

## **“BURGEON & TRANSFORMATION OF EDUCATION IN ODISHA DURING PRE-INDEPENDENCE ERA.”**

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### **Abstracts:**

*Education plays the key to development for any nation in the world. Education is a very powerful instrument for social change and transformation and education is the only way to enhance the growth of our nation. Though Education alone, social transformation is possible. Hence it is highly essential to study the process of evolution of education in India which is at great transformation stage. The problems which society faces are essentially the problems of educational. The beginning in this regard was made by the missionaries for the evangelical purpose. In course of time, the British government took the initiative for the introduction of modern education in the form of English education in Odisha for their administrative convenience and to keep the people of Odisha silent by giving small employments and other facilities they emphasis on English as medium of instruction and also to glorified British conquerors and their administration. It is observed the British education system were influence by the aspiration of Christian Missionaries. It was injected to ensure a cheap supply of educated Indians to increase a number of subordinate posts in administration and in British business concern. In course of time, the British government took the initiative for the introduction of modern education in the forms of English education in Odisha for their administrative convenience and to keep the people of Odisha silent by giving small employments and other facilities they emphasis on English as a medium of Communication.*

*The colonialization of Odisha by the British India Company in 1803 proved disastrous to Odisha in all spheres. It led to the collapse of the traditional education system. Yet, Odisha being one of the last Indian territories to came under the British rule became exposed mush later than after parts of India to the system of education they*

*introduced. Under the East India Company, Christian Missionaries who took up printing the Old and New Testaments in Odia, also contributed to some growth in education. The first primarily school was created in 1822 by Missionaries. The Cuttack Zilla School Odisha's first modern school up to matriculation level was established in 1866. It was extended to become a collegiate School in 1868, which provided first and second year college education to Odia students. However, Odias were severely disadvantaged by having to attend presidency college in Kolkata for B.A. degrees. This was until the collegiate branch of Zilla school was converted into a full bachelor's degree granting college under the then commissioner T.E.Ravenshaw. This college was names as Ravenshaw College after him.*

*In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Gopabandhu Das established the 1<sup>st</sup> nationalist school in Odisha, the Satyavadi Bana Bidyalaya, following which Sayeed Mohammad established the school nationalist school of Odisha at Cuttack named the Muslim seminary. These nationalist schools aimed to cultivate the ideals of patriotism in the hearts of the students. Women's education was taken up with the establishment of the Ravenshaw Hindu Girl's School in 1873. The Maharaj of Keonjhar, the Rani of Talcher, amongst other notable Odia personalities, who made contributions . Later, Reba Ray, a former student of this school, Begam Badar Un nissa Akhtar and Sailabala Dasa became instrumental in furthering the cause of women's education, leading to the creation of the Sailabala Women's College, Cuttack, which was founded by Sailbala Dasa in the year 1913.*

*Medical education began with the opening of the first medical school in 1876, by Dr. Stewart, the Civil Surgeon of Cuttack, who also translated the material medical into Odia. The first industrial school was opened in 1884, in Alalpur, Balasore. A survey school began at the same time in Cuttack, which later on became the Odisha school of Engineering, making the beginning's of technical education in the state. Thus each country sough to use education to provide the skilled man power required for national development and to socialize its diverges population into feeling loyal to the new state.*

**Key Words:**

*Education, Transformation, Missionary, Administration, Communication, Population, Development, Tradition, Colonization.*

### ***Introduction:***

In the words of Socrates, “Education is not the filling of a vessel but the kindling of a flame”. It is said that Education is the mirror of life and ignorance is the curse of god. Education plays a key role in developing human capital for any country. Since, India was in British rule, administration system of our country denied education, India was the largest big country in the world in terms of its population number. But, in our country the persistent caste, gender inequalities and the major concerns and need to be fixed for optimum and potential. There is a need to evolve a policy framework which should be aimed at the benefit of the state. Such policy framework should consist of legal, economic, social and cultural action plans to be implemented educational institutions in particular and society in general.<sup>1</sup>One of the lasting impact of the British rule in Odisha was the introduction of English education in Odisha. This attempt of the British put Odisha on the path of modernization. In fact it was a landmark in the history of modern education of Odisha. Before the British occupation of Odisha education was managed by private people. The school ran in temples, Bhagavat Tungis and in the house of some rich man. The Avadhanas ( teachers) put emphasis of reading, writing and working out simple mathematics. The Odia literature was taught to the pupils including the Bhagavata of Jagannath Dasa. There was no Odia school managed by the kings of Odisha by that time. Education in the pre-British period was quite frustrating in Odisha.<sup>2</sup>

The causes of the growth of English education were not too far to seek. At first, the East India Company was apathetic to the growth of English education in Odisha. But they realized that if the people will not be well convergent with British, their work will hamper. So they took interest for the growth of English education in Odisha. Charles Grant the member of the British parliament and Lord Minto, the Governor- General took keen interest for the spread of English education among the Indians who will understand the British administration and will help the officials in discharging their duties. The Christian Missionaries wanted to spread of English education in Odisha. The spirit of evangelization, they wanted to uplift the Odishan people through the spread of education. English Education they wanted to spread among the people of Odisha. The appointment of the Odias in the government service would be beneficial to them because they would get very less salary in comparison to all. The need of education elites to help the British

administration was a need of the time. It was true for all the provinces of India. Odisha was not an exception it.<sup>3</sup>

The British government realized the inadequacy of education in Odisha. It can be known from Hunter's report, " Until 1838 no schools worthy of the name existed, except in the two or three little bright spots within the circle of missionary influence. Throughout the length and breadth of the province, with its population of two and half million of souls all was darkness and superstition. Further they saw that the education imparted to native Odias would serve no practical purposes. At the same time they did not like the monopolistic education being controlled by the Brahmins and the Karans. But side by side they anticipated some obstacles in introducing their mode of education. The orthodox people, specially the Brahmins would not like to accept it. Rather they would hate all those who received such education. They had done it too. It was in 1874, that one Janardan Mohapatra who had joined the Medical College in Calcutta after passing the Entrance Examination, was excommunicated for dissecting corpses.<sup>4</sup>

It was for this hatred of English education that Henry Ricketts found that in the Vernacular school of Puri out of a total strength of seventy-five students there was none from the families of the priests or other officers of the temple. Poverty was yet another obstacle in the spread of higher education. Even with the receipt of scholarship, they could not afford to go for higher studies. One Nabin Chandra Sarangi who was awarded a senior scholarship in 1844-45 expressed his inability to prosecute his studies due to poverty. This next obstacle in this regard was the lack of enthusiasm to receive education in government schools as those were looked down upon as infidel A.J.M Mills, " the people not only take no interest in the welfare of the school, but many of them welfare of the school, but many of them it is said, entertain most absurd notions of the intentions of Government, believing that the children, if allowed to attend school, will eventually be taken away from their parents and sent to England. Even persons educated in government schools found difficulties in getting appointments as teachers. When an Odia Brahmin named Sadasiba Mishra, educated in such a school was appointed to the traditional post of a Sanskrit teacher in Puri school, he was excommunicated for a year or two from the Brahmanical orders, and stormy discussions took place as to his expulsion from his caste.<sup>5</sup>

At that time, learned Odia teachers did not like to enter into government schools as they were afraid of being excommunicated. This was expressed by Hunter in 1872, thus “ the genuine Odia has not even quite lost his abhorrence off the infidel government school. Many of the more orthodox elders still regard all that pertains to our system as hateful to the gods. Further more, the Purdah system among the women. Again, in the lower class families the mothers did not like to send their daughters for schooling as they wanted them to do household work.<sup>6</sup>

In Gadjat areas, the obstacles were even more formidable because of which educational progress was much slower, there compared to that in the plains. It finds mention in the report of A.J.M Mills, the Commissioner who thus wrote in 1847. “ A regards the education of the people, the time is, I fear,for distant when the March of intellectual improvement will reach this wilds, it is hardly yet commenced in the plains, and it has not there received that encouragement from the people, because not given gratuitously, which was expected.” Behind it lay certain factors , first the inhabitants were a pathetic and indifferent to education. And that was because of the large scale habitation of the tribals whose language was difficult to follow. Their spoken languages had no affinity to those of the non-tribals.<sup>7</sup>

In spite of these obstacles education made a headway in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Odisha. That was largely due to the efforts of the missionaries who had been pioneers of popular education in Odisha. The first native school that the missionaries founded was in May 1822 at Cuttack, vigorous efforts in this direction were made thereafter. From June 1822 to December 1823 fifteen such native schools were established at Cuttack and etnear by places with a strength of 305 boys and 63 girls. In August 1823, a fund was created for the promotion of native schools. And under the auspices of this fund, the Cuttack English Charity school was established in October, 1823. Thus, Cuttack was most unfortunate to see the growth of education through the efforts of the missionaries. Besides at Cuttack, two such schools were established in 1823 at Puri although various forces obstructed their progress. Similarly at Balasore two schools were opened under the patronage of the missionaries. Further, an American free Baptist Mission maintained in Balasore town a high school, one English school for European boys and girls five kindergarten lower primary schools and a middle English school. Side by side at other missionary stations of

the district, two middle English schools, one Vernacular school, thirty one lower primary schools and one kindergarten schools were maintained. The missionaries also played a prominent role in educating the girls including non-Christian and tribal girls.<sup>8</sup>

The British government adopted some measures for the improvement of education in India. Macaulay's minutes of 1853 marked a milestone in this regard . He argued for the spread of English education in India, saying that it would bring about a class of persons Indians in blood and color, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellectual and that education would filter down from them to the masses. After the adoption of Macaulay's minutes the current started flowing in favour of the progress of education in Odisha. In 1835, the commissioner of Odisha, W.Wilkinson, started " Puri Free Academy" or Puri English School, which finally became the principal citadel of education in the province. Meanwhile the love for English education began to increase in Odisha. This can be known from the report of 1849-50 of the council of Education which mentioned that " For Cuttack higher class English School, numerous applications were daily received from the natives for admission, but all were not entertained owing to a strict enforcement of the rules.<sup>9</sup>

Of course, some steps were taken to attract students in large numbers and there by promote English Education. Books were provided in the form of prizes scholarships were given to talented students were students who were poor. The community of Balasore took measures to open a school like the one at Cuttack. In a petition sent to the council of Education for the establishment of an English school, the people expressed their willingness to defray all expenses for the erection of school house, but the government school appoint teachers. But it could not be entertained owing to the shortage of funds. However, in 1853, an British School was founded in Balasore, simultaneously another was revived at Puri.<sup>10</sup>

Besides, spreading English education in Odisha, measures were taken side by side by the government to spread vernacular education, too. As a result, eight vernacular schools were established in 1845, during the Governor-generalship of Lord Harding. These schools were located at Khurda, Puri, Balasore, Remuna, Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Mahanga and Hariharpur. But on account of lack of financial support those schools could not make much headway. Students could not purchase books and pay school fees. Printed

copies of the Odia text books were few and as such the price of the books was fairly high. At Bhadrak respectable natives were sullenly determined not to pay even one anna per meson towards schools fee. The government of course tried to remove these difficulties. Even then the vernacular schools suffered lamentably and that was parily due to the growing importance of English education.<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile the attention of the British authorities both in India and in England was directed to the upliftment of the moral and material conditions of Indians. The famous *Educational Despatch of 1854*, more commonly called *Wood's Despatch* was the result. While outlining the education of the masses through vernacular languages, it laid great emphasis on female education, teacher's training, and the encouragement, teacher's training, and the encouragement of private enterprise to run the schools through a regular grant-in-aid system. The Despatch therefore "set in motion new forces", writes Hunter "intellectual and political whose magnitude it was impossible to gauge". Reiterating its importance H.R. James remarked, "The Despatch of 1854 is thus the climax in the history of Indian education, what goes before leads up to it, what follows flows in spite of the utilitarian aspect of Woods Despatch, Odisha received no benefits from it". He also called it the "*Magna Charta of English Education in India*".<sup>12</sup>

Yet, in spite of the utilitarian aspect of Wood Despatch, Odisha received no benefits from it. And that was because the native population stood against the spread of English Education. Further the Bengal Government neglected the interest of Odisha in this regard. Speaking on this pitiable condition, G.F. Cockburn, the Commissioner of Odisha, reported on February 23, 1859, "It must be remembered that as yet, education at all in Odisha is its infancy and no doubt, the government has done its duty in respect to the improvements of the people, lakhs & lakhs of rupees having been spent in almost every division in Bengal excepting in Odisha."<sup>13</sup>

In fact, whatever little progress was made in the field of education, it was due to the generosity of some commissioners and the school inspectors besides the missionaries. In three great government estates, namely Khurda, Banki and Angul, nineteen Elementary School were set up between 1855 and 1859. Later on the number was raised to twenty nine. And all those were for three million people. Again out of fifty-eight Odisha students who appeared at the Entrance Examination of Calcutta University in

1868 only ten were native Odias and the rest belonged to the Bengali families of Odisha. Giving reasons for this in considerable progress. J.G.Medicot highlighted, “ The grant-in-aid system was very insufficient for Odisha and the vernacular scholarship was made available to a very few students. Even then it was not given to all those who were selected, it was in 1869 that the government did not give a single scholarship to the Odia student Kalpataru Das . A clear scarcity of trained and qualified Odia teachers and the reluctance of the Bengali teachers to come to a distant place like Odisha also worked for this poor progress.<sup>14</sup>

Mean while with the changing attitude of the people the demand for education in Odisha gradually increases. In many places, Odia children voluntarily came to receive education. In Puri even the Brahmin priests were known to have sent their children to schools to receive English Education. Having seen the eagerness of the people. Greeves, the Assistant Magistrate of Puri, opened a night school at Puri in 1870 for importing English education to the students of a Sanskrit School. Even then there was only one Middle English School at Khurdha for the whole of Puri district. However, the Raja of Puri donated 550 pounds to the school and with this amount a school room, was erected in 1870. Education was imparted free. And there were 45 pupils, chiefly the Brahmins. This school was the first attempt to educate the Puri Brahmins. Some local government officers also made attempts to establish schools in their own jurisdiction.<sup>15</sup>

Mention may be made of the Deputy Magistrate of Bhadrak, Srinath Ghose, and the Munsif of Jajpur, Pandit Biswamber Bidyabhusan, who worked in this direction . This is how the number of schools along with students rapidly increased, while in 1848-49, there were 9 schools with a total strength of 279 pupils, in 1868-69 the number increased to 63 schools with 4943 pupils. Meanwhile the government adopted another measure for the spread of vernacular education. In January 1868, a normal school was opened in Cuttack town at a monthly expenditure of Rs. 1100 to train the teachers. So that they would work efficiently in the village schools. By February 1870, such trained teachers were found to have been employed in fifty-eight primarily schools.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, “no other measure could have been more successful,” writes L.S.S.O Malley “ In popularizing education at that time”. It was in 1872 that Sir George Campbell introduced another scheme for the furtherance of education in Odisha. Under this scheme



grant-in-aids were given to a large numbers of hither to unaided schools, stipends, scholarships and rewards were given to the talented students. The teachers were also rewarded for producing good results.<sup>17</sup>There was yet another British officer, T.E.Ravenshaw, who took keen interest in the promotion of education. A number of vernacular schools were opened in the moffussil areas under his patronage, He also established a medical school at Cuttack in 1876 with the help of Dr. W.T. Steward, the civil surgeon of the district. He also opened a college at Cuttack to encourage higher education. To start with, two college classes were opened in 1868, in the zilla school, which had been started in 1841. This college was raised to the status of a first- class college in 1878, when the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj made a gift of Rs. 25,000 towards its maintenance. This college was named after T.E.Ravenshaw.<sup>18</sup>

Efforts were also made to spread education in southern and western Odisha although the progress in those areas was very slow. In southern Odisha schools were found to have been established by 1867-68 at places like Ganjam, Ichhapur, Russel Konda, Purushottampur, and Tekali. However, the greatest concern of the government was to import education to the tribal people and more so to the Khonds of Ganjam and Khondmals with whom superstitious inhuman practices loomed large. Of course hill schools for the tribals were opened in Ghoomsar and Chinna Khimedy areas. Some steps were also taken to attract tribal students. Books and slates were supplied to them and scholarships were institutes. The salaries of the teachers were also increased to attract efficient teachers. But the attendance of the students was most discouraging. And that was largely because Odia language was not the language spoken by the Khonds. So the Khond children was taught in the medium of their own language. Captain Frye look the trouble in writing Khond Manuscripts. Such books in the Khond language helped in bringing the Khonds in contact with the more advanced races of the plain. A community feeling was thus fostered. Like wise Gobinda Chandra Mohapatra of Mayurbhanj wrote a book in the Santali language which he dedicated to the then Commissioner, Smith, More vigorous steps were taken in the Khondmals . One Odia officer, Dinabandhu Patnaik, who joined there as Tahasildar got a school sanctioned at Bisipara, the head quarters of the KhondmalTahasil. To add to his efforts the missionaries also worked in those areas with the some end in view. Mr. Hutchinson of the Canadian Baptist Mission, reading at

Chicacole, was one who succeeded in opening a school in a savour village in the neighborhood of Paralakhemundi. This is how in the Hill Tracts of the Ganjam District, attendance of boys and girls belonging to Odia, Khond and Sourah families in the primary schools was increased to 926 in March 1887.<sup>19</sup>

The efforts for the spread in western Odisha were in no way less vigorous. It was in 1857-58 that an Anglo- vernacular school was opened at Sambalpur. Its satisfactory progress was highlighted in an Odia weekly, Utkal Dipika, in 1868. It also referred to more vigorous efforts that the government adopted-like the appointment of a large number of teachers every year from Cuttack. The results of all such efforts were also heartening as known from Cuttack. The results of all such efforts were also heartening as is known from the annual report of the education department of Sambalpur. While in 1862 in Sambalpur areas there were 249 schools with 13,276 children, in 1899-1900 the number of schools and children was raised to 6351 and 1,08,956 respectively.<sup>20</sup>

In the Garjat areas, it was due to the efforts of the Government with the patronage of the local Raja that education made a march although in a slow degree A.J.M Mills made Banki the nucleus of education. Further among the Rajas, Bhagirathi Mahindra Bahadur ( 1830-1877) of Dhenkanal rendered meritorious services in the field. At his instance primarily schools, Sanskrit Tools and middle English schools were established all over his estate. The middle English school that he established all over his estate. The middle English school that he established in 1868 to import English education was known to be the first of its kind in the entire Eastern states of Odisha. That year the chiefs of Garjat states were known to have requested to Commissioner, T.E.Ravenshaw to supply teachers to be employed in their estates. He complied with their requests . He also tried and succeeded in establishing schools in Garjat states.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly, in the state of Daspalla, its Raja took keen interest in establishing Pathasala in his state in 1873. In the state of Mayurbhanj, English education was first introduced during the rule of its Maharaja Krushna Chandra Bhanja ( 1867-1882), who started at Baripada one middle English school which was upgraded to a High school in 1889. Furthermore, Rajas were also known to have donated money to encourage education in other parts of Odisha. The Maharaja of Rewa of central provinces gave a donation of 300 rupees to a school at Puri when he visited it in 1857 and the amount was

set aside for the construction of a new school house. In the state of Keonjhar, the Raja championed the cause of education by exempting students from payment of fees and supplying them with books and slates. In February 1877, the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj was known to have donated rupees 500 for awarding scholarships to the students of Cuttack College.<sup>22</sup>

Similarly in 1883, the Raja of Keonjhar contributed rupees five thousand for the construction of a hostel for the college students in Cuttack. In 1894, the Raja of Athmalik, Mahendra Deo donated five thousand rupees for popularizing Ayurvedic education in Odisha and one hundred rupees for the poor students of Cuttack normal school. The Raja of Bamanda was also reported to have given financial assistance to the students for higher studies. The famous zamindar of Balasore, Raja Baikuntha Nath Dey, also pioneered the growth of education in his estate. In western Odisha states of central provinces instituted the “ Wood burn scholarship” of twenty rupees per monster tenable for five years in the medical college, Calcutta and it was to be awarded every sixth year to one deserving student. In this way the Rajas and the zamindars made efforts to spread education non only in their respective estates but also in the whole of Odisha.<sup>23</sup>

Side by side, efforts were made to bring out the women from their dread fit seclusion by providing them with education. The Christian missionaries were naturally the first to take steps in this regard. They opened schools to remove the ignorance of the Odia females. Furthermore, the indigenous schools in the countryside also helped in promoting women’s education in Odisha. In Balasore, a Boarding school for native girls was started in 1841 with Bachelor as its patron. Likewise in the missionary school at Pipli, orphan girls were given excellent training. When they attained marriageable age they were given in marriage to Christian cultivators at the missionary settlements. Similarly in 1871 Miss Crawford, an American missionary, started a missionary Girl’s School Balubazar area of the town.<sup>24</sup>

Along with this books for girls were also published. It was in 1878 that B.N.Dey published “ Balikapatha” in Odia which was the first ever book of its kind. In Bhadrak, under the patronage of Chaturbhuja Pattanaik, a Girl’s School was established in 1879. Financial assistance for its maintenance was know to have been received from Zamindars like Raja Baikunthanath Dey of Balasore and Braja Ballabha Padhi of Eram. While the

former paid Rupees Six, the latter paid rupees ten. Further at Soro, it was under the patronage of the same Chatrubhuj Patnaik, that another Girl's school was established in 1879 with twenty students on the rolls. Similarly at Dhenkanalgarh some girl students were found on the rolls of Madhyayubraj School. Another Hindu Balika Vidyalaya was established by some Bengalis in 1881 at Cuttack, in which there were 45 girl students on the rolls in 1882. For the maintenance of the school, financial help was received from the Maharaj of Keonjhar, the Rancee of Talcher, Kalipada Banerjee, Chaudhury Kashinath Dash and Baikunthanath Dey. The Government also extended its help in running the school. Here greater care was taken for the girls than was taken in Balasore and Bhadrak.<sup>25</sup>

However, all those schools were of the low vernacular standard. It was only in 1882 that some girls for the first time appeared at the middle English Examination. They were pupils of the Girls school started by Miss Crawford at Jaleswar. The Cuttack Municipality also opened four lower primary Girl's Schools in 1883. That year the Maharaja of Keonjhar donated eight thousand rupees for the education of Odisha, out of which three thousand was to be spent for a Girl's school in Keonjhar.<sup>26</sup>

In 1884, two Girl's students of Cuttack also passed the primary examination. Being encouraged at their success, a Girl's school was established at Bhadrak in 1885. Srimati Swarnamayee and Srimati Radhamani Ray of Kanpur and Srimati Allhadini Das of Agarpada had donated for women called the "Cuttack Female Orphanage" was established at Cuttack under the patronage of Rev. J.Buckley. Although, its inmates were Christians, yet their education was not religion- oriented. Side by side some Girl's schools were established in the Garjat areas by 1891. It was towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century that Ravenshaw Girls' school was started at Cuttack. By 1897 a few more Girl's schools had been established in Cuttack town in places Chandinichowk, Jholasahi, Gangamandira, Buxibazar and Ranihat. In the same year in July 1897, two women students took admission in Ravenshaw College. However, the progress of female education in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was definitely slow.<sup>27</sup>

Thus, the spread of education with a western bias brought about a remarkable change in the social sphere of Odisha as elsewhere in India. It mentally prepared the people to reform their society on the basis of modern ideas. The upper class people

having received such education started to examine their old customs and convention in the light of the new knowledge that they acquired then. Side by side the common men, being literate, became keen for social change. The spread of education' writes William Hunter, " broke the old prejudices". Indeed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century education was found t have given a severe, blow to the excessive caste influences in the society. For example, the touch of leather by a Brahmin was forbidden even as late as eighteen fifties. They were not allowed to use English shoes. A Brahmin who accidentally touched it was required to choose between public expiation or degradation and expulsion from the caste. But in 1870 an Odia Brahmin held the post of a sub-Inspector of Police within the shadow of Lord Jagannath, in Puri, although a leather belt constituted a part od his uniform. Similarly, Young men of Brahmin caste started using shoes.<sup>28</sup>

Reiterating the impact of western education on the society in general, Richard Temple wrote, " Now the English or Western Education has greatly elevated the character of the natives who have come within its influence. They will no longer tolerate superstitions or any absurdity whatsoever. Odisha was no exception to this observation. Thus, with the growth of education in Odisha there drowned a sense of enlighten in the minds of the people.<sup>29</sup>

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