CHAPTER – III

English Education and Indigenous Education in Orissa
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The first school in Orissa imparting English education was established in Cuttack in 1822 by the Christian Missionaries about twenty years after the British annexation of Orissa in 1803. It was possible due to the relaxation of control over missionary activities in India. Before the Government started taking interest in education in Orissa, the missionaries had prepared their field.

They were the body of people who had an extensive involvement in literacy work throughout India. There was a powerful religious impulse behind it also. In their own country, they were swayed by a motive to show light to all. In the nineteenth century, there was an increase in literacy in England. R. K. Webb says, “Clearly a powerful religious impulse contributed to the wide spread establishment of schools. George III had expressed a wish that he might see every child in his dominion able to read the Bible”.1 The same motive inspired the missionaries in Orissa. The Colonial Government established a number of commissions to survey the state of indigenous education in India before going to take any step in the establishment of a new system of education for the people of this country. Nevertheless, the missionaries were opening their own model schools without having an attempt to study the roles of indigenous schools in the life of the Indians. The indigenous centers of learning were not going to cater to the latter’s religious need at that time. For them, the modern schools were meant for religious instruction.

They established a charity school at Cuttack in 1822 where English was taught for the first time. Besides teaching rudiments of English language, i.e. the alphabets and grammar, they taught the Bible. The first learners in this school were the children of company officers and the converts from the Bengalis who had come to serve in Orissa under the Company Government. Until 1828, there was
not a single convert to Christianity in Orissa.² The Missionaries learnt the vernaculars for their benefits and introduced religious teaching. They hoped to promote education as a preparatory to the reception of the Gospel. Though in the beginning they taught only Christian literature, later they had to shift their attention to secular subjects like History, Geography, Elementary Mathematics, Natural Sciences etc. They had to follow the policy of the Government not to directly interfere into the religious life of the people. So surreptitiously, they offered the bribe of education. The government entered the field late, in 1835 by opening a school at Puri, which according to the British was 'the citadel of orthodoxy'. It was closed in 1840 for the indifference of the inhabitants of the town, "which consist(ed) of the priests of the temple of Jagannath, to whom knowledge of the shastras is (sic) more profitable then that of the English language".³

There was no idea of a school in the modern sense of the term. School, as such, is a term, very peculiarly, conceived by the Europeans. The word 'school' means the 'Institution for educating children'.⁴ The British conceived education as taking place in an 'institution' meaning a building with divided spaces marking one class of students from another as well as teachers from students. There were fixed positions or designations of the teachers who taught regular classes in certain subjects. The students' progress had to be regularly examined to measure their acquisition of fixed bodies of knowledge. The end of the process was marked by prizes and certification, which attested to the students' command of a specific body of knowledge.

This system of schooling was absent in the indigenous education prevalent in Orissa. No one can deny the fact that this country had a wide spread system of indigenous learning, which was both elementary and scholastic. The chatsali or pathsalas were the elementary schools that existed in the villages of Orissa. From the life history of a number of neo - literates we come to know that imparting of learning was not confined to the specific institutions. Any one could
have started a school in his own household or in a rich householder's establishment to teach the four R's namely reading, writing, arithmetic and religion. Hunter says,

Here and there, indeed a pandit taught a few lads Sanskrit in a corner of some rich land holder's mansion; and the larger villages had a sort of hedge school, where half-a –dozen boys squatted with the master on the ground, framing the alphabet in the dust and repeating the multiplication table in a parrot-like sing song.  

Here he seems to be prejudiced against the indigenous system of education. His mis - conception is also vivid from the statement, “Any one who could write a sentence or two on a palm leaf passed for a man of letters”. The thing was not as it appeared to the colonial masters or scholars. As the goal was not to achieve a certificate or degree, there was no such exhibition of pedantry. The purpose to learn the skills of reading, writing and counting was served by the so-called ‘hedge-schools’, which were found in a number of villages. It was already said that any educated person could start a school. There were the abadhanas or the itinerant teachers too, who went from one village to another. Gangadhar Meher, the famous Oriya poet, write in his autobiography that his father (who was a weaver) started teaching him the alphabets and than Namaratna Geeta. Gradually a few other children from his village came to learn with him and his father had a chatsali of his own then. Madhusudan Das, one of the architects of a separate province of Orissa, had also his primary education from the chatsali of his own household.

These indigenous schools were not structured like the modern schools. There were no formal sitting arrangements for the kids. In the absence of blackboard, the teacher had to write the alphabets and numerals on the mud floor. The pupils went on writing it upon the same by repeating in a 'parrot like sing-
song’. "The mud wall, served the purpose of memoranda tablets and diaries, where the teacher record(ed) enactment and accounts". This is what Madhusudhan wrote in his incomplete autobiography about the mud-wall. There was no fixed syllabi, no fixed amount of fees collected from the pupils or no fixed amount of salary paid to the teachers.

The traditional system of education had been criticized for being monopolized by the higher castes. It might have been the case in the medieval period. However, in the nineteenth century, as Phakirmohan says, ‘Children of the untouchables also attended schools, though they sat a little away from the cast children’. Though women had no access to these centres of schooling they received education from the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, Jagannath Das’s Bhagabata inspired the Oriyas, irrespective of caste, creed and sex to learn Oriya in order to read this great book. The credit of uniting Oriyas in the segregated parts of Orissa, from the 15th century, goes to the Bhagabata of Jagannath Das. In the preface to ‘Typical Selections from Oriya literature’, Bijay Chandra Majumdar had rightly said:

*It can be unhesitatingly said that by producing Bhagabata in Oriya, Das has motivated all the classes of his race to learn their mother tongue Oriya. This book of Jagannath has been building a moral life of the nation. Bhagabata in Sanskrit is the holiest book of the Hindus. When people came to know that such a book was available in Oriya, they started learning the language. That’s why the literacy is widespread in Orissa than in Bengal.*

Inspite of this widespread primary literacy, Hunter remarked in 1870, that throughout the length and breadth of the province, with its population of two and a half million of souls, all was darkness and superstition. But in 1835, Adams was convinced that the system of village schools was extensively prevalent
throughout the country. The people appreciate the value of learning as a training for life's work. Sir A. Croft specifically highlighted an independent system of indigenous education system in Orissa:

The indigenous system of education was, from time immemorial, in extended operation in Burdwan Division. It used to supply gurus (teachers) to other parts of Central Bengal before the system of department supervision began. Orissa was quite independent of Bengal in this respect and had its own national system of education which was probably more far reaching in its influence than even that of Bengal. In Bihar, on the other hand, there was no widespread indigenous system and therefore no tradition among the villagers leading them to the general and ready acceptance of education when offered. In these parts, we have to break new grounds, instead of raising a slightly different crop in soil already prepared.¹⁴

There was an opinion that Orissa was far more advanced in education than many a Christian country of the world during the period concerned. E. Roer, the first Inspector of Schools for Orissa division mentioned in 1857-58, that there were many tols or higher schools in which pandits (scholars) were educated in Sanskrit lore.¹⁵ However, education in those schools was based on tradition; dull, monotonous and unscientific old texts.¹⁶ According to the report of J.G. Medlicott, another Inspector of Schools, in 1862-63, there were numerous indigenous schools in Orissa.¹⁷ From a report of the commissioner of Orissa division in 1873, it was found that, only in Cuttack district there were 1927 indigenous schools in which about 14,727 pupils were learning. In this context the Commissioner remarked that Orissa in comparison to the other districts of Bengal had the highest literacy rate, although many a learned were ignorant in the use of paper, they wrote legibly on palm leaves.¹⁸
The above remarks show the importance of education in the traditional set up of Orissa. The indigenous village schools or the *pathsalas* satisfied the particular needs of the people of all the sections of the society. The Brahmins (the priestly class), the *Karanas* (the clerical class) and *Kayasthas* (the commercial class) and the agricultural classes had their rudiments of practical knowledge from these *pathsalas*, which was also known as the *chatsalis*. Obviously, these were the elementary schools widespread in Orissa. Not only the three R’s but the four R’s, the fourth one being Religion, were systematically taught to children. The Vernacular or Oriya was the medium of instruction there. Moral teaching through religious texts/discourses was imparted to the mass. *Bhagabata Ghara*, a community centre in every village was serving that particular purpose. This community centre played the role of a powerful ideological apparatus to educate the Oriyas. It had been serving as a school, information centre, meeting – place and a public library. This was the centre, which played a great role in igniting the spark of nationalism among the Oriyas dispersed in different provinces under colonial government. Jagannath Das’s *Bhagabata* along with a few other literary works in Oriya existing at that time was serving a unifying force for the emotional integration of the Oriyas.

Inspite of all these, the Missionaries and the company servants portrayed the Oriyas ‘as the most orthodox and the most ignorant of the Hindu provinces of India’. Amos Sutton remarked, “Doubtless as to all the main features of their existence, the Oriyas are nearly the same as were their ancestors hundreds and perhaps thousands of years ago”. Such a remark often shows misconception and lack of experience. The following statement of Stanley bears a testimony to that, “The Oriya, as I have found him, as particularly polite in small ways. I have expressed this opinion to several, and I have always heard that Oriya is a rude and stupid brute”. There is a clash in the personal experience and the rumors in this statement. Such confusion might have misguided Hunter, Sutton and many a company servant. The cultural and linguistic gaps were so big that the
customs, rituals, costumes, behaviors of the Oriyas might have appeared peculiar, strange and barbaric to the western observer.

Interestingly, the British did not have a very healthy atmosphere in their own country in the first part of the nineteenth century. Schools were there which taught reading, while some went on to teach writing and other secular subjects. R. K. Webb writes:

_The great majority of schools were, of course, poor enough. Although most children in England, except in some of the worst areas, must have spent some time in school, few stayed long enough to get a really solid grounding even in the rudiments. Great many learned to read. Some forgot; many more always found reading difficult._

Mr. R. P. Singh estimated that England had about 40 percent illiterates in 1850s and as against the few the mass of that society was leading an inhuman and bleak life. This was not true of India. The villages still had their _tol _schools and the class oppression was in its infancy. These _tol _schools were playing a great role in India in the succession of a literacy tradition from one generation to another. Where the indigenous elementary schools were fulfilling some practical objectives, the _tols _were imparting purely literary instructions. The _maktabs _and the _madrasas _in different Muslim villages had a satisfying role in providing the elements of Arabic, Persian and Urdu literature as well as Islamic learning to the Muslim children. Even the Hindus were interested to learn Persian at the time of Muslim rule. This tradition of Persian learning was still in vogue when the British captured Orissa. Persian was the court language and the Hindus learnt it for getting jobs. As there was a powerful motive behind the learning of Persian so also of English. Both the languages were foreign to the Indians. However, some kind of political and utilitarian motives inspired them to learn these. However, there were no such prospects related to the learning of the vernacular, it had been restricted to
the elementary levels. No body could have felt or thought a system of higher education in the medium of vernacular. Nowhere in India had ever been a thought given in that direction. Everywhere higher education was in Sanskrit. Later, both Sanskrit and Persian inspired advanced learning in different branches. Therefore, the vernacular i.e. the Oriya, in Orissa, remained in the elementary level of pedagogy. The reading and writing in Oriya and a rudiment of arithmetics were, enough for a literate man. That was enough for him to read a little of vernacular literature rich in mythological subject matters and to carry on business correspondence. As there was no specialization, it was suitable for every variety of vocations. No question of status had been involved into that. There was no vanity involved in being more qualified than anyone. The scholarship that the society valued much was concerned with higher Sanskrit education. That was highly qualified and restricted to the higher caste. The mass had nothing to do with that.

As the education imparted in these indigenous schools was secular in nature, they had no link with any religious motive. The vocation of teaching was not restricted to the higher caste Hindus. The teachers were the men of inferior castes. They were the wandering teachers seeking a job. “The majority of teachers were Karana by caste, but a few,” according to Phakirmohan Senapati, “were mati – vamsa -ojhas. The later were famed locally for their skill in arithmetics. They were reputed to know the Lilabati Sutra, a treatise on mathematics by Bhaskaracharya. Some teachers also belonged to the astrologer class”. In 1869-70, Inspector Martin reported that the teachers in these schools were Naiks and Mahantis by caste. The Oriyas preferred to send their children to the Naiks than to the Mahantis. The teachers had to inflict a terror in the mind of the pupils. Much had been said about their slovenly methods and harsh discipline. It has been criticized for providing minimum of good results with maximum of hardships. Phakirmohan in his autobiography has given a list of punishments meted out in a traditional Oriya school. Sometimes the teachers punished the pupils for no basic reason. Gangadhar Meher also mentioned that harsh discipline in his village
school created a fear in the heart of the guardians and the students. The teacher was a despot in his own territory. The parents had nothing to say against it. They took it for granted that physical punishment was a part of the system. They heartily believed in the aphorism, 'spare the rod and spoil the child'. With strict discipline, the students had to learn the lessons of punctuality, regularity, obedience, sincerity, hard work etc. There was competition among the pupils in all the matters of the school. There was no scope for a child to absent himself from the school even for a single day. The teacher had such a status in the society that inspite of his lower caste he could have an access to the household of any high caste Hindu. The teacher was no doubt the sole authority, but in his absence, the monitor or the best pupil took the charge of instruction. He was known as 'barachata' or the head boy. F. P. Graves says, "It was from India that the idea of monitorial system was first obtained by Andrew Bell and others before them". Before 1833, as R. K. Webb points out, 'in England the schools of the National Society of the Established Church and the British and Foreign School Society of the Dissenters were based on the monitorial system, whereby older students taught the younger children, a scheme recommended by its cheap solution for the shortage of trained teachers'. This system had its own advantages and disadvantages. The pupils had to stay in the school for the large part of the day. They had to spend years in order to get just the rudiments of the vernacular.

The indigenous system of education has often been criticized on this ground of harsh discipline and the long tenure of a pupil's staying in the *chatsali*. The point to be marked here is that emphasis had been given on the student's capability to remember. The learners must learn thoroughly so that the matter should not slip out of their mind as soon as the school days were over. Such an emphasis was also due to the absence of printed books and any other modern method. Adams gives a very detailed account of the scheme of discipline inflicted upon pupils in the indigenous schools of Bengal and Bihar (Orissa was a part of that).
The scheme of discipline may be truly characterized as a reign of terror. Kindness, patience, generosity, love—all were alike unknown in the schools. Fear was the first and last and the only motive brought into play; caning was the most normal punishment, while open palm and clinched fist were also vigorously applied to the back, cheek and the head. Other indigenous modes of punishment were also followed. The pupils regarded the school as a sort of dungeon or grievous prison house.

This situation has also been mentioned in the autobiographical sketches of several of the nineteenth century educated Oriyas: Nilakantha Das, Phakirmohan Senapati, Godavarish Mishra, Madhusudan Das. However, they never had any detest for the system. Their autobiographies are full of memorable reminiscence. The teachers were not hard hearted (of course temporary cruelties were there) they were often generous and loving. The propounders of the child-centred modern education may take the system satirically but they forget that Charles Dickens in his novels (see Hard Times) had openly portrayed the inhuman attitude of the teachers towards the pupils in the schools of England. Of course, there was no scope to give better direction for the unfolding of an individual talent. Though the texts like Bhagabata of Jagannath Das, Ramayana of Balaram Das etc, were taught to the pupils, they were not taught as the books of religion. The children learnt the verses by heart. These were not interpreted and explained to them. They were never inspired for the critical analysis of literature. As the teachers were of lower castes, they had no right to interpret any thing dealing with religion. Due to these limitations, they had no scope to implant and nourish the traditional ideas of right and wrong. Lack of proper analysis tended to narrow the minds of the literates in the traditional set up. Their interests were confined to their narrow circle where they could be satisfied with their limited needs and limited means. In that way, this system had a very peculiar merit also. It checked the creation of a privileged minority who could show their influence over any
particular occupation or trade. Here we understand the reason why a middle class did not exist in the pre-British time. The *varna* system had set the priestly class, martial class, trading class and the untouchable in their respective places in the society. In a true sense, there was no public spirit that could enhance zeal in them to be united at least for some material gain. Those aspects of European society, which helped there in the emergence of a middle class was totally absent in India, especially in Orissa. Manipulation of wealth by the rich, exploitation of the workers both in the factories and in the agricultural field, controlling of law by the privileged class— all these things were not visible in the traditional set up of Orissa. So the growth of a middle class in the background of Industrial Revolution was unique in the context of European countries. The middle class, who emerged in India, was on the foundation of English education and western ideas.

A racial or national consciousness, in every country, has given birth to a middle class. Truly, 'consciousness and assertion of one's cultural identity is a modern phenomenon' and in India, 'it began with colonialism'. So Subhakanta Behera says, 'identity originates from the conflict between 'self' and 'otherness'. From a comparison with their neighbours and with the colonial masters, the Oriyas became conscious about their identity. It was fostered by the English education with its comparative, analytic and critical study of literature and science. Such facility was absent in the traditional pattern of indigenous education. Consequently, there was no change for the evolution of a privileged middle class.

Of course, there were other causes behind the checking of the emergence of an important class. The Brahmins, no doubt, had the supremacy in the social order. In Orissa, as else where in India, Sanskrit education had been given in the *tols*. The learners were the Brahmins. The kings and landlords, in a few cases, sent their children for Sanskrit learning to these *tols*. The pupils were taught grammar, *Kosh* (lexicology), *Karmakanda* (rituals), philosophy, poetry, rhetoric and astrology. Sterling's account says that Sanskrit education was
imparted in the mathas on both side of Baradanda, the road in front of the Jagannath Temple, Puri. Even in gadajats (princely states) the scholars in the royal households imparted Sanskrit learning. These institutions in the pre-British time depended on the patronage of the rulers or the members of the aristocracy. In Orissa, as in other parts of Bengal and Bihar, the gradual decay of higher learning was due to the decline in the position of the old aristocracy as a sequel to the immediate effects of the permanent settlement. Another cause of this decline was the apathy of the Brahmins even towards Sanskrit education. Although, Hunter comments on the monopoly of education by the Brahmins, it does not cater to the historical reality. Though elementary education was wide spread in Orissa, higher education was restricted to a very few. At the time of the British ascendance of Orissa, the Brahmins had developed a lethargic indifference to higher learning. They were satisfied in receiving that much knowledge, which could help them to perform the rituals in their day-to-day life. As this learning was bereft of scientific rational study, it was blended with superstition. Consequently a number of evil systems entered the social life and spoilt it. There was no sufficient reason found to justify the indifference of the Brahmins towards scholarship of high order. It was most probably due to the absence of royal patronage. We can better understand it from the account given by Phakirmohan Senapati about the Brahmins in Nilgiri state, a princely state in Orissa, “Being provided with sufficient tax-free land for their subsistence, the Brahmin beneficiaries led lives of care-free ease. Their minds were completely innocent of scholarship. In the whole of the Raja’s domains there was not a single Brahmin who knew Sanskrit.” At the Raja’s expense, he tried to set up some Sanskrit schools for the Brahmin children. However, due to their ignorance of the benefits of learning they rejected his proposal out right. This apathy was also felt when the Colonial Government tried to attract their attention towards the English education. Of course in the first trial, the colonial masters did not introduce English as a substitute to Sanskrit, because they knew that Sanskrit was the symbol of Indian culture. The Anglicist-Orientalist controversy on the selection of a medium of instruction had already
alarmed them not to go against the Indian sentiments. Therefore, the Government encouraged native learning. At the same time they went on making a field for English education. In the first college established at Puri for modern education, there was the provision for Sanskrit learning. But this institution proved altogether unable to, make headway against the tide of ignorance and bigotry” says Hunter. The Brahmin’s reaction against English education can be understood, but they were also against Sanskrit education provided in a government institution. As a protest against it, they also took government schools as the centres of conversion. In 1866, a Sanskrit school was established at Puri by a famous Sanskrit scholar Harihar Das. The orthodox Brahmins looked down his modern outlook. They did not send their children to his school for the fear of losing their religion. They could send their children to mathas, where Karmakanda (rituals) were taught or could provide them with Sanskrit education from a private tutor.

When we judge this state of mind of the Brahmins we cannot be surprised to find that there was not a single Brahmin student in the English school established at Puri in 1853. Even after the 17 years of establishment of Puri Zilla School there was not a single Brahmin boy going to have English education. For them English learning was similar to a conversion to Christianity. As a reaction in 1860, a Brahmin who was appointed to the ‘orthodox’ post of Sanskrit teacher in Puri school was excluded for a year or two from the brahminical order.

Investigation reveals that this degeneracy was due to the decline of quality education in Sanskrit. It was due to the long succession of Muslim regime in Orissa in which the Brahmins felt neglected. Scholarship was not encouraged in the field of Sanskrit whereas Islamic learning was patronized. Persian being the court language inspired both the Muslims and the Hindus to learn it. It was considered an accomplishment in a gentleman and a passport for employment.
Now, it is rightly felt that there had been obvious reasons for the downfall of the Sanskrit learning.

The Colonial Government was very much shrewd to play a game of divide and rule. From the very beginning of the history of English education in Orissa the British showed extra concern for the Muslims. Therefore, they followed a generous policy of special encouragement to Muslim education by the adoption of various measures of liberal concession. At the end of the 19th century, most of the centres of Muslim population in Orissa were well supplied with schools. There was scarcely an important Muslim village in Orissa, which was not within an easy reach of either a secondary or an advanced primary school. What was done for all classes benefited them alike. In respect of educational facilities, the Muslims of Orissa were in a better situation than the other sections of the population.39

When the Brahmins were reluctant to government institutions, the Muslims welcomed those wholeheartedly. In 1844, the vernacular ‘Hardinge School’ in Mahanga in the district of Cuttack was closed. The Muslims in Mahasingpur invited the proposal to establish it in their own village. It proved that the Muslims were not against government schools. It was such a critical phase in the history of Oriya people that the admission into a government school was taken seriously. But strangely enough, there was no hesitation in the part of the Hindus to learn Persian and Urdu in a maktab or madrassa.40 The Oriyas had abhorrence for the government-established schools. Out of fifty-eight students from Orissa reached up to the entrance stage in 1868, only ten were native Oriyas.41

Inspite of the reluctance of Oriyas, especially the Brahmins, the Government exhibited its concern for the people by establishing schools for both Oriental and English studies. The Sanskrits tols numbered 68 in 1893 at Puri, Cuttack and Balasore district. Of the tols, the advanced were Puri Sanskrit Tol established by the Maharaja of Balarampur, the Sri Ram Chandra Tol in Balasore
and the Ganja Tol in Cuttack. The Education Commission of 1882 recommended that all indigenous schools, whether high or low, should be recognized and encouraged if they served any purpose of secular education. The recognition and encouragement of indigenous schools, therefore, became an essential part of the education system of Bengal. Sanskrit education was encouraged in tols by rewarding the pupils and pandits under a system of payment by results. Thus the tols were improved and brought under departmental supervision. But no attention was paid to organize the village pathsalas having provision for teaching of Sanskrit. The numbers of tols in Orissa decreased from 78 in 1922 to 57 in 1927. But the gradual decay in the popularity of Sanskrit as well as Persian was visible from the following fact. A decrease in the number of Mohammedan students and the lessening popularity of Sanskrit as a subject of study resulted in the abolition of the posts of a Professor of Persian and a lecturer in Sanskrit in 1922.

It was due to the increase in the popularity of English education that Sanskrit education faced serious problem. The increase in the number of tols under the government control was problematic. They imparted a form of education which, whatever its merits it might have, made it difficult for the students to obtain remunerative employment. Consequently, English education was gradually attracting people by providing opportunities for jobs as Sanskrit education was loosing its importance.

It was gradually realized that the indigenous education was narrow and impractical. It did not help the students to use their eyes and ears nor did it provide them with useful information of the world they lived in. The practical utility of the elementary education was very much restricted. The concept of nationhood was thus completely foreign to the people. But Oriya identity was there from a very early time. Subhakanta Behera says that "It was there even at an early period. It was not the Oriya elite of the period invented the Oriya identity question, rater they only refashioned and restated what existed earlier."
Nevertheless, the education they received in these indigenous schools was not entirely futile. Their sphere of inquiry and thought might be narrow but the subjects were intensively taught. As there was a stress on memorizing, they achieved a mental discipline. Though Hunter criticized 'the repetition of multiplication table' as a dull and monotonous work, others had appreciation for it. Sir Richard Bourton praised this system by saying that their chief merit lies in the noise of repeating aloud, which teaches the boy to concentrate. There was much stress on remembering the subject matters taught to pupils. So the most prominent feature of traditional education, in Orissa as in other parts of India was the training of memory. Even long after writing was introduced; religious literature, history and technical knowledge were handed on orally from one generation to the next.

Reliance upon memory does not mean that there was no use of texts. The texts were there, but not in the form of printed books. The teachers variedly used manuscripts as texts in the chatsalis. Of course, there were no graded textbooks like the modern ones. The gradual emergence of a textbook culture based on printed books marked a significant change.

The British seemed to have a dislike for the oral system in the indigenous set up of learning. But the modern examination system is also a memory system. The long tenure of a pupil in his indigenous school helped him to give complete devotion to master a subject matter. No course was confined to an academic session. In fact, there was no fixed course to complete whatever manuscripts available were given to pupil for recitation. Jagannath Dasa's Bhagavata, Balaram Dasa's Ramayan and Sarala Dasa's Mahabharata were the most widely instructed texts throughout Orissa. Mathuramangala, Lavanyavati, Namaratna Gita, Vaidehisha Vilasha and a few others were also taught in some of the schools. There was a great value assigned to the great epics. The importance
was because they were for all alike, for the literate and illiterate, men, women uniting them in a common culture. It is this national culture which the modern education ignored and tried its best to destroy. The moral education that an Oriya received from the epics and vernacular literature was of high order. It was a culture transmitted from one generation to another for centuries before the British came to Orissa. However, as Hunter reports, ‘the missionaries had, by schools and printing press introduced a new culture and a new literature in to the district capitals of Cuttack and Balasore’. This new culture did a lot of harm to the native Oriyas.

The colonial interest behind the introduction of English education was to impose it upon the subject people. If we accept it as a historical accident, it means that we have received it as inevitable. A colony cannot be saved from the imposition of the intellectual and political identity of the colonizer. Educational growth is an index of the people’s satisfaction and easy acceptance of it. The educational experiments that the colonial master carried out in the different provinces of British India and became successful show the willing acceptance of this new system by the people.

The British experience with the Oriyas in the Paik Rebellion of 1817 made them indifferent to the Oriya interest. In the first few years of their stronghold in Orissa they did not carry out any plan according to the policies laid down for the Indians. On the other hand, the bitter experience of the Oriyas with the foreigners for centuries made them reluctant to the benefits derived from a new system of education, which had already shown its impact in other parts of India. There was a big gap between the ruler and the ruled. Where on the one hand the proselytizing task was going on, on the other hand the government was facing a lot of administrative hurdles due to the ignorance of the people, as the other had no experience of the documents like minutes, written, circulars and dispatches. They did not comprehend the meaning of these documents. Though there were the use
of pharmans or written circulars at the time of Mughals, those were intelligible to people. But at the time of British, the rulers faced many problems to convey the message to the people. So there was the need of a literate subject. The English realized the necessity of modernizing by means of Western type of education. They understood that to establish a wide administrative framework in this country there was the necessity of training a few in the western method of office works; there was the need of producing clerks in this land. This aim was stated by Macaulay in his famous minute of 1835.

However, we should not always judge the development of education through these minutes and dispatches of the government officials, or through the proceedings, records and reviews of the progress of education. There were the practical necessities to fulfill and difficulties to overcome. Sometimes, it has been realised that these documents did not reflect the needs and aspirations of the people geographically separated from the main centre of political activities of India, i.e. Bengal. The period was such that the geographical distance between Cuttack and Calcutta was a big one. The road communication was very poor. The gradual diminishing of the physical and intellectual distance marks a significant change in the attitude of the rulers as well as of the Oriyas.

We have already discussed the progress of education in Orissa both in quantity and in quality from 1822 to 1936. Here we are concerned with the concept of modern education as differentiated from the traditional indigenous system of education existing in Orissa. From varied experiments, the colonial masters understood that the English language should not substitute the vernaculars. At first, there was an intention to provide western science and literature in English. In their established English schools, they wanted to diffuse the improved arts of science, philosophy and literature of Europe. English was the medium of instructions in those schools. The vernacular was taught in a separate department. In several administrative documents the content of English literature
appears to include the entire field of writing and is distinguished only from sciences. In Macaulay's Minute, 'literature' means English language that includes works of imagination, historical compositions, moral philosophy, political economy and science.

As it has already been pointed out, the missionaries had no botheration to teach a variety of subjects. They had to follow certain yardsticks in the educational mission. There literature included the fables, parables and allegories related to Christian teaching. But after Bentick's resolution they had to teach some other subjects like history, geography, science and arithmetic. We often talk about the emergence of a 'babu-culture' from the English schools. The missionaries themselves protest that they had no interest in anglicizing the Indians. They assert, "We have carefully avoided everything that might anglicize the converts. We have made no change in their dress, their names, their food, their language or their domestic habits".53

Here they sound very much hypocritical. The irony is that it was from their institutions the 'babus' came out. Though the British policies aimed at making clerks, the missionaries had no such intention. The missionaries' way of instruction was quite different form the government schools. Much stress was laid on dictation and handwriting in English in the government schools as the emphasis was on clerical jobs. On the other hand, the missionary schools gave stress on the content for they were preaching the Gospel in the name of education. Both the missionary and the government schools served as ideological apparatus to inculcate new ideas into the traditional minds. A language always serves as a powerful medium to transmit ideas of the people who use it.

The little education that the Oriyas received from the English schools made them fit only to be employed in the subordinate offices. They were miserably paid and were denied any authority. Financial difficulties and desire of
getting a little power taught them the art of exploitation. When the occasion arrived, they took bribe. The mischief may appear to be confined to a microscopic minority, but it created an unhealthy tradition concerning the scope and object of education and gave currency to a new view of worldly success.

Gradually it was felt that, there was an opposition to the traditional cultural practices. Western education made the Oriya babus snobbish towards their own people and traditional things. The cultural difference between the orthodox and the modern educated became wide. Phakirmohan said,

*Our newly educated have studied all the really important matters in this world. They will be stumped, of course, if you ask them their great grand father's name, but they have the names of all the ancestors of England's Charles III. But then if you study English and French literature, you are entitled to call yourself educated, whereas to know anything of your culture or that of your neighbors is completely unnecessary.*

The glamour of the new learning blinded the neo-literates to the merits of the old. Consequently, they lost their loyalty and reverence to the old. However, we must not ignore the serious result of an alien system of education by an alien group of teachers, who had no sympathetic inclination towards the culture of the Oriyas. These teachers played a great role in the formation of a new culture in Orissa. Inside the modern class rooms of an English school they implemented the policies, interpreted the English texts and shaped the pedagogical practices through which they could engage themselves in the construction of a new concept of gender, caste, religion, race, nation as well as the opposite concepts like traditional and modern, colonial and indigenous etc. The formation of a new ideology was a part of the colonial politics behind teaching English literature and other western subjects. Due to the impact of English literature a new process of
rational inquiry started. The modern teacher inspired his pupils to look into the
matters with a new perspective. The docile, meek, innocent, passive and introvert
Oriyas started inquiring and became rebellious. For the first time, he started a
comparison between man and woman, an evaluation of the class order based on
varna system, a search for a racial and national identity. For most people in
Hinduism, religion meant only an unending series of rituals and practices and
ceremonies. Religion, as a source of moral purity and spiritual force, exercised
little influence over a large section of the common people. The process of
'creating a class of Indians in blood but English in taste and habit' was initiated in
the English schools. The first output in the form of 'babu-culture' was
disappointing. However, the gradual changes in the attitude of the educated were
there. The remarkable effect of English education was first manifested in religious
and social ideas, but in the next phase, it affected the national consciousness of the
people.

Life in India, more then in any other country, has been dominated by
religious forces. So the impact of English education was first felt in the religious
aspects of life. As the first reaction was rebellious, it was like fighting against
one's own kith and kin. There was total rejection of the religion following the path
of conversion or a reformation of religious beliefs. Of course, this phase was
transitory. The spirit that revolted at the tyranny of priesthood later raised its voice
of protest also against the oppression by the colonizers. O'Malley observed, “Now
the classes educated in English did not, as rule, give up there traditional ways of
life and habits of mind, but used western learning improving there own culture and
adapting it to the new impulses created by contact with the West”.55

There was no such radical changes brought through the
establishment of Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, Prathana Sabha in Orissa, but
immediate impact of these movements was felt here. Phakirmohan Senapati tells
us how some Brahma preachers came to Orissa in order to influence a number of
educated people. Ironically 'at that time in Bengal, even the most venerable of the Brahma servants were not immune to the temptation of liquor.' So Senapati and others decided to establish a separate Brahma temple at Balasore. Madhusudan Rao, the author of the first Oriya primer was one of the greatest followers of Brahmoism in Orissa. Through him, this new ideology started influencing the neo-literates. Madhusudan had a long connection with the department of education. For about 35 years 1873 to 1908, his important role in this field has already been discussed. His primer had been significant from the point of view of presenting his spiritual worldview in small verses. In this manner, the role of Brahmoism could be felt. Like Christianity, Brahmoism was a missionary religion and was trying to convert people. Somehow, in the context of Orissa, Brahmoism had also been treated as an alien influence. We can find very few converts in both the cases of Christianity and Brahmoism in Orissa.

Missionaries, being the pioneers of modern education adopted new methods in changing the outlook of the Oriyas. Although their field works had been inspired by the cause of Christianity, yet they had to do a lot of public service to motivate people to accept the transformation. Their original motive was to preach the Gospel. So in their attempt to translate the Bible into the regional languages they initiated the process of updating and standardizing the Indian scripts and languages. The Missionaries gave impetus to modern prose literature in Oriya as in other Indian languages. The enlightened Oriyas were later encouraged by the government to translate and write books in vernacular on the different branches of science and European learning. Pearimohan Acharya wrote the first history of Orissa in Oriya. Phakirmohan Senapati, Gourishankar Ray, Govind Rath, Bichhanda Pattnaik, Radhanath Ray, Madhusudan Rao and a few others played significant roles in writing textbooks in Oriya in order to help the vernacular in the modern set-up of schools. They wrote books on different subjects like local, national and world history, local and national geography, mathematics, geometry etc. The methods of writing history and geography were
new to the Oriyas. History, in the modern sense of the term had not yet been written. What ever had been written were in the form of romance, ballad and mythology? For most of the Oriyas the two great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata were nothing but historical truth. The modern historians took the help of the ‘Madala Panji’, the annals preserved in the Jagannath Temple to construct history in Oriya. It is true that these manuscripts were not written for the sake of writing the national history of the Oriyas. But the information regarding the kings and the events related to their reigns throw a light upon the past history. In 1822, Sterling took the help of ‘Madala Panji’ and first wrote a history of Orissa.\textsuperscript{57} Other historians like Toynbee, Hunter, Rajendralal Mitra etc. had also derived historical knowledge from it. Interpretations of inscriptions and scripts were very late affair in Orissa.

The English introduced the new phenomenon of compilation of dictionaries, philology, criticism, comparative study etc. in the field of literary study. Systematic study of science and philosophy was started. Pupils were imparted the rudiments of physical education, physiology and hygiene, nature study, drawing etc. in the primary schools. The Missionaries saw the harmful effects of teaching English for its own sake, without any reference to morals or values. So critical study was introduced. They had to follow the secular policy of the government. Government took steps for checking the Missionaries from their overemphasis on conversion. The Colonial Government had the worldly motive to teach Indians ‘the business of life’. Therefore, they had different educational goals for the higher class and the lower class people. They thought that it was impossible to educate the masses in English or European thought even in translation. Thus, the colonial motive was “not to translate European works into the words and idioms of the native languages but so to combine the substance of European knowledge with the native forms of thought and sentiments”. The European intelligentsia had clear-cut knowledge about the fact that a language bears peculiarities of a people and conveys the cultural significance of the same.
The usage of a people cannot translate the thoughts of a foreign people. This process may be difficult in the first phase of cultural transmission, but not in the later phases. So whatever Adams proposed in the above statement was a safe approach to the new acculturation process. Consequently, the method of translation and interpretation was introduced. The Missionaries had a fear regarding the interpretation of English literature to the people in Orissa. They were doubtful in making the Oriyas comprehend the Bible and the other Christian literature. For them English literature was the source of high intellectual order and 'native' mind was not fit to receive that. Therefore, in the beginning of this proselytizing or acculturation process the Missionaries taught their pupils by reciting a portion or other from the Bible or other religious books without explaining it. This was like the same old method of rote learning in the indigenous schools. The same problem arose even when textbooks were introduced. These textbooks were available, at first, in translation made by the Missionaries. As many of these textbooks were far removed from the cultural contexts of the pupils, they were not intelligible to them. As such rote learning was the consequence.

The printing press had come to play a significant role in the transmission of this culture. Printing even at the early stage was not merely a service industry but a powerful ideological tool for the colonial state apparatus. Very soon, the connection between the printing press and the educational institution was established. Related to the textbook culture no one can deny the role of ‘Schoolbook Societies’ both in Calcutta (established in 1821) and Cuttack (established in 1866), which came up for improving the condition of existing schools and printing textbooks for them.

Before the ‘Schoolbook Society’ was established in Cuttack, Calcutta ‘Schoolbook Society’ provided books for the schools in Orissa. No doubt, there was a scarcity of textbook both in English and in Oriya for the pupils. There were no fixed courses of studies for the schools in Orissa. Different schools had
different books to be taught. Gradually textbooks were provided in low cost to children. Printed textbooks started taking the central place in the modern education system. It altered the existing pedagogical practice. The centrality of the textbook also changed the entire nature of the educational institution. It introduced a wholly new apparatus – the agencies of the prescribing authorities, fixed syllabus and an examination system based on the prescribed textbook. A web structure was formed where a new generation of teachers were trained to teach these texts. A provision of inspection and supervision was introduced. The modern teacher was no more enjoying the autonomy, which the indigenous teacher had. The teacher had to follow the guidelines prepared for him and was responsible for the school administration not only in the local level but also in regional or even higher than that. The teacher, above all, was responsible to the text, which he had to teach. These textbooks really changed the face of the modern education system. There was a gradual change in the attitude of the people. Growth of education since 1869 had given a deathblow to the excessive influence of caste. The Brahmins who were reluctant to English education came to feel that in the changing modern social pattern they had to receive English education. Though in the first phase there was no such public awareness yet here and there a few individuals started taking interest in education and in the jobs offered by the English. The most prominent group that showed enthusiasm to learn English for the sake of material benefits was the Karanas. They were the people who showed their promptness in availing any sort of opportunities at the times of the Mughals and the Marathas too. Their quick response even at the beginning of Company rule is quite noteworthy. The Karanas, along with the Brahmins, were the non-landed elites who had no other choice but to receive education for earning their livelihood. In reality, there was no such private endeavor in the field of trade and commerce by the Oriyas. Though Oriyas had shown such kind of entrepreneurship in the medieval periods, there was a decline in the national character of this race in the nineteenth century. The Karanas belonged to the Vaishyas i.e. the commercial class in the third rung of the varna system. But there was no such attempt in the
field of trade and commerce. There was no proof of any industrial adventure by the Oriyas. But their quickness in receiving English education gives an explanation to their behaviour.

Another important fact needs to be highlighted is the failure of downward filtration theory in Orissa. The noble class i.e. the kings and the Zamindars did not show their enthusiasm for western learning. There were two major causes behind it. First of all, the concept of ‘useful education’ had no meaning for them. Those who were in search of job opportunities they were in need of English education. This was a monopoly of the middle class – neither poor nor rich –non-landed traditional elite. For that reason, the indigenous ruling class did not feel attracted to it. On the other hand, the bitter experience of the permanent settlement kept them away from English people and English learning.

The British could have taken apology for keeping their subjects ignorant for some time but they did not want to rule over the ignoramus. They thought that the ‘native’ would be grateful to them for giving the latter a ‘civilized’ education. So inspite of a number of hurdles they tried their level best to encourage the Oriyas by giving a number of incentives to provide English education. In these early years the Government did not have thorough understanding of Oriya’s standard of living, their choice of occupation and their approach to a system of education alien to them. Consequently an experiment of trial and error started. Keeping in view the economic condition of the majority of people, the Government took some liberal steps in providing comparatively higher education to the poor students. There was the provision of scholarship. The government was trying to encourage the meritorious students of the Cuttack School by awarding them prizes in the shape of books and cash after the annual examination. Employment was also promised to the meritorious students, who because of their poverty left their study in search of government jobs. Gradually, the Colonial Government realized that ‘without any worldly prospect the progress
of education was impossible'. F. Gouldsbury, the commissioner of Orissa, suggested to the Revenue Board that if employment in the government offices would be assured to the educated natives, the parents would gladly send their children to the schools.61

In 1854, the Education Dispatch of Charles Wood introduced some new schemes like the improvement of mass education, female education, inspection and supervision and the training of the teachers. All these were the novel experiments in India. But it was really unfortunate that the Dispatch produced no immediate result in Orissa. Inspector E. Roer reported in 1860, "It is to be regretted that no new educational operations can be carried out, for Orissa is at a disadvantage as compared to other district".62 Despite this apathetic attitude the growing demand for English education increased. E. Roer reported, "There is now a demand for schools even at places where there is strong religious bias against innovation of any kind".63 He referred to places like Puri and Bhubaneswar where people were gradually inclined towards English education. Even the temple priests of Puri were found to have applied for the admission of their children.64

Orissa during the early phase of colonial administration confined to the three districts of Cuttack, Puri and Balasore. The other Oriya speaking tracts were in the three neighbouring provinces. The progress of education in these tracts was very limited. The state of education in the district of Samblapur according to L.S.S. O’Malley was like this:

Sambalpur is one of the most backward districts in Bengal in respect to education largely, it may conjectured, because a considerable proportion of the population is composed of aboriginals or semi­original, who are poor, ignorant and indifferent to the benefits of education.65
A few sons of rich families of the town had already had the taste of western education so there was a growing demand for that from these neo-literates in the district. ‘Western education had its beginning in the district with the foundation of the Zilla School at Sambalpur in 1852. It was originally a Middle English school and was converted into a high school in 1885’\textsuperscript{66} A few more schools ‘village primary schools’ grew due to the local endeavor and government policies.\textsuperscript{67}

This was the period when local effort to establish schools were encouraged by the government through the provision of grant - in - aid policy. This provision had been utilized as a diplomatic game played by the government to check the educational and intellectual growth. In order to get the grant – in – aid, the private schools must have certain norms. In that way, these schools could enjoy only a very limited freedom to achieve their goals. On the other hand, it seems that the government did not want to give the responsibility of imparting English education to the ‘native’ people or otherwise they intended to prove that the ‘natives’ had no capability to control the institutions designed by the English. In the guise of showing a positive attitude to the well being of people, they tried to satisfy their petty selfish interest. The British could not establish such a large number of schools with their own means and could not provide efficient teachers in these modern institutions. So there was the need of providing the schools with trained teachers.

The most revolutionary feature of the modern school system was the opening of Normal School or the teacher training school in 1863. For the first time in this province teachers were taught educational philosophy, educational psychology, educational methods etc. to make themselves equipped with such qualities that they could teach English literature and science and transmit an alien culture to their own students. It was really a very difficult task for the first generation of teachers. These teachers were the early victims of the politics of pedagogy in the years of British rule. As the English text was used in the colonial
situation as an instrument of social control, the modern teacher was in a great
trouble. He played the role of a catalyst for social change. Being trained in child
psychology, he was able to understand the pupil. It gave him a scope to inculcate
the ingredients of a different culture into the mind of the pupil. Even the
government planned to train the in–service teachers of the indigenous schools. By
inspiring the neo–literates to write books in Oriya the Colonial Government had
already started an acculturation process. By preparing the teachers to teach these
texts in the primary institutions, they filtered a new culture to move downwards.
The ‘textbook culture’ challenged the autonomy and creativity of the individual
teacher. The teacher was afraid of doing any kind of experiment on texts. After
1870, Goerge Campbell, the Lt. Governor of Bengal, made provision to reward
teachers on good results that was called ‘payment by results’. This system
brought a spirit of competition in the indigenous mechanism of education and also
organized all the indigenous schools in Orissa under a common principle. In
reality, the colonial administration could not take a risk for English education by
ignoring indigenous education wholly. They had to attract the good will of people
by showing their benevolence. When John Beams notified for people in the village
areas that if they were to construct houses for schools then the Government had to
bear all the expenditures of the management of schools. Due to such a liberal
policy, a number of schools were established in a few villages of Cuttack, Puri and
Balasore districts.

The establishment of Puri and Balsore English schools in 1853,
Sambalpur Anglo-Vernacular School in 1857 and five government schools at
different places of Ganjam in 1867-68 were due to the growing demand of people
for such schools. It was a sign of growing consciousness among the elites. The
commissioner reported in 1874,

There is more knowledge and education among the masses, more
trade and money in circulation, more employment at high wages for
the labourers, more moving to and fro in the country less stagnation and a divided tendency to enlightenment and progress. The progress of civilization may be slow, but it is nevertheless, sure and safe, because it is not rapid and revolutionary. 70

The above report was nothing but the expression of self-satisfaction. It seems as if the colonial masters’ labour was going to be fruitful. They had made the Oriyas instruments of their own improvements. There was a progress of civilization, slow but safe and sure. The gradual development of education was of course based on the changing needs of the people.

Gradually the discontentment became visible. Though there was an easy acceptance of English education but an uneasy feeling of being deprived of their own rights in their own land made the Oriyas irritated. Sentiments of hatred, defiance and hostility overtook the majority of people as a reaction against Bengali interference. The Bengali monopoly over different educational institutions and governmental jobs slowly made Oriyas hostile towards the Bengalis. Out of that mental state, a new consciousness emerged that Orissa was meant for the Oriyas. That led to a national awakening and language agitation and at last to a demand for the amalgamation of Oriya speaking areas resulting in the creation of a separate Orissa province in 1936. We must see that modern education with its assimilation of humanities, scientific, technical and vocational matters, created a hierarchy of the primary, secondary, collegiate and university education. Female education was encouraged, so was the minority education. There was no better scope for all these in the indigenous education system as discussed earlier.

There was still nostalgia for the traditional way of learning at the eve of creation of the separate province of Orissa. The natural atmosphere, parrot-like singsong, and teacher student relationship – all these had an indigenous call for the national way of life. Those who consider national growth and freedom movement
because of English education in this country, they also consider it as a failure of English education. English education served as a weapon at the hand of the Oriyas who used it for the self-defense.

Notes

6. Ibid. p. 144.
16. Ibid. p. 115.
23. Ibid. p. 205.
34. Quoted In M. C. Mahapatra, ‘Adhunik Sikshya and Odisa’ (Cutack, 1977), p. 86.

35. Boulton, J. V. (Trans) My Times and I, op. cit. p. 47.


38. Ibid. p. 148.


43. Annual General Administration Report of Orissa Division, 1892-93, Para 134.

44. Ibid. 1902 - 03, Chap – XIII.


47. Annual Report on Public Instruction in Bengal, 1895-96, Para 244.


Utkal Dipika, 22 September 1922, Para. 82.


51. Pradhan, N. N. (Published) Gangadhar Granthavali, op. cit., p. 390.


54. Translated and quoted from Phakirmohan Senapati, Chari Mana Atha Guntha (a novel in Oriya), p. 249.

63. Ibid. p. 122.
64. Ibid. p. 122.
69. Education Committee Report 1884 (Bengal Provincial Committee), p. 42.
70. Annual Administrative Report, Orissa Division, 1899-1900, p. 31.