ETHNO REGIONALISM AND STATE FORMATION: A CASE STUDY OF JHARKHAND

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DECLARATION

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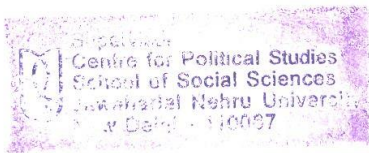
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ABBREVIATIONS

AJSU	:	All Jharkhand Students Union
COJM	:	Committee on Jharkhand Matters
CNTA	:	Chotanagpur Tenancy Act
CPI	:	Communist Party of India
GNLF	:	Gorkha Nationalist liberation Front
FRA	:	Forest Rights Act
INC	:	Indian National Congress
JAAC	:	Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council
JBM	:	Jharkhand Budhijivi Manch
JCC	:	Jharkhand Coordination Committee
JDU	:	Janata Dal United
JHP	:	Jharkhand Party
JJP	:	Jharkhand Janta Parishad
JMM	:	Jharkhand Mukti Morcha
JVM	:	Jharkhand Vikas Morcha
JVM(P)	:	Jharkhand Vikas Morcha (Prajatantrik)
LAA	:	The Land Acquisition Act
LWE	:	Left Wing Extremism
MCOR	:	The Marxist Co-ordination Committee
NDA	:	National Democratic Alliance
OBCs	:	Other Backward Classes
PESA	:	Extension of Panchayats to Schedule Areas
PRIs	:	Panchayati Raj Institution
SPTA	:	Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act
SRC	:	States Reorganization Commission
SSS	:	Sadavasi Sadan Sangh
TSP	:	Tribal Subplan
AJSUP	:	All Jharkhand Students Union Party

INTRODUCTION

India has witnessed challenges to maintain unity and political integration due to the nature of diversity from its various constituent units. In this context, the issues like nationalism and regionalism assume significance to understand the process of nation and state building and its consolidation. The challenges arise out of the nationality question of the constituent units and sometimes due to regional disparities in the process of development. Also at times, a specific cultural community may historically or politically remain dominated by another cultural community. The latter may respond to this situation by asserting its identity in the form of a social or political movement.

Most of the multicultural countries of the world reeled under the colonial rule for a long time. The colonial rule in most of these countries created artificial provincial units which did not match the cultural linguistic affiliations and the traditional homelands of the people. This arrangement ultimately resulted in the cumulative socio-economic dominance of the majority community over the minority community. The domination was felt most acutely in the cultural and economic spheres.[1] Nonetheless, the situation did not change much post decolonisation. In the post-colonial period, the establishment of self-governments and democratic institutions and values provided thrust to the nationalist consciousness of several cultural communities including the subdued and neglected ones. Most of the decolonised countries opted for provincial reorganisation on the basis of primordial ties.

The basis of reorganisation of the federal units differed from country to country. Region was the basis of reorganisation in Indonesia, tribe cum-kinship in Nigeria, sect and religion in Lebanon, race in Malaysia, language and tribe in Pakistan etc. The policy of reorganisation mostly followed the simple goal of establishing co-terminality between administrative units and cultural units so that people's aspirations could be met and the unity and integrity of the state could be maintained. Also attempts were made to bring in the process of modernisation and usher programmes

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[1] Subrat K. Nanda, "Nationalism and Regionalism in India: The Case of Orissa", Kalpaz Publications, New Delhi, 2007, p. 14.

of development so that desirable interaction between social collectivities could be promoted to neutralise differences of race, colour, language, religion, tribe and region.

However, re-organisation could not stem all the problems between cultural communities and provincial administrative units or the urge of the ethnic groups towards becoming recognisable entity. The regional movements are ubiquitous and not confined to the ex-colonial world alone. The well-integrated countries of the West by and large have also witnessed resistance from their people belonging to cultural backgrounds different from the mainstream culture. For example, national movements latent or manifest exist among the Scot, Welsh and Irish in the U.K, French Quebecois in Canada, German Swiss in Switzerland, Basques and Catalans in Spain, Burgundies and Britons in France etc.[2]

The cultural diversity that exists in India mainly of language, tribe and religion are important because they not only define cultural identities but also demarcate specific cultural territories traditionally referred to as homelands with terms like 'desh', nadu, 'rashtra'. With the traditional linkage between culture and territory, the provincial arrangement of colonial India continued not only the fragmentation of culture and territory of several communities but also juxtaposition of different cultural communities into one unit or dispersal of one cultural community into several such units. The larger or the dominant community having better access to power, privilege and material benefits assumed mainstream status. The smaller and territorially fragmented communities faced threat on the questions of their identity and the demand for recognition in the political space led to the growth of regionalism in India. One of such cases is the study of ethno regionalism in Jharkhand. Here the demand for autonomy was based on the tribal heritage and culture and it was one of the oldest such demands in the country.[3]

The first recorded articulation of a proto-Jharkhandi identity demanding autonomy in the form of a Governor's province was found in the 1920s before the Simon Commission. The demand for autonomy made by the Jharkhand movement did not attain significant success as there were demographic handicaps in terms of socio-

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[2] Ibid. p. 27.
[3] Ibid. p. 14.

cultural heterogeneity of the population of the region. Only a third of the population of region was of tribal origin. Ethno regionalism that led to identity consciousness in the region thus balanced the tribal heritage and culture with a region-oriented development deficit argument. The demands for a separate state got rejected by different official and representative fora. This led to a change in the self-definition and articulation of the identity and its nomenclature underwent realignment. Hence the mobilisation centred on the questions of regionalism and development got linked to the electoral politics of the region.[4] Nevertheless, ethno-regionalism helped in the acceleration and consolidation of the process of state formation. The mobilisation got realigned in favour of regionalism as a consequence of not only the economic and social cleavage but also to neutralise the tribal question to make it more secular. Regionalism in Jharkhand developed as a result of ethnic cleavages, unequal development due to the historical and political events of its past.

To understand Jharkhand regionalism, it is important to define the word region. According to Rajendra Vora, "people living in worlds of various sizes inherit and develop 'subjective' and shared conceptions of the areas they live in and move through. They understand those areas as regions, attach meanings to them and develop loyalty to a region as well as to those with whom they share a sense of its meaning. Regions are created and nourished by human minds and emotions. It is a mental construct. Regions are not always physically given entities. They are also historically and politically determined. Regions change their boundaries overtime. Hence regions are defined with reference to a context. If the context changes, the boundaries or definition of the region can also change radically. Because a region is fundamentally a mental construct, in many instances it remains an amorphous idea and thus poses a challenge."[5]

Ethnoregionalism is a more systematic expression of regional consciousness based on ethnicity. To define ethnicity, Kanti Bajpai explains, "Ethnicity is understood to mean social identity based on ascribed qualities such as race, religion,

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[4] Amit Prakash, "Identity and Development in Jharkhand", in "New States for a New-India", edited Manohar Publications, New Delhi 2011, p. 36.
[5] Rajendra Vora and Anne Feldhaus, "Region, culture and politics in India", Manohar Publications, 2006, p. 7.

caste, tribe, language and region."[6] Regionalism is an ideology founded on the linguistic, ethnic and cultural identity of the people of a particular area. Not all regions necessarily enter into the phase of regionalism, even though the rise of regional consciousness gives a region a distinctive identity and an implicit political dimension. Regionalism suggests that regionalist ideology is initially based on some vague ideas, but later on as regional movements develop, regional elites create a more or less defined set of arguments or justifications. A regionalist political movement makes demand for greater autonomy and a larger share in power for the region, or for a separate political existence within the boundaries of the nation-state or even for secession from the nation state.[7]

Few scholars like Daniele opines that "Connor associate ethno with nationalism and suggest that it signifies the kinship basis of a nation. According to him nations are only self-aware ethnic groups. Members of ethnic groups constitute people not yet cognisant of belonging to a larger element. In such cases, meaningful identity of a positive nature remains limited to locale, region, clan and tribes. Thus, members need not be conscious of belonging to the ethnic group. These are essentially 'prenational peoples' or potential nations, peoples for whom nationhood and national identity lie in the future. Ethnicity normally refers to a belief in putative descent. It is a perception of commonality and belonging supported by a myth of common ancestry. Connor has stressed the subjective and psychological quality of this perception, rather than its objective 'substance'. Identity oes not draw its sustenance from facts but from perceptions; they are more than reality when it comes to understanding ethnic issues." [8]

The process of transforming conceptual cultural regions into administrative and political units continues in India to this day. The latest addition being the state of Telangana in June 2014. The regional identities are becoming ever more refined and also the basis for carving up larger states into smaller ones. The understanding of regions in India can be distinguished into three phases. The first phase (from 1947

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[6] Kanti Bajpai, "Diversity, Democracy and Devolution in India," edited "Critical Issues in India: Ethnonationalism in India, A Reader." OUP, 2010, p. 21.
[7] Ibid p.9
[8] Daniele Conversi, "Conceptualizing Nationalism: An Introduction to Walker Connor's Work", in Daniele Conversi (ed.), Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World: Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism, (London: Routledge), 2002, p.56

through the early 1970s) was influenced by partition which cautioned the first government of independent India against any kind of regionalist demands based on religion or ethnicity but did recognise and accommodate linguistic regions. In the second phase (1970s to 1990s) regionalist movements became extremist and challenged the tendencies of centralization. Regionalism also became an expression of a sense of economic deprivation. Development planning could not generate sufficient surplus for every region which led to regional disparities. It failed to distribute resources equitably among various regions. Linguistic regions had become a fact of political life. By the end of the 1990s, regional identities came to be organized around ethnicity. In the third phase, which began in the mid-1990s and continues into the present, on the one hand, the militancy of regionalism has died down, while on the other, regional parties have come to play a significant role in national politics and are being accommodated within the coalitional system at the centre. In this phase the state units of national parties are functioning like regional parties and the regional parties are working as extensions of national parties.[9]

Region thus figures prominently in the society, culture and politics of India and several studies on regions have focused on comprehending the complexity of India in the present and the past. Region thus leads itself to a multiplicity of meanings. It acquires new dimension in the state's spectrum of politics and government. A region is marked by "maximum homogeneity within drawing sustenance from language, dialects, social composition, ethnicity, cultural pattern, historical antecedents, and recognised consciousness of group identity."[10] The study on ethno regionalism in Jharkhand that comprises of the Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana is based on the questions of development, identity, role of regional parties as vehicles of regionalism and electoral politics in India. Jharkhand is the study of this particular region and its development from origin to full-fledged manifestation as a state.

Ethnoregionalism and ethnonationalism can be associated with a wide range of political phenomenon like nationalism, sub nationalism, ethnic insurgency, ethnic

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[9] Ibid. p. 11.
[10] Dhirendra N Das, "Regional Movement, Ethnicity and Politics", Abhijeet Publications, New Delhi, 2005 p. 2.

militancy or sometimes regionalism. Sanjib Baruah calls it a "heterogenous set of nation-oriented idioms, practices and possibilities that are continuously available or 'endemic' in modern cultural and political life. In his view, the term explicitly seeks to restore the ethnic connotation to analytical primacy, and it rejects the notion of a foundational distinction between the ethnic and the civic that has sometimes served to privilege state nationalism over the nationalism of groups not endowed with states."[11]

The political history of India has witnessed creation of newer and smaller states. Each redrawing of boundaries had been a step towards the integration of the regions into the union. The process started with the integration of the princely states at the time of India's independence and in 1954-1956 with the creation of the States Reorganisation Commission. India underwent a long spell of states reorganisation leading to the formation of new entities in 2000 as Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh. The creation of these states acknowledges the ability of the regional forces to provide improved governance. It reflects the maturity of the federal polity in accelerating the decentralization process. The growing demands of statehood have heralded a significant shift in the evolution of Indian federalism. These states have come into being as a result of the role of regional elite and triggered by the imperatives of global economy. In the views of Samuel Berthet, it is important to re-evaluate this notion of backwardness associated with the tribal state of Jharkhand. Also, it is used as the basis of political discourse and as a justification for economic and industrial policies of development.[12]

To understand the political landscape of the Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana region and its journey towards occupying the space as a state entity, it is important to see the political discourse on ethnic demography, its political consequences and population change. Myron Weiner rests his analysis on population change on three concepts "(1) territorial ethnicity – the notion that certain ethnic groups are 'rooted' in space (2) notion of dual labour market with its conception of two types of jobs: traditional, marginal, unorganized or informal sectors employing low-skilled manpower at low wages as against the modern, developed, organised and formal sectors that employ the skilled at higher wages. (3) ethnic division of labour. The dual

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[11] Sanjib Baruah, "Critical Issues in Indian Politics: Ethnonationalism in India", OUP, 2010, p.1
[12] Berthet Samuel, Kumar Girish, "New States for a New India", Manohar Publications, 2011, Page 14.

labour market may be ethnically stratified. In the classical conception of an ethnic division of labour, migrants belonging to one ethnic group move from the periphery to work in subordinate positions to the ethnic group predominating in the core. The migrants settle into their own communities, where they develop culturally distinct ethnic associations that both strengthen their identity and provide them with social support."[13]

The reasons for the underdevelopment and backwardness of the Chotanagpur and Santhal region and especially the tribals of this region could be the result of the above hypothesis. In the words of Myron. Weiner, "ethnicity insofar as language and tribe are concerned has a territorial base, the ethnic homogeneity of some areas of the country have long since been eroded by population movements. He further explains the case of Chotanagpur, where the migrants and not the local people gained from the development of the region. Migrants from north Bihar and Bengal entered the colleges and universities, occupied most of the positions in state and administrative services, skilled positions created in the new mining, industrial and commercial activities. As the region itself prospered, a large number of tribals actually left. Starting in the middle of the nineteenth century and accelerating later, thousands of tribals emigrated to the tea plantations of northern Bengal and Assam where they found employment as tea pickers and took jobs as far away as the Andaman Islands. With the emigration of tribals and the immigration of non-tribals to Chotanagpur, the indigenous population grew smaller. The indigenous tribal population already failed to reap the benefits of regional development. Most remained outside the growing urban, industrial sector and disproportionately outside the system of education. They were unable to compete with the migrants for job in either industry or government, for admissions into colleges and also for the use and control over their own land." [14]

Accounting for roughly 27% of the total population, the tribal population forms a minority in the state. Number of these tribal groups is also dwindling due to immigration from other states due to industrialization, urbanization, and the creation of new avenues. Demography matters in political decision–making. Such divides in the name of class hierarchy, culture, social and religious practices have weakened the

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[13] Myron Weiner, "Sons of The Soil: Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India", OUP, 1978, p.4
[14] Ibid.p.13

tribal identity and collective voice. The term 'Adivasi' in common parlance gave a unifying identity, a new imaginary to these groups of people. Irrespective of their differences, tribes in Jharkhand are ethnically the same. Groups of people having common culture, interest, past experiences, coherence and solidarity constitute an ethnicity. There should not be scope of antipathy between these variegated tribal groups in Jharkhand that would alone ensure their upliftment.

Review of Literature

K. L Sharma highlights three factors that were responsible for the case of Jharkhand movement in Bihar. Prior to independence, "the factors were (i) administrative viability of the region (ii) exploitation of the tribal people and of the mineral, material and forest resources by the dikus (iii) ethnic distinctiveness of the Adivasis (tribals). These factors continued to be the main basis for the demand for the state of Jharkhand. But the character and complexion of the Jharkhand movement witnessed a sea-change in terms of leadership, electoral politics, discourses on ethnicity, class and power, inter-tribal ethnic and political linkages, and the questions of identity and sub-nationality". In his view, the Jharkhand movement was a mix of ethnicity, class and power right from its inception in 1938 with the formation of Adivasi Mahasabha by Jaipal Singh. Persisting ceaselessly for centuries, an identity of the exploited emerged in Jharkhand by the dikus who comprised of the non-tribal upper-class bourgeoisie in the form of zamindars, money lenders, governmental officials, industrialists and businessmen. Initially, the leadership of the Jharkhand movement despite ethnic divide, cultural barriers, political and functional cleavages and intrigues clearly remained confined to the tribals. Later the movement included the non-adivasis and sadans with a broad-based secular ideology. Sadans are people of those castes and communities who are not scheduled under the Constitution but lead a miserable life compared to that of the tribals. It was also realised that due to in migration and out migration, social mobility, education and electoral process, non-tribal communities and groups came closer to the tribal people in regard to language, culture and occupation. The symbolic relation between the adivasis and sadans resulted in the creation of a composite culture and a world outlook with its adivasi core. The people of the region as a social category have opposed their subordination in the form of economic and cultural marginalisation. The movement for formation of

a separate state of Jharkhand was directed against the hegemonic conditions and practices created by colonialism which were transformed into neo-colonialism or internal colonialism after independence confirming control of the region in the hands of the dikus. Jharkhand's ethnohistory makes visible the historical depth of its adivasi communities, socio-cultural styles and how social maintenance and the attachment to land and territory have acted as an axis for the reproduction of collective identities. Tribal groups are basically peasant societies inserted in a class society, portraying at the same time specific ethno-cultural styles. The Jharkhand resurgence was observed due to oppression, exploitation, ecological imbalance, commercial exploitation of forest resources, cultural humiliation, forced migration, land alienation and semi-enslavement of the adivasis by the outsiders. The emergence of a middle class among the adivasis had given a new complexion to the Jharkhand movement. The objective of the movement was to carve out a liberated social space for the Jharkhandis. It aimed to reconstruct its distorted past and to eliminate all social force and violence by the outsiders (dikus). In fact, Jharkhand was an all-inclusive, a composite movement aiming at the deconstruction of the imposed alien structures and normative patterns on the one hand and reconstruction of the positive features of Jharkhandi social formation on the other.[15]

Interesting reflections by Partha Sarathi Gupta on questions of identity and politics suggest a case for federal polity. While explaining the conflating concepts like nation, state, ethnic identity, he explains four markers to identify a human collectivity and its bonding agent within a given territory. First is the primary collectivity (Gemeinschaft) where unity is based on fairly intimate personal contact. Second, is the nature of transport and communication. Third, in his view, is the level of literacy and its distribution within the social hierarchy. Fourthly, through what sort of moral codes and symbols do the people in the primary collectively identify themselves with a supra-local larger political unit, that is a kingdom or some other form of a territorial state?[16]

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[15] K.L Sharma, "The question of identity and sub-nationality'' in "Reconceptualizing caste, class and tribe", Rawat Publication, New Delhi, 2001.p.137
[16] Partha Sarathi Gupta, "Identity-Formation and Nation-States: Some reflections", September 11, Mainstream, 1999 p. 15.

According to Partha Sarathi Gupta, there are two approaches to understand the concept of identity – the primordialist (perennialist) and the modernist. The protagonists of the primordialist approach were Anthony D Smith and Herder. The modernist view was presented by Ernest Gellner, Anthony Giddens, Eric Hobsbawm, Michael Mann and Benedict Anderson. In his view, they would all agree in a global historical perspective, the development of a sense of national identity and the creation of a nation state was closely associated with the development of capitalism in the western world. According to him, "Gellner viewed that if communities share language and culture (ethnicity) then assimilation is possible through standardized education. If there is no shared ethnicity then assimilation will not occur but rather are excluded from society. Nationalism will emerge as the excluded 'ethnicity' pushes for political sovereignty. He explains that for Anthony Giddens, the self is not a passive entity determined by external influences. In forging their self-identities no matter how local their contexts of action, individuals promote social influences that are global in their consequences and implications. Similarly, in his view for Eric Hobsbawm- 'Invention of Tradition'- the construction of historical narratives is widely recognised as a common means of strengthening the legitimacy of a claim to a geographical region, self-autonomy or even solidifying a sense of group identify to serve a nationalist agenda. Further, he viewed that for Benedict Anderson- Imagined communities'- nationalism is a way of imagining and thereby creating community. The nation is imagined as a community because regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation, the nation is always conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship. In the quest of seeking an answer to the idea if territorial states create nations or pre-existing collective identities seek and eventually acquire statehood, he considers four aspects important for seeking statehood i.e., religion, language, historic memories and specific economic functions in a territorial state".[17]

Virginius Xaxa explains that the "initial discourses on tribal identity were shaped by those who advocated integration of tribals as citizens of a nation state and others who sought their assimilation into the majority community. Here the identity definition for the tribals has been largely a process from without or outside. In the recent times, with the advent of education and the threat posed to tribal ways of living

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[17] Ibid.p.16

by other dominant groups and demands imposed by development, tribal identity articulation has been a process directed from within the tribal community. This is also the result of the growing middle class among the tribal community. Such demands are not just for political autonomy but for the protection of tribal language, customs and culture."[18]

Xaxa argues that the "dominant line of thinking in social science inquiries recognises difference as the hallmark of a distinct tribal identity. The interaction with the non tribes has led to the absorption of tribes into the larger society. Notwithstanding constitutional provisions of securing the development of tribes, actual social reality has been quite the contrary. The access they had over land, forest and other resources has been usurped without any tangible benefits in return. These constitute the structural settings of identity politics among tribes in India."[19]

Stan Lourduswamy explains "ethnic group as a historical identity whose members in large part conceive themselves of being alike by virtue of certain common stable features located in language, culture, stereotypes and territory. In his view, the Jharkhand movement started with restoration of ethnic identity and protests against outsiders, exploiters and land alienation to establish self-rule through separate Jharkhand state. Then through Tribal Development Council and Tribal-development Sub-plan, the movement diverted from ethnicity to developmentalism through role of the state. With the dilution of the ethnic core of the movement, Jharkhand adopted the cause of regionalism."[20]

Jyotirindra Dasgupta interrogates the issue of autonomy in the discourses on federalism. He delves on the meaning of the term on the basis of regional and individual rights. He questions if the issue of autonomy in a developing country also calls for a necessary concern for those material and human resources and conditions without which the promise of making appropriate choices in order to pursue human competence and capabilities may remain largely unrealized? In his view, given the uneven distribution of resources and conditions across regions in India, is there a

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[18] Virginius Xaxa, "Politics of Language, Religion and Identity: Tribes in India," EPW, March 26, 2005. p. 1363.
[19] Ibid. p. 1369.
[20] Lourduswamy, Stan, "Jharkhand's claim for self-rule: its historical foundations and present legitimacy," Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, 1997.p.3

special need for a crucial institutional role to promote and materially coordinate the possibilities of exercising prudent choices? These questions deserve scrutiny to evaluate the quality of autonomy that is contributed by the federalizing designs and processes in India.[21] Hence one has to clarify and find the alternatives that may be attainable by such choices.

Jyotirindra further argued that "it was obvious at the founding moment that regional reorganization would involve a careful processing over a long time. Given India's cultural complexity, inter linkages, and the prospects of changing priorities of identity and representations on the part of individuals and collectives due to the shifting agenda of interests induced by developmental process overtime, any course of reorganisation was likely to have room for revisions. Changing perceptions of cultural differences and political preferences as projected in the future did not make the choice of regional boundaries either easy or enduring"[22]. The most reasonable course at the moment of founding was to generally anticipate these problems and to leave the course of successive phases of specific negotiation open and institutionally secure for democratic participation. It is easy to observe that articles 2,3, and 4 of the Constitution offers extensive formal powers to the national parliament to reorganize states. These provisions enable Parliament by law to admit a new state, increase, diminish the area of any state or alter the boundaries or name of any state. They may help amend the specification of the states included in the first Schedule of the constitutional procedure and also the fourth Schedule (allocation of seats in the council of states) without encountering the constitutional procedure for amendment as in article 368.

With these kinds of democratic decentralisation, the subregional groups lead to the building of autonomous administrative institutions within regions with federal support and constitutional assurance. A deeper introspection would suggest if these have onset a deeper process of federalization. However, political autonomy to regions also involves the problems of federalism in a developing multicultural country. Jyotirindra Dasgupta suggested the case of India per se "where interactive process

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[21] Jyotirindra Das Gupta, "India's federal design and national construction" in Atul Kohli (ed)" The success of India's Democracy, CUP, 2001, p. 58.
[22] Ibid, p.25

have made the federal system to cope with pressing demands at critical moments of the formative decades of political development. The combined development of democratization and federalization, crucially contributed to India's systematic coherence. It indicated how the collaborative development of complementary resources can help evoke and maintain legitimating sentiments and strategic political support for the multicultural federal system."[23]

Ethnic ties in India are perfectly compatible with the simple logic of gain from intergroup cooperation and avoidance of the unnecessary cost of conflict. In fact, the multiplicity and malleability of identity in India's context offers a constructive opportunity to the democratic system. Institutions can create identities and preferences at the same time as they respond to them. The federal system can promote, support and sustain multicultural and trans-regional cohesion based on inclusionary political culture. In this prudent way, one can construct a federalized nation in a multicultural society.

In the review of literature on Jharkhand's ethno regionalism, Stuart Corbridge suggested that ethno regionalism in Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas were "an eminently rational response to a state of internal colonialism existing in this area. In his view, the tribals of South Bihar presented an undifferentiated mass of simple cultivators variously exploited by the non-tribals. The struggle for the Jharkhand state was made possible by the territorial integrity of these ethnic units."[24]

U.S. Rekhi in his book on 'Jharkhand Movement in Bihar' opines "that the movement did not begin as a party based political movement. It began as a social movement in the form of rebellions and revolts against the exploiters. It was a multidimensional movement against socio-economic exploitation and oppression."[25]

Nevertheless, after a brief interlude on the Review of literature, the thesis seeks to advance the following ideas as a theoretical and conceptual preface to the discussion on Jharkhand state formation. Jharkhand movement was the longest movement in the history of India with strong tribal consciousness and ideology. The

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[23] Ibid.p.76

[24] Stuart Corbridge, "Jharkhand Environment, Development and Ethnicity", OUP, New Delhi 2004, p. 20.

[25] Upjit Singh Rekhi, "Jharkhand Movement in Bihar, "Nunes Publishers, New Delhi, 1988, p. 223.

demand for a separate state was ceded to only towards the end of the last century with the inroads of the BJP in South Bihar. It was of huge significance as it replaced ethnicity with regionalism. A shift was noted from exclusive one-dimensional tribal ethnicity to an inclusive multi-dimensional regional identity. This period also marked the onset of regionalisation of politics and the regional parties began to utilise the preponderant role in the national politics as well with the vantage point of bargaining power in the national space. During this time, there was regional pressure for creating more states that gained momentum. There was explosive growth of regional parties that were becoming essential actors. It was the end of single party domination that entrenched coalition politics as never before. National election ceased to be dominated by big national parties. Instead, coalition of dozens of parties established electoral success henceforth.

Before taking a look into the genesis of state formation in the ethnic consciousness of tribals in Jharkhand, it is important to briefly outline the provisions in the Constitution for accommodation of country's diversity. To begin with, India is home to diverse language, religion, ethnic and cultural groups. Placed in relation to the failures of many less diverse and plural post-colonial and socialist states, India's record of relative political unity and stability seems remarkable indeed. It is argued that at the heart of the resolution of many ethnic conflicts in India lay a set of state policies. The Indian constitution as the source of these policies can be said to be a basic document in providing for political and institutional measures for the recognition and accommodation of country's diversity. In the post independent period, the major form of political recognition of territorially based ethnic identity of the people has been the statehood within the Indian federation. Since independence, federalism and an ongoing federalizing process which politically accommodates ethnic identity, has remained the most effective method of management and resolution of conflicts. The story of statehood within the Indian federation since 1950 is the story of acceding to ethnic identity demands for political recognition, for autonomous power within the federation and for a more secure environment for the protection and maintenance of identity. As the ethno-linguistic communities are by and large mostly territorially rooted, territorial solution of different degrees of statehood have worked. Statehood and other such demands are predicated on collective or group rights of ethnic communities. The formation of states on the basis of language was a pledge

and a demand of the anti-colonial nationalist movements. One of the first steps taken by the Nehru government after independence was to establish in November 1947, a Linguistic Provinces Commission. Its report presented to the Constitutional Assembly in December 1948, strongly disapproved the formation of states on the linguistic basis. It warned that the unity of newly independent India would be jeopardised if the map of India were redrawn with linguistic affinity as the deciding factor. In the words of the Dar Commission, "the formation of provinces on exclusively or even mainly linguistic consideration is not in the larger interests of Indian nation and should not be taken in hand." [26]

Nevertheless, the Constitution of India has remained a resource as well as an instrument for various regional movements for self-determination to fight for the appropriate political institution and to securing ethno-regional identity. Constitutional provisions for the creation of new states in India are flexible. "The Indian federation is an indestructible union of destructible states. Article 3-4 of the Constitution empowers the Union Parliament to reorganize the states for territorial adjustment. Parliament may (1) form a new state by separation of territory from any state or by uniting two or more states, or parts of states or by uniting any territory to a part of any state (2) increase the area of any state (3) diminish the area of any state (4) alter the boundaries of any state (5) alter the name of any state etc. The legislative requirement on the part of Parliament to do so is by a simple majority and by the ordinary legislative process. However, presidential recommendation for introducing such a bill is required. President is required before he recommends, to refer the Bill within a specified period to the legislature of the state to be affected by the proposed changes. The President is not bound to accept the view of the state legislature." [27]

In the case of the three new states of Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh, the constitutional procedures have been followed. The legislative assemblies of the three affected states debated the proposed changes and the Bill for years before agreeing. The democratic process followed in state formation and maintenance is continuous and located in history. In the words of Rudolph, "the nature of the state cannot be known a priori from theory. Because state-society

[26] Arora, K Satish, "The Reorganisation of the Indian States", Far Eastern Survey, Feb 1956, p.27
[27] Basu, D.D, "Introduction to the Constitution of India", New Delhi, Prentice Hall of India,1997, p.51

relationships vary with historical circumstances, the continuous process of state formation and maintenance produces polymorphous entities, that is states occur in a variety of forms, character and styles."[28]

Since independence, "statehood has remained alive, predicated on India's manifold diversity especially language. The basis in the first major reorganization of states in 1956 was thus strongly linguistic. The federal units were created to correspond largely with linguistic boundaries. It was guided by the need to federalize the Union on an identifiable basis. Federalism breathed life into the governance model of relational control and interlocking balances. Since 1956, the formation or new federal units in India has remained a continuous process. In the 1950s and 1960s, the linguistic factor played the most determining role. It was combined with the issue of religion as well."[29] In the 1970s, India's North-East became an area of major state reorganization based on political recognition of tribal identity. Thus, according to Paul Brass, "state recognition in both the pre and post independent periods itself has been a critical factor in explaining the rise of some ethnic and cultural movements rather than others. Likewise certain factors influencing the mobilization of some groups and not others have been unevenness in rates of social change among different social groups. This has led to imbalances in rates of social change among different social groups."[30]

The essence of statehood demands had been the congruence between federal political boundaries and the ethno linguistic boundaries of the people. At the heart or such demands remains the urge for decentralisation and autonomy for the protection of identity and for development. The state of Jharkhand is the culmination of over a century of struggle by the Bihar tribes for their identity, development in their region and a state of their own. Moreover, to see in general terms, the form which tribal mobilization has taken has been diverse. Sometimes it has focused on economic grievances and drawn support from Marxist political organizations and at times it has also been based on political demands organized and led by exclusively tribal leaders

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[28] L.I. Rudolph & S.H. Rudolph, "In pursuit of Lakshmi: The Political Economy of the Indian State," Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1987 p. 66.

[29] Chadda, Maya, "Integration through Internal Reorganisation: Containing Ethnic conflict in India", The Global Review of Ethnopolitics, September 2002, page.28

[30] Brass, Paul "Language, Religion and Politics in North India" (Cambridge University Press, 1974) p. 151.

and tribal political organizations. The ethnic basis of the state of Jharkhand is complex. In the creation of the Jharkhand state, regional underdevelopment and a sense of deprivation have combined with tribal affiliations, struggle for identity providing interesting insights into the concepts of oppression and resistance. To quote Neera Chandhoke, "the struggle for identity made us realize that though people needed access to means of social reproduction, they also needed recognition as people who matter and who matter equally."[31]

To elaborate this point further, "parts of India are inhabited by tribals who often are not part of the mainstream. They live in particular regions of specific states. Such regions may demand a separate state if they feel discriminated against and deprived of development and feel that through resource transfers others are prospering at their expense. This is what has happened in regions such as Marathwada, Vidarbha, Konkan, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh etc. The demands for statehood by tribal people in Jharkhand and by hill people in other states have been based on the perception that they have been victims of internal colonialism by other regional and cultural groups. It is this fact that most of the demands for constituting new states have been primarily upon an allegedly unfair and unequal distribution of development benefits and expenditures in multilingual composite states. If people have to live in the territory of the others, they may feel dominated. The success of their demands is related to the success of the elite in marketing the perception of deprivation and in making what Benedict Anderson has termed as 'imagined community into a natural one.' Because number counts in a democratic process, the forging of several identities into a common identity is politically expedient."[32]

Jharkhand presents the best example of the above phenomena. Here, tribal cultural identities combined with the backward development profile of the region, helped to forge a single distinct political identity. Over a period of more than a century the movement for social and political equality was transformed into the movement for political freedom and instead of a pan tribal nature of ethnic identity became a regional movement of tribal nationalism. By asserting that all tribals were

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[31] Chandhoke, Neera "The Logic of recognition," (Seminar, Dec. 1999) p. 36.
[32] Chadda, Maya, "Integration through Internal Reorganisation: Containing Ethnic conflict in India", The Global Review of Ethnopolitics, September 2002, page.57

members of the Jharkhand party from birth, the Jharkhandi elite was successful in constructing a geographical identity that encompassed various cultural identities. However, it became clear that by geographically including all the residents of this region as Jharkhandi, the non-tribal people would benefit more due to their educational and social advancement. The argument that was earlier given against a Jharkhand state was based on the minority status of the tribals spread over Bihar's neighbouring states of Orissa, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. Consequently, the move to broaden the base was abandoned by the Jharkhandi elite. Even the demand for a separate state was put on the back burner. The flexible approach of the Jharkhand party became apparent when it gave its support to the government of Bihar, led by Rastriya Janata Dal (RJD) party, in return for that party's support for Jharkhand state. The reorganisation of a state or the formation of a new one is thus the result of the political assertion of a regional community. It is explained by a triangular relationship between the people, territory and the state. Such regions reflect a set of variables. These variables are language or dialect, social composition of communities, ethnic regions, demographic features, area contiguity, cultural pattern, economic life, historical antecedents, political background and psychological makeup or felt consciousness of group identity. However, because the boundaries of these economic-cultural zones do not correspond with the administrative boundaries of states, there is always the possibility of forming new states or reorganizing the existing state. Some attempts to create commonalities of linguistic and political identities have not succeeded in erasing historical ethnic-regional identities.[33]

Thus, from the discussion until now, it can be presumed that demands for separate state develop when people of a region have the perception that they were deprived, discriminated against and exploited by people from outside the region. However, it cannot be argued that "such discrimination or exploitation disappears once a region becomes a state. Statehood may not lead to any perceptible difference in the condition of everyone including those who may well have been the foot soldiers in the battle for a new state. The reorganization of states or creation of a new state in the name of inequality or identity has often been driven by a regional elite that has hoped to displace the existing elite. It is questionable whether all sections and all groups

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[33] Ibid, p.62

within a state share the same values and the same concerns. The assumption of a new exclusive identity may exclude some peripheral identities and this can make some people feel marginalized and deprived. It is visible in the state of Jharkhand where various tribes-Mundas, Santhals, Horos and Oraons are not on the best of terms"[34].

In Jharkhand, the political elite was far long marginalized and had tried to align with different political parties. Because the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) threw its weight behind the demand for a separate state, support for other options also grew steadily in the Jharkhand region. The state was grappling with a number of issues like the linguistic demand, development needs, administrative and financial viability, cultural affinity, presumed homogeneity in the interaction of history, region's resources and the overall economic repercussions for the truncated state at the time of its formation in 2000. It was difficult to strike at a middle ground for the creation of Jharkhand. For nearly so many decades, the Union government and virtually all the political parties have resisted the creation of new states. These came into existence only after much bickering and pressure. The state formation in 2000 became a milestone when the issues became a normal and permissible theme of party agenda and of mainstream political activity. The demand was not treated as a threat to national integration and security. The state of Jharkhand was proposed and created on the basis of regional identity enshrined in terms of cultural and geographical differences. The justification for it was administrative efficiency as well. This was where such a reorganization deviated from the criterion followed in the 1950s and 1960s[35].

It thus appears that "durable entities are based on commonality of culture. In India, the emergence of both a state and regional identity and the struggle for their achievement have been simultaneous. A consciousness of being separate has motivated those in the struggle and out of the struggle has emerged a new consciousness. There are now thirty more demands for new states. It is time for the states to be reorganized in a manner that accommodates and institutionalizes the various regional identities. Keeping this logic in view, India is a union of states where the number of states constituting the Union is not specified. Had it been so, it would

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[34] Ibid, p.63
[35] Ibid, p.64

have been difficult if not impossible, to accommodate the growing ethno-regional identity aspirations".[36]

Despite its illustrious historical legacy abounding natural resources and a multiethnic tapestry of culture, Jharkhand has suffered from severe handicaps due to the lack of economic development. The research will also focus on the dynamics of development and the role of the state in Jharkhand in ushering the process of development. However, to understand the making of a new state, it is important to excavate and see the objectives underlying it. The literature review suggested that the creation of Jharkhand was a twofold process of struggle and construction. Struggle was against those who bereaved the tribals (indigenous people) of their land, water and forest popularly called 'Jal, Jungle and Jamin' with which the tribal people shared their symbiotic relationship and cultural bonding. Another challenge was to create and form their own state.

During more than a century of struggle, the indigenous ethnic population in Jharkhand aspired for self-rule, a self-controlled economy and pre-eminence of their own bearing culture. The rationale was the multilayered deprivation ranging from political domination to cultural subordination. It was believed that the progress of the parent state of Bihar had been at the cost of the abundant natural resources of Jharkhand and the exploitation of its cheap labour force. Thus, the demand for separation of Jharkhand from Bihar was to prevent the domination of certain groups in the state politics. A.K Roy suggested in his writings that Jharkhand was not exclusively a tribal phenomenon that could be resolved by making a state for tribal population. It had vast majority of non-tribal (sadans) population that bore the same destiny of neglect and deprivation. It had hills, plains, fields, and jungles with varieties of people living together for ages. Here no single language, community and religion dominated. Even the tribals were different like Santhal, Ho, Munda and Oraon. Being an industrial belt, there were workers from all parts of the country. Barring a few, every section here felt exploited, subjugated and ignored. It was an internal colony where everybody wanted freedom.[37]

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[36] Ibid, p.65

[37] Roy A.K., "Jharkhand: From Separation to Liberation", EPW, October 7, 2000.

Similarly, A.L. Raj is suggestive of the fact that "Jharkhand underwent ideological somersault. The movement became a part of geography from socio-political anthropology. The Jharkhand movement as one of the oldest movements in the country was in very many ways a continuation and extension of the tribal people's heroic tradition of struggle against British imperialism and local feudalism. From being a struggle of tribal masses to preserve, strengthen and assert their distinct ethnic culture, identity, values, history and independence, the Jharkhand movement in the course of its long existence steadily and slowly transformed itself into a movement for the development of the tribals." [38]

The literature review further suggested that the question of tribals and non-tribals did not arise in Jharkhand. Instead, the issue was of local and outsiders. Jharkhand was not just for the tribals but for all the people living within Jharkhand. Regionalism took over the ethnicity question due to tribes being in minority. Thus, from ethnicity via development to regionalism, the Jharkhand movement travelled a long distance towards integration and assimilation with the dominant communities. From being a movement of tribal autonomy and identity, it got transformed into a movement for decentralized administration and for demarcating of state boundaries.[39]

To geographically situate Jharkhand within a regional ambit, it is a hilly mountainous and plateau region extending in the East from Bankura district of West Bengal to Surguja district of Madhya Pradesh on the West and from Santhal Parganas of Bihar in the North and Sambalpur district of Orissa in the South. It thus includes twelve districts of South Bihar, three districts of West Bengal and two of Madhya Pradesh within its contiguous geographical regions. The geographical formation of Jharkhand region provides it with rich mineral resources. Even though the people of Jharkhand region are politically divided into four states, yet the region consists of a specific and distinctive geographical region which has its own history. For a long time till the British occupation, the political cultural identity of the region remained unimpaired.

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[38] Raj A.L., "Ideology and Hegemony in Jharkhand Movement", EPW, February 1, 1992.
[39] Ibid, p.210

The movement for the creation of the state of Jharkhand has its history dating back to the colonial times. Unlike the traditional Indian society which was characterized by rigid hierarchical structure built on the principle of inequality, tribal society was greatly free from such structures and principles. By virtue of the fact that tribes lived in relative isolation from the dominant community, they enjoyed autonomy of governance over the territory they occupied. The extension of the British rule was however different. The colonial state took upon itself the right over the forest thereby denying tribes the right to collect fuel and other daily necessities of life which they were so heavily dependent on. Such processes at work continued all through the colonial period in different scale. Injustice which was so alien in the traditional social setting became something pervasive. The state law which aimed at securing justice and freedom to people opened up a space for innumerable injustice to be inflicted on the tribal people. It enabled one set of people to take advantage of it and squeeze and dispossess the other. Historically, the earliest form of struggle among tribes had primarily to do with the issue of overthrowing the colonial rule and administration. These early struggles were of autonomy. It gave rise to widespread discontent and restlessness among the tribal people. This led to a series of revolt and rebellion all through the late 18th and 19th century. The early revolts were the Pahariya Birdars (1778), Tamar (1789), Great Kol Insurrections (1831-32), Bhumij (1832-33), Santhal (1855-57), Sardari (1858-95), Birsa Munda movement (1895-1900) etc.

The literature review further suggested that these revolts had their main roots in grievances against loss of land or forest as the issues were intricately connected with the overall destabilization of society brought about by the colonial rule.[40] Though autonomy as it came to be articulated in the post independent era had been different in a very substantive sense from the ones under the British rule, yet there was much overlapping. It had ethnic dimensions also. After tribals failed to overthrow the alien rule and administration, the latter got deeply entrenched in the tribal area. There was now greater communication and interaction between tribes and non-tribes. The result was that non-tribal lifestyles and values came to be emulated by the tribes. The urge to emulate in due course had become so strong that it took the form of movement. The prominent among such movements have been the Tana Bhagat

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[40] Mullick, Bosu S. and Munda R.D., "The Jharkhand Movement Indigenous Peoples' Struggle for Autonomy in India", (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2003, p.X).

movement among the *Oraons, Haribaba, the Hos and Sapha Hor* among the Santhals. The solution to the problem began to be sought by directing at the society itself. But the Jharkhand movement that began in the 1930s unlike the state formation movements aimed at reorienting the tribal society in a new mould. This new mould slowly got articulated in the form of the demand for the separate state of Jharkhand for the tribals. Slowly the separate state of Jharkhand had become an important electoral issue. The struggle for a separate statehood in the later phase was joined by the non-tribals as well. Thus, this articulation of autonomy in the form of a separate state was a product of western educated middle class which emerged in the tribal society. The formation of the state was seen as an institutional mechanism whereby they would be able to protect and safeguard their economic, social, political and cultural interests. Soon accommodation for other groups began to be made in the movement apart from the tribals. This was reflected in the change of nomenclature of the organization spearheading the movement from *Adivasi Mahasabha to Jharkhand party*. However, the backbone of the movement continued to be a safeguard of adivasi interest. Alongside the movement for separate state, other forms of struggle and resistance continued side by side pertaining to forest and land issues, issues of displacement, mineral exploitation, power projects installation, and irrigation expansion etc.

In the words of N. Ashirvad, the important contention had been that the Jharkhand region was economically and industrially backward compared to other regions of the parent state.[41] Assimilation and integration were sought with the national mainstream for balanced development. The developmental discourse in the region draws attention to the period after independence that saw launching of gigantic programme of industrialization and modernization. It led to large scale alienation. The displaced people were neither properly rehabilitated nor given adequate compensation for their land. The various benefits such as administrative, managerial and skilled jobs arising out of these projects were cornered by the outsiders and the displaced persons got unskilled and exploitative jobs. The exploitation was systematic, methodical and purposeful. It was structured and rooted in the entire existing system. The departure of

[41] Ashirvad N., "Regional Politics in India: A Case Study of Jharkhand Movement in Bihar", (Dr. M.V. Pylee Foundation), Cochin 1993, p.100.

British Raj though ended the external colonialism but the process of exploitation in the name of progress continued internally.

Sajal Basu, who gives a Marxist interpretation, asserts that economic factors such as deprivation, exploitation by outsiders, negligence and development aspirations remained the mobilisational factors behind the Jharkhand movement.[42] The movement in its long journey encountered several divisions and contradictions precipitated by ethnic parochialism and personalized factors. Conclusively, the nature of the movement in the course of its evolution from *Unnati Samaj to Adivasi Mahasabha* to various forms of Jharkhand party extended its base among the indigenous communities. But internal squabbles and divisions remained chronic with the movement. The movement reduced into a leader oriented one due to gap in the coalitioning of different ethnic factions. This was also one reason why the movement could not reach a take off stage despite the common denominators being exploitation and deprivation of the diverse ethnic group in the region. Being a source of surplus migrant labour, depeasantisation and marginalization, the region remained the hotbed of peasant revolts, 'anti-imperialist' ethnic upsurges and post-independence ethno-regional movements. Sajal Basu uses the term '*ethnocide*' in explaining the process of diminution of indigenous groups caused by modern development programmes.[43]

The movement finally culminated into statehood for the people inhabiting this region. The answers that have to be sought for are whether the statehood harped upon on the dreams of the people or have belied it? The economic component became lately the crux of the problems of Jharkhandi regionalism. The formation of the new state in a way reiterated the success of India's democracy. The success was manifest early in the area of identity politics, and in the reorganization of India along linguistic lines. In the initial years the state of Jharkhand lurched from crisis to crisis due to political instability in utter ignominy. Thus, through creation of a state can one say that problem of economic deprivation can be resolved? Has the political process ensured human and cultural rights for its people?

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[42] Basu, Sajal, "Identity Aspirations and Ethnopolitics" in "Regional Movements, Politics of Language, Ethnicity and Identity", IIAS Shimla, 1992.
[43] Basu, Sajal, Ibid, p.59.

While making a study of the state of Jharkhand into the processes of state formation, it is important to understand the nuances of the ethno regional background. As already stated, the bases of ethnic solidarity depend on diverse factors like cultural linguistic, regional contiguity and historical similarity. Ethnicity in the case of Jharkhand did not operate in circumstances independent of other identities. The political identity here corresponded to a particularistic more ascriptive, narrower meaning referred to as the ethnic identity. Sub national identity usually takes two forms of articulation. They may crystallize into a national identity and seek political recognition or may end up as one of the many ethnic or sub national identities competing for control of resources in the multi-ethnic state. Ethnic identities are formed under a particular set of circumstances and a number of factors like myths, symbols, perceived history, geographical identification, role of elite and many others play an important role in shaping these circumstances. Articulation of ethnic identities in the words of Amit Prakash is based on three propositions –"that ethnic identities are variable rather than given, interact with socio, economic and political context and are continuously in a state of flux which alters the nature of demands on the political system. Second, the elite form the ethnic groups and their relationship of alliance or opposition vis-à-vis the state. It plays a central role in the character and intensity of articulation. Third, the process of ethnic identity formation may have important consequences for the very self-definition of the ethnic group and its ability to persist."[44]

Ethnic identity relates to a subjectively self-conscious community that establishes criteria for inclusion and exclusion from the group. In the case of Jharkhand, it can be said that an ethnic group belonging to a particular region aspired political recognition as a new state. Hence, the state and its policies or the lack of them played an important role in precipitating the articulation of ethnic identities. At times there is struggle within the ethnic groups for control over symbolic and material resources, rights and privileges. Ethnicity become an ever-adjusting process of alignments through which an ethnie or group tends to uphold its distinctness, otherness and resist measures which appear to disrupt their socio-cultural security.

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[44] Prakash, Amit, "Jharkhand Politics of Development and Identity", Orient Longman, 2001, p.6.

Literature review further suggested that the aspirations of the tribal people for self-rule were made against the background of their multi-layered deprivation ranging from political domination to cultural subordination. The literature suggested that the struggle for restoration of tribal economy was more than 150 years old, beginning with the restoration of land-owning rights in the colonial period. Economic aspirations of the tribes at that stage were control over the means of production, ejecting non-tribals from control and assuring tribes of employment. The independent state did not bring a proper solution to the outsider controlled tribal economy. There was substantial net flow of resources from the underdeveloped tribal periphery to more developed non-tribal urban and agricultural centre. This reflected the internal colonisation of the natural resources in tribal areas leaving little benefit for the local tribes. This was one of the main causes of emerging ethno regionalism.[45]

Demographic transformation in Jharkhand also passed through a long historical process. Chotanagpur was a centre of inter-regional trade in the 11th and 12th centuries, after the settlement of the Mundas and other tribes in the region. By the time of the late Mughal era, the region started to witness migration to and from Jharkhand. Prior to 1930, Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas had higher out-migration to the brickyards of Calcutta and the tea gardens of Assam. However, after the kickstart of the process of industrialisation of Dhanbad and Singhbhum, Jharkhand witnessed the reverse process of increasing immigration. Since then, the non-tribal population has outnumbered the native population in the region. The demographic transformation shrank the base for ethnic consolidation in the region.

Since 1974, the region had been under the sub plan of the Planning Commission. A sub plan area should consist of more than 50 percent of tribal population but Bihar had 54.81 per cent non-tribal population. Except some exclusive benefits like education scholarships and reserved jobs, the major welfare scheme allotted in the name of Scheduled Tribes benefitted the resident non-tribal population. These features according to Sajal Basu provided the structural base to the Jharkhand movement.

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[45] Sajal, Basu, "Ethno Regionalism and Tribal Development: Problems and Challenges in Jharkhand", in G.C Rath, "Tribal Development in India: The contemporary Debate", Sage, 2006, p. 135.

Initially the movement started for the development of the tribal community with organisations like Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj (1915), Adivasi Mahasabha (1938) and Jharkhand Party (1949). Slowly, different ethnic groups and non-tribal people joined the movement. The movement's original demand was for a separate state with 16 districts which later increased to 21 districts. The basic issues during this time relegated around exploitation by the dikus, alienation from land and forests, right to forest resources, marginalisation and displacement of indigenous people due to installation of big dams, industries, power plants and so on. Under the leadership of Jaipal Singh, Jharkhand movement raised the demand for a separate state with the aspirations of receiving these rights.

The ethno-regionalism under the Jharkhand movement picked up strength in the 1950s but lost momentum in the 1960s and the 1970s and picked up again after 1987 with the formation of Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee by 62 cultural and political organisations such as the JMM (Soren), JMM (Marandi) and a host of smaller organisations. It was from here that the demand for a state remained active.

The creation of Jharkhand was part of an evolving federal framework with relation to the politico-administrative recognition given to the tribal population by the Constitution. This recognition of the specificity of tribal regions was further strengthened by the tribal sub-plans from 1974 to 1997. Even within the discourse concerning promotion of Scheduled Tribes rights, resources were prioritized over political empowerment. This was done to ensure development administration as tribal areas were big depositories of natural resources, its exploitation in both national and tribal interest was important.[46] Based on the distinctiveness of the geographical units where Scheduled Tribes accounted for more than 50 per cent of the total population, schemes under the Integrated Tribal Development Project were set up. From 1980 onwards, the remaining tribal areas were covered by the Modified Areas Development Approach.

Hence the tribal areas that developed as separate administrative enclaves were symptomatic of the difficulties as they did not bring the outcome as participative and organic development of the regions. The reasons attributed to these dates back to the

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[46] Ibid p. 15.

history of hinterland of the Indian Peninsula. Samuel Berthet opines that these regions developed as reservoir of raw materials and subdued manpower. It sustained the prosperity of the new administrative and industrial elites. The objectives of the creation of the Excluded Tracks and Scheduled Areas was segregation of tribal communities by a special administrative regime to manage resource rich forest area and provide special safeguard of their rights.[47]

When tribal movements took place before 1947, they were on the margins of the political scene and often clashed with the interests of political elites. These areas post-independence did not bring with them a legacy of political negotiation. Scheduled Tribes communities were defined as having a traditional state of economy, backwardness, their location in the forest and a symbiotic relation with nature and ancestral traditions. Qualifying tribal communities as traditional and asking for their integration into mainstream was a convenient way to justify intensive and large-scale exploitation of natural resources. Many states appropriated this ideological notion in order to justify their hold on land or regions for exploitation without any involvement of local community. The politics of identity merely justified the politics of resources.

In India, the local equivalent of the term 'tribe' is often assumed to be 'jana' or 'communities of people' based on the usage of the term in ancient Buddhist and puranic texts. In this conception, the term Jana was used in opposition to the term jati to indicate that these communities were outside the jati or hierarchical caste system of social organization. This view, however, was not universally accepted as the categories of Jana and jati did not neatly overlap with that of tribe and caste, respectively.

Tribal history indicated that it was largely following the various tribal rebellions during the colonial period that tribes came to be seen as the region's 'original inhabitants' who existed outside the caste system and were marginalized by the more advanced caste in society. The nineteenth century ethnographic view of tribes referred to a particular type of society based on kinship ties and a stage of evolution. An amalgam of the various traits ascribed to tribal groups include relative egalitarianism, definite area, dialect, cultural homogeneity and unifying social

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[47] Ibid. p. 16.

organization, absence of complex political structures, strong and functional kinship bonds, cooperation, territorial integrity, cultural and linguistic distinctiveness and lower levels of technology. Tribes were seen as traditional societies lacking all the traits of modern, western society in the sense to be non-literate, uncivilised, non-industrial and rural. Hence tribal people were viewed to be at a lower stage in the evolutionary social hierarchy in terms of their socio-cultural characteristics, economics and political structures. They had a simple lifestyle insulated from changes in the larger regional polity. They were outside the structure of state and civilization.

Each definition of tribe stressed on a particular aspect of tribal life – their relationship with the state, civilization and processes of development as well as specific features of their culture, livelihood and economy. However, the dominant conception of tribe that developed during this period (advent of British) revolved around notions of 'backwardness', indignity, and separation from the larger civilisation. Tribes were identified largely in terms of what they were not: they did not practice Vedic Hinduism, they were not Muslim, their societies were marked by the relative absence of economic and ritual stratification, and they were not integrated into the 'modern' economy or civilisation.

The census of India played a critical role in shaping the modern understanding of tribe through its efforts at enumeration and classification. The proper delineation of tribes began with the colonial census in the late nineteenth century to provide detailed information about the population of the sub-continent. Through this exercise, certain communities were labelled as tribes although the criteria transformed overtime. In the 1881 census, the term used was 'forest tribes', as subcategory within the broader group of agricultural and pastoral castes. In the 1901 census, tribes were identified as those who 'practiced animism' thus placing religious practices at the centre. Therefore, those practicing 'Hinduism' were viewed as castes, while those practicing animisms were labelled tribes, although this criterion changed with time. One of the earliest attempts to create a list of tribes in the sub-continent was during the 1931 census which identified 'primitive tribes. This was followed by a list of 'backward tribes' for the provinces made under the Government of India Act, 1935.

These definitions of tribe were contested by the various ethnographers. Tribes had been constantly in interaction with other social groups. According to them, terms

such as 'traditional' and 'backward' were based on the problematic assumption of social evolutionism. Conception of tribe as isolated was based on their emergent marginalisation through unjust forest policies, forced sedentarization and pacification during British colonial rule. Large segments of the tribal population were integrated into the market economy during this period through the appropriation of their lands as well as their labour in commercial forestry, mines and plantations.

In the post–colonial period, certain anthropologists tended to view the 'tribe' as a colonial construction, rendering fixed and rigid those identities which were earlier relatively fluid and contextual. There was huge differentiation for example in the range of occupation practiced among tribes – they were hunters and gatherers, shifting cultivators, settled agriculturists, pastoralists, artisans, farm labourers, plantation and industrial workers.

At the time of the first census of independent India in 1951, there were 212 recognised Scheduled Tribes in the country. The term Schedule Tribe itself is a politico-administrative category that does not capture the enormous social complexity of the various tribes encompassed within its fold. Tribes in India are defined not so much in terms of coherent and well-defined criteria but in terms of the administrative classification that divides the population into tribal and nontribal. Tribes are treated as those groups enumerated in the Indian Constitution in the list of Schedule Tribes under Article 342. The Constitution empowered the state to make provisions for reservation in jobs and appointments in favour of tribal communities. The Directive Principles of State Policy required that the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of society including tribals be especially promoted. The Constitution empowered the state to bring areas inhabited by tribes under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules for the purpose of special treatment with respect to administration of the tribal people.

In constitutional and legal terms, tribes have also been given the same status as other citizens. In addition to the fundamental rights, Constitution contains many special provisions for tribal people. These include provisions for their statutory recognition (Article 342); for their proportional representation in Parliament and the state legislatures (Articles 330 and 332); restrictions on the right of ordinary citizens to move and settle in tribal areas or to acquire property there (Article 19 (5)).

Constitution also provides protection of tribal language, dialect and culture (Article 29). It provides reservation in general (Article 14 (4)) and in jobs and appointments in favour of tribal communities in particular (Article 16 (4)).

In the post independent period, various laws were adopted for the restoration of tribal land. Protection was also provided in the form of special administration of tribal areas. In administrative parlance, such areas are referred to as the Fifth and Sixth Schedule areas, Articles 244 and 244 (a). The Fifth Schedule provides for special legislative powers for the Governor and Tribal Advisory Council. In a circular fashion, tribes are defined as those groups enumerated as tribes under the Indian Constitution. Thus, Article 366(25) of the Constitution defines Scheduled Tribes as follows:

"Scheduled Tribes means such tribes or tribal communities or parts or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution".

The currently followed criteria for identification are primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large, and general backwardness. The idea of the tribe as the traditional has clearly continued into the post-colonial period. In 1959, the Government of India appointed a Commission headed by U.N. Dhebar to look into the welfare of Scheduled Tribes. The Commission concluded that Scheduled Tribes can be identified by the fact that they live apart in the hills and even where they live in the plains, they lead a separate, excluded existence and are not fully assimilated with the rest of the society.

In the 1961 census, the number of Scheduled Tribe communities increased to 427, which was twice the number from the previous census. It increased to 432 by the time of the 1971 census. The Bhuria Commission Report (2002-04) pointed out that winds of change had been sweeping through tribal society. It resulted in the growth of individualism, particularly among the youth. However, despite transformations in the internal communitarian dynamics of tribal society which threatened to alter it's very 'tribal-ness', the Commissions noted that tribal identity was likely to reassert itself in the form of traditional norms and mores. The Bhuria Commission Report further stated that: "as an individual, individualism may be practiced by a tribal when he is at

large and may be abroad, but even in facing the larger world his psyche looks backwards to lean on the support of his own tribal community, thereby revealing the profundity of bonds with his tribe". [48]

Beyond definitions of 'tribes', the Indian context has produced a situation in which classification of communities as Scheduled Tribes is not uniform throughout the country but varies based on often arbitrary administrative boundaries. Several committees have taken note of this anomalous situation, introduced through the Government of India Act, 1935, whereby members of some tribe from an ethnological or social point of view are recognised as Scheduled Tribes in one State or one part of a State and not in others. That is, the category of Scheduled Tribes, although distinct, was connected to an understanding of 'tribal areas' in that, until 1976, area restrictions were in operation with regard to recognition as a Scheduled Tribe.

According to Lokur Committee, these territorial restrictions acted as a barrier to spatial and social mobility, since moving out of the area in which the tribe was recognised would imply the loss of all the benefits and privileges. Such restrictions were therefore, seen to be contrary to the goal of tribal integration that supported the end of tribal 'isolation' and the inter-mingling of populations. The Lokur Committee recommended that the various tribes in the list should be administratively differentiated, so as to ensure that priority in development planning should be given to the more deprived among the groups. In 1976, the Removal of Area Restrictions (Amendment) Act was passed, which removed area restrictions on the recognition of Scheduled Tribes, making lists applicable to the entire state rather than blocks and districts within states. Despite efforts made by various Governments, there continued to be several anomalies in the scheduling of tribes.

The state of Jharkhand became the twenty-eighth state of the republic of India on fifteenth November 2000. The movement for a state of tribals belonging to the Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana region realized its aspirations in its century long struggle for separate statehood. Jharkhand was carved out of Bihar to address the mineral rich regions history of deprivation and to preserve and foster its distinct tribal identity. In the similar vein the year 2000 witnessed creation of Chhattisgarh and

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[48] Tribal Committee Report, 2014, p.24

Uttarakhand as well. All the three states were not recognised on the basis of a particular cultural marker rather their case was of a complex combination of ethnicity, regional deprivation, ecology of a particular subregion within a particular state. It was understood as an exercise of a mature federal polity considering the demands of regional forces and accelerating the process of decentralization.

The demands of ethno-regional statehood started from the 1960s onwards as a growing assertion of state and regional identities demanding for more autonomy for states and a restructuring of centre-state relations. The 1980s saw the rise of secessionist movements in Punjab, Kashmir and some of the North eastern states (Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura). The movements for autonomy in several regions (Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Uttaranchal and Gorkhaland) also gathered momentum and made their presence on the political horizon. A number of ethnic, state autonomy, sub-national and sons of the soil movements emerged in different states and regions in distinctive political bargaining power owning to the compulsions of regional and coalitional politics and the absorption of the leaders into or alliance with national political parties.

These demands also indicated the complex relationship between political legitimation of power on the one hand and the actual social and cultural diversity and its representation and recognition on the other. The non-congruence between these two realms was one of the reasons arguing for more states in different parts of the country and rise and growth of ethno regionalism. The Indian experience of state formation through the exercise of redrawing the boundaries and territories led to identity formation of regions, sub-regions and of various communities and groups. It ushered the phenomenon of regional cultural renaissance culminating in the indigenisation and democratization of provincial politics which gave rise to diverse regional political cultures.[49]

Scholars like Atul Kohli opines that the demand for new states can be set within the politicisation of society and the related growth of social movements over the last twenty years. In his words, "these changes from below are reflexively bound

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[49] Asha Sarangi, Frontline, Vol 26, Jan 1, 2010

up with changes from above and the broader trends within India's economy." [50] In his view the growth in the number and success of various regional parties have come to exert an increasingly powerful role in the national polity in position as allies of the larger parties and their success in taking power in individual states all over India. It has led to the growth and mobilisation of various social and economic groups including the intense regional and ethnic activism.

Thus, we can say that in the modern nation state of today coexistence of territoriality and ethnic affiliations are universal. The problem of recognising and accommodating the necessary autonomies and rights of defined social collectivities or segments whether ethnic, regional linguistic or religious is one of the major items of the contemporary politics of states.[51]

Management of ethnic identities is important to balance domestic and international peace and also for future democratic development. Maya Chadha opines that this balancing act has burdened central authorities in democratizing countries. New forces of interdependence and globalization have strengthened the cause of ethnic and religious nationalists, who have increasingly demanded the grant of large-scale autonomy or separation from the mother country. Hence, we can say that the Indian experience of federal nation building provides valuable insights into the dilemmas of power sharing in an ethnically plural country. Indian experience showcases, splitting up existing federal units and creating new ones as only one of the many strategies new democracies can use to build nation states and contain ethnic conflicts. Over the course of several decades since independence, Indian governments have entered into various ethnic accords, created regional councils and constituted district level autonomous councils to address the needs of ethnic regions surrounded by competing ethnic communities. Other strategies range from confederal arrangement to the inclusion of nationalities based on layered sovereignty (Jammu and Kashmir) before scrapping of Article 370. Each such strategy has a variable

[50] Kohli, Atul, "Democracy and Discontent: India's Growing Crisis of Governability", CUP,1990, p.14
[51] Rasheeduddin Khan, "Bewildered India: Identity, Pluralism and discord", Har Anand Publications, New Delhi, 1994, p.2.

record of ethnic containment; the creation of new state units is considered the most successful in India.[52]

Such federal reorganisations especially the ones in the year 2000 suggests that Indian democracy has matured and enhanced in its constitutional provisions that permit parliament to create or break up existing units without having to seek consent from the affected province-state or its people. Maya Chadha reiterates that the ebb and flow of these waves of federal remapping provides valuable clues as to how a particular federal design might advance or retard the cause of democracy in an ethnically plural country.[53]

The issues addressed in the thesis are contemporary though posited within a long historical background of the ethno regional movement. The study on Jharkhand state formation incorporates the study of the factors responsible for the underdevelopment of the region. It is an effort to understand if creation of new state has a tendency to centralise greater powers at the hands of regional elite class. Also, if the problems of under development are tackled with an alternate vision of development to provide access to education and skill formation to people. The study will locate shift in power centre, and the operations of state organizations at various levels of different structural environment. Ethno regionalism deeply shapes and affects the reconstitution of the state institutions in the newer states in India as they have challenged the organization of power in the existing states. The rise of ethno regionalism is bound with existing disparities in developmental trajectory of the new states. Also, it is an attempt to understand how the creation of the new state has reversed the process of disempowerment along with the modern industrial economy.

Methodologically, it is difficult to adopt a particular research technique which can explore the various facts and complexities of the state. In the present study, case history with participant observation is undertaken. An area study gives a situated knowledge, knowledge that is located and marked by time, place and circumstances. Case history is also problem driven and thus the generalization is based on inductive reasoning. The factual analysis includes the study of (1) Ethnographic profile (2)

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[52] Maya Chadha, "Integration Through Internal Reorganisation: Containing Ethnic conflict in India", in "Critical Issues in Indian Politics: Ethnonationalism in India", OUP, 2010, p. 380
[53] Ibid. p. 382

Issues like land alienation, migration, politicization and the sociological vision. The field study includes collection of empirical data and responses of different actors like common population, members of different political parties, interest groups, civil society organizations, and the people associated with new resistance movement and new demands. The quantitative data however helps in building comparisons. But the level of state formation cannot be quantified. Nevertheless, it should help in understanding the divide of the traditional and the modern as an effect of a particular form of exclusive governmentality.

In the case of Jharkhand, it can be said that an ethnic group belonging here aspired political recognition as a new state. The state and its policies or the lack of them played an important role in precipitating the articulation of ethnic identities. This region underwent certain identity formation due to contradiction between the adivasis and non-adivasis and the contestation between the two. Elite class developed among the tribal groups with the advent of Christian missionaries and colonial state's support to it. State continued the tribal policy of integration and assimilation of tribal communities into the mainstream complex. Hence ethno regionalism was the result of one century old struggle to reclaim economic, political, cultural hegemony from which these groups were displaced.

The thesis looks into the claim that regionalisation strengthens the sense of identity among the people and eventually consolidates political institutions. It also seeks to examine the political discourse on democratic decentralisation, the way in which democracy and multicultural identities have been nurtured and balanced to preserve the autonomy of the distinct identities. To arrive at a meaningful explanation of ethno regional specificity, it is important to establish relationship between historical structure, human experience, and social consciousness. The problem is understood at a particular level of theorising through the specific case of adivasis of Jharkhand region in India. An identification of the aspect of ethnicity is sometimes understood overtly as a language of political expression through movements or not so visible aspect as protest in cultural terms. In this way the theoretical proposal of the case study of Jharkhand raises relevant points regarding the nature and contents of ethnic phenomenon and its cultural and political dynamics.

To sum up the entire argument, it can be inferred that, given the complex diversity of this vast country coupled with regional imbalances, socio-economic inequalities and mass poverty, statehood may provide an institutional framework of autonomy and decentralisation. It is the most comprehensive and effective method of political recognition of ethnic identity in India. Now how far it proved to be a panacea to the situation in Jharkhand in meeting the demands for which the state came into being in the recent past will be unfolded in various chapters of the thesis. This was the brief introduction of the thesis. It further engages in discussion on the conceptual and theoretical understanding of the term ethno regionalism and its contextual grounding in the political history of Jharkhand. This discussion entails in detail the meaning and practices leading to ethnic discourses in the region of Jharkhand. The chapterisation of the thesis is as follows:

Chapter One: Ethno Regionalism: Practice, Meaning and Discourses:

The chapter discusses thoroughly the meaning, practices and discourses on ethnicity and how they are interlinked into this region. Here the thesis engages in interrogating the meaning of ethnicity through scholarly writings. Various aspects and meaningful connotation of ethnicity are attempted at, though there can never be a single discourse on it. However, any approach to this phenomenon must locate itself within a bewildering plurality of discourses each with its underlying assumptions. They get articulated into explicit ideologies that orient perceptions and condition the response to this phenomenon. Ethnicity is understood as a dynamic process with a specific present entailing a particular mode of social experience. There has to be a comprehensive frame of reference to understand ethnicity. Jharkhand is taken as the case study to understand the conflict precipitated by the dialectics between state formation and ethno politics in the region.

Chapter Two: History of Shaping of the Identity Formation in the Region: From Pressure groups to Political parties.

In the long history of the movement there was sea change in terms of leadership, electoral politics, class and power, discourses on ethnicity, inter-tribal ethnic and political linkages and the questions on identity and regionalism. This chapter details the events and role of political parties in the creation of Jharkhand and presents the narrative of the political history of the region that became significant with

the entry of pan ethnic parties like the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) in the electoral foray.

Chapter Three: Identity Formation in Jharkhand through Field Survey

Findings map the journey of ethno regionalism in shaping and challenging the organizations of power in the new state. It also studies the disparity in the developmental trajectory of the state. These two broad premises stand the test of hypothetical plausibility. A number of extensive interviews and survey were conducted across large sections of the population who were mostly common people, tribal elites, policy makers, governmental agencies, non-government organisations, politicians from across major political parties, which have played key role in shaping the state formation. There is also a huge collection of archival newspaper clippings of the year 2000, which helped to deduce the political undercurrent and underpinnings of the political process.

Jharkhand was plagued by adverse initial conditions of economy, polity and society. Economy witnessed a low average income, very high incidence of poverty that got further accentuated by fractured mandate leading to frequent changes in government interspersed with President's rule. The policies and the programmes could not reach the people at the margins to bring social and economic development. Government reports and data suggested that prima-facie while the implementation of programmes has improved after the separation of Jharkhand from the parent state; it still faces significant challenges in overcoming the growing weaknesses of implementation capacity more so with instable polity. This fact is validated in both the qualitative and quantitative accounts of the field study.

In a state like Jharkhand with huge mineral endowment and large forest cover, the management and governance of minerals and the natural environment assumes heightened importance. The localities often get inadequate attention in the rush for mineral development and end up suffering in economic, social and environmental terms. The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act 2013 (LAA 2013) has added some provisions from the previous Land Acquisition Act (LAA1894) but does not provide any real space to the affected parties for protest, negotiation or even discussion. An important missing institution in Jharkhand that came up for discussion during field survey was

the Panchayati Raj Institution (PRIs) or the Local government. Popularly elected, administratively and fiscally empowered, local government was crucial for inclusive development. As per the Extension of Panchayats to Scheduled Areas Act (PESA) and Jharkhand Panchayati Raj Act 2001, the Gram Sabha is vested with strong powers such as the right to approve programmes and projects, select beneficiaries and certify the correct use of funds by the Gram Panchayat.

There are nearly 60 lakhs tribals in Jharkhand as per the census data 2011, divided into 30 different groups. This is 27.67 per cent of the total population of Jharkhand. There are hierarchies, variations, and cleavages among the tribal communities in Jharkhand, so is their social, economic and political mobility. It depends upon their association with organisation and agencies or institutions that have facilitated their upward mobility in the social formation. They also have dominant groups within them depending on access to education and modernisation. Christianity in a latent way has contributed to tribal identity formation by providing education to these people. It also heightened the sense of history about the myth of 'golden age'. It accentuated the notion of private rights in land. Those educated by the church played a leadership role in mobilizing resources for tribal educational development that spread across all areas.

Chapter Four: Understanding the New State of Jharkhand

The fourth and the last chapter engage in understanding the new state. It is titled – Understanding the New State of Jharkhand. The two decades of the new state helped to assess and understand the quagmire, if it stands for federalism, decentralisation, autonomy, economy growth, and development of the underdeveloped, better standards of living or made space for divisive politics. This chapter is divided into two parts. First part is on the first decade of turmoil and instability that deals with the study on the elections that the state witnessed around this time. The Assembly election of 2005 was important in the contextual political discourse as it was the first time the people of Jharkhand elected their own assembly. This decade witnessed uncertainty, instability and statusquo in terms of polity, economy and society and did not lead to development centric approach. The second part discusses the later decade from 2010-2020.There is a **Conclusion** chapter in the end that will attempt to present the summation of the thoughts and its recourse.

The formation and implementation of the state policies reflects the aggregation of a series of different actions based on the particular calculus of pressures experienced by parts of the state at each level. Jharkhand is a state where the political leadership was unstable during inception. Severe contradictions emerged in this situation between the imperatives of political survival and professed aims of state policy. The realization of the state's professed aims requires strong state policies. Otherwise, the question of survival would compel leaders to undermine state strength by extending patronage network. In analyzing the prospect of state building in this particular case, it is important to look at the social forces that the state represents and depends on and what their interests are. In Jharkhand political anarchism adversely affected economic growth of the region.

The 2011 census is taken as a benchmark to study the process of development in the nascent journey of the state. The basic function of a welfare state and its actual delivery to masses is considered as a benchmark for development. Improvement in education, health, irrigation, power, industrial development, social welfare, infrastructure, water, forest, and transport are recognized as catalytic factor for rapid development. Agriculture and allied sectors are keys to an economy, especially when a large population depends on it. Jharkhand's economy is based on agriculture and not industry. Jharkhand holds over 36 percent of the mineral resources in the country. It contributes almost 26 percent of the mineral resources in the country. Apart from all this, Jharkhand is one of the biggest grain deficit states in the country.

The new state faced the old challenges right from the beginning of its inception. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, the fore runner in the struggle for statehood was somehow distanced from the political process. Prior to the creation of the state, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and the Congress had maintained their political dominance over the 14 Lok Sabha constituencies in the Jharkhand area. But the electoral success of the BJP in the region brought a drastic change in the existing discourse on Jharkhand. The first such change was to rename the state as Vananchal (Forest Region) which differs from Jharkhand. Jharkhand was the symbol of self-assertion; the struggle for separate state raised by the indigenous people. The name identified itself with the culture, ethos, religion, social relationships and self-rule, of the tribal communities. Vananchal was never self-created nor symbolized any cultural

meaning. It was a superimposition by the dominant group. It raised the voice of the concerned subjects in the land who were non-tribals also and not exclusively the tribals. This name did not seem to accommodate and recognize tribal ethnicity so important to the region. It also undermined the long struggle for self-rule by tribals.

At the time of the formation of the state of Jharkhand in 2000 it was believed that there would be a social change through the gaining of political power. A state created under the domination of tribals would not only increase the tribal share of employment by political means but would also increase the self-confidence of people and enable them to acquire skills and ambition to compete with others. But the development and industrialization process has rarely benefitted the people of Jharkhand or the indigenous people. Dispossession and forced migration have remained chronic. The consequences are extreme poverty, exploitation, oppression and dehumanization culminating to the culture of silence. Jharkhand in the last two decades has not presented a model to ensure political stability and democratic legitimacy which are pivotal as virtues of a state. It also impacted the political decision making in areas of economy and growth.

Hence these kinds of democratic decentralization force us to introspect deeper to arrive at a larger democratic consensus to establish its political legitimacy and economic viability. It should not be the result of a political expediency. Then only these new states would provide insight to understanding the new demands and political identity assertions in other examples like Gorkhaland, Bodoland etc. Creation of new states is equated with democratic decentralization. In case of both Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, the negligible devolution of funds by the parent state was the main justification for the creation of these new states. Both regions were known to provide huge income to the former undivided states. These were the revenues in which they did not have any substantial share in return in the form of investment or infrastructure.

Samuel Berthet opines that the three states were carved out from less culturally homogeneous states as indicated by their names: Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, none of them associated with a dominant language. There have been semantic controversies: Jharkhand versus Vananchal and Uttarakhand versus Uttaranchal, whose names refer to a geographical rather than a cultural pattern.

Nevertheless, the tribal factor was a very crucial factor in the creation of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. The political landscape of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh differ widely, the later having no comparable records of mass mobilization.[54]

The regional autonomy movement like Jharkhand, Bodoland, Gorkhaland, Uttarakhand, and Chhattisgarh demanded separate statehood based on the claim that regional reorganization of political life possesses merit, as the socio-cultural homogeneity of the people, the smaller size of the region, the strong sense of belongingness etc. could make the region a more effective unit of political organization. It offers a better arena of effective planning, rational administration, participation, and the growth of a responsive and responsible leadership[55]. These regional movements challenged the fundamental organizing principle of Indian federation based on linguistic homogeneity. These movements demanded greater economic development, decentralization of power, more sensitivity, and greater responsiveness from the centre.

These regional movements although political in nature took the form of ethnic movement as they used socio-cultural symbols for defining the group identity and cultural markers for mobilization. Defining the identity of the group in relation to the other is very important for an ethnic movement. It is defined by the confrontation of opposing interests over the control of a society's forces of development. The principle of identity is the definition the actor gives to himself. A social movement cannot be organized unless this definition is conscious, but the formulation of the movement largely precedes that consciousness[56].

Identity formation has taken place here through multi layered symbolic congruence. It can be said that this is how imagined communities become nation through the invention of tradition. In the words of Rajni Kothari – "Together with social movements and citizen's actions, ethnicity provides security and democracy ….

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[54] Ibid. p. 17
[55] Ramashray Roy, "Region and Nation: A Heretical View", in Paul Wallace (ed.), Region and Nation, OUP, New Delhi, 1985, p.278
[56] Alain Touraine, "Self-Production of Society", University of Chicago, Chicago, 1977, pp. 310-311.

able to translate into real security and democracy for all, including the most marginalized".[57]

The federal reorganisation at the beginning of the twenty-first century has a backdrop that elucidates the political landscape of Indian democracy, the trends of which became visible in the 1980s itself. The 1980s marked the decline of the Congress, the rise of nationalist forces, the emergence of coalitional governments, the regionalisation of politics, and the de facto dispersion of power it brought about accelerated in the 1990s. The third wave of democratization can be said was also based on the role of market economy with the ushering in of liberalization and globalization.

India acceded to the global changes by initiating economic reforms. Liberalization of the economy had unshackled new centres of political interest and influence. A retreat of the central state meant greater latitude for the state and local level constituencies and a shift in the locus of decision making to the regions. During this time powerful ethnic and caste parties in many states in India altered the basis of domestic politics. These parties became more closely integrated into the central government with corresponding influence to dictate the course of policy.

The federal reorganisation in 2000 is often termed as a result of the calculations of party competition and elections. For countries that are simultaneously pursuing democracy, development and territorial unity, choices are hardly between neat pair of opposites like oppression versus human rights, big government versus small governments, centralisation versus decentralisation and nation versus state. Each trade off demands a price in terms of compromise with some other equally desirable goal. The creation of new states was a key element in the success of Indian democracy that combined autonomy to regions and layered order within an overarching political universe.[58] Sunil Khilnani also reposed trust in the working of democratic politics in India. In his view, it is the capacity of India's representative democracy to articulate its diversity, to give voice to differing interests and ideas of self, rather than merely to aggregate supposed common identities. This has saved

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[57] Basu, Sajal, Ibid, pp.61-62.
[58] Maya Chadha, "Integration Through Internal Reorganisation: Containing Ethnic conflict in India", in "Critical Issues in Indian Politics: Ethnonationalism in India", OUP, 2010, p. 380

India from the civil conflict and auto destruction typical of so many other states. India has successfully maintained federal decentralization not due to any innate value or cultural uniqueness. Rather, it is the outcome of a political intervention, the intricate architecture of constitutional democracy established by India's founders. Many countries in India's regional neighbourhood despite being smaller and less diverse have broken down due to the imposition of a common identity. However, it has prevented monolithic outcomes in India. It has stalled zealots in their tracks, penned demagogues to their corrals, taken the winds out of populist sails-just as it has also frustrated and slowed more positive or desirable outcomes. According to Khilnani that is the crucial, under recognised value of such a system: its capacity not to achieve the good but to prevent the worse. [59]

Hence, with these kinds of democratic decentralisation, the case of India can be said to be unique. The paradox of Indian democracy continues to confuse theoreticians and intellectuals. The primordial loyalties far from being the seeds of separation have acted as a link between the mass electorate and the new democratic processes that unleashed in the beginning of twenty-first century. The movements in India based on language, ethnicity and identity far from disrupting the democratic structure have led to the creation of new states. This also confirms the positive aspect of regionalism and state formation in India. To understand the basis of state formation it is important to study the role of state vis-a-vis the people. The state is not merely a policy producing mechanism that simply balances conflicting societal interests. Instead, the state tends to support particular groups to distribute privileges, represents autonomous collectivities as well as a summating concept of high societal generality.[60] State formation is an ever-going process linked with leadership, ideology culture, power and identity within the complexity of factors. Ethno regionalism led to creation of state of Jharkhand and consolidated its scope towards forming state institutions and refining its political processes thus upholding the belief in the success of India's democracy and its federal designs. It is the story of India's federal arrangements embodying the idea of a layered Indianness, an accretion of identities.

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[59] Khilnani, Sunil, "The Idea of India", Penguin Random House, 1997, p. xv
[60] Rudolph Lloyd, "Explaining Indian Democracy, A fifty Year Perspective, 1956-2006", in "The Realm of Institutions – State Formation and Institutional Change", OUP, p.6.

The Jharkhand State should embark on the path of development by ensuring economic growth, better governance and more power to its people with distribution of equitable resources. The research hypothesis is grounded on this very assumption that the movement rooted in the vortex of ethnic consciousness should affect state institutions in an organic way to end the existing disparities among its people. The modicum of positive change is already evident in Jharkhand.

CHAPTER ONE

ETHNO REGIONALISM: PRACTICE, MEANING AND DISCOURSES

Ethno regionalism comprises of two words 'ethno' and 'regionalism' which is important to understand people's movement in Jharkhand region. Ethno regionalism became a language of political expression in the form of the longest political movement for a separate statehood namely Jharkhand. The word 'ethno' is related to ethnicity. Factors like culture, ethnicity, language, religion give such movements a sense of unity and togetherness for mobilization. Ethnicity becomes a dependent variable in the formation of the region as a political entity. Hence, ethnicity has to be situated in a historical framework along with class, culture, identity and social classification specific to this region.

To understand regionalism, it is important to define region. "Region in the words of Norton Ginsberg is defined as some portion on the surface of the earth. Apart from the physical basis of a region, the conceptualization of region involves basically non-physical phenomenon as well. They are historic, linguistic, cultural, social and structural or the interactions and interrelations among these kinds of variables. As part of national domain, region is sufficiently unified to have a consciousness of its customs and ideas and thus possesses a sense of identity distinct from the rest of the country. Therefore, region is conceived as having both territorial reference as well as reference to sociocultural and psychological consciousness. There is widely shared sentiment of togetherness and we-feeling in the minds of the people that often reinforces a sense of separateness from others. This kind of feeling comes spontaneously from within and is not influenced and imposed from any external agency."[61] In the words of Rajendra Vora , "precisely we can say that regionalism refers to an ideology which is primarily based on the awareness of linguistic, religious, ethnic and cultural identity of a particular geographical region. Regions, even the assumed enduring ones subsumed under the concept of historical regions, are

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[61] Cohn, B, "An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays'", Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 101.

of changing nature through time. Various kinds of circumstances can rapidly alter the boundaries and very conception and nature of the region. This is evident in the case of Chotanagpur". [62] The British rule and modernization had impacted the nature and culture of this region. Region according to Vora is a mental construct, it has to be defined in reference to a context.

Post 1990s, India witnessed a great deal of democratic upheaval which affected "the politics and economy of various regions in a very significant way. Regionalism in India was a byproduct of long historical evolution and of neglect and deprivation. The demands of the people found expression in the form of regionalism. The action and interaction of such subjective and objective factors have resulted in initiation of catastrophic changes in tribal communities as well which had contributed to worsen their position in the globalized world even further"[63].

This chapter is divided into two parts; the first part explores and engages with the meaning and definition of ethnicity. In the second part, ethno regionalism is situated and contextualized within the Jharkhand state. How the liaison of the two terms took place in the long historical journey is attempted here. An insight to it follows below:

I. Understanding meanings and definitions of ethnicity

An ethnic group according to Phadnis can be defined "as a historically formed aggregate of people having real or imaginary association with a specific territory, a shared cluster of beliefs and values connoting its distinctiveness in relation to similar groups and recognized as such by others."[64] Paul Brass defines ethnicity " as the subjective, symbolic or emblematic use by a group of people of any aspect of culture, in order to differentiate themselves from other groups. Ethnicity also stresses the importance of inequality in the distribution of available resources, social benefits and opportunities between distinct ethnic groups. Ethnicity is precipitated by a feeling of relative deprivation. It involves the articulation and acquisition of social, economic and political rights for the members of the group or for the group as a whole.

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[62] Vora Rajendra, "Religion, Culture and Politics in India", Manohar publications,2006 p.1
[63] Ibid, p.3
[64] Urmila Phadnis, "Ethnicity and Nation building in South Asia" Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1990, p. 27.

Ethnicity is basically a device for the pursuit of the collective goals through competition and interaction, with its major arena being the state. Ethnicity is a form of collective action conveniently using emotional affinity to make claims on the powers that decide who should be the beneficiaries of the development process." [65] Sajal Basu defines ethnicity as an ever-adjusting process of alignments through which an ethnie or group tends to uphold its distinct, otherness and resist measures which appear to disrupt their socio-cultural security.[66] Ethnic at times in the modern concept of development is understood as primordial which would disappear in the course of development. But in contrast they have posed challenges to the state and the state development programmes are held responsible for the marginalization of ethnic groups. The new concepts like ethno development, ethno politics and ethno regionalism has set the tenor of politics in India. Stuart Corbridge identifies economic and demographic transformation of south Bihar as the factor for emerging ethno regionalism in Jharkhand.

Ethnicity is understood when a "particular group shifts its identity or asserts its distinctness, otherness as an ethnie in course of age long feeling of being discriminated or due to a sense of insecurity and aspiration for a larger share in power. It may occur at various stages of development or maldevelopment. When the concerned ethnic group or community fails to articulate grievances through various levels of political parties or administration, they may resort to ethnicise the issue of their grievances. There are examples of Assamese hostility to Bengalese; the Punjabi Sikhs antagonism against the Hindu Punjabis, Jharkhandi vehemence against the dikus" [67]. In Jharkhand, the 'diku' question got lost in the definitional debate on autochthons, sadans, indigenous local ethnos, tribals etc. Diku is a term used for outsiders in Jharkhand. The concerned groups changed the issues related to identity. Sajal Basu opines that ethnicity is a plastic, variegated and originally ascripting trait that in certain historic and economic circumstances is readily politicized.[68] India as a plural society has nationalities and ethnos that have moulded identity expressions in

[65] Paul Brass, "Ethnicity and Nationalism" Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1991, p. 19.
[66] Basu, Sajal, "Identity Aspirations and Ethno Politics" in Regional Movements: Politics of Language, Ethnicity and Identity", IIAS, Shimla, 1992, p. 47.
[67] Basu, Sajal, "Ethno-Regionalism and Tribal Development: Problems and Challenges in Jharkhand", in "Tribal Development in India: The Contemporary Debate" edited by G.C Rath, Sage, 2006, p. 134.
[68] Ibid, p. 49.

the set pattern of social functioning. Ethnicity has become significant in the legitimation and delegitimation of systems, regimes or governments. To understand ethnicity and its co-relation with nationalities and state formation, it is important to locate the origins of nation states. The nation states originated five hundred years ago with the breakdown of the imperial states system in Europe. After a series of internecine wars fought for centuries, the socio-political fragments found a new basis for organising the state i.e., ethno linguistic, ethno religious groups called nations. For D.L Seth, "the state exists not merely for maintaining law and order, in the framework of which the ethnic pluralities live their own lives. It is also a vehicle for ethnic aspirations, an engine of economic growth and development for an ethnically defined nation. The role of the state can be presumed as maintaining internal order, rapid economic growth and development for all the people within its territorial boundaries. It provides political coherence for ethnically divided societies it also transcends traditional group loyalties in favour of an abstract sense of community called nation."[69]

"Ethnicity is also often viewed as a part of the larger problem of nation-building. The western model seeks to reconcile the centrifugal forces of ethnicity with the idea of nationhood and in the process, it assigns a central role to state for building a nation. The project of building the nation-state got legitimised in the context of the breakdown of the imperial states-system. The idea of a single nationhood co-terminus with a society and super ordinated by a centralised state was a product of that process. The peace of Westphalia in 1648 in fact put an end to several ambiguities in the status of the existing imperial states in Europe. It established the principle of territorial existence for the emerging nations in the face of conflicting but overlapping 'religion' and denominational identities of the people. It established organisational primacy of the state over religion. The cultural symbolism of nationhood is often projected in terms of the ethos and interest of the dominant ethnic community. Dominance is achieved through the subtle processes of politics, education and communication. If we see the case of India, it was a complex phenomenon of big ethnic divide in the subcontinent. In rejecting the ethnic principle of nationhood, the Indian state sought to base its legitimacy on political ideas, all new to the Indian society, of secularism,

[69] D.L Seth, "State Nation and Ethnicity: Experience of the Third world Countries", EPW, March 25, 1989, p. 620

egalitarianism, and political equality. This was to be achieved by extending equal citizenship rights to all through universal franchise. The Constitution ensured that the state shall not discriminate among citizens on the grounds of religious affiliations, ethnicity, race, caste, creed or gender. Eventually though the Indian society too yielded to the ethnic pulls and pressures of electoral politics."[70]

The project of transforming ethnic identities to national identity of citizens often gets subjected to centrifugal ethnic pulls in society. As the understanding follows, that a nation state cannot survive as a mere political arrangement, a holding operation for managing ethnic pluralities. Sooner or later, it has to give primacy to economic development. This agenda disturbs the political equations among the ethnic groups. The economic disparity grows in the process of development. It is believed that the cultural base of ethnicity gets eroded in the process of development and the ethnic group assumes political identities. It gets rooted in secular economic interests which are articulated in the language of ethnicity. It also becomes a demand for political autonomy or a separate state for fulfilling ethnic aspirations as well as the developmental aspirations of the ethnic groups.[71]

Ethnic groups cannot function as groups and communities which devise and live by their own ideas and traditions of political rule and cultural organisations. All nation-states of the world, irrespective of their own specific histories and needs of change internal to their societies were reduced to a cohesive political order which derived its legitimacy and stability from the national society. Thus, the creation of a national society through political and social mobilisation became the centerpiece of the model of state formation and nation building. The model of nation state for most of the developing countries could not solve the problems of ethnicity and development. The models received from western historiography and the comparative theory, resulted in closing the options for these societies to devise the form of the state appropriate to their needs of continuity and change. They were hitched to a process transcendental to their history, their experience and their needs. These societies dealt with a state form which was primarily an outgrowth of western statecraft based on the theory of state which invalidated their own experience of governance. The idea of the

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[70] Ibid, p. 624
[71] Ibid, p. 624

state as an instrument of creating order out of chaos was alien to most of these societies. Here, order existed prior to the state. The coming of the nation state in these societies largely through forces exogenous to them turned their political and economic priorities upside down. In the process of working with these new state forms, these societies lost their endogeneity i.e., autonomy and control over internal forces of order and change. These societies could not cope with the problems of social change and economic transformation.[72] Here, ethnicity emphasised its partial identity, in terms of religion, ethno-linguistic and as regional cultural groups.

It is believed that "the process of modernisation, politicisation, development, education and media exposure has created a sense of self-awareness and sharpened the urge for identities based on race, language, tribe, caste, religion. Modern technology and knowledge have increased the mobilisation potential of traditional identities. Also, ethnic mobilisation has become the principal instrument of grassroot political activity, reallocation and redistribution of resources and share in and access to political power. In many cases, intermediary identities acted as emotional bridges between anonymous individuals and a distant intangible national identity".[73]

In India, identities cut across one another, with its large population covered by emotional bridges, exclusiveness and parochialism. Ethnicity here is determined by complex interaction of social forces. It was presumed for long that ethnic consciousness was a sign of lack of development. Ethnic attachment however did not get undermined with the extension of market rather became more resolute as a phenomenon. With examples of Shiv Sena in Maharashtra and situation in Punjab it is also believed that ethnic passions, ideologies, movements and parties are not the outcome of elemental drives at the popular level. It is the manifestation of ethnicity in Indian politics as a creation of vested interests. These ideologies are hatched at the top and then broad casted below. Only sometimes these take root and when they do not, they merely languish as amorphous judgements without concrete action prescriptions.[74] Ethnic conflicts and contradictions are almost ubiquitous in so many countries today. Ethnicity has to be understood in the realm of relationship with

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[72] Ibid, p. 624

[73] Balraj Puri, "Politics of Ethnic and Communal Identities", EPW, April 7, 1990, p 703.

[74] Gupta, Dipankar, "Communalism and Fundamentalism; some notes on the nature of ethnic politics in India," EPW Annual Number, March 1999, p. 573.

identity and their manipulation in the dialectic of ethnic elites and social class along with the dilemma of developmental change and ethnic politics.

Ethnic groups are also defined as "a distinct category of population in a larger society whose culture is usually different. Such a category remains a mere aggregate until the group members become interrelated though interactions or bound to one another by formal, institutionalised rules and characteristic informal behaviour. Ethnicity is the phenomenon of an ethnic group coming to self-awareness that enables it to affirm its identity and pursue its interests. It is the summation of its impulses and motivations for power and recognition, the driving force in the emergence of ethnic movements. Ethnic group is also defined as a social collectivity which possesses and is aware of its distinctiveness by virtue of certain shared historical experiences as well as certain objective attributes."[75] Heredia C Rudolf gives three dimensions in describing an ethnic group and its ethnicity. First, an objective foundation for its identity in the material history and existential group relations of that society. Second, a subjective construction of this in an articulation and motivation of common myths and rituals symbols and values. Third, a contextual recognition even if it is only to contest it. It situates the social context for inter-group relations.[76]

It is also important to understand the dynamics of ethnicity as a process: how it is founded, how it is construed, how it interfaces with other aspects of society. It is these elements that must be integrated in the definition of an ethnic group. An ethnic identity however is socialised in a more public space. Identity provides us with some master value or some allegiance or some community membership that constitutes a horizon of meaning by which we can identify ourselves. Such a horizon when translated into the concrete context of a particular group or ethnie will necessarily involve a process of inclusion and exclusion of value and symbols. The boundaries thus defined can be more or less permeable, they may overlap and cut across other borders or they may get sharper and harder as they are politicised and contested from without or within the ethnie.

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[75] Ibid, p. 624
[76] Heredia C. Rudolf, "Ethnicity class and Nation: Inter relationships in a multicultural state, EPW March 10, 1997, p. 1010.

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Thus, ethnicity is a multifaceted and inter relational social phenomenon. It allows many degrees of freedom in constructing an ethnic identity within a social context and underlines the crucial importance of ethnic elite. Identity is also at times imposed and internalised to support the statusquo. There are other kinds of recursive reinforcement of such imposed identities. In many cases it is observed that ethnicity also "serves as an element to reproduce systems of social relationships, to validate structures of inequality and to support policies of social control and co-opt communities to serve the prevailing hegemony."[77] In a multicultural context there are overlapping multiple identities cross cutting group boundaries. Ethnic identities are not monolithic organic wholes. As group identities get homogenised within groups, boundaries between them gets sharpened and reinforced. This makes for easier internal mobilisation which is to the advantage of internal group elites who often manipulate such situations to promote their interests. They organise to achieve a multi-symbol congruence to broaden and strengthen their appeal and so reduce dissent and dissonance. Ethnicity can be both mobilising and divisive. It can be used to mobilise a group against discrimination or to divide groups to exploit them.

So, according to Rudolph when an "ethnic category becomes conscious of its ethnicity, it evolves into a community. When this becomes politically articulate and organised, it develops into a nation"[78]. The identity formation through multi-layered symbolic congruence takes place. The crux of the argument holds that in a multi-ethnic state, the issues of concern should be recognition of ethnic diversity and cultural rights with the pursuit of social equality and community participation. These are the issues that must be addressed and resolved in a viable consensus that sets a framework for the discourse and negotiation between groups and their elites.

While understanding ethnicity in the context of Jharkhand, both politico economic as well as socio-cultural aspect of it was interrogated. Ethnicity proved to be a positive potential without precipitating negative consequences in terms of intractable divisions and violent conflict. It addressed the problems of the people and negotiated for rights and equality in the power game. However, it would be further

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[77] Heredia C. Rudolf, Ibid, p. 1012.
[78] Ibid, p.1012

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unfolded if ethnicity has posed as an exclusivist or a defensive factor? Has it proven to contribute for the overall advantage of the groups per se?

Ashutosh Varshney opines that any "collectivity that is larger than a village, a neighbourhood or a small organisation is an imagined community for it does not allow face to face intimacy. Ethnicity is also defined as the tendency of human beings to associate with one another around shared religion, sect, language, cultural tradition, belief in common ancestry and a host of other particularistic identities. The feeling of belonging together, of sharing common symbols and a structure of discourse is usually multi-dimensional, constituted by more than one objective characteristic".[79]

Few scholars like Niraja believes that individuals have multiple identities, and no single identity can acquire primacy in all contexts. Modernisation leads to the supplanting of one kind of identity by another because as societies become more complex and inter societal interactions increase, there is a net increase in the number of identities constituting identity sets. Individuals and collectivities tend to invoke the convenient element from their identity – sets at different times. "Ethnification also occurs when a state attempts to integrate and homogenise different nations in its territory or denies basic human and citizenship rights to immigrants".[80] In the words of Paul Brass "an ethnic community generally emerges from the formations of social groups which has distinct cultural characteristics from other social groups and are self-conscious."[81]

According to S. Devalle, "ethnicity should be seen as a historical phenomenon subordinated to existing class and centre periphery contradictions and as an element operating in cultural dialectics. Ethnicity can serve as an element of support for the hegemony of the dominant classes and of the state. In this case, ethnic strategies confirm the state, its policies and the status quo of class domination. The ideological uses of the tribal construct in India fall into this category. The second phase of the phenomenon is when ethnicity can be a counter-hegemonic force in the instances where ethnic ascription and economic and political subordination correlate. Grassroot proposals for Jharkhand are a case in point. Here ethnicity contributed to develop an

[79] Varshney, Ashutosh, "Class, Like Groups are imagined Communities", EPW July 12, 1997, p. 17.
[80] Jayal, Gopal, Niraja, "Ethnicity and Nationality", EPW, April 11, 1998, p. 833
[81] Harsha Rajen, "From Ethnic to National", EPW, April 25, 1998, p. 960.

awareness of the contradictions existing in the society at large as they were experienced by the social sectors concerned."[82]

In a number of multiethnic societies, the languages of indigenous inhabitants and ethnic minorities are marginalized, or their existence is denied, while the language of those in power is imposed as the official one. In such a situation the indigenous cultures, vernacular languages and diverse modes of knowledge have been debased by the power holders as 'folklore', 'dialects' and 'little tradition'. Thus ethnicity as observed by S. Devalle, should be conceived as " a process evolving through time. The time dimension either gives these styles and identities substance or legitimation as in the case of 'imagined communities' and 'invented tradition'. Ethnic differences were structured in the non-western world under specific historical circumstances like colonial expansion, the persistence of residual colonial forms of control, the development of neo-colonial structures of exploitation of people, land, natural resources and the processes of state formation. The constructs of 'tribe' and of 'race' as a social category became elements through which Europe reconstructed part of the reality of societies that came under its dominance. Racial, ethnic and tribal stereotypes were forged conflating a variety of modes of production, forms of social organization and cultures. All these ignored the complexities, dynamism, history and civilization patterns of societies thus catalogued." [83]

Thus, ethnicity has emerged as "a major issue in national and international politics. The growth in ethnic politics has led to the demolition of the notion that with increasing modernisation and communication, particularistic identities would eventually be eroded or would be submerged into national identities. Ethnicity continues to be an important and meaningful source of identity. Ethnic groups have retained them along the way, even when they have made it to the top in the quest for socio-economic and political equality. Hence, political and socio-economic issues are being increasingly identified as ethnic".[84]

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[82] Devalle B.C, Susana, "Discourses of Ethnicity: Culture and Protest in Jharkhand" Sage, 1992 p. 16.
[83] Ibid. p. 17.
[84] Amit Prakash, "Jharkhand: Politics of Development and Identity", Orient Longman, New Delhi, 2000, p. 1

In the modern world today, "there are two strands in the articulation of political identity. The first is an overarching identity which supports the state and its policies and the status quo. This identity is more inclusive and seeks to subsume all other identities by employing a wide variety of methods such as co-option, coercion and incentives. This can be termed as national identity, defined as an overarching identity which claims precedence over all other identities. The grass roots are narrower, more ascriptive, particularistic and more region-specific identities which can be referred to as sub-national or ethnic identities. These identities are not always and necessarily antagonistic to the overarching national identity and are often a part of the latter. Sub-national identities usually take two forms of articulation. They may crystallize into a national identity and seek political recognition or may end up as one of the many ethnic or subnational identities competing for control of resources in a multi-ethnic state. Though all national identities do not necessarily begin as ethnic identities. They are closely related and often overlap as in the case of nation states that are largely ethnically homogenous."[85]

For Amit Prakash, "an ethnic group is a historical entity whose members, in large part, conceive of themselves as being alike, by virtue of shared common features such as history, language, culture, stereotypes, territorial ancestry (real, fictitious or imagined), specific nomenclature or endogamy, and are regarded so by other such groups. Ethnic identities on the other hand are groups of individuals that perceive one or more of the similarities mentioned above, as paramount in the self-definition of their individual identities and organise around it to acquire political resources. Such ethnic identities may be unstable, ad hoc, shifting, opportunistic and often related to political necessities and demands. Thus, ethnic group is a sociological category whereas ethnic identity can be potentially a politically relevant identity over a period of time."[86]

According to Amit Prakash "identities could also be latent or conscious. When an identity is latent, it serves merely a descriptive purpose. Such an identity is not politically very significant, when an individual consciously perceives a certain descriptive identity as indispensable to the definition of his/her personal identity and

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[85] Ibid, p. 2
[86] Ibid, p. 2

accepts that descriptive identity as predominant and paramount over other such descriptive identities and further seeks to acquire political resources on the basis of that identity, that conscious identity becomes politically significant. A term that refers to an ethnic group may remain a descriptive category used to refer to certain individual (s) who are distinct on the basis of their ancestry, culture, stereotypes and other such factors. Such an ethnic group, however, is not a politically self-conscious identity. When the individual concerned translates this descriptive identity into a self-conscious political identity, it emerges as an ethnic identity. Thus, self-conscious is not inherent amongst members of an ethnic group. It is created by intellectuals from within the ethnic groups who are deprived of desirable positions in society by the dominant ethnic group. Consequently, the frustrated intellectuals of a minority group may invoke common ethnicity as a political instrument. Any societal group which is not a self-conscious identity remains a sociological category and is not a politically relevant identity. " [87]

Ethnic identity and national identity are different and contested topic. Different scholars have their opinion on the issues of identity. Anthony Smith, "emphasises the idea of equal citizenship rights and vertical economic integration as factors that differentiate a nation from an ethnic group. Certain ethnic groups, despite a substantial degree of economic integration with other societal groups, nevertheless retain their ethnic character. Ethnic groups are also very conscious of their distinctiveness only because of their economic and trade related interaction with other ethnic or societal groups. A sense of association with a territory – mythological, actual, symbolic, or commemorative is important for an ethnic group to crystallize into an ethnic identity. Actual physical possession of a territory is indispensable for either an ethnic identity or a national identity. But Israel is an exception where – the Jews were hardly in actual possession of the territory but that did not deter the process of national identity formation amongst them. Moreover, a sense of association with the territory of Israel played a crucial role in the sustenance of the ethnic identities of Jewish communities in many European countries. Thus, national identity and ethnic

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[87] Ibid, p. 2

identity may share certain common features, but this does not make them identical political concepts."[88]

In the words of Amit Prakash, "all nations do not emerge from ethnic components which 'crystallise' into national identities. However, in multi-ethnic nations states such as India, the ethnic component can hardly be said to have crystallised but this has not proved to be an impediment in the emergence of national identity either. Both nationalism and ethnicity share a number of common features, but ethnic identities are not the same as national identities. It cannot be denied that ethnic identities may and often do become national identities and that at different points of time, the same individuals may respond to different identities. This does not imply that all ethnic identities are ipso facto national identities. An ethnic identity may be translated into a national identity under a certain set of circumstances, but all ethnic identities are not necessarily potential national identities which often emerge as civic identities. The two identities can also be differentiated in terms of the demands they make on the political process. Largely, national identities might be inclined to seek statehood, whereas ethnic identities might seek autonomy and adequate representation within an existing state. Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia exist where erstwhile ethnic identities did aspire for nationhood and statehood, but this is not the dominant phenomenon. All national identities inevitably contain a number of subnational identities. Such a distinction can be drawn only to underline the fact that some national identities depend upon ethnic identities to a greater degree than others, on account of the relative homogeneity of their populations. It is likely that a largely ethnically homogenous nation would rely more heavily on the ethnic component to knit a coherent identity. An ethnically plural national identity would try to underplay the ethnic differences and focus on the non-ethnic similarities. It is also argued that ethnicity emerges as 'an alternate form of social organisation' but is a contingent and mutable status that may or may not be articulated in a particular context or time. An ethnic group may tend to seek a major say in the political system in order to protect, preserve and promote their interests. This may lead to an ethnic group aspiring for a

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[88] Ibid, p. 3

national status and/or political recognition, either within an existing state or as a new state."[89]

A nation is "a particular type of ethnic community politicized, with recognized group right in the political system. In the multi-ethnic national identity of India, nationalism was articulated to counter a visible 'opposition', that was British rule. This manifest opposition factor succeeded in creating an overarching national identity. However, in modern times most individuals have a number of identities that operate simultaneously. Under such circumstances, it is likely that an ethnic identity may be strongly articulated but remains a part of a larger national identity. In the independent Indian state also, various ethnic identities articulated themselves at different points of time in different ways. Until the mid-1970s, these articulations were more like interest-group politics for a better share in the redistributive potential of the State. Then the ethnic groups started to assert themselves and demanded anything between more representation and complete autonomy. The bases of such articulation were varied from language to region, culture and tribal heritage. Due to the post – independence Indian state's emphasis on development activities, such identities modified their bases of articulation to include the need for special development measures. Such articulation focused on the demand for greater political autonomy for efficient implementation of the development policy. The thrust of nationalist state on development was utilized by the newly articulated political identities to redefine their modes of political articulation."[90]

According to Amit Prakash, "the resource capacity of a state being limited, development politics tend to target group or remain region oriented. Not at all regions and societal groups have been beneficiaries of the positive actions of the state. A number of region specific or culture specific identities have been thrown up by the grassroots. These identities have been called ethnic identities and their demands were largely greater share in the benefits resulting from the positive action of the state and greater administrative autonomy."[91] He opines "that to study the relationship between state and society in the process of ethnic identity formation, there are three sets of

[89] Ibid p. 7
[90] Ibid p. 7
[91] Ibidp.8

struggles that have to be differentiated. The struggle within the ethnic group itself, for control over its symbolic and material resources, which in turns involves defining the groups boundaries and its rules of exclusion and inclusion. The struggles between ethnic groups competing with one another for rights, privileges and available resources. The struggle between the state and the groups that dominate it on the one hand, and the population that inhabits its territory on the other. Most modern states adopt policies of selective discrimination for a variety of reasons. Equalising policies such as 'affirmative action' or 'protective discrimination' are often seen as precipitating the formation of new identities amongst various categories of social groups. However, such policies do not precipitate identity articulation and mobilization amongst all relevant categories of population, in the same way that not all sections of the population that face the adverse effects of unbalanced development, mobilize to assert a politically significant sub-national or ethnic identity. Thus, the study of public policy as a site of tangible interaction between state and society can provide us with a valuable tool to interpret the processes by which public policy conditions the agency of societal groups, and in turn is conditioned by them."[92]

The case of India: Subnational identity assertion

The articulation of subnational identities in India is generally premised on "linguistic, racial, ethnic, historical and geographical bases. Under the British colonial rule these local and regional identities were accorded a position of dignity by the nationalist leadership. After the transfer of power in the hands of national leaders, the subnational imagined political communities began to assert themselves in order to give concrete expression to their political aspirations. Cultural factors combined with development issues, and a feeling of alienation from the state and its policies, have led to the articulation of subnational identities in many parts of India. The articulation of the subnational identity in the Gorkha regions of West Bengal combines the underdevelopment of the population in the region with the linguistic and cultural bases to demand political recognition. Similar patterns were noticed in other parts of India like the tribal autonomy and socio-religious movement amongst the Bhil, the Dang, the Dholia, the Gamit, the Naik, the Kokna, the Warli and the Kathodi tribes in south Gujarat. Instances of sub-national identity articulation were also noticed

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[92] Ibid, p. 8

amongst the eighty-three tribal groups in South India like the Koya, the Malayali, the Irula and the Paniyan tribal groups. These subnational identity articulations drew upon cultural and historical factors that included socio-economic considerations born out of imbalances in the development process, as additional bases of mobilization." [93]

In India, the case of Northeast is significant due to the number as well as intensity of subnational assertions and extraordinary diversity of cultural identities. The region includes – "Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. The articulation of sub national identities in the Northeast can be classified into three broad categories – 1) Those conflicts that arose out of a concept of distinct and separate identity leading to a secessionist movement and the clash with the Indian state. Like Nagas, Mizo National Front. 2) Demand of some groups for a distinct political identity separate but within the broad framework of an existing Indian identity, Bodoland movement. 3) Those groups that are not numerically dominant nor live in geographically compact areas but nevertheless are apprehensive of their identity being subsumed within the dominant political and cultural identity. Hence, they assert themselves to protect their culture. The States Reorganization Commission had recognized the difficulty in drawing boundaries around such a complex of cultural plurality. The pressure exerted by sub-national identities with 209 ethnic groups speaking more than 420 languages and dialects, led to the acceptance of the principle of culturally defined states in the region. This was possible after much drawn insurgency e.g., the Naga Nationalist Council led an insurgent movement between 1956 and 1966 leading to the creation of Nagaland. The Mizo National Front led an armed rebellion from 1966 to 1986 when the state of Mizoram was created. Manipur also witnessed extremism since 1947. In Tripura, the tribal population also fought to preserve its identity. Similarly, Assam witnessed a long-drawn insurgency spearheaded by ULFA (United Liberation Front of Assam). The hill tribes of the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo Hills fought for the creation of Meghalaya in 1971. Cultural complexity of the region fueled the identity assertion movements and conflict till recent times." [94]

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[93]Ibid, p. 15
[94] Ibid, p.7

Therefore in, "the many instances of assertion of subnational identities in India, the case of the Jharkhand movement was unique in many ways. The movement drew upon the tribal cultural heritage of the Chotanagpur region but evolved overtime into including the socio-economic problems of the region as one of the primary bases of the articulation of a subnational identity. This led to a regional basis for political mobilization from an ethnic one or interplay of both factors crystallized the demand of a separate state in Jharkhand."[95]

II Understanding Ethno Regionalism in Jharkhand

The movement based on ethnic and regional economic demands has always been riffed with divisions on ethnic and religious lines. In the current scenario the discussion on ethnicity and region is even more relevant when more and more movements are taking shape to meet the demands of the 'ethnie' or a particular group, region in the form of Bodoland, Gorkhaland and many more. The basis on which the Jharkhand identity came up was exploitation by the outsider (diku), exclusion/inclusion of some communities in the reservation list guaranteed by the constitutional provisions, right to forest resources, protection of tribal tradition and culture, marginalization and displacement due to setting up of industries. All these components have changed in dimension in different areas and times. Diku referred to a local term used to define the outsiders, moneylenders, landlords and exploiters in general in the region.

The Jharkhand movement offers a different dimension of the cultural resurgence. Initially it was based on anti diku sentiments. As the concept of diku changed qualitatively due to change in demography (emigration of tribals and immigration of non-tribals) the identity factor entered a new phase. The experiences and exposures of the new generation of leaders to the modern world have led them to develop a self-image and community identity. It has aroused a new awareness of Jharkhand indigenousism. Both at the social and political levels, there have been a reassertion of distinctness and separateness. Thus, it becomes important to know the historical, cultural, social and political dimensions of ethnicity. The different communities in Jharkhand shared the basic traits (culture, language and aspects of

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[95] Ibid, p.8s

social organisation) and a long history of migration into the area. Jharkhand has seen a sustained agrarian-based tradition of protest with ethnic overtones since the end of the eighteenth century. Here forests supplemented the agrarian economy, and the indigenous people were basically peasants. The expansion of industries in Bihar since the fifties and the commercial exploitation of the forests accelerated a process of land alienation. The adivasi peasant economy was undermined by limited alternative source of subsistence resulting into bonded labour and chronic indebtedness. This led to the maximization of ethnic differences.

The plateau region of Chotanagpur, Santhal Parganas and some parts of West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa formed part of a distinct socio-cultural region called Greater Jharkhand. Jharkhand denotes more than a geographical region. The word Jharkhand holds a special significance. It is a Sanskrit word first mentioned in the thirteenth century inscription later occurring in Sanskrit and Persian texts in the medieval period. It got absorbed by the tribal groups speaking Mundari and Dravidian languages. Etymologically Jharkhand is the combination of Jhar (forests) and khand (land including hills). Since this region was covered with dense forests centuries ago, it may be assumed that the name is geographically attributed to the virgin forests and hilly tracts of the area. Further Jharkhand has been variously called as 'Khokhra', 'Nagdesh', and 'Dasaranya' in different periods of history and often called as the 'Ruhr of India'. The name is mentioned in 'Akbarnamah' as a place where diamond, ivory or tusks of elephants and silks were abundantly available. The place was practically inaccessible to the outsiders due to the density of the forests and the warring prowess of the native tribes. The indigenous people living in the region were mostly adivasis and sadans (non-tribes).

Munda, Santals, Oraons, Hos and other settlers reached Jharkhand after a series of migration. "The ancestors of the adivasis have been identified as the native opponents the Indo-Aryans encountered when they entered the subcontinent. The differentiation between aryans and adivasis persisted across centuries, later formulated on a racial basis as the one between 'superior' and 'inferior' communities. The term 'Adivasi' deserves special mention. It is used to affirm self-identity. It is an equivalent of Scheduled Tribes. It reflects the concept of their history and identity in their own use. Tribes were catalogued during the British times to facilitate the

incorporation of this population into the colonial system. Jharkhand's ethno history reveals not the existence of 'tribes' but a variegated development of its indigenous societies and processes of transition from lineage and communally based societies to a class-based society. Further, tribe has also been reformulated in the context of the Hindu model of caste ideology, a context observable in the conceptualization of adivasis' 'backwardness'. Thus, tribes exist only in relation to the mainstream complex. The adivasi sense of history and their culture are declared to be retrograde as a 'negation of progress' and a perpetuation of backwardness"[96]. However, with the acknowledgement of the ethno-regional movements there was change in perception. Now ethnicity is understood with reference to the adivasis and tribes in India.

Das Victor has observed that, "of the total Scheduled Tribes population in Bihar, 91.7 percent were located in its Jharkhand region. More important than Bihar's internal administrative division is the geo-ecological regional differentiation of the state resulting in three well demarcated regions: North Bihar to the north of Ganges River, the south Ganges Plain or South Bihar and South Bihar Plateau comprising Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas. The distinctive geo-ecological characteristics of these areas condition the development of production and the emergence of socio-cultural patterns. The Ganges River divides Bihar into two physically different regions. The fertile plain of the north and the south which being fertile along the Ganges becomes hillier as one proceeds south into the Chotanagpur plateau. Until the middle of the sixteenth century when Akbar acceded to the throne of Delhi, Chotanagpur seemed little affected by the external influences. Under the Mughals, the Raja of Chotanagpur was made a tributary. Whatever independence and isolation Chotanagpur had enjoyed in Mughal times was relative. Chotanagpur was surrounded by a cash economy. This economy did not penetrate the entire area because of the lower productivity of its land. Chotanagpur's settled agricultural communities shared a similar language and social institutions and up to the advent of the first Chotanagpur Nagbansi raja (5th century A.D) followed parallel patterns of social, economic and cultural development. The Mundas settled in Chotanagpur around the sixth century B.C. The descendants of the founding clan of the village (khuntkattidars) controlled the land, protecting their rights under customary inheritance laws. The khuntkatti

[96]Das Victor, "Jharkhand: Castle Over the Graves", Inter India Publications, New Delhi, 1992, p.186

system and the egalitarian character of Munda society began to change with the development of social stratification based on a differential attainment of power over land. Also, there was transformation of the offices of the chiefs of villages and confederacies into hereditary positions. This marked the beginning of a tendency towards the establishment of chiefdoms. The election of a ruler among the Munda and the Oraons initially with no prerogatives over land, initiated a change in their economic and political patterns which led to state formation. Hence state formation at that time was the result of settled agriculture, the continuous occupation of a territory and a territorial administrative organization. The emergence of an aristocracy with economic privilege accelerated the already existing process of social stratification and differentiation. The process of immigration intensified. Peasants were encouraged to migrate to the area to extend agriculture and thus generate a larger surplus. The ruler also brought military mercenaries who were remunerated with 'Jagirs' for purposes of defense and control of peasantry. A complex land tenure system thus evolved in Chotanagpur together with the rising power of the ruler. All this was later compounded with the changes brought about by British colonial administration"[97].

The fertile river basins inhabited by the Indo-Aryans and the indigenous population witnessed a different mode of occupation leading to economic specialization with use of land, social differentiation and regional integration. The latter inhabited the hilly areas that did not witness such development. With the advent of colonialism this regional economic identification became fixed. Isolationist policies towards adivasis were shaped to protect them. In the background of these policies stood a history of repression and economic exploitation of adivasi land and labour. This unequal integration continued even after independence in the region.

After a brief outlining of the precolonial socio-political history of the region, the meaning of ethno regionalism is further explored in Jharkhand with the advent of the British. In 1765, the East India Company acquired the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa which included Jharkhand. "Colonialism introduced individual land ownership resulting in the alienation of adivasi land, pauperization of peasantry, migration of contract labourers to the tea plantations in Assam and coal mines of

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[97]Ibid, p. 187.

Bihar and Bengal. The pervasive effect of money economy, the creation of a market in land, the emergence of money lending landed sector and the development of chronic peasant indebtedness were instrumental in producing fundamental transformations in agrarian economic relationships. The main conflict that emerged in Chotanagpur as a result of progressive subinfeudation was the one between different kinds of landlords and the peasantry. The adivasi states were small and lacked the necessary resources to give rise to a separate landlord class with autonomous power. It was the inflow of elements alien to these societies, like merchants and moneylenders, who found in the system of land grants the channel to obtain and augment their control over land and peasants. This emerging landlord class was precisely the one that gained from British conquest. It was colonialism that created the conditions for the emergence of a rich peasant class from among the claimants to the old Zamindar status. The imposition of the capitalist mode of production in its colonial form brought with it the restructuration of the existing pre-capitalist systems which were simultaneously undermined. Adivasi societies were shaped by colonialism into units – 'tribes' and given a subordinate role in the new economic system. They were 'preserved' in this constructed way to permit the reproduction of the labour force and to ensure their survival at the level of subsistence. Capitalist plantations in Assam, indigo plantations in Bengal and mines in Jharkhand, developed on the basis of the exploitation of the labour of temporary adivasi workers. The process of colonial conquest was not a peaceful affair. Military operation consistently preceded the establishment of administrative control in all areas of Jharkhand and was launched every time there were signs of protest."[98]

S. Devalle has described it as the "culture of repression that made use of physical violence as well as other means of coercion which crystallized in a legal and revenue system that fostered the reproduction of indebtedness and extensive forced labour."[99] Hence, "the 'tribes' were the fixed ethnic stereotypes that were constructed to denote a variety of systems of production and cultures, ignoring the complexities in the socio economic organization, law systems, history and civilizational patterns of the adivasi societies. The existing diku-adivasi (alien-indigenous) opposition implying regional ethnic cum economic difference was indirectly sanctioned by early

[98]S. Devalle, Ibid,p.70
[99] Ibid. p. 74.

provisions like the permanent settlement. The 'alien exploiters' gained added strength when they became Zamindars under the protection of a British legal and administrative system which conferred on them the status of land proprietors. The tribals functioned as agricultural labourers and as a reserve of labour force in the new division of labour. A creation of European origin, 'tribe' was one of the elements through which Europe constructed part of the Indian reality. The nineteenth century colonial Chotanagpur also witnessed the arrival of German Evangelican Lutheran, Anglican and Roman Catholic mission. Education given by the different missions, based on European values, contributed to the adivasis deculturation. Hence the initial perception of British rule became just. The questioning of the colonial system was controlled, and violent conflict avoided until it surged up with great force at the close of the century in Birsaite Movement. However, capital, goods, lands and market control were in the hands of the Zamindars. It is against this background that the history of Jharkhand's adivasis from the end of eighteenth century took shape. This history later led to an anti-colonial and ethno-national (regional) struggle. Even after independence the situation did not improve with the legal abolition of the Zamindari system. In the sixties and the seventies, class oppositions were translated into an intense class struggle in Bihar's countryside. There were incidents of violence against dalit and adivasi peasants. The Chotanagpur and the Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act could not contain money lending and land alienation."[100]

Before the incorporation of adivasi pre-capitalist societies into capitalist system through colonialism, internal social differentiation had already emerged. Susana had rightly viewed that "it is erroneous to place Jharkhand's adivasi societies within the framework of tribe as egalitarianism, primitive subsistence economy, autonomy and isolation are not to be found in Jharkhand. The collective holding of land gave way to privileged holdings in the hands of some like (Mundas, Pahans and Mankis). Among Mundas and Bhumi' some lineages became ruling ones. The development of a social division of labour, a differential distribution of the products of work, wealth and access to land gave rise to class divisions and to state formation in these societies."[101]

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[100] Ibid, p.74
[101] Ibid., p. 76

Jharkhand has been described as a melting pot, a haven for immigrating communities. Four waves of migration have been identified here. First, brought in the present-day tribe. The second wave of migration in the later Middle Ages brought in traders, warriors and peasants. The third wave, in the colonial period mostly in the nineteenth century with its influx of (aliens/dikus), money lenders that sparked off tribal rebellions. The fourth wave accompanying the growing urbanization and industrialization after 1951 was made of job seekers and workers which is still going on.

In Jharkhand, two types of settlement emerged. One inhabited entirely by members of one caste or lineage and the other multiethnic. The second type of settlement facilitated an economic interdependence of different communities in production which also formed part of the primitive jajmani system of services and obligations. Similarity of physical characteristics, incidence of inter – ethnic marriages and genetic convergence suggested a considerable measure of miscegenation not only between the Dravidian and Mundari speaking tribes but also between the tribes and backward communities and between tribes and backward Muslims in some villages of Chotanagpur.

There were also other forms of interaction. The tribes scheduled castes and peasants shared elements of material, culture, economy, life cycle ceremonies and festivals. The incoming communities also introduced new crops, techniques of cultivation, agricultural implements and concept of seasons (nakshatras etc.) which contributed to the growth of self-sufficient villages in pre-colonial times. They also brought with them and propagated – the popular forms of Hinduism. The earlier waves of immigrants particularly depended on the tribals and at a later point in history these social groups participated in the rebellions and movements led by the tribals.

The formative years when feeling of ethno regionalism took shape was the turn of the twentieth century. It saw the rise of "institutions designed to introduce reforms and stimulate development among the tribes mainly along denominational and even interdenominational lines. The leadership came from missionaries and students. The missionaries pioneered temperance movements to check the evil of drinking habits among tribals. They also formed cooperative societies to free tribals from the clutches of money lenders. In this effect the 'Roman Catholic Society' was

formed in 1906. The society had a considerable effect in 'civilizing' and raising standards of life, with promotion of education. There were institutional manifestations not of inter denominational but also of pan tribal solidarity for socio-economic uplift of the region as a whole. Voices were raised for forging unity of the people of Chotanagpur and for abolition of differences among Christian and non-Christian tribals, as also among all tribals, Munda, Oraon, Tamaria, Mahali, Lohara and Panre. The phase from (1920-38) saw the formation of tribal urban middle class. It was dominated by the activities of 'Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj'. It was led by tribal teachers and catechists and sought to secure employment for educated tribals, reservation in the services and legislative bodies, and formation of a sub-state joined to Bengal or Orissa. However, it remained essentially an urban movement. For the first time, a demand was made by the anthropologist S.C. Roy for the creation of either a sub-state joined to Orissa or a separate state. The next decade saw the rise of a militant movement under the Adivasi Mahasabha. Both the Samaj and the Mahasabha remained outside the mainstream of the nationalist politics and the freedom movement. The Mahasabha was led by professional political workers, some of them educated and articulate. It became a Chotanagpur movement extending over both urban and rural areas. It involved tribals other than the ones from Ranchi."[102] It demanded not the formation of sub-state but complete separation from Bihar.

The period from 1949 to 58 was the period that marked the peak of the ethnic movement. It saw the rise of Jharkhand party in 1950. The Adivasi Mahasabha was wound up. Behind it were the experiences of the failure of the militant movement and the framing of the Constitution of India. The tribals had been recognized as a special category through the Fifth and Sixth Schedules. The 'exclusion' thus ended. The census of 1951 showed that the tribals were not a very large community and they ceased to be a majority in the Chotanagpur region. There was during this time, a transition from ethnicity to regionalism as a formative factor was witnessed in the movement.

Slowly the ethnic question died down from the late 1950s and Jharkhand became an overarching regional issue cutting across different sections of population.

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[102] Ibid, p.26

Taking the case of ethno regionalism forward it is thus believed that "the colonial rule prepared the ground for the popular search for a territorial identity of the region in accordance with the demand of their political autonomy. The leaders of the Adivasi Mahasabha picked up the cultural name of Jharkhand to identify the region politically even before they formed the Jharkhand party in 1950".[103]

As already stated, Jharkhand could not get the political recognition of a 'tribal state' as the post-independence category of scheduled tribes was not in majority in all districts of the area. Cultural identity of Jharkhand was determined by the way of life of its indigenous people particularly the Austro-Asiatic language speaking and Dravidian language speaking people. These were the early settlers who assumed their identity of the Adivasi (first settlers). Besides, there were some Hindus lower castes that also spoke Indo-Aryan languages but were culturally integrated with the rest. For the past few hundred years, "the Adivasis of this area lived in a symbiotic relation with various artisan and service castes, referred to as 'sadans', who now accounted for up to 50 percent of the population. In the many revolts in the area, the sadans too participated in large numbers. The symbiotic relation between the adivasis and the sadans has resulted in the creation of a composite culture. Even where the adivasis have long ago taken to settled agriculture (Santals, Mundas, Oraons and others) they however retained a considerable element of gathering of forest produce in their economic life. K.S Singh points out that the " state formation was a feature of the Dravidian tribes (Chero and Nagbanshi) where the land had been made into private property, and not of the Kolarian tribes (Santhal, Munda, Ho) where the land continued to remain the property of the clan. Among the Kolarian tribes there developed only dominant lineages and not a kingdom. There was lack of endogenous state formation and the state machinery remained alien to Jharkhandi society. When the British for the first time established an administrative machinery over the area, the intermediaries like traders, landlords, administrators, clerks, policemen were largely

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[103] Das, Arvind, "Jharkhand's Roots: Tribal Identities in Indian History", in S Bosu Mullicks "The Jharkhand Movement: Indigenous Peoples' Struggle for Autonomy in India, IWGIA, 2003, p. 188.

from outside leading to the identification of 'dikus' (meaning outsider) with exploiter." [104]

Jharkhand is a "mosaic of diverse but related tribes like Munda, Oraons, Santhals and many others as well as a number of nontribal ethnic groups like Kurmi, Mahato, Momin (Muslim weavers), and Scheduled Castes etc. The region is thus an ethnic aggregation of tribal and nontribal cultures. Most of these tribes and non-tribal groups do not as yet have written languages or a common literary tradition. But they are rich in folklore and around this a common culture and literary tradition have taken shape. All these ethnic groups who belonged to the region, non-tribal as well as the tribes, have suffered the kind of economic exchanges at the hands of outside exploitative elements. These ethnic groups have much undiversified economy with low technology productive base concentrated exclusively in agriculture and primitive manufacture. There is one very interesting point asserted here by Javed Alam that why these various ethnic groups did not assert their ethnicity? Why did they not get assimilated into the adjacent advanced national formation? And why is it those ethnic boundaries collapsed and the diverse people demanded recognition as a separate national group with a state of their own?" [105]

According to Javed Alam, "Jharkhand from the beginning of the colonial period witnessed massive popular revolts. The earlier outbursts were led by the rulers against the British efforts to assess land revenue or evict tribal chiefs from the land. Starting within individual tribes, these outbursts often spread to other groups for example, - Great Kol Rebellions (1819, 1931-32), the Santal Insurrection (1850), Birsa Munda Rebellion (1895). These were directed against the depredations of traders, merchants, money lenders, and landlords and so on and were fueled by a sense of exasperation and loss of identity. They were inspired by individuals like (Singh Kanhu and Siddhu from the Santals, Birsa Munda among the Munda tribe). However, none of these were revivalist, spiritualist messianic or characterized by upward mobility. They were purely agrarian movements seeking emancipation from

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[104] Nathan Dev, "Jharkhand: Factors and Future" in R.D Munda and S Bosu Mullicks, "The Jharkhand Movement: Indigenous Peoples' Struggle for Autonomy in India, IWGIA, 2003, p. 121.
[105] Alam Javed, "The Category of 'non historic nations" and Tribal Identity in Jharkhand". in R.D Munda and S Bosu Mullicks, "The Jharkhand Movement: Indigenous Peoples' Struggle for Autonomy in India, IWGIA, 2003, p. 195.

the agents of traditional capitalist accumulation. From early twentieth century, the style of politics changed. Ordinary people were drawn into constitutional politics involving regular meetings, drafting of resolutions, memoranda coupled with social reform and welfare activities. Hence slowly, inspirational politics was replaced by institutional modes. There was greater emphasis on intra and inter-tribal units as well as alliances between tribal and non-tribal forces. It gave rise to trans-ethnic political platforms culminating in trans ethnic unity. Diverse ethnic groups moved together with a demand for recognition as a distinct group. The social existence of these diverse indigenous people was marked not simply by the absence of caste divisions, but more so by distinct concepts and practices on a whole range of specific life situations. Opposition to the outsider – exploiters has been one of the primary sources of unification which had cut across ethnic identities between tribals, Kurmi-Mahato peasantry, Muslim weavers etc. Thus, the identity of Jharkhandis was counterpoised against that of outsiders. This feature had provided the necessary psychological basis for the national/regional dimension in the growing self-awareness of the people."[106]

As had been discussed already the past revolts had also highlighted the protest in the areas of autonomy, protection of land etc. It was this all-embracing quality of tribal protest against the nontribal intrusion that kept the movement alive. G. Aloysius opines the tribal situation in Jharkhand as " a classic situation of a subaltern movement against the dominant classes, locked up in an ideological struggle for hegemony. The struggle of the subjugated people towards change in the status quo takes place within the overall dominance of the ideology and control of the ruling groups. The dominant ideology forever tries to maintain its hegemony by strengthening its moral and intellectual dominance over the rising and struggling subaltern ideology for change. The dominant ideology opposes the latter by posing as a superior, more acceptable and universal ideology to be received by all sections of the society. The former blunts the militancy of the later by a number of options open only to it. The former accommodates the latter when it is not possible to suppress it totally into its own discourse and idiom by conceding superficially and partially to the insurrectionist knowledge and ideology; and the former even takes up the causes of

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[106] Alam Javed, "India: Nationality formation under retarded capitalism" in "Ethnicity Identity, Conflict and Crisis", ed. ARENA Press Hong Kong, 1989, p. 64

the latter naturally in a twisted and selfish manner to thwart the real aims and objectives of the movement."[107]

According to him, "the Jharkhand movement started with the aim to preserve, strengthen and assert distinct ethnic culture, identity, values, history and independence but in the course of its long history and existence it slowly and steadily got transformed into a movement for the 'development' of the tribals. It is believed that this was the first ideological victory of the dominant community over the tribals. Early years of the movement had an implicit sense of superiority in the collective and cooperative way of life of the tribals. Whenever the movement became militant the government responded in terms of development. The onslaught of this developmental discourse within the autonomy movement was significant. From self-determination based on confident and proud self-identity to imitative development as the goal of the movement, there was a significant concession on the part of the tribals in the war of positions between the two contending ideologies. This transformation did not however take place in vacuum. It was rooted in the existential life conditions of the people through all pervasive deprivation and dependence. This is how the long-cherished goals of independence and identity got sidetracked. The ascendancy of 'development' over 'autonomy' of the tribal way of life within the ideology and practice of the Jharkhand movement opened up several avenues for penetration by dominant ideological thinking. The shift in the concept from development of the people to development of the region became a platform for major onslaught in the tribal movement. The tribal groups were already a minority in the tribal areas. The demographic situation also changed in the area from the 1833 when Regulation XIII gave tribals autonomy from the general laws. Then the 'area' and 'people' were more or less coextensive. The tribals were an overwhelming majority and then ethnic issue could be addressed from the 'area or territorial' platforms but in the last seventy years there were momentous demographic changes through in migration of non-tribals and out migration of tribals that reduced tribal population to a minority (27%). Against this vast demographic change, ethnicity and regionalism became two distinct and different phenomena. The meaning of ethno regionalism that was realized for so long

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[107] Raj A.L., "Ideology and Hegemony in Jharkhand Movement", EPW, February 1, 1992. p. 210.

marked a shift in emphasis. Political thrust of the movement indicated a change that was a sort of concession and compromise."[108]

In the words of G Aloysius, "political and developmental discourse shifted from communities to area. At the level of political practice, it was believed that unity of the people of the entire backward area would strengthen the movement. In this way ethnicity was contained and regionalism got encouraged in two ways: one which placed priority on the nationality question- that but for a handful of exploiters, the entire people of Jharkhand were denied their nationality rights so the unity and mobilization of all the people of Jharkhand irrespective of their language, caste, tribe etc. was encouraged in the struggle. The second formulation was to discover a sort of political or proletariat nationality wherein the organized workers of the industrial centers of Jharkhand would combine with the rural masses to form and achieve a socialist Jharkhand. Implicit in both formulations was the denial of 'tribal nationality' as a priority within the movement. While the former brought the tribal movement within the broad democratic, progressive movement based on regions, the latter stressed the need for a 'class' framework. Both were the variants of the same phenomenon – reduction of ethnic consciousness and progress into a regional or class consciousness. The movement slowly camouflaged the contradiction between the tribals and non-tribals. In this way the status quo was preserved and finally it sought to confuse and blunt the sharpness of the all-pervasive ethnic exploitation that had given birth to a struggle for freedom and autonomy. Thus, a nationality was constructed on the basis of region. Region was invested with a nationality based on the memories of historical tribal occupation of entire Jharkhand. Hence the meaning, focus, aspirations expectations of people of the region changed over time. The issues that demanded attention was not of tribals and non-tribals, instead that of local and outsiders. It was not asked what power or autonomy the tribals would have in the new state rather it was asserted that the Jharkhand movement was not only for the tribals but for all living in Jharkhand. Ethnicity in all its manifestation was shunned for regionalism, issues of development etc. The raison d' etre of this concept was supposed to be that most of the people living in this area were anyway backward, poor and neglected both by the state and central governments and hence their existential

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[108] Ibid, p.209

situation could well be described as a nationality. The ethnic consciousness was neutralized and the movement from being a pan ethnic became a regional one".[109]

In the words of S. Devalle, "during its long years of existence, the movement itself did not throw up any important tribal intellectual who could speak for the movement or ideologise the struggles and aspiration of the tribal masses. Several attempts were indeed made by the educated tribals to put down in writing some concrete situation or incident, biographical sketches of heroes like Birsa or Siddhu. These indigenous attempts unfortunately were too few and were informed by a 'tribal style' of writing. In the context of Jharkhand, conditions were always favourable to the dominant communities. The examples of the intervention of the British more often to side the Zamindars, the expansion of industrial, developmental and administrative activities and the large scale immigration of non-tribals into the area, economic scarcity and famine leading to equally large scale emigration of tribals from the area, the overall imitative way of life imposed on the tribals by the advanced communities, spread of education as well as the rise of a new class of tribals who acted as a bridge between the tribal masses and dominant communities and overall compulsions of electoral politics and pressure of economic necessities under the changed conditions. Thus, Jharkhand movement widened its base due to the participation of a large number of non-tribals. This quantitative expansion also led to this qualitative dilution of the movement. The nontribal entrants were not from the working class but money lenders and contractors. They were the local leaders, and, on several occasions, they were more powerful and manipulative. Slowly the issues and problems connected with the historical and ethnic relationship and exploitation were abandoned. Rather than addressing the issues of discrimination of tribals in every sphere of sociopolitical life, continuing ever increasing tribal land alienation, mahajani exploitation in village bazaars, dominance of regional and national languages and culture over tribal etc., the focus became the educated and middle class tribals. A general paucity of issues could be noticed. This new middle class substituted the traditional rural forces. With the newfound urban emphasis, the movement started to accommodate the aspirations and interests of the nontribal majority in the towns."[110]

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[109] Ibid. p. 210.
[110] Ibid, p.150

In the words of Devalle, "the ever-burning problem of the tribal masses, was no more the foci of the movement. Even in mass displacement of tribals for developmental projects less opposition was visible. This indicated a definite trend within the movement. The movement geared towards the interest of a small section of vocal and educated tribals whose interest was distinct from that of the masses. It was this sectional interest among the tribals that contributed much towards the inclusion of and adjustment with the nontribal communities. Corresponding to the in migration of the non-tribals and their interest there was the out migration of the tribal masses from the movement. Ho, Munda and Santali traditions, aspirations and struggles were no more the vital force of the movement. The whole spectrum of the nontribal interests made significant inroads within the resistance movement taking the initiative and militancy away from the exploited tribal masses. The influence of Western education and Christianity had been instrumental in the development of an urban and rural adivasi petty bourgeoisie. The adivasi petty bourgeoisie reformulated the basic ideology that shaped the political line earlier. Jharkhand party belonged to this political tradition. Although different sectors of the indigenous petty bourgeoisie differed on formal points in their formulation of the Jharkhand project, there were commonalities in their perceptions of social reality. They formed the group of reformists ethnicist. The path followed by the reformist ethnicists was one of political compromise sought through reforms within the existing socio-economic and political framework. They avoided any substantial questioning of the system and direct confrontation with the state except on the question of a separate territory. The adivasi petty bourgeoisie became the spokesman for all the tribals. The reformist ethnicist position repeated time and again the old ideological discourse synthesized in the exclusive demand for a separate state. This position gained strength in the later phase of the struggle. And the formulation of Jharkhandi identity among the labouring people and ethnic lines faded away."[111]

During this time the movement witnessed ethnic confrontations. The members of the adivasi elite claimed solidarity on ethnic grounds. To explain it further in the words of S. Devalle, "the petty bourgeoisie presented two nonintegrated levels of social consciousness. First, they were aware that they belonged to subordinated ethnic groups. Second, as a transitional class, they acted as a dominant

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[111] Ibid, p.151

sector vis-à-vis the lower sectors of their own ethnic groups. By not acknowledging the class character of exploitation and its links with ethnic differentiation, the adivasi petty bourgeoisie tended to accommodate itself to the expectations of the ruling classes. In their view, the separate state was for the people of Jharkhand, tribals and non-tribals. Jharkhand became a nationality. Part of Jharkhand's history and cultures have been selected and reformulated to legitimize a political discourse based on ethnic referents and to call for a broad ethnic solidarity. Through cultural revivalism and invented traditions, the reformists codified and fixed ethnicity following their class needs and interests. Jharkhand appeared as a region where exploitation and ethnic subordination coalesced, and a dialectical movement developed. In the study of ethnicity and regionalism in Jharkhand, a historical perspective helped to understand the process of ethnic consciousness building. It also helped tracing the origins of dominant discourses, their meaning and correlation with ethnicity. Historical dimension provided contextual meaning to the analysis of the adivasi' political manifestations in Jharkhand."[112]

To quote Susana B.C Devalle, "Ethnicity cannot be understood unless issues of social differentiation, processes of class formation and the development of class conflicts are considered in the context of their articulation with processes of ethnic differentiation".[113]

With grant of statehood, the movement confirmed the basis of both regional state formation and ethnic self-determination of tribal masses. The Jharkhand movement also got drawn into the pure politics of national mainstream. The socio-political trajectory of the movement witnessed a huge transformation in its course of journey of a century. Hence ethno regionalism was vital to understanding the history of making of state of Jharkhand. Ethnicity, region, class, power and their mix have played a powerful role. Identity cannot be seen in terms of its conventional meaning of homogeneity of ethnicity, language, caste, religion, region etc. In the Jharkhand region, the language spoken by the oppressed and the exploited was the basis of their identity formation. The Jharkhand movement had a strong historical grounding. Issues changed with time but the movement gave an identity and consciousness to the people.

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[112] S. Devalle, Ibid. p. 152.
[113] Ibid. p. 233.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORY OF SHAPING OF THE IDENTITY FORMATION IN THE REGION: FROM PRESSURE GROUPS TO POLITICAL PARTIES

Administrative viability, exploitation of the tribals and of the mineral, material and forest resources by the outsiders, ethnic distinctiveness of the adivasis (tribals) are some of the basic factors that were responsible for the formation of the state of Jharkhand within the Indian Union. But also, there was a huge maze of political processes and factors, role of political parties and political leadership that accentuated the demand for statehood. Over a period of time, in the long history of the movement there was a sea change in terms of leadership, discourses on ethnicity, electoral politics, class and power, inter-tribal ethnic and political linkages and the questions of identity and regionalism. Nonetheless, ethnoregionalism was the central premise for mobilisation and demand of a state. Development and regional dynamics posed as additional grounds for demanding a separate state. With the passage of time, these issues became inextricably linked to the electoral politics of the region that guided the discourse on ethnoregionalism. However, it set a new narrative that shifted the locus standi from people to region. Here different political parties and political groups played a crucial role in shaping the dynamics of identity and its manifestation in different ways. Here is a look into the events and role of political parties that finally catapulted in the year 2000 with the formation of the state of Jharkhand.

According to Amit Prakash, "the dynamics of the interplay between the process of autonomous community formation and integrationist efforts by the state has to be examined before undertaking an analysis of the role that development issues have played in sharpening the identity in the region. To being with, while understanding the political discourse on regionalism and ethnicity in the Jharkhand region, it was observed that there were political activities in the Jharkhand region, led by members of the traditional elite groups since the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was manifested in spontaneous peasant uprisings and revolts against unjust agrarian relations like the Chotanagpur uprisings of 1801 and 1817, Barasat Birodha

of 1831, the Kol insurrection in (1831-32), the Santhal Hul (1855-57) and the Munda Ulgulan (1895-1902). The beginning of a political movement in the modern sense of the term in the Chotanagpur region can be traced back to the twentieth century. The Jharkhand movement and the related political developments began with the efforts of students at St. Columbus College, Chaibasa. J. Bartholmen and some Anglican missionaries established the Dacca Students Union in 1910 to deal with the problems faced by poor tribal students. The early activities of this organization were limited and ambiguous. It donned the multiple roles of a religious society, a cultural organization, a discussion forum and also student union. The Dacca Students Union organized religious discourses, discussions and seminars, staged plays and represented the interests of the students. Under the leadership of Bartholmen and Heward, the Dacca Student's Union was successful in mobilizing tribal students to demand better educational facilities, economic avenues and job opportunities etc."[114]

Looking at the unfolding of political events in Jharkhand through the efforts of political parties and pressure groups, at the outset is the brief history of Jharkhand movement. By 1918, "the question of constitutional reforms and protection and promotion of regional interests became dominant issues among the educated Christian tribals. The Dacca Student's Union was renamed as Chotanagpur improvement society. This new body championed the cause of adequate protection of the tribal population and their cultural identity and emphasized the pressing need to create avenues for rapid politico-economic advancement of the region. In 1928, a deputation of this organization met the Simon Commission and put forward what was perhaps, the first demand for the creation of a separate province in the Jharkhand area. In the year 1928 itself, the Chotanagpur improvement society was renamed Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj. The membership of this organization was limited to Christian and non-Christian tribals and no non-tribal could become a member. The aims of the Samaj were: securing reservation for the tribals in government service and legislatures; employment for educated tribals; removal of backwardness in Chotanagpur; and efforts towards finding avenues for the social, economic and political advancement of the Chotanagpur region. The Chotanagpur improvement society and the Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj were not very successful in mobilizing the entire population towards

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[114] Amit Prakash, "Jharkhand: Politics of Development and Identity", Orient Longman, New Delhi, 200, p. 64

large scale political activity but they, nevertheless, represented the earliest political organizations in this region. The political leadership of these organizations was unique in the sense that it was radical in its demand for the creation of the state of tribals. The period of the activity of these organizations, along with their radical and progressive ideas saw the emergence of social reform amongst the tribal population on the lines of the nineteenth – century Indian renaissance. These organizations glorified the bygone golden age of the tribes and stressed the need to restore that past. Also, the need was expressed to shun the undesirable features. The leaders of the Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj were dissatisfied with the urban and middle-class bias of their organization and were eager to make it a broad – based and a unified platform for the upliftment and advancement of the tribal society. Slowly they realized that the issue of landlessness amongst the peasantry was the pivotal issue that had to be sorted to mobilize them in the fold of the Samaj. However, of the features that severely restricted the effectiveness of the Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj was the fact that until the 1930s, this organization was limited to the Lutheran and Anglican Christians. The non-Christian tribal elements were not involved in their activities." [115]

The Adivasi Mahasabha

A temporary alliance developed amongst the pan-tribal parties in the Jharkhand region to contest the Ranchi municipality elections. Around this time in 1938, "the Adivasi Mahasabha came into being which aspired to create a pan-tribal solidarity to solve tribal problems. A major plank of this organization was to fight dikus in order to ameliorate the socio-economic and political conditions of the tribal people though the subtle aspiration was creation of a separate province of Jharkhand. Dikus referred to the outsiders, moneylenders and the exploiters in general of the tribal groups. At that time, Jaipal Singh entered the arena of tribal politics. Jaipal Singh was born at Takara, a village near Ranchi in a priest family of the Munda tribe. He converted to Christianity. He was educated at Oxford and was the captain of Indian Hockey team in Amsterdam Olympics 1928. Jaipal Singh's achievements in foreign land convinced the tribals of their abilities and soon he acquired a legendary stature. He came to be looked upon as an incarnation of Birsa Munda and was latter accepted as Marang Gomke (supreme leader) by the tribals. He joined the Adivasi

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[115] Ibid, p. 66

Mahasabha and became its president in the year 1939. The Adivasi Mahasabha represented a substantial advance in the tribal politics of the Jharkhand region. It commanded a wider social support base and claimed to represent pan – tribal interests. This organization was also supported by the Muslim league. Jaipal Singh and the Adivasi Mahasabha however did not become part of the mainstream nationalist politics. They supported the British war effort in World War II, and Jaipal Singh contributed to the recruitment of soldiers from the tribal areas with the fond hope that it would induce the British to look at their demand in a sympathetic manner." [116]

Gradually, led by educated and articulate political workers, "the Adivasi Mahasabha became a pan Chotanagpur movement holding sway in both rural and urban areas. It slowly started to demand a complete separation from Bihar and the creation of a separate state. At times, the Adivasi Mahasabha became militant in pursuing its goal but lost popular appeal. It was defeated in the election to the constituent assembly in 1946. The Adivasi Mahasabha demanded reservation of seats for adivasis in educational institutions and employment. This demand was extended to limiting all jobs in the industrial enterprises in the Jharkhand region exclusively for Chotanagpuris. The grievance that dikus were cornering all the plush jobs became a political issue. Jaipal Singh lost the 1946 election to the state legislature. The social base of the Mahasabha changed over the years. Until the 1950s, the membership of the Adivasi Mahasabha was restricted to the tribals (Christians and non-Christians) of south Bihar. However, around this time it was realized that to make the movement successful and to expand the cause of separate Jharkhand, non-tribal settlers in the region would have to be brought into its fold. The support of the non-tribal settlers was necessary to achieve the goal of a separate province. Marginalisation of tribals was an outcome of colonial policy in the region. Alongside tribal outmigration as labourers, there was a sizeable migration of skilled workers into the region to work in the industries. Soon these 'outsiders' who had settled in the region outnumbered the tribals by almost two to one. The political importance of the immigration necessitated the broadening of the social base of the Mahasabha." [117]

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[116] Ibid, p.98
[117] Ibid, p.99

The Jharkhand Party

The goals of this organisation were basically to accommodate non-tribal (sadan) population into the fold of the political organisation. According to Amit Prakash, "it was not an easy task to accommodate the non-tribal population into the Adivasi Mahasabha as it meant the loss of a major plank of political activity and mobilization. Simultaneously, without accommodating the non-tribal population, the prospect of a tribal state would remain impossible. Consequently, in its 1949-50 session at Jamshedpur, the Adivasi Mahasabha decided to rename itself the Jharkhand Party (JHP) and extended its membership to the non-tribal population as well. It also succeeded in securing the support of the Chotanagpur separation league that was powerful amongst the depressed classes, especially the Muslim depressed classes and the Miners' Association of Santhals. The Jharkhand Party became a full-fledged political party from 1950 onwards. The identity of the Adivasi Mahasabha was also preserved by retaining it as a cultural unit of the party. Jaipal Singh became the president of the JHP and Ignes Beck was appointed its secretary. The leaders of the party succeeded in retaining the essential premises of tribal heritage as the basis of their identity, and simultaneously managed to extend membership to the non-tribal elements." [118]

Hence, "the history of the JHP in some ways became the history of the translation of this essentially tribal identity into a regional identity that drew its uniqueness from the region's tribal heritage. Its cultural aspects were successfully construed to represent a geographical region instead of a specific social group. All the supporters of the JHP, tribal as well as non-tribal saw the tribal premise and symbolism representing them all. The JHP brought together various tribal denominations (Christian and non-Christian) within the region under a rather cohesive political platform. The Jharkhand movement gradually evolved into a full-fledged regional movement commanding support from all sections of the population. The JHP was thus successful in combining aspects of tribal culture and broad-based politics to put forward a viable political agenda. It drew upon the tribal symbolism to further people's demand. JHP allowed all tribal people membership in the party which added to larger mobilization of people in its fore. The redefinition of the dikus and their

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[118] Ibid, p.104

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relationship with the movement by the leaders ensured that the movement was strengthened by the support of the powerful money lending communities as well as the dikus. The JHP underplayed the anti diku stance for political and monetary support of the non-tribals. Hence the diku moneylenders and landed class became the influential political elite of the region." [119]

Therefore, "the support of the non-tribals expanded the geographical scope of the movement. From focusing on only the tribal pockets of South Bihar, the movement now began demanding the creation of a new province form the areas once under the Chotanagpur division, i.e., parts of the provinces of West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. The entire region that was covered by the Chotanagpur division during the British rule now came within the geographical scope of their demand. The leaders of the movement advanced economic, socio-political and cultural grounds for the creation of a new state. It was reiterated that linguistically, culturally and ethnically the whole region was separate and different from other regions. The entire region had been under similar kind of administration, during the colonial rule. Consequently, there were similar problems born out of alienation of land, out migration of the labour, in-migration of skilled industrial labour and incomplete economic integration. The redefinition of the geographical and societal scope of the movement resulted in a large following for the Jharkhand party. This expansion of the social base of the movement was an astute move. The tribal population in the region was a minority due to economic and concurrent demographic development.[120] The movement for a separate Jharkhand state lasted much longer than anticipated which would not have been possible without the inclusion of the various non-tribal groups. The 1952 general elections showed the Jharkhand party at the peak of popularity. JHP firmly established itself as the dominant political factor in the region. It gave the party bargaining power to lead intensive campaigns for the creation of Jharkhand. The tribal supporters led several demonstrations around the year 1955 at Ranchi and Dumka (Santhal Pargana district) before the States Reorganization Commission (SRC). The SRC around that time also faced counter demonstrations supporting the integrity of Bihar. The anti-Jharkhand camp accused the Jharkhandis of playing into the hands of Christian missionaries. The JHP relentlessly tried to

[119] Ibid, p.101
[120] Ibid, p. 103

mobilize the people on the issue of creation of a new state of Jharkhand. It sent memorandum to the SRC. The States Reorganization Commission did not get convinced about the cultural distinctness of the region. It had built its case on a purely linguistic basis of reorganization. The SRC viewed that the multiplicity of tribal languages did not permit the creation of new state in the Jharkhand region." [121]

The Jharkhand Party in a decade showed signs of decline. However, "a number of factors were responsible for the decline of JHP. The greater exposure of the people of the region to the government's development effort, the emerging split between the Christian and non-Christian sections of the population, the ensuing competition for development resources fractured the unity. Many national parties such as the Congress, Jan Sangh, Swatantra party and the Communist Party of India (CPI) became active in the region. These parties successfully deflected a section of the non-tribal voters from the JHP. The leadership of the Jharkhand Party were largely composed of urban professionals that had few agrarian based programmes in their agenda. Also, the government policies and development activities benefitted the Christians among the tribal population. The Christian population got western education in the different mission schools along with the benefits provided by the government. They emerged into a new landlord class and elite, consequently monopolising the political space. The JHP merged with the Congress after the 1962 election. The merger of the two parties was an act of political exigency that did not arise out of common aspirations on issues and outcomes. Merger was the outcome of the personalized politics that existed in the region. The merger of JHP with Congress encouraged factionalism and there was no consensus on the fate of the Jharkhand politics in the region. The 1967 elections marked the end of an era in Jharkhand politics. Since 1938, Jaipal Singh and the JHP had dominated the politics of the area and had fought for a separate province of Jharkhand. They did enjoy substantial political legitimacy in the region. This party became the fore runner to demand a separate state though it had limited participation of the masses. Factionalism became the hallmark of Jharkhandi politics. It was the single most important factor in the undermining of popular support for the Jharkhand political parties and shifting of the electoral support to INC and other national parties. The splintering of Jharkhandi

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[121] Ibid, p.104

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parties also ensured that they lacked the organizational strength to expand their political base to rural areas. The Jharkhandi parties operated mainly in urban areas and consequently, urban politics came to play an important role in the Jharkhand movement. With the growth of industrial enterprise in the region, an unprecedented in-migration of non-tribals took place in the region from the decades of 1970s onwards for specialized jobs in industries, steel plants and corporations. The speed of development activities in the tribal region was slow in relation to the aspirations of the population in the region. This led the radical politics to take shape in the region. The naxalite movement paved way that altered the character of Jharkhandi politics to a considerable degree. Left politics that originated in the industrial centres gradually began to make dent in the tribal politics of the region as well." [122]

Affected by more radical ideas, "the tribal organisations and other forums on the political landscape of the region began to lay greater stress on the political education of the party workers and the people at large. It was largely the leftist analysis of land relations and other agrarian issues. It meant linking local issues with all India politics, violence and militancy. The Marxist Coordination Committee (MCOR) headed by A.K. Roy also supported the JMM. The Jharkhand movement became successful in drawing the support of sizeable sections of the tribal and non-tribal population. The major leaders of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) were Shibu Soren, B.B. Mahto and Sadananda Jha. Under their leadership, the JMM activities were a mix of radicalism, social reform and cultural revivalism. On the socio-cultural front, the JMM organized a series of reform movements. It started a campaign to rid the region of the habit of liquor consumption as it led to growing indebtedness and consequent alienation of land. The JMM also championed the cause of illiteracy. There were night schools at the behest of the party to impart political education to people. The party also realized that the government credit institutions were not sufficient and there was need of such institutions in the villages. It implemented grain bank in villages from where peasants could borrow cash at nominal rate. Party also promoted collective farming. In areas of agrarian reform, JMM resorted to indirect action. There was widespread violence and anarchy witnessed in the region around mid-1970s. Efforts were made towards political mobilization based on leftist

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[122] Ibid, p. 108

ideology. The leaders of the movement took part in all democratic programmes of Jayprakash Narayana under the banner of Janvadi Sangram Samiti.They also retained their political identity in the form of Jan Sangharsha Samiti. Militancy that became the hall mark of Jharkhand movement in the 1970s was also responsible for the collapse of the movement. This was the period and the nature of Jharkhand politics that led to educating people on the issues of oppression and land relations. JMM incorporated broad based politics. The surviving leaders of the Jharkhand movement formed a united front which included the JHP, MCOR, JMM, The Communist Party of India (CPI), Birsa Seva Dal, Jharkhand Muslim Morcha, Hul Jharkhand Party and the Revolutionary Socialist Movement also aimed to secure urgent public policy measures to reduce the suffering of the masses. Mass movements were based on processions, blockades, gheraos, public meetings, propaganda, sit-ins and demonstrations. These methods were used to reclaim land for cultivation, to oppose new public sector enterprises set up in the region, opposing forest produce purchase policy and continuous struggle for restoration of alienated land rights to the tribal people. Under the leadership of the united front, this phase of the movement garnered participation of sizeable population." [123]

Around the year 1979, "the tribals of North Bihar formed an organization called Uttaranchal Bharatiya Samiti. This organization also opposed the exploitation of tribal population by landlords and moneylenders or the dominant community. The Jharkhand movement got support from all quarters. The movement garnered social and political legitimacy as well. Nevertheless, the beginning of the 1980s saw the emergence of cracks in the Jharkhand alliance that had forged ambitious programmes for the unity between the peasant and workers to widen the social base of the movement. The rift began with clash between the leaders on ideological issue. JMM was to set its foot in the electoral politics of the region. The changes in the demographic profile of the region had reduced the tribal population to a numerical minority. Consequently, electoral support of only the tribals was not sufficient in the electoral politics of Jharkhand where the demographic dividends did not favour the tribal parties even if they were a monolith group." [124]

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[123] Ibid, p. 109
[124] Ibid, p. 111

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Other Peripheral Parties and Organizations demanding Jharkhand state

In the history of Jharkhand movement, a number of political parties and organizations emerged supporting the demand for a separate Jharkhand state. This was evident from the fact that 47 different political parties and organizations represented two conferences held at Ramgarh in September 1987. During this conference Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee was formed. These organizations also expressed their solidarity with the oppressed and exploited Jharkhandi masses. Some of the political parties and organizations are discussed as following.

1.   All Jharkhand Students' Unions (AJSU)

It was often a matter of discussion among the students and youth of Jharkhand region that Jharkhand movement could not reach its goal. They were quite aware of the fast-changing situation in this region and that the people of Jharkhand were increasingly exploited, suppressed, oppressed, and discriminated against in all matters of their progress and development. They believed that if this situation continued, their very existence and identity would be endangered. These thoughts disturbed them, and they were anxious to do something to turn the tide of destruction in Jharkhand region. Students of Jamshedpur wanted to find out a way to get out of the difficult situation existing at that time, which was likely to worsen in the years to come. They looked for guidance to remove the hurdles in the way of the formation of Jharkhand state.

Talks continued among the students' leader like Suraj Singh Besra, Naresh Kumar Murmu and few others who met the then President of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), Nirmal Mahto. He inspired them to organize themselves on the lines of the All-Assam Students' Union which brought the Assam movement to a successful conclusion on 15th August 1985. This called for continued struggle and sacrifice. Under the guidance of Nirmal Mahto, AJSU was formed on 22nd August 1986, in the office of JMM, Sonari Jamshedpur. Immediately after its formation, its convener, S.S. Besra went to Assam to meet the leaders of the students' movement of Assam along with other leaders. A conference was to be held on 21st October 1986 in Adivasi Association Hall, Sitaram Dera, Jamshedpur. It was decided to invite Prafulla Kumar Mahant and GNLF Chief Subhash Ghising to the conference as distinguished guests. AJSU leaders visited Gorkhaland and held talks with GNLF leaders. They

offered to support each other in their respective demand for Jharkhand and Gorkhaland.

Different political parties demanding Jharkhand state, intellectuals and different student's union had been invited to attend the conference held in October 1986 at Jamshedpur. In the conference a decision was taken to obtain statehood. For this purpose, it was decided to build up the organization during the year 1987 and to struggle for the achievement of the goal by 1988. The main purpose of the conference was to unite different political, social, cultural and public organizations. This would expand the base of Jharkhand movement and intensify the demand through collective leadership. A decision on 'no Jharkhand, no election' was also taken in the conference. An agreement also was reached upon that AJSU would not be attached to any political party. It would work independently to unite the scattered forces of Jharkhand. The conference initiated the process for the formation of Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee in September 1987.

AJSU kept itself in the limelight from the very beginning of its formation. It undertook agitational programmes for the formation of Jharkhand state. Initially it was radical and pragmatic in its approach to the solution of Jharkhand problem. AJSU had asked all the parties which demanded a state to boycott elections. They approached candidates of reserved constituencies with an appeal for not filling their nominations. This party did not believe in any compromise as far as the demand for a separate state was concerned. To garner support of the rural masses the party chalked out programmes to reach the people and involved them in the movement for the acquisition of state. With the new strategy, this party united the tribals and non-tribals (Sadans) of this region by asking a handful of grain from each household. This created emotional attachment for the cause. AJSU cadre was to be drawn from village 'akhra' (dancing ground normally where villagers gather for meeting or settling dispute, celebrating festivals). There would be chain of akhras and they would be organized into Gram akhras, Panchayat akhras, Zilla akhras etc. Thus, the people of entire Jharkhand area were to be linked to the movement.

AJSU was very much committed to its objective of acquiring a state. Its effort along with other political party(ies) led to the formation of the Committee on Jharkhand Matters (COJM). The Central and Bihar Government reached an

agreement to form Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council on 27th September 1994. The period which followed kept AJSU leadership occupied in the assembly elections. After that AJSU almost slipped into hibernation.

2. Jharkhand Party (HORO)

After the merger of original Jharkhand party with Congress party, several parties bearing the name of Jharkhand were formed by different leaders indicating utter factionalism. Among them N.E. Horo has been the central figure in Jharkhand Party (H). Horo's support base was restricted to Khunti Sub-division of Ranchi district which was a Munda area. He derived political ethnic support. He has been an important member in the team of Jharkhand leaders who had been invited for talks and negotiations with the government.[125]

3. Jharkhand Raj Morcha

This organization came into being on the initiative of Lal Ranvijay Nath Sahadeo in 1968. From 1964 to 1968, he was associated with a splinter Jharkhand Party, possibly the Sahadeo Jharkhand Party formed by Harihar Nath Sahadeo, as General Secretary. He formed Jharkhand Raj Morcha at a time when factionalism prevailed in the world of the Jharkhand politics. During this time, several Jharkhand parties came into existence. Sahadeo's Jharkhand Party failed to remain in existence. The purpose of Morcha was to revive the old Jharkhand Party by involving the people, especially the intellectuals in the Jharkhand movement. Despite of all the efforts by the political leaders, there was lack of unity among the people to fight for the cause of Jharkhand concertedly. Morcha was mainly a non-political organization formed to bring the pro-Jharkhandi people together. Morcha failed in its effort, inspite of its active role through several meetings and conferences.

4. HUL Jharkhand Party

Hul was a familiar term in the Santhal (Santal) region of Jharkhand because of its association with the Santal resurrection led by Sidhu and Kanhu.[126] "After Jharkhand Party merged with Congress Party, some Santals formed a new Jharkhand Party prefixing Hul to it. Some prominent leaders were Edward Marandi, Sibu

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[125]William Ekka, Sinha, R.K, "Documentation of Jharkhand Movement", ASI, 2004 p. 105
[126]Ibid p. 107

Murmu, Kunjiram Tudu, Koleshwar Hembrom. They believed that after the merger of Jharkhand Party with Congress, the tribals had no party. Hence it became necessary to form Hul Jharkhand Party to keep the name of Jharkhand alive in the minds of Santhals. It started off as an important organization in 1964. This was the time when the Santhals were in the clutches of moneylenders. A system of usury was in operation in this region known as Mahajani. The tribals as well as backward non-tribals had to pay the Mahajans (Teli, Bania, and Marwari) in return of the loan that they undertook. The system worked in such a way that the amount of loan could never be paid back. Invariably, the debtor had to mortgage his land to the moneylender and at the end he was dispossessed of it. To regain the amount of loan, the moneylenders took away even the standing crops from the land of their debtors.

The poor were in helpless situation. The legal institutions also were not of much help to them. Hence, people organized themselves to fight the oppression of the moneylenders. Sibu Murmu and Edward Marandi organized the people and started their work from Bartali village. Here they started forcible harvesting of paddy crop. As a result, Hul Jharkhand Party gained immense popularity. It was registered as a political party and allotted jora patta (a pair of leaves) as its election symbol. In 1967 elections, five of its candidates won. In 1969 it won six seats and one of its MLA's was made excise minister in coalition Government of Bihar.

By 1972 the Mahajani system ended in Santhal Pargana. This was the time when the Hul Jharkhand party began to get disorganized. It had no future goals or objective though it supported the demand for a separate Jharkhand state comprising 22 districts. Hul Jharkhand Party struggled to remain in existence. Masi Soren and T.K. Rapaz kept it alive till 5th April 1991 when it merged with Jharkhand Kranti Dal to form that Hul Jharkhand Kranti Dal at Ranchi in Bari Park.

5. Jharkhand Liberation Front

This party was formed in late eighties with the only purpose of attaining the aim of the formation of a state by or before 1990. It supported the initial stand of All Jharkhand Students' Union (AJSU) that electoral politics was a hindrance to the formation of Jharkhand state. Therefore, it gave the slogan for sacrificing personal and party interest. The ideology of this party advocated that any talk about political, economic, social, cultural development, identity and justice in the region was futile in

the absence of a state. Jharkhand movement stood for all round development. Therefore, all the political economic social and cultural organizations should be involved in it. Jharkhand state cannot be realized by demanding it. The Government should be compelled to give it through non-co-operation movement. It laid emphasis upon the unity among the Jharkhandis. Green flag was the symbol of their unity and 'Jai Jharkhand' their slogan. Though Jharkhand was rich in mineral resources, its people were poor. Poor people were exploited, oppressed and dispossessed. Internal colonialism was established here. Jharkhand should be immediately liberated from it.

The central office of Jharkhand Liberation Front was inaugurated by a former MLA, Suryadeo Manjhi on 23rd October 1987 in Karandih, Jamshedpur. Its President and General Secretary were Bibhisan Birua and Jolges Lakra respectively.[127]

6. Jharkhand Kranti Dal

The Jharkhand Kranti Dal was formed around 1981 with the active support of the Santosh Rana group of CPI (ML). It was said to be a frontal organization of Provincial Central Committee of CPI (ML). It was reported to have been formed by Lebachand Tudu. During the eighties it was quite active in Debra, Gopiba, llavpur belt of Jhargram and Midnapur – Singhbhum border. In this area the demand for Jharkhand state got very good support from the people. At one time, it was a stronghold of naxalite movement. After a brief while the activities of Jharkhand Kranti Dal shifted to Bano – Lachragarh area of Gumla district due to the association of William Lugun with it who became its general secretary in 1986.

The ideology, intentions and programmes of Jharkhand Kranti Dal evident from the resolutions adopted, opinion expressed in its meetings and conferences, was briefly to launch an armed movement for a separate state. This party wanted to put an end to the oppression of the downtrodden people of Jharkhand by government, capitalists, industrialists, businessmen and landlords.

Jharkhand Kranti Dal wanted to protect Jharkhandi language, culture and identity. It demanded restoration of alienated tribal land. It believed unbalanced development policy of the government has ruined the Jharkhandis. Construction of

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[127]Ibid p. 112

dams and factories had dispossessed them of their land and displaced them. Land and forest which are the chief sources of peoples' livelihood have been taken away from them. Employment was denied to them in the big industries set up in this region. Therefore, people were facing poverty and hunger. This party gave a call to the people to preserve their cultural identity and existence and intensify their struggle for a separate state. It demanded a Jharkhand state of 22 districts.

7.   Jharkhand Janta Parishad (JJP)

Jharkhand Janta Parishad was formed on 11th March,1984 with 31 members. Rajkumar Verma was made its President and Sitesh Sharma its convener and working President. Sharma represented this (JJP) formerly a non-political organization in the Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee. Though the Parishad was not very actively associated with Jharkhand movement, Sharma was a staunch supporter of the cause. When Janta Party President Subramaniam Swamy had come to Ranchi on 4th May 1989, he was honoured as the Chief Guest in the meeting of the Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee. Swamy announced his support for Jharkhand movement. He deputed Sharma, who was at that time General Secretary of Janta Party of Bihar to work for the formation of Jharkhand on behalf of this party.

About a month before the Parliamentary election in 1989, Sharma had arranged a meeting of such national leaders as V.P. Singh, Chandra Shekhar, Devi Lal, Subodh Kant Sahay, Maneka Gandhi etc. with Ram Dayal Munda, B.P. Keshri, N.E. Horo, S.B. Mullick, Santosh Rana and others of Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee at Ranchi. The Jharkhand leaders had met them with a view to enlisting their support of Jharkhand movement. They were assured by the national leaders that they would discuss the Jharkhand issue in a meeting at Chaibasa before committing themselves to support Jharkhand movement.

8.   Jharkhand Budhijivi Manch (Jharkhand Intellectual Forum) JBM

JBM was formed in Hazaribagh on 15th November 1986, the birthday of Birsa Munda, in a meeting of some local people. A.D. Nandi was elected President of the Manch. Before this a meeting of the students and intellectuals had been held at Jamshedpur by the AJSU in October 1986. A similar meeting had been held in Giridih also. Such meetings were forerunner of the idea of the setting up of the JBM.

Immediately after its formation it organized a meeting of intellectuals, politicians and leaders of cultural, social and literacy organizations associated with the Jharkhand movement in Hazaribagh. This also paved the way for the formation of Jharkhand Coordination Committee.

The objective of the Manch was to create awareness among the people of Jharkhand about what it meant to have a state. The very existence of the people depended upon the formation of a state. In the past people had lent emotional support to this cause. With the efforts of this Manch, people supported the cause rationally through meetings, seminars and workshops. Manch also tried to revive the language and culture of Jharkhand, the meaning of community festival as Sahrul and Karma. The indigenous society of Jharkhand practiced an egalitarian culture with no concept of hierarchy as in Hindu society. People established kinship relationship with each other irrespective of their caste, tribe and religion. Slowly with transgression from other cultures and people there was huge dilution in the traditional practices like use of archery, class identity, spoken dialect etc.

According to JBM, unless the people have control over their economic resources and until their economic condition improved, people of the region won't be able to protect their identity and culture. Trade, employment, professional institutions, educational institutions all had a monopoly of the outsiders. Through political power in the form of a separate state people would improve their economic condition. For an all-round development, a separate state was imperative.

9.   Jharkhand Quomi Tehrique

It was a Muslim organization formed to associate the Muslims with the Jharkhand movement. It was formed on the initiative of Khalique Ahmad, Farooque Azam and Nazam Ansari in 1987 after several informal meetings of the Muslims. They wanted to support Jharkhand movement and also wanted to benefit from it. According to the leaders of this party, their continued support to the Congress Party did not bear much fruit for them. They remained educationally backward and economically poor. Political parties gave them false assurances and used them as vote bank. Hence, they decided to support the Jharkhand movement. They found several commonalities with the oppressed and exploited people of Jharkhand. The members

of this party felt that if Jharkhand state was formed, they could live peacefully without any fear of communal violence.

This organization strived towards developing economically and making progress along with the oppressed and exploited people of Jharkhand. An attempt was also made at different places to gather Muslim support for Jharkhand movement through this organization. This organization became a constituent unit of Jharkhand Coordination Committee. It sent ten proposals to the JCC related to religious security, non-interference in religious and personal law and regarding educational and economic development. The proposals of Jharkhand Quomi Tehrique were accepted by the Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee.

10.   Sadavasi Sadan Sangh (SSS)

This organization was formed on 9th June 1969 for socio-economic development of the sadans (original non-tribals) of Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana. Sangh strived towards making the same facilities available for the sadans that were enjoyed by the Scheduled Communities under the constitutional provisions. It argued that the tribals and sadans were a common lot. The sadans were also exploited in the same measure as that of the tribals. Their socio-economic conditions were as bad as that of the tribals. Also, in some respect i.e., education and job reservations the tribals were ahead of the sadans. Economically, culturally and in many respects, they identified themselves with the tribals. To seek justice for the sadans, this organization demanded reservation for them in proportion to their population in Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana. It claimed that the sadans were a sizeable 60 to 65 percent of the population of the area.

Formation of a separate state would have provisions for safeguarding the interests of the sadans. Hence, it supported the movement and its demand of a separate a state consisted of only 14 districts of Bihar. It called a bandh on 25th January 1990 for fulfilling its demands. There was another organization of sadans known as Sadan Vikas Parishad. Its objectives were like (SSS). It also submitted a memorandum to the Central Government on 4th September 1989.

The parties and political organizations studied above were region specific and limited in their scope. They could not transcend all groups and

homogenize people across regions in Jharkhand. Goals were specific and local. None of the efforts by the political organizations could culminate towards the goal of a separate state. Political parties of different hue could not get their efforts to precipitate into the demand of a separate state.

There was emphasis on greater political mobilisation and organization of the people in the region. Around this time with greater emphasis on tribal land relations and the general exploitation of the tribals, the demand for a separate state got pushed to the background and focus shifted to end all kind of exploitation – industrial and agrarian. Political activity centered on securing more opportunities for the tribals in terms of seats in educational institutions and jobs in industrial enterprises, as also restoration of alienated land.

Role of JMM in the demand for a separate state

Left politics in the region had its backdrop in the caste politics of Bihar, Shivaji Samaj was an organization of the Kurmi caste association basically a social reform organization. It sought restoration of land which had been alienated during the process of industrialization to the Kurmis. Shivaji Samaj also highlighted the backwardness of the region. An alliance was forged with the Santhal population of the region that came to be known as Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) in 1972.

"The movement in this phase became divided again. The Jharkhand alliance split into the pro-right JMM led by Shibu Soren, Suraj Mandal and Hakim Prasad. The pro-communist MCOR was led by B.B. Mahto and A.K. Roy. The Jharkhand party almost disappeared. However, Soren emerged as the undisputed mass leader in the region. The JMM in this period maintained close alliance with the Congress. Shibu Soren remained the symbol of the articulation of the aspirations of the masses. JMM broadened the definition of Jharkhandis beyond the Scheduled Tribes. It defined the people of Jharkhand as including all those who resided in Jharkhand including tribals, Harijans, Kurmis, Backward Communities whom it described as belonging to a common sub-nationality.[128] The JMM also sought alliance with the Congress in the 1980s. The Jharkhand movement became low key and fell into disarray. Huge

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[128]Chandra Kancha, "Why Ethnic Party Succeed Patronage and Ethnic Head Counts in India," CUP, 2004. p.16

amounts of development fund started to flow into the region under the TSP (Tribal Subplan) in the form of development grants, foreign project assistance and relief operations." [129]

The cracks that developed in the Jharkhandi movement by the early 1980s led to further splits in the movement. "The nomenclature of the Jharkhand parties marked a major transformation. There was competition between the two broad Jharkhandi political factions over the sharing and control of symbolic resources that led to the adoption of a constitution to demarcate a separate identity of the JMM. This constitution envisaged the role of the JMM as the leader in the all-round fight to drive out the dikus. The relationship between the tribals and non-tribals in Jharkhand were again redefined conceptually. Thus, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha presented itself as a radical Marxist party, fighting against internal colonial exploitation of the Chotanagpur region. Naturally, it not only demanded a separate state, but a state free from class exploitation. The leaders promised to make Jharkhand the first 'Lalkhand' (red state) in India. JMM also tried to recover alienated lands from moneylenders and big peasants in North Chotanagpur and areas where Jharkhand Party was not very strong. The agrarian radicalism of the JMM was combined with its role in cultural revivalism. The ancient practice of 'tribal self-government was partially revived. The 'baisi' (assembly) was revived in Santal Parganas, without pleaders or court fees, to deliver simple justice to the local people." [130]

With the passage of time, JMM widened its base, in Dhanbad, by embracing the mining and industrial workers. An attempt was made to bring the workers and peasants closer on a common platform. Before the advent of JMM, the movement was basically an adivasi platform, with non-tribal population being lukewarm in their response to the cause of the movement. The Morcha, for the first time, could project some non-tribal leaders like Binod Bihari Mahato, A.K. Roy, K.S. Chatterji and others with "considerable mass base and thus could shed its exclusively tribal character. The urban bias made way for the Marxist, radical and leftist components that primarily focused on the problems of grassroots. Development problems that became acute in the region sidelined the issue of autonomy. The increasingly leftist

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[129] Ibid, p. 124
[130] Ibid, p. 125

orientation of the Jharkhand movement around the 1980s was due to the weaking influence of the Jharkhand parties in the region. Land related issues also played a major role for the left parties to make inroads in the political landscape of the region. Some other related issues were, growing unemployment amongst the tribal youth due to land alienation of agricultural land and poor job prospects in the urban industrial complexes." [131]

By the seventh general election for the Lok Sabha, 1980, "Congress formed an alliance with Shibu Soren to gain ground in the tribal belt of Chotanagpur. The same year, Congress returned to power both at the Centre as well as in the state of Bihar. This signaled a virtual end to the militancy of Shibu Soren who gradually distanced himself from Binod Behari Mahato and A.K. Roy. Meanwhile, Bagun Sumbrui another important leader of the 'Horo' faction also joined the Congress Party. By this time the Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana Development Authority was formed in 1981 under the initiative of Kartick Oraon. The authority intended to reinforce the developmental process in the area, however failed to implement its resolutions effectively. Kartick Oraon, like both Soren and Sumbrui, also thought of fighting for the tribals' cause from within the system and preferred to join hands with the Congress. Thus, the Jharkhand Movement reverted to its infancy, with the dream of a separate Jharkhand state enjoying little practical value. In May 1980, a department of tribal and regional languages was opened in the Ranchi University. Soon the University, especially its tribal and regional languages department, became the nerve centre of tribal activities. Missionary agencies like Bishop Carey Institute, Bangalore and Oxfam provided finances for publications and other activities of the department. Thus, Ranchi University and its department of tribal and regional languages became a training centre for activists working under a few front organizations of the tribals like Chotanagpur Santhal Parganas Sangharsh Vahini, Chotanagpuri Intellectual Forum, Chotanagpuri Teachers Association, etc. A large number of cadres were also supplied to the All-Jharkhand Students Union after its formation in June 1986." [132]

In the eighth Lok Sabha elections held in 1984, Shibu Soren lost along with A. K. Roy and in the subsequent assembly elections of 1985, JMM won 14 seats, thus

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[131] Amit Prakash, Ibid, p. 118
[132] Ibid p. 119

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becoming a major opposition party in the Bihar legislature. In 1985, 52 members of the Bihar legislative assembly, representing the Chotanagpur region, under the leadership of Devendra Nath Champia, sent a joint memorandum to the Prime Minister demanding Central Administration in the Chotanagpur region.

In June 22, 1986 tribal students formed the All-Jharkhand Students' Union (AJSU) taking a cue from their counterparts in Assam. Prabhakar Tirkey, a student of Birfca Agriculture University, Ranchi, became the President and Suraj Singh Birsa, a student of Ranchi University became its secretary. The formation of the AJSU led to a rift between politicians and students resulting in further fragmentation of the movement. During October 19 to 20, 1986, a conference of students and intellectuals was held at Jamshedpur in which N E Horo and Ram Dayal Munda along with other prominent leaders took part. A demand was made in the conference to grant an independent status to AJSU. This was followed by another conference at Hazaribagh between December 30 and 31, where the old demand for a separate Jharkhand was revived and it was decided to launch a militant agitation to achieve the goal.

In the year 1975, The World Council of Indigenous Tribal People was founded. Under the aegis of World Council of Churches, in the Chotanagpur region, an Indian Council of Indigenous Tribal People appeared as a branch of the World Council. In August 1987, the council sent a delegation to Geneva to participate in the deliberations of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The delegation included A. K. Kisku from West Bengal representing the Santhal tribe, Bishop Nirmal Minz from Chotanagpur representing the Oraon tribe and Samar Brahma Chaudhury a MP, representing the Bodo tribe of Assam. Issues like the exploitation of the adivasis and right of self-determination under a separate Jharkhand state, were raised in the Conference.

The Jharkhand movement lacked co-ordination ever since the eclipse of Jaipal Singh. On August 8, 1987, the President of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Nirmal Mahato, got killed. This led to vigorous agitation and underlined the need for unity and co-ordination among different factions. The Indian Council of Indigenous Tribal People held a conference at Ranchi from October 17 to 19, 1987, where 150 delegates from eight states took part. It was decided in the conference to make a serious effort to bring all the tribal factions in India under one umbrella.

In September 1987, a conference was held at Ramgarh that was attended by 438 delegates representing 50 political, cultural, students' and women's organizations. Prominent among them were the Jharkhand Party led by N. E. Horo, the Binod Behari Mahato group of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, two factions of the Jharkhand Kranti Dal led by Santosh Rana and Satya-Narayan Sinha, the Indian People's Front, All Jharkhand Students Union, Jharkhand Liberation Front, MKSS and others. A 23-point programme was adopted in the conference to achieve the goal of a separate Jharkhand state comprising of 21 districts of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. A few Jharkhand bandhs, 'rail roko' agitations and Jharkhand March (March 1988) were organized, and a provisional government was formed.

The Soren faction of JMM demanded a reconstitution of the Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee, excluding non-political men like Kesri and others. In a meeting of the JCC convened by Kesri, to chalk out the future strategy for the movement, Shibu Soren stressed two points. First, since Jharkhand movement was a political one, JCC should be formed by political parties only. Secondly, if JCC comprises both of political and nonpolitical organizations, half of its members should be taken from the JMM alone, by virtue of its stronghold in the area. Kesri however did not concede to any of the demands and held that all the JCC members were coordinators of the Jharkhand movement, with equal status Kesri's leadership provided the movement with broadening of its base. The movement was no longer confined to tribal chauvinism but slowly included the 'Sadan' population of the Chotanagpur as well. A new wave of intellectual participation gave the movement some degree of maturity that lacked in the earlier phases. The movement came out of its emotional phase.

In a significant development by 1990, two factions of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha led by Shibu Soren and Binod Behari Mahato reunited after seven long years, at a joint convention of both the factions held at Dumari, in Giridih. In the 9th Lok Sabha Elections of November 1989 and assembly elections of February 1990, JMM emerged as the strongest Jharkhand group in tribal Bihar. It won three Lok Sabha seats and 19 assembly seats in Bihar. Interestingly, Bharatiya Janta Party which won 39 assembly seats got 21 of them from tribal Bihar alone. Thus, JMM got the third place after BJP and Congress.

Most significantly, in a major policy shift, the JMM accepted the proposal of BJP to confine the agitation for a separate Jharkhand state to the geographical boundaries of the Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas of Bihar only. A 'Jharkhand Vananchal Action Committee' was formed at a meeting held at Patna on July 19, 1990, with Shibu Soren as the Convenor of the steering Committee, having representation from even the Communist Party of India, apart from JMM and BJP.

After the Assembly Elections of 1990, the JMM won nineteen seats in the state Assembly and emerged as the strongest party in Jharkhand. The Janata Dal formed the government in Bihar under the leadership of Lalu Yadav. Meanwhile the Union Home Ministry constituted a Committee on Jharkhand matters (COJM) in 1990. "It comprised all the major political figures of the Jharkhand movement, irrespective of their party affiliation. COJM concluded that it was necessary to preserve and promote the cultural uniqueness of the region, but this was not enough premise for the creation of an autonomous state in the Jharkhand region. Even the Committee on Jharkhand matters (COJM) felt that there was a political consensus about regional autonomy in the Jharkhand region due to widespread neglect of the region in the development terms. It did not recognize the significant ethnic tribal component in the movement. COJM opined that The missionaries and the colonial officers treated the tribes and non-tribes as two separate categories. The hangover of this policy persisted even after independence for many years, even though the operation of market forces and of economy in general and the surfacing of underlying cultural processes tended to mitigate such dichotomous perceptions……. the distinction between the two categories became blurred and their perceptions of regional problems converged as both became victims of progress. From a cultural identity, the Jharkhand identity evolved into one that had as the primary basis of its articulation, the poor development profile of Jharkhand and relegated the cultural aspects to the background. The report of the COJM thus amplified the clear correlation which was seen between the demand for the creation of a separate state in the Jharkhand region and the poor performance of public policy since independence." [133]

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[133]Prakash, Amit, "Jharkhand Politics of Development and Identity", Orient Longman, 2000 p. 307

Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council

Laloo Prasad Yadav once again came to power in 1995. The Bill creating the Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council (JAAC) had already been passed in 1994. The JAAC and its activities could not satisfy the people of Jharkhand. The leaders of Jharkhand and its population aspired regional autonomy, but they got a regional development council of nominated members who did not really represented the people.

Demand of Vananchal by Bjp

The direct correlation between autonomy and development was emphasized in the resolution regarding creation of new states of Uttaranchal and Vananchal, tabled by Jagat Vir Singh Drona (BJP MP from Kanpur) on 5th March 1993 in the Lok Sabha. The resolution sought to recommend to the government that the two states (Uttaranchal and Vananchal) be created.[134]

This turned the tide in favour of BJP in the Jharkhand region. BJP became the first national party to offer a practical alternative to the demand for a Jharkhand state. "It pointed out that the political possibility of carving out a new state comprising twenty-five districts spread over four states was improbable due to the differences of opinion among the four states concerned. Consequently, the likelihood of creation of such a state was remote. Secondly, BJP argued that in such a scenario of continuing disagreement, development work in the region would suffer. Thus, BJP was also able to change the political discourse of the demand of the state since independence. It postulated that the region of Santhal Pargana and Chotanagpur was the real Jharkhand as far as the separateness and uniqueness of the region was concerned. The electorate and the political opinion accepted this approach. The BJP did recognize vanvasis as a societal group, but the undertone of this recognition was reminiscent of one strand of the colonial discourse which saw tribes at a lower level of evolution. By 1996, BJP had a sizeable following in the Jharkhand region. The JMM had also sealed down its stance of not settling for anything less than a state carved out of the four states concerned. JMM did not want to over emphasize the identity aspect since the political system had been unable to evolve mechanism to deal with such demands. Also, the

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[134]Ibid p. 312

'development deficit' argument was 'secular' and non-controversial enough to draw cross-party support."[135]

"The political dynamics of Bihar and the Jharkhand region changed very rapidly since 1997. The Chief Minister of Bihar was charged with corruption and got arrested. Janata Dal split and a new party called the Rashtriya Janta Dal (RJD) was formed. For this new RJD government to survive, the support of Jharkhandi MLAs was crucial. Consequently, the JMM MLAs supported the new government and in return secured the passing of a resolution in the Vidhan Sabha which recommended to the Union Government that a separate state must be created in Jharkhand. This resolution was passed on 23rd July 1997."[136]

The 1997 election resulted in the BJP led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) coming to power at the Centre. JMM did not win a single seat in the Jharkhand area while BJP won 11 of the 14 seats (with one going to the RJD and the two to the INC). Hence, the NDA fulfilled its electoral promise of creating a state in Jharkhand. Consequently, the Bihar Reorganisation Bill 2000 was passed by the Lok Sabha on 2nd August 2000 and after passage in the Rajya Sabha and receiving Presidential assent, the new state of Jharkhand was inaugurated on 15th November 2000.

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[135]Ibid, p. 340
[136]Ibid, p. 347

CHAPTER THREE

IDENTITY FORMATION IN JHARKHAND
THROUGH FIELD SURVEY

This chapter is primarily field study based and it maps the journey of ethno regionalism in shaping and challenging the organizations of power in the new state. It also studies the disparity in the development trajectory of the state. The methodology adopted is objective, based on empirical study where several extensive interviews and survey of 440 respondents are conducted across large sections of population, which includes tribal elites, policy makers, governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, politicians from across major political parties that have played a key role in shaping the state formation. There is also a huge collection of archival newspaper clippings of the year 2000, which helped to deduce the political undercurrent and underpinnings of the political process that unfolded the genesis of political formation in Jharkhand. The sampling is random. It is non-stratified.

Field work included collecting data from relevant institutions and an attempt was made to meet and interview as many relevant persons as possible. In the process it was possible to interview important political actors in the region across the political spectrum as well as the general population in both urban areas as well as rural areas of the Jharkhand region. These interviews helped to elicit the views of political actors and the general population to gain firsthand insight into the dynamics of development policy and the politics of identity in the region. Mostly all political players in Jharkhand from Members of Parliament, office-bearers of political parties to sitting MLAs were included in the interview, also the general population, political activists and government officials. The questions/questionnaires were divided into two modules. Some were open ended, and some were direct and simple to record the response of general population.

In the discussion on Jharkhand, here is a brief interlude to understand the ethnic identity formation in the region. These issues marked the crux of the thesis: -

The new state has been given to the people of Jharkhand in 2000 as a result of more than a century of struggle. Several revolts of the tribal people had a common enemy in the exploiter or the outsider whom they called 'diku'. The word 'diku'

signified the zamindars, the moneylenders and the people of dominant community. This region underwent certain identity formation due to contradiction between the adivasis and non-adivasis inhabiting the region. The colonial policy and the advent of Christian missionaries set in the formation of certain elite class who were exposed to western education. Initial demands of these people were only socio-cultural reform and not political autonomy.

The Jharkhand parties in Bihar used the term 'diku' very negatively attributing it a xenophobic character for the outsiders, the dominant community and whom they considered as exploiter. This resulted in their gaining popularity. Among the Jharkhand parties only the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha maintained a balance between the diku and non-diku population. All the people who came to reside in Jharkhand post 1950s were defined as 'Jharkhandi'. There were attempts towards cultural homogenization as well through diluting the demand as regional statehood rather than ethnoregional statehood. Nevertheless, the state was premised on ethnoregional demand and on questions of development. The field research testifies a strong undercurrent in favour of the ethnoregional specificity.

Ethno-regionalism in the Jharkhand region was the result of a long struggle by the adivasis of South Bihar to claim economic, political and cultural hegemony, from which they were displaced. Rise of ethno-regionalism in Chotanagpur and the Santhal Parganas was a consequence of internal colonialism existing in the area. According to Corbridge, the philosophy of tribal development in Bihar must be challenged. Again, the past and future of the movement should be gauged. He viewed that the economic and demographic transformation of South Bihar and unsuccessful state tribal policies must be taken into consideration while understanding Jharkhand politics. [137]

The Santhal leadership in the Jharkhand movement played a significant role in shaping the ethno-politics of the region. Shibu Soren was one of the prominent Santhal leaders, who had mass appeal in the region. His fight was against the exploitation of the rural masses by the dominant community. His struggle was for ethnic self-determination. Shibu Soren belonged to adivasi Santhal middle class community. Adivasi socio-political organizations were headed by middle class adivasis who had established platforms for socio-political mobilization on behalf of

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[137]Corbridge, Stuart. 1988, The Ideology of Tribal Economy and Society: Politics in Jharkhand, 1950-1980, Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 22, No. 1, p. 40

their communities. However, the adivasis who belonged to the economically and socially disadvantaged sections of society did not assert their identity towards accomplishing socio-economic advantages. The educated middle class among the adivasis benefitted most from the socio-political mobilization. The adivasi community had internal hierarchies and the upward middle class reaped most of the advantages. Main occupation was related to land in terms of agriculture and forest produce. Several of their religions, customs and others were directly related to the environment and land they inhabited. Once this land was encroached and they were displaced from it, varied forms of resistance gave rise to indigenous identities. Identity assertion of the adivasi was always in context of this 'other' non-adivasi and the contestation between the two. In fact, this was one of the key features of the Jharkhand movement. However, the characteristics and feature kept changing and evolving overtime. The movement, in its later phases that is post-independence, observed inclusion and assimilation of non-adivasis also into the evolving definition of Jharkhand identity.

The new politico-economic order set up the practical apparatus for the segregation of tribal communities by a special administrative regime. The objectives of the creation of the 'Excluded Tracks' and later the Scheduled Areas were two-fold. First, it gave the modern state the opportunity to manage resource rich forest areas which could anyway not come under the same administrative regime. Second, it prevented the tribal communities from falling prey to middlemen. While the first objective was fulfilled, the second could not be. However, a nexus between the administrative and the middlemen/business community developed overtime that prevented the tribal areas to develop. The tribal communities were maintained at the margins. They were basically craft and agrarian communities with non-settled practices. Being left out of the industrial and commercial development issuing from the economic pattern set up by the colonial administration, the ST communities' livelihood became more than ever linked to their natural environment. With the diversity and historical legacy of their socio-geographic situation obliterated and the focus mainly on the concentration of tribal population in the hilly forest region, Scheduled Tribes remained associated with forests and backwardness.

Tribes have suffered mainly because of this legacy of disadvantages which had been cumulative. These disadvantages have been demographic, historical, ethnic and structural. Structural disadvantages have economic, political, cultural and social

dimensions, resulting from the subordination of tribes after their incorporation into the larger social system.

Of all the tribal movements, movements for autonomy have drawn wide attention. Autonomy movements are an expression of the larger articulation of identity by tribals. Such movements have been widespread in the north-eastern region where they have been based on intense mobilisation. In other places like Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, the demands failed to take shape of organised movements. The factor that made the autonomy movement in Jharkhand sustainable was that the tribes in Jharkhand had a long history of struggle against colonial rule and outside exploiters. A long history of struggle helped the tribe to forge a shared identity despite differences. They continued to suffer exploitation and domination in the post-independence period as well. This served to further reinforce their sense of identity. In sharpening this identity, the role of a tiny but articulate middle class was crucial. It was the tribal middle class that experienced discrimination and domination most intensely in terms of access of the supposed benefits of development, employment, trade, commerce etc. This helped to keep the struggle alive. Further, increased communication among the middle classes in different places were facilitated by the growth of towns in the tribal regions. The strong sense of identification with their own language and culture sharpened the sense of difference between tribes and non-tribes.

It is observed that wherever there has been a loss of language and culture, the movement for autonomy has generally been weak. This sense of common identity was further strengthened by identifying with a distinct religion, especially Christianity. Christianity contributed to the vibrancy and vitality of tribal languages and cultures in many ways.

The movement for autonomy in Jharkhand was thus rooted in cultural differences and uneven development between tribes and non-tribes. The factors that we see in Jharkhand were absent in other parts of mainland India. The mark of identification of tribes such as the adivasis was undoubtedly important factor in the articulation of a distinct identity, but this was not sufficient for transforming it into a process of actual political mobilization. The case of Jharkhand suggested that pauperization and expropriation also lead to the emergence of an autonomy movement. When we compare Jharkhand with the political movement in the

northeast; the issue of autonomy has also been fought over most fiercely in this region. Here, the demand of autonomy had its genesis not so much in the marginalization of tribes as in the fear of losing their distinct language, culture, customs and traditions on account of the domination of an alien language and culture. Sometimes unprecedented demographic shift is also cited as a reason of loss of control over land, forests and other resources as well as cultural patterns of the region. The tribes in Tripura which constituted a majority unit before independence, became a minority after independence because of the exodus of Bengalis from former East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. Tribal solidarity is positively correlated with factors such as ecological and socio-cultural isolation vis-a-vis the core peasantry, a certain numerical strength to provide striking power, a certain level of literacy and education to provide elite leadership, historical experience of conflict etc. At the root of such movements lies a strong sense of identity politics. Autonomy movements by ethnic minorities have not been all the same nature, level and character. But mostly, they have been articulated in the form of demands for separate states.

These kinds of movements articulated and engaged in by the tribal people have been overall heterogenous and amorphous in nature varying in character and orientation. They have invariably tried to address a wide range of issues. In the words of Xaxa, "due to the diffused character of tribal society with different aspects interwoven, it becomes difficult to determine where one begins and the other ends."[138]

Jharkhand was premised on the tribal way of life and its separate heritage and culture combined with the poor development profile of the region. The efforts towards creation of new state did not meet with any noticeable success till the 1990s.The self-definition and articulation of the identity in this region also underwent a series of realignment in the progressive years. The political parties in Jharkhand as have been already discussed in the previous chapter, were basically confined to specific areas. The present Jharkhand as part of the Chotanagpur plateau, was not the solution to the age-old autonomy movement. The political and tribal identity was much vague in Jharkhand. There was infighting amongst several groups and parties. The way the state of Jharkhand was formed in 2000, it developed a strong ethno regional identity. Though factions and bickering amongst the progressive and potential parties led to dilution of the ethnic question. The movement that began with the desire for the

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[138] Tribal Committee report,2014, p.20

betterment of the tribal people had anti non-tribal component as well. However, the demographic reality of the region forced the leaders to modify the rules of exclusion.

Thus, we see that in the case of Jharkhand, region, language and ethnicity though distinct as concepts and categories have often coincided and overlapped with each other. Ethnic as a general term has multi-dimensional base and it covers vast dimensions like language, region, religion, nationality, race, caste, tribe etc. Tribe as a category was introduced in the post-colonial India to understand the complex Indian society but, the understanding of the meaning of tribe has vast connotation than those who lived in isolation from the dominant community.

The tribal population in India, though a "numerically small minority, represents an enormous diversity of groups. They vary among themselves in respect of language and linguistic traits, ecological settings in which they live, physical features, size of the populations, the extent of acculturation, dominant models of making a livelihood, levels of development and social stratification. Most of the tribal population is concentrated in the eastern, central and western belt covering the nine states of Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. About 12% inhabit the North and Eastern region, 5% in the Southern region and about 3% in the North-Eastern states."[139]

Groups and communities identified and enumerated as tribes during British rule came to be re-classified as Scheduled Tribes after the Constitution was adopted in 1950. The Constitution, as per Article 342, provided for the listing of these groups in the Schedule so that certain administrative and political concessions could be extended to them. Thus, a distinction was drawn in the form of a tribe as a social and cultural entity for politico-administrative category.

The Constitution did not define the criteria for recognition of Scheduled Tribes and hence the Lokur Committee was set up to look into the issue. The Committee recommended five criteria for identification namely (1) primitive traits, (2) distinct culture, (3) geographical isolation (4) backwardness, (5) shyness of contact with the community at large. However, some of these criteria carry forward certain paternalistic and pejorative connotations from the colonial era. Features associated with the idea of indigenous people have been questioned in South Asia as it

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[139]Tribal Committee Report 2014, p. 24.

assumes a theory of Aryan invasion. However, many tribal communities employ the term 'adivasi' (original inhabitants) as a political term of self-reference although this term is not recognized by the Government of India[140].

In acknowledgement of the marginality of tribal communities, several committees and commissions have been constituted over the years by the Government to look into the issues facing tribal communities. One of the first Committees set up in this regard post 1947 was the Elwin Committee, which examined the functioning of Multi-Purpose Development Blocks, the basic administrative unit for all tribal development programmes.

This was followed by the U.N. Dhebar Commission, constituted in 1960 to address the overall situation of tribal groups, including the issue of land alienation in tribal areas. The Lokur committee, set up in 1965, looked at matters relating to the scheduling of groups as Scheduled Tribes. It was this committee which delineated the criteria for scheduling, which continues to operate to this day. The Shilu A.O. Committee 1966, like the Elwin Committee addressed the issues of tribal development and welfare. The Committees constituted in the more recent years have been the Bhuria Committee (1991) and the Bhuria Commission (2002-2004). The Bhuria Committee recommendations paved the way for the enactment of the PESA Act, 1996, while the Bhuria Commission focused on a wide range of issues from the Fifth Schedule to tribal land and forests, health and education, the working of Panchayats and the status of tribal women. The most recent Committees have been the Bhandopadhyay Committee, which looked at development and governance in Left-Wing Extremist areas, and the Mungekar Committee which examined issues of administration and governance.

As per the Census of India 2011, the number of individual groups notified as Scheduled Tribes is 705. There is quantitative and qualitative data on the tribal population in relation to languages and livelihoods, density of forest cover and existence of mineral resources, and on-going conflicts. The tribes can be distinguished into five broad regional groupings based on ecological, social, economic, administrative and ethnic factors (although there are many overlaps)[141].

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[140]Ibid, p 26
[141]Ibid, p 35

1. Himalayan Region: It has three sub-regions: (a) Northeastern Himalayan region, (b) Central Himalyan region, (c) North-Western Himalayan region

2. Middle Region: It is constituted by the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh (including Chhattisgarh), where more than 55 percent tribal people of India live.

3. Western Region: It includes the states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Dadra & Nagar Haveli.

4. Southern Region: It is comprised of the states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala.

5. Island Region: The Islands of Andaman and Nicobar in the Bay of Bengal and Lakshadweep in the Arabian Sea.

There are many differences between these regions as well as differences amongst tribes of these regions. While the Northeast is often viewed as a singular and homogeneous entity, the region is highly diverse with over 200 tribes and sub-tribes, each of which have their own language, culture and political structures. Further, the tribes of the Northeast differ from tribes in other parts of India, particularly in terms of their historical relationship with the colonial and Indian State. The tribes of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, comprising 556 islands of which only a few are populated are also distinct.

The tribes can also be differentiated based on population size since communities like Gonds, Bhils, Santhals, Oraons, Minas, Mundas and so on have a population that ranges from one million to a little over seven million people. As against this, there are communities like the Andamanese Islanders and tribal groups such as the Birjia and Asur in Bihar and the Birhor of Madhya Pradesh who have a population of less than 200 persons.

The languages of India fall into four different linguistic families. These are Indo-European, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic and the Tibeto-Burman sub family of the Sino-Tibetan languages. Approximately three fourths of the country speak languages belonging to Indo-European family. However, only a little over one percent of tribal population speak languages of this family, the Bhil and Halbi tribes being the two main groups among them.

Table 1: "Total population of STs and proportion of STs in each state to the total state and national population"

S. No.	Name of the State/UT	Total Population	ST Population	% Of STs in the State to total State population	% Of STs in the State to total ST population in India
00	**India**	1210569573	104281034	8.61	--
1	Andaman& NicobarIslands	380581	28530	7.49	0.02
2	AndhraPradesh	84580777	5918073	6.99	5.67
3	ArunachalPradesh	1383727	951821	68.78	0.91
4	Assam	31205576	3884371	12.44	3.72
5	Bihar	104099452	1336573	1.28	1.28
6	Chandigarh	1055450	0	--	--
7	Chhattisgarh	25545198	7822902	30.62	7.50
8	D&NHaveli	343709	178564	51.95	0.17
9	Daman&Diu	243247	15363	6.31	0.01
10	Goa	1458545	149275	10.23	0.14
11	Gujarat	60439692	8917174	14.75	8.55
12	Haryana	25351462	0	--	--
13	HimachalPradesh	6864602	392126	5.71	0.37
14	Jammu&Kashmir	12541302	1493299	11.90	1.43
15	**Jharkhand**	**32988134**	**8645042**	**26.20**	**8.29**
16	Karnataka	61095297	4248987	6.95	4.07
17	Kerala	33406061	484839	1.45	0.46
18	Lakshadweep	64473	61120	94.79	0.05
19	MadhyaPradesh	72626809	15316784	21.08	14.68
20	Maharashtra	112374333	10510213	9.35	10.07
21	Manipur	2570390	902740	35.12	0.86
22	Meghalaya	2966889	2555861	86.14	2.45
23	Mizoram	1097206	1036115	94.43	0.99
24	Nagaland	1978502	1710973	86.47	1.64
25	NCTofDelhi	16787941	0	--	--
26	Odisha	41974218	9590756	22.84	9.19
27	Puducherry	1247953	0	--	--
28	Punjab	27743338	0	--	--
29	Rajasthan	68548437	9238534	13.47	8.85
30	Sikkim	610577	206360	33.79	0.19
31	TamilNadu	72147030	794697	1.10	0.76
32	Tripura	3673917	1166813	31.75	1.11
33	UttarPradesh	199812341	1134273	0.56	1.08
34	Uttarakhand	10086292	291903	2.89	0.27
35	WestBengal	91276115	5296953	5.80	5.07

Source: Census of India, 2011. (Note: Excluding 3 Sub-divisions of Senapati District of Manipur)[142]

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[142]Ibid, p 37

Languages belonging to Dravidian family are spoken by tribes such as the Gond, Khond, Koya, Oraon and Toda. Tibeto-Burman languages are spoken by the tribes of the Himalayas and North-east India. The Austro-Asiatic family of languages is spoken only by tribals in the country like the Santhal; Munda and Ho. Scheduled Tribes communities live in about 15% of the country's area, in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains and forests to hills. A large proportion of Scheduled Tribes are collectors of forest produce, hunter-gatherers, shifting cultivators, pastoralists and nomadic herders and artisans. Traditional occupations of tribal groups may range from honey collections to hunting small animals to engaging in metal work and rope making.

Most tribal groups work in the primary sector and are heavily dependent on agriculture either as cultivators or as agricultural labourers. At the same time, a number of Scheduled Tribes no longer follow their traditional occupations and work as labourers on plantations or in mines and factories (in many cases since the nineteenth century). Displacement and enforced migration have led to an increasing number of Scheduled Tribes working as contract labourers in the construction industry and as domestic workers in major cities. Over 80% of the Scheduled Tribes work in the primary sector against 53% of the general population, primarily as cultivators. However, the number of STs who were cultivators, declined from over 68% to 45% in 2001 whereas the number of tribal agricultural labourers increased from over 20% to 37%. This demonstrates increasing landlessness among tribes. This trend has intensified.

Table 2: "States with highest and lowest proportion of Scheduled Tribes"

| Top5 States/Union Territories		Bottom5 States/Union Territories	
Lakshadweep	94.8%	Uttar Pradesh	0.56%
Mizoram	94.4%	Tamil Nadu	1.1%
Nagaland	86.5%	Bihar	1.28%
Meghalaya	86.1%	Kerala	1.45%
Arunachal Pradesh	68.8%	Uttarakhand	2.89%

Source: Census of India, 2011.

Table 3: "Distribution of ST Population by State"

S.No.	State	% Of national ST population	S.No.	State	% Of national ST population
1	MadhyaPradesh	14.7	8	AndhraPradesh	5.7
2	Maharashtra	10.1	9	WestBengal	5.1
3	Odisha	9.2	10	Karnataka	4.1
4	Rajasthan	8.9	11	Assam	3.7
5	Gujarat	8.6	12	Meghalaya	2.5
6	**Jharkhand**	**8.3**	13	Others	11.6
7	Chhattisgarh	7.5			

Source: Census of India, 2011.

These figures may not transparently yield any definitive trend, they do point towards issues of migration of ST population outside state, increasing influx of non-tribals into state, recognition of more tribal groups by state and so on.

Map 1: "Percentage of ST population to total state population"

Source: Census of India, 2011.

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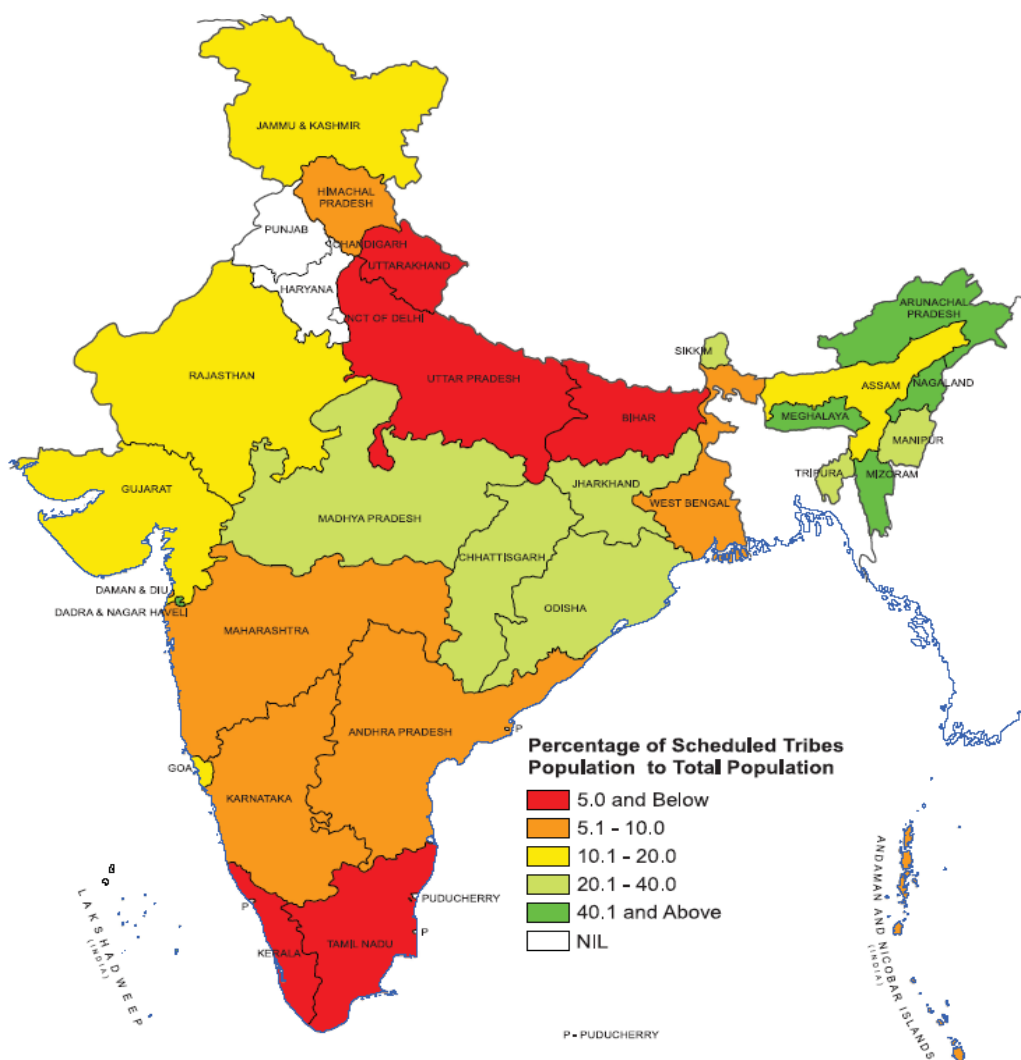
Table 4: "State-wise ST population and decadal growth rate"

State/UT	ST Population			Decadal Growth Rate amongst		Decadal Growth Rate among Total Population		% of ST sin The State to total State population	
	1991	2001	2011	1991-2001	2001-2011	1991-2001	2001-2011	2001	2011
India	67,758,380	84,326,240	104281034	24.45	23.66	22.66	17.64	8.20	8.61
Andaman& Nicobar Islands	26,770	29,469	28,530	10.08	-3.2	26.90	6.86	8.27	7.5
Andhra Pradesh	4,199,481	5,024,104	5,918,073	19.64	17.8	14.59	10.98	6.59	7.0
Arunachal Pradesh	550,351	705,158	951,821	28.13	35	27.00	26.03	64.22	68.8
Assam	2,874,441	3,308,570	3,884,371	15.10	17.4	18.92	17.07	12.41	12.4
Bihar	6,616,914	758,351	1,336,573	-	76.2	-	25.42	0.91	1.28
Chandigarh	NST	NST	NST	NST	NST	40.28	17.19	NST	--
Chhattisgarh	--	6,616,596	7,822,902	-	18.2	-	22.61	31.76	30.6
Dadra& NagarHaveli	109,380	137,225	178,564	25.46	30.1	59.22	55.88	62.24	52.0
Daman&Diu	11,724	13,997	15,363	19.39	9.8	55.73	53.76	8.85	6.31
Goa	376	566	149,275	50.53	-	15.21	8.23	0.04	10.23
Gujarat	6,161,775	7,481,160	8,917,174	21.41	19.2	22.66	19.28	14.76	14.8
Himachal Pradesh	218,349	244,587	392,126	12.02	60.3	17.54	12.94	4.02	5.71
Jammu& Kashmir	--	1,105,979	1,493,299	-	35	-	23.64	10.90	11.90
Jharkhand	**--**	**7,087,068**	**8,645,042**	**-**	**22**	**-**	**22.42**	**26.30**	**26.2**
Karnataka	1,915,691	3,463,986	4,248,987	80.82	22.7	17.51	15.60	6.55	6.95
Kerala	320,967	364,189	484,839	13.47	33.1	9.43	4.91	1.14	1.45
Lakshadweep	48,163	57,321	61,120	19.01	6.6	17.30	6.30	94.51	94.8
Madhya Pradesh	15,399,034	12,233,474	15,316,784	-	25.2	-	20.35	20.27	21.1
Maharashtra	7,318,281	8,577,276	10,510,213	17.20	22.5	22.73	15.99	8.85	9.4
Manipur	632,173	741,141	902,740	17.24	21.8	17.94	12.05	34.20	35.1

Source: Census of India,2001and 2011

Table 5: "State-wise percentage of Scheduled Tribes to total population (rural and urban) and decadal growth-rate (2001-2011)"

State	Total (2001)	Rural	Urban	Total (2011)	Rural	Urban
Jammu & Kashmir	10.9	13.8	2	11.9	15.4	2.5
Himachal Pradesh	4	4.3	1.3	5.7	6.1	2.6
Punjab	NoSTs	-	-	NoSTs	-	-
Chandigarh	NoSTs	-	-	NoSTs	-	-
Uttarakhand	3	3.8	0.7	2.9	3.8	0.9
Rajasthan	12.6	15.5	2.9	13.5	16.9	3.2
UttarPradesh	0.1	0.1	0	0.6	0.7	0.2
Bihar	0.9	1	0.5	1.3	1.4	0.6
Sikkim	20.6	21.2	15.9	33.8	36.6	25.5
Arunachal Pradesh	64.2	69.7	43.4	68.8	74.1	51
Nagaland	89.1	93.7	67.1	86.5	92.8	70.8
Manipur	34.2	44.4	6.1	35.1	45.6	16.4
Mizoram	94.5	96.3	92.6	94.4	96.6	92.5
Tripura	31.1	36.5	4.7	31.8	41.2	5.1
Meghalaya	85.9	90.2	68.3	86.1	90.1	70.4
Assam	12.4	13.6	4.5	12.4	13.7	5
WestBengal	5.5	7.2	1.2	5.8	7.8	1.5
Jharkhand	**26.3**	**31**	**9.8**	**26.2**	**31.4**	**9.8**
Odisha	22.1	24.6	8.1	22.8	25.7	8.5
Chhattisgarh	31.8	37.6	8.4	30.6	36.9	10
MadhyaPradesh	20.3	25.8	4.9	21.1	27.2	5.2
Gujarat	14.8	21.6	3.2	14.8	23.1	3.5
Daman&Diu		11.1	4.9	6.3	12.6	4.2
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	62.2	74.9	19.4	52	82.4	17.2
Maharashtra	8.9	13.4	2.7	9.4	14.6	3
AndhraPradesh	6.6	8.4	1.8	7	9.3	2.4
Karnataka	6.6	8.4	2.9	7	9.2	3.5
Goa	0	0	0.1	10.2	15.9	6.8
Lakshadweep	94.5	95.6	93.1	94.8	95.2	94.7
Kerala	1.1	1.5	0.2	1.5	2.5	0.3
TamilNadu	1	1.6	0.4	1.1	1.8	0.4
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	8.3	11.9	0.9	7.5	11.3	1.3

Source: Census of India, 2001and 2011.

Table 6: "State-wise Number of Scheduled Tribes"

S.No.	State/UT	No. of Tribes	S.No.	State/UT	No. of Tribes
1	AndhraPradesh	25	16	Meghalaya	17
2	Arunanchal Pradesh	16	17	Mizoram	15
3	Assam	29	18	Nagaland	05
4	Bihar	33	19	Odisha	62
5	Chhattisgarh	42	20	Rajasthan	12
6	Goa	08	21	Sikkim	04
7	Gujarat	29	22	TamilNadu	36
8	HimachalPradesh	10	23	Tripura	19
9	Jammu&Kashmir	12	24	Uttarakhand	05
10	**Jharkhand**	**32**	25	UttarPradesh	15
11	Karnataka	50	26	WestBengal	40
12	Kerala	36	27	Andaman&NicobarIslands	06
13	MadhyaPradesh	43	28	DadraandNagarHaveli	07
14	Maharashtra	45	29	DamanandDiu	05
15	Manipur	34	30	Lakshadweep	01
				Total	**693**

Source: Tribal committee report 2014, p 44

Table 7: "Fifteen most populous tribes in India"

NameofTribe	Population	States in which members are residing
Bhil	12689952	Tripura, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka
Gond	10859422	Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, AndhraPradesh, Karnataka
Santhal	5838016	Bihar, Tripura, West Bengal, Odisha, Jharkhand
Mina	3800002	Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh
Naikda	3344954	Karnataka, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Daman & Diu, Dadra &Nagar Haveli, Maharashtra, Goa
Oraon	3142145	Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra
Sugalis	2077947	AndhraPradesh
Munda	1918218	Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Odisha
Nagas	1820965	Nagaland
Khond	1397384	Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha
Boro	1352771	Assam
Koli Mahadev	1227562	Maharashtra
Khasi	1138356	Mizoram, Meghalaya, Assam
Kol	991400	Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra
Varli	974916	Gujarat, Daman& Diu, Dadra &NagarHaveli, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa

Source: Tribal committee report 2014, p 48

Of the 58 districts wherein the forest cover is greater than 67%, 51 districts are tribal districts. Therefore, a large section of the tribal population has been dependent on the forest for their livelihood. However, much of this forest was classified as Reserved Forests and Protected Forests as well as Wildlife Sanctuaries and National

Parks, resulting in the marginalization of tribal communities who were treated as encroachers on this land prior to the passing of the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

With regards to mineral resources, three states with substantial tribal populations – Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand – have considerable mineral reserves. These three states alone account for 70% of India's coal reserves, 80% of its high-grade iron ore, 60% of its bauxite and almost 100% of its chromite reserves. Indeed, according to the Centre for Science and Environment, about half of the top mineral producing districts are tribal districts and these are also districts with forest cover of 28% which is larger than the national average of 20.9%. Unfortunately, much of this forest land has been diverted for mining purposes resulting in environmental degradation, loss of livelihood and displacement of tribal communities. Many of these mineral bearing areas are also affected by the on-going conflict between the Maoists and the State. Dams have been another source of displacement for tribals since Independence with India being one of the largest dams building nations in the world. It is estimated that dams are the biggest cause of displacement in the country.

The main issue addressing the thesis was to study the socio-economic educational and health status of the tribal people as an integral part of the development agenda that the state was pursuing. With respect to the tribal development, there were two prominent discourses. The first one suggested the overall conditions of the tribal people, including their poverty. This was due to their social and geographical isolation. Correspondingly, the whole thrust of the approach to tribal development in independent India was to be centered on the integration of tribes into the larger Indian society. In fact, their integration was seen as the solution to tribal 'backwardness'. There was however, also a dramatically contrasting explanation for their poverty. The main architect of this view was Verrier Elwin who attributed their deplorable and impoverished condition to their contact with the outside world, which had led to indebtedness and loss of control over their land and forests. The provisions enshrined for Scheduled Tribes in the Constitution however are a testimony to this dual approach. It provided for development as well as for safeguarding and protection of their interests.[143]

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[143] Ibid p. 43

In the words of Virginius Xaxa, " it was development of a particular kind that became the primary thrust of the state's agenda, with minimal regard for protection and safeguards. What the state is pursuing in tribal areas – apart from Northeast India – is assimilation rather than integration. A policy of integration provides space for protections and safeguards for their distinct identity, as enshrined in the Constitution. Integration entails incorporation and acculturation into the larger society, but not at the cost of tribes' own identity and distinct way of living. Assimilation is total fusion with the larger society."[144]

However, these provisions are precisely under threat of erosion through the process of cultural domination and more importantly through the prevailing development paradigm. Poor implementation of programmes is also the cause of lack of social development among the tribals. The solution lies in effective implementation of state sponsored development programmes and schemes, whether these pertain to livelihood and income–generation activities, education, health or communication facilities. The problem of ineffective implementation in tribal areas remains inadequately addressed. Even with an increase in resource allocations since the Fifth Five Year Plan beginning in 1974, the condition of tribals have failed to improve proportionally.

Issues with the underdevelopment of the tribals are also linked to the traditional socio-cultural aspects of tribal life. The framework of development is alien to the tribes. (This was also quoted by one of the respondents in his interview, Father Tom). There is a need to re-orient development in tune with the tribal culture and to adopt a more humane centric approach to tribal development. One can also probe the issue of tribal development beyond concerns of inadequate resource allocation, ineffective implementation or tribal traditions. The misappropriation of tribal land and forests began during colonial rule and has continued into the present times.

Since tribal–inhabited regions are rich in mineral, forest and water resources, large scale development projects invariably came to be in tribal areas. It is true in the case of Jharkhand as well. Jharkhand and Orissa have considerable natural resources and the highest percentages of tribal people living below the poverty line. In 2004-05,

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[144] Ibid p. 44

the proportion of tribal people below poverty line was 52.2% in Jharkhand. Overcoming tribal 'isolation' through large scale mining, industrial and infrastructure projects, has clearly not resolved the problem of poor development indicators. These have further led to impoverishment and vulnerability for these groups of people. There has been a massive push to this development agenda which coincided with economic liberalization and the entry of private corporations into tribal areas. This has been met with considerable resistance by tribal people. They have questioned the model of development which is being imposed on them from outside. Laws and rules that provides protection to the tribes are being routinely manipulated.

This situation has also paved the way for Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in tribal areas. Amongst the 83 LWE affected areas or districts, 42 districts have Scheduled Areas. These regions are marked by the features like (1) serious neglect and deprivation, (2) widespread poverty and poor health and educational status, (3) exploitation and oppression by traders and moneylenders and absence of an effective and sensitive civil administration, (4) occurrence of all the factors mentioned despite the special constitutional provisions and legal solutions to the tribal people (in the form of the Fifth Schedule, laws to prevent alienation of tribal land and restoration of alienated lands and the progressive legislations as PESA, 1996 and FRA 2006). Tribal communities face disregard for their values and culture, breach of protective legislation, serious material and social deprivation and aggressive resource alienation. Hence, the solution to these issues should enable the tribals to protect their own interests.

Here are a set of research questions that helped to gauge the upliftment of the people in general in Jharkhand.

1.   Has Jharkhand moved towards empowering its people through participatory self-governance? (Including women).

2.   Have the tribal people been given their share in the socio-economic progress including habitations, health, livelihood, drinking water, sanitation, roads, electricity and sustainable income?

3.   Are the laws for protecting the land and forest rights of tribal communities properly implemented?

4.   Tribal lands hold much of the natural and mineral wealth of the nation, so those who part with their lands do they get the share in the wealth and income so generated from its resources?

5.   Has there been attempt to preserve the culture, language and traditions of this area and protect the same against the loss of identity? Also, has there been attempt to recognize, protect and document such indigenous practices to thrive as a living dynamic culture?

Constitution recognizes that the tribal communities need and deserve special protections and that the politico-administrative establishment must act to ensure that such protections are extended to tribal communities. Accordingly, the device of scheduling has been adopted to enable identification of tribal communities and tribal areas that are within this dispensation.

Understanding Ethnic Identity Formation in Jharkhand

To understand the political landscape of the newly created Jharkhand State, field survey was conducted where two sets of research questions were prepared to interview the respondents. Jharkhand as a state has a sharp rural /urban divide and to reach out to the entire labyrinth of political and social formation with almost 30 different tribal groups proved to be a complex exercise. Added to this, it is also a state where the development index ratio vis-à-vis living parameters are at the very bottom compared to national average. The respondents were mostly in the age group of 30 to 55 years. The reason to choose this fixed age criteria of the respondents was to ascertain they had fair enough grasp of the political narrative of the year 2000 or at least it was etched in their memory significantly.

Blocks and districts that were covered to interview and survey the 440 respondents included the entire geographical regions of Jharkhand.

In North Chotanagpur division, districts were as follows:

1. Giridih – Jamua, Pirtand and Suriya blocks

2. Ramgarh – Gola, Mandu, Patratu, Chitarpur, Barkakana, Petarwar, Tundi and Baghmara blocks

3. Bokaro – Chas and Jaridih blocks

4. Dhanbad – Baliapur block

South Chotanagpur division, districts were as follows:

1. Ranchi – Ratu and Namkum blocks

2. Khunti – Khunti block

Santhal Pargana division, districts were as follows:

1. Dumka – Shikaripara and Ramgarh blocks

2. Pakur – Hiranpur and Littipara blocks

3. Godda – Mahagama and Meherma blocks

There were altogether 40 interviews that were conducted over a period of six months. Amongst the few prominent ones are discussed as follows. The areas covered maps the entire of Santhal Pargana and Chotanagpur region, from the most backward to industrial belt and the epicentre of the movement, Ranchi. Political leaders, administrators, educationalist, politicians, social-activists, newspaper agencies, wage-labourers to the general population, all are covered here. The research questions basically tried to comprehend the core issues that are still significant for the identity and development of the people of this region. It was a trial to garner insights about the state, whether it has attained its logical conclusion. Have people got emotionally integrated in the region? What was the condition of language, culture and history? In whose interest the development was taking place, who were the beneficiaries? Has the state lived up to the democratic promise towards the underprivileged? How was their future envisioned?

Research questionnaire of second set was a simple version of the first set that was used to interview the respondents. This was quantitative research that gave out absolute numbers and figures from the 440 respondents. (50% belonged to tribal group + 50% non-tribe).

Field Survey Highlights

1.   All the respondents belonging to tribal and non-tribal groups were satisfied with the new state.

2.   On the question of development of the state, 97% responded that there was development in Jharkhand post statehood.
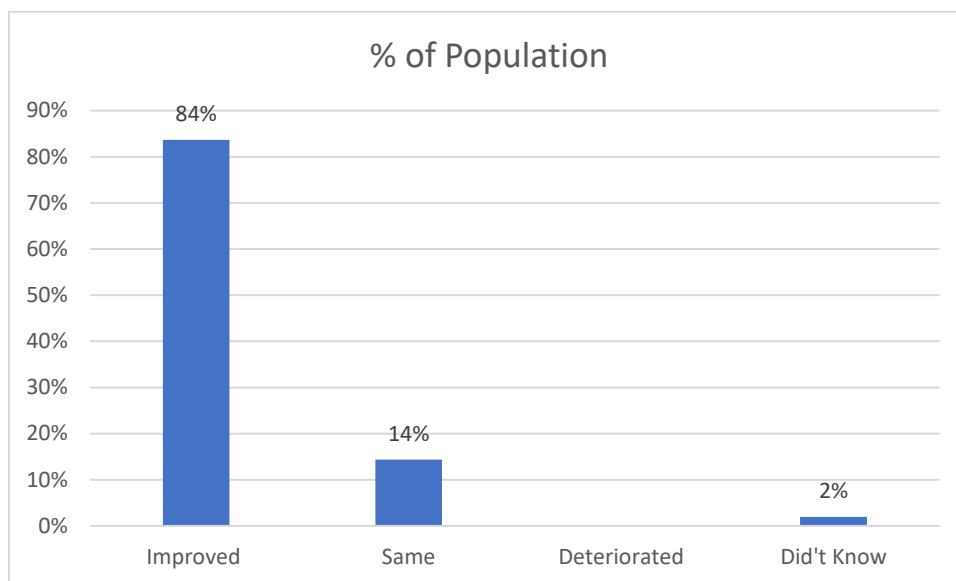
3.   Overall current situation of the state

Chart 1: Overall development of state

4.   63% of respondents said that development has reached to the remotest places. One interesting finding in this answer was 98% tribals believed that development has reached the remotest areas. There was huge contradiction in the way the two groups responded. It indicates that the tribal community is overwhelmingly positive about the grant of statehood to them and repose trust in the working of state institutions.

5.   90% of the respondents said that there was cleavage among the tribals.

6.   On the question if the new state has addressed the grievances and interests of the poor: - 94% of the respondents said yes.

7.   On the question of leadership: - 92% favoured a tribal leader. (83% tribals and 100% non-tribal)

8.   95% said yes on the question that local issues were addressed by the government.
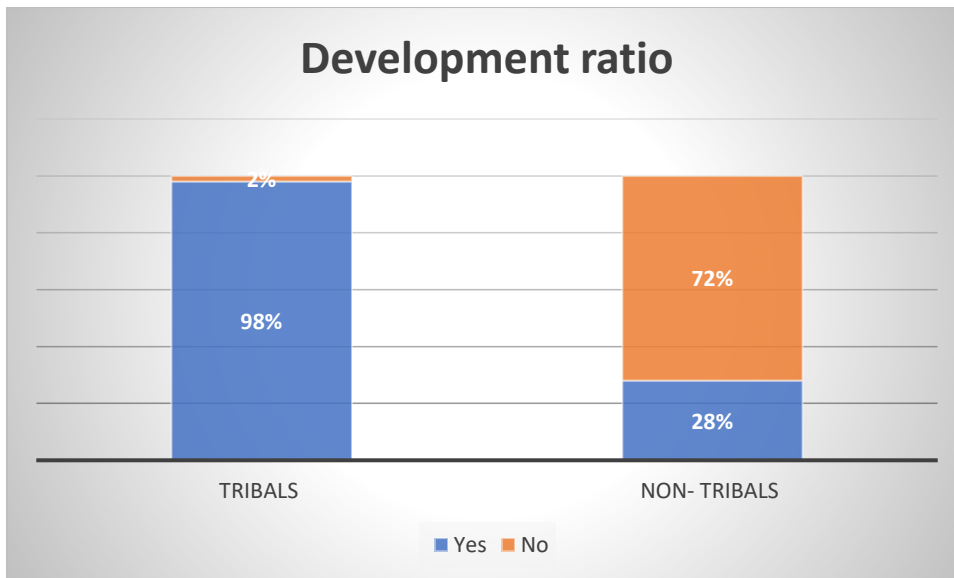
Chart 2: Development in remote areas

9. To the question if the condition of life standards, jobs and education have improved: - 97% respondents said yes.

10. 94% of the tribal respondents believed that diku was relevant in Jharkhand today. Only 6% of non-tribal respondents said diku was relevant. This also focuses on the divide of tribals and non-tribals here. For tribals there still existed a group, class or outsider community that was the exploiter of the benefits and perks of the new state given to the indigenous community. Ethnic identity articulation is sharpened on questions determining such cleavages. Ethnic identity is the central theme of the narrative on state formation of Jharkhand that is established through the field survey findings as well. Jharkhand could not absolve itself from the arbitration of specific groups or advantageous communities. However, the non-tribal respondents were on the opposite axis. This question explains the ethnic divide in Jharkhand.

11. 64% of the respondents said that there is migration in search of jobs and employment. Here also the answer was at opposites between the tribal and non-tribal respondents. Tribals were more conservative in their views on migration to other states. It shows that the new state has provided them with opportunities in economy, employment and livelihood but all the non-tribal respondents did not believe so.
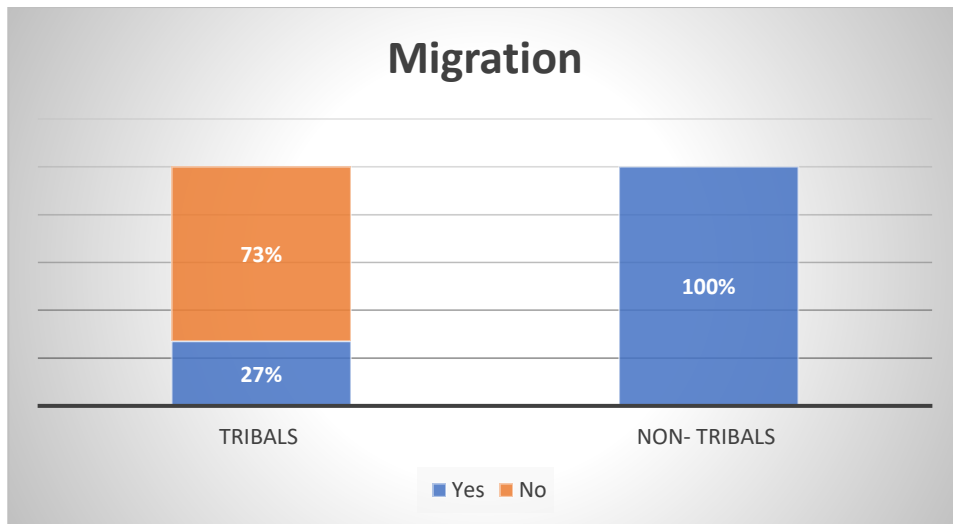
Chart 3: Migration of population

12. Only 18% tribal respondents said that there is displacement taking place due to development projects.

13. An interesting finding came out on the question, if there was contradiction between tribal and non- tribal communities? For all the tribals it was not pronounced at all whereas among the non-tribals 83% believed that there was contradiction. What is important to note here is that the same tribal respondents who mostly believed that diku was relevant is attenuated on the question on contradiction with non-tribals. This also establishes that all non-tribals are not considered diku by them. In Jharkhand, tribals have not diluted their claim on ethnic question but have accepted a proto Jharkhandi identity for themselves.

The tribal society in Jharkhand in the last 50 years witnessed change in the most unprecedented ways. Tribal society which was marked as homogenous has moved to becoming heterogenous. After conducting interviews with different groups of population in Jharkhand; it was observed that there was occupational differentiation among the groups of population. People were engaged in occupations like agriculture (shifting or settled), trade and commerce or business. They were occupied in other work as agricultural labourers, quarry or mine workers, stone crushers and plantation and industrial workers. Some also made their living by joining a profession. Along the occupational differentiation there were also differences in wealth and income, giving rise to social stratification in the form of class among the

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population. There were also differences of religion, ideology, values, political orientation, way of life etc. among members of the tribal communities. Tribal society became like any other component of Indian society with their terms of differentiation intact in their ethnicity which laid the basis of their identity formation.

This identity formation among the tribes was also forced upon them from the outside by the social workers, administrators, politicians and scholars. They imposed upon them this identity to mark their differences from the dominant community. It slowly got internalized by the tribal people themselves. It became an important mark of social differentiation and identity assertion. In the case of Jharkhand, it became an important tool for the articulation of the demand for empowerment.

In Jharkhand, the theoretical assumption that tribes or indigenous people are marginalised also emanates from the understanding that there was a pattern of population movements here. Different communities came to develop a distinct and definite association with certain territories during their movement. The tribal communities here considered themselves as having prior and preferential, if not exclusive rights over the territory. The tribal communities considered these territories as their own against the claims of other communities. They sought to demand special rights and privileges. These aspirations led to the desire to have a state of their own. Having articulated this demand, they sought to promote the interest of their community through state patronage.

Paradoxically, such privileges and rights are freely recognized with respect to the dominant communities, the same is denied to tribal communities in India.[145] In the process they are being dispossessed of their control over resources (land, forest, water, minerals) in their own territory and are being subjected increasingly to misery, injustice and exploitation. Denied power and rights, a new form of identity, namely the identity of the adivasi has crystallised here. The term adopted mainly as a point of reference or marker became important for identity articulation and assertion. It evoked a consciousness and sense of self-esteem, pride among them. Further, this consciousness cuts across tribes bearing different names and speaking different languages or dialect in Jharkhand. Tribes do not view themselves in the sense of

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[145] Ibid.p.48

constituting a politico-administrative category. They view themselves in the sense of belonging to the same community, irrespective of whether a group or a segment of it, is listed or not listed in the Constitution.

Modern civilization is believed as inimical to tribal people all over the world. But now this is a thing of the past. Tribal people have a resilient, benign culture of their own which is not anti-modernity but pro-humanity. Development is not anti-tribal if it is humane in approach. Tribals have a value system that is traditional and inward-looking and only tribal leadership will help to preserve such ethos and culture. In the field findings one thing was clear that the new state spurred the development of the region. It made possible a better articulation of regional, political and social aspirations and brought the structure of governance and administration closer to hitherto neglected areas. Times have changed with phenomenal access to information in the remotest places. Government and agencies must be responsible to the people or popular democracy. There cannot be a universal rule to judge if there should be smaller states or not. In Jharkhand there had been presence of strong popular movement, a history of systematic neglect of the region and the existence of a distinct socio-culture identity. The three factors gave enough ammunition for Jharkhand state to become a reality.

Jharkhand was plagued by adverse initial conditions during its formation. Economy witnessed a low average income, very high incidence of poverty that got accentuated by fractured mandate leading to frequent changes in Government interspersed with President's rule. The policies and the programmes could not reach the people at the margins to bring social development.

Initial health and education indicators in Jharkhand were also markedly unfavourable in comparison to both, all India average, and the major Indian states. As per the census 2001, figures, the literacy rate of the state was at 54 percent second lowest after Bihar. Jharkhand remains a state with one of the highest poverty rates in India. Government reports and data suggested that prima-facie the implementation of programmes have improved after the separation of Jharkhand from Bihar, but the state still faces significant challenge in overcoming the growing weaknesses of implementation capacity more so with its instable polity. This fact is validated in both the qualitative and quantitative accounts of the field study. It would not be

inconclusive to state that Jharkhand needs to introduce reforms for improving resource mobilisation, increasing cost effectiveness of expenditure and rationalising the whole economics of it. While large increase in expenditure on infrastructure and social development of the underprivileged groups is warranted, it is important to ensure that these are within the absorptive capacity of the state.

Table 8: "Population Profile"

Tribes	Population	% In Tribal Pop	Literacy within Tribes	Main worker	Cultivator	Labourer
Asur	7783	0.13	10.62	35.10	27.63	15.42
Baiga	3553	0.06	4.22	41.68	43.07	37.26
Banjara	412	Lowest	12.38	37.17	28.13	45.00
Bathaudi	1595	0.03	16.93	49.96	49.63	36.09
Bedia	60445	1.04	10.82	36.28	66.61	21.98
Bhumij	136110	2.35	16.45	39.65	74.83	35.71
Binjhia	10009	0.17	14.52	35.08	81.79	13.48
Birhor	4057	0.07	5.74	41.05	43.09	30.74
Birjia	4057	0.07	10.50	37.75	70.00	18.74
Chero	52210	0.09	17.30	32.86	52.85	40.09
Chick Baraik	40339	0.69	20.17	36.89	67.94	19.24
Gond	96574	1.66	20.00	37.78	49.71	35.48
Gorait	5206	0.09	16.61	35.76	46.11	33.17
Ho	536524	9.23	17.71	30.15	64.59	25.21
Karmali	38652	0.66	13.30	30.15	44.46	21.53
Kharia	141771	2.44	24.86	38.43	72.99	19.11
Kharwar	222758	3.83	17.22	34.39	59.78	33.21
Khond	1263	0.02	15.99	33.03	46.41	31.98
Kisan	23420	0.40	13.41	40.65	71.26	17.84
Kora	33951	0.58	9.23	37.03	36.20	47.09
Korwa	21940	0.38	6.41	39.10	43.09	50.82
Lohar	169090	2.91	12.71	37.11	48.35	30.98
Mahli	91868	1.59	12.74	40.08	30.98	18.72
Mal Pahariya	79322	1.37	7.58	39.44	58.02	32.18
Munda	845887	14.56	22.16	38.15	70.61	16.64
Oraon	1048064	18.05	23.28	35.73	66.98	18.44
Parhaiya	24012	0.41	15.30	35.14	51.69	31.59
Santhal	2060732	35.47	12.55	38.66	62.57	29.89
SauriaPaharia	30269	0.68	6.87	40.03	62.70	27.79
Savar	3014	0.05	9.55	47.70	10.42	71.43
Unspecified	6660	0.1	3.94	30.37	35.74	26.99
Total	5810867	100.00	16.99	37.61	63.06	25.50

Source: Louis Prakash EPW Nov 18, 2000, p 1488

There are some tribal groups that have benefitted from western education also due to the presence of huge number of missionary schools run by the Christians from across Indian subcontinent in Jharkhand. The tribal groups like the Kharias are much ahead with 24.86 percent in literacy compared to Oraons (23.28) and Mundas (22.16). However, the literacy rate of the entire tribal community is only 16.99 percent. The Baigas situation is deplorable with only 4.22 percent literate among them. There are nearly 60 lakhs tribals in Jharkhand as per the Census data 2011, divided into 30 different groups. This is 27.67 percent of the total population of Jharkhand. There are variations among the tribal communities in Jharkhand so is their social, economic and political mobility. It depends upon their association with organizations, agencies or institutions that have facilitated their upward mobility in the social formation. They also have dominant groups within them depending on access to education and modernisation. The Santhals among the tribals constitute the biggest tribe with about 35.47 percent while the population of the banjaras is just about 861. The four tribes Santhals, Oraons, Mundas and the Hos constitute over 75 percent of the tribal population in Jharkhand. The Kharias, Mundas, Binjhias and the Birjias are mainly cultivators while very small segment among them are agricultural labourers. The Savars and the Korwas have more than half of their population in the category of agricultural labourers. The Kharias are one of the most socially mobile among the tribes of Jharkhand. This can be attributed to the better literacy rates of this tribe. Next is the Santhal in the social mobility spectrum.

Tribal societies in India have a very ancient and alive history and heritage. They have their own cultural, religious, social, economic and political structures. The indigenous peoples' myths, stories, tales and songs reflect their social, political and cultural organizations. Nature, environment and ecology play the most important role in their lives. They have developed their religious beliefs and practices around these life-giving forces. The tribals have developed their own forms of political participation known as 'Adivasi Swashashan' (tribal self-rule). This form of governance was based on the ideology of indigenous culture, economy, religion and society that was both local and regional. Over the centuries, the tribals have continued to build on a common identity. It is this identity formation which provided adequate ground for a long-drawn-out struggle against outside forces.

There were several factors that contributed to the identity formation as tribals or Jharkhandis. The fact of being a tribal united all the various tribal groups with differences among them. The cultural and ethnic sentiments unified the tribals despite the economic and demographic differences. Moreover, since the major tribes were concentrated in geographically distinct regions, they were not split up like the Bhils and the Gonds in other regions of India. In a consolidated social condition, the fact of being the indigenous population or tribals provided greater scope for congruence than conflict. This further provided a common platform for political awakening and action. The slogans like 'Jai Jharkhand' (victory to Jharkhand), 'Adivasi dishum' (this is our land) in the course of struggle led to political mobilization which in turn built up political consciousness.

The sense of being adivasi or the original settlers of the Jharkhand region also brought in a sense of being part of a confederation than that of an individual group. The term 'Jharkhand' is derived from two different words – Jhar (a cluster of thick forests) and Khand (a tract of land). Thus, Jharkhand suggests a land mass quilted with forests. It is not just the geographical territory that determines the identity as Jharkhandi but also the entire socio-cultural life. Hence, even those tribals who have moved over to Assam tea gardens or to the Andaman Islands continued to maintain the identity of a Jharkhandi. The term Jharkhandi has itself gone through a historical evolution. In the beginning, exclusively tribal organizations such as Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj (1915) and Adivasi Mahasabha (1938) were formed. With the formation of the Jharkhand Party in 1950, the identity formation reached its zenith.

Also, Christianity in a latent way contributed to tribal identity formation by providing education. It heightened the sense of history about the myth of 'golden age'. It accentuated the notion of private rights in land. It emphasized the sense of separateness from the rest. Here religious conversion also aided social mobility by opening avenues. Those educated by the Church played a leadership role in mobilizing resources for tribal educational development that spread across all areas.

The ethnic sense of 'we' tribals and 'they' dikus or the outsiders united the entire tribal populations for a protracted struggle. With the Jharkhand movement gaining ground, the backward caste groups like the Dalits and the Momins, the downtrodden Muslims who had settled in Jharkhand for a long period of time also

became part of the struggle. Thus, 'Jharkhandi' came to be known as 'the land of the destitute' comprising of all the deprived sections. Consequentially, the process of identity formation that went on unabated nearly for two centuries contributed immensely to the Jharkhand movement. And this consciousness exists even till date among the people in the form of evolving new symbolism where different groups have coalesced together under one homogeneous identity as Jharkhandi. This factor was established in the field survey as well. However, this does not mean that the people here don't recognize their identity as belonging to different ethnic groups. The attribute of being a Jharkhandi has unified them with common aspirations to development for the whole region.

Table 9: "Tribals Displaced from 1950-90 (in Lakhs)"

Projects	Displace	Resettled	Backlog
Dams	52.00	13.15	39.86
Mines	12.00	3.00	9.00
Industries	2.60	0.65	1.95
Animal Sanctuaries	5.00	1.25	3.75
Others	1.50	.40	1.70
Total	74.1	18.45	56.26

Source: Louis Prakash EPW Nov 18, 2000, p 1488

The lands alienated from the tribals in the name of development have been massive. The above table suggests that out of the 74 lakhs tribal population displaced, only 18.45 lakhs have been resettled. In this development – induced displacement, the tribals did not benefit anything. However, inspite of all these oppressions the tribals continued to fight against every form of alien rule. From 1950 onwards, tribals initiated the Jharkhand struggle to defend their natural and human made resources, the political systems and their entire socio-cultural systems. The leadership at different times betrayed the aspirations of the people but the tribal masses carried on their struggle unhindered. There were internal cleavages within the various sub-

nationalisms that had over time become more sharpened. Still the struggle continued unabated.

The word tribe has now been adopted by the tribals themselves to mean the dispossessed, deprived people of a region. There is no claim to being the original inhabitants, but only a prior claim to the natural resources is asserted vis-à-vis the outsiders. The tribal identity gives the marginalized people self-esteem and pride. This factor is established through the interviews and field survey findings.

The dominant communities hardly felt the need to articulate issues in terms of rights of indigenous people. They have states of their own and therefore territories too. It surfaces only when they feel threatened from the movement of the population from outside the community. The threat is felt either on account of fear in the rise of number of members from outside the community or loss of control of power, economic and political. This identity with land or territory is crudely manifested in the sons-of-the-soil theory that has been raised from time to time in India. People in India representing different languages, physical features, cultures, mode of social organisations etc., identify and relate themselves in a special way with a given territory or region in the country. In the words of Virginius Xaxa, "There is strange paradox in India where privileges and rights are freely recognized in respect of the dominant communities where the same is denied to the tribals. In the process they are progressively getting dispossessed of their control over land, forest, water, minerals and other resources in their own territory and increasingly subjected to inhuman misery, injustice and exploitation. It is the non-recognition of these rights and privileges by the dominant section of the Indian society that has led to increasing articulation of the idea of indigenous by the tribal people"[146]. The adivasi consciousness in Jharkhand is not so much about whether they are the original inhabitants as about the fact that they have no power whatsoever over anything (land, forest, river, resources) that lies in the territory they inhabit.

The consciousness and the articulations were basically an expression of the yearning to establish a special relation with the region they inhabited. The issue with the tribal identity and consciousness was more strongly articulated in central, western

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[146]Xaxa Virginius, EPW, Dec 18, 1999, p. 3594

and southern Indian than in north-east India. In the north-east people exercised power over their region which whatsoever never happened in other parts of tribal India. Thus, the hypothesis that suggested dispossession and marginalisation led to sharpening of ethno-regionalism holds true in the case of Jharkhand. The assertions of such ethno-regional identity were stronger where there was greater degree of marginalisation, dispossession, powerlessness and disparities in development. These features attributed to identity formation and consolidation of the process of state formation.

Excerpts from a few in-depth interviews are discussed as follows: -

Larger issues in Jharkhand relegated around the 'Jal, Jungle and Jamin' where the rights of tribals have originated. They had cultural affinity and strong symbolism with this association which are becoming extinct with time. According to respondents, development is a political concept that figured later in the movement to shadow the core tribal issues. They spoke on the implementation of the PESA Act.

The provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 or PESA is a law enacted by the Government of India for ensuring self-governance through traditional Gram Sabhas for people living in the Scheduled Areas of India. Scheduled Areas are areas identified by the Fifth Scheduled of the Constitution of India. Scheduled Areas are found in ten states of India, which have predominant population of the tribal communities. The Scheduled Areas were not covered by the 73rd Constitutional Amendment or Panchayati Raj Act of the Indian Constitution as provided in the Part IX of the Constitution. PESA was enacted on 24.12.1996 to extend the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution to Scheduled Areas, with certain exceptions and modifications. PESA sought to enable the Panchayats at appropriate levels and Gram Sabhas to implement a system of self-governance with respect to a few issues such as customary resources, minor forest produce, minerals, water bodies, selection of beneficiaries, sanction of projects, and control over local institution.

PESA was viewed as a positive development for tribal communities in scheduled areas who had earlier suffered tremendously from engagement with modern development processes and from the operation of both colonial laws and statutes made in independent India. The loss of access to forest, land and other community resources had increased their vulnerability. Rampant land acquisition and

displacement due to development projects had led to large scale distress in tribal communities living in scheduled areas. PESA was seen as a panacea for many of these vulnerabilities and sought to introduce a new paradigm of development where the tribal communities in such scheduled areas were to decide by themselves the pace and priorities of their development.

Respondents spoke on the bifurcation of power at the level of Gram Panchayat. In their view, the deplorable state of tribals was also because of the middlemen, who reaped the advantages in their favour. They also advocated going back to nature that was greatly symbolized by their relationship with land and forest resources. Government should make policies for 'Moolbasi', the original indigenous people, adivasis. The policies should preserve their culture, identity and privacy. They also spoke to invoke 'La-Bir-Baisi' i.e., the social formation for the justice system based on traditional customary laws. These practices are integral to the life of Santhal 'culture'. These traditions should be preserved as an expression of their identity.

The movement got wrecked in favour of non-adivasis. There were discussions on challenges faced by the adivasis. Some of the views quoted here are, "adivasis are not educated, when they are at the helm of affairs they are basically toys in the hands of the educated subordinates. At the top of Government administration there should be a non-adivasi who is educated and qualified. Adivasis should be trained slowly to understand the gamut of affairs".

The ground reality was that the adivasis did not benefit from the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (CNT Act) and Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act (SPT Act). CNT Act, 1908 was an offshoot of the Birsa Movement. This Act prohibited transfer of land to non-tribals and ensured community ownership. But on the pretext of development and blaming the Act as a stumbling block in the path of economic growth, the Act was not being implemented in true letter and spirit. Development should not be at the cost of the lives of those whose very existence was dependent on forest. The CNT Act provided not only for the creation and maintenance of land record; it also created a special tenure category of 'Mundari Khuntkattidar'. (KhuntKattidar is the founder of the village in which are situated his Khuntkatti lands. The tenancy is of two kinds. It is either the tenancy of the whole brotherhood, the descendants of the original founder, or that of an individual member of the brotherhood over the lands in his

immediate possession). This I have already discussed in my first chapter. They are the original settlers of land among the Mundas. This Act not only restricted the transfer of tribal land to non-tribals, significantly it also provided recording of various customary community rights on the other resources (water, forest and land) including the right to take produce from Jungle and to graze cattle as well as the right to reclaim 'wastes' into Korkar (rice growing field).

Land, water and forest which together constituted the surroundings in the nature are not only the traditional key sources of livelihood of these indigenous people, but their cultures, lifestyle, customs, rites-rituals and folkways. The whole life of these people and communities vibrates accordingly. Therefore, obviously, intrusions or interferences of the outer world into their lives had affected and does affect their entire traditional, social, cultural and natural resource-based economy. These indigenous communities struggled to save their endangered existence in the capitalistic competitive neo-imperialistic world.

The CNT Act was placed under the Schedule 9 of the Constitution to render it beyond the preview of judicial review. But it has been grossly violated since its inception. Contrary to popular beliefs, the CNT Act also allowed transfer of land from tribals to non-tribals under Section 49. As per Section 49 of the CNT Act, tribal land could be sold to non-tribals but only for the purpose of putting up industries or for agriculture work. The people of Chotanagpur were greatly attached to their land assets therefore, the CNT Act 1908, went a long way in establishing peace in the region. The people of Chotanagpur are against any misappropriation of the provisions of the CNT Act which is grossly misused after the advent of the British colonial administration and till date.

They held the view that the creation of the new state of Jharkhand has not ceased the misuse of the SPT Act and its provisions should be revised and amended such that it is not altered. It should safeguard the rights of the tribals. These rights on land, forest and water are related to their lifestyle, spirituality and identity. The Santhal Parganas are bounded on the north by the districts of Bhagalpur and Purnea of Bihar, on the east by Malda, Murshidabad and Birbhum of West Bengal on the south by Burdwan and Manbhum of West Bengal and in the west by Hazaribagh, Munger and Bhagalpur. It is an upland tract with a hilly backbone running from north to south

and the river Ganges on the north and east. The earliest inhabitant of whom there is any record appears to be the Sauria Paharias who are to be found in the north of the Rajmahal Hills. However, the authentic history of the Santhal Parganas is said to begin with the rule of the Mohammedans when their armies marched to and from Bengal through the Teliagarhi pass.

The insurrection of the Santhals was the direct reaction of oppression inflicted upon them. It was an uprising directed more against their oppressor (Mahajans and other non-Santhal settlers). Four Santhal brothers Sidhu, Kanhu, Chand and Bhairab of village Bhagnadih were leading spirits of this movement. The creation of the district of Santhal Parganas was the direct result of the Santhal Rebellion of 1885. Under the present Constitution the President had issued a notification published in Bihar Gazette, 1950 declaring the Santhal Parganas to be a Scheduled Area. Section 13 of the SPT Act enumerates the rights of Raiyat in respect of use of land and provides that a raiyat may use the land of his holding in any manner of local usage which does not materially impair the value of the land or render it unfit for the purpose of cultivation.

The CNT Act and the SPT Act protected the rights of the adivasis on their land. The respondents held the view that adivasis have not benefited from the CNT Act and SPT Act. Hence, devolution of powers should start from the local levels and Nigam. There should be revival of the cultural melas specific to the Santhal Pargana region, the 'Izla Mela'. Cultures have lost their relevance which was very symbolic to the life and meanings of the adivasi people.

Jharkhand faced many challenges since inception. Due to absence of any single political party that could give stability to the Government, the early years of Jharkhand state was a compromise and a bad political phase. The state lurked in uncertainty and there were several roadblocks in the paths of development. Respondents believed that the government policy making has to be blamed for this.

There should be grievance redressal mechanism at the grass root level. There are issues that needed immediate attention like agriculture, deforestation, water scarcity, acres of barren land. There was huge manpower in the area, only that they were not channelized properly. There should be manpower entry in the system at

warfront level. There were lot of avenues but in the absence of proper planning and policy the funds got wasted. Political class in Jharkhand was unaffected by the real adversities of the local people. The current scenario in Jharkhand will improve only when the political leaders address the issues at the local level by being attached to the real cause. These were the views of the respondents during interview.

Interview with Father Tom was conducted in the Kadma Boreo block of Santhal Pargana of Jharkhand, who was from the Society of Jesus, a Christian missionary organization. This organization was active in this area since more than a century for the education and upliftment of the lives of the tribal people basically the Santhals and Paharias. He highlighted that the non-government agencies should work as 'Jan Sangathan' where the local people should be the office bearers and communicate to the Government officials and carry on the rights and welfare activities.

Father Tom emphasized on the need of a greater number of schools in the villages to educate the young ones for their better future. He said that the tribal people have their own traditions. There should be traditional leaders as the 'Pradhan' or the village head and this should be legalized and recognized by the Government. Village should have the right to settle disputes and the Government should help to record and document them. People should be made more aware of their rights. The Panchayati Raj Institutions and the Gram Sabhas should exercise all the special powers to ameliorate the lives of the poor people. He viewed that Santhals followed an exclusivist policy, are inward looking people whereas the paharias are outward and progressive. They have their own customary rules and value system. They are innate and their cultural bindings are very strong. They use the word 'diku' for the other world and also make use of the word 'Hor' i.e., 'we' or 'human being'. With the creation of the state of Jharkhand, there was a paradigm shift in the ways of lives of the tribal people. Now Jharkhand has its own centre, no more periphery no isolation as such. Power has also shifted its base from the periphery to the centre. Power has also been localized. To spread political resilience and awareness people have to identify with their leaders and the tribal movement.

In the words of Father Tom, "we are in a liberalized, competitive, market centred world but the way of life of the adivasis are not affected by this change. Our

idea of development is different from theirs. Industrialization is meaningless for them. Here the Government should take the initiative to perceive their problems and prepare these people to change and cope with it. We have to first perceive and comprehend their culture as our own."
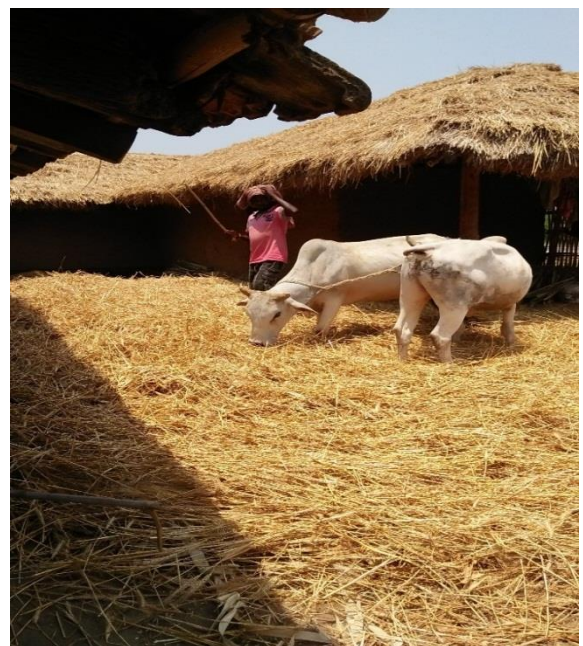

Dispensary in Santhal Pargana

Local Nurse

House of local Santhal

Traditional method of crop harvesting using bullocks

Father Tom was of the opinion that the models of development initiated by the Government are dysfunctional. Needs of the beneficiary (tribals) from the development project has to be separately discussed. He referred with an example of 'Lalmatia' mines in the area where the outsiders encroached the benefits of the development programmes.

Thus overall, his entire point of view was centered on the idea that one cannot obscure the differentiation between the two world views and values. Government initiative should be concrete and planned with the benefits of the tribal population in mind, to generate employment and preserve folk art and culture. There should be better health facility, one school in each block for the education of children. There should be sustainable development and the tribal values also favour the same.

Other respondents advocated the needed of the political exigencies to take up structural development. The Panchayat Raj Institutions also needs a re-evaluation. There should be more decentralization of power and the democracy should be more people participatory. There should be more feedback from the common people. The self-rule model should be strengthened.

The tribal welfare rhetoric should make way for policy-based governance. There was urgent need to create 'human capital'. Respondents gave the example of Jaipal Singh of the Jharkhand Party. They said there are few blessed who get a chance of foreign education. Such human capital must arise from Jharkhand state then only situation would improve. Government is still struggling to provide the basic primary education for children. Hence, there was policy deficiency on the part of government. The policies of government should be well defined, and output based where the positive feedback of the people is emulated.

I interviewed Shibu Soren on May 8, 2018. His role in shaping and spearheading Jharkhand movement was pivotal. The rise and fall of the JMM has been elaborately discussed in the previous chapter. During the 1980s, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha struck the chord in the political gamut of undivided Bihar and in a span of two decades the party became the game changer in politicking and deciding the electoral dividends.

After the reorganization exercise in India, State played an integrationist and developmental approach with the development programmes intended to achieve certain economic ends. The states emphasis on development was also appropriated by the 'sub national' identities to pursue and legitimize their claims. The emphasis on development affected the character of articulation of 'subnational' identities or ethnic identities as well as the state in a profound way. It is viewed that the state was not able to respond to the challenges from the ethnic identities with adequate political measures due to its dependence on the integrationist – rationalist paradigm. It continued to emphasise the need for a faster pace of development to remove all allegiance to any other political identity.

In the words of Shibu Soren, poor development of the region and the demand for autonomy was interlinked. The local development institutions were weak and the poor linkages between the affected communities and larger policy mechanism led to the poor performance of development policy in the region. However, 'development' was still elusive in this context. He said that there was need to understand if an increase in the societal groups' capacities to organize and utilize resources should be defined as development or it was defined in social, political economic or cultural terms? In general terms greater avenues for education, improved health facilities were defined as development. It could also be defined as improvement in the standards of living of the population. It involves better availability of health and educational facilities as well as improvement in the availability of the opportunities of gainful employment.

Shibu Soren was an acronym for Jharkhand. He was addressed with lot many questions about his expectations and beliefs from the present and future of Jharkhand. Shibu Soren said that he was very happy that Jharkhand realized its cherished dream of independence from the parent state. This reaffirmed the question of tribal identity and its assertiveness. It was a long struggle for the rights of the indigenous people and their cultural bonds with natural habitat was the essence of their identity. In his view the goals of the tribal people have been realized though it is only one aspect of it. Adding to this, the present situation in Jharkhand was not negative. After initial hiccups into formation of a state, Jharkhand was moving ahead in the path of development. The tribal people are happy to have a state of their own and being

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administered and governed by their own people. Jharkhand is not just about the tribals, rather it is all the inhabitants of the area who have lived here for centuries as non-tribals or 'Sadans' and are a part of the mosaic culture of Jharkhand. In the year 2004, he became Coal Minister in the Manmohan Singh Government in the Centre. In 2005, Shibu Soren also became the Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Barring the initial phase of turmoil and uncertainty, Jharkhand has witnessed a piecemeal progress and certainly has a bright future ahead.

The main objective of this chapter was to understand and examine the idea of state formation and how it affected the social and political lives of the people in the state. My idea at the initial stage of research was that ethno regionalism will have huge dent and ideological rumblings in the lives and minds of the people. This was construed from the apriori that Jharkhand as a state was born as a result of decades of cultural and political assertion of the adivasi community and the sadans together. Nevertheless, the field research unabashedly established that Jharkhand has become a synonym with the archetypal ethnic, cultural and political discourse that defined the identity formation here.

The findings from the field and close interaction with the people of Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana proved that all my respondents were proud of their ethnic identity. However, this was not the end of the debate for them. In their view the development of the state was not relegated around the ethnic question anymore. Prima facie health, education, jobs, pucca house, roads and other basic amenities were the major concerns among the people. They were not against development. They wanted to be part of the developmental process but not at the cost of their identity question. Jharkhandi subsumed all inhabitants of Jharkhand and not just the tribal people. This was symbolic in understanding the dynamics of identity and culture in the region. Jharkhandi identity became a transcendental identity for people of this region.

Contrary to all assumptions that the question of identity was the epicentre of all political assertion in Jharkhand, the interviews provided a skewed orientation, towards the question of development. Jharkhand is endowed with vast natural resources, but the majority population is still grappling with the issues of poverty and underdevelopment. Respondents wanted to interrogate why the resources are not channelised to meet the demands of the poor people? Why the government has not

been able to offset the benefits of natural endowments of minerals and forest with the goals of development? They felt that these questions needed serious introspection.

My personal observation in the field brought me to the conclusion that people here had awareness about their rights and privileges and the schemes run by the government. In the remotest of place people knew the value of their vote. At least, the current generation valued education, career and jobs. This could be due to surge of information technology in the past decade. It would not be farfetched to believe that the goals of the movement to achieve statehood has been realized. Issues of forest and land has taken a backseat for now though it is etched in the very tribalness of the people. Almost all my respondents brought the mention of these three words in their interview.

My primary objective in this chapter was also to explore and analyse the degree of tribal consciousness in the case study of Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana region and how far the dream of a state has been actualized? This was the epicenter of people's movement that gave statehood after almost a century of struggle. It was this consciousness that remained intransient throughout, that propelled the demand to survive through all thick and thin. This is also the peculiarity of the nature of this movement. At the initial phase of my field study my assumption was that there would be acute distinction between the ethnic and Jharkhandi identity. It was expected that the adivasi community in Jharkhand would be assertive of their cultural and political identity explicitly and would only identify themselves with the word tribal than Jharkhandi. But the field research suggested that mostly the respondents identified themselves as Jharkhandi first over other identities. This phenomenon spoke of the values of the movement that was based on political and cultural assertions of adivasis and sadans. Homogenization towards new symbolism as Jharkhandi was becoming predominant here.

The respondents in the field survey spoke consensually in favour of the development of the people of the region irrespective of whatever political affiliations they had. They were okay with any tribal political leader who can bring in development and ameliorate their conditions of poverty and impoverishment.

As evident from the earlier political discourse on Jharkhand especially in the writings of Amit Prakash that there was a contradiction between the adivasi and non-adivasi community that led to identity formation in the region. The field analysis did not point towards any such contradiction as only 30 percent of the respondents pointed towards such orientation. The demand for the new state by the Jharkhandis was based on the premise that the post- colonial state did not bring much difference in the state of the tribal people in terms of civilization, development, integration and assimilation with the mainstream. It continued the colonial policy and could not offer alternative solutions to the problems of the people inhabiting the Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana.

The field analysis also suggested that in Jharkhand certain communities amongst the tribes benefitted from western education like Christians, Mundas, Oraons and the Kharias. These tribal groups in the Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana region took advantage of the greater educational availability and thus better economic opportunities creating schisms and internal cleavages within tribal groups. There were these political elites among them who spearheaded the movement (leaders from educated middle class like Shibu Soren belonging to Santhal tribe). Also, the educated middle class among the adivasis in Jharkhand today have established common platforms for socio political mobilisation on behalf of their communities. Others have not been able to assert their political identity towards accomplishing social and economic advantages.

The adivasis main occupation has always been related to their land in terms of agriculture and forest produce. Their religions, customs and cultures are also centred around the land and environment they inhabit. So, when they are displaced or encroached, varied forms of resistance emerge from their indigenous identities. Hence under such circumstances the approach should be such that the development benefits are not compromised. The Jharkhand movement was not an exclusive movement of adivasi communities alone. Non- adivasis also played a major role in this case. The present state of Jharkhand points towards a more inclusive, assimilative nature of the Jharkhandi identity. The tension between the outsider (diku) and the inhabitants is much pronounced in the current situation. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) has successfully taken the one-upmanship as interlocutor for the adavsis and non-advasis

acting as a buffer. Nonetheless, in the last two years it is observed that the political organisations are pronouncing the ethnic divide in the region and accentuating the anti diku feelings again. Here, I therefore conclude quoting Stuart Corbridge that "the modern Jharkhandi ethno-regionalism is the result of one hundred- and fifty-year's old struggle by the adivasis of south Bihar to claim economic, political and cultural hegemony which belonged to them, but from where they were displaced by the outsiders"[147]. To understand the rise and fall of ethnic politics, it is untenable to look at such politics through the lens of a static ideology of tribal economy and society. The economic and demographic transformation of South Bihar and unsuccessful state tribal policies must be taken into consideration while understanding Jharkhand politics.

Despite of all the dissimilarities, the tribals continued to build on a common identity of the ethno regional consciousness that provided the ground for grant of statehood. Ethno regionalism was pivotal in the formation of state as it also consolidated the state institutions and spearheaded the movement towards attainment of its objectives. It is mostly believed that creation of a separate state ensures fulfillment of the objectives of self-rule, self-determination and self-actualization. Jharkhand should look forward to establishing self-rule, autonomy, traditional forms of governance, eco-friendly economic enterprises, as well as life-oriented education system that the movement stood for.

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[147]Corbridge, Stuart. (1988), The Ideology of Tribal Economy and Society: Politics in the Jharkhand, 1950-1980, Modern Asian studies, vol. 22, No. 1, PP. 1-42

CHAPTER FOUR

UNDERSTANDING THE NEW STATE OF JHARKHAND

Jharkhand is an extraction zone and a supplier of cheap raw material and labour to the non-tribal areas. To ensure it, the dominant mainstream co-opted the tribals, by using financial incentives, religious division and inter-tribal rivalry[148]. The leaders of the movement just wanted a tribal state. There was no serious debate on how political power was to be shared and how the local people would exercise control over the economy. Apart from the tribals, there were Sadan and other non-tribals among the original inhabitants of the region who would also demand a share in the political power. There was no political or economic ideology beyond the demand of state. Hence from the original ethnic movement, Jharkhand became a regional movement. To the tribals, Jharkhand (forest) is a symbol of their belonging to the region. "Adivasi" gives them the sense of being the local egalitarian community. The two together confer on them a sense of being owners of the land and having a dignified identity. When Jharkhand came into being in November 2000, it was caught between two contradictory paradigms. One of the subalterns re-asserting themselves without a clear-cut ideology and the other the statusquoist forces co-opting them by using their divisions. So, the two decades of the new state helped in understanding the quagmire, if the new state suggested federalism, decentralization and autonomous economy, growth and development of the underdeveloped, better standards of living for the deprived or made space for further divisive politics.

At the time when Jharkhand became a state, political temper swung in favour of the BJP. 1991 Census suggested that religion wise the Hindu population was 82.42 percent; the ST population 7.89 percent; Christian population 0.98 percent and people of other religious persuasions 1.67 per cent[149]. There was spread of Christianity in the area for more than hundred years. But the lack of cultural cohesion between the Sarna tribal (non-Christian tribals) and Christian tribals paved way for the manipulation of the tribal population by the non-tribals for their political ends. Also, during this time various outlawed naxalite organizations disrupted the law and order and the political

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[148] Fernandes Walter, "Jharkhand or Vananchal Where are the Tribals?" EPW Oct 31, 1998, p.2770,
[149] Ekka Alexius, EPW January 29, 2000, p.257.

processes in the region. BJP consolidated its position with 12 seats out of 14 in the 1996, 1998 Parliamentary elections and 11 seats in the 1999 elections. Congress managed only two seats and RJD was confined to just one.

Statehood was granted to Jharkhand under the one upmanship of BJP. BJP also forwarded the idea of naming the state 'Vananchal' instead of 'Jharkhand'. But it was believed at that time that the people of South Bihar were not forest dwellers per se, rather they were indigenous people with rich social and cultural heritage. The term 'Jharkhand' was more closely associated with the identity of the people.

The political discourse on the naming of the state also suggested that Vananchal was a part of Hindutva ideology. Its nomenclature suggested establishing a non-tribal upper caste, socio-economic and political hegemony in the region and to keep the tribals in perpetual subservience[150]. Vananchal was the negation of the identity of the tribal people. In terms of societal structures and relations, the tribal features were non-hierarchical, egalitarian and communitarian as against the pyramidal, status quo and caste stratification of the non-tribal world view. Similarly, in polity and authority it was believed that the tribal system follows the socialist values, consensus in decision-making and peoples' participation. The ecological and economic principles of the tribal society used the natural resources as means of their livelihood, practiced need-based production, applied labour intensive technology and resource generating method and maintained a symbiotic relationship with nature. Hence, when observed closely there was dichotomy between the two world views of the tribals and non-tribals. Hence, the Jharkhand state was the epitome of relentless holistic tribal world view.

Many debates surfaced in the year 2000 when three new states Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal were created from Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. It was deliberated whether creation of more states would strengthen our federal structure or would lead to instability and disintegration of the country. Basic question was why these new states were created at all? Was it to serve the political interest or to facilitate the functioning of the administrative machinery?

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[150] Ibid, p.258

Table 10: "Support for creation of Jharkhand"

Categories	Heard of demand of new Jharkhand State	The demand for new State justified
All	53	33
North Bihar	47	15
Central Bihar	46	23
South Bihar	73	68

Source: Bihar assembly election survey 2000, (post poll) Sanjay kumar, EPW Sep 7, 2002, p.3705

Are smaller states clearly an answer to all the ills of the regions that becomes a new state after the bifurcation of the earlier state? It can certainly not be the problem-solving mechanism of all the people living in the region. These are the several questions and issues that would be interrogated in this chapter. Answers to how far the new state fulfills the specific problems of regional discrimination and access to power will also be sought for. However, there cannot be a universal rule about the creation of new states. In the words of Sanjay Kumar, "the extent to which a new state succeeds or not depends upon the specific combination of three factors: the presence of a strong popular movement in favour of new state, a history of systematic neglect of the region and existence of a strong distinct socio-cultural identity" [151].

The creation of the new state of Jharkhand was precisely because there was enormous support among the people for creation of this state. This was evident from the survey conducted by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) in Bihar during the assembly election[152]. Above table suggested that more than 50 percent of the people of Bihar were aware of such a demand while nearly 33 percent of the people were in support of this demand. There were some regional variations as people from South Bihar, which has now been created as Jharkhand, were more in support for the creation of the new state. More than 73 per cent people of this region had heard about such a demand and nearly 68 percent people were in support of creation of the new Jharkhand state.

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[151] Sanjay kumar, "Bihar Assembly election Survey",EPW, Sept 7, 2002, p. 3706
[152] Ibid, p.3706

However, adivasis are no longer in a majority in the region created as the new Jharkhand state from Bihar. But as per the 2001 Census, they constituted the biggest section of population in this region. Adivasis account for nearly 26.2 percent of the total population. CSDS survey suggested that there were 12 percent dalits, 25 percent upper castes and 35 percent Other Backward Caste (OBC) in the region. Clearly this was the area which was still dominated by its original inhabitants, the adivasis and they should have had a decisive say in the decision-making process in this region. In the words of Sanjay Kumar, "these data provided strong case in support of the creation of Jharkhand" [153].

Table 11: "Social groups and support for creation of Jharkhand"

Social Groups	Demand for Jharkhand Justified
All	33
Dalits	32
Adivasi	68
Other backward caste	26
Upper caste	38

Source: Bihar Assembly Election Survey 2000.

The political process around the new millennium suggested the pulsating demand in favour of a new state in Jharkhand. Even the performance of the major political parties suggested similar trends from the Elections of Vidhan Sabha 2000 and Lok Sabha elections of the year 1999, 1998 and 1996. A comparative study suggested the political performance of political parties in Bihar and Jharkhand. The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and the BJP were the two most important political parties in united Bihar. The results of the elections during this time indicated that both RJD and the BJP had equal presence in the state. But the relative strength of the two political parties around the year 2000 in the newly formed Jharkhand state had different connotation. While the RJD had a strong support base in Bihar, it had a very weak presence in the newly formed Jharkhand state. Similarly, though the BJP had some presence in Bihar (15% vote polled in 2000 Assembly elections) it had strong

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[153] Ibid, p. 3705

support base in the newly created Jharkhand state. The party polled nearly 46% vote in this region during Lok Sabha elections of 1999 and 1998.

Table 12: "Comparative performance of political parties in Bihar and Jharkhand"

	Vidhan Sabha Elections 2000		Lok Sabha Elections 1999		Lok Sabha Elections 1998		Lok Sabha Elections 1996	
	Bihar	Jharkhand	Bihar	Jharkhand	Bihar	Jharkhand	Bihar	Jharkhand
INC	9	20	5	24	5	16	12	16
BJP	12	25	17	46	17	46	16	31
JD/RJD	33	12	34	7	32	9	35	25
SMT/JD (U)	10	4	26	-	21	-	19	3
JMM	-	16	-	10	-	3	-	11

Source: EPW Ibid, p.3708

Hence, the various studies conducted on different elections were testimony to the fact that RJD had a strong presence among the Yadavs, the dalits and the Muslims. BJP was popular among the upper caste and the adivasis and the JMM mostly among the adivasis. Later on, a separate section will discuss the political performance of JMM in various elections that took place in the two decades of creation of Jharkhand.

What needs to be further interrogated in this chapter is who or what forces have monopolized political power in the new state. The new state was given on the pretext that the south region of Bihar had considerable presence of adivasis and that their problems were different from the people living in other parts of Bihar. How far this can be justified to have uplifted the position of the adivasis? How far the creation of new state proved to be a success story? What were the new groups and classes that coalesced to form the political divide and benefited the most?

To understand the political journey of two decades of the newly formed state, this chapter is divided into two broad sections. The first section will discuss the decade of turmoil and instability in Jharkhand. The second section will conclude the discussion hitherto it is early to make any conclusive inference or arrive at definitive answer. The new 'tribal' state should therefore help to interrogate the possibility if the

tribal leadership has preserved the tribal forms of life and its own ethos and cultural identity and tribal consciousness in Jharkhand. It will also understand how the political process and state institutions have consolidated in the realm of given circumstances.

I. Decade of turmoil and instability: (2000-2010)

Here is a brief interlude to understanding the political backdrop in Jharkhand before discussing the decade after the formation of state of Jharkhand. It was largely believed by scholars that politics in Jharkhand region has never been in the interest of the tribal people though they constituted a significant group in this region of India. The tribal people could not make use of the political opportunity to turn the tide in their favour.

The political history of Jharkhand spans about a hundred years since the colonial times, when the tribal leaders like Birsa Munda wanted to free their land and people from the oppressions of the outsiders. The struggle for socio-economic and political freedom had seminally begun as early as 1832, with many revolts like the Kol and the Bhumij rebellion of 1832-34 and the Santal insurrection of 1855. It gave rise to the Jharkhand movement for greater political autonomy, more specifically since 1938, with the formation of Adivasi Mahasabha and the Jharkhand Party in 1950. Since then, the subaltern movement passed through the ethnic and pan-tribal phases to the stages of tribal nationalism and regionalism[154]. The State Reorganization Commission did not accede to the tribal leaders' demand for a separate Jharkhand state in 1956 comprising the 18 tribal districts of Bihar and the seven contiguous districts of Orissa, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh on the grounds of the minority status of the tribal population, linguistic heterogeneity of the area and the apprehensions of regional imbalance.

Under the leadership of Jaipal Singh who held huge political clout as a tribal leader having western education, the Jharkhand movement underwent huge somersaults. There were many splinter parties that bore their genesis to Jharkhand Party of Jaipal Singh. Out of these many political parties, the Jharkhand Mukti

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[154] Ekka Alexius, EPW Jan 29, 2000, p. 257

Morcha (JMM) managed to hold some semblance of popular credibility in the 1970s under the leadership of the charismatic leader Shibu Soren.

During the active political dialogue and negotiations with the state and the central governments from 1986-1994, the Jharkhand Coordination Committee (JCC) played a pivotal role. Though what came out from such negotiation was only a truncated Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council (JAAC).

Closer to the new millennium, the BJP made significant dent ahead of all other parties in every respect in the political landscape of Jharkhand. The BJP chose to release its manifesto, choice of candidate and earnestness in all matters related to the political formation of Jharkhand. While other political parties like JMM, Congress and RJD lost their political fortunes, the BJP reaped huge electoral dividends in the 1996, 1998 and 1999 elections in this region. BJP increased its stronghold over the years, while others lost badly. The JMM eroded in the very Santal heartland since its inception in 1973 by the 'Maran Gomke' (the great leader), Shibu Soren. BJP maintained its hold in Dhanbad, Ranchi, Jamshedpur and the Kurmi majority constituency of Giridih through its stalwarts like Rita Verma, Ramtahal Chaudhury, Abha Mahto and Rahindra Prasad Yadav to name a few[155]. The BJP's increasing hold over the constituencies in South Bihar and the loss of other parties in the area was significant to granting of statehood to this region.

There occurred a sea change in the Jharkhand politics in the 1990s from that of the earlier decades. From the 1950s to the 1980s, the Jharkhand parties and the Congress had kept a firm hold on the electorate. The Jharkhand parties had a sway on the people during the heyday of the Jharkhand movement and the Congress dominated the politics on account of the traditional following of the Tana Bhagats (the Gandhian followers among the Oraon tribals) and the Christians.

Jatra Oraon was the messianic leader of the Tana Bhagats during the First World War and wanted to restore the tribal land from the occupation of the British and the Zamindars. Consequently, he thought that an alliance with the Germans would help his peoples' cause. 'Tana' in the local dialect simply means 'pull'. The followers

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[155] Ibid, p. 258

of Jatra wanted the Germans to pull the British out of their land. Hence, the Tana Bhagat movement started. After the death of Jatra, the Tana Bhagats expected Mahatma Gandhi to fulfill their dreams. They were mainly located in the Lohardaga constituency with a population close to one lakh, a majority of who till the advent of the new millennium were influenced by the BJP. The disappointment over the formation of JAAC till 2000, the dubious stand of the Congress on the autonomy of Jharkhand and the loss of influence of the Left parties in the region, strengthened the hold of the BJP in the region around that time[156]. This was crucial to grant of statehood to the region as BJP made significant inroads in the politics of Jharkhand.

Strategically however, the erstwhile Jan Sangh Party, together with its ally the RSS, started making inroads in the Jharkhand politics since 1960 to forestall the growing influence of Christians in the area. The relief work of the RSS during the famine of 1966-67 strengthened them and they won five assembly seats in Ranchi and Singhbhum in the 1967 elections. They also gained from the communal riots of 1964 in Jamshedpur and of 1967 in Ranchi and from the propaganda of reconversion of tribal Christians to Hinduism carried out by the Arya Samaj[157]. BJP further gained progressively from the cultural alienation of the Sarna tribals and the Christian tribals from each other. In the words of Alexius Ekka, BJP almost hijacked the old Jharkhand movement during the 1990s.

Nevertheless, in the similar vein BJP mooted the idea of naming the Chotanagpur Santhal Pargana region 'Vananchal' that unfolded an entire gamut of politics. Scholars believed that 'Vananchal' was derogatory and that the tribal people were not forest dwellers per se but the indigenous people with a rich social and cultural heritage. The term 'Jharkhand' according to them expressed the identity of people of the region.

Vananchal was viewed as an ideology to establish a non-tribal upper caste, socio-economic and political hegemony in the region to keep the tribals in perpetual subservience. It was a negation of the identity of tribal people. Scholars reiterated their concern that Vananchal would reinforce the upward social mobility of the upper

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[156] Ibid, p. 258
[157] Ibid, p. 258

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castes, just as it would bolster the downward mobility of the lower castes and other marginalised sections[158].

Tribal societal structure and relation, featured non-hierarchical, egalitarian, communitarian values whereas non-tribal world view was diametrically opposite as pyramidal, statusquoist and stratified. It valued autocratic or feudalistic values. Similarly, the economic and ecological principles of the tribal society undertook natural resources as means of livelihood, they practiced need-based production, applied labour intensive technology and resource generating methods and maintained a symbolic relationship with nature. In a non-tribal or dominant society, the resources were used erroneously as capital or means of production applying capital intensive and resource depleting methods. The protagonist of the movement and the champions of tribal world view believed that the socio-economic and politico cultural difference between the tribal and the non-tribal vision of life makes the very connotation and idea of Vananchal anti-tribal. Tribals needed change but with their own pace and pattern. Tribal ideologues thus believed that Jharkhand movement spearheaded the tribal cause relentlessly and according to the holistic tribal world view which was not clear under the scheme of Vananchal.

Hence, the twentieth century ended with the positive hope that people would finally conscientise on the merits of Jharkhand that finally materialised on 15th November 2000 with the efforts of the leaders of the movement who came out clearly with their socio-economic and political ideology and its praxis. The idea of Vananchal was nipped in the bud that brought BJP in power in Jharkhand with Babulal Marandi as the first chief minister of Jharkhand. This government when it came into existence in the late 2000 saw the state in a buoyant revenue situation and received generous assistance from all centrally sanctioned schemes. However, it could not salvage the situation and plight of the people in the backward districts that witnessed starvation deaths, acute conditions of malnutrition, misery, poverty and penury.

Added to this, the government got mired in several controversies with the enforcement of the domicile policy in government jobs. The policy was supposed to benefit those youths whose forefathers were listed in the 1932 land survey. It enabled

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[158] Ibid, p. 258

them 73 per cent reservation in Class III and IV grade jobs advertised by local district offices. Some adivasi activists though welcomed the policy like the Adivasi Chatra Sangh etc. But in Jharkhand the demographic divide was such that the tribal population was in minority itself. Nearly 27 percent of the Jharkhand's population comprised adivasis; half of the remaining 73 percent included backward, and other castes settled in the state for centuries. The rest were those who came in search of jobs from adjacent Bihar. These sections formed an important vote bank which no political group that time could have afforded to antagonise. The benefits accruing from the domicile policy was limited (only 0.3 percent of all jobs). Ironically, the decision to implement the policy first sparked off opposition mainly within the Marandi's coalition government and beleaguered it. It hindered party's prospect in Jharkhand. The decision also smacked of the government as it failed to evolve a mechanism to identify the 'original residents' of Jharkhand.

The domicile policy was more an act of desperation by government to ensure its survival. The game plan was to create a coalition of adivasis and original inhabitants in the state. The agitation fostered an insider-outsider divide that in the long run could spell doom for the state. The passion this controversy ignited, succeeded in splitting society vertically, a move almost reminiscent of the Mandal protest of 1990 that created schisms over caste-based reservations. With non-adivasis pitted against adivasis, government successfully sowed the seed of greater chaos and confusion in Jharkhand[159].

By the year 2004, the BJP coalition in Jharkhand crumbled and the alliance broke down. Studies conducted by Sanjay Kumar on elections at the Centre for the Studies of Developing Societies (CSDS), showed formidable sense of dissatisfaction with the performance of BJP government in Jharkhand that resulted in its electoral defeat. The results of the 2004 parliamentary elections in Jharkhand, the first since the formation of the state in 2000, seemed to be a superb demonstration of the aphorism: 'United we win, divided we fall'. The split factor combined with an adverse swing, spelled disaster for the Bharatiya Janta Party's prospect in Jharkhand. It polled only 33 per cent of the votes, a sharp decline from 45.5 percent votes it polled in the 1999

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[159] Jharkhand Creating Schisms, Notes from Editor, EPW July 27, 2002

Lok Sabha elections. Paradoxically, the BJP could not chalk out a pre-poll alliance with JD (U), its partner both at the centre and the state. Nor could it enter an alliance with the All-Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU) which was also on ally of the state government. On the other hand, the Congress managed to form a rainbow alliance with parties like the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), CPM and CPI, resulting in a grand victory for the alliance.

BJP had formed the government in Jharkhand in collaboration with JD (U), Vananchal Congress and AJSU. Nevertheless, the relations between the partners had been always marked by unease and distrust. The BJP never shared a good working relationship or bonhomie with the alliance partners[160]. Infighting and bickering amongst alliance partners of BJP, vilification remained a matter of embarrassment for the Jharkhand government. The BJP's persistent distrust of its alliance partners reached a climax when the latter staged a coup against chief minister Babulal Marandi. It led to his replacement by Arjun Munda.

However, what was more significant was that even an alliance would not have saved the BJP from losing seats. There was a swing factor in the electoral debacle of the BJP in Jharkhand[161]. The unpopularity of some of the candidates among people and party workers and dissatisfaction among the electorate with the performance of the government led to the electoral debacle of BJP.

The formation of Jharkhand was associated with the heightened aspirations of its people. They had attained statehood after a long struggle. The BJP government could not prove its mettle in touching the core issues that really affected the lives of the people. Apart from undertaking some cosmetic measures like construction of a few important roads, the BJP government did very little to fulfill the aspirations of the people. A large section of the people then turned against the government and the ruling party. The unemployed, who had thought that the formation of separate state would create large number of jobs for them, became frustrated with the government, which despite the existence of many vacancies and its announcements of appointments, failed to fill the vacancies. The constant criticism of the government by

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[160] Dayal Harishwar, kumar Sanjay, "Jharkhand – Reversal of Past Trends" EPW Dec 18, 2004, p.5513
[161] Ibid, p.5514

its own ministers, the preoccupation of most of the ministers in serving their own interests and privileges, their demand for frequent change of officials, rampant corruption, turned a large section of the electorate against the ruling parties[162].

A section of OBCs – the sahus, surhis and kurmis who inhabited the region for centuries were called 'Sadan', had been traditional voters of the BJP. These people also displayed their displeasure against the government. They targeted the governments' Panchayati Raj legislation (PESA Act, 1996). Sadan leaders of the BJP like Ram Tahal Choudhary and Shailendra Mahto mobilised sections of OBCs against the BJP. At the organisational level, the BJP failed to solicit the support of its party workers for some of its candidates. Nagmani, the BJP candidate from Chatra who was earlier in RJD failed to gain support of all BJP workers. The organisational secretary of the BJP was an outsider to Jharkhand who could neither resolve the conflicts between state party leaders nor gain the confidence and loyalty of party workers.

The election result in Jharkhand was a real setback for the BJP, since it was one of the regions of the erstwhile Bihar where the party had a strong support base and political presence. Here is a brief discussion on the Lok Sabha elections of the years 1991 to 2004 that would help to gauge the public sentiment towards different parties and coalitions in the region and understand the pulse of the political narrative that unfolded on the political landscape of the region. Looking at the electoral performance of various parties in this state earlier, it was noticed that not only the BJP won the large number of seats, but it polled larger percentage of votes as well. During the 1998 and 1999 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP polled more than 45 percent vote and won 12 and 11 seats, respectively. Although the Congress and JMM too polled a decent number of votes in those elections, neither of the two was able to win many seats. It was only in 1991 when contesting elections, the JMM in alliance with the Janata Dal, managed to win six of the 14 Lok Sabha seats and polled 21.4 percent votes. The JD (later RJD) never had a strong presence in this state. Thus, the results of the 2004 elections meant a complete reversal of the earlier trend. Table below illustrate the same.

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[162] Ibid, p. 5514

Table 13: "Performance of Parties: Lok Sabha Elections 1991-2004"

Year	Congress		BJP		JMM		JD/JDU	
	Seat Won	Votes polled %	Seat Won	Votes polled %	Seat Won	Votes polled %	Seat Won	Votes polled %
1991	0	17.9	5	32.9	6	21.4	2	9.7
1996	1	15.9	12	34	1	12.2	0	22.2
1998	2	15.7	12	45.5	0	10.4	0	9.2
1999	2	23.8	11	45.5	0	9.5	1	7.3
2004	6	21.4	1	33.1	4	16.3	2	3.5

Source: EPW December 18, 2004

In the 1991 elections, the Janata Dal and JMM had an electoral alliance. The alliance won eight seats: six seats by the JMM and two by the Janata Dal. Their combined vote share was 31.09 percent. In the 1998 elections, the Congress, RJD and JMM had an electoral alliance. The alliance won two seats by the Congress. Their combined vote share was 35.39 percent. In the 1999 elections the RJD and the Congress had an electoral alliance which won three seats, two by the Congress and one by the RJD. Their combined vote share was 31.26 percent. In 1999, the JD (U) an ally of the BJP had not contested any seats in Jharkhand. In 2004, the Congress had an alliance with the JMM, RJD and CPI. BJP had been virtually wiped out. Congress established a complete dominance in the state. The success was largely credited to the pre-poll alliance, these parties entered along with the CPI, which also won one seat. The electoral alliance resulted in a formidable social coalition that provided it with a decisive edge. Studies also indicated a strong support base among the 27 percent adivasi voters in the state for the JMM. Table given below indicates the same trend.

Table 14: "Congress and allies led Among All Social Groups, Except Upper Caste Voters (%)"

Social Group	Congress +	BJP	N
Adivasi	50	25	198
Dalit	41	29	91
OBC	44	34	171
Muslim	73	13	86
Upper caste	24	63	120

Source: EPW December 18, 2004

During the election survey of 2004, the Congress had its support base among 13 percent dalit voters and the RJD had been popular among the OBC voters, who constituted about 30% of the state population. The alliance of the Congress, JMM and RJD paved the way for these three numerically large social communities to come together (Dalits + OBC + tribals).

The survey also indicated that a majority of the voters belonging to these social communities voted for the Congress led alliance. Among adivasis, 50 percent voted for the Congress alliance and only 25 percent voted for the BJP. The Congress alliance also took a lead among the OBC voters, 44 percent of whom voted for it, 34 percent voted for BJP. The Muslims also in tune with the national trend leaned towards the Congress-led alliance. While the dalit voters were equally divided between the Congress alliance and the BJP, upper castes voted for the BJP in large numbers. Inspite of its defeat the BJP remained extremely popular among upper caste voters in Jharkhand. BJP donned the mantle aggressively towards fulfillment of its poll promise of creating a state for the people of Jharkhand but, the reality turned hollow when the state could not be revived from the state of utter ignominy and penury. People of Jharkhand chose BJP above the parties like JMM, but their aspirations fell flat.

Table 15: "Congress Alliance More Popular Among Young and Urban Voters"

Social Group	Congress +	BJP	N
Rural	44	32	589
Urban	51	36	142
Young (upto 25years)	51	33	172
Old Voters (above 65 years)	43	33	560

Source: EPW December 18, 2004

The Congress led alliance took the lead both in rural and urban areas. The survey indicated that the Congress got more votes in towns than in villages. While the lead for the Congress alliance in rural areas was about 12 percentage points, in urban localities it was 15 percentage points. The above table suggests that BJP was less popular in urban areas than in the villages. Congress was a popular choice among both the young and the old in the state, the alliance was more popular with young

voters, among whom it established a lead of 18 percentage points. Among older voters the alliance had a lead of only 10 percentage points.

Of the three states formed during the NDA government in the Centre, only Jharkhand had seen the most intensive, sustained and militant movement for the formation of a separate state. Naturally, its creation raised hopes and aspirations of the people. But within two years of the formation of Jharkhand, disillusionment descended upon them. People expressed great dissatisfaction with the government. There were expectations that more employment opportunities would be generated once the new state would come into existence. That did not happen unfortunately, it rather deteriorated. People did not stop migrating in search of jobs and opportunities to other states. In fact, the BJP nailed its coffin with the introduction of the issue of domicile. People at large believed that domicile should have been given to all those who were resident of the state at the time of its formation.

Hence, the crux of the entire analysis for the election debacle of BJP in the year 2004 was the social coalition that emerged between the Congress, RJD and JMM. Also, the general dissatisfaction of the people with the performance of the government acted as an added factor. Hence, the BJP election report card suggested split and swing factors that led to its defeat.

Ever since its formation as a state for the tribals of undivided Bihar, Jharkhand suffered from bouts of political instability, corruption, poor governance and the 'resource curse' – widespread and unplanned exploitation of its mineral wealth without benefits accruing to the tribal population. Discontent against the mainstream political parties showed up in the maoist challenge to the state. Jharkhand around the year 2004-2005 remained a relative maoist stronghold in variegated areas.

Out of the six people who had served as the state's chief minister since Jharkhand's formation, half of them including the inaugural office holder Babulal Marandi represented the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). His successor Arjun Munda also from the BJP, was the longest serving chief minister. He served for almost five years across three terms but never completed a full term. In his first term Arjun Munda served as chief minister from 18th March 2003 to 2nd March 2005.

Table 16: "Seats Won and Vote Polled: Lok Sabha Elections 2004"

Party	Seats Contested (2004)	Seats Won (2004)	Change Since (1999)	Vote % (2004)	% Change since (1999)
Congress	9	6	4	21.4	-2.4
JMM	5	4	1	16.3	6.8
RJD	2	2	1	3.5	-4
CPI	1	1	1	3.8	1.2
BJP	14	1	-10	33	-12.5

Source: EPW December 18, 2004

The table above suggests the result of the 2004, Lok Sabha election. The election of 2004 saw a decimation of the decade old dominance of the Bhartiya Janata Party in the new state. The grand alliance forged painstakingly by the Congress with the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, the Rashtriya Janata Dal and the Communist Party of India made a near clean sweep, winning 13 of 14 Lok Sabha seats, leaving just one for the BJP. The alliance established a lead in 62 out of 81 Assembly segments in the state. Anyone could be forgiven for assuming that the Assembly election, which was held within a year of this verdict, would prove to be a non-contest. For assuming that, notwithstanding the usual electoral complexities of Assembly elections, the Congress-JMM alliance would displace the BJP in the state. Jharkhand which held its first ever Assembly election in 2005, looked all set to emulate Uttaranchal and Chhattisgarh. In these states, the ruling parties (the BJP in Uttaranchal and the Congress in Chhattisgarh) lost the first Assembly election[163].

The Jharkhand result showed that the state did not go the way of the other two. However, there were certain common factors. As in the other two newly formed states, the Assembly election in Jharkhand was marked by intense participation and fragmentation. The creation of new but long cherished state led to the intensification of political activities. The election in the words of Yogendra Yadav, witnessed modest rise of about two percentage points in the turn out, even as neighbouring Bihar witnessed a sharp drop in voter turnout. The number of contestants were 1390 as against the 882, who contested from this region in the last Bihar Assembly elections.

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[163] Yogendra Yadav and Sanjay Kumar, "How Jharkhand Voted" The Hindu, Monday March 7, 2005

In Uttaranchal and Chhattisgarh, the upsurge in participation had been accompanied by a fragmentation of the party-political space. Hung Assemblies with a large proportion of votes going to smaller political formations. This was what happened in Jharkhand too, only even more so than in the other two states of Uttaranchal and Chhattisgarh.

Table 17: "From one fractured verdict to another"

	Assembly 2000		Lok Sabha 2004		Assembly 2005	
Parties	**Won**	**Vote (%)**	**Won**	**Vote (%)**	**Won**	**Vote (%)**
BJP	32	25.1	16	33	30	23.4
JD(U)	8	6.3	2	3.8	6	4
Congress	11	20.1	29	21.4	9	12
JMM	12	15.9	22	16.3	17	14.3
RJD	9	11.6	7	3.5	7	8.5
CPI+CPI(M)	3	4.7	4	4.2	0	2.8
Other Left Parties	2	3.4	0	3.2	3	4.5
Independents	2	6.6	1	6.9	3	15.3
Others	2	6.3	0	7.2	6	15.2

Source: The Hindu March7, 2007

The hung assembly in Jharkhand in the Assembly elections of 2005 reflected a deep fracturing of the electorate. In the words of Yogendra Yadav, "something that might have become a reference point in Indian Politics" [164]. Further an analysis of the final vote share revealed the nature of the vote splintering. No single party got even one quarter of the votes cast in the state. The largest single party the BJP secured only 23.4 percent of the total vote. Moreover, none of the alliances secured even 30 percent of the vote. The BJP-JD(U) garnered a combined vote share of only 27.4 percent. The corresponding figure for the Congress-JMM alliance was 26.3 percent. Hung Assemblies are not unusual in our country. But even a hung Assembly normally has one or more political blocs controlling one-third or more of the popular vote. As an

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[164] Yogendra Yadav and Sanjay Kumar, "How Jharkhand Voted" The Hindu, Monday March 7, 2005

instance of a fragmented verdict, Jharkhand 2005 was one of every few exceptions of its kind.

The important questions that came up for interrogation after the Assembly election of Jharkhand in 2005 were – what changed in less than a year? How did the Congress – JMM snatch defeat from the jaws of victory? From a different vantage point, why did the BJP –JD (U) not succeed in converting the Congress – JMM follies into a clear victory. There are a few points discussed below that would help to draw some inference towards understanding the uncertain verdict of the Assembly election of 2005 in Jharkhand.

The one big change that was noticed from the Lok Sabha 2004 to Assembly elections of 2005 was that the alliance forged by the Congress disintegrated, the BJP consolidated its position by forging one. In the 2004, Lok Sabha election Jharkhand was one of the few states where the BJP failed to keep the NDA together; the BJP and the JD(U) fought separately. While the JD (U) secured less than 4 percent of the vote, the BJP recognised its role as spoiler and accommodated it in the Assembly elections. The JD (U) polled the same proportion of votes in the Assembly election but brought six crucial seats for the NDA. But for this alliance, both parties were still a few seats short and out of the race to form a government.

The anti-BJP forces moved from unity to disunity during this period in more than one way. First, the alliance shed partners such as the RJD and Left parties on the assumption that they were dispensable. Secondly, the Congress – JMM alliance was far from perfect. It was marred by many not so friendly contests. There was also a significant decline in the vote share of all major parties. All the major parties, including the JMM, suffered erosion in its vote base. The Congress lost as much as 8 percentage points while the others lost about two percentage points each. This added to a negative swing upward of 20 percentage points.

Compared with the last Assembly or the last Lok Sabha election, one-fifth of the state's voters shifted from mainstream parties and their allies to smaller political formations and independent candidates. These 'smaller forces' – mainly smaller Left parties and alternatives within the JMM family plus independents controlled as much

as 35 percent of the vote share[165]. Now to understand why the lack of confidence in the mainstream parties affected the Congress-JMM alliance's performance more than others, one needs to reflect on a deeper understanding of the political and social formation that took place around that time. JMM's last minutes follies played a small but significant role. Then the adverse image created by infighting and nepotism within the JMM also caused the steep decline in Congress-JMM fortunes. Thus, the 2005 Assembly election encapsulated important analysis to understand the pulse of popular democracy in Jharkhand that reinstated the government at the helm of the political centre.

The verdict in Jharkhand made one introspect a deeper realm of political situation where the party that represented the majority of state's population (Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits) failed to trust vote. There was huge political fragmentation of the weaker sections. Adivasis who constituted about 25 percent of the state's population at that time got divided along political and tribal lines. JMM-Congress combined lost as much as 18 percentage points of the vote when compared with the 2000 Assembly election.

In Jharkhand, the social pattern was linked to the geography. All the major parties suffered reverses in the areas that were considered their strongholds. The RJD suffered reverses in the 28 seats in the northern region bordering Bihar, where older and recent migrants from Bihar dominated the electorate in 2005. The BJP suffered losses in the Chotanagpur areas in the South. And in Santhal Pargana, the homeland of Shibu Soren, the Congress-JMM lost as much as 19 percent points of the vote. Being reminiscent of the fact that creation of Jharkhand as a separate state filled new hopes among the people, as they had shared a general sense of discrimination and neglect from the political leadership that ruled the state after India's independence. The Assembly election of 2005 was important in the contextual political discourse as it was first time the people of Jharkhand got the opportunity to elect its own assembly. Until now, the political leaders from the north and central Bihar region largely dominated as the ruling elite. Political leaders from the tribal regions were underrepresented and were relegated to the periphery of the ruling class. Since

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[165] Yogendra Yadav and Sanjay Kumar, "How Jharkhand Voted" The Hindu, Monday March 7, 2005

Assembly elections for the undivided Bihar was held barely six months before the division of Bihar into two states of Jharkhand and Bihar it was agreed that members elected to the legislative assembly from the constituencies now under the new state of Jharkhand would be treated as members of the new state Assembly and the party having the majority would form the next government. Since Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had won the largest number of assembly seats from this region, it managed to form the first government in the newly created state of Jharkhand. Hence elections to the first Assembly in Jharkhand technically took place in 2005, when BJP completed its five years of rule in the state.

In continuation to discussing the Assembly elections of 2005, here I would briefly like to throw some light on the role of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha as pan ethnic party for the adivasis of the region. JMM led by Shibu Soren had fought a long battle for the creation of this new state. In corollary to this, it was expected that, with large support of the people in the state, JMM along with allies would perform well in the first battle for the ballot in the state. Just six months earlier, in the Lok Sabha elections held in the year 2004, the JMM along with its allies the Congress, RJD and the CPI had fared very well, winning 13 out of the 14 Lok Sabha seats in the new state, raising expectations for electoral success in the ensuing Assembly elections. But contrary to the popular expectations, the JMM contested the 2005 assembly elections in alliance with Congress and performed very badly managing to win only 17 assembly seats and polled 14.3% votes. The table below illustrates it:

Table 18: "Electroral Performance of JMM in Assembly Elections (1985-2005)"

Year	Contested	Won	Votes % (Undivided Bihar)	Votes % (Divided Bihar)
1985	57	9	1.8	10
1990	82	19	3.1	15
1995	63	10	2.3	9
2000	85	12	3.5	15.9
2005	49	17	-	14.3

Source: EPW August 15, 2009 Vol XLIVN033

The JMM along with the Congress managed to win 26 out of 81 assembly seats in the state falling short by 15 seats in forming the next government. Despite the

JMM's performance in this election, Shibu Soren remained the most popular for chief minister in the state[166]. However, the popularity and charisma of the political elite in Shibu Soren outgrew the choice over the party JMM as it was not the first-choice party in the state. The reasons that were given for the political performance of JMM in the election have been already discussed in the beginning of this chapter. However, fragmentation of votes, lack of unity and coherence in the secular alliance forged between JMM and the Congress, infighting and nepotism in JMM led to poor choice of candidates that proved detrimental to the party's fortunes. Also, the 'late swing' against the JMM-Congress alliance during the election dealt an important blow on the fortunes of both the parties.

Table 19: "Electoral Performance of JMM in LS Elections (1991-2009)."

Year	Seats Won %	Votes Polled %
1991	6	21.4
1996	1	12.2
1998	0	10.4
1999	0	9.5
2004	4	16.3
2009	2	11.7

Source: EPW August 15, 2002, p. 27

If we make a comparison of JMM's performance in both Assembly and Lok Sabha elections, we find from the above table that JMM's performance at the national level in Lok Sabha elections since its participation in 1991 general elections have been better in terms of percentage of seats won. The best performance of JMM was in Lok Sabha elections in 1991, where JMM in alliance with the JD contested the elections and managed to win 6 out of the 13 Lok Sabha seats in the state. What can be deduced from here was that JMM lacked the broad-based support. The political history of JMM is also linked to the rise of regional parties in India around the 1960s when many new parties were formed based on regional distinctiveness, culture and political mobilisation based on caste / community identities with state – specific agendas. The rise of regional parties led to change in power equations in state politics

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[166] Sanjay Kumar, Praveen Rai, "Shrinking Political Space for the JMM", EPW August 15, 2009

as these parties representing sectional interests were able to carve a niche for themselves.

Regional parties in some states are perceived by voters to serve their interests better in comparison to the national parties and therefore, regional parties are seen to be a natural choice for the electorate. Regional parties have come to hold centre stage in many states of India and have created alternative political space for them.

JMM also emerged as a regional party in Jharkhand but its electoral history shows that it failed to occupy the centre stage in state politics by getting majority support of the electorate. Regional parties like Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), the JD (U) and the Samajwadi Party (SP) have formed state governments on their own with majority support. Therefore, the government led by JMM in the state always remained a fragile coalition with political pulls and pressures. Now the question was why JMM could not garner the majority or popular support of the people in Jharkhand. Below table illustrates some points to understand the paradox.

Table 20: "JMM gets the main credit for formation of state of Jharkhand (%)"

	JMM	BJP	Congress	Other Parties
All Respondents	41	37	16	6
JMM Voters	90	5	4	1
BJP voters	18	79	2	1
Congress Voters	36	9	53	2
Voters of other Parties	39	26	8	27

Source: EPW August 15, 2009 Vol XLIVN033

Above table suggested that there was a popular sentiment in Jharkhand that JMM played a crucial role in the formation of the new state. But the credit for the formation of new state was split between JMM and BJP. Here JMM failed to politically posture itself as the main inheritor of Jharkhand movement that led to the creation of the new state.

JMM could not project itself as the party which spearheaded the movement for the creation of the new state and reap electoral benefits out of it. There is another Table below that studies the support base of the JMM.

Table 21: "JMM Popular among Adivasis and Muslims only (in %)"

Caste – Community	Lok Sabha Election 2004	Assembly Election 2005	Lok Sabha Election 2009
All	16	14	12
Upper Caste	7	1	2
OBC	13	5	1
Dalit	19	21	13
Adivisi	25	31	30
Muslims	22	9	20

Source: EPW, August 15, 2019

The party's (JMM) support base in Jharkhand appeared to be narrow and localized even with respect to location, gender, age groups and caste and communities.

Table 22: "JMM losing support base among youth (in %)"

Social Group	Lok Sabha Election 2004	Assembly Election 2005	Lok Sabha Election 2009
All	16	14	12
Young (Upto 25years)	20	10	13
Old Voters (above 65 years)	14	20	12
Men	18	14	11
Women	14	15	13
Rural	16	17	12
Urban	16	2	11

Source: EPW August 15, 2009 Vol. XLIV No. 33

There was strong erosion of youth voters from JMM that formed the major support base of the party along with its failure to polarize overwhelming tribal support in its favour.

In a state with sizeable adivasi population where JMM a pan ethnic party after the creation of state should have occupied a central position in Jharkhand's politics but till the year 2009, it was far away from that dream. Its support base was much below the required threshold to occupy the centre stage in the politics of Jharkhand. Its appeal was among certain sections. Till 2009 its position was on a downslide. Shibu Soren once a 'tall leader' and a symbol of Jharkhandi movement seemed to have lost his stature. It could be due to inconsistent politics and personal follies[167].

Nevertheless, it was important to discuss the political party's role to understand the political process that unfolded in the state. The political outcome of the election results also ensured that in Jharkhand people did care about the issues like governance. The popular evaluation of the BJP government was neither very positive nor very negative. The studies conducted by the CSDS on poll survey suggested that the people expressed satisfaction with the overall development of the state and the conditions of adivasi. They had reservations when it came to assessing the law-and-order situation, public health facilities and the supply of drinking water and electricity. The people were split on their choice about giving another chance to the government. All major political parties' lost votes in which livelihood mattered most. Clearly, the voters looked towards political leaders and formations outside the mainstream to meet these concerns[168].

Table 23: "UPA vote of 2004 got fragmented"

Lok Sabha Election 2004	Congress +JMM	BJP+JD (U)	RJD	Others
Those who voted UPA	44%	8%	20%	28%
Those who voted NDA	9%	64%	3%	23%
Those who voted others	22%	9%	8%	61%
This table illustrates those who voted for UPA, NDA and others in Lok Sabha 2004 shifted their vote in Assembly 2005				

Source: The Hindu March7, 2007

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[167] Sanjay Kumar, Praveen Rai, "Shrinking Political Space of the JMM", EPW August 15, 2009, p. 29
[168] Yogendra Yadav, Sanjay Kumar, The Hindu, Monday, March 7, 2005

Table 24: "Shift in traditional Congress – JMM Support"

	Total Supporters	Congress +JMM	BJP+JD(U)	RJD	Others
Congress Supporters	14%	67%	5%	10%	18%
JMM Supporters	13%	60%	9%	2%	29%
BJP Supporters	25%	3%	77%	2%	19%
RJD Supporters	8%	4%	8%	78%	10%
Supporters of Other Parties	11%	3%	9%	9%	85%
Floating Voters	29%	27%	19%	8%	46%
This table illustrates those who voted for UPA, NDA and others in Lok Sabha 2004 shifted their vote in Assembly 2005					

Source: The Hindu March7, 2007

Table 25: "Major Shift in Mahato, Muslim and Adivasi Vote"

	Congress +JMM		BJP+JD(U)		RJD +		Others	
	Vote 2005 %	Swing from 2004%	Vote 2005 %	Swing from 2004 %	Vote 2005 %	Swing from 2004 %	Vote 2005 %	Swing from 2004 %
Upper Caste	13	-7	58	-10	8	4	21	13
Yadav	14	-19	12	-27	61	45	13	1
Kurmi/Mahato	6	-32	41	7	4	-14	49	39
Other OBC	25	-7	30	-9	4	-4	41	20
Dalit	32	7	24	-10	10	-5	34	8
Adivasi	40	-6	15	-13	5	2	40	17
Muslim	32	-23	13	-3	20	4	35	22

Source: The Hindu March 7, 2007

The results of the 2005 Assembly elections did not bring clear mandate for any political alliance. Arjun Munda served as chief minister of the state till 2006. The

next Assembly elections to the state took place in December 2009. Again, the fractured mandate was in sync with the state's recent electoral history. Also, in keeping with the trend of throwing up random post-election coalitions, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) staked and achieved their claim to form a government along with the inclusion of All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU) Party. This claim was made even though the BJP led NDA (National Democratic Alliance), including the Janata Dal (United) had a tally far less than what it had in the previous elections in 2005, with the BJP losing nearly 5% of its erstwhile support. The Congress-led United Progressive Alliance including the newly formed Jharkhand Vikas Morcha (Prajatantrik) JVM (P) – led by former BJP leader and ex-chief minister Babulal Marandi, managed to win 25 seats making it the pre-election alliance with most seats.

The Congress-JVM (P) alliance polled 25.1% of the votes and emerged as the biggest grouping in the house. Next was the BJP – JD (U) alliance, which won 20 seats (BJP 18 seats, JD (U) two seats) after polling 23% of the votes. The JMM obtained 15.2% of the votes and 18 assembly seats. The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and AJSU got five assembly seats each. Various other smaller parties like the Jharkhand Party, CPI (ML), Marxist Coordination Committee and others ended up with one seat each.

Despite its inability to form a government, the biggest gainer in the elections was the Congress Party. The party obtained nine more seats than last time. This was possible by a positive evaluation of the period of President's Rule (and therefore of the central government), following the resignation of chief minister Shibu Soren (JMM) in January 2009. In the Assembly election of 2009, Congress gained seats also due to the alliance with the JVM (P) and the consistent projection of Babulal Marandi as 'Chief Ministerial candidate'. It helped supplement the support for the alliance[169].

Voting in the election of 2009 was also on the lines of kinship – Geeta Koda, wife of former Chief Minister and independent Madhu Koda, recorded a facile win due to support from the Ho tribe. The JMM also more or less retained its vote share suggesting that the electorate still had fond memories of the party's past role in state

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[169] EPW, January 2, 2010, Vol XLV NO 1

formation. Interestingly, most of the party's sitting members of the legislative assembly did not fare well while new candidates on the JMM ticket won, which pointed to voter fatigue with incumbent legislators. Another factor in this election was the use of money power by assorted party rebels and independents, quite a few of whom were victorious.

The post-election alliance of convenience between the BJP and the JMM has been consummated on the understanding that Shibu Soren, senior leader of the JMM would be named the chief minister. And this was despite the fact Shibu Soren's continuation in the UPA cabinet following a charge of murder against him was opposed vehemently by the BJP not very long ago, in 2006.[170] Not surprisingly, BJP's enthusiasm to prevent yet another UPA – led state government made the alliance with the JMM possible. Two posts of deputy chief ministerships were allotted to the BJP and the AJSU to tie up the arrangement. As has been the trend generally, with post-election alliances in most states, there was no programmatic understanding that bound these parties beyond distribution of posts or power. The BJP–JMM–AJSU arrangement in power promised no change from the status-quo that ravaged Jharkhand's political economy – the legacy of corrupt politicians and corporations continued using patronage to garner contracts and huge profits and the enduring resource curse. Hence the indecisive mandate of December 2009, did not bring any change in the quagmire with just another bout of jousting between parties for newer coalitions and rearrangements of power.

Nevertheless, the first decade of the new millennium in the life of Jharkhand witnessed uncertainty, instability and status-quo in terms of polity, economy and society and did not lead to development centric approach.

An important piece of legislation that was passed during this decade was Scheduled Tribes Bill 2005. It was called the "Recognition of Forest Rights Act, 2006. It was a key piece of forest legislation passed in India on 18th December 2006. The law was concerned with the rights of forest-dwelling communities to land and other resources denied to them over decades because of the continuance of colonial forest laws in India." The legislation's objective was primarily correcting the

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[170] EPW, January 2, 2010, Vol XLV NO 1

historical injustice done to forest dwelling communities through the seizure of their land and forest and thereby addressing the livelihood insecurity that plagued the daily lives of forest dwellers. A view was also expressed that recent judicial interventions have rather than addressing the problem, exacerbated the situation and made it difficult to recognise rights.

Communities should be involved and empowered in and through conservation efforts. Conservation efforts, particularly struggles against environmentally destructive development and industrial projects, provide a space for building more alliances between conservationists and people's movements. Gram Sabha must be authorised and strengthened to be the primary authority in the process of determination of rights, to ensure that the process was democratic, open and not subject to the vested interests of forest authority. These were the views expressed in a dialogue that was held by the CSDS (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies) and Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics.

There was exclusion of some communities from the purview of the bill that was problematic. Many non-ST forest dwelling communities too suffered from the injustice and livelihood insecurities. There was no recourse for recognizing the rights of ST and non-ST communities who had been forcibly evicted or displaced without rehabilitation. There was no clarity about the jurisdiction of village community, which should have been clearly defined as the village's customary boundaries. In connection with penalties and wider conservation initiatives, the accountability, responsibility and limits of the power of state institutions and agencies had to be defined clearly. The treatment of indigenous knowledge needed to be revised to avoid privatising such knowledge through creating 'Community patents'.

II.   Later decade from (2010-2020)

The identity of the tribes in Jharkhand has to be understood from ethnic, socio-economic, political and religious perspective. As already observed in the writings of Xaxa, "the initial discourse on tribal identity was shaped by those who advocated integration of tribals as citizens of a nation state and others who sought their assimilation into the Hindu fold. Identity definition for the tribals in the early post-independent years had been a process from without. It was only in the recent times, with the advent of education and the threat posed to tribal ways of living by other

dominant groups and demands imposed by development, that tribal identity articulation has been a process directed from within, spearheaded by growing middle class. Such articulation has seen initiatives to ensure protection and development of tribal language, customs and culture other than the demands alone for political autonomy."[171]

It is said that language and region, "is an important mark of difference but they tend to coincide with each other in the Indian context. The two together have been the driving force behind the reorganisation of the society and polity in India in the post-independence era. Despite differences of language and region, the societies so marked are enormously similar in their societal characteristics–religion and caste being predominant among them. Religion and caste cut across regions and languages and to that extent constitute the common thread across the diversity of language and region. That is why language and egions have not become a rallying point for deliberation and analysis. The advocates of tribal policy in India also expressed that the state policies and attitude towards tribe could be discerned from the kind of provisions that were laid down for tribes in the Indian Constitution. The special provisions for tribes among other things included the provision of statutory recognition, proportionate representation in legislatures, right to use own language for education and other purposes, the right to profess the faith of one's choice or freedom of faith, and development – economic and social according to own abilities. The Constitution had also clauses that enabled the state to make provision for reservations of jobs and appointments in favour of tribal communities. Alongside such provisions, the Directive Principles of the Constitution required that the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections in society be especially promoted. Besides, there were provisions in the Constitution that empowered the state to bring areas inhabited by Tribes under the fifth or the sixth Schedule for purposes of special treatment in respect of the administration of tribal people."[172]

The provisions made for the tribal people point to an approach that is sociologically described by the term 'integration'. The provisions regarding reservations in education, employment political representation and the administration

[171] Xaxa Virginius, "Politics of Language, Religion and Identity: Tribes of India", EPW March 26, 2005, p. 1363
[172] Ibid, p. 1363

of the tribal areas as well as the provisions laid down in the Directive Principles of the Constitution, aim at bringing tribes closer to larger Indian society. Constitution has provisions, which aim not only at protecting and safeguarding their language, culture and tradition but also to promote them. The overall thrust towards tribes is one of integration rather than assimilation. Integration largely provides space for diversity, unlike assimilation which extends no such space. The conception of assimilation entails that the small minority must give up its culture in favour of the dominant majority.

Xaxa expressed that a level playing field does not exist for tribal languages despite provisions in the Constitution. Regional politics has worked more in the direction of giving tribals a regional identity shaped by the dominant language spoken by people, often at cross purposes with their cultural orientations. Looking at the tribals' access to resources, facilities in politics, employment or education they are invariably excluded on grounds that they belong to a different ethnicity. He opined that in certain contexts or for certain purposes, the thrust of the policy makers is always towards absorption, which entails their inclusion into the dominant society. The difference is not only maintained but also covertly employed to deny, discriminate and segregate them from securing access to a wider social and cultural relationship. What ensures from this is strategic deployment of difference.[173]

The domain of religion was another area where the distinctiveness of tribes was denied by state. Generally, tribes were identified and delineated vis-à-vis the larger Indian society, which practiced primarily Hinduism but there were adherents of other religions as well. In contrast, tribes were described as those who practiced animism. However, those who practiced animism also represented different kinds of social organization, languages, customs, traditions and social practices. These were implicit and not explicitly articulated in the delineation of tribes.

The so many years after independence failed at attainment of constitutional objectives and apparently it is going to be even more elusive in the future. This is evident from the kind of assertions among tribes in different parts of the country. The assertions are most discernible in respect of land and forest, language and culture

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[173] Ibid.p.1366

issues as well as identity and autonomy. In a way the assertions of different kinds and at many levels are the result of the increasing social consciousness of differences and identity among tribes. The tribal society is also increasingly becoming socially differentiated.

Most tribal societies are becoming differentiated into the landless; agricultural labourers owing some land; marginal farmers; small farmers; middle farmers and even rich farmers in a limited sense. In terms of occupation, they are now differentiated into cultivators, agricultural labourers, industrial workers, while collar / salaried workers and even shopkeepers, traders, and transporters among some tribes like the Khasis, Jaintias, Mizos etc. Tribes are also differentiated in terms of access to education, income / wealth and political power and so on. This is the case in point in Jharkhand. Even at the religious and cultural level one can see much differentiation among tribes today. The differentiation is not so much due to forces from within as from outside. The agrarian differentiation, viz. differentiation regarding access to land is more due to land alienation arising from fraud, deceit, indebtedness and state-sponsored projects leading to large-scale displacement of tribes from their lands and resources. Social differentiation has caused considerable fragmentation of tribal Society. In the context of Jharkhand per se what was also evident from field study and interviews, the social solidarity that tribes enjoyed came under stress and strain due to differentiation along with the axis of religious, political, ideological, economic, social divides and regional divide (Santhal Pargana dominated by the Santhal tribal groups and Chotanagpur by Munda, Kharia and HO tribal community). Economic and social parameters are discussed separately through tables and graphs in a chapter on field survey). The differentiation is getting more pronounced, there are cleavages within the different tribal groups in Jharkhand. This has got further acute after the grant of statehood.

Despite fragmentation of the tribal society due to differentiation, the assertion of tribal identity is on rise. Studies suggested that it is largely due to the emergence of a middle class within tribal society mostly even so with statehood. With the emergence of a middle class, the issue of culture, tradition, livelihood, even control over land and resources as well as a demand for a share in the benefits of the projects of modernity has become an integral part of identity articulation among tribes. In the not-so-distant past, the emerging middle class had moved in the direction of

acculturation into the larger society through such processes as Sanskritization. However, what one can witness now in Jharkhand is a reverse process which has more to do with alternative avenues of social mobility and social change among tribals. It is mostly due to new opportunities that the state led development brought through modern education and modern occupation[174].

The new state has accelerated the process of evolution of a new middle class also due to the spread of modern education among the tribals and accentuated the process of the tribals entering government and non-government services. Tribes were aided through provisions of reservations not only in employment but also in higher education and politics. Here, I would also like to mention the role of the Christian missionaries in spreading modern education in Jharkhand. The interaction of the tribes with Hindus was fraught with cleavage and conflict, the relation to the Christian missionaries was seen as holding out potential. The Christian missionaries sought to address the problems created by the movement of the Hindu population into tribal areas. By posing the issues of exploitation, oppression, domination and by addressing matters of health, disease, education and language, Christianity heightened the contrasting identity of tribes as against those of the larger society, especially the Hindus and this process went on without any cease.

The articulation of identity by the tribes in the form of autonomy movement for greater political power has come to an end but it is visible in other forms as well. The promotion and revitalisation of tribal languages, art forms and introduction of tribal languages in primary schools have been voiced time and again. Connected to it is the search or development of script like the 'Santhali'. The identity articulation has more to do with the drawing of distinctions between tribes and non-tribes with a view to gaining more economic and political powers, however, limited it may be. The movement connected with language and tradition is primarily concerned with enriching the content of the identity created in the process of interaction between tribes and non-tribes. The identity question is more pronounced among tribes where an educated middle class has emerged. The consciousness evident in such articulation is not the consciousness of tribe as a category but consciousness of being different from others and especially the dominant regional community.

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[174] Ibid, p. 1368

Notwithstanding constitutional provisions of securing the development of the tribes without violence to their languages and cultures, Xaxa opines that the actual reality has been quite the contrary. There has been aggressive incorporation of tribes into the language and religion of the dominant regional community. Yet, in respect of providing tribals' access to the fruits of development, such incorporation has been overall avoided and even resisted. The access tribals had over land, forest and other resources (jal, jungle, jamin) has been usurped without any tangible benefits in return[175].

This argument has laid to constitute the structural settings of identity politics among tribes in India and the region of Jharkhand per se. However, there is a rupture how tribal social consciousness is viewed by tribals themselves and the way it is presented by others. Others present such articulation / expression of identity to be coterminous with the consciousness of tribals. Tribal consciousness is more a middleclass consciousness than the consciousness of tribals at large.

Till the political autonomy question survived as a demand in this region of Santhal Pargana and Chotanagpur, the analysis rested on the grand narrative of the tribal discourse that highlighted the conditions of these people in utter dispossession and marginalisation. The part on the decades after grant of statehood, highlights the emerging middle class whose consciousness of being tribal got pronounced with access to education, better health and social advantages. The political processes and institutions guarantee such claims that got again tested in the Assembly elections of Jharkhand in 2014, the progression of second decade in the life of the state. The so called small political history of Jharkhand narrated a very inglorious past where horse-trading during government formation use of money power was endemic. The state, which was created to fulfill many hopes, unfortunately was despised for the rule of money power in government formation and legislative decision making. Party-hopping, purchase of legislators, purchase of dubious laws to protect MLAs holding offices of profit were all part of its recent political history. There needed to be drastic change in the political culture of Jharkhand, the worst forms of which were already evident. So, the elections to the Assembly in the year 2014, was an important yardstick to measure the strength and weaknesses of the political systems here. The

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[175] Ibid, p. 1369

results of this election were also counterpoised with the Lok Sabha elections around the same year. Undoubtedly, the Jharkhand Assembly election saw the Bharatiya Janata Party and its poll partner, the All-Jharkhand Students Union Party secure an absolute majority by winning 42 seats. The absence of united opposition, a lukewarm Congress, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha ceding ground in Santhal Parganas; large scale defections of Jharkhand Vikas Morcha legislators; and a record voter turnout ensured that the result went the BJP way. The party also benefited from its urban population, the consolidation of the majority vote and being in power at the centre[176].

The third election to the 81 member Jharkhand Assembly saw voters of the 14 years old state elect their first majority government. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its poll partner, the All-Jharkhand Students Union Party (AJSUP), secured an absolute majority. The table below illustrates the election result of 2014.

Table 26: "Jharkhand Assembly Election Result, 2014"

Parties	Seats Contested	Seats Won	Seats Change since 2009	Vote (%) Actual	Vote Change since 2009 (% Points)	Vote % in Seats Contested
BJP	72	37	19	31.26	11.08	35.12
AJSUP	8	5	Nil	3.68	–1.44	37.03
INC	62	6	–8	10.46	–5.70	13.97
RJD	19	0	–5	3.12	–1.91	12.66
JD(U)	11	0	–2	0.96	–1.82	6.61
JMM	79	19	1	20.43	5.23	20.91
JVM	73	8	–3	9.99	1	11.05
TMC	10	0	Nil	0.5	–0.43	3.96
BSP	61	1	1	1.82	–0.62	2.38
CPI ML(L)	39	1	Nil	1.52	–0.83	3.05
JKP	19	1	Nil	1.11	0.01	5.14
M-COR	13	1	Nil	1.02	–0.07	6.01
JBSP	19	1	Nil	0.79	–0.12	3.59
NSM	9	1	1	0.49	0.49	3.92
Others	642	0	–4	11.16	–6.56	
NOTA	81	0	Nil	1.69	1.69	–

Source: EPW, May 9, 2015, Vol 1 No 19, p 62

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[176] Kumar Sanjay, Sardesai Shreyas, "Jharkhand Assembly Election", May 9, 2015, Volume I. No. 19, EPW, p. 62

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won 37 of the 72 seats it contested, and the AJSUP five of the eight it contested. The Lok Janshakti Party (LJP), which was also a partner of the BJP, failed to win the one seat it contested. The BJP secured 31.3% of the vote while the AJSUP got 3.7%. Both in terms of votes polled and seats won, this was the BJP's best performance in the state.

The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) was BJP's main opponent in what was mostly a four cornered fight between the BJP-led alliance, the JMM, the Congress-led alliance and the Jharkhand Vikas Morcha (JVM) – led alliance. Despite being the incumbent party, the JMM ended up with 19 seats, securing 20.4% vote. This was also its best performance in an Assembly election. In the 2009 election it won 18 seats with a vote share that was five percent lower. The Congress won only six seats and its partners, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and Janata Dal – United (JD-U) drew a blank. The performance of the former chief minister Babulal Marandi's JVM, which had tied up with the Trinamool Congress, was only a tad better than that of the Congress. It won eight seats, three less than in 2009. Babulal Marandi lost in both the seats he contested. In fact, the election was disastrous for former chief ministers like Arjun Munda (BJP), Madhu Koda (Jai Bharat Samanta Party) and Sudesh Mahto (AJSVP). Hemant Soren (JMM) also lost in Dumka but won in Barhait. Baring three, all the ministers in the Hemant Soren government lost the election. The Congress retained only one of the 14 seats it had won last time. Also notable was that the Assembly had 34 first-time members.

BJP was fortunate that the JMM and the Congress alliance did not put up a united front for the Assembly election. Had they fought together the BJP's tally would have been much less. Table below shows the combined lead of Congress –RJD–JDU–JMM in seats where BJP alliance won.

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Table 27: "Combined Lead of Congress- RJD- JDU- JMM in Seats where BJP Alliance Won"

Assembly Constituency	BJP Alliance Vote %	Congress Alliance Vote %	JMM vote %	Lead of Cong- RJD- JDU- JMM over BJP Alliance (% points)
Rajmahal	39.71	3.74	39.35	3.38
Borio (ST)	36.39	1.69	35.94	1.24
Madhupur	37.34	4.49	33.88	1.03
Gandey	28.9	21.14	22.81	15.05
Tundi	31.41	4.97	30.78	4.34
Ghatsila (ST)	32.48	22.69	28.52	18.73
Potka (ST)	36.69	7.65	33.08	4.04
Jugsalai (SC)	40.28	20.61	28.02	8.35
Sisai (ST)	31.02	18.22	29.21	16.41
Gumla (ST)	38.89	9.9	35.78	6.79
Lohardaga (ST)	38.81	38.41	9.21	8.81
Manika (ST)	24.7	45.55*	4.67	25.52
Chhatarpur (SC)	30.54	33.48**	0	2.94
Garhwa	36.94	26.3	23.32	12.68

*Congress and RJD contested; ** RJD and JDU contested.*
Source: EPW, May 9, 2015, p. 63

Henceforth, it could be assumed that BJP gained at the Congress's expense. If we do a comparison to understand the vote share and factors that led to BJP's win, we see that the Congress put in very little effort during the election. It was the least active among the major parties in reaching out to the voters[177].

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[177] Ibid, p. 63

Table 28: "Difference Between Two Jharkhand Assembly Elections, 2009 and 2014"

2014 Election/2009 Election	Seats Won by BJP Alliance	Seats Won by JMM	Seats Won by Congress Alliance	Seats Won by JVM	Seats Won by Others	Total
Seats won by BJP alliance	13	6	1	3	0	23
Seats won by JMM	5	10	2	1	0	18
Seats won by Congress alliance	15	1	1	2	2	21
Seats won by JVM	7	1	0	2	1	11
Seats won by others	2	1	2	0	3	8
Total	42	19	6	8	6	81

Source: EPW, May 9, 2015, p. 63

Above given tables suggest that the JMM gave the BJP a tough fight in the south of the state, winning 10 of the 29 seats, a gain of five since 2009. Five of these 10 seats Majghaon–ST, Manoharpur, Chakradharpur, Kharsawan and Silli had been won by the BJP alliance in 2009. However, the JMM's gains in the south were neutralized by its losses in Santhal Pargana. The survey conducted by CSDS found that support for the JMM among Santhals was high at 40%. There was however a consolidation of the non-tribals, particularly other backward classes (OBCs) behind the BJP.

Table 29: Region Wise Result of Jharkhand Election 2014

Regions	Seats	Turnout %	Congress Alliance		BJP Alliance		JMM		JVM	
			Seats Won	Vote %	Seats Won	Vote %	Seats Won	Vote %	Seats Won	Vote %
North	23	64.8	2	15.8	14	36.5	3	15.4	2	10.2
North West	11	62.7	1	19.6	5	26.8	0	6.8	3	15.7
Santhal Parganas	18	72.5	3	12.3	7	33	6	29.5	2	12.4
South	29	66.2	0	12.8	16	38.6	10	24.7	1	5.7
Overall	81	66.6	6	14.5	42	35.1	19	20.4	8	10

Source: EPW, May 9, 2015, p.63

In a region where about 30% of the population was tribal, the coming together of the non-tribal vote around the BJP became a loss for the JMM. The region recorded a voter turnout of 72.5% much more than the state average. While the JMM's seats and votes came largely from two tribal regions, the BJP alliance's gains were widespread across the State. The result of 2014 region-wise illustrates the same from Table below. BJP did best in North Jharkhand winning 14 seats compared to just five in 2009. BJP also won from JVM defections. Seventeen candidates who switched sides at the last minute emerged victorious interestingly. The Table suggests, eight were BJP, six JMM, two JVM and one Congress. Five of the eight defectors who won on a BJP ticket were former JVM members of the assembly. It was also believed that the defections were 'engineered' by the BJP to pressure Marandi to merge his party with it or at least become an ally[178].

Table 30: "Locality wise Result of Jharkhand Election, 2014"

Locality	Seats	Turnout %	Congress Alliance		BJP Alliance		JMM		JVM	
			Seats Won	Vote %	Seats Won	Vote %	Seats Won	Vote %	Seats Won	Vote %
Highly rural	53	68.2	5	13.2	22	31.3	15	21.7	7	12.1
Rural	10	69.4	0	12.9	7	36	2	25.2	0	5.7
Urban	12	64.5	1	15.8	7	39.3	2	19.8	1	7.7
Highly urban	6	56.4	0	24.7	6	53.4	0	5.3	0	5.2
Overall	81	66.6	6	14.5	42	35.1	19	20.4	8	10

Source: EPW, May 9, 2015, p. 64

Urban Jharkhand played a major role in the BJP alliance's victory. It won 13 of the 18 urban seats in the state. The Table on locality-wise results depicts the same below. Most of the JMM, JVM and Congress victories were in rural parts of the State. Then was the turnout factor that added to BJP's big win. Two out of three registered voters in Jharkhand voted in the Assembly elections of 2014. This factor also

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[178] Ibid, p. 64

attributed to BJP's win through halfway mark in Jharkhand. Table below shows the same.

Table 31: "Rise in Turnout and BJP's Success in Jharkhand Election, 2014"

Turnout Increase since 2009	Number of Seats	BJP Alliance Won in 2014	BJP Alliance won in 2009	BJP Alliance increase since 2009 %	BJP Alliance gains since 2009	BJP Alliance Retentions since 2009	BJP+ losses since 2009
Less than 5 percentage points (low)	16	8	7	14	4	4	3
5-9.9 Percentage points (moderate)	34	16	9	78	13	3	6
10+ Percentage points (high)	31	18	7	157	12	6	1

Source: EPW, May 9, 2015, p. 64

In the 2014 Lok Sabha election, BJP was successful in consolidating the majority vote. It received 50% of Hindu Upper Caste votes, 40 percent of Hindu OBC votes and 29% of the dalit vote.

Table 32: "How Communities Voted in Jharkhand, 2014"

	BJP Alliance	JMM	Congress Alliance	JVM	Others
Hindu upper castes	50	15	10	10	15
OBCs	40	19	15	10	16
Scheduled Castes	29	24	11	15	21
Scheduled Tribes	30	29	10	9	22
Muslims	14	18	34	7	27

Source: EPW, May 9, 2015, p. 64

BJP also cornered the largest share of dalit votes. Tribals who constituted one-fourth of the state's population, made the contest between the BJP and the JMM very interesting. Here religious identity played a role as well. While tribal Hindus largely voted for the BJP (49%) tribal Christians largely opted for the JMM (44%). In terms of community BJP did well among Oraons and the JMM held on to its Santhal support. Muslims who constituted 14% of the state's population did not vote in a consolidated way[179].

Table 33: "Tribal Voting by Religion and Community in Jharkhand 2014"

	BJP Alliance	JMM	Congress Alliance	JVM	Others
By religion					
Tribal Hindu	49	18	17	6	10
Tribal Christian	8	42	15	9	26
Tribal other	25	31	5	11	28
By community					
Oraon	47	23	12	11	7
Santhal	19	40	4	14	23
Munda	7	26	11	5	51
Other	48	31	13	8	-

Source: EPW, May 9, 2015, p. 64

Since the state was formed in 2000, Assembly elections were entirely determined by local issues. But politics at national level also had an influence. BJP benefitted from the affable relation it was enjoying at the centre. While the performance of the Hemant Soren government was rated quite positively by people, the performance of the BJP led government at the centre was rated even better. Table below shows the same.

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[179] Ibid, p. 64

Table 34: "Satisfaction with JMM Government, Hemant Soren and Modi Government in Jharkhand 2014"

Performance of	Fully Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Fully Dissatisfied	Can't Say
JMM-led state government	11	51	14	20	4
Hemant Soren as chief minister	12	51	16	16	5
BJP-led central government	31	50	11	6	2

Source: EPW, May 9, 2015, p. 65

Table 35: "Most Important Issue in Jharkhand Assembly Election, 2014"

	Price Rise	Corruption	Development	Jobs	Power Supply	Drinking Water Supply	Educational Facilities	Women's Safety	Poor Conditions of Road	Naxa-lism	Other	DK
All	16	7	13	19	3	4	6	4	3	1	14	10
Youth	15	8	11	24	2	6	7	6	3	1	9	8

Source: EPW, May 9, 2015, p. 65

Any society that is divided along the lines of ethnicity, religion or political affiliations cannot raise a collective identity and consciousness. Jharkhand is testimony to the fact that grant of statehood did not end the division rather it got accentuated and tribals inhabiting the region could not articulate their collective voice and identity. This was more evident with the 'anti-conversion bill' or passing of the 'Jharkhand Religious Freedom Bill' in 2017. The divide reached a point where Christian and Sarna tribals (non-Christian) were in open hostility. The non-Christian tribals believed that Church was conspiring against them, their religion and culture and that it aimed to annihilate the indigenous tribal community itself[180].

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[180] Kumar Anant, Pramil K Panda, "Ethnicity, Religion and Identity Politics Among Tribes in Jharkhand", EPW, September 29, 2018, p. 23

It was observed that the conflict and divide was based on both reality as well as perceptions within the indigenous tribal community that needed to be addressed with caution. This is one of the greatest challenges facing the political leadership. It may lead to turmoil within the state that would not only affect socio cultural and political relations between the tribes but also Jharkhand, its people and its policies.

One view suggests that tribes have been sanskritised and assimilated within the larger society. Tribal leaders like Jaipal Singh had asserted that since tribals no longer live in jungles and their interactions with the rest of the world take place in public sphere, they are capable of successfully coping with mainstream society in different conditions. Nonetheless, some of the primitive tribes in rural areas are still suppressed, subjugated and denied their rights. This is also attributed to the apathy of political leadership and policy of isolationism and under-development as it was not considered a revenue extraction zone. Despite the claims of sanskritisation, assimilation and development, tribals in Jharkhand are divided. The tribal society underwent social differentiation in the form of lifestyles with the arrival of Christianity that led to the shaping of two different groups, Christians and non-Christians (Sarnas) in the tribal society. As the two began to live segregated lives without much interaction, the distance widened between them[181].

Any further division among tribes in Jharkhand will only weaken their bargaining power, position and collective voice, as an ethnic group, which is imperative in the assertion of demands. Accounting for 26.2% of the total population, the tribal population forms a minority in the state. Numbers of these tribal groups are also dwindling due to immigration from other States due to industrialization, urbanization and the creation of new avenues. Demography matters in political decision-making. Such divides in the name of class hierarchy, culture, social and religious practices will only weaken the tribal identity and collective voice. The term 'adivasi' in common parlance gave a unifying identity, a new imaginary to these groups of people. Irrespective of their religion, tribes in Jharkhand are ethnically the same. There are also counterclaims that these tribes originated from different ethnic

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[181] Ibid, p. 23

races that settled in the geographical region during their migration. Nevertheless, groups of people having common culture, interest; past experiences, coherence and solidarity constitute an ethnicity. There should not be scope of antipathy between these variegated tribal groups in Jharkhand that would alone ensure their upliftment. The aphorism stands true in this case 'united we stand, divided we fall'. Earlier also in times of distress the tribals had forged their unity when the Birsa Movement was brutally repressed by the colonial administration, they came together to create a formal political platform in the form of Unnati Samaj as early in 1915. It later became unified political voice of the tribals. Then again, they came together in 1938, when Adivasi Mahasabha was formed to foster a greater Jharkhandi unity. It was renamed Jharkhand Party in 1949. Adivasis in Jharkhand have lived side by side with caste societies for a substantial number of years. Their culture is dynamic rather than stagnant. Hence, it may be easier to capture the exchange of tangible behavior, but the amorphous nature of cultural cross-pollination is not easily interpreted[182].

Adivasi society is believed to be outside the caste system and hence endowed with a unique agency in a country where caste has pervaded every religion. In the process of reproduction of culture, adivasi culture has not remained a watertight category and has undergone changes which gives it a mere syncretic form. It is also strange observation but true that despite endorsing one or the other religion, adivasis still remain at the fringes of their adopted religion. Despite being named as backward, pagan and primeval why do they convert? Sujit Kumar views that the answers to these questions are not straightforward and need to be understood in the backwardness of the community as well as the neo-liberal onslaught on their resources. The tribal community has resisted government's attempt at amendment to protective legislations like the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (CNTA) 1908, and Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act (SPTA) 1949 and the current Anti Conversion Bill. This resistance had the capacity to act as a transcending force in creating 'adivasiness' amidst the localised imagery pertaining to the different cultures of the Santhals, Mundas, Oraons and Hos among others. The realm of culture is a problematic category and the case of Jharkhand with the construct of adivasi is even so. Adivasi itself does not infer a cultural homogeneity of a particular group of people. It is rather a political construct in which cultural

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[182] Kumar Sujit, "Muzzling Artistic Liberty and Protesting Anti Conversion Bill in Jharkhand", EPW January 12, 2019, p. 16

notions play an important role to consolidate groups of people against others, including the state.[183]

Every member of adivasi community does not carry the same historical imagination and engage with similar cultural practices. The history of the HO adivasi in Jharkhand is different from the histories of Mundas or Oraons and so it is with rest of them living in Jharkhand. While adivasi icons like Birsa Munda, Sidhu Kanhu and others who fought against the exploitation of adivasis by outsiders, are equally owned by every adivasi in Jharkhand, one cannot say the same about a Ho adivasi and Tana Bhagat, who is believed to have started a millenarian movement among the Oraons. Therefore, what is inferred here is some adivasi symbols can easily transcend the intra-community barriers while others cannot. Adivasis in India have experienced different degrees of interaction with various societies and religions. Influences from caste and religion have developed some puritanical values among certain groups of adivasis particularly those who have adopted one or the other religion. Nonetheless, the original people of Jharkhand carry a notion of their culture that is more definitive and has defined traits.

The last years of the second decade of the millennium saw two crucial elections of Lok Sabha and Assembly where interestingly one reinstated the political dispensation at the centre and the other ousted the government at state. The success of Bharatiya Janata Party in Jharkhand in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections did not mobilise the voters in favour of the assembly elections in December 2019.

The Jharkhand Assembly election in December 2019 brought a decisive victory in favour of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), Congress and Rashtriya Janta Dal combine, leaving little room for the BJP to form the government either by entering a fresh alliance or by mobilising the required numbers. The BJP went into the Jharkhand election on its own as it could not build pre-poll alliance. This is cited as one of the factors that led to the defeat of the BJP. Although the vote share of the BJP and its erstwhile ally, All Jharkhand Student Union (AJSU) had shown improvement over the 2014 elections. The five years rule by the BJP in the state had been stable and it was the only government in the history of the state that completed its full term. But

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[183] Ibid, p. 17

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the rule is said to have far-reaching consequences for the people, especially those in the margins.

It is said that various segments of the population in Jharkhand were extremely discontented with the government. This fact, I encountered during my field trip where a major segment of the respondents showed their rancor and displeasure for the incumbent government. Anti-tribal legislations, lynching, loss of livelihood, Freedom of Religion Act, polarisation of people along religion and ethnic lines combined with the environment of hate, fear and violence especially against tribes and religious minorities were some of the overriding factors that could have led to the electoral debacle of the BJP. Earlier the rule of BJP was not considered as hostile as the current one was that too against the tribe. Undoubtedly, there were attempts towards improving economy, education and health.

Bills that sought to bring change in Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana Tenancy Acts were anti people. The tribal people showed resistance to such Acts through mass protest and rallies resulting in denial of assent to the bill by the Governor. The two Acts reflected the essence of the struggle of the tribal people. The Freedom of Religion bill was also divisive in nature that did not go down well with the people. Any form of resentment or assertion of rights by the people was painted as anti-national. The posture and attitude of the government towards religious minorities was even worse. Jharkhand has number of industrial towns giving rise to various kinds of ancillary activities. The economic slowdown has had indeed an adverse impact on the people engaged in those activities. The JMM and its allies had therefore done well in the semi urban areas too that was the bastion of the BJP. It is said that the tribal state nomenclature to Jharkhand is a misnomer (36% tribal in 1951 census to 26% in 2011 census). It adds no value to Jharkhand other than symbolic and cultural. Whatever the demography may suggest for the tribals of this region they are nonetheless very central to the dynamics of politics and development. They are indispensable to the understanding of ethnicity, region and state.

The place that is abundant in natural resources with enterprises – public and private is languishing in poverty. The benefits of development have not accrued to the tribal and other indigenous population of Jharkhand. They have impoverished further. It is imperative that the new government (JMM and allies) that identifies with the pan

tribalness of the region and was part of the history of the region organically, understands the paradox and takes initiative to include the people at the margins in programmes of development. The feelings of hatred and animosity is predominating in the last few years in Jharkhand and the divide between diku and non diku is purposely sharpened for political dividends that has polarized society here resulting in accentuated belligerence.The political dispensation must be cautious to nip the divide and look forward to a progressive space of governance. This would ensure the upliftment of all communities in Jharkhand.

CONCLUSION

It is often believed that identities that shape conflict are primordial. In the case of Jharkhand this may be a result of political necessity and administrative convenience. [184] Identity formation by more than 30 tribes harping on exclusivity, integration and dominance resulted in conflict that also provided ground for several observations and narratives that did not even have meeting points.

Four fundamental factors decisively contributed to the identity formation as tribals or Jharkhandis. First, the fact of being a tribal united all the various tribal groups on the basis of cultural and ethnic sentiments. Since the major tribes were concentrated in geographically distinct regions, they were not split up like the Bhils and the Gonds. In a consolidated social condition, the fact of being the indigenous population or tribals provided greater scope for congruence. This led a common platform for political awakening and action.

Second, the sense of being adivasi or the original settlers of the Jharkhand region also brought in a sense of being part of a confederation. The term 'Jharkhand' is derived from two different words – Jhar (a cluster of thick forests) and Khand (a tract of land). Jharkhand suggests a land mass quilted with forests. It is not just the geographical territory that determined the identity of a Jharkhand, but the entire socio-cultural life. Hence even those tribals who have moved over to Assam tea gardens or to Andaman Islands continued to maintain the identity of a Jharkhandi. The term itself had gone through a historical evolution. In the beginning, exclusively tribal organisations Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj (1915) and Adivasi Mahasabha (1938) were formed. The term Jharkhand also came to be used in 1938 giving a much broader platform for political assertions of the Jharkhandis. With the formation of the Jharkhand party in 1950 the identity formation reached its zenith.

Third, Christianity in a latent way contributed to tribal identity formation by providing education. It also gave them a history, a myth about the 'golden age', it accentuated the notion of private rights in land. Finally, the ethnic sense of 'we'

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[184] Oinam, Bhagat, Patterns of Ethnic Conflict in the North-East", EPW May 24, 2003.

tribals and 'they' dikus or the outsiders united the entire tribal population for a protracted struggle.

Demography played a crucial role in determining the dividends for both marginalised and native communities. Migration is followed by settlement, inter-linkages between the two with collective conflict must be further interrogated. While the issue of migration is projected as the point of departure for distinguishing the native from the outsider, that of separating 'we' from 'they', it is the settlement which covertly generates the fear in one or the other tribe, of being robbed of the land capital. Political and ideological theories are then construed out of this fear. Process of identity formation does not give cognisance to the forces of land capital in the whole issue. As long as land is in plenty, beyond the matrix of its handled technology and world view, neither migration nor settlement is considered worth considering an issue. Perhaps earlier, the idea of conflict lay on external invasion and the relationship of dominance and subservience. The concept of conflict drastically changed in the recent times. It is now between the native and the migrants. The events witnessed in the last few decades in Jharkhand slowly changed the equation of power and process of participation in the political dialogue of ethnic communities.

Collective consciousness has emerged among the tribes in the Jharkhand region through formation of separate political identities. In addition to their identities as cultural and political, a new form of internalisation of new political ethos is in the process. The tribes in the state are trying to redefine themselves through this new consciousness, but many (larger) tribes are moving out of tribal identity to that of a new symbolism of community identity. This is also manifest in the findings of the fieldwork where mostly the tribal groups identified themselves as Jharkhandi. As compared to a tribe, " an ethnic community is more politicised, ideologically structured with a matured form of communication network. Tribe was generally attributed as more or less a homogeneous group of people having a close-knit way of life, with relatively simpler means of production, to be somewhat falling under a close/communicable speech community. It is politicisation of a tribe with certain ideological construct as goal that gives birth to an ethnic community. Formation of ethnic community is primarily political. It may later provide ways for the emergence of a 'more unifying' cultural identity. The tying bond of cultural one-ness in a

community is strong that we tend to see such identity as pre-given, almost as the source for all other identity formation.Emergence of political consciousness cannot be seen as the only factor determining the process of identity formation and subsequent conflict. Increasing awareness of land as the only long-term reliable capital for all development purposes in the state has slowly been realised by the tribal communities in Jharkhand. These new identities – in formation have started using the discourse of western liberal democracy and its ideological constructs. Political consciousness in its collective form becomes not only exclusive in approach but also takes violent turns – sometimes the ethnic conflict being its outcome. In this region unlike the north-east there was no aspiration for political independence. It was the absence of a language native to the community in terms of which they could generate a complex, nuanced, authentic and imaginative articulation of the idea of freedom. In the absence of such a language, the articulation took place in the language of ideologies here, fashioned elsewhere." [185]

Political participation not in terms of just electoral politics but also involvement with civil societies, economic development aiming at removing regional imbalances would resolve the issues of development and identity. Unless such a method is adopted a chain of conflict is bound to take place. This is often due to non-governance and tendency to subsume the other within one's own fold.

Assertion of ethnic identity is rooted often in fears among groups of their culturally and historical acquired identities. These have several dimensions attached to it though. All social groups present here manifest distinctive social and cultural personality and linguistic entity; there is no cultural and social organisation interaction despite the physical affinity among them. Today the question that is most pertinent among these groups of people is the ethnic territoriality and control of its natural resources precisely the land. By assimilating those with the mainstream will only diminish their political potential, nonetheless. This often results in the dominance of a particular ethnic group.

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[185] Virginius Xaxa, "Politics of Language, Religion and Identity: Tribes in India," EPW, March 26, 2005. p. 1368.

Ethnicity should not be deemed as atavistic or primordial but indeed as modern which is integral to the making of modern states. Modernisation and technological progress have sharpened the sentiments and made a resurgence of parochial loyalties. The growing explosion of knowledge and education have revived continuity of historical memories and have brought different ethnicities closer to its past here.

If the first wave (1950s and 1960s) of regional movement was grounded in linguistic and cultural assertions, the second wave in Vidharbha, Telangana and Marathawada (1970s and 1980s) linked to economic deprivation, the third phase (2000) for Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand was driven by economic factors that involved the political construction of identity. By fusion of these identities (Garhwali and Kumaoni in Uttarakhand), (Munda, Oraons, Santhals and Horos in Jharkhand) the movement proceeded here in the latest phase.[186] The nature of the movement marked here showed tendency that was mostly centripetal. This attribute was evident throughout the movement for a separate state where the movement vacillated as being pro-centre rather than regionalist. The region of Chotanagpur and Santhal Parganas reinforced that it was mainly developmental neglect that fueled this movement with identity being manufactured to rally people around the state's insensitivity to the backwardness of the region. There are various dimensions of social and political practice of the region in the last few decades that reiterated the demands for development and participatory governance. These demands have also resonated in the extensive field work in the region. Such linkages must be probed further in the advancement of the state through its policies.

The politics of the Jharkhand state formation highlights the trajectory politics from ethno regionalism to nationalism. This region was dominated by Christianity and was homeland to multi-ethnic community. Despite the existence of ethno-regional political parties and organisations and ethnic assertions in the region for a long time, the region fulfilled its aspirations of statehood only with the intervention and support of the national parties.

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[186] Jayal, Gopal Niraja, "Political construction of sub-national identity, "EPW p. 4103, November 18, 2000.

Tribal identity in Jharkhand is directly linked with 'Jal jungle and jamin', the connotation of which is discussed and derived at, through the narrative of the thesis and it has been established beyond doubt that development here is meant by some kind of social change in a particular direction for the betterment of group or entire society. In the case of Jharkhand, a shift is noted from exclusive one-dimensional tribal ethnicity to an inclusive and multidimensional regional identity. Later the statehood also culminated on the pretext of regionalism and development rather than only ethnicity.

Development in the region is assessed through the lens of policies and programmes undertaken in the last two decades of the state. Growth is studied to understand equity, education and employment, more decentralisation, policy planning from below etc. Though it would be inconclusive to assert that the development taken place here is multidimensional, inclusive, voiceful, job oriented especially for the marginalised, yet it cannot be ruled out prima-facie. Conditions of the people could not be assuaged due to unstable polity of the one decade that was very decisive to nail the development parameters here. Also, no regional party could make a dent in the ethnic politics in Jharkhand.

However, it is also important to draw attention to the idea of India and how multiculturalism in play here becomes the harbinger of change with practice and redefinition of federalism and decentralisation at the advent of new millennium. The creation of these new states became the integral feature of new India. "It was also a point of contention how a vast multi-ethnic country in terms of religion, language, community, caste and tribe has survived in conditions of underdevelopment, mass poverty, illiteracy and extreme regional disparities. Placed in relation to the failures of many less diverse and plural post-colonial and socialist states, India's record of relative political unity and stability seems remarkable indeed. It is believed that at the heart of the resolution of many ethnic conflicts in India lies a set of multicultural state policies. The Indian Constitution as the source of these policies can be said to be a basic multicultural document in the sense of providing for political and institutional measures for the recognition and accommodation of country's diversities. Since independence, federalism and an ongoing federalising process which politically accommodates ethnic identity have remained the most effective method of

management and resolution of conflicts. Related to this method is democracy which stipulates that the political association or institution that ethnic groups may demand as the fulfilment of their identity needs must be democratically based and formed by the consent of the 'ethnic' electorate and not to be something 'naturally' given. The story of statehood within the Indian federation since 1950 is the story of acceding to ethnic identity demands for political recognition, for autonomous power within the federation, and for a more secure environment for the protection and maintenance of identity." [187]

The ethnic basis of Jharkhand was rather complex. Although, "the tribes began to assert their identity some decades ago, they were no longer in the majority when statehood was granted. In the creation of the Jharkhand state, regional underdevelopment and a sense of deprivation combined with tribal affiliations has taken count." But the thesis has tried to unfold the ideas and interrogated if statehood in the case of Jharkhand has in the real sense provided an institutional framework of autonomy and decentralisation. Has this responded to the need for development and identity in the region? By this claim can it be established that "statehood for territorially based ethnic identities remains the most comprehensive and effective method of political recognition of ethnic identities in India." [188]

The formation of state in Jharkhand is seen as an institutional mechanism whereby the underprivileged were able to protect and safeguard their economic, social, political and cultural interests. The struggle of the underprivileged has not ended with grant of statehood. The struggles of the tribal people are primarily centered on greater control over land, forest and other resources. The traditional view (new state encourages parochial tendencies) must be shunned in favour of creation of new states if it provides good governance, administrative convenience, economic viability, cultural linguistic affinity and similarity in the developmental needs of a subregion. Most of the demands for constituting new states have been based primarily upon an allegedly unfair and unequal distribution of development benefits and expenditures in multilingual 'composite' states. The three states created in the year

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[187] Maya Chadha, "Integration Through Internal Reorganisation: Containing Ethnic conflict in India",
in "Critical Issues in Indian Politics: Ethnonationalism in India", OUP, 2010, p. 383
[188] Ibid. p. 384

2000 can act as benchmark to decide if more such demands should culminate in statehood.

It is observed that, "such demands and aspirations are related to the success of the elite in marketing the perception of deprivation and in making what Benedict Anderson has termed as imagined community into a natural one. Jharkhand presents the best example of this phenomenon. Because number counts in a democratic process, the forging of several identities into a common identity is politically expedient. Here tribal cultural identity combined with the backward development profile of the region helped to forge a single distinct political identity. Over a period of more than a century, the movement for social and political equality was transformed in the movement for political freedom. Instead of a pan-tribal nature of ethnic identity, it became a regional movement of tribal nationalism. By asserting that all tribals were members of the Jharkhand party from birth, the Jharkhandi elite was successful in constructing a geographical identity that encompassed various cultural identities. However, it had become clear that by geographically including all the residents of this region as Jharkhandis, the non-tribals benefited more due to their educational and social mobility. The reorganisation of a state or the formation of a new one, results from the political assertion of a regional community. It is also explained by a triangular relationship between the people, territory and the state, the basis of which is maximum homogeneities within and maximum identity without. The process reflects or incorporates a set of variables: language, dialect, social composition of communities, ethnic regions, demographic features, area contiguity, cultural pattern, economic life, historical antecedents, political background and psychological makeup or felt consciousness of group identity. However, because the boundaries of these eco-cultural zones do not correspond with the administrative boundaries of states, there is always the possibility of forming new states and/or reorganising the existing one. Some attempts to create commonalities of linguistic and political identities have not succeeded in erasing historical ethnic-regional identities for example, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. States have been created but imagined communities are yet to emerge." [189]

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[189] Amit Prakash, "Identity and Development in Jharkhand", in "New States for a New-India", edited Manohar Publications, New Delhi 2011, p. 45.

As has been noted that demands for separate states develop when people of a region have the perception that they were deprived, discriminated against and exploited by people from outside the region. However, in the case of Jharkhand it can be said that discrimination and exploitation has disappeared to a larger extent. Statehood may not lead to any perceptible difference in the condition of everyone including those who may well have been the foot soldiers in the battle for a new state. In Jharkhand it is observed that the regional elite that spearheaded the process of new state formation displaced the existing elite noticeably to figure out that a new exclusive identity has started to take shape among the educated middle class among them. This had led to exclude some peripheral identities and people of some groups are still deprived of the actual gains that the new state processed. Here various tribal groups (Mundas, Santhals, Horos and Oraons) are not on best of the terms as well.

Year 2000 became a milestone when "the issue of state formation became a normal and permissible theme of different party agendas and of mainstream political activity. This demand was no longer treated as threat to national integration and security. There was no mass movement either. The states of Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand were created based on a certain regional identity enshrined in cultural and geographical differences. The justification of these states was administrative efficiency. It thus appears that 'durable entities' are based on commonality of culture. In India, the emergence of both a state and regional identity and the struggle for their achievement has been simultaneous. A consciousness of being separate has motivated those in the struggle, and out of the struggle has emerged a new consciousness. There could be more such demands as these states have set a precedent. It is time for other states to be recognised, reorganised in a manner that accommodates and institutionalizes the various regional identities."[190]

In retrospect, if one analyses the claims of various literature, in the late 20th century, one sees that state retreated in some spheres and lost its monopoly in others. "The result was a retreat to identity politics in which ascriptive status provided the basis for rights and entitlement claims. It is believed that it is the character of the state which crucially influences the pattern of situational insecurities in a society and hence

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[190] Ibid,p.47

the pattern of ethnic consciousness and relationships. From a Marxist perspective separatist movements are fostered by the state to serve the interests of those classes who control the state. More specifically the economic component is the crux of the problems of regionalism. The material interests of these regional movements, except that of the tribals are not the same as that of the subaltern masses. Indeed, to contain and in some cases to destroy the radicalisation of politics on class lines at that level, the state power paves the way for growing influence of ethnicity by one form of ethnic/religious manipulation or the other, depending upon the specificity of socio-economic reality."[191]

Movements like "Gorkhaland, Jharkhand, Assamese and Khalistan were not basically anti system. They only challenged the functioning of state apparatus. The explanation for the separatist movements had to do with the maintenance of state power in the hands of the ruling class. Another Marxist interpretation of the separatist movement comes through the work of Sajal Basu. He asserts that economic factors such as deprivation, exploitation by outsiders, negligence and developmental aspirations remained the mobilisational factors for such non-secular sentiments. He argued that in many regions the economic idioms were utilised as ornaments only to rationalise the parochial content of the movement. The appearance of a casual role in economic factors believes a reality in which non-economic factors are casual. A sense of deprivation, feeling of being discriminated and oppressed does not necessarily arise from development factors. The causes of separatist movements have more to do with the sense of deprivation than actual deprivation. So, Basu sees the explanation for the movement in a variety of interacting factors rather than simply in efforts of the dominant bourgeoisie to maintain its power."[192]

The movement for a separate homeland in the case of Jharkhand sustained for a century. It is believed that this was because of the support for the movement by different tribal political parties – the landscape of which is already discussed at length in chapter 2. "The propagation of the movement by different non-tribal political parties also continued for obtaining foothold in the region. Then there was the funding

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[191]http://spe.cgu.edu/faculty/facpages/deanmchenry Dean E. Mc Henry Jr. – The weakened state explanation for the rise of separatist movement: The experience of India.
[192] Sajal Basu, 'Identity Aspirations and Ethnopolitics' in "Regional movements: Politics of language, ethnicity and identity" IIAS Shimla, p.58

and guidance of different Christian missionaries in the region who worked for the advancement of their religion as well. There were also demands of tribal elites for recognition and power within their community and outside; the movement was sustained by the efforts of non-tribals to preclude the fear of eviction from the proposed state and with the intention of capturing political power as Jharkhandis with the support of non-tribals. The movement continued as government failed to appreciate the tribal culture and social life and could not involve them properly in the development efforts and bring them in the mainstream. The case of Jharkhand was more to do with political bargains between the elite actors than the pressures from below. There is a corrective in the narrative of the success of democracy in India. Democracy in India has worked in many respects and to that extent Jharkhandis are rewarded with high rates of economic growth and better governance. What looks like success from one vantage point looks like hypocrisy from another – hypocrisy that extended in Jharkhand, from forced industrialisation in which tribals were meant to enjoy state protection and to a redefinition of 'tribalness' itself when that became convenient? If one takes a closer look at the problems of underdevelopment in the region in general, it explains the story of building castle over graves. In the name of development tribal community should not adopt the model of western modernisation uncritically. Rather it should be planned and implemented locally with active participation of the subaltern tribal community that should not be reduced or replaced by their representatives.Development usually means social change in a particular direction for the betterment of a group or entire society. To usher this kind of development in Jharkhand the procedure should be reassessed and need based, with sustainable use of forest and natural resources. Growth should include equity in areas of health, education, employment, decentralisation etc. Policy planning should take shape from below with more and more people's participation. There is a need for a shift from exclusive and one-dimensional tribal ethnicity to an inclusive and multi-dimensional regional identity. Historically speaking the rigid tribal ethnicity failed to get mass involvement in Jharkhand movement. Economic condition will improve with creation of infrastructure with more jobs based on local resources." [193]

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[193] Vijay Kumar, "Crystallization of a Regional Movement. The case of Jharkhand, Third Concept, April 1992.

Reiterated several times already that the catch phrase of 'Jal, Jungle and Jamin' is central to the identity of the people, issues of displacement, landlessness must be addressed vigorously. Administration should be more responsive. Right to information should be implemented at all levels of planning and execution. Recent programmes of action research in Jharkhand also reflect on the use of participatory ideas within governance reform. There are many government schemes already in place but a critical thinking, self-reflection and alliance building by agencies that are responsible must take place to remove further systemic and structural blockage.

Development in Jharkhand should be multidimensional, inclusive, voiceful, job-oriented, community based, women centric so that not only the local people's feelings are assuaged but their socio-economic condition also improve. The tribals must achieve what is socially suitable, culturally accommodative, and economically useful for them. The newly formed state could not launch any systematic movement or agitation for the conservation of indigenous languages and script. Hence, it should enforce programmes of ethno development and revival of culture through developing languages as Sadri, Kurmali and the Ol chik script in the Santali language. Development should serve the purpose of the people and ensure their direct participation. Goals of freedom must be broadened with expansion of human capability. Culture and power should be the epicentre of all developmental process. It should be marked as a dimension of all social action including economic and political life. Ethno development should build on the positive qualities of indigenous culture and society to promote local employment and growth. These positive qualities are tribes' strong sense of ethnic identity, close attachment to ancestral land, capacity to mobilise labour, capital and other resources to achieve shared goals. With this kind of development, the tribal people can define their own process of development and interactions with other segments of society.

The tribal population of India constitutes 8-9 percent of India's total population which is larger than that of any other country in the world. Jharkhand also has a population which has a sizeable proportion of tribal population (26-27) percent. Despite the protection given to the tribal population by the Constitution of India, scheduled tribes remain the most backward ethnic group. The Indian tribes are backward not only in comparison to the general population but also compared to the

scheduled caste and other backward classes. In fact, the conditions of tribes in India have in many ways worsened. Tribes are neglected, discriminated in terms of income distribution and social status.

The word 'Adivasi' originated in the Chotanagpur in the 1930s and literally meant 'original inhabitants'. Adivasi was used interchangeably with tribe in a very neutral sense to distinguish a group of people sharing some group sentiment. Benedict Anderson portrayed the modern nation as an artefact, as imagined community. "Nation exists more as mental images than as genuine communities that require a level of face-to-face interaction to sustain the notion of a common identity. In his view nation exist as imagined artifices constructed through education, the mass media and a process of political socialisation binding the working force to the existing power structure. Anthony Smith highlighted the continuity between modern states/nations and premodern ethnies. Nations according to him are historically embedded rooted in a common cultural heritage and language that may long predate the achievement of statehood."[194] The adivasis of this region in Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana can also be termed as some ethnie imagined, who over a period and history got rooted in a common culture and language of the region.

In the words of scholars like Samuel Berthet, from cultural dynamics in modern India to federalism and decentralisation, one can see a thread and common issues such as the constructive and conflicting relationship between organic diversity and the continuous homogenizing trend, the defining feature of the modern state. The issue of federalism and decentralisation got renewed relevance after the 73rd and 74th amendments of the Constitution of India. The amendments were meant to accelerate rural development, provide resources and political empowerment at the local level also leading to industrial development. All the new states were rich in mineral endowments. The twenty first century also ushered an era of new global economy and industrial development. Hence a balance is advocated in favour of development and decentralisation and its implications on these newly created political entities.[195]

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[194] Kumar Girish, Berthet Samuel, "New States for a New India", Federalism and decentralisation in the states of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, Manohar Publications,2011 p.7
[195] Ibid, p.10

The process of redrawing the boundaries and creation of the new states led to better integration of the regions. They accelerated a process of better governance. Even if it gave the elites of the region political advantage or mileage or was an attempt to placate them, nonetheless it made the regions politically significant and ushered an era of growth and development, gave a new face and identity to the people of the regions who lived in isolation and ignorance. It marked a significant shift in the evolution of Indian federalism. The creation of these new states was also in sync with the need of globalization and liberalisation.

Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh were created for the need of development and progress to remove backwardness of the region. Thus, the pretext for them was issues of governance and decentralisation with the dilution of ideological contradictions. These regions remained backward since the colonial times. Adivasi and backwardness got interlinked as an adage since that time. The research tried to reinvestigate and revaluate this very definition that has been used in the political discourse that justified for initiating economic and industrial policies.

Undoubtedly, the creation of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand did establish politico-administrative recognition given to them by the Constitution as well. It channelized both resources and political empowerment in their favour. Only if the development becomes more sensitized, in tune with the relevance of the symbolic relationship that the people of this region share with their natural environment, the problems of development and identity will be resolved. Policies were already in place since 1980s with modified Areas Development Approach, only implementation needed a boost and sensitivity and representation. With creation of state, the region got an opportunity to become more participative in the developmental programmes.

In the current context, with the passage of almost two decades the adage of backwardness attached to the meaning of tribalness is slowly getting diluted and homogenised. The communities which were termed backward, or traditional have slowly moved from the periphery or the margins and stepped in the process of change by governmental efforts. Tribal handicrafts and non-settled practices are marketed as high-end commodities. It had boosted the trade and commerce and pumped money in the tribal economy. The local community in the region has slowly regained control over the spaces of industry and finances.

Earlier the politics of identity justified the politics of resources. The project of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand as tribal states no longer serves mainly as a logo for industrial development policy. The last two decades have witnessed the tribals' distinctive political bargaining power and the compulsions of coalition politics cannot underestimate the powers of regional parties at the negotiation table. Each has the growing dependence of one on the other. There is a resurgence of culture and language and many extinct dialect and art forms are revived slowly like Santhali and Jadopatia artform. There is perceptible change in the areas of skill formation, capacity building and awareness and literacy.

The creation of new state in Jharkhand has to some extent reversed the process of disempowerment and created new opportunities for the underprivileged. The regional elite is able to bargain better, and the new federal scheme has ushered a new era of decentralisation and development. The political leadership should have a benevolent approach for tribal cause and adopt holistic measures and not exclude tribal areas as separate administrative enclaves. The participation of these people in the programmes of development will only spur organic development. These areas should not merely act as reservoir of raw materials and manpower, they should get the most advantage from their resources. The modern state building should consider that a fixed identity assigned to this section of the population was only for administrative purpose. Now that they have a state, they should be united and defend their own rights and heterogeneity. This will only increase their participation in the politico administrative structures.

The nomenclature and definition of tribe and tribalness have changed. They are no longer traditional and backward. They are slowly getting assimilated in the mainstream and their social and cultural bearing reflects modern socio-economic labels. There was an inherent contradiction and fear that the politics of identity for this region would become the politics of resources. Nevertheless, if the political leadership is strong, it would ensure that the tribals distinctive political bargaining power in Jharkhand is not compromised. Tribal way of life was distinctive based on self-governance culture. This practice needs to be recognised and their languages should be officially recognised too. This section of the population should be made party or beneficiary to industrial and commercial development. Their diversity and

legacy should be preserved with decentralisation of power at the regional level and the privileged elite group from within and without should not seize the new opportunities.

New global economy in the year 2000 triggered the issue of good governance in regions where people were considered the prime victims of disempowerment. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and the Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha though differing in their objectives, history and nature were party to the socio-regionalist movements and demanded better governance in a decentralized framework.[196] After two decades of statehood their role becomes more crucial to assess if the political mobilisation and regionalisation of politics was just a facade to capture political power and co-opt a diluted version of the people's movement. This period also saw a shift in emphases from political balance of power and confrontation to the political neutral concept of good governance. In fact the entire movement got a new meaning in favour of region and development and the questions of identity were pushed to the backburner.

Civil society, NGOs and self-help groups have acted with a more targeted approach on neutral political grounds. In Jharkhand also there are few NGOs who chose activism and empowerment where free education and entrepreneur skills are being taught to young talent. The extension of the 73rd Amendment Act to Scheduled Areas (1996) aimed at giving legal framework to rural and local empowerment. At many instances, the civil society organisations perform better compared to local institutions and there is no dearth of funding, devolution of functions, and functionaries. This even becomes important in the context of Jharkhand where the politics of resources – forest products, water or mining is the main issue which needs further interrogation. Democratic empowerment of the tribal and other backward community is possible only on the capacity of the government to deliver.

Two parallel phenomena took shape during the creation of the new states in 2000. They are the economic reforms and regionalisation of political parties. Some scholars viewed that communities that have historically negotiated their social relationship through indigenously evolved reasonably egalitarian mechanisms become fractious and conflict ridden as decentralisation brings with it development funds and

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[196] Ibid. pp. 19,20.

new opportunities for the concentration of power. The inter-ethnic conflict among groups and communities in Jharkhand also bears a testimony to this.[197] At times the politics of identity do not reconcile with democracy at the local level as well.

Identity and history of the new state was apriori to understanding how the political force and the elite in the region contributed to political movement and acted as the countervailing power. Study on Jharkhand also corroborate the fact that acceptance of tribal states came after a shift from 'social class/economic demands', a configuration which never took the shape of longstanding mass movements. This transition went along with the rise of the BJP in the 1990s and the building of a Hindutva bastion in the tribal regions. With the weakening of the struggle of deprived social categories, identifying themselves as tribal communities against 'non-tribals', outsiders or 'diku' the notion of 'tribal states' lost its significance. It was reassessed in a communal context in terms of notion of vanvasi, integrating the ST community into an organic vision of the nation.[198]

The demand for a separate state in Jharkhand got enmeshed with a host of other issues, including land, forest, displacement and discrimination in employment. So far, the tribal regions have remained far behind the rest of India in the development index as well in the health indicators as amongst the poorest in the world. They are also the most affected by land displacement (45 per cent of the persons affected by displacement are tribal). Christian missionaries played a significant role in giving momentum to a certain tribal consciousness in the early twentieth century in Jharkhand. Besides, they also played a role in the fragmentation and division of the tribal population with deep cleavages in favour of the Christian tribals.

Nevertheless, it would not be wrong to concede that new state has bridged the gap between the people and their elected leader and accelerated the pace of development. People and market should also connect in the similar fashion. The PESA Act should integrate itself in the above process of access to global market. This is the imperative and demand of the modern economic and administrative structure. A new developmental blueprint is needed based on a more organic and less rigid

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[197] Ibid, p. 22.
[198] Ibid, p. 26.

concept of interdependence between different natural and human milieus. Unless a new approach towards land is sanctioned by law, sustainable economic development is not possible

The research on Jharkhand brings one to a fix while understanding the aims and objectives of the experience of democratic decentralisation and development in broad historical and geographical context. Should one judge in procedural terms, the states continuing success in holding elections, its achievements in managing the country's much vaunted ethnic and religious diversity and/or mainly regarding the outcomes of these procedural rules and deliberations. Federalism should be seen in more organic terms. The regional movements are expression of the increasing political engagement of different groups who are demanding a more participatory and decentralised political organization.

The coming of Jharkhand as a state provided undoubtedly a more propitious environment for more manageable administrative loads, greater understanding and commitment to the region, and proximity between people and political and institutional centres of power. But these kinds of regional mobilisation-based state formation often witness other drawbacks which cannot be completely undermined in Jharkhand as well. Again, how do we ensure that everyone gets greater political and social justice? Culturally the state has ended up being homogenous. This can lead to regional or ethnic chauvinism. As India has a long history of 'sons of the soil' movements, which although diverse in form and nature usually aim at the exclusion of 'outsiders' from the state/region through expulsion or privileging the 'native' population through the setting up of a system of preferential politics to guarantee their 'rights' to employment, land and political power. This has also become unavoidable in the case of Jharkhand. These problems are inevitable or inexorable and are place specific and context dependent. Jharkhand nurtures strong anti diku sentiments which can bring up new vulnerabilities in the path of development for both tribals and sadans.

History of the creation of these new states suggested that the political parties were not motivated and driven by the considerations of development or federal decentralisation rather short-term political expediency. Tribal politics in Jharkhand can be described as the politics of resistance, a long-drawn-out struggle against the

violation of tribal rights on water, forest and land by state sponsored activities and private interests. The compulsions of coalitional politics can weaken the bargaining capacity of the regional parties and their interests if they are not able to anchor themselves in a resolute position. To fulfill this objective the heterogeneity of different groups should be coalesced under one nationality that is Jharkhandi. Though diverse in its articulation of resistance the distinguishing feature of these struggles (Jharkhand, Uttarakhand) has been towards advancing a critique to the modern scientific management of natural resources. It is this what sets the creation of states in 2000 apart from other movements demanding statehood and special privileges for the original inhabitants there.

With the formation of Jharkhand there were various dimensions that were interrogated during the research, and it can be well assumed that the state formation brought an interlude in the relatively uninterrupted tribal situation. State formation in a way has led to the realisation of the aspirations of the people of Jharkhand. Nevertheless, it was also observed that the state formation led to slighting of some prominent political leaders as it led to the rise of the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) as an important party in the area. Clearly statehood cannot be said as an affirmation of self-rule and autonomy. Basic to this realisation are issues revolving around the control and management of abundant resources. The fundamental question is how the indigenous people in the new political milieu, are represented as they are outnumbered already. The performance of the Jharkhand parties over the past few elections has not been promising because of floating from one party to another. Also, Jharkhand parties have sought alliances in almost all Lok Sabha and assembly elections, their association with various national parties such as Congress, Janata party and the Communist Party of India around elections have confused the electorate about their locus standi vis-a-vis long term political ambitions for the area.

The demographic transformation changed a lot in terms of diversification of tribal life in the region from a long time. It is clear with the formation of Jharkhand that there can be no political solution to the cultural questions. Political enclaves cannot ensure cultural autonomy or economic entitlement. And any meaningful deliberation on the issue of autonomy will only be possible if the movement unlearns the terms of current debates on tribes. Till they are designated as the proverbial

'other' and do not break free from the past labels as denigrate identity the situation will not change, as labels reveal more than they conceal or cover up as categories of thought and politics.

An empirical investigation that examined the role of ethnicity in influencing local government spending on public goods like education, lighting, drainage, health and public work suggested that ethnic differentiation based on caste lines led to greater inequality in status and opportunities which posed as strong impediment to economic development and growth. So, the promotion of minority identity (like the tribals) in Jharkhand requires special measures intended to facilitate the maintenance, reproduction, and further development of culture of minorities. The issue in Jharkhand is not one of conflicts between rights or of discrimination, but of generating confidence among minorities about the protection of their identity. Ethnic peculiarities were to disappear, and ethnic awareness was to become weak with progress. However, this has not taken shape rather ethnic awareness has got accentuated.

Indian society is primarily an identity-based society. Identity of the individual stems from caste, ethnic or religious or even regional belongings. These identities are still entrenched in caste and religious hierarchical institutions governing social conduct and market transactions. It is more prevalent in the rural areas where poverty is also high. The ethnic minorities in Jharkhand suffered from historic exclusion due to their geographical isolation and cultural/religious differences. Though it can be said that the situations have changed substantially over time, strong undercurrents remain where caste/ethnicity is difficult to dislodge in normal social settings. It has acquired the status of the quintessential social identifier. Levels of poverty are higher among the SCs, STs overall. Poverty is more likely to be a visible symptom of the invisible infliction of social division, exclusion and discrimination based on social identity (caste, religion and ethnicity) to which one may be linked to and ignored or denied on the basis of.[199]

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[199] Thorat, Amit, 'Ethnicity, Caste and Religion: Implications for poverty outcomes," EPW Dec 18, 2010, vol. XLV No. 5 p. 48.

Identity goes a long way in determining peoples' final level of wellbeing in economic terms. Impoverishment may be a result of lack of access to information, education, skill and land and capital endowments. State needs to direct programmes in a more focused and targeted manner to develop new more effective and innovative measures to address group-specific problems. Jharkhand produced vision 2010 – a statement of policy directions. As identified during the creation in 2000, that Jharkhand had more than 56.8 percent of its population living below poverty line (36% for India), lack of road connectivity in more than 60 percent of the villages, 54 percent literacy rate and 85 per cent of villages having no electricity.[200] But when we assess the situation now, things have improved significantly. Poverty may still prevail but the strategy leading peoples' participation in the process of economic expansion and social change has brought piecemeal changes. However, lack of health facilities, food security, clean drinking water, employment opportunities are challenges that the state is grappling with. Public distribution has increased but there needs to be tighter targeting and identification of beneficiaries.

Field survey in the Santhal Parganas division pointed towards the need of land reform with distribution of government land to the landless and marginal farmers and restoration of alienated land to the adivasis. "There should be investment in basic health and education to develop the capacities of the population to make use of social and economic opportunities and contribute to the growth of Jharkhand.For the social, cultural and political development of Jharkhand, the hostility among the tribal groups must be resolved. The conflict and divide are based on both reality as well as perception within the indigenous tribal community. The state views that the tribes have been sanskritised and assimilated within the larger society. Jaipal Singh, one of the earliest tribal leaders, believed that since tribals no longer lived in jungles and their interactions with the rest of the world take place in public sphere, they are capable of successfully coping with the mainstream society. Nonetheless, the tribes in Jharkhand are still suppressed, subjugated and denied of their rights. Also, the divide among them (Christian and Sarna Tribals), have widened. Groups of people having common origins, culture, interests, past experiences, possessing some degree of

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[200] Rao, Nitya, "Jharkhand Vision 2010, Chasing Mirages" EPW May 3, 2003, p. 1755-1756.

coherence and solidarity constitute an ethnicity and hence this ethnicity should work towards consolidation of the region and not towards its division and disintegration."[201]

Thus, "the creation of the new states of Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand from the parent states of Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar respectively was the result of ethnic assertion of the regions (especially Jharkhand) and consequent shift in terms of regional/federal thinking. Significantly, this new wave of reorganisation was supported by all parties. This was also the result of emerging highly competitive political environment marked by the declining ability of any one party to claim power at the centre, rise of regional parties reflecting the regional concerns and compulsions of coalition politics. Also, the new demands are coming up with increased intensity for redrawing the boundaries of states in the form of Coorg in Karnataka, Mithilanchal in Bihar, Saurashtra in Gujarat, Gorkhaland and Kamtapur in West Bengal, Vidarbha in Maharashtra, Harit Pradesh, Purvanchal, Braj Pradesh and Awadh Pradesh in Uttar Pradesh Maru Pradesh in Rajasthan, Bhojpuri comprising areas of eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, a Greater Cooch Behar state out of the parts of Assam and West Bengal."[202]

Of late, after the creation of Telangana in 2014, demands are mostly along regional lines centered on development and unequal access to political power. Jharkhand movement also at the time of grant of statehood got relegated to regionalism and demands of development. The movement got diluted on ethnic question. This was also due to the compulsions of regionalisation of identity politics and increasing political mobilisation along caste/ethnic/language based social cleavages. Regional parties were territorially contained, and the national parties aligned with them to forward the region-specific electoral policies.

As a consequence of this, India's federal ideology registered a marked shift reflected in the following developments. First, after creation of Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh, "regional identity, culture and geographical differences are better recognised as a valid basis for administrative division and political

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[201] Kumar Anant, Pramil K Panda, "Ethnicity Religion and Identity Politics among Tribes in Jharkhand" EPW Sept 29, 2018, vol No. 39 p. 24.
[202] Kumar, Ashutosh, Exploring the demands for new states, EPW Aug 14, 2010, Vol. XLV No. 33, p. 15.

representation. Separate statehood movement are no longer being stigmatised as parochial, chauvinist and even antinational. Second, a shift is visible in the way the new states are being proposed on the grounds of good governance and development. Third, the dialect communities have also posed the demand of territorial homeland, while underlining the cultural and literary distinctiveness and richness of the dialect, i.e., Bundelkhand, Rohilkhand and Mithilanchal. The contemporary regional movements in India are adding brownie points in favour of newer smaller states. The experience of the states of Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh has found resonance in their favour. The development and efficiency argument also worked in favour of the smaller states. Also, economic integration sought under a centralised development planning model on the promise of equitable development across regions acted as an incentive for political separation. There are dissatisfaction and conflicts brewing up over failed redistribution policies within regions. The gains from agreeing to remain part of the parent state seem small for the marginal regions"[203].

In the case of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand, cultural or ethnic factors acted as instrumental factors for mobilisation of people into a movement but decades of underdevelopment in the region acted as the driving force behind the movement for statehood. The newly created states have also maintained a better growth rate than the parent state. Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are emerging industrial hubs in the country. The proposition held credence that their separation unleashed the suppressed growth potentials of these backward regions.

Also, "Smaller states enjoyed a comparative advantage of better public-private partnership in mobilisation of local skills, development of local transport, health and growth of various regions in a state. Evident from the experience of smaller state, the redrawing of political boundaries also brings forth gains for the electorates in terms of better representation of their preferences in the composition of the government".[204] It ensures greater participation of all the stakeholders which eventually deliver prompt, flexible, effective and efficient actions under greater accountability and awareness about the local needs.

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[203] Ibid p. 15
[204] Ibid p. 17.

Historically speaking, the tribes of this region of Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana lost their land and livelihood to development projects which did not bring any real benefit to them. In fact, they got dispossessed and displaced without rehabilitation and adequate compensation and this practice is in vogue in the current times as well. Paradoxically, tribes remain as the most disadvantaged groups in India. Jharkhand has many public sector enterprises such as the heavy engineering factory, Bokaro Steel Plant, Sindri Fertiliser Plant, Hindustan Copper Mines, Coal India Limited etc. These projects displaced tribals in large numbers without resettlement. The data of the year 2004-2005 suggested that the share of the tribal population living below poverty line (BPL) was as high as 46.5% as compared with 27.6% for India. In Jharkhand, it stood at 54.2%. The new economic order opened spaces of economy that were mostly occupied by the dominant community. Development in this sense proved hollow and antithetical to the very existence of these sections of population.

In the last one-decade Jharkhand witnessed resistance movements over amendments to the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908 and the Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act, 1949. It witnessed widespread Pathalgarhi movement aimed at the implementation of provisions ensured in the provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996. One distinct disadvantage for the tribals of Jharkhand is that it has gone through a steady decline in the tribal share of the population through the years because of the movement of people from outside into the region. The current political scenario in Jharkhand has opened spaces for an alternative political path. The result of the last assembly election in December 2019 is a point to reckon with. The current political path centres on securing tribal rights over land, forest and other resources. This is visible in the articulation and assertion of grassroot organisations and forging of a larger alliance among the tribal groups. The political parties, especially the ones with their roots in Jharkhand such as the JMM and JVM (Jharkhand Vikas Morcha) could not keep distance from the peoples' movement that were revolving around their constitutional and legal entitlements. These parties have realised that they cannot take the issues of the people further and capture political

power unless they cooperate and collaborate with the grass root movements and organisations.[205]

The progress of Jharkhand is possible only if it can restore its strong regional identity which it had during the long chain of struggles. Jharkhand is a symbol of mobilisation and consolidation through secular pursuits and cultural pluralism. There is scope for development as well if the abundant resource is converted into positive assets. Tribal politics in Jharkhand within the discourses and meanings of ethnoregionalism was a politics of resistance against the violation of tribal rights on water, forest and land. These struggles provided a critique to the management of natural resources. The creation of the state has marked a new beginning of the phase of cooption of these groups of people into the mainstream by giving them the right to govern themselves. What needs serious introspection is if these kinds of political solutions ensure cultural autonomy and economic entitlements to its people and their integration into the mainstream? Another point of deliberation is if the political formation will end the divide between the tribes and non-tribes around the same dichotomies of nature and culture. The ethnic communities here represent a specific economic and symbolic relationship with land and forest. Their culture and nature should not get reduced to becoming mere exhibits of tribal heritage of India. They should be given special intellectual property rights. Hence, ethno regionalism alone consolidates federal democratic institutions and ushers the process of development as proved in the case study of Jharkhand.

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[205] Xaxa, Virginus, "Tribal politics in Jharkhand", EPW July 13, 2019 Vol. 28, p. 10.

APPENDICES

Research Questions: - Qualitative (in-depth interview)

(1)   Does state-formation give vent to the feeling of economic deprivation and backwardness?

(2)   What are the challenges before the communities? Has the state been able to shelve or mitigate their grievances?

(3)   What are the new symbolisms and the identity questions?

(4)   Do all sections and groups within the state share the same values and concerns or any group feels further marginalized and deprived?

(5)   What is the major societal transformation after the state formation of Jharkhand and their relationship with the state?

(6)   Is there a sense of belongingness with the state among the people?

(7)   Does state formation serve as good governance in terms of administrative convenience, economic viability, developmental needs, social endowments, cultural progress and socio-economic equality?

Research Questions: - Second set (Quantitative)

1.   Are you satisfied with the new state?

2.   Has there been development after state formation?

3.   How the situation is (improved, same, deteriorated) compared to then?

4.   Has development reached to the remotest place in Jharkhand?

5.   Are tribals divided among themselves?

6.   Has the new state addressed the grievances and interest of the poor?

7.   Is a tribal leader better?

8.   Are the local issues addressed?

9.   Has the condition of people (education, job opportunities, and life standards) improved with the coming of the State?

10.   Is diku relevant in Jharkhand today?

11.   Are people migrating out of Jharkhand for jobs and employment?

12.   Is displacement taking place due to development?

13   Is there a contradiction between tribal and non-tribal communities?

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