PREFACE

This study examines the period between two crucial phases (1930 and 1942) of the national struggle in the context of Orissa. Precisely, it is in this time span that the mass movement vis-a-vis colonialism not only consolidated itself as in the CDM (1930-34) but, importantly, climax in the Quit India movement. The period was also marked by the structuring of left forces and the increase in their ideological weight in the movement. Moreover, the period saw the broadest participation of the peasants, tribals and the oppressed marginal sections of society in the anti-imperialist struggle. This study also tries to deal with the inter-relationship between the peasantry and tribals, on the one hand, and the mass movements in the colonial context, on the other.

This work attempts to read in the context of Orissa the complexities of the anti-colonial processes in their nature, depth and variety of patterns which informed the struggle for India's independence. The processes, specified as anti-colonial, were informed with the ideology of anti-colonial resistance, and thus crucial, being the product of the central contradiction of colonial India i.e. the Colonial State pitted against the interests of the whole of the colonised people.

The historiographic framework of both neo-colonialists and a section of left-scholarship disclaims the legitimacy of such processes though with different understandings. In the scope of the present study, references can at least be made to Judith M. Brown (Gandhi and Civil Disobedience: The Mahatma in Indian Politics, 1928-34) as representing of the neo-colonialist trend. This school emphasises the ' patron-client' theories of the Congress or harp on the factional politics of the Congress, grossly denying the existence of colonial exploitation and basically denying any ideological orientation of the movement.

1. In the type of understanding expressed in the initial attempt of R.P. Dutt (India Today) and ranging to Sumit Sarkar (Popular Movements and Middle Class Leadership in Late Colonial India: Perspectives and Problems of a History from Below), Gyan Pandey (The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh 1926-34: A Study in Imperfect Mobilisation); and the 'subaltern' histo-
our view, the inter-relationship of the twin phenomena of colonialism and nationalism needs to be located in the Indian context in so far as the colonial state was sought to be overthrown by the national movement which evolved its strategy in the whole course of the anti-imperialist struggle. The strategy which got evolved was based on the comprehensive understanding of the nature of colonial state. The latter being 'semi-hegemonic' and 'semi-suppressive' in character, the nationalist strategy accordingly got structured taking into account the "specific history of (subject) people and their psychology". In other words, the situation of imbalance, flowing from the very reality of an armed enemy (colonial state) confronting the militarily poor subject people in the colonial situation, dictated the shape of the nationalist strategy in terms of prolonged efforts at internalising a counter anti-colonial ideology among the Indian people. This was a process of generating the confidence among the masses politically and ideologically and to draw them into the vortex of national struggle. It was in this long drawn out process that colonial hegemony was equalled (Gandhi-Irwin Pact 1931), countered (Congress Ministry 1937-39) and finally defeated (Quit India 1942). Thus, the nature of Indian national struggle being a hegemonic one, it led to a much longer time frame than the short and swift course of an armed struggle. Viewed from this...

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angle, the historiographic analysis in locating 'the Gandhi/Congress/bourgeois leadership's vacillation, conciliation, retreats, and co-option' throughout the movement misses the real import of a hegemonic struggle.3

Based on this understanding, this work explores both mass [in terms of Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) and Quit India] and non-mass movement phases of the struggle to evaluate the viability of the strategy in both the phases, in terms of its potential for building a mass-imperialist movement. In fact, the non-mass movement phase of struggle under the given strategy was defined in terms of constructive activities and also by constitutional-political exercises by the leadership. A fuller treatment of this aspect of the movement awaits its recognition as an important area of research by historians for a coherent understanding of the national movement. This work tries to fill up the gap in this respect, to a certain extent, in the context of Orissa. Similarly, our treatment of the Individual Satyagraha of 1940-41 attempts to adjudge the viability of the strategy in the context of war and the attendant Defence of India Rules.

The study of Congress Ministry assumes importance because as part of the strategy of the movement led by the Congress, it defined itself in terms of expanding the base of the movement through ameliorative-agrarian legislations. It was aimed in the main, at the expansion of nationalist hegemony and at the same time avoiding co-option into the imperial structure as envisaged by 1935 Act.4 In fact, the Ministry was utilised as another arena to weaken the colonial hegemony. The specific popular linkages were sought to

3. Ibid., pp.11-12; The hegemonic struggle is typical of the Gramscian situation of 'war of position'.

4. Sumit Sarkar, Modern India, 1885-1947, p.351. Sarkar characterises the functioning of Congress Ministries as a steady shift to the Right, occasionally veiled by left-rhetoric. Our study does not accept this to such characterisation.
be created through the Ministry and thus to revitalise the Congress after the withdrawal of CDM.

This work also deals with the peasant/tribal/state peoples movements in Orissa during the mid-30s. In this connection, we have suggested that placed in the context of the radical ideological transformation of the movement through the activity of Nehru, Socialists, Communists, etc., these movements assumed militant postures. Additionally, the Congress Ministry helped to generate the space for the emergence and spread of such movements.

One of the continuing themes of this work has been its effort to read the patterns of popular response/internalisation to any kind of political/ideological initiatives of the leadership.

The sources for the study are, as far as possible, wide-ranging. In fact, apart from using already used traditional sources, extensive use of Home Political and revenue records, such as the districtwise fortnightly reports, intelligence reports/letters/notes/speeches and the writings/poems/booklets/diaries/pamphlets, etc. of the participants of the struggle has been made. Besides, many regional as well as national newspapers and old journals are also used. We have also used interviews with the grassroot participants of the struggle, though it has not yet been possible to incorporate the views of all the interviewees (nearly 80) in this work, due to paucity of time and space. We hope to do it at a later stage.

On my part, any acknowledgement of gratitude through words to Prof. Bipan Chandra, who has supervised this work, will not suffice here. It is he who, in fact, generated my early interest for the re-reading of the social history of Orissa, way back in 1982. Subsequently, the long-term critical interaction with him has in a major way, gone into the making of this work. While allowing me absolute freedom to pursue my ideas, his consistent encouragement and valuable criticisms have made me think coherently and correct my
inconsistencies pertaining to this study. Despite a very busy schedule, he has read out the bulky drafts with patience and kindness at the final stage of this work. This has not only given an otherwise scattered body of ideas a necessary focus and direction, but crucially enabled me to stick to the deadline of the submission of the thesis.

I am extremely thankful to Profs Mridula and Aditya Mukherjee, Prof. K.N. Panikkar and Prof. Bhagwan Singh Josh (CHS, JNU) for comments on my earlier drafts as well as discussions on wide-ranging themes on modern Indian historiography, which have influenced and enriched my understanding on various issues. Similarly, I would like to thank Prof. Tapan Roy Choudhury (Oxford) and Prof. Bishnu N. Mohapatra (CPS, JNU) for providing insights into my reading of the nationalist literature of Orissa.

I am greatly indebted to the staff and members of Orissa State Archives, Bhubaneswar, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, National Archives, New Delhi, J.N.U. Library, New Delhi, Utkal Sahitya Samaja Library, Cuttack, and Sahitya Akademy Library, Delhi for their co-operation and instant help during the prolonged stages of my research work. I am equally grateful to the UGC, for providing me one year's Teacher Fellowship which greatly facilitated the completion of this thesis.

Though it is not possible to mention here all the names of the people in various districts of Orissa who spoke to me at great length regarding their participation in the national struggle, I would like to admit that their description of events or recitation of poems and above all their language of politics have provided a certain vigour to the thesis. In particular I am extremely grateful to Late Mr. Raj Krishna Bose, Late Mr. Sarat Patnaik, Mr. Guru Charan Patnaik, Mrs. Malati Devi, Mr. Sachi Routrai, Mr. Man Mohan Choudhury, Mr. Man Mohan Mishra and Mr. Govinda Mohanty to quote only a few of the names.

I must thank my wife Krishna Nanda for directing my attention to many valuable Oriya poems and reading out the
meanings of some of the critical Oriya texts for me without which some of the views incorporated in the thesis could not have taken shape. Besides, my son Samyak in his characteristic sweet disturbances, at times has removed few pages from my handwritten drafts; this has almost made me re-write those pages but effectively with a new look.

I am very thankful to my friends, Lata Singh (Maitrayi College, New Delhi), Salil Mishra (IGNOU, New Delhi), Subrat Mohapatra, Rajib L. Sahoo (Archivist, NAI) and Anil Kanungo (Editor, IIFT) for sharing the many responsibilities associated with the final submission of the thesis.

Finally, both Mr. Man Mohan Mohanty and Mr. Om Prakash deserve my special thanks for typing out the drafts in time and so well.

The responsibility for errors remains mine entirely.

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