
CONCLUSION

C O N C L U S I O N

Southern Orissa was a vassal region in South Western part of Orissa around the Eastern Ghaut mountain range. This region was earlier a cradle of a great prehistoric civilisation & culture, the evidence of which are amply available at different parts of the region in form of rich historical remains under the coverage of thick jungles & earthy surfaces. The earliest inhabitants of the region were the aboriginal Savaras & the Khonds, who were ethnically Dravidians.¹ The geographical situation of Southern Orissa has given its inhabitants (the aboriginal Savaras) a distinct cultural identity tainted with mixed Aryan Dravidian influences.²

Gradually, with the march of time, like the other parts of the country, the people including Savaras of Southern Orissa came in contact with the Aryans, Muslims, Europeans & Christians; & in the process, they formed a composite population having different religious, racial & linguistic

1. Rath, Bipin Behari, compiler of "Tarini Charan Granthavali" published by Berhampur University, Bhanja Bihar, Berhampur (First Edition, 1980) p-291.
2. Ibid.

groups like the Hindus, Mohammadans, Moghuls, Pathanas, Sheikhs, Syeds, Erasians, Europeans, Christians, native Christians, Oriyas, Telugus, Khonds & Savaras.³

The aboriginal Savaras are an original native people of Southern Orissa and they numbered more than the non-aboriginal inhabitants, like the Oriyas and Telugus in all historical times in their region. The aboriginal Savaras of Baralakhemundi Zamindari numbered 52,302 in Southern Orissa, as per the census of 1891.⁴ The inhabitation of Southern Orissa largely by the tribals resulted in the gradual tribalisation of all the traditional institutions and the systems - political, social, economic and cultural. In the process with the march of time, a tribal environment persisted in the region all through the ages leaving its permanent impact on anything and everything, right upto the present time in and around the tribal belt.⁵

The aboriginal Savaras of this region have been focused in the traditions as an ancient most people of "Bharat Varasa" - meaning India. The geographical situation of Southern Orissa, made it the nerve centre of Orissa political and cultural activities all through the historical eras.⁶

3. Pandit Surya Narayan Das, History of Oriya Literature, Vol-II (Cuttack, 1956) PP-164-193.

4. The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol.XX, Pandit Dasad (1908) P-4.

5. History of Oriya Literature Vol-II (Cuttack-1956) Op.cit; PP-488-489.

6. Ibid. PP -516 & 542.

With the establishment of the British power over the Northern Circars of the Madras Presidency⁷, the British set to administer inheriting a dismantled Moghul policy.⁸ The British almost took a century to consolidate their ruling position in Southern Orissa, right from 1766 till 1866. The British faced continuous resistance from the native Rajas & the aboriginal tribals, the Savaras & the Khonds, of the region. The Rajas, being firmly supported by the Bissois (feudal chiefs), Naiks (military generals) and Fakis (armed retainers) became refractory and defiant, and put up dogged resistance to the British authority, and created a climate of tension and instability. Almost all the British military campaigns resulted in fiasco in one way or the other, due to their lack of close knowledge of the strategic parts of the region, which remained covered up under thick jungles and inaccessible mountains. The Britishers were able to put down their (Rajas) resistances, only after they well acquired sufficient knowledge about the geography of the region, the strategic secrets, its people, their language and life-style after as many as one hundred years.⁹

The Rajas of Southern Orissa and their subjects the aboriginal Savaras and the Khonds all through the ages acted as semi-independent rulers and ruled, although they had

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7. a) C.V. Aitchison - A collection of treatise, engagement & sunnads relating to India & neighbouring countries Vol V, (Calcutta; 1864) PP-14-15.
b) Guide to the records of Ganjam District, Chapter-II, P-1, XCI Vol. 335-336; 1934.
c) Final Report on the major settlement operation, Ex-State areas, (Board of Revenue, 1936-62). P-4.
8. a) Fifth Report from select committee, Vol-II, I-9 (Reprint Madras, 1883.)

remained under different paramount powers. The internal autonomy and independence of the ruler and ruled (aboriginals) had never been encroached upon, by their paramount authorities like the Somavansis, the Suryavemis, the Kutabshahi Sultans of Golkunda, Deccan Governors - the Nizams of Hyderabad. Their sentiment of internal independence had been well guarded, protected and respected by such paramount powers. But when the British became its paramount authority, adopted the policy of leasing out the right of collection of tribute to the concerned Rajas or the highest bidders, without acquiring sufficient knowledge of the sources of income of the people, and such situations gave rise to confrontation between them and the Imperial Government. In the event of failure to pay regular tributes, the Rajas were liable for removal from power, and with such a practice they had never before been acquainted, they grew defiant, when they were forced to face such humiliating consequence of their refusal or reluctance to pay the tributes regularly. The frequent interference of the British in the internal administration of the region added the fuel to the fire.¹⁰

The British played the game of "divide and rule" which helped them much to establish their power and implimentation

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8. b) W.W.Hunter-Orissa, Vol.I, (London, 1872,) P-60-61
 9. Somanath Rath, Upendra Bhanja, Side-lights on History and culture of Orissa. Edited by Dr.M.N.Das (Cuttack, 1977) P-698.
 10. Ananta Padmanava Pattanayak, Upendra Bhanja (Berhampur,

of their regular pattern of administration in Southern Orissa. They played off one against the other for gaining their imperial ends. The British supported such royal persons, who agreed to pay huge sums of money as peshcush (tribute) to them; such policy led to the uncertainty of the estate, and ultimately compelled the Government, aggrieved royal persons to enter into continuous mutual confrontation leaving aside the peace and tranquility of the territory. A few among the royal persons and the native people played as the tools in the hands of the British, against their fellow-brothers and neighbours, which added to the tensions and the conflicts in Southern Orissa.¹¹

The gradual implementation of the British administration in Southern Orissa in place of native traditional administration worsened the situations. The British civil and judicial officials posted in Southern Orissa, did not care for the centuries old feudal rights and privileges of the Rajas, and made mockery of the Rajas' administration by reducing their functional activities to the minimum, to the level of the commoners. The Rajas were deprived of their traditional civil, judicial, criminal and administrative powers. The feeling of deprivation made the Rajas of Southern Orissa aggrieved and revolting. Similarly, the Raja's civil and military officials were also deprived of many of their

11. Uendra Khanja (Berhampur, 1968) Op.cit.P-31.

traditional rights and privileges. The Bissoies, the Naiks and the Raiks were also refrained from many of their privileges. The aboriginal Savaras and Khonds also lost their traditional privileges. Thus the Rajas, their feudal supporters and the aboriginals felt equally aggrieved, and made a common cause of revolt against the British rule.¹²

The situations in Paralakhemundi had their natural reactions among the Rajas and their people in the neighbouring princely estates. The Gajapati family of Paralakhemundi had fostered up matrimonial and other cordial relations with the ruling families of the other estates of Southern Orissa, even the ages, and that now helped to build up a common fraternal resistance to the British in Southern Orissa.¹³ Despite all resistance of Narayan Deo of Paralakhemundi he was forced to remain under the British authority by paying necessary tributes to them.¹⁴ Sitaram Raju, the Raju of Vizianagar in support of the British made the political situation in Paralakhemundi complicated.¹⁵ The British interfered in the matters of succession of the Paralakhemundi estate, as king makers.¹⁶

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12. a) Upendra Bhanja (Berhampur, 1968) Op.cit, PP-118-119.
b) T.J.Maltby, GDM (Madras, 1918) P-148.
 13. Upendra Bhanja (Berhampur, 1968) Op.cit, PP-266-68.
 14. Maclean - Manual of Administration, Vol, I, P-60.
 15. C.Wilkins; Fifth Report on the East India Affairs, Vol.II, (Madras, 1883) P-218.
 16. a) Representation of Jagannath Deo to the Government dt.25th Feb, & 7th March, 1792.(Proceedings & chief and council of Ganjam. G.R.Vol. 721).
b) Report of the Spl.Commissioner, dt.16th May, 1803 (E.A.I.A.C.Report Appendix, XVII, (Madras, 1936). P-340.

This action of the British, made the Bissois and the Doratnams reactive who excited the aboriginal Savaras to revolt against the policy of the British authority. The rebels destroyed agriculture, burnt villages and plundered the Haveli lands, which compelled the government to restore the Paralakhemundi Zamindari to the family of the Gajapati Raja.¹⁷

FOR INSTANCE:-

Purusottam Narayan Deo, a Raja of Paralakhemundi was died in Oct, 1805; and the estate was brought under the away of Court of Wards, and managed through its manager Durga Razu. But after the death of Durga Raju in 1813, conflict for succession between the two widow Ranis of the late Raja, Pattamahadevi and Saugi Mahadevi started.¹⁸ The aboriginal Savaras of Paralakhemundi Zamindari in Southern Orissa revolted against the British rule insupport of their Rajas, Bissois, Naiks, and Paiks from time to time under the leadership of different persons, like Codiapadi, Lachans, Radha Krishna Dandasena (a Savara), Durga Razu,¹⁹ Gumma Bissoi and Jerangi Bissoi, Subba Rao and Jagannath Gajapati Deo.²⁰

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16. c) Letter from A.Scott, Collector Chicacole to Gajapati Narayan Deo, dt.30th Sept, 1797, Vol.740. PP-280-291. (GDR, TNA.M.)
 17. a) Letter from the Collector to Board of Revenue dt. 10th, Dec, 1798, G.R.Vol. 741. TNAM.
b) C.F.Russell, Disturbances in Paralakhemundi, Vizagapatnam and Goomsur in 1832-36, Vol-I, (Madras, 1856) PP-5-6.
 18. Letter from Sub-Collector to the Board of Revenue dt.28th Oct' 1822, Vol. 755, GDR, TNAM.
 19. Letter from the Collector Board of Revenue.dt.23rd April 1817, Vol. 760 GDR, TNAM.
 20. Letter from the Sub-Collector to the Collector, dt.26th July, 1819, G.F.Vol. 819. TNAM.

Radha Krishna Dandasena an aboriginal Savara leader alongwith his followers, (Savaras) plundered twenty-three villages and destroyed them by burning. He terrorised the people and asked to with-hold the government revenue, and compelled the Company government to remove Subba Rao from the post of Manager.²¹ At last Bayard the Sub-Collector, appointed Radha Krishna Dandasena as Manager in the Rayagada Sub-Division.²²

At last the Company's government being alarmed by the eminent threat to their supremacy posed by the Savara rebels and made all possible efforts to quell the rebellion and to restore peace and normalcy in the territory.²³ However in 1819, William Thackeray, the special Commissioner and Thomas Munro, a district Officer were deputed to Southern Orissa to find out the causes and nature of the disturbances in Paralakhemundi.²⁴ They were finally convinced that the defective system of Company's administration in the region was responsible for the chaos and confusion. The policy of direct intervention of the government in the internal affairs of the local

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21. a) Letter from the Sub-Collector to the Collector, dt. 28th July, 1819, G.E. Vol. 819. TNAM.
b) Letter from the Collector to Collector, Dt. 28th July, 1819 MFC of 1819.
22. Letter from the Sub-Collector, dt. 8th March, 1820, Vol. 820, GDR, TNAM.
23. Report from William Thackeray to Govt. dated. 15th Feb, 1819, MFC of 1819.
24. a) G.E. Russell-Report on the disturbances in Paralakhemundi, Vizagapatam and Ghusur, 1832-36 (Madras 1856) PP-32-33. ASOD. (124, 102) TNAM.
b) Report from William Thackeray to the Government 15th Feb, 1819, MFC of 1819.

Zamindars (Rajas) hurt their sentiment and forced them to raise weapons against the British Government. He concluded that the permanent settlement crippled down the traditional privileges of the Rajas and on the other hand the Rajas and their close adherents attempted their best to regain them by creating extremely difficult situations to the British. This sort of idea was not only paralysed the British Government's smooth administration but also caused a great loss to the Zemindary.²⁵ Thackeray, the Special Commissioner, further suggested many liberal remedial proposals towards the Rajas and their tribal subject to end the chronic disease of the disturbances and the strategic interference of the Government in the affairs of the estate for restoration of tranquility so long the Raja remain a minor.²⁶ The Company Government carried out his recommendations by managing the affairs of the estate on behalf of the minor Raja by appointing Bayard, the Sub-Collector as its manager in 1820.²⁷

In July 1822, the two Banis, Pattamahadevi and Suagi-Mahadevi appealed to the Governor of Madras Presidency, Thomas Munro to restore their respective authorities in the estate, which was rejected and the Government allowed to continue Gopinath Patnaik as its manager, consequent upon this the Banis started their rebellious activities against the Company

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25. Thackeray's proclamation, 28th Nov, 1818, MRC of 1818, Extract from the proceedings of the Board of Revenue dt. 29th Nov, 1819, GDR Vol. 820, TNAM.
 26. Report of Mr. Thackeray to the Government dt. 15th Feb, 1819 and 20th March, 1819 MRC of 1819.
 27. a) Extract from the proceedings of the Board of Revenue dt. 29th Nov, 1819, GDR Vol. 820. TNAM.

Government.²⁸ In 1826 when Pattamahadevi managed the situation in such a manner that got her appointed as Manager of the estate by the Government and this led to a struggle for power among rival powers of the royal family.²⁹ Godiapadhi Krishnamma Dora and Utam Singh continued disturbances with their uncommon ability to harass the British with the help of the Savaras. Krishnamma Dora raided and plundered Paralakhemundi town and made the situation uncontrollable.³⁰

Finally the collector, recommended for the appointment of a Commissioner with extensive powers as ^{the} last resort. However, On 1st February 1823, G.D. Russell, Senior member of the Board of Revenue arrived in Paralakhemundi as Special Commissioner. He recommended for investing adequate powers with the collector of Ganjam (Southern Orissa) so as to enable him to tackle the problems successfully, arising out of the sporadic disturbances created by the Zamindar Rajas. In 1836, he recommended rewards for the apprehension of the rebel chiefs.³¹ and also exemplary punishments to be inflicted upon the rebels ³² After the abolition of the Rajagi and the occupation of the estate by the British, systematic efforts were

27. b) Letter from Sub.Collector to Collector dt.8th Mar, 1820, GDR Vol. 820, TNAM.
28. P.C. Mishra, History of Ganjam under the British (1767-1900) (B.U.1980). pp. 32-33.
29. G.D. Russell, Disturbances in Paralakhemundi, Vizagapatnam and Goomsur in 1832-36. Vol.I (Madras, 1856) p-34.
30. Letter from the Collector to the Government dt.23rd July 1831 GDR Vol. 3915 TNAM.
31. a) Imperial Gazetteers of India, Vol-XII (Oxford, 1908) p-146.
b) G. .Russell, Report in Goomsur dt.12th Aug, 1836.
32. Ibid. p.27.

made to win over the native landed aristocracy to the side of the Government. Resultantly, the Bissois, the Naiks, & the Paiks were recruited to the different ranks of the District Security Force and land grants (land Inams grants) and such other gifts of permanent nature were lavishly distributed among the feudal chiefs of the Rajas. Consequently, many Bissois, Naiks and Paiks turned themselves towards the British Government. In the process, the Government Security Forces both in Paralakhemundi and in other Zamindari of Southern Orissa became reinforced to face and quell any sort of disturbances and rebellions and to meet all the challenging situations effectively. (33)

Besides their all sorts of participations with the ruling authorities of Paralakhemundi estate, against the British Government, the aboriginal Savaras also directly challenged the government in 1865-66, when police system was introduced in the Savara hill-tracts³⁴ Behind this rising of the Savaras an urge worked instigating them to be independent from all control. They viewed the introduction of police system as an encroachment upon their freedom and rights. This rising was also suppressed by the British Government through conciliatory measures.³⁵

33. Side-lights on History & culture of Orissa (Cuttack, 1977) Op.cit, P.669 & 700.

34. a) Annual Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency during the yr. 1865-66 Sec-III, Political (Vol.ASO) (A-188) P-15 TNAM.

b) T.J.Maltby (Madras, 1918) Op.cit. P-158.

35. Ibid.

The relentless and unsuccessful economic policies of the British towards the Zamindar estates in Southern Orissa caused the economic ruination of the Rajas and their subjects. This was also applied to the estate of Paralakhemundi and Jeypore, resulting in their economic ruination. They were forced to pay ever increasing tributes to the Government off and on quite disproportionate to their income and resources. The economic bankruptcy and the loss of resources compelled the Rajas to accept the reality of their being under the Supreme authority. When the Rajas refused or expressed their inability to pay the increased tribute, they were then forced to pay the same at the bayonet points. The collection of tribute, appeared to be the first and foremost aim and interest of the British. Even the rights of the Rajas to own and possess landed property were restricted through law courts. In such circumstances, all sections of the society- the Rajas, the Bissois, the Naiks, the Paiks, and the aboriginal Savaras; and Khonds and other people were reduced to economic non-entities. Thackeray, the collector and Magistrate of Southern Orissa, seriously criticised the exploitative economic policies of the local officials and suggested for persuasion of conciliatory relations with the Rajas and the aboriginal Savaras of the region for maintaining productive peace and tranquility in the Southern Orissa.³⁶

36. Side-Light on History and culture of Orissa (Cuttack, 1977) O.P.cit., PP-700-701.

The continuous resistances put up by the Rajas and their feudal chief, the Bissois; to the British authority in Southern Orissa, the Government felt it necessary to put an end to lines of the Zamindars in the estate in opportune times. After the capture of the rebel chiefs, Bissoi of Gumma and Radha Krishna Dandasena, the British Government, rejected the appeal of Raja Pratapsudra Deo and resolved to terminate the line of the Rajas of Paralakhemundi by not allowing the kith and keens of the deceased Raja to succeed to the Gadi (throne) The same policy was applied to the Ghumsur Zamindary at the death of its Raja Dhanajya Bhanja in 1835. Thus one after another all the Zamindary estates of Southern Orissa met the same fortune and came under the direct British authority. After the abolition of the ages old Rajgi (Kingship) the estates (Zamindaries) were occupied and put under direct administration of the East India Company till 1857, in which year, the estates were finally placed under the imperial supremacy of the British Crown. All through the British rule from 1766 till 1866, the socio-economic conditions, of the aboriginal Savaras of Southern Orissa remained absolutely unchanged. No visible improvements could be marked in the general lot of the Savaras and others. No appreciable measures were taken up by the British Government, for accomplishing public welfare like, the construction of roads, irrigational canals, dykes and reservoirs, and wide extension of health and educational facilities. Instead of making a forward march, Southern Orissa made a backward march

in the fields of socio-economic progress under the British rule.³⁷

However, the British Government initiated a large number of progressive programmes and measures to bring manifold changes in the socio-economical and educational spheres. The British Government kindled the light of civilisation in the dark horizons of the aboriginal Savara hill-tracts and jungles of Southern Orissa, through spread of education and the lavish and liberal distribution of all kinds of humanitarian charities and help through the Government and the Christian Missionary organisations and agencies.³⁸

The Government followed an extremely cautious and careful social policy. They most carefully refrained from interfering in the existing social and religious institutions and systems of the aboriginal Savaras. The Government allowed the Caste system to continue as a social institution as they found no barbarism involved in it. It adopted a policy of religious non-interference with regard to the native religions. The Savara religion was not interfered with and allowed to be preserved and maintained along with their temples, shrines and the ritualistic formalities. Christianity was widely spread with both the government initiatives and through the dedicated Missionary activities. On the otherhand the

37. Tarinicharan Granthavali, (B.U. 1980) Op.cit, PP-291-296.

38. Janakiballeva Mohanty, History of Oriya Literature (Cuttack, 1977) PP-302-312.

people were allowed to have their own faith and religion according to their conscience. Despite of all this, the Christian Missionary activities received great impetus and encouragement in the Savara tribal-tracts of Paralakhemundi, Jeypore, Chumsur, Khallikote, Jarada, & Surangi etc., during the British rule. With a very short time of its spread, several christian churches—both Roman Catholic and protestant spring up into existence at different places like Jeypore, Paralakhemundi, Bisamakatak, Rayagada Baliguda, Paikia, Aska, Berhampur, Chhatrapur, Russelkonda and Surada. A large number of aboriginal Savaras, Khonds and Oriyas were converted into christianity during this time. Christianity was accepted mainly by the aboriginal Savaras, Khonds and the low caste Hindus as it gave relief from the socio-economic inequalities and religious discrimination in their respective native religions.³⁹

Under the native Rajas trade and commercial activities in Southern Orissa failed to receive adequate state patronage, but under the British rule they were provided with all possible attention with the construction of new roads into far interior tribal-tracts and the use of water routes in the rivers. With the establishment of new-markets in rural areas

39. Chau Fattanaiik, Chumsur, Bhanja Vansavali (Berhampur, 1972) Pt-1-7.

below the ghats and the expansion of trade, the needs and tastes of the aboriginal Savaras and other common people changed considerably. This resulted in positive changes in the attitudes and outlook of aboriginal Savaras of Southern Orissa. Barter system was replaced by the exchange of money, and the later became, the medium of exchange in the markets; and even revenue came to be paid in cash but not in kind. Money as medium of exchange became convenient to the traders, government and the common people. The government emerged as the monopoly trader in almost all the items of business and commerce. With the extensive expansion of trade and commerce, both internal and external, the means of transport and communications improved and expanded; which resulted in the close contacts the people of Southern Orissa. The British Government also realised the actual socio-economic conditions of the aboriginals and tranquility was maintained in the region.⁴

With the advent of the British supremacy in 1766 and its stabilisation by 1866, after hundred year, the social, economical, religious, political and cultural systems and values under went total and rapid changes. The regional tra-

40. D. Behera, Freedom Movement in the State of Chumsur in Orissa (1836-1866) (Calcutta, 1984) PP-122-123.

of western values. The local culture could not stand against the onslaughts of that of Europe; and as a result, the Southern Orissa and its aboriginal Savaras totally changed with the march of times. The Rajas, the local aristocracy and the elite lost much of their traditional feudal rights, privileges, powers and social prestige. The reign of power passed into the hands of a new class of people, who were privileged enough to enjoy the administrative officers & posts, high or low, clerical or menial, nay they were the Europeans or Indians. In the process, all such changes and transformations in the situations in Southern Orissa, assumed new dimensions and brought benefits to both the aboriginal Savaras in particular and Indians in general and the British.⁴¹ The period from 1766 to 1866 was no doubt a significant one in the history of Southern Orissa for the reason that all the agitations were suppressed by hook or crook with the establishment of 1900. A.D. The British Government undertook all sorts of welfare works for the aboriginal Savaras of Southern Orissa and succeeded in bringing them into the fold of modern civilisation.

41. Parinicharan Granthavali (B.U. 1980) Op.cit, P-304.