalienable on the land he tilled and the crops he raised.

Even under the Moghuls, the zamindars were considered not more than mere revenue-collectors on behalf on of the state, and though entitled to a portion of the revenue, on that account had no proprietary right over the land and the land always belonged to the ryots. In 1773 the British through the notorious Permanent Settlement had created a set of intermediaries on
permanent basis, which had given a new orientations to the zamindari system. That system was partially introduced in Orissa, after the British has conquered the country in 1803. But since then, the Permanent Settlement had proved a failure and in the light of actual experiences, the Permanent Settlement System had not been extended to Madras and other provinces, where the ryotwari system continued to prevail.

It was only natural justice that, the ryot having unfettered rights over his own plot of land, could sell, exchange or otherwise dispose it of without let or hindrance. Land being the only medium of exchange in a predominantly agricultural economy, most of the times, necessity compelled every ryot in want to sell, gift or exchange his occupancy right to tide over his to temporary difficulties. Under the circumstances if he was not permitted to apply his own free choice in the matter of purchase and sale of his property, he was sure to be a loser in the bargain. But the Orissa Tenancy Bill (1811) put much oppressive restrictions and obstacles on the natural way of the poor ryot in the matter of transfer of his occupancy rights. Clause 13 of the Bill provided that “every transfer, by sale, gift or exchange of any tenure or a portion of tenure... shall be invalid unless made with the consent of the landlord.”, knowing fully well that the landlords consent was difficult to obtain, as he had made it an established source of his income by insisting upon an exorbitant rate of mutation fees. The landlord or zamindar utilized this power in forcing the ryot to transfer his occupancy right to zamindar’s henchman or kith and kin at a throwaway price. Thus when the poor ryot in his anxiety to tide over his temporary difficulties came to part with his occupancy rights in lieu of a fair, competitive price, the landlord pounced upon him to demand his pound of flesh, and the cut, more often than not, was bloody and big.

The Orissa Tenancy Bill sought to lend its seal of approval to this vicious process of exploitation and give legal sanction to an illegal practice. The Bill in Clause 14, provided for registration by the landlord of certain transfers of tenures on payment of mutation fee, which varied from two to twenty-five rupees. Besides this enormity the Bill sought to impose certain odious
provisions on the ryots, hitherto unknown to the agrarian system of Orissa, and were based on the Bengal Tenancy Act, which was unsuitable to the Orissan conditions,

Explaining his opposition to the Bill, Madhusudan wrote in the 'Letter to the Editor' column of the Statesman (dated November 13, 1912) of Calcutta.

In fiscal and agrarian history of Bengal, Orissa occupies a unique place, having features essentially different from that, which distinguished the rest of the province. Notwithstanding the fact that the Bengal Tenancy Act was not suited to the conditions of its own, the Revenue Settlement of Orissa was made under that Act. The application of foreign law must disturb agrarian relations and vested rights and throw everything out of joint. This is a validation Bill giving legal sanction to an illegal action.

Notwithstanding Madhusudan's opposition to this iniquitous Bill both in the council and the the Press, it emerged out of the select committee, without any change, In a note of dissent to the report of the select committee, Madhusudan observed that the Bill was the result of "an ignorance of social forces and influences which control agrarian relations in Orissa and an utter disregard of local opinion, both official and non-official, as to the adaptability of the Bengal Tenancy Act to the conditions of Orissa, in the eighties of the last century."

Thus while the fate of the Orissa peasants was hanging in the balance in the Bengal Council, annulment of Bengal partition and cession of Bihar and Orissa from Bengal partition and cession of Bihar and Orissa from Bengal Presidency to form a new province came as the deus ex-machina. Madhusudan grasped the declaration to plead in the Bengal Council or postponement of further consideration of the Orissa Tenancy Bill as a new council for Bihar and Orissa was about to be constituted. As the government of Bihar and Orissa would be entrusted with the working of the Orissa Tenancy Act, he argued, it would be fit and proper for the Council of Bihar and Orissa to consider the Bill.

Notwithstanding Madhusudan's consistent opposition at every stage, the Bill was rushed through in the Bengal Council under pressure from the big
zamindars of Bengal, who had considerable interests in Orissa. The Bill was passed into an Act on March 27. But thereafter the Governor-General withheld his assent to the Bill under the plea that the new province of Bihar and Orissa was to begin its course from April 1, 1912.

Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, recorded this unprecedented legislative event in his reminiscences in the following words.

Just before I left Calcutta an awkward and unpleasant incident occurred. My carriage was at the door and I was saying goodbye to my friends, when the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal brought me the Orissa Tenancy and Mining Law passed by the Bengal Legislative Council on the previous day and asked my assent to it. Now in four days time, Orissa was to be separated from Bengal and embodied in the new province of Bihar and embodied in the new province of Bihar and Orissa and it was fairly evident that the Bill had been rushed through the Council with a view to getting it passed before the change of provincial boundaries in order to meet the interests of the Bengali landowners, which I knew to be considerable. As it was contrary to my practice to give my assent to a measure, which I had not had an opportunity to consider maturely and in view of the objections mentioned above, I refused assent after consultation with my legal advisers...There had been no instance of a Viceroy withholding his assent to a Bill for a great number of years.

The Viceroy's refusal to assent meant in effect postponement of the Bill for consideration afresh in the new Council of Bihar and Orissa, for which Madhusudan had pleaded so eloquently and effectively so that the Oriya ryots could get a fair deal!

7.15 Defender of lost causes

"Hon'ble member has well earned for himself the title of Cato of Bengal Council. You will remember that it was said of the great philosopher that the victorious cause pleases the gods, but the losing cause was dear to Cato". in such words a Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Bourdillen, had eulogized Madhusudan on the floor of the Bengal Council.
But in the causes that Madhusudan has lost germinated the hopes and fulfillment of the future. In the assembly of conservatives and liberals, his radicalism at times was entirely out of harmony and thus beyond acceptance; but nevertheless, Madhusudan was a radical among the diehard conservatives. Though in his political thinking he was too much of a constitutionalist and pleaded for orderly progress towards self-government through constitutional methods, his views on social and economic matters were marked with a high degree of radicalism. In many respects, Madhusudan was clearly ahead of his time.

Though Madhusudan was ever vigilant of the special problems of Orissa and acted as her spokesman in the Imperial Council, momentous national issues never escaped his attention. He participated in most of the important debates in the council and made valuable contributions to its deliberations. Though strictly a constitutionalist to the point of being misunderstood at times as a loyalist, Madhusudan never hesitated to criticize the government in the bitterest terms, when occasions arose. Speaking on the need for industrial development of the country, Madhusudan said in the course of a Budget speech:

As a study of the history of the past has led the people to believe that the decadence, decline and the present wretched condition of the industries in India are due to a great extent to the insalutary influence of British rule... That is the feeling of the weaver who has taken to the plough leaving his loom; that is the feeling of the artisan whose hand stands paralyzed today. That is the feeling of the artisan's son who took to English education with a view to get employment as a clerk, but failed to secure such employment, and that is the feeling of an old man (referring to himself) who has associated intimately with artisans during the last quarter of a century and has noticed their struggle for existence... I do not wish to go into the details as to how and under what circumstances British influence exercised an insalutary influence over Indian industries... That may lead me to exhume the bones of the people in authority who exercised their influence and position and authority to bring about injury to the interests of India and such dead bones turn living human beings into dogs. Long before the
concept of public sector and nationalized undertakings, etc. had been heard of, Madhusudan pleaded for state-management of railways, speaking on a resolution on the subject, Madhusudan said.

I ask, Sir, is the railway system in India to be managed merely on the ground of profit and loss? Is it actually a commercial business? Have the railways no other purpose to serve? We have been told that to remove the present system of management would kill competition. Is the management of the railways in India to be thrown open to world competition? .... What would it be if a German company undertakes to work is on cheapest lines? Sir, mere financial considerations should not outweigh other considerations. for which it is the duty of the State to maintain railways... The dominant motive ought to be something other than commercial. We have had experience of commercial motive dominating over other more important motives in the case of the East India Company and we know how objects of a nobler nature, which are more befitting the position of a government, were sacrificed to commercial motives.

Nothing was nearer and dearer to Madhusudan’s heart than the expansion of the frontiers of the local self-government bodies like the district boards and the municipalities and redeeming these institutions from official control. Speaking on the need for electing a chairman for the district board, Madhusudan said:

These district boards send their elected representatives to the council. Yet the district boards standing mid-way between the provincial councils and the local boards have not the power to elect their own chairman. As a matter of fact, the vice-chairman very often does the duty of chairman and while he actually bears the burden of the work, the chairman, the magistrate, gets the credit for it, and it is not likely that non-official gentlemen will find sufficient inducement to take up the work.

Apart from such other issues of general importance, Madhusudan specifically addressed himself to the special needs of Orissa, which he consistently described as a sub province. He had moved separate resolutions in the council for opening a port between Chandbali and Short’s Island, as the
existing ports a Puri, False Point and Chandbali had been rendered unsuitable to serve commercial and navigational purposes. About Puri, Madhusudan said, in course of a speech, "At present it imports only diseases and exports the sins of the Hindus who go and bathe there." He did not, however, fail to remind his audience that the British rule and had ruined the prosperous ports on the Orissa coast and had said: "the ancient history of Orissa, if referred to, will show that Orissa had several ports to carry on trade with foreign countries, long before the advent of the British Government." He also pleaded for extension of railways in Orissa and urged.

Not to open up a country is to keep the people in confinement, shutting out the light of heaven from them... And not only the railways promote trade, but they also serve the purpose of circulation and what circulation of blood is to the system, that railways are to the prosperity and growth of country. If a part of the Body does not share in the circulation, of course, that part suffers from regions in India are concerned.

Though by nature courteous, civil and urbane, Madhusudan could be extremely hard-hitting and pungent on occasions when confronted with swollen-headed prejudice and insolence towards Orissa on the part of men in authority. In fact, his very first experience in the Imperial Council was not a pleasant one. The commerce member, Mr Clark, moved the Indian Companies Bill in the council, certain provisions of which the Orissa Association considered harmful for the formation and growth of indigenous trading companies. Mr Clark, in the course of his reply, referring to Orissa Association's objection, said.

But Society is not yet perfect even in the Arcadian groves of Orissa, where there are rogues probably and swindlers who are able to rob the ignorant with impunity and are a far greater impediment to industrial progress than the trivial amount of troubles and expenses involved the complying with formalities imposed by the Bill. ... I fear the Orissa Association must go disappointed.

No doubt, Madhusudan returned from the council that day disappointed. But he had not forgotten Mr Clark's ungracious and uncalled for denigration of Orissa, on the floor of council. A couple of months later, while moving a
resolution in the council for allotment of increased recurring grants for
promotion of education and improvement of sanitation in Bihar and Orissa.
Madhusudan paid back Mr Clark in his own coin by saying:

Had the hon'ble member acquainted himself with facts showing to what
extent and with what result the Indian Companies Act has been worked in
Orissa, he would have come to a different conclusion. No doubt there are rogue
elephants in the jungles of Orissa. If the hon'ble member ever visits those
Arcadian groves on a sporting excursion, he may find his life in danger from
these rogue elephants, but the contents of his pockets will be safer than they
would be in Piccadilly Circus.” The innuendo was obvious. If the ‘
representative’ of the Orissa Association returned ‘disappointed’ from the
council chambers a few months ago, the ‘spokesman’ of the Piccadilly Circus
returned that day writhing in silent agony.

The lifespan of Madhusudan Das is synonymous with the history of Oriya
nation building. Truly, a dedicated and spirited soul is the chief architect of
modern Orissa, the symbol of Oriya nationalism and self respect. Though
physically lean, thin and emaciated he was endowed with a towering
personality, soul stirring oratory, heart touching patriotic poet and generosity
personified and a great humanistic to the core.

Madhusudan Das not only concerned himself with the political affair
of its people but also tried hard to strengthen economic nationalism challenging
the colonial exploitation and oppression of Oriya people. His pioneering role in
this regard included the economic upliftment of its people through resurgence of
cottage industries and other dynamic measures and establishment of cooperative
agencies. The great organizer, Madhusudan Das spent almost a fortune in Utkal
Union Conferences for rousing the dormant national consciousness of Oriya
people. His solitary effort for industrialization, advertisement of products of
Orissa in the world market, establishment of orissa Art wares, Utkal Tannery
and his astuteness in maintaining the quality of Orissa products made him a
legend. He believed in epochal words of scriptures “work is worship”, which
he tried to implement in all his walks of life till he breathed his last. In his
indefatigible style of functioning marked by dedication, truth, selflessness and sacrifice he was exemplary and second to none. He was never a loyalist of the British Empire though he openly appreciated their good qualities and deprecated their bad qualities. His devotion to duty and dedication for the cause of Oriya people earned for him the Imperial title of Companion of Indian Empire (C.I.A) in 1904.

In his capacity as a legislator he was a political moderate, and believed in constitutional methods to bring independence to India. He raised issues like spread of education, women education, improvement in roads and railways, development of industrial potentialities, more representation of the Oriya people in the Legislative Council and Imperial Council. In the pages of history of its political, economic, and industrial development, the imprint of Madhusudan Das is indelibly bold and clear. He emerged as a mighty patriot. His life was dedicated for the cause of Oriyas, he lived for them and ultimately died for their cause. He life ended in bringing back the lost glory, prestige and rich cultural heritage of Oriyas. He was truly a polymath. In the words of Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, who adored him as an ideal, writes:

An intimate biography of Das will be studied with profit and interest not only in Orissa but in all parts of India. His career will show how it is possible for one man endowed with indomitable will, energy and courage to raise the level of his province and usher in a new era of hope and progress. He is rightly called the maker of a new Orissa; for this, generations of her people will cherish his name with reverence and affection. But Das was a mighty Indian nationalist first and everything else afterwards. And as such his career will be a shining example for all Indian youths to profit by.”

Madhusudan Das was truly a polymath, a prince among patriots, who decisively restructured the fortune of his people.
References

2. Joined on 27 January 1913.
3. Resigned on 8 March 1923.
5. Ibid., p.116.
   At the B.A. examination held in 1894, 29 candidates appeared, of whom only 7 passed. At the F.A. examination only 5 passed, out of 31. There was also a decrease in students’ strength - from 68 in 1894 to 59 in 1895.
13. He had sent his adopted daughter on his own expense to England for higher education with a view to engage her in spreading Female education in Orissa. The Girl’s School which she started at Cuttack did yeomanry service in the cause of female education.
14. Ibid., 1902-03, vide proceedings dated 4 April 1902.
15. Ibid., 1901-02, p.45.
16. Ibid., p.48.

20. For a full account of his speeches covering the entire career please see - N.K. Sahu & P.K. Mishra, (ed), Madhusudan Das, His Speeches (Ranchi, 1980).

21. Ibid., Section III.

22. Ibid., Section IV.

23. Ibid.


25. See Supra., p. 166.


26. Letter of Mr. M.S. Das to Mr. H. Wheeler, the Governor of Bihar and Orissa, dated Patna 7 - 8th February 1923.

27. Letter of Mr. M.S. Das to Mr. H. Wheeler, the Governor of Bihar and Orissa, dated 9 March 1923.


29. Letter of Mr. M.s. Das to Mr. H. Wheeler, the Governor of Bihar and Orissa, dated Patna 8 March 1923.

30. Suryanareyan Das, Desaprano Madhusudhan oriya, Cuttack, 1971), p.498; Supra, p.190


32. Ibid., p.74.

33. Ibid.; Also see, The statesman. 2 March 1901.

34. Nabakishore Das, Madhusudan Das (Oriya, Cuttack, 1951), p.70-90.


(ii) For the Letter of M. Gandhi to Mr. M. S. Das dated 12 August 1925.
Please see Surendra Mohanty, Kulabrudha (Oriya, Cuttack,1978), p.279.

39. The Oriya, 10 April 1918.
40. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Formed in 1913 with Madhusudan Das as the Secretary.
Nabakishore Das, Madhusudan Das oriya, Cuttack, 1951) P.184
Also, Suryanarayan Das, Utkalmani Gopabandhu, (Cuttack,1975), PP.175-83.
44. Ibid.
45. To the tune of Rupees 10,00000/-.
46. Nabakishore Das, Madhusudan Das (Oriya, Cuttack, 1951), P.76.
47. Suryanarayan Das, op.cit.,p.264.
48. Ibid., pp.238-265.
49. Supra, p. an.
50. Braja Sundor Das, Rajo. of Kanika, B.N.Mishra,
Bar-at-Law, Sudara Charan Naik, Laxmidhar Mohanty, Bhikari Charan
Putnaik and Bhubanananda Das etc.
52. Visited on 23 October 1931.
53. Government of India Resolution N0.F. 12/VI/31
18 September 1931.
54. O'Donnell Committee Report, Chapter I.
55. Utkal Dipika, 11 June and 30 July 1932.
56. Harihar Hahapatra of Cuttack, B.K.Patra of Jeypore:
Both later became the Justices of High Court, Orissa.
57. Utkal Dipika, 6 August 1932.
58. There would be a huge deficit of Rs.35.21 lakhs:
O'Donnell Committee Report, para 81.

275
59. They opposed on account of the possibility of heavy taxation on poor peasants to make up the deficit.
   Utkal Dipika, 18 June 1932.

60. Samaj.


62. Utkal Dipika, 18 March 1933 and 1 July 1933.

63. See S.N. Rajguru Papers(O.S.A).

64. Proceedings, Home - Public, 1/44/1933.


66. The Joint select Committee on India’s Constitutional Reforms (1933-34) Vol.1, part I, para 62, P.36.

67. Ibid.

68. Proceedings, Home - Public, 214/1933 (N.A.I).

69. Ibid., Notes, p.10.


71. Ibid.

72. The Orissa Administrative Committee Report (1933), para-3.

73. Sir John Hubback’s Letter to Mr. M.S. Das, dated Cuttack, 17 October 1933.

74. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Life of Madhusudan Das as seen by my Eyes p.9