

The Writings of Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla:
A Comparative Study

*Thesis submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of*

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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INDIA

2017




Date: 17/07/2017

DECLARATION

I declare that the material in this thesis titled "The Writings of Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla: A Comparative Study." (La escritura de Rigoberta Menchú y de Dayamani Barla: Un estudio comparativo.) submitted by me is an original research work and has not been previously submitted for any other degree or diploma of this or any other University/Institution.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled "The Writings of Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla: A Comparative Study." (La escritura de Rigoberta Menchú y de Dayamani Barla: Un estudio comparativo.) submitted by Mr. Saket Suman Saurabh, is for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) of this university.

To the best of our knowledge, this thesis is a bona fide work and has not been submitted fully or partially to any other university. Therefore, we recommend that this work may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


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Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I am grateful and indebted to my supervisor Prof. Indrani Mukherjee for introducing me to the Latin American Studies. Her constant advice and close supervision always encouraged me to solve the problems and accomplish the tasks. It has been a great learning experience to work with her. I greatly admire her way to approach the issues at hand and the various study materials either books, journals or the online resources; she was always there to help in all ways what she could do. She was always present to help and sort out problems cropped up during my research.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Prof. Rajiv Saxena, Chairperson, CSPILAS, JNU for his on-time guidance. I am grateful to his constant help, kindness in several discussions. I would like to extend my gratitude to all the faculties of the Centre namely Prof. Anil Dhingra who always encouraged me. Dr. Lipi Biswas Sen who gave me valuable suggestions, Dr. Sovon Sanyal who has

introduced me to the Lusophone world, Dr. Meenakshi Sundriyal who is a kind of pillar strength, Meenu Bakshi ma'am who has taught during my M.A. days, Simran Maira and Alka Jaspal Berry ma'am both have taught me and guided me, Shri Gaurav kumar and Nabel Ansari have supported me throughout. Also I cannot forget the suggestions of our beloved professors like Prof. S. P. Ganguly and A. Chattopadhyay.

I also want to thank the Office staffs of CSPILAS namely Shri Basant Yadavji, Ram Kumar and Vijay who have give me immense support in any kind of assistance regarding the administrative formalities.

I would like to express my warm and sincere thanks to Prof. Vivek Kumar of CSSS, SSS, JNU who has given me immense support regarding my Summer Programme at Columbia University. Also, I would like to extend my thanks to Prof. Elsa Stamatopoulou and Teresa Aguayo from the CSER, Columbia University, New York who have provided me the materials regarding Indigenous Studies. I would also like to thank to all researchers and my supervisor of CIALC, UNAM, Mexico for their guidance related to Internal Colonialism.

I would like to thank CLACSO, IDEAs and CODEISRA for selecting me as a South-South Fellow 2014 and offering me monetary assistance to travel to Latin America and do the research.

I would like to thank Laura from Mexico, Geiselle Vanessa Sánchez Monge, Wendy and Sra. Issa from Guatemala, Mauricio from El Salvador, Claudia and Laura from Colombia, Graca Akullo from Uganda who is the best friend of mine, Jorge from MIT for their immeasurable support during my research.

I spent a long time in JNU. My experience at JNU was made enjoyable in a large part due to the company of many friends. I owe my sincere gratitude to Mangalam for helping me at the early stage of my research career from all directions. I am highly grateful to Kamalabel Neitham, Pritam Chand, Tara Shankar, Ram Babu, Shashi, Satish, Abhishek Darbey, Anurag, Prasenjit, Dr. Ram Kumar, Wasique, Sumedh, Saurabh Singh, Hemant, Vitor, Mani and Dr. Ajay Mishra from Delhi University.

I want to especially thank Iqbal Abhimanyu, Shrenya Mallik and Gursheen Ghuman from CSPILAS for their sincere and gracious help with proof reading my manuscript several times and for their

numerous suggestions. I would like to acknowledge also that Iqbal helped me with the translation from Mundari/Hindi to English.

I would like to mention one of the most important people whom I met in JNU, Rimpi Borah who was a kind supporter throughout my Ph.D, her valuable arguments has been commendable and the analysis of my work seemed impossible without her.

I am thankful to all the office and mess staffs at Lohit Hostel and Sabarmati Hostel, JNU for providing food during my stay there.

I must thank Almighty God for giving me such a wonderful family. I am highly indebted to my father Shri Shiv Narayan Sah and my mother Smt. Sudha Devi for their unconditional support and love without which it was impossible to complete this journey. I pay my loving thanks to my dearest brother Sunny Saurabh, sister Shilpa Shweta for being a great tower of strength during my Ph.D. They have encouraged me to have high expectations and to fight hard for what I believe. I also thank to all my other family members including my brother-in-law Shri Sunny Ramdas for his constant motivation to complete my thesis.

Thank You!!

To My Parents

Contents

Acknowledgements	i- iv
Abbreviations	vi-vii
1. Introduction	1-31
2. Chapter 1: Colonization and its Impact: Exploring the Comparative Scope through the Testimonials of Rigoberta Menchú and Texts of Dayamani Barla	32- 78
1.1 Spanish Colonization of Guatemala in Latin America	32- 43
1.2 British Colonization in Indian Sub Continent and afterwards	44 -47
1.3 Impact of Colonization in respective parts and comparing the works of Both Activists	47- 56
1.4 Interview with Dayamani Barla	57- 67
1.5 Interview with Rigoberta Menchú	68- 75
3. Chapter 2: The Mayans of Guatemala and the Munda Tribals of Jharkhand: Race, Rites and Rituals and understanding Globalization	79- 126
2.1 Understanding Globalization	81- 92
2.2 Mayas of Guatemala and the testimonio	92- 113
2.3 Mundas of Jharkhand	113- 123
4. Chapter 3: The Struggles of Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla against Globalization and Ecological Disaster	127- 166

3.1 Development induced Displacement.....	129- 135
3.2 Struggle propagated by Rigoberta Menchú.....	135- 144
3.3 Struggle propagated by Dayamani Barla.....	145- 163
5. Chapter 4: Beyond the Testimonials: Ongoing Struggles and More Texts.....	167- 207
4.1 Struggle in different forms and different parts of the world.....	175- 195
4.2 A New beginning through Sustainable Development.....	195- 203
6. Conclusion.....	208- 216
Works Cited.....	217- 235
Glossary.....	236- 238
Appendix I.....	239
Appendix II.....	240

Abbreviations

NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
WTO	World Trade Organization
IMF	International Monetary Forum
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NGO	Non Government Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
AFSPA	Armed Forces (Special Powers) Acts
ST	Scheduled Tribes
SC	Scheduled Castes
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ILO	International Labour Organization
MNC	Multinational Corporation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
CoP	Conference of the Parties
BoP	Balance of Payment

Introduction

The present thesis proposes to look at two “texts” from India and Latin America; Dayamani Barla and Rigoberta Menchú. I use the word “texts” as a generic term referring to all their activism through life experiences, struggles and their writings. I submit that each of these elements complement each other to comprise what I state as a “text.” Rigoberta is from Guatemala and belongs to the Maya-quiche community, and had suffered a lot along with her community members at the hands of ‘Ladinos’ (The landlords of white skin “mixed blood from native Indians and Spanish colonizers,” who exploited local native people in their cotton, sugarcane and coffee farms in the high lands) because they were being exploited in terms of low wages and the worst working conditions. When these native workers were being transported to the farm lands, they had to sit for long hours, without putting any ear to the call of nature. As said by Rigoberta:

I remember going along in the lorry and wanting to set it on fire so that we would be allowed to rest. What bothered me most was travelling on and on and on, wanting to urinate,

and not being able to because the lorry wouldn't stop. The drivers were sometimes drunk, boozed. They stopped a lot on the way but they didn't let us get out (Burgos 24).

These native people had also suffered from the Guatemalan dictatorial regime and many thousands perished due to the atrocities committed by the Guatemalan soldiers. In India, since time immemorial the "adivasi" people were marginalized and were not provided the constitutional rights as such. They are the original inhabitants of India for the reason that before the advent of Aryans these people were living on the land in harmony with nature. The Aryans had 'fair' coloured skin and called themselves superior to these dark coloured people in the main land India. The Aryans chased them to an extent that the native inhabitants had to run into forests and mountains leaving behind their land as they were no match for better armed Aryans, their horses and chariots. And since then those original people have been called "adivasis" because of living aloof to the main land. That was the beginning, which led to the "adivasi" people to embrace the forest, river and the gifts of nature. But the story does not end there because the people turned so greedy that even in the forests these people were made alienated by "dikus" (outside people) in the state of Jharkhand in

particular. That is why Dayamani Barla is propagating the issue of land, forest and water. As rightly said by V. Venkatesan:

The Indian Forest Act, 1927, the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, have been premised on the misconception that any human interference in a forest ecosystem would lead to its destruction. The National Forest Policy, 1988, which outlined a policy statement on national conservation strategies, challenged this traditional view. It preferred to recognize forest-dwelling communities as primary stakeholders in forests and involve them in the conservation process. The recognition of forest rights is an acknowledgement that forests and forest-dwelling people are inseparable. One may wonder why the country took so long to enact the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act. The answer has to be found in the evolution of the Act itself (Venkatesan: Web).

Thus, first of all, making issue of their life experiences, I would like to point out that both these women Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla are indigenous tribal women in their respective

parts of the world. Their communities have always lived on the fringes of society since times immemorial eking out a living with modest means. An entire civilization, the Mayans, were destroyed completely and reduced to being called as “indigenous” peoples. It was attempted to destroy their histories by burning their religious icons and their written records. The peoples were mass-murdered and very few survived the European diseases which they were inflicted with thereafter.

Similarly, in India, the Government by not providing decent education and health-care has dishonoured its constitutional guarantee to provide the “adivasis” (there are many different endogamous communities-more than five hundred at last count-that come under the label ‘Scheduled Tribes.’ However, despite this internal differentiation, taken as a whole the tribes of central and eastern India share certain attributes, cultural, social, economic and political, that allow us to treat them as a single segment. Usually, what they share is denoted in cultural or ecological terms, namely that these “adivasis” generally inhabit upland or wooded areas, that they generally treat their women better than caste Hindus, that they have rich traditions of music and dance, and that while they might occasionally worship some manifestation of Gods like Vishnu or

Shiva, their rituals and religion centre around village gods and spirits) equal opportunities for social and economic development. On the other hand, the policies of the Government have more actively dispossessed very many "adivasis" of their traditional means of life and livelihood. This is basically due to the reason that the tribals live amidst India's best forests alongside many of its fastest flowing rivers and on top of its richest mineral resources. As the pace of economic and industrial development picked up after Independence, the "adivasis" increasingly had to make way for commercial forestry, dams and mines. Often, the "adivasis" are displaced because of the pressures and imperatives of what passes as 'development.' Sometimes they are even displaced in the name of 'conservation.' Thus, apart from large dams and industrial townships, tribals have also been rendered homeless by national parks and sanctuaries. According to Ramachandra Guha:

The sociologist Walter Fernandes estimates that about 40% of all those displaced by government projects are of tribal origins. Since "adivasi" constitute roughly 8% of India's population this means that a tribal is five times as likely as a non-tribal to be forced to sacrifice his home and hearth by

the claims and demands of development and conservation (Guha 3306).

Colonization had left the biggest impact on the indigenous people both in Latin America and India under the Spanish and English colonizers respectively. The Mayan civilization flourished throughout much of Guatemala and the surrounding region long before the Spanish arrived. However, The Spanish conquistadores led by Pedro de Alvarado destroyed this civilization in 1523-24 ("Spanish Conquest"). The Spanish world, thereafter, established Ciudad Vieja as "capital city" and few Mayan people who survived were left to marginal and trivial lives. In the twentieth century Globalization has been most difficult for Mayans as they have had to fight corporate interests, state's indifference, displacement and destruction of their natural surroundings leading to the loss of their means of livelihood etc. Central America has always remained under the hegemonic influence of the United States which controlled not only its governments through their politics and economy but have also plundered them geo-politically and militarily, turning them into 'Banana' Republics. The plight of the indigenous peoples may be imagined! Post Globalization the scenario changed into 'internal and soft colonialism,' where the government of the day

was facilitating everything from land to water to the outside agencies and big corporate houses; indigenous communities suffered and were on the verge of losing whatever still remained of their old ceremonies, language and culture because of alienation from their land and forests. Thus Rigoberta asserts in a recent online write up that “people are integral part of nature and not masters of it” (Menchú “Somos parte...”).

Similarly, English Colonizers had used the written word when it comes to question of relationship of tribes to their means of production through ‘land use’ in India. As a consequence of the forests laws introduced by the British, and continued by the governments of independent India, ‘the tribal who formerly regarded himself as the lord of the forests, was through a deliberate process turned into a subject and placed under the forests department.’ Tribal became alien to their own land. Several revolts and protests like in 1789 revolt led by Tilka Manjhi happened to escape from the clutches of colonizers in the then Chhotanagpur region, but all were not successful (“A Portal for Santals’ Freedom Struggle”). The Chhotanagpur Tenancy (CNT) Act enacted in 1908 after the Birsa Movement to govern land issues and prevent land alienation, is supposed to be the Magna Carta for tribal peoples

("Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act"). But after the economic reforms of 1991 and then advent of Privatization, Liberalization and Globalization, the socio-economic profile of many tribal communities changed as they continued to be displaced from their land. After this they have been forced into migration towards the cities for work. Their skills in peasantry and sharecropping, which are no longer utilizable due to forceful land grabbing and displacement, were rendered useless and eventually these peoples came to form part of dispersed unskilled labour in the cities. As R. Ramachandran Says:

Ostensibly, the new State was created for the welfare of the indigenous population. But this political process has been hijacked by vested interests. Political parties that were opposed to the creation of Jharkhand are now ruling the State. Contravening the constitutional provision under fifth Schedule, the State government has entered into several MoUs for mining operations (for four steel plants and six coal mines) without the real stakeholders, the "Adivasis," having a say in the matter. There are land and forest rights granted to them under various Acts and laws, many of them enacted

during the colonial period. They are unaware of these provisions, or do not have a full understanding. There are also contradictions among the various laws. They are often the victims of prolonged land disputes and litigation, and are forced to spend hard-earned money on fighting these cases to protect their rights. To preserve the unique cultural identity of the region and restore to the “Adivasis” their rights the time to act is now (Ramachandran: Web).

Both in Jharkhand and Guatemala this changed their lives because now these indigenous and tribal communities had to thus sacrifice their land, forest and water resources for facilitating the “development” for the whole country as unpaid unskilled labour. The question was that such development did not serve any purpose to the indigenous peoples of India and Central America and led, instead, to their complete pauperization. Rigoberta’s people had to shift to other forms of work, and mostly shifting to cities and towns to work, so in a way are on the verge of losing their ‘Indigenous’ identity. Dayamani’s Munda people are also losing their source of livelihood and are on the verge of collapse.

Rigoberta Menchú, an indigenous woman and a prominent member of the struggles of her community in Guatemala is the “writer” of the testimony titled *I Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Women in Guatemala*. It is among the most famous testimonies written by Latin American writers in the last twenty years of the 20th century. In her book Menchú gives us a vivid account of the hardships and exploitations faced by her, reflective of the situation of her community at large. In her testimony she also gives detailed account of the customs and traditions highlighting the unique cultural identity of the indigenous community of Guatemala. Indigenous people have no decisive role in the political-economy of the country dominated by a small number of wealthy elite classes called ‘Ladinos’ (White skinned people).

Research Questions:

In my research, I propose a reading of this testimony as a document of struggle which I believe, merits to be considered as a Post Colonial one. I also hope to address the problems associated with this text in the context of questions regarding the genre and veracity and reliability of the same. In highlighting cultural peculiarities of the indigenous communities of her country the

author questions the notions of “cultural supremacy” of the ruling class which thrives on a politics of cultural homogenization based on values of consumerism, individualism and profit. Post Colonialism is understood to have emerged as a counter-discourse to the Eurocentric notions of history and development articulated and promoted by the ruling class of the newly independent countries of the Third world. In Latin America in general, the ruling elite’s embrace of positivist ideas such as industrialization, urbanization, education based on European and North American models and ignoring the indigenous peoples’ traditions, needs and desires was problematic.

This colonial mindset of the ruling elite was contested in the post colonial writings which articulated the historical agency of the marginalized people in contrast to the imposition of categories like ‘undeveloped’, ‘backward’, ‘illiterate’ by the ruling classes on these people. Thus the post colonial writings also contested the developmental policies of the State which was using the indigenous people merely as ‘labour force’ and displacing and even killing them at will. Miguel Ángel Asturias’ book *Men of maize* is an example of such writings. This research proposal however, wishes to analyze the texts of Rigoberta Menchú as a document of struggle and

activism giving voices to people hitherto marginalized in the official discourse of 'national development.' Menchú as a child had to work with her parents in a *finca*, a big estate, where they had to work as labourers under the abusive conditions of whip lashes, foul dirt and language abuse. They were brought en masse, in closed truck, after a long journey where they had no food or water and where they had to sit on their own excreta! "During the trip the animals and the small children used to dirty the lorry and you'd get people vomiting and wetting themselves" (Burgos 21). The testimony is the memoir of how Menchú survived these horrific realities to be able to help her people to organize their struggle and also to narrativize all this.

Similarly, Dayamani Barla used to write in *Prabhat Khabar*, a leading regional newspaper of Jharkhand. Through her writings, she gave voice to the thousands of "adivasis"/tribals who have been exploited for years. There she writes about the plight, sufferings and related struggle due to displacement of "adivasis," the rampant corruption of the State administration, and the environmental degradation due to exploitation of natural resources and construction of dams. She has been a recipient of the Counter Media Award for Better Rural Journalism (2000), the National

Foundation for India Fellowship (2004) and Ellen L Lutz prize (2013) an Indigenous Rights Award from Cultural Survival, an international non-governmental organization (NGO) in recognition of her pioneering grass root leadership for tribal rights. She earns her living by running a small tea stall at Club Road, Ranchi, Jharkhand. Being an “adivasi” woman from the poorest section of the society, Barla’s struggles were far greater than any of us could imagine. It began as a child when her father, who was illiterate and didn’t have the proper paperwork to prove his land rights, was cheated off his land and displaced. Dayamani had to work to support her education throughout, first as an agricultural labourer, then as a house maid and later as a typist. Her poignant childhood stories led to the story of how she started working with an NGO. Later, after joining the Koel Karo dam movement, (which would submerge hundreds of villages and displace thousands of “adivasis”) ultimately turned her into an activist cum vociferous writer. She completed her education through many hardships. She decided to devote her writings to bring to light the unheard plight of the “adivasis.” Dayamani was saddened and unhappy at how “adivasis” were wrongly held responsible for destroying the forests and other resources. Giving a glimpse into “adivasi” life, she talked

about how intricately their lives were linked to the forests since time immemorial, to the seasons and more importantly to land. With their strong tribal values and understanding of the environment, they have preserved and survived on forests for centuries.

Talking about the so called “development” programs and policies, she said that even today the people making the policies do not understand their culture and values. Most policies are directed towards exterminating their indigenous ways of living. Rich natural resources of Jharkhand such as iron, coal, copper and wood, have led the government and corporate to displace them on a large scale with almost no rehabilitation, for big industrial projects and dams, many of which are funded by the World Bank. She stated the example of Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC), the first large scale industrial venture in Ranchi. It displaced around 32,000 “adivasis,” out of which 22,000 were told they would be employed. Only about 2000 were given jobs, which were the lowest paid ones of manual labour. From the 36 villages which were uprooted, only about 700 people remain today, earning their lives as manual labour, domestic workers or rickshaw pullers. There is a singular failure of successive governments both in states and centre to protect the dignity and the Constitutional rights of the “adivasis” (to

compulsorily acquire tribal land (which is where most of the minerals are) and turn it over to private mining corporations is illegal and unconstitutional under the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act or PESA. Passed in 1996, PESA is an amendment that attempts to right some of the wrongs done to tribal people by the Indian Constitution when it was adopted by the Parliament in 1950. It overrides all existing laws that may be in conflict with it. It is a law that acknowledges the deepening marginalization of tribal communities and is meant to radically recast the balance of power. As a piece of legislation, it is unique because it makes the community-the collective-a legal entity and it confers on tribal societies who live in scheduled areas the right to self-governance. Under PESA, “compulsory acquisition” of tribal land cannot be justified on any count). Dayamani confronted the ways of the State’s insensitivity and neglect in-so-far as “adivasis” are concerned and works holistically in bringing about an administration that is fair and just, prompt and caring, compelled the State to redress the injustices they have done in the past and pressurized the government to be both responsive and responsible. During all these years of activism and journalism, she has faced numerous threats and personal injuries in an effort to silence her,

but she remains as strong as ever. While she continues to fight for justice for the poor and exploited, she completely deconstructs questions of what 'development' is and who is benefiting from this 'development.'

Dayamani describes that the indigenous people of Jharkhand and working masses have a mother-son relationship with nature. Their social, linguistic, cultural, religious, economic and historical existence continues to live in water, forest and land. These communities will exist as long as they are linked with water, forest and land. When "adivasis" and indigenous society get displaced from their land, forests and water, they not only get displaced from their dwellings and livelihood but also from their social values, language & culture, economy and history.

If we look at the global history of indigenous people, it becomes clear that indigenous communities remain alive only in those places where there is water, forest and land, mountains and waterfalls. Indigenous society is a part and parcel of nature. By separating them, we can neither conceive of "adivasi"-indigenous society nor of forests, rivers, waterfalls and mountains. After the formation of the Jharkhand state, within 12 years, the state government has signed Memorandum of Understandings (MoU) with 104

Corporates. Out of these, 98% are mining companies. Each and every company wants a dam for water, land for the plant, and complete destruction of ecology to advance on infrastructure, transportation, urbanization and market for their coal, iron ore, bauxite and mica mines (Barla “Ellen-L-Lutz-indigenous-rights-award-speech”). Now mining licenses have been issued with the urgency one can associate with a knockdown distress sale, and the scams that are emerging have run into billions of dollars. These companies have polluted rivers, mined away state borders, wrecked ecosystems and unleashed civil war in eastern and central India which has been the home of the “adivasis.” But let us take a brief look at the star attraction in the mining belt—the several trillion dollars worth of bauxite. There is no environmentally sustainable way of mining bauxite and processing it into aluminium. It’s a highly toxic process that has been exported out of their own environments by most western countries. To produce one tonne of aluminium, one needs about six tonnes of bauxite, more than a thousand tonnes of water and a massive amount of electricity. For that amount of captive water and electricity, one needs big dams, which, as one knows, come with their own cycle of cataclysmic destruction.

Dayamani Barla is the first tribal journalist from her state and is considered as the “voice of Jharkhand” for her powerful storytelling, community organizing, and writings. Together with her colleagues from the *Adivasi Moolvasi Astitva Raksha Manch* (Platform of Indigenous Adivasi People to Defend their Existence), Barla has stopped Arcelor-Mittal, a global mining giant, from plundering the rich natural resources of Jharkhand. The proposed steel plant, a \$9.3 billion planned investment, would have seized 12,000 acres of land and displaced 40 villages, additionally harming the surrounding ecosystems and by extension the livelihoods and survival of Indigenous communities. *Loha nahi aanaj chahiye!* (“We want grains, not iron!”) was a rallying cry of indigenous communities protesting this project. She says “We will not allow the Arcelor-Mittal company to enter into the villages because one cannot be rehabilitated once displaced. The lands which we cultivate belong to our ancestors; therefore we will not leave it” (Barla “World listens to ‘Iron Lady of Jharkhand’ in the Big Apple”).

Similarly, Rigoberta Menchú has won the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize for her work in Guatemala and expressed her state of mind during the ceremonial speech.

I consider this Prize, not as a reward to me personally, but rather as one of the greatest conquests in the struggle for peace, for Human Rights and for the rights of the indigenous people, who, for 500 years, have been split, fragmented, as well as the victims of genocides, repression and discrimination. It is also a tribute to the Central-American people who are still searching for their stability, for the structuring of their future, and the path for their development and integration, based on civil democracy and mutual respect (Menchú “Nobel Peace...”).

Therefore, Dayamani Barla and Rigoberta Menchú have left us with many questions, notably the need to make the choice of whose side we are on, in this fight for human rights, justice and equality. The rich tribal culture, language, festivals, deities, birth and marriage ceremonies etc. are at stake and have to struggle to be kept alive. Dayamani is struggling for the revival of cultural identities of several endemic “adivasi” tribes and their languages, against the government onslaught in the process of making ‘development’ in the state, and pushing them further on to the brink. So, breaking the bondage of literature as ‘fiction’ and/or ‘non-fiction’

category, this thesis will make issue of all of the above through paradigms of Cultural Studies.

Finally it will look at how these “texts” continue to inspire and incite newer horizons. Both Menchú and Barla have continued with their struggles and in the process, their “texts” have extended well beyond the limits of their material form. They continue to “write” through blogs, interviews and the social media to engage with people across the globe. Their stories of despair and triumph have impacted governments and have begun to touch upon their own lives in terrific ways that could never have been imagined before.

The existing similarities between Rigoberta and Dayamani pave the way of comparativeness in terms of their early life struggle and background context related to it. The chapters have been devolved upon the theme of comparativeness which can be looked into, as said by Susan Bassnett, “the simplest answer is that comparative literature involves the study of texts across cultures, that it is interdisciplinary and that it is concerned with patterns of connection in literatures across both time and space” (1). This work has tried to incorporate the text-based approaches which emphasized on the cultural products themselves, and more importantly lived cultures, which ‘would have been closely associated with a politics of

representation' to justify the writings of these kinds. The famous work *I Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Women in Guatemala* reflects all of the above mentioned issues from perspectives of Menchú's experiences. She portrays all the circumstances which led her to take part in the struggle of her people against their dispossession, their rights as citizens etc. Similarly, Dayamani Barla's *Ek Inch Bhi Jameen Nahi Denge (We will not Part with even an Inch of our Land)* was the fuel against anti-Mittal movement in Jharkhand. So, through these studies the present thesis proposes to enquire both "texts" and identify common hopes.

It explores the movements to fight against the corporate-bureaucratic-politician complicity to expose all their atrocities through the texts of these writers. At the same time, it would also study carefully the social dimension of the lives of the indigenous peoples as reflected in these texts of Menchú and Barla. This study thereof will serve to explore an alternate social order which will put in crisis the so called "normative" givens in terms of development. Rigoberta Menchú has used the language of their oppressors - *Spanish*- to speak against them and preach her community people in Maya-quiche itself. Likewise Dayamani wrote first in Mundari language for her tribesmen but then she started writing in *Hindi* to

appeal all folks. Hence, language plays a major role in mobilizing the whole affected lot because both activists had not only adopted local language prevalent over there but also took part actively and led from the forefront with usage of forms of the mainstream languages as well. The present thesis will also look into the role of language and the metaphors used in local sayings, the importance of forest/nature and its resources which give them from timber to fruits and livelihood to shelter as reflected in their poetry, songs and literatures. It hopes to thus make issue of how the indigenous habitat and their lives are intrinsically woven together. The exploits of the corporate-politician nexus thus also destroy this ecological balance which had been sustained through ages until now. And it is in their songs and rituals where fossils of these interwoven interdependencies can be still found.

Other Texts:

I am using both sources available in the public domain like primary and secondary sources where books written by both “texts” of my research, including the interviews, newspaper reporting, pamphlets, lectures in various places, YouTube videos, social networking pages and more importantly their blogs. Apart from that I would visit Jharkhand and meet Dayamani Barla directly in her

area of struggle, where she works at the ground level to know better the problems at the first hand basis. I have had some detailed interview with Dayamani Barla about the whole methodology of her struggle and her people have been able to “collect” more of their songs, stories, festivals, cultural practices and different ceremonies. This thesis also draws from my visit to Guatemala in Central America where I met Rigoberta Menchú and got to know her part of struggle and vision on the whole issue first hand, apart from her testimony and books; through interviews.

I am following the writers who have written a lot for the marginalized populace and the demonizing effect of globalization on all, more importantly on the indigenous and tribal population. Some such names would include Prof. Kancha Ilaiah, Sharmila Rege from Dalit/Tribal Studies in India and John Beverley and George Yúdice from Latin American studies.

My Readings will include critical texts on minor literatures, transatlantic connections, new social movements as well as literature dealing with indigenous movements, *testimonio*, *zapatism* and contemporary global mobilizations. In the Indian context, I have used the texts, blogs, reportage, pamphlet, and interviews etc. written by Dayamani Barla, which serve as the primary text.

However, I would also draw from many similar movements taking place not only in India but also in Latin America as such which are going to serve as my secondary source of reference in the proposed research. Likewise, I have conducted extensive field research in Jharkhand, where Dayamani is actively involved in tribal welfare and opposing anti “adivasi” projects and their implementation. I have undertaken deep study of prevalent songs, festivals, socio-religious, cultural and community activities through first hand observation and interview not only of Dayamani Barla but also those who are with her.

Kancha Ilaiah’s works come here handy which explain how the ‘dalit’ community not only includes the scheduled castes but how the scheduled tribes also come in the definition of this broad term. He propagates that the whole lot of forest dwellers, sharecroppers and poor peasants were made to alienate from their ancestral lands, earlier through ‘British Colonialism’ and now through ‘Globalization led colonialism.’ He says:

The occupying of their lands by government, changing of the entire climate in which tribals are used to live in, is making fish out of water. The so called other alternatives’ like planting of ‘community forests,’ ‘social forestry’ all have

nothing to fetch tribals. In fact, with these programmes only businessmen who go into the tribal areas, but even labour is taken into tribal areas from plains only to destroy the tribal identity. In order to uproot tribals from their natural habitat, the state has other mechanism too like reservation of forests, creation of wildlife sanctuary and establishment of national parks (Ilaiah 2773).

Sharmila Rege who was an Indian sociologist, has expressed her opinion regarding women activists who are coming from 'dalit' and tribal communities who, despite being doubly marginalized, are displaying extraordinary courage to thwart Government's unsocial and discriminatory moves with their community people. They also use popular culture to give potential to their collective actions, and Savitribai Phule, Jyotirao Phule and Bhimrao Ambedkar are their light houses. Recollecting the Lower caste women in India, Prof. Rege said in one of her papers that:

In the case of the lower caste women of the fact that their labour outside the family is crucial for the survival of the family, leads to the lack of stringent controls on their labour, mobility and sexuality and this renders them 'impure' or

'lacking in virtue.' In several instances the rape of lower caste women may not be considered as rape at all because of the customary access that the upper caste men have had to lower caste women's sexuality. In almost all regional languages in India the work for 'rape' is equivalent to the phrase 'stealing the honour of' and since lower caste women by the virtue to their double oppression have not 'honour' to speak, the right to redressal is often denied (Rege 10).

The similar story goes around in the Rigoberta Menchu's friend's life in *Finca*, where the landlord's son raped her and she was not able to complain. Hence, in Dayamani and Rigoberta's struggle I would try to locate these stories. One of the interesting things to be noted is that both are not any 'writer/journalist' by training but started giving interview and writing, and taking part in the protests etc. just by coincidence, which paved the way for governing authorities to recognize the legitimate demands put forwarded by them. However, they are following these protest methods like daily routine. These also come to light when they get the support of other similar groups, civil societies, press and national and international organizations. Different prizes were given to them, which in a way got them noticed in the international arena and created a kind of

psychological fear in the minds of governments to restrain themselves. This is a positive sign of triumph for the poor and displaced people.

Similarly from Latin American studies, I will dwell on Beverley's position regarding Latin American Subaltern studies. He says "Subaltern studies are about power, who has it and who doesn't, who is gaining it and who is losing it" (Beverley 1). As described by Jon Beasley-Murray:

The importance of Beverley's book about power is that it derails nostalgic celebration of subaltern cultural production and forces us to reconsider the political theory of the state. As such it is a significant engagement with cultural studies and promises to redefine the boundaries of Post Colonial theory from some time to come (Murray 144).

Henceforth John Beverley is relying on the development of Latin American Subaltern Studies as an academic project which is centrally concerned with the antagonistic relation between the people and the state.

I will also dwell on George Yúdice's proposal of how culture is managed by localized resistance groups to deconstruct narratives of globalization. Yúdice explains in *The Expediency of Culture*, as a pioneering theorization of the changing role of culture in an increasingly globalized world. Yúdice explores critically how groups ranging from indigenous activists to nation-states to nongovernmental organizations have all come to see culture as a valuable resource to be invested in, contested, and used for varied socio-political and economic ends.

This thesis would be premised on all of the above mentioned "texts" and their influential impacts in order to do pioneering work to understand the writings of Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla. Hence the present proposal will draw the common tropes of their (Menchú and Barla) "writings" (which include their activism and their use of social media) to see how they cope with their ongoing struggle.

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Chapter: 1

Colonization and its Impact: Exploring the Comparative Scope through the Testimonials of Rigoberta Menchú and Texts of Dayamani Barla.

In this Chapter, I am going to analyze the histories of the state of Jharkhand in India and Guatemala in Central America with reference to the impact of English and Spanish colonization. Here, the written accounts of Menchú and Barla, along with other sources will be studied to understand their struggle. At the same time the nature of this historical idiom will be explored in the context of Central America and India, taking into account the interface between multilingualism, transcription/translation culture and related aspects. How this idiom comprise resistance, will be addressed thereafter.

1.1 Spanish Colonization of Guatemala in Latin America :

The discovery of the “New world” by Christopher Columbus in 1492 led to a new beginning through which the Spaniards made their way to a place which was exotic and was full of natural

beauty. When they reached different parts/countries of the Continent they found that there were different indigenous kingdoms already ruling in the vast tracts of land. Thus, for example in the north, was the Aztec civilization under the rule of Moctezuma with its capital in Tenochtitlan. In the south of this civilization was the Maya civilization which is today's Guatemala and southern Mexico; further down in the South America in the region of today's Peru was the well-known Inca civilization.

But the Spaniards and other European colonizers started their conquest and colonization of the "New World" with the name of educating poor indigenous people whom they wrongly called as "Indians" assuming they were in India, which Columbus was trying to discover; according to these "Europeans" the American Indians were not literate and that is why they were called barbarians and forest-dwellers. Under Spanish rule, local religion and society were extremely quelled. Entire libraries of local codices (they're not the same as our books in some ways, however were basically comparable in function and reason for existing) were burned by enthusiastic ministers who believed that they were the work of the Devil. Just a modest bunch of these fortunes remain. Since the Spanish did not perceive local codices and different manifestations

of record-keeping as real, the historical backdrop of the codices was viewed as open for examination and translation. Their antiquated society is something that numerous local Latin American gatherings are right now attempting to recapture as these codices were the only documents that remain. Prior to the entry of the Spanish, Latin American societies had social hierarchies, which were stable and practiced without any difficulty. These were broken, as the newcomers murdered off the most important leaders or stripped them of respectability, rank and riches. The only exception was Peru, where some Inca nobility figured out how to clutch on to the riches for a period; however as the years went on, even their benefits were disintegrated into nothing¹.

Latin America has seen wars, despots, starvations, financial blasts, remote intercessions and an entire array of fluctuating catastrophes throughout the years. Every single epoch of its history is vital somehow to comprehend the present-day character of the area. Indeed, even in this way, the Colonial Period (1492-1810) emerges as the period that did the most to shape what Latin America is today. Indigenous inhabitants of Guatemala comprise

¹ For more see Minster, Christopher:
<http://latinamericanhistory.about.com/od/coloniallatinamerica/p/colonialera.htm>

almost 61% of the total population of the country which includes 'ladinos' among others, according to the reliable data but the Guatemalan government shows their figure merely around 40 per cent. Here also the notion of representing people incorrectly could have the 'interest' perpetuated by the long historical narratives and its goal. As Danilo said:

According to official statistics, 40 percent of the Guatemalan population is indigenous, and includes Maya, Garífuna and Xinca peoples. Though they themselves claim that more than 60 percent of Guatemala's 14 million inhabitants are indigenous (Valladares: Web).

The most traditional Maya populations reside in the western highlands in the departments (In Guatemala the regions are divided into departments as in India the prevalent system is of states) of Quiche, Huehuetenango, Quetzaltenango and San Marcos. They stretch across modern-day Yucatan, Quintana Roo, Campeche, Tabasco, and Chiapas in Mexico and southward through Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador and Honduras. The nomenclature *Maya* comes from the ancient Yucatan city of Mayapan, the last capital of a Mayan Kingdom in the Post-Classic

Period. The Maya people refer to themselves by ethnicity and language bonds such as *Quiche* in the south or *Yucatec* in the north (though there are many others).

The Classic Maya Period: 250-950 CE was the era which saw the consolidation of power in the great cities of the Yucatec Maya such as Chichen Itzá and Uxmal. Direct cultural influences may be seen, in some sites, from the Olmecs and the Zapotecs and the cultural values of Teotihuacan and El Tajin but, in others, a wholly new culture seems to have emerged (such as at Chichen Itzá where, though there is ample evidence of cultural borrowing, there is a significantly different style to the art and architecture). In terms of political-administrative, Vázquez says:

El omnipotente poderoso era *HalachHuinic* (el hombre verdadero), también denominado *Ahau* (señor). El cargo, hereditario, pasaba de padres a hijos; pero si el *Ahau* moría sin descendencia masculina el título pasaba a las mujeres. Si tampoco dejaba hija, el cargo era heredado por el hermano de mayor edad. El *HalachHuinic* controlaba la vida de la comunidad desde la capital del distrito ayudado por el resto del linaje gobernante, los *bataboob*, que se

encargaban de administrar los centros secundarios subordinados, presidir los consejos comunales, supervisar la recogida de tributos e impartir justicia (Vázquez 46).

This period was the height of the Maya civilization in which they perfected mathematics, astronomy, architecture and the visual arts and also refined and perfected the calendar. The great pyramids which characterize so many Mayan sites like one of Tikal in the department of Petén are replicas of the great mountain of the gods known as the *Witzob*. The cyclical nature of human existence is mirrored in the famous Maya calendar. The depictions of the many gods and goddesses all go towards their function in helping one through the cycles of life or hindering. The great religious book of the Maya-quiche people, the *Popol-Vuh*, which means book of the people, tells precisely this story of the cyclical nature of life through the tale of the *Hunahpu* and *Xbalanque* and their victory over the forces of chaos and darkness symbolized by the Lords of *Xibalba*. However at the time of the conquest, the Mayan civilization was already in decadence due to infighting, bad weather, epidemic and other disasters.

The Colonial History of Guatemala spans across the period of arrival of the conquistador Pedro de Alvarado from the Hernán Cortés team in 1524 and ends with the Guatemala's declaration of independence in 1821. Alvarado had led his forces upland along the congested canyon of Samala from Xetulul and after two days of wandering at the end of passage there happened a fierce war between the army of Alvarado and K'iche forces; where k'iches had to retreat and finally they were slaughtered near Xequikel river meaning 'under blood,' though it might had this name before the massacre because of presence of reddish color of mountains above but it seems to this author otherwise. K'iche' loyalists regrouped again but in the absence of proper arms etc. they were nowhere equal to Spanish soldiers and so they started surrendering to Alvarado which encouraged him to march towards the capital of K'iche' for the final showdown. That was the last challenge faced by Alvarado by k'iche people and it led to the establishment of Spanish empire in the Mayan world in 1524.

Although Guatemala was part of the Viceroyalty of Mexico, it functioned separately as a Captain General and included the stretches of what is now Chiapas, part of Yucatan, El Salvador,

Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and of course Guatemala. The colonial capital city of Guatemala called La Antigua was founded with the name of Santiago de Guatemala in 1543. It was the centre of cultural, economic, religious, political and educational activities for the entire region. The Spaniards had chosen Antigua as the capital city because the earlier Mayan capital had drowned in 1541. Antigua, moreover, had very fertile soil and very comfortable climatic conditions. Later in 1773, after terrible earthquakes, the capital shifted to the present day Guatemala City. The region of Guatemala was not as rich in minerals and metals as Mexico and Peru. However, it stood out mainly in agricultural production. Its main resources were sugarcane, cocoa, precious woods and indigo ink to dye textiles.

The colonial regime, prevailing in Guatemala between 1524 and 1821, can be conceived, in essence, as the economic exploitation of a territory and of the inhabitants of that territory, who had until then enjoyed autonomy. The economic apparatus, strictly considered, rests mainly on the following institutional columns: Slavery, Encomienda, Repartimiento, personal services, ownership and use of land, public finance administration, technology,

craftwork and trade. Therefore, in Guatemala, the colonial regime was completely based on the labour of the indigenous peoples.

It is worth remembering here the fierce debates regarding the so called *encomienda* system between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda during the XVI century. Las Casas, who was a Spanish encomendero in the New World to fulfil the Spanish agenda of evangelism, had written the most famous book of that time titled as *la brevísima relación de la historia de las Indias* with the revelation of atrocities committed on the native indigenous people. At the same time in Spain there was an arm chair historian who was advocating the Spanish rule and other measures to do whatever deemed fit to teach the 'barbaric' Indians in the new world, whose name was Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda.

Sepúlveda had distinguished the 'civilized' Europeans from 'other' barbaric Indians who were living in forests, who were not having any 'correct' form of history (because they were practicing the oral or pictographic form of history, passed on from one generation to others traditionally. While considering this form unacceptable, the 'civilized' people preferred - the written form of history, such as *Diarios de Colón and Cartas de Hernán Cortés*

which were referred to as the first official history of Latin America). So, we can realize how the whole agenda was a managed one, to keep afloat the civilized one.

Central American indigenous history has mainly comprised of the occupation of forest lands by the colonizers resulting in depopulation and pauperization of the indigenous peoples. Occupation has led to deforestation as the Spaniards used these lands to produce commercially bananas, cacao and other such items for profit. Thereafter, the Spaniards also decided to use the occupied lands of Guatemala to build their settlements as they conveniently turned the indigenous peoples into slaves. As is explained earlier, the subsequent deployment of the *encomienda* and the *repartimiento* systems only helped in the perpetuation of slavery of indigenous peoples of Guatemala.

The nineteenth century debate of civilization/barbarism only justified the continued exploitation and marginalization of the indigenous peoples as it helped in looking at the political dispensation of the powers that were to engineer the designs of citizenship and nation building. The impact has been so terrible that even the so-called freedom of Guatemala in 1823 did little to

redeem them as they fell now under the violence of dictatorships of conservative or liberal regimes across the entire nineteenth century.

The first President was Rafael Carrera who was an illiterate *mestizo*. He toppled the liberal government of Francisco Morazán in 1840. He was a conservative and hence restored the privileges of the colonial period. He favoured the church and the landed classes, and brought the Jesuits back into the life of the nation. He died in office in 1865. The next caudillo was a liberal, Justo Rufino Barrios, who came to power after a revolution in 1871, and in 1873 he became president. The dramatic changes which he introduces over the next twelve years won him the title of 'the Reformer.' He expelled the Jesuits, seized church property, and set up a system of secular education. He opened up the country to foreign investment. The next two caudillos in Guatemala's quartet were so-called liberals, but their regimes in reality were more dictatorial in nature. Manuel Estrada Cabrera, president from 1898, became president and remained in power through rigged elections while he amassed large reserves of wealth. In 1920 he is ousted from power because of being declared insane. After this, Jorge Ubico, a general, became the next president in 1931. He was

known by the nickname Tata (father), and he worked for the improvement of the conditions of the Indians. But he was also a brutal dictator and curbed freedom of speech and of the press. In 1944 he was forced to flee Guatemala (Gascoigne: Web).

The conditions of the indigenous peoples did not change as nineteenth century framework of the new nations and citizenships could only accommodate them in frames of labour management. Landlords and heads of vast clientele served varied functions: from the obligation of colonial officials to care for the natives to the newest needs of providing workers for coffee plantations. In the mid-nineteenth century, therefore, the tensions of the Indian republic era were re-established: how to get workers without destroying the material base of the people. All this in the framework of a forced labour system of colonial roots. Now, the extent that political leaders functioned as hinges, it could be here where the natives could build their space for negotiation. However, mediators and political bosses fail to shape anyone, not the indigenous (who do not protect) nor the farms (who do not get the workers they need).

1.2 British Colonization in Indian Sub Continent and afterwards:

India is the land of many civilizations which have flourished here, taking the support of primitives since time immemorial. When we look back to the history of race and creed associated to the Indian sub continent, we would find that the original inhabitants were the people who are now called as “adivasi” (those people of India, who are still living in the larger parts of Central India, inside the deep forests, where the rivers are serene and land is full of minerals). These “adivasi” people are very close to nature as they revere the forests, mountains, rivers and nature. They became the ardent preserver and conservator of forests, land per se because they were totally dependent on nature for all their needs of life.

Historically, the tribals had always lived as masters of their lives and their system of communal holding of agricultural land continued uninterrupted. There was no system by which land could be owned as private property by individuals. It was one of the most egalitarian and democratic system of land holding known to the region. But once the colonial British arrived they also brought with them corrupt practices and exploitative system of governance.

In Munda areas of Jharkand the village headman was called the Munda. The head of a cluster of villages – *killi* – was called *Manki* who was always elected. The clusters of villages were created for mutual help during war. The local chiefs received no rent, rather only assistance in war and “salami” (gifts given as a mark of respect) at festivals. In Oraon areas, community ownership of land was known as “Bhuinhari” held by the original settlers; it was also rent free. The Raja of local chiefs had separate land known as “Majhas.” The rajas gave the land to the tribals, who cultivated and paid a share to the Rajas (kings). There was a similar system among the Cheros and Kharwars of Palamu.

However, during the Mughal regime the regional “jagirdars” began controlling almost all lands of the tribes and of Rajas also. They collected pre-decided revenue on behalf of the Mughal rulers. When the British snatched territories they started serving the new masters and their exploitative commercial interests. The white rulers were far more exploitative and demanded hefty revenues which turned the jagirdars and their middlemen far more oppressive.

They soon started taking possessions of land themselves and made the tribals cultivate these lands for free. Thus, the wretched tribals were reduced to the status of slave labourers on their own lands. It was for the first time that land owning tribals were reduced to the status of tenants. This process started among the Cheros and Kharwars of Palamu, and later among the Oraons, Santhals and then among the Mundas and the Hos. The net result was a severe blow to the community oriented lifestyle and land ownership of the “adivasis.”

When we analyse the impact of both Spanish and British colonisations in the Latin America and Indian Sub Continent, it becomes very clear that both the respective parts had suffered colonization’s brutal force, which changed their own way of looking at history and demography as such. In independent India, various efforts have been made to improve the socio-economic conditions of the tribals and to sustain the constitutional safeguard given to them. However, the caste factor continues as an institutional engine of discrimination and exploitation of the tribal peoples. It is not surprising therefore that in spite of constitutional guarantees, the results are not encouraging. Moreover agendas of development plans of the nation are often in direct conflict with the interests of

some tribals resulting in them finding themselves disintegrated. The establishment of heavy industries, construction of dams and launching of development plans in tribal zones has led to displacement of local population. Thousands of tribal families have been displaced from their traditional habitats.

Destruction of forests, coastal areas and other kinds of terrains inhabited by tribals has resulted in drastic difficulties for the people whose livelihood depended on those habitats. The tribals of Jharkhand have had an impressive history of struggle against their new exploiters. Such struggles work towards recuperating their land rights as well as resist cultural homogenization with the main dominant narratives².

1.3 Impact of Colonization in respective parts and comparing the works of Both Activists:

If we look at the Indian context after the British Colonization, many domestic industries, handicrafts, artisans were affected very badly due to cheap factory made imports from Manchester. The

² For more see Mondal, Puja. <http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/india-2/tribal-movement-in-india-before-and-after-independence-2796-words/6141/>

oppressive rules and regulations made the local people's life very difficult likewise 'subsidiary alliance,' 'rule of lapse' etc. irked the local chieftains and further meddling into the religious and social affairs of local masses made a clinching point against the British. The drain of wealth and converting pristine forests into plantation hubs for tea and other cultivations also made the life difficult for those who ever the original habitants of this land the "adivasi/tribal" people. The greed of colonizers promoted influx of many outsiders and gave a chance to make pawns out of the innocent habitants of these regions and further alienated them. This was the story of that era. Now the situation is not good either, after 69 years of independence there is not much change at the ground zero in many states leave alone the remote areas. Concerned people like Dayamani Barla are making efforts at this end so that the needful could be done in due course. Barla is also denouncing the same colonial preoccupations through her writings where she opines that today's ruling government is no different than the colonizers of India. The Government is taking away land from poor tribal people for establishing urban utilities, dams, mining and other things in the name of the development of the region; and the poor tribal people

who would be affected by all this, they say people are misinformed on the whole issue.

Barla says all this through her celebrated work of *ek inch bhi jameen nahi denge* where along with her the affected tribal community has expressed the concern in the following excerpt about the land about to be given for the million dollar company Arcelor-Mittal to open a factory in Jharkhand:

आजादी के बाद गुजरे इन ६० सालों में विकास के नाम पे स्थापित विभिन्न परियोजनाओं की वजह से ८० लाख झारखंडी (आदिवासी मूलनिवासी) विस्थापित हो चुके हैं। इन विस्थापितों में से मात्र 5 से 6 प्रतिशत को ही किसी तरह से पुर्नवसित किया जा सका है। शेष विस्थापित आज कहाँ हैं और किस हाल में हैं? इसे जानने और समझने को न तो कोई नेता तैयार है और न ही सरकारी तंत्र।कल तक जो कोई जमीन के मालिक थे , आज वो ही अपनी जमीन से बेदखल होकर एक बेला की रोटी के लिए दर दर भटक रहे हैं। इनके पेट में आनाज नहीं है इनके बदन पे कपडे नहीं है, इलाज के आभाव में बेमौत मर रहे हैं। कभी जमीन के खुटिदर रहे विस्थापित, आज कुली-रेजा और बंधुआ मजदूर बन गए हैं। खेत खलियान उजड़ने के बाद बहू बेटियां महानगरों में जूटन धोने को

मजबूर हो गयी हैं। विकास के नाम पे हम विस्थापितों को क्या मिला ? (Barla *Ek Inch Bhi Jameen Nahi Denge* 5)

(English Translation)

In the 60 years which have passed since the independence 80 lakh Jharkhandis (tribals/indigenous people) have been displaced due to different projects established in the name of development. Only 5-6% of these displaced people have been rehabilitated somehow. Where are the rest of the displaced and in what conditions? No leader or the government machinery is keen on knowing to understand this. Those who were owners of their land till yesterday are forced to wander from place to place in search of food and livelihood. There is no food in their stomach and no clothes on their bodies; they are dying untimely due to lack of medical attention. Those who once worked their own land are now forced to work as daily wagers, construction workers, and bonded labourers. After the fields and forests were destroyed the women are forced to wash used dishes in cities. What did the displaced get in the name of development? [Translation Mine].

Due to so much protest and repression of tribal people, the Government finally relented which meant the ouster of Mittal company. Here, she cites the importance of tribal history and culture, which have been neglected since centuries in their own motherland.

Now we can realize that Dayamnai Barla is fighting and making her voice heard in different fora, has the same echo as pointed by various authors, environmentalists and conservationists. Here, it must be noted that she alone is making her mark in the state with the help of her community people. She says:

भारत गावों का देश है और हमें यह भी नहीं भूलना चाहिए कि भारत एक कृषि प्रधान देश है। आज भी देश की 80 प्रतिशत आबादी गाँवों में रहती है इस पूरी आबादी की जीविका जल -जंगल -जमीन सहित प्राकृतिक संसाधन पर ही निर्भर है। यही नहीं देश की आबादी के लिए किसान अनदाता भी है। (Barla *Kisano Ki Jameen Loot Kiske Liye?* 3)

(English Translation)

India is a country made of villages and we should not forget that agriculture is the main occupation here. Even

today 80% of the country's population lives in villages and depends solely on land, water, forest and other natural resources for their livelihood. Also, it is peasants who feed the whole country [Translation Mine].

It is clear from the writings that Barla is very much for the conservation of natural resources because since ancient times these very resources have sustained the livelihoods of poor, marginalized people who were/are living in the forest. For them these things are still God like and some places are God itself. Dongria Kondh example from the Odisha state is the fantastic example where they fought against Vedanta Company, which wanted to establish Bauxite mine, to save the Niyamgiri hills which they revered as the deity. Here also we can draw a parallel between Dayamani and Rigoberta. Menchú says that her community and other indigenous communities as well are very much dependent on nature and pray in front of it. This becomes clearer from the following citation:

We say: 'Mother Earth, you who gives us food, whose children we are and on whom we depend, please make this produce you give us flourish and make our children and

animals grow...' for the Sun, we say: 'Heart of the sky, you are our father, we ask you to give your warmth and light to our animals, our maize, our beans, our plants, so that they may grow and our children may eat' (Burgos 57).

Hence we get a fair idea how the Maya-quiche community had preserved the nature under its lap generations after generations. The Water is also very pure for them and they never want to waste it. "Without Water we cannot survive, nor did our ancestors have survived" (Burgos 56). *Popul Vuh*, which is the most sacred book of Maya community, has talked about the nature in much more detail as mentioned by Jeeni Criscenzo³:

Here is the new creation,
made of mud and earth.
It doesn't look very good.
It keeps crumbing and softening.
It looks lopsided and twisted.
It only speaks nonsense.
It cannot multiply.
So Heart-of-Sky lets it dissolved away.

³ Criscenzo, Jeeni. <http://www.criscenzo.com/jaguarsun/popolvuh.html>

Now Heart-of-Sky plans again.
Our Grandfather and Our Grandmother are summoned.
They are the most wise spirits.
"Determine if we should carve people from wood,"
commands Heart-of-Sky.

They run their hands over the kernels of corn.
They run their hands over the coral seeds.
"What can we make that will speak and pray?"
asks Our Grandfather.
"What can we make that will nurture and provide?"
asks Our Grandmother.
They count the days,
the lots of four,
seeking an answer for Heart-of-Sky.

Now they give the answer,
"It is good to make your people with wood.
They will speak your name.
They will walk about and multiply."
"So it is," replies Heart-of-Sky.

And as the words are spoken, it is done.
The doll-people are made
with faces carved from wood.
But they have no blood, no sweat.
They have nothing in their minds.
They have no respect for Heart-of-Sky.

They are just walking about,
But they accomplish nothing.

"This is not what I had in mind,"
says Heart-of-Sky.
And so it is decided to destroy
these wooden people.

Hurricane makes a great rain.
It rains all day and rains all night.
There is a terrible flood
and the earth is blackened.
The creatures of the forest
come into the homes of the doll-people.

"You have chased us from our homes
so now we will take yours,"
they growl.

And their dogs and turkeys cry out,
"You have abused us
so now we shall eat you!"

Even their pots and grinding stones speak,
"We will burn you and pound on you
just as you have done to us!"

The wooden people scatter into the forest.
Their faces are crushed,
and they are turned into monkeys.
And this is why monkeys look like humans.

They are what is left of what came before,
an experiment in human design (Criscenzo: Web).

Hence, Dayamani Barla and Rigoberta Menchú are on the same side when we discuss the environment protection and human rights issues. Both the protagonists of this work have seen as well as suffered so much hardship in their own life which has made them raise their voice for people like themselves poor marginalized peasants, land-less labourers, tribal people who are living in the forests, indigenous people and many more.

1.4 Interview with Dayamani Barla:



Ranchi, Jharkhand, India, 15 Jun. 2014.

Me: Sister, Please tell me from where do you get inspiration to fight against the detrimental Government policies?

Dayamani Barla: I have struggled a lot during my childhood days. Land had been snatched from my parents, and to retrieve back that land they took thumb impression on the plain paper, what was written then, nobody knows. We could realize only when the land had been taken away and to take it back my father had to approach the court. They had put in that paper their own name. Earlier, in our village, there were no *Sahu* (money lenders) people, ours was a very big village named Arahari in the Gumla district in the state. He was the first *Sahu* who took away my father's land. When we were fighting the case in the court, during the trial there were witnesses who had been called but nobody appeared. Due to the power of the local muscleman, people were afraid and some gifts like radio, watch, alcohol had been offered to them to abstain from the trial process. When the verdict came, we lost the case. During the process of fighting the case we had to sell small land plots, our cattle etc.

After that my father had to go to another village for work in the field, as an agricultural labourer. My mother became maid servant;

my two elder brothers had to come out in the city to work. They had to leave school, and work in the Ranchi City. Back home, only I and my third brother were left. My mother used to send us money. There was food scarcity and we used to eat fruits etc. from the trees. After passing 8th standard from the village school, I came to Ranchi as well. My mother used to work in the household of a Punjabi family. There was problem of how to continue the studies and where to live? A temporary accommodation had been arranged in the workers-shed where on one side there were cattle and on another side we were located. I know how a family breaks up. I know how the children become homeless and orphan inspite of living with parents. That's why I talk about land, forest and water so that those families who are dependent on them and their coming generation would not have to suffer. My life is itself a message for me and therefore I do not have to get any inspiration from any person.

Me: When you lead the struggle for these causes, how do people follow you and express their willingness to join you?

Dayamani Barla: In today's date, to go in front of people, to convince them of taking into account their own problems, taking

them along to solve them and find the way out are very challenging tasks in itself. As I have said earlier, what I have seen during my childhood, people are exploiting them, be it mafia, be it bureaucracy or may it be the political class. Actually, people do believe them without giving a single thought because these classes know very well various rules, and rob common peoples of their land, their food and make a habit to return all these in instalments or do not return them at all. People do not understand all these so easily, and those who want to stand with them in solidarity, they are not able to get support so easily.

As people do want to come but not in majority because when we go to meet them; we talk about rights, we talk about making a united community but we are not able to give them anything in return. However, the administration or these powerful people take away food from their plates and return them in small instalments and in small intervals. In these circumstances, it becomes very difficult to manage people's solidarity for the just cause, and to fight for them. Nevertheless, I try to do whatever possible I can do. During 365 days of a year I am out for almost 320 days, I participate in meetings and in those meetings we decide how to convince people, how to get the remedy of the grievances they are

having. To understand the problems at the hand, what media is saying, what mafia is saying, what political class is saying and what the administration is saying on those issues? To study the whole issues, the documents related to it and prepare a wholesome idea, are very important. In the field of journalism one has to keep open all her/his six senses to collect information from various sources and analyse accordingly. It means that one has to do the work from the beginning till the end.

Me: The struggle propagated by Siddhu-Kanhu, Birsa Munda has a very important place in the history. How do you channelize those messages among the people?

Dayamani Barla: In real sense, all those struggles were for the demand of self governance. Those were for the self governance in the villages, to arrange everything in a proper order in the history and talked about the self respect, for those vary reasons we do remember Mahatma Gandhi, Siddhu-Kanhu and Bhagat Singh among many others today as well. Also we do remember the incidence of 1819 Jaliawala Bagh incident. But the 1856, Bhog river incident was also a big one. Before the advent of Bhagat Singh, Siddhu-Kanhu fought against the repressive regime of the British

government. They had not fought for the Jharkhand state but for the independence of India. The same was of Birsa Munda, it is not true that Britishers had given him some incentives and he had bowed in front of them. In today's life the country needs them; there is again the need of the same Birsa Munda, Siddhu-Kanhu type struggles for the self respect, for not bowing down. At the time of Siddhu-Kanhu *Hul* had happened and during Birsa Munda *Ulgulan* had happened.

Today, due to flawed policies of the government, lands have been displaced massively so it needs those types of struggles. For the formation of Jharkhand state people had fought, isn't it? The Government at that time did all its calculations and made three new states, the struggle for the formation of Jharkhand state was one of the oldest one. There was no movement for the Chhattisgarh. These three states were created because of their mineral richness. How to exploit them and how the country's big and small industrial houses grab them, the division of states took place. After the formation of Jharkhand state on 15 Nov. 2000, a few MoUs had been signed. However, these were not signed through which the development and security of forests take place, or development of agriculture, development of education system with environment

take place. For the betterment and development of youth and women, policies had not been made. The policies have not been made for the self governance but for the MNCs.

These days, people are struggling in the same way as Siddhu-Kanhu fought without compromising the self respect, to save their forests and lands. 104 MoUs have been signed and there are 4-5 companies using any coercive means whatsoever available to them to establish power plants and do mining. Therefore, we are fighting, after taking inspiration from the history. The land has been considered as 'property' by them but we consider it as the 'heritage' because it is not for any single community. Today the non-tribals are also able to get fresh air and water and they are also very much owner of them. Environment means fresh air, fresh water, and fresh food. Today the struggle of Siddhu-Kanhu is alive but there are full forces working to muzzle that dissent. Gandhiji fought for the *swaraj* but the government of the day itself making amendments in the various policies. We are looking towards the foreign lands for the technology and education policies but at the same time discarding our own local things. Today, if there would not been any land and farmer in the state and the country, then what would be left behind and how can we imagine the holistic country. It is not like that we

are against 'development' but we talk about the sustainable development. The government policy making process is missing the real message in itself. The real meaning has been known by those illiterate farmers and people residing in the villages. The whole world should learn from them actually.

Me: Those struggles which have been going on today in the country, should all of them follow the constitutional means or other options should be explored?

Dayamani Barla: I am in people's movement since 1995 in a true sense. I have seen its strength, its ideology and the model propagated by them for the development; I have understood it and I can understand its core message. The thinking which is prevalent in the peoples and in the activists; is itself lacking in the administration. Those who are struggling not only for themselves but also for the others, because they want to facilitate fresh water and fresh air to them as well. Today, the government of the day is very much adamant to give concessions to the MNCs through various changes in the policies in the Parliament and the Assembly. We are fighting at the grassroots level. CNT and SPT acts are there for the well-being of our region and in the Constitution there is

PESA Act, in which rights have been given to the *Gram Sabha* for the consent to divert the land from tribal people and without its consent, a single inch of land cannot be displaced. However, those who are in the assemblies or in the parliament, they never raise such issues. Today these issues are not political issues for them. They go to Malaysia and see overthere skyscrapers and say that that type of model should be accepted, they visit New York and standing at the middle of the Times Square say that model should be in India, without knowing the history of that place. Eighty per cent of Indian population are living in the villages and you are doing injustice to them. You can see New York and Malaysia but you are not talking about how to develop our state with our own resources, what kind of 'development' model your state is demanding. In the 20 years of struggle I feel that people like me should also go the tempels of democracy.

Me: Women do take part in movements which are related to environment protection?

Dayamani Barla: In all people's movements the majority are women, almost 60 per cent. These all people's movements are somewhere or other, related to the environment protection. Women

are more sincere for the environment, for the house, for the society, for the country; it is different thing altogether that they are not being given their due place.

Me: In the tribal society, women are being given higher place. What do you want to say regarding this?

Dayamani Barla: Our tribal society is a nature-based open society, where people do work along and solve the life related problems accordingly. In the so called educated and developed society you will not be able to find such a scenario where the whole society participate and involve in the rituals like birth ceremony, but you will find this in the tribal society. In the marriage ceremony, the whole society goes along to bring the bride and in the death, men and women go together to the crematorium. During festivals, both the men and women sing and dance along with each other.

Me: If I am correct, during the struggle of Siddhu-Kanhu, we are not able to find any name of women warriors?

Dayamani Barla: It is like that the historians have presented things in a much distorted way. During the Siddhu-Kanhu movement, there were more women and children in the band of 20- 25

thousands. However, you will not be able to find their details. During the Dumbaripur incident, there were more women who died. For the struggle of land-forest-water, since the beginning there were more women than men, about which you will find their names mentioned somewhere and somewhere not. To make anything handicap, you cut the history, like you cut one leg amongst two then how will one can stand, after two minutes, one will fall automatically. That's why we have started writing. I used to tell our people that one should not be made spokesperson but write own self. Therefore, I have started writing to save the tribal society, save the farmers and to write our own history. I have written in the *Ek Inch Bhi Jameen Nahi Denge*, compensation for which you will give - for the water, for the air, for our language, for our culture; for which will you give us the compensation? The historians would say compensation has been given for the land and here goes the 'development.' Then we have said that the land is not the only land, for us it is the 'heritage', and then how one would measure that [Transcribed and Translated from recorded interview by me].

1.5 Interview with Rigoberta Menchú:



Guatemala City, Guatemala, 30 Jan. 2015.

Me: How do you see the nature as the protector of the Guatemalan identity of Indigenous community? And how is it changing in the XXI Century?

Rigoberta Menchú: Well, for us (the mayas) the nature is like a spirit which exists in the life. The Earth is our mother, nobody can live without the oxygen and the oxygen comes from the plants, the water and the ocean. It is an interaction in totality; if it does not exist then it will be difficult for the life to sustain on the Planet. So, it is very necessary. Our Mayan Calendar is very sacred one. First, it is essential to understand it in a philosophical way. It provides the guide of life in a very real sense. The calendar is mathematical one because it contains time and spirit as well. So, we see it in a philosophical way and in a mathematical way. Second, it is related to the life of a human being.

For a female to be fertile, a perfect degree of alignment is needed between the moon, the uterus and the earth. If it is in good orientation for the next 260 days in the uterus of the mother, the child would be there. The Moon possesses a formation, comprehension of each one's life. After the 260 days, we respire the first oxygen, the first life. We put the uterus in the earth, like we

do when someone dies. One cannot translate the holy *Semana Santa*, which is the sacred day. According to our calendar, we celebrate each 20 days of the year, dedicated to our ancestors to thank our grandfather and grandmother for the life. We offer them glass of water and also food to eat. For the 20 days we just talk to them, many of them were lost and many were dead; for example I don't know where Victor who was gunned down, my brother Petricinio is, also I could not find the body of my mother. I know that my mother is alive in the spirit; it is difficult for me because we generally call our grandparents. Your vision follows the way which you want to pursue. Apart from the moon and the earth, there is the existence of the Sun because it is our guide. The mayans who are living in different parts of the world like in China or in India, all are oriented by the Sun and its light.

Me: How do you and your community think, after winning the Nobel Peace prize and what are you doing for the human rights for example?

Rigoberta Menchú: I think that the Nobel Prize is a decision which has magic in the time. Martin Luther King had fought for the human rights. Nelson Mandela and Mother Teresa of Calcutta are the

lighthouses in front of the world. There are many persons who have not got this prize like Mahatma Gandhi and many others and many women as well. Then, the Nobel Prize is a kind of opportunity which can transcendence into the objective; it is not the person. We as a human being have a short life unfortunately, which lapses in short time that's why one has to do many things. There are rivers and the sea which live long but it does not depend on its own. Many believe that the Nobel Prize is the money. The multi millionaires are those who have accepted the resources of this Planet, we don't know where they are, how their credit card is. We know very few people who exactly know Bill Gates. What kind of love a multi millionaire can give with her/his money. The money teaches us the insensibility. There are famous artists who have been united for the causes, leaving behind the hope among the youths. This must be appreciated. I want to do something good. However, many did accumulate the wealth but at the moment of death, it is all waste but these are their own mission simply. For me help and solidarity comes in terms of mutual reciprocity. I respect you and you respect me.

Me: How do you see the Eco-feminism where women are conserving and protecting the Environment?

Rigoberta Menchú: Many persons do fight for the mother earth due to their common sense. Because they know that if it does not rain this year there will be no water, they know that if there is no water then drought will occur and if there is no seed then there will be no food. I think that the majority of people have the common sense to be in plane-pact with the Mother Nature. When we theorize the fight, the stereotype has been put already. Therefore, I think that there does not exist the real defender of the mother earth indeed. Simply we have our own compromises with the surroundings. When one establishes the institution to defend the mother earth or a pact has been signed for the same, in my mind I always say the world has lost its way. The mother earth has never said that she needs the defender; she is the one who gives us everything and other methods to conserve her. I think that common sense is necessary and it needs more practice, for example if my son wants to kill a rabbit, I would say that “don’t kill that one and allow the rabbit to go his place.” This is a type of education to conserve the nature coherently. It is not necessary to distribute the papers of the pacts, vote on it etc. I think that it is a part, not very well of the consumption. If there is ‘fight’ of nature then there should be a ‘total consumption.’

Me: what do you think about the need of industrialization at a large scale for the economic growth? Which method do you support: industrialization or sustainable environment?

Rigoberta Menchú: I never support the industrialization. Always, it is totally destructive because it already has an objective, which is commercial one. Someone sells gold, silver, petrol; saying that it is the beginning, but it is not a beginning of the conservation of life but it is a beginning to sell, earn and discard. It is the logic of neo liberal economy, the capitalist economy. I do not know a single industry which says that we will take little from the mother earth and we are going to use this so that nothing goes wasted and turn into using the same so that not to return again to extract. *Hombre*, here, the only principle that works is to extract till the life drops.

Here comes the tragedy always, the process of exploitation of the Mother Nature with the combination of people dependent and based on them, who are not in the process of this business at all. Also, I think that the humanity produces much more, thanks to the God and the Earth, but all that it produces serve or not, the major part of it being wasted. This means to say that no need to search for the alternatives. Now what is more important? To do more

extraction or to use the things judicially? Preferably, I would prefer the communitarian economy; believe in the humble community initiatives. I think there lays the hope. There is no hope in maintaining a fleet of 30 airliners, shares of stock exchange etc. which are all related to the money. Due to this, one needs to have the service of economists and environmentalists. For us, the environment and mother earth are not like this. As the medium is not the same medium because medium here is, just to commercialize. To be a human being there should not be medium of life.

Me: How do you see the concept of Globalization? How it is affecting your community in particular and other Guatemalans?

Rigoberta Menchú: I think that the Globalization is working as a kind of drug whose remedy is very difficult to produce. If you have money, I will vote for you. If you have money, you can pay a lawyer for the defence of your rights. When we can have the capacity to know what is defence or what is offence. For all such things, they have created the rules, norms and codes so that it defends us profoundly irrespective of who does the same. People do hope that the Government is going to change this situation but what they are

hoping for that government will bring money and invest in the roads, schools, and drinking water. Therefore, the 'development' is trying to inflict a serious torture in a real sense. This is a very polemic situation because our 'value' is more than money for example I have been in the legal process for past 16 years to fight against the injustice (Spanish embassy incident where her father had died) [Transcribed and Translated from recorded interview by me].

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Chapter: 2

The Mayans of Guatemala and the Munda Tribals of Jharkhand: Race, Rites and Rituals and understanding Globalization.

Globalization has been a finer form of colonization, as it has more to do with economic colonization. Geo-political frontiers have become increasingly irrelevant as they are breached very scientifically and strategically through economic alliances of the most powerful members of every nation-state. The result is that the most oppressed and alienated peoples of every nation continue to be marginalized, leading lives of deprivation and indignity and barely managing to survive. I consider Rigoberta Menchú's testimony as a document of struggle and unheard story which not only, she is saying but all other community people want to say, but unfortunately they are not getting enough opportunity to present their respective plight. That's why she says as well "I know that millions of people would like to speak the words I speak, but they do not have the chance. They know their own reality, and I know the things I have related. I stand as a witness and, if I do not speak

out; I would be a party to great injustices” (Menchú 1). Her own struggle with the other family members had been depicted in the testimonial form of the book which manifested all about her peoples’ struggles. She has got the idea to present her narrative in the book form through a friend and interviewer Elisabeth Burgos-Debray in Paris, when she was in exile from Guatemala.

Here, the testimony of Rigoberta Menchú would be analyzed in detail as a document of identification of her language and culture which would serve to go deep into the question of the Maya-quiche culture which contests the status of her peoples’ social and religious practices as a marginal narrative dwelling on the brink of the uncivilized. It will explore the Maya-quiche traditions, practices and rituals as described in her testimonial narratives and which continue to be performed till date. Likewise, Dayamani Barla’s Munda community rituals and celebrations would be analyzed and explored. These practices highlight the links of these lives with sustainable eco-system, thus bringing to the fore their advanced ways of thinking and establishing how global geo-politics continue to be based on greed and destruction. The study will also thus work towards establishing how their lost world was destroyed by savagery and violence; serve to archive their social history.

2.1 Understanding Globalization:

Globalization is a gradual process of integration of systems across the world, in multiple dimensions like in political, social, administrative and economic etc. This process has resulted in intense debate among various scholars over its impact on state and administration. Scholars like Samuel Huntington, Francis Fukuyama, Prabhat Patnaik and many others have expressed their apprehensions. They have emphasized on the demise of the state and administration due to Globalization which would result into Global village and Global management.

Due to the changes witnessed in era of Globalization in state and administration, the role and significance of supra-territorial organizations has increased, that has given rise to the phenomenon of Global Constitutionalism (here, Constitutionalism is based on limited government and based on rules and laws; and global Constitutionalism refers to increasingly run by many international institutions for example the IMF, WTO and World bank etc.) thereby making many laws, rules and regulations binding over the nation-state. Systems across the world are increasingly becoming interdependent while dealing with various issues which

are becoming international or global e.g. environment, terrorism, drug, human trafficking etc. The states across the world have moved closer to the market. So, there has been an effort by systems across the world to be associated with non state institution like market institutions. A move towards the marketization of the state or a corporate state or a government by market etc. leaves out interests of these groups of its citizenry which fall outside of its profit making agenda.

Challenges:

- 1) Loss of Sovereignty: Due to increased role of supra-territorial organization and their number of rules, regulations and norms will become binding in nature. Sovereignty relates to supremacy of the government. It is considered as the traditional perspective and government has the supreme control and other institutions enjoy this supreme power. And the government decides all rules and regulations and public policy. But today under Global Constitutionalism, there are number of norms, rules which are binding and it compromises the sovereignty of the state.
- 2) Loss of Democracy: Globalization project is a top-down project and which is defined by few and it is followed by the rest. This project is

directed towards universalization. There is a loss of public sphere or space (arena of public discourse, dialogue, negotiation, public action), which is critical to democracy. But due to Globalization, it is under threat.

- 3) **Loss of Community:** Existence and belief in diversity is a part of community, and when diversity is threatened then we can say community is in danger because Globalization brings universality. Under Globalization, there are developments in developed and developing countries which led to loss of community or groups. Any community sustains on economic activity. In the industrialized country, many factories were shut down so to operate in developing countries; there itself it affected large number of communities and in developing countries also, they cause to loss of community because of displacement of population.
- 4) **Concentration of power towards global, political and economic elites:** In the era of globalization, it is increasingly understood that major decisions are taken in Global Legislature and the implementing arm of these decisions are International financial institutions and thereby through aid-conditionalities and MNC's interests are imposed. So, in the era of globalization, informally a

globally monochromic structure is being put in place and 'oligarchy' revels.

- 5) Subordination of developing countries over the developed countries: Today in the era of Globalization; knowledge and technology provides the power. Developed countries have more resources and becoming more powerful. So, developing countries are trapped in the 'vicious cycle' of marginality and know-how. Due to resource constraint they become dependent.

As described by Navine Murshid⁴, the effect of Globalization on Migration:

The logic of globalization requires that labour be freely mobile across markets for efficiency reasons, at least theoretically. Yet, despite high economic integration, labour migration is often criminalized, creating an inherent contradiction between the incentives to migrate and immigration laws that limit migration. What this means is that there are profits to be made from migration that governments restrict artificially, which then incentivizes "illegal migration."

⁴ Murshid, Navine. <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/rohingya-migrants-and-ethnicitybased/article7275533.ece?homepage=true>

When the workers are desperate, unskilled and willing to pawn off their lives' worth of assets to access job markets abroad they become easy targets of extortion, exploitation and trafficking. As the many interviews of rescued migrants in the past weeks indicate, these migrants often have no idea that what they were doing was illegal; after all, many had paid huge sums of money for migration services-often by selling land/assets, taking on loans, or mortgaging future earnings (Murshid : Web).

Here it would be inappropriate if we would not talk about the concept of Development, from where it emerged and other related connotations. Development as a term can be traced back to 17th and 18th century Europe primarily in the background of Industrialization. Europe was witnessing chaos and disintegration and therefore development was a reference for moving away from chaos and towards orderliness.

In due course of time this westward development phenomenon failed which resulted in Great Depression of 1929 where the so called Adam Smith's Capitalism, *Wealth of Nations* (1776), failed to sustain the development agenda and gave birth to Keynesian

economy where it based its hypothesis on the increasing role of the state. Because he questioned the nature of 'invisible hand' and said that this hand itself is strangulating the poor. So, advocated for strong government intervention to provide equilibrium in the market. This period also witnessed the success of Russian economy which included the centralized planning, state led approach. Development gained its meaning in Post World War period in the background of US President Truman's address towards the developing societies. He brought about dichotomous approach while referring to developed societies, he created a contrast with the developed societies and emphasized that West is modern, scientific, rational and civilized while the rest is ancient, superstitious, barbaric and archaic. He identified the concept of Development with the West and Rest as underdeveloped.

In due course of time after the Colonial independence, the newly independent countries were facing multiple social and economic problems because these societies did not have robust system to tackle. During this period, the project of development took shape with the centralized planning, Industrialization (Import Substitution), effort to enable the public sector to attain the commanding heights of economy. During this period, the approach was to bring

modernization, urbanization and industrialization. This project did not lead to good result.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) advocated growth led redistribution and same also resulted in World Bank advocating the concept of Basic Needs Approach. This resulted in programmes and initiatives to address the concern of rural farmers, landless labourers, artisans, poor and other vulnerable sections of the society. Overall, growth based approach continued; emphasis was on direct benefit going to certain people directly. Early 80's witnessed a crisis in Latin American countries as well as in South-East Asian countries. Also, 80's was known for neo-liberalism where import substitution, monopolistic strategy and state led bureaucratization was questioned.

This concept was coined by western developed countries and meant for developing countries majorly by World Bank, IMF though it has been supported by OECD, ODA etc. The concept of good governance was created as part of aid-conditionalities which were imposed on the less developed countries, when they sought loan from international financial institutions. The aid-conditionalities started in 1989 in the Sub-Saharan region and subsequently

extended to rest of the countries during 1990's. Andrew Heywood says:

The most controversial aspect of the loans that the IMF provided was that 'conditionalities' were attached to them. From the 1980s these conditions were shaped in line with the thinking of the Washington Consensus, which required recipient countries to introduce 'structural adjustment' programmes (see p. 371) shaped by a faith in market fundamentalism. This led to a 'one size fits all' application of a neoliberal template based on the control of inflation ahead of other economic objectives, the immediate removal of barriers to trade and the flow of capital. The liberalization of the banking system, the reduction of government spending on everything except debt repayment, and the privatization of assets that could be sold to foreign investors (Heywood 467).

Here, we can remember the case of India which had to go to the International financial institutions to seek loan when its Balance of Payment (BoP) situation was in peril and the country was not having foreign exchange reserve to import more than weeks of fuel

and other essential goods then we had to put our gold reserves in the IMF to seek loan but it also dictated few aid-conditionalities, in return of the loan. These aid-conditionalities were promoted as agenda for reforms which went on to as the agenda for Governance.

The World Bank has termed it as “Good Governance.” It is an instrumental concept; the aid-conditionalities have not been static but changed from time to time. In general it refers to sound public sector management and democratization, rule of law and sound legal framework, openness and transparency, people participation, human rights etc. OECD and other multilateral systems have also followed the same.

However, the critics have pointed out that World Bank’s view itself is inconsistent and thereby unsustainable because the World Bank’s view is universalizing and intends to bring about universality, directed towards universalization of particularities (different cultures, identity etc.) and project directed towards non-ecological and non-contextuality. These things have been discussed without taking into account the culture, environment of these countries. Likewise, South Asian critics said the Good

Governance and Democracy are mutually contradictory in operation and conceptually both cannot go with each other. Good Governance is a top-down approach, non ecological, exogenous initiative. It is based on dialogue and compromise, 'means to an end' approach and more importantly it is an economic term. While democracy is down to top approach, it promotes diversity, endogenous, ecological, 'end in itself' and more importantly it is a political term. Apart from this, in operational and practical aspects Good Governance and Democracy are contradictory.

So far, we have seen how the development agenda was defined putting the rest in the bag of underdevelopment category and West as the only model of development. In the due course of time the Good Governance paradigm came and then the cover of whole package as widely known as Globalization. As rightly said by Prof. Prabhat Patnaik⁵:

One often comes across a mirror image of this argument of "separability," which is prevalent in Left-wing circles, especially in Europe, regarding "globalization." This holds

⁵ Patnaik, Prabhat.

<http://www.networkideas.org/news/may2015/Misconceptions.pdf>

that the “globalization” occurring today is a “good” thing, even though contemporary capitalism is “bad,” so that we should somehow retain this “globalization” even while trying to transcend contemporary capitalism. What this argument does is to detach contemporary “globalization” from contemporary capitalism, and suggesting that we should retain the one but not the other. But the “globalization” that is occurring today is no less a manifestation of contemporary capitalism than the economic measures covered under the term neo liberalism. Just as one cannot get rid of neo-liberalism while retaining contemporary capitalism, likewise one cannot get rid of contemporary capitalism while retaining contemporary globalization. They together constitute an integral unity that has to be transcended (Patnaik: Web).

When we realize the shocks and aftershocks of Globalization which is spreading its tentacles like a hydra and which is taking away the rights of the poor and needy people on one hand and making the nation state as dependent category on the other world multilateral institutions and their dictated policies, which they have to apply in one or another, which has been expressed by Dayamani Barla in her latest work *kisano ki Jameen loot kiske liye?*

The detailed study of MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) shows that those schemes which are working good, yielded results at different levels of the problems implicit in the Indian scenario, have been made difficult by the irregularities and delay in payment, fall in allocations. Also due to non regular payment and work, people are migrating from rural areas towards the cities to work even in the exploitable conditions. As they have to manage family back home and in the era of skyrocketing inflation, has risen to a level of unsustainability which make the conditions even more deplorable. All these are making the conditions of poor tribals of Jharkhand deplorable.

2.2 Mayas of Guatemala and the testimonio:

We know of the fierce debate between Oral history, which is based on observations, memory, orally transmitted incidences, history, used mostly by the downtrodden subalterns as in this case by Latin American indigenous population and the Written history which was put in the public domain by the colonizers who were carrying the European cultural baggage. They were riding on the superiority complex and falsehood of the written history claims, rejecting all other forms of history. With this preoccupation in their

mind only, they were always suspicious of any other form of history and hence made issues of the veracity and reliability of the oral history and the testimonial writings. *Yo Rigoberta Menchú* is a mediated narrative through Elisabeth Burgos Debray, who was a journalist cum interviewer of Rigoberta Menchú; she metamorphosed the memories, narratives and experiences of the protagonist into a much more credible form per se, which could also be the possible unheard story of other indigenous people as well. The theoretical perspective of John Beverley in his monumental work *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth*, can be a possible departing point, through this we would try to understand the testimony of Rigoberta Menchú and others per se. He says:

The Spanish word *testimonio* translates literally as “testimony,” as in the act of testifying or bearing witness in a legal or religious sense. This connotation is important because it distinguishes *testimonio* from recorded participant narrative, as in the case of “oral history.” In oral history it is the resulting text is in some sense “data.” Unlike the novel, *testimonio* promises by definition to be primarily concerned with sincerity rather than literariness. This relates *testimonio* to the generic 1960s practice of “speaking bitterness,” to use

the term popularized in the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Production of a testimonio generally involves the tape-recording and then the transcription and editing of an oral account by an interlocutor who is an intellectual, often a journalist or a writer (Beverley 32).

In this sense we can realize that Beverley is very much concerned about the testimonio and its core idea as we are familiar that Rigoberta Menchú has used the testimonial mode to present her real story in a number of books where “It is the intentionality of the narrator that is paramount. The situation of narration in testimonio involves an urgency to communicate, a problem of repression, poverty, subalternity, imprisonment, struggle for survival, implicated in the act of narration itself. The position of the reader of testimonio is akin to that of a jury member in a courtroom” (Beverley 32).

Moving further to the Oral history where Valerie Raleigh Yow says:

Oral history is the recording of personal testimony in the oral form. But what is the oral history? Is it the taped

memoir? Is it the typewritten transcript? Is it the research method that involves in-depth interviewing? The term used here – such as *in-depth interview*, *life history*, *life review*, *recorded memoir* etc. – imply that there is someone else who is also involved, frames the topic and inspires the narrator to begin the act of remembering, jogs memory, and records and presents the narrator's words (Yow 3-5).

After analyzing the above fragment, it is very much clear how oral history functions in general and in the context of Rigoberta Menchú in particular and her testimony is a form of oral history. Taking into account the tedious task carried out by Elisabeth Burgos-Debray as the interviewer of the protagonist and compiling all answers in the written form, to give an output in the book form *Yo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia*, is highly commendable. Here, in this chapter I want to verify the truthfulness of oral history and compare it to the written history, and see the veracity of these two forms. As rightly said by Yow, oral history depends very much on the interviewer, like on which agenda she/he is working? What exactly she/he wants to take out? Which kind of ideology she/he is following? What message she/he wants

to spread to the world? And who are the consumers of the final packaged product?

So, “The narrator in testimonio, speaks for, or in the name of, a community or group, approximating in this way the symbolic function of the epic hero, without at the same time assuming the epic hero’s hierarchical and patriarchal status” (Beverley 33). The interviewer also takes the role of the protagonist, as happened in the case of Menchú, who struggled with her own family and other community members and now she is a celebrated woman and social rights activists for her country. She puts all her oral account in the book form, which now a days we call as the *Testimony*, which itself is a new genre in the so called ‘literary’ world. However, this vary form has been trivialized on number of occasions regarding its truthfulness where American anthropologist David Stoll in his book *Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans*, infers that Menchú had exaggerated her narrative to gain sympathy of the people. But I think that she had been fighting against all odds and other false allegations because the testimony is the resistance literature of indigenous masses to attract the world’s attention. Also, if there are critics of Rigoberta’s testimony, there are other

intellectual supporters of her cause as well for example John Beverley, Lynda Marin and many more.

Likewise, many other marginal activists said many things about their struggle in Latin America, in which Domitila Chungara is also quite well known; she talked about the conditions of the Bolivarian mines through the same method of oral history in *Deja me Hablar!* Nevertheless this conserves the form of oral history which is in today's world a kind of endangered category because the biggest threat is posed by the written history, which has very deep understanding with the colonial regime if we remember *Cartas de Hernán Cortés* and *Diarios de Colón* in the Latin American context. These were mediated history itself and since, were written by the dominant people and the conquerors of the Spanish America, we tend to accept them as the written literature/history at the same time negating the oral form of that native people which they have been practicing for thousand years.

Coming back to our discussion which is at the beginning stage related to the oral history, I can remember here Valerie Yow, who says:

Oral history reveals daily life at home and at work- the very stuff that rarely gets into any kind of public record. It is through oral history that the dimensions of life within a community are illuminated. Oral history research thus becomes crucial to obtaining a picture of the total society because the viewpoints of the non-elite who do not leave memoirs or have biographies are presented. Oral history testimony is the kind of information that makes other public documents understandable (Yow 11-12).

So, the views presented by the author point towards a system where the downtrodden and the most marginalized people can also say their past histories and happenings in the oral form. Any interviewer can record the statements of the protagonist and frame the questions in such a way so, that the voice of the voiceless could be heard in the best possible way and the desired goal of the author must be achieved. Analyzing the inbuilt situation, where all the information provided and explained by the protagonist cannot be verifiable every time, because these small records are not possible to find out each and every time. Record keeping may not exist in that society but quite possibly they remember those entire incidences orally and pass it on, to generations after generations.

Hence, oral history becomes a valid account here to obtain information pertaining to community life and past histories, where the poor ones try to say whatever they have to say to the society at large. They are not affluent enough so that their plight and past community life can be presented in the form of memories and biographies nevertheless their testimonies are becoming the research topic and are very frequently added in the syllabus of the various universities. Hence, it is a very good opportunity for me to put the testimony of Rigoberta Menchú in this frame where the intellectual community can go through meanings and happenings of her life, her family life and her community life. Her testimony reveals the Maya history, culture and civilization through the original inhabitant of that great civilization of Mesoamerica, not through the lens of the colonisers.

I want to clarify that those colonisers were the outside element, who could be any historian/researcher/anthropologist/conquistador, wanting to write all these through her/his understanding and research and more importantly their own thought process. Therefore, I want to go through the real account provided by the native inhabitant and daughter of the Maya civilization, Rigoberta

Menchú, who is presenting her community life, culture and struggle onwards.

Coming back to our discussion once again which, was related to the Oral history and its related ramifications on the society, I think that the oral history used to be a source; bigger than anything else since time immemorial and is still continuing in many parts of the world. Remembering Yow words:

Oral history is inevitably subjective: its subjectivity is at once inescapable and crucial to an understanding of the meanings we give our past and present. To reveal the meanings of lived experience is the great task of qualitative research and specifically oral history interviews. The in-depth interview offers the benefit of seeing in its full complexity the world of another. And in collecting in-depth interviews and using the insights to be gained from them as well as different kinds of information from other kinds of records, we can come to some understanding of the process by which we got to be the way we are (Yow 23).

Oral history in the form of testimony is very much related, as literature is related to the society and depicts in the form of black

and white means printed one and its reality is like the sun and the shadow, where some portion are brightly illuminated and others are not. The form may be different and keep changing during the course of time, from oral narration to written expression and saying the same thing time and again. We have seen many civilizations and the same story is continuing, in which the poor and the downtrodden and marginal people are suppressed, oppressed and kept at the periphery of the society. The power relation in the society is always in the favour of the elite and the powerful. The power relation in the society functions as *the knowledge is power*. If anybody has the knowledge then she/he is powerful among his people in the society and the knowledge comes from the education, which makes human beings aware of rights available at her/his disposable.

Rightly, explained by Lynda Marin about the testimonial literature and its relation to the 'others' of the society, who are in majority in population but still ruled by the minority of the population. All they live at their peril and what they can only do is to obey the orders issued by that particular minority and live in the same conditions from generations to generations without raising the voice. So, the testimonial literature is a kind of challenge to all other

forms available, to present the story through the medium of oral history. Marin says:

After all, the testimonial is not usually produced by great writers and often not by writers at all. Besides, the testimonial almost always raises issues about genre which remain irresolvable. Its legitimacy as a field of study is never directly questioned, but lurking behind much discussion about it is just that. Although the testimonial has a long and varied history, it has always been seen as a kind of writing from the margin. The testimonial has been seen as the means by which those who are not privileged tell about themselves and particularly about their struggle against the powers that claim privilege over them (Marin 51-52).

Before moving ahead, one thing John Beverley himself wants to clear that there is a distinction between testimony and autobiography. "Testimonio represents an affirmation of the individual subject, even of individual growth and transformation, but in connection with a group or class situation marked by marginalization, oppression, and struggle. If it loses this connection,

it ceases to be testimonio and becomes autobiography (Beverley 41).

Caren Irr explains culture in her work *A Challenge to Post-National American Studies: George Yúdice's "The Expediency of Culture"*:

The Expediency of Culture is, as the title aptly indicates, primarily devoted to asserting that a new Foucauldian episteme has arrived, one characterized by the predominance of arguments that assume the expedient character of culture i.e., arguments that value culture to the extent that it "does" something, whether advancing the interests of the poorest inhabitants of the *favelas* or furthering the project of NAFTA-style deregulation of state industries. Analyzing a wide range of arguments about culture—from UNESCO documents to the catalogue texts of curators and musicians' co-ops—Yudice demonstrates that arguments on the basis of expediency make possible new sorts of cultural activism, because they unite the agendas of parties that may have quite opposed views of the content of culture (Irr 604).

So we can see that how the culture plays an important role as well. Coming back to our discussion in contemporary Guatemala where Guatemalan Mayans are still following the dress, gastronomy, rituals and many other practices of their ancestors and fore-fathers. They also carried with them their histories, myths and religion through oral historicity, paintings and hieroglyphic texts. Women continue to wear traditional clothing that varies according to their specific local identity which is locally called as *hupil*. Catholicism is the major religion of Guatemalan people because of advent of Spanish colonizers who had introduced it here to make people “civilized.” Though the Maya were worshippers of nature, they assimilated Catholicism also in very interesting ways (Dayamani Barla also belongs to Hindu religion per se but the belief of Munda community revolves still around the worshipping the nature and its various forces). Rigoberta Menchú says “Our people have taken Catholicism as just another channel of expression, not our one and only belief” (Burgos 9). A counter narrative to the dominant one finds expression in the testimonial. The unique religion is reflected in the local saint Maximón, a relic of a Mayan god, who is associated with the subterranean force of masculine fertility and prostitution. Always depicted in black, he wears a black

hat and sits on a chair, often with a cigar placed in his mouth and a gun in his hand, with offerings of tobacco, alcohol, and Coca-cola at his feet. The locals know him as San Simón of Guatemala. In the Jharkhand context, for Munda community *Singbonga* is the supreme deity, his consort is mother earth. The ancestral spirit is called "Ora Bonga." *Pahan* is the religious head who conducts rituals and ceremonial worship. The important festivals celebrated by them are *Maghe parab*, *Phagu parab*, *Karam parab*, *Sarhul*, *Sohrai* etc. 'Mage Parab' is celebrated in the full moon day of Paush (tenth month of Hindu calander). 'Karam parab' is celebrated in the month of August-September for the prosperity of whole village. 'Sarhul' is celebrated in the month of March-April. The Sal flowers are brought to the *Sarna*.

As said by Ajit K Singh regarding the tribal festivals which are different from dominant Hindu festivals per se in Indian context:

The tribals do not worship their gods and deities or the super-natural as some Hindus. Unlike Hindus we can never find a common individual tribal involved in religious performances. Thus among the tribes, the ritual performances are not individual rather they are communal. A

festival is the only occasion when a tribal individual or community, worships the mysterious powers during which it seeks gods favour and feels religious stimulations (Singh 131).

I had the good fortune to meet Rigoberta Menchú in person on 30th January, 2015 at *Fundación Rigoberta Menchú Tum* in Guatemala City, when I was on a visit to Guatemala for my research. The cultural aspects of Maya-quiche indigenous people are very much near and dear to Rigoberta as she said to me during my interaction with her. She was feeling very proud of her root of belonging to this community and very intrinsically nostalgic about their culture's attachment to the forests, nature and pristine surroundings. She repeatedly said to me that her achievement (Nobel Prize) is for the community and all Guatemalans; here the underlying sense is that apart from the 1992 winner of Nobel Peace Prize, was also her towering activism figure in whole of Latin America; which is reeling under underdevelopment, drug cartelism, murder, violence, indigenous rights violations and the most important surging of capitalism again.

In terms of going through the writings of Menchú, regarding birth ceremony she says “When baby is born, the mother mustn’t have other children round her. The people should be her husband, the village elders and the couple’s parents” (Burgos 8). In the community, there is an elected representative, someone who is highly respected. He is not the king but someone who the community looks up to like a father figure. Rigoberta explains about *Nahual* “Every child is born with a nahual. The nahual is like a shadow, his protective spirit who will go through life with him. The nahual is the representative of the earth, the animal world, the sun and water, and in this way the child communicates with nature. It is usually an animal” (Burgos 18).

Likewise for Munda community the family is based on belief and cooperation of family members. The relation between husband and wife is very cordial. Both have full faith in one another. Both cooperate each other in maintaining the family. They perform their own work or go to earn wages. They struggle hard to maintain the family. In the family, if woman becomes pregnant then there is ceremony to give sacrifice to deity *Garasibonga*. After the nine days of birth, the mother and child has to be taken to nearby pond for regular bathing. Then *Chhathi* ceremony after 3, 6 or 9 days after

birth in which the guests are being invited for the feast and blessings. Subsequently the name ceremony happens and then *sutam tol* in which a black thread is tied along the waist of child to save from evil eyes.

Maize has an important place in the life of Maya people since the ancient times as we have already seen in context of *Popul Vuh* and further in the various literatures where the most prominent amongst all is of Miguel Ángel Asturias in his seminal work *Hombres de maíz*. Even, Menchú admits in her testimony that “Maize is the centre of everything for us. It is our culture” (Burgos 54).

The harvest season is very important and very elaborate in the Mayan community as described by Rigoberta Menchú in detail:

The times we spend up in our village are happy times because we're there to harvest the maize, and before we harvest the maize, we have a fiesta. The fiesta really starts months before when we asked the earth's permission to cultivate her. So, we burn incense, the elected leaders say prayers, and then the whole community prays. We burn candles in our own houses and other candles for the whole

community. Then we bring out the seeds we will be sowing. We choose two or three of the biggest seeds and place them in a ring, candles representing earth, water, animals and the universe. In our culture, the universe is man. The seed is honoured because it will be buried in something sacred-the earth-and because it will multiply and bear fruit the next year (Burgos 52).

There are many occasions about which she has dwelt on in detail because every ceremony and ritual makes the life of Maya people very much attached to the mother earth because the Mayans consider themselves as the children of hers only. So I have noticed during the interview session as well that she was very much emotional about the nature and the related environment. As Elisabeth Burgos writes, as narrated by Menchú that:

Our parents tell us: 'Children, the earth is the mother of man, because she gives him food.' This is especially true for those whose life is based on the crops we grow. Our people eat maize, beans and plants. We can't eat ham, or cheese, or things made of equipment, with machines. So we think of the earth as the mother of man, and our parents teach us to

respect the earth. We unnecessary harm the earth when we are in need. This is why, before we cultivate maize, we have to ask the earth's permission (Burgos 56).

In the Munda community, 'Aouba Parab' is celebrated in April-May before sowing the first crop and all the household gods are worshipped on the occasion. So, we can see how the important and sacred is the "Nature" for them likewise Dayamani Barla talks about it, at numerous occasions because for them it is the source of livelihood, health and sustainability. Many herbs and shrubs were used in medicinal context and we are still dependent on it for the majority. Our food, cereals, vegetables have been dependent on earth and its productivity. So as we remember, it has been provided by our forefathers after generations of arduous labour and conservation efforts. But still the tribal festivals are way different from Hindus in terms of dates of celebration as well, rightly said by Ajit K Singh:

The date of celebration of a Hindu festival is fixed according to astronomical calendar whereas the tribal sacred specialist and the village elders fix the festival day according to particular season i.e., at the time of agricultural operations

and when the forest trees bear flowers and fruits. The date of celebration of festivals also varies from one cluster of tribal villages to another. The festival date cannot be changed among the Hindus but among the tribes it may be changed under certain circumstances i.e., when an epidemic disturbs the villagers and during the menstruation period of the Pahan's wife (Singh 131).

Likewise, the occasion of marriage in the social context is one of the important get together of the community people in the *altiplano*.

About Marriage, Rigoberta Menchú says:

We have four marriage customs to respect. The first is the 'open door.' It is flexible and there is no commitment. The second is a commitment to the parents when the girl has accepted the boy. This is very important custom. The third is the ceremony when the girl and boy make their vows to one another. The fourth is the wedding itself, the *despedida* (Burgos 61).

So the marriage in Munda community, between a Munda boy and a Munda girl belonging to the same clan is not allowed. *Sagotra* which means intra-clan, inter-tribe or caste marriages are

strictly tabooed. Within tribe, there are numbers of exogamous clan called as *Killi*. They believe that all members of a particular clan of *Killi* are descendents from one common ancestor so martial relationship within a clan is strictly prohibited.

Regarding *fiestas* Rigoberta says:

The fiestas which take place in the towns are more than anything a mixture. The actual fiestas that our ancestors celebrated probably no longer exist, and they are being replaced now by celebrations of some Saint's days. In the schools they often celebrate the day of Tecun Umán. Tecun Umán is the Quiche hero who is said to have fought the Spanish and been killed by them. There is a fiesta each year in the schools. They commemorate the day of Tecun Umán as the national hero of Quiches. But we don't celebrate it, primarily because our parents say that this hero is not dead. So, we don't celebrate (Burgos 204).

The *Popul Vuh* is the most important book in Guatemalan literature written in the Quiche. It is also known as *Libro Sagrado* means the sacred book in which there is explanation given about origin of men and his relation with the earth. Due to its combination

of historical, mythical, and religious elements, *Popul Vuh* is often called the Mayan Bible. In which man was first made of mud then of wood and at last of maize. Finally, regarding the death, Rigoberta says that:

Among Indians, the phenomenon of death is something that we prepare ourselves for. Coffin is built a long time ago and person get to know his coffin. At the point of dying person tell all what she/he want to covey. The death ceremony is performed in the house of the dead person. The body is not left for so long, respects are paid quickly and the body is buried within twenty four hours. When he's buried, all the objects he most loved in his lifetime are put in his coffin (Burgos 201-202).

Likewise, the dead is cremated according to the munda tradition and rituals. After burning of the corpse, some bones are collected in earthenware. This is kept in the *Sasan*. The mundas generally erect memorial stones in the *Sasan* to commemorate the dead.

2.3 Mundas of Jharkhand:

Regarding Munda's entry route to the state of Jharkhand in India, there are many theories which at the same time conflicting as

well. According to B.C. Mazumdar, “the Mundas had pushed the original tribes of Jharkhand towards south-east. Other scholar says, they came from Central India and Uttar Pradesh where their land was captured by Aryans (which seems correct as well to this author). Later the expansion of the Aryans forced the Mundas to escape towards district of Rohtas and they gradually moved towards Jharkhand” (Singh 1).

Munda population is approximately 10, 49767 which comprises of 14.80 per cent of tribal population of Jharkhand. The literacy is one among the good index, which is 39.22%. They are mainly living in Ranchi, Lohardaga, Gumla, Hazaribagh, Chatra, Giridih, Bokaro, East and West Singbhum. Mundas are Proto-Austroloids basically and they speak Mundari dialect of Astro-Asiatic family. We can divide them in two branches namely Mahli Mundas, also called as Tamarias because settled in Tamar; and Kompah Mundas/Ho Mundas. The Ho Mundas mostly live in Singbhum area of the state. They live in mixed village with other tribes and caste where they are having similarities and differences in the common rituals likewise.

Some of the important places of munda tradition include *Sarna* which is the sacred grove where village deities reside. *Akhara* is the

open space where panchayat takes place and where people assemble to dance and to sing and *Sasan* serves as the burial ground where stone slabs are kept over graves to remember the dead.

Munda family is based on belief and cooperation. The relation between husband and wife is cordial; Munda families are basically nuclear type of families and are also Patriarchal. Inheritance, lineage, descent are patriarchal and are traced through father's side. Monogamy is prevalent; usual way of acquiring marriage mate is by bride price.

The village headman is called 'munda' and he is also the religious head. The post is hereditary. The *Parha Panchyat* settles cases between two villages; *Parha* is the group of ten to twelve villages and its head is called *Manki*.

Regarding the celebration of 'Sarhul' as discussed earlier, Dayamani Barla has elaborated this popular and auspicious festival in her own words:

मुंडा/संताली समाज सरहुल पर्व-चंडु उपिन दिन से (चांद निकलने के चौथे दिन से) बाहा पोरुब मनाना शुरू करते हैं और पुर्णिमा के दिन अंत करते

हैं। इसी बीच लोग अपनी सुविधानुसार दिन निश्चित कर लेते हैं। संताली
समाल भी प्राकृति के साथ सामाजिक ताना-बाना को बाहा पोरुब में गीतों
में प्रकट करता है-

ओकोए मई रे सबेआ दादा

ने सरजोम बाहा दो,

ओकोए मई रे सबेआ दादा

ने मदुकम बाहा दो।

नायके मई रे सबेआ दादा

ने सरजोम बाहा दो,

देवरी मई रे सबेआ दादा

ने मदुकम बाहा दो।

(Hindi Translation: दादा कौन पकडेगा सखुआ फूल, और कौन पकडेगा
महुंआ फूल। नायके पकडेगा सखुआ फुल, पुजार पकडेगा महुंआ फुल)
उरांव समाज सरहुल पर्व अपने मान्यता के आधार मानता है। इसी तरह
हो भी। पुरा बसंत झारखंड के गांव-गांव गीतों से गूंज उठता है
(barla.blogspot).

(English Translation)

The Munda/Santhal community start celebrating the Sarhul festival (Baha Porob) from the 4th day of the Moon and end it on full Moon. People decide a convenient day in between. Santhals also express their social syncretism with nature in the songs of the Baha Porob (Baha festival).

Okoi mai re sabea dada

Ne sarjom baha do,

Okoi mai re sabea dada

Ne makdum baha do.

Naike mai re sabea dada

Ne sarjom baha do,

Devri mai re sabea dada

Ne makdum baha do.

(Who will hold sakhua flower oh brother, who will hold mahua flower? The chief will hold the sakhua flower and the priest will hold mahua flower). Oraon tribals and Ho tribals also celebrate Sarhul according to their own beliefs. In the spring the villages of Jharkhand ring with songs of festivities [Translation Mine].

'Sohrai' is celebrated during October-November. The Munda owners of the cattle fast for the whole day. The next morning cattle shed is washed and sprinkled with rice beer. The festivities are celebrated in joyous mood which is always related to the nature worshipping and the very utilization of its products.

Not only these things are important for Munda tribe but each and every other co-existing tribes of Jharkhand as well. They have been born and brought up in nature's lap, for them the Mother Nature, the Sun, the Water etc. are perennial resources which had sustained their own ancestors and expect that the future generations would be provided the same nurture and care. Due to these very reasons they always respect them with utmost regard.

Munda-Manki system was popularised by Munda tribe for the administration of the tribal village coherently. Networks of 10-12 villages called *Patti*, which was headed by *Manki*, who was the political organiser of the Mundas. They have developed *Mundari-Khunkattidari* system for customary tenancies. A *Mundari* who cleared the forest and made the land fit for cultivation by himself or by male members of family. The heirs in the male line alone are *Mundari-khunkattidar*. They are original owner of the land and so

they do not pay tax but collect rent through contribution. Likewise in Oraon tribe was having *Bhuinhari* tenure. The problem started as stated in earlier chapter, when there was advent of 'outside people' in these pristine territories of Jharkhand since medieval period during Mughal and others. This further deteriorated during British period and so on. Prof. Kancha Ilaiah's works come here handy which explain how the 'dalit' community not only includes the scheduled castes but the scheduled tribes also comes in the definition of this broad term. He propagates that whole lot of forest dwellers, sharecroppers and poor peasants were made to alienate from their ancestral lands, earlier through 'British Colonialism' and now through 'Globalization led colonialism.'

Hence we can see how these traditional customary systems were floundered by outside *dikus* and Britishers. The tribals of Jharkhand were organising themselves against all these nefarious influences and tribal leaders had fought valiantly against all such atrocities. Dayamani Barla remembers this:

जल-जंगल-जमीन की लूट के खिलाफ 1855-56 में सिद्ध-कान्हू के नेतृत्व में संतालियों ने समझौता विहीन हूलकिया था। 1895-1900 तक मुंडा- हो असदिवासियों ने मुंडा सरदार और बिरसा मुंडा की अगुआई में

उलगुलानकिया था। जब दामिन ईकोह के घने साल के जंगल को काट कर आंग्रेजों ने भगलपुर तक रेलवे लाईन बिछा रहे थे, संताली आदिवासियों ने जंगल-पर्यावरण की रक्षा में हुल अभियान चलाया। पाकुड़ के धनुष पूजा गांव के करीबखड़ा मारटिएल टावर जो मारटिएल इंजिनियर की देख-रेख में आंग्रेजों ने रातों-रात टावर खड़ा किया, जो सालजंगल बचाने के लिए हुल छेडे संतालियों को मारने के लिए बनया गया। इसी टावर से आंग्रेजों ने सैकड़ों संतालियोंको छलनी किया था। शहीदों के खून से धरती रंग गई, बावजूद अपने धरोहर की रक्षा के लिए सिना तने सेतालियोंने सिने पर गोली खाते टावर तक पहुंच कर आंग्रेज सैनिकों को तीर से मार गिराया, जो भागने को कोशिश-आदिवासियों के तीर उनके पीठ को भेदता गया। यह संघर्ष 10 जुलाई 1856 की हुआ। दूसरी ओर इसी दरम्यानमुंडा इलाके में खूंटकटी जंगल-जमीन की रक्षा के लिए बुन्डू, तमाड़, खूटी क्षेत्र में मुंडा आदिवासियों ने आंग्रेजशाशकों, जमींदारों के खिलाफ उलगुलान का बिंगुल फूका था। आज भी लोग इस संघर्ष को सरहुल-जदूर गीतों मेंयाद करते हैं-

जदुर राग

ओको रेको मपआ तना

लुपु मुई कपिस गोअना

चियम रेको तुपुइ तना
टोंटो मुई टेम्पाए तोलाना।
बुन्डु रेको मपआ तना
लुपु मुई कपिसय गोअना
तमाइ रेको तुपुई तना
टोंटों मुई टेम्पाए तोलाना।

(Hindi Translation: कहां मार-काट हो रहा है छोटी चींटी-आदिवासी फरसा ढोये हुए हैं, कहां तीरो से लड़ाई हो रही है-बड़ी चींटी-आंग्रेज बन्दूक ढोये हुए हैं) (barla.blogspot).

(English Translation)

Against the loot of their land-forest-water, the Santhals waged a struggle without compromises in 1855-56. Till 1895-1900 the Mundas and the Hos rebelled in the Ulgulan (Uprising) led by Birsa Munda and Munda chiefs. When the Britishers were making a railway line after cutting the dense Sal forests of Damin Ikoh the tribals ran the Hul campaign to save the forest-environment. There is a martial tower near Dhanush puja village of Pakur, which was constructed under the supervision of engineer Martiel at great haste to kill the

rebelling santhalis who were fighting to save the Sal forests. The Britishers killed hundreds of santhalis from this tower. The earth turned red by the blood of the martyrs, despite that, the santhalis kept fighting and taking bullets on their chests, finally reached the tower and killed the British soldiers with their arrows, the soldiers running away got arrows in their back. This struggle took place in 1856. On the other hand at the same time in the munda area, munda tribals revolted against the British rulers and landlords in an Ulgulan to save the khuntkatti land and forest. People still remember this struggle in the Sarhul-Jadur songs.

Lupu mui kpisai goana

Tamar reko tupui tana

Toto mui tempae tolana.

(Where is the fight going on, the small ant, the tribals are carrying where is the fight going on, the big ants, the Britishers are carrying guns) [Translation Mine].

Due to the genuine and popular demands of tribals, various rules and acts were also made for their welfare and further displacement of their land rights like Wilkinson rule, 1837 for the Singhbhum and Kolhan region for the Ho tribe, Chhotanagpur Tenancy (CNT) Act, 1908 for the Chhotanagpur region which covers Mundas and Oraons and lastly Santhal Pargana Tenancy (SPT) Act, 1949 for the Santhal region. However not much of the avail these acts and rules these days because in the garb of Globalization the successive governments of Jharkhand had tried to dilute or amend these. The latest attempt has been made to amend the CNT and SPT acts where the land can be transferred for any 'public purpose.'

In this way we can see how the Globalization has seeped into the lives of people in different regions of the world through its sophisticated tools and other dependencies related needs which make people more vulnerable per se.

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Chapter: 3

The Struggles of Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla against Globalization and Ecological Disaster.

This chapter will explore the protagonist's struggle in today's contexts and concurrent theme of Eco-Feminism, which is converting into more reality to the much more related lives of Rigoberta and Dayamani. The third world countries, and more specifically Indian rural areas where class, caste and gender discrimination still prevails, illustrate a lot of contrast among men and women itself. Women are the main livelihood earners in the hilly and tribal areas; they have to leave the home early morning after doing the household chores for the paddy field to work as labourers or for the forest to collect firewood etc. And men keep themselves busy either with the consumption of alcohol or taking away whatever the money earned by the women. This is one of the various forms of violence done by men towards women, which is prevalent in most parts of India. This is totally against the tribal teachings because, as we remember from the earlier discussions, tribal societies like the Munda society is one of the egalitarian

societies in which an equal footing is given to their cohort. However, exceptions are there in the *KhuntKattidari* system. Due to the outside influence, the tribal aura is fading. Nevertheless, women are the one of the biggest conservators of nature and the forests because of their frequent interactions with it. As Bina Agrawal quotes Vandana Shiva:

Violence against women and against nature is linked not just ideologically but also materially. For instance, “Third world women are dependent on nature ‘for drawing sustenance for themselves, their families, their societies. The destruction of nature thus becomes the destruction of women’s sources of ‘staying alive.’ Drawing upon her experience of working with women activists in the Chipko movement-the environmental movement for forest protection and regeneration in Garhwal hills of northwest India- Shiva argues that “Third world women” have both a special dependence on nature and a special knowledge of nature. This Knowledge has been systematically marginalized under the impact of modern science “ modern reductionist science, like development, turns out to be a patriarchal project, which has excluded women as experts, and has simultaneously

excluded ecology and holistic ways of knowing which understand and respect nature's process and interconnectedness as science" (Agrawal 124).

So, it can be observed that how indigenous people are involved with nature as the bond has been carried forward for a very long time; likewise Dayamani Barla and Rigoberta Menchú are involved in their parts of the world. They are mobilizing and educating people for the sustainable development per se.

3.1 Development Induced Displacement:

Migration has increased in the recent years and it continues to rise. This has had a large-scale impact on the economy and environment in many parts of the country. In the recent years tribal/indigenous people are forced to migrate towards the cities for work. Their skills in peasantry and sharecropping were rendered useless due to forced land grabbing and displacement. The unjust acquisition of land from them has eventually made these people part of dispersed unskilled labour in the cities. If we analyse Munda context of Jharkhand state, we see that it has its CNT Act since 1908 where section 46 clearly says that "No transfer by a *raiyat* of his right in a holding thereof- by mortgage or lease exceeding five

years or by sale or gift or any other contract or agreement shall be valid to any extent provided that a *raiyat* may enter into *Bhugat Bandha* mortgage of his holding for a period not exceeding 7 years." It further provided that:

A Schedule Tribe may transfer with the previous sanction of Deputy Commissioner his right of sale, exchange, gift or will to another person of ST and who is a resident within the local limits of the area of the Police station.

A Schedule Caste or Backward class member may transfer his right with the previous sanction of DC to another person of SC and Backward classes respectively within the local limits of the District within which the holding is situated.

A person who is not a member of ST, SC or Backward classes may transfer his right to anyone. Similarly, there is restriction on transfer of *Bhuinhari* tenure according to section 48.

Henceforth, we can see that there are ample restrictions provided in the laws to save the tribal people land, but is it true in real sense? This author thinks in the negative because lands are

transferred to one or the other, taking advantage of illiteracy and innocence of tribals of Jharkhand.

The poor economic conditions that were part and parcel of their original ethnic life, in addition to the induced dismal conditions as discussed above, compelled the tribals to migrate to big cities in search of job. Their migration is affected by the induced 'push factor' working in their state and they become vulnerable to the city mongers, who are working as *hawks* to grab the opportunity to exploit these innocent people. These hawks decoyed and entrapped and lured the innocent people with attractive prospects of a better life in cities. Women have to work as domestic help, young girls being subject to exploitation in their employer's home, placement agencies confine them and rape them in the name of arranging employment, young boys have to work in factories etc. as daily wage labourers in not so viable conditions and male folks have to work either as street vendor or rickshaw pullers. This kind of migration meant long working hours, poor living conditions and poor access to basic minimum necessities. The push factors are those which intricately make them vulnerable like the lack of opportunities back home, land grabbing, displacement from their land, limited opportunities to earn livelihood, neglected state of

government education system and health facilities. The apathy created a complete package which induces the poor and marginalized sections of people to leave their homeland and 'pull factors' seem like greener pastures far away.

Hence we can see that due to alienation from their land and other forest produce, the tribal people from the state of Jharkhand have to move out in search of livelihood and get trapped in the 'pull factor' of big cities. Therefore, this employment and security led migration from one of India's backward states to the cities put them at the crossroads of humanity; where they have to face all odds. Regardless of the various social sector schemes run by the government, people are trapped in this vicious cycle, making it a problem of acute nature.

Jharkhand has produced many bright people from academicians to politicians, from activists to revolutionists. As this work has discussed, the "adivasi" people they were suppressed at the maximum, therefore as a result it also witnessed the most number of struggles against the oppressors. Counting begins from Tamar uprising, Cherao, Ho uprising, Kol, Bhumij, Santhal revolt led by Sidhu-Kanhu, Munda uprising in which "Ulgulan" propagated by

Bhagwan Birsa Munda is very famous, Tana Bhagat Movement which was led by Jatra Bhagat and many more. Through these revolts one can very well understand that tribal people were not easily subjected to the enforced oppression in terms of land alienation and deforestation. Many business enterprises and corporations from the inside as well as outside of the country have shown very keen interest in investing in the state because of its abundance of natural resources and minerals. Tata Company was the first to establish steel factory in the dense forest areas of Singbhum back in 1907. After that the rest is history and the queue to exploit the state and tribes are increasing day-by-day and so the Government is snatching the land of tribals to fulfil its agenda of 'development.'

Dayamani Barla describes that the indigenous people of Jharkhand, the Dalits and working masses as having a mother-son relationship with the Nature. Their social, linguistic, cultural, religious, economic and historical existence continues to live in water, forest and land. These communities will exist so long as they are linked with water, forest and land. When "adivasis" and indigenous societies get displaced from their land, forests and water, they not only get displaced from their dwellings and

livelihood but also from their social values, language & culture, economy and history. She says:

झारखंड अंचल सोना, रूपा हीरा, कोयला, चोदी, अबरख, तांबा जैसे रत्नोंसे अटा पड़ा है। इसी भूखंड ने विभिन्नजनजातियों की बहुरेगी सांस्कृतिक बिरासत विविधता में एकता को संजोये रखा है। इसी धरती ने झारखंडी भूमिपुत्रों, दरांव, मुंडा, खड़िया, संताल, हो, नगेसिया, बिरहोर, बिरजिया, पहाड़िया, आदि को स्तन पान कराते रहा है। यह समाज प्राकृतिक छटा के बीच खेतों खलिहानों, जंगलों के बीच निकाई-बुनाई, दातुन-पताई करते प्राकृति के साथ आत्मीय रिस्तों को सरहुल- बसंत ऋतु में गीतों में व्यक्त करता है (barla.blogspot).

(English Translation)

Jharkhand is full of valuable minerals like gold, diamonds, silver, manganese, copper etc. This land-mass has given rise to a harmony among the multi-coloured cultural heritage and diversity of different tribes. This motherland has breast-fed the sons of the soil, the Oraons, Mundas, Kharias, Santhals, Hos, Nagesias, Birhors, Birjias, and Paharias. The society expresses its intimate relationship with nature in

songs of Sarhul and spring while working in the forests amid beautiful natural vistas [Translation Mine].

3.2 Struggle propagated by Rigoberta Menchú:

The case of Guatemala is historic in the sense that it gives us an in-depth understanding of the Latin American suffering which has put their perpetual and discriminatory society at the helm, where Rigoberta Menchú is representing her ethnic Maya community. By giving a human face to her community struggle, her testimony *I Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala* got international support and huge sympathy, putting her on the pedestal of Nobel Peace Prize in the year 1992. She has been associated with many books; I have been saying 'associated' because the above said book was the testimonial form which was given in the interview form to Elisabeth Burgos Debray in Paris. Because of not having that much fluency in Spanish which of course, was the colonial language for her and she had to learn it to sustain, apart from her mother tongue Maya-quiche; which represent the perpetual reality of her life including the other Mayas of her community; which the myopic government has not been able to see. *Crossing Borders, Rigoberta: La nieta de los Mayas, The*

Honey Jar and *The Girl from Chimel* are the prominent in the long list.

Her struggle did not start abruptly but right since childhood, along with other members of her family, she suffered. Menchú said her father Vicente Menchú Tum was very poor and worked very hard. After getting married he came to settle up in *altiplano*, which was in the mountains. “The land up there belonged to the government and you had to pay a fee so that you could clear the land and then built your house. Through all my parents’ efforts in the *fincas*, they managed to get enough money together to pay the fee, and they cleared the land” (Burgos 5). Her parents had six children, where two of Rigoberta’s brothers had died from scarcity of food. Her parents had to work in *fincas* that were down near the coast to work in the coffee/cotton plantations. So, they had to work in the *fincas* for eight months and go back to *altiplano* to sow maize and beans, which could only be produced after eight-nine years of hard work on that mountainous soil. She also started accompanying her mother to the *finca*, first as a baby and then as a worker in the cotton plantations as early as when she was only eight years old.

Death of Menchú's friend Maria due to poisoning when they were spraying the pesticide in the cotton field in *finca*, led to realization about the harsh life surrounding the *finca* and working merely as a poor worker for the wealthy *Ladinos*. This particular incident had put little Menchú in total shock, especially after having witnessed the death of her brothers as well. Meanwhile, due to the distressing economic conditions being faced by the family, her elder sister had to go to the city to work as a maid. These incidences, all one after the other, made Rigoberta Menchú desperate to work and earn more so that she could leave the filthy conditions of the *finca* as early as possible. So, she also went to be a maid in the capital, which was Guatemala City, at the age of thirteen. She suffered here as well at the hands of mistress who scolded her many times for petty excuses. Menchú was not very well versed with Spanish at that time but she could understand a bit but she could not speak it. After months of work "I was pleased because I now understand Spanish very well. But since nobody taught me to memorize word by word, I couldn't say a lot. I could say the main things I needed for my work but I couldn't start a conversation, or answer back, or protest about something" (Burgos 97).

The land which was giving harvest after many years of hard work by her family members in *altiplano* with other community members and a large tract were now under cultivation, however suddenly big landowners appeared: the *Brols*. With engineers and inspectors they started measuring the land saying that they are from Guatemalan government. Vicente Menchú Tum went to Instituto Nacional de Transformación Agraria de Guatemala (INTA) after collecting the signatures of all community members who were living in the *altiplano*. Meanwhile the officials in INTA gave a piece of paper to sign-in to Vicente, which he did since he could not read and write. "In fact the paper said that the peasants confirmed, once again, that they would leave their land. This gave the landowners power, since he, the community's representative, had signed the paper" (Burgos 104). Explaining further Rigoberta Menchú said the Guatemalan Government was in collusion with land owners:

The Government says the land belongs to the nation. It owns the land and gives it to us to cultivate. But when we've cleared and cultivated the land, that's when the landowners appear. However, the landowners don't just appear on their own - they have connections with different authorities that allow them to manoeuvre like that. So, the first time they

threw us out of our homes was, if I remember rightly, in 1967 (Burgos 105).

Hence due to all these skirmishes the families of the community suffered and were living in a perpetual hostile environment. The Menchú family had to work in *finca* and then in *altiplano* to manage the daily needs. Meanwhile the landowners were adamant to take away their lands. Vicente said “we were the first families to come and cultivate this land and nobody can deceive us into thinking that this land is theirs. If they want to be the owners of more land, let them go and cultivate the mountains. There is more land but it is not land where things grow” (Burgos 106). This is also very much true in the India case as well where in the state of Jharkhand the original land owners are those who were the first settler according to the *Khuntkattidari* system in Munda tribe and *Bhuinhari* system in Oraon tribe as this author has discussed before as well. Therefore we can see the similarities in the words of Vicente Menchú and the ancestors of Munda tribe as well, which cements the author’s comparative work. However, there are ups and downs as well in these two tropes.

There was yet another raid on the village of *altiplano* to move out the 'alleged settlers' from their hamlets. INTA again came and said that they are giving the land to them and just they had to sign a few papers. Even small kids were made to put their stamps. It was a big trap in which the community had to vacate the land after two years positively. When Rigoberta Menchú's father protested and started going to the unions, he was arrested on the charges of 'compromising the sovereignty of the state.' Those days were the most difficult days for the family of Menchú because to manage the advocate's fees, witnesses, documents, as well as interpreter fees to fight the case because the advocate was *ladino* and not able to understand Maya-quiche language.

Rigoberta remembers "That was when I told myself: 'I must learn to speak Spanish,' so that we don't need intermediaries" (Burgos 110). Here we can remember the masterpiece of Gayatri Spivak- *Can the subaltern speak?* Here through the words of Rigoberta Menchú itself we can see that she is very much willing to learn Spanish, which was the language of *ladinos* apart from the knowledge of Maya-quiche.

Due to defeat of the case on the documentary evidences, Vicente Menchú had to live in prison for one year and two months. He was beaten up for being active to pursue the land holding case with other community members. Again in 1977, he was arrested as a political prisoner. But due to union pressure the Guatemalan Government had to release him in fifteen days. After that only he started to join up with other peasants and discussed the creation of Comité Unidad de Campesina (CUC). Rigoberta says:

The CUC started growing; it spread like fire among the peasants in Guatemala. We began to understand that the root of all our problems was exploitation. That there were rich and poor and that the rich exploited the poor- our sweat, our labour. That's how they got richer and richer. The fact that we were always waiting in offices, always bowing to the authorities, was part of the discrimination we Indians suffered. So was the cultural oppression which tries to divide us by taking away our traditions and prevents unity among our people (Burgos 118).

Likewise we see similar happenings in various countries of the world that are categorized in the binary of 'developed' and

'developing' countries. The famous standing Rock and Dakota access pipeline case is from the US itself. Nevertheless the scheme of exploitation is same everywhere whether it is Guatemala or India.

As in those days the army attack was very common on the village and they used to rape women and torture men frequently; so for few days the community was staying on the mountain tents leaving their home at night. After General Kjell took power in his hands, he set 'agrarian reforms' in which he divided the land into small plots and gave each neighbour a plot and finally set up the INAFOR (Instituto Nacional de Forestación de Guatemala), an institution looking after trees and forests in Guatemala. Through this institution they have tied the community hands because they could not cut the trees without INAFOR permission and each tree cost five *Quetzales*. "And we used practically to eat wood- we have no stoves, no gas, nothing. Many of the peasants cut trees down and the INAFOR arrived and took them prisoner because they'd killed a tree" (Burgos 158). However, the situation for rich businessmen was different which Rigoberta Menchú narrates as such:

But when big businessmen come to cut, I don't know, huge quantities of wood to sell, to export, of course they were free to cut five thousand, six thousand trees. This made our people even more conscious of their situation. We protested against our little plots, we wanted to grow crops on our own land but not have it divided up. We could not use the wood and we had nothing to sow (Burgos 159).

The CUC was formed as a clandestine organization, but due to the demands of prevailing situation in the *altiplano* it came in to fore-front in May 1978. Apart from Vicente Menchú, who was its foundational member; Rigoberta Menchú had also joined it to demand a fair wage from landowners, respect for the community, decent treatment from all others not as an animal and not considered inferior to *ladinos*, respect for their religion, customs and culture.

The following paragraph will give an account of the gruesome torture and death of Menchú's family members one by one. On 9 September 1979, her brother of sixteen years old Petrocinio Menchú Tum was kidnapped and tortured for sixteen days on the charges of being a member of Guerrilla army. He was burnt alive

in-front of family members in Chajul. In November, the very same year there was a march on the capital organized for the removal of army from El Quiche. Vicente Menchú was part of that march and they first tried to occupy the Swiss embassy in Guatemala and lastly the Spanish embassy. "The objective was to tell the whole world what was happening in Guatemala and inform people inside the country as well" (Burgos 185). In the Spanish embassy as event that nobody could have foreseen occurred, burning all of them, including Vicente Menchú, to death. The kidnapping and death of Rigoberta's mother occurred in April 1980. "My mother was kidnapped. And from the very beginning she was raped by the town's high-ranking army officers. And I want to say in advance that I have in my hands details of every step of the rape and torture suffered by my mother"(Burgos 198). There was looming threat to Rigoberta Menchú's life in Guatemala because one after the other family members perished. Hence taking that into consideration her's *compañeros* made way for her to exile in Mexico and from there to Paris; where during taped interview to Elisabeth Burgos Debray she explained all those sufferings, which were compiled in book form and named *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia*.

3.3 Struggle propagated by Dayamani Barla:

Dayamani Barla belongs to the Munda community in the state of Jharkhand. She has suffered a lot since her childhood along with her parents. Due to illiteracy and unavailability of proper paperwork to show the claim on the land on which her family was staying in Gumla district, her family had to vacate the land. The aforesaid paper work was introduced by the Colonial masters, and since then has been carried forward as discussed by this author in the earlier chapters. Her father's land was taken away with false promises; which led her family members to do odd works to sustain their livelihood. Dayamani and her mother used to work as domestic help in Ranchi city, the capital of Jharkhand, and her father as an agricultural labourer in another city. Amidst these odd circumstances she was able to complete her education, for example working as a maid and then as a typist. Barla sometimes slept at the railway station due to lack of proper place to sleep; with all such hardships and struggle not to give up, she completed her education in Master in Commerce.

She is a vociferous writer, as she started writing about the problems faced by tribal people due to the political-corporate nexus

and their pet project of “developmental works” of Jharkhand as such in local newspapers. The first such confrontation was Keol-Karo dam issue and later at Nagri protest, which paved the way for the successful channelization of her inner suffering into activism for her ‘people.’ Here it should be noted that ‘her people’ are not only the Munda community but also all indigenous people who were facing injustices. She asks:

पिछले छह साल झारखंडी लोगों के उत्पीडन के साक्षी हैं। दर्जन गोलीकांड में दर्जनों लोग शहीद हुए हैं। मुक्ति की आवाज बुलंद करनो वालों का दमन जारी हैं। जननायक महेंद्र सिंह की हत्या जिस तरह से की गई है वह लोकतंत्र पर ही सवाल खड़ा करता है। राज्य शासन माफिया गिरोहों, लुटेरों। पूंजीशाहों, अपराधियों की जागीर क्यों बन गया है झारखण्ड”
(Barla *Visthapan Ka dard ‘Dard Ka Takaja’* i)

(English Translation)

Last six years are the testimony of sufferings of Jharkhandi people. Dozens have died in the firing. Those who are raising voices for the freedom from suppression are being tortured. Mass leader Mahendra Singh’s murder itself put a question mark on the democracy. Why the Jharkhand state

has been turned into the privy purse of mafia cartel, capitalists and criminals [Translation Mine].

Carrying forward the struggle these days, Barla is leading the protest against the so called “development works” of the Government. All this make the tribal people in general and Munda tribe in particular alien in their own homeland. The situation is more or less same in Guatemala as well, as we have just seen through the history of Rigobarta Menchú.

According to Dayamani Barla, ‘development’ has displaced a major chunk of the population of Jharkhand from their land for which there is very less rehabilitation. The actions of the tribals who agitate, struggle and provide enormous resistance to the development projects and resist the land acquisition process irked the Government and thus started an onslaught on the tribals who tried to resist these projects. The tribals are being arrested on forged cases and tried in the court of law and generally incarcerated. They are branded for murder and ‘Maoist activities’ and kept in jail and almost harassed on almost daily basis on flimsy grounds.

In Jharkhand Barla is protesting against the forceful land grab, plundering of forests, damming of rivers and other such activities which are putting her Munda people in particular and tribal communities in general at the 'crossroads' of the society; which again hounding them with their past. She highlights the notoriety in the 'development':

आज मित्तल कंपनी इस इलाके में जनसुविधा उपलब्ध कराने के नाम पर अपना पाँव जमाना चाहता है। इसके तहत स्कूल ,कॉलेज ,अस्पताल ,औद्योगिक प्रशिक्षण कॉलेज खोलने की बात कर रही है। यदि आदिवासियों को मुख्यधारा में लाने का यह निस्वार्थ प्रयास है तो यह स्वागत योग्य है। लेकिन कंपनी यह तमाम सुविधा इसलिए उपलब्ध कराने की बात कर रही है ,क्योंकि आदिवासियों मूलनिवासियों का जंगल जल जमीन उनको चाहिए। जहाँ कंपनी उद्योग प्लांट लगाएगी। जहाँ से लाखों की आबादी अपने जीविका ,समाज ,भाषा -संस्कृति ,पहचान सहित अपने पूर्वजों के धरोहर से उजड़ेंगे। यह सभी जानते हैं की एक बार आदिवासी -किसान अपने जंगल -जमीन से उजाड़ जाते हैं , तब उनका अस्तित्व स्वतः खत्म हो जाता है। (Barla *Ek Inch Bhi Jameen Nahi Denge* 13)

(English Translation)

Today Mittal Company is trying to establish them in this area in the name of making availability of public utilities. So, they are talking about opening of school, college, hospital, industrial training institutions. If these measures are meant to bring the tribal people in the main-stream in a selfless manner then it is a welcome step. But the company is talking about these developments because they need the land, forest and water of tribal-indigenous people where they will establish their plant and industry. Where the population of million will be displaced from their livelihood, society, language-culture, identity including their ancestors heritage. We all know that once the tribal-peasant is uprooted from their forest, land then their existence vanishes simply [Translation Mine].

Jharkhand has one of the largest mineral reserves of India, from metals to non-metals, from coal to iron and from uranium to mica. Such a mineral abundant state is still lying in neglect: there are railways and roads but not to serve the people as such but to transport the minerals from mines to the port or to the industries, there is electricity for the industry but not for the common people, they are still living in the dark near the electricity producing thermal

power plants, there is coal not for the local people but for the industries and thermal power plants. There are rivers but due to many dams, these rivers are choking and not able to maintain their flow and so the adjoining flora and fauna is dying; which are important life sustaining inputs for the tribal people to survive, is dying. In such a scenario when the basic life amenities are not being fulfilled at the local level because of forced land grab and destruction of forests, the adjoining populace has to look for other possibilities and support system. Here, they become open to the other face of societal realities, where they have to do odd jobs instead of peasantry or sharecropping; they have to migrate towards the cities near to their village and most of the time they move towards the bigger metropolis like Kolkata or Delhi NCR to try their luck, moved by hardships suffered back home.

The forest is also reeling under the same axe, It used to be the *Ali Baba's magical door* for "adivasi" people in past, where they used to go and find almost everything for their need accordingly; they had fire-woods, bamboo for various purposes, green fodder, *tendu* leaves for making *beedi*, *mahua*, tamarind, beetle leaves, honey, resin, gum, different varieties of fruits and nuts etc. So, in this way poor people used to have modest amount of income since

time immemorial, but due to the passage of the Forest Rights Acts 2006 many of the activities of the tribal people have been coming under the supervision of forest officials, who are exploiting them for their own whims and prejudices. As rightly said by Bina Agrawal, when it comes with the relation of indigenous people and their forests:

Moreover for forest dwellers, the relationship with forests is not just functional or economic but also symbolic, suffused with cultural meanings and nuances, and woven into their songs and leg-ends of origin. Large-scale deforestation, whether or not due to irrigation schemes, has eroded a whole way of living and thinking (Agrawal 142).

All these conditions are making a kind of threshold platform for these poor tribal people of Jharkhand to leave their ancestral homes and move towards the “greener pastures” in towns and cities with their family, which itself is creating a kind of vulnerable situation for female folks in the cities. Similar perpetually induced subversion and oppression has been taking place in different parts of the world, for example in Africa and Latin America as well. We have seen the case of Latin America, which was also under the

clutches of Spanish colonization, where in the name of “educating people” indigenous population were massacred, oppressed and subjected to alienation in their own land. Focusing on Guatemala, a beautiful Central American country, home to many native Indians in which Maya-quiche is also a community, suffered a lot first at the hands of Spanish colonizers, then *Ladinos* (people of mixed blood, Spanish and native) and now at the hands of different Government related “developmental works.”

Africa’s map was totally changed and named it as the ‘dark continent’ on racial lines by the Europeans who had literally made the different countries boundaries just using the scale when there were on fight to capture huge untapped resources. Colonialism exploited the people at its zenith and some of the dark memories are still afresh when people were traded as slaves on the West Coast to bring them to ‘New World’ as bounded labourers to work in the sugar and coffee plantations. Franz Fanon in his most celebrated book *The Wretched of the Earth* has described the conditions of African slaves. So my point here is to just make an observation those countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America had suffered equally and have common tropes as well. In the next chapter, I will try to elaborate on this in detail.

As Rigoberta Menchú is letting the entire world know what is happening in Guatemala by using Spanish language as a tool to assert herself, besides the use of *Maya-quiche*; similarly Dayamani Barla is writing in Hindi language in addition to her own *mundari* language to make the people of Jharkhand and outside aware of the reality. Here, I would like to highlight the observation made by Prof. Sharmila Rege “Can reading and teaching of dalit autobiographies radicalize the perception of readers? Do readers conveniently consume these narratives as narratives of pain and suffering refusing to engage with the politics and theory of Ambedkarism? Translator and teacher Arun Prabha Mukherjee argues that autobiographies are not ‘sob stories’ but stories of anger against injustice” (10). This means that the narratives written in these contexts are loaded with resistance to the hegemonic bourgeoisie that is on its full force to throttle the marginal discourse and put a blanket on the rotten society just to present a utopian imagery.

Edward Said is very much correct when he said that the discourse of *Orientalism* was created to highlight the ‘otherness’ in the society and always to subvert the unusual. He was talking in the context of how the countries of South and South-East Asia and

Middle East were deliberately not included in the mainstream discourses and always a hedge is put between them to subvert their profound knowledge, history and cherished civilizations. The West considered themselves as the only saviours of humanity and so after them and before them nothing existed. That very dangerous notion created then is now paid by the heavy prices by the whole humanity. We see the animosity in various discourses, between religions and sects etc. Similarly I want to argue that these writings of Menchú and Barla are not the major discourses which are very much in conformity with Prof. Rege's argument "In consciously violating the boundaries set by bourgeois autobiography, dalit life narratives became testimonies that summoned the truth from the past; truth about the poverty and helplessness of the pre-Ambedkarite era as also the resistance and progress of the Ambedkarite era" (13).

Walter D. Mignolo has argued that the project of Coloniality was done with the 'Eurocentric' notion to dominate historically and temporally; which was very much about power, structure of management and hierarchy. All these were done in the name of modernity, which he considered as a mere fiction and rhetoric of salvation. Further he is celebrating that the Western domination is

ending with hyperbole of *those who classify always forget but those who are classified never forget* (Interview). This means that now the centre of 'Capital' and 'Knowledge' has been controlled by the colonies that were once in the hands of 'white people,' 500 years back. Hence, we are able to see a bit different effect of Globalization as well. However, while these colonies are flexing their muscles in the international arena, at the same time in the hinterland of those very same colonies there exist the bipartisanship that in a way maintain the concept of *centre* and *periphery*; which was analysed by Angel Rama in his *Lettered City*. However, Pablo González Casanova has thus explained it in his famed article *Colonialismo Interno*:

Con el triunfo mundial del capitalismo sobre los proyectos comunistas, socialdemócratas y de liberación nacional, la política globalizadora y neoliberal de las grandes empresas y los grandes complejos político-militares tiende a una integración de la colonización inter, intra y transnacional. Esa combinación le permite aumentar su dominación mundial de los mercados y los trabajadores, así como controlar en su favor los procesos de distribución del excedente en el interior de cada país, en las relaciones de

un país con otro y en los flujos de las grandes empresas transnacionales (González Casanova 425).

Hence exactly the same case here justifies the writings of Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla. Prof. Sharmila Rege says:

My argument here is that Dalit life narratives are in fact *testimonies*, which forge a right to speak both for and beyond the individual and contest explicitly or implicitly the 'official forgetting' of histories of caste oppression, struggles and resistance. A *testimonio* is a narrative in book or pamphlet form, told in the first person by a narrator who is also the real protagonist or witness of the events he or she recounts and whose unit of narration is usually a 'life' or significant life experience (Beverley 1992: 92-93). In a *testimonio*, the intention is not one of literariness but of communicating the situation of a group's oppression, imprisonment and struggle. The narrator claims some agency in the act of narrating and calls upon the readers to respond actively in judging the situation (p. 94-97) (Rege 13).

Therefore, these writings and their struggle are co-existent to the framework of *testimonio*, which is now very much acceptable in the society because they are not demanding that this be given a specific genre or other but it is up to the reader to decide how she/he wants to read it and I think the readership of various ages has decided these to be the given respect which they are entitled to as very much referenced in *The Death of the Author* by Roland Barthes.

Finally we can say that both the women writers are the Iron pillars in their respective parts of the world. They do not need any intermediaries to explain their history. This has been explained earlier as well in the contexts of Spanish and Hindi languages which they are using. Nevertheless, women are always an active agent in discussions related to the carefulness, which is not to be confused with docile and submissive. Referring again to the words of Bina Agrawal, "Women, especially those in poor rural households in India, on the one hand, are victims of environmental degradation in quite gender-specific ways. On the other hand, they have been active agents in movements of environmental protection and regeneration" (Agrawal 119). This explains the notion behind eco-feminism which both protagonists talked about. Rigoberta

Menchú has talked about the importance of nature in Mayan civilization where their gods were representative of nature and its various forces. Whether it is the Rain god or the Sun god who were having different capability to influence the human beings and so they do altar on various occasions to show their gratitude and respectfulness. Similarly, for Munda tribe as well *Singbonga* was very auspicious and also entire ceremonies revolve around him. By myth it represents the Sun god.

As the title of this chapter suggests about synthesis and imagination of these two women writers and their impact on the Globalization and environmental disaster in terms of writings; through which we are going through still and future agenda set by the same. So, outcome depicted through this chapter reminds that sooner are days when there would be minimum of forests, cultivable and multi-crop land and fresh river water in Jharkhand because all these would be taken over by big multinational companies and corporate houses, setting up their industries and vegetable farms, where there would be monopoly and future markets coming in handy. The minerals would be extracted from the mines in such a way that plundering of mines through open-cast and deeper mines would put a long lasting effect on the state,

which would ultimately put the state in deep despair. This is not only the shadow of the Globalization and free market economy in India but this is true in different countries of South as well. Today people are well connected through different social media and micro-blogging sites, which foment the opinion and happenings around the globe on a real time basis. Due to easy connection with different persons sitting in different parts of the world the people are provided with a holistic opportunity to share ideas and give their comments instantly. That is why the protagonists of this thesis are connected with the masses and sufferers through blogs etc. For example, I am quoting the exact words from the front page of Dayamani Barla's blog:

A JOURNEY FOR PROTECT EXISTENCE.

VOICE OF HULGULANLAND AGAINST GLOBLISATION AND COMMUNAL FACISM. OUR LAND SLOGAN BIRBURU OTE HASAA GARA BEAA ABUA ABUA. LAND, FOREST AND WATER IS OURS (dayamani-barla.blogspot).

Therefore, we can infer how sincerely Barla is pursuing these issues. She has said in different forums and talk shows that what we are entitled to according to the Constitution of India should be given because we people are defined differently and have been called as Scheduled Tribe and Nature is our utmost important

treasure. Hence both these activists are in the favour of a just society where the indigenous/tribal people could live happily in peaceful coexistence, conserving the nature because if nature is adversely affected it would put the footsteps of irreversible magnitude on the Blue planet.

The struggles of these two women accompanied by their writings against the oppression and 'development-induced displacement' do not mean that they are against 'development.' The existence of the tribals/Indigenous in their respective territories cannot be jeopardized in the name of 'development.' The government's way of rehabilitation and compensation does not serve the need in a dignified manner. Even the Supreme Court of India has said on January 10, 2017⁶:

"We will tell you now itself. You giving cash instead of land is tentatively not acceptable. That's just not done," Chief Justice of India J.S. Khehar, who headed a three-judge Bench, told the Narmada authorities and counsel for Madhya Pradesh. "They have worked their lands all their lives," Chief

⁶ <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/Cash-for-land-is-just-not-done-SC/article17019352.ece>

Justice Khehar said during the hearing (Correspondent: Web).

As we do see these days that how the UNFCCC is very concerned about the climate change and various meets of Conference of Parties (CoP) have been recognized namely Rio Earth Summit, Kyoto Protocol, Nagoya Protocol, Paris Agreement and more recently Kigali Agreement. All these are striving towards reducing the temperature of our ballooning earth with hot gases due to the usages of various greenhouse gases in our day-to-day life. However, this seems a bit difficult in the era of neo liberalism and mercantile economy where no country wants to loose its pie of 'growth' and 'development,' the overall effects of this trend have been demonstrated in various chapters of this work already.

Joseph Stiglitz has analyzed Globalization in his book *Making Globalization Work* and said "About 80 percent of the world's population lives in developing countries, marked by low incomes and high poverty, high unemployment and low education. For those countries, globalization presents both unprecedented risks and opportunities. Making globalization work in ways that enrich the whole world requires making it work for the people in those

countries” (26). Similarly it brings boon and bane inbuilt within. The policy makers should always keep into their consideration the last person in the queue who may belong to ethnically, culturally and religiously marginal group; since our discussion revolves around the ethnicity and gender discourse that are surely doubly marginalized. Stiglitz laments that “Global warming is a global problem, yet no one wants to pay to fix it. Everybody wants a free ride on the efforts of others. But it is in everybody's interest that the world act collectively to do something” (174). Lastly there is a different approach propagated from one of the Latin American countries and another from Asia (both are in ‘developing’ category but still they are showing the way to spearhead the move against Global warming) to take steps as early as possible. From *Making Globalization Work*:

Led by Papua New Guinea and Costa Rica, a group of developing countries calling themselves the Rainforest Coalition put forward an innovative proposal in January 2005, offering to commit to greenhouse gas limits but asking in return that they be able to sell carbon offsets not just for new forests but for avoided deforestation. Countries would, under this proposal, be paid for not cutting down there from

the global perspective-which is to maintain them as forests rather than to harvest them for timber (Stiglitz 179-180).

Therefore, in this way the smaller and concerned countries and their inhabitants are offering solutions to this grave problem of Globalization induced global warming. Likewise, we remember Menchú and Barla's concern for the same since long, but yet not many individuals are listening.

Finally Rigobeta Menchú's⁷ wish includes:

...instead of giving a rifle to somebody, build a school; instead of giving a rifle, build a community with adequate services. Instead of giving a rifle, develop an educational system that is not about conflict and violence, but one that promotes respect for values, for life, and respect for one's elders. This requires a huge investment. Yet if we can invest in a different vision of peaceful coexistence, I think we can change the world, because every problem has a nonviolent answer (Menchú: Web).

⁷Menchú, Rigoberta. http://www.azquotes.com/author/21308-Rigoberta_Menchu

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Chapter: 4

Beyond the Testimonials: Ongoing Struggles and More Texts.

This Chapter is an attempt to address the issues regarding further struggles apart from those which have already been discussed in the earlier chapters. It includes some of the later publications, interviews or blogs etc. propagated by Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla in the contemporary period. This will study how the staging and management of local cultures and customary (literature, art and performances) serve to resist the neo-liberal paradigms of propaganda. Here I hope to explore how the lives of 'their peoples' have begun to change, as their respective Governments have also been forced to rethink and strategize anew their liberalization agendas; while at the same time seriously engage with the Indigenous Peoples.

Dayamani Barla is looking at this side of story and putting her words according to that mainly, as she puts her emphasis on the politico-corporate arrangement due to which the "developmental works" likewise illusioned by them and media, are not taking place

in reality for the local peoples but for the interests of the corporate sector who want to only exploit them and dispossess them of their lands and means of livelihood.

This is the story of every state in India in general and Jharkhand in particular. Indigenous people have to flee their homes in huge numbers because of paucity of opportunities available in villages as their basic tenant facility has been taken away through various *modus operandi*. Although, there are many laws, like the Chhotanagpur Tenancy (CNT) Act, Santhal Pargana Tenancy (SPT) Act, PESA Act and Forest Rights Act which give ample rights to the tribal land holders. According to these acts lands inhabited and worked upon by the tribal people will not be transferred to non-tribal people; however the real situation is totally different because land grab is taking place mercilessly and even rich multi-crop land has been taken away from poor peasants. Now the amendments made to these acts are looming large, and have become a point of contestation between the tribals and the government of the day because of awareness among the proposed sufferers of those very acts.

Barla has written on various issues from time to time apart from *Ek Inch Bhi Jameen Nahi Denge* and *Visthapan ka Dard*; recently she has come up with *Kisano ki Jameen Loot Kiske Liye?* In that, she says:

विकास का इतिहास गवाह है की जब तक आदिवासी -मूलनिवासी -किसान -मेहनतकश अपने खेत-खलियान, जंगल-जमीन से जुड़ा रहता है , तब तक ही आदिवासी -मूलवासी -किसान जीवित रह सकता है। जल -जंगल -जमीन के साथ हमारे सहअस्तित्व को अक्षुण्ण रखने के लिए ही - छोटानागपुर कास्तकारी तथा संथाल परगना कास्तकारी अधिनियम बनाया गया। आजाद भारत के संविधान ने भी पांचवी अनुसूति के तहत हमारे समुदाय को प्राकृतिक संसाधनों के साथ विकसित तथा इसे संचालित और नियंत्रित करने का अधिकार गांव सभा -ग्राम सभा को दिया गया है। (Barla *Kisano ki Jameen Loot Kiske Liye?* 18)

(English Translation)

The history of “development” bears witness that tribals-indigenous people-peasants survive only till they are rooted in their lands-farms, forests. It was to save our

co-existence with the land-forest and water that Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act and Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act were established. Even the Constitution of India gave the right to our community to develop, manage and control natural resources through Gram Sabha under the Fifth Schedule [Translation Mine].

Jharkhand state was formed after the bifurcation from the Bihar state on 15 November 2000 solely on the agenda of development however the long struggle for which many had given their lives, seems dwarfed now because of the real plank of 'development' has completely been missing. When Barla protested against the possible atrocities, she had been shown the way of prison on many occasions on various charges for example *Nagri* incident is the famous one. "These are the latest in a spate of arrests, starting with the booking of another civil rights activist, Dayamani Barla. She was leading a protest against land acquisition in Nagri village near Ranchi on October 16 when she was detained in connection with a six-year-old case. Her bail plea has been rejected thrice by the Ranchi High Court" (Mahaprashasta: Web).

Similarly, Rigoberta Menchú had put her words in *Crossing Borders* in which she described the situation after her self-imposed exile during 1980 to 1988 in Mexico as it became very dangerous for the life of Menchú after murders and deaths of her family members. During that period, she travelled across many places except Guatemala but when she made an attempt to return on 18 April 1988 after the personal persuasion of Guatemalan Ambassador to United Nations in Geneva, she was arrested at the airport itself. She tells about the charges that had been put on her:

There were three charges against me. One was for public disorder offences in Nebaj, Cotzal and Uspantan, for organising peasants to rebel against the government and putting 'national security' at risk. A second charge was that I wrote Marxist-Leninist ideas, which were prohibited in Guatemala. This too was a threat to 'national security.' The third charge was more serious. They accused me of collaborating with the guerrilla movement. They said that I had been training guerrillas as 'commander' and 'military instructor' in two countries, and had camps in Nicaragua and Cuba (Menchú 51).

We can see how the state tried to put the activists in 'order' to fulfil the policy design which may be influenced with the colour of *Utilitarianism* (A school of thought which treats pleasure and pain as the chief motive force behind all human actions. The balance of pleasure over pain derived from a thing or a course of action is termed 'utility' which is the source of 'happiness' (Gaubu 416) of Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) which is for 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' but we forget that it leaves the minuscule or the minority population behind which may consists of big numbers when it could be calculated in terms of a states like Guatemala or Jharkhand. So, utilitarianism tends to subordinate individual to the collectivity.

The State must always use the yardstick of *Veil of Ignorance*, which was propagated by the great political scientist John Rawls (1921-2002) through which the Government should always take into its consideration, the last person in the queue or the most disadvantaged and oppressed section of the society without any prejudice; then only that Government would be real National government which works according to the mandates of the Constitution which is the organic law of the land. "Rawls in his celebrated work *Theory of Justice* (1971) has pointed out that a

good society is characterized by a number of virtues. Justice is the first virtue of a good society. According to him, the problem of justice consists in ensuring a just distribution of 'primary goods' which include rights and liberties, powers and opportunities, income and wealth, means of self-respect and so on. Rawls has described his theory as the theory of pure procedural justice. It means that once certain principles of justice are unanimously accepted, the distribution resulting from their application will be necessarily just" (Gaubha 427-428). The State should never indulge with vested interested parties and their cohorts. However, the reality is that it tries or pretends to likewise but governments have their 'ulterior agenda' with the interests of the affluent and thus want to maintain the oligarchic system (as we can remember the cases of Latin American countries up to early twentieth century as also with India where local feudal lords continue to call the shots). Therefore governments are increasingly failing to address the lives and livelihood of the last women/man. That is why poverty and inequality have not been wiped out from the lives of the indigenous peoples of Guatemala and Jharkhand although millions have been sanctioned for their development; India has the really good social schemes and policies but still situation remains the same. The daily

wage payment and work scheme MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) has received accolades of the highest order from the United Nations as well but it has been failing in many states as also in Jharkhand due to corruption.

In the continuation of Guatemala, Rigoberta Menchú has been remembering her own life struggles to better co-relate to others of the community. She explains that victims do not choose their destiny but that it has been imposed brutally:

Las víctimas, de cualquier forma, no tienen opción. No podemos elegir. No podemos decir: “Yo escojo esto para mí, yo debo pagar este precio”. No se puede elegir hasta donde llega nuestra capacidad de sufrir. Las víctimas no eligen, uno tiene que vivir lo que tiene que vivir y tiene que enfrentar lo que tiene que enfrentar. Un pedazo del dolor de uno no puede dejarlo para mañana, ni se puede repartir entre todos. Recuerdo que me quede en Huehuetenango después de la muerte de mis padres, después de que no sabía nada de mis hermanos, después de que pensé que era la única sobreviviente de la familia. Eso me llevo a un estado de ánimo muy difícil. No lo conté en el libro *Me llamo*

Rigoberta Menchú por vergüenza. No aguante compartir mi dolor porque mis heridas estaban abiertas (Menchú et al. 231).

Before proceeding further as of now we have the intellectual understanding that the suffering and oppressor/oppressed relation cannot be confined and museumized in binaries but these are subjective realities and cannot be bypassed in the objectivity of shallow understanding. We will begin our work to analyze the similar happenings round the Globe.

4.1 Struggle in different forms and different parts of the world:

Indigenous peoples are a small minority in this world yet they hold ancestral rights to substantial percentage of the planet's land resources. Today they are aware of these rights chartered through the international rights of indigenous peoples across the globe and legitimized through the intervention of the United Nations. As a matter of fact, the indigenous peoples are no longer fighting their own battles and are not alone any more as increasingly they are also being seen as protectors of environment. The case of the indigenous peoples fighting corporate interests in the Standing Rock Sioux reservation in North Dakota has received lots of

support from across the globe, both through social media as well as by active participation of environmentalists, activists and humanists⁸.

It is in this context that the present chapter proposes to highlight the testimonial literature as a tool of resistance and hence the present section dwells on acknowledging some other important movements of indigenous peoples across Latin America.

As we are now getting familiar with the framework on which this chapter is moving into, after Rigoberta Menchú in Guatemala (1983) other testimonies were also present in the horizon of resistance, such as those by Domitila Barrios de Chungara in Bolivia (1978), Elvia Alvarado in Honduras (1987) and many others which would be subsequently added up.

Elaborating first and foremost would be Domitila Chungara's *let me speak!* Where Chungara had made history by telling her own history orally to Moema Viezzer, a Brazilian journalist and further translated by Victoria Ortiz. At the United Nations International

⁸ "15 Other Indigenous struggles you Need to Know about." *Intercontinental Cry: A Publication of the Centre for World Indigenous Studies*. Accessed 19 Apr. 2017 downloaded: <https://intercontinentalcry.org/15-indigenous-struggles-need-know/>

Women's Year Tribunal in Mexico in 1975, Domitila and Moema met and conceived the idea for that book. It combines taped personal conversations and formal presentations, and written correspondences, and was originally published as, *Si me permiten hablar... testimonio de Domitila, una mujer de las minas de Bolivia*, by Siglo XX Editores, Mexico. This reminds one of the processes of Rigoberta Menchú's interview as well.

Here Chungara made us realize that how in Bolivia the miner's family suffers due to the exorbitant nature of exploitation by the owners of the Tin mines. In Bolivia, big multinational corporations (MNC's) backed and supported by the United States and Western capital, dominate the Tin mining industry, which represents almost 60 percent of Bolivia's National Income; oil and other means of exploitation contributes to the rest.

There were over 70,000 tin miners where the worker's average life expectancy was 35 years on an average, which was due to mine related sickness and diseases "exposed to noxious chemicals and gases, including silica dust, arsenic gas, acetylene vapours, as well as asbestos deposits. Dynamite is used regularly, carts laden with heavy rocks come rattling down the tracks upon which they

walk, surfaces are slippery, and tunnels are poorly-lit (if at all), and visibility is incredibly poor” (Gallop: Web). The miners and their families lived inside the mining camps, like Siglo XX, where Domitila is from. Born in Siglo XX on May 7, 1937 at three she went to Pulacayo in the department of Potosi in Quijarro province then the largest tin-producing region of Bolivia, She was the daughter and wife of a miner. The miners dwelling used to be the property of the mining companies, so that when a miner dies, his family/widow had to leave the same. Their groceries come from the company store, where prices are so exorbitant that the people remain constantly in debt to the company. The men work ten hour shifts, with no breaks, no food, and no daylight.

So, the question arises how do they stand the mine? Chungara explains “By chewing coca mixed with lye. Coca is a leaf that has a short of bitter flavour but that makes you forget your hunger. Lye is the ashes from quinoa stalks (Grain from the highlands) mixed with rice and aniseed that people chew with coca in order to get rid of its bitter taste. So that’s what the miners chew to raise their spirits and so that their stomachs can stand it” (Viezza 27). And while the men work in the mines, the women back home sell some food items etc. on the streets to supplement family, cook food and maintain the

household chores. There were no development work in mining area for the welfare of the miner and their families, the profit were never expended on them but it was for the big multinational corporations outside Bolivia. Lisa Albrecht says:

In 1961, the Housewives' Committee formed when 70 women of Siglo XX came together to protest the miners' low wages and poor working conditions, and the high prices of food. These women were initially laughed at by the men who refused to see their importance. By 1973, national demonstrations of 5000 women gathered on several occasions in response to similarly oppressive conditions. These women have gone on hunger strikes, guarded hostages, formed picket lines in front of mine entrances and in Domitila's case, been arrested and tortured for their activism (Albrecht 14).

Here Domitila Chungara point outs how the capitalist society is preying on these poor Bolivians through their agendas which is always profit and rent seeking in collusion with the Government of Bolivia, the country which is known for its highest indigenous population in the whole Latin America. The Quechua, Guarani,

Aymara speaking Indians were thriving in the Andes. But now they were all suffering due negligence of the successive governments and so many had started grouping together to do something to get rid of it. Her father was a political organizer before, so he was tried and sent to various prisons, tortured. He was first sent to Coati Island, which is on Lake Titicaca. The family also suffered in due course as there were siblings of Chungara who were to be taken care of by her after the death of her mother. She was told to leave her school as she knew how to read and write as suggested by her father but she continued “Then one day the little one ate carbide ashes that were in the garbage pail, the carbide that’s used to light lamps. They’d thrown food on top of the ashes and my little sister, who I think was hungry, went to eat out of the can. She got a terrible intestinal infection and she died. She was only three years old” (Viezzer 54).

All the problems then and after, were having a strenuous relationships with the conditions perpetuated in the guise of ‘development.’ As this author has demonstrated before, in Chungara’s case, she was at the receiving end of the mining project along with others. This perspective is very important from the lens of *testimonio* as well because her story was written before

Menchú's so by default it gains significance as a resistance literature. Finally we can say that her family along with others had suffered as she was narrating, so this testimony does not belong to her alone but the suffering was same for all.

In an interview she said about the Capitalist society which is worth mentioning here:

This capitalist society is so corrupt that it is ruining humanity with its bombs and poisons. All over the world there are people struggling from their own points of view, for the environment and against pollution, against discrimination suffered by women, against racial discrimination, even through religious sects. All these separate struggles have a single mother, which for me is like a trunk whose roots are the capitalist system that is imposed on our worlds. It is against this system that we all must unite, to tear up by the roots this evil that is destroying humanity. It is in order to prevent this that trying to distract us, and of course it would not be surprising if they had put some money into this. By this I do not mean that I am against the struggle that our peoples must pursue for our culture, our customs, our

language, our religion. Everything that we feel because we have it in our blood, but it must lead to an understanding among us (Yanez 94-95).

Capitalism is hydra-headed because if we are going to cut one of its head there are many others which are ready to pop again and to put in danger the economy of developing countries, because these are its base to flourish at any cost. That was demonstrated in the San Juan Massacre by armed forces in the civilian dress at the dawn on June 24, 1967 in Bolivia which was taken to sanitize the 'guerrilla forces.' Similar types of operations had occurred in different countries of Latin America as well, the memories of *Cien años de Soledad* are still alive in the heads of common colombians when plantation workers were killed in thousands and transported through trains to throw them away in the Ocean in the dark hours of mid-night. The United Fruit Company, Anaconda Company for copper mines in Chuquicamata etc. are the names of few companies which affected not only the economy of different countries of Latin America but also ruptured the poor and working classes in the name of 'development.'

There are many other live accounts of oppressed people in the world as well which I am going to analyze but I am covering the Latin American scenario first. Mexican author Elena Poniatowska says:

In Latin America, how many possess a credential? Many of the poor and peasants who shouted "Land and Liberty!" with Zapata go through life worshipping their land titles as if they were images of the Virgin of Guadalupe. They carry them with them to Mexico City in their wallets, those yellowing titles giving them the sacred right to possess land, inherited from their parents, delivered to them by the blessed revolution, and now rejected as proof of ownership by the Ministry of Agrarian Reform because in Mexico, land is divided in layers down to the very core of hell and for a long time public servants have divided it among their friends (Poniatowska 67).

The situation is the same everywhere "The collective voice, the woman-centred view of "the people's" story, and the collaborative, gendered mode of production of Latin American women's testimonials model a kind of women's writing that has important

literary and political implications” (Marin 65). Further exploring the same gender based heterogeneity and negating the binary of ‘developed’ and ‘developing,’ Lynda Marin has investigated a lot of testimonials apart from Rigoberta Menchú and Domitila Chungara. Likewise, following the testimonial niche, Marin explains in her paper *speaking out together: Testimonials of Latin American Women*. She quotes⁹: In her composite recounting of the life of Salvadoran Commander Eugenia, Claribel Alegria in *They Won't Take Me Alive* (1987) qualifies the introduction of her subject like this:

But the story is not just Eugenia's. It is that of her suffering and rebellious fellow-nationals, still engaged in waging the 'popular war,' against a system that many of them describe here in cruel and personal detail... And it is a book dedicated to Salvadoran women engaged in political

⁹ Marin, Lynda. “Speaking out Together: Testimonials of Latin American Women.” *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 18, No. 3, Voices of the Voiceless in Testimonial Literature, Part I (Summer, 1991), pp. 52-53,

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2633739> Accessed 10 Jun. 2017.

struggle, to Ana Patricia (Eugenia's daughter), to the next generation and a new civilization (1987: 32).

And Elvia Alvarado, a Honduran campesina, suggests the collective nature of her speaking when, in the forward to her *Don't Be Afraid, Gringo* (1987), she says:

I thought about our struggle, how we suffer hunger, persecution, abuse by the landowners. How we fight with all the bureaucrats at the National Agrarian Institute. How we fight with the police, the army, the security forces... But then I decided that I couldn't pass up a chance to tell the world our story (1987: xiii).

The burning story in Chiapas, southern state of Mexico is the violent revolution by Zapatistas in which women fighters contributed as well. I am not talking about any testimony in particular but my focus area is the uprising of common and oppressed people which included indigenous people for sure. This region of Mexico had numerous hydroelectric potential because of its fast flowing rivers which fall in the Gulf of Mexico and Petroleum exploration probability over there gave the region one of the biggest chunk of money allotment by Alvarez regime during 70's. But due to

economic crisis of 1982 there were fund cuts and the said region was badly affected, the common people were suffering in particular in the regions of Zinacantan and Pantelho, including San Cristobal de las Casas where finally the rebellions took the office of Mayor and caught everybody by surprise in the leadership of Subcomandante Marcos on January 1, 1994. His writings chronicle the struggles of the Mexican Indians and are significant as they include philosophical, historical and fictional writings.

The whole agenda was due to the Salinas's government pursuing liberal economic policies in the background of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) which includes US, Canada and Mexico. In 1996 the indigenous people got a special deal regarding the management of their own affairs while establishing *Oventic* as the municipal council, but the majority of deals were not implemented in true spirit yet by the Mexican government. The above said description tells us the discontent in the Latin American society in which land rights are frequently violated by the powerful in collusion of the government itself. The Guatemalan case is the burning example. The case of Zinacantan and Pantelho (March 1994) is worth mentioning as the society had itself been divided. Therefore the divided society is the place of

discontent among the oppressed people, when at last they realize that there could be no more sustenance so either if the rebellion should take place or if someone like Rigoberta Menchú or Domitila Chungara tells their stories to others. Solidarity was the most vital and essential pre-condition towards any concrete results of their struggles.

There are many examples from India as well in continuation with Dayamani Barla from the state of Jharkhand, where women/men are writing vis-à-vis fighting against the unjust societal architecture which has been maintaining status quo since the time immemorial. The cause of environmental consciousness has also made them activists; an example of Chipko movement is not very unknown to us. The first Chipko movement happened in the Jodhpur district of Rajasthan in 1730, when Amrita Devi and three others of Bishnoi community of Khejarli village had given the ultimate sacrifice of their lives while saving the Khejri trees which was considered auspicious for Bishnois. Here we find the supreme love and respect for not only for tree but for the Nature as well. Also, during 1970's there was a unique mass movement which took place in Chamoli district of today's Uttarakhand, which was the Himalayan part of Uttar Pradesh then where precisely in 1973, people did not allow

trees to be cut and felled. They started embracing the tree whenever someone came to cut trees; - Gaura Devi, Sudesha Devi, Bachni Devi among women was prominent and among men Chandri Prasad Bhatt and Sunderlal Bahuguna were the towering figures.

Similarly, Gladson Dungdung is a known tribal rights activist from Jharkhand and has staunch belief in retaining and increasing the forest cover for the indigenous people as well as for the betterment of the world. “There can be no economy without ecology. Are people going to eat iron and money instead of rice and grain?” he asked (Verma: Web). Dungdung has recently written the book *Mission Saranda: A War for Natural Resources in India* (2015), which focuses on human rights violations and mining, issues in Saranda Forest which houses India’s rich “Adivasi” cultural heritage in West Singhbhum district of Jharkhand. He explains:

The idea that “Adivasis” live in symbiosis with the forest and nature is not some ‘ecological romanticism.’ It’s a central fact about a set of societies with ancient roots that developed long ago an economic system based on the ecological values of not taking too much from nature,

honouring the earth and in recognizing the intrinsic sacredness in nature, in streams, mountains, the Sun, trees and sacred groves...(Dungdung 2).

The cases of Soni Sori from Chhattisgarh and Irom Sharmila from Manipur are peculiar ones; as women tribal leaders from their respective parts of India, they demonstrate the nature of their sufferings and their struggles. Soni Sori in her own life has taken so much of violence, repression, torture and still stands for her peoples and their cause. Similarly, Irom Sharmila fasted for the repeal of draconian AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Powers Act) from Manipur in particular and entire North-East in general. It was endorsed by the Supreme Court as well that people of these regions are suffering, due to unwarranted killings and in the guise of militancy and related problems the armed forces are indulging themselves in extra-judicial killings and encounters, for which the Honourable Supreme Court has said that all killings must be probed.

Henceforth, women activists are taking part in every occasion where they feel that something very grossly wrong has happened or when some law is violated. They do not need any representative or spokesperson on their community's behalf as they are today

empowered to fight their own battles. As we know that the “Adivasi” or tribal people are designated as the Scheduled Tribes (ST) in India. The Constitution of India does not define Scheduled Tribes. However, Article 366 (25) refers to Scheduled Tribes as such tribes or tribal communities or groups as are deemed under Article 342 of the Constitution. According to Article 342 of the Constitution, the Scheduled Tribes are the tribes or tribal communities that have been declared as such by the President through a public notification. This leaves open the scope for widening of the lists of Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (SCs and STs) under this Article, as evidenced by many Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe constitutional orders *via* 2002, 2003 *etc.* It was Mahatma Gandhi who fought hard to recognize them as free citizens of India and called them the *Girijans* or the *Children of the Forest God* (Thomas : Web).

Similarly there are many *Dalit* writers as well who have shared their testimonies highlighting the perpetual subjugation. The word *Dalit* has been taken from Sanskrit language which means “suppressed” or “crushed” qualifying it as broken into pieces. Jyotirao Phule had first used it in his discourse and later on Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar also used this name. Bama’s *Karukku* is

considered as the first Dalit testimony in Tamil in which she condemns all forms of oppression be it caste, class or gender. So, Raj Kumar asks “so what makes Bama adopt such a narrative strategy in her autobiography? Is it deliberate or just a mere coincidence that she takes her entire community of Parayas along with her while narrating her sufferings?” (Kumar 229). The lifecycle of the Parayas depended on Naickers, who were their patrons because if they do not call them for agricultural labour then they had to work odd jobs to get two square meals like they had to go mountain to fetch wood to sell them, also fish catching was one of the exercise to sustain. Bama explains the distinction on caste “as they kept themselves to their part of the village and we stayed in ours. We only went to their side if we had work, to do there. But they never ever come to our parts” (Kumar 233).

Explaining the workers conditions in the agriculture fields, she highlights the tiresome works done by her community people just to earn and live at the margins. As said by Bama:

Even though they worked so hard and suffered bodily pain, our people laughed and were cheerful. This is a community that was born to work. And however hard they toil it is the same *kuuzh* everyday. The same broken-grain

gruel. The same watery dried-fish curry. It seems they never ever reflect upon their own terrible state of affairs. But do they have any time to think? You have to wonder how the upper-castes would survive without these people. For it is only when they fall asleep at night that their arms and legs are still; they seem to be at work at all other times. And they have to keep working until the moment of death. It is only in this way that they can even half fill their bellies (Kumar 234).

The aggravated parties are same everywhere be it South India, North-East India, Central India or somewhere else, because the 'oppressor' and the 'oppressed' have been present everywhere. The discriminatory nature varies only in form and content. There are innumerable examples from other parts of the world as well when the exploited masses have not been able to say their own stories or write. But still through these peripheral understandings of the nature of suppression today by any means and know-how, these peoples are coming forward.

Evidently, The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is one of the most significant developments in human rights. It recognizes that indigenous peoples throughout the world have a permanent right to exist as peoples, nations, cultures,

and societies. The UN Declaration was adopted by the UN General Assembly on September 13, 2007. The journey to get it passed was not easy at all but a very arduous one. The Haudenosaunee chief Deskaheh was the first to go to the League of Nations at Geneva in 1923. He tried hard to get an audience for his voice about the plight of indigenous people but it was in vain. But he was the first indigenous leader to use an international organization to express his ideas and believed that the international organization will one day defend the indigenous people's rights. Hence, step by step progress was made in this regard since 1970's and the result is now in front of us.

It is true that the Globalization has changed the thinking as such though it has given few mediums of social-networking and micro blogging through which those tribal and indigenous activists are able to interact with netizens and people concerned. A relevant example could be the interaction of Subcomandante Marcos with people of Chiapas in Mexico through live radio telecasts as he has become very old now. Likewise Noam Chomsky says:

The things I consider inspiring is seeing people struggling: poor suffering people, with limited resources, struggling to really achieve anything. Some of them are very

inspiring. For example, a remote very poor village in southern Colombia organising to try to prevent a Canadian gold-mining operation from destroying their water supply and the environment; meanwhile, fending off para-military and military violence and so on. That kind of thing which you see all over the world is very inspiring (Resnick: Web).

In the same framework, Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla are using their blogs and other peripheral modes of protest to sensitize those who are still not very informed about the benefits of environment protection and nature preservation. They are always in favour of peaceful methods of genuine and legible demands because '*an eye for an eye will make the whole world blind.*' I do remember the words said by Edward Said in an interview quoting Antonio Gramsci from his *Prison Notebooks* "History has left us in infinity of traces (all kind of marks) but there is no orderly guide to it. Therefore, the task is to compile an inventory of the traces that history has left in us." He was acknowledging the pain and oppression peoples have gone through during their lifetime however the appropriate revenge would be about them to the world and not to indulge in any violent activities. Any message or communication should be through peaceful means and using the

same language through which the outside community could comprehend easily as done by Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla using Spanish and Hindi languages respectively. This would create a kind of consensus in the society, invoking people's participation, discussion and debate; this would culminate in the recognition, networking and hence the collective fight against the perpetual damage caused by the state in collusion with the big organizations.

4.2 A New Beginning through Sustainable Development:

As we have seen through the various stages and levels, Globalization is ingrained in the every nook and corner of the world and there are very remote chances that any person would not be in this grip of 'glocal agenda' except the few indigenous people who are deep inside the forests, mountain tops or in vast deserts; here also lies the catch because people are intruding into their areas as well with the motive of gaining every possible gain and profit. Noam Chomsky explains in detail during an interview:

Globalization could be designed so that it's beneficial to the general population or it could be designed so that it

functions along the lines of the international trade agreements, including the Uruguay Round, the WTO Agreement, NAFTA, the current Atlantic and Pacific agreements, which are all specifically designed as investor rights agreements, not even trade agreements. Very high protection for major corporations, for big pharmaceuticals, media conglomerates, and so on, and very high barriers through intellectual property rights. Devices that allow corporations, but of course not people, to sue governments action that might potentially harm their profits. That is a particular form of globalization designed in the interest of the designers. The designers are concentrations of private power, linked closely to state power, so in that system they are consequences of globalization (Resnick: Web).

Therefore, From Amazonian forests to the Malaysian rain-forests, from Jharkhand's mineral-rich Chhotanagpur Plateau areas to the barren arctic continental shelf, from deep sea bed drilling to the international space station competition; everywhere the syndrome of Globalization has everyone a victim and there is no escape as such indeed. So, in this charged atmosphere of global village, the bottle of Coca Cola is available not only in Jharkhand's

remote village of Latehar district but also in the *altiplano* area of Guatemala, not only in Mexican barrio but also China's Guangzhou province.

Hence, the cultural homogenization is already making its presence felt, the testimonies of various authors are first hand examples and there is no doubt we cannot close our ears and eyes. Therefore the options available at our disposal, vary from making the government of the day fully accountable for whatever actions peep through the lives of marginal and disadvantaged peoples, taming the bulldozing aspect of Globalization and finally making the world a sustainable one where there would be mutual cooperation between state, market forces and civil society acting at the behest of multi-actor paradigm; and more importantly making this earth a liveable earth holistically.

The United Nations has established Human Rights Commission, Permanent Forum for the rights of Indigenous Peoples and many other organizations and foundations which are working uninterruptedly day and night for the welfare of the affected. Similarly, in India almost 3 million NGO's (Non Government Organizations) are working and many of them are pursuing the just

cause of downtrodden peoples. The areas which need urgent correction include¹⁰:

Biodiversity: Market-based instruments for ecosystem services, including Payment for Ecosystems Services (PES) and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+); increasing the extent of protected areas; sustainable management of protected areas; trans-boundary, biodiversity and wildlife corridors; community-based participation and management; sustainable agricultural practices.

Climate Change: Removing perverse/environmentally harmful subsidies, especially on fossil fuels; carbon taxes; forestry incentives for carbon sequestration; emission trading schemes; climate insurance; capacity building and financing; climate change preparedness and adaptation such as climate proofing infrastructure.

Land: Integrated watershed (catchment) management; smart growth in cities; protecting prime agricultural land and open space; no till and integrated pest management and/or organic agriculture;

¹⁰ http://www.unep.org/geo/pdfs/GEO5_SPM_English.pdf

improved forest management; PES and REDD+; agro forestry and silvo-pastoral practices.

Environmental governance: Multi-level/multi-stakeholder participation; increased introduction of the principle of subsidiary; governance at local levels; policy synergy and removal of conflict; strategic environmental assessment; accounting systems that value natural capital and ecosystem services; improved access to information, public participation and environmental justice; capacity strengthening of all actors; improved goal setting and monitoring systems.

Rigoberta Menchú says “the struggle of indigenous peoples to protect the environment is different from the struggles of other peoples’. Ours is not just a passing fancy, which she saw in Rio Earth Summit 1992. We protect our environment, our air and our water by the way we live. It is our very way of life” (Menchú 175). She was attending the summit not as a dignitary but as common participant just to know it, as a layperson and realized that there was also the concept of mercantilism however the summit did a good job. Menchú explains:

I have seen lots of T-shirts, plastic bags and postcards being sold. But I wonder how many trees were cut down to make them. I had gone to find out what their idea of the earth, plants and nature might be, and what I found was a commercial version of ecology. There were T-shirts with tigers, lions and parrots painted on them, and plastic bags with animals' faces. It was a case of businessmen making money out of the environment. They usurped indigenous wisdom, and made films to sell to make even more money. They prostituted the thoughts of the indigenous peoples (Menchú 172).

Therefore, we should accept the forms and rituals of indigenous/tribal people as they practice because when they celebrate their festivals or other customs there is care for the nature and environment, like they have their own sacred-groves form each tribal community where they believe the deity resides and they never cut the trees of that area. Hence, in an environmentalist's vision it is like saving the trees because of unbreakable bond with the nature. The Club of Rome was the think-tank which gave the concept of Sustainable Development for the management of the natural resources in a judicious way, which was further carried in the

Stockholm Conference, then in 1987 World Commission on Economic Development and finally culminated in the launch of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the UN for 2015-2030. However, "A sustainable development for the South cannot at the same time ignore the fact that the present models of development do not cater to the needs of the vast majority" (Nayar 1328). I have used the same argument in previous chapters. Further explained by Pratima Bansal:

The social-equity principle requires that everyone, independent of initial endowments, be treated fairly. Indigenous peoples, the presently disenfranchised, and future generations are entitled to the same access to resources as more privileged people in today's developed countries. If people aren't treated equitably, they will exploit natural resources. We live in an interdependent world, where the injustices inflicted on one group inevitably affect others. For example, firms sometimes choose foreign developing countries as sites for their manufacturing facilities because of the low labour cost and more relaxed pollution regulations. The profits from most host-country operations are repatriated to the home country, so residents of the host country

sometimes pay a high environmental cost in return for a fraction of the income. The result is even greater income disparity between developing and industrialized countries, locking the developing countries into a cycle of sustained poverty and exposing them to the risk of further exploitation (Bansal 123).

The dream which our forefathers and great leaders of the nations had seen, must be fulfilled and the voiceless, poor, marginalized, tribal, "*adivasi*," indigenous of the society must be given their due at each and every cost and at the same time development of the whole mankind should take place, not the kind of "development" which has been promised but the one which is desirable and comes under our fundamental rights in the Article 21 of the Indian Constitution which promises us to give right to life; which itself has the connotation of wide range of meaning which even the Constitutional luminaries of India have said that all fundamental rights at one place and Article 21 on another, would be a perfect case of equilibrium.

The above mentioned corrective steps are not only important for India where Jharkhand is a state but also for Guatemala as well,

where Rigoberta Menchú and other indigenous people live and practice their own traditional customs and rituals. These communities must be given their due what they are liable to and not robbing-off their land, forest and nature in the name of “development.”

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Conclusion

Research as an intellectual exercise has its own relevance as a purposeful enterprise; it also becomes a potent tool for affecting social change. The present research can lay a strong foundation to various economic, social, cultural, educational and other policies that are continually formulated. The intended research is therefore an attempt to address the outlined concerns and make suitable suggestions. This thesis becomes pertinent as it is related to the comparative study between two Indigenous women, one of Guatemala, Central America and the other of Jharkhand, India namely Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla respectively.

After reading the written accounts of Barla and Menchú, we have reached a point where, through the lens of cultural studies, we have found a huge reversal of seemingly simple situations. This high water-mark in the space and time takes us to a field of the narrative of 'self' where it does not only represent the narrator but also the whole community or the *compañeros*, situated in a larger context of society because if one part of society is working towards making life more liveable then it will obviously benefit the others as

well. For these very reasons, these authors of the testimonial literatures strive to achieve the desired and just conditions.

If we remember the sanguine history of Latin America, the Spanish colonizers first and then, after the various independence struggles, the local *criollos* in the role of governor, had made the society dependent, monopolistic and, finally inhabitable for many by robbing their lands and suppressing the indigenous forms of culture, which the locals had carefully cultivated since ancient times. In Guatemala, Pedro de Alvarado led the Spanish settlers, - in creating all the mayhem, uprooting the indigenous people to capture land and forests to exploit the area's natural resources and to expand their political, economic and missionary activities.

In the Indian context, the arrival of colonial powers in India with Vasco de Gama's sailing to India, in 1498, opened the gateway for the Portuguese first, then the English, the Dutch and the French. Gradually, all of them tried to maximise their commercial gains at the expense of Indian sweat, blood and labour. However, the English were the precursor of division in the society in a much more explicit way. The demarcation of forest area, turning them into sanctuaries and national parks, promoting the concept of reserve

forests, protected forests, plantation estates, pressurizing the peasants to grow particular crops like indigo in Champaran in Bihar, and extensively promoting the planting of those trees in hill areas which could be used in construction activities and railways lines. These prescribed rules made the environment fragile and displaced traditional hunters, gatherers and those who were dependent on them. Also, we must take into account the introduction of exotic flora and fauna, which had corrupted the endemic strength of the local species and made them fragile.

Hence, the impact of colonization has definitely made irreversible changes in both these continents in which this author has a particular interest. To rectify all those pathological changes discussed above, the will of the government of the day is required. Infrastructure, capital, suitable laws and other necessities are required in a very balanced combination without affecting the indigenous inhabitants and by creating the culture of making the bureaucracy accountable to the people and not only to their elected political representatives. Though this task requires a lot of endeavour to realise the desired objectives in a true sense, once achieved, it will positively impact the suffering party in greater depth. We must always keep in mind what Dayamani Barla says

“land is not just the land but it is heritage for the indigenous community.”

Globalization has affected the lives of many traditional dwellers of the planet and, in a more aggressive manner because of their dependence on Nature. Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla have admitted the same in their interviews as well. This has seeped into society in a very open, direct and confrontational manner now while it entered the Indian society (in the early 90s) and in other regions in a very subtle manner. However its problems in terms of sustainability and decolonization has not yet been dwelt upon seriously. Perhaps there can be some hope if at least it would involve the inclusion of people affected the most, a bottom-up approach and a decentralized approach to decision-making and not by appropriating their land, forest and water resources.

The debate between oral and written forms of history-recording and between the testimonial form of writing and other prevalent ones in the society, forces us to think why the societal structures are skewed and in favour of the dominant sections of the society, as we have witnessed in the case of Rigoberta Menchú and Dayamani Barla's writings. They have talked about the protection of

nature and Mother Earth. They are not in favour of 'development' because of its ill-effects that are majorly, faced by those who are dependent on land, water and natural resources.

We see that the testimonial form of writing has created a well-recognized space for itself these days. Earlier, since the recognition of testimonial forms as historical and literary texts during the late and early parts of the 1980's, they were accepted with a pinch of salt and the following debate occurred: can the testimonial be considered literature? As we know Literature is a mirror of the society and by that logic, we can say that testimonials fit very much in that definition because after all, they are representative of society and do not merely talk about 'fiction' or 'utopia'. It is resistance literature, where the margins re-claim their space. Some examples are the Bolivian writer Domitila Chungara's *Let me Speak* or various Dalit writings in India like for example, Sharmila Rege or Kancha Ilaiah's works.

This thesis addresses the issues regarding those struggles that resist the neo-liberal paradigms of the various facets of Globalization and its hydra-headed encroachment upon the daily lives of the masses across the Globe. This research is another

effort with which we are able to know the darker side of the voiceless peoples' lives as pointed out by Walter D. Mignolo in his seminal work *The Darker Side of Renaissance* and their living in a perpetually mundane routine. In this era of digital connectivity and globalization, the close contacts between different countries fosters a kind of need to 'respect' the existing peoples' knowledge passed down across generations, and to carefully preserve it. This is because we have learnt that we must live symbiotically on this planet with sustainable and inclusive growth high on our policy agenda.

We are also getting to realize how the lives of the indigenous peoples have begun to change as their respective governments have been forced to rethink and strategize anew their liberalization agendas, while at the same time seriously engage with the indigenous peoples. The pressure groups created by international organizations like the United Nations is a very commendable act as it witnessed the mass mobilization of indigenous peoples for many years and now they are being invited every year on various panels and fora to present their views on various issues. The moment of victory was the collective acceptance of the United Nations

Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007 for the humanity.

The natural resources are not just simply resources for the tribals; they accord cultural identity to these people and are important sources of their livelihood. A case in point is the Niyamgiri hills, which has been revered by Dongaria Kondh community of the state of Odisha, India. The tribal development is reliant upon natural resources. The development process should be inclusive of the tribals of any region. They have to be given equality of opportunity in education, health-care and employment.

Both the writers, who are the focus of this thesis, have struggled throughout their lives and stood for the peoples' struggles. We need to support them as they demand that 'development' must be rolled out in a sustainable manner so that future generations will not be adversely affected and face severe shortages. However, the present generation should also have the opportunity to live holistically as stated in the UN declaration, but the situation is not conducive to sustainable growth at the ground level where they are involved; they still they have to face many challenges and the apathy of the administration. These writers are, through their

writings, uniting them with due consideration of their causes. They are also taking the help of various available platforms to facilitate dialogues and discussions like blogs, social networks and the internet etc. Here, we can see that globalization has been used in a positive way. Various other writers are writing for the same cause, in different parts of the world, and this common interception makes them significantly important.

The social stratification of the Indian society helps one understand the processes of discrimination in the labour market. Discrimination in the labour market basically means selective restriction of certain groups of people in both the formal and informal sectors. Discrimination in labour market is operated on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, caste and gender and more recently is also based on age and sexual orientation. The tribals of Jharkhand are restricted to menial and low-paying jobs in big cities. This kind of restriction in profession also affects labour market interactions. This labour market discrimination and suppression is also related to political lobbying. Political parties along with business stalwarts in Jharkhand are always attempting to displace people from their land. This kind of labour market discrimination

has led to the unequal access of opportunities and, thus larger intra group inequalities. It also fosters intra-group conflicts.

Similarly, in Guatemala due to the scarcity of opportunities the indigenous people had to move towards those places where they could earn and sustain their livelihood, leaving their *altiplano*. Once they leave their original habitations and migrate to other regions, they become vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. The displacement and pauperization of the indigenous peoples have been the worst effect of globalization. The scope of this thesis therefore lies in the possibility of a South-South dialogue and Cooperation which means the coming together of the developing countries to resolve their problems collectively, a paradigm shift that is recognized in many spheres of multilateral interactions. There should be zero tolerance for the violation of human rights in any form based on the colour of skin, ethnicity, caste, creed, race, religion, place of residence etc. Mutual respect should be the benchmark for people-to-people interactions as rightly pointed out by Rigoberta Menchú in the interview, “For me, the help and the solidarity come in terms of mutual reciprocity. I respect you and you respect me.”

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Glossary¹¹

Adivasi- a member of any of the aboriginal tribal peoples living in India before the arrival of the Aryans in the second millennium BC.

Altiplano- the high tableland of central South America.

Bhugat Bandha Mortgage- It is a kind of used fructuary mortgage. It means a transfer of the interest of a tenant in his tenancy, for the purpose of securing the payment of money advanced or to be advanced by way of loan, upon the condition that loan, with all interest thereon, shall be deemed to be extinguished by the profits arising from the tenancy during the period of mortgage.

Bhuinhari and Khuntkattidari system- The *Bhuinhari* lands surveyed and recorded under the provisions of Acts of 1869 are tenures. *Mundari Khuntkattidars* are neither *Raiyats* nor tenure-holders. De facto, however, both these classes of tenants approximate to *Raiyats*; and, as the *Bhuinhars* and *Mundari Khuntkattidari* frequently hold *Raiyati* lands, in addition to their privileged tenancies, it is therefore they are regarded as *Raiyats*. All members of a *Bhuinhari* family and all male members of a *Mundari Khuntkattidari* family, who hold and have held continuously land in the village for 12 years, shall be deemed to be settled *Raiyats*, in respect of any land which they may hold as *Raiyats*.

Caudillo- (in Spain and other Spanish-speaking countries) a military or political leader.

Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act (CNT) - Instituted by the British the Chhota Nagpur Tenancy Act, 1908 is an important act for the tribal population of Jharkhand. It restricts transfer of tribal land to non tribals. The CNT Act is effective in North Chhota Nagpur, South Chhota Nagpur and Palamau divisions, including areas under various municipalities and notified area committees.

Criollos- a person born in Spanish America but of European, usually Spanish, ancestry.

Dalit- Dalit, meaning "oppressed" in Sanskrit and "broken/scattered" in Hindi/Urdu, is a "defiant" self-chosen political name for the members of lower castes in India.

Diku- The word Dikus means outsiders. Dikus were the people who made the tribal people depend on them, thereby causing them a lot of misery and suffering. The outsiders consist of traders and money lenders, who can come into the forest. They used to sell the goods not produced in the forests and offer cash loans with high rate of interests.

Dongria Kondh- The Niyamgiri hill range in Odisha state, eastern India, is home to the Dongria Kondh tribe. Niyamgiri is an area of densely forested hills, deep gorges and cascading streams. To be a Dongria Kondh is to farm the hills' fertile slopes, harvest their

¹¹ These definitions have been taken from various web sources.

produce, and worship the mountain god Niyam Raja and the hills he presides over, including the 4,000 metre Mountain of the Law, Niyam Dongar.

Encomendero- The heart of encomienda and encomendero lies in the Spanish verb encomendar, "to entrust". The encomienda was based on the Reconquista institution in which adelantados were given the right to extract tribute from Muslims or other peasants in areas that they had conquered and resettled.

Encomienda- the system, instituted in 1503, under which a Spanish soldier or colonist was granted a tract of land or a village together with its Indian inhabitants.

Finca- a ranch or large farm in a Spanish-speaking country, especially a plantation in tropical Spanish America.

FRA- The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, is a key piece of forest legislation passed in India on 18 December 2006. It has also been called the Forest Rights Act, the Tribal Rights Act, the Tribal Bill, and the Tribal Land Act. The law concerns the rights of forest-dwelling communities to land and other resources, denied to them over decades as a result of the continuance of colonial forest laws in India.

Hupil- It is the most common traditional garment worn by indigenous women from central Mexico to Central America.

Jagirdar- A Jagir also spelled as Jageer, was a type of feudal land grant in South Asia at the foundation of its Jagirdar system.

Ladino- From Spanish Ladino "sagacious, cunning crafty." The Spanish word also has appeared in 19c. American English in its senses "vicious horse" and, in Central America, "mestizo, white person."

Maximón- Maximón also called San Simón, is a Mayan deity represented in various forms by the Maya People of several towns in the highlands of Western Guatemala. Oral tradition of his creation and purpose in these communities is complex, diverse, and born of the ancient Maya traditions centuries ago.

Mestizo- (in Latin America) a person of mixed race, especially one having Spanish and American Indian parentage.

Munda-Manki system- Traditional administrative system of a village. Governed by a village headman and a priest. Headman was known as *Munda* among Munda and Ho tribes, and *Mahto* among Oraon tribe. The priest was known as *Pahan*. Networks of 10-12 villages called *patti* was headed by *Manki*, who was the political organiser of the Mundas.

PESA Act- The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 or PESA is a law enacted by the Government of India for ensuring self governance through traditional Gram Sabhas for people living in the Scheduled Areas of India. Scheduled Areas are areas identified by the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

Scheduled Areas are found in ten states of India which have predominant population of tribal communities. The Scheduled Areas, were not covered by the 73rd Constitutional Amendment or Panchayati Raj Act of the Indian Constitution as provided in the Part IX of the Constitution.

Popul Vuh- It is the story of creation according to the Quiche Maya of the region known today as Guatemala. Translated as 'The Council Book', 'The Book of the People' or, literally, 'The Book of the Mat', the work has been referred to as "The Mayan Bible" although this comparison is imprecise.

Quetzal- a paper money and monetary unit of Guatemala, equal to 100 centavos.

Raiyat- A raiyat was defined as someone who has acquired a right to hold land for the purpose of cultivating it, whether alone or by members of his family, hired servants, or partners. It also referred to succession rights.

Repartimiento- It was a colonial forced labour system imposed upon the indigenous population of Spanish America.

Rio Earth Summit- The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit, Rio Summit, Rio Conference, and Earth Summit, was a major United Nations conference held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992.

Santhal Pargana Act (SPT) - SPT stands for Santhal Pargana Tenancy act. If I put this in the most simplest way, any tribals belonging to ST, SC or OBC are bound to sell their land to people belonging to their caste only and that also within their police station (the seller and buyer must be under same police station). This was introduced in order to protect the lands of tribal people from powerful and rich people.

SCs and STs- The Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) are various officially designated groups of historically disadvantaged people in India. The terms are recognised in the Constitution of India and the various groups are designated in one or other of the categories.

Wilkinson Rule- In 1837. A set of 31 rules. Kolhan region/Singhbhum. Ho tribe. Upheld Munda-Manki system.

Appendix I

Publications:

1. **Saurabh, Saket Suman.** “Rigoberta Menchu y perspectiva latinoamericana: Ecuador, un estudio específico” *Hispanic Horizon*, Vol. No. 31, CSPILAS, SLL & CS, JNU, New Delhi: 2014. ISSN 0907-7522. PP.162-172.
2. **Saurabh, Saket Suman.** “La Escritura de Rigoberta Menchú u otros movimientos similares” *Papeles de le India*, Volumen 43, Número 1, Consejo Indio de Relaciones Culturales, Nueva Delhi: 2014. ISSN 0971-1449. PP. 82-98.
3. **Saurabh, Saket Suman.** “Language, Literature and Cinema: Ramifications and its Impact on Culture” *Hispanic Horizon*, Vol. No. 30, CSPILAS, SLL & CS, JNU, New Delhi: 2013. ISSN 0907-7522. PP.108-119.

Appendix II

Para Saret.
Puede usar la entrevista
en su tesis

Rigoberta Menchú Tum

