

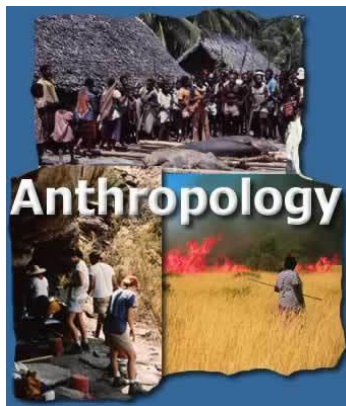
SOCIOLOGY OF TRIBAL Society (Need for studying the Tribes)



Introduction:

“Sociology studies everything under the sun”. But if one goes through the history of development of the discipline, one discovers two facts: first, the entire world has been under the sun from times immemorial and sociology does not study the entire world; second, in the strict sense of the word, sociology is a “Post industrial” phenomenon.

Further, as Pierre Von Der Berghe observed; study of „whites” was cornered by sociology and the study of „dark savages” was „relegated” to Anthropology. After all, sociology developed as a specialization in response to a plethora of problems of social life emerging in the modern world, thanks to industrialization. And those, who fashioned themselves as sociologists lived in the middle of urbanizing industrializing world, seemed quite comfortable living in towns and cities. As history shows Anthropologists were going to remoter corners of the globe trying to understand the lives of those lesser known to modern people.



Anthropology:

The central issue in anthropology is human variation. In the nineteenth century, the guiding idea was that there were significant biological differences between human populations, and that these biological differences – notably in the development of the brain – explained variations in rationality, technical sophistication and social complexity. The Enlightenment belief that human history was a unified history of progress in knowledge and rationality was recast in an evolutionist idiom: there had been a steady and determined movement from more primitive to more advanced human types. Differences between populations were represented as reflecting the fact that they had achieved different levels of development. Ancient civilizations revealed by archaeology were thought to represent stages of development through which all modern societies had once progressed. There were also still some primitive human populations that closely resembled not only our own remote ancestors but also even the primate ancestors of humanity. „Primitive“ peoples – like, it was thought, the Fuegians, Australian Aboriginals and the South African Bushmen – were physically less evolved than other humans, lived in a „primitive“ society based on kinship and had a „primitive“ totemic religion. Other living populations represented intermediate stages of development between „primitive“ and „civilized“ modern peoples. In the 1880s, an alternative view became popular, which was that each human „race“ had specific inherent capacities and therefore produced more or less sophisticated cultural forms and social institutions.

A major paradigm shift occurred in the first decades of the twentieth century, which resulted in the abandonment of the „evolutionist“ approaches of the nineteenth century. In the USA, Franz Boas (1858 – 1942) and his students were among the pioneering critics of racial theory. They helped to establish that biological differences between extant human populations cross cut the racial classifications; that these racial classifications were crude and unreliable, being based on a few phenotypical features; and that there were no apparent differences in intellectual capacity between populations. It was not race that caused the differences between cultures. Cultural differences were themselves the main source of human variation. Anthropologists in the Boasian mould accordingly distinguished between biological and cultural processes.

Culture was conceived as that part of the human heritage that was passed on by learning rather than by biological inheritance. There were, however, two very different views of culture. E.B. Tylor (1832 – 1917) and other evolutionist writers had typically treated culture or civilization as a single, cumulative attribute of humankind: some communities simply enjoyed more or less „culture“ as they advanced. The Boasian scholars were critical of these evolutionist speculations, and were more concerned with local histories and with regional distributions of cultural traits. In contradiction to the evolutionists, they insisted that cultural history did not follow any set course. A culture was formed by contracts exchanges, population movements. Each culture was a historically and geographically specific accretion of traits. There was no necessary course of cultural development, and in consequence cultures could not be rated as more or less advanced.

In Britain, Bronislaw Malinowski (1884 – 1942) and A.R.Radcliffe-Brown (181 – 1955) abandoned what they termed speculative reconstructions of the past and insisted rather that beliefs, customs, institutions and practices could be understood only in terms of the context of their use. Contemporary causes were sought, rather than historical origins. Inspired by the theories of Emile Durkheim (1858 – 1917), they situated anthropology within the social sciences, drawing particularly on sociology and social psychology.

The new schools of anthropology in Europe and North America agreed that social, cultural and biological processes were largely independent of each other. This fostered a divergence between the biological study of human beings and the study of cultural and social processes. Although Boas himself contributed to „physical anthropology“ or „biological anthropology“, this became a distinct specialism in the USA. In Europe, physical anthropology (often confusingly termed „anthropology“) developed independently of what had initially been called ethnology, the study of living populations. Some influential figures in American anthropology tried to preserve the “four fields” approach, which linked cultural anthropology, physical anthropology, archaeology and linguistics, but increasingly the specialisms within anthropology diverged from each other. By the middle of the twentieth century the intellectual links between the four fields had become increasingly exiguous. Certainly there is some mutual influence. Archaeology has increasingly drawn on cultural and social theory, and some biological anthropologists have developed neo-Darwinian explanations of social institutions. In general, however, cultural anthropology in North America and social anthropology and ethnology in Europe can be treated in isolation from the other anthropological disciplines.

Youngsters pursuing Social Sciences, Development Studies, even Economics will find value in Anthropology. Many take it as a base subject to further study Law, Forensic Science, Public Health and Social Work.

As a subject, anthropology has fascinated man for centuries, as it deals with the study of the various dimensions of man’s existence and behavior. There are several streams in which one can specialize in Anthropology. These include:

Socio-Cultural Anthropology:

It deals with different aspects of socio-cultural behavior – how groups and communities are formed and the development of cultures. One studies socio-economic changes like cultural differences among various communities and regions and the cause behind such differences and also cross-cultural communication, the evolution of languages, evolution of technology and the changes patterns in different cultures.

Prehistoric-Anthropology or Archaeology:

This is an attempt to reconstruct history on the basis of relics like statues, bones, coins and other historical artifacts. Such discoveries help to reconstruct early history and social customs and traditions. Archaeologists also try to analyse social activity from such discoveries. They also make use of contemporary records or historical documents to tally with their discoveries and then reconstruct early human history.

Physical or Biological Anthropology:

This stream of anthropology is concerned with physical or biological characteristics of the primate order, like humans and links with other primates. This branch tries to understand social customs through the evolutionary chain. It also explores the physical differences between races and the way in which different races have adapted themselves physiologically and their reactions to different environments. Biological or physical anthropology also has other sub streams or sub disciplines. These provide further specialization options. These include primate biology, otology (the study of bones and skeletons), paleoanthropology and forensic anthropology.

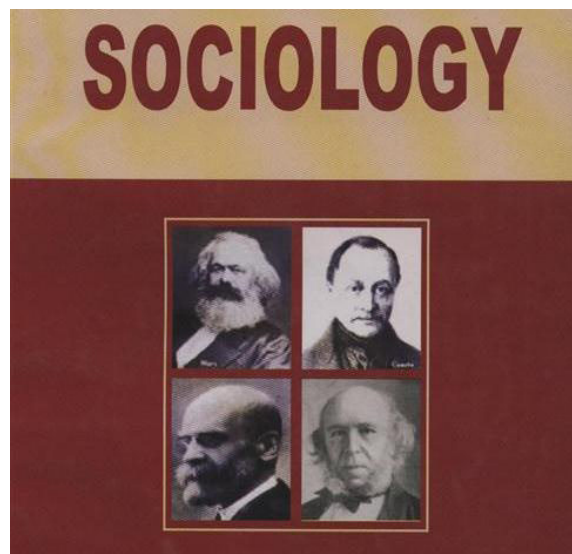
Applied Anthropology:

Applied anthropology puts to use the information collected from other branches of anthropology and then uses the data in programmes like large-scale initiatives for birth control, health treatment, reducing malnutrition, trying to curb juvenile delinquency, solving labour problems and worker protests in industries, improving agricultural practices, preventing tribal welfare and helping in tribal rehabilitation when their land is taken over or they are forcefully removed.

Linguistic Anthropology:

This stream deals with the origin and construction of oral as well as written languages. There is also a scope for comparative studies to see how cultural interactions have influenced the language of the different cultures involved and how language is an indicator to different cultural practices and customs. Linguistic anthropology is closely linked with cultural anthropology.

Sociology:



Sociology is very much a product of modern history, seeking to provide new answers to old questions as well as answers to the new questions posed by the social changes and contacts between previously isolated peoples that have become the background of daily life in the twentieth century. Of course, long before 1837, when Auguste Comte coined the term sociology, the Greek philosophers, the Church Fathers and the thinkers of the Enlightenment – to mention only the most outstanding figures of Western intellectual history – reflected on the origins and foundations of human society. Indeed the first amateur sociologist was the tribesman who first perceived in the social relations of his fellows an enduring pattern or structure that outlasted the particular individuals composing it at a given time.

In spite of their many penetrating insights into human customs and institutions, the early philosophers and theologians generally regarded human social relations as part of a divinely ordained cosmic order or as the expression of a fixed and time less human nature. The political philosophers and classical economists, who were the immediate precursors of the founding fathers of sociology, had a narrow view of the social bonds uniting men, seeing them almost exclusively as political and economic relations. Thus Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and the other great seventeenth- and eighteenth-century political theorists thought of the relation between man and society largely in terms of their relation of the state to its subjects. Adam Smith and the classical economists, on the other hand, saw the contractual relations between traders in an exchange economy as the prototype of all social relations. Only after the social consequences of the great political and economic revolutions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries became fully evident was it possible for the structure of social relations to be perceived as an autonomous realm, a “variable” partially independent of political regimes and market relations. The disintegration of traditional European institutions as a result of the French Revolution and the industrial revolution made visible the existence of an order in men’s social behavior that was independent of the statecraft of rulers and that could not be seen as the manifestation of an unchanging human nature.

The thinkers who were the first to conceive of the social order as a larger whole encompassing the state, the economy, and all the other institutions of society are the men we honor today as the founding fathers of sociology: Henri Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte in France, Herbert Spencer in England, and Karl Marx in Germany. Comte and Spencer in particular saw the necessity for developing a new intellectual discipline sociology-which would study the social order and seek to discover general principles and laws underlying it.

The historical changes which gave birth to sociology as a new perspective-and, eventually, a new discipline-have continued at an accelerating rate to transform Western industrial societies. Indeed, machine technology, the concentration of more and more people in large cities, representative government, the nation state as the dominant form of political organization, and the substitution of secular values for religiously inspired ones are now spreading around the world. The conception of sociology as a continuing effort to understand these societal changes from the time of

the founding fathers to the present, has served as the main organizing principle of this book.

If Sociology originated as a response to the birth pangs of the modern world in Western Europe, it is also true that the discovery of the “social” as an independent force shaping human experience had implications transcending the specific historical conditions under which it occurred. The sociological perspective has cast light on traditional as well as on modern societies, and it has also illuminated age-old questions about the nature of human nature and the origins of man and society. The sociological perspective has influenced the work of other social scientists and that of philosophers and historians as well. Indeed practitioners of these disciplines have made many important contributions to sociology itself.

The human variety:



What social science is properly about is the human variety, which consists of all the social worlds in which men have lived, are living, and might live. These worlds contain primitive communities that, so far as we know, have changed little in a thousand years; but also great power states that have, as it were, come suddenly into violent being. Byzantine and Europe, classical China and ancient Rome, the city of Los Angeles and the empire of ancient Peru—all the worlds men have known now lie before us, open to our scrutiny.

Within these worlds there are open country settlements and pressure groups and boys’ gangs and Navajo oil men air forces pointed to demolish metro-politan areas a hundred miles wide; policemen on a corner; intimate circles and publics seated in a room; criminal syndicates; masses thronged one night at the crossroads and squares of the cities of the world; Hopi children and slave dealers in Arabia and German parties and Polish classes and Mennonite schools and the mentally deranged in Tibet and radio networks reaching around the world. Racial stocks and ethnic groups are jumbled up in move houses and also segregated married happily and also hating systematically; a thousand detailed occupations are seated in businesses and industries, in near-

continent-wide nations. A million little bargains are transacted every day, and everywhere there are more „small groups“ than anyone could ever count.

The human variety also includes the variety of individual human beings; these too the sociological imagination must grasp and understand. In this imagination and Indian Brahmn of 1850 stands alongside a pioneer farmer of Illionis; an eighteenth-century English gentlemen alongside an Australian aboriginal, together with a Chinese peasant of one hundred years ago, a politician in Bolivia today, a feudal knight of France, and English suffragette on hunger strike in 1914, a Hollywood starlet, a Roman patrician. To write of „man“ is to write of all these men and women-also of Goethe, and of the girl next door.

The social scientist seeks to understand the human variety in an orderly way, but considering the range and depth of this variety, he might well be asked: Is this really possible? Is not the confusion of the social sciences and inevitable reflection of what their practitioners are trying to study? Answer is that perhaps the variety is not as “disorderly” as the mere listing of a small part of its makes it see; perhaps not even as disorderly is it is often made to seem by the courses of study offered in colleges and universities. Order as well as disorder is relative to viewpoint: to come to an orderly understanding of men and societies requires a set of viewpoints that are simple enough to make understanding possible, yet comprehensive enough to permit us to include in our views the range and depth of the human variety. The struggle for such viewpoints is the first and continuing struggle of social science.

Any viewpoint, of course, rests upon a set of questions, and the over-all questions of the social sciences..... Come readily to the mind that has firm hold of the orienting conception of social science as the study of biography, of history, and of the problems of their intersection within social structure. To study these problems, to realize the human variety, requires that our work be continuously and closely related to the level of historical reality – and to the meanings of this reality for individual men and women. Our aim is to define this reality and to discern these meanings; it is in terms of them that the problems of classic social science are formulated, and thus the issues and troubles these problems incorporate are confronted. It requires that we seek a fully comparative understanding of the social structures that have appeared and do now exist in world history. It requires that smaller-scale milieu be selected and studied in terms of larger-scale historical structures. It requires that we avoid the arbitrary socialization of academic departments, that specialize our work variously according to topic and above all according to problem and that in doing so we draw upon the perspectives and ideas, the materials and the methods, of any and all suitable studies of man as an historical actor.

Historically, social scientists have paid most attention to political and economic institutions, but military and kinship, religious and educational institutions have also been much studied. Such classification according to the objective functions institutions generally serve is deceptively simple, but still it is handy. If we understand how these institutional orders are related to one another, we understand the social structure of a

society. For „social structure“, as the conception is more commonly used, refers to just that-to the combination of institutions classified according to the functions each performs. As such, it is the most inclusive working unit with which social scientists deal. Their broadest aim, accordingly, is to understand each of the varieties of social structure, in its components and in its totality. The term „social structure“ itself is quite variously

defined, and other terms are used for the conception, but if the distinction between milieu and structure is kept in mind, along with the notion of institution, no one will fail to recognize the idea of social structure when he comes upon it.



Need for the Study of Tribal Society:

There is a whole variety of needs why students of sociology in India should be studying tribal society. The needs can be enumerated as under:

- Scientific need
- Demographical need
- Political need
- Educational Need
- Developmental need
- Welfare need
- Socio-Cultural need

Scientific Need:

As long as sociology as a discipline remains defined as dealing with the study of human society(ies), it has an obligation to study tribal society in order to give a fuller meaning to the definition. Just as natural laws take care of natural phenomena, sociology has defined social laws as governing the social phenomena in human aggregates. If that be

so, there is the scientific need to study tribal society if only to demonstrate that these social laws are operating there too.

In more recent times, thanks to the rapid social changes overtaking the world, the tribal people all over the globe are undergoing transition of various kinds and at different phases-albeit not of their own choice. If tribal people are not studied now, sociologists would lose a chance for ever of having a measure of evolutionary trends in social structure and organization.

Demographic Need:

Scheduled castes – as enumerated and listed in the relevant schedule of Indian Constitution – form well over 8 per cent of population. Even to this day there are still certain groups isolating and shying away from civilization who constitute substantial numbers. Demographically, the provincial as well as the central governments have an obligation towards them. It is for those involved in the process related to tribal world to find out ways and means of making the tribal people “feel at home” as a part of one of the largest democracies in the world.

Political Need:

Names of numerous tribal groups spread through the length and breadth of India have entered the special schedule of the Indian constitution. Therefore the different state governments as well as the central government have a “Political” obligation to make the tribal people become a part of the democratic process in general and the electoral process is particular. Given the fact that the tribal people have no knowledge of 3Rs this is a stupendous task. What holds the promise is that India has had PA Sangma (belonging to a Naga tribe) as the speaker of Lok Sabha and his daughter is an MP in the current Lok Sabha.

Educational Need:

Close on the heels of political need is the educational need. Civilized people refer to tribal people as illiterate but anthropologists would insist that we use the term “Pre-literate”; the argument here is that tribal people have been in existence pretty much earlier than modern times and from the times much before the art of writing came into the lives of a modern man.

Partly due to xenophobia and partly due to the fact that modern world has often exploited the gullibility of the naive tribal people, “educating” the tribal people becomes a paradoxical need that is not easy to achieve.

Besides general education to the tribal people voters education as well as mass education on the electoral & democratic process is of vital importance if tribal people have to be brought into the mainstream in the country.

Developmental Need:

If the planners of economic development both at the provincial levels and the central level wish to claim anything positive as resulting from the programmes implemented,

tribal people will have to be offered sufficient space to occupy the niches of beneficiaries.

Left to anthropologists, they might even choose to say that the extent to which a country is civilized may have to be measured based on how the tribal people are treated. A million dollar question still remains: "What is development", as applied to tribals? It should ideologically, be like nurturing a flowering plant. Proper nutrients & water be offered to the plant which will then grow to bloom by its own nature. Tribal development should not mean to make them ape the civilization of modern man.

Welfare Need:

Very much tied down to the development need is the welfare need. The constitution of India professes to work for developing the people in such a manner that India would become a "Welfare State". Ideally speaking, a well developed state of nation would mean that „welfare of all“ should be taken care of as a combination of „trickle-down“ and „feed-back“ arrangement. The "haves" must feel voluntarily the "moral obligation" of lifting the "have nots" up to enable them become part of the main-stream of India's population.

It is an open secret in India that most poor people in the country are living in rural and tribal areas. This has resulted in people's migration into towns and cities. Once migrated, these migrants become parts of the urban poor pockets.

The most notable irony in this effort of bringing about tribal welfare is that the people who have to guide the tribal people toward happier life need to come from the same quarters from where emerged those who have thus far exploited the gullible tribal people

Socio-Cultural Need:

The socio-cultural world of tribal people in India is a colorful canvas with exquisitely bedecked dancers at the one end and immaculately made artifacts at the other end. One comes cross classical pieces of art emanating from the deft hands of tribal craftsmen and women.

The art appreciation of tribal people finds a vent on national day parades in India and otherwise limited to the handful that have chosen to live among the tribal people for shorter or longer stay out of admiration or for research. The entire range of tribal Socio-culture is such a colorful spectrum that if no positive effort is made it is in danger of disappearing forever.

Nature and Characteristics of Tribal Society



Introduction:

Tribal communities throughout world history—from the times they were ‘discovered’ by modern man – have been known for two fundamental facts of their existence: First, they live “close to nature”; and second, they live in “Synchronization with nature”. Tribes in no part of the world have been noted to work “against the natural environment” in which they live. After all, given the simple elemental technology at their disposal, tribal people were far less equipped compared to the heavily technologised moderns in their attempt to “exploit” nature. All in one expression, very much unlike modern men who “adopted” the environmental aspects and features continually to suit their ever-changing needs, tribal people managed to live “adapting” their social life to remain in harmony with “environmental givens”

Before going into details of characteristics of tribals it may be worthwhile to understand some vital terms used in the analysis:

A. Adivasi/Adimjati/Janjati:

These are the terms used locally to refer to what is known as a tribe. Other terms used to refer to the most original autochthones of a geographical area are vanavasi, girijanpaharis etc. The apparent meaning is that they are normally found in forests/jungles & atop mountains.



B. Robert Redfield conceptualized the term “The little community” through identifying the following presenting features:

- i) Distinctiveness: Where the community begins and where it ends are apparent. The distinctiveness is apparent to the observer and is expressed in the group consciousness of the people of the community.

- ii) Smallness: A compact community with a small population provides, in some part of it, a unit of personal observation fully representative of the whole.
- iii) Homogeneity: Activities and state of mind are much alike for all persons; and the career of the generation repeats that of the preceding and thus a state of homogeneity exists.
- iv) Self-sufficiency: The Community is self-sufficient and provides for all or most of the activities and needs of its people. The little community is a cradle to vast arrangements.

All these qualities are realized, to a great extent, in particular groups and villages of rural and tribal India. But the qualities present in them differ in degree. Going a little into the Social structure of tribe, the following concepts become relevant:



C. The Moiety – Half Tribe:

The Moieties are half tribes. When a tribe is socially divided into only two groups for its social activities, each group is called moiety. This organization is also known as a dual organization. The two groups of the community regulate the social behavior and acts of the people. Moiety may be exogamous, agamous or more rarely endogamous. Agamy may mean that once exogamous dual organization has relaxed the rule preventing marriage within the group; but it may also mean that for some reason the sense of kinship has never been extended, nor fully extended to the moiety.

An exogamous dual organization differs from a multiple clan system. When the group is divided into two parts by the rule of descent, the moiety affiliation of all its relations can be reduced. But if there are more than two clans or exogamous clan-like groups the relative affiliations are not traceable or are only partly determined. Any dichotomy in the two halves of the tribe may prove a practical complete division of the tribe. They may occupy two different parts of the village; one group may reside in the south tola and the other in the north. Their political and mutual behavior will clearly reflect the two distinct groups of the tribe. They may wear different dresses. One of the moieties socially ranks higher than the other and so on.



D.Phratry – A Major Social Unit

A tribe or sub-tribe is divided into a number of clans which are further grouped in three or more groups or clusters of clans, maintaining their individuality on a higher order to form a phratry. In other words, a few clans unite to form a group called phratry, It is of interest as an immediate higher grouping of clans towards a major social unit. The form for phratry is Gotra-Samuha which again indicates the grouping of clans into a major social unit. Majumdar and Madan opine that when a group of clans merge together for some reason or the other the emergent grouping is called phratry.

Social life is the essence of human life. It grows out of constant patterning of social interactions and relationships among human beings as such. IN the social life of the Indian tribes though certain common characteristics cut across the four geographical regions,* yet there are some strong local variations. The factors which form matrix of social life are five:

(1) natural environment, (2) population, (3) human being, (4) material technology and (5) social environment. These go to constitute the parameter for organized social life.

Of these components, the natural environment is often conceived as the basic. All societies depend on it for their basic needs such as food, fuel, shelter, etc. Furthermore, to the extent that we do manage to procure natural products, our social life must be organized to make this effort a success. Next the population provides the raw material for a well-organized society as it is always composed of relationships among people constituting the population.

Material technology always is inseparably linked with social life. The technique helps in obtaining natural resources, erecting a shelter, making tools, preparing food, etc., and the range of material technology is a parameter for the society to be called advanced or backward and inevitably shapes it.

Structure and Organization in Tribal Community

The social life of the tribals involves of grouping and grading people for the effective carrying out of the various activities for common existence by sharing in common activities under the bonds of relationship. They have their own structure and organization. As their tribals form a small community of their own in a particular territory their relations are direct and intimate.



Now let us attempt a characterization of mankind in precivilized times. Let us begin with the simple statement that in the primary condition of man kind the human community was small. Food collecting period, hunters and vegetable-food collectors usually live in small roving bands. Even the more stable settlement of Pacific coast Indian fishing people, of recent times exceptionally well provided with food, includes hardly more than thirty occupied houses and several hundred people. Nor does the immediate transition to food producing increase substantially the size of the community, now a group of farmer's huts or a center of cattle raising.



On the whole the growth of population was not reflected so much in the enlargement of the settlement unit as in a multiplication of settlements. In ethnography Neolithic villages can boast only a few hundred inhabitants... In prehistoric Europe the largest Neolithic village yet known, Barkaer in Jutland, comprised fifty-two small, one-roomed dwellings, but sixteen to thirty houses was a more normal figure; so the average local group in Neolithic times would average two hundred to four hundred members.

Certain food-producing town centers well on the way to civilization do give indication of larger populations, but hunters' bands or food producers' settlements are alike in general contrast to the far larger community which was the ancient city with its seven thousand to twenty thousand inhabitants. What is here worth emphasizing is that until the rise of civilization mankind lived in communities so small that every adult could, and no doubt did, know everybody else.

These communities were isolated from one another. Change in this regard with the coming of agriculture was a change in some degree, but at first not a radical change. Throughout both Paleolithic and Neolithic times each little group was largely self-contained and self-supported, as the surviving primitive societies, whether hunters or growers of vegetable or animal food, are largely self-contained and self-supported. The trade that occurred in Paleolithic times was chiefly trade intensified and included some staple commodities, such as stone for querns and flint for hand axes. But the trade did not greatly limit the essential separateness of the local community. The isolation of the Neolithic settlement continued into the medieval village. Villagers of primitives or peasants today are still relatively isolated, and, on the whole, when such people have more than casual association with outsiders, it is with people who are much like themselves, in the neighboring bands or settlements that are like their own community.

So we may characterize mankind in its primary condition as living in small and isolated communities. These communities were of course without writing. One need not say more of the absence of literacy and literature; its importance as a criterion of primitive as contrasted with civilized living is familiar. To these qualities other may be added. The precivilized community was composed of one kind of people. If this fact is not to be deduced from the archaeologist's data, it follows from what we know of isolated primitive communities seen today. Small and isolated communities are intimate communities; people come to have the same ways of doing things; they marry with and live almost entirely with others like them in that community.

Next we may say that the members of the precivilized community had a strong sense of group solidarity. No doubt they thought of themselves as naturally belonging together, and so far as they were aware of people different from themselves, they thought their own ways to be better than those of the ways of others. These things also may be said, not only because they are necessary consequences of the isolation and the smallness of the community, but because we see them to be true of contemporary primitive communities.

Civilized communities are more heterogeneous, and the sense of group solidarity is qualified by the number and variety of kinds of groups to which the individual makes attachment—or by the difficulty of making firm attachments to groups in some urban situations.

Yet another characteristic of precivilized living may be asserted. Within those early communities the relationships among people were primarily those of personal status. In a small and intimate community all people are known for their individual qualities of personality. Few or no strangers take part in the daily life. So men and women are seen as persons, not as parts of mechanical operations, as city people see so many of those around them. Indeed, this disposition to see what is around one as human and personal like oneself is not, in precivilized or primitive society, limited to people; a great deal of what we call "nature" is more or less so regarded. The cosmos is personal and humanlike.

Also in this connection it may be said that the groupings of people within the primitive community is one that depends on status and on role, not on mere practical usefulness. There are fathers, or older people, or shamans, or priests; each such kind of person is accorded prestige. In civilized societies the network of relationships of utility—that numbers and kinds of people who produce goods and services are so great and are at such remote distances—that many of the relationships that keep people provided with what they use are not involved in status at all, for those who use the goods. In primitive societies the status relationships are universal and dominant; the exceptions to be made would be those relatively few that arise out of trade with foreign communities.

Furthermore, in this personal universe where categories of relationships involve status, the forms and groupings of kinship provide the basic classifications. The original human society was one of kinsmen. It is the "sentiment of kinship" which in considerable part

held the group together. Within the precivilized society, it is safe to assume that relationships were essentially familial. The primary arrangements of personal status and role are those connected with that universally persistent kind of family anthropologists now call “nuclear” and the extensions of this primary kinship into many, possibly even all, of the other relationships within the community. Moreover, the categories of kinship may include elements of nature, as some animals, and supernatural beings. Of course we cannot say just what were the kinship institutions in the thousands of bands and settlements that constituted precivilized society.

What, essentially, held together this primordial human community? Was it the mutual usefulness to one another of those few hunters or fishers or farmers?

To answer only that the precivilized community was held together by reason of mutual usefulness is to fail to say what it is that more importantly and characteristically holds such a community together. Indeed, Childe sees and states succinctly, in terms which Durkheim caused many of us to use, the difference in this regard between the precivilized settlement and the city. It is not the former, but the earliest cities that “illustrate a first approximation to an organic solidarity based upon functional complementarity and interdependence between all its members such as subsists between the constituent cells of an organism”. It is the urban community that rests upon mutual usefulness. The primitive and precivilized communities are held together essentially by common understandings as to the ultimate nature and purpose of life. The precivilized society was like the present-day primitive society in those characteristics— isolation, smallness, homogeneity, persistence in the common effort to make a way of living under relatively stable circumstances—to which we have already attended, and therefore it was like that parallel societies which we can observe today in that its fundamental order was a matter of moral conviction. In both cases the society.

For the homogeneity of such a society is not that homogeneity in which everybody does the same thing at the same time. The people are homogeneous in that they share the same tradition and have the same view of the good life. They do the same kinds of work and they worship and marry and feel shame or pride in the same way and under similar circumstances. But at any one time the members of primitive community may be doing notably different things: the women looking for edible roots while the men hunt; some men out on a war party while others at home perform a rite for its success. And when there is a familial ceremonial, or a magico-religious ritual affecting the whole community, the differences in what is being done may be very great. In the activities to gain a material living, labor, as between man and man or woman and woman, may be divided. But the total specialization of function, as among people of different sexes and age-or-kinship positions, and as among participants in a rite, may be very considerable. The point to be stressed is that all these activities conduce to a purpose, express a view of man’s duty, that all share, and to which each activity or element of institution contributes.

We can safely say these things of the precivilized societies as we can say them of the primitive societies because these things follow from the other characteristics which we

have already conceded, and are attested in every very isolated, undisturbed primitive society we observe today. For the same reasons it is possible to add yet other attributes to the characterization. In the most primitive societies of living men into which we may enter and which we can come directly to understand, the controls of action are informal; they rest on the traditional obligations of largely inherited status, and are expressed in talk and gesture and in the patterns of reciprocal action. Political institutions are few and simple, or even entirely absent. The members of these societies “believe in the sacred things; their sense of right and wrong springs from the unconscious roots of social feeling, and is therefore unreasoned, compulsive and strong.

People do the kind of things they do, not because somebody just thought up that kind of thing, or because anybody ordered them to do so, but because it seems to the people to flow from the very necessity of existence that they do that kind of thing. The reasons given after the thing is done, in the form of myth and the dress of ceremony, assert the rightness of the choice. Particular things are done as a result of decision as to that particular action, but as to the class of action, tradition is the source and the authority.

“The Indians decide now to go on a hunt; but it is not a matter of debate whether one should, from time to time, hunt. So the principles of rightness which underline the activities are largely tacit. And they are not the subject of much explicit criticism, nor even of very much reflective thought. Institutions are not planned out, nor is their modification a matter of much deliberate choice and action. Legislation, though it may occur, is not the characteristic form of legal action in primitive societies.

And what Malinowski refers to as “science” in connection with the primitive peoples is better distinguished as practical knowledge. And these things too may with confidence be attributed to the precivilized societies. Yet, because in them thought and action were largely traditional and uncritical, it does not follow that activities were automatic or empty of meaning. Rather we must suppose that activity with them as with us involved lively and variable subjective states. Ruth Bunzel, studying Pueblo potters, found that the Indian woman who was in fact copying the designs of other potters with only the smallest variation was unaware that she copied, condemned copying as wrong, and had a strong conviction that she was in fact inventive and creative. And as for the meaning of life—that was, so to speak, guaranteed. One did what tradition said one did, making a multitude of interesting and particular choices. But all of it fell within and was motivated by the common understandings of the little community as to the nature and purpose of life.

Civilization may be thought of as the antithesis of the folk society. It may also, and consistently with the first antithesis, be thought of as that society in which the relations between technical order and moral order take forms radically different from the relationships between the two which prevail in precivilized society.

The contrast between technical order and moral order helps us to understand the general kind of thing which is civilization. In the folk society the moral order is great and the technical order is small. In primitive and precivilized societies material tools are few

and little natural power is used. Neither the formal regulations of the state or church nor the nonmoral ordering of behavior which occurs in the market plays an important part in these societies. It is civilization that develops them.

It is civilization, too, that develops those formal and apparent institutions which both express the moral order and are means toward its realization. The technical order appears not only in tools, power, and an interdependence of people chiefly or wholly impersonal and utilitarian, but also in greater and more varied apparatus for living—apparatus both physical and institutional.

Under ten headings Childe has summarized the characteristics of civilized life whether lived at Uruk, Mohenjodaro, or Uxmal among the Mayans. One, the reappearance of naturalistic art, has significance not immediately plain, and may be a little doubtful. Of the other nine, six plainly announce the growth of the technical order : (1) the great increase in the size of the settlement (the material equipment for human association becomes far larger); (2) the institution of tribute or taxation with resulting central accumulation of capital; (3) monumental public works; (4) the art of writing; (5) the beginnings of such exact and predictive sciences as arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy; and (6) developed economic institutions making possible a greatly expanded foreign trade. Each of these six suggests the increasing complexity of social organization, and the remaining three criteria explicitly declare features of that social organization which are characteristic of civilization; (7) full-time technical specialists, as in metal working; (8) a privileged ruling class; and (9) the state, or the organization of society on a basis of residence in place of, or on top of, a basis of kinship.



In folk societies the moral order predominates over the technical order. It is not possible, however, simply to reverse this statement and declare that in civilizations that technical order predominates over the moral. In civilization the technical order certainly becomes great. But we cannot truthfully say that in civilization the moral order becomes small. There are ways in civilization in which the moral order takes on new greatness. In civilization the relations between the two orders are varying and complex.

Characteristics of Tribal Society can be summed up as follow:-

- i. They have usually a well-demarcated geographical territory.
- ii. Generally they live in forests and hilly areas.
- iii. Their territory is relatively isolated or semi-isolated compared to other social group.

- iv. They have their own culture, folklore, and cosmology and belief system.
- v. Economically they are self – sufficient, i.e. their economy is based on subsistence level where there is no concept of surplus. They cling to primitive technology. They lack monetary economy; their economy is dependent on barter exchange.
- vi. They are more interested in earning their to-days need and do not bother about their future requirements.
- vii. They have their own language; generally do not have any script.
- viii. They have their own political system, i.e. both stateless and state. Earlier they had stateless system i.e. without any tribal chief. They manage their law and order system through family and kinship ties. Later on came the state system, when tribals nominated or elected their own chiefs. Today, of course, this autonomy has been lost and they have become part of the local administration.
- ix. Tribal societies are known as simple societies because their social relationships are primarily based on family and kinship ties. Besides they do not have any rigid social stratification.
- x. They have their own religion i.e. having their own deities (gods and goddesses) and belief system. Their forms of religion are known as animism (worshipping the soul or ancestors), animatism (worshipping any non-living body like stone or wood), totemism (worshipping a tree or any animal as the founding ancestor), and naturism (worshipping objects of nature like river, stream, sun moon, forest etc.,)
- xi. They have a sense of belongingness to their own community, they feel that they are the sons of the soil and hence they have a strong ethnic identity.

Tribe & Caste in India



Tribe

Victorian scholars used the term 'tribe' as part of their attempt to construct a science of so-called 'primitive' societies. They labored to identify core features of the array of indigenous societies in areas such as Africa, the Americas and Melanesia. The Term "tribe" was initially applied very generally to major social groups, but it was soon apparent that there was considerable diversity, and efforts were devoted to deciding which groups should properly be called tribes, and what their defining characteristics were. The term passed into common usage and persisted in anthropology for many years but it fell increasingly into disuse when it became apparent that the groups described as tribes had little in common. Moreover, intellectuals in decolonizing states argued that Western scholars, particularly anthropologists, had colluded in the colonial invention of the tribe in order to divide people and hinder nation-building.

In the 1970s many anthropologists embarked on a reflective exercise to discover why the notion of tribe had exercised such a hold on the discipline and, indeed, on the Western imagination. Part of the answer, they decided, lay in nineteenth-century fascination with ideas of social evolution. Armchair ethnographers had not been careful empiricists, but had constructed images of primitive society through a priori inversion of supposed traits of their own society, and had then selected evidence to prove this vision.

Early ethnographers had argued that recruitment to significant groups in industrial society turned on criteria of achievement, contract and choice. They speculated that 'primitive' groups were recruited by ascription, on the basis of status. Evidence that

kinship played some part in constituting these groups led them to conclude that tribes were ascriptive groups based solely on kinship. This was patently untrue, but allowed Westerners to believe that primitive and civilized worlds were fundamentally different, and that the latter had evolved superior forms of social existence.

From the reflexive vantage of the 1970s 'tribe' was part of an intellectual process that had imposed 'otherness' (difference and inferiority) on people in certain parts of the world. It was convenient to believe that these constructions denoted natural groups that had existed since time immemorial. It was argued in the 1970s that early twentieth-century ethnography had not seriously challenged these assumptions, because its ostensibly neutral research was integral to the colonial enterprise, and to the way the West used its image of 'the Rest' to justify inequality and exploitation. A new generation of scholars now proclaimed that tribes had never existed, except in the minds of observers. The reaction, however, went too far, and was insulting to the people whose plight it sought to explain. It implied that they had passively allowed tribe, and related paraphernalia of otherness, to be imposed.

In the 1980s, scholars from various disciplines sought more nuanced analysis of the practical ways the idea of tribe was imposed by diverse agents of colonialism. This allowed exploration of how colonized people responded – by adapting new ideas and practices to old ways, transforming them while adopting them, and subverting them to their own ends.

Recent research has revealed who led responses of adaptation, transformation and subversion, and why others followed. In doing so it has also uncovered the ambiguity of tribe. Tribe involved ideas that were new in much of the world – primordiality, ascription and absolute boundaries. But, once adopted, these ideas could not be contained at one level of society. This mode of thinking informed new perceptions of smaller and larger groups, and was used to construct images of ethnic groups and nations, and to separate difference from inferiority. People were enabled to claim, and redeem, their otherness in various contexts. Tribe was one key to a Pandora's box of claims about identities.

The repercussions are still evident, and gain significance in a postindustrial world where narratives of progress and social mobility turn sour. There is now a widespread tendency to emphasize identities and groups for which people qualify by ascription rather than achievement. Belonging to such a group is a way to assert dignity and to compete for resources in national global contexts. Tribe is only one label that may be used, and in Africa it is likely, for historical reasons, that cognate terms such as ethnic group, nation and race will be preferred. But in part by questioning the extent to which significant social groups in industrial society have ever been based solely on achievement and contract, it would be foolhardy to proclaim the idiom of tribe dead.

A social division of people, especially of a preliterate people defined in terms of common descent, territory culture etc., (historically) on ethnic or ancestral division of ancient.

A unit of political organization consisting of a number of families, clans or other groups who share a common ancestry and culture, and among whom leadership is typically neither formalized nor permanent.

A tribe is viewed, historically or developmentally, as a social group existing before the development of, or outside of states. Many anthropologists used the term tribal society to refer to societies organized largely on the basis of kinship, especially corporate descent groups; some theorists hold that tribes represent a state in social evolution intermediate between bands and states. Other theorists argue that tribes developed after, and must be understood in terms of their relationship to, states.

It is important to note that the word 'tribe' is a contested term due to its roots in colonial anthropological foundations and the connotations that these hierarchical definitions have.

It is common practice to use alternative terms like ethnic group, or nation. First use of the word tribe was in 12th century middle English literature referring to the original tripartite ethnic division of the Roman state.

Anthropologist Elman Service presented a system of classification for societies in all human cultures based on the evolution of "social inequality" and the 'role of state'. The system "contains 4 categories:

1. Gatherer – hunter bands which are generally egalitarian
2. Tribal societies in which there are some limited instances of social rank and prestige.
3. Stratified tribal societies led by chieftains.
4. Civilizations with complex hierarchies and organized institutional governments.

Adivasi (Sanskrit: Nepali: Hindi: adivasi) is an umbrella term for a heterogeneous set of ethnic and tribal groups claimed to be the aboriginal population of India. They comprise a substantial indigenous minority of the population of India. The word is used in the same sense in Nepal as is another word janajati (Nepal: janajait), although the political context differed historically under the Shah and Rana dynasties.

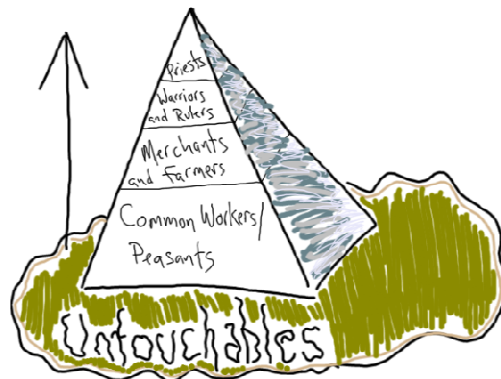
Adivasi societies are particularly present in the Indian states of Kerala, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhan, West Bengal, Mizoram and other northeastern states, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Many smaller tribal groups are quite sensitive to ecological degradation caused by modernization. Commercial forestry and intensive agriculture have proved destructive to the forests that had endured swidden agriculture for many centuries. Officially recognized by the Indian government as "scheduled Tribes" in the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India, they are often grouped together with scheduled castes in the category "Scheduled Castes and Tribes", which is eligible for certain affirmative action measures.

Connotations of the word “Adivasi”

Although terms such as atavika, vanavasi (“forest dwellers”), or girijan (“hill people”) are also used for the tribes of India, adivasi carries the specific meaning of being the original and autochthonous inhabitants of a given region, and was specifically coined for that purpose in the 1930s. Over a period of time, unlike the terms “aborigines” or “tribes”, the word ‘adivasi’ has also developed a connotation of past autonomy which was disrupted during the British colonial period in India and has not been restored.

In Nepal, the infiltration of Khasi people from west to east through the Middle Hills, then the consolidation of dozens of petty kingdoms by the Shahs followed by the usurpation by the Ranas brought indigenous nationalities under orthodox Hindu rule and then codified inferior social and political status into a corpus of law known as Muluki ain. Although the Shah kings were restored to power in the revolution of 1950, they still governed mostly for and through high caste Bahuns, Thakuris, Chhetris and Newards, Enfranchisement of adivasis – except Newars –seldom advanced beyond lip service. This produced grievances that were instrumental in the Nepalese Civil War, where the rank and file of guerilla fighters were largely adivasi. Thus in Nepal, there are no historical parallels to British interference with orthodox Hindu discrimination, nor was there much resembling India’s significantly effective post-Independence efforts to improve the lot of adivasis.

In India, opposition to usage of the term is varied, and it has been argued that the “original inhabitant” contention is based on dubious claims and that the adivasi – non adivasi divide that has been created is artificial. It should also be noted that in Northeast India, the term Adivasi applies only to the Tea-tribes imported from Central India during colonial times, while all tribal groups refer collectively to themselves by using the English words “tribes”.



Theories of Caste System

There are too few theories about the origin and perpetuation of caste system in India. Whatever the theory, two fundamental factors are generalizable, i.e., the role of birth and the practice of endogamy.

Occupational Theory

This theory identified the fact of a strong interrelationship between caste and a specified occupation. The bond is often so strong that some of the caste groups have their names derived straight from the names of their occupations. Carpenter, iron-smith, goldsmith are some of the ready examples.

The logic is also supplemented by the argument that 'Divine Sanction' is attributed to the occupation identity through referring to the caste occupation with terms like 'swadharma' & 'Kuladharmā'. A couplet from Srimad Bhagavad Gita can be cited here;

Sreyan swadharme vigunaha paradharmath swanushtithath!
Swadharme nidhanam shreyaha para dharmo bhaya vahaha!!

Meaning; It is better so follow one's own dharma however imperfectly instead of doing another's dharma perfectly; it is better to die following one's own dharma, another dharma is dangerous. 'dharma' here refers to one's own calling, one's duty.

Varna Theory

The varna theory identified the caste system with the four-fold varna system of Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra, as the creation of the Supreme creator "Brahma" thus: Brahmins born out of the head of Brhama, Kshatriyas from the shoulders, Vaisyas from the thighs and the sudras from the feet. Categorically brahmins remain the 'think tank'. Kshatriyas the protectors, Vaisyas, traders and Sudras, the toilers

A line from Gita is in order:

Chatur varnya maya srishtam
Guna Karma Vibhagashaha !

Meaning: I (the Creator) have created the 4-fold varnas according to guna (quality) and Karma (duty)

Ideally the line can be interpreted as open and unbiased in the sense that if a Brahmin does not either possess the brahminic qualities or does not perform the brahminic duties, can be relegated to a lower position; like wise if a sudra possesses refined qualities and performs higher functions, he can be uplifted. But, it is imputed on the Brahmins that they, as the sole interpreters of the sacred scriptures interpreted as Divine sanction the 4-fold system as the permanent division of (human) society.

Again another line from Gita says:
Strishu dushtasu varshneya
Jayate Varna Samkaraha

Meaning: Arjuna, when women become bad it brings about Varna mixtures.

Fusion Theory

This theory argues that the Hindus always had the four-fold system as the ideal to strive for but in their efforts to move towards the ideal happened to create divisions and subdivisions among themselves. Yet the ultimate ideal remained in the background and that is how/why it is possible even to day to regroup the hundreds of caste groups under the four-fold framework.

Fission Theory

This theory, in a sense is the antithesis of fusion theory. It argues that in the efforts of moving towards the ideal four-fold system, the population got into fissiparous tendencies and kept breaking away into smaller and smaller endogamous units. Thus the four-fold system has receded to the background as an one-time goal.

Conspiratorial Theory

Some critics of the caste system in India have imputed the situation as the result of a conspiracy between the Brahmins and the Kashtriyas bracketing the crucial group of Vaisyas with them to keep the bulk of society-Sudras – under a permanent leash of social control. Thus only the top three would have initiation ceremony of “sacred thread” which will make them “ritually purer” & much higher in the ladder of caste system. It was even proclaimed that only after the “sacred thread” is given the male adult really came to belong to of three top groups:

Janmana Jayate sudraha
Sanskarat Brahmanaha:

Meaning: everyone is a Sudra by birth & only by Samskara becomes a Brahmin. Donning of the ‘sacred thread’ came to be noted as so important an event in man’s life that it was regarded as “second birth” thus the name “Dwija” (the Twice-born)

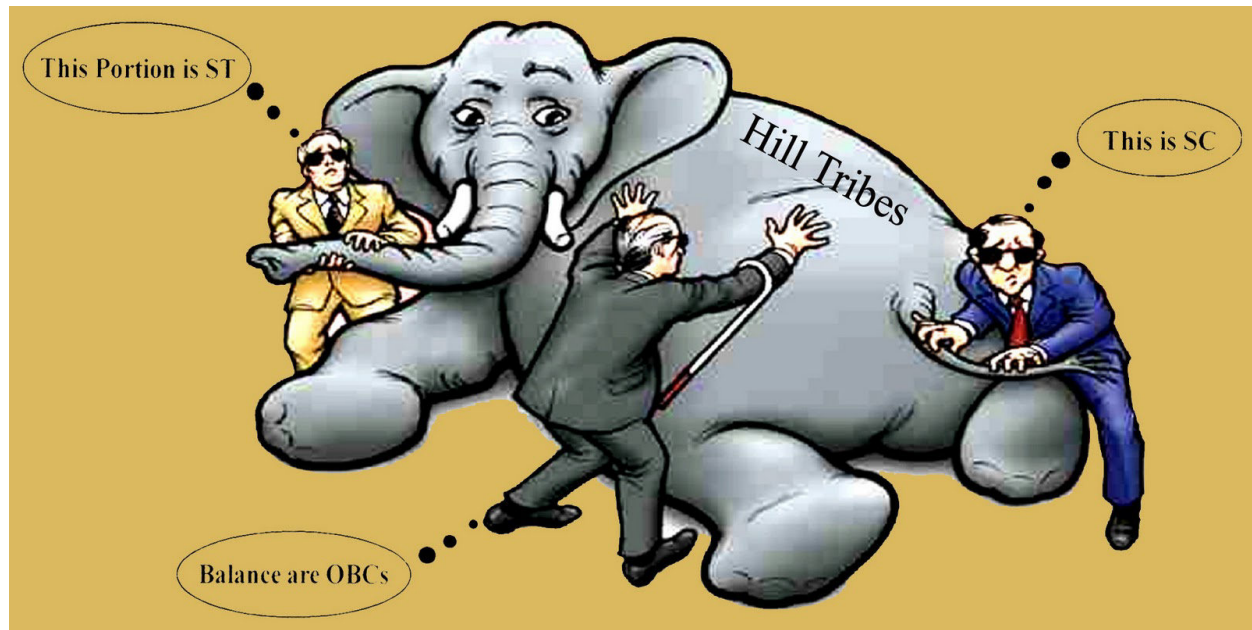
Panchamas: The case of the “Untouchables”

The four-fold varna approach resulted in identifying the bottom-most rung in the hierarchy, even below the level of sudras referred as “Panchamas”, the fifth group. Panchamas as those involved in all kinds of menial tasks remained practically “ritually impure” all the way.

The planners in post-independent India apparently saw a parallel between the panchamas of the larger Hindu Society and the various tribals that had been identified numerically. There were many parallels with respect to their plight for survival: being downtrodden, poor, illiterate, ill health, indebtedness, exploitation and bondage to list a few.

Thus Panchamas and Tribes were pooled together under a special schedule of the constitution and thus the name “scheduled castes” and “scheduled tribes”. The planners have felt the need for a special treatment to them – SC& ST – in order to uplift them so that they can become part of the “mainstream” someday. A period of ten years was

earmarked, very optimistically, to begin with at the time reservation policy was first introduced in early 1950s., in the hope significant changes and improvement would become visible with respect to the conditions of their existence. Having seen no notable sign of improvement the exercise of formal parliamentary resolution of extension of reservation policy by 10 more years started and the exercise has continued ever since.



Tribal-Caste Continuum

Anthropologists have differed on the question relating to tribe and caste. According to Ghurye tribal people are backward Hindus differing only in degrees from the other segments of Hindu society. Elwin argued for the recognition of separate social and cultural identity of tribal people. Government of India gives tacit recognition to this identity of keeping alive under constitution sanction their lists of Scheduled Tribe.

According to Andre Beteille there are certain commonly observed differences between tribes and castes. The tribes are relatively isolated as to the castes. They are world within itself having few externalities. Tribes speak a variety of dialects which separates them from non tribes. They follow their own religion and practices which are not common in Hinduism. Language is a criterion of difference as tribes speak their local dialect for example Mundas and Oraons of Chota Nagpur speak different dialects but Bhumij have lost their tribal dialect and speak dominant language of the area.

According to N.K Bose there are many similarities in customs between tribes and castes and they are interdependent. Marriage within the clan is forbidden both in the tribe as well as in the caste. Both generally don't encourage marriage outside the group.

According to Herbert Risley the convention of endogamy is not rigidly enforced in the tribe where as such is the case in a caste. But this view is not acceptable since the law of

endogamy is enforced with extreme rigidity in some tribes.

Max Weber writes in *Social Structure* that when an Indian tribe loses its territorial significance it assumes the form of an Indian caste. In this way the tribe is a local group whereas caste is a social group.

According to D.N Majumdar the tribe looks upon Hindu ritualism as foreign and extra-religious even though indulging in it and the in the worship of God and Goddess where as in the caste these are necessary part of the religion.

In caste individuals generally pursue their own definite occupations because functions are divided under the caste system. In the tribe individuals can indulge in whatever profession they prefer as there is no fixed relation between them and occupation.

According to Bailey tribe and caste should be viewed as continuum. He seeks to make distinction not in terms of totality of behavior but in more limited way in relation to the political economic system. Briefly Bailey's argument is that a caste society is hierarchical while a tribal society is segmentary and egalitarian. But contemporary India both caste and tribe are being merged into a different system which is neither one nor the other.

The tribes in India have been influenced by certain traditions of the communities around them. Major neighboring community in all the areas has always been Hindus. As a result from the very period there have been several points of contact between the Hindus of the area and tribal communities living within it. The nature and extent of contact the pattern of mutual participation and characteristics of revitalization movements have been different in different parts of India.

The ethnographic records establish that the contacts varied from semi-isolation to complete assimilation. The numerous castes among Hindus have emerged out of the tribal stratum. The recent studies of tribes of Himalayan, western and middle India have left no doubt that some of the tribes are Hinduized to the extent that they have been assimilated with the different castes at different levels in the caste system.

The study of two major Central Himalayan tribes Tharu and Khasa reveal that though they have a tribal matrix and continue to practice certain distinctive tribal customs they have been accepted as Kshatriya. Their cultures have been modeled on the ways of living of the Rajputs and Brahmins of the neighbor plain areas. With their fast adoption of the Hindu names and establishment of social connections with the Rajputs and Brahmins of plains.

They declare themselves as Rajputs and with Brahmins constitute the apex of the social order. With the long and continuous contacts with the regional Hindu castes the tribals of Kharwars has long been assimilated as Rajput castes. There are numerous other tribes which have undergone selective acculturation and have added selected traits or features of the regional Hindus to their respective traditional cultures. In this practice of

acculturation most of them failed to occupy any rank in the castes hierarchy while few of them were integrated into the lower strata of the Hindu social system.

Formation of Tribal Status



Formation of tribal status 1.0

We will now get into the concept of tribal status. The very term tribal status sounds a little interesting. Who are we to offer a status to tribals? They live where ever they are living, they have their own lifestyle, they have their own status within their own community.

Formation of tribal status 1.1

We will presently get into the concept of tribal status. It is a very peculiar expression. Who are we to offer status to tribals? Why do we need to offer a status to the tribals? They are living their lives wherever they are living, whatever is their own concept of status. But we shall presently understand why there is the need for according a status to the tribals. Tribal people who form 8.25% of nation's population, this is of course as per 2001 census. They are people of India in different zones, as a substantial part of India's population. The original inhabitants of the land in different parts and different zones of the country. Ethnic diversity is rather vast. In fact, Indo-Aryans from the northern parts of India and south of the Vindhyas, Dravidian, most of North eastern part, Tibeto Burman and further south and south east, Andaman and Nicobar islands, ___ (1.08). But then with such a variety we need to accord something called tribal status.

A status for them. Where? A status for them in the constitution of the country which is the basis for the development perspective of the nation as a whole. Therefore we need to distinguish between the term tribe and scheduled tribe. We are in the name of tribal status referring in essence only to scheduled tribes. What are scheduled tribes? Scheduled tribes are those tribal people in the length and breadth of the country who have been listed, enumerated, demographically analyzed and they have become part of

the special schedule 5 and 6 of the constitution of India. Therefore which means there are also other tribals who have not been listed, have not been enumerated, have not been demographically analyzed. They have in a way shied away from the non tribal people, whether it is government or other non tribal population in the surrounding areas all the way. Because they are the ones who have always manipulated and they have even, to use the word in a limited sense, cheated the tribal people. So the tribal people who are not enumerated are the ones who are living their original style of life, un enumerated. That means in a way unscheduled tribe.

What is the necessity for according a status to the tribal people? After all, first necessity is the identity for the tribal people as a part of the larger population of the country, for whom development programs are being launched.



So therefore tribals have to be accorded a status. This is a necessity for bringing about the amelioration among the life of the people to solve their problems. One of the first approaches in according the tribal status to the tribal people was the initial restriction for non tribal people. In fact, initially non tribals were even debarred from entering into the areas identified as tribals. But then there is also a necessity given the rich cultural heritage of the tribal people, to preserve their rich cultural heritage. In fact, north east stands completely out as very distinct in its variety and diversity of rich cultural heritage compared to rest of India.

Nehru who was known for his love and appreciation for tribal people... In fact, whoever has gone through his book Philosophy for NEFA would understand that he loved the tribal way of life from the core of his heart. He wanted the tribal people in India to develop as per their own geniuses. Very unfortunately non tribal people always regarded tribal people as very primitive, pristine, older ways of life, who never want to change and improve their lots. But Nehru said they should be allowed to develop as per their own wishes and framework of development. It is hard to digest, because, after all, any government will have to have a general framework for tribal people. Nehru did not believe in this. He said the individual tribes must be allowed their own ways of

developing. We only have to sort out their problems. And whatever land they are living in they must be respected for owning the land. We must encourage even tribal languages. There is a whole variety of languages among the tribals for which we know there are no written scripts. But some of them are unique and so colorful, so respectful. Nehru believed that languages of the tribal people should be encouraged. There should be reliance of tribal people upon themselves. We shall not always tell them what to do? How to change, how to develop? What is the use of making people force them to change their ways in a certain way which is not to their own liking?

So Nehru believed in that kind of reliance to be given to the tribal people to develop in their own ways and any administration should not try to impose too much of control over the ways in which tribal people lived their lives. There should be no over administration – to use Nehruian expression – in the tribal area.

There are constitutional safe guards following the attachment of tribal status and listing the tribes as part of the schedule 5 and schedule 6 of the Indian constitution. Article 46 for instance provides that the state should promote special care of the tribal people to sort out the problems that they are facing. Whether it is related to health, poverty or any other kind. Article 244(2) in the 6th schedule emphasizes on self government. Of course this is quite in line with the Nehruian principle – that tribal people should be allowed to govern themselves. Article 330, 332 and 335 speaks about the allocation and reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha and the State legislatures to represent the tribal people. Then there is a very distinct concept that emerged following the independence. That is the concept of separate statehood, concept of tribal councils came into picture. That means separate tribes or a group of tribes could be given a kind of a tribal council which will decide what needs to be done in the name of welfare of the tribes involved. Then the state reorganization commission SRC as it is referred to, made its own recommendation. Reverend Roy for instance proposed that all hill areas to be linked with Assam. Because North east in fact, till very recently would have been very difficult, till all the seven states were created to identify as distinct groups.

North east frontier agency when it was formulated considered all the tribal people in the north east as belonging to one large bunch of tribal people who needed to be helped for their own welfare and development. But then there was the proposal of Assam government that all eastern Himalayan sub region consisting of Assam and all the neighbouring tribal areas should be consolidated as one large group.



That includes, besides Assam, Manipur, Tripura, district of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Kutch Bihar in West Bengal also and of course the so called NEFA – North east frontier agency including Nagaland. A large chunk of groups which had to be developed together because many of their problems are rather common. Now SRC recommended, the State Reorganisation Committee, in a way self-contradicting- two premises – no encouragement of small states. Just imagine – tribals given statehood. How many tribes and how many states? Unimaginable, because they are enumerable, the number of tribes that are there in the length and breadth of India. Put together certain tribes in order to give them statehood. So one part of the recommendation was encouragement of statehood but then there was a suspicion whether patriotism of hill people could be taken for granted at all. If they are given independence especially the tribal people who are surrounding the borders with the neighbouring countries whether it is not going to put the international security into jeopardy.

So there was some suspicion also whether they can be relied upon, especially those tribal people who are around the border areas. So they were considered as little unreliable, for after all some of these tribes in the north east in particular have always been demanding a separate identity. So separate identity on the one hand and giving them independence on the other hand, thereby putting into question the international border security. Therefore there was some opposition to the concept of hill state also. But reverend Roy opposed in a way, district councils would disappear he said once statehood is given. But then there was the fear of giving a hill state concept falling into the hands of non tribals. Because, all kinds of tribals especially in the north east have always played into the hands of the non tribal people who have always tried to influence. Therefore a concept of APHLC came up. The All Party Hill Leaders

Conference. That means, you take into confidence the leaders of all different parties and constitute a council who could speak on behalf of all the tribal people.

Now we have tried to understand on the one hand the need for tribal status. But at the same time the difficulty in identifying the tribals. Because, if you look at the idea of giving them some independence to develop in their own style, but then independence is also fraught with the danger of a particular tribal group whether it is at the district level or at the states level, trying to behave in its own way, very particularly the tribal groups which are in the border areas affecting the national security.

After all as we know even to this day a good number of tribals in the north eastern parts have always been fighting for separate identity.



Now separate identity for a tribe including giving them independence to govern themselves on the one hand and the security on the other hand, particularly the national security and the identity and patriotism for the Indian Union as a whole, they are all a mixed bag. You do not know what to encourage, where to control, where to stop.

So this is about the concept of according tribal status which is fraught with a whole lot of dangers around it but yet basic problem remains that we have to accord the special status in order to identify what is to be done for the several problems that the tribal people through the length and breadth of India are facing. And after all government of India and provincial governments have got equal responsibility to make sure that the tribal people are taken care of as part of the larger population of the country.

Formation of tribal status 1.2

Coming to according tribal status there is a very interesting dimension. In fact, it is a more recent phenomenon. We talked earlier in this episode about the distinction between tribe and tribal status. That means, those tribes which have entered the

schedule in the constitution and those tribes which have not been enumerated at all. If it is a question of according tribal status to those tribes which have not been enumerated so far, the problem is very simple and straight forward and very logical. But the problem that is coming up in the recent times is certain groups which have been already part of the larger population in different parts of the country demanding that they should be accorded tribal status. That is in the background of the development programs of which they have not been able to become a part. We can understand the scheduled tribes asking for this. But very interestingly we have also had groups which have demanded for the according of scheduled caste status also. And also in fact MBCs - it is a very interesting concept. Interesting phenomenon and a very interesting demand which has come in the more recent times. After all, the ambition in the constitution of India to make all these people forward and make them become part of the main stream. But if more and more groups are demanding the special status, we do not know, in the last 60 odd years of India's independence, whether we are helping these groups to move forward or are they going backward. Because identity of scheduled tribe, scheduled caste, backward community, etc., certainly means that they are backward. That means they are not moving forward. It is a very quixotic situation for any government, provincial or central government to deal with.

Formation of tribal status 1.3

Initially when the provincial governments and the central governments had to think of according tribal status there were some reservations. That is, if you accord this status directly to these people, there may be problems. But then the non tribals and tribals they had to be controlled in the given situation of according tribal status. Under this reserved approach the governments, provincial as well as central government thought that the non-tribal should be restricted in making their entry into tribal areas. Their argument considered to be very crucial in according tribal status to people who are identified as tribes as such for provision of development and welfare programs.

Formation of tribal status 1.4

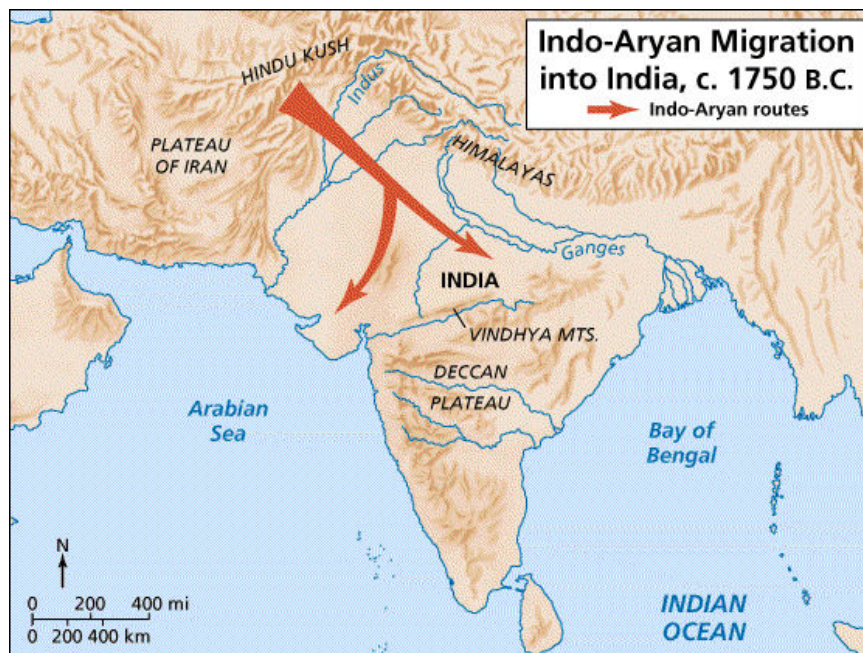
When it comes to the idea of separate statehood there is a vital question. After all no single tribe occupy such a large area that it could be identified as a separate tribal state. There is always more than one tribe in the area.

Then what happens for according a separate statehood in the name of a particular tribe? Then the idea of the tribal councils came up. So that every single tribe or a group of tribes could be put together under a tribal council within the State Reorganization as per the recommendations of the state reorganization commission.

tall in stature, broad nose, thick averted lips and pretty dark complexion. And very interesting feature on the head hair, head hair looks curly, frizzy and woolly and sometimes it is so coiled it is said, it is called pepper corn. If you pull out one hair it may run into several inches. But it sits on the head very compact as if it is attached through a gum to the head. That is the unique feature of the Negroid race when it comes to head hair.

Ethnic diversity among the tribals in India, drawn in the background of these three broad races of mankind are Indo Aryan. History shows that people came from the Middle East into India. They were known as the Vedic people and there was a lot of intermixture that took place between these incoming people and the original inhabitants of the land.

You would see the so called Indo Aryan ethnic diversity among the people from Central India downwards towards parts of Eastern India up to the Northern part of the Vindhyas.

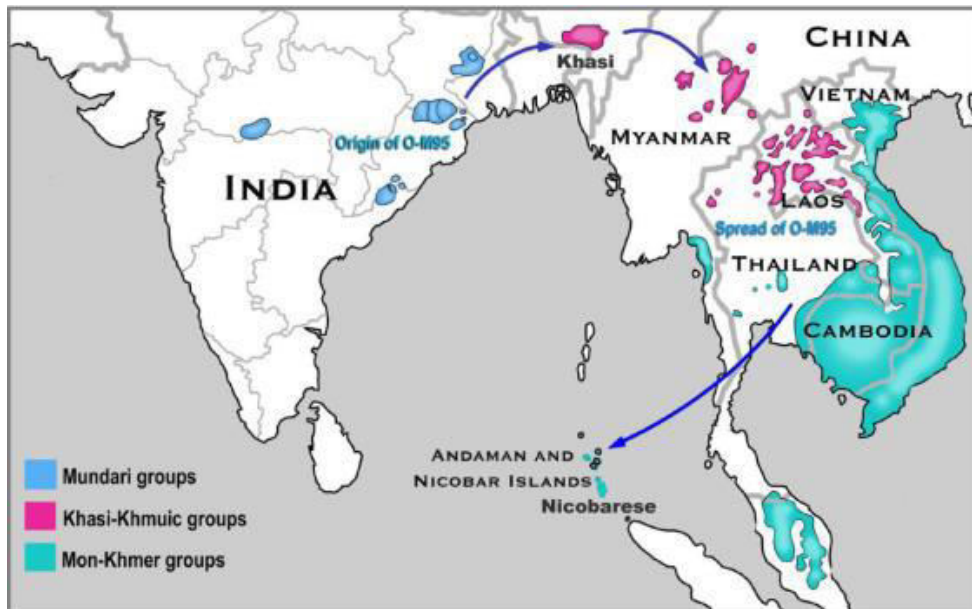


Tibeto Burman as the name itself indicates is the influence of people from Tibet and Burma, today's Myanmar on the people of North Eastern India. Naturally the yellow race people, this variety we can see among the tribals in almost the whole part of the North Eastern Tribals in India.

Dravidian, south of the Vindhyas. In fact Dravidians even to this day are known as the most original racial stalk so far as the Indian sub-continent is concerned. It covers almost all the four southern states in India that is, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Kerala. Astro Asiatic.

Astro Asiatic is a small pocket towards the south eastern parts of Tamil Nadu where there is an influence of incoming people from the Australian island. Andamanese,

Andaman and Nicobar islands, there is the first trace among the tribal communities in India of dark features.



Andamanese and Nicobarese the Onge, you would see them as very tall people, rather dark in complexion.

Indo Iranian - Indo Iranian is the influence of the incoming people from the middle-east very strong, can be seen among the people in the northern parts particularly Jammu and Kashmir. We know many people who came invading India from the west, north-western part through the kyber pass, the first attack happened to be on Jammu and Kashmir area. So you will find the Indo Iranian people very fair in complexion, tall in stature, very fine features of the physical part, particularly the facial features can be seen among the Jammu and Kashmir people.

Indo European if you remember from the history, the great Greek who wanted to rule over the world, Alexander the Great came and lot of influence he had on the Indian people particularly in the states of Rajasthan and Haryana. He came across the local Manars, who fought with him sometimes very successfully but opposed him. So lot of intermixture took place that they are referred today as the Indo European ethnic characteristics.

We shall understand on the socio cultural diversity. I don't think, if you have seen the republic day parade or the Independence day parade in our country, you would not miss the various dress habits of the people.



The most famously known Kashmir belle. In fact, Kashmir belle is a very important item in the competitions of schools and colleges, where a beautiful young woman tall in stature, fair in complexion, totally bedecked in colourful dress, Kashmir is a name in itself for the beauty of the especially the young girls. So dress habits of Kashmir are so unique.

North eastern, in fact the first tribal group that predominantly comes out from the north east are the Naga people. The way they dress, particularly the men, almost dressed like warriors. Manipuri girl totally bedecked. In fact, the Manipuri dance one can see in the fullest range of the beauty of the dressing habits of the Manipuri people. Bhils which was also referred to earlier in a unit, they are known for ornamentation. Ornamentation does not mean only gold and silver. In fact the ornamentation of Bhils tribal people is totally made out of lacquer and beads, glass beads, whole variety all the way from the head dress down to the toe whole variety of lacquer based bead necklaces and bead ornamentation for which Bhils people are very well known.

Coming down to central India, one can see the Maria Ghonds and particularly the famously known Maria Bison horn dance. In fact the way the man is dressed, completely dressed in whole attire with ornamentation and particularly the head dress on the top of which there is a pair of bison horn looking up from his head dress. Bison horn Maria dance to the drum beating of the Maria music is one of the most uniquely known among the tribal festivals in India.

Coming down to the western parts Coorg, they are also known for certain dressing habits. Although Coorg has become part of the non-tribal, but the original Coorgis have

been actually a kind of a warrior race. So therefore particularly when a marriage takes place among the Coorgis one can see the groom is dressed as a warrior including riding on the horse with an open sword and with all the dresses looking like crown prince. Such is the variety of dressing habits in fact as I refer to earlier, republic day parade and Independence day parade in India is the best occasion for you to see the variety of dressing habits of the people particularly among the tribals in India.

Economy and implements - You will find that the implement used by the people depends on their way of life obviously. Food gatherers we have earlier noted do not have many implements at all. They have only the hoe, the digging implement for digging the edible roots. But yet hoe has different varieties. The length of the hoe, the length of the blade, the width of the blade, the angle of the blade, the length of the holding handle of the hoe, everything differs depending on the kind of roots that they are looking for in their effort for gathering their food.

Hunters - There is a variety of hunters. But the bow and arrow seems to be the basic one. In fact, Bhils in India from Rajasthan are almost the number one.



They are the greatest archers in the tribal world not only in India, but also throughout the world. Besides bow and arrow there are other implements like sword, small knives, which they use for hunting. When it comes to bow and arrows one can certainly remember the whole variety of bows and particularly the arrows that the Bhils use. And very particularly a variety of arrow heads that they use.

Supplementing the economy - Besides the Bhils of Rajasthan, the other tribal group very well known for hunting and particularly bow and arrow are the Santhals of west Bengal. Many of these tribals do supplement their economy. Because whatever they have taken to as a way of life, the main stream of economy may not always be sufficient, particularly all through the year. So therefore, they supplement their economy

through handicrafts. Many varieties we have already talked about that the tribal people make from the locally available material using their own skills and imaginative thinking producing beautiful handicraft items which they always try to sell in the weekly market of nearby tribal area as well as the surrounding non-tribal rural areas.

Which means these tribals have already gotten into a monetary kind of economy where they can sell their products to whoever is interested in buying and with the little money they get, they can supplement their own other needs in addition to what their own economy is producing.



Painting is another important enterprise of tribal people. In fact, there is no tribe known anywhere in the world including India where tribals do not get to some kind of painting or the other. In fact, there are certain tribals in India where they have the painted decorations on the front walls of their house and merely by looking at the kind of painting one will be able to say what is it that they are mainly specializing in, whether it is bow and arrow, whether it is the handicrafts or whether it is fishing by merely looking at the kind of painting in front of the house one will be able to say, what this family is trying to do for supplementing.

Music and dance is another aspect which the people use in tribal areas to supplement their own livelihood income. Music and dance is something very unique for tribal life. In fact, the type of music, type of dance is what is very unique for any particular given tribe. That creates an entire tribal heritage

Tribal heritage includes besides music, dance and the instrument that they are using for playing the music, most importantly the very theme of the music and dance and their own presentation of the heritage of their own tribe, in fact, many tribes derive lot of pleasure in presenting through their music and dance the heritage to which they belong. The rich heritage which has run over generations and generations to come to the

present stage which, as I said earlier is chosen and presented in parades at the national events.

CLASSIFICATION OF TRIBAL PEOPLE- Artisans, Pastoralist & Nomads- Rework

Introduction

A number of tribes subsist on crafts and cottage industries like basket making, tool making (iron and wooden) for other tribes' use, spinning and weaving, metal work, iron-smithy, etc. A particular tribe specializes in the crafts and carries on the business. Only a few tribes come under the category with poor individual population strength. They live in the tribal village as part of it and have no exclusive village of their own tribes-men. These people are tied to the major tribes by a chord of more or less jajmani relation as is the system prevailing in the Hindu villages. They visit the periodical markets with their finished goods and dispose them of by barter or on cash in addition to jajmani exchange.

The Simple Artisan Type

The craft and cottage industries are peculiar features of the tribal people as a whole and most of them know matting, basketry, bamboo-work, spinning, etc. These serve as a subsidiary occupation for them. The Kanjars of Uttar Pradesh are engaged in basketry and rope making. In middle India, the Lohars, Karmalis, Chik-Baraiks, and Mahalis, all from Bihar, are the artisan type tribes. The Lohars and Karmalis fulfil the needs of agriculturist tribes or other people by making and repairing their agricultural implements and other tools. The Chik-Baraiks supply hand-woven cloth to the mundas, Oraons, etc. The Mahalis of Bihar and the Agerias of Madhya Pradesh were traditionally iron-smiths. Now they have adopted agriculture and hunting. In western India, the Godulia Lohars of Rajasthan are iron-smiths and have workshops in their traditionally mobile homes in bullock carts. The Kolams of Maharashtra were formerly engaged in basket and mat making from bamboo strips and also from paratya (remnants of cotton). This traditional occupation is still practiced though they have adopted agriculture. The Vitolias are engaged in making bamboo mats, baskets and winnowing fans. In south India the irulas of Tamil Nadu and the Thotis of Andhra Pradesh make bamboo mats and baskets and subsist on this. The Kotas of Nilgiri depend on carpentry, tool making and pottery. Considering the locally made or purchased tools like the bhatti of Lohars, the loom of Kinnauris and Chik-Baraiks, the knives of Mahalis the people are pretty skilful in their crafts.

The Pastoral and Cattle Herder Type

Some tribals are loosely called "pastoralists" and they treat the occupation as a subsidiary one. The tribals inhabiting Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh are the most appropriate example. In the hill areas of Shahabad in Bihar the Kherwars graze the cattle of local people and earn their livelihood. The Bhotiyas of north Uttar Pradesh are midway between pastoral and agriculture. The tribal boys, in general, graze their own cattle and help their parents.

Pastoral Societies

A pastoral society is one relying for its subsistence primarily on domesticated herd animals. The first pastoral societies emerged between 10,000 and 12,000 years ago, when some hunting and gathering groups began to capture, breed, and tend species of wild animals they had previously hunted. This strategy has since been adopted by many people living in deserts or other regions that are not suited to the cultivation of plants, but which contain animals—such as goats or sheep—that can be readily tamed and used as a food source. Many pastoral societies still exist in the modern world, particularly in Africa and in the Middle East.

Pastoralism is a much more reliable and productive strategy than hunting and gathering. It assures a steady food supply, and the size of the herds can be increased over time through careful animal husbandry. An important result is that societies can grow much larger, perhaps to include hundreds or even thousands of people. Equally significant, the greater productivity of this strategy allows pastoralists to accumulate a surplus of live-stock and food. Through such means as trade, this surplus can be converted into other forms of wealth, such as wine, weapons, or gold—which can be used, in turn, to acquire power. For the first time, some individuals can become more powerful than others and can even pass on this status to their descendants. Patterns of hereditary chieftainship begin to appear, as powerful and wealthy families are able to secure their positions.

The Folk – Artist Type

The tribes, with singing and dancing, music barding, acrobatics, conjuring, snake-charming, etc., as their main occupations, have been placed in this category. Actually these people are folk-artists and economically depend on their art which led us to evolve the present economy type. The Indian tribes that can be captioned as the folk-artists are the Nats and Saperas of south-eastern Uttar Pradesh, the acrobat Mundupttas and Kelas of Orissa in middle India, the barding Pardhans and Ojhas, the animal-players Madarias, the snake-charmer Pamulas, the Garadis, the acrobat Dommaras and Bynollus, the conjuring Palukumugguals and Paddintigollas, the Bahuroopas, etc., of Andhra Pradesh, a few Kotas of Tamil Nadu in south India and the snake-charmer Kalbelias of Rajasthan in western India.

The Nats perform their shows of singing and dancing or acrobating, etc., lasting 15 minutes to an hour at one place before the local gathering and earn inam (gift) to subsist on. Apart from a few Muslims, they are generally Hindus by religion. They move from place to place and from village to village.

Conclusion:

Although for the purposes of classification, artisan type has been presented as a separate category there is nothing like a tribe being purely in arts & crafts. After all the tribals have to get into food production – main or subsidiary- for survival. In this sense it is difficult to come across a tribe in India, which is devoid of arts – either in the form of handicrafts or performing arts – singing and dancing or both.

Classification of Tribal People - Shifting Cultivators, Peasants and Agriculturist

MEANING OF SOCIALIZATION

A child shows no signs of socialization at the time of its birth. The child gradually becomes socialized when he comes in contact with different individuals in his environment. In this way his environment determines the scope of his socialization.



Socialization is that process through which one becomes aware of the values, aspiration, objectives and cultures of his society and gets involved in them. Through socialization an individual adopts the ways of living, mores and religion of his society. On so doing, he gets social recognition and on the basis of this recognition, he strikes a balance in his personality which makes others praise him. It is an effort of the individual to show behaviour which is approved by the society. He acquires different social qualities by so doing.

PROCESS OF SOCIALIZATION:

There are four main processes of socialization.

They are

1. Initiating Action
2. Perception of the situation
3. Making the correct response and
4. Learning the response of forming the habit.

INITIATING ACTION:

An individual's mental preparedness includes his strength, dynamic aspects and structure. Structure here stands for physical parts and heredity traits. Within the physical

structure are included the mind, nervous system, muscles and glands. Within the hereditary traits come natural traits and capacities. In the sphere of dynamic aspects are included the individual's drives, motivations, needs, expectations, purposes, attitudes, interests and values. Due to all these, there appears a tension in the individual and consequently he gets active in a specific direction. The individual inculcates various social qualities due to this tension and its allied responses. In its absence, he learns nothing. It is well known that a man who feels satisfied all round never attempts to learn anything, but those who want to attain anything or fulfill any desire feel tension, and due to this tension they initiate action and work for the fulfillment of their desire. This effort helps the individual to pick up various social qualities.

2. PERCEPTION OF THE SITUATION:



The socialization of an individual also depends on the manner in which he perceives a situation. Individual differences are formed in the perception of situations.

That is why different persons perceive the same situation in different manners. For instance; the same film is appreciated by some and bitterly criticized by others. The speech delivered by the orator is liked by some and disliked by others. The socialization of an individual takes place according to dynamic learning's in the perception of a situation.

3. MAKING THE CORRECT RESPONSE:

A Person makes some responses while facing a situation. Some of them are correct and some wrong. He is praised for his correct response and criticized for his wrong one. Showing of correct response takes some time. In his effort, he makes mistakes many times. When he learns to make correct response, he gets great satisfaction. This satisfaction is the sign of his desirable socialization.

4. LEARNING THE RESPONSE OF FORMING THE HABIT:

A person repeats that response which is praised. By repetition, he learns it and it becomes a part of his nature.



This repetition is a great contribution towards the building up of his nature or forming of his habit. To learn to show a response in this way amounts to formation of habit and this is a very important process.

THE MAIN FACTORS INFLUENCING SOCIALIZATION

A number of factors influence socialization. These are family, mutual relations between father and mother, going to a new family, relations with various members of the family, brotherhood, social and economical condition, neighbours and companions, social anxiety, ethnic status, schools, cultures etc.

1. FAMILY:

Parents play a vital role in the socialization of the child. During his early years, the child learns many things from his parents. In fact, his life begins with his parents. During the earlier period of his life, he is fully dependent on them for all his needs. How the child will fare in the future depends on the pattern of parent's behaviour.



In fact, parent's balanced behaviour is of utmost importance for the healthy growth of the child. Many strains and disparities appear in the child's personality on account of parents on psychological behaviour towards him. Really speaking, parents are largely responsible for the defects in the child's personality. We know that the married life of a too much fondled daughter generally is not happy because her socialization remains incomplete. Similarly, an over fondled son remains unaware of the realities of life and his future remains dark.

2. MUTUAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTHER AND FATHER:

The mutual relationship of parents largely influences child's personality. Consequently, their relationship, too, influences the socialization of the child.



The home where quarrels between the mother and father are a daily routine becomes a curse for children. When the family life i.e., the relations between mother and father are happy, their behaviour before the children is quite balanced. They attend to child's requirements sympathetically and make necessary arrangements to meet them in a reasonable way. The condition and behaviour of the parents serve the purpose of an ideal instrument for the socialization of their children.

3. ENTERING A NEW FAMILY:

In certain circumstances, a child has to move to a new family. Such situations arise when a child is adopted by issueless parents, the death of mother or father occurs or when a mother remarries.



If the children accompanying the mother are young, say below the age of 5 years or so their adjustment in the new family is not difficult, but when they are older their adjustment in the new family becomes difficult. Such children face great difficulty in balancing their behaviour. These conditions are unfavourable in the context of socialization.

4. RELATION WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY:

Other members of the family too, besides the parents, have intimate relationship with the socialization of the child, because it is they who come in close contact with the child next to parents. These members may be possessing high ideals and qualities. All these will certainly affect the child. If there are some corrupt members in the family, the socialization of the child will be adversely affected and he may follow the path of evils.

5. IMPACT OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS:

Brothers and sisters greatly affect the socialization of the child, because he learns many things in their company. Differences in the socialization of the eldest child, the youngest and the middle one may be found.



The youngest one receives the affection of all. He depends more on others. The eldest child has a tendency to exercise authority over other younger children. The middle one considers both the elder and the younger brother as rivals. If the parents are cautious and psychological in their behaviour, and pay proper attention to all their children, then there is no reason why their children's socialization goes in the wrong direction.

6. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITION:

Social and economic condition affects the socialization of the child consequently the children of high status have more opportunities of coming into contact with many persons. So they learn in a shorter time various patterns of behaviour.



Whereas the children from middle and lower classes do not get so many opportunities, therefore their socialization proceeds with a slower speed. The behaviour pattern among children develops according to their living in a particular environment or society.

7. NEIGHBOURS AND COMPANION:

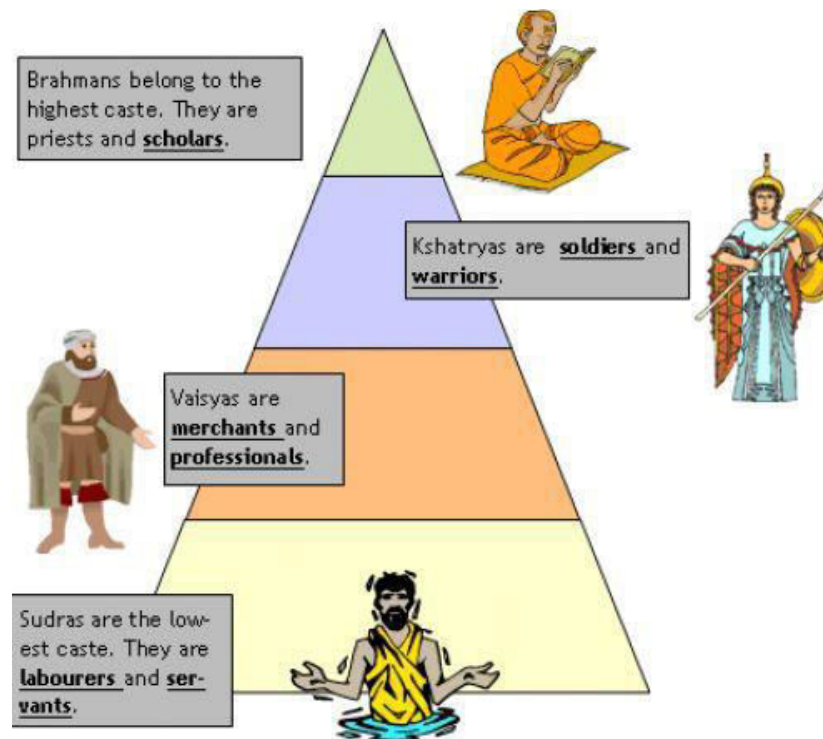
Neighbours and companion greatly influence the child's socialization. If his neighbours and companions do not happen to be of good character, they will adversely affect the child and he may misbehave and develop evil habits. Evil company inspires evil feelings and good company inspires good feelings.

8. SOCIAL ANXIETY:

It is not wise to award corporal punishments to adolescents. Consequently, they are mostly subjected to remarks, criticism. Condemnation or cut in facilities. In order to escape punishments, the adolescent is quite cautious in his behaviour. The greater the social anxiety to show behaviour according to approved social norms, the better is his social behaviour. Evidently, social anxiety is a major motivator in an individual's socialization at least during adolescence and afterwards also.

9. ETHNIC STATUS:

Ethnic status may influence the child's socialization. If a child is born in the majority community, he considers himself superior to the child belonging to the minority community.



This feeling also affects the minority community and the children belonging to it consider themselves somewhat inferior. Due to this sense of inferiority, these children develop inferiority complex and peevishness. This influence affects the socialization to some extent.

10. SCHOOL:

In the new environment of the school, the Child's physical, emotional, mental, moral and social development takes a new shape. This new shape puts him much ahead in the race of development. Consequently, he starts understanding gradually various social values and tries to mould his behaviour accordingly. On account of this effort his process of socialization takes rapid strides

11. CULTURE:

It has been concluded through various studies that culture plays a special role in the development of an individual's personality.



There is no doubt that culture influences socialization. That is why the socialization of persons brought up in different cultures differs in nature quality and standard.

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN SOCIALIZATION:

Individual differences in socialization are found among the children brought up in the same culture, though all of them try to mould their behaviour according to the same social ideals and values. The reason for this variation is the differences in basic powers and capacities in various children. Every child is not equally benefited by teaching because everyone's grasping power and basic capacities vary. We find that in the family too the development pace of each child differs from that of the other.

METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION:

These mostly relate to two categories: The reward category and the punishment category.

1. THE REWARD METHOD:

Reward in the wider sense includes affection, appreciation, praise and honour etc., besides material things. Reward has great importance in the socialization of a child.



It has been seen in many experiments that reward method is more useful than punishment method. However, it will be much better if the form of reward instead of being material is social and spiritual.

Praise and affection may be called social reward. The self satisfaction which an individual desires by behaving according to the social values and ideals may be regarded as spiritual reward. Often great men have no motive expect self-satisfaction in undertaking many social welfare activities. It will be the highest order of socialization if the child learns various social qualities only for self-satisfaction and not for receiving social appreciation or any material reward.

2. THE PUNISHMENT METHOD:

Punishment whether good or bad, cannot be denied its place in the socialization process of a child. In the process of learning or socialization the child commits mistakes from time to time. Some of the mistakes he commits unknowingly or unintentionally, but some he commits intentionally or due to some interests.



A child should never be punished for unintentional mistakes, but punishment should be awarded for intentional bad behaviour. The purpose of punishment should be reformative. When all these factors have been taken into consideration, only then proper punishment possible and socialization will get the right direction in the course of development.

3. REWARD AND PUNISHMENT METHOD - PROPER BALANCE

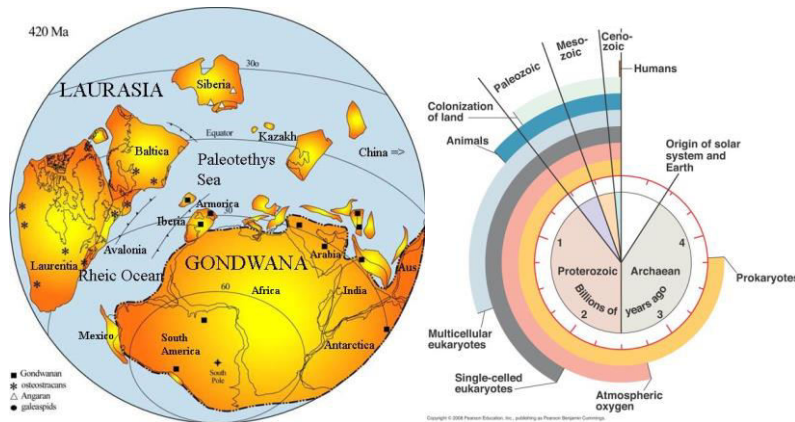
For getting best results one has to strike a balance between reward and punishment. For a desirable socialization of the child neither he should be given too many rewards nor too much punishment. With too many rewards the process of socialization becomes lifeless, because then child will expect reward at every stage. Therefore, to promote a healthy socialization, one has to strike a balance between the two methods, i.e., between reward and punishment. If any of them relies too much on punishment method,

the feeling of rebellion will naturally appear in the child and he will even give up learning good things.

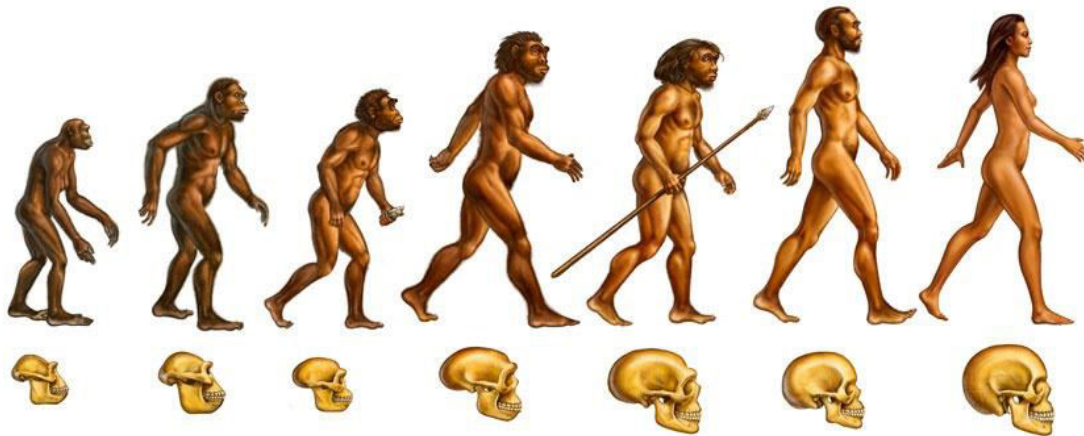
CLASSIFICATION OF TRIBAL PEOPLE – Food Gatherers & Hunters

INTRODUCTION

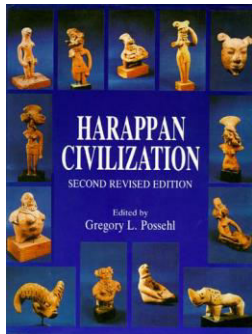
If we compressed the entire history of life on the planet into a single year, the first modern human being would not appear until December 31 at about 11.53 P.M., and the first civilization would have emerged only about a minute before the end of the year. Yet our cultural achievements in the brief time that we have occupied the planet have been remarkable.



Some 15,000 years ago our ancestors were practicing religious rituals and painting superb pictures on the walls of their caves.



Around 11,000 years ago, some human groups began to domesticate animals and plants, thereby freeing themselves from total dependence on the food that they could hunt and gather.



About 6,000 years ago people began to live in cities, to specialize in different forms of labour, to divide into social classes, and to create distinct political and economic institutions. Within a few thousand years empires were created, linking previously isolated groups and bringing millions of people under centralized rule. Advanced agricultural technologies improved the productivity of the land, resulting in growing populations and the emergence of large nation-states. A mere 250 years ago the Industrial Revolution began, thrusting us into the modern world of factories and computers, jet aircraft and nuclear reactors, instant global communications and terrifying military technologies.

At each stage in the evolutionary process, social structure and culture grow more complex. The reason is that a more efficient subsistence strategy allows a society to create a greater amount of surplus wealth, that is, more food and other goods than is necessary to meet their producers' basic needs.



As a result, an increasing proportion of the population is freed from the job of food production and can play a whole range of other social roles instead. The result is a significant increase in the division of labor, the specialization by individuals or groups in particular economic activities. In the most technologically simple societies, virtually the entire able-bodied population is engaged in food production. But in the most technologically advanced societies, less than 5 percent of the work force can feed the rest, enabling them to pursue a variety of occupational, social, and cultural opportunities.

CULTURAL CLASSIFICATION

Very close to the type of economy of the cultural type of the tribals. Vidyarthi has attempted to classify the Bihar tribes into four cultural types. In evolving the cultural type, the significant factors are (i) their economy, which has become a part and parcel of their life because of the centuries-long association resulting in specialization, (ii) their ecology including human environment, viz., man-to-man relationship, etc., (iii) socio-cultural adaptation of the tribes to ecology and economy, (iv) their religious beliefs, and (v) emerging contemporary situation, influx of other groups of people, etc. In the broader framework of nature-man-spirit complex (Vidyarthi, 1963), we find that the nature, man and spirit all function to give a particular way of life to the tribals. All are interdependent and interact within this framework. With these considerations we can classify their typology. The distinctiveness in their economy is also a matter of consideration.

The grading of the Indian tribes on the basis of their economic life and occupation has been suggested by Majumdar as (a) hunting and collection state, (b) shifting or jhum cultivation, lumbering, manufacturing, catechu, etc., (c) settled agriculturists, who keep poultry, cattle, know weaving and spinning, pottery and terrace farming. Another classification has been given by Majumdar with Madan. This sixfold classification includes (i) food gathering, (ii) agriculture, (iii) shifting axe cultivation, (iv) handicraft, (v) pastoralism, and (vi) industrial labour. Dube divides the Indian tribal economic system, firstly, into two parts: (i) important and (ii) semi-important, and ultimately suggests the following economic types:



(i) Important

- (a) Food –collection State,
- (b) Unsettled Primary Agriculture Stage.
- (c) Settled Primary Agriculture State.

(ii) SEMI-IMPORTANT

- (d) Cattle –herders,
- (e) Tribes, earning their livelihood from a specific craft or industry.
- (f) Crime as a source of livelihood for a few tribes.



TYOLOGY UNDER TRANSITIION

Each tribe thus appears as a special economic type, each has its own life-ways, its own environmental circumstances which finally fir them into difference economic types. Keeping all the different classifications in view a typology is suggested as under. Here again it must be kept in mind that no particular type is either completely adopted by the tribes or is exclusively the means of livelihood for them.

- The forest hunting type;
- The hill-cultivation type;
- The plain agriculture type;
- The simple artisan type;
- The pastoral and cattle-herder type;
- The folk – artist type;
- The agricultural and non-agricultural labour type—sections of the tribe, working in the mining and manufacturing industries. Traditionally they belong to plain agriculture and simple artisan types;
- The skilled, white-collar job and traders type—some individuals of the families of the tribal communities are working in offices, hospitals, factories, business enterprises, doing business on a small scale and in All-India or State Government Services owing to the percentage of reservation of seats for the Scheduled Tribes and so on.

PRIMORDIAL HUMANOID DEVELOPMENT LEVEL

Hunting and Gathering Societies

As the name implies, a hunting and gathering society is one relying for its subsistence on such wild animals and vegetation as its members can hunt or gather.

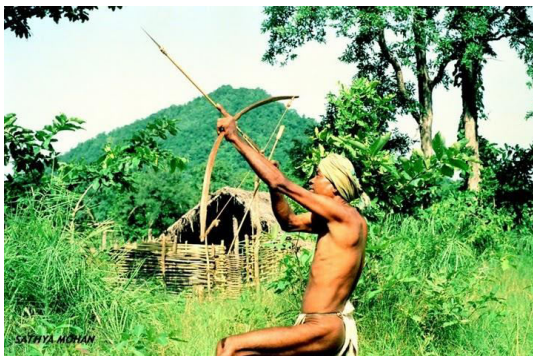


All societies used this subsistence strategy from the dawn of human existence until only a few thousand years ago, and even today there are still a handful of isolated peoples, such as the Aranda of the central Australian desert, who retain this way of life. Kadars of Kerala (Cochin) are another example from India.

Hunting and gathering people are constantly on the move because they must leave an area as soon as they have exhausted its food resources. As a result, possessions would be a hindrance to them, so they own very few goods. No one can acquire wealth, because there is no wealth to be acquired. Individual who find food, the only significant resource in these societies, are expected to share it with the whole community.

The Forest Hunting Type

These forest hunting type have mainly three resources of economy which vary according to season, cycle and area: (a) Food gathering, different States and in small pockets. Taking their geographical distribution into consideration we have in the Himalayan region the Rajis of Uttar Pradesh. Coming to middle India, we find the Birhors, the Hill-Kharyias, the Parahiyas, the Birjias and the Korwas in Bihar. The last three tribes are changing from their forest hunting economy as their primary source of livelihood to agriculture. The Juangas in Orissa and the Hill Maria Gonds of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh fall in this group.



The major concentration of this type is in south India; we fail to get any example in western India. The southern Indian tribes who have relied on the forest hunting economy are the Chenchus and Yanadis in Andhra Pradesh, the Kadars and Mala-Pantarams, the Arandans and Kurumbas of Malabar in Kerala, the paliyans of Madurai

in Tamil Nadu and Onges, Jarawas, Sentinalese, Shompen and Nicobarese in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.



Honey collection is generally done by the tribal men. Honeycombs on high trees or rocks are located and looked after until the time for collection comes, mostly during the dry season between March and May. The Kadars and other south Indian tribes use a typical method of using wooden pegs and bamboo for high-tree climbing. Collecting honey from rocks is done by one man climbing down a rock on a rope held firmly by one or more men for safety.

Demographic Profiles



Introduction

All in one sentence the 'habitat' of tribal people what is "close to nature" and away from the 'humdrum' of civilization. Throughout the world the tribal people are known today to be living in the forests, on the hill-tops and mountains as also on smaller islands; in a nutshell, away from the mainland where the relatively far more sophisticated civilized people live. One conjecture also prevails that some of these people lived in the plains but as a result of ever-expanding vistas of civilized populations as also often due to the exploitative onslaught by the latter, the tribal people receded shying away backwards either deeper into the forests or towards the top of hills and mountains.

Distribution of Tribal People in India

If one refers to the presence of some tribe or the other, there is, in a way, no single state in India where in tribal people do not exist. Some of the prominent tribal names of India are listed state wise just to indicate the country wide distribution of tribal people.

State	Tribe's Name	State	Tribe's Name
Andra Pradesh	chenchu	Maharashtra	Koli
Arunachal Pradesh	Apatani	Manipur	Kom
Assiam	Kuki	Meghalaya	Khasi
Bihar	Kharia	Mizoram	Mizo
Chhatisgarah	Bhumia	Nagaland	Angani
Goa	Gowhi	Orissa	Oraon

Gujarat
Himchal Pradesh
Jharkhand
Karnataka
Kerala
Madhya Pradesh

Pardhi
Gaddi
Birhar
Kuruba
Kadar
Gond

Rajasthan
Sikkim
Tamil Nadu
Tripura
Uttarkahand
West Bengal

Bhil
Lepcha
Toda
Tipra
Jaunsari
Santal

Indian Tribes

2.1.1.a

India is the home to large number of indigenous people, who are still untouched by the lifestyle of the modern world. With more than 84.4 million, India has the largest population of the tribal people in the world. These tribal people also known as the adivasi's are the poorest in the country, who are still dependent on hunting , agriculture and fishing. Some of the major tribal groups in India include Gonds, Santhals, Khasis, Angamis, Bhils, Bhutias and Great Andamanese. All these tribal people have their own culture, tradition, language and lifestyle. This enables the tourist to get an insight into many different cultures at the same time on the tribal tour to India.

Santhals Tribe



Santhals are the third largest tribe in India. They are mostly found in the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand and Assam. They belong to the pre- Aryan period and have been the great fighters from the time of Britishers.

[more...](#)

Munda



Munda tribe mainly inhabit in the region of Jharkhand, although they are well spread in the states of West Bengal, Chhatisgarh, Orissa and Bihar. Munda generally means headman of the village. Hunting is the main occupation of the Mundas tribe.

[more...](#)

Khasi



Khasi tribe is mainly found in the Khasi Jaintia hills in Meghalaya and in the states of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur, West Bengal and Jammu and Kashmir. They forms the large part of the population in the state of Meghalaya.

[more...](#)

Angami



Angami tribe belongs to the extreme north eastern part of the country, in the state of Nagaland. The total population of the Angamis is around 12 million. They are quite popular for their woodcraft and artwork. Sekrenyi is the main festival celebrated among the Angamis in Nagaland.

[more...](#)

Bhils



Bhils are popularly known as the bow men of Rajasthan. They are the most widely distributed tribal groups in India. They forms the largest tribe of the whole South Asia. Bhils are mainly divided into two main groups the central or pure bills and eastern or Rajput Bhils.

[more...](#)

Bhutia



Bhutia tribes are of the Tibetan origin. They migrated to Sikkim around 16th century. In the northern part of the Sikkim they are known as the Lachenpas and Lachungpas. Bhutias forms 14% of the total population of Sikkim. Losar and Losoong are the main festivals celebrated among the Bhutia tribes.

[more...](#)

Chenchus



Chenchu inhabit in the Nallamalai hills, which have been the part of the

Gonds



The Gonds are the tribal community mostly found in the Gond forests of the



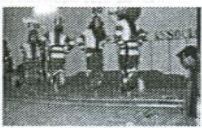







Great Andamanese



Great Andamanese is the negrito tribe inhabitant in the the Andaman group of

Ten Tribes of India

A considerable portion of India lives in its Tribes. These tribes are the living example of how life was in the earlier days. These show what were the difficulties man had to face before the advent of machine and technology. See India through a different perspective in these tribes and tribal villages. Though some of them are on the verge of extinction, still there are other tribal communities in India that fiercely protect their identity and culture. Read more about them here

 <p>The Tribes of Assam, are involves in Bodo Movement. Know more about them. Bodo Tribe</p>	 <p>The speakers of Dravidian Language, these call themselves, the Hill People. Gond Tribe</p>
 <p>The aboriginals, these have their roots connected to China. Hmar Tribe</p>	 <p>Involved in Freedom Fight of India, these are very respected tribes in India. Munda Tribe</p>
 <p>The most progressive tribes of India, these have their people in forigen countries too. Oran Tribe</p>	 <p>The Khanabadosh or the Gypsies of Himachal Pradesh, these reside in Duladher Range. Gaddi Tribe</p>
 <p>Making fifty percent people of Meghalaya, Hynew makes for the seven huts. Khasis Tribe</p>	 <p>Aboriginals of Brahamaputra Valley , these Indian tribals follow their religion very peculiarly. Dimasa Tribe</p>
 <p>With still hunting the main source of earning, these are one of the old ages tribes of India. Chenchu Tribe</p>	 <p>Most wide spread tribes of India, these believe in polygamy. Bhil Tribe</p>

Composition and Location (Habitat – distribution and concentration of tribal People)

Tribal peoples constitute roughly 8 percent of the nation's total population, nearly 68 million people according to the 1991 census. One concentration lives in a belt along the Himalayas stretching through Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh in the west, to Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, and Nagaland in the northeast. Another concentration lives in the hilly areas of central India (Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, and, to a lesser extent, Andhra Pradesh); in this belt, which is bounded by the Narmada River to the north and the Godavari River to the southeast, tribal peoples occupy the slopes of the region's mountains. Other tribals, the Santals, live in Bihar and West Bengal. There are smaller numbers of tribal people in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala, in western India in Gujarat and Rajasthan, and in the union territories of Lakshadweep and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The extent to which a state's population is tribal varies considerably. In the northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland, upward of 90 percent of the population is tribal. However, in the remaining northeast states of Assam, Manipur, Sikkim, and Tripura, tribal peoples form between 20 and 30 percent of the population. The largest tribes are found in central India, although the tribal population there accounts for only around 10 percent of the region's total population. Major concentrations of tribal people live in Maharashtra, Orissa, and West Bengal. In the south, 1 percent of the populations of Kerala and Tamil Nadu are tribal, whereas about 6 percent in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are members of tribes.

There are some 573 communities recognized by the government as Scheduled Tribes and therefore eligible to receive special benefits and to compete for reserved seats in legislatures and schools. They range in size from the Gonds (roughly 7.4 million) and the Santals (approximately 4.2 million) to only eighteen Chaimals in the Andaman Islands. Central Indian states have the country's largest tribes, and, taken as a whole, roughly 75 percent of the total tribal population live there.

Apart from use of strictly legal criteria, however, the problem of determining which groups and individuals are tribal is both subtle and complex. Because it concerns economic interests and the size and location of voting blocs, the question of who are members of Scheduled Tribes rather than Backward Classes or Scheduled Castes is often controversial. The apparently wide fluctuation in estimates of South Asia's tribal population through the twentieth century gives a sense of how unclear the distinction between tribal and nontribal can be. India's 1931 census enumerated 22 million tribal people, in 1941 only 10 million were counted, but in 1961 some 30 million and in 1991 nearly 68 million tribal members were included. The differences among the figures reflect changing census criteria and the economic incentives individuals have to maintain or reject classification as a tribal member.

These gyrations of census data serve to underline the complex relationship between caste and tribe. Although, in theory, these terms represent different ways of life and ideal types, in reality they stand for a continuum of social groups. In areas of substantial

contact between tribes and castes, social and cultural pressures have often tended to move tribes in the direction of becoming castes over a period of years. Tribal people with ambitions for social advancement in Indian society at large have tried to gain the classification of caste for their tribes; such efforts conform to the ancient Indian traditions of caste mobility. Where tribal leaders prospered, they could hire Brahman priests to construct credible pedigrees and thereby join reasonably high-status castes. On occasion, an entire tribe or part of a tribe joined a Hindu sect and thus entered the caste system en masse. If a specific tribe engaged in practices that Hindus deemed polluting, the tribe's status when it was assimilated into the caste hierarchy would be affected.

Since independence, however, the special benefits available to Scheduled Tribes have convinced many groups, even Hindus and Muslims, that they will enjoy greater advantages if so designated. The schedule gives tribal people incentives to maintain their identity. By the same token, the schedule also includes a number of groups whose "tribal" status, in cultural terms, is dubious at best; in various districts, the list includes Muslims and a congeries of Hindu castes whose main claim seems to be their ability to deliver votes to the party that arranges their listing among the Scheduled Tribes.

A number of traits have customarily been seen as establishing tribal rather than caste identity. Those include language, social organization, religious affiliation, economic patterns, geographic location, and self-identification. Recognized tribes typically live in hilly regions somewhat remote from caste settlements; they generally speak a language recognized as tribal.

Unlike castes, which are part of a complex and interrelated local economic exchange system, tribes tend to form self-sufficient economic units. Often they practice swidden farming—clearing field by slash-and-burn methods, planting it for a number of seasons, and then abandoning it for a lengthy fallow period—rather than the intensive farming typical of most of rural India. For most tribal people, land-use rights traditionally derive simply from tribal membership. Tribal society tends to be egalitarian, its leadership being based on ties of kinship and personality rather than on hereditary status. Tribes typically consist of segmentary lineages whose extended families provide the basis for social organization and control. Unlike caste religion, which recognizes the hegemony of Brahman priests, tribal religion recognizes no authority outside the tribe.

Any of these criteria can be called into question in specific instances. Language is not always an accurate indicator of tribal or caste status. Especially in regions of mixed population, many tribal groups have lost their mother tongues and simply speak local or regional languages. Linguistic assimilation is an ongoing process of considerable complexity. In the highlands of Orissa, for example, the Bondos—a Munda-language-speaking tribe—use their own tongue among themselves. Oriya, however, serves as a lingua franca in dealings with Hindu neighbors. Oriya as a prestige language (in the Bondo view), however, has supplanted the native tongue as the language of ritual. In parts of Assam, historically divided into warring tribes and villages, increased contact among villagers began during the colonial period and has accelerated since

independence. A pidgin Assamese developed while educated tribal members learned Hindi and, in the late twentieth century, English.

Self-identification and group loyalty are not unfailing markers of tribal identity either. In the case of stratified tribes, the loyalties of clan, kin, and family may well predominate over those of tribe. In addition, tribes cannot always be viewed as people living apart; the degree of isolation of various tribes has varied tremendously. The Gonds, Santals, and Bhils traditionally have dominated the regions in which they have lived. Moreover, tribal society is not always more egalitarian than the rest of the rural populace; some of the larger tribes such as the Gonds, are highly stratified.

Here follows the description of a few of the noted tribes of India:

Bodos – Tribe of Assam

The Tribes of Assam, are involved in Bodo Movement....Bodos in their ancient years, used to pray to their forefathers. Today they have changed significantly – they have accepted Hinduism as their main religion. They practice a Culture known as Bathouism. The plant siju is taken for the worship as a symbol of Bathous Symbol. For the worship, a clean ground near the home or the courtyard of the home is taken. One pair of Betelnut called Goi betel leaf called pathwi is used as offering. The offering includes rice, milk and sugar. For the Kherai Puja which also happens to be the most important of all Pujas, an altar is placed in the rice field. The Bodos do not practice dowry and caste system as per their rules of Brahma Dharma.

The main work of Bodos is tea plantation, silk worm rearing, weaving, pig and poultry farming. They are also good bamboo craftsmen. The main festivals of Bodos include Kherai – the colorful function which includes, drumming, singing and dancing (Bagurumb) to the rythmn of the drums. Garja, Hapsa Hatarnai, Awnkham Gwrlwi Janai, Bwisagu and Domashi are the other important festivals. The main cuisines of the Bodos include Narzi, Onla and Oma Bedor.

Bhil – The Archers

Bhils- The Archers, are the tribals of Mewar, descendents of original inhabitants of India. The word Bhil is derived from Bil or Vil meaning Bow. The Bhils used to furnish the needs of Princes of Mewar with bowmen, supplies or by guarding their families. Sosme famous names of Bhils are Bhim, Bhim singh maharana, Bhimisi and Bhindar. All of them have special place in the ancient history of India.

Bhils are the tribes of Central India found in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Tripura. Out of India they are found in Bangladesh. In colonial times they were employed by the Rajputs as Shikaris and as Warriors. Today there is a Mewar Bhil Corps – the acclaimed Corps of Mewars. They are supposed to be the best archers and also excellent in geographical knowledge. They are the third largest tribe in India after Gonds and Santals.

Gonds – The God's People

Gondvana – The Mighty Kingdom in the oden days still stands with the ruins of the Kingdom in its sand. From the 15th century to the 18th century, this region called Gondwana was the home to the Gonds. The Gondwana Land gave its name to the present day Africa, south America, Australia, Indian sub Continent and Antarctica. The Gonds lost their lives in saving their lands from the then upcoming tribe called the Banjaras. Most of the Gonds describe themselves as hill people or as Koi or Koitur. The inheritors of the Dravidian Culture – the Gonds are the simple tribe with a high thinking of non – egalitarianism. Mainly found in Central India the Gonds preach the Gods path and do agriculture as their main work.

Apart from Madhya Pradesh, Gonds can be found in Chattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. They are the largest Tribe in India, south Asia, and perhaps the world with nine million people (out of which four million resides in India). They speak language related to telgu and Dravidian language. The spoken languages are generalized as Gondi and Hindi. They practice agriculture growing cereals. Herding cattles is also a part of their livelihood.

Hmar – The Christian Tribe of India

Hmar also known as Mhar or Mar are the dwellers of the North Eastern Part of India. Hmars can be found in Meghalaya, Mizoram, Cachar, Chittagong Hill Tracts and Tripura.

Hmars are supposed to be the aboriginals of the Brahmaputra Valley ascending from the Himalayas with their roots connecting to mainland China. The roots of Hmar find route to the place called Sinlung. Sinlung is the ancestral home of Zonhnathlak. However the location of Ssinlung is still a controversy but not the roots of Hmar. Hmars eventually left Sinlung which was once a democratic state.

The Hmars belong to the Chin-Kuki-Mizo group of tribes, and are recognized as Scheduled Tribe under the 6th Schedule of the Constitution of India. They are medium statured usually 5-5.6ft in height, sturdy, dark-haired, brown-eyed and are known for their bravery. Manipur, Mizoram, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura have the major chunk of Hmar Tribe People.

Munda – Adivasis of Jharkhand

Mundas are the Adivasis or the Tribals of the Jharkhand. They are spread over other states like Bihar, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, and Orissa. Outside India Mundas can be found in Bangladesh. Today there are around two million Munda People.

The Mundas are highly respected tribals from the time of pre- independence of India. Birsa Munda, the Munda who turned into a Prophet and was a freedom fighter in the Indian Independence Struggle, is the respected tribal. At a small age of 20 years, Birsa Munda was revered by his people as God. His active participation in the freedom fight disturbed the Britishers so much that they finally caught him at the young age of 25. He died in suspicious circumstances in the Jail of Ranchi in 1990. Even today his

contribution to the Independence of India is recognized with regard. He has been honored by the Government Of India.

Orans – The Progressive Tribe

The Orans or Oraons are the most progressive tribe of all the tribes found in India. They are the ones who are into education and places like Churches. Kartik Oraon, who was the most educated Oraon, an Indian Congress leader and former state communication minister of India, Albert Ekka, the Paramveer Chakra awardees (Highest Award for Bravery in India), The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Ranchi, Cardinal Telesphore Placidus Toppo, are Oraons. People of this community have shown exceptional makes as compared to people of other tribes.

Orans speak the language called Kurukh which belongs to the Dravidian Family and is related to the Pahari language (language of mountains). Kurukh has a special recognition as it is taught in Ranchi University.

The Orans have progressed with the time and have shifted to Indian Metro Cities like Kolkatta, Delhi, Mumbai and other smaller cities like Patna, Bhuvaneshwar, Bhopal, Hyderabad, Allahabad and Lucknow.

Khasis

Hynniew Trep , that is how they like to be called – The Khasis Tribe of Meghalaya, a state in the North Eastern Part of India. The Khasis inhabit the Khasi Hills proper, and the Syntengs, or Pnars, the Jaintia Hills. These people whose literal meaning is “Seven Huts” in Khasi Language, cover about 50 percent of the population of Meghalaya. Khasis are the descendants of Mon-Khmer speakers who migrated probably from Yunnan to Meghalaya. They live in the Jaintia Hills in the state of Meghalaya. West Bengal, Mizoram, Maharashtra, Tripura, TamilNadu, Arunachal Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The sub- divisions of Khasis i.e. the Wars, Khyntriams, Pnars and Bhiois are not only the territorial groups but each of them acquired different socio-cultural traits. What sets the Khasis apart from other tribes is that in Khasis the descendants are recognized from Mother and not from father (Matrilineal Society). As per the Khasi Law and tradition the mother inherits the children and property and not the father. In addition to this a Khasi woman is at liberty to take divorce from her husband as per her will. The Khasis have well defined homelands.

Dimasa – Dim – Fisa – The Tribe From Assam

This tribe from the North Eastern India, is apart from the greater Bodo – Kachari group. Dimasas live in the Jatinga Valley in the North Cachar Hills of Assam. Dimasas are supposed to be the aboriginals of the Brahmaputra Valley ascending from the Himalayas with their roots connection to the Great Hindu Epic Mahabharata. Dimasas have their seats in the city called Dimapur. Laying on the banks of the river Dhanasiri, also known as the Brick City, was the ruling Capital of Kacharis – the prominent and

powerful race of those times. Dimapur got its name from the Kachari word Di – meaning water, Ma – meaning – big and Pur – meaning city.

The Dimasa Kacharis are distributed in different regions of Assam and Nagaland. The Dimasa Kacharis living in North Cachar Hills appear to have retained much of their traditional tribals more. However, those ones in the in Nagaon district of Assam, the influence of Assamese Culture is very apparent. The Dimasas living in cachar Hills are highly influenced by the Bengali Culture.

Chenchu – Aboriginal Tribe of Central Hills

Chenchus are the Hindu Tribes – the Aboriginals who are found in the Central Hill stations of Andhra Pradesh.

Chenchus are the Aboriginal Tribe who still consider hunting for their livelihood rather than farming. Selling meat is one of their major activities. Their food consists of gruel made from jowar or maize, and boiled or cooked jungle tubers. They mix tamarind fruit with tamarind. The Caste Hindu which lives with Chenchus take Chenchus land on rent and pay by giving a portion of their harvest to Chenchus. They are the food gathering tribe who mostly speak Telgu.

The Chenchus collect jungle products like roots, fruits, tubers, beedi leaf, mohua flower, honey, gum, tamarind and green leaves and make a mearge income of it by selling these to traders and government cooperatives.

Gaddis – The Khanabadosh Tribe

Gaddis are the Tribes of Himachal Pradesh, residing in the Dauladher Range. The peculiarity of the Gaddis lie in their Khanabadosh Naure – they are Gypsies in true nature as they travel to the higher pastures along their flocks in the summer season and so are transhumance in their traditional practice.

In the earlier years the Ancestors of Gaddis left India during their tough times. Later on with the chauhan Rajputs Brahman Gaddis descended to the place called Chamba in Himachal Pradesh. From those years, Gaddis and their generations have been living in Chamba along with the flocks. Aside from Chamba, they are also found in Kangra district, near Dharmashala, Himachal Pradesh.



Tribal zones:

Although Indian tribal communities are spread all over the length and breadth of the sub-continent, yet some tribal areas can be outlined as follow:

1. North – Eastern
2. Western
3. Central
4. Southern
5. Island

The format below highlights the zone-wise distribution of some of the notable tribes:

Territorial distribution of some important tribes:

- North – Eastern Zone
Naga, Mozo, Adi, Lepcha, Gaddr, Khasi, Garo, Jaintia, Raji, Bhotia, Tharu
- Western Zone:
Seheia, Hil, Girisia, Rebari, Dang, Mina, Worli
- Central Zone:
Munda, Oraon, Santhal, Gondh Ho, chenchu, Bhumjij, Birhor, Kondh, Saora, Poroja
- Southern Zone:
Toda, Kodar, Palliyan, Badagar Krumba
- Island (Communities) Zone:
Great Andamanese, Jarawa, Onge, Sentinnclose, Shompen, Nicobarese

Population-wise Gonds are found highest in number (about 8 lakhs), followed by Bhils (about 7.5 lakhs) Santhal (about 5 lakhs), Mina (about 2.2 lakhs) and Oran (about 2 lakhs). The lowest number among them are the Jarawa (about 50), Onges (about 100), Andamanese (about 150)

The North and North – Eastern Zones:

Consist of the sub-Himalayan region and the mountain valleys of the eastern frontiers of India. The tribal people of Assam, Manipur and Tripura may be included in the eastern part of this geographical zone. While in the northern part are included Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh.

Some of the important tribes in India living between Assam and Tibet are Aka, Dafla, Miri, Gurung and the Apatani on the west of the Subhansiri river. The Mishmi tribes live in high ranges between the Dehong and Lohit rivers. Further east are found the Khamti and the Singpho and beyond them are the different Naga tribes. South of the Naga hills running through the states of Manipur, Tripura and the Chittagong hill tracts live the Kuki, the Lushai, the Khasi and the Garo.

There are number of primitive tribes found in Sikkim and the northern part of Darjeeling, Lepcha being best known of them. The Himalayan region of UP also contains some important tribes Tharu, Bhoksa, Jounsari, Raji et.

Western Zone:

This zone consists of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra mainly some preeminent tribes are Bhils, Lambanni, Sehela, Worli

The Central Zone:

This zone consists of plateaus and mountainous belt between the Indo-Gangetic plain to the north and roughly the Krishna River to the south.

In this zone have another massing of tribal people in Madhya Pradesh, Southern Rajasthan, Northern Maharashtra, Bihar and Orissa.

The important tribes inhabiting this zone are the Savara, Gadaba and Borido of the Ganjam district; the Juang, Kharia, Khond Bhumij and the Bhiya of the Orissa hills. In the plateau of Chotanagpur live the Munda, the Santhal, the Oram, the Ho and the Birhor. Along the Vindhya ranges live the Katkari, Kol and the Bhil, the Gond forms the largest groups and occupy what is known as the "Gondwan a Land"

The Southern Zone:

This zone consists of that part of the southern India which falls south of the river Krishna stretching from Wynad to Cape Comorin. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Coorg, Travancore, Cochin, Tamil Nadu are included in this zone. Beginning from the north east of this zone, the chenchu occupy the area of the Nallaimalais hills across the Krishna and into the erstwhile Hyderabad state. Along the Western Ghats from the Loraga of South Canara, the Yeruva and the Toda live on the lower slopes of Coorg

hills while the Irula, Paniyan and the Kurumba inhabit Wynaad area. The most primitive of Indian aboriginals such as Kadar, Kanikkar, Malvadan, Malakuravan etc., inhabit the dense forest along the ranges of Cochin and Travancore. They are also included among of the most economically backward communities of the world. Except the Toda, Badaga and Kota who live in Nilgiri hills most of the tribal groups of this zone depend upon hunting and fishing for food.

Andaman and Nicobar Zone:

Jarawa, Onge, North Sentinelese, Andamanese and Nicobari are some of the important tribes in India living in this Andaman and Nicobar zone. Thus separated from the main body of India's primitive tribes, they are ethnically close to the south Indian tribes.

The Grand Variety & Tribal Life:

India is the country which is having the variety in every way, as the country is having the largest concentration of tribal people from all over the world except Africa. India has the wide and rich Eco-system which gives the variety of tribes to grow and survive in the country. The north eastern part of the country is completely unexplored. The valley of north east India is having the green vegetation majestic beauty of mountains, rich variety of flora and fauna.

Beauty of North-East India:

There are many such states in North East India which showcase the beauty of north east India. Sikkim where the beauty resides in the orchids bloom on the hillside. Assam which is famous for its tea gardens, Arunachal Pradesh which is the first state in the country to welcome the morning sun, Tripura which explores the princely tradition of the country, Nagaland is the state which is famous for its tribal crafts and culture, Mizoram is the place to enjoy the exquisite bamboo and cane souvenirs, Manipur is the place that luxuriate the traditional dance. Meghalaya is the state that is situated in the picturesque view of the clouds.

Major Tribes of North East India:

The major part of tribes resides in the hilly and forested area of the state. Tribes are generally found in the areas which are away from the alluvial plains and the area which is near to the rivers. The native tribes of Arunachal Pradesh are the tribes that gratify the heritage of art and crafts and entertaining folksongs. Arunachal Pradesh is the state which is having 26 major tribes and there are many sub tribes who are having their own language and cultural identities. Apatani is the biggest tribal group of Arunachal Pradesh. Each tribe has its own folk songs and kaleidoscopic traditional dance and dressing style. There are 16 major tribes that are residing in the state of Nagaland. Each is having its own customs, language, dress, attires, jewelery, and head strings that are worn by them. The tribe that resides in Assam are Khamti, Phakial, Khyamyang. Altonia, Nara, Gurung and Shyam.

In the state of Nagaland the most happening festival is Nazu festival which is celebrated by the Pochury tribe of the State. This is the festival that is celebrated for 10 days in the month of February before the sowing of seeds for the year. Songs and dances are also

performed by the people of the Pochury Tribe during the occasion. Khupielilie dance is one of them performed by the women folk of the Pochury tribe.

Tribals of Arunachal Pradesh:

There are around 20 major tribes and sub tribes in Arunachal Pradesh. All the tribes of the state have its own distinct lifestyle. All the tribes have their own occupation, customs, costumes and festivals. The names of tribes are: Adi, Apatani, Mishmi, Aka, Buguns, Khambas are among about 20 tribes.

Maram Tribe of Manipur:

Places like Senapati district, Tadubi and Kangpokpi region in Manipur are home to numerous tribes. Anthropologists from all around have studied the traits and features of the people of Maram tribal community. The Maram tribal people possess Mongoloid and Caucasioid features. Like other of Manipur, the history of Maram tribes is also associated with numerous legends and mythologies.

Village & Dialect

The village of these tribes is divided into numerous 'Sadung' or 'Khel'. Each of these 'Khels' has a separate entrance. There are different dormitories for boys and girls. The dialect that Maram tribes used to speak is known as Maram Khullel. It is interesting to note that while all the other people of tribe speak the same tongue, the village Senapati uses a different one. Though the language used by the village Senapati is not completely different, it has a different mode of expression.

Men & Women

Males of the Maram tribe are usually engaged in farming. Another interesting aspect of the men is that they take care of most of household work including collection of water and firewood. Women of the tribe are only responsible for cooking and looking after the child. Women do, however, lend a hand in digging the fields so that men can sow and harvest.

Dresses & Costumes

Males of the Maram tribal community can be seen wearing black cotton skirt decorated with white cowries arranged in 3-4 rows. Women also wear an inner loin cloth, which resembles male dresses. White robe or shawls (more recently) are used by women to cover their bodies.



Festivals & Rituals:

No tribe is devoid of customs, traditions and festivals. Maram tribes too have a number of festivals to celebrate. These include Ponghi, Kanghi and Rakakkou, Singing is a part and parcel of these tribal festivals in which both men and women participate. The tribe also celebrates a name-giving ritual. After 5-7 days of birth, the newly born is held in the direction of sun. Later, the father of the baby fetches a crab within 10 days. The head of the family gives blessings. Some purification rituals follow and then the baby becomes an accepted and full fledged member of the family. It is ideal to fix marriages through negotiations.

The state of Manipur in north eastern India provides a number of tribes and tribal communities. One of the popular Manipur tribes is the Chiru Tribe. Steeped in history and mythology, Chiru tribal community inhabits various districts of Manipur – Senapai, Tamenglong and Bishnupur. The word “chiru” means the seed of plant. In terms of lifestyle and culture the Chiru tribe has some similarity with the Naga tribal community. Due to their distinguished physical features, anyone can recognize the people who belong to the Chiru tribal community.

Chirus have contributed to the Manipuri culture. These tribals have their own customs and traditions both in dance and musical recitals. Chiru tribes of Manipur follow unique living style patterns. In this tribal community, bachelors and unmarried women are provided with separate quarters. The people of the Chiru tribe actually have their connections with Kuki family tribal group.

Most of the people belonging to the Chiru tribes have adopted farming as their major profession. The rugged terrains of the mountains prove to be just perfect for doing shifting and wet farming. Chiru tribal community is also involved in the growth and trading of fruits like bananas, oranges, lemon and papaya. These fruits do not only serve their food requirements but also help them earn. In addition, the Chiru tribes of

Manipur are also known to specialize in cottage industries. The tribe prepares a range of household products from cane.

People of the Chiru tribal community also display great craftsmanship in the field of weaving and carpentry. In a nutshell, Chiru tribe has greatly contributed in enriching the cultural ethnicity of whole of Manipur in northeastern India.

Lambani Tribe (Western India)

Lambanis lead a gypsy life and mainly inhabit the western Indian states including Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. A part of the tribal community is also found in the northern region of Karnataka. The Lambani tribe of India speaks a language which is believed to have been originated in the state of Rajasthan. Earlier, Lambanis used to supply grains to armies. In the olden days, the Lambani people carried grain, salt, bamboos and firewood. The tribal community used oxen to carry heavier commodities.

Lambani Tribal Women

Women of Lambani tribes wear decorated clothes or fabrics. Jewellery is also an essential part of these tribal women's lifestyle. Women wear bone-made finger rings, bangles and bracelets. In addition, they adorn their hair with flowers and balls. These tribal women mostly wear thick aprons which are interwoven with cotton thread through needle work. The thick apron remains suspended from the waist (downwards) while bodice makes up for the upper.

Lambani tribal Men

A coarse turban forms the headgear of a Lambani tribal man. Men of the Lambani tribes are mostly seen dressed up in tight breeches, which extend a few inches below the knee.

Lambani tribals keep travelling

People of Lambani tribes keep moving from place to place. Noticed usually in groups, people of this tribal community earn their daily bread by selling clothes at local markets and on beaches. When the Lambani tribe inhabited the forest region of the southern India, they were also referred to as the bee-keeping caste.

People of the Lambani tribal community worship Goddess Shakti.

Aimol Tribes of Manipur

Aimor tribes of Inida inhabit mainly in two districts of Manipur, one of the seven sister Northeastern states. Their population is distributed in most of the villages of Chandel the Churachandapur districts. The name Aimol has been derived from a word which means roots. "Ai" is a small ginger like plant which is found in the areas of "Mol". This area is located in the hills of Aizawl, the capital city of Mizoram.

Aimol tribes of Manipur live in their traditionally made houses of bamboo, wood and mud. The roof is made of thatch in a slanting style. Most of the Aimol families are nuclear and comprise parents and children. This tribal society generally follows

monogamous and patriarchal system. Aimol tribes of Manipur mainly depend upon agriculture and allied activities. Their main agricultural products are paddy, maize, soyabean, pumpkin and chilly. Other than this, they also depend on livestock rearing and weaving to earn their livelihood. Buffalo, pig, ox and hen are some of the animals which they domesticate.

Most of the Aimol tribes of India have adopted Christianity. But before adopting Christianity around three decades ago, they used to believe in many spirits and deities. They used to worship several deities for several reasons like Sailing and Bonglei as the protector of their village and pregnant women used to worship Arkun Pathian, which is considered as the Goddess of fertility. Their dressing sense, clothes, living habits, traditions and beliefs have resemblance with Chothes tribe, who are their neighbours.

Population of Aimol tribes of India is about 2,500 in numbers and they speak Aimol language. Some of the Aimol tribes of Manipur have also settled down in Mozoram and Tripura.

Jarawa Tribes of Andaman

Jarawa is one of the tribal communities inhabiting in Andaman and Nicobar islands. It is believed that the ancestors of Jarawa tribes were part of the migrated people out of Africa. Jarawa tribes of Andaman still hunt pigs and monitor lizards with bows and arrows to make their livelihood. Jarawas also gather berries, seeds and honey from the forests. They mostly restrict themselves to their jungle dwellings but some of them have now started mingling with people of nearby villages and towns.

The population of Jarawa tribes of Andaman is dwindling with the passage of time. Jarawas of Andaman islands are left with around 400 people in their community, at present. Most of the Jarawas died because of epidemic disease like measles. Construction of roads inside their territory in forests became the greatest threat for their survival as many people started encroaching their lands. People from other parts of Andaman and Nicobar islands have started inhabiting near to the areas where Jarawas live in their dwelling in the forests. Poaching of honey and other fruits like bananas the outsiders has also made a bad affect on their survival.

Jarawa tribes inhabiting in South Andaman Islands and Western Coasts of Middle Andaman Islands. Some of them still lead a nomadic life in forests. Most of them live in temporary huts built by woods and leaves found in the forests. Crude crafts are used by Jarawas to cross streams and creeks. Sometimes they also make attacks on intruders inside their territory.

These tribes speak Jarawa language but some of them who are getting in contact with other people have also picked up few Hindi words. As no prominent influence of any other languages of the region is seen in Jarawa language, it can be one of the reasons that these tribes remained secluded for a very long period.

Sammakka Saarakka medaram Jatra: India's Largest Tribal Fair

The four daylong Sammakka Saarakka Medaram Jatra is the largest tribal fair of India. It is celebrated once in two years at Medaram village in Warangal district in Andhra Pradesh. Medaram village is situated about 100km away from Warangal city, amid dense jungles, Sammakka Saarakka Medaram Jatra attracts millions of tribals from different states of India like Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh.

The festival is celebrated in the Magha month, as per the Hindi calendar on the full moon day. Saarakka goddess, in the form of vermilion, is brought from the neighboring village Kanneboyinapalle and placed on the platform made under a tree. The main Goddess, Sammakka, is also brought from a nearby village Chilukalagutta in a great procession. According to a legend Sammakka and Saarakka were Koya women warriors who were killed by the army while fighting against Pratapa Rudra.

Sammakka Saarakka Jatra is also known by the name of tribal Kumbh Mela and all the tribes gathered here take dip in the Jampana Vagu, a small rivulet, to get purified and absolve from sins. After that devotees pay their obeisance and worship Goddesses Saarakka and Sammakka with the belief that they will bring prosperity and happiness in their lives with miraculous and divine powers. Girls offer prayers to the Goddesses for good life partners and couples to bless them with children.

Tribes have a ritual of weighing themselves against jaggery and after that it is offered to the Goddess. Apart from this they also sacrifice thousands of goats and cocks in the name of deities as per the rituals and beliefs. Devotees dressed in beautiful attires sing hymns in praise of their deities.

The sanctum sanctorum of Jatara site, Gaddelu, is thronged by devotees to the fullest. A number of temporary dwellings also spring up to accommodate the devotees from far away places.

Losar Festival in India

Losar is a Tibetan festival but it is also celebrated in the regions located near to Tibet's boundary which are normally habituated by tribal population or the regions where Tibetans have settled in India. Losar means New Year in Tibetan and is celebrated to welcome the New Year. Though celebrations carry on for fifteen days in Tibet but in India it is celebrated for three days. Losar is celebrated in the months of December-January as per the lunar calendar.

In India, Losar is celebrated with full pomp and show in various states with tribal and Tibetan population like Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. In Himachal Pradesh it is celebrated in Kinnaur, Lahaul Spiti and Kangra. In Arunachal Pradesh, Losar is celebrated in Tawang, Memba and Mechukha valley by Monpa tribes.

Losar is celebrated by offering prayers in various beautiful monasteries by localites to wish for the good luck in the approaching year. On the very first day of the Losar

festival, “Changkol” a beverage made of “Chhang” (a kind of Beer) is made and enjoyed by the folks. Second day of the Losar festival is known as “Gyalp Losar” or King’s Losar, which is specially reserved for secular gatherings and exchanging of greetings. It is from the third day when the monks and localities start enjoying the festive season by participating in Deer dance, folk music and merry making.

Special preparations are made to celebrate Losar by painting of houses, decorating homes by flour paintings of Sun and Moon, and illuminating houses by earthen lamps during the nights. Losar festival in Sikkim begins one month in advance than that celebrated by Buddhists and Tibetans in other places.

During Losar, folks enjoy various kinds of special cuisines. It is the time for Buddhists to ensure stopping of bad omens from carrying into the new year. Losar is also celebrated in various parts of Nepal and Bhutan.

Bhunda Festival in Himachal Pradesh

Fairs and festivals have always been a part of the life of tribes in India. One of the such festivals is Bhunda festival, which is celebrated in Nirmand region of Himachal Pradesh. Nirmand is located at a distance of around 150km from Shimla and 17km from Rampur. Famous by the name of Bhund Narmedh (Human Sacrifice) mahayajna, Bhunda is celebrated every 12 years. The festival mainly revolves around Beda tribes of Himachal Pradesh, who have a major role to play in the whole Bhunda ceremony.

Bhunda festival in Himachal Pradesh is performed believing that it will make local deity happy and He will shower prosperity and goodwill on the villagers. The main hero of the festival, a man from Beda tribe who is designated to perform the ritual, starts taking meal once a day when only one month is left for the festival. He starts weaving the sacred rope by collecting the “Munji” grass, on which he is going to slide on the day of the tribal ceremony, which is generally around 500 meters in length.

On the final day of the tribal Bhunda festival all the local deities are invited to the place of event where priests and a large number of audience gather to witness the traditional Bhunda celebration. The Beda man takes bath, wears a white dress (kafan) and worship the local deity after which he is accompanied to the site of the event with drum beats. The sacred rope weaved by the Beda is tied to a high point on a hill at one side and at another side it is tied to a point across a ravine deep down on the ground. The Beda then sits on a wooden siding saddle tied to the rope with his hands pointing upwards and slides down the ropeway, where his wife sits like a widow. If the man is able to survive and perform the event successfully, he and his family become rich as they are bestowed with huge amount of money and jewelry from the temple fund and is carried to the temple on a palanquin where hundreds of goats are sacrificed by the villagers in the name of local deity. But if the man is not able to survive, then his family is taken care of by the villagers.

Nowadays, special precautions are taken by the local authorities during Bhunda festival like tying of sand bags on both the legs of the Beda man sliding down the rope so as to

maintain the balance and putting of nets and mattresses below the rope to avoid any unusual happening.

Thousands of visitors from various parts of Himachal Pradesh and other parts of the country including tribal regions witness this three day long Bhunda festival ceremony. Though for localities it is usual affair but for the visitors from outside, it is nothing less than an event where a human being is forced knowingly into the mouth of death.

Characteristic features of tribal society – Kinship, marriage and family



Characteristics – 1.1

In the previous episode we familiarized ourselves with the cultural and ethnic diversity prevailing among the tribal people in India. In this episode we will continue a little further, try to understand from where this diversity occurs. We will presently try to understand the family structures, the kinship practices and the marriage practices of the tribal people. All these three together form a unique triangle. You can imagine an inverted triangle, at the bottom of it is the family structure. Marriage practices on the one hand and the kinship practices on the other hand together flow down to create the family structure. To understand this we will follow through what are known as genealogical charts. Before that we need to familiarize ourselves with the genealogical symbols. This represents the male. This represents the female in the genealogical chart. Equal (=) sign represent the marriage between the male and the female. Either male or female shown with a line across means the person is dead. Now look at the simplest genealogical chart which in sociological language is known as a nuclear family. Father, mother and two children.

Here you will see the male symbol, equal sign and the female symbol. So male symbol and female symbol with the equal sign means they are married. So, husband and wife and this vertical line drawn below the equal sign represent that they are the progeny of this couple. The horizontal line below the vertical line represent that these are blood relatives, what is now in genealogical language known as consanguineous relationship. Consanguineal – root word Sanguine means blood. So in general parlance it means they are blood relatives. So after this symbol father, mother, son and daughter. So father and son are also blood relatives. Mother and son or daughter, they are blood relatives. Father and daughter, they are also blood relatives. Brother and sister, they are blood relatives. So in this simple genealogical chart, there are two types of relationships. Male and female, married – that is known as the relationship of filiality or affinality. The relationship between brother and sister is known as consanguinity. Similarly father and son or daughter, mother and son or daughter, they are consanguineous kins.

Characteristics 1.2

In understanding the genealogical chart system we will first begin with what are known as the degrees of kinship. The degree of kinship concept fundamentally relies on the primary relationship which is very direct between two individuals whether it is based on marriage or based on birth. Now if you go back to the simple nuclear family structure we presented earlier.. this is what you saw already. Here you will find the male symbol and the female symbol with the equal sign (=) in between which means these two are married. You will see the vertical line. The vertical line means these are the progeny of this couple. Now the horizontal line below the vertical line... the horizontal line in the genealogical chart always represent relationship by blood.

So you will find this simple nuclear family structure presents basically two types of relationship. One built on marriage which is known as relationship of filiality or filial bond. And another by birth, like brother and sister. This is known as consanguineous relationship. So the simple genealogical chart showing a nuclear family presents two types of relationships. That is through matrimonial bond which is known as the bondage of filiality or affinity and by birth. Brother and sister, or blood relatives by birth. Father and son / daughter on the one hand and mother son/or daughter on the other hand, they are also primary relatives through blood. So this simple nuclear family structure presents two different types of direct relationship. That is between the father and mother who are directly related as husband and wife and father and son / daughter who are directly related through blood on the other hand mother and son / daughter who are directly related through blood and thirdly the brother and sister who are directly related through birth. This relationship is known as relationship of consanguinity. Consanguinity the root word – sanguine means blood. So in general relationship they are blood relatives.

Characteristics – 1.3

In this system of understanding the relationship among the people and between the people based on the genealogical chart, the concept of degree of kinship becomes very crucial. The degree of kinship concept is fundamentally based on direct relationship between any two individuals within the structure either through marriage or through blood. Now if you look back into this simple nuclear family structure which was presented a little earlier, I will go back to it and you will be able to understand the meaning of primary relationship.

Here you will find two types of relationships. One based on marriage. This male and female due to marriage, they become husband and wife. After the birth of children they will be referred to as father and mother within the structure. Now the two relationships that you find here is, one based on marriage. That is known as filial bondage or affinal bondage. The other one, say between the brother and sister, they are by birth relatives through birth. They are blood relatives. This is known as consanguineous relationship. Consanguineous, the root word sanguine means blood. So in general parlance consanguineous relationship means blood relationship. So you will find in this particular little structure of a family that there are filial bonds, direct primary relationship between

the male and the female who are now husband and wife on the one hand and father and mother on the other hand. And father and son / daughter, mother son / daughter, they are also directly related as primary kins. Similarly brother and sister they are also direct primary kins. So you will find that two types of relationships in this simple structure, that is, filial bond, as well as, consanguineous bond. And you will find one pair, two pair, three pairs, four, five. You will find 5 pairs of direct primary kins in this simple structure. This is how genealogical chart is used in order to understand family structure as well as the kinship structure.

Characteristics 1.4

Obviously next to the primary degree relationship should be the secondary degree relationship. If you look at the chart now the symbols are boxed. You look at the boxed symbols. Now you look at this boxed symbol and this one. Now you will find, this father and son.

Father and sons are primary kins. Son has got married. Son and his wife are again primary kins. So second degree relationship in the simplest definition means the primary relative of a primary relative. That goes to the second level. So father and son are primary relatives. They are consanguineous kins. And the son and his wife are primary relatives, they are filial kins through marriage. This is through blood, this is through marriage. So two primary relatives coming together, the first and the third will be referred to as kins of the second degree. Now similarly in the second chart here you will find boxed. The box for the male in the family, the father and wife's sister. You will find here the man and his wife are primary kins through marriage. The woman in this and her own sister, they are primary kins through blood. So primary kin and primary kin. Two primary kin together. Now if you look at the man in the house and his sister in law, wife's sister, they become kins of the second degree. That is, primary kin of the primary kin. She is primary kin to the women and she is primary kin to the husband. So this man and his sister in law become kins of the second degree. Similarly the son in the family, the son and mother are primary kins. Mother's sister becomes the secondary kin to the son. Similarly to the daughter, mother's sister becomes secondary kin. This is known as the kinship of second degree.

Characteristics 1.5

We will now understand the third degree relationship through the genealogical chart. You look at the chart. Boxed persons in this structure – the man in the house and his wife, son and daughter, daughter is married and that is son in law, and son in law's sister. So you will find between the father and the daughter or the mother and the daughter, they are primary kins through blood. And the daughter is married, her husband and the daughter they are primary kins again through marriage.

The sister of the son in law of the family their primary kins through blood. So here is a blood relationship, filial relationship and blood relationship. This is one primary kin, another primary kin and third level primary kin. So therefore, the man in the house and the son in law's sister or the women in the house and her son in law's sister become relatives of the third degree. Three primary relations put together. This is known as the third degree relationship.

Characteristics 1.6

We will now just take a look at a very interesting relationship that is universally found particularly among the tribes in south India and also among the tribes in Africa. That is, the position of the mother's brother. What in Tamil language we call "Thai Maman". In fact particularly in South India this is a very interesting relationship. Now look at the chart. The man and woman in the family, the son and daughter and the woman's brother. So this is the mother's brother in the family. So the boxed individuals here are the son and daughter in the family and mother's brother. So mother's brother and the son or daughter in the family become very relatives in this particular kinship relationship. Avunculate built on the root word uncle. So in general parlance he is the uncle in the family, so avunculate is a kinship practice where mother's brother gets an important position in the family. In fact, normally when the man of the house is dead, sometimes, mother's brother comes in if there are no other grownup males in the family to run the family show, to run the family itself taking the responsibility. Because normally the belief in our system is that if there is no elderly man in the family, there will be very little control in running the family show.

So therefore, he may come into picture especially when this man is no more. But in south India, the marriage between the daughter and her uncle, mother's brother, is a preferential marriage. In fact this is normally preferred so that family property remains within the family. This is a very well known practice particularly in south Indian families. But among the tribal it goes one step further. What happens is even if this man is married, before marrying off the daughter the mothers insists on the daughter giving gifts to this man, falling upon his feet almost symbolizing getting the permission from this man in order to marry someone else. So the strength of this relationship, strength of the bondage of the mother's brother in family structure is very strong in many tribal families in India.

Characteristics 1.7

We need to look into the joking relationship. Something very interesting in the family structure. Look at the chart. Two boxed items. The man in the family and his wife's younger sister. Joking relationship between the man and his younger sister. In fact, especially in north India during marriages even when the man is going to get married, often enough you will find the bride groom teasing his own would be wife, the bride, referring to her younger sister, telling her that your younger sister is more beautiful than you, more interactive than you, very helpful, she does more work than you, compared to her you are lazy, blah... blah... blah... So that speaks of the joking relationship that is permitted and in fact is very much within the family structure. Similarly in this family you will find the boxed one, the man and the woman boxed with this man is not the husband. He is husband's brother. Normally the woman in the family has a joking relationship with her own husband's younger brother.

Of course in this chart it is shown as the elder one, but actually the joking relationship is stronger between the woman in the family and her husband's younger brother. They tease each other. In fact, in front of the husband she may glorify the younger brother in

order to tease the husband, in order to mend his ways the wife may take up this approach. But this joking relationship is also allowed very much in the northern Indian families rather than south Indian families. But in the tribals in the north India this is pretty well known.

Characteristics 1.8

We will take a look into a very interesting kinship usage. Look at this chart. The man here and the sister of his wife shown in the box. The joking relationship between the man and his wife's younger sister, particularly in many north Indian tribes, right at the time of marriage itself, this man tries to glorify his own would be wife's younger sister explaining her to be more beautiful, more useful, more meaningful, more interactive and etc..., in order to tease and set right the would be wife. Joking relationship between the man and his wife's younger sister. Similarly between the women and her husband's younger brother. I don't know how many of you remember from the Dilwale Dulhania Ley Jayenge – Babhi tera dewar dewana. This kind of joking relationship is very famous between a woman and her husband's younger brother, a joking relationship.

Characteristics 1.9

We will presently look into a very unique kinship usage prevailing among some tribal people in India, of course, much better known among the tribals in certain parts of Africa. Look at this chart.

I have shown a man and a woman directly married. The other one I have put within brackets with equal sign that means there is a relationship. Not necessarily married yet. It means it could be a relationship between the woman and the man before marriage or extra marital. The practice is known as coaudh.



What happens in this kinship practice is when a woman becomes pregnant could be she, could be her. Which means actual wife or another woman pre-marital or extra marital like I said. When the woman becomes pregnant, the man who considers himself responsible for the pregnancy becomes positively alerted. In fact the entire practice of

coaudh has been explained in detail in one of the earlier episode in this series. But here I will just briefly tell what is exactly meant by positively getting alerted. He takes the responsibility. He goes through all the travails that the pregnant woman is going through. Just imagine, it could be his wife or may be premarital or extra marital. She may or may not be living in the same family. Not even in the same village. But he goes through all the travails. 4 months pregnancy, she takes to diet, he takes to diet. 6 months pregnancy, she stops hard work, he stops hard work. 8 months pregnancy, she is confined to home, he is confined to home. May be the same home, may be the same village.

That is immaterial. 9 months pregnancy, she is confined to one room in the family, he is confined to one room. It goes up to the level of woman getting labor pain. He gets labor pains. Don't ask whether it is possible. It is a very interesting practice. Two advantages of this. One is, when a woman becomes pregnant everybody knows who is the mother of the future child, but nobody knows who the father is. Here, father is automatically declared. Number 2, when the woman is going through problems there is moral support when the husband is going through the problems. These are the two distinct advantages of the practice. Very interesting practice. After all we know too well that every time there is a woman pregnant around in the community there is always a question mark as to who is the father. Everybody knows who is going to be the mother of the future child. In fact the entire marriage practice in the human community is said to be only to pin down the father of the future member of the community.

Characteristics 2.0

We will presently look into some marriage practices very much prevalent among the tribal communities. Look at the chart. A man with equal sign (=) with three women. This is known as polygene. A man with more than one wife. If all these three women are sisters, it would be known as sorrorel polygenic. So Polygene means a man having more than one wife. The general term is polygamy as contrasted with monogamy. Monogamy means, one man, one woman. So polygamy is contrasted with monogamy. So polygamy has 2 variants. First variant is man having more than one wife. We will come later on to the other variety where woman is having more than one man for husband. That is the other variant of polygamy. So don't please confuse... polygamy is contrasted with monogamy. Polygamy in general is contrasted with monogamy.

Monogamy meaning one man and one woman getting married. Polygamy means either the man or the woman having more than one husband or more than one wife. So polygamy is contrasted with monogamy. Polygene is one variant of polygamy. Polygene means one man marrying more than one woman. If all these women are sisters it will be known as sorrorel polygene. Here is another little chart. Where the wife is dead and the man marries the dead wife's sister. This is known as sorrorate. You can see the parallel. Sorrorite is the practice born out of sorrorel polygene system. If sorrorel polygene is not there in the tribe very rarely you will find sorrorate as a practice.

Characteristics 2.1

As I just mentioned in passing polyandry is the other variant of polygamy where one woman has more than one man as husband. You will find this in the genealogical symbols here. If all these men are brothers it will be known as adulfic polyandry or leviratic polyandry. And in the next little chart you will find that this man, the husband is dead, the woman marries the husband's brother. That is known as levirate. Obviously if there is no polyandry in practice in the tribal community probably you will not come across levirate. That is a woman being forced to marry forced please note it. Being forced to marry he dead man's brother. This is again done in order to conserve the property within the family structure.

Characteristics 2.2

There is a kinship usage interestingly a kind of opposite to the joking relationship we analyzed little while ago. Now look at this chart. The man, his son and son is married. The two boxed individuals, the man in the house and his daughter in law. Relationship of avoidance. In fact the man in the house and his daughter in law are not even supposed to come face to face with each other in the same enclosure within the family. Similarly in the second chart you will find the woman and the son in law, daughter's husband. Mother in law and son in law. Mother in law and son in law, again like the father in law and daughter in law are not to be seen face to face with each other.

Characteristics 2.3

To take a quick look into a very, very interesting practice prevalent both in the north and south of India, but in some sense opposed to each other. In much of north India when a man wants to address his wife or even shout out for his wife, he does not straight away call out her name. He makes a reference to the son or daughter and says so and so's mother, can you come for a minute. If the son for instance is known as Sunil, say Sunil Ki Maa, Sunil's mother, will you come for a moment. Addressing or referring to his own wife through the son or daughter, through the progeny. In the south in a way it is opposite. The woman referring to the husband through the child. When she wants to tell something to the neighbor or another woman, she will say – I mean this fellow's father. So she will also call sometimes the husband not directly but so and so's father, can you spare a minute for me.

Characteristics 2.4

There is a very interesting practice but very logically defended, inherently it speaks of the male dominance in the community. A man marries, one woman, after she dies, another woman, after she dies, another woman. It will go on after 3 or 4 marriages. But every time after the wife dies, that is often referred to as serial monogamy, because you can't blame him. Sometimes, the pretext could be there is a young child.

And I need to have another woman in order to take care of the child. But whatever it is, basically it speaks of the male dominance in the community. Because, you cannot similarly identify serial monogamy with the woman. Woman losing the husband, marrying another man, that man dies and then yet another man, no, you can't easily imagine. So inherently it speaks of the dominance of the male in the community.

Characteristics 2.5

There is a practice among some south Indian tribes, in fact in Tamil nadu, look at this chart. 2 or 3 men, 3 women, together married. 3 husbands and 3 wives. No further questions. Who is who's wife, who is who's husband. Of course if the women are smart or they will pertinently try to draw equations. Identifying just one man out of the 3, each one for herself. If they are smart, they may do that. But otherwise within the community they are supposed to be married together – 3 men and 3 women referred to as group marriage.

Characteristics 2.8

Next we will try to understand the family structure going by the residence. That is, after a young man or a woman in the family marries, where do they go to establish their family. So family structure by residence, sometimes known as by locality. Now look at the chart. The first one, the son gets married, and after marriage the daughter in law comes to live with the husband's family. So naturally this speaks of the male dominance. This will be known as the patrilocal family where the father side is dominant. Similarly you have, after marriage the daughter comes to live with the mother's family along with her husband. Obviously the emphasis is on the female line. That will be known as a matrilocal family. In fact even to this day this is well known in Kerala among the Nairs. After marriage she goes to live with the mother. And the third one you find, after marriage they go to live with the mother's brother – uncle.

This is known as Uxorilocal. That means they go to live with the uncle after marriage. This of course is the most common, after marriage they set up their own family. This is nuclelocal or neolocal. They look for a new residence after their marriage.

Characteristics 2.9

In a way, continuity of the previous one we have analyzed where we said it is by locality, this is by line of descent. Of course the idea is how they inherit the property. So this will be known as patrilineal, that is, the line of descent is on the male line. The property will be inherited from the father to the son. And this is matrilineal, the property is inherited by the daughter from the mother. Patrilineal and matrilineal, going by the line of descent, emphasis is on property, how it is inherited within the family structure.

Characteristics 3.0

We look at quickly about one interesting practice limited to certain tribes in India. Focus. What is the focus? Focus for the mother is the child. So it is often referred to as matrifocus structure. Irrespective of what the husband says, the mother always wants the children to be living with her. So this could happen even after the marriage of the children. But the focus is the relationship between the mother and her children. But of course the next one, is a very, very universally seen structure which we have called the nuclear structure. This is the nucleus for all types of families. That is, husband and wife and their children. Father and mother and their children. This is the nucleus of all kinds of family structures throughout the world. And we will just end up this analysis of

genealogical chart with the concept of extension of family structure and how it takes place.

Characteristics 3.1

Although I just said, nuclear family is the most universally seen structure of the family, even among the tribal people... forget about polyandrous and polygeneous marriages, yet the nuclear family is the most standard one in most communities. But yet, communities throughout the world has brought in extension of their family structure. The first chart that you see is horizontal extension where one has to be the primary relative of a primary member in the original family. That is enough for the person to become a part of the family. Extension could take place, brother is living, his brother, his children, his wife and children could be living together. Extension is only horizontal. The second one is something that we have to be particular in our country, because, throughout the world analysis has taken place on the joint family structure in India, where the emphasis is on the male line and opposed to horizontal this is vertical. Father, his son gets married, his family lives, his grandson gets married, the great grandson gets married, traditionally it could run into 3 or 4 generations. But emphasis is on the male line. All the daughters as they get married, they go out of the family. But sons come to live. A particular, peculiar extension in the joint family structure is when the daughter gets married and she becomes a widow, she comes back to the parental family. This is something very uniquely known in joint family structures. In fact the joke that goes about the Hindu joint family structure in our country is, that Hindu joint family always had the open arms. So many people living, just one more person, there is no problem. You come and join. Anybody who is not able to fend for oneself, so long as that person is related to any person in a primary manner within the family structure could become part of the family structure.

Characteristics 3.2

We have just gone through a whole series of genealogical charts. You would have probably realized that it is possible to understand the family structures, kinship structures and the marriage practices among the tribal people purely only through genealogical charts. The credit for this belongs to W H R Rivers who popularized the genealogical method of analysis of the family, kinship and marriage practices among the tribal children.

Characteristics 3.3

We have just completed a whole series of analysis of genealogical charts. You would have certainly realized that it is possible to make an analysis of the marriage practices, kinship practices, as well as the family structures prevailing among the tribal people exclusively through analysis and use of genealogical charts. The credit for this belongs to W H R Rivers, who proved for the first time, that it is possible to make an in depth study of family, marriage and kinship practices among the people exclusively through the use of genealogical charts. Incidentally W H R Rivers used this method for the first time only in India.

Characteristics 3.4

We have just gone through an analysis of a series of genealogical charts. I am sure you would have realized that the marriage practices, kinship practices and the family structures could all be analyzed and understood very clearly and extensively through the use of genealogical charts. The credit for this belongs to W H R Rivers, who showed and proved for the first time that it is possible to use the genealogical charts extensively in order to understand the kinship usages, practices, marriage practices and family structures among the tribal people, in fact any other community, very clearly through these charts. Incidentally W H R Rivers did it for the first time in India.

Status of Woman Marriage & Education



Introduction

One can see that there is an intrinsic inter-related thread running through the three above-mentioned aspects of a woman's life in a tribal community. Regarding the status of a woman, it is obvious that the woman holds the sceptre in the matriarchal tribes a handful of them in India – and, the rest of the tribes that are patriarchal like much of the civilized world; have their women playing roles subservient to the man. But a relieving piece of information impinging upon the status of women in tribes is that the sex ratio has almost always been about 5% higher in favour of women in tribes as compared to the national average. One or two other facts of tribal life that indicate as to how women are regarded in tribal communities also worthy of being noted. For instance a tribal woman is in no danger walking alone in the middle of night very much unlike the situation that prevails in some of the cities of highly civilized societies. It is most unlikely that her modesty would be violated at all; if something does happen, the leaders do not lose much time in taking up the issue and a decision basically in favour of the hapless woman may emerge; also, the male responsible for the untoward happening will be suitably awarded a punishment. Thus, there is many a tribe that do not know that there is something called “rape” prevalent at all in humans. Some anthropologists fashionably maintain an argument that even STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) may have to be regarded as “gifts” of civilization to tribal life!

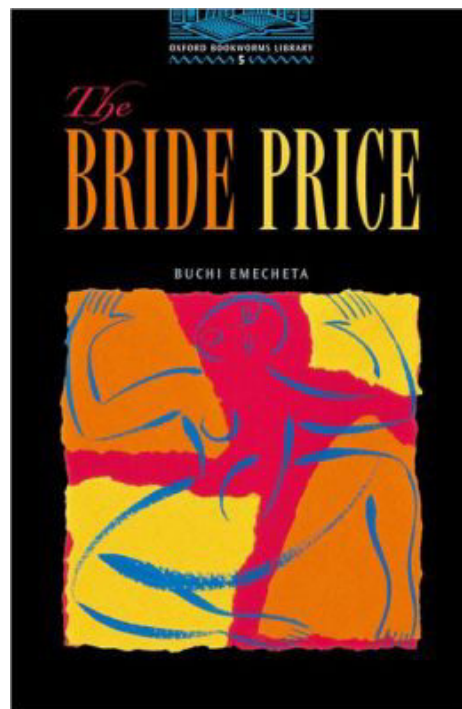
Sex Ratio

There is an intricate cause – effect interrelationship between status of women and marriage practices with sex-ratio playing an invisible role like Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati river's sangam. One thing must be noted about almost all practices among tribals in general and Indian tribes in particular. That is, the significant role of pragmatism in defining and deciding on very many routine issues. One ready case in

point is in case an unmarried girl becomes pregnant, the man responsible for the pregnancy. (Rather made easy to identify, thanks to practice like “couvade”) *is made to marry the (pregnant) girl. Pragmatism can also be seen to guide the practice of polyandry where there is a relative shortage of women (not quite normal, however in most Indian tribals, who almost as a rule present a sex ratio in favour of females). However, the practice of polyandry has deeper pragmatism of conserving family property and avoiding fragmentation.

Status of Women

Very much unlike the modern civilized societies status of women in tribal communities is often closely tied down to the practices related to marriage. As a matter of fact again very unlike in the civilized communities, most tribal societies throughout the world and also in India, present monogamous marriage as an exception rather than as a rule: the point to be noted here is that only in a monogamous family the women normally enjoy a status that is higher bound.



Bride Price

Many of the Indian tribes practice the system of bride price which involves a demand by the girl's family of certain assets to be transferred to them by the boy's family if the latter wished have the girl as their daughter-in-law. In the face of the practice of dowry known with the civilized communities in India, bride price system can be seen as the perfect antithesis of dowry practice.

If dowry system can be viewed as a practice that keeps the bridegroom at an exalted level compared to the bride, reverse argument should hold good in the case of bride price system.



Marriage practices and choice of mates

In comparison to the concept of arranged marriage prevailing among the conservative families of civilized communities, the tribals seem to enjoy as individuals much greater freedom of choice in mate selection.

Here follow a few examples from tribal India:

Marriage by service

If a young man has chosen to marry a particular girl but is unable to meet the bride price demands of the girl's family, he may offer to "serve the girl's family" for certain specified period weighed as equivalent to the bride price. Following the completion of the period of service contract, the couple has the freedom to decide on their future with respect of residence.

Marriage by Probation:

There are tribal communities in India where a prospective bridegroom is "appointed" by the girl's family to ensure that he is capable of taking care of family; following the successful completion of probation, the girl will be married off to the boy.

Marriage by Capture: Physical

There are tribal communities in India, where there is a practice of physical capture of the girl by the boy; the bridegroom in this case waits along with a few supporting friends at a vantage point in the route that is frequented by the girl he is interested in. At an opportune moment he 'physically' captures the girl to a specified place in safe custody. He then sends emissaries to the girl's parents to inform them of "His" (their" – ie., his and the girl's) intention. This may often fructify in a marriage finally.

Marriage by Capture: Ceremonial

This practice is a kind of philosophical extension of the physical capture of the girl by the boy. The boy in this case chooses a vantage point on the route used by the girl of his choice. Normally this happens on the occasion of the annual fair of the village deity. The boy "runs in from nowhere" and applies ochre powder on the forehead of the girl. This even may often ultimately lead to the boy marrying the girl.

Marriage by intrusion: man – GharJamai

A young man who is interested in marrying a girl decides to “intrude” the girl’s family with “bag and baggage” and refuses to leave unless the parents agree for the alliance. After due deliberations and setting of preconditions, the alliance normally gets the green signal.

Marriage by “Sit in”: Girl:

A girl who is bent upon marrying a particular young man arrives at the door-steps of the boy’s family with her belongings and sits on “dharna” demanding the boys hand in marriage. After tete-a-tete between the families involved, marriage normally gets set in motion successfully.

Marriage by “Elopement”

A boy and girl who are mutually interested decide to elope together to the outskirts of the village normally surrounded either by forest or hilly tract. They are traced after a while and allowed to marry.

Marriage by prowess: Man

There is a practice among some central Indian tribes of allowing a man to choose a girl of his desire after displaying his ability through a test of endurance and prowess. The day chosen is normally through the festive season. A pole is put up with a circle around. A Somejaggery and coconut pieces are kept atop the pole. All the girls interested in getting married crowd inside the circle around the pole. The boys who wish to have their choicest girl from the crowd must break into the crowd, climb the pole, reach the jaggery and coconut and put them in the mouth. The boy who successfully completes the task will have liberty of choosing ‘any girl’ from inside the circle and declare his intention to marry her.*However, the “process” part is contained in the practice of allowing the crowding girls inside the circle the full liberty of ‘troubling’ young men through doing things like pulling their hair, throwing water on them etc.

Marriage by Ceremonial Capture: Girl

Some tribes in South India, especially Tamil Nadu have the practice of throwing “turmeric water” – supposed to be a very sacred one – on each other on the occasion of annual fairs of the local deity. On such occasion a girl may choose to throw ‘turmeric water’ on a boy of her choice to display her interest. If the elders around witness, they note the intent, especially when the girl pours turmeric water on the same fellow more than once, and begin negotiations.

Polygamy

No discussion on the marriage institutions among the tribals will be complete without a reference to the practice of polygamy as opposed to the wide spread practice of monogamy among the civilized communities (among much of whom is “bigamy is legally questionable) Polygamy takes two forms: polygyny wherein one male takes more than one woman as a wife; and polyandry wherein one woman takes more than one man as a husband. A specified version of polygyny is “sororal polygyny” where in all the wives are sisters. Similarly, a specific version of polyandry is “adelphicor “leviratic”

polyandry where in all the husbands is brothers. Offshoots of these two practices are “sororate” wherein the widowed husband remarries the sister of the deceased wife; similarly, in “levirate” widow of the deceased husband remarries the deceased man’s brother.

All these practices have on the one hand controlled fragmentation of family property and on the other hand, made the woman’s status rather subservient to man’s status in tribal society.



Education and Tribal Life:

Before one speaks of education among the tribals it is necessary to clarify the terms “education” and “literacy” from the functional perspective. Education may be defined as bringing a bout an all round development of a human being whereas the meaning of literacy is rather limited to the knowledge of 3Rs. In the above meanings, education is a broad based concept and literacy occupies a minor space in connotation. Unfortunately the terms education and literacy got started being used synonymously and interchangeably; and they continue to be used as such even to this day. What makes the issue more complicated in the case of tribals are: firstly the tribals as a rule have “dialect” only and when they are to be made “literate” it has to be in a “language” “foreign” to them, however close it may be otherwise to their spoken dialect; secondly, an adult who may be under a literacy programme is getting to “learn a language” which he/she may not use in everydaytribal life where as he/she may be already “educated” sufficiently well in the sense he/she has “learnt” much of what is needed for normal life in the tribe.

Type of Education

Some educationists and social workers are of the opinion that the tribal education should have basic education as its basis or rather it should have basic bias. This policy is perhaps advocated in order to make sure that the tribal children do not lose touch with their culture and after the completion of their studies do not run after white-collar

jobs but are able to pursue their own arts and crafts and earn their own livelihood. Others, however, feel that by doing this we will be depriving them of the benefits the modern scientific and technological education can give them. The people themselves do not find a fulfillment of their aspirations in such systems of education. More often they have voiced their dissatisfaction over the fact that their children are likely to remain backward as they are by learning agriculture and other arts and crafts which the basic education proposes to teach them and in which they are already adept. Their children have equal rights, they assert, to become engineers, doctors, scientists and so on. Basic education, they say, can hardly enable them to become so.

The importance of social education or adult education is being gradually realized in India. There have been many handicaps for a successful implementation of a mass adult education campaign in India. The general picture of adult education in India is not very encouraging and in the tribal areas there is hardly any progress made. It is argued by some that unless parents are taught and educated they cannot realize the importance of education for their children. So, to have a successful primary education in tribal areas, it is felt that efforts should be made to educate the parents first. But others consider it a waste of time and resources. They, on the other hand, argue that we cannot wait to educate the children till their parents have been educated. It is true that an educated father would not like to keep his child illiterate but it is a long process and it is the respective strength of arguments of the two sides it will be impossible to ignore the problem of adult education for the tribal people. Related to this is the problem of universal, free and compulsory primary education. It is generally accepted that this problem cannot be solved by legislation. It may have an adverse effect. Any programme in the tribal area has to be taken in phases and there should be no effort made to achieve something great overnight. In our zeal to achieve something spectacular we may overshoot the target and do more damage than good. Compulsory and free education will one day come to the tribal areas but it will take some time to achieve this target.

Content of Education

In many of the States in India tribal children are taught such books which are in general used for the non-tribal children of the State as a whole. The content of these books deals with subjects unknown to the tribal children. The tribal child who lives in an isolated and far off place untouched with the currents of modern civilization can hardly assimilate any information about history and geography of the country, about the industrial and technical development, uninteresting and outdated stories and about the important personalities unknown and unheard of in tribal areas. The child has to be given complete information to begin with about its own tribe and village. Then he/she can pass on the information about his/her neighboring communities, his/her village life, social organizations, beliefs and practices, and then pass on to the national scene where we can introduce he/she the child to India which is his/her country. Then only she can be able to grasp what is happening the village, in the State, in the country, and, if possible, in other countries of the world.

Mother Tongue and Medium of Instruction

Tribal languages and dialects are in the most rudimentary stage and there is hardly any written literature. The main reason for the non-development of the tribal dialects is perhaps the isolation in which the tribes lived for centuries and the lack of contact with their more advanced neighboring communities which resulted thereby. The need for preservation and development of these tribal dialects—the mother tongue of about 30 million people—is very urgent.

For any education the medium of instruction is of great importance; it is more so for the tribal people. It is a well-known fact that the tribal people have lived in isolation untouched by the outsiders for a long time. Very few of them follow the regional languages of the State in which they live. Most of the States impart education to tribal and non-tribal children alike through the medium of the regional language. A tribal child who has practically no knowledge of the regional language is thus placed at a great disadvantage. He/she may have picked up here and there a few words of the regional language by coming into contact with the government servants, teachers or traders in the weekly markets but this knowledge is scanty, superficial and hardly sufficient for him/her to receive instruction in that language. By virtue of having learnt that script the school children may be able to read textbooks but they may not be able to comprehend them. This factor alone may be greatly responsible for the low achievement of the tribal pupils in the examinations.

Here comes the importance of the mother tongue. It is an accepted fact that anyone can understand things better and in a shorter duration when taught in one's own tongue than when taught through an unknown tongue. It is doubtful whether the present system of imparting education through the regional language is beneficial to the tribal children. Here the examples of non-tribal children in various States could be given. Even during the British days such children received instruction upto the Middle School through their mother tongue. English was taught from class IV onwards as a subject, it was never the medium of instruction till the child reached Class VIII and a little later only at the intermediate stage. The tribal child is also, therefore, entitled to receive instructions in his/her own mother tongue at least in the lower primary classes.

There are more than 200 major tribes in India speaking an equal, if not more, number of dialects, most of which are in the rudimentary stage. Not much has been done to build up a written tribal literature and preserve the dialects. It is generally known that the tribal life is rich in folk-lore, folk-songs, mythology etc., and thus could provide enough material to build up tribal literature. Some myths and folk-songs have been collected by various research workers in different States but unfortunately these remain confined to the intelligentsia and hitherto have been used for academic and research purposes only. It is necessary to popularize them by publishing them in tribal, regional and national languages and make them available to the common man. The regional languages of the States are making greater headway compared to the tribal languages which at many places are being neglected. At some places in Madhya Pradesh the present generation has even forgotten the Gondi language and it is on the verge of

extinction there. This situation may obtain in other States also if enough attention is not paid to preserve and develop the tribal language. It is generally suggested that the tribal languages are not well-developed, that any undue importance need not be given to them and that in due course they will all disappear. It is hardly sympathetic and practical to suggest that 30 million tribal people should be made to forget their mother tongue and speak a tongue unknown to them through which they cannot express themselves. Tribal languages also represent the cultural heritage of India and we cannot afford to have wanton destruction of its so many and so varied languages. Such a step is hardly conducive to the idea of integration which is so dear to us.

Efforts are needed to use the tribal languages as much as possible. Textbooks and reading material for the primary schools should as far as possible be written in tribal languages. Alphabet charts and posters could also be prepared in them. Some work has been done in this respect. Much more is needed. Universities, voluntary agencies and social workers can extend help in this field. Research scholars may also take up research projects for scientific study of tribal languages.

The problem of mother tongue is closely connected with that of script. Except the Khamptis, who use their traditional Tai script, none of the tribal languages has a script. And to build up a tribal literature it is essential to give the language a script. It is dangerous to give any sweeping suggestion regarding adoption of any particular script for the tribal languages without a detailed scientific study of the tribal dialects. It has to be found out how far the intended script is able to represent the various sounds and tones available in the particular tribal language. Only after we have determined this and other related aspects we can think of adopting a policy in this matter.

There appears to be a general agreement on the policy of teaching the tribal children in primary schools through the medium of their mother tongue. Time and again recommendations by various commissions and committees have been made but with the exception of perhaps the NEFA Administrations and the autonomous hill districts of Assam and Nagaland none of the States and the Union Territories is imparting education through the medium of mother tongue. The State Governments have expressed certain difficulties in this regard particularly the difficulty of the tribal languages being too many. But such difficulties need not necessarily stand in the way of implementation of the policy. It is futile to suggest that State Governments should adopt all the tribal languages as media of instruction but surely the important languages with large number of speakers could be picked up. No doubt, it will take some time to prepare textbooks in tribal languages thus selected but the ultimate benefit that will accrue to the tribal pupils will far out-weigh the temporary disadvantages due to lack of textbooks.

Even though there is a general dearth of reading material and scarcity of authors who could write books in tribal languages it could be safely recommended that tribal languages should be introduced at least in the primary schools and teaching should be imparted through them. It may not be difficult to write books for the children in their

languages for teaching them up to class II or III. From Class IV onwards they can switch over to the regional language or Hindi as the case may be.

Sociological Aspects of Education

Social factors play important roles in the successful implementation of educational programmes for any society, more so for a tribal society. Tribal people have never been given an equal status by their non-tribal neighbors, and, like the Sudras of the Hindus have been denied the benefit of education. As the tribal societies themselves were and are not stratified in several social strata there was no other basis of division of labour, except sex and age; social status and educational achievements had no part to play. Formal education was not considered necessary for any member to discharge his social responsibilities efficiently. To bring about any change in any field of social or cultural development a society has first to be prepared to accept the change. It goes without saying that education, in whatever form it may be, has got to be disseminated to the tribal people who cannot at this stage understand its benefit. Therefore they cannot go in search of education: education has to be taken to their doors.

There are also instances of barriers, taboos and prejudices against formal education in many tribal societies. It is feared that boys will grow insolent and rebellious and the girls will go astray after receiving education. A certain tribe in north-eastern India could not make any endeavor to teach its children because whatever 'literature' or 'script' the Supreme Being gave the tribe on an animals skin, was devoured out of hunger by an ancestor of the tribe and hence they think it would be impossible for them to learn anything. There are also fears of the educated tribal boys and girls losing their moorings and being cast adrift without any goal. Some tribal societies have shown a weakening of the traditional social institutions after some of their members have been educated and then have started flouting the authority of the village elders. These social barriers and psychological complexes have to be overcome. Here the importance of social education could be emphasized. As already mentioned it is believed in certain quarters that to teach the children we have first to teach the parents. It may not be necessary to teach parents simply because then they could teach their children but for quite different reasons. But how far it is practicable and applicable to the tribal societies is a matter to be decided after due research in this field.

Health and Life Expectation

Introduction

Health is a function, not only of medical care but of the overall integrated development of society-cultural, economic, education, social and political. Each of these aspects has a deep influence on health which in turn influences all these aspects. Hence, it is not possible to raise the health status and quality of life of people unless such efforts are integrated with the wider effort to bring about the overall transformation of a society. Good health and good society go together. This is possible only when supportive services such as nutrition, environment and education reach a higher level.

The common beliefs, customs and practices connected with health and disease have been found to be intimately related to the treatment of disease. It is necessary to make a holistic view of all the cultural dimensions of the health of a community. In most of the tribal communities, there is a wealth of folklore related to health. Documentations of this folklore available in different socio-cultural systems may be very rewarding and could provide a model for appropriate health and sanitary practices in a given eco-system. Maternal and child care is an important aspect of health seeking behavior which is largely neglected among the tribal groups.

Health and treatment are closely interrelated with the environment, particularly the forest ecology. Many tribal groups use different parts of plant not only for the treatment of diseases, but for population control as well. There exists a definite nexus between forests and nutrition. It has been noted by many that tribals living in remote areas have a better overall status and eat a more balanced diet than tribals living in less remote, forest free areas. The mode of utilization of available natural resources often determines the long term impact on health.

Marriage Practices

India is characterized by the process of a large number of endogamous castes, tribes and religious communities with different types of marriage practices.

“Health status of tribal women in India” Status paper for the national workshop held at New Delhi 22 – 23 Dec 1993.

The pattern of marriage in India is largely governed by three important regulations, namely

- a) Endogamy (marrying within the group of birth)
- b) Exogamy (marrying out) and
- c) consanguineous or sapinda marriage.

The regulation of consanguineous marriages does not permit marriage between two individuals related through a common male ancestor up to the seventh generation on the father's side and the fifth on mother's side; there is a greater incidence of consanguineous marriages specially among the population of the southern states, Muslim groups, Parsees and various tribal communities.

In many tribal communities, cross-cousin marriages were preferred and practiced. The system of cross cousin marriage had proved to be beneficial to the females in terms of care and treatment at husband's place. It also avoided high bride price/dowry and maintained the property of the household.

Consanguineous marriages may, however, result in an increased probability of abortions, miscarriages, still births, neo-natal deaths, infant and juvenile deaths physical and mental defects, susceptibility to infectious diseases etc.

In Himalayan region, some of the tribes like Naga, Lusia etc. practised polygamy which was for economic reasons to protect the property and get help in agricultural activities. On the other hand, some of the tribes in India practised polyandry because of less number of women available for marriage. E.g Jaunsaris of Jaunsar-Bawar, Chakrata tehsil, Dehradun, Todas of Niligiri hills. Formerly the Todas practised female infanticide which resulted in less number of girls available for marriage.

Age at marriage

The age at which the girl was given in marriage depended on social values. Among the tribal, virginity was not very much valued. Many of the tribal societies were lax towards pre-marital sex relations which were considered as training in the art of love and sex life and often ended in marriage.

Girls in tribal societies were given in marriage generally after puberty. According to 1971 census at the national level, the age at marriage for tribal women was higher (16.39) than that of the rural women in general. The mean age at marriage of the tribal females in Assam, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Arunachal Pradesh was more than 18 years, the highest being in Nagaland. On the other hand, it was less than 15 years in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, the lowest being in Uttar Pradesh (14.50).

There were a few micro-level studies which dealt with the age at marriage of individual tribes e.g female age at marriage – Ao Naga (16-20 years), Bhil (16 yrs.), Chenchu after puberty, Khasi (13-18 yrs.), Koli (12-16 yrs.), Bodh (19 yrs.), Gond (18yrs.) Munda(18yrs.), Oraon (16 yrs.). Mean age at marriage of Jaunsads was 12.2yrs., Dudh Kharias 21.41 yrs., and Santhals 17.87 yrs.

Jaunsaris of Jaunsar-Bawar, Dehradun were a polyandrous tribe and they followed the custom of child marriage as a part of their cultural behavior which was still prevalent among them. Investigation showed that 33.83 percent of the Jaunsari females got married before or at 8 yrs, 29.70 percent in the age group 9-15 yrs, 30.33 percent in the age group 15-20 years and the remaining 5.6 percent got married above the age of 20 yrs.

Fertility and Mortality

Studies on fertility and mortality trends among the tribal population of India have been found to be fragmentary and isolated. Limited studies are available on infant mortality and hardly any study is available on maternal mortality among the tribal population. However, brief reviews of the available studies are discussed zonewise.

North-East Zone (Arunachal, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura)

A few studies on fertility and mortality of individual tribes besides two studies on tribes in general were available from North-East zone.

On the basis of the census data, Gogoi found that during 1961-71, the rate of growth of tribal population in North-East India was lower than that of the general population. This was mainly because of a very low natural growth rate of the tribal population in the region.

Pandey observed high fertility and mortality in Mishmi tribal groups and attributed it to the low level of education and income, lack of knowledge of family planning method and importance of small family size, poor medical facilities, lack of proper sanitation and drinking water.

Barua studied 196 pregnant women belonging to the Hajong tribe of West Garo hills district of Meghalaya. High infant mortality (18.2%) and prenatal mortality (3.1%) were reported among them.

Das et al. studied two Lepcha villages of northern Sikkim namely Lachen and Lachung and found the total fertility rate for Lachung and Lachen to be 4.66 and 3.79 respectively. The results on total fertility rate were more or less similar to the Indian national population.

Differences between the two were possibly due to the socio-cultural factors. The number of surviving children per women in Lachung and Lachen were found to be 3.70 and 2.65 respectively. The net reproductive index was observed to be 3.6 in Lachung and 1.80 in Lachen.

Northern Zone (Himalayan belt of Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Darjeeling district of West Bengal)

This zone has been better investigated and about 10 studies on individual tribes were available.

Prakash and Malik showed that high altitude Bods had higher fertility than the low altitude Bods. They also had higher mean number of children (4.11 per mother) as compared to the low altitude Bods (3.63 per mother). The altitudinal differences in fertility have been explained in terms of socio-cultural factors such as education,

awareness, urban contact, advancement in medical facilities which were higher at low altitude. The differences have also been accorded to a stronger feeling in the altitude population that children were economic assets.

Kumar and Mitra observed high infant mortality and fertility among 199 Tharu tribal women of Naintal. Despite the availability of modern facilities of treatment, Tharus had their own beliefs and concepts of diseases.

Saxena in his study conducted among the Tharu and Buksa tribes of Uttar Pradesh reported that the Tharu and Buksa couples displayed a high level of fertility which was well reflected to achieve higher order births even at younger ages.

while conducting research investigation on 481 households among the Jaunsaris of Jaunsar Bawar, Dehradun found a crude birth rate of 42.67 per thousand population and infant mortality rate of 79.64 per thousand live births. Polyandry and polygamy were found to co-exist in the study sample. A. Basu found that Lepchas ate fish and a type of tuber viz. Dioscorea, while Sherpas did not eat them. It was observed that dioscorea had a fecundity-inhibiting-function resulting in lower fertility among Lepchas as against Sherpas though both share a similar physical environment.

Central zone (West-Bengal except Darjeeling district. Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Eastern Maharashtra, Orissa and some parts of Andhra Pradesh)

This zone has been investigated quite in depth and mortality rates were available.

Datta reported from her study that Koras, a Scheduled Tribe of Midnapur, West Bengal had a mean of 3.30 surviving children in their completed age of fertility. She found the crude birth rate and total fertility to be 41.81 per 1000 population and 4.42 per 1000 Kora women respectively. These values were relatively higher than the national figures for these measures. However, these values were in agreement with most of the tribal groups in India.

Study among the Toto tribes of West-Bengal conducted by the Demographic Research unit of the Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta revealed the average number of children born to women married for 20 years and over to be 6.9.

Ray and Roth studied the fertility pattern of Juangs of Orissa. It was observed that the marital age specific fertility rate was highest among mothers in the 20-24 year age group whereas it was lowest among the 45-49 year age group. The total marital age-specific fertility rate was 1.157 among the Juang mothers. It was also observed that the index of Overall Fertility and the Index of Martiality among the Juangs were 0.49 and 0.50 respectively.

Basu and Jindal made an indepth study of a primitive tribal group i.e. Kuttia Kondhs of Tumdibandha block of Phulbani district, Orissa. The average age at menarche among Kuttias was found to be 14.5 years. It was observed that the average number of

pregnancies per mother was 5.09 and 3.89 respectively for mothers of completed and incomplete reproductive life cycles.

Infant mortality was found to be very high i.e. 179.75/1000. The fertility record of Kuttia Kondh mothers in various age groups indicated a total fertility of 5.0 estimated from the average fertility of the women in the group 45-49.

Basu and Kshatriya studied the fertility and mortality trends among the Dudh Kharia of Sunderagarh district, Orissa. They reported that the estimated total fertility, crude birth rate, crude death rate and infant mortality rate were 5.39, 38.5, 11.80 and 102.4 respectively. All these demographics showed higher values than the Indian national population level according to the 1981 census were similar to these of the other Indian tribal populations.

Ch. Satish Kumar reported that the average pregnancies per mother and infant mortality rate among the Desia Kondhs of Orissa were 3.89 and 151.28 respectively.

Khan while investigating the Dongria Kondhs of Orissa found average pregnancies per mother and the infant mortality rate as 4.07 and 153.11 respectively.

Choudhary and Kumar estimated the birth rate as 43.5/1000 among the Bhils of Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh.

Sharma & Khan observed that the average fertility rate among Kharwars of Sarjung district (M.P.) was 4.85. The highest reproductive wastage (9.67%) was observed in the age group of 40-44 years and the pre-reproductive mortality was highest (6.84%) among mothers in age group 35-39 years.

Basu and Kshatriya reported the fertility and mortality estimate on the basis of demographic analysis of genealogical data collected from 792 households of the four tribal populations, namely Muria, Maria, Bhatras and Halba from Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh. The results of the study indicated that total fertility rates were 5.64, 6.00, 5.95 and 5.89 respectively for the four groups which were higher than the Madhya Pradesh rural non-tribal population and Indian national population and was in accordance with high fertility levels among the tribal. The study groups showed higher mortality among males than females. A very high rate of infant mortality was observed among Bhatras (148.56) followed by Murias (123.25) whereas Marias (85.44) and Halbas (92.78) from the same area displayed lower IMR.

Western zone (Western Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Dadra, Nagar & Haveli, Goa, Daman & Diu)

Very few tribal studies on fertility and mortality aspects were available in this zone. Most studies (4) showed the general trend of fertility and mortality among the tribes.

Parsuraman and Rajan discussed the estimation of vital rates among the scheduled tribes in Western India. A very high proportion of 0-14 population to the total population indicated a higher level of fertility and not so high mortality.

Parsuraman and Rajan reported that there were significant differences in death rates among the tribal population in different states. It was high in Maharashtra followed by Gujarat.

Sinha reviewed the fertility of tribal groups of Gujarat. M.P. Maharashtra and Rajasthan and found the general marital fertility rate to be 169.4 births / 1000 females against 152.9 births/1000 females.

Southern zone (Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu)

The study of demographic and health determinants of infant deaths by Gurumurthy et al among the Sugali tribal group in the Kalyanadurgam and Beluguppa blocks of Ananthapur district of Andhra Pradesh pointed out that out of 348 infant deaths 45.4 percent were neonatal and 54.6 per cent were post neonatal. About 25 percent infant deaths occurred due to dysentery/diarrhea and 20 percent due to maternal factors such as prematurity, birth injury, multiple birth, low birth weight, birth asphyxia and so on.

The study of Sirahuddin et al. among the Chenchu tribal group of Achampet taluk of Andhra Pradesh found that the average number of surviving offspring per married woman and mortality in relation to live births were 3.67, 2.96 and 27.5 respectively.

Murty and Ramesh also found a high fertility and mortality among the Pardhans of Adilabad district.

M.P.Basu conducted a demographic research work among the Irular of Tamil Nadu and reported the net reproductive index which was also an indication of their fertility as 1.31. It was also reported that mortality according to the age of the child was highest in the first year.

Ghosh while studying the Kota tribe of Nilgiri hills, found that the average number of live births per women aged 40 years or more to be 3.73. Also the frequency or mortality before reproductive age i.e., 15 year was 30.8%. This also revealed a high mortality and fertility among the Kota tribe.

Murty investigated the Soliga tribe in Karnataka in order to find out their fertility behavior. The Crude Birth Rate (CBR), General Fertility Rate (GFR) and Total Fertility Rate (TFR) among the soligas were found to be always higher in comparison to the general population of Karnataka. The unusual high fertility among the Soligas was influenced by their age at marriage which was ultimately influenced by the age at menarche. The mean age at menarche among the Soligas was 13.2 years and the age of marriage was 14.2 years which was very early. Early

age at marriage, and low level of family planning acceptance seemed to be responsible for the high fertility among the Soligas. The completed family size among the Soligas was 5.64.

Island region (Andaman and Nicobar Islands)

Aggarwal found that among 45 ever married Onge women of the Andaman Islands, the mean number of children was 1.64 and the mean number of children per woman was 1.13. Infant mortality was very high as revealed from the reproductive index which was 0.51.

Life expectancy

A general indicator of the health of girl and woman is their life expectancy. The expectation of life is the average number of years remaining to be lived by those surviving to that age. The expectation of life at birth is the life table function most frequently used as an index of the level. It also represents a summarization of the whole series of mortality rates for all ages combined as weighted by the life table stationary population. In those countries where revealed that women put in an average of 14 working hours per day as compared to 9 hours put in by men. Given this additional workload, even women in advanced stages of pregnancy were required to work in the agricultural fields or walk great distances to collect fuel and minor forest produce. The over strain on tribal women grain production. A study among the Pauri Bhuniyas of Orissa showed that 52 women as against 17 men in a sample of 268 persons suffered from diseases related to malnutrition. As a result of deforestation, additional distance and less fertile soil, the availability of food for the tribal family was reduced. This had implication particularly for the housewife who was responsible for the provision and distribution of food, in cases of shortage, she even deprived herself of food in order to feed the others. Studies in this connection have shown that tribal in general were undernourished. For example, a study had shown that over 55 percent of Kondhs consumed less than 2000 calories per requirement of 2400 calories.

To add to the malnutrition and additional workload, there was the destruction of traditional herbs through deforestation and the lack of access of the tribals to modern medicine. This, combined with the increasing ecological imbalances, resulted in diseases such as TB, stomach disorders and Malaria.

Childbearing and maternal mortality

Childbearing imposed additional health needs and problems on women, physically, psychologically and socially. The complications of pregnancy and of childbirth and of illegally induced abortions in areas where environmental and health conditions were adverse resulted in large numbers of female deaths. In India the maternal mortality was around 500 per 100,00 live births, which was about 50 times that in a developed country or in the better off segments of the India society. Poor nutritional status with its concomitant problems of poor body weight, poor weight gain during pregnancy, low hemoglobin levels, was one of the primary underlying causes of maternal mortality in India. More maternal deaths occurred in India in one week than in all of Europe in one year. Generally malnourishment, poor medical facilities and unfavorable social

conditions were the major underlying causes for high maternal mortality in India. Nutritional anemia, a serious problem in pregnancy, affected 50 percent of the women of childbearing age in South East Asia. (Shiva, 1992). The situation was all the more aggravated among women in the tribal belt of India because of the prevailing magic-religious and socio-cultural practices.

Maternal mortality was reported to be high among various tribal groups but no exact data could be collected. The main causes of maternal mortality were found to be unhygienic and primitive practices for parturition. For example, it was observed that among the Kutia Kondhs, the delivery was conducted by the mother herself in a half squatting position holding a rope tied down from the roof of the hut. This helped her in applying pressure to deliver the child. In complicated labour, obviously it might lead to maternal as well as child mortality. Similar crude birth practices were found to exist in other tribal groups like the Kharais, Gonds, Santals, etc.

Maternal and child health care practices

Maternal and child health care practices were found to be largely neglected in various tribal groups (i.e. Baster tribal groups, Kutia Kondhs of Orissa, Santals, Jaunsaris, Kharias etc.) Expectant mothers to a large extent were not inoculated against tetanus. From the inception of pregnancy to its termination, no specific nutritious diet was consumed by women. On the other hand, some pregnant tribal women (i.e. Dudh Kharias, Santals) reduced their food intake because of the fear of recurrent vomiting and also to ensure that the baby may remain small and the delivery may be easier. The consumption of iron, calcium and vitamins during pregnancy was poor. The habit of taking alcohol during pregnancy was found to be common among the tribal women and almost all of them continued their regular activities including hard labour even during advanced pregnancy. More than 90 percent of the deliveries were conducted which resulted in an increased susceptibility to various infections. Services of paramedical staff were secured only in difficult labour cases.

Maternal mortality directly related to pregnancy and childbirth was found to be appreciably high among the tribal population groups of Bastar district. In addition, a lot of females suffered from ill health due to pregnancy and child-birth in the absence of a well-defined concept of health consciousness. As far as child-care was concerned, both rural and tribal illiterate mothers were observed to breastfeed their babies. But, most of them adopted harmful practices like discarding of colostrums. Giving prelacteal feeds, delayed introduction of breast feeding and delayed introduction of complementary feeds. Vaccination and immunization of infants and children were inadequate among tribal groups. In addition, extremes of magical-religious beliefs and taboos aggravated the problems.

Crude Birth & Death Rates

Birth rates among the tribes in India are not too aberrant compared to the national average. The positive aspect to note is the sex-ratio among tribes being in favour of females as noted earlier in this section.

However the death rates have normally been higher among the tribal against national average. This is often due to deaths occurring as a result of epidemics victimizing the tribal, sometimes to the point of extinction depending on how much remote and in isolation they are living.

Tribal Languages



We shall presently understand the variety of tribal languages. But before we start one word of caution. Language conventionally is a term used only for a certain way of communication which has a written script. But most tribal people not only in India throughout the world do not have a written script. But we still use the word languages with respect to many tribals in India, you will presently see why this is being done, because of the richness and the depth of the usage of communication system through this particular dialect that the tribals are communicating not only among themselves and even with the others in the neighbourhood. The major dialects or languages to peg the term, that we have among the tribals in India are Bhili. Bhils are of Rajasthan. Mostly they are in Rajasthan but they are also spread in other parts of the central bed including the western parts of Maharashtra and the western parts of Madhya Pradesh. Ghondi. If some of you have seen prehistoric maps of sub-continent India, you will see parts of the neighbouring islands even right up to Australia included in the land. In fact, originally years and years ago Ghondwana land was identified as encompassing today's southern parts of Madhya Pradesh almost the whole of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, parts of Bengal and down up to Australia. Such was the variety of the people who were living in this Ghondwana land and therefore Ghond language or Ghondi as it is referred to is one of the noted languages among the tribals in India.

Kasi are the people living in the north eastern parts particularly in the sub Himalayan region in Kasi Jayanthia hills. Mundas another language which is very famous, because mundas as a tribal group who also participated in the freedom struggle are one of the most noted tribes not only among Indian tribes, noted even by the people who come to study tribals in India. Bodos living in the north eastern parts are also a very well-known tribals particularly for the use of their language, they are a very, very active and very aggressive people and their language is also used in the same style.

Santhali used by the santhals of west Bengal mostly in west Bengal but also in parts of today's Orissa and Bihar. Santhals have dominated an area which is known as the Santhal region in west Bengal. Historically among the tribals Santhals have a very big, very large, very notable heritage all through the generations especially for fighting out for their rights, whether they are British, whether they are Maharajas or more recently the government – local as well as federal. Garos again living in the Garo hills like the Kasis in the north eastern parts in sub Himalayan region and Karias also are a matriarchal group living in the same area, these languages are also among the noted ones.

Tibeto Burman languages mostly in the north eastern parts, arunachal Pradesh, Assam, having the influence of Tibet from the Northern side and from today's Myanmar from the north eastern side is also a very noted language. South of the vindhyas the Dravidian group spoken by most of the tribals south of the vindhyas in India, they are a very large group of tribal languages. We shall technically get into a linguistic classification.

First the Astro Asiatic under the linguistic classification. Macquire, Kasi and Nicobari, Munda Santhali and Hor Mundari, santhali as well as Mundari. Munda language also referred to as Mundari. Heranti, Karia and the Kanda from the north eastern parts. Again from the north eastern parts Tibeto-chinese.



Influence of the Tibetan language as well as the Chinese language. Siamese Tai, Tibeto-Burman, Himalayan Bhotia. Western sub group chamba, lahol, Kanori. In fact, Kinor are a tribal group who are otherwise well known for some of the other features of their heritage. Lepcha, Toto from sub Himalayan region. Arunachal Aaka, Abhar, Miri, Mishmi, Arunachal Pradesh, the north eastern, northern most part of the north eastern states.

Assam Burmese, Bodo, Garo, Tripura, Nagar. Naga, Bodo, Manipuri, Lushay. All these are languages from the north eastern parts. The largest chunk of the tribal languages

come from the Dravidian family Koravas, Badagas, Thodas, kotas, Aravans, konds, and Ghondi. Indo European Bhili, earlier referred to in the earlier part of this lecture Indo European gets the name, the only one group which had the impact of Europe, thanks to Alexander the great and his influence on the parts of Rajasthan and Haryana.

Let's have an overview of the tribal languages now. Before we get into the actual overview one thing we need to note is the word languages itself as used earlier by us and as used earlier in this lecture whether it can be called a language at all. We will presently see with the overview of the tribal languages, why the term language can be used at all. As was told earlier language is a term used only when there is a written script.



But most of these tribal languages do not have a written script. But you will be surprised to know, some of them had some kind of notations which were recorded even as old as thousands of years ago on palm leaves. So it is interesting to note why some of these languages have become so well-known not only in India, even outside India with people who have come to study the tribals in the Indian sub-continent. Language as such is just a carrier of communication among the people and between the people. How effectively it can be used should be learnt by us only from the tribal people. Because tribal people have limited words. In fact they have a limited vocabulary. But yet they communicate very effectively among themselves using only these small number of words that they may have which completes their entire round of life from birth to death. In fact, it is very interesting for us to analyze some of these better known tribal languages in order to understand on the one hand, the richness of their language within their limitations, yet the impact it can create on the people who hear this language, who deals with them through this way of communication.

Now let us highlight some of the important languages among the tribes in India. Chakma language is the most advanced of the tribal languages. Some old putis are

extinct in this language. One of them Chandiganch, charapala was written on palm leaves.

The Puti reveals that the chakmas originated in Nepal and after roaming about in several south East Asian countries came to old Burma. And Arakans before settling in the Chittagong hill tracks. Their original name was Task. In the Arakani language they were called chak. In the dialect of Chittagong Chamua and in the chakma language chakma. The alphabets of the chakma language are similar to the alphabets of Thailand anumlas, Cambodia, Sam and south Burma. Tara the scripture of the chakmas is written in the Burmese script. When spoken the chakma alphabet has a soft sound and is generally articulated from the bottom of the tongue. It is primarily based on sound and has a Chinese tone. In many respects including philology, prosody, folklore, idioms and phonology it is close to Bangla. All sounds of Bangla language are also available in the chakma language. Efforts are now being made to write the chakma language in the Burmese or Myanmar script. A book on primary reading in chakma has also been published from Rangmati. Its author is Narayan Chakma a tribal himself.

The Garo language is undoubtedly an unwritten language. Albeit an ancient Aryan language. This is a very rich language and full of proverbs, idioms, songs, rhymes, oral narratives, folktales, palagaon etc this language bears most of the history of Garo people and their religious and cultural quotes. Its vocabulary contains words borrowed from many different languages. The syntax, semantics, positions of cases and inflexions, verbs and transformations of words in this language are all very systematic and resemble those of other developed languages. It is likely that this language has a long history. Some believe that the Garo language is a mixed form of Bangla and Assamese as it resembles both languages. Actually it is a primary language.

Kasia language is part of the Astro Asiatic group of languages. In this language the tendency is to pronounce S as H, something also noticeable in some Bangla dialect. It has no alphabets nor is it written. In this language a village is called Punji. The Kasia houses are clustered and that accounts for the name of Punji. Kasia has many dialects, although lingam, Nad, ware are the major ones. Nad means hilly. Lingam is spoken in areas close to the Gharo hills.

The language of Mag people a spoken form of Arkanis. It belongs to the Tibeto Burman family. But also contains some elements of the Astro Asian family. Chinese old Burmese and Mizo languages are related to it. But its closest links are with the Burmese.



Mag is a hybrid of Arkanis and Bangla. Once upon a time repressive Burmese king forced about two thirds of the Arkanese people to flee to the Chittagong region of Bangladesh. The intermixing of two ethnic groups led to the development of Mag language. The influence of Burmese is strong as Burmese was the lingua franca of the Arkan region.

Chinese Alphabet?

There is no such thing as a Chinese alphabet. But, just for fun, we have selected authentic Chinese characters that look something like the letters of the English alphabet. You can use these "letters" to write in code . . . and no one but you and others with the code can read your secrets!

月 A	官 B	匹 C
力 D	三 E	下 F
巨 G	升 H	工 I
丁 J	水 K	心 L

If you want to know what the "alphabet" characters mean, you can visit: <http://goodcharacters.com/chinese-alphabet.html>

冊 M	內 N	口 O
戶 P	己 Q	尺 R
弓 S	七 T	白 U
人 V	山 W	父 X
了 Y	乙 Z	

© 2008 Good Characters, Inc.

The Mag alphabet is known as Jha. Each letter is named after a part of the human body. The letters resemble the pictorial Chinese alphabet.

Manipuri language is about 3500 years old and belong to the Kukis ching group of the Tibeto Burmese stream of the mongoloid family of languages. Up to to the middle of the 19th century this language was known as Maitoi after the name of a tribe. In the original Maitoi there were 18 alphabets all pronounced in accordance with the limbs of a human body. Its alphabets are similar to the Tibetan family. The Manipuri language began to be written in the Bangla script when Vaishnavism assumed the form of the state religion during the days of Maharaja Gharib Nawaz in the 18th century. This trend continues till today. This was made possible because of the phonetic closeness of the two languages.

The Munda language was spoken over a vast region of India and because of this it has numerous regional forms. Nearly 10 million people in areas of south Bihar and Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal speak this language. About 15000 to 20000 Mundas live in Bangladesh. The Munda language evolved amongst the Mundas about 3 to 4 thousand years ago as a Pitkin language to facilitate communication and livelihood between them. Later it spread to other south East Asian countries through agriculture and superior hunting practices. In due course it took the form of an established language until later it became a written language for literature.

Religious Beliefs, Practices and Cultural Traditions



We have analyzed the tribal religion so far. But in more recent times there has been a strong influence of Hindu religion and Hindu pantheon among the tribal gods and goddesses. Not always it is the choice of the tribals themselves. Sometimes it is because of the influence of the Hindu neighbourhood but also because tribals today have not been able to avoid interaction with the non-tribal people around in their everyday life. So the inter communication between the tribals and non-tribals has been strong enough. Particularly after India became independent all these tribal areas were under some name or other made part of the Indian constitution, made part of the Indian country. Therefore the interactions between tribals and non tribals has increased manifold compared to the British times and pre British times. So tribals have come under the influence of Hindu religion. In fact anthropologists use a very interesting term. When Hindus come across the tribal people and experience the kind of religion they have and the kind of gods and goddesses they have, they become interested in some of the practices that the tribals have been successfully following over the generations. Thus, like for instance the Ghonda gods and goddesses have become famous and in fact, in central India part of the Hindu neighborhood have also adopted some of them. In fact, if you take the example of the Sabari movement for instance, many years ago, not more than about 50 years ago, sabari mala was a small hill temple in Kerala. Not many people knew about Aiyappa god.

Now Aiyappa has become universalized. Not only inside India even outside India. So anthropologists use the word universalization. That is god or goddess or a practice which was limited to a certain religion getting enlarge and covering more and more parts of the surrounding areas. The opposite of universalisation is parochialisation. Now the gods and goddesses of the tribal areas, having come across the influence of the Hindu religion, the pantheon, the gods and goddesses, now the god of the tribal people is identified with the Hindu pantheon. So the god becomes Shiva, god becomes an incarnation of Shiva, the goddess becomes the incarnation of Parvathi or Shakthi or the

god becomes an incarnation of Jagannath or Vishnu, Goddess becomes an incarnation of Lakshmi etc.. And of course the tribal people have all been well known for worshipping a rain god but now their rain god is falling in line with the Varuna of the Hindu pantheon. Similarly lakshmi puja is not uncommon among the tribal people who are living in the neighborhood of the people in the non-tribal areas, where Vishnu worship and Lakshmi worship are rampant.

If you see the tribal cultural festivals, there are colourful dances with costumes. The most notable one among this is the Manipuri dance. Having come under the influence of Vaishnavism Manipuri dance is nothing other than the Raas Leela of lord Krishna of the Hindu mythology.



Most songs are tuned however to natural processes and call for bounty. Many rituals of the tribal people they look like they are religious ones, but actually they are so pragmatic, they are always praying for prosperity, for bounty, for good rains, good crops, good prosperity of the animals that they are depending on. Among tribals in general everyone is a musician and a dancer. And the best time to see it is when they are having their annual festivals. Almost every little boy, a teenage boy or a girl, every adult, man and woman is equally conversant with the music and dance which is unique for the particular tribe. The beautiful wall paintings, decorations and crafts also depict the various aspects of the rich and colorful life of tribal people. And most of these wall paintings decorations and crafts also have something to do with the religion of the tribal people. Wall paintings may depict a scene in a particular folk tale or folklore of the tribal people. The decorations made may also indicate their religious beliefs and practices. Embroidery work for which Kadabas and Ghond women are certainly well known among the tribal people in India, their embroidery work is so beautiful, so attractive, so impactful and so intricate, but many of them do indicate their religious beliefs and practices. Bead and lacquer ornaments about which we already talked about, Bhils, the Bhil women, how bedecked they could be in their lacquer based bead ornamentation, how completely dressed they could be in this ornamentation, we have already noted it in an earlier lecture.

Head bands with decorations for dancing, the most dominant ready example is the bison horn Moria dance among the people in Bastar.



Wood carvings, clay figures, earlier we noted that every tribal group is very much adept in making imaginative clay figures and other kinds of handicrafts. In fact, some of the tribes in central belt of India are known for wood carvings. In fact it is hard to believe with their limited technology and limited tools that they are able to produce such beautiful wood carvings in the central belt tribal people, similarly clay figures and some of them even using the smelting of metals make metal figurines, by using different metals.

All these depict the various practices and beliefs that the people have. Tribal people have undergone certainly changes like this due to the influence of the non-tribal people, whether they are Hindus or even Muslims for instance. But closer to the civilized world there is less control now on their tradition. Now more and more tribal people are coming under stronger influence of the non-tribal practices and non-tribal beliefs, non-tribal religious rituals. Hunters and gatherers for instance are most particularly vulnerable. Because government organized settlements are typically larger than natural. Hunters and gatherers we have earlier noted that they have been limited to a particular area and they are not very much exposed to the wider world.

But after the latest legislations about tribal areas which all became government parts of the state, government organized various settlements, especially forest tribes of the hunters for instance, who were moved out, evicted from the forest, they were rehabilitated elsewhere, they came across the people to whom they had not been exposed. In fact, the joke about the tribals is, an average tribal shies away particularly tribal women shy away from the very look of the non-tribal people. They do not want to have any interactions with the non-tribal people. But government organized settlements

are typically much, much larger than their natural habitats whether it is within the forest or within the plain area where they have been living.

Now settlements of gatherers and herders we have seen is now much, much wider and their world is much bigger, more complicated, they are not able to understand even, why only deal with it. Now we must note the role of the missionaries in tribal chain. In fact, right from the pre British times there has been the influence of missionaries. Missionaries who actually came to India to spread the message of Christ as the prince of peace, to message to the tribal people the role of love in everyday life and how people could live more comfortably through the exhibition of love towards each other. They can lead an amicable life but yet there was conversion into Christianity through their efforts. And many average missionaries were very smart in choosing two important aspects of tribal problems, one poverty and another sickness.



In fact tribal people when they are sick many of them do not even know that they are sick. Because tribal people have always lived accepting the nature. Not rebelling against nature. So sickness is also not seen as sickness. This is part of life. You would be surprised to note that many tribal people would not even realize that they are poor. Partly because their world is small, they have a contented life, they have limited wants and poverty is basically something very relative. Only when you compare your own way of life and the standard of living with somebody else you know whether you are rich or poor. So tribal people lived within their own world and even if they were considered poor by the people who were coming from outside, tribal themselves did not realize that they were poor. But however missionaries got into these two declared as the important problems, they tried out helping the tribal people in overcoming their poverty to bring them to better standards of living, similarly cure them of some vital diseases they were dying of without even knowing that it is a disease that they are dying about.

Similarly with all these efforts they were able to convince the tribal people as their own saviors and therefore they were able to take them into confidence and in course of time they could convert them into Christianity.

We have learnt about the various religious practices and beliefs of the tribal people with particular reference to India. We have understood the wide variety of religious practices that the people have. But what is very common for all the practices is the basic belief in a certain super human, super natural, all powerful force that is always there in the background trying to help the human beings live a better life. That is so long as they are propitiating these powers.

So it is the human effort all the time to keep the superhuman powers happy and comfortable and sort of convince them that they are not being taken for granted, so that these super human powers bestow on the human community a better prosperity and a better more comfortable life.



We have also understood in the course of this lecture how tribals have not remained the same and they have undergone changes, whether it is their own choice or the changes have been imposed on them like the government of India or the state government programs after independent India or the work of the missionaries pre British, through British times and even after that bringing about changes in tribal life. Today tribals are in transition. They cannot anymore live in isolation the way they have lived over the generations.

It is proverbially said that if there were no god, man would have created one. Thank god, there is god. Man doesn't have to create. It means there is no human society ever known to us anywhere in the world that does not believe in some super human power or

the other. And tribals are no exception. Tribals have their own religious beliefs and practices and cultural traditions built around their beliefs and practices.

We shall now look into the types of religions practiced by the tribal people in India. Foremost is the simple super naturalism. That means, anything that is super natural, anything that is super human is something to be propitiated, something to be worshiped. Animatism. Animatism basically believes in the soul. There is some soul which makes the human being alive. When the soul goes out of the body human being is declared dead. In fact, there are tribals who believe in minimum two souls in the human body. One is the life soul, another is the ancestral soul. There is a very interesting interpretation based on this. Life soul is what makes the human being alive. Ancestral soul is what is responsible for the continuation of the tradition. This probably explains why many of us dream dead ancestors in our dreams when we sleep through the night. That is because of the ancestral soul which goes out to meet the dead ancestors when we are sleeping. Naturism, there is, part of nature or the whole nature itself is god or goddess depending on what the tribal community believes, whether it believes in female form or the male form.



Manatism. Mana is a very interesting concept of the tribal people. Human beings had to explain, when all human beings live together and every human being is living the same kind of life, eating the same kind of food, living the same style of life, why some people are more powerful, more effective, more energetic than the others.

They believed in mana. Suppose there is a tree, you are planting the trees like all the other saplings. But certain trees bear better results. They bear more fruits. Why? That is because there is mana. If some human being is more powerful than the others, that is because there is mana. There is a certain additional extra power that is prevailing in the body of the person or in the particular item of nature which makes it more powerful.

Bongaism. Bonga is the sun god of the Mundas. Of course solar people, people who worship the solar power are nothing unknown to the world, nothing unknown to Hindus in particular. So Bonga is what is believed by the Mundas as their sun god whom they

worship. Similarly Santhas believe in Takurji. Takurji is a very famous supreme deity for the Santhas. Maranburu the great mountain. Buru actually means the great mountain. Great mountain is the one who takes care of the community, takes care of the tribal people. And the consort of Maran Buru, the great mountain is Jaher iva. The lady of the grove, who takes care of their environs, takes care of their flora and fauna. Nagas have an earthquake god. For everything that happens in Naga life their earthquake god is the most important and powerful. Similarly Kasipanars have a practice of religion very well known, there are no temples. But they are a very religious people. Just imagine you and I, living in the Hindu society without a temple neither at home nor at the community. It is hard to believe but, kasipanars are a highly religious community managing their religious worships and rituals without a temple. Birhor religion. Birhor people always believe in haunting spirits. They are afraid of haunting spirits. That means, anytime they happen to do something dishonest and unfaithful and untruthful, they are worried about a certain spirit which will go into the hiding and haunt them all their lives.

Besides the practice of religion by the people we need to know especially after the arrival of the religious people from the west conversion into Christianity that took place. So religious conversions among the tribals have been very predominant particularly in the north east, the most ready examples are the Nagas who are today the most Christianized, most western educated, so much so, we had very recently a person from the Naga tribes as the speaker of our parliament. Karias of Birhor similarly are also a Christianized lot. Similarly west Bengal's santhals have also undergone Christian conversion. But besides all these practices there are cultural traditions. The best occasion to see the cultural tradition of a particular tribe is to arrive there in the middle of tribe when their annual festival is going on. You will see the entire social organization coming into play, people playing different roles in the organization of their annual festival and the role of language, the practice of rituals and the festivals. Rituals stimulate natural processes.



Now, there is a very interesting practice among certain tribes in the north eastern communities. There they believe when it rains, normally rain is preceded by lot of sound of the thunder. But they do not know where the thunder arises, where the thunder prevails. But all they know is there is a big noise that precedes the rain. So they therefore believe that if a big noise is produced there will be rains.

When there is a paucity of rain what they do, they go in great numbers on top of the mountain depending on their own ability they will choose big rocks and boulders and they roll them down the mountain top. And as the rock rolls down the mountain top lot of noise produced and they believe rain follows this noise.

Rituals of hunting before expedition are very important among the people who are hunters. That is, before they go on a hunting expedition, they all come together and perform a ritual, where whatever they want to hunt is produced in their models there, in the rituals and they produce the effect of hunting the particular animal and they believe it will have a magical effect and their hunting expedition will be successful. Agricultural festivals before plowing, before transplantation, before harvesting, nothing much needs to be told.



We have seen it all in our rural India.

Poverty/Illiteracy



Poverty 1.0

Starting with this episode, the next few episodes, we are going to deal with some of the most widely discussed, debated issues applicable to the tribal people. First term – poverty. Poverty is all said and done an economic concept measurable in terms of monetary parameters. Once this is accepted it becomes a little tricky to apply it in the case of tribal people. for one thing, they are always lived through generations in a non-monetary economy. There is another important dimension with respect to tribal people. Poverty all said and done is a relative concept. People living in the tribes unless they compare themselves after coming into contact with non tribals would not even realize that they are living in condition called poverty. Because they have always lived in the natural environment accepting whatever was available within the environment, within the environment where they were living through generations accepting whatever was there as the naturally given ones. So they would not even think that they were poor unless they compared themselves with things that other people, non-tribals, posses with the thought that they could also be possessing. So therefore the concept of poverty can be applied to the tribal people only in relation to the interactions with the non-tribal people.

Poverty 1.1

I said earlier that poverty as applied to tribal people is a tricky exercise. Unless the tribal people come into contact with the non-tribal people under monetary economy and when they see the non-tribal people possessing certain things which they could consider they could also be possessing in order to maintain a better kind of life they would not realize that they are poor. Because they always lived for generations in the natural environment accepting whatever was available around them as naturally given to them, they would not even realize that they are poor.

When it comes to the tribal people as applicable to the Indian situation there are other related problems that come into picture. Illiteracy- In fact when it comes to the Indian situation you need not separately say who are the poorest people and who are the tribal people. Most poor people are the tribal people in India. When it comes to ethnicity the people who are poor belong to certain ethnic stocks, whether you refer to them as scheduled castes or scheduled tribes. Normally the poorer people are darker in complexion. They are toiling the whole day in the hot sun.



When it comes to religion most tribal people, most poor people are having a single god or a goddess sometimes not even in the human form. Some kind of a symbol, even the totemic pole as I was referring to much earlier could be their god or goddess. When it comes to occupation they are all skilled only in their own lifestyle. Once they are taken out of their tribal situation they could be considered as mostly unskilled. That means only manual labour is usable. If you look at poverty, ill health, indebtedness and unemployment as well as underemployment, all these four aspects form together a vicious circle. We can start within this vicious circle at any point, go round and round and you will find one is feeding the other, poverty feeding to ill health, ill health feeding to indebtedness, indebtedness feeding to unemployment or underemployment and back to poverty. That means within this vicious circle the tribal people go round and round, round and round, caught in this web with no way out. Now indebtedness again is something that tribal people came into in their lives only after they entered the interaction with the non-tribal people. Non-tribal people in perfect contrast to the tribal way of life are living a monetary economy. So when a tribal person comes into contact with a non-tribal person, gets into transactions with the non-tribal person, for the first time he comes into monetary dealings. Not only understanding what exactly it means, he would not know the value of what is being transacted. Because in the non-monetary economy average tribal people have lived with the barter exchange where the value of what is being exchanged is based on the need for it and not on the quality or quantity.

Now, one the tribal people get into the interaction with the non-tribal people the equation is very, very direct which they have never experienced in their lives within the tribal

communities. The irony of tribal existence is that they are living in rich areas, Rich in terms of say, forest products and whatever available in the forest, rich in terms of the minerals that are available. In fact the people living in the forest find that variety of food that they never bothered about much. Now find that they are valuable like sandal wood for instance and Teak for instance People living in the forest areas, the tribals would never visualize the importance of all this unless the non-tribals come into picture.



Think of the tribal people living atop the hills and the mountains which contain lot of ores, minerals and also rocks which some of them are very, very meaningful and very, very important for the non-tribal people like granite for instance. Now, quarrying starts, mining starts. What happens to the tribal people? Tribal people within their limited technology never almost bothered about the value of these things. Now a non-tribal person with advanced technology would always visualize that something is getting wasted. Lot of rich resources available in the middle of which tribal people are living in subsistence economy, they do not know the value of what is lying around.

So the monetary dimension of the non-tribal world drives them into the tribal areas with a kind of an approach of making fuller use of the resources that are available there through mining. Just imagine, through quarrying. Just imagine. How the tribal people are getting affected. What is to be done with the tribal people? Now tribal people become a hindrance for the programs of the non-tribal people whether these non-tribal people are coming in the garb of contractors to the area or they are coming in the garb of government servants, government officials. All of them would regard tribal people as a block, as a hindrance, as a hazard in the program of making very good use of the rich resources available in the area.

Now what happens then when these people come into this area for exploiting the resources that are available in plenty? Something needs to be done. How do you go about it? Either take the tribal people out of the situation, away from there or try to give them some kind of education so that they can realize the value of it. Now that brings us to the most important dimension of tribal life in modern times. That is, the concept of education.



Just imagine the term education which is a very, very broad based concept. Education simply means an all-round development of a human being. Now what has happened in the governmental programs is education is completely equated with literacy.

After all literacy is a very minor part of larger canvas of education. Literacy simply means the ability to read and write a certain language. Just imagine the plight of the tribal people who simply had some kind of a communication system that did not involve written language at all. Now if you want to educate the tribal people how do you go about? We went in most programs in the name of literacy trying to give them the scripts. Just imagine the plight of an adult tribal who has lived all his life till this particular moment using a communicative language which has no script. Now you want to introduce the script. What kind of a script? Whether it has something to do with the communication system that the tribal people have been using or not? It doesn't matter. But we need to put them into this literacy because the system of governance, the system of development and the system of implementing the programs demands that the tribal people come to know some kind of writing, their own concept of functional literacy. People in the tribal areas are made functionally literate in a language which is alien to them. However comparable it is to the communication system they had. Can you imagine the tribal people have lived in such a way including India, many tribals do not have the word in their dialect for future. They do not have the word for tomorrow because they lived all the time in the present. Just imagine such tribal people being introduced to a language in the written form which they did not know anything about.

In fact, it is almost like a rural man say in Tamil Nadu who knows not how to write even Tamil being introduced to English. This was the plight of the adults in the tribal areas when they were introduced into this literacy.



What is the modicum of literacy? Did the tribal people need it? Absolutely not. Tribal people never bothered about it. If probably the tribal people bothered about literacy perhaps they would have developed some kind of script for their own communication. They did not need it. Then who needed the tribal people to be literate? The programmers needed. People implementing the programs needed. The non-tribal people needed. And why did they introduce this? Because, they needed something in black and white for their transactions, something written in black and white by the tribal person under functional literacy which the tribal person did not understand at all. Therefore in its own unique style introduction of literacy has played an additional implement in the hands of the non-tribal people in exploiting the tribal people.

Now look at the other dimension, the paradox of the educated tribals. If a young adult man or women, boy or girl, in the tribal area gets educated, comes up to a certain level of learning the art of reading and writing, the person now starts believing that he or she does not belong to the community. I am different. I am something different. I cannot go back to the tribal community for a life. Now look at the tribal community.

The educated person among themselves who now gets literacy is considered something alien. So this is the paradox of educated tribals. The parents who are illiterate totally, now when their sons and daughters get educated, they are afraid that sooner or later they are going to lose them from their family structure, they are going to lose them from the community. It is a very, very interesting concept, very, very impractically applied in the case of India when it comes to tribals.

But anyway literacy or education is a question that has to be answered. In fact in one word tribal people do not need literacy. They need education. They need to be educated about their rights. They need to be educated as to how to go about solving their unique problems. Particularly after they came into contact with the non tribal people, they need to be educated as to whom to approach for solving their problems. They need to be educated as to their different programs that are available for their own development. Development once again is something very, very foreign for the tribal people. Earlier I said that there are certain tribes even in India who do not have a term in their vocabulary for future and tomorrow. Then where is the question of development? Where is the question of progress? Now all this will have to be put into the minds of the tribal people through education. Not necessarily literacy.

Now come to the most crucial aspect of the different programs that are being implemented in the tribal area. Who owns the programs? Ideally speaking the tribal people in whose name the development programs are being run, they must be owning the program. Absolutely not. It is not how it happens.

Think of the rehabilitate tribals. Now look at the tribals who get evicted from an area where they have been living for generations.



In fact, if you think of the forest based tribals, tribals living on top of hills and mountains, they do not know that there is a world beyond their area of existence. Now they are being rehabilitated. Put into a different area which is foreign to them. Everything around looks new, not necessarily only the people. The whole environment is new. The whole way of interaction is new. And imagine the concept of rehabilitation. If you did deep into the term, the very term can be questioned because no particular human group can be so called rehabilitated with an environment.

Indebtedness, Land alienation, Agrarian Issues



Indebtedness 1.0

Talking about the tribal development programs now appears the most crucial question. Who owns the program? Directly tribal people should be owning the program. Could one say that? In fact, tribals do not know why this so called development programs were drawn up in their name. Forget about their participating in deciding the contents of the program. Obviously one cannot say that tribals own the program.



They are now being rehabilitated. First of all they did not know why they were evicted from their original habitat at all. They had no decision in this. Perhaps it came imposed on them. They did not even understand why they were being shifted, they didn't know where they will be shifted and what is being done in the development of their own group. Hard to believe. Hard to accept. Hard to understand.

If you think of yourself as a tribal adult, you just do not know what is happening around. And the entire group is now evicted from the forest area or the mining area into a so called rehabilitation camp.

Now dig deep into the term rehabilitation. You find it difficult to believe that this is rehabilitation, because the word rehabilitation is from the root habitat. Can you imagine that a tribal group which is evicted from a certain original area of their residence, they can be recreated into a real habitat in the so called rehabilitation camp? Rehabilitation camp is just a place where they wanted to accommodate the tribals who are evicted from their original area of habitat. Now what happens in this rehabilitated area? It's a entirely new world for the tribal people.



Forget about the people, non-tribals, who are new. Non-tribals in the form of contractors, non-tribals in the form of people manning the government machinery, in fact even the non-government organization's machinery, everybody is new. The whole world is new. What is being transacted is new.

Now, ultimately come to think of the so called the tribal school. Do the tribal people own the tribal school? They don't know what for it is started. They are being asked to go to the school. They don't know why they have to learn. Why they have to become literate. They do not understand. And adult people among the tribals will have to be made literate just because the governmental machinery needs some records for what is being done.

Now come to think of this tribal schools which tribals do not understand have been started for their sake, in the name of their development and therefore many of them find it impossible to use this system. In fact the corruption that takes over in the whole situation now makes it difficult for an average tribal parent to put the son or daughter in the school unless something is spent. Now, think of what is being spent. For the tribal people who had no monetary economy in their existence in their own tribal style now come into touch with the non-tribal people, for everything they have to shell out something on the form. There is so much of wastage of tribal schools. In fact many tribal

schools which have been started, for namesake there is on the list certain names of tribal people much of it being cornered by the non-tribal people in the rural neighborhood.

Now in this episode we have tried to understand special problems of tribal people. Particularly the most widely debated problems, that is, poverty and illiteracy. Now think of poverty... so long as poverty is accepted as a monetary concept it becomes difficult to be understood and be applied in the case of tribals because they have lived for generations in a non-monetary economy. They did not even realize that they were so far living in poverty unless the non tribals pointed out certain aspects of economic terms as per which they could be declared as poor. Otherwise tribal people lived accepting whatever was there in the environment as what is naturally given to them.

And come to think of literacy and education, we wanted to make them literate, whereas these people all through generations had lived without using any kind of a script for their communication system.



If they have to be made literate it is not for the sake of tribals themselves. It is for the sake of the non tribals who are dealing with them in so called modern terms in the so called development and progress framework which itself is something new for an average tribal.

So there is so much that has been happening in the name of tribal development. Forget about tribals participating meaningfully in this, they do not even understand what is happening in their world.

Indebtedness 1.1

In the previous episode we started off with some of the noted problems with respect to the tribals which are widely discussed and debated. We learnt about poverty and its implications for tribal life. We now take up indebtedness. All in one word. Indebtedness

is a new word for tribal people because indebtedness is basically in terms of monetary economy.



And we already know that an average tribal people lived in a non-monetary economy. So indebtedness or anything to do with monetary transactions is an entirely new word for the tribal people. Indebtedness came in two forms. When these tribal people got evicted from their original habitat and were rehabilitated, they were brought to an entirely new world in direct interaction with the non-tribal people. The other way indebtedness came into the lives of the tribal people was when non-tribal people were given the liberty to enter into the tribal areas for dealing with the resources in the tribal areas in the form of contractors. They brought the tribal people into various kinds of transactions and before they could realize the tribal people became indebted to the non-tribal people. Much of it was in the form of their land ownership. They already know that individual land ownership was something alien to the tribal people in their style of life. And thanks to the development programs which also brought in the concept of individual property the first thing that happened in the realm of indebtedness to the tribal people was in the form of losing their land whether they were owning it at the family level or the community level. Now land alienation has been one of the very, very crucial processes through which the tribal people have been.

Indebtedness 1.2

Land alienation has been one of the most crucial agrarian issues haunting the tribal world. Tribal people who as we say earlier, were not very comfortable with the idea of owning lands at the individual level. In fact land ownership was at the community level, clan level and the lowest was family level. Individual ownership was totally unknown to them. And only the development programs brought for the first time into picture in the tribal world the concept of owning the lands at the individual level.



And they got alienated before they realized that they were getting alienated. For one thing, the individual ownership of property brought into focus the use of the written word as a record of ownership which was totally unknown to the tribal people. So they got alienated from their lands before they could realize that they were getting alienated. They got indebted to the non-tribal people in some fashion or the other, to a smaller or greater extent before they could realize that they were getting indebted.

Now what are the measures needed in order to control this problem of indebtedness among the tribal people? One is prevention. Earlier it was tried that non-tribal people could not go into the tribal areas at all.

Probably that was the good beginning. But later on development programs could not stop non-tribal people going into the tribal areas particularly after many of the tribals had to be evicted from their original habitat. So it became difficult to prevent. But prevention is one of the measures needed. Only when non-tribal people and tribal people come into regular interaction with each other anything like indebtedness or exploitation can take place. But wherever possible government should take measures in order to prevent.

Another is protect. Have certain kinds of laws which protect the tribal people from getting exploited monetarily dragging them on to indebtedness especially whenever they come across the non-tribal people in their regular transaction. Lot of measures were taken in the form of micro credit facilities for the tribal people so that they could go into an entrepreneurship, they could have their own efforts in order to improve themselves.



But then we already learnt that the concept of development, progress was not in the vocabulary of the tribal people at all. Therefore, whatever was done in the name of providing credit facilities additional measures taken in order to help these tribal people could not bear too much of fruit because of the non-understanding among the tribal people of whatever was happening in the name of transactions with the non tribal people.

Non-tribal people came not only in the form of contractors. They came as part of the machinery of governmental agencies as well as non-governmental agencies.

Now one way of trying to sort out this problem is the spread of banking facilities for the tribal people. It is a very, very quixotic situation for the tribal people. It is good to hear that you spread the banking facilities and provide the banking facilities to the tribal people even exclusively.



But then what happens? Again banks depend on literacy. And the extent to which the system depends on literacy tribal people very soon become victims of the machinations of the people who have learnt better, who can use the written word better more

efficiently in a very manipulative manner. Therefore even banking facilities and expanding them in tribal areas was not of much help for the tribal people.

Now take up the issue of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship again for people who simply didn't have the term development and progress in their vocabulary was a totally new word. The very idea of thinking of something new. Now thinking of something new presupposes that you are creative, you are imaginative. And for tribal people who just lived from day to day, the idea of tomorrow, idea of future, imaginative thinking was limited to their crafts. But not to their enterprise in order to develop themselves economically.

Therefore again those who were put under the entrepreneurship training programs fell into the hands of the non-tribal people who are always adept at taking the tribal people for a ride, for better benefits for themselves.

Now legislation. There were lot of legislations in order to deal with the problems of the tribal people, but we know too well, not only tribals, even in general in India that legislations by itself cannot bring up any kind of change. Legislations of whatever kind is to be accompanied by a social kind of movement among the people who are dealing with the tribals. Same thing happened. We provided legal aid. Even legal aid had to be given to the people, legal aid provisions had to be told to the people, by themselves tribal people would not have approached any legal aid agency for getting redressal from their problems.



Then it brings us to creating an awareness and educating the tribals. Another important aspect that has been haunting the tribal world in more recent times is bonded labor. And tribal people very easily get into the bondage. After all, they know only hard work and almost nothing else. Very naïve people. Very simplistic people.

They are just carrying out their day to day activities without even realizing whether they are getting any benefit out and out of what they do. Now look into the creditor debtor relationship that gets built up between the tribals and non-tribal people. Earlier we said land ownership or whatever is owned has been only at the community level, clan level or family level. Now that, what happens, an individual goes into some kind of debt. For how long indebtedness? It takes over. The non-tribal person takes over the individual

for manipulation. Does it end with the individual? Absolutely not. It may spread over to the family. Because the husband got into the indebtedness with a non-tribal person, non-tribal manipulator now takes over the family. The wife starts working in order to clear the indebtedness. The children start working. How long? Don't know. It is left totally open. The duration for which they will remain indebted could be infinite. Terms? Terms are not specified at all. After all tribal people are traditionally used to conventional way of dealing with things. Terms are not always purely economic. Therefore, the family of the tribal people may come under a whole variety of exploitation, not always economic in order to save themselves from the problem of indebtedness.

Now the concept of the adverse, often illegal ones, do not know when a non-tribal person deals with a tribal person and exploits the tribal person, it often becomes difficult for the tribal person to draw the line between what is legal and what is illegal. What is acceptable and what is not acceptable, because the tribal people by their very nature are quite used to conventional way of doing things. So therefore, they are so used to the customary way of doing things, they will easily accept that the entire family goes into bondage because of the indebtedness of one person in the family. Normally it is the man. It could also be the woman.

So the entire family goes into bondage because of this indebtedness.



Now, what are the causes of this bonded labor? In the agricultural sector, the main cause has been land alienation. Some of these tribal people are given to various kinds of pastimes like gambling. In fact, one of the reasons often quoted for land alienation is that the man in the family goes in for gambling pledging the pieces of land and ultimately gets alienated from the land. But then all interactions with the tribal people are always lurking in the corner, the danger of getting into indebtedness.

Indebtedness 1.4

One crucial aspect with respect to alienation is the common property resources. In fact the tribal people have been using all that is available within their own habitat very freely. In fact the idea of common property resources is something new. Without their

knowledge they were using. But the concept itself is new. But what happens in the name of development and change in the tribal areas is, it is the very common property resources that will be exploited in the name of development and progress.

Therefore, what happens in the wake of a development program in the tribal area an average tribal now finds it difficult to have access to common property resources which he has always used without any kind of hindrance or hazard. So denial of access to common property resources becomes a very serious problem in the name of tribal development so far as an average tribal member in a tribe is concerned.

Now look at the socio economic dominance of groups. What happens in the tribal life, there has been no dominance as such. People worked, worked and worked. Whatever was the product there was no control over that as such in terms of the monetary parameter of measuring what they were doing. In fact there was no hierarchy; there was no leadership except for the tribal chief. They would work and handover a certain part as a tribute to the tribal leader. Now dominant groups come into picture in the wake of tribal development. Now after all we know in any society during the changing time the smarter ones take over the changed situation. Smarter ones take over the possibilities of progress and development in the changed situation. This is what exactly happened. And obviously smarter ones were not always among the tribal people. In any development program demanding change in the existing situation it was the non-tribal almost as a rule who took over the changing factors which were contributing to betterment of conditions and they took control of such factors.

Now changing labour requirements. Now the problem for the tribal people when they go to rehabilitation area, not always labor market is providing them opportunities to make a living.



It depends on the seasons. So therefore it depends on where they are rehabilitated. So, changing labour requirements have also been responsible for changing the lifestyle of the tribal people without their own knowledge. Actually they became victims of this rather than the leaders in this kind of a changed situation. But then the weakness of the tribal people to spend on social rituals and of course on treatment for illness, all these made in the absence of provisions for meeting these expenditure, this made them go

differently into deeper and deeper bondage under the non-tribal people. One of the most ready examples is brick kilns. The tribal people who work in the brick kilns, invariably one will find, in the brick kilns the owner is not always around. It is the middle men who manage the whole situation. After all the middle men wants to make better use of available finance in the whole enterprise. And ultimately it results in manipulating the payments to the poor tribal people who work in the brick kilns either through part payment or weekly payment or making a bulk payment once in a way or making mostly monthly payments.

But the worst payment arrangement for the tribal people involved in these brick kilns has been that for their own urgent needs they take advance money and you find them working for weeks and weeks without getting any money, being told by these people who are the middle men in the whole arrangement that they are only repaying the advance that they have got. After all being new to monetary economy they are not able to get an exact measure of how much they have worked for, what is being accounted for in terms of money and payment. Now all of these are leading them deeper into bondage. It is a very direct equation. Poorer are the people, deeper they go into bondage. And deeper they go into bondage poorer they become.

Another important dimension in which the tribal people have gone into lot of indebtedness is stone quarries. Now just imagine. The brick kilns in the land area, on the plain area. Stone quarries on the mountains and hills where there are precious rocks that are available for quarrying. And miners and crushers, tribal people come to work. After all, you need local people, localized labour for the hard work. And an average tribe is known for hard work. An average tribal adult, man or woman does not shirk away from hard work. It is almost the only thing that they have known because of living in such areas all their life over the generations. So therefore what happens is, the local labor is used and again they are not paid very regularly. This has expanded to other areas like the examples from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. People work in power looms and hand looms. They also undergo lot of exploitation. They work and work. In fact they work long hours not limited to the factory rules of 8 hours duration and all that. They could work much longer and not getting paid very regularly. This is again another kind of exploitation that these people are going into.

Every little thing that they get into, in the hands of the non tribals ultimately sooner or later leads to some kind of indebtedness or the other. But the most interesting thing that happens in this field is the capital and the material may not sometimes be invested by the people who are localized.



The owner who invests money could be elsewhere. Not only in the near town. It could be even in a different state of India. And the people who are operating, naturally they want to make the best of it in the absence of the person who has invested money and material in running the enterprise. And everything ultimately boils down to exploiting the tribal people more and more.

Now look at the land alienation issue. Why does this happen at all? Why do people go into land alienation? What are the causes behind all this? Ownership types as I said much earlier tribal people had only known community based ownership and lower level clan based ownership and the lowest level family based ownership. Individual ownership of anything that is in their habitat was almost totally unknown to the tribal people.

Therefore, when in the name of development programs individual ownership of land comes into being and non-tribal people come on to the picture the entire balance of their ownership of their habitat is totally disturbed and the tribal people are completely confused in the whole situation. And look at the forms of alienation. Manipulation of land records, everything now depends on literacy and tribal people are not quite known to it, in fact they are not quite comfortable with it because writing has not been part of their life for generations. So therefore, land records are manipulated. Leasing and mortgaging manipulated. And poor tribal people do not know where they put in their thumb impression they do not know what for they are doing it. So they raise loans for different reasons and then get into indebtedness.

Slackness in implementation of programs has also been responsible. Policy intervention is needed. But then you do not know how the intervention takes place, who comes into picture, who is manipulating what? In fact when a tribal person comes across a non-tribal person whether as a contractor or as a government servant involved in implementation of programs, poor tribal person does not know who is honest and who is manipulating because lot of things happen which are beyond the comprehension of the average tribal person. Forest policy has been very, very crucial in terms of posing problems for the tribal people. We have known till now that forest dwellers tribal people have depended on whatever was available in the forest. They have happily lived with whatever was available. No one to question what they use and what they don't use. But,

the forest policy under which the forest become the government property, these people suddenly become aliens in the forest where they have lived without knowing there is a world beyond.

Suddenly forest policy makes it that this is government property, so therefore they have to be moved out. Now forest dependency for tribal people who have always lived in the forest has been so complete when they are taken out of the forest they simply do not know whatever has been happening in their lives in the name of development and change.

Colonial policy has been very, very destructive so far as the people are concerned. But then, they still had the right to live in the forest and use the forest products. But post-colonial after India became independent there has been development induced displacement. Just now we said that forest becomes government property so forest tribes are evicted from the forest and they simply don't know what to do beyond that because they have known no other world. Now, development induced displacement, a very interesting thing that is happening, affecting the tribal people very, very negatively. Development induced – what a misnomer. It is done in the name of larger development. But, why tribal people have to be evicted from this particular area? Tribal people do not know. Now agrarian issues – what happens? Shifting cultivation, they are not allowed to move from place to place as easily as they have been doing. Think of the forest where tribal people have been living. Deforestation. An average tribal has never known doing anything negative to the forest that he has been living there. Now if deforestation takes place by the tribals it is only because non tribals are putting them into deforestation. Tribals left to themselves, would not get into deforestation at all.

We have analyzed so far the ways and means in which the tribal people have gone into indebtedness, have gone into different forms of exploitation by the people who do not belong to them at all. The non tribals whether they come in the garb of contractors dealing with the programs or in the garb of different levels of government officials, whoever dealt with the tribal people in the name of development and progress always tried to keep the balance in his or her favor from outside the tribal area rather than with the genuine interest of helping the tribal people sort out their problems and lead a better life.

Exploitation and other Problems



In the last two episodes we referred to exploitation of tribals in an indirect way intermittently. In this episode we shall dwell with the issue of exploitation more directly and also look into other related problems. When we think of exploitation of tribals story goes to the first ever time tribal people came across the non-tribal world i.e., in touch with the so called civilized world and the so called the civilized people. The story of exploitation starts from that moment onwards for any particular tribe in India in fact, anywhere else in the world. But particularly in India the exploitation tendencies have been very fast, very quick and very varied by the non-tribal people with whom the tribal people came into contact. Gullibility and naivety, simplicity of the tribal people on the one hand and the craftiness and greediness to make a fast buck and easy money among the non tribals on the other hand is a perfect combination for the exploitation of the tribal people.

There came missionaries later on with the zeal and commitment to help the needy people everywhere in the world. They came to India. They came from the west. They came from the European countries, they came from America. They dealt with the tribals and their problems. Very meaningfully they chose the important issues haunting the tribal people, poverty on the one hand and diseases on the other hand.

Poverty as we dealt with earlier tribal people never realized that they were poor.



But the western people coming from the materialistic world could easily define that it is poverty that the tribal people are basically suffering from and then sickness. No doubt missionaries have done yeoman service so far as the tribal people are concerned with respect to their poor living conditions as well as sickly and deadly diseases that they were suffering from. But yet, underhand, underlying was the zeal of converting them. When it comes to conversion from the original religion to Christian religion, we do not know whether this was a positive effect on the tribal people or a negative effect. But somehow this happened. Service motives of the people who were involved in this service to the tribal people cannot be questioned at all. It was very committed and it was very badly needed for the tribal people.

When it comes to exploitation the impact of missionaries cannot be directly referred to as exploitation because the zeal and commitment with which they came into the tribal world, to sort out the problems of poverty and diseases that the tribal people were suffering from, the term exploitation cannot be used at all. Because, it was real, meaningful, committed, compassionate service that these people employed in order to deal with the problems of the tribals. But yet underhand there was involvement of religious conversion.

Religious conversion we cannot say whether it could be taken as positive or negative, because, they have both dimensions.



Religious conversion sometimes made tribal people in the neighborhood belonging to different tribes also come together sometimes. May be that was the positive side. But negative side Christianity into which the tribal people converted brought out two things. One was a reluctance to accept their own traditional ways and values as any more meaningful now after conversion. And number two whether Christian conversion made them move away from the larger society of India, we do not know. When we pay the price later on we may probably realize. But yet in some sense this was exploitation. And then of course nobody can forget the amount of exploitation tribal people have undergone under the British rule. We know the very name British rule when they decided to rule. And ruling the tribal people was probably the easiest thing for them. And the British rule exploitation of the tribals came in two different ways. One was the more dangerous one. That is, direct exploitation in terms of labour using them on their plantations to work. Very soon the British people realized the amount of effort and hard work an average tribal labourer would put in for the same duration of time per day was incomparably more than any other labour they could have from outside the tribal world including part of the imported labour that they had, for whom they had to pay higher wages.

In fact, taking in lower level of nutritional intake an average labourer was able to produce much more work during a given period than the other kinds of labourers. The other way that British rule exploited was levy of taxes. Sometimes it would be suddenly doubled and tripled. That was the kind of exploitation the tribal people had to pay for the imposition of taxes by the British rule. For the land that they don't know why they were paying taxes at all because they had always lived on that land, they had always felt conventionally that they were the owners of the land and the land belong to them. Why they had to pay taxes on this land was never understood by the tribal people. Then came independence. After India became independent entirely different vistas opened in the life of the tribals. Again in the name of development lot of things started happening in the tribal area.

Sal leaf policy leaves tribals high and dry

By RATAN PANI

Gurundia, Aug 9: Tulsi Oram (32) ventures out to the forest early in the morning with her child. Trekking the mountainous path she reaches her destination after about 5 hours. Making her kid comfortable in the shade of a tree, she goes about collecting sal leaves. And the entire day's back-breaking toil in the deep forest fetches her a meagre Rs. 10 to 20 that the Mahajan pays her.

Tulsi is one of the millions of tribals whose major source of income in a year comes from sal tree. Though the sal leaf business involves crores of rupees, lack of a farsighted government policy has landed these tribals in

a lurch while the middlemen continue to prosper.

Undivided Madhya Pradesh has the highest area covered by sal forest followed by undivided Bihar and Orissa. Besides being used as timber, sal trees have multifarious uses. From its bark, white thick resin is extracted that has medicinal properties besides being used as incense in religious ceremonies. Its seeds are used to extract oil while the sal leaves are used for making eco-friendly cups and plates.

It is estimated that the annual business in sal leaf alone (in ab-

sence of government figures) is worth a staggering Rs. 1,095 crore in Orissa - bigger than most industrial sectors in the state. The turnover is almost doubled to Rs. 2096 crore at the retail

return, the poor and landless tribals are engaged in it in the absence of lack of alternatives. It acts as an insurance against drought and has the potential to provide employment to 50 lakh people for at least 100 days in a year in the entire state besides earning revenue for the exchequer.

Lack of a far-sighted Govt policy has landed the sal traders in the lurch while middlemen continue to prosper

end after inclusion of distribution cost and retailers' margin.

But, profit eludes the primary collectors. Mostly women members and children are engaged in this economic activity and male members join them during off-agriculture period. Despite the low

ade being so substantial and its social dimension so critical, a series of government decisions over the last few years has taken its toll on the trade.

Contrary to the observation of the state government, primary collectors believe that sal leaf col-

lection has been preventing deforestation. Daily visits to the forest keep away timber mafia besides acting as a cleaning and thinning operation necessary to keep sal forest healthy. If the government decides to stop sal leaf collection on the ground of unsustainable method of collection, it will be replaced by felling of tree, they observe.

While the government policy on sal leaf collection is mired in controversy, its decision to impose sales tax on sal leaf products has frittered away the potentiality of Orissa to have monopoly in the trade. In the process, it has also been threatening the meagre living the tribals make from forest produce.

Tribal people could not realize why certain things were being done in their lives by the government all in the name of their own welfare, development and progress. Very soon with so much of money coming in as we understood earlier, there was very little time, lot of things had to be done in order to bring about change in the life of the people in the tribal areas. And the local governments and the central government got into the act very fast. Sometimes the development programs had been drafted very quickly, very fast without going into much details.

Therefore the administrators who got involved were not quite serious about some of the implementations may be out of lack of understanding of the spirit behind the development program or because there was more money than what was needed for a meaningful implementation of the program. There was certain amount of indifference among the administrators in implementing the programs. And then particularly forest tribals had to face very harsh situations. In fact the forest laws that were implemented in the forest areas starting from the very first definition that from now on after independent India, the forest are government property. Therefore the forest laws were made in order to help the forest as owned by the government rather than for the people, the tribals who were living in the forest areas. In that sense forest laws were not made for the tribal people as if they were made against the tribal people.

An uncertain future awaits settlers

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

For anyone passing along the ghat road to Paderu from Visakhapatnam, the tiny village of Vankachinta in one of the many valleys of the hills that form part of the Eastern Ghats is what picture post-cards are made of.

But the reality for the 38 families of the Nooka Dora community that live here is quite different. For Vankachinta is an "illegal" settlement — a village that does not find place on the map of the forest department.

The residents have been sold many times to stop cultivating the cleared area of the forest around their village. Vankachinta is one of the 18 such villages in Paderu mandal of Visakhapatnam district.

"We have been here for the past 50 years," Kora Somulu, one of the oldest inhabitants of the village, says.

One of the settlers from Orissa, Somulu, who came to the area along with others in search of livelihood, says, "We first began by cutting bamboo for the forest depart-



A view of some of the houses in the village. Most of the hillside has been cleared by villagers for undertaking Podu (shifting) agriculture.

ment and slowly settled down." Over the years, Somulu and others have cleared part of the forest and planted various crops and built pucca houses.

"The forest department wants us to leave," says Kotana, another resident, cheekily called "adhikari" (village officer) by other residents. "So, we said we do not mind provided the department gives us alternate land

and plant all the trees we planted here as part of the Vana Samrakshana Samiti programme," he says.

Vankachinta, though an illegal village, was allotted a VSS in 1985 by the forest department as part of the joint forest management programme in the hope that the highly damaging Podu (shifting) cultivation would end in the area.

While there is no new Podu

around Vankachinta, the old Podu land continues to be cultivated, much to the chagrin of the forest department.

Even more curious is the complete confusion between various government departments with settlements of this nature.

While the forest department wants the people to leave, stop cultivation and plant trees in the Podu area, the Eastern Power Distribution Company Limited two months ago laid power lines to the village.

The education department has a school building and posted two teachers for the 18 children of Vankachinta. Now the villagers are planning to ask for a cement road over the one km stretch that connects it to the highway.

And the AP Forest Development Corporation has provided the villagers coffee plants to be planted this year.

"Where do we go after all this," asks Potiraju, another resident, "unless equal facilities are provided for at an alternate site."

Now there is a lack of legislation also in handling the problems of land alienation. In fact, land alienation went on rampantly by the non-tribals in the tribal areas because development programs allowed for the first time free entry of all kinds of non-tribals into the tribal areas. Given the gullibility of the tribal people it was very easy for the crafty non-tribals to handle the situation in their own favour. And initially laws against alienation were very loose. They were not very strict.

The tribal people who got into financial problems found credit not easily coming. There was a total lack of credit facilities. And for people who had not known monetary economy at all during the generations they have lived in their own regions understanding of credit facilities were not easy for the tribal people. So therefore they did not even realize that there was lack of credit facilities. Because they were not well informed about the difference sources from where they could get credit.

Well then, using the opportunity, there were measures taken by the government but very ineffective. In fact, if we think of the biggest of the problems that the tribal people faced, especially the forest tribals who were evicted from the forest and measures taken to rehabilitate them were not sufficient at all for the enormity of the situation. Whether the planners and implementers understood the enormities of the situation at all is again questionable because for an average tribal who has been asked to move out of the forest the only world that the tribal knew all his existence, what it means to get rehabilitated, asked to move away from the forest and then live in a place which is totally different, totally new in every sense of the term. And again in formulating the programs of development and welfare there were involvement by the government officials. They got involved, it was implemented, but there was always the perfunctory

way of functioning by the government people who did not get into the spirit behind the programs and there was always some kind of a delay or the other in the implementation of the programs itself. It is not that we did not have people who went into the problems. There were teams who were asked to go into the details. Analyze the situation and make recommendations. And again bureaucracy came in the way and implementation of recommendations were always retarded and were always slow and were always inadequate. And even in this implementation there were certain varieties of discrimination in implementing it depending on the people who were to receive this. It is very questionable to look into how under democracy tribal development started taking place.

Exploitation 1.1

As I mentioned earlier for the tribal people who went through the process of despoliation, exploitation by the civilized world, the continuity under Indian democracy was nothing new. Because for them the entire set of forces that were exploiting them continued to exist. Nothing seemed to vanish from the middle of their way of life as things started changing around them and demanding changes in their life style. And first of all they did not realize at all why changes were needed in their lifestyle because they had no role in deciding why the change should be made at all. All programs were drawn outside of the tribal world miles and miles away in the state and the central capitals and people in the tribal world did not know at all why certain things were necessary at all.

Therefore when Indian government and provincial government started implementing the so called development programs and welfare programs for the tribals balance had to be maintained. What kind of balance? We meant balance has to be maintained between the kind of life the tribals have been living so far and the kind of life that they were supposed to change? No. it was a different kind of a balance. The people whether they belong to the voluntary sector or even missionaries and the government, whenever they came into touch with the tribal people in order to bring about change in them they maintained a balance. A peculiar kind of a balance. The interactional framework maintained the balance basically in favour of the non-tribals rather than the tribals themselves. Irrespective of whether they were government servants or the voluntary agency people or even for that matter the missionaries.

For instance the government people always wanted to have facilities for a meaningful life as government servants.



So a government servant would not be ready to live in the tribal area for the welfare of the tribal people. He would have a more comfortable life. Come to think of it, even missionaries working in the tribal areas would always have their own headquarters in one part of the tribal world where certain minimum facilities for civic life were available. They would not certainly choose the most backward part of the tribal world for them to exist. That means, whoever came into contact with the tribal people in the name of welfare or development programs always chose to keep the balance in one's own favor rather than the favor of the tribal people.

Exploitation 1.2

As I mentioned earlier because the development programs were drawn away from the tribal world, tribals themselves did not know why certain things are being done, therefore whatever they were asked to do, whatever was given to them as benefit was unasked for. So very ungrudgingly they just accepted what was given to them. But then they did not realize at all perhaps even to this day, the tribals did not realize at all the amount of prize they have paid for what they have accepted in the name of development and progress of themselves. However the rudest shock historically in the tribal world came to the forest dwelling tribals when they were asked to leave the forest. As I have been repeatedly telling the only world the tribal people ever knew. In fact an average tribal living in the forest simply did not know or simply did not bother whether there was a world outside the boundaries of the forest. When they are asked to move out, in fact not being able to understand why they have to leave the forest at all and come to think of it being rehabilitated in an open area in the plains away from the forest, a totally different world. Everything around is new and they have to manage their life over there.



For an average tribal therefore development in the shortest definition meant disturbance in life. A total change in life. I do not know whether an average tribal would accept it as development at all, if an average tribal ever understood the very meaning of the word development.

The greatest irony that happened in all these processes is that the governor of an area had full powers. Whenever the governor came to know of exploitation of tribals, in what manner whatever it was, governor had been empowered to take even draconian measures in order to ensure the safety of the tribals. There is no history in post independent India of any governor who used this enormous power in the name of tribal welfare. Every governor only towed the line of which ever was the government that was ruling in that particular area.

Therefore for an average tribal independence meant a mixed bag. What is mixed? Lot of things being given unasked for. Some of them probably were not quite needed for their everyday comfortable life. But things were given unasked for, they received it. In any tribal area, in the name of development, whether it is forest, mining and collieries. Independence therefore meant for an average tribal a total mixed bag. Mixed bag in the sense lot of things started coming in the name of benefits unasked for. Gratis, they were happy to receive although some of them may not be needed for their everyday life at all and they never thought they would need it for their everyday life. So the other side of it was lot of things started happening in the tribal area. Right in front of their eyes and under their noses, but they would not get the benefits. They would not get the benefit of what came out of the efforts in the name of development in tribal areas. On the other hand they lost their freedom. They lost the only world that they knew in which they were happily moving around for generations totally unquestioned.



But then the so called development program and welfare programs of the government brought in a lot of questions. If you think of an average tribal there were whole lot of questions but not many answers coming around.

Big dams, take for instance. Tribal people did not know they were supposed to be living in an area which is supposed to be the catchment area for building a dam. So they had to be evicted. They simply didn't know why they were being evicted. And after all we know when a big dam is constructed tribals do not get any benefit at all. Some small mercies, some compensation was given for evicting them from that area, compensation that came too little and came too late. Therefore migration began. Tribals started migrating to some neighboring areas, sometimes voluntarily, sometimes perforce. Migrant tribals entered a new world, new economy, new kinds of people and new kinds of interactions and simply they didn't know what was happening in their lives. Very particularly women migrants. Women migrants compared to migrants among the tribals in general came under a whole variety of exploitation.



You need not start listing. We know what it means when gullible and simple tribals become migrants in a new world right in the palms of the greedy people in the civilized world, what kinds of exploitation could take place, need not be listed.

So far in this episode we have tried to understand a whole variety of exploitation tendencies that the tribal people had to undergo. You can't list people, but then generalisably every non-tribal who came in touch with a tribal person did involve in exploiting the tribal people in whatever manner he or she could manage the situation. And given the naivety of the tribal people it was not a big challenge at all for the crafty and greedy non-tribal people to exploit the tribal people. Come to think of it, including missionaries, including the so called government servants who were supposed to be working for the development and welfare of the tribal people, every non-tribal in some guise or the other got involved in exploiting the tribal people. So far as the tribal people are concerned the continuity of exploitation there has never been a break ever since they came into contact with the civilized world for the first time in their life.

Hinduisation and Sanskritization

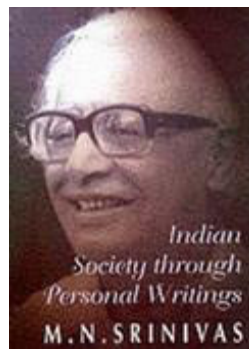
Hinduisation and Sanskritisation 1

So far in this course of tribal sociology we have been trying to know about the different tribal people living in various zones of the length and breadth of the country. But in doing so we have only been trying to know their variety, their cultural diversity and things like that, as if no change has been taking place in the lives of the tribal people. Of course, the change that take place among the tribal people is much, much slower compared to the fast life of cities even in India.



But from now onwards we will try to understand the kind of changes that are taking place in the life of the tribal people. To start with we look at two concepts which have directly infringed up on emphasizing the changes that have been taking place. The terms are Hinduisation and Sanskritisation.

The term sanskritisation however owes to the doyen of social sciences in India Late M N Srinivas.



Hinduisation and sanskritisation are both referring to the Hindu way of life by and large. In that sense, Hinduisation is a generic term, sanskritisaion is a specific emphasis on the type of changes that take place in the life of people in any given group. Hinduisation means the general process of influence that the larger Hindu community has been casting up on the tribal people. This influence has been mostly seen in the ways the people worship by and large, because Hindu is a religious way of life by and large. Tribal people who come into contact with the larger Hindu population do get influenced

and mimic some of the ways in which rituals are performed by the larger Hindu community. Such has been the influence on the traditions of the tribal people who have come into contact. There has been mutual participation and of course most of the time the mutual participation is on the occasion of the larger religious festivals of the centers, in the neighborhood of tribal people.

Wherever Hindu pilgrim centres are there and the annual or bi annual programs take place with large gatherings, like what you might have heard of the 59 day Kumbh Mela that attracted lakhs and lakhs of people from throughout the world. So whenever such festivals take place among the Hindu people the neighboring tribal people do come and participate to whatever extent they could. So such has been the mutual influence between the tribal and non-tribal people. When tribal people do come and participate, they will have their own contribution to make and therefore even non tribals are often influenced by certain tribal ways of doing things

We come to another important term. The moment we talk about the Hindu way of life, that is the term caste. A very interesting argument that the caste have emerged from the tribal people. It is hard to believe for a typical devout Hindu man. Well, after all, tribes have been in existence much, much earlier than the name of Caste we have heard of. Often enough the introduction of caste system is identified with the incoming Aryans. And tribal people have been living in different parts of India from much, much earlier times. When people talk about the argument that castes have emerged from the tribal people, the most open reference is to Kshatriyas. Many Kshatriya groups after the Hindu system do derive the origin to some of the tribal ways of doing things. The Most ready example are what the Chota Nagpur tribals refer to as Munda Raj. And Bhumir Raj of Birbong district. And Raj Gound Raj of Gondwana land. A very interesting term emerged out of this argument of that castes have emerged from tribal life.

That is the term tribal caste. It is a very interesting term. Because, often enough tribe and caste are distinguished as totally different from each other.



In fact in the way anthropologists have made us believe, an average tribe does not have caste system. Caste system is something very unique to the larger Hindu society. Therefore when the two opposite terms like tribe and caste are put together in the concept of tribal caste, it makes it very interesting. But of course, the use of this term is not without ground. In fact, there are certain groups among the tribals which directly claim Brahmin status. The most ready example are the Bauris of West Bengal. They have 11 days mourning after the death of a family member like we see in the larger Hindu society. They have the other important symbol of the high caste life that is the sacred thread. Of course the two broad divisions among the larger Hindu society, i.e., vaishnavism – Vishnu worshipers and worship of Shiva. So there are tribals who fall in line with Vaishnavism and they also worship whom they call Sheetla Mansa, referring to the Ramayan heroin Seetha obviously. And Lord Mahadeva becomes another important god for the tribals because of this influence of Hindu way of life. In fact, some tribes go even to the extent of telling that the Bauri member of their tribe has been the first domestic servant of Lord Mahadeva. Another interesting example of this kind of a trend of tribal caste are Mahalis of West Bengal. In fact, among the Mahalis in West Bengal, one can see perfect Hinduisation. A total Brahminic pattern in their way of life. Coming back to the term of sanskritisation which I said was coined by M N Srinivas who said so convinced about the process of sanskritisation by which he meant lower caste groups copy the models of ways of life of the higher caste people. And the higher caste people themselves drawing the ideals from the sanskritik texts. So the term sanskritisation.

Hinduisation and Sanskritisation 2

Now back to the term sanskritisation. Strictly speaking when late Prof. M N Srinivas coined the word sanskritisation, he had originally used the word Brahminisation. Thereby in his own mind probably he presumed that the Brahmins derived their ideals from the sanskritik texts. So he directly used the word Brahminisation to begin with. But then there were other researchers in other parts of India who claimed that what happens in certain communities where there are no Brahmins at all. Like for instance the Rajputs in Rajasthan. There are any number of villages with no Brahmins around. And Jadshiks of the northern parts of India where also there may be no Brahmins. Then they came up with parallel terms like Jadshikisation and Rajputisation. Srinivas quickly restructured his definition and used the word sanskritisation dropping the term brahminisation.

But in the back of his mind Srinivas was so convinced that the ideals are drawn from the Sanskrit texts, that is, the different epics.

योद्धनलिखितसुसंवादः ।

१ प्रथमोऽध्यायः ।

१ खीष्टस्येश्वरत्वं ईश्वरेण योद्धनः प्रेरणं १४ खीष्टावतारकथा १९ तस्मिन् योद्धनः
साध्यदानं २९ खीष्टस्य प्रामाण्यस्य कथा ३५ शिमोनान्द्रिययोः कथा ४३ निचनेल्लः
कथा च ।

१ आदौ वाद आसीत् स च वाद ईश्वरेण सार्द्धमासीत् स
३ वादः स्वयमीश्वर एव । स आदाव् ईश्वरेण सहासीत् । तेन
सर्वं वस्तु ससृजे सर्वेषु सृष्टवस्तुषु किमपि वस्तु तेनासृष्टं नास्ति ।
४ स जीवनस्याकरः, तच्च जीवनं मनुष्याणां ज्योतिः ; तज्ज्यो-
५ तिरन्धकारे प्रचकाशे किन्वन्धकारस्तन्न जग्राह ।

To give one ready example of the influence of sanskritisation among the people of the lower caste groups is the practice of tee - totalism. That is, giving up alcohol, giving up non vegetarian food and also giving up smoking. Together they are called tee-totalism. One of the significant ways lower castes groups tries to sanskritise is taking to tee-totalism. Ideas and practices are drawn from the great tradition. Now, great tradition is a relative term. Great tradition is the term that refer to the larger community in contrast to the tradition of the tribal people would be referred to as the little tradition. And the practice transference that takes place between the great tradition and the little tradition are both ways. That means, some from great tradition are copied by the little tradition and some from the little tradition are copied by the great tradition. And in fact, the terms for these processes would be referred to as universalisation and peroculisation.

Universalisation is when the items from the smaller tradition, the little tradition are carried over to the great tradition and they become part of the ways of doing things in the larger community. And the reverse of it, that is, certain practices copied by the little tradition from the great tradition to suit the locally available materials and ways of doing things would be known as peroculisation.

A word about Hinduism. How do people do get influenced by Hinduism by and large? In fact, Hindus, as I said earlier are known for religious ways of doing things. Therefore, among the Hindus the centers of pilgrimage become very, very important in their way of life. Sometimes it is referred to as sanskritik Hinduism, because most of these centers of pilgrimage do have the sanskritik ways, including the chanting of mantras in the Sanskrit language. So it is referred to as sanskritik Hinduism. Of course, one should not forget that the movement that came up against the Brahmins, starting in Tamil Nadu particularly was in the form of introducing Tamil in place of Sanskrit. Therefore it is important for us to note that sanskritik Hinduism has had a distinct influence on the tribal life, particularly in parts of India other than down south. Sanskritik scriptures are different languages. In fact, sanskritik scriptures got translated into different languages only after this influence of Hindus on the larger communities. In fact, Ramayana and Mahabaratha which have got translated into several other Indian languages are solid

examples of to how Hinduism has been trying to spread its influence on other communities in the neighborhood which are not the caste Hindus as such.

One of the most important influences of Hindu way of life on the tribal people is the change from monotheism to polytheism. Hindu communities, Hindu way of life, Hindu religion has always been known the world over for multiplicity of gods and goddesses. Any average tribe, not only in India, in fact, anywhere in the world, is normally known for worshiping just one god or one goddess. That too, not even in the human form. It may be in some kind of a symbol, even a kind of a spear, kind of the trident that we have in the Hindu society, any symbol, even the totem symbol. Totem itself would be identified as a god or a goddess. So an average tribe in India has been always known for monotheism, that is, identifying only one god or one goddess. But Hindu influence has opened them up into polytheism. Of course universalization process that has taken place in tribal life when it comes to religious ways of life, is to identify their own god or goddess with the Hindu Pantheon. Therefore, any god that they are worshipping depending on the neighborhood Hindu community would be identified as an incarnation of Vishnu on the one hand or incarnation of Shiva on the other. Similarly, goddess as an incarnation of Lakshmi or an incarnation of Parvathi. Such has been the influence of Hinduistic way of life in the tribal people.

Now we will come to the most important part of the life of the people that is taking place and especially after the interaction between the tribals and non tribals. That is, the concept of social mobility. Now the basic question, sanskritisation as Srinivas argued results in some kind of mobility. Please note, social mobility. It is not physical mobility. Social mobility basically refers to the movement of the people higher or lower in the hierarchical order. Here we need to note at once, that traditionally an average tribe has not been known at all for hierarchy. Except the tribal leader who would be the unquestioned top most person among the tribal people.

The rest of them would be dealing with each other on egalitarian basis. But, particularly after the influence of Hinduism and sanskritisation process, there has been some attempt of social mobility among the tribal people. Otherwise, moving up of down of any hierarchy or basically the concept of any hierarchy itself has not been quite well known in an average tribe. They choose certain relationships. For example, sanskritisation depending on where they want to move. There are tribal caste groups who take to the way of life of the valiant kshatriyas, thereby, they get into the kshatriya under the hierarchical arrangement. In fact, kshatriya level has been one of the easiest for tribal people to get into the caste structure. Brahmins has been very, very difficult because Brahmins have always been the most ideal way of life among the Hindus. But one thing very, very crucial about the Brahmins. Historically Brahmins in India have always been known about being very positive and pragmatic and falling in line with the ruling kings. And there have been instances also of the tribal group going ascending into the tribal and to the caste hierarchy, getting into the kshatriya level and having some of the local Brahmins to assist them in performing rituals. In this sense one of the highest caste groups, Brahmins, become in a way subservient to a converted tribal group. Because Brahmins have always been pragmatic in approaching those in power. If the tribal

people became the local kings and had power, the Brahmins were pragmatic enough to fall in line with them and serve those in power. Learned Brahmins patronized the kings. In fact, Hindu history is replete with examples of almost every king having a Brahmin as an advisor.

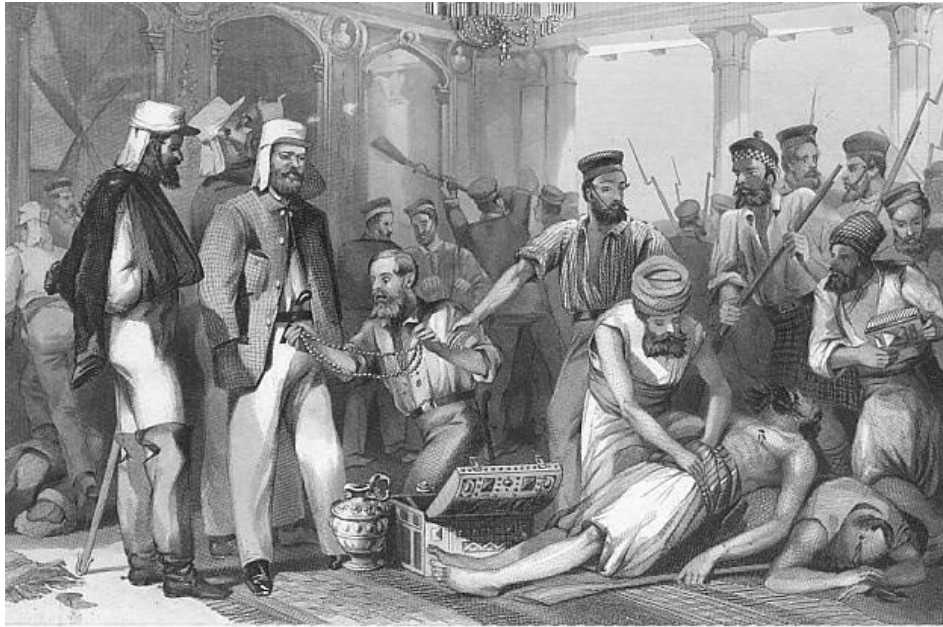
Finally we should note that every religious center in India in its own way has been a source of sanskritisation. In fact, the first thing that tribal people who want to become socially mobile will do is to get in touch with these religious centers, go and participate in their annual, bi annual or occasional celebrations and make their own contributions including various donations of their own artifacts and also in the cultural programs of the particular religious center during the mela.

Hinduisation and sanskritisation 3

All through India's history, learned Brahmins have always been patronized by the kings. It is in a way kind of symbiotic relationship. Brahmins depended on the kings for their own livelihood and kings depended on the Brahmins as advisors for various problems that they were facing in their own kingdom. But in one way, every religious center has been a source of sanskritisation for the larger population, tribal as well as non-tribal. The occasions where mostly these take place are the various melas. The annual programs of celebrations of particular religious center where tribals come into contact with the non-tribals. They make their own contributions in the form of artifacts and also in the form of service intermingling with the non-tribal people. In fact, the religious centers have been one of the greatest sources of changes that have come about among the tribal people. In this particular episode we have been trying to understand with special emphasis on the changes that have been taking place, because, earlier we studied the tribals as if there are no changes. Two or three things to highlight in this particular episode. The concept of sanskritisation, a very specifically defined term in order to identify the type of changes that take place among the tribal people who want to participate in the larger Hindu society and become part of the local hierarchy of the larger Hindu caste society. A very interesting term that came in is tribal caste.

Although, tribe and caste are always contrasted as two different and distinct concepts. In tribal caste, where these two terms are put together presents a very interesting argument, after all tribes have been in existence much, much earlier than the caste Hindus came into existence. Therefore, the argument that some of these castes are origins from the tribal people themselves. Some examples we have noted are the kshatriyas as well as the Brahmins. The kshatriyas from the middle and western parts of India, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gondwana, and particularly the Brahmins in West Bengal who beat out the larger non-tribal Brahmins in their way of life following almost everything that the Brahmins follow in their routine way of life as well as the occasional situations in brahminic way of life.

Impact of Colonial Rule in Tribal Society



Impact of colonial rule 1.0

Exploitation by the non-tribal people of the tribal people ultimately resulted in the unrest among the tribes. On top of it came the administrators under the central and provincial rules. They had their own kind of indifference dealing with the tribals. They were often harsh and unfriendly. Even forest laws were not very friendly so far as the tribals were concerned, because, all forest laws generally went in favor of the administering group rather than the needs of the tribal people. Sometimes lack of legislation to stop the land alienation also resulted in the travails of the tribal people. And then, whoever wanted to use the development programs and improve found it very difficult because of the lack of credit facilities, ineffective government measures. In fact, whenever tribals were evicted from a piece of land, whether it was forest or any other piece in the name of building dams, even to this day this problem has been going on. Government measures to rehabilitate them have not been adequate at all.

Impact of colonial rule 1.1

Even the compensation given to the tribal people evicted from wherever they were living have been very inadequate. We see this problem continuing even to this day. And then there are committees and commissions appointed in order to look into the problems of tribal people and suggest ways and measures of overcoming them. But then, there is always a delay in the implementation of these recommendations.

We now look into the tribal classification criteria. Listed as scheduled tribes right from the beginning at the time of the establishment of the constitution of India, Negritos and Astoloids survived as forest tribes. May be they shied away from getting listed, shied away from getting analyzed demographically, they have lived isolated in the forest. Mongloid are also considered as Adivasis still, but not all of them have come on to the

list for scheduled tribes. Demand for tribal classification now even today continues. In fact, the Meetai of Manipur who are otherwise pretty advanced and Rajbonshi of Assam and Gurjars of Gujarat and Rajasthan have all been pretty advanced. But still they have found ways and means and reasons and factors to demand that they must be listed as tribes for getting the benefits of development and progress.

Impact of colonial rule 1.2

In this episode we have tried to understand how complicated has been the problem of developing the tribal people in terms of the problems that they have gone through prior to independent India coming into existence. The most dominant factor which will not help the tribal rehabilitation, tribal development and tribal welfare is the British policy.

British had a policy of totally isolating the tribes. Just give them what they needed. So much so, even to this day we are paying the price in terms of the demands made by different types of tribes in different parts of India particularly in the north east demanding identity as a separate state or even a separate area which should be their own with total independence to govern themselves.

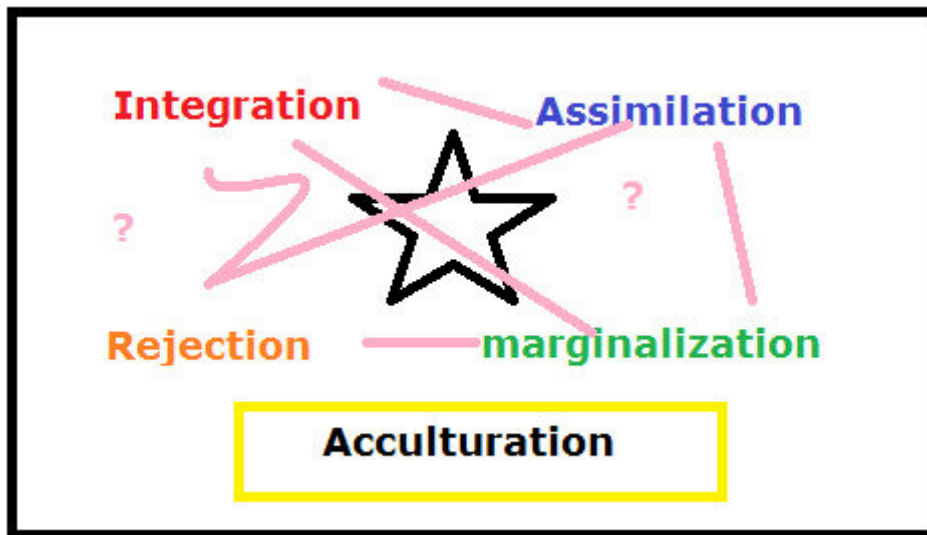


Such has been the demand mainly because of the isolation that they have gone through. As such we have known earlier that the tribals have been living a more or less totally isolated life economically, socio-culturally, physically and geographically. On top of it what happened during the British period brought in a further degree of distinct identity among the tribal people. To make matters worse this isolation of tribal people also brought in a totally apathetic attitude among the non-tribal people which even today we find that the apathy has been so strong that whenever non-tribal people come in contact with the tribal people they have absolutely no hesitation in trying to take the tribal people for a ride, cheat them and exploit them. All this happened until the reformers came on to the scene when there was a demand for policy change. But we are yet to see the real changes coming about in the policy of dealing with the tribal

people towards a meaningful development and welfare, so that they can become part of the main stream called independent India.

Impact of colonial rule 1.3

Thanks in a way to the isolationist approach of the British rule on the one hand and the resultant apathy of the larger population towards the tribal people on the other hand, what happened, whenever the tribal people and non-tribal people came to live together they merely co-existed next to each other. There wasn't much of give and take between them. In the sense there was no acculturation process. Why this is important for us to note is if tribals today have to be made part of the main stream, tribals and non tribals alike must try to understand each other. What acculturation process provides for, this did not happen during the British rule for which even to this day we are finding it difficult on the one hand in the minds of the tribals to think of the non-tribal people as their own people in the land and on the other hand in the minds of the non-tribal people to have consideration for the problems that the tribal people are facing.



Unless this give and take takes place it will not be possible to bring about a more meaningful development and welfare of the tribal people. Because after all non-tribal people have to be involved in the process either as part of the system or as a part outside the system co existing along with the development programs and their implementation.

Colonial



Colonial 1.0

We have been in the last few lectures trying to analyze the exploitation tendencies going on in the tribal world. Obviously the question comes up. Have the tribals been taking it lying down? Have they not reacted? Obviously not. The amount of exploitation that the community goes through it is not very easy to imagine that they will keep quite. In fact it is very difficult to say they would keep quite. They have reacted. In this episode we will make a cursory glance at some of the tribal movements as a sample that has been taking place in the Indian sub-continent.

Before that very briefly the socio economic profile during the colonial period. The tribal people have had their own religion. Their own colorful life but lived in a subsistence economy. As we observed earlier no concept of tomorrow, no concept of future, no idea of development and no idea of progress. They lived in the present day world with their own customary right to use whatever was available in the vicinity where they were living whether it was the forest or top of mountain or hills. And they of course with whatever locally available materials they developed subsidiary handicrafts basically to supplement whatever they needed in their everyday life.

Let us now take a look at the salient features of tribal movement. Tribal movement have been against exploitative tendencies in general but by feudal lords. You can easily understand feudal lords have been there even before the British came. Therefore the tribal movement against exploitation is pre British and not necessarily after the British. But with the experience under the British rule they had felt this exploitation particularly in the form of forced labour as well as levy of taxes. So there was movement among the tribals against this, against the British.



Religious overtones, because, prior to British, Mughals ruled. So there were also some exploitation from the Moghul Chieftains who were ruling in the different areas. Then came the British, then came the missionaries who got involved in conversions and landlords were always there who were from the larger Hindu community. Therefore in tribal movement there have always been religious overtones. Sometimes against the British, the Christians, sometimes against the local chieftains, the Muslims, sometimes against the Hindu lords the Hindus. They fought with their traditional weapons. In fact after every such tribal movement, movement here does not necessarily mean shouting slogans, no, absolutely. Tribals needed only one way and they knew only one way.

They used their traditional weapons wherever they went against any particular suppressor and the used their own weapons in this. Most movements were suppressed by the government. Government does not necessarily mean the Indian government because we have already noted that revolts against suppression and exploitation were even pre British. So whoever was ruling the tribal people rebelled against them.

We will take a quick survey of some of these revolts. Tamar revolts was against the faulty system of government. What these people felt from the Midnapur and surrounding areas, later on they were joined by the Aravans and Mundas, woles and coles in their neighboring areas of Orissa and West Bengal, they fought against the faulty system. They thought and they could see that there was a hand in glove arrangement with the local lords and the government officials. So they rebelled against them. Kherwar movement among the Santhals was led by Bhageerath Manji who promised to restore the golden age, whatever was there before all these exploitation tendencies came up in a big way.



He assured to liberate the people from all this suppression. Santhal revolt has been one of the most noted among the tribal movement although it lasted only 60 days. Government changed its policy of dealing with the tribals and their exploitation that was going on. But they also called out as a result of the Santhal revolt a non-regulation district where the normal regulations of the government would not hold good.

That was in a way the success of the Santhal revolt. Bukta Rai Singh, Leroi movement, the name Bhukta and Leroi after the leaders who led this movement in the Chota Nagpur area, three phases, agrarian, revivalist and political. First it began with the landlords who were levying taxes and forcing them into labour. Revivalist they wanted to go to the pre exploitation time of having freedom on their own land.

Colonial 1.1

Next in this quick survey we refer to Bokta rising Leroy movement. Bokta and Leroy named after the leaders who lead this movement in the chota Nagpur area. Three phases have been identified. Agrarian that is against the levy of taxes and forced labor. Revivalist, demanding going back to the pre exploitation time of freedom in land cultivation. Political, that is when the tribal leaders identified that lot of local leaders were hand in glove with the government officials and other bigger Babus in the area, it became a political issue combining also identifying the religion behind. But basically there have been clashes between the landlords and tenants all through even pre British, landlords and tenants. Tenants have always rebelled against the feudalism of the landlords.

Feudalism



But later on it turned out as all Europeans who were referred to as Dickoos. In fact it was a challenge for the tribal leaders who lead the movement to at least identify one or two Dickoos and exterminate them.

Dickoo was a general term that was given to everybody who was involved in exploiting the tribal people. But of course this movement fizzled out because of lack of organization. One of the most noted revolts among the tribal people is the Birsa-Munda revolt. Birsa-Munda as the name refers to was from the Munda tribal group. Most popular among the tribal movements in the chota Nagpur area of Bihar against Kundkaari system. Kundkaari system was what was traditionally followed by the tribal people under which they would cultivate. They would be cultivating, nobody would be declared as the owner of the land. But the tribal people had the liberty to cultivate the land.



And they would pay only to the chief in tribute. This was fine because there was no owner. But when it was replaced by the British people, they started appointing zamindars, there came the problem. Because, Zamindars became local leaders and

harassment started, harassment through brute force sometimes. In fact it was well known during the zamindari system that every zamindar would have a handful of tough men around him to force the people to pay the levy of whatever fashion. They rebelled against it. Exorbitant interest rates by the lenders because sometimes for want of money they had to turn to the lenders who charged exorbitantly. The unholy collaboration was seen by these tribal people that took place between the landlords, money lenders on the one hand and the officials residing outside the tribal area in the government programs.

They saw this relationship and they rebelled against it. What made Birsa Munda movement very famous was that he joined the general freedom movement led by Mahatma Gandhi. Devi movement of Gujarat led by a lady Devi Sala Bhai who commanded but she had a unique system.



She thought that the value of the movement will pick up if she manages to convince all the people. She did so in the south Gujarat region making the people believe that tee-totalism, giving up alcohol, non-vegetarian food and smoking would certainly push their value up in the eyes of the people who have to deal with their rebellion. So she led tee totalism movement among the people. She gave a religious touch also. She also joined the Gandhi's national movement. Lot of people under her leadership attended the congress conference in large numbers.

Midnapur movement among Santhals and Kurmis, they rebelled against East India Company, such an established company which ultimately turned out to rule the country. They dared to challenge the East India Company. They were against encroachment by non tribals. Under East India Company a lot of non tribals were allowed to take over the lands for cultivation

And these tribal people rebelled against it and they also became noted at the national level because their movement coincided with the non-cooperation movement led by Gandhiji.



Tribal national movement in Orissa, this goes in for a very, very special notice because Orissa movement among the tribals has come to be known as a kind of a national movement. That was the kind of vision they had. In fact, it covered Bihar and Orissa divisions. They also became famous because they participated in large numbers in national movement. No rent aspect of non-cooperation movement. They picked up of the non-cooperation movement of Mahatma Gandhi and said, we are not going to pay any rent for the land in which we are continuing the cultivation. In fact, they stopped the payment of taxes. They were directed against the established forest rules also. They fought against the forest rules of the government. They said it is not going to help tribal people to develop and live a peaceful life.

Then there is something very unique in the tribal movement of Assam. Because Assam which included Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya. In fact, they fought against the annexation of the Assam area by the British. The war of independence also promoted at that time, these people questioned the rule of the British.

Actually they were basically against the rise in taxation in the area and particularly when it followed increase in revenue. When there was more cultivation it resulted in more taxation which was not digestible for them.

Now you will see in this list of tribal movements one thing that is very clear is the tribals however naïve and simple they were, but the amount of exploitation that went on in their lives by several forces, that is, starting from the pre British times through the British times and also even after India became independent has been so open, so impactful on their lives nobody could expect them to sit quite. Tribal movements that we have tried to analyze in a small way will make us believe that they certainly revolted against. The revolt was not against any particular individual or particular person or particular rule.



Revolt was general, that is, whoever is trying to exploit us will have to answer the questions. So they revolted against the feudal lords before the British came, they revolted against the Muslim chieftains in the local areas, they revolted against the British and the East India Company itself and in general they revolted against whoever was trying to exploit them. Therefore the sense of discomfort and the rebellion in the minds of the tribal people will have to be understood. In a way to generalize it very simply tribal people with their simplicity and honest approach to life would revolt against anything that could regard as injustice.

Post-Independence Scenario and Tribal Development

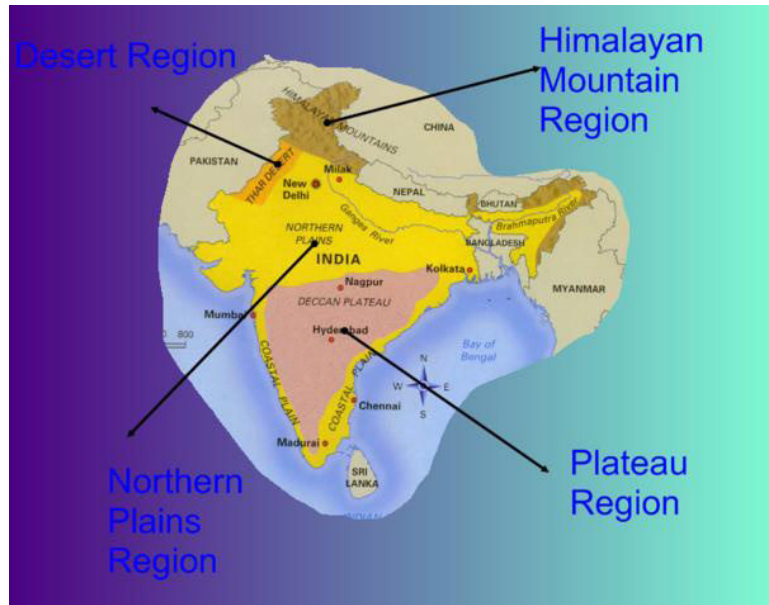


Post-independence 1.0

Through the previous episodes we learnt as to how tribals were isolated and as a result the larger population got apathetic about the tribal issues and tribal problems. In this episode we will try to analyze about what happened after India became independent. In a way, the problem that independent India had to face after it became independent and to deal with the tribal issues all by itself unmindful of what happened earlier.

In the previous episode we understood as to how tribals got isolated because of the British policy and as a result the larger population of non-tribals became apathetic about the tribal issues and the problems and their welfare issues in the tribal area. After India became independent it had to face a whole lot of problems. In fact, it had to undo much of what had been done during the previous rules, British as well as the Moghul influence later on. After independent India came into the administration, it became the state's responsibility by and large to develop the tribals. The peculiar situation was there was so much to do in the name of tribal development and tribal welfare. But then there was not much time to be lost.

Well, after all a clear cut plan meaningfully drawn framework for development and welfare of the tribal people needed in depth knowledge of tribal life in general and particularly of different tribal people in different zones of India.



But the urgency for action after India became independent did not provide this much of time. In fact, the constant criticism in the name of sociologists by the administrators - as students of tribal sociology you should know - i.e., sociologists always ask for more time to have in depth knowledge of the problems but administrators and planners have so little time to give to sociologists. So let us see, in this urgency social development programs in the tribal areas were introduced by provincial as well as the federal government. What happened with these development policies? Obviously some of them were very drastic because of want of time they were all drawn up in a hurry, because there was no much time to wait before implementing them. But what happened as a bargain was the deep relationship that most tribal people had in their way of life with the nature and environment in which they lived got disturbed. The most notable thing in tribal life, which they have not experienced earlier in their life at all, came about. That is, the land was made a saleable property.

Modern transport also provided some migration possibilities for tribal people who found life difficult in their area started looking for greener pastures around. But with the development programs being implemented the worst thing that happened was there was depletion of resources. Forest resources because development projects promoted influx of lot of outsiders into tribal areas. In fact so much was the promise of quick money in these areas that lot of people who came from outside were always very active in manipulating the whole situation in order to make more money. Ironically tribals now became a minority in the place where they were living for generations. Large scale expansion also made tribals get denied in the fruits of expansion because most of it was cornered by the non tribals who were dealing with these programs in some fashion or the other either as officials or as contact people or contractors.

Now the general perspective on development was, tribals were seen as hindrances to development because their traditional socio economic system which was based on subsistence economy did not look for more fruits from the environment. Tribals are seen

as backward, ignorant and superstitious, not providing enough room for faster development. The present scenario that was presented after India became independent was that the tribals are living in rich areas, rich in terms of minerals and forest products. But then their own technology was so limited, therefore, mining and industrialization, the modern people, planners and administrators thought were getting retarded. Because people got disillusioned, tribal people started naxalism. Why have naxalites become so important? They became important because all their methodology, technique, everything apart, naxals basically were pro poor.

They were against the rich people. They wanted the people to have the rights. Wherever they are living, they wanted the people to have the right of self-determination.



Therefore, naxalites have attacked both private and government people in order to make the poor people get their own right - Right of the people to say no to any project that is planned to be implemented in their area. This is how naxalites could win the hearts of the tribal people in whatever they did.

Forest rights act also brought some relief to the tribal people. The forest act of 2006 provided for the first time the right of tribals to their forest land wherever they lived. It addressed some historical injustice. But yet the fear that it may lead to mass destruction was always lingering around. A mechanism was needed to divert benefits to the tribal people because as I said earlier lot of non-tribals came into the forests after the new forest act. Economical and political conditions thrived in such a way that tribal people lived mostly in rich areas, areas rich in a whole variety of minerals and other possibilities for faster development of the area and faster income. But then the tribals lived with subsistence economy. But gradually development programs overtook the relatively the slow moving tribals but opened up land ownership concepts totally alien to the tribals. Tribals always knew wherever they lived, the entire area where they lived belonged to the community as a whole.

There is absolutely no concept of private ownership. But it came up now in the form of land ownership for the first time.



But this concept of land ownership as private property opened the flood gates for the non-tribal people. Before the tribals could realized that they had lost much of their communally owned lands, going into the hands of non-tribal people in the name of private property, the worst thing that could happen happened. That is the language barrier. Tribals did not know the language of the people who were running the show either in the form of government program or as private contractors or non-tribal people coming in to exploit them. Government functionaries also did not help much. Constabulary and revenue officers who were on the scene also became very apathetic to the needs of the tribals. Tribals became labourers on their own land.

There was the most important thing that happened negatively for the tribals. Almost as a rule most tribal people have their own local varieties of drink. They are alcoholics in some sense or the other. So the non-tribal people used this particular weakness of the tribal people and liquor was given on credit. And in course of time much of liquor that was bought on credit ultimately resulted in the poor tribals losing the little piece of land on which they were cultivating.

They became again laborers on their own lands because tribals who loved drinks got a whole lot of money, got intoxicated on credit and they had to lose their freedom finally. The final blow was in the form of political jockeying. Lot of political parties came on to the scene because they saw the gullible naïve tribal people as a very strong and reliable vote bank. The only exception here was the inter continentally strategic tribal people who were in the sub Himalayan region because they were on the border land between the countries India and china on the one hand and Bhutan and other states like Nepal on the other hand



They were on the border land therefore they were strategically very, very crucial. They were probably very deliberately prevented from getting into any kind of exploitation. With the only exception by and large tribals became victims of exploitation by the non-tribal people.

Role of early missionaries must be recognized here. It was crucial for government policies. Early missionaries had a lot of compassion in dealing with tribals and their problems. But then the negative side of it was that, that also brought in lot of conversions in religion among the tribal people. Today particularly in the north east every other tribe in the seven states of the north east have come under the influence of Christian conversion in smaller or greater measures.

There is a need if the tribals have to be developed in the most meaningful sense in their own way there is a need to conceptualize something different which gives independence to the tribal people, some kind of self-governance among the tribal people, such programs need to be implemented in order to help those people to retain their own unique heritage on the one hand and yet become part of the larger population of the country.

Post-independence 1.1

The economic and political condition that came to prevail after the introduction of development programs provided for the first time the possibility of owning pieces of land in the tribal areas. Tribal people as a group or as an entire community were using the land for cultivation or for the use of other products.

The economic and political condition that came to prevail after the introduction of development programs in the tribal areas ultimately resulted in the concept of landed property that could be individually owned. Now tribals who as a group or as a community had been cultivating or using the products in the area where they were living for the first time came to be dealt with in the form of manipulation by the non-tribals. Whatever piece of land in which they were living or using, which they assumed belonged to them, now they were about to lose because of the machinations of the non-

tribal people. Now they lost their right to cultivate on those lands and now they became labourers on their own pieces of land.

In this episode we have tried to understand that independent India had to undo lot of things after the implementation of development programs in the tribal areas thanks to the policy of isolation of the British.

We have learnt in the previous episode as to how the isolation policy of the British led to a development of apathy among the non-tribals regarding the issues that were beleaguering the tribal people. They had absolutely no interest in dealing with the tribals except for their own machinations of exploiting them for drawing their fruits from the areas where tribal people were living. Now very interestingly the social consequences of development, just the irony you can look at, development programs in the tribal areas basically envisioning developing and for the welfare of the tribal people, now because of the subsistence economy approach of the tribal people and their concept of limited wants and not trying to do too much than what is necessary for everyday survival, ironically tribal people came to be identified as laggards and they are the ones who are hazards for development programs. It means tribal people were retarding the development of the area. That was the paradox because the development programs were introduced in the tribal areas with the ultimate idea of developing these people.

Depletion of forest resources- In fact tribal people lived in the forests always lived in line with the natural harmony of the forest. I do not think there are records of tribal people deforesting the forest area. They were not involved in deforesting. If tribal people were involved in deforesting it was only to work for the non-tribal people who employed them for deforesting the forest resources. Basically tribal people have always lived in harmony with the nature and the environment in which they have lived.



But the interesting thing about the tribal people and how they looked at development was the general perspective is - development is not for us.

Tribal people never imagined that any development program must ultimately aim at improving their own lot. Because every development program in some way or the other provided for further exploitation of the tribal people little more openly than what was happening earlier from the hands of the non-tribal people. One thing must be said about the forest tribes act. Imagine. Till 2006 forest act tribals were evicted from the forest. Poor tribal people who always lived in the forest considering this as their only world, in fact, many tribal people who lived in the forest did not know of any world existing beyond the boundaries of the forest. You can just imagine the plight of these tribal people when they were evicted from the forest, they simply did not know where to go. But wherever they got rehabilitated they were exploited by the non-tribal people, whether they were part of the administration or part of the larger non-tribal population.

One thing must be said positively partly and partly negatively about the missionary work. Christian missionaries who came to India working mostly in tribal areas did a yeoman service for the tribal problems because they identified two very important problems that the tribal people were facing.

Number one poverty and number two sickness.

They did a whole lot of things to alleviate the poverty problem in the tribal areas and also solved the sickness problem. This was the notable positive side of missionary work. However the hidden idea of converting them into Christianity was something partly negative. Seen from this angle, because independent India wants to develop all the tribal people as part of the main stream whether conversion has helped in this manner or not, we are not very sure.

Particularly when we look at the problems that north east India is facing especially like Nagas, Bodos, kukis demanding separate statehood entirely for themselves as if they do not belong to India it becomes a question mark whether conversion into Christianity has helped the Indian cause of making tribal people part of the larger main stream or not.



It is a question every student of tribal sociology may have to ponder over.

Post-Independence Period

Introduction



In the previous episode we made a quick survey of tribal movements against exploitation and injustice. Post-independence period it continued. So far the tribals are concerned they have always been revolting against injustice and exploitation. For them it made no difference whom they were fighting against. They fought against anybody who tried to impose, per force certain things on them like levy of taxes or injustice in dealing with their problems. So, peculiarly, now the tribals after India became independent put up the fight against the Indian government. We called it Indians against India. Who are the Indians? So far as the larger country was concerned, tribals are also Indians but tribals never realized this. Some of them wondered why they are to become part of India. That was the kind of history that they were made to go through. Particularly in the north eastern region what is formerly known as NEFA, North East Frontier Agency, which is today broken into seven states in the north eastern region. Now, all these tribal people in the original NEFA region led by in a way represented by the Naga movement. In fact, the story goes when India became independent the underground Nagas were dreaming of an entire different Nagaland as independent as England and they questioned what business British government had in handing over Naga area to the Indian government. Such was the kind of image some of these tribal people had about living an independent life. So they fought against independent India also.



About North Eastern Tribes

Assam's stance in a way was very interesting because they identified themselves as so distinct. In fact, mythologically, they related some of their leaders as far back into the Mahabharata time and they claimed that Assam is something very different from the rest of the tribal world and it has to be given a separate kind of an identity in the tribal world in the

Indian subcontinent. In fact, for the first time only during Muslim period they found Muslim settlers coming into the Mughal area otherwise it was totally Hindu identifiable back into the Mahabharata times.

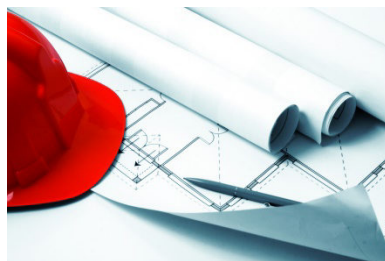


Mizoram insurgency was the demand by Bodos for a separate statehood. Now the Nagas and Kukis in fact they had fought between themselves on other different grounds but they all came, joined hands in demanding for separate statehood.



Tribal uprising in Orissa which we already noted earlier was a unique history of revolt against the British. Often these leaders normally get immortalized. Leaders are forgotten, masses are forgotten but somebody walks away with the name. Fight against injustice in a way has been a tradition among the Orissa tribes.

How Development projects help tribal



Development projects, if you deeply look into it, are a kind of a double loss for the tribals. First of all, whatever is done after evicting them from the area or even without evicting them has nothing to do with their own development and progress because what is undertaken under the name of development is something that does not fit into their framework of life. That is

one kind of loss. Second kind of loss is without getting the fruits of so called development. Sometimes they lose their freedom, they lose even their land, their habitat and they are displaced. Displacement for building dams, displacement for mining and colliery activities is something very unique. Because they happen to live in the resource rich areas tribal are asked to move out in the name of larger plan of development and their rehabilitation as we have repeatedly noted takes them into a new world which they don't understand at all why only accept and manage and control the situation. Now a special emphasis should be made on the tribal living in the forest areas. They were evicted from the forest. Poor people, they lived all their lives there; they lived their life within the forest without cognizance of any world beyond them. They had their problems, they solved with whatever was available in the forest area. They had their diseases for which they found their own medicine in the forest products. So, therefore, the non-timber forest products which they were deprived of using after they were evicted from the forest posed a big challenge for the poor tribal people. On the one hand they didn't have access to the medicinal plant they had identified for the diseases on the other hand wherever they were rehabilitated they had to pay for the medicines the name of it they didn't know at all. In fact the worst thing that could happen to tribal people living in the forest is once they are evicted from the forest areas if they try to go back to the forest they will be known as encroachers. What a paradox in the life of the tribals. Now, development projects in this way has been a double loss to the tribals. Most paradoxical thing that could happen in the life of the tribals living in the forest is once they are evicted from the forest they are not allowed to go back into the forest and if anybody tries to go back will be declared as an encroacher. Look at the fate of the tribals. They lived in the forest using the forest products but then when they are evicted they can't go back into the forest because they will be known as encroaching the government land. Now forest conservation acts in this way have been totally uncharitable to the forest tribes. The forest eviction takes place all right but then the reality had to be identified by the people who are making them leave the forest that there are certain dependent items in the forest on which the tribals should be allowed to depend on even after they leave the forest.



A real new test has come with the entry of the corporate lords into the mineral rich areas which were originally inhabited by the tribal people. This is a total lack of empowerment for the tribal people who have always lived there and without a doubt anybody could be in support of the tribals if the kind of newfound poverty led them into a kind of belligerent attitude towards anybody around who was involved in bringing them into this new kind of a downward fate. The present upsurge has been repressing the oppression from above. Who is this above? Above could be locally only a feudal lord but feudal lord in this oppression is not alone. Every feudal lord has hands-in-glove arrangement with the higher ups. Higher ups could be the bigger capitalists, higher ups could be the people who are influential, higher ups

could be those who have the lobbying power with the powers in the government or higher ups could be the government officials themselves



Tribal adivasi rebel



Now comes a new dimension to the tribal movement, the Communist Party Movement. CPI(M) in the main who have also been championing the cause of the tribals particularly, the pro poor. The pro poor stance of the CPI(M) along with the right to make decisions of one's own future and one's own development that CPI(M) is trying to hold out has common cause what tribals have been fighting against. So this party finds it easy to identify the tribal leaders and make them part of their movement but poor tribal leaders may not always realize that their own participation has been politicalised but then they do derive sufficient satisfaction because for the first time they find somebody in the non tribal world who is supposed to be ready to stand behind them supporting them. The problem with the tribal adivasi rebel is that it is not always easy to separate this tribal adivasi rebels from the Maoist groups. Naxalites on the other hand have also got similar stance. They are also pro poor. They are anti rich but naxalites cannot be declared as necessarily interested in development but because of their common cause of being pro poor and anti-rich fighting against injustice they find it easy to convince the tribal leaders to join them and unwittingly tribal leaders have also joined the naxalites. Here again we need to distinguish between the unwitting tribal leaders and the naxalites who are a political group which supports all around beyond the regions where they

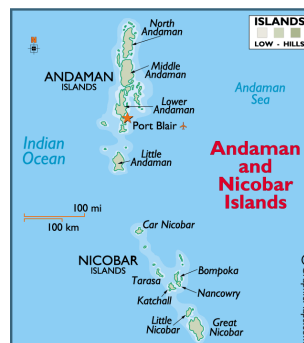
operate. Urban intellectuals are generally seen by the tribal people as usurpers of power, usurpers of their land, and usurpers of whatever richness they have in their living area but then there has been one silver lining in tribal life. The 1999 Government of India draft national policy on the Tribals of India ultimately, which demanded recognition of tribal languages. Two distinct tribal states have been carved out in the name of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. This could probably be recognized as one ultimate fruit of all tribal demand that has been going on. But come back to the rebellion of the tribal people. In fact, it is not always easy to distinguish between rebellion and crime. Particularly because tribal people have only one way of rebelling, i.e., pick up their arms; pick up their traditional implements to fight against thereby sometimes committing also murders. Therefore it becomes very difficult to distinguish rebellion of tribal people from crime. This is what exactly happened during British rule. British listed several several tribes in India as criminal tribes. Unfortunately, most of the tribes that were listed by the British people were those who participated in freedom struggle. For the British, those who participated in the freedom struggle including Mahatma Gandhi himself were anti British. They were enemies of the British crown. So it was easy for the British people to declare some of these tribals who participated in the freedom struggle as criminal tribes. After independence, these tribes which had been listed as criminal tribes although some of them really involved themselves in criminal activities like murder, thieving but whenever these tribal people got involved in this it was not out of their choice. It was in order to make some money at the hand of somebody else goaded them to involve in these things mainly because of the position of poverty to which they had been pushed thanks to the development projects. After independence, most of these criminal tribes have been denotified tribes. In fact, through a proclamation, Government of India declared them as denotified tribes and they were also eligible for the reservation facilities like all the SC's and ST's. In fact, a national commission in the name of national commission for denotified nomadic and semi nomadic tribes, NCDNST was also constituted in order to take care of the welfare of these people who had originally been declared as criminal tribes during the British rule.



Jarawas Tribes



We come to the most important dimension of tribal life especially the tribals who have been living in the forest because they have been living in the middle of wild life. In fact, some of us revel in referring to a tribal man as part of the wild life because sometimes he is like a ruffian. He has no time and patience we believe to look at a situation and act calmly. We cannot unless we imagine ourselves, empathize with the situation of a tribal who have long been taken for a ride we cannot understand the mind of a tribal why he tries to be bullish in a particular situation. They live in the forest in the middle of wild life and wild life has always been a money spinner. We have heard so often about foreign tourists coming in not always with the gentle feeling of having a look at the variety of wildlife the flora and fauna and the richness of the biodiversity but also some of them with the hidden interests of carrying some kind of memento of having visited, memento in the form of the skin of a rare animal, it could be the horn of an elephant or a rhino, it could be anything that they could carry along with them as a memento but the foreign tourists have come under a different kind of influence in more recent times, particularly the story of Jarawas in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.



What happened there is the promoters of tourism particularly the promoters of tourism among the foreigner tourists take them into these areas and they have them interact with the local people, the Jarawas. In fact, the Jarawas are fed, they are given something to drink, foreign liquor, and as lovers of drinks they are very happy to taste something new and something different and even in the food item it is something new that they have not come across. They are all taken for a ride and then come the photograph session and with the scanty kind of dressing the teenage girls, in fact most of them are seen often naked above the waistlines, pictures taken with the foreign tourists hanging around them, dancing with them. NGOs and INGOs have taken up this cause because many of these tourists keep their photos as mementos having made girlfriends in a foreign land among the tribals. Many of these photos back in their country may become posters, poster girls and poster villages but NGOs and

INGOs have taken up the cause but poor tribal people they do not realize that they are being taken for a ride. They have always had somebody else fight their cause.



Summary

Now in this particular episode we have tried to identify how the tribal people have been facing problems even after India became independent particularly in the name of development programs, very particularly when the development program involves eviction of tribals from the areas where they have been living. So therefore, development does not necessarily mean for the tribals something positive, something progressive. For people who earlier we noted, some of these tribes have no term for tomorrow, no term for future. They lived in the present. For such tribals to do something in the name of development, in the name of progress which they don't understand at all from which they do not get any benefits at all it is time that anybody who is involved in tribal development and welfare sit down and think what exactly is wrong, why don't tribals become or made to become part of their own development and welfare programs, how to involve them from the word go in shaping up a development program for the tribals. It is for every literate person with higher levels of literacy to think seriously, sit and try to imagine a framework where this could happen, where tribals could become participants in their own development and welfare.

Tribal Communities of the State/Religion



Tribal communities of states 1.0

We have come to the last part of our course in tribal sociology. We will take a look very briefly into much of what we have learnt and also conclude towards what else needs to be done towards the tribal communities in our country. We will take a quick look as to what we have learnt. Initially when we dealt with the tribals, tribals were identified as having special rights because the tribals have always lived accepting whatever is there in their nature and surroundings, whatever there to live with they were the givens by the nature including poverty for instance. And earlier we learnt that they did not understand that they were poor because after all poverty is both a monetary concept and a relative concept. In fact tribal people also accepted disease as a part of their natural calamities. They did not consider them as curable as such but basically they had their herbal treatment all around available, especially the forest tribes and those living on top of mountains and hills. But beyond that, they accepted death as inevitable. The passage of outsiders was restricted in the beginning.

This is how the governments became protective of the tribals before they started drawing out programs of development and welfare for the tribal people.



Special right was to govern themselves that was later on taken up. In fact, separate representation for the scheduled tribes was given in the assemblies and the parliament. In fact, when we look back into what we have learnt on the movements among the tribal people we have seen repeated cries for autonomy particularly spearheaded by the tribals in the north eastern parts. The most ready example is that of the Nagas. In fact the very name Nagaland that they gave to themselves with the suffix land made those people who were demanding special rights and statehood for the Nagas, imagine that someday they would be a free country themselves almost like England. So therefore Nagas falling in for western education and conversion to Christianity was not without a basis. They opted for it, they went in for it and today they are the single most example spearheading the cry for autonomy and separate statehood. In fact emergency period where there was repression of people all around the country particularly also of tribals went on, that is when whole lot of movements demanding for statehood or identity started galore during the emergency period.

The tribals have always fought against injustice. In fact, during the British rule they fought against the British. But in general they always fought against the land lords. Not land lords as such. But land lordism. That means whichever land lord treated them well they had nothing to say. But those landlords who empowered them very weakly and tried to rule over them forcing them to labor, they always rebelled against. They rebelled against levy of taxes. They did it against the feudal lords even before the British, they did it against the British lords during British regime and they continued to do it against the government.



Whenever the taxes are levied they rebelled against it. They fought against the Zamindars after the British introduced the Zamindars.

The story of different parts of India we will briefly summarize going back into identifying some of these tribal people who have always been fighting. Beends for instance, one of the names in movements from Rajasthan. Tribals of sub Himalayan region in a way have been very peaceful.

After all the cold climate, the hilly trench where they have been living, the tribal people particularly the Gaddhis for instance and the Sherpas, they have become hard working by nature because of the land where they have been living.



And particularly because they are in strategic areas bordering international level, therefore this area probably is a single example of calm life in tribal life, perhaps the only pocket of peaceful existence of tribal people. Otherwise, tribal people have always been rebelling against the forces that were it be wherever, whoever as I said, before the British the feudal lords, through the British the British officers and after India became independent with officials of the Indian central and provincial governments. They always fought against whoever tried to empower them weakly, whoever did not recognize their own rights over wherever they were living. The piece of land whether it was forest, on top of the hills or on the plains.

Tribals of central India for instance Narias, Ghonds, Gurias, chenchus, Aaravans, Santhals, they have all been part of the rebellion. They have been part of the tribal movements, but many of them also became part of the freedom movement led by Mahatma Gandhi.

The tribals of southern India for instance, the kolies, the Kathans, Katharis, Parohis, lambanis of Maharashtra, KAADARS and Naikars of Kerala, Kadabas, Kurubas of Karnataka, Badagas, Palians, Koravas, thodas of Tamil Nadu.



Here one or two unique features of the way of life of the people. Kadars of cochin are a food gathering tribe. That means they are rather docile, probably one of the ready example of how docile can tribals be. Naikars have been little bit into kingdom building, so they were little more powerful. Kadabas known for magical practices. In fact the tribal people living around the Kadabas they use their services for their black magic. Otherwise the other tribal people are little bit afraid of the Kadabas. Now, Palians, Palians are known for their interest in gambling. In fact the most unique example of Palians is they were land owners of pieces of lands and because of their interest in gambling they lost their land to the non tribals and they are now working with the non tribal owners on their own piece of land of which they were owners once upon a time.



Thodas are unique example of a pastoral tribe. For them the buffalo is the most important one. Thodas buffalo, the dairy is almost like their temple. They are a very, very ready example of how meaningfully the tribal people in Nilgiris have been living with a pastoral way of life. Jaravas and ___ of Andaman and Nicobar are one of the tribes that have come under terrible exploitation particularly in the latest wave of tribal tourism promoted by many NGOs and INGOs.

Now if you think of the religions of the people, tribal people as they came into contact with the non-tribal people they were carried away by and large by the large pantheon of the Hindu society. Multiplicity of gods, every tribal group normally has just one god or

goddess. Then when they came into contact with the non-tribal people, two things struck them. One is multiplicity of gods and number two is the human forms given to gods and goddesses because for the tribal people in their religion human form was by and large unknown. They had only symbols as gods and goddesses. So when they came into contact with the non-tribal people many of them took up to the ways of life of the larger community with which they came into contact. Similar thing happened with Christianity. Many of them did get converted into Christianity particularly in the north eastern areas again Nagas being one of the leading example.

But some tribals watching the Hindu pantheon and the way Hindus were going about their religious life, they identified the importance of religion in everyday life and some of these tribes tried to work on reviving their own religion, strengthening it further. This religious revivalism is also seen among certain tribals particularly after they came into contact with the non-tribal people.

There is one important dimension then. That is education. We have earlier dealt with the concept of education and contrasting it with literacy. Unfortunately, most educational programs whether of the provincial government or of the federal government, have been emphasizing literacy.



So when a person gets into education that means the person, the tribal person is getting modernized. We have already seen that sanskritisation that tribals got exposed to, brought into contact with the ways of life of the higher echelons of the Hindu society where the tribal's behavior underwent a solid change. But then it went on through English education. In a way conversion to Christianity and English education went side by side and some tribals like the Nagas and Bodos and the Kukis, got into this christianisation as well as English education.

Now before they got into this basically an average tribal group always looked at civilization with an underlying suspicion. They did not always straightaway believed whatever was happening in the non-tribal world. Any person from outside their own variety came into their middle, they always look at the person with suspicion. They would not readily accept this person. This is how they have always been dealing with

the civilized people and after all the way in which non-tribal people continuously exploited the tribal people is a standing proof of the basic suspicion that the tribal people had always about the non-tribal people. But after the democratic decentralization what is happening? In fact in our country gave the vote to the tribal people, not straight away.



It took a while. In fact, it took a while before adult franchise became common for every citizen of India. It was not given to women. It took couple of elections before women were allowed to vote. Probably in this chain tribals were the last ones to be allowed to vote in the elections. And initial stages you would note the tribal people did not contest at all because in tribal practice leadership is incontestable. Leadership comes within the family. Leadership is in the blood of the people. So nobody who does not come from the leadership family could become a tribal leader. And also contesting leadership was rather unknown to tribal people. So initial elections in fact in the tribal areas it was the non-tribal people who contested the elections and tribal people voted for them. Now of course they have realized and gradually they have come to understand the importance of voting, importance of electing their representatives and now they are little more open. But still they are not fully educated in the electoral process to be bringing up meaningful leaders. After all one aspect they will identify in their leader given their script less dialect that they are using as communicative system, naturally they will identify this aspect of a person who is literate, who is able to speak the language of the larger people in the non-tribal world as one of the important characteristics of becoming a leader. This is what they have identified, right or wrong, they will identify this and they will vote for such person.

Initially they were not considered as eligible at all and later on we gave them this. Policy of integration was introduced. Constitutional commitment that we must do something for the tribal development and tribal welfare became a part of the constitution of India. In fact, this has been mentioned earlier in certain articles, state responsibility and federal responsibility. Protection of distinctive way of life was one of the hidden concepts and commitments. But we do not know whether protectionism always helps. But then protection is needed in order to offer social justice to the tribal people.

Let us now take a look at some of the government programs and why they have failed. Most important aspect or the reason for the failure of the government programs is it suffers from lack of research and perspective.

Earlier we learnt, analyzed and said that there was not much time to be lost after India became independent and some of the so called development and welfare programs were drawn in a hurry without sufficient knowledge of the area at all, without sufficient research and analysis of the problems of the people.



We also identified earlier on that the programs were drawn uniformly to be implemented in the entire tribal world and does not take into consideration the special features of the particular tribe. In which sense, each program of tribal development and welfare had to be customized for the unique features of particular tribe which has never happened, which did not happen at all, probably it may take time before we sit down to think and analyze and make it customized for particular tribal people and their unique features.

Another reason for the failure of governmental programs is the apathy of the implementers. The people who are involved in implementing the development and welfare programs are not psychologically, sociologically, temperamentally and technically, particularly trained for dealing with the tribal people. So they have their own limitations and therefore resulting in some kind of apathy towards the tribal issues and their problems when they deal with the implementation of the programs. The most important aspect for the failure is programs are forced upon the tribal people. Tribal people do not know when and where the program is given to them.

After all it is given unasked for. They have no role in designing the program, whether it is development or welfare. So it comes from nowhere. So long as it does not harm us, you give the benefit, we will take it. That is how the tribal people have been accepting.

On the part of the government people in a way you can identify, the government people involved in the programs into 3 broad categories. 50% of the government people involved in implementation of tribal programs is perfunctory in nature. That means, just for duty sake in order to satisfy the requirements of the job they will just do it perfunctorily. Another 30 -35% do it with some kind of commitment but, no corruption all

right, but they will do it in order to fill in the records. They may or may not go to the tribal areas at all. They could sit somewhere else and fill in the details as if they have visited the areas. Last 10 -15% have some meaning, some commitment, they have some spirit that they want to do it ethically. This has been the broad division of government people involved in implementing the programs for the tribal areas. NGOs and INGOs have arrived on the scene of late.

Tribal communities of states 1.1

Finally NGOs and particularly INGOs have arrived on the scene in tribal development with the approach of development action in tribal areas. Of course INGOs in particular with foreign funding, the funding agencies demanding participatory development, the NGOs and INGOs go in for involving the tribal people right from the word go, sitting with them and planning for the development and welfare programs. There are instances of such participation in planning. But it is not without the negative side also. Sometimes a particular NGO or an INGO may show along with photographs and other things that the entire proposal was prepared through participation of the people. But then once the money comes they may spend it in different ways.

But every now and then they may have photographs again to support that the issue was brought back to the people, they sat with the people, or the leaders in particular and sorted out some of the issues in order to reshape the perspectives of the programs whether it is development or welfare. That means it is not without negative side. But still we have to identify the positive side. Its only the arrival of NGOs and INGOs which now has made the government functionaries also open their eyes and see that there is no way unless they get into the stride and make people participate in the development and welfare programs, there is no way they can compete with the NGOs and INGOs in this realm of tribal development and tribal welfare. Finally it brings us to the most important concept that goes into the development dialogue. Who are the stake holders? Earlier we made a very sweeping statement whether tribals are there, who owns the programs? Tribal development program, tribal welfare programs, meant exclusively for the tribals and tribals are not aware. Government owns the programs. But after the arrival of NGOs and INGOS there is this new term which has come into the dialogue, that is the concept of stake holders. So starting from the planning level tribals become stake holders in the development program, the development process and development action. It is a welcome change.

Now let us look back into what we have learnt in this particular episode. We have tried to make a very quick look at how the things have gone on from the beginning. We have moved a long way from protectionism of the tribal people towards making them part of development process. But still some of the basic questions remain. What are the things we need to do to make the tribal people really and meaningfully become part of the larger reality called democratic India?

Tribal communities of states 1.2

We have gone through the course in tribal sociology. Anyone who has gone through all the episodes of this particular course would probably realize that a negative picture has

been painted to quite an extent. But indicating also what needs to be changed. After all there should be some kind of exigency. Exigency means a free floating discomfort. If anyone feels that the present situation is hunky dory and comfortable, no change will come, there will be no development, no progress. Exigency is defined as a free floating discomfort. There must be some kind of discomfort feeling that a person should have in order to work for bringing about change in the given situation. Such kind of a message has been brought, we know very well the way the whole course has been presented, there has been plenty of exploitation by the non tribal people in the tribal world. But the worst part of it is even tribal development programs and welfare programs which have been implemented have lost the sight of identifying tribal people as a distinct people with their own unique features and they must be helped to keep themselves all their unique features but still become a part of the larger reality called democratic India.

I must tell you the example, of tribal world of course, not with India. Margaret Mead, when she came to the New Guinean islands, Papua New Guinea to study the Samovan people, she did one thing very unique. What she did? Newly married she came with her husband, she built her residence right in the middle of the tribal community. And the residence could be seen from all around. It had no windows. And just imagine, newly married American couple, how they live. She lived typical American life. She was studying going by problem of dating in America, she was trying to study how a girl grows up into adulthood.

That is, coming of age of a girl among the Samovan people. Now what happens is, when we go to people we ask questions. We want to know everything about their lives. But we do not tell anything about our life which remains a secret. Margaret Mead hit at the bottom line. She said when I want to ask everything about the tribal life, they should also know all about my life. So she had nothing to hide. Entire community could watch how the American couple newly married lived their life. So when she went to ask the people several questions from the most private to the most public, just imagine the topic was coming of age in Samova. Her work was monumental. Total exposure of how a girl comes of age in the Samovan tribal people. Such was the openness with which she conducted the study. In fact "Coming of age in Samova" of Margaret Mead is a monumental book, never before and never after. Such should be the approach. The people, whoever goes into the tribal community to help them, there must be this openness. The most ideal person, whether the person belongs to the governmental program or an NGO or a volunteer or an INGO, the approach should be, I go to the tribal people, I want to help them, can I become one of them, can I practice their dialect, interact with them, can I live with them, the kind of problems that they are going through. If one could do that, live with them, go through what they are going through, with all the problems and then understand, interact with them, probably would be a living example of how one could change. Perhaps the people in the tribal areas would take such a person's word and listen to this person in order to remold themselves, in order to become better in their lives and also become part of the experiment called democratic India.

Tribal Integration and Identity



By now we have all become very conversant with the tribal world in India. The diversity, the variety of colour and culture of the tribal people and their interactional issues with the non-tribal people and the kind of problems they have been facing within themselves and much more based on their interactions with the non-tribal people particularly the kind of exploitation they have faced all through ever since they came into contact for the first time with civilization. There are inherent dilemmas. Time has come now for us to think as to what can be done in meaningfully dealing with the tribals and their problems particularly making them part of the larger reality called democratic India. The inherent dilemmas are - should tribal be allowed to flourish in their own ways with their own identity or should they be allowed totally to live in isolation? Because if tribal people have to flourish with their own identity they should not mix up with the non-tribal people or if they do mix up, the non-tribal people must give them the total freedom to live their own style of life. Is it possible? Should we encourage this? Or should we ask them to become a part of the main stream? But does it not mean that we are fine with the modern civilized life and we in a way ask the tribal people to ape or copy the civilization? Are we happy with the civilized life? Are there not problems in civilization? Why should we keep civilization as the model for everyone to live? Is it not a bias in favour of the modern ways? Are you not happy with the diversity of tribal life, the colour, the costume, the culture, their folk culture, their folk variety? Are you not happy with it? Anybody who has seen the Rajpat Tableaus on the independent day and Republic day would have enjoyed watching the tableaus of tribal areas. In fact, every state has some tribals or others living in the state. And most of the tableaus presented by the different states invariably include presentation of the diversity of the tribals in that particular state. If we have enjoyed watching this diversity should we not try to retain? What does it mean actually? If we want to retain this, allow the tribal people to live their own life with full identity of their culture and the diversity, does it not mean in a way we are trying to build up a human zoo for showing to the world?

There are very many questions inherent to this issue of making tribals part of the larger reality called India. But then the question of allowing them to join the main stream,

where is the main stream? The larger Hindu society, are we happy with larger Hindu society, particularly when we think of the caste ridden ways of the life of the people? Particularly the example of the scheduled caste for instance who are the bottom most? And whenever tribal people become part of this caste structure we have witnessed that they become a further level, further below the scheduled caste people. That means they become the bottom most. Now what is this dilemma of ethnic diversity Vs assimilation. A word about assimilation. Assimilation means the people of a different culture come and become a part of a larger cultural group and lose their identity and adopt the ways of life of the larger reality.

Can this happen when tribal people become a part of it? Will they be assimilating completely with all their diverse ethnic groups? Will they really assimilate at all? What does it mean when they assimilate? Will they become equal? Can equality prevail after tribal people become part of a larger reality particularly in India?



The larger reality called the caste system with its established hierarchy. The caste system has its unique characteristic. Anytime a new group comes and joins and becomes a part of the hierarchy the new group normally goes bottom bound in the hierarchy rather than higher positions. Then what will happen when tribals become part of this larger reality. That brings us to the basic issue of tribal identity. When we want to make tribal people part of the larger population in India does it mean they will be allowed to retain their identity or will they lose their identity? We know too well that tribal people have their distinct socio-cultural life. In fact even physically they often look different. Forget about their language. There is no language as we have understood earlier. There is some system of communication and they are not very comfortable with the language spoken by the non-tribal people. Then what will happen? How do they interact? Will their differentness make them completely different within the larger

population? That means retaining their identity within the larger population also in a way means they will be cornered.

Will there be a fraternal feeling when they become part of the larger community in India?

So the basic issues are equality. Tribals when they become part of a larger population must still become equal to others. Is it possible? Sustainable inclusion, sustainable from both angles. One, the tribals become a part of the larger population, the becoming part should also be sustainable over succeeding generations. The other side of sustainability is the tribal people must be able to sustain this inclusion maintaining their distinct identity. Is it possible? It is, with people's participation.



But how far people's participation is feasible along with the tribals and non-tribal population? Our history of interaction of exploitation by non tribals of the tribal people does not permit us to assume that there will be full-fledged people participation when tribals become part of the larger reality. Now tribal diversity, when it is steam rolled, that means, when all the tribals become a part of the larger population, the term steam rolling, that means irrespective of their original nature and diversity that we have seen in tribal life they invariably become part of the larger population. What does that mean? Does it mean that they will lose their original identity, original uniqueness at all?

Actually whenever programs are drawn up for the tribal people either in the name of development or in the name of welfare what happens is, programs are made generic. That means, there is a tribal program which is uniformly applied to all tribals throughout the country or throughout the state depending on whether the program is drawn by the federal structure or under the provincial government. When such is the case what will

happen to the tribal identity? What will happen to their unique features in their cultural lives, the grandeur of their colourful life? What happens to it? Programs to be strictly speaking will have to be custom made. That means, emphasizing on special features and particular aspects of the colourful life of the tribal people, whatever program is drawn up in the name of development and welfare must be custom made identifying these unique features of this particular tribe. I do not think this is happening and this might probably not happen because this calls for lot of patient thinking, analysis and complete recognition of the diversity of the tribal life if this has to happen at all. Administrators and implementers do not have the patience and time to go through this. There is a vital question also. When tribals become a part of the larger population will their voices be heard at all? After all we have already understood that their language is different. They are not comfortable with the language that is spoken by the non-tribal people. Forget about the nontribal people. They have never been comfortable dealing with the tribal people unless it brings them income. It brings them easy and fast money. Therefore the non-tribal people will not bother basically when it comes to identifying and accepting the voices of the tribal people who have become now part of the population along with them. It is doubtful whether this voice of the tribal people will be heard at all when they become part of the larger population.



There is an interesting concept that comes up, assimilation or integration. Assimilation we have meaningfully understood that it means a person or a group of people who join a larger population, take up the ways of life and thinking and rituals anything that is in practice with the larger population. That means they will lose their identity. Integration means as such keeping their identity they will become part of the larger population. Now the dilemma is, is it assimilation or integration?

Tribal integration 1.1

Much of what we have been talking about so far in this episode brings us down to the basic debate, assimilation or integration? Assimilation we have just minimally understood means any larger group where the smaller group comes and joins will guide the ways of life of the people for the newly joined group. That means the newly joined group takes up to the ways of the larger group.

Integration means the newly joined group retains its original physical features still manages to live in co-existence with the larger group. Now this debate of assimilation or integration becomes vital when we think of bringing tribal people as a part of the larger population in India. Will assimilation make way for identity to disappear? It is a very ticklish question. Assimilation basically means that the people of the newer group would join the larger group lose their original identity because they are taking up to the ways of the larger population. Then identity certainly may have to disappear. But then, can integration alone retain the identity. Yes and no, because when people integrate they do retain their identity, but then in retaining identity, they lose their recognition of equality, because with their identity they are placed in a different level with respect to the larger population.

Now joining the main stream therefore might lurk around the corner the danger of loss of identity. Now more and more programs based on uniformity whether a provincial government or federal government plans tribal development and welfare programs they have a uniform frame work which is uniformly applied to the entire tribal world in the country.



Is it meaningful? Is it purposeful? Does it mean anything for the tribal people at all? Does it mean we are recognizing the unique features of the particular tribe?

Unless we recognize there is no question of encouraging the tribal people to retain their special features. More and more programs should be identifying the retention of the unique features. That means, the program should be sort of custom made.

Now this brings us to the debate of solving the dilemma between integration and assimilation. A concept of integrative assimilation, is it not an oxymoron? The two opposites brought together in one expression. Integration means one retains the identity and becomes a part. Assimilation means one loses the identity and becomes a part. Therefore it sounds like an oxymoron. But if you dig a little deep into the meaning of the term integrative assimilation the Hindu society is a marvellous example in the world. Have not Hindus included people from different cultures, different ethnic varieties, different languages and different parts of the world? They have all become part of the Hindus. But still they retain their identity and Hindus are fine with it. So the Hindu way of life is a marvellous ready example of accepting people of different identities and allowing them to live in their middle. Can this happen with the tribal people? Perhaps the history of exploitation that they have gone through the hands of non-tribal people does not permit us to assume that this could happen with the tribal people. Tribal people whenever they have become part of the interactional pattern with the non-tribal people have always been looked down upon. Now when these tribal people become part of larger India can this happen that they will be treated with respect?

If you look deep into the concept of integration it looks like it is a one way process. Whoever joins from a smaller community to the larger reality now integrates in the sense it is a one way process. That means the larger group determines the ways in which the smaller group which joins them is going to deal with the everyday situation.

Tribals, whenever they have become part of the structure within the rural communities for instance, they have become part of the caste hierarchy but they are always seen as outsiders, they are down at the bottom of the structure. And when they become part of a nearby town or a city again they are seen as outsiders. They became in a way in the class structure bottom level. That means, seen as minority. So tribals have lived with this both negatives, that is being seen as outsiders on the one hand and being seen as the minority people on the other hand.

But we come to one positive aspect when it comes to tribal life and tribals becoming part of the larger reality of the population in our country. That is the concept of conservation. Lot of times we talk about getting the people educated for the conservation of the bio diversity for which Indian sub-continent is very famous. Do we have to teach conservation to the tribal people? No. Strictly speaking we have lessons to learn from the tribal people regarding conservation of the environment and the harmony of nature because no tribe ever has worked against disturbing the harmony of nature.



They have been marvellous examples throughout the world particularly India of conserving the bio diversity and conserving the harmony of nature. So we don't have to tell them how to work for conserving. Now the thing is, the conservation logic taken to the tribals is basically unnecessary because they are already honouring it. But the thing is development paradigm has brought into focus different aspects in tribal life. Tribals in a way are at the cross roads.

Development without loss of moorings in every tribal settlement you find that there is a civilization. You have to identify it.

Now we come to a very crucial argument coming up in the recent times. We always contrasted tribal people with civilization. We even use the expression uncivilized or non-civilized to the tribal people. Civilization means the non-tribal people. Are we a ready example of how meaningfully one could live in a larger community? Yes and no. There are polished ways of civilization in respect of which we could always look at tribal people as rustic and unpolished. But then dig deeper. In fact, I would like to refer to a beautiful statement made by Robert Redfield and Milton Singer who said – look deep into the tribal way of life you will find every tribe is a kind of a civilization in itself. Look deep into the ways of life of the people in the non-tribal world you will find there are pockets of tribal life style. That means there is civilization in every tribe and there is tribal way in every civilization. So let's forget about contrasting civilization and tribe. In fact, a ready example you must see here as to the distinction between civilization and tribe is, take for instance a tribe, in fact a woman could go away walking right in the middle of the tribe in the middle of the night, very safe and secure if it is a tribal situation. You know what happens when a woman walks like this alone in the middle of the night in a town or a city in the so called civilized world. You just do not know what is going to happen. So that means the meaning of the expression that there is civilization in every tribe, that means, we have to see the finer ways of dealing with their women, the finer ways and values of the people in the tribal world which are of vital value. So long as we recognize this, there is a way to treat the tribals if we want them to become a part of the larger reality.

Now in this dialogue so far what we have understood is two things in the main. Number one is the issue of tribal identity. Number two is the issue of making the tribal people part of the larger reality called India. Where do you draw the balance? So long as the non-tribal people do not recognize that tribal people are unique in their own ways and

number two, there are lot of things that we need to learn from the tribal people and so long as the larger population does not see the basic issue that there are lot of things that we need to learn from the tribal people in order to make the life for everybody in this subcontinent in our country meaningful, happy and comfortable. Unless this change comes about among the non-tribal people it becomes very difficult to make tribal people part of the larger mainstream in our country so that they could become equal participants in the democratic experiment called India.