

**Beyond Powerlessness: Institutional Life of the Vernacular in the Making of Modern
Orissa (1866-1931)**

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Abstract

This article calls for a revision and expansion of our understanding of the concept of ‘vernacular’ in modern Indian scholarship. Current definitions of the concept pose it as a local, indigenous and powerless language. Scholars like Ranajit Guha and Partha Chatterjee have argued that such indigeneity and exclusion from structures of power provide vernacular languages with the capacity to represent the true voice of the oppressed. While this is true of vernacular languages in some instances, my analysis of linguistic politics in Orissa demonstrates that an overwhelming reliance on this definition of radical powerlessness blinds us to the hegemonic power exercised by regional vernacular languages in determining political and territorial alignments in modern India. This article illustrates how it is only by raising the question of how regional space is produced in India that we can illustrate the hegemonic power of major Indian vernacular languages.

Keywords

Vernacular, Orissa, Regional History, Linguistic Identity, Adivasi, Boundaries, Regional Territory

Beyond Powerlessness: Institutional Life of the Vernacular in the Making of Modern Orissa (1866-1931)

Often, in histories of linguistic nationalism in India, an invocation of the term “vernacular” carries with it a suggestion of powerlessness.ⁱ This reading of vernacular as powerless draws from the two dominant paradigms for the understanding of this term in contemporary Indian scholarship.ⁱⁱ In scholarship on early modern literary history of India, the vernacular is understood as a diminutive and local counterpart of more dominant cosmopolitan or classical languages such as Sanskrit or Latin.ⁱⁱⁱ Then again, in the study of linguistic politics of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the term vernacular is used to mark the subalterneity of both Indian languages and their speakers in relation to the colonizing English language and its speakers.^{iv} Interposing vernacular languages with ‘civilizing’ languages like Sanskrit or ‘colonizing’ languages like English has defined contemporary Indian life in the 19th and 20th centuries as less than either their own past or the colonized present. In this framework, the major Indian vernaculars appear besieged by a sense of decline from the classical past and inadequacy in relation to the present.^v Although current scholars of regional vernacular languages explore the politicization of language in deeply nuanced ways, an apriori assumption about the powerlessness of the vernacular in general prevents them from asking more exacting questions about the representative power of the vernacular.^{vi} This article seeks to question this investment in the ultimate powerlessness of major Indian regional vernaculars.^{vii}

Even as scholars historicize the making of vernacular mother tongues in India, there is little attention paid to the hegemonic power of language in the formation of modern Indian territorial and political alignments.^{viii} Through a reading of political rhetoric on community, history and territory in the movement for the creation of a separate state of Orissa, I argue that the vernacular became powerful precisely due to prevailing assumptions about its indogeneity and its ability to represent/speak for hitherto unrepresented groups along with elite groups.^{ix} The

capacity of the vernacular to act as a broad-based site of representation, I shall illustrate, is the product of justificatory strategies employed by movements for linguistic regionalism in negotiations for territorial entitlements of new linguistic provinces. These justificatory strategies in turn hinged on arguing for the primacy of language as a basis of community while ensuring that such a claim did not exclude non-Oriya speakers from definitions of the Oriya community.

The case of Orissa illustrates how this move was enacted through what I call the ‘sublimation’ of language as the basis of regional territorial divisions. The changing definitions of Oriya community and territorial limits of the proposed province illustrate how the foundational nature of language was sublimated through a shift in the definition of regional community from one based on shared language to one based on shared space even as the salience of language in the definition of regional community was maintained. At stake in this sublimation was Oriya leadership’s attempt to claim tracts of land populated by a sizable non-Oriya speaking adivasi population. The history of the institutional life of the Oriya language is also, then, a history of boundary formation in the new state of Orissa. Through a focus on the history of the demarcation of territorial limits of the emergent Oriya province in the 1920s and 30s, this article reveals that when it came to the regional organization of Indian territory the vernacular was anything but powerless.^x

Rethinking ‘Vernacular’: Language and its Sublimation in the Construction of Regional Territory

In order for us to truly understand the role of major vernacular languages in modern India, we need to revise and expand our assumptions about the implications of the term ‘vernacular’ in nineteenth and twentieth century political and official rhetoric.^{xi} While existing definitions of the term take into account the history of linguistic and literary development in early modern India as well as account for the status of the vernacular as the language of the oppressed, these paradigms cannot be borrowed and deployed in the study of regional linguistic politics in nineteenth and

twentieth century India. Even as Sheldon Pollock's definition of the vernacular acknowledges the institutional status of the literary vernaculars in early modern India as fundamental to the emergence of regional polities, his notion of vernacular as a *language of place* cannot be directly applied to the modern period where the place-ness of language itself is being rigorously contested by the colonial state and various non-official pressure groups. Furthermore, even as languages like Oriya, Telegu, Kannada and Marathi functioned at a disadvantage in the linguistic economy of colonial India, these languages came to command profound institutional power as the colonial and post-colonial Indian State reconfigured Indian territory on linguistic lines.

Existing definitions of the term draw on either the translation of relevant Indian words or by reference to the western origin of the term through a search for its etymological roots. In the first paradigm, best exemplified by the Sheldon Pollock's famous treatment of the vernacular millennium, the meaning of the term is founded on Indian words pertaining to languages that are first called vernacular in the late 18th century by colonial philologists. Pollock has defined his use of the term by drawing on early references to the word *desi* or *of place*, which he notes has served as a 'conceptual counterpart' to the cosmopolitan in Indian languages at the beginning of the vernacular millennium.^{xiii} Through a discussion of early modern literary history, Pollock illustrates how the use of the term *desi* was embedded in contemporary efforts among local intelligentsia to demarcate their regional worlds from the broader cosmopolitan world where languages like Sanskrit and Persian operated.^{xiii} Through a discussion of how translations of the Mahabharata into various Indian languages are deployed in the process of linking language, space and political order, Pollock illustrates how the *desi* languages of India were being used to establish the spatial boundaries of regional political praxis. Even as he hesitates (rightly so) to provide a definitive explanation of the term vernacular, Pollock insists on the relational nature of the vernacular. Ultimately, he argues, that a vernacular language can only be vernacular in relation to a cosmopolitan language.^{xiv} Therefore, in this framework, vernacular or *desi* languages were self

consciously local *languages of place* defined in opposition to cosmopolitan languages that transcended the local. As such, vernacular languages are understood as less than—in scope as well as power—cosmopolitan languages.

In the second paradigm, best exemplified by Ranajit Guha's plea for the recognition of the authority of vernacular pasts, the etymology of the term is traced to its Latin roots-- *verna* or "slave". Guha's influential treatment of the term is an exposition of both the Latin roots of the word and its English use in the nineteenth century. Guha argues that the modern Indian understanding of the vernacular draws from the English use of the term, which is hinged on the indigeneity of the vernacular even as it remains marked by a trace of enslavement left behind by its Latin origins. In the Indian context, Guha poses, the 'vernacular' became a pejorative term that served as a "distancing and supremacist sign which marked out its referents, indigenous languages and cultures, as categorically inferior to those of the West or of England in particular." As such this ascription of inferiority allowed it to uphold "in every invocation, the power, value and status of white civilization".^{xv} For Guha, every invocation of the term vernacular was an instance of the epistemological violence perpetrated by colonial disciplinary knowledge. An example of the post-colonial critique of colonialism and its instrumental knowledge of the colonized, Guha's reading of the vernacular is very influential in contemporary post-colonial scholarship on Indian vernacular languages, historiography and linguistic politics. As a recent volume of essays on regional historiography in India reveals, histories written in the vernacular are seen as representative of an authentic subaltern voice.^{xvi}

In contrast to Pollock and Guha, this treatment of the institutional life of the vernacular in the making of modern Indian regional territory points to an expansion of our understanding of the term 'vernacular', which would compensate for some of the intellectual pitfalls inherent in the central implications of these two paradigms—that the vernacular is local, powerless and indigenous. Rather than taking these three features of vernacular languages for granted, one can

trace how major Indian regional vernacular languages came to claim a status of indigeneity and radical, representative powerlessness. Attention to the emerging official recognition of these languages as the basis of regional territory can reveal that these languages were not always indigenous to the territory that they claimed. As the case of Oriya will reveal, in the movement for the creation of Orissa, arguments about the powerlessness of the Oriya language and its people in relation to other groups was coupled with a systematic production of a historiographical orthodoxy portraying the history of Oriya as an ancient, independent, Indo-European vernacular which was indigenous to the areas being claimed as Orissa. This seemingly contradictory narrative about the status of the vernacular as both powerless and linguistically singular was driven by an equally paradoxical imperative to appear as minority in a bid to become the majority group in the proposed province. This deployment of a minority discourse rooted in liberal narratives of emancipation, the rhetoric of state protection of minority rights and the threat of homelessness, effectively produced Oriya as a historically independent vernacular *of the region* fallen on hard times. ^{xvii}

By focusing on a facet of the institutional life of language, I seek to uncover the repressive power of the vernacular that is often ignored in readings of language politics, which focus on the relationship between the major Indian languages and cosmopolitan languages like Sanskrit and English. The argument here hinges on the proposition that we need to recognize the dual lives of the regional vernaculars in India—the quotidian and the institutional. Therefore, it is not my contention that the major Indian vernaculars function only as powerful classificatory tools of colonial and post-colonial governmentality. Rather, I pose that we need to recognize that even as vernacular language use enables the kind of radical politics being valorized by Ranajit Guha and Partha Chatterjee et al, it does so in parallel to its life as a hegemonic, institutional marker of identity recognized by the post-colonial Indian state. By “institutional”, I mean the ability of language to demarcate regional boundaries and hence, determine individual access to provincial

state resources through the ascription of regional domicile.^{xviii} Accordingly, this discussion is not an attempt at privileging the institutional life of language. Rather, it is a critique of its over-riding influence in the understanding and definition of modern India.^{xix} It is an attempt to question the authority of the vernacular by drawing attention to the complex nature of this authority.

The authority of the major Indian vernacular languages draws from their ability to do two things in India. First, as Ranajit Guha has suggested, their authority draws from their ability to represent the subaltern voice. In an ethical economy of ideas, the vernacular has authority precisely because it is powerless. Second, and this is my contention, the vernacular Indian languages have a peculiar ability to exercise their institutional authority through their sublimation.^{xx} This is particularly evident in the process through which these vernacular languages become officially recognized as regional languages and come to be the basis of the territorial realignment of Indian regions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The conflation of language and territory is fundamental to this process. The history of the 'landing' of the vernacular languages in India illustrates how they emerge as the most powerful representative category in postcolonial India that determines political and territorial alignments to the exclusion of other categories such as class, caste etc.^{xxi} In her recent book on Telegu linguistic politics, Lisa Mitchell has illustrated how language came to be a foundational category in India.^{xxii} However, a reading of political rhetoric of the period shows that only by bypassing language even as it's salience in defining regional territory is maintained is language able to serve as a foundational category. That is, the reason language can trump other registers of difference is because it can be used as a basis of territorial divisions and then neatly sublimated in ways that religion, caste, class cannot be sublimated. The capacity of language to be 'landed' and its ability to be sublimated through a reference to it as simply a feature of territory and not as the pre-dominant determinant of the scope of regional spaces, allows it to not obfuscate other ways of being in the same land. This

sets the regional vernacular languages apart in their capacity to serve as a foundational representational category.

In this way, the major vernacular languages of India are simultaneously able to define Indian regions as exclusive cultural spaces while enabling the inclusion of people who do not belong. However, this sublimation is the product of elite efforts to define Indian territory and community and often involves the imposition of a certain vernacular language on areas where they are not spoken. This is particularly true of the areas inhabited by adivasi populations. The history of regionalization of vernacular languages reveals that they are local as well as translocal, elite and fundamentally powerful.

The example of the formation of territorial linguistic province of Orissa in 1936 is a particularly good instance for illustrating how the major regional vernaculars of India became powerful, translocal languages with clearly demarcated territorial domains. As one of the earliest linguistic state movements, beginning in the last decade of the 19th century and culminating in 1936 with the formation of a new state of Orissa, this movement necessarily involved complex justificatory strategies that would lay the groundwork for subsequent re-distribution of Indian provinces along linguistic lines. As Orissa was to be culled from three different British provinces (Bihar and Orissa, Bengal Presidency and Madras Presidency), the movement fell into a strangely dislocated discussion about reorganizing provinces where leaders representing different vernaculars were vying to lay claim to the same territories as Bengali speaking, Hindi Speaking or Telegu speaking.^{xxiii} This competition for territory led to further debates about which linguistic community would gain control over lands where none of these languages was spoken as the mother tongue. The Oriya, Telegu and Bihari claims to tribal areas that lay in the intersection of Oriya-, Telegu- and Hindi-speaking areas proved to be particularly contested.^{xxiv}

More importantly, the disaffiliation of Oriya linguistic regionalism from language resulted in the creation of a land-based vernacular that was always posed as though it was set to include other

Indians who had made Orissa their home, but which politically allowed for the remaking of adivasis who lived in the middle of the Oriya language tracts and did not speak Oriya into members of the ‘natural’ Oriya community by dint of their landed vernacular. This article traces the history of the effort among the Oriya-speaking elite to situate the ‘tribal’ communities of the proposed province within the Oriya-speaking community despite the linguistic, social, cultural and economic differences between the Oriya-speaking people and their tribal neighbors to expose the emerging ability of vernacular languages to speak for communities that were not necessarily allied to those vernaculars.

What follows is an archeology of the process of sublimation of language as a foundational category through a case study of Orissa.^{xxv} Such an archeology necessarily takes a circuitous route. That is, the process of rendering the foundational nature of language obscure through reference to land and territory, which this article traces can only occur through a reading of various often tenuously connected moments in the history of the definition of community in Orissa. The story begins with early British official privileging of language as the grounds for territorial reorganization of the British Indian provinces. As these official discussions about language and territory were informed by and in conversation with a broader non-official public debate about the unification of all Oriya-speaking areas under a single administration, I will explore the shifting definitions of the limits of the Oriya community within Utkal Sammillani—the premier public organization in Orissa. Anxieties about the implications of the exclusive nature of the linguistic definition of community compelled the leaders of the organization to define the proposed province in historical and territorial terms rather than linguistic terms. However, as a subsequent discussion of history writing in early twentieth century Orissa will reveal, this inclusive territorial definition of Orissa and the Oriya community was based on histories of Orissa where the adivasi people were written out of the history of the province. Hence, the sublimation of language through reference to a shared homeland allowed the leaders

of the Oriya movement to obscure the elision of adivasi pasts even as they were able to make a case for the inclusion of areas inhabited by adivasis into the proposed province of Orissa.

Finally, through a discussion of public memoranda submitted to the Orissa Boundary Commission in 1931, I will illustrate how this sublimation of language is institutionalized in the creation of a separate province of Orissa.

Beyond Language: Thinking Regional Space within the Indian Nation

By the early 1930s, Oriya groups lobbying for the formation of a separate province of Orissa had named the proposed province 'Natural Orissa'. The strategic deployment of the term 'natural' in the rhetoric on regional space provided both political and historical legitimacy to the demand for a separate province of Orissa. Such legitimacy was essential to the project of carving out a territorial geography of language that would bolster the movement for the formation of a separate linguistically defined province of Orissa. However, the move to define Orissa territorially was also informed by the need to situate the Oriya movement within the broader Indian nationalist movement and make a case for a more inclusive Oriya community that was not bounded by an exclusive focus on language. This section traces the history of the shift from language to territory through a reading of the political formulation of the concept of natural Orissa and the subsequent historicization of the term to produce a historical and geographical Orissa that was not ostensibly based on shared language.

In Orissa, a concern with the boundaries of the geographical domain of the Oriya language has its roots in the crisis of colonial governmentality posed by the devastating famine of 1866 in the Orissa Division of the Bengal presidency.^{xxvi} The famine, which claimed the lives of a third of the population of this area, compelled colonial officials to suggest that the unwieldy Bengal presidency be divided into smaller units.^{xxvii} By 1895, officials were proposing that the division be made on linguistic lines for administrative ease.^{xxviii} By 1903, official proposals for the unification

of all Oriya-speaking areas were beginning to find greater purchase among higher officials of the government as they discussed possible plans for the partition of Bengal.

These official suggestions privileged language as the basis of territorial rearrangement of the Bengal presidency and the formation of smaller administrative units. For instance, in 1903, in a letter to the government of Bengal, the Home Secretary to the government of India, H.H. Risley, suggested that the Oriya language was the most prevalent language of the area and that ‘Oriya-speaking’ ‘plain-men’ and ‘hill men’ (read adivasi) should be united under a single administration despite ‘racial difference’ because “...the connection between a spoken language and its dialect or its patois, is a more potent ground of union than a purely racial difference is one of separation.”^{xxxix} Risley, himself an authority in the study of the various ‘races’ of India, was arguing for the inclusion of the Sambalpur division of the Central Provinces in the Orissa division of the Bengal Presidency.^{xxx} Clearly, even for Risley, the similarity of language trumped the difference between ‘pure’ Oriya-speaking plains people and adivasis of this district who formed a distinct demographic on their own.^{xxxi}

However, it should be noted that this claim to similarity of language was based on philological theories about the relationship between Oriya and the adivasi languages like Kui, Ho, Gondh, etc., that were circulating in the Orissa division during the late nineteenth century. Philology became a terrain for cultural contestation between the Oriya- and Bengali- speaking elite of the Bengal Presidency during the language debate of the 1860s and 1870s. The debate was sparked by an official proposal to substitute Bengali for Oriya as the primary language of instruction in the schools of the Orissa division of the Bengal Presidency.^{xxxii} Vocally supported by Bengali intellectuals like Rajendralala Mitra, the proposal was based on the contention that Oriya was too similar to Bengali to warrant state expenditure on a separate curriculum in Oriya.^{xxxiii} In arguments for the substitution, the similarity between Oriya and Bengali was often explained through philological proofs that tended to illustrate how Oriya was a regional dialect of Bengali.

A controversial text published by an amateur philologist Kantilal Bhattacharya, titled *Oriya Swatantra Bhasba Naye* (Oriya is Not an Independent Language) in 1872, attempted to prove that Oriya was a bastardization of pure Bengali resulting from linguistic miscegenation of Bengali with adivasi languages of the area.^{xxxiv} Hence, modern-day Oriya was a product of the gradual mixing of Bengali with the adivasi languages of the borderlands between lower and upper provinces of the Bengal Presidency.

Even as such claims were refuted in the popular Oriya press as well as in more serious academic arenas like the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the debate did raise some important questions about history of the Oriya language and the relationship between Oriya and the neighboring adivasi languages.^{xxxv} Implicit in any philological discussion of the development and interrelationship between Oriya and Bengali was the idea that Oriya and the neighboring adivasi languages were intrinsically connected in their historical development. The influence of adivasi languages of these parts on the Oriya vocabulary could be used as evidence of the derivative nature of Oriya (as in Bhattacharya's formulation) or, paradoxically, of the singularity of Oriya in relation to Bengali due to its unique borrowings from adivasi languages. In later histories of Orissa and the Oriya-speaking community, this question of the relationship between the Oriya language and adivasi languages and by extension Oriya speaking people and the adivasi people of the area come to be central to the dominant historicist reading of the Oriya past. Therefore, as we will see later in the article, the most far-reaching impact of the language debate of the 1870s was the establishment of a relational nexus between colonial philology, Oriya historiography and the question of relationship between adivasi languages and pasts with the Oriya language and past. Could Oriya be thought as something separate from and outside the history of the adivasi communities of the region? This became one of the central concerns of Oriya nationalist historians of the period.^{xxxvi}

Despite these contentious philological debates, by the 1920s, much of the official discussion about the amalgamation of the outlying areas was concerned with the ‘aboriginal’ question in the outlying Oriya-speaking areas like the Ganjam District of the Madras Presidency and Singbhum District of the Central Provinces. Risley’s 1903 comment about the centrality of language served as a reference point for later official debates about the addition of ‘aboriginal’ areas into the proposed province of Orissa.^{xxxvii} However, the question of similarity of language became increasingly complicated in the view of emerging historical explanations about the formation of the Oriya community in the *longue duree*.^{xxxviii}

Meanwhile, even as official discussions about the amalgamation of Oriya-speaking areas were underway, non-official public organizations were established in Orissa to lobby for this change.^{xxxix} By 1903, the public discussion about the amalgamation of Oriya-speaking areas had come to involve Oriya representatives from other neighboring provinces such as the Central Provinces and the Madras Presidency. Utkal Sammillani or the Utkal Union Conference, a pan-Oriya organization that drew its members from the Oriya-speaking elite of four different British provinces was formed in this year. Established to lobby for the amalgamation of what the colonial government had come to call the ‘Oriya-speaking tracts’, this organization became the most vocal proponent for the unification of all Oriya-speaking people under a single administration.

As the primary objective of the organization was to lobby for the amalgamation of Oriya-speaking areas, a new territorial geography of the Oriya language was imagined both within the Utkal Sammillani and in other cultural venues. In one of the earliest statements about the aims and objectives of the Sammillani, in 1903 the first president of the organization defined the meaning of the term ‘Utkal Desa’, the Oriya expression for Orissa, in the following words, “We have taken Orissa, Ganjam and Sambalpur as well as all areas where the Oriya language is used to mean Utkal Desa.”^{xl} Initially, the definition of the Oriya community within the Sammillani was

based strictly on the criterion of language use; the Oriya community was constituted of Oriya speakers. As recurring references to the historical existence of a unified Orissa within the Presidential addresses at the Sammillani suggest, the founders of the Utkal Sammillani did not consider this characterization of the new linguistic region a modern invention. They traced the existence of Utkal Desa back into ancient times. As Jayanta Sengupta has recently revealed, the rhetoric of the ancient loss of and the need to recuperate a pre-existing Utkal Desa subtended the dominant meta-narrative of the movement for the amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking areas.^{xli} Implicit in this rhetoric of loss was the notion of a cohesive and historical community of Oriya-speaking people.

Bolstering this imagination of a cohesive historical community that had lost its territorial basis was a discourse of disempowered victim-hood focused on the threatened status of the Oriya language in the cultural economy of colonial India. Oriya arguments about the status of the language were elaborated in three main sites— in Oriya newspapers and journals, in new histories of Orissa and its language, and on the platform of the Utkal Sammillani and Oriya memoranda to the colonial state. In the years between the movement to refute claims that Oriya was a dialect of Bengali during the 1860s and 70s, and the formation of a separate province of Orissa in 1936, advocates of Oriya frequently returned to this theme of the disadvantaged status of the language and its speakers in Oriya newspapers and journals. Written and published primarily for an Oriya audience, newspapers like *Utkal Dipika*, *Sambalpur Hiteisini*, *Balasore Sambadababika* and *Asha*, and journals like *Utkal Prabha*, *Uktal Sahitya* and *Mukura* featured articles and essays elaborating on the need to rescue Oriya from its dire status under colonial rule.^{xlii} These claims were often linked with problems caused by the minority status of Oriya in various British provinces and with the lack of progress in the production of Oriya literature. At the crux of these claims was the anxiety that ‘more developed’ languages such as Bengali, Telegu and Hindi enjoyed greater state patronage as majority languages of British provinces. For instance, in an article titled

“Odiya Sammillana” (Oriya Amalgamation) published in 1926, the author spoke of a gradual weakening of the Oriya language due to its minority status in Madras and Bengal Presidencies. Speaking specifically of the ‘oppressive’ influence of Bengali, the author argued,

After inundating the land of Bengal, the wave of Bengali literature threatens to take over Orissa, Assam and Bihar. The rate of growth of Oriya is so slow and weak that it is gradually dwindling. Who is policing its progress?^{xliii}

Coupled with this rhetoric of underdevelopment and external threat was the argument that the dire status of Oriya language and literature required Oriya speakers to work towards the betterment of their mother-tongue through increased literary production. Infact, this theme was repeatedly and consistently raised from 1890s through to the 1920s. For instance, in 1898, one of the most influential Oriya editors of this period-- Biswanath Kara wrote a number of essays elaborating the need for and the praxis of an Oriya literary populism centered on reading, writing and critiquing new Oriya literature.^{xliv} Such calls for action were repeated in the Utkal Sahitya Samaj (Oriya Literary Association) for the next thirty years.^{xlv} Within this context, the Oriya language came to be understood as a subaltern tongue locked in a battle for survival with more dominant languages like Bengali, Telegu and English.

However, it could be argued that this rhetoric of powerlessness was interrupted by a simultaneous move to establish Oriya as an independent vernacular in the new histories of Oriya language and literature written in the 1920s. Most notable of these histories were Binayak Misra’s *Odia Bhasara Itibas* (History of Oriya Language) in 1925, B.C. Mazumdar’s *Typical Selections from Oriya Literature* published in three volumes between 1921 and 1925 and Jagabandhu Singh’s *Prachin Utkal* (Ancient Utkal/Orissa) in 1929. Despite serious disagreements among these scholars about the process of the emergence of modern Oriya, all these texts attempted to illustrate the development of Oriya as an independent vernacular and to show that its literature differed significantly from Sanskrit in metre, rhyme and style of composition.^{xlvi} However, we

should take care to read these narratives within the context of broader arguments about the status of the Oriya language circulating in the Oriya public sphere. Even as these accounts underlined the singularity and historical antiquity of the language, they were often also marked by a defensive undertone. Both Singh and Misra made explicit allusions to the earlier controversy about the relationship between Oriya and Bengali at the beginning of their histories of Oriya. Infact, a reading of the their arguments reveals that they took the controversial claim that Oriya was not an independent language as their point of departure to elaborate a history of Oriya as an independent vernacular.^{xlvii} For instance, in *Prachin Utkal*, Jagabandhu Singh began his discussion on the history of Oriya language with the following statement, ‘Some people say that Oriya is not an independent language. Some Bengali people say that Oriya springs from Bengali. Let us explore how far this statement is true.’^{xlviii}

Building upon these contradictory claims, the leadership of the Oriya movement often described the Oriya people as a besieged group subject to governmental neglect and exploitation by the neighboring Bengali speaking people in its negotiations with the colonial government through public speeches and memoranda. For instance, in 1918, as the colonial government invited memoranda and conducted interviews of influential Indians on the question of franchise and representation preceding the publication of the Montague-Chelmsford reforms, the founder of the Utkal Sammillani –Madhusudan Das gave a speech at the Sammillani where he re-iterated the Oriya demand for a separate province by arguing that the Bengalis and Biharis were in-fact ‘intermediary ruling races’. This reference to exploitation by ‘intermediary ruling races’ recurred in the various Memoranda that were sent to the Orissa Boundary Commission in 1931. The Oriya protest against exploitation by ‘intermediary ruling races’ could only be founded on claims about the singularity of the Oriya language and its cultural heritage. From the earliest stages of the Oriya cultural nationalism to the eventual formation of Orissa, the advocates of Orissa cited

the enforced powerlessness of Oriya and its speakers in relation to other communities under British colonialism as the primary reason for the amalgamation of the Oriya speaking areas.

Read together, these discussions reveal an uneven and often contradictory argument about the status of the Oriya language. However, in reading the variations in these texts we should account for the difference in the context of their production and readership. Also we should take care to contextualize these varying accounts within the overarching framework of the movement for the amalgamation of Oriya speaking areas. The movement required the Oriya leadership to make a contradictory set of claims. Their demand for a separate province was predicated on two claims. First, framed within a discourse of minority and linguistic rights, they claimed that the Colonial state needed to protect the Oriya speaking people from exploitation by more dominant linguistic groups such as the Bengalis, Telegus and Biharis. This is where the rhetoric of powerlessness and under-development came into play. Second, the discourse of minority rights required the Oriya leadership to establish the singularity and cohesion of the Oriya language and community. This is where the claims to ancient heritage as well as linguistic and literary independence from Bengali, Sanskrit or Adivasi languages came into play. However, by unpacking these contradictory claims we can reveal the power of the 'powerless' vernacular. That is, while the first claim about the powerlessness of the vernacular allowed the Oriya leadership to deploy contemporary global anxieties about self-determination and freedom from those could be described as the non-self of the community, the second claims *sustained* the argument for regional autonomy and cohesion long after the region was formed. Hence, while the first served its purpose as colonial plea for governmental support and a populist call for action, the second laid the foundations for the continuing hegemony of Oriya over its own minority population –the adivasis.

However, this imagination of a besieged, victimized but exclusive language community was interrupted by anxieties about the possible exclusion of non-Oriya speaking members of the Utkal Sammillani. From 1903 to 1920, this anxiety repeatedly surfaced in Presidential speeches of

the Utkal Sammilani as the leaders of the organization returned to the theme of land and shared life in an effort to include non-Oriya speakers into the imagined Oriya community.^{xlix} For instance, in the 1913 presidential address, Madhusudan Das, a founding member of the Sammillani, described the Oriya jati as children of Utkal Mata. Das' definition of the Utkal Mata was not merely linguistic. Rather, he argued that 'those who have risen from and choose to blend into the Utkal land upon death are the true children of Utkal Mata'.^l Das' anxiety about inclusiveness is clearly evident in his claim that people of any community, whether they are "Bengali, Mussalman, Brahmin, Karana (kayastha), Kandara, Pana, Punjabi, or Madrasi" are the children of Utkal Mata. Perhaps the most sustained discussion and resolution of this anxiety can be found in the 1920 Presidential address given by Gopabandhu Das.

Occasioned by a looming split in the ranks of the Sammillani leadership on the issue of whether the organization should join the Indian National Congress led Non-Cooperation movement, Gopabandhu Das's speech came at a turning point in the history of the Sammillani.^{li} Prior to 1920, the leaders of the group, led by Madhusudan Das, adopted a policy of apoliticism in order to maintain good relations with the colonial government; this would have ensured the Sammillani's primary objective of achieving the amalgamation of all Oriya-speaking tracts under a single administration. At the 1920 session, leaders like Gopabandhu Das acknowledged the growing anti-colonial nationalist sentiments of members and adopted a new mission that balanced older provincial agendas with growing pan-Indian political sentiments. As we will see in Das' speech, this transition was accomplished through an attention to redefining the limits of the Oriya community beyond language and basing it on a more inclusive notion of shared space.

Clearly, this move towards shared space was not new within the Utkal Sammillani. Rather, it was a more clarified and liberal version of the argument made by Madhusudan Das in 1913. At stake in their redefinition of the limits of community were two kinds of inclusive initiatives, one internal and one external. Gopabandhu Das's emphasis on shared space as the basis of

community echoed earlier anxieties about possible exclusion of the non Oriya-speaking members *within* the Utkal Sammillani and its constituency. In particular, at the root of this anxiety were two communities—the Domiciled Bengalis of Orissa and the Adivasi peoples of the various Oriya speaking areas. Then again, the call to anti colonial politics instituted by his speech required him to imagine an Oriya community that was not at odds with the broader pan-Indian national community. While the continuity between Madhusudan Das’ definition of community and that of Gopabandhu Das points to the internal concensus on the Sammillani’s move towards imagining an Oriya community beyond language, there are fundamental differences between their formulation of the relationship between region and nation. Symptomatic of the shift described by Gyan Pandey in his discussion of how the definition of Indian political community changed from federal to unitary in the 1920s, Madhusudan Das’ imagination of the Indian nation differed significantly from that of the new Indian nation being imagined by Gopabandhu Das.^{lii} For Madhusudan Das the Oriya community and other regional communities, were sisters under the rule of an imperial mother-nation.^{liii} For Gopabandhu Das, common subject-hood to Britain could no longer serve as a basis for the sisterhood of regions like Orissa and Bengal. Rather, he had to make a case for a relationship between region and nation and among regions which accounted for the demands of self-determination on linguistic lines as well as the formulation of unitary Indian nation. He did so by elaborating an metonymic relationship between Orissa and India where specific qualities of Orissa allowed it to represent to best self of India.

To this end, Das drew on a notion of *udaar manabikata*, or expansive humanism, to make a case for his inclusive initiatives. He argued that the Oriya community was uniquely adept at such humanism due to its association with the Hindu religious cult of Jaganath.^{liv} He claimed that only the Oriya people have understood that “at the focus of nationalism is liberal humanism”.^{lv} This avowal of liberal humanism enabled Das to espouse a Janus-faced identity politics that

simultaneously claimed a separate Oriya province while situating this demand squarely within Indian nationalist and anti-colonial aspirations.

By alluding to the Jaganath Cult and Puri, one of four of the most important places of Hindu pilgrimage in India, Das was able to do two things. First, by centering the Jaganath cult within the Oriya community, he was able to claim that social and spiritual life of the Oriya people was intrinsically tied into that of the broader Indian community. Second, focusing on the Jaganath Cult allowed Das to produce what Bisnu Mahapatra has termed a “regional geography of horizontal religious brother hood”.^{lvi} Thus able to elide social differences within the Oriya community as well as those between Oriyas and non-Oriyas, Das claimed that in Puri or Nilachal, the seat of the Jaganath cult, “there is no distinction between big and small, raja and praja, Brahmin and Chandal, friend and foe or even Hindu and Buddhist. In the later Chaitanya age even the distinction between Muslim and Hindu was obscured. Because this seed of expansive humanism and pan Indian nationalism lies in Nilachal, over the ages devotees and great men have been attracted to Nilachal.”^{lvii}

Using this inclusive humanism as his alibi, Das argued for an expansion of the prevailing understanding of the Oriya community beyond language. He asked provocatively,

Who is Oriya community? It is seen around the world that communities are named after places. A feeling of affinity develops naturally among those who inhabit the same place. Their hope, purpose, fate and future are confined to a singular interest for welfare. Their land of action is the same and undifferentiated. For them that very land is a pure and lovable space. It is their birthplace. In their view it is equal to heaven. Therefore, those who live in such a defined tract of land—they are one community and they are named according to the name of that land. According to this natural law those who have been born and have died with the same hopes and desires, and have been imbued with the same interests—they are all Oriya community.^{lviii}

By founding his understanding of community on spatial categories like stana (place), sketra (area) and Bhumi (land), Gopabandhu called for a shift in focus from linguistically based community to geographically organized regional community. Prior to Das' intervention, occasional efforts to broaden the exclusive linguistic definition of the Oriya community to include non-Oriya-speaking communities who resided in the Orissa Division were made by the Domiciled Bengalis of Orissa Division. The domiciled Bengalis were an influential group within the Oriya literati of Cuttack and played an important role in the Oriya language movement of the nineteenth century. In 1905, the Star of Utkal, an English language paper published by a member of the domiciled Bengali community featured an article that introduced the term 'utkaliya' to denote members of the Oriya community. Utkaliyas were people who lived in the Oriya-speaking area but did not use Oriya in their day-to-day lives.^{lix} However, it was with Gopabandhu's speech that the dominant understanding of the Oriya community went through its final divorce from language. In his speech, G. Das managed this shift by calling into question the distinction between Utkal and Oriya. The common understanding of Utkal –due to its links with the term Utkaliya—invoked the idea of the inhabitants of Orissa. The appellation Oriya denoted the speakers of the Oriya language. Das posed—is there a distinction between those who inhabit Orissa and those who speak Oriya?

Some people even see a difference between Utkal and Oriya. In fact there is no difference between these two and there should not be any. Whether they are from Bengal or Punjab, from Marwar or Madras, Hindu or Muslim, Aryan or Aboriginal, those who have assimilated their selfhood and interest with Orissa –Orissa is theirs and they are of Orissa. These days it is impossible for a place to be inhabited by the same kind of people. There is almost no place on earth where different communities or societies are not living together. Only, the focus of their interests is one. It is natural and acceptable that over

time they become united as a community. The United States of America is an exemplar of such a formation of community affiliation.^{lx}

This move proposed to shift the locus of Oriya regional politics from an exclusive community based on linguistic identity to a more inclusive constituency based on a shared everyday life in a common place. However, the argument for a community based on adjacency and commonality of interests did not necessarily involve a disavowal of the Oriya community as a linguistic unit. Rather, the very invocation of other linguistic identities such as Bengali, Punjabi, Marwari, etc reveals Gopabandhu's investment in the distinctiveness of these identities. In fact, he was calling for a cosmopolitan idea of community where shared interests, common historical experience and future aspirations transcended rather than effaced particular linguistic identities. Furthermore, by calling for transcendence of linguistic identities he did not forsake the idea of a distinct region of Orissa. In fact, for Das, the transcendence of particular linguistic, religious or caste identity was possible precisely because the geographical category 'Orissa' was assumed as an irrevocable reality. Hence, his call for the inclusion of other linguistic groups in the Oriya community did not threaten to demolish the long-cherished vision of a separate province of Orissa.

The geography of the proposed province of Orissa became central to the objectives of the Sammillani as a consequence of Das's privileging of a spatial definition of the Oriya community. Hence, in this session, a new constitution of the Utkal Sammillani was drafted where the concept of 'natural Orissa' as a geographical category was defined.^{lxi} In the new constitution, Natural Orissa was opposed to the existing 'artificial' or political Orissa that did not include all Oriya-speaking areas. The invocation of 'natural' as a qualifier made the idea of Orissa appear a-historical and took it beyond the realm of history into the domain of natural geography. No longer subject to idiosyncratic movement of people over time, natural Orissa became an unchanging backdrop against which the history of the Oriya-speaking people could be enacted. While the original definition of Orissa was based on commonality of language (that all Oriya

speaking areas should constitute a single province), Natural Orissa was a geographical category, which could serve as a basis for a community that was not necessarily limited to the Oriya-speaking people.

As Das's privileging of shared space over shared language underlined the centrality of the category of 'natural Orissa', the definitions of the Oriya community came to be centered on establishing the historicity of 'natural Orissa' in early twentieth century Oriya historiography. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, historiography of Orissa was focused on tracing the ancient origins of the Oriya-speaking people and delineating the boundaries of the kingdoms inhabited by them.^{lxii} This historicism of Oriya and its speakers became central to the Oriya nationalist cultural production for the next two decades. Through the organization of historical associations, the more prominent Oriya nationalists produced a historical orthodoxy about the ancient past of the province of Orissa.

It is in this move from language to space through history writing that the sublimation of language as the basis of regional territory took place. As various histories of ancient 'Orissa' that were written in the early twentieth century attest, the central impulse of history writing in this time was focused on explaining how historical 'Natural Orissa' came to be a discrete geographical unit in ancient times. However, such a history necessarily involved reconstructing the history of the Oriya-speaking people and their historical experience of migration and miscegenation.^{lxiii} Hence, these narratives of the ancient Oriya past were about more than just the ancestors of the Oriya community they had to do with the encounters between the Oriya and the non-Oriya.^{lxiv} As such, modern understandings of the limits of such categories as "Oriya" or "adivasi" in the ancient period were fuzzy at best. Who were the ancestors of the modern Oriya speaking people? Were they Aryan or non-Aryan? These were some of the questions that animated the researches of Oriya historians in the early twentieth century.

Therefore the sublimation of language as the basis of regional territory came about through a paradoxical narrative move. The shift from language to place was effected by a historiographical conflation of language and place. In historicizing 'natural Orissa' back to the ancient times, the leaders of the Oriya movement were effectively attempting to trace the ancient origins of a people who spoke the Oriya language. To historicize Orissa was to historicize Oriya. That is, in order to argue for the creation of Orissa as a geographical category, they historicized the thing that marked the ancestors of the Oriya-speaking people as separate from other communities: the Oriya language.

Histories of Orissa written between 1900 and the 1930s that attempt to trace the origins of 'natural Orissa' drew together the history of disparate ancient political domains such as Odra, Utkala, Kosala and Kalinga. Historians like B.C. Mazumdar and Jagabandhu Sinha, and even literary historians like Binayak Mishra, wrote about how these disparate kingdoms came to be drawn together in a 'natural Orissa' consisting of Oriya-speaking people. In writing these histories, Oriya historians were challenged with a three-pronged requirement: the need for a history that established Oriya civilizational and historical bona fides, that conclusively proved that the Oriya-speaking areas belonged to a single historical past, and that incorporated both the main stream Oriya population and the non-Oriya adivasi population into a single historical community. This project, both cultural and geographical, faced its greatest challenge in the figure of the adivasi. As he was neither considered historically civilized nor linguistically Oriya, the adivasi became a sticking point in the histories of Orissa written in the early twentieth century.

Theoretically, this problem of the adivasi could have been resolved by what Johannes Fabian calls the "Denial of coeval-ness" where the adivasi is simply seen as an anachronistic presence who could be dismissed as an exception. However, in Oriya historiography the adivasi could not be so easily dismissed. The adivasi population played a peculiar role in the constitution of the proposed province of Orissa. The demand for a separate province of Orissa required historical

proof of the incorporation of areas where a majority of the population was adivasi. Hence rather than viewing them as inconsequential temporal exceptions, the Oriya historians of this period had to provide a theory that would explain the relationship between the mainstream Oriya-speaking population and the adivasi population. Yet this relationship could not undermine the existing hierarchies within Oriya society. Therefore, the Oriya elite anxiety about the adivasi was based on a paradox. While Orissa as geographical category could not be imagined without incorporating the adivasi into the Oriya community, the imagination of the Oriya community could not include the adivasi due to his perceived historical backwardness.

Natural Orissa, as the projected province came to be called, had been four different kingdoms in the ancient times—Kalinga, Utkala, Odra and Kosala. Present-day historians of ancient Orissa have gleaned from ancient sources like the Mahabharata and the Manusamhita that “these areas were inhabited by the sic different stocks of people, but in the course of time they gradually became amalgamated, through the distinct nomenclatures of their territories continued to exist.”^{lxv} The modern name Orissa is a 10th century AD bastardization of the name Odra and its other derivatives such as Udra and Odraka. A geo-political Orissa akin to the projected Natural Orissa came to be established only in the 11th century AD under the Imperial Ganga Dynasty that ruled Orissa for almost three-and-a-half centuries.

It could be argued that the case for Natural Orissa could have been made by referencing the historical Orissa of the Ganga Dynasty. However, the discursive privileging of ancient Indian history as the justificatory marker for early twentieth-century political demands made it essential for the proponents of a separate province of Orissa to prove that Orissa was an ancient geo-political entity.^{lxvi} Hence, in this period the production of an ancient historical Orissa became one of the more significant projects of Oriya regional politics. The effort was to ensure that the emergent histories of ancient Orissa established that the four Kingdoms of Kalinga, Utkala, Odra and Kosala were integrally tied together by cultural and political bonds. Furthermore, the

Oriya nationalist historians were invested in proving that these kingdoms were inhabited by both the original aboriginal inhabitants of the areas (understood as the ancestors of the adivasis) and the ‘civilized’ Aryan immigrants from Northern India.

While Oriya historians were engaged in an effort to produce a unified, ancient, cultural, political and linguistic heritage for the Oriya people, the particular political ends served by these narratives defined the limits of what was acceptable as a story of the Oriya past. That is, not just any narrative would do. Oriya history writing in this period was a site where the very nature of the modern Oriya linguistic community was being produced. In particular, I argue that the Oriya elite’s anxiety about incorporating a sizable number of ‘aboriginal’ adivasi groups of the Oriya speaking areas into the Oriya community was resolved through specific iterations of origin myths linked with the Oriya linguistic community. These myths centered the Jaganath Cult, a Hindu religious tradition. By implicating both the adivasi people and the Oriya-speaking people in a legendary narrative these legends of the cult of Jaganath served as a bridge between these two groups while maintaining existing social hierarchies between the two groups.

In 1926, B.C Mazumdar, a professor at Calcutta University argued in his book *Orissa in the Making* that “...the history of Orissa begins where the history of Kalinga Empire ends.” An established and well-regarded scholar of Oriya history and literature, Mazumdar was tracing the process by which a unified linguistic Oriya community came into being. The cornerstone of his argument was that the ancestors of modern day Oriyas had no links with the Kalinga Empire and in fact came to be identified as Oriyas as a consequence of the processes set in motion by the fall of the empire.^{lxvii}

Oriya nationalist historians aggressively contested Mazumdar’s claim. For instance, Jagabandhu Sinha posited alternative linguistic and racial pedigrees for the Oriya-speaking people. Sinha argued that ancient Orissa, commonly called ancient Utkal, had always been linked with the Kalinga and that the two names Utkal and Kalinga were often used interchangeably in the past.

Sinha took particular offence at Mazumdar's claim that the ancestors of the modern-day Oriyas were the aboriginal, 'uncivilized' Odra and Utkala races that were later Aryanized by the people of Aryan stock rendered itinerant due to the fall of the Kalinga Empire. Countering Mazumdar's depiction of the origins of the Oriya language and people, Sinha argued that the Odra and Utkalas were of Aryan descent. The points of contention in these two narratives of the Oriya past hinged on question of the provenance of the Oriya language and, by extension, of the modern Oriya people.

Oriya nationalist response to Mazumdar's thesis was focused on disproving his claim that the Odras and the Utkalas were uncivilized races that had no links with the Kalinga Empire. It should be noted that Oriya effort to establish the antiquity of Oriya civilization was not merely a product of the response to Mazumdar. The Oriya historians were responding to the earlier histories of Orissa that presented it as a primeval land untouched by human endeavor.^{lxviii} In the case of Utkala, the task was easy because of the Sanskrit roots of the term 'Utkala'. Utkala was read as the conjunction of Ut and Kala. This translated to high art. Thus Utkala was the land of high art or high culture. In the case of 'Odra' the task was not as easy, even as proving that Odra was the name of a civilized kingdom was crucial. This was because Orissa was drawn from 'Odra Desa' or 'Odra Rastra'. Jagabandhu Sinha mentioned in an article that the Bengali Vishwakosha defined Odra as people who weight bearers. In fact, there were many different iterations of the term Odra in this period. Such references to the menial origins of the Oriyas forced the Oriya elite to systematically recuperate Odra from its contemporary definitions in existing historiography.

Here, I will focus on an article written by Satya Nararyan Rajguru, a nationalist historian associated with the Prachi Samiti, titled "The Odras and their predominancy"^{lxix} Rajguru was one of the founding members of the Prachi Samiti. The Prachi Samiti was set up 1931 and was intended to throw "light on the hitherto shrouded aspects of the great Kalinga civilization, which

carried the arms of its cultural conquest far and wide, and made the 'Greater Utkal.'^{lxxx}The founders believed that the ancient glory of Utkal was lost and with it was lost the prosperity and pride of the people of Utkal. History was to provide an uplifting memory of a glorious past that would rouse the people of Utkal from the depths of degeneration and powerlessness.^{lxxxi} To this end, the Prachi Samiti was striving to bring about a revival of the Oriya past through historical writings and re-publication of ancient Oriya texts.^{lxxxii}

Rajguru's essay was part of this mission to revive a glorious memory of ancient Orissa. In this essay Rajguru attempted to advance an alternative narrative of the formation of Orissa. This alternative narrative was based on the redefinition of the term Odra. He affirmed the prevalent understanding among Oriya nationalists that modern day Natural Orissa covers the territories of the erstwhile Kalinga, Odra and Utkala kingdoms. However, in contrast to Mazumdar's thesis that Orissa was formed when the fall of the Kalinga empire resulted in the aryanization of the uncivilized Odra and Utkala people, Rajguru argued that the Odra people were the first Aryans to come in from the north. Hence, he argued, present day Orissa is the result of the intermingling of these Odras with pre-existing aboriginal peoples of the land and the gradual spread of Odra influence over Natural Orissa.

In Rajguru's thesis the Odras were the fallen Kshatriyas mentioned in the Manu Samhita. He noted that some scholars have interpreted the term Odra as 'one who flies'. Thus Rajguru argued that "the word Odra as interpreted by some scholars is a synonym of a person who flies. Probably this is the first race to fly from the 'Aryavartta' or the northern part of India and settle in the south."^{lxxxiii} This reading allowed Rajguru to establish the Aryan heritage of the Odra people. As opposed to Mazumdar's claim that the Odras were rude, uncivilized people who inhabited the fringes of the civilized Kalinga Empire, Rajaguru cited ancient texts like the ManuSamhita and Bisnuparva to claim that the Odras were a race of people with a separate spoken language Odra-Bibhasa. This language was broadly derived from Prakrit and Pali and

later came to be known as Odia. The region where it was spoken came to be called Odisha, or as the British called it, Orissa. The later influx of the Aryan Utkala people resulted in the sanskritization of the Odia people.

While Rajguru established the Aryan heritage of the Odra and the Utkala people, he also attempted to establish the linkages between the adivasi population of Natural Orissa and the Odra people. He treated two tribes in particular, the Khonds and the Savaras.^{lxxiv} He argued that both the Khonds and the Savaras were the products of the intermingling of the Odra people with the aboriginal people of Orissa. As proof of this, Rajguru took recourse to linguistic analysis of the adivasi languages such as Santhali and Ho. He illustrated the similarities between words in Oriya and these languages to prove that languages like Ho are merely local dialects of Oriya. This allowed Rajguru to claim that the tribes such as Santhals, Parajas, Hos, Bhils, and so on are part of the Oriya-speaking community and that areas inhabited by them should be included in amalgamated Orissa.

While linguistic similarities established the membership of the adivasis in the Oriya community, the relationship between adivasis and the Odras had to be clarified. As has been discussed earlier, in existing historiography the Odras themselves were portrayed as the 'aboriginal' ancestors of the modern-day adivasis of Orissa. This coupled with the claim that the Odras were also the ancestors of the modern-day Oriya elite who were the product of the aryanization of the Odras implied not only that the modern-day adivasis and the Odras are racially linked but also that the modern day Oriya caste elite and adivasis come from the same racial stock.

In order to maintain a clear distinction between the Oriya caste elite and the adivasis of the hilly regions of Orissa, Rajguru turned to the originary myth of the Jaganath Cult. As Jaganath was considered the most important deity of the Oriya people, connecting adivasis to Jaganath legitimized their incorporation into the Oriya community. In this myth found in the Madala Panji temple records, the original devotee of Jaganath was a Savara man named Basu. Indradyumna, a

kshatriya king of Malava, sent Vidyapati, a Brahmin priest to bring Basu's idol of the deity to his kingdom. Vidyapati visited Basu and married his daughter. In the course of time Vidyapati was able to bring the deity to Indradyumna's kingdom. Rajguru argued that the offspring of the Brahmin and Savara Basu's daughter are the ancestors of the present day Savara. The legend goes that in recognition of Basu and his daughter's devotion to Jaganath, Jaganath himself decreed that the children of Basu's daughter be recognized as Suddho Savara or pure Savara.

The use of the legend allowed Rajguru to make two claims. First, the Savaras were culturally integrated into the Hindu caste system and belonged to Oriya community. Rajguru noted that it is these Suddho Suaras who functioned as cooks in the temple of Jaganath.^{lxv} As any service in the temple was considered a marker of the great devotion and had immense purificatory powers, the Savaras were assimilated into the mainstream Oriya community. Interestingly, while Rajguru's essay began with a reference to Khonds and Savaras, there was no discussion of the assimilation of Khonds into the Oriya community towards the end of the essay. In fact, by the end of the essay the Savaras had come to stand in for all the adivasis of Orissa. This shift coupled with the use of the Madala Panji legend allowed Rajguru to make a case for the cultural assimilation of the Oriya adivasis into the mainstream Oriya caste community.

Second, Rajguru could claim that though the Savaras are adivasis, they are a fairly evolved race of people. To this end, he described the Savara system of administration and claimed that even in pre-colonial times, "Savaras and the Odras were living side by side in Orissa." This emphasis on the 'side-by-side' coexistence is very revealing. Even as the essay seems to be straining against claims about the common origins of the Oriya-speaking elite and the adivasis, it is driven by the need to establish that both of them belong to the same community. The use of the language of 'side-by-side' enabled Rajguru to claim that the adivasis of Orissa and the caste Oriyas belong to the same community without having to accede to any racial commonalities. A common

adjacency over a long period of time coupled with a common language was to Rajguru an adequate ground for community.

However, even as he emphasized the cultural advances of the adivasi elements in the Oriya population, the use of the myth enabled him to maintain the hierarchies within modern Oriya society. The legend of Jaganath implied that while the adivasis were assimilated into the Aryanised Hindu Oriya society, the terms of their coexistence were based on a clear distinction between the adivasis and the caste Hindu Oriya elite.

This balance between inclusion of adivasi communities and the sustenance of a hierarchical understanding of the Oriya community enabled the imagination of an Oriya community that was unmarked by any genealogical borrowing from the ancestors of the adivasi communities. At the same time, it made a strong case for the historical neighbourliness of the Oriya-speaking people and the adivasis of the Oriya-speaking tracts within the context of the debates about the inclusion of areas with a large number of adivasi population in the proposed province of Orissa. In this way the adivasi communities were incorporated into the history of 'natural Orissa' without upending the existing hierarchies that defined the social order.

The narrative and mimetic strategies deployed to produce vernacular pasts in Orissa are necessarily party to broader political agendas such as the need to situate the Oriya movement within the Indian anti-colonial nationalist movement and the necessity of producing an Orissa that was historically "in charge" of the adivasi people of the area. Orissa had to be defined as a place for the being-in-common of the caste Oriyas and the adivasis. This being-in-common could not be asserted through a 'denial of coeval-ness' in the case of the adivasis of Orissa as Oriya historians had to make a case for the common historical past of the Oriya-speaking people and the adivasis.^{lxxvi} They had to be portrayed as coeval to the Oriya-speaking people, as integral to the historical development of Natural Orissa. They could not be explained away as anachronistic remains of a less desirable past.

Naturalizing Tribal Orissa: Memoranda to the Orissa Boundary Committee and the 'aboriginal problem'

These efforts to produce a normative Oriya past where the ancestors of aboriginal tribes and caste Hindus of the Oriya-speaking areas lived 'side-by-side' had more than just Oriya community pride at stake.^{lxxvii} The production of these histories was informed by the ongoing discussions within the colonial government to inscribe the limits of the proposed province of Orissa. By 1924 the Colonial government had decided to act upon the recommendations of the Montague-Chelmsford Report of 1918-1919 that argued for the reorganization of the British provinces in India on linguistic lines. To that end, the government had instituted the Phillip-Duff Committee to investigate the possibility of the transfer of the Ganjam district from the Madras Presidency to the new Orissa province. Similar efforts on a smaller scale were in process in other Oriya-speaking areas located in other provinces. This atmosphere of the administrative reform of the political geography of British India was the context for efforts by historians like Satyanarayan Rajguru in Orissa to construct a unified and glorious past for all the Oriya-speaking areas scattered in various British provinces. Such histories produced an Oriya historiographical orthodoxy which was put in service of the movement for the creation of a separate province of Orissa.

In 1931, the Orissa Boundary Commission was set up to define the boundaries of the proposed province. The commission received a number of memoranda that made the case for the inclusion of various outlying areas in the proposed province. The language of these memoranda, drafted by leading advocates for the formation of a separate province of Orissa, reveals the stakes of history writing in Orissa during this period. History was the means of producing a historical, 'long standing' regional culture that would inform the colonial production of a new geographical and administrative region in India. Such claims to common history enabled the

Oriya elite to demonstrate that the Oriya people met the basic criteria that the Colonial state had set for an ideal provincial area.

The memoranda noted that the Indian Statutory Commission of 1930 had described these criteria as "... (common) language, race, religion, economic interest [and] geographical contiguity."^{lxxviii} These criteria, particularly those of common language, race and religion, could be proved only through claims about a shared historical past which was based on a common development of language, race and religion. The colonial understanding of the development of language and race were entwined in the study of the origins of Indian languages. Hence to prove that a people shared the same language necessarily involved narratives of origin, which established the commonality of race. In the case of Orissa, the effort to prove that all inhabitants of the Oriya-speaking areas belonged to the same community involved more complicated discursive strategies. Owing to the discomfort with claims to common racial and linguistic origins among the 'non-aryan' tribal population of the Oriya-speaking areas and the 'aryan' upper caste Oriya elite, historians such as Satyanarayan Rajguru drew on religious myths from the Jaganath Cult to establish a different kind of commonality. However this different commonality too had to be rooted in the past. This motivated the construction of histories such as Rajguru's treatment of the history of Odradesa.

Rajguru's argument reveals the incredibly productive nature of the Oriya historiographical efforts to think the Oriya community, as one comprised of both the Aryan and Non Aryans elements of the population of the Oriya-speaking areas. Even as his argument produced a community based on a shared every day life, his use of the Jaganath origin myth is also indicative of how and why the Jaganath Cult became the normative religion of modern Orissa. Thus historians such as Rajguru and Jagabandhu Singha made the case for a common Oriya culture through histories based on a fundamental unity of experience that belied racial difference. Such a reading of the past also enabled Oriya claims to areas inhabited by aboriginal populations that

interspersed areas where a majority spoke the Oriya language. This was especially crucial because the Oriya claims to these areas was threatened by the fact that the aboriginal peoples of these areas had their own languages such as Gond, Ho, Munda, Bhumij, Savara, etc. Hence, as claims to common linguistic identity could not be made in the face of such linguistic diversity, Oriya historians and the political leaders had to argue for a community based on a shared historic-geographical space—ancient Orissa. Therefore, these histories written by the Oriya historians of the early twentieth century were not only arguing for the recognition that all inhabitants of the Oriya-speaking areas were part of one community, but they were also attempting to validate the demand for a separate province of Orissa by creating a historical Orissa as a geographical region that may or may not have existed in reality. The importance of this claim to a common Oriya past is revealed in the justificatory refrain “since time immemorial” that recurred in the 1931 memoranda sent to the Orissa Boundary Commission.

It is evident from the memoranda that the need to incorporate the tribal populations into the proposed province remained one of the more anxious preoccupations for the advocates of the formation of the new province. Oriya claims to particular districts in the Madras Presidency, Bihar and Orissa, Bengal Presidency and Central Provinces greatly depended on proving that the sizable tribal populations of the aboriginal tracts could be counted as part of the Oriya community. For instance, one of the memoranda made a systematic analysis of the percentage of tribals in the population of each district and of how the coupling of this segment of the population with the Oriya-speaking non-aboriginal population would constitute a majority—thus justifying the incorporation of that district in the proposed province. This matter was particularly crucial in the case of the southern Oriya-speaking district of Ganjam in Madras Presidency which has become a bone of contention between Oriya and Telegu leaders. As both Orissa and Andhra Pradesh were provinces in the making, both proponents of both provinces laid claim to the Ganjam district which had sizable populations of both Oriya- and Telegu-speaking people. The

tribal people of this district formed the third major demographic of this district. Hence both the Oriyas and the Telegus argued for the incorporation of this group into their community in order to prove that their linguistic group was a majority in the district. In the discussion of Ganjam in the memoranda written by the Great Utkal League, the author noted,

These parts are largely peopled by Khonds, Sabars, Porojas, Khondadoras and Godabas. There has always been a sinister insinuation on the part of our opponents to take these people almost as Telegus. To outnumber the Oriya population they are trying to hoodwink the simpler folk with this dilemmatic argument; non-Oriyas versus Oriyas. Here they cleverly manage to add the aboriginals to the Telegus and thus to swell up the number of non-Oriyas. And thereby they discredit the Oriya claim to these parts. But it is only just that the real issue should be Telegu vrs. Non-Telegu because *there are very cogent grounds to take these aboriginals as castes of Oriyas for all practical purposes*. The Savaras reside only in Oriya territories and therefore be taken as Oriyas. Gadavas are found only in the Vizag agency and their language was taken as a dialect of Oriya in the 1911 Census Report. Census Report of 1901 takes Poroja as a dialect of Oriya too. ...The Indian Government Letter of 1903(No. 3678) rightly remarked “The majority of the people of Ganjam Agency tracts speak Khond which as education spreads is certain to give place to Oriya.”^{lxxix}

Two things emerge from this argument for the incorporation of the aboriginal tracts of the Ganjam district in the proposed Orissa province. Firstly, by introducing “cogent grounds to take these aboriginals as castes of the Oriyas for all practical purposes,” this argument was attempting to do more than just lay claim to the areas inhabited by these aboriginals by recourse to colonial enumerative practices. The invocation of these grounds indicates an effort to understand the nature of the Oriya relationship with the aboriginal people differently. In fact, the discussions in

the memoranda about this relationship reveal the tendency among the Oriya elite to think of the Oriya community and its ability to include the aboriginal communities as an *exception*. Unlike other linguistic communities like the Telegus, Biharis and the Bengalis, who could lay claim to these areas on the grounds of linguistic commonalities, the Oriya community—the framers of the memoranda argued—was best suited for the assimilation of these races without encroaching on the interests of the aboriginal peoples.

Interestingly, this claim to an already present Orissa in the past did not suffice. The memoranda coupled these references to history with a more prescient argument about the need to link the areas inhabited by sizable tribal populations with the proposed province. This argument was based on an upper-caste paternalistic attitude towards the tribal populations of the Oriya-speaking areas. While arguing for the incorporation of the aboriginal tracts of both Bihar and Orissa and the Bengal Presidency in the proposed Orissa province, one of the memoranda argued

Be it noted here that the majority of the aboriginal people do not properly understand where their interests lie. We leave it entirely to the Government to judge for them to see if they should allow these people to be swamped by the ‘combatant Bihari’ or the all-absorbing Bengalee.^{lxxx}

The protectionist language used to describe the tribal populations of this area rendered the tribal into silent non-actors in the rearrangement of the British provinces. While the tribals were appropriated as members of the Oriya community, their participation in the community was curtailed. The argument made by the memoranda was directed towards establishing Orissa’s comparative suitability as the primary host for the aboriginal peoples of these areas. The opposition between the ‘combatant Bihari’ or the ‘all-absorbing Bengali’ and the more inclusive yet non-intrusive Oriya was based on precisely the kind of historical community that Satyanarayan Rajguru’s history of the tribal relationship with caste Oriyas produced. However, as

the language of the claim quoted above indicates, such a historical community is predicated upon a fundamentally unequal relationship of power between the caste Oriyas and the tribal people.

This unequal relationship is explained away in the memoranda by further discussion about the particular adeptness of the Oriya people at civilizing and assimilating the tribal populations of the area. While these claims do not deny the prevalent exploitation of the tribal people at the hands of the caste Hindus, they claimed that this exploitation was a necessary accompaniment to the gradual civilization of the tribal population:

We admit that these people have been subject to Hindu exploitation to certain extent, we also hold that the exploitation has gone hand in hand with civilization we don't like to enter into the discussion of the comparative economic position of the Hinduized aborigines. But nobody can challenge that the Hindu culture played prominent part in raising the states of these people and engrafted their culture through the medium of their civilized tongue and if any race in India can claim to have civilized the aboriginal, the most, it is the Oriya, we don't like to travel into the regions of ethnology, but it is certain that Hindi has driven the aborigines to the south-east and Telegu to its north-west till pushed by the Oriya and it is the Oriya who has penetrated into the hilly regions, (sic) lived amongst the rude tribe and made them absorb its culture and language and has been continuing as the functional caste among the thousands of aboriginal villages, and it is the Oriya rajas be they of Rajput origin or (sic) of Semi-aboriginal origin who have been so long lending special protection to these people. If any nation in India has ever cast his lot with the aborigines and lived its life with the aborigines it is the Oriya.^{lxxxii}

While this statement reiterates the exceptional nature of the Oriya community, it introduces a new element into the justification of the incorporation of the tribal areas into the proposed province of Orissa—the civilizing role of the Oriya language. The argument that the civilizing influence of Hinduism, particularly through the medium of language, has succeeded in

‘engrafting’ tribal culture into the mainstream, coupled with emphasis on the Oriya exceptional ability to incorporate the tribal population points to claims about the ability of the Oriya language to civilize the tribal population.

Considering the possibility discussed in B.C. Mazumdar’s history—that both the Oriya language and people were descended of early aboriginal kingdoms of Utkala, Odra and Kosala – the distancing of the Oriya from the tribal and the establishment of a liberal hierarchy between them reveals the mechanics of discrimination in the imagined Oriya community. The statement quoted above not only denies the possibility of a racial kinship between the Oriya and the tribal, but it also imitates the British liberal attitude towards the native Indian population in thinking a new kind of kinship. Hence, even as the Oriya community is being imagined as a liberal, inclusive and horizontal brotherhood, this reading of the relationship between the tribal and the Oriya effectively maintained existing hierarchies within the Oriya-speaking community.

Interestingly, this argument about difference and hierarchy between the Oriya and Tribal coexists with Oriya arguments about Oriya self governance and the removal of the alien influence of the Bengali and Bihar “intermediary ruling races”. Elsewhere in the memoranda, the authors argue that provincial governments in Oriya-speaking areas are not truly representative of Oriya interests.

On this point authors of the Montford reforms remark that—“generally speaking we may describe provincial patriotism as sensitively jealous of its territorial integrity. If an all India politician of the brightest luster be scratched, the provincial blood will flow in torrents. Even the Provincial Government betrays a mentality and an advocacy that could only be expected from the professional Advocate. The dispatches and letters of the Government of Madras and C.P. since the days of Lord Curzon right upto the time of Sir John Simon, betray an advocacy for the majority community and sensitiveness for territorial integrity which no government constituted for the good government of various

peoples under their charge can ever resort to....Again the *“intermediary ruling power” i.e. the majority partners of the province who feed upon the minor partner and appropriate to themselves all the loaves and fishes of service and hold the string of commerce, trade and industry and who force the Oriyas to give up their mother tongue, can never tolerate to the rid of their prey.* Under the circumstances mutual agreement can hardly be expected. All imaginable obstacles and pleas will be put forward by the people and the Governments to keep their territorial integrity intact. It is for the government to right the wrong they have so long permitted through their stolid callousness. *If they fail the destruction nay annihilation of an ancient race, of an ancient language, of an ancient civilization will lie at their door.* It must be remembered that it was not by mutual consent that the Oriyas preferred to remain under four different Governments, nor it was by common... »^{lxxxii}

Taken together, the two statements quoted above illustrate the emergence of two ideas of community in Orissa. First, there is the kind of community based on shared everyday life of the Oriya and the tribal where despite quotidian neighbourliness the community is marked by hierarchical divisions. Second, the critique of “intermediary ruling power” and the oppression of the majority which would lead to the eventual annihilation of the entire Oriya community, implies that the writers of the memoranda were invested in a community of equal rights: a liberal community. Interestingly the central argument of the above passage—the possibility of the extermination of the entire Oriya community due to the imposition of a different language and culture—is oddly reminiscent of the Oriya claims about their suitability as “civilizers” of the tribal people. Clearly, while there is an effort to avoid a destructive homogenization of culture at the national level, the only way the tribal question is resolved is through the same process of aggressive homogenization.

This paradox is borne out in the scant evidence that exists of an adivasi critique of the Orissa Boundary Commission’s decisions. In a memoranda written to the Governor General of India

by the “aborigines and semi- aborigines” of the Gangpur Princely State in Orissa in 1938, the memorandists argued for the separation of Gangpur State and “the districts of Angul and Sambalpur and the States of Gangpur, Bonai, Bamra, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj” from the new province of Orissa and the union of these areas with Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas.^{lxxxiii} The memorandum claimed that 74 percent of the population of the Gangpur state were adivasi and had more in common with their ‘aborigine kinsmen’ in the Chotanagpur division of Bihar than the people of Orissa.^{lxxxiv} At the heart of the memorandum were claims about endangered mother-tongues and the institutional onslaught of Oriya on adivasi lives. The memoranda noted that,

That these aborigines and semi-aborigines of the Gangpur state speak the same languages spoken by their people in Chotanagpur. They do not understand Oriya; and because of their dear mother tongue they do not like to even hear Oriya language which since the creation of the Orissa Province is now compulsorily forced upon them through education and authorities. These people are told either to adopt Oriya language and forsake their dear mother tongue or to leave the State.

Even as this plea for the protection of their mother-tongue echoed some of the concerns raised by the Oriya memorandists for the Orissa Boundary Commission, this Gangpur memoranda elaborates a plea for a different kind of regional community. The vagueness of the term mother-tongue (the area under consideration is fundamentally multilingual) coupled with the demand to be placed with their ‘aborigine kinsmen’ who were related to them by ‘blood and marriage’ points to a community posited on a common adivasi identity rather than commonality of mother-tongues. Further more, we should also note that despite this desire for a different kind of community, the only language available to these memorandists as they pled their case for a new region is that of linguistic rights.

This document represents an early iteration of the demand for a separate Jharkhand province. As the subsequent career of the Jharkhand demand during the 1956 reorganization of Indian provinces reveals, one of the primary reasons cited for the rejection of the Jharkhand demand was that it was not a linguistic unit.^{lxxxv} As T.K.Oommen notes, the case of Jharkhand reveals the uneven consequences of the linguistic re-organization of India. While the institutional recognition of ‘strong nationalities’ like Oriya, Tamil or Bengali empowered them with greater administrative and economic autonomy, the linguistic reorganization left ‘weaker and smaller’ nationalities like Munda, Santhal, Ho or Gond peoples of Eastern India economically and culturally vulnerable.^{lxxxvi}

Conclusion

As this discussion of the memoranda to the Orissa Boundary Commission reveals, the effort to produce a unified Orissa depended on two justificatory moves. First, that the adivasi population of Orissa belonged within the Oriya community due to a history of shared everyday life. Second, even in the present, the Oriya population was exceptionally able to cater to the needs of the ‘less developed’ adivasi community. Both these claims echo humanistic arguments made by Gopabandhu Das in his 1920 speech where he urged a shift in the definition of Oriya community through the introduction of the notion of “Natural Orissa”. The politics of exclusion in the historiography of this Natural Orissa came to simultaneously exclude as well as include the adivasis of the area. However, even as the historiographical imagining of Natural Orissa was exclusionary, its humanistic origins in statements like that of Gopabandhu Das rendered invisible the exclusion of tribals in its very formulation. As the case of Jharkhand reveals, this process of veiled exclusion was institutionalized in the territorial boundaries founded in early post-colonial India. This is the history of exclusion that makes the understanding of language as a foundational concept in the making of the post-colonial Indian nation possible.

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ⁱ I employ the term “nationalism” in the sense that Sumathi Ramaswamy uses to understand linguistic politics in colonial Tamilnadu. Ramaswamy explicitly configured linguistic politics in colonial India within the conceptual framework of nationalism and illustrated that even though such politics does not neatly map onto western understanding of nationalism, linguistic politics could be understood as “nationalism but different”. Sumathi Ramaswamy, *Passions of the Tongue: Language Devotion in Tamil India, 1891-1970*.

ⁱⁱ A very recent example of such a discussion would be Rama Sundari Mantena’s essay on colonial Telegu where she makes explicit reference to both paradigms in explaining her use of the term vernacular. See Rama Sundari Mantena, ‘Vernacular Futures: Colonial Philology and the Idea of History in Nineteenth-Century South India’.

ⁱⁱⁱ The most prominent example of this school of thought is Sheldon Pollock’s definition of the vernacular in Sheldon I. Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*.

^{iv} The most authoritative statement of this paradigm can be found in Ranajit Guha’s discussion of historiography in the vernacular in Ranajit Guha, ‘The Authority of the Vernacular Past’.

^v In his article on colonial translation, Micheal Dodson, has illustrated how colonial philologists imbued the Indian vernaculars with qualities of inadequacy and degeneration in relation to both English and Sanskrit. Through a brief reading of contemporary English discussions about the connections between language and civilization, Dodson demonstrated how such ascriptions reflected on more than just the status of the vernacular themselves—they involved a judgment on the civilizational status of the people who spoke them. See Micheal. S. Dodson, ‘Translating Science, Translating Empire: The Power of Language in Colonial North India’.

^{vi} Representation here means the representation of communities as well as that of the individual self. However, for the purposes of the article, I would confine the discussion to representation of communities. I develop the relationship between language and the colonial imagination of the universal Indian self elsewhere. See Pritipuspa Mishra, ‘Vernacular Homeland: Language and Territory in the making of Modern Orissa (1867-1942)’, unpublished book manuscript.

^{vii} Even as I question this investment for the purposes of understanding the role of vernacular languages in colonial and post-colonial Indian polity, I do recognize the political and ethical stakes in this investment in powerlessness. As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak mentions in her discussion of strategic essentialism, even though essentialism in academic writing can be ethically suspect, the strategic deployment of essentialism by groups like the Subaltern

Studies collective to interrogate the structures of colonial power can serve a radical purpose. See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Donna Landry, and Gerald M. MacLean, *The Spivak Reader*.

^{viii} The more recent work on the politics of language has traced how the evocation of Indian vernacular languages as the locus of regional community in nineteenth and early twentieth century enabled the emergence of the earliest forms of anti-colonial political radicalism in different parts of India. For instance, Farina Mir has illustrated how the colonial government's negligence of Punjabi in favor of Urdu sparked the emergence of an autonomous Punjabi public sphere where more complex cultural negotiation between the Hindu and Muslim Punjabi speaking public was possible, See Farina Mir, *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab*. In her study of the politics of mother tongue in colonial Andhra Pradesh, Lisa Mitchell has illustrated how language emerged as a foundational category in the reorganization of South Indian public life. See Lisa Mitchell, *Language, Emotion and politics in South India: The Making of a Mother-Tongue*.

^{ix} Like other major languages in India, literature in Oriya emerged in the 16th century as part of radical critique of caste discrimination. This history of Oriya as a non-elite language accessible to lower caste, adivasi and Muslim population of the Oriya speaking areas was often referred to in the rhetoric of the movement for the formation of a separate province of Orissa. For the connections between early Oriya literature and social critique see Satya. P. Mohanty, 'Alternative Modernities and Medieval Indian Literature: The Oriya Lakshmi Purana as Radical Pedagogy,' pp.3-21. The vision of early Oriya literature as fundamentally populist has spilled into academic writings on the Oriya literary history. See Mayadhar Mansingh, *History of Oriya Literature*, pp. 9-12, where he describes early Oriya literature as 'essentially proletarian'.

^x This argument applies to the politics of language beyond the case of Orissa. As a recent edited volume on language and politics in India indicates, scholars are noting that dominant languages in Indian do play a role in extending regimes of power and authority. See Asha Sarangi ed., *Language and Politics in India*. My understanding of the power of language is drawn from the discussion on language and power in Martin Putz et al., '*Along the Routes to Power: Explorations of Empowerment through language*'. In the context of language Joshua Fishman defines power in this volume as "control over scarce resources", p.5.

^{xi} 'Vernacular' here denotes the major literary vernaculars of India that came to serve as the basis of the linguistic reorganization of Indian Territory. As Sheldon Pollock notes, these languages are not the same as those that are deemed vernacular in sociolinguistics. These are standardized, literary and historically powerful languages that often formed the basis of pre-modern regional polities. ^{xii} Sheldon I. Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*, p.24.

^{xii} *ibid.* p. 22.

^{xiii} *ibid.* p.380-397.

^{xiv} *ibid.* p.388.

^{xv} Guha, “Authority of Vernacular Pasts”, pp.299-300

^{xvi} Raziuddin, Aquil, and Partha Chatterjee, eds, *History in the Vernacular*.

^{xvii} My definition of liberal discourse of minority rights is borrowed from Amir Mufti’s discussion of the same in Amir R. Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony*, p.2. Mufti argues that liberal thought on the ‘question of minority existence’ displays certain central tropes. They include, “assimilation, emancipation, separatism, conversion, the language of state protection and minority rights, uprooting, exile, and homelessness.”

^{xviii} In his path-breaking book on regimes of governance by high modernist states, James Scott has remarked on the institutional role of language as a means for the state to render its citizens ‘legible’ or ‘visible’. See James. C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. pp.72-3. As the colonial shift from Persian to Bengali, Hindi and Oriya as the official languages of the Bengal Presidency in the 1830s illustrates, even the colonial government, in its unprecedented effort to ‘see’ its subjects, recognized that the institution of official languages was an important means of categorizing and ruling people. See Farina Mir, ‘Imperial Policy, Provincial Practices: Colonial Language Policy in Nineteenth-century India’, pp.395-427.

^{xix} David Washbrook noted that ‘new ideology (of modern linguistic ethnicity) dictated that territorial space itself must be culturally (or at least linguistically) homogenous’ and thus India became a ‘a society of language jatis much as it has previously been one of the caste jatis competing for honor and status within a continuing multi-jati social order’ quoted in Asha Sarangi, *Language and Politics in India*. p. 6

^{xx} It would be impossible to invoke a term like ‘sublimation’ without referencing its psychological burdens. In Freud’s use of the term ‘sublimation’ the concept denoted the process of sublimating socially unacceptable desires into more visible socially productive actions. Despite, what seems like taking liberties with Freud’s formulation, this notion of sublimation can be borrowed in a limited way to explain the transference of regional political allegiance from language to territory as regional political parties were under pressure to fall in line with broader majoritarian nationalism. The move to territory enabled the Oriya regional movement to continue to desire an Oriya province without making a case for the exclusion of non- Oriya speaking people from their imagination of regional cultural and political community. Beyond this limited borrowing, the resemblance ends. Rather, I use sublimation as a means to uncover the process that Ayesha Jalal commends researchers to question—the given-ness of language as a

category of analysis. Can we take the territorial domain of language for granted? Quoted in Asha Sarangi, *Language and Politics in India*.p.6

^{xxi} Theorists argue that language is unlike other registers of difference in a multicultural society because of the “fact that language is the medium in which most social interaction takes place, the fact that most people can speak only one or several languages, the fact that learning new languages is very difficult for most adults, and the fact that translation is expensive, inconvenient, and always imperfect.” Alan Patten, “Political Theory and Language Policy”, p.692

^{xxii} Lisa Mitchell, *Language, Emotion, and Politics in South India: The Making of a Mother Tongue*.

^{xxiii} For a detailed history of border disputes in Orissa before and after 1947 see, Nivedita Mohanty, *Oriya Nationalism, 2005*

^{xxiv} Public and official debates about this matter began as early as 1903 when the Bengal government began to consider plans for the territorial reorganization of the Bengal Presidency. Even as fervent opposition in the Madras legislature forced the Indian government to abandon these plans, the issue was raised again in the Montague Chelmsford reforms. Subsequent government established commissions such as the Phillip Duff Commission (1924) and the Orissa Boundary Commission (1931) surveyed the population of the Oriya-speaking Ganjam district to ascertain whether the Ganjam district should detached from the Madras Presidency. See *Report of the Enquiry into the attitude of the Oriya speaking population of the Madras Presidency towards amalgamation with other Oriya speaking Tracts*, Orissa State Archives, Bihar and Orissa Secretariat Papers, B&O Doc 11216. Also *Report of the Orissa Committee*, British Library- India Office Records, L/PJ/9/54

^{xxv} I would like to thank Jayson Brewster-Jones for pointing out that the process I was tracing was actually an archeology of sorts.

^{xxvi} The Orissa division of the Bengal Presidency consisted of three Oriya-speaking districts—Cuttack, Puri and Balasore—during the nineteenth century. In 1905, the Sambalpur district and associated Princely states were transferred from the Central Provinces to the Orissa division. However, in 1912, the entire Orissa division was excised from the Bengal Presidency and the new province of Bihar and Orissa was formed. In the meantime, the Oriya-speaking Ganjam District of the Madras Presidency became a bone of contention between the administrators of the Madras Presidency and the public organizations lobbying for the unification of all Oriya-speaking areas under a single administration.

^{xxvii} The famine affected three districts of the Orissa division of the Bengal presidency—Cuttack, Puri and Balasore. Despite a series of relief measures a million of people of this area died of starvation. Villages were depopulated and

about 1,15,028 people had gone missing. Government relief efforts proved inadequate because most of the relief came too late to have any actual impact. The government of Bengal spent 62 lakh rupees on relief measures. Most of these expenditures took place in 1867. By this time, the worst of the famine was over. As a result, the 28 lakhs spent on the importation of food grains from Burma to feed the victims of famine went to waste. The new crops of 1867 had just produced fresh grain and the people did not need government grain. The Orissa Famine Commission set up after the famine found that apart from grave errors of judgment, the relief efforts were seriously impeded by lack of communication between the local government in the Orissa division and the central government in Calcutta.

While suggesting that more should be done to decrease the seasonal isolation of the division, the commission argued that the government of Bengal was over-burdened by a very large realm. For more details see Gorachand Patnaik, *The Famine and Some Aspects of the British Economic Policy in Orissa, 1866-1905*.

^{xxviii}H.G.Cooke, the Commissioner of the Orissa division of the Bengal Presidency, wrote in the Report on the Administration of the Orissa Division 1894-95 that “any portion of the race (Oriya-speaking people) which is forced in an unwilling combination with distinct races incurs the danger of having the national characteristic and aspiration sacrificed to those of the predominating portion of the population in the administration under which it is forced to live”. Quoted in P.K. Mishra, *The Political History of Orissa 1900-1936*, 1st ed., p.16.

^{xxix} From “Extract from H.H. Risley, Esq. CIE, Secretary to the Government of India, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal” in N. Patnaik and Chakrapani Pradhan, “Appendix D”, *The Oriya Movement: Being a Demand for a United Orissa*, p.238.

^{xxx} The district of Sambalpur was eventually added to the Orissa Division of the Bengal Presidency in 1905.

^{xxxi} By Risley’s own admission, language could not be used as the basis of ethnological categorization of races. Race was not the same as language. However, as his extensive discussion of the relationship between language and ethnology in his introduction to *People of India* attests, Risley was persuaded that observation of language similarity could contribute in a limited way to the categorization of the people of India. Pointing to the reasons why using language to determine ethnicity was so seductive to both philologists as well as ethnologists, Risley noted that “while there are practically no mixed languages, there are hardly any pure races.” Employing language to determine ethnic origins provided a certain neatness of explanation that mere study of physical characteristics could not offer. H.H. Risley, *People of India*, pp.7-12.

^{xxxii} Such discussions were not unprecedented. For a detailed history of colonial language policy of substituting Oriya, Bengali and Hindi for Persian as the Court language in 1838 see Farina Mir, “Imperial Policy, Provincial Practices: Colonial Language Policy in Nineteenth-century India,” pp.395-427.

^{xxxiii} In a speech made in 1868 at the Cuttack Debating Society, Mitra argued for the removal of Oriya from the schools of the Orissa division on the grounds that the Oriya-speaking population was numerically too small to support the production of new Oriya school textbooks. Mitra was well known both in the Orissa division as well as in Calcutta. An active member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Mitra had strong links in Orissa due to his early research on Orissa antiquities. In 1875, he published *Antiquities of Orissa*. He was also a very vocal voice on the debate about vernacular education in Calcutta, where he held that Indians should be educated in English rather than vernacular languages.

^{xxxiv} An Oriya translation of the Bengali text is available in Mahanti, Bamsidhara, *Odia Bhasba Andolana*.

^{xxxv} A debate on this issue was recorded in the Journal of Asiatic Society in 1872. For details see Asiatic Society of Bengal, *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1905

^{xxxvi} The question of the historical development of the Oriya vernacular and its relationship with adivasi languages, Sanskrit, Bengali and Prakrit appears in comprehensive histories of Oriya language and literature written in the 20s and 30s. For instance, in history of Oriya language, Binayak Mishra argued that new languages are produced when two languages interact. In the case of Oriya, “The Pali language that came to Orissa from Magadha was influence by the particular idioms of the indigenous peoples of Orissa and was transformed. In this way, through the interaction of two languages the Odra-Prakrit was formed. Therefore, if we have to discuss the history of Oriya language, then we have to identify the ancient indigenous peoples of Orissa through a study of the antiquity of Orissa and we have to learn about their ancient language.” In the rest of the book he traces the connections Oriya, Sanskrit and adivasi languages. See Binayak Mohanty, *Oriya Bhashara Itibas*, pp. 6-7.

^{xxxvii} For instance, in 1920 the District Officer of Puri echoed Risley’s argument about the advisability of adding the adivasi areas to the proposed province of Orissa by arguing that due to the ‘long-standing contacts’ between the Oriyas and the ‘aboriginals’, it is only if they were placed with the Oriyas under a single administration that the “natural development of the aboriginal could have free play” See Letter no 116 dated Puri, the 15th February 1921 from R.E. Russell district officer of Puri to the Commissioner of the Orissa Division, Cuttack, in National Archives of India (NAI) , Home Public Papers, File no-669, p.68.

^{xxxviii} The most notable of such histories are B.C.Mazumdar’s *Orissa In the Making*, Jagabandhu Singha ‘Prachin Utkal’ and Satyanarayan Rajguru, ‘The Odras and Their Predominancy’,

^{xxxix} For a comprehensive history of the Oriya movement through the late nineteenth and early twentieth century see. Nivedita Mohanty, *Oriya Nationalism: Quest for a United Orissa (1866-1936)*

^{xi} Presidential speeches of the Utkal Sammillani collected in Debendra Kumar Das, ed. *Utkal Sammillani(1903-1936)*. p.39

^{xli} Jayanta Sengupta, 'Imagined Chronologies: Perceptions of "Development" as a Tool of mapping Oriya Political Identity,' Angelika Malinar, ed., *Time in India*.

^{xliii} Such discussions about Oriya backward-ness abound both in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. For instance, as the proposals for the removal of Oriya from schools in the Orissa division was floated in the 1860s, a slew of articles were printed in the weekly newspaper, *Utkal Dipika* about the backward-ness of the Oriya language and the Oriya people. In March 1869 Utkal Dipika published a two-part article titled "Utkala Bhasara Unnati Prati Byaghata" or "An attack on the development of the Oriya language" that spoke of an assault on Oriya culture by Bengali interest groups. See Sudhakar Pattnaik ed., *Sambada Patraru Odisara Katha, Part-1 (1856-1881)*. 531-536. Also see in 1898 Madhusudan Rao, "Odiya Bhasa", *Utkal Sahitya*, in 1912 Anonymous, "Utkala Sammillana", *Utkal Sahitya* and Padmacharan Pattnaik, "Ambhamanankara Matrubbhasara Abasta", *Utkal Sahitya* and in 1915, Sribatsa Panda, *Mo Matrubbhasa*.

^{xliiii} Brundaban Nandasarma, "Odia Sammilana", *Utkal Sahitya*, p.185.

^{xliv} A collection of these articles is published in a recent volume of his essays. See, Archana Naik, ed., *Nirbachita Rachanbali: Biswanath Kara*.

^{xlv} For instance, see in 1915, Fakirmohan Senapathi, "Abhibhasan", pp. 269-275 and Shashibhusan Ray, "Arjyasahityare Satya Sahitya". In 1920-21, Nabakishor Chandra Singhadeb, "Abhibhasana- Presidential address at the Utkal Sahitya Samaj's 15th meeting", pp. 104-106 and in 1934-35, Artaballabh Mohanty, "Presidential Address at the Utkal Sahitya Sama", pp. 434-446.

^{xlvi} I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for raising this point. Infact, even before the 1920s, studies of medieval Oriya literature were being conducted to trace to development of the Oriya language in the vernacular millenium. The most notable of these was Pandit Gopinath Nanda's *Sree Bharathdarpan* published in book form in 1921. Intially published as serialized articles in the Utkal Sahitya journal in the mid 1910s, this book was a critical analysis of Sarala Das' sixteenth century Oriya Mahabharata and traced the impact of the Das' text on the development of the Oriya language.

^{xlvii} Infact, they were not alone in this preoccupation with the independence of Oriya. The earliest discussions of the relationship of the Oriya language with other languages were structured around the question of whether Oriya was separate from Bengali and what was the relationship between the Oriya script and the Bengali script. Such

discussions can be found as early as 1872. For a history of language studies in Orissa see D.P. Pattnaik, 'Oriya and Assamese' in Thomas A Sebeok ed., *Current Trends in Linguistics Vol 1*, pp.122-152.

^{xlviii} Jagabandhu Singh, *Prachin Utkal*, 2nd ed., p. 63.

^{xliv} See Presidential speeches of the Utkal Sammillani collected in Debendra Kumar Das, ed. *Utkal Sammillani(1903-1936)*, Part 1.

ⁱ *Ibid.* 299. M.S. Das defined the scope of the Oriya community in the following words, "I am a son of Utkal Mata; and those who are born on Utkal Bhumi and those who wish to be to offer their dead bodies into the lap of Uktala Mata on their death, those people are Utkal's children-- no matter what community they belong to—whether they are Bengali, Mussalman, Brahmin, Karana (kayastha), Kandara, Pana, Punjabi, or Madrasi." We should note the plurality of categories that could be subsumed within the category of regional community. In Das's list are linguistic groups (Bengali, Punjabi, Madrasi), Caste groups (Brahman and Karana), a religious group (Mussalman) and adivasi groups such as (Pana and Kandara).

ⁱⁱ For a more detailed discussion of this shift see Purushottam Kar, *Indian National Congress and Orissa (1885-1936)*,

ⁱⁱⁱ Gyanendra Pandey, *Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, pp. 265-266. See in particular, his discussion of how 'sectional demands' based on particular interests were outlawed in the 1920s.

ⁱⁱⁱⁱ Madhusudan Das' formulation of the relationship between various linguistic groups in India can be found in his 1918 speech at the special session of the Utkal Sammillani where the organization's reactions to the Montague-Chelmsford reforms were discussed. In arguing for the creation of a separate province of Orissa so that 'Biharis' are not allowed to serve as a 'intermediary ruling race' in the Province of Bihar and Orissa, Madhusudan Das noted, 'Allow a group of people to occupy the position of an intermediary ruling race and you store up trouble for the future from the dominant race and deprive the empire of the loyal support from another race. Allow one race to exercise a dominant influence over another and you mar the glorious picture of a sisterhood of states in India of the future.'" Debendra Das, *Utkal Sammillani*, p.441

^{liv} In doing so, Gopabandhu Das was building upon a pre-existing association between the Jaganath Cult and Oriya nationalism. The relationship between the Jaganath Cult and Oriya identity politics has been explored by a number of scholars. G. N Das has illustrated how the cult was instrumental in the formation of an early sense of community based on language and religion in Orissa during the 16th century. See G.N. Das, "Jaganath and Oriya Nationalism", in Anncharlott Eschmann et al, *The Cult of Jaganath and Regional Tradition in Orissa*. The other essays in this collection trace the relationship between the Jaganath Cult and regional tradition in Orissa through detailed studies of Kingship, the relationship between the pre-colonial state and the Jaganath ritual establishments and allied religious

movements in medieval and early modern Orissa. For the use of the Jaganath Cult in 19th and 20th century nationalist literature see Subhakanta Behera, *Construction of an Identity Discourse*.

^{lv} Gopabandhu Das, *Desa Misrana Andolana*, vol. 3, Gopabandhu Rachanabali (Collected Works of Gopabandhu Das), p.16

^{lvi} B.N.Mahapatra, "Ways of Belonging: The Kanchi Kavery Legend and the Construction of Oriya Identity".203-221.

^{lvii} Gopabandhu Das, *Desa Misrana Andolana*, p.15

^{lviii} *Ibid.* p.12

^{lix} Anonymous, 'Utkaliya', *Star of Utkal* 1905.

^{lx} Utkal is a term used both to denote the Oriya language and the place Orissa as a geographical category. In this particular instance Gopabandhu is using Utkal to denote both and here Oriya denotes simply the language.

^{lxi} Gopabandhu Das, *Desa Misrana Andolana*, vol. 3, p.16

^{lxii} For instance O. R. Bachelier, *Hinduism and Christianity in Orissa*

Containing a Brief Description of the Country, Religion, Manners and Customs of the Hindus, and an Account of the Operations of the American Freewill Baptist Mission in Northern Orissa: Illustrated by a Map and Thirty-Three Engravings; William Wilson Hunter, *Orissa*; B. C. Mazumdar, *Orissa in the Making*. And for a more exhaustive list of texts see Laxmikanta Mishra and Sitakanta Mishra, *Historians and Historiography of Orissa : A Study in Perception and Appropriation of Orissan History* .

^{lxiii} One of the most explicit, if problematic, treatments of ancient Oriya migration and miscegenation can be found in B.C. Mazumdar's *Orissa in the Making*, pp. 16-18

^{lxiv} The connections between the Hindu and adivasi populations over time have been traced by a number of scholars. Often framed within the process of Hinduisation of the adivasi peoples, these studies trace how elements of adivasi religion and cultural mores were assimilated into Hindu traditions of Orissa as a means to absorb such groups into the mainstream Oriya society. See Anncharlott Eschmann, "Hinduisation of Tribal deities of Orissa: The Sakta and Saiva Typology" and Hermann Kulke, "Early Royal Patronage of the Jaganath Cult". For a comprehensive treatment of this process see G. N.Dash, *Hindus and Tribals*.

^{lxv} K.C. Panigrahi, *History of Orissa (Hindu Period)*, p. 4.

^{lxvixlvi} Historians Gyan Prakash, Javeed Alam, and Sumit Guha have illustrated how ancient history is used in India as a justificatory basic of Indian nationalist political rhetoric. See Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* , Javeed Alam, *India: Living with Modernity* . Also Partha Chatterjee and Lata Mani have shown how the production of orthodox tradition during the early colonial period drew heavily on colonial studies of Indian

scriptures rather than from everyday custom. Therefore a reading of ancient texts became central to understanding of the Indian past. See Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments : Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History; Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions : The Debate on Sati in Colonial India*.

^{lxvii} For a more detailed exposition of Mazumdar's thesis on the development of the Oriya language see the introduction to his selections from Oriya literature. See B.C. Mazumdar, *Typical Selections from Oriya Literature, Vol 1*, ix-xx

^{lxviii} In his influential *Orissa: Or the Vissitudes of an Indian Province under Native and British Rule*, written in 1872, W.W. Hunter wrote, "This book endeavors to delineate the inner life of an Indian Province. It tries to bring home to the imagination and the understanding of Englishmen, a state of society and forms of human existence far removed from their own. The narrative is embellished by no splendid historical characters. Nor does it possess the interest which belongs to striking crimes; to the world's call-roll of heroes it will add not one name. The people whom it treats have fought no great battles for human liberty, nor have they succeeded in the more primary task of subduing the force of nature to the control of man. To them the world stands indebted for not a single discovery which augments the comforts or mitigates the calamities of life. Even in literature—the particular glory of the Indian race—they have won no conspicuous triumph. They have written no famous epic; they have struck out no separate school of philosophy; they have elaborated no new system of law" See N. K. Sahu et al., *A History of Orissa*, 1st ed., vol. 1.p. 1.

^{lxix} Satyanarayan Rajguru, "The Odras and Their Predominancy,"

^{lxx} 'Ourselves', *The Prachi* 1, no. 1 (1931).

^{lxxi} "People who made their land the cradle of all fine arts, whose maritime activities established an oversea empire and who kept burning the torch of independence when the same had been extinguished from the rest of India are today alas! healots abroad and hewers of wood and drawers of water in the land of their birth!" p. 2

^{lxxii} See "Appendix," *The Prachi* 1, no. 1 (1931), "Ourselves."

^{lxxiii} Rajguru, "The Odras and Their Predominancy.'

^{lxxiv} Perhaps this is because the Kondhs and the Savaras were the most widely known of the Orissa tribes. Samuel Charters Macpherson documented his expedition in the Kondhmals to eradicate human sacrifice and female infanticide. This text and other colonial recordings of instances of Human sacrifice perpetuated the image of the savage tribals of Orissa. The Savaras were widely known in the colonial official circles because of their role in the functioning of the Jaganath temple. From the onset of colonial rule in Orissa, the Jaganath temple and the annual

chariot festivals obsessed colonial administrative resources. Hence, due to their association with the temple of Jaganath the Savaras were well known to the colonial officials.

It appears from Rajguru's choice of examples that his paper was intended partly for colonial officials. This resonates with efforts among Oriya nationalists to write histories of Orissa that served as arguments for the amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking tracts. See Two Batchelor of Arts, *The Oriya Movement: Being a Demand for a United Orissa*.

^{lxxv} The deployment of narratives about communal and ritual food in these assimilatory strategies had a precedent in the earlier movement for the inclusion of Sambalpur in the Orissa division in 1905. In that case, the leaders of the movement argued that the people of Sambalpur were linked to those of the Orissa division through a brotherhood of Mahaprasad or food made in the Jaganath temple. See Chittaranjan Mishra, *Freedom Movement in Sambalpur 1827-1947*, pp. 146-190. Such arguments about the assimilation of Sambalpur precluded alternative possibilities for community identification. Chitrasen Pasayat speaks of the emergence of an insipient *gadajatia identity*, which was based on the territorial concept of Gadajat—chiefly consisting of the princely states of the Eastern Ghats. Ruled by princes and populated by a majority of adivasi communities the foundations of such an identity would have been fundamentally different for the Hindu linguistic community being broached by the Oriya leadership. See Chitrasen Pasayat, *Tribe, Caste and Folk Culture*, pp. 168-177.

^{lxxvi} Here I am thinking about Jean Luc Nancy's formulation of community as a 'being-in-common' that does not assume any shared essence. See Jean Luc Nancy, *Inoperative Community*, p.xxxviii

^{lxxvii} I shall switch from using the term adivasi to using the term tribal in this section to maintain consistency and avoid changing the tone of the primary material, which often referenced the adivasi as tribal.

^{lxxviii} "Memoranda to the Orissa Boundary Commission." P.52 These documents are catalogued under two serial numbers and placed in the Private Papers collection of the Orissa State Archives. They are a collection of memoranda sent to the Orissa Boundary Commission by various Oriya public organizations. Page numbers are idiosyncratic.

^{lxxix} *ibid.* p.57

^{lxxx} *ibid.* p.7

^{lxxxii} *ibid.* Appendix B, "The Problem of Aboriginal Tracts", p.2

^{lxxxiii} *ibid.* "Acid test of provincial areas" p.22

^{lxxxiiii} Oriental and India Office Collections, British Library (OIOC), Crown Representative: Indian States Residency Records R/2/286/10, February 1938.

^{lxxxiv}The provenance of this critique is rather complex and requires us to be cautious in our reading of the memo. It emerges from complicated negotiations between the Sambalpur Princely States, the new government of the Orissa province and the colonial state, within the broader context of the Prajamandal Movement in the Orissa princely states. Therefore, it is doubtful that this memorandum was entirely a product of an adivasi critique of Orissa. However, my subsequent argument about the impossibility of the making a claim for a province based on any basis other than that of language still holds. That is, irrespective of its provenance, the memorandum does reveal the tenacity of the notion that only language could serve as a basis of provincial boundaries. For details see Chitrasen Pasayat, *Tribe, Caste and Society*, pp. 176-178.

^{lxxxv} See Stuart Corbridge, 'The Continuing Struggle for India's Jharkhand: Democracy, Decentralisation and the Politics of Names and Numbers', pp.55-71

^{lxxxvi} See T.K Oommen, 'Civil Society: Religion, Caste and Language in India', pp.198-200