

CHAPTER II

HISTORY

PREHISTORY

The state of Orissa may be divided into four major zones such as North, South, West and East and they have distinct physiographic features. The eastern zone is a coastal plain and the districts like Ganjam, Puri, Cuttack and Baleshwar may be taken as the areas of this zone. Due to the coastal geology, drainage, pedology and climatology the evidences of the remote past during the prehistoric period have been inadequately reported. However, the detailed micro-level surveys in the areas of the above mentioned districts have yielded some substantial evidence which support to establish the settlement, growth and distribution of early human cultures.

Basing on the geographic and geological conditions the district has been divided into—

- (a) The plain which includes the regions of Bhadrak and Baleshwar subdivisions; and
- (b) The hill which includes the Nilagiri subdivision.

Drainage and Deposition of Palaeo-relics

The district is traversed by three major drainage systems such as the Subarnarekha in the north, the Burhabalanga in the centre and the Baitarani in the south. The significant tributaries are the Jalaka, Kansbansa, Sona and Gangahara. The Sona mainly flows in the region of Nilagiri subdivision. Besides, there are several other small fluvial streams which are significant due to ancient pleistocene deposits. But due to deposits of deltaic alluvium the thin layers of calcareous sand and clays are very difficult to be distinguished. The blown sand drift along the coast of Orissa form sand hills which cover a considerable area from Puri to Baleshwar. It has been found that each range of sand hills mark an old sea coast and the sea has retired gradually and that the land has been raised at intervals and by interrupted movements. The raised beaches elevated above the present sea level contain molluscan shells of recent species. The gravel deposits of the rivers are associated with pleistocene evidence and cultural relics of early men. But the length of the rivers of the Burhabalanga flowing through the district of Baleshwar has been highly affected by recent alluvial and sandy deposits which pose a problem to examine the early deposits. But the study of the Burhabalanga at Baripada, Kamarpal, Mahulia and Pratappur in Mayurbhanj district shows that up to the sea the river deposited enormous quantity of silt from

remote past and as a result, a land mass was formed which was the bed of the sea during the tertiary times. Again the fluvial deposits are in rich association with palaeo-relics. The change in fluvial depositional compositions also indicate a change in cultural relic associations which evidently signify to justify the sequence of cultural morphology and gradual growth. Besides the deposits of the Subarnarekha upstreams towards the north of Baleshwar at Jamsola and Jharpokharia have been highly rich in association with pleistocene deposits and palaeo antiquities of prehistoric period.

Location of Mesolithic sites on the Drainage Burhabalanga near Baleshwar Subdivision

Kasaba

The site is located four kilometres away from Baleshwar town on the Baleshwar-Jaleswar Road. The site has yielded a few microlithic raw materials of black chert and some ceramic relics of antiquity.

Kantabania

It is located on the right bank of the river Burhabalanga on the Baleshwar-Jaleswar Road. Prehistoric relics have not been discovered, but some fragments of palaeo ceramics have been found.

Kathasangada

The site is located on the confluence of the Burhabalanga and the Sona. The site has yielded a large number of unfinished microlithics of quartz, quartzite and chert along with some ceramic relics.

Haladia

The site is located on the left bank of the river Burhabalanga. It is richly associated with the distribution of ceramic materials. No prehistoric tool has been recovered.

Location of Neolithic site in Baleshwar Subdivision

Darada

A neolithic axe was reported from Darada (Lat. 21°41' N., Long. 87°75'E.). The site is located in the Basta police-station of Baleshwar subdivision and 4 kilometres away from Basta-Baliapal road and to the east of Basta. The tool was recovered from a pit measuring 1.8288 metres (6 feet) below the surface. The site is filled with alluvial deposits. The sole implement could not be interpreted as a part of cultural concentration and may have been deposited through redeposition, transportation or secondary disposal.

Location of Mesolithic sites on the tributary Sona in the Nilagiri Subdivision

Balisahi

The site is located on the left bank of the river Sona and five kilometres away from the Nilagiri town. The site has yielded the raw materials of quartzite, chert and a few ceramic fragments. The finished microlithic tools include blade and flakes.

Tinidesh

The site is one kilometre away from Balisahi near the fair-weather road which connects Baleswar and Udala (in Mayurbhanj district). The site is associated with several ceramic relics.

Kans

The site is located on the left bank of the Sona. The surface is highly capped with silt deposition. No prehistoric tool could be located but the ceramic relics are sparsely distributed.

Kolhapal

The site is also located on the left bank of the river Sona. The chert stones are widely distributed in association with ceramic fragments.

Ayodhya

The site is located on the right bank of the river Sona. The surrounding region of the site has yielded a large number of ceramic fragments and microliths.

Palaeolithic

So far no prehistoric relic has been reported from the district. Bhadrak subdivision was completely free from such activity and the locality does not indicate any perspective for analysis due to substantial morphologic modification. The modifications are mainly for thick depositions of alluvial silts and marine actions. In the absence of any tangible evidence relating the lower palaeolithic culture in these localities, the probable cause may be accounted to habitational unsuitability during the middle pleistocene period. The problem remains unsettled until further works in the deltaic areas have been undertaken to investigate the details of palaeo-channel formations. The evidences might have been concealed under the sand-hill formations and any specific research made in this line in future will add to our knowledge about the lower palaeolithic complex in the district.

Mesolithic

A few evidences of microliths consisting of scraper, blade and bladelets indicate that Baleshwar and Nilagiri areas were probably suitable for the folk of this culture. Again, mesolithic folk introduced completely a new technology and new types of raw materials. The raw materials particularly the fine-grained rocks of chert, milky quartz and quartzite are plentifully available in the hills of Nilagiri and pebbles in the river Burhabalanga. These tiny tools were hafted in bone or wooden handles to make knives, arrow heads, spear heads, sickles, etc. Besides, scrapers of various types, borers, burins, truncated flakes and corer are also found. In the earliest phase of mesolithic culture the blades tend to be longer, wider and thicker whereas the proportion of geometric microliths is smaller. With the passage of time the bladelets became smaller and more symmetrical and the corers displayed improved workmanship. An analysis of the recovered materials indicate that the culture was introduced to the locality at a very late phase. The presence of bladelets appropriately suggest that the culture made its expression in the localities as the people of the culture made their temporary migrations due to seasonal impact or in search of available resources. The problem of its representation and distribution could not be explained properly as they are based on scanty evidence.

Neolithic

The sole evidence of a neolithic axe may be interpreted that the region of Baleshwar experienced the wave of neolithic culture. As the tool was ground and polished, probably at a later phase of the culture, the region experienced this cultural impact. It would be possible to reconstruct the culture on recovery of more materials from the area. But the minimal evidence suggests that the area dates back to remote antiquity from mesolithic to neolithic period.

ANCIENT PERIOD

The name Baleshwar is not known from any epigraphic or historical sources of the ancient and mediaeval periods. According to local tradition, the term is derived from the word, Baneswar, the famous *Sivalinga* of the town. Though phonetically such a corruption of the original word is possible, the authenticity of the tradition can hardly be vouchsafed from historical point of view. It is also surmised that Baleshwar is derived from the Persian words 'Bala O Shore', meaning thereby 'the fort on the sea'. However, it is certain that the modern district of Baleshwar was not a territorial unit in the ancient and mediaeval periods. It was included in different territorial units under different rulers at different periods.

Territorial Extent

The greater part of Orissa in ancient time was known as Kalinga. The *Mahabharata* gives an idea about the northern boundary of the territory of ancient Kalinga. That the Ganges formed the northern boundary of Kalinga can be inferred from the stanza in which the sage Lomasa standing on the confluence of the Ganges and the sea, spoke to the Pandava brothers:

“This is the Land, O Kunti’s Sons, where the Kalinga tribe dwell. Through it passeth the river Vaitarani”.¹

That Kalinga extended as far as the Ganges is corroborated by the writings of Meghasthenes² (4th century B. C.) and Pliny (1st quarter of the 1st century A. D.). Thus, the region of Baleshwar was included in ancient Kalinga which was conquered by Asoka in the third century B. C. and Kharavela in the first century B. C. It appears that after the fall of the Mahameghavahana dynasty, the empire of Kalinga began to shrink by the 4th century A. D.³ and it was confined to South Orissa and a part of northern Andhra Pradesh⁴. Baleshwar was then a part of another territorial unit, i.e. Utkal. In the *Raghuvamsa* of Kalidasa, Utkal is mentioned as a territory to the north of Kalinga. It says that king Raghu, after crossing the river Kapisa (modern Kasani in the Midnapur district of West Bengal) entered Utkal and there the people showed him the path to Kalinga.

By the end of the 6th century A. D., some copper plate grants refer to Uttara-Tosali or Northern Tosali.⁵ Utkal was then known as Tosali or Tosalia which was further divided into the northern and southern parts. The river Mahanadi appears to be the dividing line. The Bhaumakaras (A. D. 736—931) ruled over both the Tosalis. In the records of the Somavamsi kings the term Tosali has not been used. It was known only as Utkal. The term also occurred in the copper plate grants of the Gangas and denoted the whole of Orissa.⁶ Thus, the region of Baleshwar was included in Tosali, more particularly Uttara Tosali, and then in Utkal.

It is now held that the present name ‘Odisha’ (anglicised Orissa) has been derived from Odra, a geographical unit in the past. The earliest reference to Odra is found in the Soro copper plates

1. The Mahabharata Vanaparva, CXIV, 4.

2. Mc. Crindle, Ancient India as described in classical literature, p. 144.

3. Ibid, p. 137.

4. K. C. Panigrahi, History of Orissa, p. 5.

5. Soro Copper Plates of Maharaja Sambhuyasas (E. I. Vol. XXIII, pp. 197 ff.)

Soro Copper Plates of Somadatta (E. I. Vol. XXIII, pp. 202-203)

6. K. C. Panigrahi, op. cit., p. 7.

of Somadatta in the first half of the 7th century A. D., in which it is referred as a *visaya* or district of Uttara Tosali. In Hiuen Tsang's account of Orissa, Odra or Wu-cha is mentioned as a kingdom which extended from Karnasuvarna in the north to Kangoda in the south. Thus, the whole of modern Baleshwar was included in that territorial unit and continued as such under the imperial Gangas and Somavamsis.

Early History

With the victory of Asoka in the Kalinga War, the territories were annexed to the Magadhan empire. The new province was placed under a Viceroy bearing the designation of *Kumara*. Asoka paid special attention for its administration and divided it into two divisions with their headquarters at Tosali (northern division) and Somapa (southern division). As a part of the northern division, Baleshwar region enjoyed the benefits of the Mauryan administration. But no details are available about the Mauryan rule. In the first century B. C. Kalinga came under the powerful dynasty of the Mahameghavahanas. Kharavela, the third ruler of the dynasty, launched a career of conquest and aggrandisement and enhanced the glory of Kalinga. Baleshwar region had a share in it.

The discovery of the so called Puri-Kushana coins from different parts of Orissa has led some scholars to believe a period of Murunda supremacy over Orissa.¹ These copper coins were issued in imitation of the Kushana coin-types by the Murunda kings ruling over a part of Bihar and Orissa with their capital at Pataliputra. The Puri-Kushana coins have also been discovered from Baleshwar district. In 1912, the Collector of Baleshwar received about 910 such coins² and these are now preserved in the museum at Calcutta. Some coins also have been discovered at Baudpur near Bhadrak. It can, therefore, be presumed that Baleshwar region was probably under the Murunda rule.

The earliest inscription of the district is the stone inscription of Bhadrak³ which reveals the name of the Maharaja Surasarma. Palaeographically this inscription belongs to the 3rd century A. D. It records the donation by a pious lady named Raughali to goddess Parnadevati by special arrangement with Mahakulapati Agnisarma in the 8th regnal year of Maharaja Surasarma. He was probably an independent ruler. From the inscription it is obvious that the presiding deity of the present Bhadrakali temple in Bhadrak was popular in the name of Parnadevati in the third century A. D.

1. Ancient India, No. 5, pp. 97 ff., Journal of Numismatic Society of India, XII, pp. 1—4.

2. Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1924-25, p. 130.

3. E. I., Vol. XXIX, p. 169 ff., Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. XXXV, p. 327. This inscription is in the Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar.

In the 4th-5th century A. D., Maharaja Satrubhanja brought *Ubhaya-Tosali* as far as Tamralipti (Tamluk in the Midnapur district of West Bengal) under his political influence. The Asanpat Inscription¹ represents Satrubhanja as the most powerful ruler of his time who rose to prominence in Kendujhar region, and also extended his supremacy to the coastal region of Orissa. However, his supremacy over *Ubhaya-Tosali* in general and Baleshwar region in particular remained for a short period. It probably ended with his death. A hoard of 147 copper coins² has been discovered at the village of Nanduru near Gandibedha in the district. These coins bear on the reverse the legend *Sunandasya*. These coins belong to the 5th-6th century A. D. But the identification of Sunanda is a matter of controversy. He appears to be a local ruler who flourished after Maharaja Satrubhanja's expeditions.

The Jayarampur copper plate inscription³ (discovered from Jayarampur village in Bhograï police-station) mentions one *Maharajadhiraja* Gopachandra ruling over an extensive area around Baleshwar. The copper plate, issued in his first regnal year, records the grant of the village, Svetavalika by Mahasamanta Maharaja Achuta (a vassal king of Gopachandra) for establishing a 'Vihara' in favour of god Arya Avalokitesvara. It is believed that Gopachandra belonged to the second quarter of the 6th century A. D.⁴ There is no evidence to show that his supremacy or the glory of his dynasty lasted for a considerable period.

The Manas

In the last quarter of the 6th century A. D. the Uttara-Tosali came under the Manas. The Soro copper plates of Sambhuyasas⁵ and the Patiakela copper plates of Sivaraja⁶ throw light on the rule of the Manas. The Soro copper plates were issued in the year 260 Gupta era, i.e., 580 A. D. and the Patiakela copper plates in 283 Gupta era, i.e., 603 A. D. Maharaja Sambhuyasas was perhaps the founder of the Mana rule in Uttara Tosali. Nothing is known about his ancestry. The Soro copper plates record the donation of eight *timpiras* of land as well as 200 units of homestead land in the Ghantakarnaksetra (within Sarephahara Visaya, i.e., Soro) in UttaraTosali to a Brahmana Bharanasvamin of the Bharadvaja *gotra*. The Patiakela copper plates, issued by his feudatory

1. Orissa Historical Research Journal, Vol. XIII, No. 2, pp. 1—8.

2. Orissa Historical Research Journal, Vol. V, pp. 157—159.

3. Ibid, Vol. XI, No. 4, pp. 206—233.

D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Vol. I (2nd ed.) pp. 530-31.

4. R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 54.

5. E. I., Vol. XXXII, p. 201 ff.

6. E. I., Vol. IX, pp. 285—88.

Sivaraja indicates the occupation of southern Tosali by him. Sambhuyasas captured southern Tosali by 603 A. D. and appointed Sivaraja as its ruler.

Sambhuyasas was a ruler of considerable political importance. He succeeded in uniting both the Tosalis and styled himself as Paramabhattacharaka, Paramamahesvara, Maharaja and Paramadaivata. He was a liberal ruler with many virtues. Saivite by faith, his capital was at Viraja or Jajpur. As an invincible ruler he had defeated the Vighras of South Orissa. However, the Mana rule was short-lived. It was Pruthivi Maharaja of Durjaya family who put an end to the Mana rule in Tosali.¹

Sasanka and Harshavardhan

After the Mana rule, the coastal districts of Orissa came under Sasanka of Gauda. His conquest of Orissa can be inferred from the Midnapur copper plates of Subhakirti, Midnapur copper plates of Somadatta and Ganjam copper plates of Sailodbhava ruler Madhavaraja II.² Subhakirti was appointed by Sasanka as his Viceroy in Dandabhukti, the present Midnapur region of West Bengal, and the former issued the Midnapur copper plates in the 8th regnal year of his sovereign in order to donate some lands to Brahmins. His successor was Somadatta who issued the copper plates in the 19th regnal year of Sasanka who also donated some lands to one Bhattesvara. Somadatta also issued two other copper plates which were discovered from Soro.³ Both the copper plates were issued in his 15th year from the victorious camps which clearly showed that he was busy in wars for his monarch, the details of which are difficult to know. In these copper plates, the titles of the sovereign mentioned are *Paramadaivata Shri Paramabhattacharaka* and perhaps they were used for Sasanka.

One Soro copper plate registers the gift of the village named Adayara in the Saraphahara *Visaya* situated in northern Tosali which formed a part of Odra *Visaya*. The other one records the gift of the village Vaheravataka in the Varakana *Visaya* which was contiguous to the Saraphahara *Visaya*. The earliest epigraphic reference to Odra is noticed here. The present Baleshwar district formed a major part of the same territorial unit Odra or Utkal or northern Tosali.

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1. The Paralakhemundi copper plates of Pruthivi Maharaja was issued from the victorious military camp at Virajanagar, S. N. Rajguru, Inscriptions of Orissa, Vol. I, part. II, pp. 54—56.
 2. Inscriptions of Orissa, Vol. I, part II, pp. 141—161.
 3. Inscriptions of Orissa, Vol. I, part II, pp. 136—140.

Somadatta, who ruled over Dandabhukti and Utkal on behalf of Sasanka, was succeeded by Mahapratihara Maharaja Mahasamanta Bhanudatta, known from his Soro,¹ Baleshwar² and Olasingh³ copper plates issued in his 5th regnal year. In these inscriptions, his paramount sovereign Sasanka is mentioned as Paramabhattachara. The Soro copper plates were issued from a place called Viranja which is probably the corrupt form of Viraja, i.e., modern Jajpur. It stated that the village Vahirakataka, situated in Saraphahara *Visaya* was redonated to certain Brahmins. The Olasingh copper plates record his donation of lands to Maninagesvara at Ekambaka, i.e., Bhubaneshwar.

Most probably Sasanka exercised his authority over Utkal or Odra or northern Tosali till his death which occurred shortly before 637 A. D. Subhakirtti, Somadatta and Bhanudatta served him as his Viceroy in Dandabhukti and Utkal and helped him in maintaining his authority over these areas. Soon after Sasanka's death, Harsavardhan conquered Utkal or Odra and Kangoda.⁴ Thus Baleshwar region came under Harsa, but no record on his administrative arrangements in Utkal or Odra in general and Baleshwar region in particular has been discovered so far. However, it was during his reign the famous Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang visited U-cha or Odra and has left a valuable account of his travels.

Hiuen Tsang reached Baleshwar by travelling south-west from Karnasuvarna in the year 639 A. D.⁵ According to his accounts the people of this region were tall and yellowish black and their language differed from the languages of Central India. The majority of the people were Mahayana Buddhists. It is corroborated by the discovery of several Buddhist sites in the district. He also mentioned about a famous Buddhist monastery called Pu-si-po-ki-li or Puspagiri. But it is difficult to identify the place, bearing the same name in the district of Baleshwar.

Bhaumakaras

The Bhaumakaras established their rule in Uttara Tosali in 736 A. D.⁶ It is suggested by some scholars that Bhaumakaras belonged to Assam and they came to Orissa in the wake of the

1. Inscriptions of Orissa, Vol. I, part II pp., 131-132.

2. Ibid., pp. 239-240.

3. Ibid., pp. 133-135.

4. The History and Culture of Indian People, R. C. Majumdar (ed.), Vol. III, p.107.

5. Yan Chawang's Travels in India, T. Watters, pp. 193 ff.

6. Chronology of the Bhaumakaras and Somavamsis of Orissa, K. C. Panigrahi, pp. 66 ff.

Assamese king Harsavarmadeva's eastern expeditions. According to the Pasupati Temple inscription¹ he conquered Gauda, Odra, Kalinga and Kosala. Harsavarmadeva after conquering Odra appointed probably one of his relations named Ksemankaradeva as the ruler of the conquered territory who became the founder of a new ruling dynasty called the Bhaumakara dynasty.

The capital of the Bhaumakara kingdom was the Guhadepataka or Guhesvarapataka which was very close to Viraja or Jajpur.² The early Bhaumakara copper plates were issued from that capital and naturally it is believed that the Bhaumakara kingdom was originally established around the capital or centring round Jajpur. It comprised the present district of Baleshwar and the northern part of Cuttack district as well. Subsequently, the kingdom was extended from the Dandabhukti *mandala* in the north-east to the Kangoda *mandala* in the south-west, both the *mandalas* being included in the kingdom.

The Neulpur grant of Subhakaradeva³ records the donation of the villages Komparaka and Solanapura to the Brahmins. Komparaka has been identified with modern Kupari and Solanapura with Solampur, both in the Bhadrak subdivision of the present Baleshwar district where some ruins of ancient monuments are still visible. Large number of images were also available from those two historic sites.

It is believed that the early Bhaumakaras were Buddhists and during their rule the Mahayana became the dominant religion of Orissa. There are several sites in the district bearing the Buddhist antiquities belonging to the Bhaumakara period such as Kupari, Ayodhya, Khadipada, Solampur, Palia, Avana, etc.

Somavamsis

The Bhaumakaras were replaced in Utkal by the Somavamsis in 931 A. D.⁴ It is surmised that they came from South Kosala, i.e., the Sambalpur - Sonapur region of Orissa. Jajati I of the Somavamsi dynasty conquered the Bhaumakara kingdom and thereby united both Kosala and Utkal. Later on they shifted their capital to Jajpur which was then called *Avinava*

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1. Indian Antiquary, Vol. IX, p. 179. and Early History of Kamarupa, K.L. Barua, p. 107.
 2. Pandit Binayak Mishra in 'Orissa under the Bhauma kings, p. 81, identifies it with Sivadaspur where as K. C. Panigrahi in 'Chronology of the Bhaumakaras and Somavamsis of Orissa', p. 22, places it in Guhiratikiri; both the places being in the vicinity of Jajpur.
 3. E. I., Vol. XV., pp.1-8.
 4. History of Orissa, K. C. Panigrahi, p. 105.

Jajatinagar. Because of its close proximity to Jajpur, Balëshwar region again became an important and integral part of the Somavamsi kingdom.

The Somavamsis, like their predecessor, might have used Balëshwar as a base for their expeditions against Bengal. Jajati II was in arms against Gauda, but maintained friendly relation with the king of Vanga (East Bengal) in order to contain Gauda.¹ In the first quarter of the 11th century A. D. the Chola ruler, Rajendra Chola, led an expedition up to the Ganges by defeating the Somavamsi ruler Indraratha at Jajatinagar.² However, the Somavamsi rule did not end immediately after the expedition of Rajendra Chola. It continued till its last ruler, Karnadeva, was overthrown by the powerful Gangas.

However, towards the end of the Somavamsi rule, the Palas of Bengal probably occupied Balëshwar. In a literary reference, the commentary of *Ramacharita* of Sandhyakara Nandi, it was stated that Jayasimha, the able lieutenant of Ramapala, lifted the last Somavamsi king Karnakesari with his palm. It suggests the occupation of Dandabhukti, which was a part of Utkal, by the Pala ruler. He might have then snatched away its neighbouring Balëshwar region from the Somavamsis because for a long time Dandabhukti and Balëshwar were considered as one unit and remained under one administration. Infact, the last Somavamsi ruler, Karnakesari or Karnadeva, was a weak ruler and the power of the Somavamsis had declined considerably under his rule. He was not able to defend the northern part of his kingdom against the Palas. Jayasimha, referred earlier, was perhaps the Viceroy of the Pala ruler in Dandabhukti and Balëshwar. However, the Somavamsis were finally replaced by the powerful Gangas in early 12th century A. D.

The Gangas

Anantavarman Chodagangadeva of the Eastern Ganga dynasty occupied Orissa in about 1110 A. D.³ and founded the Ganga rule in Orissa. According to his Korni copper plates, he reinstated fallen lord of Utkal, i.e., Karnadeva. Probably the latter was helped to regain the lost territories of Dandabhukti and Balëshwar from the Palas of Bengal. However, Chodaganga finally ousted the Somavamsi ruler and himself occupied the kingdom.

1. Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, Letters, Vol. XIII, p. 72.

2. Tirumalani Inscription, E. I., Vol. IX, p. 232, K. A. N. Sastri, *Cholas*, pp. 948—949.

3. Orissa Historical Research Journal, Vol. I, pp. 7 ff.

As the Imperial Gangas started their career of conquest and expansion of territories, Baleshwar became the base of operations in the north. Chodagangadeva defeated the chief of Mandara and occupied his capital Aramya, modern Arambagh in the Hooghly district of West Bengal. With the rapid expansion of the Muslim power in North India in the 13th century A. D., Orissa was exposed to the menace in its northern frontier. The importance of Baleshwar region increased considerably as it occupied a strategic position in the Ganga empire. The rulers of Orissa realised the gravity of the situation and took certain effective steps to meet the challenge of the Muslim power. A chain of forts were built in the region of Baleshwar to ward off any possible expedition from the north. These forts were also used by the Gangas to launch attacks on the Muslim territory. Some of the copper plates of the Ganga rulers were issued from the one such important fort situated at Remuna Kataka.¹ It is ordinarily identified with the present village of Remuna, about 9.6 km., to the west of Baleshwar town. But some historians think it to be the present ruined fort at Raibania, about 14.4 km., north of Jaleshwar on the bank of river Subarnarekha.² John Beams, the District Magistrate of Baleshwar in the second half of the 19th century, had given a description of the ruined fort in *Indian Antiquary*.³ There is no doubt that Raibania was a very important military establishment for the safety and security of the Orissan empire.

There are other forts in the northern parts of Baleshwar belonging to the Ganga period. One such fort is at Deulgan. The forts of Kahasin and Mandaran, which played a significant role in the Ganga-Muslim conflict, were not far from the border of the district. Besides, the Ganga ruler were very particular about the communication system in the frontier area for easy and quick transport of military forces. The Kendupatna copper plates of Narasimghadeva II⁴ which was issued from Remuna-kataka refer to *Subarnarekhanadi Setu*. Probably there was some sort of bridge over Subarnarekha. It is further known from the above copper plates that Remuna was a *Visaya* or district and probably the administration of the frontier area was carried on from that headquarters.

In the conflict between the Ganga rulers of Orissa and the Muslim rulers of Bengal, Baleshwar became the base for military operations of the former. Narasimhadeva I, the greatest of the

1. History of Orissa, H. Mahtab, Vol. I (Cuttack, 1959), pp. 243—45.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 244.

3. *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. I. pp. 33—36, also see Appendix I of the Chapter.

4. *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. LXV, p. 254.

Gangas, led a successful campaign against Tughril-i-Tughan Khan of Bengal. Minhaj-i-Siraj, the Muslim historian, in his *Tabaqat-i-Nasir*, gives a vivid account of the success of the Imperial Ganga army against Tughan Khan. In consequence of the victory of Narasimhadeva I, the districts of Howrah, Hoogly, Bankura and Birbhum were added to the Ganga empire which was at the zenith of its glory and splendour. The annexed territories must have been controlled from Baleshwar. According to tradition, Narasimhadeva I built the original temple of Khirachora Gopinath at Remuna.

The Suryavamsis

The Gangas were succeeded by the Suryavamsi Gajapatis in 1435 A. D. The first ruler of the dynasty, Gajapati Kapilendradeva (1435—1467 A. D.) led an expedition to Bengal and defeated Sultan Nasiruddin, and probably occupied some territories¹. However, they could not maintain their hold over Bengal for long. The three Gajapati rulers—Kapilendradeva, Purusottamdeva and Prataparudradeva remained mostly engaged in their southern conquests and to some extent neglected the defence of the northern frontier of the empire. Because of lack of military preparedness on the part of Orissa, Hussain Shah, the Sultan of Bengal, could proceed unopposed as far as Puri. Of course, according to *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, he conquered the country 'up to Orissa and levied tribute.'² At that time Prataparudradeva, the Gajapati of Orissa, was campaigning in the south. He rushed to Puri, defeated the invader and pushed him back to Bengal. However, he could not inflict any crushing defeat on him. Rather he withdrew his siege of the fort of Mandaran due to the treachery of one of his generals, Govinda Vidyadhara. He betrayed his master at the crucial war with the ruler of Bengal.

In 1510 A. D., Shri Chaitanyadeva passed through Baleshwar on his way to Puri from Bengal. By that time Jaleshwar, Remuna, Soro and Bhadrak were the major fiscal divisions in the district of Baleshwar³. According to the Garhpada copper plate grant⁴ Gajapati Purusottamadeva (1467—1497 A. D.) donated the village Purusottamapur in Baleshwar district to one Potesvara Bhatta. However, by the beginning of 16th century A. D. the administration of this area was also neglected. Due to the long absence of the Suryavamsi rulers in the south, the local officers

1. *The Gajapati Kings of Orissa*, P. Mukherjee, p. 28.

2. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, Vol. III (Eng. Trans.), p. 443.

3. *Op. Cit.*, P. Mukherjee, p. 127.

4. *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. I, p. 355.

had become insubordinate. There was the breakdown of law and order as evident from the accounts of *Chaitanya 'Bhagavata'*. While Shri Chaitanya was crossing the frontier of Bengal and Orissa, an officer of Prataparudradeva took all possible care so that the saint and his followers might escape the molestation from the hands of the Muslims. The administrators also became corrupt. Gopinath Badajena, who was the Governor in the north-eastern *dandapata* of the Suryavamsi empire, misappropriated two lakhs *kahanas* of *cowries*. He was sentenced to death by Gajapati Prataparudradeva for the offence, but his life was saved due to the intervention of Shri Chaitanya². It reveals the nature of Gajapati administration in general and the state of affairs which prevailed in the most sensitive part of the empire in particular.

With the death of Prataparudradeva, the glorious era in the history of Orissa came to an end. An epoch of intense fratricidal war and alien invasion from both ends of Orissa ensued and finally the Muslim powers dismembered and occupied the territories in 1568 A. D.

MUSLIM AND MARATHA PERIODS

The last Hindu king of Orissa, Mukundadeva, incurred the displeasure of Sulaiman Khan Karrani, the Afghan ruler of Bengal, because the former gave shelter to his enemy Ibrahim Sur and also had formed an alliance with the Mughal Emperor, Akbar, against him. Consequently, the Afghan ruler attacked Orissa and sent troops to Cuttack under the command of his son through the jungle route of Mayurbhanj and Kendujhar, while he himself met the Orissa Chief in the border at Kotsima. When that information reached Mukundadeva, he hurriedly sent two of his Commanders to protect Cuttack. But they revolted against his authority and thus started an internecine struggle in Orissa in which Mukundadeva was killed in 1568 A. D., and Orissa passed under the Afghan rule. It is believed that Mukundadeva fought his last battle at Gohiratikiri not far from Dhamnagar, in the district where he was killed by his own people.

In regard to the Afghan occupation of Orissa in 1568 A. D. the name of a notorious commander of Sulaiman Khan Karrani, Kalapahar, was associated. He goes down in the history of Orissa as a destroyer of temples, and icons. Baleshwar is associated with the tombs of a number of his captains who fell in the battle. They are at Garhpada, Ramachandrapur and Remuna. Besides, it is believed that Kalapahar set up a number of Muslim settlements in the district and left behind some of his followers at Kasba, Bhadrak and Dhamnagar.

1. Chaitanya and His Companions, D. C. Sen, p. 9.

2. History of Orissa, R. D. Banerjee, Vol. I. pp., 332 ff.

Daud Khan, the second son of Sulaiman Khan Karrani, who succeeded governorship of Bengal, threw off all allegiance to the Emperor of Delhi and declared himself independent. In the struggle, Daud Khan was driven out of Bengal by the forces of Emperor Akbar under Munim Khan, and fled to Orissa. Raja Todar Mal came to Orissa in pursuit of Daud Khan who hovered backwards and forwards between Cuttack and Jaleshwar for some time. Finally, a decisive battle was fought at Tukaroi, 9.6 km., west of Jaleshwar on the bank of river Subarnarekha on the 3rd March, 1575. The Mughals became victorious, but suffered losses. Munim Khan himself was wounded. However, Daud Khan, who had fled to Cuttack, ultimately surrendered and negotiated for peace. On 12 April, 1575 Munim Khan settled the matter and left Daud Khan in possession of central Orissa as far as the river Baitarani but the areas of Baleshwar district came under the control of the Mughals as part of the Subah of Bengal and two officials were stationed at Bhadrak and Jaleshwar. But the matter reopened with the death of Munim Khan. In fact, Baleshwar, lying in between Cuttack and the frontier of Bengal became the central place of fighting between the rebel Afghans of Orissa and the Mughal forces, for some years and consequently suffered the most. Many places with Muslim names in various parts of the district testify to the settlement of Afghan and Mughal invaders.

In 1592 A. D., the Afghans were crushed in a battle fought on the northern bank of Subarnarekha by Raja Man Singh. The victorious Mughal army advanced towards Jaleshwar where coins were struck and Khutba was read in the name of Akbar. Thus, Orissa was finally annexed to the Mughal empire and the Subedar of Bengal remained in charge of the province. The first separate Subedar for Orissa was appointed in 1607 in the reign of Emperor Jahangir. However, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa formed one compact unit of the empire and the charge was held by a royal prince or a trusted man of the emperor.

With the Muslim occupation Baleshwar emerged from its former obscurity, and became the highway along which the rival armies passed and repassed and fought many battles. From that time began the rise of Baleshwar as a commercial town and a prosperous sea port to which flocked the vessels of many European powers including the British. The Mughals also maintained a naval base in the port of Baleshwar. A Mughal Faujdar was stationed at Remuna, not far from the town.

In the early part of 18th century A. D. Murshid Kuli Khan I got the Subedarship of Orissa and ruled over the province from 1703 to 1708 and then from 1714 to 1727. During the latter

period, his son-in-law Shuja-ud-din Muhammad Khan was his deputy in Orissa. The northern part of Orissa and especially the territories of Baleshwar are truncated for some administrative convenience during this period. The *chakla* of Midnapur was separated from the Subah of Orissa and it was annexed to Bengal. In the revenue settlement in Orissa enhancement of tax was made in the prosperous *sarkar* of Jaleshwar including Basta and Remuna. The ports of Baleshwar and Hijili were included in such settlement. Murshid Quli Khan was very particular to realise the dues from the ports, especially from the English Company which had thrived in Baleshwar at that time.

Further changes occurred in the border of Baleshwar during the administration of Shuja-ud-din Muhammad, the able successor of Murshid Quli Khan, who controlled the province from 1727 to 1739. He appointed his son Muhammad Taqui Khan as Naib Nazim of Orissa. During this period, the northern part of Jaleshwar *sarkar* beyond the river Subarnarekha except a few *mahals* were transferred to the administration of Bengal. Thus, the river Subarnarekha became the northern boundary of Orissa. Taqui Khan was fond of Baleshwar where he built the masonry tank and reservoir and the mosque and gardens known as Kadam Rasul. It was confirmed by a *sanad* issued by him in 1730. He is said to have constructed a hunting place at Remuna, 9.6 km. from Baleshwar town under the Nilagiri hills where there are extensive ruins of Muslim tombs and buildings.

With the change of power in Bengal by Alivardi Khan after the death of Shuja-ud-din in 1740, the possession of Orissa again became a disputed matter and the rival army devastated Baleshwar. A decisive battle was fought on 3rd March, 1741, at Phuladi in the suburb of Baleshwar in the highland in the middle of the Nuniajori and Burhabalanga in between Alivardi Khan, the Nawab of Bengal, and Murshid Quli Khan II, the ruler of Orissa. Alivardi's position was difficult. Some of his soldiers left the field in desperation, leaving their master on the verge of defeat. However, some traitors in the camp of Murshid Quli Khan entered into a bargain with the Commander of Alivardi and changed side with sepoys under their control. Alivardi's General fought back bravely and finally Murshid Quli Khan lost the battle. He had wisely planned his escape in the event of defeat in the hands of the Nawab of Bengal. His merchant friend was then in the port of Baleshwar with his ship with some of his followers. He escaped in that ship immediately and sailed to Masulipatam. Thus, Alivardi got possession of Orissa and by the end of 1741 A. D. he had subdued his enemies completely. The whole of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was under the control of Alivardi Khan.

However, Alivardi was not destined to rule in peace. From 1742 A. D. the Marathas rushed down upon Orissa and for long ten years Alivardi had to fight against them to maintain peace and order in his territories. Unfortunately, Baleshwar suffered most in the Maratha-Muslim conflict and several pitched battles were fought in this area which devastated the land and brought untold miseries to the people. When Alivardi failed to check the repeated Maratha onslaughts on Orissa, he signed a treaty for peace in 1751 which virtually placed Orissa in the hands of the Marathas. The river Subarnarekha was fixed as the line of demarcation between Orissa and Bengal. The Marathas, in lieu of Orissa, promised for regular payment of *chauth* and agreed not to set their foot again in the dominion of Alivardi Khan. Beyond the river Subarnarekha only a few *mahals* were retained by the Marathas.

Orissa remained under the Marathas from 1751 A. D. to 1803 A. D., when it came under the British rule. Under the Marathas, a strong military station under a Faujdar was maintained at Baleshwar which guarded the Phuladi *ghat*, the northern entrance to the town. Another important military station in the district was at Soro. The Faujdar of Baleshwar exercised power over a large area, collect revenue from the tributary states of Nilagiri and Mayurbhanj and remitted it to Cuttack. He also checked the disturbances in the border. The British also maintained a Resident in their factory at Baleshwar. There was occasional friction between the British Resident and the Maratha Faujdar regarding the payment of duties, smuggling of salt, harassment to merchants, etc.. One such case was brought to the notice of Lord Cornwallis, the Governor-General in 1792 by Wilkinson, the British Resident, against Bhabani Das Chaudhury, the Faujdar of Baleshwar. Lord Cornwallis informed Raghujji Bhonsla to take necessary steps for immediate removal of his Faujdar at Baleshwar¹. Rajaram Pandit, the Maratha ruler of Orissa, enquired into the matter and the offender was removed. Murari Pandit became the new Faujdar of Baleshwar and he was in office when Orissa including the port and the district of Baleshwar was occupied by the British in 1803.

Another problem which created occasional Anglo-Maratha conflict was the boundary line between Bengal and Orissa. Though the river Subarnarekha was considered as the demarcating line, some of the zamindars of the border villages and *parganas* did not give up the lands on one or other side of the river and collected revenues from the people. Both the zamindars and the people in the border of Baleshwar created problems occasionally and took shelter on either side to evade payment. The problem lingered on till the British occupation of Orissa.

1. Orissa under the Marathas, Dr. B. C. Ray, p. 62.

BRITISH PERIOD

British occupation of Baleshwar and early administration (1803—1827 A. D.)

The British contact with Orissa began in the first half of the 17th century A. D. "True to our national character", Hunter remarks, "We settled in Orissa as merchants long before we made our appearance as rulers". One of the earliest British factories in India was established at Hariharpur, in Orissa in 1633. Soon after two other factories were established, one at Baleshwar on river Burabalanga and the other at Pipili on river Subarnarekha. "These two Orissa harbours", writes Hunter, "Formed the basis of our future greatness in Bengal"¹. The British factory at Baleshwar developed into a thriving centre of maritime trade. In 1670, of several factories in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, Baleshwar was the seat of their chief and his council. The pre-eminence of Baleshwar as a commercial centre continued for some years. It declined in the 18th century when the East India Company's trading concerns were shifted to Hugli and Calcutta².

Orissa came within the orbit of the East India Company's political interest after the Battle of Buxar. On 12 August, 1765 Lord Clive got the *dewani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. 'Orissa' of the said grant was nothing more than a single district of Midnapore and northern Baleshwar. The titular Mughal Emperor used the term 'Bengal, Bihar and Orissa' as those areas had long been considered as one administrative unit in the days of the Great Mughals. From Clive to Cornwallis, the Company had tried to get possession of Orissa by negotiation, but failed. It was left to Lord Wellesley to conquer Orissa during the Second Maratha War. The British occupation of the province in 1803 was an easy task for two reasons. First, the Raja of Nagpur had no adequate troops in Orissa to resist the British army and in fact, only a feeble resistance was given to the enemy at the time of occupation. Secondly, the British army had acquired sound knowledge on the topography of Orissa during their march through its territory on the two previous occasions under the command of Col. Pearse in 1781 and Col. Cockrell in 1790.

In spite of weak position of the Marathas in the province, the British authorities made thorough preparation for war and annexation of Orissa. The principal army for the expedition was ordered to assemble at Ganjam under the command of Lt. Col. Campbell. Besides, Lord Wellesley also decided to send troops under Captain

1. Orissa, W. W. Hunter, Vol. II, p. 39.

2. See Appendix-II of the Chapter 'European Settlements in Balasore district'

Morgan to occupy Baleshwar from the north. Another detachment was formed at Jaleshwar in the northern border of the province under Lt. Col. Fergusson for advancing into Orissa after the occupation of Baleshwar. Col. Fenwick, incharge of the troops at Midnapore, was ordered to occupy the Maratha zamindaries, north-east of river Subarnarekha.

The main British army under Lt. Col. Campbell began its March on 8th September 1803 but only three days after Campbell was replaced by Lt. Col. Harcourt due to former's illness. Harcourt was accompanied by a civil officer, John Melville, for organising civil administration after occupation of the province. They succeeded in capturing the Barabati Fort, the citadel of Maratha power in Orissa, on 14th October 1803. In the meanwhile, the campaign of Captain Morgan at Baleshwar was also equally successful. On 20th September 1803, four small British vessels including the gun-vessel crossed the bar at the mouth of river Burhabalanga and anchored opposite Balaramgarhi, a small Maratha post. The Maratha troops did not offer any resistance to the British on the spot but fled away from the post, thus allowing the British army to proceed towards the town of Baleshwar unopposed. With the help of local pilots, the British vessels sailed up the river, but due to heavy rains the progress was slow. Captain Morgan, on hearing a rumour that the Marathas were returning to oppose the movement of the British troops, left the heavy vessels and proceeded with two light canons and 300 soldiers in small boats. The party landed near the town and marched to occupy the Maratha Fort at Baleshwar. The troops moved on against a feeble resistance offered by the Marathas and finally reached the British factory in the town at night on 21st September, 1803. Murari Pandit, the Maratha Faujdar at Baleshwar, was not prepared for any serious encounter with the British troops. Infact, after the arrival of the British force in the town the Marathas lost courage and fled away from the fort during that night. Thus Captain Morgan occupied the place without any resistance on 22nd September, 1803. He strengthened the British position at Baleshwar and posted his troops outside the town to ward off the Maratha attack. A week later he sent two companies of troops under Lt. Slye to drive out the Maratha force assembling near Soro and to open communication with Cuttack. Further reinforcement was sent to him and the combined troops succeeded in occupying Soro after defeating a large contingent of Maratha army on 3rd October, 1803. The Marathas scattered away towards Bhadrak and they could not muster sufficient strength again to give resistance to the British in the district.

Col. Fergusson marched from Jaleswhar soon after the occupation of Baleshwar and reached there on 4th October. As directed by the authorities he continued to march and was supposed to join with the army under the command of Harcourt at Cuttack. But before he could do so, the fort of Barabati was seized and the campaign in the coastal Orissa almost came to an end.

A small operation was needed to conquer the territories on the north-east of river Subarnarekha comprising the Maratha Zamindaries of Pataspur, Kamarda, Bhogra, Shah Bandar, Jamukonda, etc. Col. Fenwick, who headed the reserve force at Midnapore, undertook the task of bringing those border zamindars under the British control. Some of them submitted without resistance, others were forced to surrender when the British troops marched on their territories.

By the Treaty of Deogaon, signed on 17th December, 1803, Raghuji Bhonsla ceded to the East India Company in perpetual sovereignty, the province of Cuttack, including 'the port and district of Balasore'. Thus, the district of Baleshwar came under the British administration.

Soon after signing the Treaty of Deogaon, Lt. Col. Harcourt and Melville, the Commissioners for settling the affairs of Cuttack gave their attention to the organization of civil administration. Captain Morgan remained in-charge of the district of Baleshwar, at first as the officer commanding at Baleshwar, but subsequently as Collector, Magistrate, and Salt and Customs Agent. Under him there were four native *amils* or Collectors of revenue at Baleshwar, Soro, Bhadrak and Dolgram. In 1804, the newly acquired territories of Orissa were divided into two divisions, the northern and southern, with the river Mahanadi as the boundary between them. For each division, a British officer was appointed as the Judge, Magistrate and Collector. He shouldered all administrative responsibilities in his division under the direction of the Special Commissioners. Captain Morgan made over charge to Robert Ker, who was designated as the Collector and Magistrate of the northern division of Cuttack. Such an arrangement continued for about a year when some regulations were promulgated for organizing civil administration on a more lasting basis. The offices of the Special Commissioners were abolished and the superintendence of the revenue affairs of Orissa passed to the Board of Revenue at Fort William in Calcutta.

In 1805, George Webb was appointed as the Collector of the entire British territories in Orissa, or as it was called the province of Cuttack. For the next 24 years this arrangement continued

with its headquarters at Puri up to 1816 and then at Cuttack. From 1805 to 1820, Baleshwar had no separate revenue officer; but in 1821 a Joint Magistrate was stationed at Baleshwar, his duties being chiefly the trial of criminal cases and the superintendence of police. In 1828, Baleshwar was constituted an independent collectorate and the first occupant of the office was Henry Ricketts. At first Jajpur and Bhadrak were attached to it, Jajpur being subsequently transferred to Cuttack district. On the north, a perplexing district series of transfers and re-transfers of Parganas went on for a long time between Baleshwar and Midnapore. The district finally acquired its present dimension in 1870, when the northern boundary was defined, and Baitarani and Dhamra rivers were made the southern limit of the district.

The first important British regulation, which formed the basis of land revenue policy in Orissa, was the Regulation 12 of 1805. Following the Bengal pattern, the regulation provided for short-term settlements of eleven years, at the end of which it was intended to introduce a permanent land revenue settlement. But the short-settlements continued for long 32 years when the Government finally decided to fix it for thirty years by Act VI of 1837. The question of a permanent settlement in Orissa was finally rejected and a long-term settlement for 30 years was enforced. The decision has an important step in the history of land revenue policy and administration of the British in Orissa. However, it had preceded with an unusual experiment of long 32 years of short settlements causing immense hardship both to the people and land-holders in coastal Orissa. Baleshwar suffered like the rest of the province due to the shortcomings of the British land revenue policy.

As regards the administration of justice and police, Cornwallis system was fully introduced in Orissa in September, 1805. The new regulation provided for the establishment of *thanas* or police-stations and appointment of *darogas* in-charge of police-station. The court of Sadar Nizamat Adalat acted as the highest court of appeal for dispensation of criminal justice and it also supervised the police administration. The court of Sadar Dewani Adalat supervised the administration of civil justice. Each police-station controlled a number of villages covering an area of about 919.42 sq. km. The district had initially only five police-stations; viz., Basta, Baleshwar, Mutto, Soro and Bhadrak and on an average each *thana* controlled about 614 villages¹.

The British conquest of Orissa was closely followed by the extension of salt monopoly, in the first instance, to the northern division of Cuttack, i.e., from river Subarnarekha to river Mahanadi.

1. Orissa under the East India Company, K. M. Patra, New Delhi, 1970.

The British conquest of Orissa was closely followed by the extension of salt monopoly, in the first instance, to the northern division of Cuttack, i.e., from river Subarnarekha to river Mahanadi. The British Regulation of 1804 reserved to the Government the exclusive privilege of manufacturing salt as a source of public revenue. In 1806 James King took over the charge as the first Salt Agent of Orissa with his headquarters at Baleshwar. By the Regulation 22 of 1814, the salt monopoly was extended to the southern part of the coastal tract of Orissa. The sale price was fixed at two rupees per maund * in the Golas or store-houses of the Government but the merchants must have sold it at a much higher rate to the people by adding the cost of transport and their profits. Naturally it caused much hardship to the people who never paid so high a price for purchasing salt and thus it was a cause of their dissatisfaction against the British rule.

The northern division contained 8 *aurang* (manufacturing centres), such as, Bolang, Sartha, Dasmolang, Panchmolang, Ankura, Chudamani, Dhamra and Chardia. The salt agency was capable of producing more than 4 lakh maunds of salt in one season. The salt workers *malangis* were paid at the rate of 40 rupees only per 100 maunds of salt. They were further required to give 15 maunds of extra salt for payment of zamindar's revenue and for *suktee* charges i.e. for loss of weight due to evaporation of water from salt. Besides the fixed rate, at times the *malangis* were paid 2 annas (Re.0.12) extra per maund in order to increase its manufacture to the utmost extent. There were 4 sale *Golas* situated in the central places like Baleshwar, Soro, Bhadrak and Basta to supply the article to the people. The rate was Rs. 2:3:6 (Rs.2.22) per maund, 3 and half annas (Rs. 0.22) being the cost of transportation from the *aurangs* to the sale *Golas*. The estimated sale of *panga* salt in this division was on an average 1,20,000 maunds per year. Large amount of salt was exported from the division to the Government sale *Gola* at Sulkia near Calcutta. In 1825 the estimated quantity of salt to be sent to Calcutta was 3,25,000 maunds. At Sulkia salt was disposed of by auction sales in limited lots to the merchants. Naturally the price fluctuated throughout the year and as determined by the needs of the merchants. In April 1825, the sale price was Rs.411-8-0 (Rs.411.50) per 100 maunds of salt. Thus, Baleshwar *panga* salt earned a lot of profit for the Company in the early days of the British rule in Orissa.

The commercial prosperity of Orissa had gradually dwindled and by the end of the 18th century A.D., it was at its lowest ebb. However, when the British occupied the province in 1803, considerable quantities of rice and salt were still exported from the ports of

1. * maund—37.3242 kg.

Baleshwar, Chudamani and Dhamra. Soon after the occupation, the British authority adopted certain rules for management of the ports and for collection of custom duties from these ports of Baleshwar. Though the fame of Baleshwar as a great sea port had faded away, yet the halo was somewhat maintained by the British Government. The custom house for the province was located at Baleshwar, and it was still the principal port of the province. The Government had no provision for the collection of customs in other parts of the province. Obviously, the largest volume of trade passed through the ports and custom house of Baleshwar. It was the salt trade and the export of excess agricultural products like paddy and rice which maintained the maritime activities of the people.

By the rules adopted on 4th May, 1804, it was provided that only a single duty was to be imposed on the import of goods from any foreign country either by sea or land. After the payment of that duty, the merchant could carry his goods to whatever part of the province he felt most conducive to his interest without any hindrance by the authorities. Goods of every description, except a few articles, imported by sea from Bengal or any other part of the British India, accompanied with a '*rowanah*' were required to pay a duty of 2.5 per cent on the valuation specified therein. Goods, not accompanied with a '*rowanah*' were required to pay the duty as specified in the Book of Rates. Some articles like wheat, rice, bullocks, agricultural implements, images intended for religious purposes, etc., were exempted from duty on being imported or exported either by sea or land. However, it was required that the quantity or number and value must be reported to the Darogah of the *chowkeys*. The imports or exports of canon, gun powder and weapons into or from the province were strictly prohibited. As a check against smuggling, it was provided that goods attempted to be smuggled into or from the province by sea or land would be subject to confiscation. The import and export duties were regulated from England obviously to favour British manufacturers as much as possible. The transit duties were levied on all goods manufactured in the country or imported by land into the British possessions. Initially the goods were made to pay a separate duty at each of the custom houses they passed and naturally when they reached the consumer, they were taxed with high duties according to the length of the journey. In 1810 such a system was abolished by a new regulation. Besides the central custom house at Baleshwar, 8 *chowkeys* were established at different places around it. They were (i) Baliapal, (ii) Rajghat, (iii) Remuna, (iv) Balaramgarhi (v) Bangreah, (vi) Phuladi, (vii) Chudamani and (viii) Dhamra. Thus, the *chowkeys* were stretched from Baliapal on the bank of river Subarnarekha in the north to Dhamra on the

bank of river Dhamra in the south. All those *chowkeys* were situated in the district of Baleshwar. No provision was made for the collection of customs in the districts of Cuttack or Puri. This was probably due to the fact that the maximum volume of trade passed through the principal port at Baleshwar and other smaller ports in the district.

From the statement of the collections from customs duties in Baleshwar for four years from 1825 to 1829, it was found that the total amount collected was Rs. 60,670 and 5 annas (Rs. 60,670·31) and the total expense incurred was Rs. 25,301 and 3 annas (Rs. 25, 301·19). Thus the net proceeds during those years amounted to Rs. 35,369 and 2 annas (Rs. 35,369·12) with an average of Rs. 8,842 and 4 annas (Rs. 8,842·25) per year. In fact, it was observed that the net collections rapidly declined. Further, the greater portion of the duties was collected in transit of goods at the inland *chowkeys*. It is evident from the fact that out of the total collections of Rs. 60,670 and 5 annas (Rs. 60,670·31) from 1825 to 1829, only Rs. 4,937 and 8 annas (Rs. 4,937·50) were collected at the sea ports and the rest of the amount was collected at the inland *chowkeys*¹. The main cause of decrease in the collection of duties was the gradual decline in the volume of trade that passed through Baleshwar custom house. In 1825 the Collector of Customs reported to the Board of Customs, Salt and Opium that the decline was mainly perceptible in the trade of cotton goods. It was noticed that large quantities of cloth were being imported from Europe and sold at cheap rates in the market. The people generally preferred cheap foreign goods to costly indigenous products. In this connection, Andrew Stirling, a British officer who had worked in Orissa wrote in 1829 that "The manufacturers and trade of Orissa proper are very inconsiderable and unimportant. A sufficiency of the coarser cloths is made for the use of the inhabitants in all parts of the district. The calicoes of Balasore, Soro, Bhadrak, Janjipur (Jajpur) and Hariharpur, were once much prized and sought after under the name of Sannahas, but the demand for the finer fabrics of that description having long since greatly declined the quantity now manufactured is very trifling¹."

In November 1827, the Collector of Government Customs at Baleshwar also observed that "the trade here is so trifling and the merchants and people in general so poor that few if any articles of the first quality are ever brought here for sale".

1. Balasore Custom House Records, Acc. No. 586. Collection of Government Customs to Secretary to Board of Customs, Salt and Opium, 13 Aug. 1829.

There were certain grave errors in the early British administration concerning the land revenue policy, currency system, justice and police, the operation of salt monopoly, etc. These drawbacks naturally enraged the feelings of the people to such an extent that it led to the sudden outbreak of a popular revolt in Khordha and certain other areas of Orissa. The Revolt of 1817 goes down in history as the first direct challenge of the people of Orissa against the alien ruler. It brought home to higher authorities the necessity of making enquiries into the defects of their early administration. In the light of the reports submitted by Walter Ewer and the local officers, the British authorities introduced certain administrative reforms after the suppression of the revolt.

A significant change in the administrative set up in Orissa was introduced by the Regulation 5 of 1818. It created the new office of "Commissioner in Cuttack which continued as the principal office in the administration of Orissa for more than a century. The Commissioner was vested with all the powers and functions of the circuit court for the province. By the Regulation 1 of 1829 the officer was known as the Divisional Commissioner of Revenue and Circuit. It may be mentioned here that the Presidency of Bengal was divided into 20 divisions and Orissa formed the 19th division of the presidency. Further, in 1828 the Governor-General in Council resolved to divide the province into three distinct divisions or districts, such as, Puri, Cuttack and Balashwar. Throughout the 19th century, these three coastal districts and a number of *garhjats* constituted British Orissa and were administered from the divisional headquarters at Cuttack.

British Administrative policies and their effects : 1828—1900

Within a few years of the Revolt of 1817, the Government introduced a decisive change in its land revenue policy. The Cornwallis system was abandoned and after prolonged discussions it was decided to establish the *mahalwari* system of settlements in the 'ceded and conquered province' including Orissa. It was so called because the settlement of revenue came finally to be concluded on behalf of a *maha*. Although the Government did not technically adopt the *rayatwari* settlement, the provisions for a thorough enquiry and survey imparted to the new system known as *mahalwari*, the characteristics of rayatwari system.

The progress of settlement was very slow in the initial period as the regulation strictly required that all enquiries should be on the spot and that too, only by European officers. In those days there was only one European officer (the District Collector) in

the district of Baleshwar. Naturally, by 1831 only one estate in Baleshwar was settled. In 1833 Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General, decided to overhaul the whole system. He formulated certain principles and finally a new plan of settlement was evolved. It was embodied in the Regulation of 1833, and a circular was issued to all Commissioners to expedite survey and settlement proceedings. In fact, a number of Indian Deputy Collectors were appointed to assist the European officers in their work.

The survey and settlement operations commenced in right earnest according to the new regulation. The Collectors were assisted by some Indian Deputy Collectors in three districts of Orissa. The Government appointed a special Deputy Collector to investigate into the title of the people to hold rent-free tenures. In Orissa such rent-free tenures were numerous, nearly equal in value to two-third of the total land revenue. The Board of Revenue decided that the investigation of all claims to hold land in rent-free tenures was to be conducted simultaneously with and must form a component part of the settlement.

Under the able guidance of the Commissioners like Henry Ricketts and A. J. M. Mills, the settlement operation progressed rapidly. In 1839-40, there were 14 Deputy Collectors in the district of Baleshwar who were engaged in the settlement operations and were also trying resumption cases. The work was almost completed by 1844. As regards the term of the settlement, the Government decided to fix it for thirty years. The decision was enacted by Act VI of 1837. Thus, a long-term settlement was finally enforced in the province from 1837-38 though the work was completed by 1844-45.

The success of the settlement of 1837 was obvious from the small number of estates held *khas* or directly by the Government and farmed out in consequence of the recusancy of the Zamindars. In the district, there were 922 *mahals* on the rent-roll, out of which only 6 *mahals* were held *khas* and 10 *mahals* were farmed out in consequence of recusancy of proprietors¹. Mills finally observed that "the execution of this great work is, with all its imperfection a blessing, and the extension of it to thirty years, the greatest blessing which Government has conferred on this province." Henry Ricketts, who visited the district in 1853 as a member of the Board of Revenue, stated in his report that due to the long-term settlement, the value of property had trebled, and cultivation has spread in the district. But remissions commensurate with the

1. Selections from the records of the Government, Bengal, 1847, Minute of A.J.M. Mills, 23rd January, 1847.

losses had not been granted in time of calamities. On the whole, incidence of the settlement on the people was lighter in Baleshwar than that of Cuttack¹. Ricketts drew the attention of the Government to the problem of remission of revenue in time of natural calamities. He believed that the very stability of the settlement was in danger on account of indifference towards such calamities. But the Government failed to take notice of the gravity of the problem and it caused immense sufferings to the poor cultivators who did not get any liberal remission from their zamindars in time of natural calamities which frequently occurred in Orissa.

The worst calamity that the people of Orissa suffered in the 19th century was the famine of 1866. It was a disaster which took away one-third of her entire population. The disastrous famine of 1866 had its origin in the severe drought of 1865. The rainfall ceased prematurely and that caused the failure of the winter crop on which the people of Orissa depended very much for their annual production of rice. The outturn was calculated at less than a third of the average crop. The thirty years' settlement was just coming to an end. The Government believed that there was tendency not to cultivate all assessable and culturable areas. There was, no doubt, uncertainty in the minds of different classes for ensuing settlement due to apprehension of enhancement of revenue. Consequently, full production of rice was not undertaken. Besides, the export of rice from Orissa was considerable and in every season the surplus stock was sold away. On an average 20,000 tonnes of rice were exported annually in the preceding six years and naturally the stock of rice in the province had depleted considerably. For about twenty years, Orissa had not suffered from any serious seasonal calamity and probably the people were complacent about the state of things. There was also scope for them to raise an alarm about the impending disaster in the press or platform. While such a state of affairs prevailed, unfortunately the administration of Orissa was headed by an officer T. E. Ravenshaw, who had no previous knowledge of the province. He took charge of the office of the Commissioner in July 1865. He had more experience elsewhere as a magistrate than a revenue officer. The Collectors of Cuttack and Baleshwar were also new to their assignments. They had no experience of dealing with serious famine. Therefore the Government took a very complacent view of the situation at the initial stage of the famine. No local enquiry was conducted to ascertain the actual condition of the people after the failure of the winter crop. "There is, no doubt," Ravenshaw believed in October 1865, "plenty of grain in the country and

1. Selections from the Records of the Government, Bengal, 1853, Report of the district of Balasore, Henry Ricketts.

I am confident that sooner or later it will find its way into the market. I have impressed on all who have applied to me the necessity of patience and entire non-interference with the natural course of trade, as the demand will certainly regulate the supply eventually¹.

Orissa always exported rice. The traders were not aware of the critical situation in the province and naturally never took the initiative to import rice to Orissa. Sufferings of the people increased day by day. Baleshwar like Puri and Cuttack presented terrible famine scenes. The public works were rendered inoperative due to cash payment. The distressed people did not like to work because their wages would not fetch them rice to feed their families. On 17 February 1866, Sir Cecil Beadon, the Lieutenant-Governor, who visited Orissa, held a *darbar* at Cuttack to receive the local tributary chiefs, and zamindars. In his *darbar* speech, he explained that the government could never interfere with prices. "If I were to attempt to do this, I should consider myself no better than a dacoit or thief". Such a statement by Lieutenant-Governor seemed to have been taken by every one as a final exposition of the policy of Government regarding the import of rice to the provinces. This was, no doubt, a dogmatic *laissez faire* approach and official complacency to the whole problem which ultimately created havoc in the province. An opportunity to ascertain the truth for adopting timely measures to save the distressed people was lost. Orissa was doomed to suffer heavily in the impending calamity.

In the month of June 1866, the government realised the gravity of the situation and authorised the Commissioner to import rice to Orissa. But the monsoon had commenced and it rendered the importation of rice and conveying it to the interior extremely difficult. Thus, when it was decided to rescue the people from starvation and to save their lives it was much too late. The mortality was highest during the rainy season from July to September. In August heavy rain and storms caused high flood and large extent of territories were submerged in flood waters. The Famine Commissioners observed: "The people, shut up in a narrow province between pathless jungles and an impracticable sea, were in the condition of passengers in a ship without provisions". Consequently, they were destined to die and they died in very large numbers.

Fakir Mohan Senapati, one of the foremost litterateur of Orissa and a native of Baleshwar gives a vivid picture of the tragic scene in his autobiography. Fakir Mohan was then the headmaster of the

1. Report of Famine Commissioners, Vol. I, P. 30

Mission School in Baleshwar. He saw the plight of the people for want of foodgrains and how they consumed leaves of trees. Death due to starvation started from the month of March-April 1866. The death toll increased day by day and finally there were human corpses everywhere as if the whole province was covered with dead bodies. When the relief centres were started in the towns, starved men flocked to them, but they could hardly digest the food served to them because of their long starvation. Fakir Mohan was an eye-witness to the scene of dead bodies being carried in carts everyday for about a month and a half in Baleshwar town.

By September 1866, the government established 22 relief centres in the district where cooked food was distributed. The relief operations continued throughout the year 1867 and large quantities of rice were imported in to the province. The prices were subsidised so as to enable the people to buy the articles at a cheaper rate. In order to mitigate the sufferings of the government employees, their allowances were enhanced from 1 April, 1867 to the end of the year. The cultivators, who were unable to secure seeds for themselves, were advanced paddy for cultivation. By adopting all such measures, the government tried to restore normalcy in the province. In December 1866, a Commission was appointed by the Government of India and its report was available in April, 1867. In August, a debate took place in this matter in the House of Commons. Sir Stafford Northcote, the Secretary of State for India, while winding up the debate, spoke as follows:

"This catastrophe must always remain a monument of our failure, a humiliation to the people of this country, to the Government of this country and to those of our Indian officials of whom we had been perhaps a little too proud. At the same time, we must hope that we might derive from it lessons which might be of real value to ourselves, and that out of this deplorable evil, good of no significant kind might ultimately arise."¹ No doubt, Orissa received some attention from the higher authorities after the grave disaster of 1866-67.

The devastating famine of 1866 rendered the resettlement of the estates in Orissa almost impossible. The British authorities adopted a lenient policy in view of the calamity and the thirty years long settlement, which was to lapse in 1867, was extended for a period of another 30 years. A proclamation was issued to that effect on 26th June 1867 and it invited the zamindars to appear before the District Collectors by 1st August 1867 and execute the

1. Quoted in Bengal under the Lieutenant Governors, C.E. Buckland, vol I, p. 386

necessary agreements with the government. Thus, at one stroke, the Government conferred the blessings of a long settlement without any enhancement of its demands.

The province slowly recovered from the effects of the famine. By 1873-74, the zamindars were able to pay the land revenue to the government without any difficulty. T.E. Ravenshaw reported in July 1874, "Default in payment of revenue by a zamindar is a matter of rare occurrence, and government dues are realized with punctuality and precision and without giving undue pressure". The condition of the tenants, however, did not improve even after the enforcement of the Bengal Rent Act of 1859. In fact, the Act of 1859 remained in force in the province for a long time. By its provisions, rent cases were heard by the revenue courts as it was argued that the revenue officers were much better judges of such matters than the Munsifs. Besides, the proceedings in the revenue courts were simpler, speedier and cheaper than in the civil courts. But the peasants in Orissa made little use of the Act. The Commissioner remarked in the land revenue report of 1872-73 that "In Orissa the tenant is generally yielding and ignorant and eminently oppressible, to tally unacquainted with his rights and falls an easy prey to an unscrupulous landlord". Such was the lot of the peasants in the district in the 19th century.

Six years before the lapse of the term of the settlement in Orissa, the Government decided to start the major settlement of the province in right earnest. In 1891, H. R. Reilly was appointed as the Settlement Officer to conduct the survey and settlement operations. Before he could make any substantial progress, he died in October, 1892 in an accident and Maude succeeded him. He completely reorganised the programmes, recast scales of establishment and secured uniformity of procedure. In October 1894 the charge of Baleshwar was separated and S. L. Maddox remained in charge as the Settlement Officer. In February 1896, on Maude's departure, Baleshwar was reunited with the rest of Orissa and the whole province was placed under the charge of S. L. Maddox. He completed the settlement operations and submitted a voluminous report in March 1900.

After the abandonment of salt manufacture by the Government in 1863, the salt trade was managed by the system of excise. The private manufacturers were permitted to produce it by payment of the fixed duty per maund to the Government. At the same time the import of foreign salt increased rapidly. The local salt industry could not compete with the superior quality of foreign salt available at a cheaper rate. Even the salt imported from Madras was cheaper than the indigenous product. The Salt Department in Orissa was

transferred to the supervision of the Commissioner of Salt Revenue at Madras in 1885 and from January 1886 the new system came into effect. One Assistant Salt Commissioner was posted at Baleshwar. Under the strict control and stringent rules of the Madras system, local salt manufacture did not increase. In Baleshwar district salt manufacture decreased more than 50 per cent due to large importation of Liverpool salt. Baleshwar was once the centre for the production of huge quantities of finest quality of *panga* salt in the eastern coast. As it produced only 2,939 maunds of *panga* salt, the Government decided to abolish its manufacture from November 1887 and completely depend on Liverpool salt. The discontinuance of the manufacture, no doubt, excited some public feeling in the district. It was an incalculable loss to the district and especially to the common people who depend on it for their livelihood. For a long time Orissa imported salt from outside in spite of its extensive sea coast and potentiality for production of salt.

By the second half of the 19th century A. D. the decline of trade and commerce in Orissa was an established fact. The abolition of salt monopoly had also adversely affected the commercial activities of the people. By 1873-74, it was remarked that "With the exception of a few merchants of Balasore, there are very few indigenous Oriya traders of energy and capital. Orissa is entirely dependant on Bengal, upcountry and Madras dealers; one or two European firms are generally acquiring a permanent footing"¹. There were weekly rural markets in the interior of the province. In fact, except at towns there were hardly any shops found in the villages of Orissa. T. E. Ravenshaw noticed it as, 'a marked feature in this part of India'. The number of weekly rural markets in Baleshwar district was 165 in 1873-74. A decade later in 1883-84, another Commissioner of Orissa W. R. Larminie noticed that there were few capitalists in the province. The internal trade was chiefly controlled by Marwaris, while foreign trade was almost entirely in the hands of some enterprising Muslims from Cutch and Bombay"².

Towards 1874, the importance of Baleshwar port declined considerably and its place was taken by the newly formed inland port of Chandbali which was connected with the Bay of Bengal by river Dhamra. Light steamers ran there almost daily to and fro Calcutta, The Commissioner of Orissa observed that, "the place was likely to become of vital importance to the province as a centre of coastal trade and activity"³. It was second only to False Point, which continued to be the chief port of call for

1. Administrative Report of Orissa Division, 1873-74, p. 9.

2. Administrative Report of Orissa Division, 1883-84, p. 10.

3. Administrative Report of Orissa Division, 1883-84, p. 10.

larger steamers and sea-going vessels. However, the importance of Chandbali grew rapidly and towards 1881 became the principal port of the province. It was considered more convenient by the merchants to bring their commodities to this inland port and hence there was a diversion of trade from False Point to Chandbali. By the growing demand of Chandbali port, more steamers visited the place and the Government also ran steamers from Cuttack to Calcutta. Two private firms also joined in the competition and that resulted in the decrease of freight rates and increase in the volume of trade.

As the inland water link between Cuttack and Chandbali was very popular, the British authorities decided to complete the link between Chandbali and Calcutta through a range of canals. Towards the close of 1880-81, the Government gave approval for this new inland water communication project. Probably, there was no proposal for construction of railways through coastal Orissa at that time. The Orissa Coast Canal project was considered to be much cheaper and its estimated cost was only 40 lakhs. The length of canal for joining Calcutta with Chandbali was 147.2 km. and it was divided into four ranges between Rasalpur in Midnapore district of West Bengal and Matai in Baleshwar district. The project was completed soon after 1887 and a part of sea borne trade of Orissa was diverted through this route. The Orissa Coast Canal continued as the important route for communication between Orissa and Bengal till the end of the 19th century A. D.

Steps were taken in the last decade of the 19th century for construction of railways through coastal Orissa. Two railway companies took the responsibility for joining Calcutta with Ganjam via Baleshwar and Cuttack with a branch line to Puri. The Bengal Nagpur Railway (B. N. R.) service was started in 1895. By the close of the year 1899—1900 the main bridges were completed and the railway route was opened in the coastal line except in the section between Howrah and Kolaghat. Thus, the year 1899-1900 was memorable in the history as it ended the isolation of Orissa from the rest of the country. The importance of the inland port at Chandbali and the Orissa Coast Canal rapidly declined after the opening of the railways.

Orissa came under the jurisdiction of the Calcutta High Court in 1862. The administration of civil justice was reorganised by the Act XVI of 1868. It abolished the office of *sadar amin* and the principal *sadar amin* was designated as the Subordinate Judge. The jurisdiction of District Judge and Subordinate Judge extended to all original suits cognizable by the civil courts. Appeals from

a District Judge lay to the High Court and appeals from Subordinate Judge and Munsif lay to the District Judge. Baleshwar had only a Munsif's Court. In 1872 the people of Baleshwar petitioned the Collector requesting him for the establishment of a court of a Subordinate Judge. The demand was accepted and such a court was established in 1875 as a temporary measure for one year. The experiment did not succeed because the number of Civil Suits was not sufficient for the retention of a Subordinate Judge. Hence the court was abolished, but again the demand was revived. In 1881 and 1882 the Commissioner of Orissa strongly recommended for revival of the court of a Subordinate Judge at Baleshwar. He considered it unfair to the people of Baleshwar, more especially to those residing in the northern part of the district, to compel them to come to Cuttack to prosecute or defend their civil suits. But the higher authorities did not pay any heed to it.

'The people of Orissa', T. E. Ravenshaw observed in 1874, 'are perhaps the least criminal in India'. John Beames, the Collector of Baleshwar and an experienced civilian of Orissa, also remarked in 1877 that "There is no professional crime in Orissa, and the people are as a rule, very quiet and orderly". However, in the last quarter of the 19th century, the number of criminal cases brought to the courts showed a tendency of increase. Several reasons were attributed to such a phenomenon. The Magistrate of Baleshwar remarked that "Increased litigation is fostered by social progress, by the increasing familiarity of the people with the machinery of our courts, by the gradual declining authority of the Zamindars, and above all, by the great improvement in the material condition of the people which was attended by several years of extraordinarily good crops and extraordinarily high prices"¹. Besides the salaried Magistrates, the Government decided to introduce the Bench system for administering criminal justice after the adoption of the revised Code of Criminal procedure in 1872. The system was first introduced in 1873 in Cuttack and Puri. Gradually it was extended to Baleshwar. The Benches consisted of a salaried Magistrate and two or more honorary Magistrates exercised even summary powers. It became increasingly popular. In 1890, the Bench system functioned at Baleshwar and Bhadrak. The Bench Magistrate successfully disposed of small criminal cases to the general satisfaction of the people.

GROWTH OF NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS 1919—1920

In Orissa, as elsewhere in India in the 19th century A. D. the growth of socio-political awareness was facilitated mainly due to two factors; firstly, the rise of a middle class intelligentsia,

1, Administrative Report of the Orissa Division, 1877—78, p. 21.

and secondly, the growth of mass media like press, journals, etc. The establishment of English-medium schools, colleges and universities spread the western education and slowly but steadily a new class of intelligentsia with novel hopes and aspirations appeared on the Indian scene.

In the forties of the 19th century the inhabitants of Baleshwar wanted an English medium school and they were willing to contribute money for its establishment. Petitions were sent to the authorities several times. In 1846, A. J. M. Mills, the Commissioner, recommended for the establishment of such a school. But the proposal was not accepted by the authorities. On November, 1853 the Government opened the first English medium school at Baleshwar to be known as the Baleshwar Zilla School. At that time, there were only two more such schools in Orissa, one at Puri and the other at Cuttack. In 1854, the famous Wood's Despatch introduced the grant-in-aid system with a hope that it would bring forward private enterprisers in the field. But, in Orissa, it evoked no response from the public for a long time. The main reason was, probably that only a few students came up to the Entrance standard. In 1867, only ten candidates appeared in the Entrance (Matriculation) examination from three Zilla Schools of the Orissa Division, and only three students came out successful.¹ The Zamindar family of Lakshmannath started a Middle English school and it was raised to a High English school during 1876—77.

The Baptist missionaries were the pioneers in establishing the modern press in Orissa in 1837. After thirty years, in 1867, the second press was established by the initiative of the people at Cuttack. A year after, in 1868, the third printing press was established at Baleshwar by the untiring efforts of Fakir Mohan Senapati with the help of a few local men and Zamindars. The fourth printing press was also established at Baleshwar by a local Zamindar. The establishment of printing presses served primarily three purposes, namely, printing of journals, preparation of text books and development of literature. From the printing press of Baleshwar, Fakir Mohan Senapati edited *Bodhadayini* and *Baleshwar Sambad Vahika*. The first part of the journal contained literary writings while the second part contained news items. In 1872 it became a weekly journal. After the *Utkal Dipika* published from Cuttack, it was probably the most influential journal of Orissa in the last quarter of the 19th century A. D. The journal symbolised the awakening of the people. It discussed many socio-religious and political problems of the province in particular and the country in general.

1. Utkal Dipika, 12 January, 1871.

At the same time, several organizations sprang up to spearhead people's interest in different fields. They acted as mouthpieces of the rising educated class or intelligentsia who championed various socio-political and economic causes directed towards arround improvement of the people. Three such prominent organizations in the district were (1) National Society at Baleshwar established in 1878, (2) Bhadrak Desh Hitaisini Sabha at Bhadrak established in 1874, and (3) B. Dey's Social Club at Baleshwar established in 1895. There is no doubt that these organizations succeeded to rouse the people from their age-long slumber and prepared the ground for national upsurge against foreign domination.

In the second half of the 19th century, Baleshwar readily came under the influence of Brahma preachers. By 1860, a Samaj, on the Adi Samaj model existed in the town. It became effective only a few years later when Babu Bhagaban Chandra Das joined the movement. He brought much progressive spirit to it and mainly through his influence, some prominent men of Baleshwar joined the Samaj. They carried on propaganda in the neighbouring villages and thus the Brahma ideals spread in and around Baleshwar. In 1888, Nandalal Banerjee, a missionary of the New Dispensation, made Baleshwar his principal centre and his efforts greatly strengthened Brahma activities at Baleshwar¹.

The political consciousness of the people in Orissa, as elsewhere in India, was roused during the last decade of the 19th century by their association with the Indian National Congress. No delegate from Orissa attended the first session of the Indian National Congress, but to the second session held at Calcutta in the last week of December 1886, the *Utkal Sabha* of Cuttack sent four delegates and the National Society of Baleshwar sent three members, namely, Baikuntha Nath De, Bhagaban Chandra Das and Ramesh Chandra Mandal². They laid the foundation of constitutional struggle of the people against the British authorities. But the problems which agitated the minds of enlightened Oriyas for a long time were the amalgamation of Oriya-speaking tracts into one administrative unit and the formation of a separate province. The agitation for amalgamation of Oriya-speaking tracts roused and moulded public opinion and helped greatly in the growth of political consciousness of the people in the early part of the 20th century.

The first proposal for the unification of the scattered Oriya-speaking tracts under single administration came from Raja Baikuntha Nath De of Baleshwar and Babu Bichitrananda Patnaik

1. History of the Brahma Samaj, Sivanath Sastri, p. 522.

2. Utkal Dipika, 25 December, 1886.

of Cuttack in 1875¹. Petitions were sent in vain from different parts of Orissa. Towards the end of the year 1902, Raja Baikuntha Nath De once again presented a memorial to Lord Curzon in which he urged the Governor-General to constitute a separate administrative unit for all Oriya-speaking territories or to keep them under one provincial administration of either Bengal, Madras or the Central Provinces.

The demand of the people finally paved the way for the establishment of a new central organisation in the province to put forth their grievances before the British authorities. On the 30th and 31st December, 1903 the representatives of all Oriya-speaking tracts of Madras, the Central Provinces and Bengal met in a conference at Cuttack. That was the historic gathering of *Utkal Sammilani* which met amidst unprecedented enthusiasm and spearheaded the Oriya Movement till the formation of a separate province in 1936. The first conference was presided by Sriram Chandra Bhanj Deo, the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj. Madhu Sudan Das was the Secretary and in fact, the moving spirit behind the organisation. It was the first and pioneering attempt in India to create a province on linguistic basis. Baleshwar and its people played their due role in the movement. Maharaja Baikuntha Nath De presided over its tenth session held at Cuttack. The people of Orissa were not satisfied with being tagged with Bihar in 1912. It was decided to strengthen the movement by exerting greater pressure on the British authorities. The crucial meeting of the *Utkal Sammilani* was held at Baleshwar in December 1916 in which a seven-member committee was formed with a view to collecting materials and carrying on continuous executive work of the conference regarding the union of the Oriya-speaking tracts throughout the year. The committee prepared an address with a memorandum of arguments and map of the outlying Oriya tracts and waited on E. S. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India and Lord Chemsford, the Governor-General, in Calcutta on 11th December 1917. Soon after it, the 13th annual session of the *Utkal Sammilani* was held at Cuttack on 30th and 31st March, 1918 under the presidentship of Fakir Mohan Senapati and it constituted a Standing Council of 65 members from all parts of Orissa including the outlying tracts. However, the Montagu-Chemsford Report did not solve the problem. The policy of the Government did not change and the apathy lingered on. During the First World War a revolutionary incident occurred at Odangi on 10th September, 1915 in which the famous revolutionary Jatin Mookerjee popularly famous as Bagha Jatin was killed.

1. Utkal Dipika, 27 February, 1875.

The beginning of 1921 witnessed two momentous events in the history of India, the first was the introduction of constitutional changes by the implementation of the Government of India Act, 1919, and the second and more important event was the beginning of a mass movement, the non-co-operation movement initiating a new phase of our freedom struggle.

Non-Co-Operation Movement

In the annual session of the Indian National Congress held at Nagpur in the last week of December 1920 under the presidency of Vijayraghavacharias, the final decision on the launching of non-co-operation movement took place. The Indian people now entered the decisive phase of their freedom struggle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Thirty-five delegates from Orissa including some prominent leaders of Baleshwar like Mukunda Prasad Das and Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab attended the Nagpur Session. They supported the formation of Provincial Congress Committees on linguistic basis. On the basis of such a decision the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee was constituted in early 1921 with Pandit Gopabandhu Das, as its first President. The District Congress Committees were gradually formed and some members were given specific charges of organising Congress activities in different parts of the province. Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab was kept in charge of Baleshwar district. He gave up his studies in the college and worked wholeheartedly to organise the Congress movement in the district.

The non-co-operation movement in Orissa got much encouragement due to Gandhiji's visit to the province on the 23rd March, 1921. He addressed a meeting at Bhadrak on 25th March and spent a day in propagating the Congress programmes for the freedom of the country. It created an unprecedented enthusiasm in Orissa. The message of non-co-operation spread like wildfire in different parts of the district and kindled the imagination of the people even in remote corners.

Dr. Mahtab, Karunakar Panigrahi, Krushna Prasad Mahapatra and Bhairab Chandra Mahapatra reached Baleshwar town in the morning of 6th April, 1921 and thereafter plunged into the national movement with a sense of devotion and discipline. Soon, a number of school students gave up their studies and joined Congress as volunteers; prominent among them were Biswanath Hota and Nilamber Das. Other youngmen who joined the movement were Nandakishore Das, Banchanidhi Mohanty, Ghanashyam Sahu, Upendra Nath Panda, Subodha Chandra Deo, Surendra Nath Das and Muhammad Hanif resigned from

their Government jobs and dedicated themselves to the Congress work. Such examples of personal sacrifice provided much impetus to the movement. In Baleshwar, as elsewhere in the province, a dedicated cadre of Congress workers and leaders was formed by those who joined the movement in 1921. They made tremendous sacrifice and suffered most in the struggle for freedom.

At different places in Orissa, some centres were established to organise the Congress activities and to train up workers and volunteers for the movement. One such prominent centre was *Swaraj Mandir* at Baleshwar which was under the guidance of Dr. Mahtab. The Congress volunteers were taught how to spread among villagers the message of non-co-operation. The Congress programmes were (i) boycott of government schools, college, law courts, etc., (ii) boycott of foreign goods, (iii) propagation of hand-spinning and weaving by popularising the use of *charkha*, (iv) establishment of village Panchayats and national schools, (v) prohibition, etc. All such programmes were pursued in right earnest by the Congress volunteers in different parts of the district.

In the Baleshwar District Congress Committee, Bipin Behari Das and Harekrushna Mahtab acted as the President and Secretary respectively. Prominent workers were allotted different areas of the district as follows :

Jaleshwar	.. Karunakar Panigrahi, Biswanath Hota and Harendra Ghose.
Basta	.. Krushna Prasad Mahapatra and Nilambar Das.
Soro	.. Nanda Kishore Das.
Bhadrak	.. Banchanidhi Mohanty, Ghanashyam Sahu, Upendra Nath Panda and Muhammad Hanif.

Bhairab Chandra Mahapatra remained in charge of the Congress office in Baleshwar town where H. Mahtab also worked hard with the help of Surendra Nath Das and Subodh Chandra De to spread the message of the Congress.

As a number of students left schools and colleges the Congress leaders decided to establish some National schools and colleges for educating their children. A number of such institutions sprang up in different parts of the province. In order to co-ordinate the activities of such National schools and to conduct

the examinations for students, Utkal Swarajya Sikshya Parishad was constituted at Cuttack under the presidentship of Gopabandhu Das. Nanda Kishore Das (M. A., Calcutta) joined as the Secretary of the organisation. The Parishad acted as National University which arose in the days of non-co-operation movement.

Pickettings before the foreign liquor shops and cloth shops were widely practised. It was successful to a large extent in Baleshwar, Bhadrak and Jaleshwar area. Heaps of foreign clothes were burnt at several places. The establishment of Village Panchayats for arbitration of petty civil and criminal cases were to some extent successful. The villagers enthusiastically set up such organisations to solve their problems. Some zamindars of Bhadrak area without registering rent suits in the law courts, sent a list of defaulters to the local Congress office. In some Panchayats like Srijang, even sale-deeds were registered.

Towards the end of July 1921, the All India Congress Committee met at Bombay. Harekrushna Mahtab attended the session as one of the members from Orissa. The All India Congress Committee (A. I. C. C.) resolved to emphasize several programmes of the movement like the boycott to the Prince of Wales, the programmes for prohibition, popularisation of *charkha*, etc. In the meantime, the province got ten thousand rupees from Tilak Swarajya Fund which was distributed to different district units of the party. Baleshwar got one and a half thousand rupees as its share. In December 1921, about 127 delegates from Orissa attended the annual session of the Congress at Ahamadabad which included 53 delegates from Baleshwar district. They returned with much enthusiasm to start civil disobedience as the next phase of the movement. A large number of volunteers were recruited for this purpose and in every district some specific areas were also selected. In this district a village known as Sartha in the police-station of Basta was chosen by the organisers.

But the tragic incidence at Chauri Chaura in February 1922 changed the course of events all of a sudden and Gandhiji suspended the programme of civil disobedience indefinitely. The programme of constructive works were however to continue as before. Within a few months top Congress leaders in the country including Gandhiji were arrested and put into jails. The Congress leaders of Orissa, Gopabandhu Das, H. Mahtab, and others were behind the bars. The Government adopted strong repressive measures to put an end to the movement. However, it was not possible to turn the tide of mass political awakening in the country.

The emergence of the Swaraj Party in 1923 opened a new vista in Indian politics. Its decision to participate in the elections to the various legislative bodies in order to obstruct the work of the Government from within the four walls of the council chambers until the demands of the people were met, gave rise to new hopes and aspirations. In spite of the opposition from a section of the Congress Party, leaders like Pandit Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das and others were convinced about the efficacy of their plans and programmes and ultimately succeeded in getting approval of the Congress. In the elections to the legislatures in November 1923, the Swaraj Party contested a large number of seats. In Bihar and Orissa, they won 12 seats. Radha Ranjan Das from north Baleshwar constituency was the only elected member of the party from Orissa. In fact, the whole organisation of the Congress was in shambles. Pandit Gopabandhu Das was in jail. Harekrushna Mahtab, who was released after one year of rigorous imprisonment, tried to continue *Khadi* programmes in *Swaraj Mandir* at Baleshwar. He also brought out *Prajatantra* as a weekly newspaper from his own press at Baleshwar towards the end of 1923. Bansidhar Rath and Biswanath Hota, the two devoted Congress members managed it well. In 1924 H. Mahtab was also elected as the Chairman of the Baleshwar Zilla Board and undertook welfare activities throughout the district in right earnest. The popularity of Congress was evident when two Congress members, H. Mahtab and Nanda Kishore Das, were elected from the district in November, 1926 to the Legislative Council of Bihar and Orissa.

Members of the Council from Orissa unanimously drew the attention of Government to recurrent high floods and consequent damage to crops, property and lives and demanded that immediate measures for protection against floods and prompt relief at the time of floods be taken. A devastating flood occurred in the districts of Baleshwar and Cuttack during July-August 1927. The big rivers like Subarnarekha, Baitarani, Brahmani and a number of small rivers caused extensive damages to life and property in a vast area. A striking feature of this flood was the extensive breaches caused in the railway line, canal banks, protective embankments and on the Grand Trunk Road of Orissa. The gravity of the situation was realised by the Government and Sir H. L. Stephenson, the Governor of Bihar and Orissa, gave a statement in the Council on the 30th August, 1927 assuring the House that the officers had been provided with all the funds needed for relief operations. On the same day, H. Mahtab moved a resolution urging the Government to appoint a committee consisting of non-official and official members "to start an immediate enquiry into the

present state of things in the flood affected areas of Cuttack and Balashwar districts to ascertain the magnitude of the loss the people have sustained and to suggest measures of relief¹. On behalf of the Government, J. D. Sifton gave a lengthy statement on the flood situation in Orissa with an assurance from him that he himself was going to visit the distressed parts immediately after the conclusion of the session. The resolution was withdrawn. However, by the pressure of public opinion, the Government appointed an expert committee consisting of three members to investigate the flood problem in Orissa. The committee submitted its report in 1928. It was the first authoritative review on the flood problems in Orissa, but its recommendations could not be implemented due to administrative and financial difficulties.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT

The Indian political scene took a dramatic turn with the announcement of the appointment of the Indian Statutory Commission in November 1927 consisting of seven members of the British Parliament headed by Sir John Simon. The primary purpose of such a commission was to evaluate the working of the Government of India Act, 1919 with a view to determining the future course of constitutional development. The exclusion of Indians from a body, which was to recommend for further constitutional advancement of the Indian people, was so unreasonable and unjust that India sharply reacted to the announcement. The problem finally paved the way for the next mass movement in the country.

In the annual session of the Indian National Congress held at Lahore in the last week of December 1929 under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru, nothing but complete independence or *purna swaraj* was accepted as the national demand and the Congress was determined to reach the goal by mass civil disobedience movement throughout the country. By the call of the Lahore Congress, it was decided to celebrate 26th January as the Independence Day throughout India in which the people were required to pledge their full support to the declaration of independence. At Balashwar, Harekrushna Mahtab and Nanda Kishore Das took prominent part in organizing the function. When Gandhiji decided to launch the countrywide movement by breaking the Salt law at Dandi, a village on the sea coast in Gujarat, it was received with much enthusiasm by the Congress leaders in Orissa. People took it as their rights to manufacture salt in the long coastal belt of Orissa.

1. Proceedings of the Legislative Council of Bihar and Orissa, Vol. XVI, 1927, p. 176.

Baleshwar played a conspicuous role in Salt Satyagraha which began on 6th April, 1930 when Mahatma Gandhi broke the Salt law at Dandi after his famous march to that place. The Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee in its meeting at Baleshwar on 16th March, 1930, had decided to start the movement at Inchudi, a place in the sea coast, 16 kilometres from Baleshwar town. The villagers at Inchudi showed exemplary tenacity and courage throughout the movement. On the basis of the Government report, it was claimed that the Salt Satyagraha at Inchudi occupied the second place in India, the first being Gujarat where Gandhiji himself led the movement.

The first batch of 21 volunteers, led by Gopabandhu Chowdhury and Acharya Harihar Das, began their march to Inchudi from Swaraj Ashram at Cuttack. They were determined to break the Salt law on 13th April and accordingly they planned their journey of about 192 km. in 7 days. But on 8th April, Gopabandhu Chowdhury was arrested at Chandal and was confined in the Cuttack jail for seven days. In his absence the party was led by Acharya Harihar Das and they reached Inchudi on 12th April. On the next day, 12 volunteers including the leader, Acharya Harihar broke the Salt law and began the preparation of salt on the sea coast. The police party was already on the spot and they arrested the leader and 6 volunteers. Thus began the Civil Disobedience Movement in Orissa. There was unprecedented enthusiasm in the Salt Satyagraha launched at Inchudi. Soon a large number of volunteers in several batches reached Baleshwar sea coast from Cuttack, Puri, Ganjam, Sambalpur, Baripada and other parts of Orissa. The local people joined with the Congress volunteers in large numbers and in six centres in the sea coast contraband salt was prepared. Surendra Nath Das, who had organised the villagers near Inchudi, was arrested and sentenced to six months imprisonment along with Jivaramji Kalyanji, a prominent Gujarati Congress worker on 12th April, a day before the beginning of actual struggle. However, the people of the surrounding villages did not co-operate at all with the Government officials and they even refused to supply drinking water to them. The representative of the Oriya newspaper, the *Samaj*, who toured the area at that time reported that Surendra Nath Das was the real *sardar* or Commander of the local people and Inchudi became the Bardoli of Orissa.¹ Thereafter, Surendra Nath Das was popularly known as Sardar Surendra.

On 20th April police saw hundreds of women violating the Salt law and collecting salt in two centres at Inchudi. They were led by Rama Devi and Malati Devi, the two prominent women

1. The *Samaj*, 16th April, 1930.

leaders of Orissa. Thus, the women of Orissa took part openly in the freedom struggle. In May, 1930 new centres for salt manufacture were opened in the long sea coast of Orissa. In the district, besides Inchudi, another prominent centre was Sartha. It operated under the leadership of Mathura Mohan Behera, Karunakar Panigrahi and Nilambar Das. Soon the entire sea coast of the district became the centre for the manufacture of salt. There were altogether 21 centres in the district. They were spread from Sartha in the north to Eram in the south. Thus, under the inspiring leadership of the Congress leaders the people of Baleshwar achieved a spectacular success in Salt Satyagraha. With the advent of rainy season, the production of salt was stopped and the Congress workers pursued other programmes of the freedom struggle with unabated zeal.

Meanwhile, all prominent Congress leaders of Orissa and hundreds of volunteers were imprisoned. Dr. H. Mahtab, Nanda Kishore Das, Dr. Krishna Prasad Mohanty and others, were confined in the prison. The two most influential newspapers propagating the Congress views and news of the movement, the *Prajatantra* of Baleshwar and the *Samaj* of Cuttack, were forced to stop their publications in May 1930 for an indefinite period due to stringent press ordinance. A veritable reign of terror was let loose to suppress the mass movement in the district. As a protest against the repressive policy of the Government a member of the Legislative Council of Bihar and Orissa, Bhagabat Prasad Mahapatra of Bhadrak, tendered his resignation in May 1930.

Besides Salt Satyagraha, other programmes of civil disobedience including picketing before excise shops, boycott of foreign cloth, spread of *Khadi*, non-payment of Chaukidari tax, etc., were continued. A number of school and college students gave up their studies and joined in the freedom struggle. In some places the people also refused to pay the Chaukidari tax. Ancillary to this a serious incident took place at Srijang near Inchudi where a police party was manhandled by an infuriated mob on 12th July, 1930. It led to severe repressive measures on the villagers. The properties of prominent persons like Gour Mohan Das and Bidyadhar Rath were looted and the villagers fled away to other places in panic. A large number of villagers were arrested and a punitive tax amounting to six thousand rupees was imposed on the villagers. Towards the end of November 1930 about 1,200 persons were in jail. The Government promulgated an ordinance and declared all Congress organisations as unlawful.

The Editor of Prajatantra was convicted and sentenced to two years of rigorous imprisonment for treason. The office was searched and important documents were seized by the police.¹

The Salt Satyagraha was resumed in many places of coastal Orissa in January 1931. At Baleshwar, the Congress office functioned at a place known as Pharasidinga, a French enclave, over which the British authorities had no control. Sardar Surendra Nath Das, who had returned from jail organized the movement at Inchudi once again and directed it from the French enclave. But, in the meantime, the political atmosphere of the country changed due to Gandhi-Irwin Pact on 5th March, 1931. However, it was a temporary truce. The Congress was forced to resume civil disobedience again in 1932. The Government promptly engaged its machinery to arrest the Congress leaders and volunteers all over the country. However, some of them went underground and tried to continue the movement. Sardar Surendra Nath Das guided the movement from Pharasidinga till his arrest in February, 1933. The British police could not enter the area without permission of the French Government. So the top officials of the district visited Inchudi and by threat of persecution brought undertakings from the villagers that they were not participating in the movement². Nilambar Das worked secretly in north Baleshwar for a few months. With strong repressive measures the authorities thought of putting down movement as quickly as possible. But the movement lingered on till early part of 1934.

On 9th May, 1934, Gandhiji began his famous *padayatra* from Puri for removal of the conception of untouchability from among the people. It was not only a novel experiment in India, but also provided a unique experience to Gandhiji himself. In the second phase of the *Padayatra* in Orissa which began from Bairi on 21st May, 1934 he continued his march till 7th June, 1934 which ended at Bhadrak. It was a sort of spiritual experience for him and he realised the magnitude of the poverty that prevailed in Indian villages. The living condition of the village people in Orissa moved his heart to such an extent that Orissa always remained imprinted in his heart and memory.

The march came to an end at Bhadrak due to the coming of rainy season. Gandhiji left Bhadrak on 8th June and proceeded to Bengal by train. During his tour in the district he delivered speeches and collected subscriptions. At Baleshwar railway station

1. The Samaj, 31st December, 1930. The Prajatantra ceased its publication thereafter and appeared once again only after the Independence of India.

2. Baleshwar District Records, D. O. No. 158/C, District, Collector to Commissioner, 9th February, 1932.

he was received by a huge crowd for which the train was detained for an hour. A purse was presented to Gandhiji. Some Gujarati merchant, also presented him another purse.

The Harijan movement in Orissa roused the people to a great extent. Some of the top Congress leaders inspired by Gandhian ideals, devoted themselves whole-heartedly to build some Congress centres in remote rural areas for pioneering the cause of *harijans*, *Khadi* and village reconstruction programmes. In the district, there were two prominent centres, viz., (i) Karma Mandir at Agarpada in Baleshwar town and (ii) Bhadrak Ashram at Bhadrak guided by Harekrushna Mahtab and Jivaramji Kalyanji respectively.

Meanwhile, after the end of the Third Round Table Conference, Shri Samuel Hoare, the Secretary of State for India, declared on 24th December, 1932 that a separate province of Orissa would be formed in the new constitutional set up for India. The White Paper, published in March, 1933, mentioned Orissa as a Governor's province along with ten other provinces of British India. The Joint Parliamentary Committee, in their report in November 1934, gave the final shape to the new province which emerged by the Act of 1935 as the eleventh unit of British India. It was inaugurated on 1st April, 1936 with Sir John Austin Hubback as its first Governor.

In the first general election to the Orissa Legislative Assembly in early 1937, all Congress nominees of the district were returned successfully except the candidate for special Muslim constituency. When the first Congress Ministry was formed in July, 1937, two Congress legislators of the district, namely, Mukunda Prasad Das and Nanda Kishore Das, were duly elected as the Speaker and Deputy Speaker respectively. The ministry continued in office till 4th November 1939, i.e., for about two years and four months. Besides the Congress programmes and policies which were given effect to by the ministry in Orissa it had to seriously endeavour to tackle a number of problem facing the new province, specially agrarian and economic problems. It was one of the poorest province in the country and its annual budget was hardly rupees two crores. But within the limited resources the Congress ministry tried its best to keep up the promises of the party and its ideals. Hence we find a large number of statutes to the credit of this Ministry. Its social and educational reforms were noteworthy.

It also pursued the programme of prohibition in right earnest. The Government first decided to tackle the problem of opium addiction in this district. A comprehensive scheme was prepared for the success of the programme. A Prohibition Officer was appointed

in September 1938 to look after the detailed arrangements for introduction of the scheme. The programme was inaugurated on 12th October, 1938 in a solemn function at Baleshwar. All the Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Congress leaders attended the function and addressed a huge gathering in the municipal office premises in the evening. The Premier appealed to the people to co-operate with the programme which was aimed at eradication of a social evil. A majority of existing opium shops were closed from 15th October 1938, except 14 shops on the border areas of the district. The Government restricted and regulated the sale of opium and undertook various kinds of measures for the success of the scheme.

The Congress ministry resigned on 4th November 1939 on war issue. The party decided to launch individual Satyagraha campaign from October 1940. In Orissa the movement was inaugurated by H. Mahtab, a member of the Congress Working Committee, who delivered anti-war speech in a meeting at Remuna and was arrested. All ex-ministers, members of the Assembly and leading Congressmen participated in the campaign and courted arrest and imprisonment. While on the one hand the British authorities succeeded in forming a coalition ministry in Orissa in November 1941, the Congress party was forced to launch a new movement in the country from August 1942.

The historic resolution of 'Quit India' was adopted by the All India Congress Committee in the night of 8th August, 1942. The British Government swiftly moved its machinery to repress the Congress leaders and their organizations throughout the country from the early morning of 9th August 1942. In Orissa all important Congress leaders were taken into custody. The Government declared all Congress bodies, their officers and other allied organisations as unlawful and the police took possession of those places.

The August Revolution was a people's movement against the British authority which took violent turns. In the district the first violent incident took place on 17th August 1942 at Bhandaripokhari where a mob of about four thousand people surrounded the police-station. There were only one Assistant Sub-Inspector and three Constables in the police-station at that time. One Constable was beaten severely and others fled away to save their lives. The police-station was burnt completely. The people also destroyed a wooden bridge so that the police force from outside would not be able to come quickly to the disturbed area. The government arrested the leading

agitators including Jagannath Das, a Congress Member of Legislative Assembly (M. L. A.) of the area. A collective fine of Rs. 6,000 was imposed on twelve villages for mob violence.

The police resorted to firing at Katsahi where a violent mob attacked an armed police party on 22nd September, 1942. Eight persons died in the incident. Subsequently the ring leader of the area, Muralidher Panda was arrested. A week later police opened fire to disperse an unruly mob at Khairadihi and then at Tudigadia on 28th September in which two local people and a few persons from Nilagiri were killed.

The most tragic incident took place at Eram a place near the seashore in Basudebpur police-station on 28th September 1942. It remained almost isolated in the rainy season because of natural barriers. The Congress workers wanted to establish a sort of parallel administration of their own and had boycotted the police and other officials in the locality. On that fateful day a few hundred villagers had assembled on an open place surrounded on three sides by thorny bushes, muddy fields and ponds, on hearing the usual sound of conch-shells. They had come to listen to their leaders on the possible course of action against the police and local supporter of the British Raj. A strong police contingent headed by a Deputy Superintendent of Police arrived there and asked the people to disperse. The police had already decided to take strong action against them because of snatching the Dak and the belongings of the police party from a Chowkidar. When the people did not disperse, police fired and several rounds of gunfire were discharged on a thick crowd which killed 29 people at the spot and injured more than hundred persons¹.

The Government was vehemently criticised for such a brutal action and ultimately an official enquiry was made by the Inspector-General of Police and the Revenue Commissioner of Orissa. The enquiry report revealed the lapses of the local police in controlling the situation in the early phase of the rising. In fact, the firing which occurred at several places in the district were primarily due to confrontation of the police party with the mob. The popular upsurge was not properly tackled in its earlier phase and consequently the police action caused serious trouble at several places. The Eram Enquiry Report reveals that "It is not clear to what extent the general rise in prices and shortage of essential supplies were direct

1. History of the Freedom Movement in Orissa (ed), Vol. IV, pp. 81—85.

causes of these disturbances but we have little doubt that there were important factors in fomenting discontent ¹. After the Eram firing the agitation calmed down in south Baleshwar.

A severe cyclone lashed in north Baleshwar on 15th and 16th October, 1942. Thousands of homeless and starved people raided a rice mill at Lakshmannath after the cyclone. Police opened firing to disperse the crowd in which one person was killed and a few were injured. However, the disturbance gradually declined in the district and was almost under control by the end of October 1942. Under the Defence of India Rules, a large number of Congress workers, 15 members of the Orissa Legislative Assembly and its Deputy Speaker, Nanda Kishore Das, were arrested. Several institutions of local-self government both in Cuttack and Baleshwar districts were superseded by the Government. The Government also promulgated stringent press regulations to control the nationalist newspapers and journals published in Orissa.

The economic condition of the people rapidly deteriorated in the country due to high prices and short supplies. The situation in Orissa caused grave anxiety to the authorities. It further worsened with the introduction of free trade policy by the Central Government within the eastern region which comprised Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Assam and Eastern States. The result of this order was that the provincial Government was deprived of the power to regulate or control movements of foodgrains and prices. Baleshwar was hard hit due to the cyclone of 1942 and subsequent high flood of 1943. Bengal suffered from a terrible famine at that time in which lakhs of people perished. Its impact was greatly felt at Baleshwar very much. Pandit H.N. Kunzru, the President of Servants' of India Society, who visited certain parts of the coastal districts of Orissa in the last week of October 1943, remarked that "My impression is that while the area in the districts of Orissa is smaller than in Bengal the distress in the affected areas is nearly as acute as any of the districts of Bengal that I have visited". There was no doubt that the government had failed to relieve the distress of the people. Of course, the free-trade policy was cancelled due to its disadvantages. But the Premier of Orissa agreed by force of circumstances, to release large stocks of rice to Bengal. Later on Kunzru deplored that as a poor province Orissa should have received special consideration at the hands of the central authorities, but instead of showing any sympathy, "they have accentuated its misfortune by their policy" ².

1. History of the Freedom Movement in Orissa (ed),
Vol. IV, Appendix-E, pp. 67—75.

2. Indian Annual Registers, 1943. Vol. II. p. 17.

After the end of the Second World War the situation took a dramatic turn by the victory of the Labour Party in England which paved the way for India's independence. In the election to the Orissa Legislative Assembly, the Congress party had won absolute majority. Dr. H. Mahtab who won from Bhadrak constituency took the oath of office and secrecy as the Premier of Orissa (now the post is Chief Minister of Orissa) in the forenoon of 23rd April 1946. With the achievement of independence India entered into a new phase of her history.

HISTORY OF NILAGIRI EX-STATE

The ex-state of Nilagiri, situated between $21^{\circ} 17'$ and $21^{\circ} 37'$ N. and $86^{\circ} 25'$ and $86^{\circ} 25'$ E., with an area of 278 square miles was the only Garhjat state which merged in the district of Baleshwar after independence before the merger of other ex-states with Orissa. It is one of the three subdivisions of the district with the headquarters at Nilagiri about 22 km. from Baleshwar town.

The origin of the ex-state of Nilagiri like the most Garhjat state, is shrouded in obscurity. However, it is certain that they were well established as political entities by the late mediaeval period. The antiquities of Ayodhya, 10 km. from Nilagiri town dates back to a much earlier period. It thrived as an important centre of Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism. The ruins of temples and icons of different cults are still found in the site, which conclusively proves that the area was once a prominent centre of human activities.

The first important ruler mentioned in the traditional history of Nilagiri was Narayan Basanta Birata Bhujanga Baliar Singhdeo, a contemporary of Prataparudradeva of Gajapati dynasty. It is also believed that he married in the Gajapati family of Orissa. This matrimonial alliance helped him to stabilize his position and the jurisdiction of Nilagiri. However, we get a systematic account of the royal family from the time of occupation of Orissa by the East India Company in 1803. The rulers of Nilagiri like the rulers of most of the Garhjat states signed a treaty engagement with the authorities of the Company and agreed to pay an annual tribute to acknowledge its paramourncy.

The line of succession during the British rule is as follows:

Rama Chandra Mardaraj Harichandan (1800 A. D.—1810 A. D.)
Govinda Chandra (1811—1848)

1. L. E. B. Cobden-Ramsay, *Feudatory States of Orissa*, (Calcutta, 1910), p. 271.

|
 Krushna Chandra
 (1849—1893)
 |
 Syam Sundar
 (1898—1913)
 |
 Kishore Chandra
 (1925—1947)

The Garhjat rulers were subordinate allies under the paramount authority of the British. The Garhjats of Orissa were known as Tributary Mahals for a long time. By the Regulation 12 of 1805, these Tributary Mahals of Orissa including Nilagiri, were exempted from the operation of the British laws and regulations. In 1814, Lord Hastings established the office of the Superintendent of Tributary Mahals for proper supervision and management. It provided a 'useful check on their misconduct'. In 1862, adoption Sanads were granted to the chiefs and in 1874 the hereditary title of Raja was conferred on all of them. In 1882, the Calcutta High Court declared in a judgement that the Tributary Mahals of Orissa did not form a part of British India. In 1894, they were recognised as the feudatory chiefs and new Sanads were granted defining their status, powers and position. In the last decade of the 19th century, the British attitude was clearly revealed in the Sanads. To ensure good administration, the chiefs were directed "you shall recognise and maintain the rights of all your people and you shall on no account oppress them or suffer them to be in any way oppressed". They were also strictly enjoined: "you shall consult the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals in all important matters of administration, and comply with his wishes. The settlement and collection of the land revenue, the imposition of taxes, the administration of justice, arrangements connected with excise, salt and opium, the concession of mining, forest, and other rights, disputes arising out of any such concession, and disputes in which other States are concerned shall, be regarded as specially important matters, and in respect to them you shall at all times conform to such advice as the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals may give you"¹. Such a clause in the Sanads clearly reveals the nature of British administration and the status enjoyed by the chiefs of Orissa even after the decision of the High Court that those territories did not form a part of British India. In the first decade of the 20th century, the *garhjats* were recognised as the Feudatory States of Orissa and a Political Agent was appointed in 1906 to assist the chiefs.

1. C. U. Aitchison, *Treaties, Sanads, etc.*,
 (Govt. of India, 1931).

The paramountcy of the British crown over the Indian States began to be asserted with greater certainty after the Revolt of 1857. The Company's policy of annexation was reversed, but the paramount power exercised its function beyond the terms of the treaties in accordance with changing political, social and economic conditions. Sir William Lee-Warner called such a policy as the policy of subordinate union. In case of the Tributary Mahals of Orissa, "the tie is more or less of a constitutional character. Such powers as the chiefs exercise they owe to British policy, although the country has been declared to lie beyond British India". The British authorities interfered in the internal administration of the feudatory chiefs on several grounds. Generally the interference took place in cases of disputes between two rajas, disturbances between the raja and his feudatories, disputed succession and misrule or oppressive administration over the people. The British authorities also took-over the administration of a feudatory state if its chief was a minor and the administration was handed over only after the chief became major.

Though the feudatory chiefs were free to run their internal administration as they liked, yet in course of time, several links were established between the administrative system in British Orissa and the neighbouring feudatory states. The common link was a historical phenomenon. The people of both regions possessed the cultural and linguistic unity; the political diversity was superimposed only in British time. The British laws and regulations could not be introduced in those states, but the authorities did not give up their responsibility to maintain proper administrative and judicial system in those territories for the benefit of the people. They maintained law and order at all costs, made searching enquiries to find out the grievances of the people and appointed *dewans*, managers and such other officials to run the administration or to advise the rulers to do so properly.

In case of Nilagiri, the dispute regarding succession occurred in 1883-84 when the Raja Krushna Chandra adopted a son from the Mayurbhanj Raj family who later on became the ruler of the ex-state in 1898. Raja Syam Sundar Mardaraj was kept in Cuttack for about one and a half years from October 1905 to April 1907 in a criminal case judgement. He died at a premature age in 1913 when his son, Kishore Chandra was only nine years old and consequently the ex-state passed under the Court of Wards for twelve years. During this period, the British authorities undertook a detailed survey and settlement of Nilagiri ex-state. The settlement operations began in 1917 and were completed

1. William Lee-Warner. *the Native States of India*. (London, 1910), p. 396.

in five years in 1922 during which 312 villages in all were surveyed and the rent of Rs. 83,994/- was fixed on the people. Its population, according to 1921 Census, was 65,222 and the tribute paid to the British Government was Rs. 65,222/- and the tribute paid to the British Government was Rs. 3,900-7-8 (Rs. 3,900.45).

Raja Kishore Chandra Mardaraj got the throne in July 1925 and continued to rule the state till its merger with the province of Orissa in 1948. He was a very unpopular ruler and the people's agitation against him began as early as 1928, ten years before the Praja Mandal Movement started in Orissa against the oppressive rulers of the Garhjat states. In 1928, the raja had agreed to give some relief to the distressed people by reducing the taxes and also by assuring them not to engage in work without payment. For about ten years peace was maintained between the ruler and the people.

In 1938, when the first Congress Ministry took charge of the administration of the province, the Praja Mandals or People's Associations were formed in most of the feudatory states. They were organised to secure legitimate rights and privileges for the people. The rulers were neither prepared to recognise those associations nor to redress the wrongs or grant their just demands. Consequently, the problem took a serious turn and widespread unrest prevailed in several ex-states. The first open revolt took place in Nilagiri. The people were united under the leadership of Kailash Chandra Mohanty, Banamali Das, Hadibandhu Raj, Balaram Raj, Pranabandhu Agarhi, Brundaban Sarangi, etc. As soon as Praja Mandal began to agitate for fulfilment of their demands, the ruler resorted to strong repressive measures. Not only the agitators were arrested, but also heavy fines were imposed and many of them were physically tortured. The situation gradually worsened and several thousands of people were prepared for mass civil disobedience movement. At this critical juncture, Harekrushna Mahtab, the then prominent Congress leader of Orissa and the Chairman of the State People's Enquiry Committee began negotiations with the ruler of the state and the Political Agent for some settlement of the problem. Finally, the ruler agreed to concede certain demands of the people and peace was restored for a certain period ¹.

Though there was temporary settlement with the ruler, the root cause of the grievances was not removed and the ruler took the opportunity of the Second World War to adopt strong

1. History of the Freedom Movement in Orissa, (ed.), Vol. V, p. 122-23.

repressive measures against the revolting people of his state. Consequently, the trouble started once again after the War ended in 1945. The Praja Mandal held its open sessions under the leadership of Kailash Chandra Mohanty and declared to capture power from the ruler in order to establish responsible Government. The ruler did not hesitate to resort to all kinds of repressive measures, such as, lathi charge, arrest and detention without trial, etc. In Nilagiri, soon after the independence of India, the Praja Mandal formed a parallel Government and decided to occupy government offices and property. In a desperate effort to maintain his position, it was alleged, the ruler recruited some Muslims in his military force and finally instigated some tribals to plunder the villages. Thus, by October 1947, there was complete anarchy in the state.¹

The Government of Orissa, headed by H. Mahtab, submitted regular reports about the affairs of Nilagiri to the Government of India and pressed that some strong action should be taken. The States Ministry finally decided to take charge of the administration of the state. V. P. Menon writes:

“The greatest concern to the Government of India was the possibility that outbreaks among the aborigines might spread to those neighbouring areas in which they formed a considerable proportion of the population. It appeared that the time had come to take firm and immediate action if chaos was to be prevented. When, therefore, the Government of Orissa reported that the situation in Nilgiri was tense and that the trouble was spreading, the Government of India authorised to send the Collector of the nearest district (which was Balasore) to Nilgiri to take over the administration of the State²”.

The task was accomplished on 14th November, 1947 without any trouble. A proclamation was issued by the Government of Orissa assuring the people of the state a strong, impartial and just administration. Naba Krushna Chowdhury, then Revenue Minister of Orissa, who directed the operation against Nilagiri on behalf of the Orissa Government gave a stern warning to the Eastern States while addressing a large public meeting at Cuttack on 18th November, 1947. He said :

1. K. M. Patra, *Orissa Legislature and Freedom Struggle* (New Delhi, 1979), p. 283.

2. V. P. Menon, *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*, p. 147.

"They should see the writing on the wall. The only course open before us is that of retaining our freedom and developing strength to establish real sovereignty of the people. The principle applied to Nilgiri may have to be pursued in case of all other States, if they went the same way."¹

In fact, the writing on the wall was clear. The states no longer enjoyed British patronage and they had no independent resources to maintain their position. Exactly one month after the take over of the administration of Nilagiri, in the crucial meeting of the feudatory chiefs of Orissa held by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the fate of all the feudatory states of Orissa including Nilagiri was finally decided and this state merged with Orissa on the 1st January 1948.

1. Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20th November, 1947.

APPENDIX I

The Jungle Forts of Northern Orissa

By Jonh Beams, B. C. S., M. R. A. S., Magistrate of Balasore

Northern Orissa is, considering its situation within 150 miles of Calcutta, very isolated and little known. There is however a good historical reason for this. The kings of Orissa fixed their capital always in the southern part of the province and the long narrow strip of country between the hills and the sea was only at times, and never for long periods, under their sway. It was covered with dense jungle, which extended apparently with hardly any break to the banks of the Hooghly.* The kings of Bengal, on the other hand, held their court either at Gaur, or some other place far to the north, and the lower Gangetic delta was to them also almost a *terra incognita*. The English settlement of Calcutta pushed out feelers along the course of the Ganges, and the wave of conquest and commerce followed the same path, leaving Midnapore and Balasore (Baleshwar) comparatively unheeded and unexplored. In the present day the great Imperial High road from Calcutta to Madras has opened up a portion of this country, and is much frequented, especially by the thousands and tens of thousands of pilgrims who annually visit the great shrine of Jagannath at Puri. But the line of traffic, and the road of invading armies in former times, did not follow the course of the present great avenue of communication and it is not therefore along the Madras and Calcutta road that we must look for relics of past times.

One hundred and fifteen miles S. W. of Calcutta, at the town of Jellasore (Jaleshwar) the road crosses the river Subanrekha (Subarnarekha—"streak of gold") at a spot on the confines of British territory and the territory of the tributary Raja of Mohurbhanj (Mayurbhanj). The river here winds so as to run for about five miles nearly parallel to the road on the northern side. Crossing the river we come into the isolated pargana of Pottihabad, one of the so-called Jungle Mehals, which is now included in the district of Balasore (Baleshwar). Nine miles north of Jellasore, and about two from the right bank of the river, amidst dense grass and tree jungle, which is here and there in course of being brought into cultivation, stands the group of forts which I propose to describe. I hope the above details will enable the reader to form a clear idea of their actual position on the map of India, in case however the ordinary maps should not show the road, or the little town of Jellasore. I would add that the forts are distant from the sea at the mouth of the Subanrekha, twenty-six miles as the crow flies.

* In writing native names I follow Dr. Hunter's rule of using the received (although often incorrect) spelling for well-known places, and the strictly correct Wilsonian System for those that are unknown to the general public.

I propose first to describe the forts themselves, and secondly to endeavour to arrive at an approximation to the date of their foundation, and to collect such few facts respecting their past history as I can. This enquiry will, if successful, throw considerable light on the relations between the kings of Orissa and their northern neighbours, as well as on the somewhat obscure subject of the Musalman invasions of the province, in addition to the more purely archaeological interest which it may present.

It will be seen from the annexed map that the forts are four in number, the two larger ones being close to the large village of Raibaniyan, and the two smaller ones at the village of Phulta, or more correctly Phulhatta. Of these two small forts nothing now remains save the outline of mud walls, with here and there a scattered mass of laterite stones.

The whole soil of this neighbourhood for many miles is composed of laterite, a dark brick-red stone full of holes like a sponge, but very hard. All these forts are built of this stone, though in many cases the stones have either, from having been originally loosely put together, or owing to some subsequent violence, become scattered or sunk in the soil. The stones are all hewn and of various sizes, the largest and most regularly shaped being found in the most important and probably most ancient portions of the work, the smaller and less carefully hewn in the walls and outworks. The largest stones are about 3 feet in length by a foot in depth, and the same in breadth, while in some of the pettier and more modern works, stones not bigger than ordinary bricks are found. Owing to the denseness of the jungle, and the great number of tigers and bears which find shelter there, it is very difficult to explore these forts thoroughly. In three visits which I have recently made to them, I obtained from the Zamindar some thirty or forty coolies armed with the useful little Sonthal axe, and these together with my own police and Chaukidars were occupied many hours everyday in cutting a path through the thick jungle of underwood.

The most accessible and fortunately also the most interesting of the forts is that which I have marked as the "Mud fort on the map, at the north-west angle of the Raibaniyan village. This fort is in shape an irregular pentagon, having the following dimensions:—

Eastern wall	..	1,650 English Yards
Northern	..	1,650 English Yards
North-Western	..	880 (about)
South-Western	..	1,550 (about))
Southern	..	880

There seems to be some sort of order even in the irregularity as the eastern and northern walls are the same length, so also the north-western and southern. The north and south-western, however, are so covered with jungle that it is impossible to arrive at more than an approximate measurement.

Though called the "Mud fort" the walls of this fort are not really of mud. The peasants of the neighbouring villages have made breaches through the walls in some places to enable them to get at their rice-fields in the inside, and in entering the fort by one of these breaches a sort of section is obtained which reveals the nature of the construction. The following section will explain how the wall is made. The centre or heart consists of layers of stone gradually diminishing to a point, and this is covered and entirely hidden with about four feet of earth closely rammed. The breadth at the base from A to B is by measurement 112 feet, and the height we guessed to be about 50 feet.

The wall is surrounded by a deep and broad moat, and a slight but continuous ridge, evidently artificial, runs parallel to the most on its outer edge. Outside all this again, at a distance in some places of as much as half a mile, runs a *nulla* which by a little dexterous cutting and deepening has been made into a very efficacious outer most lined here and there with a wall of laterite.

The interior of the fort is a large plain covered with debris of stone buildings, tanks, and patches of jungle, a considerable portion of it is now cultivated, and near the south wall is the remains of a small indigo factory which was conducted by a European for some years, but has now long ago been abandoned.

The native have a tradition that the north-western corner contained the palace of the Raja, and this is partially confirmed by the greater height and strength of the works in that corner, and by the numerous remains of buildings still traceable. The principal of these I have called the "keep" on the map, as the native assert that it was the highest and strongest part of the fort. It is a strong square tower of which about 20 feet only now remain; the stones are carefully hewn and placed together, but without any traces of cement or mortar. A simple but graceful style of ornament is effected by a straight moulding running round the middle of each course, above which the top of each stone is sloped inwards with a small pineapple shaped projection in the centre. The affect of this arrangement cannot be fully seen owing to the jungle, but when perfectly visible, the broken light and shade produced by it must have lent a peculiar grace and elegance to the otherwise massive and sombre building. In spite of the native idea of its being a keep or citadel, I am disposed to think this building must have been a Shiva temple, as the architecture is precisely similar

to the other ancient temples to that idol in other parts of Orissa, and the dimensions of the building, which is not more than 100 feet square, are too small for the purposes of a citadel. On the top, half hidden by trees, are the capitals of some pillars of the dark ash-coloured stone known as *mungani patthar* or chlorite : none of the column however remain. In the centre is a well or tank similar to the square enclosure round the Linga-stone in Shiva temples: so that I imagine the stone walls must have formed a lofty platform surmounted by an open hall surrounded by pillars, in the centre of which was the Linga in its sunken square enclosure. The capitals, though massive, are quite plain and without ornament.

At the foot of this building on the south side is a curious little hollow where the trees and jungle are perhaps more dense than in other part. This is called the Jaychandi Ban or Jaychand's jungle. Who Jaychand was nobody knows. In the heart of this jungle, approached by a narrow winding path, is a small platform 2 feet high on which have been set up, in quite modern times, some beautiful pieces of sculpture which have probably fallen from the temple above. There is the lower half of a female figure bedecked with jewels, and the legs of a man running both in high relief. There is also an exquisite piece of arabesque carving probably the moulding or edge of the frame enclosing the rilievo. Though much defaced the general design is clearly traceable.* There is a freedom and graceful play of outline in the rounded foliage which is rare in ancient remains in this part of India. The rest of this moulding is probably hidden beneath the masses of laterite, stones, and debris of all kinds. If I have an opportunity of visiting the spot at any future time, I may succeed in unearthing more of it. The people said they remembered in their youth having seen stones with inscriptions in the Nagari character, but unfortunately knew not where to find them. The Nagari character is not understood by any one, except a very few pandits in this part of the country, and as far as I know was never used in inscriptions, which are all in a bad form of Kutila, but the difference between Kutila and Nagari would not be appreciable by the native here.

The idols and carvings in the Jayachandi Ban are still worshipped, and in consequence, are smeared all over with that mixture of oil and vermilion (*sendur*), which is so freely applied to all sacred buildings and trees. A small plot of rent-free land has been assigned to some Brahmans who carry on the worship at stated seasons, but do not seem able to specify what god the shrine is sacred to. This Jayachandi Ban is evidently a modern arrangement. Someone found these mutilated bits of sculpture and set them up and invited people to worship them, purely as a bit of Brahmanical speculation, and

* I have represented the broken and undecipherable portions by cross shading and dotted spaces.

probably the speculator's name was Jayachand. This sort of thing goes on even at the present day: an Uriya will worship anything, especially if he does not know what it is, and a Brahman tells him it is a *debata*.

The western gate of the fort which is close to the Ban, was probably only a sort of postern, as it is only wide enough for one horseman at a time. The sketch below represents its present appearance. In the wall will be noticed the sockets of the hinges of the doors which at one time stood there. Crossing the moat by a strong though narrow bridge, we come to a second doorway, precisely similar to the first. This is merely a gateway in a sort of *tete de pont*, protecting the bridge across the moat.

Moving round to the north wall of the fort, we come upon the largest and most perfect group of remains in the whole building. It is called the Sat Gambhira Attalika literally "palace of the seven deeps"; this name however is a mere modern corruption of *satgumbaz* or "the seven domes". The building consists of six large rooms which have evidently at one time been vaulted, and the passage through them or gateway counted as a seventh room which was probably covered in and vaulted like the others. The ground plan is as far as could be made out from the top of the wall at;* but as a big black bear was sleeping at the foot of the wall in No. 3, and I had unfortunately no gun with me, having brought a sketch-book and measuring rod instead, it was not thought prudent to remain long in that neighbourhood. For the same reason there was not time to make more than a plan of the building with a rough measurement. The covered gateway is about 40 feet wide and 25 feet deep, and rooms Nos. 5 and 6, though so encumbered with rubbish as to be quite inaccessible were judged to be about the same size. This approximation will enable the reader to judge the size of the other rooms. The rest of the palace was probably, as usual in Bengal, built of mud with thatched roofs,—which mode of construction would account for its total disappearance.

The last fort of the group is that which I have called the "Stone Fort", as its walls, as far as they could be seen, are built of hewn stone not covered, as in the other, with mud. It seems more modern than the mud fort, and may either have been originally a mere out-work to the other, which seems improbable

* The Uriyas, more so, changed the comparatively little known Persian word *gumbaz* 'a dome', into their own peculiar *gambhira*. The change was probably caused by their approaching the building from the top of the walls, as they took me; seen from this position the rooms look like deep vault, and it was not till I had the jungle cleared from the northern face that I convinced them the rooms were not underground.

** Tree and Serpent Worship, p. 208.

from its nearly equalling it in size, or was more likely as I shall show presently a comparatively modern erection, built when the old fort had become so far ruined as to be no longer tenable.

The eastern entrance is through a vast hall or yard, with walls of hewn stone in which are still to be seen the staples to which, in native tradition, the Rajas, elephants were fastened. This gateway is called the *Hathi dwar* or *Hathi bandha dwar*, (elephant gate, or elephant-enclosure gate). The southern doorway, of which only a crumbled heap of stones remains,—is called the Sonamukhi, or golden faced gate, the origin of which name I cannot trace; but so many places in northern Orissa are called Sonamukhi even bare salt-marshes washed by the sea, that the appellation must be very ancient, and the allusion which it was meant to convey has become obscure. The only suggestion offered is that it refers to the golden face of the idol Jagannath at Puri—miniature copies of which are to be seen in many parts of Orissa. Such an idol may have stood in or near this gateway.

The date of the building of these forts is, like that of every building in India which has no marked architectural features and contains no inscriptions, very uncertain. In the present case, however, the uncertainty is to some extent limited by considerations derived from their geographical position. If it be assumed that they were the work of kings of Orissa, an assumption which I shall consider immediately,—then there are only two brief periods within which they could have been built—those, namely in which the limits of the Oriya monarchy extended so far to the northward as the banks of the Subanrekha river. The general absence of historical data in India prior to the coming of the Muhammadans is, in Orissa, relieved by the scanty and untrustworthy *panji* or daily record of occurrences kept in the national temple of Jagannath, the commission or inaccuracies of which may occasionally be corrected or supplied from the *panjis* and *Vansavalis* kept in the minor temples and monasteries throughout the province and by one or two connected histories written on palm-leaf, which are in the possession of private families.

The chief interest of Oriya history centres round the great cities of the southern part of the province—Katak, Jajpur, and Puri. Northern Orissa is seldom mentioned. Only twice in the annals of the country is it asserted that its boundaries extended beyond the Kansbans, a small stream near Sohroh at that point where the hill-ranges trend eastward to the sea. The long narrow slip between the Kansbans and Subanrekha appears to have been for centuries a forest. This supposition is confirmed by the frequency of names of places in which the word *ban* (Sansk: *vana*)

occurs as Banchas, i.e., "forest-tilth", Banahar, i.e., "forest enclosure", Bampadda, i. e., Ban-padda "forest-clearing", Bankati—"forest-cutting", and the like.

In the reign of Gangeshwar Deb (A. D. 1151), the Orissan monarchy is said to have extended from the Ganges to the Godavari. By the Ganges is here of course meant, as always in Oriya history, the branch which flows by Hugli. Whether this is merely an exaggeration or not we cannot tell; it probably is so, as in the celebrated speech of his great-grandson Anang Bhim Deb, the most illustrious prince of the Gangabansi dynasty (A. D. 1196), recorded by Stirling, the king is reported to have said that he had extended the boundaries of his kingdom on the north from the Kansbans to the Datai Burhi river (the modern Buda Balang, which flows past the town of Balasore). The Gangabansis were great builders, and their temples, palaces and tanks still adorn the southern part of the province. I do not think it probable that they would have been contented with so comparatively clumsy and inartistic forts as those now under consideration. I shall show presently another reason for assigning those forts to a much later epoch.

In 1550 the throne of Orissa was occupied by a prince from the Telugu or Telinga country, celebrated under the name of Telinga Mukund Deb. He was the last independent sovereign of Orissa, and of him again it is recorded that his sway extended to Tribeni Ghat on the Hugli river, where he built a temple and bathing-steps. In his reign northern Orissa became for the first time important, for then the invasions of the Musalmans, hitherto few and far between, just began to be constant and successful. "Suliman Gurzani, the Afghan King of Bengal", waged a long war with Mukund Deb, who, to oppose him, built a strong fort in a commanding position in the northern frontier. This fort, or chain of forts, I apprehend to have been those we are now discussing. No more commanding situation could well be found than Raibaniya: on its laterite ridge overlooking the passage of the Subanrekha, and backed by the impenetrable forest. This position too is on the edge of the country inhabited by the Oriya speaking race. The situation of the main entrance, and the much greater strength of the fortifications on the northern side, seem to show that it was from that direction that the danger came. Seven miles west of Raibaniyan is the fort of Deulgaon "temple-village" which as will be seen from the appendix is in still better preservation than Raibaniyan, and, as evidence on its date, contains the two stone horsemen so celebrated in Orissan legend. It is related that when Raja Purushottam Deb was marching (circa A. D. 1490) southwards to the conquest of Kanjiveram (Kanchikavari), his army was preceded by two youths, one on a black and the

other on a white horse, by whose auspicious aid he gained the victory. The youths then disappeared after declaring themselves to be Krishna and Baladeva*. The fort which contains these two images cannot well be older than the legend which they preserve.

Further, it may be urged that, in the early times of Gangeshwar Deb, there existed no necessity for strong forts on the northern frontier, which was then inhabited only by wild forest tribes, and whose possession seems to have been little cared for by the Rajas themselves. It was not till the encroachments of the Musalmans of Bengal rendered some resistance necessary that forts would be built and garrisoned so far away from the capital, nor in earlier times had the Oriya race penetrated so far to the north as to have settlements on the banks of the Subanrekha.

On the other hand, if we cannot place the date of the erection of these forts earlier than 1550, we cannot assign to them any later date. After the ravages of the terrible Kalapahar Orissa sank into a condition of anarchy and disorganization. Neither the invaders from Bengal nor the national rulers had any interest in keeping up forts at a place which was no longer important to either, and we find the Afghans immediately afterwards, and for a long period, firmly established at the strong post of Garhpadda, fifteen miles to the south of Raibaniyan.

An important result follows from the above considerations, namely, that the Oriya language is not as a certain party among the Bengalis would persuade us an offshoot of their own tongue, but an independent variety of Aryan speech. We have every reason to believe that the march or, frontier between the two provinces, was occupied by a dense forest peopled by non-Aryan tribes, and that there was absolutely no communication between Orissa and Bengal in that direction; when the forest was penetrated and the communication opened, the Oriya language was already formed, and Upendra Bhanj and Din Krishna Das had written many of their still celebrated poems. Orissa had more intimate dealings with her southern neighbour, and one at least of her dynasties came from the banks of the San-Ganga or Godavari. Even to this day the course of trade from the ports of Orissa tends more towards Madras than Bengal.

* The similarity of this legend to that of the appearance of "the great twin-brethren," Castor and Pollux, so vividly related in Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, must strike every classical reader.

After returning from Raibaniyan I received the following note from the Revd. J. Phillips, the well-known missionary to the Sonthals, whose settlement is at Santipur, two miles south of Raibaniyan:—

"Camp Baladashiha, December, 11, 1871

"On the 2nd instant we were at Deulgaon, about 7 miles to the north-west of Santipur, where at the remains of an old stone fort. It is 75 paces long and 60 broad inside the walls. The walls are 12 feet in height composed of the common laterite, hewn as are the stones in Raibaniyan. The walls are perforated on all sides with loopholes near the top, and there were entrances on the four sides with bastions over the gateways. In one corner of the enclosure there is a small tank and a walled up well in the opposite corner.

A large laterite stone was pointed to me as containing inscriptions, but if such ever existed, it had become quite too much defaced to be at all legible. Two large stone images of horses with their riders, cut from solid blocks of the "Mugani" stone (chlorite), stand near the centre of the fort. When we were there two years ago these lay partially covered with rubbish, but have since been exhumed, and now they receive some attention, though I did not discover signs of their being worshipped. The natives told us that these were living animals in the *Satya Yug*, and engaged in battle, and pointed out scars and bullet marks on their mutilated bodies. The fact of gunpowder being a modern invention seemed no obstacle to their theory as far as I saw".

APPENDIX II

Early European Settlements in Baleshwar

The early European settlements in Baleshwar present some features of considerable historical interest. The town is situated on the western bank of the river Burhabalanga and is only seven miles from the Bay of Bengal as the crow flies. A lot of historical reference is available in the contemporary Muslim and European records regarding the commercial prosperity and transactions in the port and town of Baleshwar. Another port which thrived in the coast of Baleshwar district was Pipili on the mouth of Subarnarekha where at least five European powers such as the Portuguese, the English, the Dutch, the Dane and the French established their early settlements. However, the place was abandoned by the early 17th century probably due to the formation of sand bars on the mouth of the river and other natural difficulties. But Baleshwar grew into prominence as a manufacturing and commercial centre and as a sea port from the thirties of the 17th century. The Portuguese, who dominated the Indian trade in the 16th century, were thoroughly discredited because of their association with the pirates and finally were expelled from the coast of the Bay of Bengal by the Mughals in the early decades of the 17th century. Though they had thriving establishment at Pipili, yet their settlement at Baleshwar is doubtful as there is no conclusive evidence to that effect. However, Stirling, a British Officer in early 19th century claim that in his time the only remains of the Portuguese settlement consisted of a small Roman Catholic chapel having a wooden cross over the principal doorway; but it had now completely disappeared.

Ralph Cartwright established the first British factory at Baleshwar in June, 1633 in the area now known a Barabati. The Madras Council repeatedly resolved to withdraw their factories from the Bengal seaboard, but the settlement was saved by the policy of Cromwell who reorganised the Company on a broader basis in 1657. Hooghly became the head agency in Bengal, and Baleshwar was an out-factory under its control which was administered by a chief with three assistants or councillors. As the Hooghly river was then unsurveyed and without lights or buoy, it was unsafe for large vessels. It was resolved, therefore, to make Baleshwar a port of transhipment, whenever cargoes were carried in native boats round to the Gangetic delta and then, through the river Hooghly to the town. In 1658, the British established their mint at Baleshwar which resulted in increasing the price of silver. The value of *cowries*, the local currency, in relation to rupees varied according to the availability or scarcity of the former.

In 1686 the English settlement at Baleshwar was again nearly abandoned. It was primarily due to the harassment of the Mughal administration in Bengal and Orissa that the British were ousted from Hooghly and took shelter at Hijili in 1687. Job Charnock, the head of the British settlement, resolved to take same reprisals on the Mughal port and town of Baleshwar. He succeeded in his mission and inflicted heavy loss by burning and destroying the place. They plundered even the private merchants and the ships on the docks were burnt. The expedition was passed over with contempt by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb who was then engrossed in wars in South India. Job Charnock again landed on the bank of Hooghly at Sutanati where he began to build a factory in 1688 and thus laid the foundation of Calcutta. Baleshwar remained unoccupied by the English for some years after this, but when Aurangzeb granted a new *firman* for the re-establishment of their factories in Bengal, Baleshwar factory was probably revived and continued thereafter, though its prominence in the second half of the 18th century had considerably decreased. It is evident from the records of two British travellers, Thomas Motto and C. F. Leckie, who passed through Baleshwar in 1766 and 1790 respectively. The former gives us no information about trade and commercial prosperity of Baleshwar. But the latter categorically writes about its decline. He observed: "Manufacture of cloth is very much fallen off, both in quantity and quality; the ruinous state of the English and Dutch factories, with the insignificance of the Danish one, seem to show that the trade is not of that consequence which it formerly was".

The Dutch had established themselves in 1632 at Pipili and subsequently they also constructed their factory at a place now known as Ulansahi in Baleshwar. The moat round the Dutch factory is now known as Ulannala. Two Dutch tombs of 18 feet and 16 feet high are now within the compound of Barabati Girl's High English school.

The Danish settlement was close to the Dutch one, having an area of seven acres. It is now known as Dinamardinga which is situated near the Barabati Girl's High English School. No monument or other evidence of the Danish settlement is now traceable in Baleshwar except the name of the area.

The French came to Baleshwar after 1667 and established their settlement in the outskirts of the town known as 'Farasdinga'. The French had constructed a thick boundary wall of burnt bricks round their factory which is now in ruins. The French settlement, which was reduced to 38 acres of land, continued under their

possession and was under the administrative authority of Chandanagar of Bengal throughout the British rule. However, the Dutch settlement of an area of 7 acres was ceded to the British in 1825 and the land held by the Danes, also 7 acres in area, was ceded to the British in 1846. The graveyards and the names of certain localities are now the only remnants of the early European settlements in Baleshwar.