

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE :
A study of Tribal Movements in Bihar.

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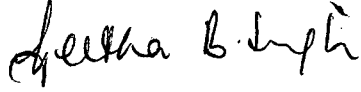
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C E R T I F I C A T E

Certified that the dissertation entitled "EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE : A STUDY OF TRIBAL MOVEMENTS IN BIHAR", by BIPIN KUMAR SINGH, has not been submitted for award of any degree to this or any other University. We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for the consideration of award of DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY in Educational Studies of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.


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BIPIN KUMAR SINGH

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

An inevitable feature of all societies is change. The rate and extent of change may differ as different cultures may be selective in their response to various factors of change. The process of tensions and adjustments as well as violent ruptures within and without a society are nothing unusual but when an relatively isolated society comes into contact with outside forces then it is forced into adaptive changes.

Anthropologists have variously defined tribal societies stressing one or other aspect of its cultural and social characteristics. An ideal typical definition of a tribe can be as "A society with a political, linguistic and a somewhat-vaguely-defined cultural boundary. It is based on kinship and social stratification is absent."¹ Every society has its unique characteristic, value systems, traditional moves, life-attitudes, social hierarchies and conceptions relating to status and authority.

The social structure of a tribe is segmental, dominated by primary kinship ties, extended family relationships, territorial unity, primary technology

1 Andre Beteille, "The Definition of Tribe", in R. Thapar (ed.), Tribe Caste and Religion in India, New Delhi, Macmillan, 1977, p.10-11.

and economy and animalistic-totemistic beliefs. These structural features are in functional adjustment with its pattern of culture, processes of socialization and education.

Though there are marked variations in educational processes which often contrast with one another the chief agencies of socialization as well as formal education in primitive society are family and clan. The age at which formal education begins in tribal societies and its duration is smaller because of low development of technology.

The characteristics which influence the process of socialization and education in primitive societies are:²

- I Uniformity of standards of morality and religio-ethical beliefs.
- II A stable and extended family life.
- III Diffused role of affection in education.
- IV Predominance of kinship category in matters of all relationships.
- V Combination of work and play.
- VI Universal and homogenous standards of authority.

2 Yogendra Singh, "Education and Socialisation" in M.S. Gore (ed.), Papers in the Sociology of Education, Delhi, NCERT, 1967, p.41-42.

VII A "stable reference group will lessen the tension of Anti-socialization.

But during the last 200 years, a systematic breakdown of tribal isolation has taken place to such an extent that it will be difficult to find any tribal group coming near to this ideal-typical description. The degrees of outside contact vary. In the tribal areas of Bihar the penetration has been to a very large extent and tribal society has assimilated many of the features of the outside world. The alien influence has resulted not only in land alienation, indebtedness and exploitation but has struck at the roots of tribal socio-cultural universe. The tribals have been converted into christianity in large numbers. The Hindu missions are also active in this area. The tribal religion itself has incorporated several of Hinduisism's characteristics. Their social life, kinship and family organisation, marriage and other rites are fundamentally altered. Economically they have been linked in an unequal manner to the larger economic structure.

All this has led to growing frustration among the tribals. They have rebelled again and again against these developments. The study of social change in the

tribal society as well as the rebellious developments with the perspective of education accepts education as one of the important factors in this process. The causal factors of tribal social movement are many and no single factor can be analytically or empirically isolated but education as a factor of social change provides a better perception of the role of other factors.

Regarding the relationship of education and social change, four basic theoretical approaches can be outlined.

- a). The liberal educationist view which accepts education as a key factor in social change and development. The "human resources capital" theory also accepts education as the key factor which will lead to economic development and social change.
- b). The radical school which considers changes in educational set-up as a pre-condition for any change in the societal set-up. Thus "deschooling society" is the first step in this direction.
- c). The functionalist school which perceives two important functions for education as:
 1. The agency for the transmission of society's norms and values and

2. the mechanism to allocate the human resources within the role structure of adult society.
- d). the Marxist stand which considers education as a reflection of the economic infrastructure and thus completely dependent on the latter.

A.R. Kamat, while disagreeing with the orthodox Marxist stand, has provided a flexible model which provides for the analysis of the role of education in social change. According to him, " The social situation, together with its underlying socio-economic structure and political power structure is dynamic. The interest contradictions at all levels with its repercussions on sub-structures."³

Though this approach considers the educational system as largely conditioned by the prevalent socio-economic and political power structure thereby tuning its expansion, growth and development to the requirement of this structure. But, while the general nature of education may be supportive of, and supported by the prevalent socio-economic structure, this relationship is not of exact correspondence.

3 A.R. Kamat, Education and Social Change in India, Bombay, Somaiya Publications, 1985, p.47.

Imbalances and incongruities sometimes result in dissent, disharmony and even revolt.

This process can take place in four ways:

- A). The contradictions within the socio-political system can have repercussions on the educational system and within it as well.
- B). The educational system in the course of its development, acquires a certain autonomy as well as its own dynamics of development which can at times produce serious value conflicts. This happens particularly when there are serious structural contradictions within the social system itself.
- C). Also, Education has a dual character while education as a mechanism of socialization teaches the individual to conform to the norms and values of society and act according to the status and role provided by the society. It has also the capacity of generating a spirit of enquiry and questioning of ruling norms and values.
- D). Because of the potential, "there may arise specific focal centres which anticipate, germinative or support from within the educational system, the movement actually taking

place or likely to arise outside in the society.⁴

This framework does provide a significant scope for the analysis of the role education plays in social movements. The relationship is not strictly that of one way cause-effect but it is that of complementarity.

All these different perspectives are in the context of western industrial societies. The tribal society presents a completely different set-up. Education as a sub-structure for socialization and social control in a formalised setup was absent in tribal societies. Thus an important aspect of any analysis has to be systematic comprehension of tribal society. In a developing society like India the modern education acquires a strategic significance in terms of promotion of scientific and technological advancement, occupational recruitment and social relations based mainly on training, qualification and knowledge.

Spread of education and its application in different spheres of social life is changing Indian society in its structural as well as institutional features. The traditional dimensions of social

4 *ibid.*, p.16-18.

hierarchy and stratification have undergone rapid changes. The growing material importance, as a result of the excessive use of modern technology and its tools in industrial and social life as outcome of education, have affected very seriously the sentiments, thought, style of life, living arrangements and attitude to occupation.

The impact of modern education is more profound on the tribal society as the isolated tribal social organisation is exposed to an alien culture of which education system forms only a part. Large scale mining and industrial activities have provided job opportunities outside the traditional tribal economy. Rapid urbanisation in the form of industrial townships have altered the tribal ecology to a great extent. The growth of means of transport and communication have broken the relative isolation of the tribal society. The new political structure has to a large extent replaced the old tribal political organisation. Thus, the changes occurring in the tribal society is the response to the cumulative effect of all these processes.

An analytical work on the relationship between education and tribal social movements has to cover a wider framework. The significance of education in

social change can be analysed in relation to three areas:

- A). The cultural content of this education,
- B). its organisational structure and
- C). its rate of growth.

As regards the consequences, they must be analysed both at macro as well as micro level.

According to S.C. Dube,⁵ ten functions of education and communication are important in a society that is changing from tradition to modernity. They are: i). Socialization, ii). Surveillance, iii). Consensus Building, iv). Raising expectations, v). Focusing attention, vi). Broadening Mental horizons, vii). Creating new attitudes and values, viii). Innovations, ix). Encouraging experimentations, and x). Teaching skills.

These functions help in adapting to change leading to assimilation of new values, attitudes and life styles in tribal society threatens the cultural identity of the society undergoing change. This generates a sense of deprivation and helplessness in the group. Sachchidananda⁶ calls the resultant

5 S.C. Dube, Modernisation and its Adaptive Demands on Indian Society, Paper read in the Social Sciences Seminar, SSS JNU.

6 Sachchidananda, The Changing Munda, New Delhi, Concept Publication, 1979, p.328.

defensive reaction of the process of identity preservation as the process of Contra-acculturation.

Also, the dichotomy of tradition and modernity is not real and processes of modernisation of tradition and also traditionalisation of modernity operate side by side. Education cannot bring change as it does not exist in a vacuum.

In tribal areas, several other factors which have sustained these processes are land alienation various practices by non-tribal moneylenders, various sort of exploitation of tribals by non-tribals the new forest and land regulations, the growing size of non-tribal population in the region and covering of new opportunities by non-tribals.

Tribals have resisted this involuntary transformation of their society by resorting to various forms of struggle. This study of tribal social movements explains the historical process that led to the growing displacement of the tribal universe and the tribal conception of themselves as well as the methods they deployed to maintain their integrity and singularity. I have tried to present a brief description of tribal movements in Bihar between 1855-1990 with the help of a time frame classification and this explains the characterisation.

This dissertation has been divided into Six chapters. The brief introduction of the topic and the variables of the study form the Introduction. The overall relationship between education and social change has been discussed in the light of various theoretical perspectives. The specific situation of education in tribal society has also been explained.

The second chapter deals with the various theoretical perspectives in the study of social movements. The classificatory models of the tribal movements with special references to tribal movement in Bihar has been discussed. I have also presented my classification in a time perspective for the study of role of education in tribal movements in Bihar.

The Third chapter deals with the violent struggles and the social dynamics which influenced the course of social movements. The millenarian nature of the movement and the centrality of agrarian issues were the basic features of this phase. The tribal social structure alongwith their traditional institutions for socialization and Education are also analysed in the chapter.

The fourth chapter describes the phase of tribal movements of Bihar during 1900-1947. Several factors like Education, missionary activities, freedom

struggle and emergence of new elite sections among tribals were instrumental in influencing the nature of tribal movements. The Emergence of Jharkhand Party is an important phase of this phase. I have tried to analyse the changes with keeping Educational scenario in focus.

The fifth chapter deals with the post-Independence phase. There were fundamental changes in the whole political structure which also influenced the tribal society. The participation of tribal population in the parliamentary democratic set-up changed the basic character of the movement. Fragmentation, fusion and fission, electoral politics and factionalisation become important. On the other extreme, a new militancy was observed on agrarian front. Intellegentia and educated youth took a lead in organising the movement.

The final chapter is a conclusion regarding role of education in tribal social movements in Bihar. The analysis of the historical background of the movement does provide a linkage which can only be expressed as a holistic generalisation regarding role of education in social change in general and social movements in particular.

Chapter I
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES
ON STUDY OF
SOCIAL MOVEMENT

The sociology of social movements is a growing edge of the discipline in more recent decades. The tribal and peasant revolts or movements had been a subject of intense pursuit among scholars both in history and in the ethnography of India. The path-breaking accounts on the Bhumji revolts and the Kol insurrection in Chotanagpur by J.C.Jha¹, K.K.dutta's work on the santhal insurrection,² B.B.Kling's study of the Blue mutiny,³ and Ravinder kumar's on the Deccan Riots (1875),⁴ draw our attention almost immediately. The tradition continued even thereafter and saw its sophistication in a host of writings. Studies on the Tana bhagat or the Birsa munda and his movement,⁵ the Rampa rebellion of 1924 and Sunil Sen's study⁶ of the sharecropper's struggle in Bengal can be mentioned here.

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- 1 J.C. Jha, The Kol Insurrection of Chotanagpur, Calcutta, Spink Company, 1964.
The Bhumji Revolt, 1832-33, Delhi, Munshiram Manohar Lal, 1967.
 - 2 K.K. Datta, The Santhal Insurrection - 1855, Calcutta, University of Calcutta Press, 1944.
 - 3 B.B. Kling, The Blue Munity - The Indigo Disturbances in Bengal 1859-1862, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966.
 - 4 Ravinder Kumar, Western India in the Nineteenth Century, London, Routledge and Kagen Paul, 1968.
 - 5 K. Suresh Singh, Dust Storm and Hanging Mist - Birsa Munda and His Movement, Calcutta, Firma K.L. Mukhapadhyay, 1966.
 - 6 Sunil Kumar Sen, Agrarian Struggles in Bengal 1946-47, Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1972.

It will be worthwhile to see at the inception what the social movements are, secondly what are the theoretical frameworks of the social movements, and thirdly what are the significant typologies in the study of the tribal movements in particular and social movements in general. This review will help in formulating an approach for the study of role of education in the tribal movements of Bihar.

Firstly, we should try to see the basic differences in the terms such as revolt, rebellion, reform and revolution. Prof. Ghanshyam Shah has classified movements in these terms, which bring about outstanding changes in the political system.⁷ Reform does not challenge the political system but it attempts to bring about changes in the relations between the parts of the system in order to make it more efficient, responsive and workable.⁸ A revolt is a challenge to political authority, aimed at overthrowing the government. Rebellion is an attack on existing authority without any intention of seizing state power. In a revolution, a section or sections of society launch an organised struggle to overthrow not only the established government and

7 Ghanshyam Shah, Protest Movements in Two Indian States, Delhi, Ajanta Publishers, 1977.

8 Ghanshyam Shah, Social Movements in India, New Delhi, Sage Publications, 1990, p.26.

regime but also the socio-economic structure which sustains it, and replace the structure by an alternative social order.⁹

Secondly, we should focus our attention towards the essential characteristics of the social movements. A social movement is a phenomenon of mass mobilisation on specific issues or problems concerning social life. This may disappear after the accomplishment of such specific objectives.¹⁰ Thus the social movements develop sooner or later a comprehensive ideology and theory which lead to the tremendous participation of the people in the social movements. It is this ideology, "a complex of ideas as mannheim put it,"¹¹ that gives directionality to change by specifying the proximate and ultimate goals. This then becomes the symbol of cohesion, unity and solidarity. Certain movements in due course of time turn into political parties but it may reject the political party also. Partha Mukherji has argued that the social movements are accomodative, alternative and transformatory.¹² M.S.A.Rao has

9 ibid., p.27.

10 M.C. Paul, Dimensions of Tribal Movements in India, New Delhi, Inter-India Publications, 1989, p.19.

11 Karl Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1936.

12 Partha Mukherjee, "Social Movement and Social Change: To a Conceptual Clarification and

offered more or less similar typologies; Reformist, transformatory and revolutionary.¹³ T.K.Oommen has strong belief that "the movements will neither have the potentialities to root out the existing system completely nor will they succumb to the traditional structures entirely. Essentially then, social movements provide the stage for confluence between the old and new values and structures".¹⁴ Social movements are also classified on the basis of issues around which the participants get mobilised. Some of them are known as the civil rights, "anti-untouchability", "linguistic", "nationalist" and other such movements.¹⁵ Some others classify these movements on the basis of the participants, such as peasant, tribals, students, women and dalits etc. In many of the cases the participants and the issues go side by side. It has been endeavoured by some of the scholars to classify the social movements into eight types on the basis of the socio-economic characteristics of the participants and the issues involved.¹⁶

Theoretical Framework", Sociological Bulletin, 26(1).

13 M.S.A. Rao (ed.), Social Movements in India, Vol.1, Delhi, Manohar Publications, 1978.

14 T.K. Oommen, Charisma, Stability and Change: An Analysis of Bhodan, Gramdan Movement in India, New Delhi, Thompson Press, 1972, p.16.

15 Ghanshyam Shah, 1990, op. cit., p.27.

16 ibid., p.27.

1. Peasant movement.
2. Tribal movement.
3. Dalit movement.
4. Backward caste movement.
5. Women's movement.
6. Student's movement.
7. Middle class movement.
8. Industrial working class movement.

THEORITICAL PERSPECTIVES :

Now attempt will be made by me to throw light on the study of the social movement through the various theoretical orientation. There are three main theories which try to explain the actiology of the social movement, the modes of mobilisation and the motivational forces. These are:

1. Strain theory by Neil smelser, Robert K.Merton,
2. Revitalisation theory by wallace.
3. Relative depriration theory.

STRAIN THEORY :

This theory saw its origin in the writing of Niel Smelser, who views social movement in relation to social change and treat structural strain as the underlying factor leading to collective behaviour. He submerged the two terms "collective outburst" and "collective movement" into collective behaviour in his writing.¹⁷ Structural strain occurs at different levels of norm, values, mobilisation of motivations and structural conditions. Smelser's analysis of the origin of the social movement is in the structural functional framework.¹⁸ In this tradition the movements are viewed as necessary accomplishments of the tension released by structural differentiation and movement manipulation as a tension-management mechanism by specialised role incumbents. Thus in this theory, the movement are viewed essentially as an adaptive mechanism in a period of rapid social change.

Some of the basic flaws of the approach can be brought out here. Firstly, it does not specify the sources of deprivation; secondly, it treats every

17 M.C. Paul, Dimensions of Tribal Movements in India, New Delhi, Inter-India Publications, 1989, p.20.

18 Neil Smelser, Theory of Collective Behaviour, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967, p.18-19.

movement as dysfunctional, anomic and disintegrative phenomena, obstructing the path of smooth development of society, thirdly, it considers human beings as mere cogs in the wheel of the society and squeezes the creative vitality out of them; fourthly, this framework is conducive to the sustenance of the social structure rather than to change it; fifthly, it is a historical and evolutionary approach.

REVITALISATION THEORY :

Wallace is one of the protagonist of organismic analogical approach, which makes it out that revitalisation movement develop out of a "deliberate, organised and conscious effort on the part of members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture."¹⁹ Society is regarded in this theory as a definite kind of organism and its culture consist of patterns of learned behaviour which certain parts of the system characteristically display. thus, he views revitalisation from the cultural stand point, a special kind of culture change phenomenon. He argued vigorously that the persons involved must feel that their cultural system is not satisfactory thus they must innovate a new cultural system, specifying new

19 A.F.C. Wallace, "Revitalisation Theory", American Anthropologist, No.58, 1956, p.265.

relationships and new traits. The significant processes of cultural change are, according to Wallace, evaluation, drift, diffusion, historical change and acculturation. Thus the main focus of this theory is on the cultural aspect of the social structure.

Stephen Fuchs elaborately discussed this type of revitalisation movements in Indian society among the scheduled castes, tribes, and other backward classes.²⁰ He said that in northern India today the tribals form a negligible minority. Similarly messianic movements are active among the Mohammedan and sikh converts from the lower castes of Hinduism. A host of Hindu reform movements took place among the Bhils of Madhya Pradesh. In south India the Pulayas and Parayas in Kerala, and the Madigas in Andhra Pradesh brought to light this type of movement.

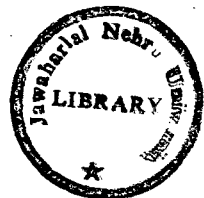
This approach of Wallace places emphasis not only on the Sociological dimension of the problem but also on the innovation of new cultural elements and social change. Now the point is how the organismic model of Wallace acts. According to him, it works "by means of coordinated actions by all or some of its

20 Stephen Fuchs, "Messianic Movements" in A.R. Desai (ed.), Peasants Struggles in India, Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1979, p.43-46.

part to preserve its own integrity by maintaining a minimally fluctuating life-supporting matrix for its individual members, and will under stress, take emergency measures to preserve the constancy of this matrix.²¹ He sees society as an organic system which is constantly exposed to stress induced in it from outside. This type of movement is basically organised essentially on religious aspect to construct a more satisfying culture, which may take the form of revolutionary, millenarian or natavistic form of movement to establish some satisfying order in the society.²²

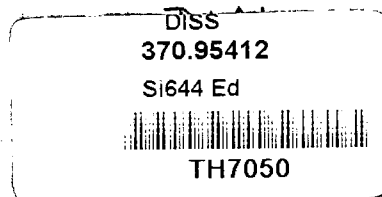
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But the revitalisation theory of wallace, despite a host of qualities, suffers from some flaws. Firstly, he did not clarify how stress on one part of cultural system can affect the other; Secondly, his framework is more conscious to the maintenance of the structural continuity than to change it, Thirdly, this approach is concerned more towards the culture than the socio-economic deprivation; Fourthly, this formulation can study the social movement with specific category only.



21 A.F.C. Wallace, op. cit., p.365-6.

22 Ted Robert Gurr, Why Men Rebel?, Princeton, P.U. Press, 1970, p.314.



RELATIVE DEPRIVATION THEORY :

This theory has seen two distinct trends. Firstly, there is the theory of relative deprivation in relation to social structure and social mobility, which has been propounded by Merton and Runciman. Secondly, there is the theory of relative deprivation in relation to social conflict, that is, the dialectical approach of Marx and Engels.

Merton developed the former line of development, the relative deprivation in relation to social structure, to analyse quite systematically the social mobility in relation to reference group model.²³ This word "relative deprivation" was first used by Samuel A. Stouffler in his book "American soldier" in 1949. Merton attempted to show how this concept of relative deprivation can be incorporated in a more general theory of reference group behaviour.²⁴ Later on, Runciman following Merton further developed this concept in relation to reference group behaviour and problems of inequalities and social justice.²⁵ In their approach, this concept of relative

23 R.K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, New Delhi, Amerind Publishing Company, 1968, p.289.

24 *ibid.*, p.304.

25 W.C. Runciman, Relative Deprivation and Social Justice: A Study of Attitude to Social Inequality in 20th Century England, London, R. and K. Paul.

deprivation is made the basis of a study of social mobility as it results from emulation and positive reference group behaviour.

Marx and Engels developed the concept of relative deprivation, which lay its emphasis on the elementt of conflict and social change and it gained importance greatly in the study of the social movement since 1940. They saw the root of conflict and dissatisfaction in the uneqval distribution of wealth property and other means of existence. To Marx the basis of society is the mode of production and the relations of production into which men enter. So what needs to be understood is the dialectical process of history and dynamics of social change. Marx writes: "In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relation of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces."²⁶

26 Karl Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Moscow, Progressive Publishers, 1970, p.20.

TRIBAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA: CLASSIFICATIONS AND FRAMEWORKS

After this brief introduction of the theoretical aspects, now the attempt will be made by me to trace out the significant trends and shift in the social movement in India. In the earlier writing of the British scholars as well as the Indians, the attention was focussed on the activities of the British as actors on the stage of history with India as a shadowy background.²⁷ Recently, sociologists as well as historians have produced really exciting studies on social movements in general and tribal movements in particular. The interest of the socialologists in the social movements was largely focussed on Sanskritisation and socio-reform movements.

If one looks at the approaches and frameworks of analysis in a large number of works of the tribal movements in particular and social movement in general, one comes to the understanding that most of the pioneering studies are either pure histories or ethnographics of tribal/peasant movements. Rarely have the researchers gone into conceptual discussions and they have not found it necessary to examine any

27 Eric Stokes, The English Utilitarians and India, London, O.U.P., 1959.

of the theoretical-analytical paradigms. Notable exceptions to this are the studies by Majid Siddiqi,²⁸ Kapil Kumar,²⁹ Gyanendra Pandey,³⁰ and of D.N. Dhanagre,³¹ who have started an important debate on the precise linkage between the peasantry, the tribals and the Indian National Congress in general, and Gandhi in particular.

This is not to underrate the value of the earlier studies. Most of them have brought to light enormous source material which otherwise would have remained unknown to the present generation of the social scientists. The accounts of these scholars like of K.K. Dutta, J.C. Jha, B.B. Kling and others are the most authentic reconstructions of the tribal revolts in India in the 1920 and 1930s, but most of them belong basically to narrative history or ethnography. Only one example would suffice to stress the point. Suresh Singh's work on the Birsa Munda movement, which has produced abundant evidence of the strong millenarian elements in the Birsaite

28 Majid H. Siddiqi, Agrarian Unrest in Northern India - The United Provinces, 1918-22, New Delhi, Vikas Publications, 1978.

29 Kapil Kumar, Peasants in Revolt: Tenants, Landlords, Congress and the Raj in Oudh, Delhi, Manohar Publications, 1984.

30 Gyanendra Pandey, The Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh, 1986-34, A Study in Imperfect Mobilisation, Delhi, O.U.P., 1978.

31 D.N. Dhanagre, Peasants Movements in India, 1920-1950, Delhi, O.U.P., 1983.

movement, makes no reference to the concept of millenarian at all. To a certain extent, Stephen Fuch's study on the Indian aboriginals has gone into the millenarian movements among Indian tribals under the influence of christianity, but only superficially. Similarly, the notions of "primitive rebels" and social banditry introduced by Habsbawn, have not been used fruitfully by any researcher of tribal revolts or insurgencies until Ranjit Guha and his colleagues launched the subaltern approach in a big way.

The tribal movements of Bihar have also been well documented by various sociologists, anthropologists and historians. The studies of Sachchidananda, K.S. Singh, L.P. Vidhyarthi, Surjit Sinha and others have evolved different typologies of tribal movements.

The classificatory models of these studies are based on a time perspective. While K.S. Singh divides the whole movement in four phases his subdivision of post independence phase bring out the shift from ethnicity to regionalism. These are :

A. The pre-1920 phase characterised by the introduction of developmental programmes and

initiation of refform movements the missionaries.

- B. The period 1920-38, which was marked by the activities of chotanagper Unnati Samaj, dominated by an emerging tribal Unban middle class drawn manly from Lutheran and Anglican sections of christianity.
- C. The 1938-47 phase which saw the rise of a militant movement under the inspirotion of Adibasi Mahasabha. The participation of non-tribals broadened its base.
- D. The period of 1949-58 when the Jharkhand party emerged. The membership of the party was open for all people of the region. This was a marked shift from ethnicity to regionalism as the ideology of the movement.
- E. The 1959-62 phase saw the gradual decline of the Jharkhand party. The increasing inpact of the developmental programmes in the region and the growing involvement of tribals in them the fission between the elite and the backward sections of the tribal society, the increasing possibility of tribal political interests being accomodated in the formal political structures, the inability of the part to provide

radical agrarian programmes for the tribal masses and the growing factionalization of the party contributed largely to its decline.

F. The 1963-75 phase witnessed growing fragmentation of Jharkhand party as well as factionalization of tribal politics along ethnic lines. There was a growing tendency of political extremism and agrarian radicalism coupled with cultural revivalism.

This analysis presents a very useful paradigm for study of social movements. The phrase "from ethnicity to regionalism" is a very generalised statement but it points to a very important dimension. At the same time it subsumes several other linked phenomena.

Sachchidananda, also broadly outlines the various phases of tribal movements in Bihar. He considers 1920 as the watershed in the history of tribal movements. As the movements before it were disjointed, temporary and revivalistic in nature. But the impact of freedom struggle movement launched by congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi changed the character of the tribal social movements in the region.

On a more generalised level, M.S.A.Rao's categorisation of the tribal movements into three stages can be applied to tribal movements in Bihar.

A. In the first stage, the intrusion of British administration on the existing tribal social structure with their lack of understanding of tribal social organisation led to the superimposition of an alien political and economic authority. The land tenure system and forest laws led to land alienation. The leadership of the tribal society was traditional and it attributed all problems to outside forces. The motivating force was the desire to return to the old ways and means of tribal life. Thus, the movements in this stage are millenarian and violent in nature.

B. The constant contact with the outside forces and the spread of education even among the tribals leads to the second phase of tribal movements with a strong element of ethnicity. There is a conscious effort to find new meanings regarding the relationship between various dimensions of their social existence by reinterpreting their own traditions and myths. The new educated

leadership is secular though it stresses the separate tribal identity in ethnic terms.

C. The third phase of tribal social movement began when a distinct political ideology became dominant and also the element of regionalism came into it. The emergence of Jharkhand Party as a well established party participating in the universal political structure of parliamentary democracy is a manifestation of changes taking place in this phase of the movement.

For analysing the role of education in tribal social movements of Bihar, we can identify the phases which marked a significant change in the nature of tribal movement. This can be seen in the background of the changes occurring in the field of education. The breakdown of tribal mode of education, the introduction of missionary education, the post-independence efforts of the government to provide education to all remote areas are some of the key features of change occurring in the field of tribal education. Related to these, the role of education in elite formation, mass articulation and mobilisation as well as its effect on the socio-cultural and economic aspects of tribal life will

K. ~~Sahasrabudh~~ Dutt ~~State of Bihar~~
op. cit.

provide a clear picture regarding the role of education in changing tribal social life.

Based on the periodisation provided by K.S.Singh, Rao, Sachchidananda and others we can divide the whole span in three phases. This division is more an exercise to facilitate the study of tribal social movements with specific stress on the role of education than an elaborate theoretical formulation.

The three phases in which I propose to divide my study are

- A. The Pre-1900 A.D. phase.
- B. The 1900-1947 phase, and
- C. The post-independence phase.

In the first phase, modern education in the form of missionary schools had not much of an influence directly though at the end of this period the impact of missionary education and christianity was visible in affecting the nature of tribal social movements. The second phase was the phase of the emergence of educated tribal elite and a middle class. The shift from ethnicity to regionalism was also becoming visible. The effect of freedom struggle also influenced the movement at this stage. The third stage witnessed the gradual spread of education, urbanisation, industrialization and other

developmental programmes in the area. The changing nature of tribal movement was a result of all these and other factors but education provides a crucial linkage between these phases

Chapter II

COLONIALISM, TRIBAL
REBELLIONS AND COMING OF
WESTERN EDUCATION

A thick curtain of mystery hangs over the antiquities of the prehistoric tribes of Bihar.¹ In the absence of scientific historical material, British anthropologists have tried to construct their history on the basis of folklore and old traditions. A clear picture emerges only after the Moghul's penetration of the area. This started a process of intrusion of alien elements in the tribal universe and their strong resistance to it which in various forms continues even today.

The tribals of the region belong to two important ethnic groups (The Mundari speaking kolarians which include Munda, Santhal, Hoⁿ and Kharia are first in terms of number as well as in importance). The Dravidian group includes Oraon, Mal Paharia and other small tribes. The differences between various tribes "relate to means of subsistence, social organisation, language but no consistent correlation can be established between any of these features."² The four tribes Santhal, Oreon, Munda and Ho constitute about eighty percent of the tribal population and they are generally settled agriculturists.

1 L.P. Vidyarthi and B.K. Rai, The Tribal Culture of India, Delhi, Concept Publishing Company, 1977, p.36.

2 Sachchidananda, Profiles of Trib^ole Culture in India, Calcutta, S.B. Mukhopadhyā, 1965, p.1.

PRE-BRITISH PERIOD :

Prior to the Outside contact, the tribal society was woven around the basic structures of clan, village and chieftanship. They acquired land by clearing the forest which was then owned generally by a group of agnatic families. The 'Korkar' system recognised the right of man on the land he has cleared himself. The 'Khutkathi' system in which the patrilineal descendants had joint ownership of the land but they were not authorised to transfer it.³ The traditional tribal chiefs were given a customary right in agricultural produce. The political authority vested into the hands of Parha head, The Manki, who was assisted by other village elders.

During the Mughal period, the isolation of tribal world was broken and "a process of state formation and adoption of feudalism"⁴ began. During the time of Jahangir, the tribal raja was taken to the court of Moghal emperor. After his return he began to copy the royal court style. He gathered a large number of courtiers and retinue and built a large palace at Doisa. A large number of Rajputs, Brahmins

3 P.P. Mohapatra, Aspects of Agrarian Economy of Chotanagpur (1880-1950), Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, JNU, Chapter IV

4 Sachchidananda, The Changing Munda, Delhi, Concept Publication, 1979, p.64-65.

and other caste groups were inducted in the tribal domain and were granted jagirs. The newcomers were granted a share in the ruler's customary right in agricultural produce but they demanded a proprietary privilege as remuneration. This was the genesis of the transformation of the traditional lineage tenures (Bhunihari Khaint) into zamindari tenures (Majhhas) and the intermediate tenures.⁵ Within a short time a new class of people consisting of up country businessmen, money lenders, Brahmin priests and Rajput jagirdars came to be settled in various parts of tribal homeland.

COMING OF BRITISH COLONIAL POWER :

The final dissolution of the tribal macrocosm originated shortly after the East India Company acquired the Diwani of the erstwhile Mughal province of Bengal. The transfer of power to the Britishers greatly facilitated the process of land alienation. The British failed to realise that "to comprehend rights and customs in Chotanagpur...., the most important requisite is to discard completely all ideas of land tenure in zamindari system. The unit in

5 R.O. Dhan, Tribal Movements in Chotanagpur, in S.C. Malik (ed.), Dissent, Protest and Reform in Indian Civilisation, Simla, IIAS, 1977.

Chotanagpur being frequently not the individual tenants but a community and the landlord or the ruler being not the owner of the soil but reciever of rent."⁶

The zamindari and the Ghatwali systems of land tenure were the result of converting titles from a difinite share in the produce to move extensive rights of a proprietary nature in lands, rent and services. The zamindari and the Bhuinhari villages supplanted the Khukkathi villages. The zamindari had huge "Bakast" lands for which they employed the tribals as 'Beth Begari'. Thus, while the tribal became from owner to tenant-at-will, on the other hand he could not look after what little land he had because of the compulsory "Begari".

The British system led to the introduction of tax-collectors, policemen and non-tribal thekadars. The Sub-infeudatories of the zamindars displaced the traditional tribal village personage the Mankis. Administrative officials, ignorant of tribal customs and insensitive to tribal mores, were bent on bringing the area in conformity to the standards of the contiguous non-tribal area in every respect.

6 T.C. Mcpherson, Final Report on Survey and Settlement Operation in Porahal Estate (1905-1907), Calcutta, 1910, p.14.

Taxation was heavy, subject to frequent increases. The annual revenue of the Damin-i-Koh grew rapidly from nil to eighty thousand rupees.⁷

All these factors were directly or indirectly related to the issue of tribal indebtedness. Earlier, tribals had a subsistence economy based on barter and exchange. The institution of credit and moneylending were absent.⁸ Now the high rates of rent, intrusion of costly hindu customs in their ceremonies and the presence of moneylenders changed the whole situation. The moneylenders gave loans for unproductive purposes such as marriage payments and village feasts. They charged exorbitant interests and frequently manipulated their accounts. The aim was land grab and forced labour which continued even after the death of the debtee. "It was a common thing for a moonsiff to decree that a grandson should give service in liquidation of a debt due by a grandfather, and of which debt the grandson was ignorant, or which had never been incurred".⁹

7 J.H. Hutton, Primitive Tribes, O.S.S.O'malley, London, Oxford University Press, 1968, p.1.

8 D.N. Majumdar and T.N. Madan, An Introduction to Social Anthropology, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1970, p.91.

9 E.G. Man, Santhalia and the Santhals, Delhi, Mittal Publications, 1983, p.111-112.

Thus, "the zamindars, the police, the revenue officials and the court exercised a combined system of extortions, oppressive exaction, forcible dispossession of property, abuse and personal violence and a variety of petty tyrannies upon the timid and yielding tribals".¹⁰ The tribal's responses over this period were largely conditioned by the discordant pressures of their absorption into colonial land tenures, transformed village-structures and other socio-economic and cultural intrusions.

In this phase, a pattern of revolt sustained by mythological dreams and yearnings, followed by normal administrative concessions, followed by frustration at thwarted tribal urges and followed, in turn by renewed resistance, invigorated by traditions and a determination born of a feeling of desperation can be described as the sequence of tribal history till this point.

The most important moements of this phase in terms of scale and impact were the Santhal Rebellion (1855-56), the Kharwar movement (1871-73), the Sardari Ladai (1889-90) and the Birsa Movement (1899-1900).

10 Bipan Chandra, India's Struggle for Independence, Delhi, Penguin Books, 1989, p.47.

THE SANTHAL REBELLION :

Among the numerous tribal revolts the Santhal "hul" or uprising was the most massive. The Santhals, living in the area between Bhagalpur and Rajmahal known as Damin-i-Koh, rose in a united and violent struggle in 1855. This was the climax of a series of hardships and oppressive policies which had threatened the very existence of Santhal cultivator. Santhals, originally hired to hunt the wild beasts that roamed the arable tracts, were set to the task of clearing the jungles for cultivation by the tenants of the permanent settlement zamindars. Relatively high wages for labourers and low rents for tenants tempted many Santhals to emigrate to the area. In 1832-33 the cultivated area between Rajmahal hills and the plains were set aside for the Santhals under the name of Damin-i-Koh meaning "Skirts of the Hill".

The Damin-i-Koh inevitably drew avaricious outsiders who with the help of British authority and its accompanying panoply of devices facilitated the process of pauperizing the tribals. Soon the poor Santhals were reeling under the oppressive burden of zamindars and moneylender. E.G. Man¹¹, a British administrator of the area identified the following

11 E.G. Man, op. cit., p.108-109.

five factors as instrumental in eruption of the revolt.

- a). Exploitation by moneylenders and the zamindars,
- b). The misery caused by their iniquitous system of allowing personal and hereditary bondage for debt,
- c). The corruption of the police in aiding the moneylenders,
- d). The impossibility for the Santhals of obtaining redress from the courts,
- e). The improvidence and the "happy-go-lucky" style of living of the Santhals.

By 1854, the tribe heads, the "Majhis" and "Paranities" had begun to meet and discuss the possibility of revolting. Stray cases of the robbing of zamindars and moneylender began to occur.

The building of the railway skirting Santhal Paraganas provided the spark for the revolt. Large number of Santhals were attracted to work on its construction while several others were prevented from going as they were contractually bound to labour for their creditors. The ones that managed to go returned to their villages with cash and this naturally created further resentment in the minds of those who

were trapped in the vicious cycle of "Kamotee", "harwahee" and other forms of debt bondage. They began to abscond. Their owners retaliated by holding their wives and children as hostages. The tribal anger was multiplied because of the famine like conditions in 1854 and an accompanying high rise in prices.¹²

The tribal leaders called an assembly of nearly 6,000 Santhals, representing 400 villages at Bhaganidihi on 30 June, 1955. It was decided to raise the banner of revolt, get rid of the outsiders and their colonial masters once and for all and usher in "the Satyug", "The reign of truth".¹³

The beginnings of the movement were marked by the submission of petitions. The superintendent of the Damin-i-Koh was petitioned to regulate usury and reduce the land tax. The commissioner of the division was also petitioned for redress of these grievances. But these were not met with any positive response.

Meanwhile, the tribal sentiments were kindled by tales of messianic vision. In 1954, Bir Singh, a Santhal "parganait" incharge proclaimed that, in a vision he had of Cando Bonga, the Santhal's main spirit, he had received magical charms by means of

12 J.H. Hutton, op. cit., p.424.

13 Bipan Chandra and Others, op. cit., p.47.

which the Santhals would be rid of their exploiters. Two brothers Sidu and Kanhu, from the village of Bhognadi, the principal rebel leaders, claimed that Thakur (God) had communicated with them and told them to take up arms and fight for independence.¹⁴

The leaders mobilized the Santhals by organizing huge processions through the villages accompanied by drummers and other musicians. The leaders rode at the head on horses and elephants and in palkies.

Sidu and Kanhu started a march to Calcutta with about 30,000 Santhals to petition the Governor-General to see to the regulation of usury, the reform of land revenue, and the expulsion of outsiders. The march was orderly as long as food lasted and no opposition was encountered. As the situation changed on both these fronts, pitched battles were fought.

Forming bands of 1,500 to 2,000, but rallying in many thousands at the call of drums on particular occasions, they attacked the mahajans and zamindars and their houses, police stations, railway construction sites, the post carriers—in fact all symbols of diku exploitation and colonial power.

14 S.B. Chaudhari, Civil Disturbances During the British Rule in India, Calcutta, Mitra Publications, 1955, p.83.

The Santhal insurrection was helped by a large number of non-tribal and poor dikus. Many of them took an active part in the rebellion.

Once the government realized the scale of the rebellion, it organised a major military campaign against the rebels. It mobilized tens of thousands of soldiers under the command of a Major-General, declared martial law and offered rewards upto 10,000 rupees for the capture of various leaders.

The rebellion was crushed by the end of 1858. This period found the Santhals homeless, with more than 15,000 killed and their accessible villages and crops destroyed. Sido and Kanhu had already been captured.

Apart from military action, the government took steps to improve the tribal situation. The tribal areas were removed from permanent settlement and placed under special territory. Special officers were appointed to look in the matters of tribal oppression. A majority of cases of debt bondage involving petty amounts were dismissed. Special courts dealing directly with the tribals were set up to investigate the cases of land alienation and laws were enacted to stop this. "The causes that gave rise to this rebellion, with the prior inactivity to give

the Santhals redress, and the stringent measures taken afterwards, form a dark blot on the pages of British history in India."¹⁵

THE KHERWAR MOVEMENT :

Apart from this violent outbursts, the tribal response included movements of internal religious and socio-cultural reform. They generally followed in the wake of defeated uprisings. Thus, the Santhal rebellion was followed by the Kherwar or Sapha Har movement. Its promptings sprang from the myth in Santhal minds of a time in the infancy of their history when they "lived in champa in absolute independence and had no rent or tribute to pay but only to bring a small offering to pay their leaders in virtue of their office."¹⁶

In 1871, Bhagirath Manjhi added the title of "Babuji" to compound his charismatic status and announced that he would lead the Santhals back to their golden age if they worshipped the Sun exclusively and put themselves through a number of cleansing practices. He told his followers that their

15 E.G. Man, op. cit., p.117.

16 J. Troisi, Social Movements Among the Santhals, in M.S.A. Rao (ed.), Social Movements in India, Vol.2, New Delhi, Manohar Publication, 1979, p.134.

ravage state was the result of divine retribution for worshipping minor and evil spirits and that monotheism would win their lands back for them. Fuchs suspects christian influence in this phase of the movement.¹⁷

The famine of 1874 worsened the economic conditions of his followers and Bhagirath Monjhi injected elements of Hinduism into the movement by exhorting his followers to worship Ram Cando.

He ordered them to bathe daily before eating; and to abstain from consumption of unclear animals, and from drinking and dancing. This infusion of charisma, christianity and hinduism failed to check the gradual decline of the movement. This led to a political overtone to the whole movement with Babuji urging his followers to refuse to pay taxes on the land they cultivated. One of his followers asked for a separate tribal administration during the census operations of 1881. Later the Khanwar movement fissured into three sects : The Sapla Har, Samra and Babujivi.¹⁸

17 Stephen. Fuchs, Rebellious Prophets: A Study of Messianic Movements in Indian Religions, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1980, p.46-53.

18 J. Troisi, op. cit., p.135.

THE SARDARI LADAI :

The concessions gained after the 1855 revolt were multiplied slowly with the active co-operation of administration, judiciary, big landlords and European indigo planters. In 1889-90, a movement lacking either the messianic zeal or the following, emerged with the traditional tribal "Sardars" as leaders. They attempted to fight the Theekadars, Bigger landlords and the imposition of beth begari. The movement sustained itself on memorandum up by lawyers in Calcutta High Courts where the Sardars were frequently cheated by people who claimed to get their petitions accepted.

The agitation assumed a significant dimension partly due to its link with the German Lutheran and Roman Catholic Church and missioneries. An impression spread that to become a christian was a sure way to successfully fight the landlord¹⁹. From 1885 onwards a new wave of proselytisation swept over the tribal area. A missionary, father Constance Lievens converted 70,000 tribals by promising to help them in fighting their cases in courts. Later the government acted in forcing the church to withdraw from this

19 F. Desai, Crisis in Chotanagpur, (1889-90), Bangalore, I.B. Publishers, 1975, p.81.

stand. This led to mass desertation of tribals from christianity and their demoralization.²⁰

A missionary reported the Sardas as complaining: 'We have appealed to the Sakar for redress and got nothing. We have turned to the missions and they too have not saved us from the Dikus. Now there is nothing left for us but to look to ne of our own men'.²¹

BIRSA MOVEMENT :

Birsa Munda (1879-1900) was the answer to the hopes of his people. Born in a poor sharecropper's family, he had received some education from the missionaries and had then come under Vaishnava influence. In 1893-94, he participated in a movement to prevent village waste lands being taken ove by the forest department. In 1895, young birsa is said to have seen a vision of a supreme God, after which he doimed to be a prophet with miraculous healing powers. Thousands began flocking to chalked to bear his woyds with its prophecy of an imminent deluge.

20 L. Clarysse, Father Lievens, His Life and Times, Ranchi, R. Mission Press, 1984, p.204.

21 Sumit Sarkar, Modern India (1885-1047), Delhi, MacMillan, 1982, p.47.

He received the name of "Dharti Aba", Father of the earth .²²

The dynamics of Birsa movement operated at two closely interrelated levels. The religious and revivalistic nature of his movement, greatly influenced by Christianity and Hinduism, was more dominant in the first phase but after his emergence from jail in 1898, the political and economic content came to the front. Though, there never was a divorce between the two.²³

He called upon the Mundas to uproot superstition, oblige animal sacrifices cease taking intoxicants and wear the sacred thread. They were to worship in the "Sarnas" (their sacred groves) rather than in temples. He ordered his followers to destroy all their property. This was not only to strengthen the Anti-foreign hysteria and lay the bases of a new and purified system akin to the unspoilt state of the past. Stories of miracles performed by him earned Godhood for him.²⁴

22 S.P. Sinha, Life and Times of Birsa Bhagwan, Patna, Pushpa Prakashan, 1964, p.49.

23 ibid., p.107-114.

24 K.Suresh Singh, The Dust Storm and the Hanging Mist: Story of Birsa Munda and his movement in Chotanagpur, Calcutta, Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1966, p.169-69.

Birsa Munda became an articulate vehicle of such moulding influences which had infused the tribal society in general. He wanted to unite his people in a mythical past by ridding them of the exploitative triad of Zamindar, foreigner and trader-usurer. He spoke out against the swallowing up of "Bhuihar" lands and "Khuntkatti" tenures, the displacement of ~~majhhis~~ all over the munda country, the "arekattais" or the labour contractors.

The mundas were galvanised into martial fury through a series of secret meetings in the moonlight and this found its expression first in the attack on police stations and mission houses. This was the last ditch battle of a people emotionally adrift and physically at their tether's end. They were fighting for their "lost kingdom where there will be enough to eat, no famine, the people will live together and in love"²⁵

After many battles, Birsa was finally captured after his forces suffered a terrible reverse against the British army at Dumbari Hill in January 1900. Thus ended the movement which the British administration chose to label as primarily an agrarian one while the Indian press emphasised its

25 Myron Weiner, Sons of the Soil; Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.163-64.

political overtones. According to 'Sumit Sarkar' it is obviously futile to seek a conscious all India nationalist in Birsa. His vision could not have embraced anything broader than a heroic defence of his tribal homeland against all intruders, though a certain primitive but basic anti-imperialist content can not be necessarily denied to his movement.²⁶

REASONS AND DEVELOPMENTS :

As this very brief account of tribal movements before 1900 shows that a multiplicity of agrarian, economic and socio-cultural factors led to numerous protests by tribals. Sometimes they were violent and sometimes the religious overtones fully surrounded the economic and political issues but there remained a basic similarity if we take into account the system characteristics, elements of social structure and the future visions of the society the tribals had. A very important dimension was the role of education or the lack of it, in moulding the tribal response to such forms.

Modern education was absent in any form prior to the coming of the missionaries. Instead, in tribal societies, "Education is the social mechanism of

26 Sumit Sarkar, op. cit., p.48.

initiating the growing generation into their cultural heritage and the use there of according to traditional methods. Thus, education may be called the preparation for the discharge of adulthood roles".²⁷

Apart from family and clan, there were institutions for educational and socializational purposes in tribal societies. The most important among them is the youth Dormitories. The Muria and Gond have their "Ghotul" while Munda and Ho call it "Gitiora". Referred as "children's republics" they provided training by folk-tales, stories, myths, legends and riddles in the absence of written literature.

This education was sufficient for the isolated tribal society but the alien penetrations into their social, economic and political life made this highly inadequate. They were unable to understand the new administrative regulations and laws. The growth of a new type of property owning system, mode of production with the expansion of money market put the tribals into disadvantage.

The diku moneylenders took benefit of their illiteracy in clamping them into perpetual debt-bondage. The book keeping was done only by the

27 D.N. Majumdar, and T.N. Madan, op. cit., p.129.

moneylenders who manipulated the accounts in their favour.²⁸

The tribal people were unable to get justice in courts because they could not understand the court language, a mixture of Hindi and Urdu words, nor the European Judges could understand their language. This brought in the court officials who could easily influence the decision by false interpretation.²⁹

This barrier of ignorance and illiteracy between tribals and justice increased their sense of alienation. In their stupefaction, they failed to assert their rights and became suspicious of and hostile to the Government.³⁰

The tribal system of education and socialization with its emphasis on legends, stories and tales made the tribals aware of the hardships they faced today in comparison to the 'Golden past'. Almost all the movements of this phase wanted the society to go back to its golden days.

The coming of the missionaries in the middle of 19th century had a major cultural impact on tribal society. Their role in education was very significant and had far reaching consequences.

28 E.G. Man, op. cit., p.126.

29 K. Suresh Singh, op. cit., p.5.

30 ibid, p.6.

According to a missionary, the social and educational impact has "enabled (them) to shake off the degrading effects of demon-worship and the extravagant drinking habits which accompany it. Education has enlarged their ideas and quickened their wits. Knowing how to read and write, understanding more about Government and law, they are no longer at the mercy of the landlord's underlings. of the moneylenders, no longer deceived by fraudulent receipts and reports. They acquire a spirit of independence"³¹

Thus lack of modern education was an important factor in providing the unequal settings in which the tribals interacted with 'diku' landlords, money lenders and British administrative. It combined to make the other socio-economic and agrarian issues even more potent in exploitation.

CONCLUSION :

In conclusion, we can note the characteristics of the tribal movement in this phase as the cause which gave rise to the specific set of circumstances leading to rebellion. the most striking feature of movements in this phase was their lack of continuity

31 C.F. Pascoe, Two Hundred Years of S.P.G. (1701-1900), quoted in K.S. Singh, The Dust Storm and Hanging Mist, op. cit., p.19-20.

and organisation. Though, all the movements were mostly linked to agrarian issues, there was lack of inter-tribal communication and movements remained confined to specific tribes. This insulatory tendency limited the scope of the movement.

The millenarian nature of the movement and the charismatic leadership was due to the lack of comprehension by the tribals of the reasons for their oppressive condition. They were always trying to re-establish the past. This lack of understanding resulted in sudden and violent outbursts which were brutally suppressed by the might of British police and army. The coming of the christian missionaries and western education gradually led to changes in the tribal society which were reflected in the changing nature of the tribal social movements from the beginning of the 20th century.

Thus the later phase of tribal movements were not the direct legatee of nineteenth century rebellions, ideologically or organizationally, but a line of descent can be traced in the heroic myths they generated.

Chapter III
GROWTH OF
ORGANISED POLITICAL
MOVEMENTS AMONG TRIBALS

A distinct change in the nature of tribal social movements can be identified with the beginning of twentieth century. This was due to several underlying factors which effected significant changes in the tribal social structure. This change was not a dramatic break with the past but the final culmination of a phase. The basic problems of land alienation, indebtedness and exploitation, which resulted in tribal uprisings had not changed but several new dimensions were added which altered the tribal response significantly. Missionary influence, spread of christianity and western education as well as growing pace of mining, industrial, urban and other modern activities and addition of physical infrastructure were the important exogenetic factor which led to structural changes in the tribal world.

CHANGING TRIBAL WORLD :

K.S.Singh identifies literacy, political consciousness and industrial progress as the principal reasons for the change in the nature of the tribal movement.¹ All these factors were inter-

1 K.S. Singh, "From Ethnicity to Regionalism: A Study in Tribal Politics and Movements in Chotanagpur from 1900-1975", in S.C. Malik (ed.), Dissent, Protest and Reform in Indian Civilisation, Simla, IIAS, 1977, p.317-21.

related. Christianity had been an important force in promoting education in this area. They had created an efficient and strong infrastructure in the field of education. Modern formal education by missionaries was started in 1845. But due to the 1857 revolt, any significant spread of education was not possible before 1871-72. In 1881-82, the number of tribal students in Bengal (including Bihar and Orissa) and Assam was about 24,000. But by 1901-2 it was 30,203 in Bengal (including Bihar and Orissa) only with literacy per thousand being 89 for males and 4 for females. By 1917-18, Bihar and Orissa had 58,300 tribal students including 8,000 girls. There were thirty-six tribals with University degrees.²

In Chotanagpur region, the spread of education followed the similar pattern as can be seen.³

Year	No. OF PRIMARY SCHOOL	NO. OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS	NO. OF HIGH SCHOOLS	BOYS	GIRLS
1871-72	16	NIL	NIL	300	4
1912-13	187	4	1	2767	2462
1926-27	193	6	1	4764	1483

2 S. Nurullah and J.P. Naik, A History of Education in India, Bombay, Macmillan, 1951, p.74.

3 S.J.A. Toppe, Dynamics of Educational Developments in Tribal India, New Delhi, Classical Publications, 1983, p.90.

In absolute terms as well as in percentage, the increase in educated individuals are not significant as it is evident that vast majority was still illiterate. The educated were a small nucleus^U but education has a multiplier effect and the consequences were far greater than the actual growth in the rate of literacy.

Following the major Mohan's report in 1899, prospecting licenses were granted to registered companies as well as individuals. The right to mine was also no longer divorced from the right to prospect. This resulted in a spurt in mining and industrial activities.⁴ Industrialization accelerated the pace of education in general by generating a sense of utility of education as there was a sudden increase in tribal employment in these industries.

All these factors led to a growth of political consciousness among the tribals and saw a complete change in the nature, scope and operation of the issues before the tribal leadership. The millinarian, messianic movements of the 19th century that sought to tap dormant energies within the tribal areas itself without relating them to other anti-imperialist movements, gradually gave way to party

4 F.R. Harris, Jamsetji Nusser Wonji Tata, Bombay, B.E. Publications, 1958. p.153.

politics led by an organised intelligentsia. "The source of legitimacy for the new leader were not the dreams and divinations but their education and experience and political skill gained through contacts with modern civilization.⁵ The growing specialisation and professionalism of political leadership differentiated it with the social, religious and other traditional modes of leadership.

While education, industrialization, urbanization and other wider development resulted in the expression of institutionalized form of political consciousness, the influence of christianity and Hinduism over the tribal society resulted in various reformative and transformative movements. Though, their beginning was in religious aspects they soon developed into socio-political movements. The development of political organisation from "Unnati Samaj" to "Adibasi Mhahasabha" symbolises the process of crystalization of the movement in an organised form. While the growth of "Bhagat" movement shows the changes taking place in the cultural and religious spheres of tribal existence.

5 Shashi Shekhar Jha, Political Elite in Bihar, Bombay, A.P. Publications, 1972, p.106.

THE BHAGAT MOVEMENT :

The 'Bhagat' movement among the Oraon tribe was initiated in 1914. This movement was partly a new variant in the tribal response to pauperization in its heavy borrowings from Hinduism and partly the continuation of the past traditions in its elevation of the cult of leaders, the Bhagats in this case. The first phase of this movement was purification.

A young Oraon tribesman Jatra Oraon, declared in 1914 that in a dream 'Dharmes' told him to give up Matia (Ghost finding and exorcism) and the belief in spirits, to abjure all animal sacrifice, animal food and liquor, and to give^{up} ploughing their fields which entailed cruelty to Cows and Oxen but failed to save the tribe from famine and poverty, and no more to work as colliers or labourer under men of other castes and tribes.⁸

A day of judgement and the end of world was announced as well as the assurance of safety of those who came under the wings of of the new religion. Tales of miracles and other super-natural powers spread. Though, the most important factor for the widespread coverage of the faith was the "combination of a strong desire for delivery from the bondage of

8 S.C. Roy, The Oraon Religion and Custom, Calcutta, The Industry Press, 1928, p.341-42.

capricious and blood-thirsty tribal spirits with perhaps a still stronger desire for delivery from the burden of what they regarded as an oppressive and inequitable land-system and land laws. The assurance that Bhakti to God will raise them from their present derogatory position to the higher social status of Hindus.⁷

The present religion and several of the Gods and spirits were declared as alien deities important from Munda countries. That was the reason behind the failure of Gods in alleviating their social and economic ills. The Bhagats gave a call for a return to the original religion as in its early appellation of "Kurukh Dharam".⁸

Despite the purificatory nature of the movement in its early phase, the social and economic undercurrent were very much strong. Very soon, these started dominating the religious aspect when its followers stopped payment of rents to their landlords and ceased ploughing their lands. The rumours related

7 L.P. Vidyarthi and K.N. Sahay, Dynamics of Tribal Leadership in Bihar, Allahabad, Kitab Mahal, 1976, p.75-76.

8 Edward J., "Revitalisation Movements in Tribal India" in L.P. Vidyarthi (ed.), Aspects of Religion in India, Meerut, K.R. Society, 1961, p.294-98.

to the first world was predicting a defeat of the British forces reached this remote tribal area.

The followers of Jatra or the Tana Bhagats were drawn into the non-cooperation movement launched by the congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Rajendra Prasad played a very important role in enlisting the support of Bhagats in the national freedom struggle. The tribals took an active participation in the Ramgarh session of the congress where the tribal demands regarding the problems of land alienation, tenancy and debtness were formulated.⁹

Joint activity with the Gandhian national movement did not prove particularly fruitful for the tribals, largely because of the peculiarities of their situation. Their struggle techniques tended to get overshadowed in the different imperatives of the wider movement.

The growing influence of Bhagats filled the British administration with concern and the reports of folktales praising the German ruler as well as Mahatma Gandhi made them suspicious. The secret gatherings of Bhagats was banned and the leading

9 S.P. Sinha, "Impact of Mahatma Gandhi on the Tribals of Chotanagpur" in Gandhi and Social Sciences, New Delhi, 1970.

political activists were arrested. They were charged with disloyal attitude and illegal activities.

According to S.C.Roy,¹⁰ the entire Bhagat movement attempting as it does to raise the status of its members in the eyes of the surrounding Hindu society, is characterised by a large scale incorporation into its ideology of Hindu beliefs and practices. Thus, besides Tana Bhagat movement, these were other Bhagat movements in Chotanagpur have puritanical elements like abstinence from the use of intoxicating beverages, meat and fish and opposition of worship of spirits, beliefs in a single God in the way of Bhakti devotion in common. the Kabirpanthi Bhagats, the Bachchi-dan Bhagats, Kamrup Bhagats are some of the Bhagat's sects.

The influence of Hinduism was very much pronounced on the Bhagat movement. Apart from affiliation with the non-tribal religion, it also helped in associating tribal struggles with the national freedom struggle but despite its influence among the Oroans, it could not sustain itself. The tribal society had undergone various changes while moving towards the process of diversification in the course of evolution of tribal leadership.

10 S.C. Roy, op. cit., p.116-18.

GROWTH OF EDUCATED LEADERSHIP :

The rural bred charismatic and tradition oriented tribal leadership, which worked for revitalising the tribals on the Hindu model was disturbed owing to the developmental work of missions. The Hindu influence was checked by the educated section as they realized the limitations in the social mobility for the tribal groups. Apart from the ruling clans, the masses were incorporated at the lowest rung of the social hierarchy. On the other hand, the spread of christian influence weakened the hold of traditional institutions. The administrative powers of the traditional elite has already been eroded by the expansion of modern legal administrative structure. Because of these factors among the Munda and to lesser degree among the Santhals, the leadership started passing into the hands of the Western educated, urban bred christian tribals.

"As a result of growth of education, land reforms and welfare measures for the weaker sections of the population, the power structure in the tribal society has undergone a change and a new elite has emerged among them. Since the beginning of the present century there has been a conscious effort on

the part of the educated Munda elite to build up solidarity".¹¹ The first step in this direction was the setting up of the christian student's organisation by J.Bartholomen, a orphan who was brought up with the Anglican missionaries of chaibasa. He attended the student's conference in Dacca and later set up the Hazaribagh brach of Dacca student's conference in 1912. This was specially formed to raise funds for the education of poor Christian students. The Chotanagpur charitable Associastion was also organised to provide scholarships for both christians and non-christains.

These developments also signalled the expression of the institutionalized form of political consciousness as somewhat feeble voices were raised for pan-adivasis unity, overriding differences between tribals and other backward communities and between christian and non-christian tribals. In 1920, for the first time, a formal organisation, "Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj" was established with the support of all th major tribes, especially Munda and Oraon. Its aim was to uplift Chotanagpur from its present backward state and to improve the social, political and economic conditions

11 Sachchidananda, The Changing Munda, New Delhi, Concept Publications, 1979, p.240.

of the tribals. This organisation started movement for reservation in jobs and legislatures and for a sub-state for the tribals joined to Bengal or Orissa.¹²

This movement was led by the newly emerging tribal urban middle class including teachers. Their approach was mostly constitutional and though they did not achieve much success in their effort, they were successful in the experiment of institutionalized politics. When the Simon Commission and the Cripps Mission visited India, a delegation of Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj met them to place their grievances, and subsequently to ask for a separate state for the tribals. However, the urbanised leadership of the movement failed to take it to the villages. The agrarian issues were also not being raised forcefully. These factors led to emergence of a parallel organisation called "Kisan Sabha". This was a splinter group of the original organisation. The Catholics who till now were aloof from these developments, formed an organisation of their own known as "Chotanagpur Catholic Sabha" under the inspiration of Archbishop of Chotanagpur.

12 K.L. Sharma, "Jharkhand Movement in Bihar", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.11, No.1 and 2, January 1976, p.38-42.

In the parliamentary elections of 1937, all the three organisations put up candidates but the winners were from the catholic Sabha. These representatives being a candidate of Roman Catholic Mission were naturally distrustful of the congress and other parties fighting for Swaraj. In the parliament, the tribal representtives listened to the speech of Jinnah and other Muslim League members who talked of a sepasrate nation based on a separate identity. These experiences proved to lbe the turning point after which lthe tribal leadership tried to bring all the tribals under one organisation.

The tribal leaders of various organisations organised a series of meetings and decided to form a permanent and strong alliance of all tribal group to fight the "Dikus" and work for the social, economic and political status of Adivasis and ultimately to win a separate state. This organistion was called the "Adivasi Maha Sabha".¹³

Along with these political developments, there were signs of revivalism in various are as. The PARHA panchayat system was sought to be revived. Parha is the union of a number of villagases of the some clan located around the village of origin.¹⁴ The Parha

13 K. Suresh Singh, op. cit., p.319-20.

14 Sachchidananda, 1979, op. cit., p. 196.

Panchayat is the court of appeal from decisions of the village panchayat with the coming of new administration and landlords, significance of Parha panchayat was undermined. But the efforts to revive it was taken by the educated leaders but they also weekfully modified it to hit the cement socio-political situation. Various Parha Sabhas were brought under an umbrella organisation. It was based on the elective principle. The new parha's functions of socio-economic development and creating a fellow feeling with the neighbours are political rather than judicial in nature. The educated leaders tried to not only create a consciousness for tribal culture and ethnic identity but also ^{to} ~~for~~ promote the co-existence and interplay of the traditional and modern values and norms in the context of parha.

Thus, the revivalistic movements in this phase not only expressed the culture consciousness of the educated tribal but also were a reminder of the dilemma faced by the elite in adjusting to the various changes taking place in the tribal world.

FROM ETHNICITY TO REGIONALISM :

In the political field, the electoral victories registered by the congress in the elections held

under the Government of India Act of 1935 had already resulted in the merger of various tribal groups in "Adivasi Mahasabha" but the lack of unity and factor fighting were prominent in the absence of a strong leadership. This vacuum was filled by the coming of Mr. Jaipal Singh, a charismatic personality who combined both the local and cosmopolitical attitudes in himself.

Jaipal Singh was born in a Pahan Family in Takra Village in Ranchi. He was educated at Oxford and excelled in sports. He captained the Indian Hockey team which won the world championship at the 9th Olympiad at Amsterdam. He held various high post including that of ministership in the state of Bikaner. The story of his remarkable career has spread all over Chotanagpur. To the educated tribal he symbolised their aspirations and for the tribal masses he was the reincarnation of Birsa.

In 1939, the leaders of Adivasi Mahasabha invited him to chair the annual meeting of the Sabha. In his presidential address, Jaipal Singh paid a glowing tribute to the past glories of the Adivasi aristocracy at Chotanagpur and offered his own services to his people. From then onwards, he became a regular member of the Sabha and later on was made

its chariman. Soon, he was able to consolidate the educated munda under his able leadership, who accepted his as "Morung Gomke" or the supereme leader.¹⁵

Under the leadership of Jaipal Singh, Adivasi Mahasabha became a political orgainisation. It tried to co-operate with the congress party and in return asked representations in congress leadership at provincial level. Upon the refusal of the congress party, it become openly hostile to it. At this stage, the politics of Mahasabha under Jaipal Singh's leadership was streaked with loyalism, in maarked contrast to the militant postures of the congress. The British war effort was thought to be deserving of support by the articulate cadres of the Mahasabha.¹⁶

The rivalry with the congress and the emergence of non-tribal political organisation forced the tribal leaders to open the gates of Mahasabha for non-tribals as well. The census of 1931 had already shown the majority of non-tribals in the region two other factors which helped in broadbasing the membership of Mahasabha were the Muslim League and the Bihari-Bengali Conflict.

15 R.D. Munda, "Jharkhand Movement - Retrospect and Prospect", Social Change, 18(2), June 1988, p.31-32.

16 K. Suresh Singh, op. cit., p.320-21.

Muslim League activists of the East Bengal region asserted the Mahasabha activities in line with their strategy of creating a corridor to link the two wings of nascent-Pakistan running through the tribal belt in central India. Also, the Bengalis of this region merged their interests with that of the Mahasabha in the hope that the best way of safeguarding themselves was to support pan-tribal bodies demanding a separate tribal state. The demand for Jharkhand had its genesis in the Adivasi Mahasabha, though as an organisation it was established by Justin Richards in 1948.

As we note the changes in the nature of tribal movements during this phase (1900-1947), several characteristic features emerge. The growth of tribal movement was somewhat different in its orientation from the national freedom struggle. The 'Bhagat' movement, influenced by Hinduism was nearer to the freedom struggle and incorporated several elements of Gandhian political methods. But the christian dominated Adivasi Mahasabha pursued a loyalist attitude to British authority.

A significant development was the efforts for pan-tribal unity. The educated tribals who studied in schools and colleges got an opportunity of

interacting with students of other tribe. Also, they were aware of the need for pan-tribal unity for the success of any movement. The traditional leadership was structurally bound with a specific tribe and only charismatic leaders, that only to a certain extent, were able to have multi-tribal following. The new leadership derived his legitimacy not from his ritual position but from his status as an educated and skillful political negotiator and such was able to cut across the inter-tribal boundaries.

The movement itself became organised. The earlier sudden and sporadic nature of the struggle gave way to more organised movements which had continuity. The main reason for this continuity was that the movement was not centred around some specific issues but was a response to the overall tribal situation. The agrarian issues, the moneylenders problems and the question of job opportunities for the tribals, all these were directly or indirectly linked with the visible dominance of the outsiders and the denial of the tribals' share in the beautiful natural resources of the region. The issue of tribal ethnicity and identity as well as growing perception of threats to it also formed a dimension of movements.

CONCLUSION :

Thus, education, political consciousness and industrial progress were mainly instrumental in transforming the nature of tribal movements with the beginning of twentieth century. The shift from "ethnicity to regionalism" which began in this phase was a manifestation of these forces at work. The tribal leadership had derived their conclusions from 1931 Census reports. They also realised the role of pan-tribal unity as well as unity between tribals and non-tribal inhabitants of the region. Their vision was not of the "Diku" free homeland of the 'golden' past but the just and honourable role for the tribals in the Chotanagpur of tomorrow. It was this vision which resulted in the changes in the nature of tribal movements with the beginning of 20th century.

Chapter IV
INDEPENDENCE
AND TRIBAL POLITICS

With the coming of Independence in 1947 there was a radical alteration of the political structure of the country and tribal movements were also fundamentally affected. The British period has resulted in a growing state of frustration among the tribal communities. A History of rebellions and violent uprisings was finally transformed into more organised political movements. The course of freedom struggle had also strengthened the roots of organised and continuous political movements.

Prior to Independence, the bonds between the tribal and the non-tribal groups were tenuous and fragile. They operated within a loosely structured but common framework and an uneasy co-existence prevailed. The growing passage of time had made some non-tribal groups also members of the tribal ecosystem. The changing concept of the word "Diku" as used by tribals explains their changing perception of the identity of the exploiter outsider.¹

The attitude of British rulers towards tribes was paternalistic and protective. The policy of exclusion or partial exclusion of tribal areas helped the tribes to pursue their distinctive life

1 S.C. Sinha, Jyoti Sen and Sudhir Panchbhai, "The Concept of Diku among Tribes of Chotanagpur", Man in India, April-June 1969.

ways. Culture change did occur but only haltingly. Unsupported by dynamic and purposeful social action, this policy resulted in perpetuation of primitiveness. Their insulation from the main currents of India life helped the tribals in preserving their traditions but at the same time it also hindered their access to new opportunities which could help them to participate in a wider society and to meet some of the challenges of the contemporary world.

Independence led to the establishment of a system of parliamentary democracy based on universal adult franchise. The aims, objectives and other fundamental principles of governance were enshrined in the constitution of India. The framers of Indian constitution tried to incorporate every aspect of Indian polity and society. The special status of the tribals was recognised and several safeguards were placed to ensure the safety of tribal world. Several specific measures such as positive discrimination in services and education, reservation of seats in parliament and state assemblies and special laws regarding the tribal areas enacted to secure their survival and development. Independence catapulted tribes from their relative isolation into the vortex of change in every aspect of their existence.

These changes had already started affecting the tribal society prior to independence. The freedom struggle and emergence of an educated leadership had led to institutionalization of political process. The change in the political structure of the country also affected the tribal movements in the form of dominance of the political element in them. "The politicization of the tribal scene is a natural and logical culmination of the democratic process. Now the entire gamut of tribal problems has to be seen in the political perspective. Politics has emerged as the principal avenue through which they look forward to finding solutions to their many problems that have persisted through centuries".²

JHARKHAND : MOVEMENT AND PARTY

The shift from ethnicity to regionalism was now more visible but the duality of the process remained. In 1950, the Adivasi Mahasabha was wound up and its place was taken over by Jharkhand Party. The doors of the party were open for tribals as well as non-tribals of the region. The major demand of the party was a separate state of Jharkhand. Though the genesis of this demand laid in the tribal problems which were

2 S.C. Dube, Inaugural Address at the Seminar on the Tribal Situation in India, Simla IIAS, 1969.

supposed to be caused by the coming of outsiders in the region.

In this phase, the dominance of the christian tribal leaders on the party was absolute. The supreme leadership was in the hands of Jaipal Singh. The top twenty-two leaders consisted of Seventeen christian and only five non-christian tribals. In the elections of 1952, the party fought on the "Cock" symbol and had spectacular victory in tribal areas. But, the non-tribals were not so actively associated with the party. The party continued to agitate for the Jharkhand state and they got their opportunity when the State re-organisation commission was formed. The party submitted a memorandum signed by thirty four legislators demanding a Jharkhand state. The memorandum stated that "the Chotanagpur and the Sanhal[†] parganas with the adjacent territories of Bengal, Orissa and Central^{or} province form a compact and homogeneous block distinctly separated from Bihar by physical, historical and natural features". Also, "the people of Jharkhand have a very strong desire for a clearer^{er} expression of their local individuality".³

3 Memorandums Presented to State Reorganisation Commission by Jharkhand Party MLAs quoted in A.P. Sharma, Jharkhand Movement: A Critique, Social Change, Vol.18(2), June 1988, p.73.

Large scale demonstrations were organised when two members of state Re-organisation Commission, Shri K.M. Panikkar and Shri H.N.Kunzru visited Ranchi and Dumka. The commission, however, in its report rejected their demand for a separate state. This defeat demoralised the party activists. The leadership quality and the motives of several top leaders become suspect in the eyes of tribals. Meanwhile, the developmental and welfare activities of the government were having impact on the tribal society. On the other hand, Jharkhand leaders had become "self-complacent and were losing their close contact with the masses which formerly they used to have frequently".⁴ There was a general overall decline of the activities of the Jharkhand party and by the end of 1961, there were strong moves in both the sides, congress as well as Jharkhand, to come closer in one way or another. finally, in 1963, the congress jharkhand merger took place.

The decision to merge on the part of Jharkhand party was taken by Japipal Singh. There was no discussion in party forum nor a single public meeting held to assess the Adiv^{is} public opinion about the merger.

4 R.D. Munda, "Jharkhand Movement - Retrospect and Prospect", Social Change, 18(2), June 1988, p.31-32.

The supporters of the merger hailed this step as an attempt to curtail the influence of missionaries. They claimed that this was not only an effort to divorce politics from religion but also an attempt to integrate the whole tribal community with the wider framework. But, the ordinary tribal was not able to see these facts. They could not understand that the party which was the main target of attack for the last twenty years has suddenly become their own party. The offer of ministership to Jaipal Singh also strengthened the suspicion that the leadership has betrayed their trust.

The eclipse of "Morange Gomke" after the merger of Jharkhand party with the congress ushered in an era of confusion in the politics of chotanagpur. The old members of Jharkand party could not regroup as a monolithic organisation. Meanwhile Jharkhand party continued to function as a faction within the congress party. The general election of 1967 resulted in the defeat of congress and the 67-72 period was of political instability in Bihar. There was no unified political expression of tribal ethnic groups during this period. Vigorous and fresh attempts were made by many of the old and new leaders to revive the Jharkhand party in their own ways to get the popular support of the Jharkhandis on the one hand, and the

recognition by the government as well as election commission on the other. Organisations such as Birsa Seva Dal, Veer Birsa Dal, Krantikari Mukti Morcha, Adivasi Chhatra Parishad appeared on the scene. All these organisations were dominated by the christian tribals and supported by missionasry organisations.⁵

The split of christian and non-christian tribals widened with the emergence of Kartick Oraon, a non-christian tribal who was an engineer with western training. He demanded the stoppage of special privileges under the constitution to the christian tribals keeping in new the progress made by them in educational and occupational field. Thus, the ethnic, religious, factional and party wise divisions weakened the tribal unity. The death of Jaipal Singh in 1970, virtually put a seal on an era characterised by a strong, united and organised tribal political movement.⁶

RISE OF MILITANCY AND REVIVALISM :

The political vaccum was filled by the emergence of Birsa Seva Dal. The agrarian issues which had

5 K.L. Sharma, "Jharkhand Movement in Bihar", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.11, No.1 and 2, January 1976, p.41-44.

6 L.P. Vidyarthi and K.N. Sahay, Dynamics of Tribal Leadership in Bihar, Allahabad, Kitab Mahal, 1976, p.136.

faded into the background during the rise and fall of Jharkhand party were again highlighted. Though, their official aim was "to unite the Adivasi in a well knit and socially conscious organisation in order to work for their moral, mental and economic upliftment."⁷ The leadership was in the hands of students and young men who were fed up of the fiasco of jharkhand party.

Birsa Seva Dal took a militant posture and several violent clashes between tribals non-tribals took place. They took out processions carrying traditional weapons and took strong anti-Diku positions.

Meanwhile, another militant agrarian movement under the leadership of Shibu Soren spread around Dhanbad. Several instances of forcible cutting of crops, attacks on moneylands^{en} and action against corrupt officials were taken by large mobs of tribals. These militant postures attracted the mass^{ist} trade union leader A.K. Roy of Dhanbad who with the support of Bimod Bihari Mahto, a Kurmi leader of the area, tried to unite the agrarian-industrial workers of the area.⁸ The unity of tribal.

7 ibid., p.131.

8 R.N. Maharaj and K.G. Iyer, "Agrarian Movement in Dhanbad" in N. Sengupta (ed.), Jharkhand: Fourth World Dynamics, Delhi. Author's Guild Publication, 1980, p.171-72.

non-tribal industrial workers unity gave rise to Jharkhand Mukti Morcha in 1973.

The tribal movement under the leadership of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) to secure lost lands, repudiate debts and oppose Diku exploitation reached its climax in 1975. Apart from mass mobilisations for militant struggles, JMM sought to rejuvenate the decadent village economy. The traditional social institutions were adopted to perform new functions in keeping with the needs of the time. "Akil Akharas" started to provide education to working boys and girls. A beginning was made in the direction of co-operative farming. Movements were also launched to check alcoholism and practise of lavish expenditures at times of marriage.⁹

Another related development was the discovery of lost "scripts" said to have been used by the tribals at some point in their glorious past. The tribal languages can be grouped into three branches: Sadani, Mundari and Kudukh. The non-tribal population of this area uses Sadani, a language whose structure is very much similar to Hindi but it has many words of other tribal languages. The Santhals, Munda, Ho and Kharia

9 ibid., p.183.

speak the Mundari language while Kudukh is the language of Oraon.

Tribals had a rich oral tradition and the missionaries in order to facilitate understanding and communication, undertook a lot of translation and publication of tribal folktales. Several dictionaries for the tribal language were also brought out. The script for the tribal language was either Roman or Devnagri.

The educated tribal leaders tried to build up a single tribal link-language to foster pan-tribal unity. The most important effort in this direction was the "discovery" of tribal scripts. This not only checked the intrusion of Hindi or English but also illustrated the earlier civilized state of the population. This task was very difficult and could not be successfully performed as the various tribal groups were not prepared to accept another group's language as their own. Also, some sections of the educated tribal leadership felt that tribal youths will be at disadvantage in competing for jobs and higher educations if they did not start early in learning Hindi or English.

In spite of the commendable success of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha in fighting exploiters, dynamizing rural

economy, and fostering social and cultural regeneration, the morcha failed to keep an united front. The politicisation of its top leadership and the declaration of emergency led to its gradual decline. Though, its importance as an alliance of dominant tribal group (Santhals) and dominant non-tribal groups (Kurmi) remained politically.

After the victory of Janata Party in 1977 at centre and state level, the demand for Jharkhand gathered fevered momentum. on 15th august, 1978, a number of tribal factions and other political parties launched a combined movement for the attainment of this aim. Jharkhand Mukti Morcha led by Sibn Soren emerged as the leader of this movement. All the political parties including Congress supported the demand but the then prime minister Morarji desai turned down the demand for a separate state. In the meanwhile, there were mid-term elections in 1980 and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha supported the congress. Thus, once again the Jharkhand movement lost its direction and the Morcha entered into an alliance with Congress.

KOLHAN AND VANANCHAL :

The breakdown of the political struggle for Jharkhand led to another militant movement called

Kolhan movement.¹⁰ In the beginning it was the movement of the Ho tribe but it soon spread in all of Chotanagpur. There demand was for the restoration of the age old "Manki-Munda" system of administration. Soon the movement turned violent and several non-tribal were killed by Kolhan Raksha Sangh". A delegation of Kolhan supporters gave a memorandum to the commonwealth and united nations in which they demanded an independent Kolhan State. As a pacificatory measure, Government revived the "Manki-Munda" system in 1981. They were given limited administrative and judicial powers. These measures along with strong law and order measures led to a gradual decline of the movement.

The beginning of the 80s also saw a new political phenomenon. Uptill now the demand for a separate Jharkhand state was made from the platform of a regional party. Now, the Bhartiya Janata Party, a national party with with Hindu fundamentalist leanings, entered this region and gave the call for "Vananchal".¹¹ The demand is very much similar to the demand for Jharkhand though the concept of "vananchal" still remains somewhat vague. This

10 P.S. Kumar, "Kolhan: State of Nation" The Indian Nation, 17 August 1981.

11 N. Prasad, "Vananchal - Adivasi Andolan Ka Naya Aayam" (in Hindi), Aryavrat, 23 January 1983.

helped in strengthening the position of Bhartiya Janata Party and its subsidiary organisations in this region.

STUDENTS AND INTELLIGENTSIA :

The erosion of the influence of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and a general loss of credibility of the established tribal leadership brought a new generation of students and tribal intelligentsia at the forefront of Jharkhand movement. This trend crystalized in the establishment of All Jharkhand Students's Union (AJSU) a brainchild of Ram Dayal Mnda, the then vice-chancellor of Ranchi University, to espouse the cause of a seperate Jharkhand. The youthful AJSU launched an agitation for the cause. Soon many other tribal organisations, including some extremist outfits, joined the stir and the Jharkhand co-ordination Committee (JCC) was born. The JCC gave a violent turn to the agitation which continued for more than a year or so. complete economic blockade was enforced, during which the movement of minerals was almost stopped. Rail tracks were uprooted and rail and road traffic were brought to a grinding

halt. Some persons were also killed in the agitation and resultant police firings.¹²

Now the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) also decided to join the agitation. At this stage the central government realised the gravity of the situation and after hectic rounds of parleys and behind-the-scene manoeuvrings brought the agitating leaders to the conference table and a committee on Jharkhand affairs (CJA) was constituted with the representatives drawn from the union and state governments and the agitators. The CJA toured the tribal areas of the four states and recorded statements of the four organisations and people of all shades of opinion. The CJA discussed different options and finally suggested autonomy for the tribal region comprising 13 districts of Santhal parganas and Chotanagpur in Bihar.

Then came the 1989 general elections which the Jharkhand parties fought on the platform of Anti-Congressism and tribal's aspiration for a separate home state. The removal of Congress government at centre and also at the state in the subsequent assembly elections again raised the hopes of an early settlement of Jharkhand Problems.

12 Newspaper Reports Mentioned 48 Encounters Between Agitators and Police.

Once again, there emerged deep cleavages in the tribal leadership. The all Jharkhand students' union (AJSU) walked out of all discussion and declared the proposed settlement which was based on the pattern of Gorkha Hill Council in West Bengal, as unsatisfactory. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) was too closely identified with the state government to carry out a satisfactory settlement. The Jharkhand co-ordination Committee (JCC) went into hibernation.

The failure of the political parties has again led to a growth of militancy in the Jharkhand movement. The AJSU is again planning to revive the economic blockade. Another development is the emergence of once outlawed "Kolhan Raksha Sangh". Their cadre have staged some violent demonstrations.

The entry of Naxalite movement with their slogan of "Lalkhand" has further complicated the issues. The violent encounters of "Lalkhand Army" a naxalite organisation and the sunlight army, a farmers and landlord's organisation has led to many killings and a grave law and order situations.

GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENTS :

Thus, the period 1947-1990 saw a cyclical movement of the Jharkhand agitation where a phase of

political unity and struggle was followed by political disunity and decline. The vacuum was filled by violent struggles of militant organisations which failed to sustain themselves.

As this brief description of Jharkhand movement during 1947-1990 shows, there has been several changes in the nature of the movement. An analysis of the characteristics of tribal movement in this phase, along with other structural changes taking place in the tribal society will provide a casual understanding of the whole phenomena.

An important characteristic of tribal movement in this phase was the relationship between Jharkhand movement and Jharkhand parties. This relationship varied between all the four basic types of relationship between a movement and a party as postulated by R. Heberle.¹³ The Jharkhand party prior to its merger with congress served as the mouthpiece of the movement. After the fission of the Jharkhand party into seven parties in late sixties, the movement was represented by all the parties. In the latest phase of tribal agitation, the organisers of the movement tried not to be identified with any of

13 Rudolf Heberle, Social Movement: An Introduction to Political Sociology, New York, 1951, p.280.

the political parties as their motives was suspected by them.

The exogenetic factors which influenced the tribal society were :

- a) The change in the political set up of the country after independence. The representative democratic set up with universal adult franchise affected the nature of tribal movements in Bihar.
- b) The massive industrialization process which started after independence also brought many social, economic, cultural and ecological changes in the tribal world.
- c) The welfare measures of the government and the introduction of Block development project brought some long term changes. These measures produced mixed results and this led to further complexities in the situation.

The problems of land grab and exploitation, by the outsiders had been the main reasons for various tribal revolts in the 19th century. After independence, several new problems added to the

tribal misery. According to Dr. Munda, the four basic issues behind Jharkhand movement are :¹⁴

1. land and forest alienation
2. cultural submergence
3. Unbalanced development
4. job deprivation due to influx of outsiders.

Earlier, individuals were instrumental in land grab but after independence, government projects for hydroelectricity and irrigation dams, several public sector industries in Iron. Heavy industries and nationalization of mines made it the largest user of the tribal land. Hundreds of tribal villages were displaced and their agricultural land taken over. The compensation paid was inadequate and was in the form of cash which was soon used up. All these tribal families become landless, jobless and even homeless.

The new forest laws regarding the use of major and minor forest produces also deprived tribals of their alternative livelihood. Though the state measures were concerned to check deforestation and help the tribals but vested interests with the help of bureaucratic red tape and legal loopholes managed to turn them to their advantage.

14 R.D. Munda, 1988, op. cit. p.8-9.

The issue of cultural submergence was made even more acute by the actual reduction of tribals in a minority status in most of the districts. According to 1981 census, the overall per centage of population of tribals in Chotanagpur area was 25.7%. In different districts it was :¹⁵

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Ranchi	-	56.4%	Giridih	-	12.9%
Singbhum	-	44.8%	Dhanbad	-	9.1%
Palamu	-	18.3%	Hazairbagh	-	9.0%

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The problems of unbalanced development and job deprivation due to influx of outsiders are two most important issues for the educated tribals. Despite government effort for welfare and construction of infrastructural facilities, tribals lack even basic necessities of life like water. The number of schools, hospitals are still inadequate and many of them exist only in government files. The rail and road network is still incomplete.

Corbridge¹⁶ in his study has analysed the consequences of industrialization and development in

15 Census of India, 1981, Series 1, Part (2).
 16 Stuart Corbridge, "Industrialization, Internal Colonialism and Ethno-Regionalism: The

this area. He notes the inadequate development and government expenditure in comparison to the revenue and also the low level of tribal employment in the industries and mines of the area. Though he considers the "internal colonialism" analysis of David Rutherford as inadequate, he sees a relationship between the ethno-regionalism in the region and the lop-sided development as well as exclusion of tribals from jobs.

Thus, the post Independence phase witnessed the emergence of several new problems. Some of them like job opportunities were very important for the educated young generation. This coupled with the growth of education in the region led to the growing involvement in the region led to the growing involvement of students in the movements for Jharkhand.

If the data for the spread of education between 1928 and 1980 are compared then the massive growth can be easily seen. Though the rate of literacy for tribals in this region was only 16.99%, there were vast differences between male-female literacy and rural-urban rate of literacy.¹⁷

Jharkhand", Journal of Historical Geography, 13(3), July 1987, p.249-66.

17 Census of India, 1981, Series 1, Part 2, Primary Census Abstracts (ST), p.19, 39, 51.

opportunity for educated tribals with rapidly increasing industrialization and urbanisation. They also become more aware of their disadvantages, some of which were caused by the influx of outsiders. A study conducted in the areas reported that education, aspirations, devotion of industrial and urban exposure were positively correlated with social and political discontent in tribal as well as non-tribal workers.¹⁹

The growth of education also led to the displacement of christian tribal dominance over the tribal politics in the region. Earlier, modern education was mostly provided by the missionaries but the establishment ^{of government} schools not only led to a greater speed ~~but~~ of education but also removed to certain extent, the disadvantages faced by the non-christian tribals. The non-christian leaders also struggled against the ~~concentration~~ of all government benefits by the christians who had the advantage of an early start.

The active participation of the students and intelligentsia was another important characteristic of tribal movement in this phase. A critic of

19 Alex Inkeles, "Individual Modernity in Different Ethnic and Religious Groups" in Exploring Individual Modernity, New York, Columbia University Press, 1983, p.139-41.

Jharkhand movement points the role of Academicians and students in the movement. "After 1980, Ranchi University became the ground for recruitment, training and propagation of Jharkhand movement. The opening of Department of Tribal and Regional Languages led to the assumption of leadership by students. The All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU) was planned here. The head of "Department of Tribal and Regional Languages" was the co-ordinator of Jharkhand Co-ordination committee (JCC)."20

Thus, the post independence phase of the tribal movement in Bihar was more an expression of the growing political consciousness of the people due to education, industrialization and urbanisation. The frustrations caused by uneven development, lack of employment opportunities and visible dominance of outsiders in the modern sector were instrumental in mobilising the youth. The fusion and fission tendencies as characteristics of electoral politics, dominated the course of the movement which in this phase was almost cyclical but the wider changes in the tribal society had far reaching consequences.

20 A.P. Sharma, "The Jharkhand Movement: A Critique" Social Change, op. cit., p.61-62).

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The history of tribal movements in Bihar is as old as the contact of tribals with the outer world. Beginning with the Moghuls, it became a bitter struggle for survival during the British period. Even after Independence, tribals have continued to agitate within and sometimes outside the constitutional framework adopted by independent India.

Tribal movements have passed through several phases during the last two centuries. Structural changes taking place in the tribal society affected the economic, cultural, social and political spheres. No single factor can be identified as influencing the course of tribal movements which have been the product of a number of causal factors acting together. However, one of the most important factors was introduction of western education in the tribal society with the entry of missionaries.

The tribals were unable to comprehend the complexities of the outer world which was superimposed on the tribal society with the gradual penetration of the administrative machinery and increasing industrial and mining activities. All these developments resulted in a great influx of non-tribal outsiders into the region who with the passage of

time because the numerically dominant section of the society.

Earlier tribals lacked the organisational structure in launching a movement. They failed to communicate with other tribes or non-tribals in the region. They generally organised around a charismatic leader and the mixture of religions and political aspects with a desire for bringing back the "golden days" of the past was the general characteristic of tribal movements in this phase. As the use of terms like revolts, rebellions, uprisings, suggest, these movements were sudden and violent. The brutal use of police and army crushed these movements but the regular occurrences along similar lines suggest that the movement was not finished but only temporarily suspended.

The coming of western education with the help of missionaries resulted in creating a small section of educated tribals who were able to comprehend the complexities involved in their oppressive situation. Though their number was very small, they were instrumental in mobilising the tribals for mass political struggle and in giving an organised shape to the tribal movement. Apart from the agrarian issues, they raised the issue of tribal welfare.

education and employment. The educated leadership formed an urban middle class elite group which transcended the inter-tribal boundaries. There were attempts for pan-tribal unity as well as unity between tribals and non-tribals.

The post independence phase of tribal movements has witnessed complete politicisation of the struggle and emergence of parties as part of the movement. The leadership is in the hands of people who are professional politicians. The various tribal problems have been subsumed under the demand for a separate state. Another feature has been the shift from ethnicity to regionalism which was done to accommodate the numerically dominant local non-tribal population. The growth of movement was in a cyclical manner with various processes of fusion and fission occurring at different times. A big gap was also visible between a small section of elite tribals and poor masses who failed to get any benefit of welfare and developmental activities.

As this study has tried to analyse the role of education in tribal social movements, the concluding remarks will try to identify the important generalisations. Though, most of the studies dealing with the social movements in general and tribal

movements of Bihar in particular have neglected education as an important variable in the study of social movements, it can be said that coming of modern education in the tribal society had a profound effect on the tribal society which in turn affected the tribal social movements.

Emergence of an educated leadership has led to the growth of organised political activities and participation of tribals in the parliamentary system of governance in the country. Several special issues relating to tribal welfare have been brought up by these leaders. But their stress has been more on political gains by exploiting the tribal sentiments. Their demands also show urban educated middle class bias as they tend to neglect the basic agrarian issues and stress demands for job reservations which are of no benefit for the illiterate masses.

The unevenness of development including education has resulted in fissures within the tribal society. The missionary efforts for educating the tribals were very commendable but their linkage with conversion also raises some important issues. It has led to a divide between christian and non-christian tribals which has started to threaten the tribal unity. The Hindu missionary organisations have also

worked in the same direction. This has endangered the whole tribal social and cultural fabric with severe negative results. This distortion more than offsets the benefits which they derive from these missionary organisations.

The government has launched various schemes for providing education to the tribals. This includes a network of primary schools, scholarships, tribal hostels and reservation in institutions. But the rate of growth of literacy has been slow and still it is far below the non-tribal rate of literacy. Even within the tribal setup, there are vast differences between rural and urban areas, and between male and female rate of literacy.

Growth of education itself has led to an increase in the number of educated unemployed. The educated youths are in the search for government jobs as this education is of no help in traditional tribal handicrafts or agriculture. Neither alternative employment avenues have been created for them, nor are they absorbed in the increasing industrial activity in the region. The increasing aspirations and the subsequent frustrations has made the educated unemployed an important part of the tribal movements.

The student's participation in the tribal movement has generally resulted in militant agitations which were more pronounced in Urban areas. They have failed to unite the masses with them. They managed to revitalise the movements but failed to give it new direction. The direct and indirect involvement of Academicians and intelligentsia has provided new ideological grounds for struggle as well as an understanding of changes taking place in the tribal world.

The analysis of ^{Social}~~total~~ movements with the perspective of the role of education also raises various theoretical questions. The different theories of social movements do not give adequate importance to education as a variable. While the studies with a Marxist framework completely marginalise the role of education. Others also subsume it within modernisation. The predominance of economic and agrarian issues cannot be denied but the changes taking place in the tribal response from 1855 to 1985 point to the need of a study analysing the role of education in tribal movements in Bihar.

The various perspectives on education and social change also present the problem of analysing the role of education in tribal society. Here,

education is thrust upon a society which cannot relate it to its socio-economic structure. Thus, instead of teaching the "essential similarities" and "skills necessary for adult roles" it alienates the individual from the society. In the long run it breaks the isolation of the group and brings distortions in the socio-economic spheres. But tribal societies cannot remain as "isolated islands" in a changing situation. The solution of "deschooling" of these societies will not be meaningful as other factors like industrialisation, urbanisation, transport and communication continue to have an impact on the tribal society. The problems attributed to education have their roots not primarily in the educational system but rather in the functioning of the wider system itself.

As the analysis of tribal movement in Bihar shows education has been an important factor in affecting the changes that have taken place in it. Spread of education has affected the ideology of movement, its organisation, the machineries for propagation, articulation and mobilisation, as well as the strategies and tactics devised by the leaders. Education can be analytically linked with other structural changes that influence the tribal movement. At another level there have arisen specific

focal centres which anticipate or support from within the educational system, the movement actually taking place, or likely to arise, outside in the tribal society.

The analysis of education and tribal society has to be understood within the broader limits of government policies towards the tribals. It has been a mid-way policy between isolation and assimilation. This is reflected in the educational system as well. The modern values sought to be inculcated by education sometimes threaten the social and cultural fabrics of the society. The problem has to be resolved in a constructive manner with a selective approach where the changes are meaningful and do not result in dismantling of tribal society.

In a nutshell, education has been an important factor in the emergence of organised political movements and any solution of the problems which the tribals face must include education. This in itself will not solve the tribals problems but will help them in adapting to their society and the changes that are taking place in them. This will make them more conscious of their rights, more aware of their opportunities and more confident of their future.

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