

A STUDY OF PATHALGADI MOVEMENT IN THE SUNDERGARH DISTRICT OF ODISHA

A Dissertation submitted to the University of Hyderabad in partial fulfillment of the degree of

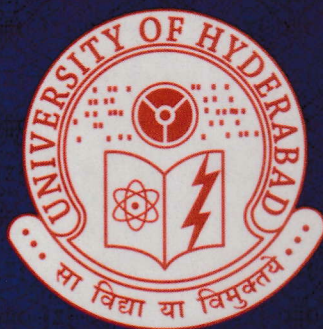
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

In

POLITICAL SCIENCE

by

Arghadeep Banerjee
Regd No: 20SPHL03



Department of Political Science

School of Social Sciences

University of Hyderabad

(P.O.) Central University Gachibowli,

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Telangana, India

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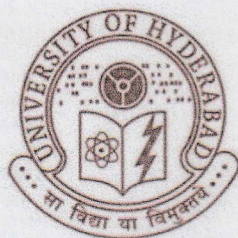
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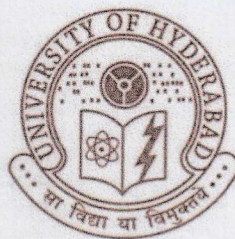
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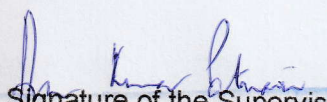
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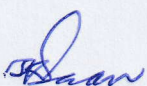
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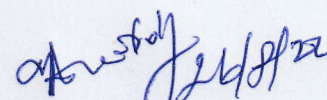
This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "A STUDY OF PATHALGADI MOVEMENT IN THE SUNDERGARH DISTRICT OF ODISHA" submitted by ARGHADEEP BANERJEE bearing Reg. No 20SPHL03 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy in POLITICAL SCIENCE is a bonafide work carried out by him/her under my/our supervision and guidance.

The thesis has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.


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DECLARATION

I ARGHADEEP BANERJEE hereby declare that this Dissertation entitled "A STUDY OF PATHALGADI MOVEMENT IN THE SUNDERGARH DISTRICT OF ODISHA" Submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of Professor ARUN KUMAR PATNAIK is a bonafide research work. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this University or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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1

1.1 Introduction

Social movements in India during the colonial times were large movements with mass mobilizations like Congress movement. Post-colonial India saw an increasing number of micro-movements, most of which were not interested in having a pie of the political power rather were survival movements of different sub-altern groups. Social movements by the landless, peasants, fishermen, adivasis and dispossessed people are concerned with loss of livelihood, opportunities, dignity and development. Although these sub-altern groups were the major stakeholders and actors but much of these movements received the support of various civil society groups and associations. Some of the micro movements have resulted in state enacting various right-based legislations as a remedy for past misdeeds. However, much of these micro-movements have been because of state's developmental policy which is highly motivated against the tribals and the sub-altern groups in general. In the state of Odisha itself, the developmental policy undertaken resulted in dispossession of entire communities from their traditional lands. This resulted in local yet strong resistance movements by the local people. The resistance movement against the "Hirakud hydel project at Burla, Sambalpur, movement against the Rengali Hydel Project of the Anugul district in the 1970s, the Baliapal protest movement of 1985–90 against the missile-testing range, the Gandhamardan Movement in the early 1980s in the Bargarh district against the mining of Gandhamardan hills by the Bharat Aluminium Company (BALCO), the Gopalpur protest movement against the Tata steel factory during 1995–96, the Chilika movement against the Integrated Shrimp Farming Project (ISFP) by the Tata group and the Government of Odisha in early 1990s, the resistance against the Lower Suktel dam at Bolangir in 2005 and the Kondh protest of the Niyamgiri Hills against the Vedanta Aluminium Limited" are some the notable resistance movements in the state of Odisha. All of these have been movements by communities how had to lose their lands because of developmental projects which ultimately benefitted the

non-tribals. One such movement is Pathalgadi movement and this paper majorly concerns with this particular movement.

Since 2016, the parts of eastern India especially the tribal belt of Jharkhand, north western Odisha and eastern Chhattisgarh is witnessing a unique phenomenon of assertion of rights and identity among tribals on the basis constitution. Pathalgadi or Pathargadi (in Odisha) movement is a strong movement among the tribals especially among Mundas and Oraons of the region which revolves around a unique and often misinterpretation of the Indian constitution. The word 'Pathalgadi' in Mundari language literally means carving on a stone. The indigenous people around the region have had this practice since generations. Usually the placement of a stone would indicate various reasons. It might be placed to commemorate birth of a son, death of family member, in the memory of forefathers, to indicate the beginning and end of a village etc. There are around seven to eight reasons for Pathalgadi in Munda and other Austro-Asiatic tribal customs. But what is unique in the events of past couple of years is that the Pathalgadi is taking new form of constitutional assertiveness. Pathalgadi movement includes placing of large stone and inscribing the provisions of Panchayat (Extension of Scheduled Areas) Act also called as PESA Act of 1996. According to the Act, "people living in Fifth Scheduled Areas of India are ensured self governance through 'traditional Gram Sabhas' in order to safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people and their cultural identity." These stones are generally found in the Khunti, Gumla, Simdega and West Singhbhum districts of Jharkhand, Sundergarh and Mayurbhanj districts of Odisha and Jashpur district of Chhattisgarh. Essentially, the stones are placed to "indicate self-rule, demarcate sovereign territory and prohibit entry of the outsiders". The governments of the state and centre were quick to identify the movement as a secessionist one, linked with Maoist insurgency and against the integrity of India. The response was a quick deployment of coercive apparatuses of the state and slapping sedition charges to the Adivasis and Pathalgadi activists. The people within the movement say that they are well within their rights to protest against the exploitation of 'Jal, Jangal aur Jameen' which they say are integral to their survival. The movement falls within the larger issue land alienation and how the post-colonial state has been a mere reflection of its predecessor by reproducing the same modes and relations that led to the loss of tribal lands in the first place. The paper would show the case of Sundergarh district where continuous land alienation has led to tribals asserting

through Pathargadi. The paper would also present a case for the traditional means of governance as laid down by the PESA guidelines.

Chapter 2 would deal with defining the boundaries of the paper. Part one of the second chapter deals with defining social movement and different theories of social movement. The second part of the chapter deal with defining the term 'tribe' and how there has been an evolution over its connotation. The part also tries to define to concept as per the context of India. The third part of the chapter deals with tribal movements within India; colonial and post-colonial periods. The part also concerns with ideas, typologies, observations and classifications of tribal movements in India by notable scholars.

Chapter 3 deals with the tribal movements within the state of Odisha; from the colonial periods to the contemporary times. The chapter would show how the tribes have continuously been displaced because of developmental projects. The last part of the chapter would highlight the role of civil society groups and NGOs in mobilizing the adivasis against the state and corporate agencies.

Chapter 4 is the pivotal chapter in the paper. The chapter would essentially deal with the Pathalgadi movement. The chapter would start with practice of Pathalgadi in the pre-modern era and how the practice was essentially part of traditional modes of governance. Further, this part would also highlight the role of colonial state in dispossessing the tribals out of their hinterland.

The second part of the chapter would show the Pathalgadi movement in the contemporary times and how the practice has become a symbol for mobilizing the community against the repressive policies of the state and to assert their constitutional rights. The last part of the chapter would focus upon the movement within the Sundergarh district. The district is one of the most backward regions of the country. "In 2006, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj named Sundergarh in one of the country's 250 most backward districts. It is one of the 19 districts in Odisha receiving funds from the Backward Regions Grant Programme (BRGP)". The Scheduled tribes account for "50.19 percent of the population of the district with Oraon, Munda and Kisan being the largest groups among tribal populations". The rationale behind this study is to highlight whether Pathalgadi movement has succeeded in asserting the tribal rights or is it a secessionist movement as termed by the governments of state and centre. The study would also focus upon the legality and constitutional dimensions of Pathalgadi movement and most importantly it would focus upon how the developmental state of India has ignored the Scheduled tribal areas even after 25 years

of PESA Act and 75 years of Independence. The study would also highlight that the 'Jal, Jangal aur Jameen' is an integral part of and is entangled with the livelihood patterns of indigenous people.

1.2 Literature Reviewed:

1. Xaxa, V. (2008). *State, Society and Tribes: Issues of Post-colonial India*. New Delhi: Pearson Longman: Virginius Xaxa explores on a range of topics relating to tribes in the post-colonial India. Starting from the word tribe itself, he explores through various other debates like citizenship, development, gender and ecology. Xaxa stresses that much of these issues continue to be solved and addressed through a colonial lens. He further prescribes to redefine the concept of tribe without a category being a point of reference.
2. Xaxa, V. (2019, January 5). Is the Pathalgadi Movement in the Tribal Areas Anti-constitutional. *Economic and Political Weekly* , 10-12: Virginius Xaxa explores the reasons for the emergence of the Pathalgadi movement. He concludes that the movement falls within the constitutional framework and the emergence of the movement has much to do with the state government amending legislations that had protected the tribal lands like CNT and SPT.
3. Singh, A. (2019, March 16). Many Faces of the Pathalgadi Movement in Jharkhand. *Economic and Political Weekly* , 28-33: Anjana Singh explores different dimensions relating to the Pathalgadi movement. She highlights that there are multiple faces of the movement; while some extreme interpretations of the movement seeks complete autonomy of the Indian state others merely seek to assert their rights within the framework of the constitution and state-laws. She also highlights that the state has condemned the movement and labelled it secessionist.
4. Verardo, B. (2003). *Rebels and Devotees of Jharkhand: Social, Religious and Political Transformations Among the Adivasis of Northern India*. London: ProQuest LLC: Verardo's study is an ethnographic study on the religion and social lives of the adivasis of Chotanagpur region. He shows how the adivasis systematically lost their forests and lands under the colonial administration. He further writes about the role of graveyards

and ‘pathalgadi tradition in its pre-modern form’ glued the community to their lands and how the colonial administration alienated them from the lands on the pretext of not having documentation.

5. Correndo, C. (2021). The counter-hegemonic potential of law: From the Wilkinson's Rules to the Pathalgadi movement in India. *DPCE Online* : Correndo studies the Pathalgadi movement within the legal framework. Correndo writes that the antagonistic relations between the state and the tribes have led to legislations where the later is acknowledged of certain rights. He further writes that the Pathalgadi movement has brought up a sense of ‘legal literacy’ or awareness of the constitutional rights among the adivasis.
6. Davidsdottir, E. (2021). Our rights are carved in stone: the case of the Pathalgadi Movement in Simdega, Jharkhand. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 25 (7), 1111–1125: Davidsdottir’s study on Pathalgadi movement concerns about the tactics undertaken by the participants or the collective. She finds that inspite of some outlier cases which demand autonomy based on the misinterpretations of the constitutional provisions, much of the movement is largely based on what she calls as ‘discursive tactics’.
7. Padhi, R., & Sadangi, N. (2020). *Resisting Dispossession: The Odisha Story*. Palgrave Macmillan: Padhi and Sadangi go through all the social movements in Odisha that have aroused out of displacement and dispossession of the people. They conclude that since independence to contemporary times sub-altern communities have been getting displaced because of large scale developmental projects which ultimately do not benefit them.
8. Kujur, R. (2021). Tribal Resentment on Land Assertion in Scheduled Areas: Pathalgadi Movement and Adivasis Rights in Sundergarh District of Odisha. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 10 (03), 259-266: Roshni Kujur’s article on the Pathalgadi movement explores the movement within the Sundergarh district of Odisha. She writes that continuous land alienation through both public sectors and corporate enterprises have led to the adivasis using constitutional rights as shield to protect their lands.

9. Malik, S. K. (2020). *Land Alienation and Politics of Tribal Exploitation in India: Special Focus on Tribal Movement in Koraput District in Odisha*. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd: Malik's study focusses upon the politics around land alienation which has led to ultimate land alienation. He writes how the state in order to fulfill the interests of the corporate and urban population sacrifice the land and livelihoods of the tribals. He writes that the persistent land alienation by the state agencies is the primary reason for tribal movements in Odisha.
10. Pattanaik, B. K. (2013). Tribal Resistance Movements and the The Politics of Development-Induced Displacement in Orissa. *Social Change*, 43 (1): Pattanaik's article studies the tribal movements that have emerged because of 'development-induced displacement'. He writes that the tribal lands are alienated on the pretext of getting jobs or proper exchange rates but the state fails to live up to the promises, ending up into large resistance movements among the tribes against the state.
11. Dash, M. (2016). Rights-Based Legislation in Practice: A View from Southern Odisha. In K. B. Nielsen, & A. G. Nielsen, *Social Movements and the State in India: Deepening Democracy* (pp. 161-184). Palgrave Macmillan: Minati Dash writes that the tribal movements have over time led the state to legislate certain 'rights-based legislations'. However, she writes that the state has always tried to find loopholes within the legislations and continue serving capitalist interests. This in turn has not been much effective in redressing the grievances of the adivasis.

1.3 Objectives of the Study:

- 1) To show the process of development policies of the state have resulted in continuous land alienation and which in turn has resulted into micro movements among adivasis.
- 2) To show that irrespective of the state labelling the movements as anti-state, these are primarily survival movements against the repressive policies of the state and corporate bodies.
- 3) To highlight the role of Pathalgadi movement in amalgamating best of the both worlds, by using pre-modern technique to assert contemporary constitutional rights.

- 4) Further, to provide a case for the 'traditional means of governance' by the tribals and how they could provide for a better alternative mechanism than the modern state's top down model.

1.4 Research Questions:

- 1) How the policies of the colonial state and the post-colonial state has resulted in eroding of the traditional structures of the tribals in Chotanagpur region and how have these resulted into forcible land alienation by the state?
- 2) How the Pathalgadi movement operates within the framework of the state-laws and constitutional provisions to demand the rights and oppose displacement policies of the state?
- 3) What are the different facets of the Pathalgadi movement and how has it impacted tribal social life?

1.5 Methodology:

The study is based on qualitative research methods with focus on secondary sources. The study takes into account all the available journals and publications done upon the Pathalgadi movement and the tribal movements in Odisha in general. The study takes into account all the newspaper clippings and internet publications on the movement. The study has also tries to look into government reports and conference proceedings in trying to bring out the arguments of the both sides; the state and the adivasis. Further, field-study is required to understand the nuances and subtlety of the Pathalgadi movement.

2

2.1 Social Movements: Defining the Concept

Movement is basically a collective behaviour aimed at achieving a social or political objective. However, there is no clear consensus on defining what a movement is and what a spontaneous rebellion is. How do we differentiate between the terms like ‘revolt’, ‘rebellion’, ‘upheaval’ and ‘movement’? Just like any other concepts in social sciences, the term ‘social movement’ is a contested one. The aim of any social movement is primarily “to bring or resist a social change”. It is primarily based on deprivations meaning when some groups opt to resist when they are deprived of their social goods. The deprivations could be in the form of political goods like liberty’ equality, right for political participation or could be for social goods like education and livelihood. It could also aim at resisting a change which could impact in deprivation of their social goods. Because of its emancipatory objective scholars like T.D. Weldon call social movements as ‘Hurrah! Word’ (Weldon, 1955). Also it is necessary to understand that how deprivations affect different individuals with the social group, how different deprivations affect the concerned social community and above all why the particular social good is so essential to the political community.

The term social movement is an assembly of two words reflecting two components that constitute the concept. First the word movement refers to a fundamental change in the society. It can also mean to resist a particular change in the society. The change or resistance could take the form of legal or extra-legal actions. Second the word social refers to the collective actor that is involved in bringing about the desired change. The movement cannot be understood without the collective actor that is involved in delivering the change. Traditionally the collective actor was always understood or associated with class but today it is associated with various communities and social groups like caste, students, women, tribes, race etc. Social Movements are a product of modernity and a development of Enlightenment project of 18th and 19th century. This is what differentiates social movements from upheavals. While upheavals, especially in the Europe, were primarily aimed at pushing back the encroachment of dominant power or restoring the ‘natural or divine order, social movements were based on the Enlightenment’s idea of ‘making history’ and establishing a new social order (Rucht, Social Movements, 2017). Thus scholars have generally

agreed upon that social movement is a product of modernity. Since, social movements aim at restructuring the society, the concept of power cannot be discounted. Any change to society would involve in restructuring the power relationships in the society. Making scholars like Jenkins term social movements as ‘socio-political movements’ (Jenkins, 1981). The form or process to achieve the change could take in any manner. It could be in legal form like marches and *dharnas* and could also take the form of violent and militant resistance.

The above understanding of the term ‘social movements’ gives us four connotations attached to it; it involves a collective actor aiming at a fundamental change in society through a desired means. Now the question lies in how does the collective actor or the group act. Thus, most scholars agree that there requires a ‘minimum degree of organisation’ for a collective behaviour to be termed as a movement (Shah G. , 2004). This is a necessary attribute to term a collective behaviour. Most scholars agree that deprivations are uniform to every individual within the social group but the deprivation takes the form of a movement only when there is a proper channelization of collective discontent through an organisation. This particular attribute of social movement also makes it highly contentious one as organisation could include loose grass-root organisations to well organised hierarchical organisations. The collective behaviour of the group is mobilised through these organisations. Another attribute that is attached with social movements is the fact that they are not institutionalised. As in these are the form of demands that are not recognised by the state. M.S.A. Rao has defined social movement “as a sustained collective mobilization through both informal or formal organization and which is generally oriented towards bringing about change” (Rao, 2000). Ghanashyam Shah in his book opines that the definition of social movements has been largely based on the context of Western political society and there has not been any clear definition provided by the scholars within Indian context (Shah G. , 2002, pp. 13-30). He goes to include movements that are ‘non-institutionalized’ forms of resistance aimed at fundamental changes to society (Shah G. , 2004). We will look into some of the definitions given on social movements by scholars. Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow say that social movements are contentious politics involving campaigns, displays and performances through which individuals make claims through collective efforts (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015). For Tilly social movements include three major elements; firstly, it includes ‘Campaigns’ which are organised collective efforts aimed at achieving desired social goods, second is what he calls as ‘Repertoire’ meaning public spheres where the demands made by the campaigns are articulated

to other members of the society. These can be public meeting forums, rallies, vigils and demonstrations etc. Third is what he calls as 'Displays' meaning the particular social group shows acts of concerted resistance to the concerned authority to whom they are making demands (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015). Mario Diani defines social movements as "a network of informal interactions between the plurality of individuals, groups and/or organisations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity" (Diani, 1992). Sidney Tarrow defines social movement as "collective challenges to elites, authorities, other groups or cultural codes] by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interactions with elites, opponents and authorities" (Tarrow, 1994). John McCarthy and Mayer Zald take 'resource mobilisation approach' on social movements which would be discussed below. They define social movements as "a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society" (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Thus scholars essentially attach these following four attributes to social movements:

- Having an organised and a mobilised social group.
- This would be acting upon a Collective Identity like caste, class, gender, race, ethnicity etc.
- Aiming to bring about or resist a fundamental change in society.
- By using techniques that could be both legal and extra-legal (Diani, 1992)(Rucht, 2004)(Johnston, 2014).

However, social movements as a whole are not clearly defined organisations and do not have well defined memberships. These are often spontaneous and loosely defined leaderships which ceases with attainment of the movement's objectives. Another essential element to social movements is the normative orientation that shapes the collective behaviour. The role of ideology and collective deprivation the social group faces also shapes the motivated actions which culminate into social movements. So the orientation of the collective actor involved in the movement is also important to study. The orientation of the group is heavily influenced to bring upon the desired changes the group seeks to bring about in the society. The desired change the group seeks is the reason for the existence of the particular movement. Thus the change the collective actor seeks and the orientation the group has towards social objects are interlinked and

overlap each other. This paper seeks to study about the literature produced upon the tribal movements in Odisha. The tribes of Odisha as the collective actor with its distinct features and diversities would be discussed later in the Chapter 3 of this paper. But before trying to understand the ‘collective actor’ i.e. the tribes of India and Odisha, it is essential to understand different theories relating to social movements. The studies on Social Movements were largely based upon the studies of mass psychology. Hence often has been under attack and criticism by the Marxists as being part of the ‘bourgeoisie’s social sciences’.

2.1.1 Theories on Social Movements

Social Movements were largely studied under two dominant perspectives, the Marxist perspective and the theories on collective mass psychology. Social movements were always understood as a ‘vanguard’ for oppressed classes. However, ever since the development of social ‘sciences’ and the growth of ‘positivism’ in the social philosophy, the studies on social movements have largely undertaken by the so called Chicago School in the United States (Shah G. , 2002, p. 13). In India too, Ghanashyam Shah argues, that largely the studies on Social Movements have been confined to Positivist approach. The studies on mass psychology and methodological individualism have largely dominated the studies on social movements. However, it is essential to discuss all the theories on Social movements.

1. **Deprivation theory:** It is one of the foremost theories on social movements, basing up on the assumption that people protest and turn into revolutionary movement when they are deprived of their social goods. The theory takes Marxist approach to determine how essential social goods are controlled by one particular class leaving deprived another class. The theory assumes that if individuals feel deprived and are deprived then they would most likely resort organise and agitate so as to achieve the desired social goods. However, the key problem with this idea is that it ignores individual preferences and capacities. For example a major contention with this theory is that all the individuals in the community face a similar deprivation yet only some resort to organising and agitating the masses.

2. **Structural Strain Theory:** This approach to the study of social movements was propounded by Neil J. Smelser constructing upon the structuralist-functionalist approach of Talcott Parsons. He says that there are several explanatory factors for the rise and emergence of social movements. He says that each factor provide distinct values and structural conduciveness that leads to a social movement. The first factor is *Structural Conduciveness* meaning that the people in the political community become aware of the existing problem. The second condition is what he calls as *Structural Strain* meaning that people's expectations of the problems are not met. In this stage there is a growing disbelief in the institutions and the political system at large. This leads to strain or tension among individuals within the political system. In the third stage the disbelief and the strain is further proliferated into further members of the political community. The fourth stage is what Smelser calls as the *Precipitation Stage* where there occurs a 'dramatic event' or an event which culminates into large scale agitation. The fifth stage is when the movement sees emergence of leaders who mobilize the group and leads the agitation against the concerned authority. This is the stage where the movement has culminated into its final phase and the movement is widely been covered by the media and public sphere. The last stage is *Social Control* when the leaders achieve the desired objectives for which the movement had started on the first place. This stage marks the end of the collective behaviour episode (Smelser, 1962). Critics challenge the stage by stage linear approach to the emergence of social movements.
3. **Resource Mobilisation Approach:** This approach to social movements was propounded by John McCarthy and Mayer Zald. This approach is primarily build upon the ideas of economic man and economic sociology discarding the ideas of collectivity. This approach builds upon the questions put on the deprivations approach (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). It questions how all individuals in a political system are deprived yet only some of them actually undertake efforts to mobilize individuals and lead the movement. This approach assumes that certain individuals or leaders in a political community take effort to collect resources like money, time and effort and build organisations and put forward the demands of the individuals. This approach treats the leaders as '*movement entrepreneurs*' and social movements as '*social movement industries*'. This approach assumes that greater the movement is organised and resources used efficiently by the

movement entrepreneurs, greater the chance of the movement being successful. This approach is often critiqued because of its too much emphasis on movement's success depending upon resources and finances.

4. **Political process approach:** this approach is quite similar to that of the resource mobilisation theory but instead on giving primacy to resources this approach gives primacy to 'opportunities'. The approach was propounded by Doug McAdam and Hanspeter Kriesi who also termed this approach as 'political opportunities approach' (Rucht, Social Movements, 2017). There are three components of this theory. First is what is called as Insurgent consciousness. This is similar to deprivations meaning when individuals feel they are treated badly by the system or feel deprived of the social goods. The second is what is called as the organisational strength. This approach like the resource mobilisation approach treats organisations as the focus of study on social movements. Third component is political opportunities which are the main reason the movements come in to existence. Scholars of this approach claim that certain groups might have insurgent consciousness and resources to mobilise but unless they find proper opportunities within the political system the movements will not be able to fulfil its objectives. By opportunities they mean are the vulnerability of the political system. It could be in the form of support from the elites or lack of oppression by the political system or growth of pluralism etc. Critics put the same criticism as they put upon the earlier resource mobilisation approach of the theory being apathetic to culture and not taking account of the distinct cultures where the movements originate.
5. **Political Framing Approach:** this idea is influenced by the ideas of social constructivism and developed primary in the writings of David Snow and William A. Gamson. Frames are basically communicative devices which give meaning to prevailing situation. Frames are discursive strategies or images through which social groups are sensitised and made aware of the future problems (Gamson, 1990). For example slogans like "abortion is Holocaust", here the term 'holocaust' is a kind of frame where individuals get sensitized about the problems regarding aborting and how this problem could culminate into something big like holocaust. Thus frames become instruments that penetrate into the consciousness of the individuals and make them act towards the cause.

Other than the above theories, there are other theories which try to study the irrational behaviour of the human beings. These theories are deindividuation theory and mass society theory. These approaches assume that individuals when completely submerged within the groups find their primitive and animalistic character and often resort to irrational and spontaneous activities. Individuals often express their angst through anonymity and social movements best provide with a platform where individuals could submerge their identity and become a part of the collective identity. However, not much research has been done upon the mass society approach to social movements. The dominance of Chicago school into the methods of social sciences has largely dominated the studies on social movements leading to ideas of economic sociology were able to proliferate better than other methods.

Other than the above theories on social movements, there is a stark differentiation made by the scholars on the difference between new and old social movements (Melucci, 1980).

2.1.2 Old and New Social Movements

The differentiation between the old and new social movements started especially in the 1970s by the Western scholars on social movements. There has been different ways taken by the scholars to differentiate between the old and new social movements. The former is more associated with the conception of power and hence deals with political sphere while the later is more associated with social and cultural spheres. However, the districting between the old and the new social movements is closely attached with the distinction between the Old and the New Left. While the ideas of Classical left or old left were focussed on the areas of economic production, the New left was more concerned with the areas of economic reproduction. Similarly the old social movements were more concerned with problems relating to economic production while the new movements were focussed more on inequalities in the superstructure of the society. The issues of the former were control of the modes of production, wages, and layoffs, working hours etc, while the later were concerned with issues like quality environment, health, education, identity and

quality of good life etc. some scholars have seen this phenomena under the light of post-modernism and post-material society. The 'new' social movements could only emerge with the onset of post-modern society and the decline in the importance of material in the society (Singh R. , 2001). Such a position is also taken by Jurgen Habermas who contends that the 'new social movements' have made class organizations as redundant so much as that the class organizations are no more primary social organizations to articulate and mobilize interests (Habermas, 1981).

With regards to organisation, the old social movements were properly organised and were often in the form of hierarchical organisations while the new social movements are loosely organised into informal networks and organisations that do not have a strict organisational pattern. Further with regards to collective actor of social movements, the old social movements were carried out by the workers and the blue collared class while the new social movements do not have a strict class from which the movement draws its members. Instead the movements include members from various classes like students, lawyers, activists, journalists etc. Above all the old social movements are a product of industrial society. The problems and issues which form the core of the old social movements were relating to the society where the manufacturing and industries were pre dominant while the new social movements are a result of a post industrial society where the problems were no longer relating only to the sphere of production. So, new social movements "radically tries to alter the Marxist paradigm of explaining conflicts and contradictions in terms of class, thereby leaving groups with issues like gender, ecology, race, ethnicity, etc. Contemporary movements have highlighted the autonomous issues of each of these specific groups apart from the class character that it may entail". Gail Omvedt argues that the 'vanguardship' should happen in all social groups and not simple restricted to organized class. She writes "Marxism has been called the historical materialism of the proletariat; what is needed today is a historical materialism of not only industrial factory workers but also of peasants, women, tribals, Dalits, and low castes, and oppressed nationalities" (Omvedt, 1993, p. xvi). Rajni Kothari claims the new social movements that emerge in India around 1970s as 'non-party political formations'. According to him the new social movements follow non-institutionalized politics which are not provided within the doctrines of the liberal welfare state. He writes that "the identity movements have captured the space of electoral politics and the non-identity movements of the poor and underprivileged have carved out institutional spaces" (Kothari, 1988).

However, such a distinction between the old and new social movements is often blurred and ambiguous. Scholars especially the post colonial theorists claim that the differentiation between the two is largely based on Western societies. In post colonial societies there is often no seamless transition from industrial to post-industrial societies. In post colonial societies there might be movements that could look like new social movements but upon closer look these are deeply political movements. Ramachandra Guha, one of the foremost writers on Environmentalism in India, in his studies on Chipko movement writes how the environmental movements in India are deeply political and the movements are double faced (Guha, 1989). The public face of the movements might give the impression that they are new social movements but upon closer look the private face of the movements are political in character. Guha writes that in West the environmental movements may form the part of the new social movements but in India the environmental movements are like an umbrella term which includes various marginalized groups which are primarily pitted against the rich. A.G. Frank and Marta Fuentes distinguish between the social and political movements within the framework of 'new social movements'. They say that the social movements are different from that of political because the former is intended towards 'autonomy' rather than state power. A.G. Frank further concludes that the 'new social movements are old movements with new form and features' (Fuentes & Frank, 1987). Similarly, Ghanashyam Shah too says that the distinction between the old and social movements is vague and exaggerated. He critiques the distinction by adding that the struggle for identities were a thing in pre-modern societies too and the current environmental, women's and students movements have an economic context as well (Shah G. , 2004, p. 23). Further the Marxists hit back at the new social movements theorists claiming that to theorise social movements without any political connotations is like 'De-politicization of the social realm'. To claim that the social movements do not have political connotations is to take political consciousness away from the exploited groups (Shah G. , 2004).

Social movements have played a role in overcoming 'structural constraints' of oppression and enabling groups and deepening democracy. In this light it must be studied how social movements have played a role in deepening democracy in India. Social movements often translate into rights based legislation and it is the point where the collective behaviour episode ends. Since, the paper is an effort to study the social movements on collective being 'tribes' of Odisha. It is essential we

discuss some of the important constructs that cannot be ignored relating to the tribes of India in general.

2.2 Collective Actor: Defining the tribe

The word ‘tribe’ often gets misused and misrepresented in the discourses of social sciences. Often in political literature the terms like Dalits, tribes, caste are often thrown together but one common resemblance these bear with each other that they represent a form of a marginalised political community or a group which is at a lesser advantage than the majority. Tribes too constitute a social and a political community whose dynamics are understood in comparison with the established or mainstream or the majority; with the former always remaining at a disadvantage than the later. However, just like any other social group the tribes are largely understood through their attributes and characteristics. Largely the social groups that have been deemed as ‘tribes’ are understood through their usage of native language, primitive modes of production, ideas of kinship, nature worship, animism and love for dance and music etc. Thus each tribes is understood through its distinct feature which stood opposite of the norms of the mainstream society. This essay discusses about the social movements that have been undertaken by the tribes of Odisha. The tribes of Odisha would be discussed at large in the Chapter 3 but before discussing about the tribes of Odisha it is essential to discuss the distinctiveness of the tribes of India at large.

2.2.1 Tribes in Indian Context

Discourse of a discipline is what defines the discipline; it includes those core areas or assumptions which one seldom challenges while practicing the discipline. Within the natural sciences too debates around the ‘concepts’ are more than not settled, but that is not with social sciences and quite frankly that’s what distinguishes social sciences. The core concepts of the discipline like state, society, liberty, justice, politics etc. are contested. Essentially, political

science and even social sciences deal with contested concepts(Gallie, 1955-1956). Among these contested concepts, tribe is one such, which finds its iteration in rhetoric but its proper conceptualization and theorization has so far escaped from the social scientists, in particular Indian social scientists. The word 'tribe' finds much usage, in particular to represent an array of marginalized sections and for administrative use. But the term fails to represent the essence and indignity of the people it tends to represent and reduces them to class objects. This part of the essay would deal with the change in the meaning of the term 'tribe' over a period, and how social context has affected the concept and what have been its effects on the particular social group. In the post colonial period we see an array of literature published on tribal studies.

The colonial administration was more focused on integration of the tribes as it served the extractive nature of the occupation. So, the tribes were not seen from an *emic* perspective. However, with the establishment of Anthropological Survey of India in 1945 and the subsequent publication of journal, *Man in India*, opened the flood gates for literature on tribal studies especially on tribal movements. The journal presented four papers on various tribal revolts. Today there are 26 Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) supported by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and tribal movements is one of the most sought after study in the domain of tribal politics (Tribal Research Institute). As discussed earlier, the concept of tribe has not been thoroughly examined in the Indian context and the state has continued the colonial tradition of identifying tribes with a point of reference and classifying them together under one homogenous bracket of 'Scheduled Tribes'. Although all of the tribes placed under the list of Scheduled Tribes have common themes of 'Isolation, Backwardness and Cultural Distinctiveness', but this reluctance on the part of both the state and the social science intelligentsia to question the concept has made a situation where there is a plentiful literature and study on tribal movements but very vague understanding of the tribes itself. Also much of the study in tribal studies is conducted by the anthropological departments and tribal research institutes where the dominant method of study continues to be ethnography, making the work descriptive rather than analytical. Even in the departments of sociology and political studies, the researches on tribal studies seem to have the recurrent themes of exploitation, marginalization and peasantisation. "Article 366(25) of the constitution has defined 'Scheduled Tribes' as 'such tribes or tribal communities or parts or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purpose of this constitution'. By the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, issued by the

president in exercise of the powers conferred by Clause (1) of the Article 342 of the constitution of India, 212 tribes have been declared to be Scheduled Tribes”. The list has added other tribes in subsequent years with further enactments. Further within the social science scholarship, much of the studies on tribes have been in relation to the mainstream population where the former is essentially associated with inferiority and backwardness. Following are some of the main themes that run within the studies of tribes in India.

2.2.2 Tribes as Categorizations

In India, the term tribe is always understood through categorization and segregation of a particular group from the majority. The division between caste and tribe may have been less severe or blurred but the tribal identity and its consolidation was a colonial imposition. As per the 2011 census, there are more than 400 groups who fall under the list of scheduled tribes, forming roughly 8.6% of the total population of the country. The total tribal population of the country is estimated to be 104 million. The decades from 1960-80 saw rise of tribal population, as more and more groups tried to get enlisted in the scheduled tribes. The problem has continued and the debate has endured about the identification of a group with tribe. The word ‘tribe’ finds its first usage in the sixteenth century, whereby it denoted barbaric or primitive groups. Joseph Bara says that such interpretations and comparisons of alternative patterns of life with bestiality can also be found in pre colonial literature. The terms like Asuras, Daityas, and Rakshashas etc. were often used to depict the tribes and can be compared with the Western racial prejudices. The colonial occupation which was primarily exploitative in nature, needed to devise a mechanism which would help them administer the entire subcontinent to its needs. This resulted in inconsistent policies in different parts of the colonial state. The colonial rule employed classification and enumeration as a method to identify different groups and bring them under a homogenous ‘category’ for administrative convenience. Although, it should be noted that psychological prejudices existed much before the colonial administration as we see the depictions of tribes in the Sanskrit literature, but ‘tribe’ as category and a point of reference should be seen as a colonial construction. The colonial rule saw certain regions and people different from the rest of the state, and employed special administrative provisions to those areas. The difference was not clear and unambiguous and inconsistent. The process of classification

and enumeration began with the census and this required deciding a criterion to classify a certain group under scheduled tribes. It was difficult for the colonial administrators to attach a particular meaning and fixed criteria for classification, initially religion and geography were attributed to classify them, but with each census more and more dimensions were added.

In 1901 census, groups that were identified with 'animism' were categorized as tribe, later in 1911 census the term tribal religion was used. From 1921 onwards newer dimensions were added to the definition of tribe. In 1921 census tribes were segregated as hill tribes and forest tribes, thus geography being a criterion to distinguish between a tribe and non tribe. 1931 census uses the term primitive tribe, making levels of accumulation as a criterion to categorize a group as tribe. One major consideration that maintained was to see the tribe as a group that is outside mainstream civilization and religion. Thus, if a tribe that showed characters of Hinduism, it was classified as caste and if a caste showed features of animism, it was grouped as tribe. Needless to say due to a prolonged history of both the tribe and the Hindu civilization co existing together, each had taken features of others and made a part of their social custom and practices. Thus, the method employed by the colonial administration to identify a group as tribe was highly erroneous. Andre Beteille says the difference between caste and tribe may have been less distinct in the pre colonial period than it is now. This has gone on to give various heterogeneous groups one distinct identity of scheduled tribes, albeit unambiguously. The early ethnographers like Risley and Hira Lal, saw tribes through the lenses of transformation into caste. It was an assumption that, tribe would be engulfed into mainstream civilization, almost inevitably and it would turn those groups into caste. However, those assumptions have been proven wrong. Virginius Xaxa for e.g. says that it is very well possible for a tribe to adopt features from the mainstream civilization, in this case Hindu civilization, and maintain its own distinct features.

Another important reason for the colonial administration to classify communities was to advance certain communities political and administrative concessions. Subsequently many groups, which would have otherwise not identified as tribes, came under the classification so as to receive political and administrative concessions. Thus, making the line between tribe and non tribe, blur. The list of scheduled tribes we find mentioned in the Article 342 of the constitution, finds its origin in these political and administrative considerations. As special treatment was the key motivation, proper formulation of the concept took backseat. Though it cannot be said that there

was not some considerations, factors like geography, primitive methods of cultivation, tribal language and even love for dance and music were often seen as factors to distinguish between tribal and non tribal. Hence, the colonial state had failed to devise a coherent definition of tribe, only a method to divide the population into tribe and non tribe. The Indian constitution too says tribes are those groups that are deemed to be scheduled tribes under Article 342. There has not been any significant attempt to reconstruct the definition of the tribe even in the post colonial state. The post colonial state continues the legacy of looking at tribe through political and administrative lens and has been more concerned with identification of tribes like its predecessor.

2.2.3 Tribes in Transition

Post independence, there have been constructive attempts to re theorize the definition of tribe has been undertaken quite sometimes within the framework of academic disciplines and think tanks. Departments with sociology and anthropology began researching on group dynamics, resulting into a separate discipline of tribal studies within social sciences. Documenting group dynamics has its origin in the colonial period, the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784; saw a plethora of literature being published on different groups across the sub continent. However, much of these works looked into tribes and caste as a part of a single homogenous civilization; with tribes eventually transforming into caste. Works like “Dalton’s Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal (1872), Risley’s Tribes and Castes of Bengal (1891), Russell and Hira Lal’s Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India (1916), and Thurston’s Caste and Tribes of Southern India (1909)”, were all studied under the light of tribes being transformed into peasant, caste or class. This *class-caste-tribe* continuum has perdured in the anthropological studies even after independence. Attempts have been made by Commission on Scheduled Tribes and Tribal Welfare Committee to provide a definite criterion for a group to be enlisted into the list of scheduled tribes. Such attempts have not been fruitful and a varied range of attributes have been taken into consideration like physical features, ecological consideration, usage of dialect, oral traditions, primitive means of agriculture, occupation, accessibility, love for dance and music and practice of animism and nature worship etc. (Xaxa, 2008).

Due to this contested nature of who and what is tribal, there has been lot of disagreements between anthropologists and sociologists. In the initial days post independence, much of the scholars were aware of the fact that the usage and the meaning of the term tribe was a colonial

construction and derived meaning only in the administrative context. However, the scholarly vocabulary continued to use the term without having a consensus about its meaning. This resulted in different scholars using different terms and having different approaches towards the so called tribal policy. Risley and Elwin use the term ‘aborigines’ to describe the tribes while G.S. Ghurye and his followers use the term ‘Backward Hindus’ (Ghurye, 1963). Jagannath Pathy uses the term ethnic minorities (Pathy, 1988) and Desai uses the term ‘tribes in transition’ to describe ethnically different groups (Desai, 1960). However, the term ‘tribe’ continues to be used while referencing ethnic communities. There have many new terms that have been used, terms like lower class, marginalized, dalits, adivasi and indigenous people have also used recently by anthropologists and sociologists. The terms like marginalized may include a various sections of population, albeit facing similar problems of exploitation and dispossession, but it would serve injustice to the section of population that has served humiliation because of caste arrangements. The people who have faced oppression because of caste arrangements have a very different historical context and history of struggle and should not be equated with the tribes. Very often activists almost use terms like dalits, marginalized and tribes synonymously, but this practice should be avoided. Describing tribes as dalits would be like imposing an ‘alien consciousness’ upon them and also would not serve justice to the people who have led caste struggles.

2.2.4 Tribes, Indigenous peoples and Adivasis

In 1993, UNO declared International Decade for Indigenous people; this propelled usage of terms like adivasi and indigenous people. The term adivasi has had serious political complications, as it has often been used for mobilization and demonstration. The term indigenous person was used for the first time in 1957 in ILO Convention 107. However the term got wide scale acceptance and usage only after 1993. In 1986, Martinez Cobo, who served as a Special Rapporteur to UNO, published the definition of indigenous people. The report was named “Study of the Problem of Discrimination against the Indigenous Population” and was published by Working Group of indigenous population, set up in 1983. The Cobo committee reports defined indigenous population as:

“Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with preinvasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present the non-dominant sector of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems”(Xaxa, State, Society and Tribes: Issues of Post-colonial India, 2008, pp. 28-40).

The two important considerations that were kept in mind by the Cobo report while constructing the above definition; first the indigenous populations were the original inhabitants before the colonization and conquest towards that said geographical location. Secondly, indigenous communities have their own methods of self governance through custom and traditions. The laws of governance that is being applied to the whole of the country should not be applied to the indigenous communities as it would create a situation of conflict between two laws.

In India, there has been a long tradition of defining indigenous populations as adivasi. Even before 1993, the term adivasi was used by a large section of social activists and politicians. Virginius Xaxa says that the term adivasi has been adopted to describe tribal people without much thinking and deliberations. According to him, the term adivasi has many prejudices attached to it. Adivasi has also been used in a context to describe a community as backward or behind the technologies of the mainstream population. The term is also used for a section of tribal population that has been historically marginalized. Going by the Aryan Invasion Theory, the Dravidians have also the legitimate claim to call themselves, indigenous people or adivasi. However, the word is never associated with them and is primarily used for the communities that have face marginalization and oppression. So marginalization when associated with the term adivasi, describes those communities that have historically been sidelined (by choice or pressure) and have remained more or so outside the dominant or mainstream civilization. And historically it has been applied to those communities that have faced wrath from the mainstream communities.

2.2.5 Tribes and Mainstream Civilization

As we see that the definition of tribes has gone through a series of evolution. The tribal people from the colonial days have been described with reference to their social relations. During colonial days it was used to refer the groups with respect to their geography and topography. Later, in the post colonial times the term or the tribal community was identified and defined with respect to their relations with the mainstream population, and that was attributed to their primitive means of agriculture, difference of dialect and language, love for dance and music and religion. Politicians and activists often consciously have tried to equate dalits and tribes, thereby not treating the tribes indifferently and reducing them to class objects or accelerating the process of transformation of tribes into class. From sociologists and anthropologists like, Ghurye and Sinha, to political activists and social workers have all looked towards tribes in relation with the dominant civilization; a 'little tradition' that could only be understood in comparison with the 'larger tradition' (Sinha S. , 1958). Also, the British policies of identification, classification and enumeration of population into tribal and non tribal has resulted into no clear cut definition of tribes, only a process of identification of a community being tribe or not. Thus there continues to be a lack of coherent and well conceptualized definition of tribe.

Andre Béteille sums up the situation tribes and ethnic communities of Asia, by saying that although it is improper to put all the different tribes of the land under one bucket, but it cannot be denied of the fact that, more or less being a tribe means that it has been outside the mainstream civilization, either by choice or necessity (Béteille, 1986). He says, in Asia and in Islamic civilization, wherever tribes and the mainstream civilization have coexisted; being a tribe is a matter of remaining outside the mainstream population. It can be matter of necessity or can be a conscious choice of that community, but what differentiates those tribes from the non tribes is its alternative life pattern which provides a stark contrast to the life patterns of mainstream civilization. It must not be seen here that the tribal society has been static over a period of time for its reluctance to adopt life patterns of the mainstream civilization. In fact, the views of Béteille or Sinha or Ghurye are not much different from each other. They all try to identify and define tribes with their relation with the mainstream civilization. Tribal society continues to be at a constant interaction with the mainstream civilization, with tribal societies continuously adopting attributes of the other. But each tribe adopts different attributes and not the same one,

thereby making every tribe distinct in its own. This makes every tribe at different evolutionary ladders, and not at different stages of a same evolutionary ladder. Activists and social workers, who often abide by the tribe-caste-class continuum, often see tribes at a lower stage of evolution of a single evolutionary ladder. Bêteille warns against this prejudice and says that all tribes are undergoing evolution and are not static societies, with each tribe having their own distinct evolutionary ladder. As Virginius Xaxa puts in “They are all tribes because they all stood more or less outside of Hindu civilization, and not because they were all at exactly at the same stage of evolution. In short, they are described as tribes, and hence even as indigenous people, because they escaped the processes of colonization and subjugation” (Xaxa, *State, Society and Tribes: Issues of Post-colonial India*, 2008, p. 36). The fact that the tribes could endure such a complex process of assimilation, and still maintain their indignity, makes every tribe indigenous own its own. And also British always saw a tribe distinct own its own, this could understood and inferred through inconsistency of different policies in different places. They understood every tribe in relation with the ‘larger tradition’ of that place. Thus every tribe has had a different pace and different social context in which they have had interactions with the mainstream civilization. Thus, it can be very well said that tribes in India have had a complex process interaction, deliberations and assimilations with the mainstream civilization; but what binds all these tribes together is that aesthetically more or less they have been outside Hindu civilization.

2.3 Tribal Movement as a Social Movement

Treating a tribal movement distinct from any other social movement has been a challenging task. As discussed earlier, due to the complex nature of interactions between the tribes and the non tribes there hasn’t been a unanimous decision on defining tribe and its nature. This has led to no unanimity on agreeing whether a tribal movement or not. Different sociologists and anthropologists have failed to distinguish between tribal movement and a peasant movement. Scholars like Guha and Desai do not differentiate between a peasant movement and tribal movement. However, such an approach undermines the indignity of the tribes and is both empirically and normatively wrong. As early as in 1890s, MacDougall in his studies on tribal movements in Bihar finds that there has been variance in the nature of tribal movements and

concludes that the variations in different places were a “consequence of variations in the peasantisation of adivasi society”. Kumar Suresh Singh says that it will be a great injustice to treat the tribal movements as peasant movements. He says that the tribal culture have a lot of cultural variations which make them fundamentally different from the mainstream population. He says “while the peasant movements tend to remain purely agrarian as peasants lived off land, the tribal movements were both agrarian and forest based, because the tribal’s dependence on forests was as crucial as their dependence on land. There was also the ethnic factor. The tribal revolts were directed against zamindars, moneylenders and petty government officials not because they exploited them but also because they were aliens”. To understand different facets of tribal movements in India it is essential to study the tribal movements under distinct time periods and paradigms. The tribal movements in each of the pre-colonial period, colonial period and post colonial period have its own distinct facets needs to be studied.

2.3.1 Tribes in Pre-colonial period

Politics quintessentially deals with power. So, the motive of this essay is not to go into the anthropomorphic history of the tribes. By virtue of the fact that the tribes remained at a topography which was largely made inaccessible for the mainstream population to reach, hence it must be assumed that largely the tribes stood outside the Hindu civilization and practiced self-rule. Though tribes often interacted and integrated with the ‘Aryan’ way of life but this process was sporadic slow. The tribal revolts in the pre-colonial period are mainly understood and referenced through resentments presented in myths, stories and folklores. A lot of the myths and folklores present a sense of towards caste Hindus in general and Brahmins in particular. The terms like *Jana* and *Atavika Rajyas* (forest areas) and *Pratyanta Desas* (frontier kingdoms) would be used by the caste Hindus to refer the tribes and the terms like *Diku* (outsiders) would be used by the tribes to refer the caste Hindus (Sinha, Sen, & Panchbhai, 1969). N.K. Bose particularly writes of a process called “Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption” (Bose, 1941). This was a process of slow assimilation whereby the tribes start emulating the social practices of the caste Hindus. The process was primarily undertaken because of the tribal elites trying to assert their power vis-à-vis the caste Hindus. Bose writes that this process was slow and it resulted in the tribes integrating with the economic order of the lower caste Hindus. As this process of slow

and integrated the economic lives of the community there was a less chance of rebellion and upheaval. However such romanticism to understand a complex processes like integration should be avoided. Surajit Sinha writes how the term *Diku* represents a strong resentment to anybody outside of the tribes of Chotanagpur Plateau. The term was used indifferently to both the caste Hindus and the British administration. The Bhils of Banswara, in their folklore too share a strong resentment towards Rajputs and caste Hindus. These all showed that there existed some fault lines and conflicts between the tribes and the mainstream Hindu civilization. However it also should not be confused by the fact that largely the tribes stayed outside of the mainstream Hindu civilization. While some tribes were as far and isolated that they had no contact with the mainstream population like the tribes of Andaman and Nicobar islands and some tribes in North-East others ranged from loosely integrated to tribes that had similar economic patterns like that of the lower caste Hindus. But largely the tribes maintained the self-rule over their community and the resources which were so essential for their survival. Although some tribes were often not completely autonomous meaning that they had to in a form of suzerainty by paying some of the forest produce or some form other form exchange. But largely as the tribes resided in the inaccessible terrains they stayed outside the Hindu civilization and practiced self-rule. However, this started to shift with the arrival of colonial powers and their efforts to construct roads and railways to remote places that would soon open new forms of tribal and non-tribal interaction.

2.3.2 Erosion of Self-Rule in the Colonial Period

The colonial period is a long history. The impact of colonial state is so deeply entrenched that most of its laws and institutions still continue to exist in Indian society and state. The colonial period and administration slowly spread its extractive control over the entirety of the sub-continent. However, this process was slow and not rampant. K.S. Singh divides the entire colonial administration and its impact on tribes into three distinct periods (Singh K. , 1983a). The first period (1795-1860) is what he calls as the incipient stage of the colonial administration where the colonial state started expanding into the interior parts and into the tribal parts of the country. In this stage the British started to build railways and roadways into the areas which were largely inaccessible.

The second period is between 1860 and 1920 when the merchant capital and extractive method of colonial economic system between the tribal economy and the colonial state was fully

established and consolidated. This was a period when the tribal areas saw massive uprisings like “The Kol insurrection of 1831–1832, Bhumij Revolt of 1832–1833, the Santhal rebellion 1855–1857, the Kherwar or the Sardari movement of 1858–1895, the Birsa Munda movement of 1895–1900 and so on”. This was a period when the tribal economy was hurt because of extractive relationship the colonial state had established. There were introduction of new laws, the power of the chieftains of the tribes were subdued, the resources upon which the tribal economy was deeply based on like forests were made under the subjection of the colonial state, these measures created abysmal patterns in the tribal economy and it resulted in a forceful integration of the tribal economy with the main state. K.S. Singh maintains that the Birsa Munda movement in the Chotanagpur region was mainly because the British altered the Mundari system of landownership into Zamindari system of ownership (Singh K. , 1966).

The third period of the colonial rule for Singh is the period between the 1920 and 1947 when the tribal communities launched separatist movements from the colonial state. Many tribes also joined the nationalist movement and joined the anti-colonial protests. The role of the tribes and the tribal elites in the nationalist movement would be discussed further.

The impact of the colonial state was profound on the tribal communities. The colonial state introduced new relationships and patterns which disrupted the existing relationships of the tribal communities. The introduction of private property, ownership of private property and exchange of private property are some of the features that disrupted the common ownership concept of property which the tribal communities. The property was usually seen as a collective entity and was passed only through lineage. Land and forests were never seen as a commodity in the tribal economy which was build upon subsistence and preservation. The introduction of the Zamindari system and the construction of railroads open new and faster modes of capitalist extraction. It further opened new means of tribal and non-tribal interaction. Soon, the concepts and ideas of mainstream economy were fully solidified within the tribal community too. Resources like land and forest produce were commoditized. However, the tribes were often paid mere subsistence and the majority of the value was taken by the colonial state. These unfair relations and extractions culminated into frustrations and this resulted into many tribal revolts against the colonial administration. However, much of the tribal movements were directed to the caste Hindus and mainstream civilization in general and the British in particular. K.S. Singh maintains that the concept of Diku was as much for the caste Hindus as it was used for the British. The

resentment among the tribes was towards all the outsiders (Singh K. , 1966). The caste Hindus for them were agents who helped them consolidate the colonial administration. They conceived all outsiders as a part of the grand alliance designed to take their nature away from them. This period also saw many messianic movements in the tribal communities. The tribal communities retreated towards religion and symbols which would help them unite them against the common purpose.

Perhaps the single most important impact the capitalist economy did to the tribal communities is the introduction of credit system (Xaxa, 2021). With the commodification of products and resources there came a huge demand for cash. The caste Hindus especially the upper castes seized upon the opportunities and provide credit with huge interests which were often difficult to liquidate. The tribal communities who often did not understand the interest rates and mortgages fell trap to it. The money lenders would not provide credit without mortgaging land and this started the extractive process of tribals losing their land and forests. Further the caste Hindus using the lack of western education among tribal communities used deceit and forgery of documentation to forcefully take away the lands and forests of the tribals. This resulted into a massive alienation of the tribal communities from the non-tribals. Further the British made forests as the state resources resulting into the law which did not allow the forest dwellers to collect firewood and other produce upon which they were so highly dependent on. Thus, these all factors culminated into massive insurrections against the colonial state. The movements around this time wanted complete autonomy from any and all kinds of alien rule.

Another important feature in the tribal social life that took place during this time is the entry of the Christian missionaries in the tribal areas. The Catholic and other branches of Christianity started establishing missions and schools and hospitals in the remote places of North East and Central India. The missionaries started to spread Western education and furthering them away from their indigenous knowledge systems. They educated the tribes against the social life patterns of the tribal communities by calling them superstition and asked them to follow Western English education instead.

The colonial rule understood that it would be difficult to forcefully establish relations with the tribal communities. Hence the colonial rule devised a unique method of categorizing an area as a tribal area. Accordingly, they came up with a method of administration and arrangements for tribal areas which were different from those in the non-tribal areas. This was to be done by

framing of “distinct legislative and executive measures for tribes, which aimed primarily at protecting and safeguarding the interests of the tribes. Thus, tribes or tribal areas since 1874 came to be governed by the Scheduled District Act. As per this act, laws enacted by the Governor-General in Council or Governor in Council were not extendable tribal areas. It could be extended to those areas only if the executive authority (governor-general) deemed it fit”. Meaning, “the executive authority was required to notify as to what laws were to be in force in the scheduled areas/districts. This provision continued under the Government of India Act 1919, which gave power to Indians on self-governance on certain subjects. Its enactment made by legislature/legislatures was not directly applicable to tribal areas unless so desired by the executive authority. Even under the Government of India Act 1935, tribal areas were declared under excluded and partially excluded areas and were not brought under the direct purview of federal or provincial legislature. The arrangements made for the administration of the tribal areas during the British period were continued with some form in the post-colonial state”. However, in spite of these measures the extractive relationship and structure which the colonial state had established continued unabated. The money lending, the credit system and the commodification of forest produce alienated the tribes from their ecosystem and livelihoods.

2.3.3 Tribes in the Nationalist Movement

The emergence of mass politics of Congress under Gandhi and the spread of Congress’ organizational structure into previously unchartered quarters brought tribal issues into the forefront of nationalistic politics. The Non-cooperation movement and the Civil Disobedience movements became umbrella movements which represented widespread resentment to all forms of authority. Under these movements tribal areas boycotted the rule of the Zamindars and the extractive rule of the colonial state. The agitation among the tribal communities was for complete self rule. The agitation was against the prevalent extractive economic relation and demand for complete self rule. The agrarian revolts during this time also included much of the tribal support. The agrarian movements had large tribal population as part of their collective base. These movements were often directed towards security of tenure, reduction of rent, increased share of produce and so on. The Congress provincial committees mobilized these

resentments into collective mass agitations against the colonial state. The tribes envisaged an autonomy where they would be free from the oppressive social relations under which they were trapped and being forced on. Hence, these mass nationalist movements included tribes and other marginalized sections of the society like Dalits and peasants.

It was during this time that the tribal movements also started taking a radical form. The earlier tribal movements like the Kol insurrection, the Birsa Munda movement and the Bhil movements were reactionary movements in a sense that these movements were launched and led with a promise to 'return to the glorious past'. However, the movements starting around 1910s were drawn towards a vision of future. Meaning that these movements wanted autonomous statehood just like any other modern nation state. Unlike the earlier revolts these movements were led by tribal elites who were well versed in Western education. Primarily among them were the Naga Movement and the Jharkhand movement. The leadership of the both movements had expressed their willingness for autonomy as early as Simon Commission of 1927. But the differences between the two movements were that the Naga movement wanted a complete autonomous statehood while the Jharkhand movement was aimed at becoming a separate state within the dominion of India. With independence the Indian state could not live up to the promise or the vision which was envisaged by the tribes. The post-colonial state inherited almost all of the institutions of the previous colonial administration. Just like its laws and political institutions the post-colonial state continued to inherit and preserve the extractive economic relations the state had established with the tribal communities.

2.3.4 Tribes in the Post-Colonial State

The struggle of the Naga movement continued post-independence and the separate state for the tribes of Jharkhand was never given a serious thought. The Naga movement continued to be a thorn for the state and the demand for complete autonomy continued within the Naga regions of the North-East. The other frontier tribes in the region like the Mizos too demanded freedom from the Indian state. The confrontation of the Nagas and the state led to violent repression of the Naga community. The deal was stuck and finally the tension de-escalated with the Nagaland being recognised as a separate state in 1963. Similarly the Mizos became autonomous governing regions in 1972 and were later given complete statehood. There were demands from the tribes of the southern Gujarat and the Gonds of Madhya Pradesh for separate state within the Indian state

but they could not transform them into substantial demands because of the lack of organisational leadership. However the story of Jharkhand movement is the most intriguing among other tribal states. The movement was strongly supported by the tribes at the local level and had leadership that had mobilized a strong support for separate statehood. The Jharkhand region belonged within the Bihar state and under its legislature. In the very first election post independence the Jharkhand Party bagged the most seats of the Bihar assembly. However, the Jharkhand party could not convince the State Reorganisation Committee and the movement was hit a blow its leadership becoming fragmented (Tirkey, 2002). But this did not stop the aspirations of the tribal people. The JMM which was formed in the 1970s continued to spearhead the Jharkhand movement and finally the state of Jharkhand was formed in 2000. The entry of tribes into the modern politics was mainly through the emergence of political parties. The role of political parties in bringing the issues of the tribes into the forefront of the national politics is undisputed. In the North-East the Naga Club was formed as established as early as 1918. Even after independence the Naga National Council and the Mizo Union were established to articulate the concerns of statehood for the Nagas and the Mizos. Off late there has been growth in the number of political parties in the tribal areas of North-East. Some of them are “Hill State People’s Democratic Party in Meghalaya, Tripura National Volunteers and Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti in Tripura, The United Tribal Nationalist Front, the Assam Tribal Leagues in Assam, , Naga National Democratic Party, Nagaland Peoples Party, Nagaland People Council, Arunachal Pradesh People’s Party and so on”. Surajit Sinha reckons that that the tendency for secession would be higher in case of the Frontier tribes (Sinha S. , 2002). However, study needs to be done on this assertion. The demand for separate states was also seen among the tribes of the central India. The Gonds of Central India for long wanted and a separate state out of the Central Provinces (Madhya Pradesh) calling it Gondwana. In the 1940s the Gondwana Adivasi Seva Mandal was established which further was christened as Gondwana Prajatantrik Party (Xaxa, 2021). It expressed the views of the tribes of the Central India wanting to have separate state within India. Their demands were finally met when the state of Chhattisgarh was formed carving out of Madhya Pradesh. However not all the demands for statehood were met and often these demands could not organize itself into powerful movements. The Bhils in the Rajasthan have long been demanding for separate Bhilstan and the tribes of Coorg have been demanding a

separate state of Kodagu out of Karnataka. But these demands are relatively weak and lack support and mobilization of tribes.

The overall movements among tribal communities in India show that there is greater tendency for secession among the frontier tribes than that of the tribes in Central India. It is important to understand the concept of 'encysted tribes'. These are that tribal communities that have been geographically surrounded by the mainstream community from all sides; in this case the caste Hindus. Scholars argue that tribes tend to adopt the customs and traditions of the caste Hindus and thereby lessening the cleavages between the communities. The tribes in the Central India often use quite similar things in rituals like that of the caste Hindus. The use of incense, oil and cow dung for purification indicate that there has been cultural socialization between the two communities. On the other hand the tribes in the North-East often are a lot different culturally and many of these tribes have adopted Christianity due to earlier efforts of the missionaries. Scholars like H.K. Sareen argue that the colonial administration through its Western education had inculcated secessionist tendencies among the tribal communities of the North-Eastern areas (Sareen, 1980).

There has been change in the patterns of leadership of the tribal movements too. The tribal movements in the post-colonial state are led by the educated elite. These are the leaders that are fully aware of the political state of the modern India and want to draw a similar power or almost in line of the Indian state. Further it has also been observed that the tribal peasant movements have found its leadership among the non-tribals (Mies, 1976). The key among it is the Maoist insurgency which had engulfed large proportions of tribal communities had its leadership based among the non-tribals (Parulekar, 1975). Leadership in some of the tribal and peasant movements like "the Telengana, the Warli, the Shahada, the Bhoomi Sena, the Naxalbari and Pardai, was provided by non-tribals coming from different political and social groups" (Banerjee S. , 1980; Banerjee T. , 1980).

However tribal movements just like any other social movements should not be seen only through the lenses of contentious politics. Social movements also play a key role in enlarging the scope of equality and integrating different communities and trying to bring all communities on a 'level playing field'. In this regard tribal movements of the 1960s and 1970s enlarged the scope of identifying key rights which are necessary for the existence of these rights. The post-colonial state initially continuing from its precursor took the liberal character and treated all communities

indifferently. Although there were affirmative action form of reservation for tribes in the public offices but mere equality of opportunity was not enough to ensure welfare for the tribal communities. Equality of opportunity has to go hand in hand with equality of conditions. And when conditions of tribes are kept in mind then certain basic rights are inalienable from the communities because it consist an important part of the life processes of these communities. For the tribes these are forests and access to forests, practice of kinship and endurance of tribal customs and laws in matters of tribal civil life. This led to a struggle between the repressive and extractive practices of the post-colonial state and the struggle among the tribal communities to hold onto their rights. The tribal areas were often situated in mineral rich areas and the tribal communities often had to be displaced and rehabilitated into a different place. Often the tribes would be forced to integrate into the new society about which they had no idea. Often there would be unequal labour exchange between the tribes and non-tribes. Many tribes were not recognized for displacement and rehabilitation for their lack of proper documentation over their tribal land and were rendered landless and forced into the labour markets of the nearby urban areas. The problems of the ‘development induced displacements’ resulted in a new kind of movements in the last quarter of 20th century and these movements were based on special rights. These movements forced the state in enacting some key ‘rights based legislations’ like the PESA Act of 1996 and Forest Rights Act of 2005. These legislations have put a control over the extractive practices of the state and corporate and as well as from the non tribals. Development induced tribal movements need to be discussed at a greater length as this has seen large scale tribal migrations, displacements and oppression.

2.3.5 Development Induced Tribal Movements

Right after the independence the vision of the top brass was clear about the way they wanted to see the modern India. Nehru was clear that modern India requires large scale projects which would be able to fuel the needs of the citizens. While inaugurating the Bhakra Nangal Dam he declared that large infrastructural projects like dams are the temples of modern India (The Financial Express, 2018). This resulted in a rush to construct large dams and canals cutting across tribal terrains were undertaken in large parts of the country. Ghanshyam Shah writes of an estimate that “213 lakh persons were displaced by irrigation projects, mines, thermal power

plants, wildlife sanctuaries, industries, etc., between 1950 and 1990 in India. And around 85% of them were from the tribal communities” (Shah G. , 2004). Many of them were never given any form of displacement and were forced into the labour markets to work in the construction projects in cities and urban areas. Tribal peoples have come to constitute as much as 40 percent of the total displaced population, even as they comprise less than 8 percent of the total population of the country. However, in spite of such huge displacement the development for which the projects and displacements were undertaken never reached the tribal villages. Most of the tribal villages continued to be un-electrified and the infrastructural projects never reached the tribal villages. Post liberalization the emphasis on the mineral based development has increased and this has led to further increase of excavation of minerals from the tribal dominated regions. The state has even used repressive measures like deployment of police and firing over the agitated tribals who were protesting against the developmental projects. Further the tribes would often resort to armed struggle by joining the Maoist insurgency which would lead the state employing even a further violent crackdown. These conflicts and loss of habitat among the tribal communities would lead to frustration and lack in the belief in the political system. This would culminate into social movements which would often be sporadic in nature and primarily aimed at safeguarding the forests and livelihoods of the community. Some scholars have called these movements as new social movements partly because they do not have rigid organizational structure and the leadership is often comprised of local leaders. Further the tribal movements were not directed towards achieving political goals like achieving statehood. However, such oversimplification of tribal movements of this kind is not justified. As even though the tribal movements were not political in character on surface but looked from beneath these movements were deeply political in character. The movements were directed at preserving the tribal modes of governance and decision making. Many tribal movements in the Chotanagpur region were aimed at preserving the tribal modes of governance and property sharing. Thus these movements were ultimately aimed at preserving character of political objects in tribal society. Further the tribals are subjugated and ostracized for their ‘tribal way of living’. Because of forceful integration the tribes have with the mainstream community the later often subjects the former to what many scholars call as ‘epistemic violence’ (Bodhi & Jojo, 2019). Meaning the tribal ways of living is always considered inferior and little in front of the mainstream population. Thus, the

development induced projects have accelerated the forceful integration of the tribal world with the non-tribals.

2.4 Classifying Tribal Movements of India

There are different typologies of tribal movements given by different scholars. Movements have been classified in terms of their objectives and ideology. There has been a practice to differentiate movements into reactionary, conservative and progressive or revolutionary. Such practice is done by scholars like Mahapatra, Shah and Fuchs. If the movement intends to go back to the older paradigm and 'bring back the old days', it is called as reactionary and if the movement seeks to maintain the status-quo it is called as conservative. The progressive movements are also called as revisionary or revolutionary as these movements look to bring radical changes to the customs and traditions of the tribe. Surajit Sinha while studying tribal movements of Bihar brings his own typologies to tribal movements. He divides tribal movements into: "Ethnic rebellions, Reform movements, Political autonomy movements, Secessionist movements and movements on Agrarian unrest" (Sinha S. , 1968). Kumar Suresh Singh divides the movements among tribals into: cultural movements, Sanskritisation movements, Political autonomy movements and movements against agrarian crisis (Singh K. , 1983a). S.M. Dubey while studying tribal movements in North-east India divides the movements into "religious and social reform movements, Movements for separate statehood, Insurgent movements and cultural rights movements" (Dubey, 1982). D. Doley (D.Doley, 1998) categorizes almost in a similar manner as that of Dubey. However there are many problems with above classifications as most of the typologies provided by the above scholars do not include movements because of large developmental projects and movements against development induced displacement. From the above typologies we find that it is only Mahapatra that has excluded political movements from his typology but more or less there is a commonality among all the scholars that they have not kept in mind issues like forest rights and environmental rights while classifying the tribal movements.

K.S. Singh offers another perspective of the tribal movements that covers the developments in the 21st century. He says that tribal movements can be categorized into another typology of identity based movements. He says that off late there has been a growing concern for bio-diversity and pluralism and this in turn has made scholars to look into communities in relation

with their resources. This has developed an emic perspective for the academicians and in situ relationship of the communities with the nature. K.S. Singh writes that “in recent years, with the rise of the international movement of indigenous people in the post-modernist phase, the focus has shifted to self-determination or self-management of the resources, identity, and ethnicity. The environmental movement has focused on communities in situ, their relationship to resources, their rapport with nature, their world-view. Therefore with the growing concern for environment, particularly bio-diversity, pluralism, ethnicity, and identity—all are now interrelated—the tribal movements are assuming a new character. They are all now becoming more and more identity-based movements, with various issues concerning control over resources etc. being considered as ramifications of this central issue”(Singh K. , 1998).

Ghanshyam Shah looks into the above typologies and then sets out to give his classification which encompasses the typologies and issue stated by the other scholars. He classifies the tribal movements into “(1) ethnic movements which include culture/religion identity; (2) agrarian and forest rights movements; (3) environmental movements (4) involuntary displacement and rehabilitation movements; and (5) political movements around the nationality question for a separate state”(Shah G. , 2004, pp. 92-117). Although he warns that social movements can never be classified into water tight compartments but it is this typology provided by him that continues to be widely accepted and used by further academicians working on tribal movements.

Virginius Xaxa classifies tribal movements into cultural and identity movements, Hinduization, land and forest based movements and autonomy movements. Xaxa explains how the term Sanskritization has been used wrongly by the scholars. He explains that the process of Sanskritization has one crucial factor that is social mobility (Xaxa, State, Society and Tribes: Issues of Post-colonial India, 2008, pp. 50-61). However tribes do not emulate the non tribes so as to improve social mobility in fact much of the reform movements are directed at their own tribal societies to purge the ‘evils’ inside the tribe. He says that reform movements might look like Sanskritization movements but it is difficult to separate ethnic lines from it. He explains how Oraons today follow mainstream Hindu and Christian Gods, yet speak multiple languages and have not given up their distinct practices and customs. Albeit, some movements might look like Sanskritization movements like the Rajbongshis of Assam, but to classify all reform movements under the head of Sanskritization is like ignoring other factors within the tribe.

2.5 Some Observations by Scholars on Tribal Movements in India

- ❖ N.K. Bose studied the tribal movements which demanded secession and statehood and termed it as growth of 'sub-nationalism' (Bose, 1967). He opined that these movements were led by the elites who base these movements on religion, traditions and customs. Bose opines that the process of sub-nationalism generally occurs among the most primitive and undeveloped parts of the nation and primarily an economic movement. He further says that these movements are a result of frustration among the elites because of their relative weaker economic position than the national elites. He further maintains that these movements often lack support of the masses and continue to be elite led.
- ❖ In contrast to Bose, Roy Burman forwards his own idea on social movements saying that these movements are a process of 'infra-nationalism'. He agrees with Bose on these movements being elite led but differing from Bose he says that these movements reflect a positive attitude among the tribal elites. He says that these movements reflect that tribal communities want to come out of 'tribalism' and participate in the modern politics through the instrumental mechanisms of the modern state (Sinha S. , Tribal Solidarity Movements in India, 2002).
- ❖ Orans talks about a process among tribes which he calls as 'rank concession syndrome'. According to it tribes which are encysted or surrounded by all sides with Hindu population, would try to emulate the social processes of the higher caste Hindus. Orans calls this process 'conceding of rank'. Orans claims that generally the process of emulation would follow an economic path meaning the tribes would follow the economic processes of the higher caste. He also maintains that if the economic path of conceding rank is not open then there is a chance of hostility between the tribes and the mainstream community and greater consciousness among the tribes regarding the cultural differences between them (Orans, 1965).
- ❖ A.P. Wallace studies the movements in the post-colonial period and claims that these are revitalization movements. He means that these movements are aimed at complete transformation of tribal lives. He says that these movements are not only economically driven but aims to transform all spheres of tribal lives so as to be compatible with the conditions of the modern world. Wallace contends that these movements are initially led

by charismatic leaders but in the later years they develop long organizational structure and social base (Wallace, 1956).

- ❖ K.S. Singh observes on the tribal movements on India and concludes that the tribals in the Southern India are relatively smaller in number and have cultural similarities with the caste Hindus. Hence there is relatively less number of revolts in the Southern Indian tribes (Singh K. , Tribal Movements in India, 1983a). He goes onto conclude that encysted tribes would have less revolt and the geographical location and proximity with the mainstream population are the key factors for tribal secessionist movements. He also concludes that tribes that have large homogenous population with a strong economic base would have a greater chance of mobilizing the masses and launching an organized movement than the other primitive tribes (Singh K. , Tribal Society in India: An Anthropo-historical Perspective, 1985).
- ❖ Surajit Sinha gives a number of reasons for tribal movements. He says that it would be difficult to single out a particular reason and often there might be interlinked and overlapping factors. Some of the factors for him are “the locale of the tribal groups vis-à-vis the core peasant matrix, the numerical strength of tribals, the degree of their exposure to, and interrelations with, the non-tribals”. He further argues the intensity of tribal solidarity/separatist movement will be positively correlated to ‘an optimum convergence’ of the following factors:
 1. “Ecological and socio-cultural isolation of the bulk of the tribal population vis-à-vis the core peasantry”;
 2. “A certain level of numerical strength and economy to provide the striking powers of solidarity movement”;
 3. “Location near the international and inter-civilization frontier”;
 4. “A certain level of literacy and education to provide elite leadership”;
 5. “Historical incidence and awareness of conflict with the peasantry and the political superstructure of the peasantry”;
 6. “The opportunity for political rank path combined with limited scope for economic emolument” (Shah G. , 2004, pp. 103-104; Sinha S. , Tribal Solidarity Movements in India, 2002).

- ❖ The most seminal contribution to the studies on tribes and tribal movements post 20th century comes from Virginius Xaxa. He challenges number of earlier studies on tribes on the grounds of colonialism, singular modernity and episteme. His bodies of work on tribal studies have been so impactful that some scholars have termed tribal studies into pre Xaxa and post-Xaxa paradigms (Bodhi & Jojo, 2019). He calls for complete re-conceptualization of all concepts on tribes starting from the word tribes itself. He says that the impact of colonial rule has been most on tribes because they have to be continuously referred through a point of reference which is based on a category. Hence the category as a social reference continues to dominate all the social realities of the tribals. He further maintains that there is an epistemic violence subjected by the dominant community over the tribes by discriminating and often ridiculing tribal knowledge systems. He accuses that the mainstream society often depicts a singular path to modernity for the tribal communities without acknowledging the possibility of multiple path to modernity. While the scholars before him studied and pleaded for tribal integration on social or political or economic or psychological groups but Xaxa called for 'epistemological integration'.(Bodhi & Jojo, 2019)

SUMMING UP

We started this chapter by discussing what social movements are. He discussed different theories relating to social movements and concluded that social movements should not be seen only from the conflict perspective and the scope of social movements could also be enlarging the scope of rights. In this light we described the tribes in the Indian context and how tribes have been able to assert to their rights and issues through social movements. We discussed how tribes have never been examined without a categorical reference point which is a product of colonial heritage. We discussed how the term tribe itself has undergone series of literary evolution by continuing to be inclusive. We discussed how the tribal movements in the colonial period were more reactionary in character while the movements since the dawn of 20th century are forward looking and more based upon 'making history' version of social movements. We discussed the impact of liberal character of Indian state and its impact upon the tribes. The liberal state with its politics of indifference treated the tribes without any special needs. Hence, the tribes were treated indifferently without referencing to their dependence on nature. Further the impact of development was severe upon the tribes. The tribes were the worst hit community because of displacement because of their geographical presence in mineral rich tracts. Often the state treated them with bias and they had to forcefully integrate with the mainstream civilisation. However, the tribes have fought back and the resultant effect was the state granting right based legislations where the state recognised the special needs of the tribal communities.

The paper does not discuss the Elwin-Ghurye debate on approach of tribal population vis-à-vis the mainstream population. But it is worth mentioning because one among them became the sole method of tribal politics. While Elwin insisted upon insulating the tribes from the broader civilization, Ghurye on the other hand wanted the tribes to integrate with the larger culture saying that that the larger culture would engulf the primitive culture in anyway. Elwin had proposed his ideas what he called as 'development in isolation'. He through his studies over various tribal groups in India concluded that the tribes do not need social integration instead require government protection which would safeguard their interests from the encroachment of the non-tribals. However, it was Ghurye's integration approach which prevailed and continued to be the state policy towards tribes. Baring some tribes in the Andamans there has not been any conscious effort on the part of the state to segregate the tribes from the non-tribes. It is also

important to note that the Nehruvian view to tribal policy was that the social and economic life of the tribals had to be upgraded and modernized even as their culture needed protection. Nehru's conception regarding the tribes was to slowly draw the tribes into the mainstream bourgeoisie democracy and politics. Nehru's ideas "formed the basis of the tribal policy in the Independent India and he was in favour of modern ideas to be allowed to permeate in the institutions of everyday life through the education and employment of tribals. The bulk of allocations in the Nehruvian State for STs (as classified in Schedule VIII of the Constitution) were as grants for education and social services".

But since then, and especially after the liberalization era and with the adoption of the capitalist, economic, development paradigm, the toll was "weighed heavily on the tribals and it resulted in marginalization and land alienation." The state has not even checked the extractive practices of the corporate and has often been biased in favour of corporate by forcefully dispossessing the tribes out of their homeland. The impact of displacement and movements that have occurred because of displacement has been discussed. The displacement induced movements in Odisha will be discussed at length in the next chapter.

Going forward topics that need further inspection are the effects and impacts of tribal integration. The position of tribals in the labour markets, formal and informal, needs to be studied. Further, the subtle forms of what Xaxa calls as 'epistemic violence' towards tribals needs to be observed and studied. The environmental and the new social movements need to be re-examined and the political character of these movements is to be found out. These movements on surface might look solidarity movements but underneath they are deeply political in character. The state should also reformulate the conception of equality for the tribes. The current assumption of equality of opportunities has not been able to manifest itself properly. Hence, in spite of fifty odd years of affirmative action the condition of the tribes has not improved and their representation in the public institution and modern politics continues to be low. All the indicators of quality life seem to lowest among the tribal communities. Hence, the task should be to identify newer forms of oppression and the structural constraints the tribes are facing in the integration process. To identify how this forceful thrust towards modernity is generating newer and subtle forms of oppression and subjugation in the tribal communities.

3.1 Tribal Movements in Odisha

Odisha lies in the eastern coast of India, sharing political borders with Andhra Pradesh in the south, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand in the west and West Bengal in the north. The current demarcations were established under the colonial administration when the state of Orissa was made a separate province on 1st April 1936. The region has big rivers draining into the Bay of Bengal; Subarnarekha, Mahanadi, Brahmani, Baitarani, Rushikulaya etc. The eastern or the coastal region is rich in alluvial soil and is conducive for agriculture. This is also the most densely populated region of the state. The rest of the state is home for much of the tribal population. The ancient name of the state is Odra, the Munda tribes claim that this is a distortion (the Munda word being Orea). Mukunda Harichandan was the last Hindu king who ruled over much of the current Odisha and he lost his power when the Mughal Empire annexed over the region in 1568. Later, the Marathas took over the reins when they defeated the Mughals in 1751. This was also the incipient stage of the colonial rule in the sub-continent. The British Empire which had already established its hegemonic rule in the north and south of the state, aspired to annex the region from the Marathas and the colonial rule was finally established with the fall of Barabati fort and the defeat of Marathas in 1803. The post-independent Odisha was initially divided into 13 districts but were later re-structured and divided into 30 districts. These are further sub-divided into 58 sub-divisions and 314 blocks. The state has a huge mineral content including “60 per cent of the country’s bauxite reserves, 98.4 per cent chromites, 91.8 per cent nickel, 32.9 per cent iron ore, 24.8 per cent coal and 67.8 per cent manganese reserves”. The availability of cheap labour adds to the recipe and the region serves as the perfect place for mineral based development. According to 2011 census, Odisha has a total number of 9,590,756 people that fall under the categorization of Scheduled Tribes, which is “22.85 per cent of the total state population and 9.2 per cent of the total tribal population of the country”. It is estimated that there are around 705 tribal communities residing in India, out of these 75 communities are categorized under Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups. There are 62 different types of tribal

communities, which are highest among other states in India, making Odisha home to most diverse groups of tribal communities within the country. The thirteen groups which are categorized under the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) are; “Birhor, Bonda, Didayi, Dongria Kondh, Juang, Kharia, Kutia Kondh, Lanjia Saora, Lodha, Mankirdia, Paudi Bhuyan, Saora and Chuktia Bhunjia”. As per the *Socio-Economic Survey*, “out of the total 2,073,079 ST households, 1,836,190 (88.57 per cent) households is considered to be economically deprived” (Padhi & Sadangi, 2020). The tribes of Odisha could be largely divided into three linguistic groups: Austro-Asiatic (Munda), Indo-Aryan and Dravidian. The tribal population is largely concentrated around the hilly tracts of the state or the non-coastal region of the state. Orissa has 480 km long coastline. It has an essentially rutted and jagged topography, with highlands constituting 64.2 per cent mainly constituting the areas of northern plateau and Eastern Ghats regions, the rest of the area is plain region mostly towards Eastern coastal region. The tribal people, who constitute about “22 percent of the total population of the state, are concentrated in this highland region”. Today, they are primarily based in the districts of Koraput, Ganjam, Boudh, Phulbani, Kalahandi, Bolangir, Sundergarh, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar. These highland regions were divided into numerous *Garhjats* which were “more or less independent kings autonomous from the kings of coastal Orissa. During British rule most of these *Garhjats* were raised to the status of princely states and maintained their identities and some forms of autonomies until India achieved independence” (Padhi & Panigrahi, 2011).

The tribes of Odisha are at different levels of social and economic development. Some tribes like the Santhal and the Kondh have developed their own scripts others have oral tradition and have not developed scripts. However, there are some issues that influences all the tribal communities and most important being tribal land alienation and forceful displacement. This has led to mobilization among tribal communities and has led to successful movements. It is essential to look at the trajectories of social movements among the adivasis of Odisha.

3.1.1 Tribal Movements in the Colonial Period

The earliest tribal resistance against the colonial administration was witnessed in the Ghumsur (present day in the districts of Ganjam and Kandhamal) uprising of 1815-1856. The movement

was initially led by Dora Bissoi and later by Chakra Bissoi. The Kondhs of the region practiced a ritualistic practice that involved human sacrifices which the British ethnographers termed as the 'Meriah Sacrifice' (Panda, 2018). The colonial administration tried to stop these practice by both enacting laws and establishing missionaries that would convert the tribes into Christianity that would result in the tribes abandoning their cruel practices. This resulted in the tribes suspecting the colonial rule of trying to interfere in the religious and cultural practices of the Kondhs. This resulted in the uprising among the tribes under the leadership of Dora Bissoi. Further the ruler of the region was not in good terms with the colonial administration and hence the British had seized the territory and had increased the taxes in the region. Although initially the British administration was able to suppress the upheaval by brute force but capturing most of its leaders, the movement rejuvenated again under the leadership of Chakra Bissoi. He was a messianic figure with a vision to take the tribes back into the glory days of nature and free from the entire colonial rule and also of the Rajas. Kondhs are divided into number of sub-clans and sub communities. Chakra Bissoi united these tribes and was able to continue resisting British forces. He also was able to receive support from the non-tribals especially kings who supported his resistance. The British were never successful in arresting Chakra Bissoi but they were successful in pushing him into deeper parts of Central India by arresting his supporters and community. The rulers who supported him like the king of Anugul, Somnath Singh, were arrested and their fiefdoms were annexed into the British Empire. Further the British administration not only adopted coercive measures but also persuasive measures. The persuasive measures included giving them autonomy over the forest produces and with a promise to reduce the taxes levied. These measures were adopted by the British to win over the Kondhs and bring the out of Chakra's influence (Panda, 2018). The Ghumsar uprising is often included within the larger context of the famous Paika Rebellion or the Paika Bidroha of 1817. The movement predates the 1857 uprising and is often debated to be included in the conversations of 'first war of independence'. The Kondh adivasis had joined the Paika rebels and had protested against the British rule (Paika Rebellion of Odisha, 2017).

David Hardiman through his study on the popular movements of the Western Part of the India concludes that many tribals had to go through change in life patterns within the community the coming of the nationalist politics. With his concept of 'coming of the Devi' he examines how the popular struggles of adivasis were entangled with the mass nationalist politics of the Congress

(Hardiman, 1995). In this light it is necessary to study how the Ghumsur rising stood apart within the larger Paika rebellion and to examine how far the former was directed towards the non-tribals.

If the early part of the 19th century was the incipient stage of the colonial administration in the tribal social life, the latter half of the century saw the colonial administration deepen into all spheres of tribal society. This resulted in tribes of Odisha reacting to colonial rule through wide spread agitations. Surendra Sai from Sambalpur led his revolt against the British Empire from 1857 to 1864. The movement was against the revenue policy that was forcibly placed by the administration. Sambalpur was once a princely state of its own which lost its autonomy under the tainted Doctrine of Lapse in the year 1849 (Padhi & Mohapatra, 2008). Tribals also rallied behind Ratna Nayak in the Keonjhar rebellion of 1867. The rebellion was directed against both the local ruler of the princely state and the colonial rule. This time the king of the princely state was installed by the colonial administration itself, both of whom had combined to take away the lands and forests of the tribals of the region. Ratna Nayak was able to forge a unity between the Kol, Juang and the Bhuyan tribes of the region and lead a resistance against the colonial administration. The revolt was crushed by the administration when Ratna Nayak was executed in 1868 and the colonial arrangement was restored. The colonial administration realized that mere brute force to bring the tribes under the colonial fold will not manifest. Thus, a 'political agent' was appointed to the state of Keonjhar to check the despotic rule of the king. However, the tribes of the region were not pleased and they rallied behind a new leader, Dharanidhara Nayak. Dharanidhara Nayak continued his movement against the arbitrary functioning of the king the colonial rule. The tussle between Dharanidhara Nayak and Fakir Mohan Senapati, the famous writer is well documented and is part of the local folklore (Panda, 2018). The Keonjhar uprisings are examples of tribal movements where the movement is directed not only to the British rule but also to the local king, landed peasantry and the feudal arrangement as a whole.

The 19th century also witnessed revolts among the Kharia tribes of Daspalla in 1854, Kondhs of Boudh in 1862, and Kondhs of Kalahandi in 1880s and among the adivasis of Nilagiri in 1890s (Padhi & Mohapatra, 2008).

One of the most famous tribal uprisings in the colonial history of Odisha was the uprising of the Munda tribes under Birsa Munda towards the end of the 20th century. The Munda revolt was against all kind of outsiders including the local Zamindars and the money-lenders. Birsa Munda

rallied the tribes of the Chotanagpur region of the North-Western part of Odisha. The tribes of the region considered him *Bhagwan*, having supernatural power with a vision to restore 'original kingdom' of the Mundas. The movement was suppressed by the British but it forced the administration to return the tribal forests to the rightful owners and this arrangement was legitimized through subsequent legislations like "Chotanagpur Tenancy Act and Santhal Paragana Act" (Verardo, 2003).

Apart from these there were other famous struggles like the uprising among the Bhuyan tribes of Keonjhar in 1921, the 'no-rent' movement among the Savar tribes of Gunpur, Gajapati in 1929-30 (now in Rayagada district), the uprising among the Kondhs of Kalyansinghpur in Jeypore in 1931 etc. In 1930, Narasingha Sahu of Bissamcuttack organized the Kondhs of the region in solidarity with the national movement going on in the state and the country at large. Such tribal solidarity movements were often classified and put under the larger canvas of national movement that was going on with the country at that time. Scholars also write that these movements often had similar characteristics as that of the agrarian movements among the non-tribals. There were lots of similar attributes between the livelihood struggles of the non-tribals and tribals as both of them directed their movement against the colonial administration (Padhi & Mohapatra, 2008). The British rule introduced the rent and the Zamindari system which had adverse effects in the politico-social life of the tribals as well as the non-tribals. The changes in the modes of production introduced by the British resulted in changes in the relations of production as well. With the introduction of Zamindari system the relation between the tribes and non-tribes changed and took a more antagonistic form because the non-tribals often served as the agents of the colonial administration (Xaxa, 2008). However, this would be an over-simplification of the matter. Studies need to be done to separate the tribal movements with the non-tribal movements and to recognize how much of the tribal movements were directed against the non-tribals. It is in this light that it is necessary to look into the role of tribals in the national movement of Odisha and how were the tribal struggles got entangled with the larger canvas of nationalist politics in Odisha.

3.1.2 Role of Adivasis in the National Movement of Odisha

The independence movement in Odisha was largely led by the educated men and women, peasants and the *harijans*, who were mainly the non-tribals and except for some casual references there has not been much written about the role of the tribals in the nationalist movement. It is essential to state that the tribal communities of the state and in general are not homogenous groups and frequent interactions with the non-tribals have entangled the relations between them. This entanglement between the tribal and non-tribal social life led to common antagonism against the colonial administration. Thus, the tribal and non-tribal led resistances against the British and often the struggles got intertwined. Scholars have divided the nationalist movement among the adivasis into four phases. First phase covers the initial stage of the colonial annexation over the tribal lands leading to indirect participation of the tribes in the nationalist movement around 19th century. Second phase covers the latter half of the 19th century where the tribal socio-economic relations was constantly altered, resulting in sporadic movements which were often of militaristic nature. The third phase was when these sporadic movements were mobilized under larger mass movements against the colonial empire. Last phase is the 20th century, where resistance and repression was undertaken by the colonial rule against the nationalist movement and the tribal movements in particular (Mishra, 1997).

The Khorda Movement which was launched under Baxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar and Krushna Chandra Bhramarbar Ray on 1817 is well covered and documented by scholars and is part of the folklore of common masses of the state. But what is essential to mention is the role played by the adivasis in the Khorda movement. The movement was supported by the Kondhs of the region and the Ghumsar uprising which is discussed earlier got entangled within the larger Khorda movement. The movement had started initially with four hundred Kondhs from Banapur and later spread to other parts of the state. The Ghumsar uprising was also not exclusive to the tribes. The Kondhs led the uprising with non-tribals especially the Panas who were traditionally lower caste communities. Non-tribal leaders like Kritibhas Patasahani, Sadhu Jani and Dunai Jani played key role in mobilizing the Kondhs and leading the agitation against the administration (Mishra, 1997). Hence, it is very difficult to divide tribal movements and non-tribal movements into water tight compartments during the colonial administration as social life of both of these communities were enmeshed together. Kondhs of Boudh region also rose up against the colonial

administration and leaders like Nabaghana Kanhar, Madhab Kanhar and Bira Kanhar led struggles for autonomy.

The struggle of 1857, also called as the first war of independence, is famous in the memories of the Indian masses. It was not a coordinated effort of all princely states together against the British Empire but series of sporadic revolts and upheavals over different parts of the country and led by different communities. In Odisha the role of Chakra Bissoi cannot be undermined as he led his agitations around this time and mobilized adivasis from Anugul, Banapur, Nayagarh, Daspalla, Ghumsar, Boudh, Nayagarh and Parlakhemundi. The Kondh uprising led to mass mobilizations of other tribal communities especially in the Western and North-Western part of the state. Another uprising that flew under the radar of the 1857 uprisings is the Kol uprising in 1830s and 1840s. The Kol adivasis of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and north-west region of Bonai agitated against the colonial rule and the chieftdom of Singhbhum and Mayurbhanj. The Kol war was so violent that the British had to bring in additional troops from Bihar. The movements made the colonial administration realize that oppressive measures against the adivasis won't serve the purpose of bringing them under colonial fold. The Kol war and other series of movements made the British come up dual administration policies with the tribal areas being categorized as excluded or partially excluded areas and there would be separate administrative rules for tribal and non-tribal areas. The British administration suppressed these movements violently and passed the Scheduled District Act (1874) under Government of India Act of 1935, categorizing the tribal lands distinct from non-tribal lands.

The series of uprisings in the later part of the 19th century got a united front under the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Non Cooperation movement. In the 20th century the nationalist politics in Odisha became a united front. The Congress movement was led by Laxman Naik in the southern part of Odisha. He hailed from Tentulligumma of Koraput region and indoctrinated into nationalist politics by INC leaders like Radhakrushna Biswas Ray, Radhamohan Sahoo and Sadashiv Tripathy. He mobilized the adivasis of Koraput and Rayagada regions against the colonial rule as they were not versed in the discourses of nationalist politics. He centred his operations around the Bonda hills of Koraput region. Under the politics of Non-cooperation movement he instigated the tribes not to pay the taxes and rise up against the unjust forest annexations. The colonial administration suppressed the movement led by Laxman Naik, charged him of murder and sedition charges and was hanged in 29th March 1943. The movement

among the Mundas and Oraons in the Gangpur estate was also a severe cause for worry for the British administration. The movement was brewing since the end of 19th century and continued till 1943. The movement started because of economic reasons like the traditional forest rights were stripped by the colonial rule but the movement took a political undertone in the 20th century. Although the movement precipitated just around independence but at one time the movement took a separatist tone. The movement was led by Nirmal Munda who turned the adivasis into a politically motivated force desiring to achieve freedom. The British arrested Nirmal Munda in 1939 and arrested several of his confidantes and suppressed the movement. The movement was further led by Jaipal Singh who later became a key figure in the post independence Jharkhand Movement (Mishra, 1997).

Biswamoy Pati writes that in spite of the efforts of the INC to bring the tribals and the non-tribals into the fold of nationalist politics, the cleavages between the two cannot be ignored because the tribal movements were more or less directed towards the economic structured that hampered their traditional social life. He elaborates that the movements were anti-feudal in nature and against non-tribal agents (Pati, 1983). The tribal movements converged with the nationalist movement but the demands for livelihoods continued in the post colonial state.

Pati tries to identify the struggles of the marginal communities through the forms of their everyday protest. Basing on James Scott's approach, Pati identifies the nuanced ways through which the tribes have adopted survival techniques against the dominant communities. Pati tries to identify some of previous unexamined domains like the agriculture. Contrary to the popular belief where the shifting cultivations like the Jhum, Dangar and Khunts are considered to be traditions means of agriculture, Pati argues that these should be seen in the light of being survival techniques. He writes that intensive use of shifting cultivation needs be seen in the context of twin pressures of growing encroachment of forests and the loss of land brought by the migration of the non-tribals into the tribal hinterland. He further highlighted the changes in food intake patterns among the tribals by explaining how the Kandhas moved away from rice-based cultivation to dry land crops cultivated on hilltops with water constraints, they reoriented to food crops like *mandia*, *ragee*, *kotkee*, and *mohwa*. He infers through these changes in the life patterns among the tribal communities that these changes are a resultant effect of the antagonistic interactions and the relations the tribes had with the non-tribes. He also highlights how the development of the indigenous capitalism has been on the back of the cheap labour especially

extracting minerals out of tribal homelands and employing tribal labour force with a minimal subsistence. He provides the example of the TATAs and the extraction of minerals and labour it had done of the tribal state of Mayurbhanj to substantiate his point (Pati, 2019).

The most important characteristic of these tribal resistance movements was that “it was essentially an uprising against the foreign rulers and in that sense could be constructed to be the precursor of the national movement that was ongoing in the entire nation”. Even if the non-tribals sanctioned the orders of the administration, the movements were primarily against the structure and the arrangement which was superimposed on them and which was of alien and colonial in nature. The tribals of the Chotanagpur region use a term called *Diku*, referring to all the ‘outsiders’, including the colonial administrators as well as the caste Hindus. The term *Diku* is described further in the next chapter. Further, the immigration of resourceful peasants, money-lenders, and scribes from the coastal plains to the tribal hinterland forced a process of assimilation of the tribals with the economic policies pursued by the immigrants and the non-tribals these resulted into tribals being cheated and fraud and alienated from their land often with low exchange rates. The British also altered the land ownership pattern of the tribal communities by introducing documentation rules which were to be scrutinized by non-tribal elites working on behalf of the colonial administration. This altered the relations between the tribals and the non-tribals as the tribals grew suspicious and often violent towards them. Also the British administration introduced the forest policy (1884) which “curtailed the customary rights of the tribals to use the forest produce. The development of the communication system and introduction of the administrative system by the British ruined the natural economy the tribals had within the forests and deprived the tribals from their traditional means of livelihood. The forest law forbade shifting cultivation and put severe restrictions on the adivasis for use of the forest and their access of forest products”. These measures of forcible integration resulted into movements which are discussed above. The disenchantment with the colonial administration led them to look into the protests of the non-tribals thereby integrating their movements with the larger nationalist politics. Thus, the tribals integrated their movements with the broader nationalist movement with a belief that their interests would be best secured under a modern independent Indian nation state. We shall discuss under the next section about the condition of the adivasis in the post-colonial period and how much of their belief in the nationalist movement realize under the independent Indian state.

3.1.3 Tribal Movements in the Post-Colonial Period

In many ways the post-colonial state was a successor to the colonial state. The model of development followed by the colonial state continued in the post colonial years. The experiences of large scale production under the Industrial Revolution of the Europe had a great impact on the intelligentsia of the day and the idea of nation-state was always associated with large scale developmental projects like dams, industries and canals, often with any disregard for local people. Much of the leadership within the INC was already clear of the notion of development it had for the entire nation, even though groups within the INC contested against it. The INC was organized into provincial levels which had its own ministries. These ministries met at the Congress Working Committee at Wardha in August 1937 “to discuss the path of economic development for the nation, especially towards industry”. A resolution was adopted to form a committee of experts to collect necessary data and to undertake surveys to chalk out a plan. As discussed earlier, there were outliers who did not prescribe to the notion of development as an imitation of European industrial development and chief among them were the Gandhians. However, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose sought to develop Indian industry “within the framework of an ‘all-India industrial plan’ that would be drawn by the expert committee. In October 1938, following the Haripura Congress in February that year, Subhash Bose, then President of INC, called all the industry ministers of provincial ministries formed by the Congress to a conference and declared the formation of the National Planning Committee. The committee constituted of industrialists, scientists, technocrats, economists and political leaders, with Nehru being the chairman of the committee”. It was in this committee where there was a large consensus among the leaders for large-scale industry and adopts the Euro-centric economics, although J.C. Kumarappa and some other Gandhians sought after cottage and small scale industries. Nehru justified the position by saying that there shall never be conflict between the large scale industries and the cottage industries and further Congress for him had started to identify itself with the State, so it was necessary to establish and encourage large-scale industries (Padhi & Sadangi, 2020). Hence, from the very beginning the large scale industries were put in the forefront of the developmental picture.

According to Nehru and other top leadership, the colonization had stopped the fruits of large scale industries to reach to the common masses and in the absence of it the common masses would be able to share the benefits of it. In fact Nehru was of the belief that the industrialization

process should be accelerated and India is lagging behind in comparison to the West. Nehru opined that if the profits could be socialized then existing modes of production could also be justified. Hence to socialize the national income he instilled his idea of 'mixed economy' where the core sectors would be nationalized while other sectors would be in the hands of the private hands. Scholars claim that this policy was made keeping in hindsight the condition of the capitalist class. The capitalist class of the immediate years post-independence did not have enough resources or organizations to run the core sectors of the economy. Hence, they needed the state to take care of the existing modes of production until the capitalist class was fully nurtured to take care of the production forces (Sanyal, 2010). The communists too did not object to Nehruvian model of development because it was linked to a National Planning, an economic model which resembled to the erstwhile socialist nations like USSR. So, the notion of nation-building continued to be essentially associated with the development of large scale projects, where mega projects were for the greater common good and the displacement associated with it was for the sake of national good. Further these mega projects like dams were seen as a triumph of humanity over nature, rationality over mysticism. Thus this de-mystification of nature and forcible injection of rationality led to destruction of traditional life patterns which were based on complex and nuanced relationship with nature. This nefarious mixture of development, nation-building and rationality were shoved down the throats of the tribes across the country and in this context the tribes of Odisha were also not spared. Though there were some secessionist movements among the adivasis of the region especially at the eve of independence. Among these the tribal movements of "Nilagiri (1947), Mayurbhanj (1949) and Kharswan movement (1948)" were very significant. Due to these continuous secessionist movements, all the 25 princely states or the Garhjat regions were merged with the province of Orissa in 1947 and Mayurbhanj was the last Garhjat region which integrated with the state in January 1949. This did not mark the end of secessionist tendencies among the tribes. The Jharkhand movement under the leadership of Jaipal Singh in 1952, for the formation of the Jharkhand state, was a great movement in both Orissa and Bihar. The tribals of Mayurbhanj and parts of Sundergarh supported it and desired to form a new state named "Jharkhand". Though the Jharkhand state was formed on 2000 but the districts of Mayurbhanj and Sundergarh continued within Odisha. A parallel movement is going on in western Odisha, called "Kosal movement"(1991). The movement often shows conditions of sub-regional nationalism but the movement has not been able culminate into a major

movement and has not been able to draw sufficient and determined leadership (Sethy, 2016). However secessionist instances have not been able to ferment to a level where it could be called as a social movement like in the case of the Nagas and the Mizos. But what concerns the adivasis of Odisha the most the question relating development and who's development. Thus, most of the social movements among the tribes in the post-colonial Odisha have been around this 'development-displacement axes'.

Post-independence, Koraput witnessed the first exercise of top-down development model with the establishment of the Machkund Dam and hydro electricity project in 1940s for which the villagers were forcibly ejected from their lands. Villagers who resisted had to compulsorily evacuate when the water level rose up. Many did not receive proper compensation of the value of the land which they lost. Many also did not find their names in the official lists of people displaced. Those who chose to stay in the forests of the nearby areas had to bear the problem of displacement again in the 1970s because of the Balimela project. The construction of Mahanadi Dam caused a series of unrest and uprising in the Sambalpur and western part of the state which included many tribal communities. The dam took almost fifteen years to complete and this entire period was marked by continuous protests by the anti-dam protestors. The state government had to employ Orissa Military Police to forcibly evacuate the remaining villagers who were not willing to leave their ancestral homes. In fact the people who lost their lands came to be known with a separate word called '*budhianchalia*' meaning people who have lost their lands in floods. The term would often be used by the mainstream Oriya population often with a slanderous connotation. The construction of Mahanadi Dam would set a precedent and soon other dams often with adjacent industrial complexes would develop all across Odisha. This forcible displacement around dams would continue with the Rengali Project of 1970s where again the Odisha Military Police would be employed by the state machinery to suppress the emerging people's movement in the Rengali region. This period coincided with the Emergency period at the centre this even furthered the case of the state as they were able to forcibly eject the people and suppress the uprising. Displacement because of dams continued even up to the 1990s often with the help of global capital. The "Upper Indravati Reservoir financed by World Bank in 1990s displaced around 99 villages with 40,000 people" (Sethy, 2016).

As discussed earlier, Odisha is a repository of natural resources and minerals. The state led development not only targeted the water bodies but also mineral resources. "In 1976–1978, the

Geological Survey of India undertook the East Coast Bauxite Project survey and discovered huge reserves of bauxite in the *Malis* (hills) located in Koraput, Kalahandi and Bolangir (KBK region)". This region is considered to be the most under-developed regions of the state with stories of impoverishment making headlines in the national newspapers(Barik, 2019). With proven reserves of coal, iron and chromium, state government started establishing newer developmental projects and industries which would foster further displacement of adivasis. Rourkela Steel Plant set up in 1960s in Sundergarh district after independence displaced hundreds of Adivasis villages. Displacement around this region would be touched in the next chapter. Even after decades of inequitable distribution of the fruits of the development, the governments both at the centre and the state continued to base their ideas of development through large scale developmental projects and forceful eviction of the people. Even till the 1990s the rhetoric of the governments both at the centre and the state were towards the large scale developmental projects. Just like in the 1950s Nehru had called the mega-projects as temples of modern India; Janaki Ballabh Pattnaik, then CM of Odisha, called for "one thousand industries in one thousand days with an investment of one thousand crores".

"In 1981, the public sector enterprise under Government of India, National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) set up an alumina refinery plant at Damonjodi in Koraput district, extracting bauxite from Panchapatmali hills of Koraput district and using water and electricity of Upper Kolab. Bharat Aluminium Company (BALCO) followed suit by targeting the bauxite reserves of the Gandhamardan Mountains". It is not only minerals but the coastline of Odisha that was also brought under the canvas of 'development'. In 1984, the Government of India proposed to establish National Testing Range in Baliapal in Balasore district. This project also faced severe agitations from the local people. Although, the composition of the people protesting in Baliapal were not adivasis but it is also important to discuss under this context because the Gandhamardan protests and the Baliapal protests forced the government to roll back the proposed projects. This was a very critical juncture in the history of people's movements in Odisha as the adivasis of the Gandhamardan hills gave stiff resistance to these public enterprises. Though the Government of Odisha tried to suppress the "movements against Rourkela Plant, the NALCO and HAL Plant in Koraput, NALCO Power Plant in Anugul- Talcher region and forced tribal to move, it could not check the Gandhamardan and Baliapal movements of the 1980s. The Baliapal movement against the National Testing Range which had started in 1984 continued till

1989". It forced the government to withdraw the project as the project threatened the livelihoods of the *paan* cultivators and the fishing folks who depended upon the fertile region. It is surprising that the state often does not pay attention to small and medium traders who contribute so largely to the nation's overall economy. The *paan* cultivators had a huge trade where their paan leaves would be traded to as far as Delhi and Himachal Pradesh. These small cultivators and traders formed the social base for the Baliapal Movement (Padhi & Sadangi, 2020). The Gandhamardan movement in 1983 against BALCO forced the government to cancel this project. Gandhamardan hills are located between the districts of Bargarh and Bolangir. The hill is traditionally home to numerous rare medicinal flora and is home to rich fauna diversity. The local Kondhs of the region revered the Gandhamardan hills as divine, in local words as *Dangar Mahaprabhu*; hence any act of mining the mountain was seen as sacrilegious by the adivasis. The leaders of the movement would socialize the adivasis by terming BALCO as *Asur* or *Rakshasa*. Collective consciousness among the tribes was mobilized by invoking religion. The movement had a broad range of tactics in trying to stop the BALCO project. Men, women, children, people of all ages from the Kondh community of the region would join in to protest, often by carrying placards like *Amar Daabi Mana Sarkar, BALCO Asur Nahi Darkar* (Government listen to our demands, we don't need BALCO the monster). The locals were so agitated and committed towards the movement that some of them were even ready to kill the BALCO and state government officials who would come for inspection (Ahmed, 1986). This forced the government to finally cancel the project. The locals would commemorate their victory over government by establishing a temple and naming it BALCO Khai Devi Temple (one who ate BALCO) (Padhi & Sadangi, 2020).

If the adivasis around Gandhamardan found respite for some time, there was no respite for the adivasis of Koraput and Rayagada. Since 1940s, adivasis in Kashipur in Rayagada have been organizing movements against INDAL and ALCA, which were mining companies. In the 1990s Rajiv Gandhi visited the area and started an initiative called as Kashipur International Fund for Agricultural Development under Orissa Tribal Development Programme (OTDP), a programme for comprehensive development of the adivasis of the state. There were numerous developmental projects sanctioned under the OTDP for the development of the region. But the irony of the issue is that even after number of projects the poverty among the tribes continued to increase. According to some estimates poverty among households in the Kashipur block

increased from 15,471 in 1992 to 24,582 in 1997(Sarangi, 2002). Utkal Alumina International (UAIL), a joint venture with Hindalco of India, Alcan of Canada and Hydro, a Norwegian company came on to the scene of Kashipur in 1990s. This was also the incipient stage of liberalization in India. The 1990s marked an important phase in the Indian economy and the social discourse at large. Privatization, globalization and liberalization became the new mantra for development. Even the lip-service which was earlier paid for creating a society along socialist lines died a quiet death and the Nehruvian idea of state-led development was disposed in favour of global capital. The public sector that was created in the last three decades by enormous sacrifice of the people was soon to be de-regulated. The most notable feature was the opening up of the core sectors to the private corporate enterprises which included the mining sector. Both national and international private enterprises were welcomed to set up their industries and extract the minerals out of the tribal hinterlands. This had negative implications for the tribal people of the mineral-rich areas of Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand as this paved the way for confrontation between the tribes and the global capital. The governments of these states signed hundreds of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with corporate bodies to dig out mines and to set up mineral-based plants and in process forcibly evicting the adivasis from their lands and forests. The adivasis of the Kashipur continued their movement against global capital and in this case the UAIL. The state government with its repressive machineries tries to suppress the movement. Police crushed the people's movement violently. In December 2000, the police killed 3 agitating people. The incident was later called as "Maikanch Firing". The state government continued to blame the local adivasis stating that the deaths would not have happened had the adivasis chosen not to protest. The government has even tried to change the narrative claiming that the deceased tribals were goons and had criminal charges, thereby justifying the act (Sarangi, 2002). The adivasis have continued to struggle and their irrevocable resistance against UAIL for over a decade now (sometimes also called as Kucheipadar movement). This project has affected more 25,000 adivasis. Over years, the district administration and other state institutions like the police have clubbed hands with the pro-company goons and have registered hundreds of cases against the anti-project agitators(Sarangi, 2002).

With the onset of liberalization and opening up of the core sectors of the economy to the private corporate entities, the conditions of the tribal people has further hit the skids. The Naveen

Patnaik government at the state was more open to the market and hence greatly relied on the corporate bodies to drive the development of the state. Resultantly, large tracts of lands and forests were made available to the corporate houses which originally belonged to the tribals. This has also resulted into increase of assertiveness among the tribals with regarding to their livelihoods and intense agitations by the dispossessed people against the government. In the beginning of the millennia the state witnessed number of uprisings against the so called 'development politics' of the state. To increase the productivity of the state along the neo-liberal lines, "the Government of Odisha signed a number of Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with various corporate entities to set up mineral-based industries all around the state. By 2014, The Government of Odisha had signed MoUs with ninety-three corporate entities in steel sector, twenty-eight in the power sector, three in aluminium, and four each in cement and ports and the rest for creation of downstream units. The corporate entities who had signed MoUs had committed investments of Rs Eight lakh crores of which Rs 2.15 lakh crores has already been grounded"(Business Standard, 2014). Thus, the Government of India wanted to protect its investments at any costs and this protection of the corporate bodies would often be at the cost of the lives of the tribals. Police firings at Maikanch in Rayagada district, killings of tribals Mandrabaju in Kandhamal district and killings around Kalinganagar protests, all could be related to the state trying to protect corporate investments.

Ever since, 1990s the Government of Odisha have been mooted to develop mega-industries in the mineral-rich region of Dangadi, Duburi and Sukinda located in the district of Jajpur. With the beginning of the millennia the state government decided to transform Kalinganagar, a place around the above regions in the Jajpur, into a steel hub. This started the inception of the Kalinganagar Industrial Complex. Padhi and Panigrahi note that Industrial Development Corporation of Orissa (IDCO) has a prominent role in acquiring tribal lands and inviting private entities into those lands. IDCO as a state government entity has been using repressive measures which the otherwise the corporate bodies could not. Padhi and Panigrahi note that IDCO has acquired around 13000 acres of lands from the tribals in the region and out of which 6900 acres have already been distributed to around twelve private bodies for steel industries (Padhi & Panigrahi, 2011). This complex was envisioned to have the capacity of producing 15 million tonnes of steel annually. The complex includes mineral based processing industries, such as iron and steel, stainless steel, and sponge iron and ferrochrome etc. Iron ore and chromites are found

abundantly in the region, making the companies easier to save transportation costs. All the major corporate houses, from India and abroad, such as the Tatas, Jindal, Mesco and some others, have their projects in the complex. In pursuance of the MoUs, the state government has granted mining leases to the concerned industrial units and provided them with land for setting up their industries. Padhi and Panigrahi argue that the state government had promised of proper rehabilitation before the proposed complex was built but instead they have used another public institution that of IDCO and used it to repress any voices against the industrial complex (Padhi & Sadangi, 2020). The industrial complex's establishment has also led to assertiveness among the local communities and this has led to struggles between them and often violent outbreaks between the two sides. The first recorded incident of violence relating to Kalinganagar Complex was when the ADM of Jajpur and some policemen were attacked by the local tribal communities during the *bhumipujan* of Maharashtra Seamless Limited (MSL) on 9th May 2005. Since then there has been reports of dozens of skirmishes between the police and IDCO officials on one side and the locals on the other side. The tribals of the region have repeatedly protested against the complex and also for proper resettlement. They have shown their dissatisfaction with the compensation or the payments they have received in exchange for their lands. The police working on behalf of the state government and often under the payroll of the private bodies of the complex have tried to suppress all kinds of discontentment shown by the locals against the complex. On 2nd January 2006, the police suppressed a rally of protestors and fired shots at them. In the encounter around thirteen people were killed, all of them belonged to the tribal community. The police in its statements have defended their action stating it a law and order issue and the deceased were threatening the social stability of the region. Such encounters around the complex were later witnessed again in the same year, this time at an inauguration of a sub-plant by TATA (Padhi & Panigrahi, 2011).

Another, strong movement by the tribals was centred on the UK based Vedanta Aluminium Company at Lanjigarh in the Kalahandi district around 2002. The Vedanta Aluminium works had proposed to mine bauxite out of Niyamgiri hills in Kalahandi. As discussed earlier, this region falls under the KBK region which is infamous around the nation for chronic poverty among its population. The government decided that the best way to develop the region is to establish mining and processing industries. Through its survey it found out that the Niyamgiri hills has a bauxite deposit of 195 million tonnes. Protests started immediately after 2002 when

the state officials and the police started acquiring land for the proposed alumina plant. One of the stark features of the Niyamgiri movement is that it attracted a lot of eyes, eyes of activists, non-tribal leaders, civil society organizations and media networks. The local communities which were affected mostly composed of Dongria Kondhs and occasionally Kutia Kondhs, all of them resided around the foothills of Niyamgiri hills. The Kondhs of the region not only considered Niyamgiri hills as the part of their livelihood system but also revered and worshipped it as a deity; considering themselves descendants of Niyamaraja who resided in the hills. When the local newspapers initially carried reports of proposed mining of 75 tonnes of bauxite from the hills, the Kondhs not only reacted as a threat to their livelihoods but also as an intrusion into their spiritual life (Borde & Bluemling, 2021). The adivasis resented to protesting against the proposed project by mass movements and protest rallies. On 7 April 2004, the *Niyamgiri Suraksha Samiti* (NSS), a civil society organization composed of activists, lawyers, tribal leaders and concerned citizens, organized a rally of 1,000 tribal people of the area under the banner called '*Vedanta Hatao*' (Remove Vedanta). This massive rally not only caught the eyes of the local media but also attracted trans-national and civil society organizations worldwide (Raj, 2017). Organizations like South Asia Amnesty International, Survival International and ActionAid did extensive field studies and published reports of repressive activities the state government have been inflicting on the tribals in order to materialize their project. These trans-national organizations joined in protests with the local organizations like the NSS and Green Kalahandi (Borde & Bluemling, 2021). These publications and protests by the trans-national organizations had a re-enculturation effect on the Indian media, where they later were forced to highlight the plight of the Kondhs against Vedanta. The continuous protests led the Supreme Court to intervene and in 2013 it passed the judgement in favour of the Kondh people rejecting forcible mining undertaken by the state government. The Supreme Court in its verdict stated "that the Dongria Kondhs would have the right and opportunity to decide within their Gram Sabha as to whether Niyamgiri was sacred to them and whether they were against the mining project. All the twelve Gram Sabhas unanimously rejected the proposed mining project forcing the Indian Ministry of Environment and Forest to ban the mining project in 2014. This entire process where the concerned community is empowered to decide upon the question of development thrust upon them, is often called as 'India's first Green Referendum' by the scholars" (Sharma D. , 2013). The Niyamgiri movement is a stark example of convergence of various civil society groups to meet

local concerns. There has been a lot of research done on the Niyamgiri movement because of the immense attention the movement received from the West. Partly because the Time Magazine published an article claiming the Niyamgiri condition resembles with the plot of the Hollywood blockbuster movie Avatar. Borde and Bluemling write about the role of spiritual essence and religious awakening as an instrument to mobilize the community. They analyse the Niyamgiri struggle through the lens of what Jean Baudrillard calls as ‘simulacra of a fantasy’ or a myth capable of stirring emotions. According to Baudrillard the capitalist discourse coming from outside marginalizes the mystic or the spiritual consciousness, which all pre-literate societies possess. To counter the hegemonic capitalist discourse the sub-altern communities need to resist capitalism by capturing the minds of the people through faith and religion which can be the best viable alternative to the capitalist narrative. Borde and Bluemling note that in the case of the Niyamgiri, this ‘enchanted simulacra’ not only happened at the national level but also at the global level. The comparisons were made between the Avatar movie and the Niyamgiri struggle worldwide media and theatres. Avatar movie is based on a planet where the residents are threatened by a mining company; this narrative attracted the minds of the Western audiences who could relate the Niyamgiri struggle to the movie. Survival International, a trans-national organization, made a video of the Dongria Kondhs worshipping the Niyamgiri hills and shared it in social media which grabbed a lot of attention in the West. Not only in the West, but also among the Kondhs there was a rejuvenation of consciousness relation to Niyamaraja. Adivasis engaged more into religiosity relating to Niyamgiri hills by offering sacrifices and rituals. The increased religiosity was more of a protest against the state and Vedanta. Even activists encouraged the Kondhs to restore their rituals and continue to worship Niyamgiri hills. This imagination of the Kondhs was also captured by the Supreme Court which based its judgement on the argument of recognizing the Niyamgiri hills as a deity of the Kondh community and respecting tribal religion and episteme (Borde & Bluemling, 2021).

Radhika Krishnan and Rama Naga have done a comparative study on the movements in Niyamgiri against the Vedanta Aluminium and the struggles against the POSCO in Jagatsinghpur. They have tried to identify how both of these movements are perceived ‘outside’ the locale or the local sphere of the movement. They show how a movement’s perception by the general public motivates or manipulates the state action. It is essential to mention the struggles against the POSCO Steel Plant in Jagatsinghpur, although the social base for this movement did

not include the adivasis. Korean multinational Pohang Steel Company Ltd (POSCO) had “signed a MoU with the Government of Odisha in 2005 to set up an integrated steel plant in Jagatsinghpur district”. The people around this place were mostly involved into paan cultivation and fisheries. As the local people felt threatened cause of POSCO plant, they turned towards agitations and protests. Hence, the movement around the POSCO plant was articulated by media and social activists as livelihood struggle. On the contrary, the Niyamgiri movement was centred on the Niyamgiri Hills being an abode of Niyamaraja, who is the ancestors of all the Dongria Kondhs. Thus, this movement had an ‘extra-material’ element attached to it. Both the movements had the claimed recognition of Forest Rights Act, 2006, (FRA) to secure the livelihoods and as a weapon to make their case stronger. But in the case of Niyamgiri struggle, invocation of the indigenous episteme was able to capture the imagination of the people outside the sphere of the struggle. Survival International, with its influential documentary on the ‘Sacred Mountain’ and eco-scholars like Vandana Shiva describing the hills as a ‘life-giving hill’ was able to give the Niyamgiri struggle a greater legitimacy than the POSCO movement which was perceived by the media as just another livelihood struggle (Krishnan & Naga, 2017). Frustrations in the capitalist discourse lead the society to look towards alternative and this case tribal social life and pre-modern episteme serves as a perfect reference point. Thus, tribal religion and its closeness to nature serve as an alternative to fight the dominant capitalist narrative of development. It not only creates a viable alternative in front of the mainstream population and media but also brings a rejuvenated consciousness among the tribal social life with regards to their culture and religion. This facet is also discussed in the next chapter.

Another important facet of tribal land alienation due to ‘development’ is the fact that majority of the jobs that are created after the industries are set up requires semi-skilled or skilled or skilled workers which the adivasis do not possess. Hence, the majority of the jobs created are held by on-tribals who steadily then influence into the tribal lands. This further leads to tribes migrating into cities for low-skilled and manual jobs like the construction workers or daily wage labourers. Jagannath Ambagudia highlights the migration among the tribals and how majority of these migrations are related to tribal land alienation and depredation of their livelihoods due to developmental projects. He finds that migration is more acute in the southern part of Odisha because of continuous mega projects like the ones discussed above (Ambagudia, 2019).

Minati Dash examines rights based legislation like PESA and FRA and concludes that legislations might not always be a safety net against tribal land alienation. She examines the Kashipur struggle against the UAIL and the Niyamgiri movement. She stresses to study both of these movements within the framework of the existing legal rights available before the adivasis. Minati dash claims that in the Kashipur struggle the available framework was PESA while in the case of Niyamgiri struggle FRA was used a reference to claim legitimacy over the hills. Dash claims that the PESA legislated in Odisha was not to the spirit of the PESA of the centre, thereby nullifying the essence of PESA. She says that the PESA legislated in Odisha gave authority to the Zila Parishad which is against the original PESA guidelines. In the case of FRA, the rights were bestowed on the Gram Sabhas which became a shield for the local people as the Vedanta was found to be non-complaint with the FRA guidelines and the project was revoked. However, Dash also warns that mere legislations cannot ensure protection of tribal lands from alienation. In fact ever since FRA was implemented in the state in 2006, “close to 12,000 hectares of forest land have been diverted for mining and refining infrastructure and the rate of mining–industrial development is at an all time high”. This shows that mere passing of rights does not ensure protection of communities from exploitation. The rights need to be implemented keeping in mind the socio-historical status and ecology of the communities (Dash, 2016).

The problem of tribal land alienation has been pertinent ever since the time of the independence of Odisha. In 1956, Orissa Scheduled Areas Transfer of Immovable Property (by Scheduled Tribes) (OSATIP) Regulation was introduced to check tribal land alienation and fraudulent transfer of tribal land. But since then the legislation has been amended multiple times; so much that the legislation has not been successful in regulating the alienation of tribal land in Odisha. Meanwhile, the state government has made an attempt to “dilute the provisions of OSATIP Regulation in 2010, allowing the transfer of tribal land to the non-tribals. The bill was passed by the Governor but failed to receive assent from the President. Since, then the state government has been looking for various options including constituting an inter-ministerial committee to relook at the matter” (Ambagudia, 2021).

3.2 Leadership, Organization, Role of Civil Society Groups and NGOs

Much of the available literature on the tribal movements during the colonial period does not talk much about the organizational structure of the tribal movements. All most all the literature available has shown these tribal movements as personality-driven. Tribal leaders like Dora Bissoi, Chakra Bissoi, Ratna Nayak, Dharanidhara Nayak, Sadhu Jani, Birsa Munda, Surendra Sai etc. have been shown as heroic figures with almost leading the uprising single-handedly. Also much of these movements have been shown as messianic movements. Movements like Ghumsur uprising under Dora and Chakra Bissoi and Birsa Munda movements have been described as messianic movements because they aimed at taking the tribal social life back to the glory days of the past, instead of aiming to carve a piece out of modernity. Going by the traditional differentiation between movement and an uprising, even the Niyamgiri Movement would not classify as a movement but as an uprising. But that is not the case, Niyamgiri movement or the movements during colonial period were very much movements even though the participants of the movements look to find inspiration from antiquity. The movements during the colonial period and the ones Odisha is witnessing post-liberalization, both are essentially livelihood struggles and movements to safeguard their traditional modes of life. It is essential to study how much the struggles during the colonial period were personality driven or were there any associated structures that facilitated these uprisings. Sahay maintains that the uprisings like the Ghumsur rising should not be seen as an uprising to protect traditional religion or Meriah tradition. Instead he says that these revolts are a result of incremental change in the modes of production which the British administration introduced in the tribal social life over a century prior to the revolts (Sahay, 2002). With regards to leadership, many tribal movements in the colonial period found leadership in non-tribal faces. Ghumsur uprising found many non-tribal leaders fighting for tribal issues. Even during the Congress movement, INC leaders like Radhakrushna Biswasray and Sadashiv Tripathy mobilized tribal people and became the face of the tribal issues (Mishra, 1997).

As discussed earlier, the British altered the social and economic life of the adivasis, a situation which was never elucidated instead the situation just reproduced itself in the post-colonial period. In addition to these, there was prevalence of “*gothi* (a form of a bonded labour) and *bethi* (a kind of slavery)” among the tribes on the southern part of Odisha. Post-independence these

problems were addressed by the Communist Party of India, which had a strong leadership and organization in the districts of Ganjam and Koraput. To address the problems of the adivasis of the region, the Communist Party leaders like “Bhuban Mohan Pattnaik, Nagabhushan Pattnaik, Purna Chandra Gomango, Purushottam Pali and Jagannath Mishra formed the Adivasi Sangha in 1952” (Behera, 2020). The issues of the tribals have been largely articulated by the left parties, sometimes by radical left. This has led the state to crackdown the adivasis often on the name of security. Anshuman Behera argues that often popular demands are often articulated by organizations under a revolutionary brand because the mainstream political parties have failed to address them (Behera, 2020). Organizations like the Malkangiri Adivasi Sangha (MAS) and the Chasi Mulia Adivasi Sangh (CMAS) have often been labelled as extremist groups with Maoist nexus by the state. Behera gives the example of CMAS as an organization which has not only fought against the repressive state policies but has been successful in doing so. He states that in Bandhugaon and Narayanpatna blocks of Koraput, CMAS has been able to reclaim around 600 acres of tribal land often through violent skirmishes. Behera stresses that it is necessary to examine how much popular support these revolutionary organizations like CMAS have within tribals. In such cases, these organizations have been able to provide better relief from land alienation that state. He says that by labelling the land alienation movements within the larger Maoist insurgency, “the state conveniently shifts its focus to the security aspects, overlooking the genuine grievances of the people” (Behera, 2020).

Not all organizations have tried to mobilize the adivasis under revolutionary grounds; in fact most have used traditional means of protest like *dharnas*, *hartals* and strikes. Post-independence, the issues relating to the tribal life not only found voices within tribes but also among non-tribals. Social activists, writers, anthropologists, sociologists, research scholars, film makers, human rights groups and various NGOs have been part of the adivasis in their struggle and helped them articulate their issues in front of the state. In the Kashipur Movement against UAIL, the adivasis organized themselves under an umbrella organization called Prakutika Sampada Surkshya Parishad (PSSP) or Council for Protection of Natural Resources. PSSP played a vital role in leading the fight against UAIL in Kucheipadar in Kashipur. It has used various kinds of non-violent tactics to demand the withdrawn of UAIL. In September 1996, PSSP organized a huge rally and protest of over six thousand adivasis against UAIL. When the UAIL officials did not pay heed, PSSP approached the district collector of Rayagada. Also in

1998, PSSP organized a referendum among 40 villages in the areas surrounding UAIL, in which around 96 per cent villagers opted against the UAIL project. PSSP then organized a public hearing of the referendum in front of the UAIL officials and this led to UAIL postponing the project till 2000. Post the Maikanch firings of 16th December of 2000, the PSSP has been commemorating that day in the local area as ‘Martyrs Day’. The day has been commemorated in the local areas since; and in 2006, then convener for National Alliance for People’s Movement (NAPM), Medha Patkar had participated (Srikant, 2009). Other micro level organizations who have led the adivasis in the Kucheipadar movement are “*Aragamee, Ankuran, Laxman Nayak Society, Basundhara Surakhya Samiti, Anchaklika Vanasampada Surakhya Samiti and Baphlimali Surakhya Samiti*. Similarly, organizations like *Loka Shakti Abhiyan* (LSA) of Lanjigarh, *Niyamgiri Surakhya Samiti* (NSS) Lanjigarh, *Green Kalahandi, Niyamgiri Bachao Samiti* (NBS), *Niyamgiri Surakhya Abhiyan* (NSA), *Samajbadi Jana Parishad* (SJP), *Kalahandi Sachetan Nagarika Manch* etc.” have been active in leading their fight against Vedanta Aluminium Limited in Lanjigarh (Pattnaik, 2013). These micro-organizations are mostly constituted by the local adivasis but there are occasional help of the non-tribal activists and civil society groups who provide with tactical as well as logistical help. The non-tribal help and leadership are not only in the form of organizing adivasis and staging *dharnas* but also doing research and provide reports to the state regarding rehabilitation and forceful eviction. These organizations are mostly small and local entities, however they coordinate with each other while leading mass protest rallies; similar to a consortium. There have been instances where the non-tribal activists and intellectuals have directly been involved in the protests; consequently, many have been charged with criminal charges. “Prafulla Samantara President of *Lokashakti Abhiyan Orissa*, Achyut Das President of the NGO *Aragamee*, Nayan Dash and Lingaraj Azad of *Samajbadi Jana Parishad*” are some of the key non-tribal faces of the tribal movements. The state government took action upon these local organizations and NGOs. Many NGOs like *Aragamee, Ankuran*, etc. were de-recognized by the state and “their funding from the state government was discontinued. The Central Government and other aid agencies were asked adversely to stop funding these NGOs. The offices were raided by the police, employees were arrested and FIR and criminal cases were filed against many NGO workers. These litigations drained their time, resources and motivations to continue their battle against the mega-projects” (Pattnaik, 2013).

In addition to local organizations and NGOs, Christian Missionaries who have had a long presence in the tribal areas of the state also supported some of the tribal resistance movements against the state and corporate bodies. “On 5th February 2010, the Church of England declared to withdraw its 2.5 million pounds worth investment from the VAL’s mining project upon the instigation and approach of the Christian Missionaries working in the Niyamgiri area, on the grounds of VAL endangering the lives and livelihoods of the local adivasis” (Pattnaik, 2013).

Not only local organizations but trans-local organizations have also played a significant role in highlighting the issues of the tribes in the national and the global level. International NGOs like ACTION AID, CARE INDIA, HIVOS, Norwatch and Survival International have played important role in mobilizing and articulating the tribal issues. “The ACTION AID with the help of *Sanhati* (an NGO at Kashipur) helped some tribal leaders to go to Delhi to give press statements protesting against the UAIL project”. Similarly, “Norwatch from Norway collected the opinion of the victims of the Kashipur area about the ongoing project and its compensation packages. The report by the Norwatch, about the protesting people of Kashipur, forced the Norwegian company Norsk Hydro to withdraw itself from the project (UAIL) in 1998” (Pattnaik, 2013). In the Niyamgiri movement, Survival International played a key role by producing a documentary on the tribes around Niyamgiri and their protest against VAL. This led to various human rights organizations, within and outside India, acknowledging the forceful eviction and loss of livelihoods among the tribes due to the project.

Examining the ‘nine theses’ on new social movements given by Martha Fuentes and A. G. Frank, the tribal movements witnessed especially in the latter half of the 20th century and the 21st century comply with some of the features espoused by them. One of them is that, these movements have been ‘anti-systemic’ movements and not ‘anti-regime’ movements. As in, the majority of these movements have been mainly against the ‘development induced displacement’ pattern rather than of the state as such. Further, these movements do not espouse to carve a part of the state power as the classical social movements aspired. Another key feature that makes these ‘development induced movements’ as part of the new social movements is the fact that these movements are led by a consortium and network of activists, scholars, intellectuals, civil society groups and NGOs. Scholastic reports and tactical manoeuvres by these organizations have led to some of these movements becoming successful. Examining the theses of Fuentes and Frank it could be said that these movements as part of new social movement. But it has to be also

kept in mind that although these movements do not seek to carve out state power but it supplements other sub Thus, it could be said that if the movements in the colonial period were aimed at a reactionary project to bring back to old days, the modern tribal movements have accepted the nation-state framework and have tried to achieve their demands within this framework. The tribal movements post liberalization has tried to alter the discourse on development and to that extent they have been successful. Frustrations within the capitalist discourse has led the intellectuals and scholars all around the world to look for viable alternatives and this led many of them to look towards tribal social life. The sustainable ontological relationship, the tribes have with nature, has attracted renewed interest to study tribal episteme. This is evident in the growing number of Ayurvedic colleges around tribal areas, especially areas like Gandhamardan and Niyamgiri, which were previously epicentres of protest against capitalist development (Padhi & Sadangi, 2020).

SUMMING UP

As discussed in the entirety of the chapter that the politics around displacement of the people has been an ongoing process, right from the colonial period to the 21st century. Forceful displacement of people has in fact accentuated in past two decades. Some scholars have even gone on to say that history of Odisha is nothing but history of dispossession and displacement (Padhi & Sadangi, 2020). If dispossession in the colonial period was because of forest produce, the ones post-independence were because of minerals. In fact, in the colonial period the large deposits of minerals turned out to be a curse for the local people. If during the colonial period the relations among the tribes to their land were altered, in the post colonial period this alienation was only accentuated. Land alienation has been normalized to the level that, displacement of people has become an acceptable norm for the development of the nation-state as a whole.

The story of “development of the urban upper and middle class India” and “displacement of the poor marginalized Bharat” seems to be the new cleavage within the nation state. Livelihood struggles of the marginalized leads the mainstream society to look into the life styles of the tribes and other marginalized sections and draw inspirations from them. In the case of the tribals, the tribals have developed a sustainable relationship with a nature by developing agricultural methods for scant and rugged terrains of hills and slopes. Further, the tribals also seem to be frustrated with the seventy odd years of development politics in the independent India. Vast majority of the adivasis have still not benefitted from the ‘fruits’ of development. For e.g. even after decades of mineral based development in Odisha the “adivasi literacy rate continues to be 52.2 per cent while the general literacy rate is 72.9 per cent. Similarly, the admission statistics of 2010 in the higher education indicates that the admission rate within the adivasi communities of Odisha is 10.94 per cent (6,328 out of 57,812) for matriculation degree and 10.38 per cent (2,330 out of 22,430) at the plus-two and plus-three degree levels, respectively” (Ambagudia, 2019)

Legislations like the PESA and FRA to some extent have been able to rectify some of the issues pertaining to land rights of the adivasis. Further, the “current discourse on tribal movements and tribal empowerment mainly revolves around securing well-defined rights to land and forests through participatory practices”. This a mere extension of the ‘rights based empowerment’ as conceived within the discourses of the West. Instead, efforts need to be paid to study the ecology and the ontological relationship the adivasis have with nature. Further, the integration of the

tribes with modernity has not been an incremental method but rather a forceful one. Adivasis within their natural ecology have their own ontology and associated norms and attributes. With forceful dispossession, they are forced into market economy where they have no knowledge of its norms and rules. Thus, civil society organizations and state need to impart skill based education within the tribal communities before integrating them with the mainstream society and economy. Scholars have also proposed that a uniform policy across all tribal communities is not suitable and would rather be detrimental. In fact, policies need to be framed keeping in mind of the distinct ethos of distinct tribal communities (Dungdung & Pattnaik, 2020). Policies formed by the state and the central government need to be acquainted and aware about the distinct ecology where the community lives in and form policies that are community centric. With the ascendance of globalization as the main reference point for development has only increased differences and disparities among marginalized communities. It is high time there should be complete restructuration of the development politics along sustainable lines.

4

Pathalgadi Movement

The tribal displacements and land alienation has resulted into tribals asserting themselves into strong popular movements. Much of these movements are primarily political in nature and are directed against state. The state on its part has been systematically taken away the land and the resources which were so important to the tribal ways of living. These movements often resort to violent methods of protest and thereby making them susceptible to violent state crackdown. However, the tribes have often developed other methods of protest. This might include going back to antiquity and reinstating age old practices as a symbol against repressive and extractive policies of the state. Communities often resort to symbols and practices which creates a greater awareness and a sense of solidarity. These symbols and customs become powerful instruments of resistance as it unites the community for a common purpose. Thus the movement becomes synonymous with that particular symbol. One such movement that has been brewing for quite a long period of the time is the Pathalgadi movement among the tribes of the Chotanagpur Plateau. This movement tends to adopt and improvise upon an age old practice called Pathalgadi to demand their rights. The movement seeks to erect stones and scribe on it existing legislations on decentralization and rights granted to them through the constitution. The key demand was that the Gram Sabhas be made completely independent and sovereign over Scheduled Areas. This chapter would try to explain the dynamics of the Pathalgadi movement. It would explain the Pathalgadi as a tradition in the antiquity and would compare with the one that has emerged in modernity. Second, it would discuss the conditions that led to the inception of Pathalgadi Movement, the constitutional provisions and grounds that have become synonymous and analogous with the particular movement. Although, much of the movement's epicentre has been in and around Jharkhand yet some parts of the movement has its effect in Odisha. In this light this chapter would discuss how the repressive practices of the government are no different irrespective of the state boundaries. The narratives provided by the state governments are often similar with regard to the movement and its leaders. Thus, the political parties seem to align in matters of tribal resistance.

The act of Pathalgadi itself has seen its fair share of evolution. In the past the act meant something else while today it plays a complete role. Sometimes there might be similarity in the

acts of the past and the present. In short, there are many layers within the movement. And all of them need careful introspection to understand the dynamics of the movement at a broader length.

4.1 Pathalgadi Movement in the Antiquity

Pathalgadi movement in the contemporary times emerged around late 2016, especially among the communities of Munda, Ho, Kharia, Oraon and Santhal tribes. Gradually the movement has spread to other adivasi communities of the region like the Khariyas and Ho. Today these communities mainly fall within the Khunti, Gumla, Simdega and West Singhbhum districts of Jharkhand, Jashpur, Sarguja and Korba district of Chhattisgarh and Sundergarh district of Odisha. Some instances of Pathalgadi movement have also been witnessed in parts of Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal. But the act has a complete different meaning within the tribal customs and is has been a part of tribal life systems, it is just that the non-tribal society was not aware of the importance of the practice within tribal community. Today, it is symbolic with protest that is primarily against state and its agencies which has systematically, over years, taken away the lands and the forests from the tribes.

It is important to understand the composition of tribes of Chotanagpur region which would explain the broader context under which the contemporary movement is taking place. The tribes were originally completely insulated from the mainstream population in the region. The adivasis of the region belong to the Austro-Asiatic family and linguistically all the tribes are affiliated to the Mundari language. The Mundari language has evolved into number of languages like Santhali, Kurukh, Ho, Korwa, Kharia, Juang, Korku, Gorum, Saora, Remo, Gutub, Gata etc. Thus because of common ancestry between the tribes of the region they often have common practices and rituals that bear similar attributes. The Mundas claim that they are the original inhabitants of these lands of the hill tracts and resources like water, land and forests continue to be sacrosanct to the lives of tribal communities. Thus, the lives of the tribal communities around the region still continue to revolve around “*Jal, Jangal aur Jameen*” and the tribes continue to struggle to ensure it.

4.1.1 Graveyards as Title records

Pathalgadi simply means to erect a stone or to fix a stone. The practice was initially associated with dead people and was done in order to pay respect or remember the ancestors. The Mundas used the term *Sasandiri* for the particular act. However, there were other quite similar practices

too that involve similar method of installing stone plaques. A form of placing stone called as *Burudiri* is practiced by the tribe to demarcate the area among the villages. Another form of placing stones is called *Tydidiri*, is conducted among tribes to display common messages and acts as a communicative device within the tribal community. Among these, *Sasandiri* was the most prominent form of Pathalgadi and it held deep intrinsic value to the tribal life. The ancestry and ancestral land holds a much deeper meaning and importance to the tribal ways of life than the mainstream civilization. For the adivasis in the region the ancestors were the pioneers of the land, messianic figures who ordained this divine piece of land which bore them all fruits and made them self-sufficient. The pioneers of the clan who settled in these lands made pacts with the ‘spirits of the forest’ and secured the clan from calamities. Hence, the divine spirits of the ancestors are to be revered and the graveyards are holy places where their spirits are commemorated. Thus, graveyards are ‘icons of territorial belonging’ for the Munda tribes (Verardo, 2003). Graveyards are the sacred institution that links the tribe with the ancestors and the territory they demarcated for them. This, practice of the adivasis of the region was marked and written by the colonial ethnographers too. One such account states the following:

“The burial customs of the Mundaris, whereby they restrict (with certain exceptions) the privilege of *Sasandiri*, that is, the placing of a flat stone in the graveyard of the village to members of the original clan which established the village, is a practically infallible test of (1) whether a Mundari claimant is a member of the original clan which established the village; (2) whether the claimant is a Mundari.”(Macpherson, 1908)

The communities did not have property deeds and title deeds like the mainstream civilization understood or as are prevalent in the contemporary times. The graveyards acted as the title deeds over land they lived. The elders in the tribes would communicate with the younger ones by referencing the graveyards and how ‘the ancestors were sleeping underneath the lands’. The objectivity of these graveyards would often include social issues like land demarcation but that objectivity would be layered under deep religious values. Thus, the graveyards were the fulcrum of the Mundari tribes of the region and alienating from this ancestral land meant alienating from the tribal identity itself. Even in the contemporary times, the tribals invoke their ancestors before chopping down any tree in the ancestral lands. The laws of the forests call for sacrifice and the ancestors had given their fair share of sacrifices and those sacrifices ensured the lands the tribes

lived in. Thus, graveyards were deeply personal and spiritual experiences for the tribes, and Sasandiri an act which give the tribes entitlements over the holy land of the ancestors. But this method of entitlements located in graveyards and stone plaques was challenged by the extractive colonial administration. And this resulted into tribal land rights taking a different form under the colonial administration.

4.1.2 Graveyards to Land Records: Tribal land alienation under Colonial Administration

With the onset of the colonial administration there was a change in the conception of land rights in the entirety of the sub-continent. It is not that the tribes were completely encysted and insulated from the mainstream Hindu civilization until the arrival of British. But the relationship between the Hindu kingdoms and the tribal chieftains were often of religious nature than political.(Verardo, 2003) The Hindu kings would attend legitimacy by patronizing the local deity and the grants collected from the tribal lands would be in voluntary manner. The kings would not encourage forced labour and grants collected from the tribal lands would not be considered as rent (Verardo, 2003, pp. 96-98). However, all of these were about to change. As mentioned in the earlier chapters, the introduction of the Zamindari system of land rights changed drastically the livelihoods of the adivasi communities in the region. With the arrival of the British the voluntary payments were replaced and non-tribals were made headmen of the villages (Verardo, 2003, pp. 98-100). Around 1840s the forested regions of the area were declared “reserved forests and put under the authority of Imperial Forest Department”. Forest reserves were achieved by systematically dislocating the tribes from the region so as to extract timber and export those produces to Europe. Many tribal villages were forcefully evacuated in the region (Areeparampil, 1984). This would give rise to first conflicts between the tribal communities and the colonial administration. With the tribes claiming the lands on the basis of clan graveyards and the colonial administration insisting upon lack of documentation. The agents of the empire who would often be the Hindus would understand the importance of graveyards and its testimony of being tribal lands but they would often turn deaf to tribal woes. Following excerpts from the British records show the understanding about Pathalgadi and Sasandiri graveyard traditions of Munda communities. As a Settlement Officer records in 1908:

“When the reservation of the jungle came and with it the evictions, the infringement of their ancient customary right was obvious even to them, and was immediately resented. They made light of their pattas from the rent receiver and to use the words of the Joint Forest Settlement Report, protested that the memorial stones of their ancestors were their pattas” (Macpherson, 1908, pp. 160-161).

Another account in the same report goes on like this:

“The Joint Forest Settlement Officers' Report of 1887 mentions the objections to reservation of Mundas and Mankis who pointed to their burial stones, the pattas of their race”(Macpherson, 1908, p. 139).

The above accounts show that the colonial administration would be often aware about the clan graveyards and the epistemic relationship that the graves bore with their lands yet they would perform extractive functions for the consolidation of the empire. Gradually the local Hindu kings were disposed and the entireties of the tribal lands were made under the subjection of the colonial administration. The tribal land alienation and subjection by the colonial administration resulted in massive upheaval among the tribal communities. The British used repressive policies like forceful evacuation and forced labour. This period of intense struggle with the British led to the insurrection called as Kol rebellion (1831-1832). The rebellion was a united front of the Munda, Santhal and Ho communities who resorted to armed rebellion against the British forces. The British had imposed taxes on number of goods some of them which were akin to their ways of living, something as simple as rice beer or *handia* were put under taxation (Sahay, 2002). The tribal people were made aware and socialized through loose networks of leaders which operated primarily through Gram Sabhas (Correndo, 2021). The immediate cause of the rebellion was that the traditional land or *Manki* lands were granted to non-tribals. This resulted into massive agitation among the Munda and five other paraganas which were then under the British administration as South West Frontier Agency (SWFA) (Sahay, 2002). The movement was successful in a way because the British were forced to change their tribal policies after the rebellion. The armed resistances faced by the British made them change their tactics and they resorted to other methods than mere violence. The Kol insurgency also brought changes in the discourses of colonial literature. No more they were referred as savages and barbarians and instead their ‘state’ was addressed in relation their primitive modes of living (Correndo, 2021).

The British introduced a new legal framework to govern the SWFA or the Chotanagpur region. Thus, the colonial administration brought separate system of governance in scheduled and non-scheduled areas. The laws of the presidency would not apply directly over the Chotanagpur region. Under this arrangement, “Sir Thomas Wilkinson was made the Governor General’s agent to SWFA. Wilkinson adopted 31 rules adopted within the broader framework of the Regulation XIII of 1833 which came into force in 1834 in the SWFA” (Correndo, 2021). The chief idea behind Wilkinson Rules (WR) was to bring the tribal chieftains within the fold of colonial machinery. This mechanism of administration was paraded not only in Chotanagpur region but the entirety of the sub-continent as the model of governance. However, it was just another method of penetrating into the tribal means of life, albeit in a subtle manner. Das Gupta says that this was nothing but divisionary tactics and by including the tribal chieftains within the fold of the administration, the colonial state had ensured lack of rebellions and protest. He remarks that the aim of the colonial state was to transform the “tribal warriors into model subjects, submitting them to strict tax and administrative rules and pigeonholing them into specific groups with well defined traits” (Gupta, 2017). Scholars also contend that this method of administration adopted by the colonial state was built upon the idea to penetrate tribal means of knowledge. The colonial administration during this period introduced missionaries and English education system which made the tribes aware of their primitive means of living. It is after all change in the knowledge system which makes them aware either they are ‘primitive’ or not (Gupta, 2017)(Correndo, 2021). Thus the colonized subject not only becomes a political object but also object of knowledge. This change in the knowledge production coupled with land alienation in the early decades built conditions of mistrust and this was directed towards all non-tribals or dikus. By the beginning of the 20th century the ‘graveyard proofs’ were completely made redundant and the colonial administration brought new kinds of property ownership (Verardo, 2003, p. 103). Soon with the aggressive policies of the British, the region of Chotanagpur became hotbeds for one of the most famous adivasi movement, the Birsa movement of 1895-1900. Birsa movement was a messianic movement with a post-apocalyptic vision of ‘original’ Munda kingdom and death of all *Dikus* (Verardo, 2003). It called for *Ulgulan* (revolution) among the tribes of Central India. Birsa called the tribes to give up Christian missionaries and move back to tribal ways of life. He attacked the Anglican and Roman Catholic missionaries and asked the people to follow their indigenous religion (Neeraj, 2009). Following his arrest and release he asked the tribes the

completely boycott the authority of Queen Victoria and ordered the tenant farmers not to pay rent. The Mundas called him *Dharti Aaba* (Father of Earth).

The Birsa movement was repressed violently by the colonial administration. Birsa died in jail in 1901 and the followers of the movement were put into jail (Sahay, 2002). The rebellions forced the colonial administrations to bring wholesale changes to the administrative patterns in the scheduled areas. Post the intense Birsa movement, the colonial administration introduced laws like Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (CNT Act) in 1908 and Santhal Paragana Tenancy Act in 1876 which were aimed at protecting the tribal lands from sale and transfer to non-tribals. This was a huge success for the Munda tribes. Their traditional *Khuntkatti* lands and rights were restored and the adivasis were given the right to self govern themselves. The rights basically prohibited the illegal sale and fraudulent transfer of tribal land. These acts recognized the claims of the adivasis over their lands also called as Khunts. This was nothing short of a victory for the adivasis of the Chotanagpur region who had struggled against the extractive policies of the British for over a hundred years. Sahay reckons that the Birsa movement was the precursor to National Movement (Sahay, 2002). Moreover, the laws like the WR and CNT Act have become symbols of resistance. Often tribes are not aware of the contents of the laws and legislations but they know the symbolic value and are aware of the fact that the laws enable the tribals to assert their rights over their land (Correndo, 2021). Over the past years these particular laws have become synonymous with tribes of the region and have become the part of the customary law. Although there are some exceptions to the laws but largely these laws enabled the tribes to assert their rights over the lands. The Pathalgadi movement which the region is witnessing today is a result of the state government trying to bring amendments to these laws and the adivasis trying to protect their lands. However, before discussing upon the details on Pathalgadi movement, it is important to discuss about the social life and the traditional means of self governance among the adivasis of the region.

4.1.3 Social Life and Self-Governance among the Adivasis of Chotanagpur Region

The Mundas, the Oraons, the Hos and the other tribal communities residing in the Chotanagpur region call themselves as the forest people. As in by forest people they mean that they ‘cut down they forest and make rice’ (Verardo, 2003). The tribes traditionally engaged in shifting cultivation. They would chop down the forests and settle for agriculture. It is this transformation of the forests into agricultural lands is considered as the defining activity of the group. The traditional lands are called as *Khunts* and houses are called as *Hatus*. The villages are called as *KhuntkattiHatus* meaning village of original settlers, group that had originally cleared the forests and settled for agriculture. The polity of the adivasis revolved around pre-state village republic with no conception of private ownership of property (Singh A. , 2019). The tribes have their own indigenous methods of self-governance. *Parha* is the form of governance and administrative system that is performed among the tribes of the region. Although the term may differ from tribe to tribe but it is generally based upon villages and individuals playing distinct special role. *Parha* is a group of villages with each village divided on the basis of a customary role or right. Though the customary right is conferred on a particular individual, the entire village is based on that particular customary role. There can be many types of social roles under which *Parhas* are divided among village. The chief among them being is Parha Raja or head of the cluster of villages. Other important office bearers within *Parha* system are *Kotwar*, *Salahkar* and *Dewan*. The chieftain or the Parha Raja performs some essential functions these are-

- “To solve all kinds of disputes within the *Parha*”.
- “To deliver justice”.
- “To maintain peace and harmony in the *Parha*”.
- “To maintain and promote social and cultural institutions”.
- “To lead the annual social functions of *Bisu Sikar* and *Parha Jatra* and other cultural practices”.
- “To ensure justice in the *Parha-villages*” (Ekka, 2018a).

The whole village acknowledged the chieftainship of the *Parha Raja* of the “Munda in matters temporal as well as spiritual” (Singh A. , 2019). They grouped themselves “into a wider brotherhood of villages termed *Parha* or *Patti* and laid the foundation of a supra-village, pre-state, tribal polity” (Singh A. , 2019). The “strongest and most influential of the Mundas became the *Manki* of the *Patti*. The village was governed by the traditional Panchayat system which was

mainly composed of chief of the Munda *Parhas* and the *Pahans* (religious head) and village elders”. This method of governance was based in infusing religion, polity and societal norms into a composed whole. Thus the *Parha Panchayats* were not only a political instrument but a religious one too. It was obligatory on the part of the villages and the members of the villages to play their significant function which has been assigned to the particular village. Thus, not abiding by the *Parha Panchayats* was an act of sacrilege for the Mundas (Singh A. , 2019).

Scholars claim that the citizenship provided within the purview of *Parha* system is more inclusive and is based upon duties and rights (Ekka, 2018a). In this manner the *Parha* system exemplifies the civic republican tradition where the citizenship of an individual in the political community is linked to the duty he performs not on rights. *Parha* system of governance is primarily within the Munda community but identical forms of governance could be also witnessed within other tribes of the region albeit in a different name. Some of the names and forms of governance are mentioned in the table below.

Name of the Tribe	Governance System	Head of the Parha
Oraon	Parha-Patti	Parha Raja
Munda	Parha	Munda Raja
Santhal	Paragana	Paraganait
Ho	Pir	Manki Pir
Kharria	Doklo	Doklo Sohor

(Ekka, 2018a)

Another striking feature of the *Parha* or the *Manki* system of the Panchayats is that all the traditional offices and office bearers worked without any payments. As the adivasi communities in their antiquity did not have the same monetary conceptions as the modern world so the private exchange for public offices were non-existent. In fact the public offices were amalgamated within the larger purview of religion and performing public institutions were considered sacred (Ekka, 2018a).

The autonomy of the original Parha Panchayats system of the tribes was considerably depleted after the advent of the feudal rule of the Rajas in the Chotanagpur plateau region and with the establishment of different local chiefdoms.

“Patti or Parha-Panchayat system survived, but became subservient and subjugated to the new structure” introduced by the British. Under the colonial rule, “the Pir-Parha system was amalgamated into the Raj framework and persons associated with village governance were converted into state officials. The process of land alienation and forceful payment of rent from the *Khuntkattidars* intensified at an unprecedented rate” (Singh A. , 2019). This lead up resulted into insurrections and rebellions which forced the British to bring laws like CNT Act in 1908. Thus the land patterns and self-governance mechanisms have evolved considerably over time among the tribal communities of the region.

Some scholars have gone on to take Marxist way of interpreting the changes in the tribal social system. The change in the ownership of the modes of production has had a resultant effect over the superstructures that govern the social life. When the mode of production was in the hands of the capable and elder members of the community the *Manki* system was evolved. When the mode of production shifted into the hands of *Nagbansi* rulers, there 'agrarian based feudalism' became the dominant economic and governance system. While, with the advent of the British rule, the mode of production was controlled by the British appointed landlords, giving rise to the *Zamindari* system of land ownership (Sahay, 2002). However, ever since the adivasis have lost their original mode of governance there control over resources seems to be lost and the land alienation among them continues to rise.

As discussed earlier, the Munda tribes erect stones for number of purposes. *Sasandiri* to commemorate the ancestors, *Burudiri* to demarcate the lands, *Tydidiri* to display political and social messages and *Hukumdiri* to instruct the clan or the outsiders are some the major forms of Pathalgadi or placing a stone is practiced among the tribes of the region. The Munda customary practice prescribes that any member of the tribe who dies in any place other than the clan village or *Khuntkattihatu*, his or her remains is to be brought to the same *Sasandiri* of the clan or tribe. This act or custom is called as ‘*Hadgadi*’, where the bones and other remains of the dead person are brought back to the *Sansandiri* of his or her ancestors. Thus, ancestral land or the *Khunts* play an important role in the socio-cultural life of the adivasis and is part of their social construction (Ekka, 2018). In short the act of Pathalgadi was done to mark happy or sad event in

tribal life, and most importantly, to mark any significant event in tribal life. Interestingly, the debate around Pathalgadi tradition has not stopped even in modernity and this time the adivasis have resorted to using the tradition to assert their constitutional rights.

4.2 Pathalgadi Movement in Modernity

According to Munda folklore the first Pathalgadi of any ‘political nature’ was conducted when Risa Munda, whom the Mundas revere as the original Munda and the father of all Mundas, chose the land of Chotanagpur and erected a stone by declaring the land as the land of all Mundas. Another form of Pathalgadi called Hukumdiri started around the colonial period. These were constructed as warning signs for the British administration. *Hukum* in local language means order and these stones were like orders to all outsiders to stay away from the tribal lands. The Pathalgadi movement which the area is witnessing today is also a kind of *Hukumdiri* where the adivasis have inscribed some legislation from the constitution and these stones are directed towards so called outsiders or ‘others’. The adivasis have inscribed on the stone slab on certain provisions of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution, and the sections which provide for their protection of land. These stone slabs are erected by the Gram Sabhas of the villages, “which on the one hand, drawing its powers of legitimacy from the constitutional provisions. On the other hand, they are based on the demand and autonomy of the on the customary practice of *Parha Panchayat* to assign more power to the *Mankis* (head of Parha)” (Singh A. , 2019).

4.2.1 Inception of the Movement

In the post-colonial period the inception of the movement was witnessed after the enactment of the PESA Act in 1996. The legislation is discussed in detail in the next section because it is the provisions of the particular legislation and sometimes the provisions of Forest Rights Act of 2006 are inscribed by the adivasis to assert their rights. The provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Schedule Areas) Act of 1996 is a law enacted by the Government of India which ensures self-governance with traditional form of Gram Sabhas (Parha or Patti or Paragana) among the people living within the in the Scheduled Areas of the Fifth Schedule of the Indian

constitution. As discussed earlier in the chapter 2 the colonial administration was more concerned with classifying tribes and after a series of revolts in the tribal areas, the colonial state demarcated the tribal areas as Scheduled Areas. Post independence the tribes were put under the fifth and sixth schedules of Indian constitution. The fifth schedule protects the interests of the tribes in the states that have sizeable tribal population except for the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram, which fall under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian constitution. While within the Sixth Schedule areas there is a greater emphasis on self-governance and hence are granted with considerable autonomy, the Fifth Schedule areas did not have any specific provisions relating to self governance. The fifth scheduled areas fall within the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Telengana, Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh. The normal administrative machinery that is operates for the whole of the state does not necessarily extend to the scheduled areas. Meaning the acts of Parliament and the state legislatures do not apply to the scheduled areas unless on some exceptional cases. Although much of the scheduled areas were put under restrictions to protect the interests of the tribals, yet the scheduled areas did not have any mechanisms for self governance. Even the Panchayati Raj system which was enacted through legislation in 1992 was not applicable to the tribal areas. Hence, the tribal areas were deprived of any mechanisms for self-governance. To ensure the solution to this problem, Bhuria Committee was formed and in 1995 based upon its recommendations, the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act came into existence in 24th December 1996(Bhaskar, Ghosh, & Chaudhuri, 2021). B.D. Sharma, Bandi Oraon, Dileep Singh Bhuria spearheaded the movement to bring forth this legislation (Ekka, 2018). B.D. Sharma was a former Indian Administrative Services personnel and Bandi Oraon was a former Indian Police Service personnel who started the practice of Pathalgadi by erection stones with provisions of the Act inscribed in them(Xaxa, 2019). Bhuria started large scale Pathalgadi practices in tribal regions of Odisha. These practices were done mainly to raise awareness among the tribal communities about the rights and provisions that are enlisted for them in the constitution. However, after the hiatus of almost twenty years the Pathalgadi practice again emerged in 2016 but this time as a protest and a sign of resistance. This time the movement was deemed un-constitutional and secessionist by the state governments (Xaxa, 2019). To understand the constitutionality of Pathalgadi movement which started in 2016, it is essential to

examine the provisions of PESA Act and the fifth schedule provisions which form the overall context of the movement.

4.2.2 Fifth Schedule of the Indian Constitution

“Under the Article 244(1) of the Indian Constitution, Scheduled Areas means areas as the President may by order declare to be Scheduled Areas”. Although there is no mention of any fixed criterion for declaring an area as scheduled area but certain well established norms are being followed. They continue to follow the principles of the Government of India Act of 1935 which included provision for “Excluded” and “Partially Excluded” Areas. The Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission of 1961 tried to base the scheduled areas under heads like preponderance of tribal population, under-developed nature of the area and economic disparity among the tribal people of the area with respect to the mainstream population. But to integrate the tribes and the scheduled areas there were some special provisions provided to the people of the fifth scheduled areas. Some of them are-

- “The Governor of each state having Scheduled Areas shall annually, or whenever so required by the President, make a report to the President regarding the administration of Scheduled Areas of that State”.
- “The Union Government shall have executive powers to give directions to the states regarding the administration of the Scheduled Areas”.
- “Most importantly, the Fifth Schedule provides for the establishment of the Tribal Advisory Council (TAC) in a state having Scheduled Areas. If the President directs, there will be established a TAC in the state having Scheduled tribes, consisting of not more than twenty members of whom, three-fourths shall be the members of the Legislative Assembly of the state as the elected representative of the tribal community”.
- “The TAC shall advice on matters pertaining to the welfare and the development of the STs in the State as may be referred to them by the Governor”.
- “The Governor may, by public notification, direct that any particular Act of the Parliament or of the Legislature of the state shall or shall not apply to a Scheduled Area or any part thereof in the State, subject to such exceptions and modifications, as specified. The Governor may make regulations for the peace and good

government of any such area in the State which is for the time being a Scheduled Area. Such regulations may

- Prohibit or restrict the transfer of land by or among members of the Scheduled tribes in such area;
 - Regulate the allotment of land to members of the STs in such areas;
 - Regulate the carrying on of business as money-lender by persons who lend money to the members of the STs in such area”.
- “To make such regulations, the Governor may repeal or amend any Act of Parliament or of the State Legislature after obtaining assent of the President”.
 - “No regulations shall be made unless the Governor, in case a TAC exists, consults such TAC”.

In spite of having so many legislations, the tribes continue to face problems of land alienation and displacement. The Governors have often not played their constitutional part in respect to the situation of the tribal lands and the problems of tribes continued to go unabated. This resulted into a growing clamour for self-governance given to the tribal communities as the fifth-scheduled areas were kept outside of the Panchayati Raj legislation of 1992. Hence, there was a campaign and movement for self-governance which was led by Bharat Jan Andolan, “an umbrella organization” constituting NGOs, activists, academics, civil society networks and grass-roots tribal community organizations. As discussed earlier the drive for PESA enactment was led by retired and former civil servants. The slogan of the movement was “hamara gaon hamara raj” (our village, our rule). The movement culminated into the enactment of the PESA Act on 24th December 1996 (Xaxa, 2019).

4.2.3 Key Provisions of PESA Act

Xaxa opines that the acronym of PESA is somewhat misleading because unlike the Panchayati Raj Institution which calls for decentralizing and establishing the Panchayats and civic bodies, the PESA legislation involves autonomy and governance through traditional self-government mechanisms like the Parha Panchayats (Xaxa, 2019). The scheduled areas were not covered under the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992. After, the enactment of PESA the extension of self governance was brought to the Scheduled Areas under fifth schedule. PESA gave authority to the Gram Sabhas on a number of issues like “customary resources, minor forest

produce, minor minerals, minor water bodies, selection of beneficiaries, sanction of projects and control over local institutions” (PESA Act 1996). Some of the key features of PESA Act are:

- “PESA recognizes the traditional system of the decision making process among the tribal areas of the country and stands for ‘peoples’ self-governance”.
- “Right to mandatory consultation of the Gram Sabhas in case of land acquisition, resettlement and management of forest produce”.
- “Management of local markets, local conflict and dispute resolution, minor forest produce and resources like water bodies, forests and marshes etc”.
- “In order to properly implement the PESA guidelines, the state governments need to implement functional guidelines, the state governments need to enact legislation that shall be in consonance with the customary laws of the tribes in the scheduled areas”.
- “Every Gram Sabha shall be adequate to safeguard, protect, and maintain the adivasis’ traditions and customs, cultural identity, community resources, and customary laws”.
- “All laws, plans, programmes, and projects planned by the Central or the State governments, must coordinate with Gram Sabha objectives and the Gram Sabha needs to approve before implementation of all of them”.

PESA Act became precursor to further right based legislations and judgements like the Samanthalu Judgement and Forest Rights Act of 2006. It is the sections of these particular legislations that are used by the adivasis to inscribe in the stone monoliths and use as a sign of protest. But although this might seem as a simple means of protest among the tribal communities to raise awareness and assert their rights, the state governments have given a complete narrative to this movement. The state governments have often described this practice of inscribing the constitutional provisions on a stone monolith as unconstitutional and backed by Maoist and Christian missionaries with an objective of opium production and illegal opium trade. The narratives of the state governments shall be discussed in the next sections. Further, as discussed above in the features of PESA, the state governments need to enact laws that would supplement

the proper implementation of PESA. This has not been done and especially in the case of the Pathalgadi movement, the state governments have often tried to amend the legislations that have protected the interests of the tribes. State governments have resorted to partial implementation and this has worsened the state of the tribes (Bhaskar, Ghosh, & Chaudhuri, 2021). We discussed how initially after the enactment of PESA, the social activists encouraged the adivasis to raise stone monoliths to aware the community about the provisions enacted for them in the constitution and in the legislation of PESA. However after almost a gap of two decades the stone monoliths became centre stage again in the political life of the adivasis. We have discussed the provisions that the Pathalgadi activists have used to inscribe on stones, now it is necessary to discuss the *modus operandi* of Pathalgadi movement in order to understand the constitutional validity of the movement. Further in the next section we would discuss the conditions that led to the resurrection of Pathalgadi tradition among the adivasis.

4.2.4 Pathalgadi Movement post 2016

We discussed that earlier that the political nature of Pathalgadi tradition among the Munda tribes began after the enactment of PESA and with the help of civil society organizations. Since 2016, there is a renewed interest developed among the Munda tribes with respect to the Pathalgadi tradition. The immediate trigger to the movement was the attempt by the state government of Jharkhand to bring amendments to the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act of 1908 and Santhal Paragana Act of 1949. The CNT Act recognized the traditional *khuntkattidari* system of land distribution and ownership based on ‘original clearers of the forest’ principle. The CNT was enacted by the colonial administration after a prolonged struggled among the Munda tribes especially under the leadership of Birsa Munda. The immediate trigger was when the Jharkhand government under the Raghubar Das organized an investor’s forum called ‘Momentum Jharkhand’, which floated the idea of transfer of tribal land to the private enterprises for development. The government introduced a policy called as ‘land bank’ where lands which are ‘non-cultivable’ could be transferred to private bodies for the sake of ‘development’. The main activity for these lands would be undertaken by the corporate was for mining as the state government went on sign number of MoU with corporate like Usha Martin Group, RSB Group and Tata Steel Growth Shop etc. (Singh A. , 2019). This triggered the adivasis as they construed that this land bank

policy could result in forceful eviction of the adivasis from their own land. Further to process this easy transfer of tribal lands to non-tribals, the Jharkhand government brought amendments to the CNT in 2016. This resulted in a sense of fear and mistrust among the adivasis against the state government. This was the moment they looked back to the tradition of Pathalgadi and its political role played two decades back. The first instance of Pathalgadi as a sign of protest was witnessed on March 9th 2017 in Bhandra in Khunti district of Jharkhand. Khunti is a historical place where the famous icon of Munda tribes, Birsa Munda was supposedly born. A stone megalith painted in all green was erected in the village premises and it inscribed on it number of articles from the fifth schedule of the constitution and PESA Act of 1996. The stone slabs would include instructions like forbidding the entry of police, government officials, medical staff and strangers. The stone slabs would contains provisions like “Article 13(3) (a), Article 19(5) (6), Article 244(1) and part (b) Para (5)(1) of the Fifth Schedule”. The stone slabs would try to draw legitimacy from these constitutional provisions and would bestow it upon the authority of the Gram Sabha. The stone slabs would mention that these instructions of forbidding police and government personnel are granted under the authority of the Gram Sabhas. The adivasis were afraid that unless they themselves put a check on the migration of the ‘outsiders’ in their state, they would become minority in an Adivasi state. The state government over a long period of time had not paid to the woes of the tribes of the region even though Jharkhand had bifurcated itself from Bihar on demand of a separate tribal state. After immense pressure and protest by the adivasis and the opposition political parties like the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and Jharkhand Vikash Morcha (JVM), the then Governor of Jharkhand Draupadi Murmu returned the bills in May 2017, asking the government to reconsider the amendments (Tewary, 2018). Although the state government of Jharkhand had enacted laws, which they were suppose to enact in spirit of the PESA, but the Jharkhand Panchayati Raj Act of 2001 did not contain any provisions relating to tribal land alienation defeating the very purpose of the legislation and PESA. Further, the Jharkhand Freedom on Religion bill was introduced and passed on 2017 which resulted in the adivasis suspecting the state government trying to divide the tribes on the grounds of religion. The final trigger of the movement was when “an ordinance was passed introducing the amendment to the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Settlement (Jharkhand Amendment) Bill, 2017” (Xaxa, 2019). This was seen as an attempt by the state government to introduce new laws to evict the tribes out

of their own land. Adivasis considered this law to be even more sinister than the previous amendments on CNT (Tewary, 2018). This ordinance saw large scale agitation by the adivasis of the region. The movement spread from Khunti to nearby districts of Simdega, Lohardaga, and Gumla and later to entire Chotanagpur plateau, cutting across political boundaries of states. Further, what helped in the spread of the Pathalgadi movement across districts and states is that the fact that the tribes had *Sasandiri* as a practice common in them. Across Khunti and Simdega alone there would around three hundred villages that would join in the movement. The villages would put up green monoliths in front of their village entrances and inscribe instructions forbidding any kind of outsiders and drawing upon the legitimacy of the constitutional provisions. But what might look like a legitimate and non-coercive method of resentment, Pathalgadi movement has many facets to it. The movement is often based on far-fetched interpretation of the constitution with stones often carrying inscriptions declaring the villages as complete independent from the state of India. So to understand that whether the Pathalgadi movement is an alternative model of village self governance or a secessionist movement, it is important to look at the various facets of the Pathalgadi movement.

4.2.5 Multi-faceted Nature of Pathalgadi Movement

Pathalgadi movement has multiple faces to it and it all stems on the interpretation of the provisions of the constitution by the adivasis. The key argument of the Pathalgadi activists is that the Gram Sabhas have the right to self-govern and draw legislations that would be in conformity with the customary law. Based on these interpretations of constitutions and customary law, there is a varied types of demands and facets of the movement. While some villages in the Jharkhand, especially in the Khunti region, declare themselves as self governing autonomous regions others merely claim rights under the PESA and FRA legislations (Singh A. , 2019). The strategy of the protagonists of the movement is often misinterpret the constitution and present the case in such a manner that it would seem that the Gram Sabhas are self governing autonomous units outside the authority of the Indian state. However such cases are few and are mostly outlier cases. But the media representation of the movement would include coverage of such outlier cases making the movement an anti-antination and secessionist in the public sphere of the national politics (Davidsdottir, 2021). In most cases however, the movement would include placing a large monolith or a signboard, painted in green and inscribed in them are sections of constitution and

claims of rights under fifth schedule, PESA and FRA. These monoliths or signboards are usually worshipped with rituals like applying vermilion and flowers. These monoliths are often places of discussions between the village elders and places where the community gets socialized among them (Davidsdottir, 2021).

Some far-fetched interpretation of the constitution and PESA legislation has made some villages take extreme steps. Some villages in the region have taken hard line approach by promoting “indigenous models of education, opening of indigenous banks, complete negation of the authority of the Indian state”. These schools would teach complete different alphabets and have opened indigenous banks that would run parallel economy in contrast to the mainstream economy. The leaders of such outlier cases would encourage the villagers to open accounts in these banks and send their children to these self-run schools. Interestingly, much of these promises would be based on central government and state government welfare schemes and would underlie in manipulation of these funds (Singh A. , 2019).

The act of Pathalgadi is often carried out in a ceremonious fashion in which the entire village or the cluster of village participates. The meetings are headed by the traditional chieftains (*Parharaja*) in presence of other important figures of the cluster (*Parha*) that are also called Mundas. The meetings organized by the traditional gram Sabhas like the Parhas and the Mankis are well-attended by the Adivasis and often attract thousands of Adivasis. “Meetings are often attended in traditional attire with bows and arrows which hold symbolic value to the adivasis”. The bows and arrows remind the adivasis of the means of weaponry used by Birsa Munda against the colonial rule and remind them to their link with militancy. There is a considerable women participation in these meetings, even though women are not accorded any position in the traditional Gram Sabhas; “they too participate with weapons and traditional red-bordered white sarees which is the traditional dress of the adivasi women of the region”. The Pathalgadi meetings usually conclude with traditional dance and music performed by both men and women and followed by a “sumptuous feast of rice and meat”. The meeting then ends with addresses by the leaders of the movement, usually the leaders of the traditional Gram Sabhas (Singh A. , 2019).

The stones that are installed after the occasion of the Pathalgadi ceremony are quite different from the traditional ones which were practiced and erected during Sasandiri tradition. The Pathalgadis of the modernity are painted in green and carry messages in white, the green colour

apparently to demonstrate their closer proximity with nature and its green landscape. They carry message of the gram Sabha imposing prohibitions on the entry of ‘outsiders’ meaning “non-residents of the village, including government officials, teachers, medical personnel, land survey officials, security personnel and others”(Singh A. , 2019). In some places in Khunti, adivasis would put barricades and put signboards like “*Ye varjit chetra hai. Gram Sabha ke anumati k bina andar aana mana hai*” meaning any entry to the area is forbidden without the permission of Gram Sabha.

Another facet of the Pathalgadi movement is the fact that the movement tries to conjoin all the tribes, cutting across the political boundaries, and establish a Pan-Adivasi consciousness. The Adivasi Mahasabha is very active in the region and plays a key role in mobilizing the tribes through numerous institutionalized networks. There are number of offshoot organizations that are affiliated to Adivasi Mahasabha like “Adivasi Pariwar Rajasthan, Bhil Autonomous Council, Birsa Brigade Madhya Pradesh, Sarv Adivasi Samaj Chhattisgarh, Manjhi Pargana Mahal East Singhbhum and others”, which organize the tribes and create awareness and helps Pathalgadi movement spread across number of states other than Jharkhand (Singh A. , 2019).

It has also been observed that the post-colonial state because of its continuous process of land alienation and displacement of the tribes has lost the confidence of the adivasis and resulting the adivasis have lost confidence on the entire system and constitution in general. The leaders of the Pathalgadi movement claim that the movement derives its legitimacy from the colonial arrangements rather than post-colonial arrangements like the constitution. The leaders of the Pathalgadi movement often carry with them a photocopy of the ‘Heaven’s Light Our Guide’ which is the motto of chivalry of the Order of the Star of India, founded by Queen Victoria in 1861. Apparently some of the leaders of the movement claim that the lands and forests were handed to the Adivasis by Queen Victoria and the Constitution of India has no power to override that arrangement (Tewary, 2018). This is contradictory to the movement itself because on one hand the protagonists of the movement inscribe the provisions of the constitution and on the other hand they reject the authority of the constitution and draw legitimacy on colonial arrangements. Interestingly, the movement and its leaders tend to be inspired from the *Sati-Pati* cult of Gujarat founded by Kunwar Keshri Sinh who too had given a similar narrative of the forests and the lands gifted to the Adivasis by Queen Victoria herself (Singh A. , 2019). However, the fact is true to a sense because, the Adivasis of the region had a greater control over

the region during the colonial period. Post the enactment of the Wilkinson's rule, the Adivasis of the region had around five hundred *Khuntkatti* forests in the region of Chotanagpur. After independence, the Bihar government passed the Bihar Private Protected Forest Act which took away around three hundred such forests from the tribes and transferred it to the State. Thus, the mistrust of the adivasis about the post-colonial arrangements is justifiable to some degree (Kiro, 2018).

But largely the Adivasis draw the legitimacy of the movement based on constitutional provisions. The few outlier cases are often reiterated by the media and the government agencies giving it a picture of illegitimate assertion. Majority of the Pathalgadi villages have based their assertion on the provisions of the constitution, PESA Act and sometimes on landmark judgments. Some of the inscriptions on the Pathalgadi monoliths are:

- “As per article 13 (3) (a) the constitution of India has the power”.
- “As per article 13 (3) (a) Scheduled tribes' custom and tradition is the force of law”.
- “As per article 19 (5) outsiders are not allowed to roam, move freely, reside or settle in the 5th scheduled area”.
- “As per article 19 (6) outsiders are restricted to practice any profession, business and seek employment in the 5th scheduled area”.
- “Parliament or State assembly's laws are not applicable in the 5th scheduled areas or districts according to Article 244 (1) and 5th scheduled area (5) (1)”.
- “As per Article 141 the Supreme Court judgments should be obeyed by the legislature and courts”.
- As per the Supreme Court's judgment in Vedanta case, “*neither Lok Sabha nor Vidhan Sabha, but supreme is Gram Sabha*”.
- “According to the judgment of Supreme Court in P. Rama Reddy case 1988, government is a person in scheduled area”.
- “According to the judgment of Supreme Court in P. Rama Reddy case 1988, minerals belong to the owner of the land”.
- “As per the judgment of Supreme Court in Samatha case 1997, land in scheduled areas does not belong to the State or the central government”.

The above are some of the provisions and messages that are inscribed in the Pathalgadi monoliths around Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh (Ekka, 2018)

Davidson writes that the Pathalgadi movement has many varieties of resistance embodied within it. She writes that the movement has many facets within Jharkhand itself. Based on the field study done on Khunti and Simdega districts, she concludes that the movement takes a much hard line approach especially in the district of Khunti where many villages have taken steps like removing their children from the schools and stopping the welfare schemes and rations. The movement in Simdega is more ceremonious and revolves around rights based on PESA and FRA. She highlights the role of civil society networks and especially the role of Jharkhand Jangal Bachao Andolan (JJBA) in everyday resistance against the state. Her article tries to identify more subtle forms of resistance, hidden in everyday practices. Drawing upon the ideas of James Scott on 'hidden transcripts' the article uncovers the resistance of the tribals that are hidden in "discourse – gesture, speech, and practices – that is ordinarily excluded from the public transcript of subordinates by the exercise of power" (Scott, 1992). Based on the works of Cavanagh and Benjaminsen (Cavanagh & Benjaminsen, 2015), she lays her empirical findings on the Pathalgadi movement and divides the tactics employed by the movement protagonists and leaders into four broad tactics; non-violent tactics, discursive tactics, formal-legal tactics and militant tactics. She concludes that the resistance involved in the case of the Pathalgadi movement falls under the purview of 'rightful resistance' meaning that the resistance falls under the legal framework ensured by the constitution for the adivasis. The movement seeks its legitimacy from the provisions of the constitution and based upon the claims of complete rights over *Jal*, *Jangal* and *Jameen*. She also concludes that the movement falls short of rebellion because it largely uses discursive tactics rather than militant tactics. She writes "discursive tactics have been successful in establishing and spreading narratives that support the transfer of power over forest land and resources to the Adivasis. Non-violent tactics exist on the periphery of the movement, and are a symptom of the oppression felt by forest dwellers. Finally, militant tactics have not materialized, but could potentially manifest if and when other tactics remain unsuccessful." (Davidson, 2021).

Vincent Ekka writes that the Pathalgadi movement has transferred into political movement relating to self-governance through traditional Gram Sabha and constitutional provisions that deal with the protection of tribal people in the fifth schedule area. He writes how the traditional Gram Sabhas could be a better alternative, exemplifying positive notion of citizenship. He finds that the movement is a legitimate assertion grounded on constitutional provisions (Ekka, 2018).

Virginius Xaxa opines that the Pathalgadi movement has arisen from the continued land alienation from the tribal domain. The state has continued to find newer institutionalized mechanisms to continue land alienation from the tribes. He concludes that the Pathalgadi movement is a legitimate democratic assertion for recognizing their rights due to the government's abject failure to implement the constitutional rights of the tribes, which is essential to their livelihood (Xaxa, 2019).

Anjana Singh writes that the Pathalgadi movement has not only achieved a new sphere to Adivasi identity assertion around a customary practice but has also questioned governmental approach and the traditional notions on development. She writes that the Pathalgadi movement seeks to empower the traditional Gram Sabhas which could be a meaningful alternative to the top-down approach employed by the state government. The meaningful empowerment of the traditional Gram Sabha as an alternative agency to protect village governance is often recognized as a multifaceted movement with political, ethnic, and ecological overtones and is characterized with secessionist tendencies based on outlier cases. She further highlights that such demands and growth of sub-nationalism is nothing new and such acts were also manifested in 1990s in the form of Gaon Ganarajya Movement. She says that such movements and development of sub-nationalism among the Adivasis is the result of the state unable to meet the demands and take steps against their exploitation (Singh A. , 2019).

Overall, although the movement has not turned to be a large scale uprising as in the case of the frontier tribes of the North-East or the Jharkhand movement, the potential for socialization of the movement cannot be denied. The movement started in Jharkhand but quickly spread to the nearby states of Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh because of many reasons. Firstly, the practice being common among the tribes was able to resonate easily with the other tribes of the state. Secondly, the political boundaries are relatively new and the Munda tribes are spread among the states of Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and even West Bengal. Thus, the tribal boundaries cut across the political boundaries are relatively new and have a short history. Third, the slogans and the discursive tactics employed by the leaders of the movement were able to reverberate with the issue of the tribes. The slogans like “*abua disum, abua raj* (our village, our governance)”, “*Mawa Nate, Mawa Raaj*”, “*Maa Wullo, Maa Rajyam*”, “*Namhai Paddanu, Manhai Raaji*” etc. were able to connect with the needs of the tribes (Ekka, 2018). Thus, the Pathalgadi movement although did not transform into a large scale uprising but its *modus*

operandi was able to cut across political boundaries if the state and was able to spread itself outside Jharkhand.

4.2.6 Response of the State

The response of the Jharkhand government to the Pathalgadi Movement was regressive on all accounts. The government used its channels to provide number of narratives to discredit the movement. The state government tried to describe the movement as a law and order issue. The government was initially unable to decipher the cause of the movement reflected in the wide variety of responses from the government. The state government initially stated that the leaders of the Pathalgadi movement are trying to lure the Adivasis of economic benefits without any real concern for their welfare. Further the state government blamed the Adivasis on the pretext of opium cultivation. The government claimed the fact that the movement is used as a smoke to hide the illegal trade of opium that undergoes in these Pathalgadi villages (Singh A. , 2019). Further the state government mentioned that the movement was a diversionary tactic by the Christian missionaries to cultivate opium which would be in turn illegally traded across the country to support the secessionist projects of the Christian missionaries. Further the government also mentioned that the Christian Missionaries were scared against a pro-Hindu party in the form of BJP, hence they resented to instigating the tribals through the incitement of the Pathalgadi tradition. Some of the leaders of the BJP government like Kariya Munda, Laxman Gilua, who themselves belong to the Munda community; blame the Christian missionaries in degrading the tribal culture. The administration went on to arrest number of pastors for instigating the tribals. The leaders of the movement saw this as a ploy by the ruling government to divide the tribes along the religious lines. Also, the government described the movement as a secessionist one. The government narratives claimed that the movement was a ploy to demand a separate state of Kolhan which included the districts of West and East Singhbhum, Lohardaga, Khunti and Saraiekela–Kharswan Divisions (Singh A. , 2019). Thus the administration did not see the movement as a legitimate assertion and instead used repressive policies to curb the movement. The state government went on to file sedition cases on number of leaders of the movement. There were many leaders of the movement that were jailed and put under trial. Between 2017 and 2018 there were as many as ten thousand cases are booked for sedition under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (Sharma U. , 2019). Interestingly, the response of the state governments

of the states where the act of Pathalgadi is taking place is identical and the narratives coming of these states are all same. We would discuss in the next section the responses of the state government of Odisha against the Pathalgadi tradition. The ruling party of all these states claims the movement to stem out of Maoists, Christians and opium cultivators. The leaders of the movement sometimes come from the educated and middle class adivasis who are well versed about the social circumstances of the tribes and the provisions enshrined for them. However, the state government has not shied away from making arrests and this has included arresting number of adivasi leaders. In March of 2018, the state government arrested Vijay Kujur, a manager in the Shipping Corporation of India and also at that time president of Adivasi Mahasabha. Further in May of the same year, the state government arrested Herman Kindo (a former IAS officer) and Joseph Tigga (an ex ONGC employee) under sections 153A (creating hatred among people), 120B (criminal conspiracy) and other sections. Further other main leaders of the movement like “Krishna Hansda, Jyoti Lal Besera, and Shaktapado Hansda” were also arrested by the state(Sharma U. , 2019). The police working on behest of the state often conducted multiple raids and physical assault to Munda Pradhans by forcibly entering into their villages. Attempts were to plant divisive narratives of ‘Oraon takeover over Munda social life’ (Priyam & Banerjee, 2020). The issue of Pathalgadi movement became a major issue for the incumbent BJP party in the assembly elections of 2019. Further, the chief minister of Jharkhand, Raghubar Das, being a non-tribal was seen by the adivasis as someone apathetic to their social conditions. The adivasis feared that the chief minister could introduce amendments and legislations which would be against the interests of the tribals. Raghubar Das also was the first non-tribal Chief Minister of the state. The Adivasis viewed that he being CM would unite all the Hindu population and corner the tribes. Thus, towards the run up of 2019 elections, the adivasis erected large scale Pathals across villages asserting their rights of self-governance. The collective mobilization around the Pathalgadi movement also questioned the traditional notion of development as was construed by the incumbent government. The collective mobilization formed a unity between different tribal groups in the region, social organizations, civil society groups and non BJP political parties. Within the Adivasis too, the movement was able to forge a bridge between the Christian and *Sarna* tribal communities. Thus, Pathalgadi as a discursive device was able to cut across inter tribal differentiations and forge a common identity around an ancient practice which served a modern use.

The aftermath of the elections was that the incumbent BJP government was defeated in the elections. BJP could win only 25 seats while JMM-led coalition was victorious with 47 seats. Interestingly, out of the 28 scheduled area seats BJP could win only two seats. The new government formed under Hemant Soren declared to withdraw all the cases filed under Pathalgadi movement. It was a resounding victory for the Pathalgadi activists as the electoral change brought a victory to the social movement (Priyam & Banerjee, 2020).

However, as the initial 'hurrah' precipitates, one might find deeper complexities. The two seats won by the BJP in the Scheduled Areas were in the Khunti district which was the hotbed of the movement. This needs investigation as why the people voted for the same government against whose policies they had protested. Further it is also to be kept in mind that the Adivasis had claimed to boycott the elections, so the proportion of tribals polled to the total votes polled is to be found out to reach any definite conclusions. Also, the Soren government after its initial promises to withdraw the cases has not made any substantial change and still many Pathalgadi activists continue to languish behind the bars (Hindu, 2020). Also how far the movement has been able to bridge the gap between the tribal communities and how far the movement has achieved Pan-Adivasi solidarity. These are some of the questions that need further investigation. As we discussed that largely the state of Jharkhand has been the centre stage for Pathalgadi movement. But as the overall study largely focuses on tribal movements of Odisha, it is essential to discuss the Pathalgadi movement in the context of the Odisha. The next section would discuss the Pathalgadi movement as it takes place in Odisha.

4.3 Pathalgadi movement in the Sundergarh District of Odisha

The Pathalgadi movement has become Pathargadi movement after reaching Odisha. The movement is limited to Sundergarh district only because of unique position and composition of Sundergarh. The district is at a closer proximity with the neighbouring districts of Jharkhand where the movement is very active. The district is beside the Simdega and West Singhbhum districts of Jharkhand and Jashpur district in Chhattisgarh where the Pathalgadi movements are

brewing and allowing cross-border social influences. Also before the political borders, as we see now, were drawn the area under the district constituted a distinct ecology where the tribes of different clans maintained and reproduced their relations. The region was the home of Munda, Oraon and Kisan communities. It is essential to discuss the background of Sundergarh district which would help us explain the unique composition of the state.

The district as we see now is a merger between two erstwhile feudal states of Gangapur and Bonai. The territory, what is now called Sundergarh district was once part of “Dakshinapatha in the ancient times”. “Kosala was an important Mahajanapada in northern India of which Dakshina Kosala was a part of it”. Although some claim that the feudal states were the descendants of the “Nagavanshi kings” of Chotanagpur region. But nothing is conclusive as there is not much literature available on it. Divergent views are available about the origins of ruling family of the feudal kingdoms. Both of these ex-states were once under the “suzerainty of Sambalpur kingdom which formed part of the dominions of the Maratha Rajas of Nagpur”. In 1821, the British Government “cancelled” the feudal supremacy of Sambalpur over these states and “a fresh lease was granted to the Chiefs of the feudal states”. Both these states, for some times, formed a part of the “South-Western Frontier Agency (SWFA) on its creation in 1833”. Again they were transferred to the charge of the Commissioner of Chotanagpur in 1854. In 1905 these fiefdoms were again “transferred from the control of the Commissioner of Chotanagpur to that of Orissa and a political agent was appointed to administer these areas”. This was a turning point in the history of the people especially the adivasis of the region as they would be divided into separate political states of Jharkhand and Orissa. The ex-states remained under the administration of the Political Agent till their merger with the state of Orissa on 1st January 1948.

Post-independence, the region saw a large scale non-tribal migration as the mining potentialities were discovered. As early as in 1891, the Bengal Nagpur Railway company had established railroads to Biramitrapur to connect Birsa Stone Lime Company, which was into mining limestone. The potentialities of mineral in the region were further boomed during the Second Five Year Plan under which M/s Hindustan Steel Limited was established in Rourkela in 1959. The second five year plan brought spree of large development projects and also forceful displacement of the adivasis from their natural habitat. Apart from Rourkela Steel Plant, there were number of large scale projects in Odisha like “National Aluminium Company (NALCO), Indian Aluminium Company (INDALCO) and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)”. Several

coal firepower projects besides dams like Hirakud, Rengali, Kolab, Indravati, etc. brought ‘development’ at a cost and that cost had to be borne by the adivasis.

Sundergarh too had to bear the pressure of ‘development induced displacement’. There was large scale mining in Tensa-Barsuan for Iron ore, Lanjiberna, Purnapani, Biramitrapur and Gomardih for Limestone etc. Rourkela Steel Plant and allied industrial projects were introduced to operate on these natural ores and minerals. Also, medium-scale industries like Auto India Kalunga, L&T Kansbahal, Marshalling Yard in Bondamunda, OCL Rajgangpur were established. Further to furnish, equip and cater water to these projects, dams like Pitamahar, Mandira and Kansbahal were built. All these resulted in large-scale non-tribal migration into the tribal land and forceful integration of the adivasis with the economic and social structure of the non-tribals (Kujur, 2021). Today, the district is not only home to tribals but a huge chunk of non-tribal population. As per the 2011 census, Sundergarh district is 2nd in size and 6th in population among other districts of Odisha. Adivasis constitute 50.7% of the entire district population. The literacy percentage of the district covers 73.3 against 72.9 of the state. It is “one of the nineteen districts in Odisha receiving funds from the Backward Regions Grant Fund Programme (BRGF)”. The adivasis in the region speak a number of languages like Sadri, Mundari, Kurukh, Kisan and Kharia (Odisha, 2018).

4.3.1 Development induced Displacement and Pathargadi

We discussed the large number of projects that sprung up in the region after the Second Five year plan. This led to massive influx of non-tribals and encroachment of tribal lands. Private lands belonging to tribals and *Khuntkatti* cultivators were increasingly acquired by the state for projects resulting in large-scale displacement of people from their traditional lands. Further, there has not been any attempt to reform their health and educational status for the cost of their land and livelihood. Benefits that the central and state governments brought in the form of irrigation and electrification did not touch their lands and homes but went to non-tribal villages. Displacement of people because of mega projects is something that has been going on ever since independence. Between 1951 and 1990, “around 21.3 million people were affected in India alone because of development induced displacement among whom 8.54 million (40%) were tribals,

and only 2.12 million (24.8%) were provided with rehabilitation. Some estimates record that the total number of people displaced in India during the last 60 years is almost 60 million”(Meher, 2009). According to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, “85.39 lakh tribal’s have been displaced from 1950 to 1990 due to mega projects and development infrastructures, and out of these Adivasis constituted more than 55 per cent of the total displaced population”(Meher, 2009). These continuous land alienation among the tribal people existed irrespective of the fact that the adivasis had number of provisions to protect their interests enshrined in the Fifth Schedule of the constitution. The government although seems to be aware of the fact but still the steps taken at the top has not been able to reach the bottom. The draft of National Tribal Policy (NTP) 2006 admitted that “Alienation of tribal land is the single most important cause of pauperization of tribals. The leading burden is that the lands lost are usually the most productive, leaving the tribals to cultivate poor quality land.” Legislations like the PESA and FRA have given some empowerment to the adivasis in terms of securing their livelihoods but the problem remains in implementing these legislations and this sphere both the central and the state government have neglected the provisions of the constitution (Tribal Rights: Promises and Reality, 2007).

Although, ever since independence, the state government of Odisha has been trying to bring in various legislations to put in check to coercive tribal land alienation but either those legislations have not been implemented properly or the administration has allowed shady land transfers for the purpose of development. Legislations like the “Orissa Development of Industries, Irrigation, Agriculture, Capital Construction and Resettlement of Displaced Persons (Land Acquisition) Act 1948, Orissa Survey and settlement Act 1958, Orissa Land Reform Act 1960, Odisha Government Land Prevention of Encroachment Act, The Odisha Government Land Settlement Act 1962 etc.” have regulated land transfers in Scheduled Areas and have laws that work in the spirit of the PESA Act and Fifth schedule (Kujur, 2021). However, these laws were often not implemented or were not enforced by the local authorities allowing irregular settlement between tribals and state agencies, tribal lands being transferred to the non-tribals and during displacement forest lands were exchanged for non-forest grounds. State on its part, instead of safeguarding the constitutional requirements for the welfare of the tribes, further deprived them of their legal rights and diluted it through different schemes, projects and agencies. To curb some of the rights laid in the constitution and PESA, the state government has tried to bring in legislations that would be contrary to the spirit these legislations. “Land Banks, Special Survey

and Settlement Act 2012, Rules framed on Ordinance (Odisha Land Grabbing (Prohibition Rules 2015), the Odisha Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Rules 2016” are some of the legislations that have accentuated the process of tribal-land encroachment in Scheduled Areas hampering the spirit of the Fifth Schedule of the Indian Constitution (Kujur, 2021). One of the major reasons for the failure of such legislations and regulations is the lack in the implementation of PESA Act by the state government and this where the Pathalgadi or the Pathargadi movement stems out. So far the PESA Act, 1996 has not been implemented in true spirit resulting vacuum in the implementation of FRA 2006. The Forest Right Committee mandates to include the village in the decision making process as defined in Section 4 (b) of the PESA Act 1996 means the above provisions introduced arbitrarily by the state government in the Scheduled Areas of Odisha are null and void. It is around these demands to implement the PESA Act in full spirit that the Pathargadi movement emerges. Partly, it has also got to do because of the unanimity between the composition of Sundergarh district and the neighbouring Jharkhand state where the movement is in full flow. But majorly because of the continuous land alienation and inability or unwillingness on the part of the state government to implement the PESA Act in spirit, the adivasis in Sundergarh have resorted to Pathargadi.

The act of Pathargadi was first witnessed in Sundergarh around 2013 when the adivasis in Rourkela had resorted to erecting monoliths protesting construction of a university which the Rourkela Steel Plant had further leased. The leaders claimed that the steel plant had encroached over the lands of the tribals and further sub-leased it to other projects instead of transferring the surplus lands to the tribals (Tribal awakening in offering over land rights, 2013). However, since 2018 the movement has spread like a wildfire across the district and according to one estimate is spread to more than 300 villages in ten out of seventeen blocks in the district. The modus operandi is similar the one we have discussed in Jharkhand with the stone plaques being coloured in green and the provisions from Fifth Schedule and PESA inscribed over it. The movement has resulted into violent skirmishes between the administration and the adivasis and between the pro-Pathargadi and anti-Pathargadi factions.

The adivasis have tried to vandalize local cement and sponge iron factories resulting in the administration using stringent measures and arresting a number of tribals. Another aspect of the movement is the fact that the movement has tried to divide the tribal society into two groups,

those who support the movement and those oppose it. The movement which had earlier acted as a discursive uniting the tribal society into a common cause had now been the reason to divide the tribal society into two halves. There has been a report of a death in the district because of the violence between the two groups (Sahu, 2018). Government officials too have to bear the brunt as there are reports of them being threatened so much so that government officials in some of the villages in the district have resented to obeying the diktats of the Pathargadi plaques. Although there very scant literature available regarding the particularities on Pathargadi movement but on the outset it looks that the movement is spreading without any formal structure of organization and leadership (Sahu, 2018). This might be because of the history of tradition and it being able to act as a discursive device and resonate with the tribal social life. However, conclusions can be drawn only after proper empirical study and ground survey.

However, there is unanimity in between the two state governments of Jharkhand and Odisha in terms of treating and giving a narrative to the Pathargadi movement. The Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, who also happens to hail from Sundergarh, has branded the movement as “nothing but a new strategy of the Naxals” (Pathalgadi a naxal act to spread anarchy: Jual Oram, 2018) The other state officials and district administration say that that movement is stemming out misinterpretation of the PESA provisions by the adivasis. The district administration also blames unlawful agents who take advantage of the illiteracy of the adivasis and are purposefully misinterpreting the provisions. Off late there has been emergence of certain anti-Pathargadi groups like ‘Khuntkatti Vikash Manch’ which has risen against the Pathargadi movement in fear that the later would lead to developmental projects being stopped in their villages (Sharma S. , 2018). As the process of integration of tribes with the non-tribal social life has been so fast in the last two decades, the adivasis are still trying to find out the complexities of the modern world. One of the facets being the provisions is in such language that it creates a cognitive barrier among the tribes. This creates perfect conditions for tribal elites who are little versed in Western education, to misinterpret the provisions and create a state of confusions. However, the state should bear the majority of the blame for its reluctance to properly implement the PESA guidelines. The guidelines are supposed to be followed then there should not be any municipalities in the district of Sundergarh, yet the district has four municipalities. Further, the Tribal Advisory Council for the state rarely meets. All of these have resulted in further land alienation among the tribes in the region. The case seems to be tailor-made for communal forces

as there are a lot of cleavages like race, community and religion. Time is ripe for the state government to implement the PESA guidelines in full spirit and the neighbouring state of Andhra Pradesh could be example where the PESA Act is implemented fully, else the movement could very well spread from Sundergarh to other districts of the state.

SUMMING UP

The paper is not an attempt to answer all the questions pertaining to tribal land alienation and exploitation; instead it is an attempt to ask further questions. The difficulty in writing this paper is that the content is largely based on secondary studies and largely based on newspaper clippings. As the Pathalgadi Movement is a recent phenomena there has not been much work done upon it. Certain issues like how the movement has unified and divided the tribal social life needs to be studied, further the role of symbols and discursive devices like the stone plaques used in this context, needs to be studied in details. Though this paper has tried to highlight the role of discursive devices and its history and the reason it is able to resonate with the adivasis but the paper fails to answer the questions like the base of these symbolic devices and how they draw legitimacy. Also, what made these sprung up in 21st century? Tribal land alienation is a continuous process and has been going on since the dawn of colonial administration. What made these devices become so effective in the modern era is need to be studied.

Further based upon the distinction made upon the old and new social movements, Pathalgadi movement cannot be phased out in either one of them. Although, it can be argued that that the movement attributes to Kothari's conception of 'non-party political formations' but behind the identity politics of the adivasis there is a hidden struggle to secure their economic interests which is entangled in their demands for Jal, Jangal and Jameen. To answer these questions with greater clarity further empirical investigation is required. Questions like what is the leadership structure, associated help regarding the mobilization of collective interests and the role of inter-tribal networks is regrettably unanswered. Davidsdottir's study tries to highlight the tactics used by the Pathalgadi adivasis to resist the state and non-tribal intrusion. It tries to highlight how the adivasis uses varied tactics ranging from subtle non-violent tactics to militant tactics like abduction of government officials. She concludes that the movement although might show sporadic instances of violence but largely the adivasis resort to common tactics like *hartals* and strikes (Davidsdottir, 2021). But the study is based on a small sample size and such studies are also required in other states. Another problem that is highlighted through this movement is the obsolescence of jargons and complex legal language which has allowed the adivasis to give multiple interpretations and often invalid interpretations to legislative enactments. The legal languages are often constituted of complex legal language which is understood by a few

educated and middle class tribals who resort to purposeful manipulation of the provisions to strike imbalance in the tribal social life. The Adivasis along with other facets of modern state like the liberal economy, Secularism, representative government and class, have also had to integrate English language into their social life. The Christian missionaries have since colonial times tried to replace the adivasis of their indigenous languages and episteme with Western knowledge. But even after so many decades the language has not been able to completely resonate with the tribal social life and this is evident from the fact the provisions are often misinterpreted by them. But the part is also to be blamed on the complexity of the legal language. Correndo writes how from the Wilkinson's Rules to Pathalgadi movement, the adivasis are constantly fighting an uphill legal battle to protect their lands and state through counter mechanisms is trying further alienate them from their lands(Correndo, 2021). It could be said that it is a pent-up frustration that has loomed for generations among tribals because of continuous land alienation that has resulted in this movement.

Most importantly, the Pathalgadi movement challenges the statist idea of development that kept neglecting and ignoring the Adivasis because of the political rhetoric of development which resonates more with the urban middle class which is the major social base for any political party in India. Ekka writes how the indigenous methods of self governance could muster better results than top-down approach. He further writes that indigenous means of self governance is often based on duties and obligations rather than on negative rights as forwarded by the liberal states. He argues that the former provides for better scope for civic participation and decision making (Ekka, 2018a). Although oscillating between the two extremes, Pathalgadi Movement has been able to increase awareness among tribals of their rights according to the Indian Constitution and "unite them against the injustices they experience due to the false promises of development by the state". Which end of the spectrum the movement shall locate itself, has not a lot to do with how the state handles the issue. Labelling the movement as anti-state and Naxalist propaganda is a purposeful denial of the detrimental effects that the 'development' has brought upon the tribal social life. However, before blaming the tribes for misinterpreting the provisions, it is essential that the state governments play active role in making the adivasis aware about their rights and this can only work well by implementing those provisions. But in most cases, the state governments are "almost totally ignorant of special rights provided to the tribes under the Constitution and laws enacted by the Indian state". If governments fail to "implement the rights

given to the people, it is only imperative that people engage in democratic assertion for the realization of their rights” and seen under that light the Pathalgadi Movement seems completely rational.

Conclusion

We discussed the primary issues relating to Pathalgadi movement and other tribal movements in Odisha at length in last chapters. In this chapter, we would sum up all the key points starting from the colonial period to the contemporary age which has resulted into movements among tribal communities. We would discuss how the post-colonial state is reproducing the perverted structures that were established during the colonial period. Also, how with the coming up of the neo-liberalism and global capital, the tribal ways of life are further marginalized and endangered. The chapter would conclude by providing further scope of studies with respect of Pathalgadi movement and the adivasi culture in general.

It is essential we revisit some of the key issues we discussed in the entirety of the paper and it should start with trying to redefine the connotations attached behind the word or the category tribe itself. The colonial administration while trying to annex different parts of India, not only transformed the economic structure of the states they conquered but also restructured their social lives in a manner that would replicate and suit the interests of the administration. In doing so, the colonial administration redefined and replaced some of the very social constructs that defined communities. Moreover, the colonial administration failing to see the indigenous people through an indigenous perspective, replaced all their traditional social structures deeming them unfit and inferior. The structures would be redefined in a manner that would facilitate the incorporation of the conquered communities into the colonial fold. Susana B.C. Devalle explains how the category tribe was constructed to obtain legitimacy among the conquered communities and the ideology of tribe reproduced itself in the post-colonial period replicating itself according to the caste-model which itself was another cataloguing device by the colonial administration (Devalle, 1990). Studying on the Jharkhand movement, she explains how Christian missionaries played the role of transforming the cultural structures of the tribal communities and the colonial administration played the role of transforming the economic structures. Devalle says the 'backward' connotation we attach with adivasis is a reflection of the colonial consciousness and is fallacious to use it today. She explores the reasons as to why there has not been any change in the 'inferior or primitive' connotations attached to the word tribe. She writes:

“The vagueness of the category *tribe*, its uses, its derogatory implications and its lack of correspondence with reality, has made anthropologists increasingly dissatisfied with it. Nonetheless, notwithstanding their doubts about its validity and usefulness, anthropologists have continued to use *tribe* as a basic category. Two factors seem to account for its persistence. First, the continuation of micro studies which ignore the societal macro level, historical processes and structural transformations. Second, there has been confusion between idealized types and reality. The category *tribe* was *constructed* out of ideas about what societies were thought to have been in the pre-colonial past. This construct was in turn extrapolated into the colonial situation and mechanically applied to societies which were already inserted in a capitalist economy and the world market”.(Devalle, 1990, p. 72)

She further writes that how the ideology of tribe was constructed within an imperialist framework and the ideology has only reproduced capitalist relations in the post-colonial state. Studying the tribes of Jharkhand she writes:

“In sum, given the qualitative aspects of the social and economic organization of the adivasi pre-capitalist societies of Jharkhand in pre-colonial India as well as after their subsumption under colonial capitalism, their categorization as ‘tribal’ is at best, out of place and, at worst, ahistorical and sociologically groundless. There were in fact no tribes in Jharkhand. In essence they were a parthenogenetic creation of British colonial administration. Only by a curious trick of historical reversion could there be tribes nowadays. Adivasis live in a class society, and exist in an economic formation where the capitalist mode is dominant. What does exist, however, is the ideology of tribe which sustains and reproduces capitalist relations of production”.(Devalle, 1990, p. 107)

It is essential to reformulate the conception of tribes without attaching any negative connotation and this could be done only by acknowledging the distinct cultural episteme round which the social communities are constructed. The colonial administration introduced exploitative capitalist relations and altered the tradition modes of production which were based on communitarian ethos (Singh K. , 1998). This change in the mode of production led to establishment of other complementary structures like “the increasing centrality of the state in the social order, sociological individuation, secularisation in politics and ethics, the creation of a new order of knowledge, vast changes in the organisation of family and intimacy, and changes in the fields of artistic and literary culture” (Kaviraj, 2005). It is essential that scholars like Lukacs describe the

capitalist society as an 'expressive totality', wherein changes in one structure necessarily prepares conditions for changes in the other related structures like the ones mentioned above (Kaviraj, 2005). So, introduction of capitalist structures in economic life of the tribal communities led to the breakdown of other social structures like clan, kinship and religion; all of which had together held the tribal community for centuries. Tribal societies in the pre-modern era did not have 'differentiated social structures' instead structures were fused together in a symbiotic whole. Individual within the community too has its identity divided into number of sub-clans and groups within the community. Colonialism, under the veil of modernity, tried to recognize the individual outside his community, leading to dilution of structures within the community that had held the individual and makes it completely dependent upon a centralized state. In the post-colonial period the capitalist structures of the colonial period were reinforced through the perpetuation of modern state in all forms of life. The tribals were left with no choice but to integrate their social lives with the state and depend upon it completely for their existence. The state instead of reforming and trying to go the pre-colonial past, continued and reinforced the capitalist structure and this resulted into further marginalization and land alienation among communities, all in the name of development and modernity. Two key policies that have characterized both the colonial state and the post-colonial state in relation to the tribal communities are the 'identity based isolation' and 'development through integration' (Malik, 2020). Identity based isolation calls for identifying tribal communities as "distinctive group outside the mainstream Hindu society both in terms of their cultural traits and geographical isolation, which are keen to preserve their distinctiveness and their isolation". While development through integration was based on the consideration that the tribal social lives were inferior and their lives could be only improved by integration them with the modern social life of the mainstream Indian population. And this integration has happened often at the expense of the tribals. They were forcefully evicted and disposed from their own forests and lands for the sake of the development of the mainstream population. Further, not only the economic structures were rendered obsolete but other social structures like tribal religion and their episteme was considered backward and inferior. Arvind Sharma provides a four-fold classification with regards to the modalities of transmission of religion and its understanding; (1) insider-insider, (2) outsider-outsider, (3) outsider-insider and (4) insider-outsider (Sharma A. , 1985). He says during the pre-modern era most of the understanding religion and social life was between

individuals within the community albeit there were nuanced transmission of ideas through means like trade and commerce. These modes reflected the first and the second mode i.e. insider-insider and outsider-outsider. With the rise of the West and its capture of over intellectual discourse through colonization in Asia and Africa, there started a new mode of transmission that is *outsider-insider*. Sharma argues that through colonization of the intellectual discourse the West had discarded all forms of indigenous knowledge and institutions. These discourse on adivasis continued in the post-colonial state too, wherein tribal life forms were associated with poverty and incompetency of material accumulation. Sharma argues that in order to hold the tribal social life in equal footing to that of the dominant paradigm, it is essential to bring an '*insider-outsider*' modality of transmission of tribal religion and knowledge. Under this framework, it is essential to study Vincent Ekka's writings on indigenous methods of self-governance among the Munda and Oraon adivasis. Ekka writes how indigenous institutions of the adivasis were more communitarian involving public participation and obligation rather than on private rights (Ekka, 2018a).

The tribals in general had a non-monetized, simple, subsistent economy collapsed with common property ownership. With the introduction of the *patta* system, the common ownership structure collapsed as the colonial state and the post-colonial state insisted on having documented ownership of land for each individual. The common ownership over the grazing lands and the forests which the communities had collapsed and their free access to those lands and forests were restricted. The "modern credit system, open markets and settled agriculture" rendered the tribal communities further vulnerable and dependant to outsider non-tribals. Further, the *patta* system also could not end the land alienation. Individuals having *patta* would fall into the credit system and would mortgage his/her land for meagre amount. Some of the key reasons for tribal land alienation are "mortgaging, loss of land through private transactions, loss due to *benami* (illegal) transactions, adoption of tribal land by the non-tribal men in the name of tribal spouses, long-term lease of land to non-tribals, land gifts by tribals to non-tribals, etc." (Malik, 2020). Continuous measures by the state to alienate tribal lands have resulted rebellions which have often turned out to be large scale movements. Adivasis have been able to organize themselves, often with non-tribal logistical support, and have stood up against the exploitative practices of the state. This large scale movements have been successful as they have brought sweeping legislative changes; changes that reflect the change in the orientation of the state towards the

tribes. Some of the changes brought in for the adivasi communities post-independence are “decriminalization of criminal tribes, the special constitutional provisions for representation, affirmative action for the tribal communities, recognizing the land rights of tribals under the Scheduled Areas, creation of Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for special financial allocations for tribal population, creation of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the enactment of the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act, 1996, the Forest Rights Act of 2005 (FRA) and the creation of the District Mineral Foundation under the MMDR Act of 2015” (Malik, 2020). But, these legislations are finally under the hands of agents for proper implementation who often do not fall under a scrutiny system. Many of these legislations require complementary legislations to be enacted at the state level which is often ignored or manipulated. In Odisha, “the state government enacted the Orissa Scheduled Areas Transfer of Immovable Property (by Scheduled Tribes) (OSATIP) Regulation, 1956 to check the illegal transfer of tribal land to the non-tribals”. However, the state government has time to time brought amendments to the legislation in order to keep serving the capitalist modes of development. In 2010, the state government tried to “amend the OSATIP Act by allowing the transfer of tribal land to the non-tribals. The amendment was passed in the house by the approval of the Governor and was later sent to the President for assent. However, the president did not give assent and since then the state government has formed an inter-ministerial committee to look into the matter” (Ambagudia, 2021). It is under this context of forcible integration and continuous land alienation; the tribes of Sundergarh district find themselves.

Sundergarh is positioned within the heart of the mineral belt of India, making it a perfect place for large scale developmental project. Lime stone and dolomite were first discovered in 1898 and since then there has been array of mineral based projects; mining minerals like iron-ore, limestone, manganese, dolomite, and fire clay. The local adivasis tasted the ‘development’ through the centralized planning as large scale projects like “The Rourkela Steel Plant and Odisha Cement Limited Rajgangpur were set up in the district. Steel Plant of Rourkela, under the Steel Authority of India Limited, was the first Public Sector in the country”. SAIL was a public institution modelled around the ‘mixed economy’ arrangement of the 1960s. Soon, the suit of rapid industrialization followed and “by 2000 around 11 large Scale, 5 medium scale and 507 small and micro registered enterprises were established in the district”. In addition to these large dams were constructed to provide water to these plants. Mandira Dam, which was constructed to

provide water to the Rourkela Steel plant, had alone rehabilitated 31 villages (Tete, 2019). This forced massive rehabilitation of tribals from their homelands. Before displacement state officials had promised that they would provide one individual family member within a household with employment in the Rourkela Steel Plant but those promises were not met and those employment opportunities went to the non-tribals. Post liberalization, small and micro scale industries flourished under the reforms and state government rebates. “Around 20-30 acres of land was acquired to establish each of these industries”. Huge influx of the non-tribals changed the demographics of the district. Today the non-tribals constitute almost half of the total population of the state (Tete, 2019). Not only, economic structures of the tribal communities were affected, as discussed above, changes in the modes of production affects other social structures as well.

Under this chequered history of forceful eviction and dispossession, we find the emergence of Pathalgadi movement. The movement was not against a particular institution like in the case of BALCO movement or the Vedanta movement. The movement in totality is against the long structural constraints that have been put upon the community as a whole which has led to systematic alienation of tribal lands for developmental projects. Pathalgadi movement tries to draw inspiration from the practices of the past, yet inscribing legislations of the present, mixing both the worlds. Under Pathalgadi the adivasis are using past as a point of reference to counter the problems of the present. Although land alienation is the major reason behind the assertion which we see in the contemporary times but the issue of culture should not be trivialised. Although the nation-state of India might be divided into number of states, the adivasi mobility is permeable and cuts across these politically divided states. Thus, in the case of Sundergarh district the close proximity with the state of Jharkhand has played a major role in mobilizing the demography of the district.

But what distinguishes Pathalgadi movement from other movements in the state like the ones in Kashipur and Gandhamardan is that the former tries to use ‘state laws’ as a means of resistance. Pathalgadi movement tries to use the legal framework and claim rights and use it for resistance against land alienation and other repressive activities by the state and non-state agencies. Chiara Correndo study on Pathalgadi movement shows that Pathalgadi activists use legal literacy and state-laws as vital tools of resistance. Correndo writes that assertiveness within the legal framework is ‘legalism from below’ although much of the interpretations of these laws by the participants are fuzzed and often far-fetched. Adivasis, in the case of Pathalgadi movement, have

not taken up the entirety of the state laws (like the constitution) as tools of resistance rather certain sections or provisions of legislations which they consider emancipatory and helps them defy the state agencies. Although, adivasis have a high illiterate proportion, but Correndo argues legal literacy could become a norm and in time tool against fighting state agencies. Correndo using James Scott's expression of 'weapons of the weak' writes "this triggers a form of 'legalism from below' which represents a major change in modes of resistance: instead of withdrawing from state law and circumventing it, state law becomes a 'weapon of the weak'. Far from being a mere replication of hegemonic patterns, recurring to state law can be an effective means of expressing values and putting forward ideas about the relations between the governing and the governed" (Correndo, 2021). Correndo's study shows that although the state government has tried to label the agents of the movement as 'anti-state' but the collective movement operates well within the legal framework; in fact, it tries to draw it as a tool for assertiveness.

Further, invoking the legal rights, the adivasis have not forgotten the role of culture and spirituality in achieving the goals of the movements. In almost all cases the adivasis have offered garlands and vermilion to the stone plaques giving the movement an extramundane turn (Singh A., 2019). We had discussed in the case of Niyamgiri protests, invoking tribal religion became a major instrument of protest against the state (Krishnan & Naga, 2017). Similarly, Pathalgadi tradition was used as a tribal religious tool to make adivasis cognizant of the rights and authority over their lands. Nandini Sundar argues that incapacity of the political and the legal system to deal with the problems of the adivasis, has pushed the latter to find recourse into religion and customs; thereby making religion as last recourse to save their lands and livelihoods (Sundar, 2005). As discussed above, a change brought to a particular structure has a resultant effect on other structures as well. In the case of the adivasis of Sundergarh, the changes in their traditional *khunkattidari* system of agriculture also eroded traditional governing structures like *Parha* and *Manki*. Further, traditional recreational modes also took a hit; practices like *palas* and *jatras* stopped as the adivasis were forced to integrate with a modern urban culture of the non-tribal demography. Studies mention of many tribal festivals like Ind became extinct because of establishment of urban centres like Rourkela (Mohanty, 1962). *Khunkattidari* system, *Parha/Manki* system, *jatras*, *palas* etc. were communitarian modes and institution within which the identity of the adivasi individual was divided into different layers and these structures in turn held the adivasi society together into a symbiotic whole. Modern discourse on development,

education, art, culture, society etc. had an adverse effect on these structures and subjected the adivasis to the modern state. Even after seventy odd years of post-colonial state, the exploitations towards the adivasis have not paused, bringing the state and the adivasis into a direct confrontation. These frustrations have led to adivasis to rise again, this time under Pathalgadi movement. Although, the state governments across both the state of the Jharkhand and Odisha and at the centre have tried to malign the movement calling the leaders part of the Maoist movement, scholars like Xaxa and Correndo argue that the movement falls completely within the margins of the formal legal framework (Xaxa, 2019; Correndo, 2021). Davidsdottir's work on Pathalgadi movement shows that 'discursive tactics' have been greatly successful in spreading the narratives and objectives to other members within the community (Davidsdottir, 2021).

Still there are lot of questions that need to be studied regarding Pathalgadi movement and this leaves with further scope of study on the topic. As the current form of movement is witnessed only post 2016, there has not been much field studies available upon it. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the Pathalgadi movement has also divided the adivasi social life into two camps; one in favour of Pathalgadi and one against it. Further within villages supporting Pathalgadi, there is sections which demand complete autonomy from any and all kind of state agencies while others mere base their demands on the basis of FRA. This new cleavage in the tribal social life has potential to deepen and has already taken lives. It is essential to study the social composition and orientation of adivasis supporting and opposing the movement. Also to understand the forces and narratives that force the individual within the community to chose one of two camps. Above all, it is essential to understand that the frustrations within the modern developmental structure have led to assertion among the adivasis. Thus, under this light it is essential to reform and reevaluate the developmental structure; the state has had over years. The state should look to make room for alternative developmental and governance models like the Parha/Manki system. And this could be only done through some forms of decentralisation. Legislations like PESA and FRA have brought some levels of decentralisation but still the implementation of these remains in the hands of state agencies that often pay mere lip-service to them. Pathalgadi movement provides the best of both the worlds as it uses both antiquity and modernity to secure the future. Most importantly, Pathalgadi movement shows how traditional struggle over *Jal, Jangal aur Jameen* could be fought within the framework of state-laws and nation-state.

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