# MODERNIZATION AND TRIBES OF BASTAR DISTRICT, MADHYA PRADESH

A dissertation submitted to the
JAWAHARLA L NEHRU UNIVERSITY
in partial fulfilment for the degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

by

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90p

( CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF )SOCIAL SYSTEMS
(SCHOOL OF )SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
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1979

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November, 1979

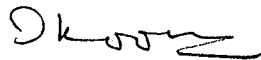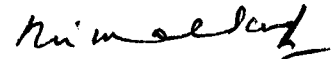## D E C L A R A T I O N

Certified that the dissertation entitled "Modernization
and Tribes of Bastar District, Madhya Pradesh" submitted by
Ramdas Maurya is in partial fulfilment of eight credits out
of a total requirement of twenty-four credits for the
degree of Master of Philosophy of this University.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before
the examiners for evaluation.

Professor T.K. Oommen
Chairman

Dr. Nirmal Singh
Supervisor

# CONTENTS

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply indebted to Dr. Nirmal Singh, Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University for the valuable guidance and encouragement given to me at various stages of writing of this dissertation. I am also grateful to my friends S/s P.K.Mathur, G.S.George, Prakash Upadhyaya and Lalli for their moral support and in suggesting relevant material on my topic.

November, 1979
NEW DELHI-110067

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# Chapter    I


## INTRODUCTION

## Chapter I

## INTRODUCTION

The tribals are a unique element of Indian social structure. In a sense, they reflect the embryonic development of human groups in the process of change and adaptation. Therefore, the tribal groups could be studied both to enrich sociological theory and to devise practical ways of effecting desired changes in the life of the people. In this study of Bastar district the main focus will be on the impact of modernization on the tribal life and culture. We will examine how modernization of Indian society after Independence has got translated into the changes in various aspects of tribal life of Bastar district.

I have taken as the area of study in district of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh. It is situated in the extreme south of the state, far away from the point of view of accessibility. Of all the district headquarters of Madhya Pradesh, its headquarters is the farthest from a railway station, Raipur the nearest convenient railway station being 185 miles away. The area of the district is 39,060 sq.kms. of which 38,982 sq. kms. is rural area and only 79 sq. kms. is urban. Only 2.3 per cent of the population of the district is classified as urban. There are three towns in the district - Jagadalpur, Kankar and Kirandul. The district comprises of 8 tahsils - Bhanupratappur, Kanker, Kondagaon, Narayanpur, Jagadalpur, Bijapur, Dantewada. Jagadalpur and Kanker are

the more densely populated tahsils. According to 1971 census, the population of Bastar district was 15,15,956 of which 10,33,950 i.e. 68.21% are Scheduled Tribes and 40,459 i.e. 3.29% are Scheduled Castes. About 96.3% people live in the rural areas. The male and female population of the district is 7,59,181 and 756,775 respectively. The male and female ratio has remained almost constant for the last 70 years. There has been 269.60% increase in the population during the period 1901 to 1971.[1] The main tribes inhabitating the district are Gond, Dorla, Bhatra, Dhurwa and Praja, etc.

The history of the district in the present form is so obscure that the historians have called it stagnant backwater of Indian history.[2] However, some traces are available from the 11th century, when Nagwanshi-family established the Chakrakot kingdom with its capital at Barsur. Later on Kakatiya dynasty of Warrangal established its kingdom in the year 1313 at Bastar, a place nearly 18 kms. north from Jagadalpur under the leadership of Annamdeo.

Hindus form the 99% majority in the population of the ? district. Followers of other religions are very small in number in the total population, and their number appears only in the urban areas.

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1    *District Census Hand Book*. Bastar District, Census of India, Madhya Pradesh, 1971, p. 13.

2    *District Census Hand Book*, Bastar District, Census of India, Madhya Pradesh, 1961, p. 13.

    Note: A detailed history of Bastar district is not given in 1971 Census of India, Madhya Pradesh.

Though it is said that in all 72 languages and
dialects are spoken in the district, Gondi is the most pre-
dominant speech of the district. The returns include
speakers of Maria, Muria, Dhurwa and Dorli also. The Maria,
Muria, Dorla and Dhurwa tribes often return themselves as
Gonds. Bastar's ethnic composition is mainly tribals about
68.21% of its population being formed by various tribal groups.
Since Bastar is a tribal dominated region by studying this
district, I would be in a position to see an actual picture
of tribal life in the process of transition, due to the impact
of various agents of modernization. This study will be based
on available literature on this region and census data.

The Previous Studies on Tribes in Madhya Pradesh

The study of tribes in Madhya Pradesh has been neg-
lected from the very beginning. In 1916 a hand book on the
tribes and castes of central India provinces was published
by Hiralal and Russell. This hand book, which provides sketchy
materials on the tribes of central provinces, was followed
by a monograph on the Maria Gonds of Bastar written by W.V.
Carigson, a British administrator. This book based on four
long tours between 1927 and 1931 brings to light for the
first time, the descriptive account of the Bisonhorn and the
Hill Marias. He also presents an analytical appraisal of
culture change that has taken place among these two tribes.[3]

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[3] W. V. Carigson, The Maria Gonds of Bastar (London:
Oxford University Press, 1938).

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(However, Verrier Elvin originally a missionary pioneered ethnographic research in the State of Madhya Pradesh. He wrote a series of monographs on the Baiga (1939), Agaria (1942), Maria Gond (1943 and 1950), and Muria (1947). He brought "to the light the rich heritage of the tribal culture of Madhya Pradesh".[4]

Among the contemporary Indian anthropologists, we can mention the name of T. B. Naik and S. C. Dube who were initiated into field work by D. N. Majumdar to work among the tribes of Madhya Pradesh. Among the edited monographs, special mention may be made of the study of the Abujh Maria which describes the socio-economic aspects of this tribe living in the hills and forests of Bastar. In addition to a number of papers, a few monographs on the Dhurwa and the A.ujhmar Muria or Hill Muria have been attempted.

According to Vidyarthi, E. J. Jay's studies make a departure in the monographic study of the tribes in Madhya Pradesh.[5] Based on an intensive field work under a pre-doctoral research grant from the Ford Foundation for a period of about two years, Jay originally presented the monograph as a Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Chicago in 1963. This study brings to light the extensions and interactions

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4  L. P. Vidyarthi, _Tribal Ethnography in India: A Survey of Research in Sociology and Tribal Anthropology_, vol. III (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1972), p. 69.

5  Ibid., p. 71.

of a small community - a Hill Maria village Orcha, near
Narayan Ganj - with a wider society for the satisfaction of
certain needs.

Most of these studies so far conducted on this
region are descriptive in nature, and very few of them are
based on an analytical framework. So these studies are not
very helpful to understand fully the nature of transformation
of tribal society as a result of the interaction with the wider
society.

The conceptual framework developed by the British
administrators - ethnographers and by anthropologists was ins-
pired by the then prevailing model in anthropology. Tribal
communities were treated as isolates, tribals as noble savages,
and the primitive condition was described as state of Arcadian
simplicity. History, as we understand it today, was not a
strong point of these scholars though some of them were sensi-
tive to historical dimensions and economics has also been a
weak point of these scholars in this area. These scholars
overlooked the operation of the historical processes that led
to the formation of the State, the emergence of a complex
regional system in the wake of migration of non-tribal commu-
nities and functional castes and the penetration of cultural
influences.

The second set of assumptions of Indian anthropolo-
gists postulated that "the tribes were a sub-system of the
Hindu system and that they were being absorbed into the Hindu

society."[6] The Hindu mode of absorption was spelt out by
these anthropologists in terms of their integration into
the economic organization of the caste. In fact, there was
nothing specially Hindu about this mode of absorption. The
tribes were, in fact, getting integrated into a secular
system of production, a market system, as it was extended to
the tribal region. (In my study of tribals of Bastar district,
I will try to analyse the impact of modernization with empha-
sis on the real nature of interaction of the tribal society
with the wider society keeping in view the colonial context.)

## Concept of Modernization

In descriptive terms modernization covers a large
number of heterogeneous trends: organization of societies at
the national level, industrialization, commercialization,
increasing participation and mobilization of population at
large, secularization and rationalization of political, cultural
and life ways etc.

The basic conceptual instrument of the modernization
theory is the tradition-modernity dichotomy used in a classi-
cal form of two polar types or a modified version of a finite
or infinite continuum. I quote two theorists as representa-
tive of the prevailing definitions of modernization:

The patterns of the relatively modernized societies,
one developed, have shown a universal tendency to penetrate

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6     G. S. Churye, <u>The Aborgines - Socalled and Their</u>
<u>Future</u> (Bombay, Popular Prakashan, 1943), p. 5.

any social context whose participants have come in contact with them.... The patterns always penetrate; once the penetration began the previous patterns always change in the direction of some of the patterns of relatively modernized society."[7]

"Traditional settings can be utilized where appropriate conditions prevail ... there is then, the possibility of gradual transformation of the traditional institutions through incorporation in the modern institutional framework."[8]

The analysis of change within this dichotomous framework rests on several directional and typological assumptions. Change is conceptualized as a transformation from traditional to modern society usually with a provision for a transitional stage or as a linear movement along the tradition-modernity continuum.

However, the break with this form of analysis has been only reluctant and the notion of the possibility of the coexistence of the traditional and modern patterns has not made a significant dent in the basic tenet of the theory. The directional assumptions obscure theoretical alternatives; there may be no inherent incompatibility between the two

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[7]    M. J. Levy, Jr, "Patterns (Structures) of Modernization and Political Development", _The Annals_, vol. 358, 1965, p. 30.

[8]    S. N. Eisentadt, "Patterns of Political Leadership and Support", in H. Passin and Jones, Quartye K, eds., _Africa : The Dynamics of Change_ (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1963), p. 41.

systems. Tradition and modernity may be mutually reinforcing rather than conflicting forces, their relationship may be of the interaction rather than unidirectional character resulting in a multiplicity of possible outcomes. More important however is the methodological implication of these assumptions. They tend to focus the analysis around the modern end of continuum, with the model of traditional society built with a set of contrasting concepts. Western societies provide the explicit standards for conceptualizing the direction of historical (and implicitly desirable) change.

The inadequacies of the "modernization" approach are reinforced by a general tendency of the modernization theorist to present modernization in neutral, natural law terms - schools spread, consumption patterns spread, political institutions spread. But it is not a natural law operating in socio-political vacuum. Technology, presumably a neutral force, is a two-edged instrument; it can be used for opposing purposes. School itself is a an important and influential phenomenon but it cannot be separated from the content of education determined by macrosocial conditions. Conspicuously missing from the modernization analysis is the fact that modernization is taking place under specific circumstances and that they are processes highly selective at both the modernizing and the modernized end.

There is an alternative mode of analysis of the process of change in the contemporary world developed by social

scientists of the third world and a few scholars in the west. It employs Marxian categories of analysis - mode of production, classes, etc. - and is associated with the Marxist theory of imperialism. The world, not the separate national system, should be a unit of analysis. The international system provides the framework within which change occurs, but it also penetrates each society. "The international historical and structural reality of the developed and the under-developed countries is the product of this world-wide system."[9] The critical questions are: what are the causes and nature of underdevelopment, the questions avoided by the theory of modernization or answered unsatisfactorily without the critical inquiry into the international historical situation.

The world is of one piece and of one history. The rich and the poor countries do not have two separate courses of development explanable by historical accident, or by some psychological and cultural characteristics of the inhabitants. The development of one and the underdevelopment of another are closely interconnected, one is a result of the other, one is the cause of another. History is not the imitative process of repetition, some countries developed somehow first and other countries follow up but it is a specific dialectical historical process and should be examined as such.

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9    Grazyna, Nikonorow, "A Critique of the Modernization Paradigm", Journal of Radical Sociology (Colombia University), vol. 12, no. 283, 1974, p. 113.

Any society has possibilities of development. These possibilities are limited by a given historical situation. "Man makes his own history but he does not make it just as he pleases; he does not make it under circumstances chosen by himself, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past."[10] Given conditions of today are an internationally stratified world dominated by the few developed nations, and in terms of the reality of the third world, which continues to be dominated by colonialism and imperialism.

The process called modernization is not restricted to one domain of social reality but envelops all the basic aspects of social life. In brief, (I will discuss the type of processes which are subsumed under the rubric of modernization without the definitional restrictions imposed by some) social scientists.

## Bourgeois View of Modernization: The Case of Eisenstadt Social Change

Modernization is high differentiation and specialization with respect to individual activities and institutional structure. It refers to the separation of different roles held by the individuals - especially among the occupational and political roles, and between then and the family and kinship roles. "Specificity" and not "diffuseness" is implied

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10      Karl Marx, _The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte_ (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1972), p. 10.

in the separation of roles, and recruitment to the roles is not determined by ascription based on any fixed kinship, territorial, caste or estate basis but is free floating based on achievement.[11]

## Political Changes

Modernization in political spheres implies four major features.

1. The legitimacy of the sovereign authority of the state is derived not from supernatural sanctions, but from secular sanctions inhering in the people and based on accountability to citizens.

2. The continual diffusion of political power to wider groups of society ultimately to all adult citizens, and their incorporation into a consensual moral order.

3. A growing extension of the territorial scope and especially by the intensification of power of the central legal, administrative and political agencies of the society.

4. Unlike the rulers of traditional societies, the rulers of modern societies, whatever may be their nature - totalitarian, bureaucratic, oligarchic or democratic - "accept the relevance of their subjects as the objects, beneficiaries and legitimizers of policy".[12] The differences between

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11      S. N. Eisenstadt, Modernization: Protest and Change (New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India, 1969), pp. 41-42.

12      Ibid., p. 3.

the modern democratic or semi-democratic forms of government
lies in the extent to which they permit institutional expres-
sion in political institutions, public liberties and in the
welfare and cultural policies.

## Economic Changes

Modernization manifests itself in the following
features: (a) substitution of inanimate power such as steam
electricity or atomic energy for human and animal power as
the basis of production, distribution, transport and communi-
cation, (b) separation of economic activities from the tradi-
tional setting, increasing replacement of tools by machine
and technology, (c) as corollary to this high level of tech-
nology, growth of an extensive sector of secondary (industrial,
commercial) and tertiary (service) occupations overshadowing
the primary (extractive) ones in quantitative and qualitative
significance; growing specialization of economic roles and
units of economic activity - production, consumption and
marketing and (d) a degree of self-sustaining growth in the
economy - at least growth sufficient to increase both produc-
tion and consumption regularly; and (e) finally growing indus-
trialization - the key characteristics of economic moderniza-
tion.

(The shift from the use of human and animal power to
inaminate power, from tools to the machine as the basis of )

⏤production and its implications in terms of the growth of
wealth, technical diversification, differentiation, and
specialization leading to a novel type of division of labour,
industrialization and urbanization are accepted to all
scholars as features of modernization.

## A Counterview - Worsley's Critique

Its ideological content is made explicit in the two
types of development seen in developing societies. As Peter
Worsley rightly pointed out, there is nothing like moderniza-
tion per se. There is either modernization on capitalist
lines or on socialist lines. [13] Either it takes place on the
axis of private property in the means of production and the
capitalist class as the main driving force of this moderniza-
tion or modernization on non-capitalist lines takes place on
the axis of public ownership of means of production with capi-
talist and land owning classes eliminated as driving forces.
Modernization on capitalist lines assumes profits accrue to
the free enterpreneur as the central objective of production
based on machine power, producing for the market and operating
through competition among free enterpreneurs. Modernization
on non-capitalist, socialist lines assumes the meeting of the
assessed needs of the society as the central objectives of
production. It also assumes mass production based on machine
power, but not producing for an anonymous market but production

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13      Peter, Worsely, The Third World (London, Weidenfeld
and Nicolson, 1967), pp. 1-20.

according to a central plan based on assessed needs.

Modernization on capitalist lines elaborates a social stratification wherein the fundamental distinction between classes owning means of production and classes who live by selling their labour power, skilled or unskilled, persists and its perpetuated. "Private means of production remains a crucial and ingrained feature of stratification shaping distribution of wealth, consumption pattern, styles of life, and leisure activities."[14] Modernization on non-capitalist socialist line is based on elimination of the propertied class which owns the means of production and elaboratts a new principle of stratification based on public ownership of the means of production, transforming social groups into various strata of skilled and unskilled categories differing from one another in diversities of skills. This principle of stratification is qualitatively different from the principle of stratification in capitalist societies. This crucial difference is very often forgotten, leading to a tremendous amount of confusion in the proper study of modernization. In my opinion this classification of modernization on the basis of the two paths will help us to distinguish the nature of the core processes going on in various third world countries.

## British Role in Modernization in India

Modernization in India started mainly with the western

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[14]    A. R. Desai, <u>State and Society in India</u> (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1975), p. 20.

contact, especially through establishment of the British Raj. This contact had a special historicity which brought about many far reaching changes in culture and social structure of the Indian society. Not all of them, however, could be called modernizing. The basic direction of this contact was toward modernization, but in the process a variety of traditional institution also got reinforcement. This demonstrates the weakness of assuming a clear dichotomy between tradition and modernity. "This polarity may be more heuristic than real."[15] However, only after the establishment of British rule in India, modern cultural institution and forms of social structure were introduced. Both Yogendra Singh and M. N. Srinivas have pointed that the British rule produced radical and lasting changes in Indian society and culture. "It was unlike any previous period in Indian history as the British brought with them new technology, institutions, knowledge, beliefs and values."[16] The new technology and the revolution in communications which this brought about, enabled the British to integrate the country as never before in its history.

But basic intention of the colonial rulers was not to modernize the traditional society. Modernization of Indian society was merely an unintended consequence of colonial

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[15]    Yogendra Singh, Modernization of Indian Tradition (Delhi, Thomson Press (India) Ltd., 1972), p. 202.

16      M. N. Srinivas, Social Change in Modern India (New Delhi: Orient Longman Ltd., 1977), p. 46.

exploitation. Whenever they needed modern institutions to
fulfil their aims they introduced them.

The role of railways and similarly of foreign trade
is a good example of a prospective agent of capitalism and
development turning into an agent of the colonization of the
economy and its under-development. While railways heralded
a new advanced stage of the development of capitalism and
production forces in England and they helped develop Germany
and the U.S.A. into major industrial economies and rivals of
Britain. In India, they enabled British manufactures to pene-
trate in land and thus to destroy handicrafts on a larger
scale and to prevent the rise of rival modern industries.
Instead of initiating in India new industries based on the
direct needs of railways for steel, wagons, engines, etc.,
they created demand for these materials in Britain. Bipan
Chandra pointed out that Marx had expected the railways to
at least link the Indian villages with each other thus end
their mutual isolation. In reality, the railways and the limi-
ted road, system failed to do so. The colonial pattern of their
construction was concentrated on linking each village with
the world capitalist market through its satellite Indian towns
and cities.[17]

An efficient and modern administrative structure and

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[17]    Bipan Chandra, "Karl Marx, His Theories of Asian
        Societies and Colonial Rule", Centre for Histori-
        cal Studies, School of Social Sciences, J.N.U.,
        Unpublished, New Delhi, 1978, p. 123.

institutions only enabled the structuring of colonialism
and colonial exploitation of the peasantry by the non-
capitalist landlords, usurers, merchants and the lower bureau-
cracy.  Modern education was first sought to be used to
create a colonized intelligentsia and, when the attempt partly
failed and an independent intelligentsia developed, efforts
were made to curb the growth of modern education, the intel-
ligentsia, and a free press.  Thus modern means of communica-
tion and modern system of education were introduced to
support colonial domination.  About the introduction of modern
technology, it is true that technology is an agent of moderni-
zation but it can be an agent of exploitation in a colonial
situation.  It is a double-edged weapon which can be used
for both liberating as well exploiting.

## Tribals and Modernization in India

// The tribes of India were in a state of isolation
for many centuries and they led a life of their own uninfluenced
by the outside world.  They were living in remote areas,
hills and plains both, surrounded by forest.  During the British
rule in India the tribal groups came in a little contact with
the rest of society due to colonial expansion.  According to
B. D. Sharma, the British rule got a firm hold of the Indian
subcontinent by the middle of 19th century.  The extremely
backward areas began to be brought under a new administrative
structure.  The ruling chiefs acquired higher level linkages.
Administrators were brought in from advanced areas. With a new

system of land revenue overlords and zamindars appeared.

Modern skills for building, education and medicine were

introduced. Traders also reached in greater numbers. These

groups were largely concentrated in the administrative towns,

though some spread out in the countryside as well. [18]

Thus a colonial system ended the relative isolation

of the tribal society, brought it into the mainstream of the

new administrative set up, policy and programmes, put an end

to the political dominance of the tribes in the region and

roped the tribal communities which had been spared to strain

of surplus generation into a new system of production rela-

tions. "The colonial system, as elsewhere, followed the dual

policy of strengthening the feudal crust of the tribal so-

ciety, formed by the rajas, chiefs and zamindars and simul-

taneously creating conditions in which their economy, and

political system were undermined by the rampaging market

forces." [19]

The wants of the tribal people were limited and

these were met with from the resources available to them by

their exclusive natural environment. Sometimes when they

were in need of any particular item, it was bartered with some

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18    B. D. Sharma, "Economic Development of Extremely
      Backward Tribal Regions", Indian Anthropologist,
      vol. 3, no. 2, Journal of the Indian Anthropologi-
      cal Association, National Publishing House, New
      Delhi, 1973, p. 110.

19    K. S. Singh, "Colonial Transformation of Tribal
      Society in Middle India", Economic and Political
      Weekly, vol. XIII, no. 30, 29 July 1978, p. 1226.

of their own surplus items. But with the introduction of market as an institution the area of interaction has not only increased, but it has also led to the introduction of money economy with gradual replacement of barter economy and acceptance of various manufactured goods.

Today in various parts of India, the changing economic environment has forced tribal and backward people to new moorings. An industrial economy has superseded the time-old leaning to agriculture and a sedentary life that agriculture encourages. But such transition from one economy to the other has not helped the tribes to effect a permanent adjustment to conditions found inevitable or inescapable. The problems of tribal life are to be viewed in the light of tribal dynamics. Majumdar has written, "Where the tribal population are facing bleak economic prospects in their own settlements, the problem of adjustment can be solved by a reorientation of their economic life without troubling about a compromise with their primitive social structure, where on the other hand, the tribal elements live away from their home, as for example in the plantation and liminal towns, divorced from their social or communal life customary in the villages, the problem is to maintain a continuity of their cultural life."[20]

In the above paragraph Majumdar suggests that problems of tribal adjustment with wider society should be solved

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20      D. N. Majumdar, Races and Cultures of India
        (New Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1958), p. 379.

by reorientation of their economic life without troubling the primitive structure of tribal society. It seems to be a more ideal suggestion than the practical. For any social change or social adjustment, social disturbance is inevitable phenomenon.

Due to the impact of modernization many changes have taken place in the cultural life of the various social groups at different levels of development, have reoriented the mental outlook of the savage and the civilized alike. There is no social group today in India which may be said to mark the zero point of culture contact. That is why the "dynamics of culture change has become more important than the monographic delineation of isolated tribal culture."[21] About the acculturation of tribal groups with the non-tribal society G. S.Churye and Majumdar share similar views that most of the primitive tribes have come under the influence of the caste system and have swelled the number of depressed communities while others have been converted to Christianity and have escaped the tyranny of caste rules. Where the tribes have lived for long in association with the lower castes and where the former do not suffer from much discomfort or exploitation at the hands of alien groups, the tribes have gradually entered into the social economy of the caste system.[22]

Nirmal Kumar Bose in his thought provoking essay,

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21    Ibid., p. 378.

22    G. S. Churye, The Aborgines - Socalled and Their Future (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1943), pp. 23-50.

"Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption" has indicated how a study
of various methods of tribal absorption deserved more care-
ful attention than has been given till now.    By comparing the [23]
Hindu or Brahmanical method of tribal absorption with the
Soviet Union's method of tribal acculturation he has shown
how the method in the context of the system of the property
relations within which the tribals have been planned to be
absorbed.  The tribal acculturation brought about in a society
like the ancient Roman society founded on slavery will be
different from that brought about in a capitalist society will
be different from the above two and also from that of society
which attempts to build up a social order founded on socialist
relations.

The mode of acculturation of the tribal people in
India before the 19th century took place within the matrix
of a different social order.  According to A. R. Desai, after
the 19th century, it occurred on the basis of a colonial and
capitalist matrix.  Unfortunately, a large number of mission-
ary reformers, anthropologists and administrators are not
inclined to confront this fundamental crucial fact.  Similarly
our larger number of tribal reformers, administrators, anthro-
pologists who work as consultants to the tribal welfare organi-
zation do not still pose the problem. [24]

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23      N. K. Bose, Cultural Anthropology and Other Essays
        (Asia Publishing House, 1961).

24      A. R. Desai, "Tribes in Transition", in A. R. Desai,
        ed., Rural Sociology in India (Bombay: Popular Pra-
        kashan, 1969), p. 228.

In my study I look at modernization among the tribes of Bastar district in this perspective. It is true that a lot of efforts has been made by the Indian Government to bring the tribal communities into the national mainstream, while preserving their identity. However, on close scrutiny, it is found that government planning has not achieved desired results. This is not only because of the lack of adequate financial resources but the reasons for continued exploitation of the tribal people, despite the government plans to the contrary, lie deeper. The government has been trying to introduce capital intensive modern technology into the backward tribal economy with the result that lot of money is being spent on paper without having much effect. The non-tribal people in the area take the lion's share of the government expenditure and exploit the tribal resources, while the tribal people are denied of its benefit. Government planning itself is defective. It does not help the tribal people to become self-reliant but makes them dependent and consequently aids the process of exploitation which has been going on for centuries. The government with the collaboration of capitalists entrenched firmly in the establishment is incapable of formulating plans for the welfare of tribal people, except to bring them into the national market both as labour community and as consumers in need of goods and services to reproduce themselves everyday and as families.

In the following chapters, beginning with the economic aspect of modernization and continuing with its political

and educational dimensions, I have tried to investigate the
government's policy with regard to tribal welfare in order to
uncover inherent strength, loopholes and fallacies in its
approach. This was to be done within a historical framework
that would take into account the actual condition of the
tribal economy at the time the government stepped in.

# Chapter II

## ECONOMIC MODERNIZATION OF BASTAR TRIBES

## Chapter II

## ECONOMIC MODERNIZATION OF BASTAR TRIBES

Agriculture is the mainstay of the tribal people in India, since more than 80 per cent of the people depend on agriculture for their livelihood. A good number of them, living in hilly areas, do not follow the normal settled method of cultivation and practice shifting cultivation. Steps are being taken to regulate this system of cultivation on scientific line as is being done in Arunachal Pradesh to minimise its evils, and help in building up the fertility of the Jhum areas. Colonization schemes, have a reasonable chance of success in tribal middle India, Kerala and Tripura where they have been introduced.

Agricultural economy has been taken to be the watershed for identification of primitive tribal communities. The pre-agricultural economic groups generally have been included in the primitive communities. Shifting cultivation is said to be the highest form of technology practised by these people. Shifting cultivation is a stage of graduation from food gathering and hunting to settled agriculture. Even here, there are no clear boundaries. It is well known that process of change may not inform all facets of community life simultaneously. In the paper entitled "Problems of Diagnostic Research and the Strategy of Development of Pre-agriculture Primitive Tribal Communities", Surjit Sinha emphasized that "the proper understanding of the situation in relation to these communities will

require a historical perspective of their problems."[1] The basic question is how to bring science and technology within the control of the participating groups so that they may inform their economic activities. Education has an important role in bringing about the process of modernization within their social and cultural outlook, which in turn may transform their economic life. All the tribes are not at the same stage of economic development in India. So the contemporary changes in the economic life of tribes differ from region to region and community to community. For example, some tribes are in hunting stage and others are having settled cultivation and have entered the stage of market economy. Therefore, we cannot have a uniform generalization of economic development which would be equally true of all Indian tribes. We have to analyse economic modernization of tribes on the basis of the level and the stage of their economic development in each case, keeping the terrain, technology and social organization in view.

In this chapter, I will discuss economic modernization of tribals of Bastar within the context of the changes in Central India as it has historically developed.

Pre-colonial Situation

The pre-colonial situation has been generally des-

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[1] Surjit Sinha and B. D. Sharma, eds., Primitives Tribes: The First Step (Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 1977), p. 4.

cribed by ethnographers as static. Historical evidence,[2]
however, suggests at least three major trends. First, there
was colonization and establishment of settlement (bhums) by
peasants castes, who were encouraged by the Mughal rulers
and zamindars to reclaim lands and offered various incen-
tives for this purpose. "The Jharkhand and Gondwana emerged
as historical regions in medieval period. Secondly, many
tribes, such as the Bhils, Minas, Kolis and Gonds were reco-
gnized as dominant communities by the Mughal empire." Thirdly
and most important of all, witness the rise of the state
either out of the tribal matrix as in the case of Gonds and
Cheros or as a result of the imposition on the tribal system
of the authority of the Rajputs and other castes which estab-
lished their power in the highlands of Orissa and Central
India, Gujarat and Rajasthan.

A crucial precondition of the formation of the
state in middle India was the extension of cultivation through
the reclamation of land and the introduction of a new agri-
cultural technology by the peasantry from plains. The Gond
Nagbansi and Chero chiefs encouraged the settlement of non-
tribal peasant communities such as the Kurmis, Keoris and
Kumbis who, with their superior agricultural technology,

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2     K. S. Singh, "Colonial Transformation of Tribal
Society in Middle India", EPW, vol. XIII, no. 3,
July 29, 1978, pp. 1225-32.
The account that follows is a reproduction from
this paper.

alone could generate the agricultural surpluses that the
new states required. A new mode of production thus emerged.
A consequence of the imposition of the feudal superstructure
on the tribal society was its breakdown and fragmentation
into distinct social strata based on corresponding distribu-
tion of power and economic interest in land and defined in
terms of ritual status. The new states acted as the agents
of sanskritization but they also strengthened the sense of
tribal identity. State formation stimulated commercial acti-
vities, developed trade routes and promoted small scale urbanism.
A variety of castes ranging from the Brahmins, who were tempted
by generous grants of land, to the artisan communities flocked
to the new fort cities. All in all, a complex social economic
system had emerged in certain parts of tribal middle India
even before the colonial system was established there.[3]

### Agrarian Restructuring and Economic Modernization During Colonial Rule in India

The land system in tribal area was integrated within
the two broad systems of land tenure, the zamindari and the
ryotwari systems. The tribal region of central provinces,
Bihar, and Bengal belonged to the first and those in Bombay,
Gujarat and the Western parts of the Central Provinces to the
second category. Tribal and/or non-tribal chiefs in the tribal

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[3] For further details see, Surjit Sinha, "State
Formation and Rajput Myth in Central India",
Man in India, vol. 42, no. 2, 1961.

regions were recognized as zamindars, malgujars, ghatwals, the guardians of passes and warden of marches and bissoyies, muttdars and the other classes of the tribal landowners as occupancy tenants or subtenants. The most striking feature of this period was the breakdown of the communal mode of production and the emergence of private right in land. The first was generally related to the technology of hunting and food gathering, the slash-and-burn cultivation, which were again associated with the system of communal ownership, control of land and use of collective labour.

To facilitate commercial exploitation of the forest shifting cultivation was forbidden in many areas. The production from land was unable to keep pace with rising population. The peasantry coming up from the plains introduced, the concept of agricultural season and new crops, implements and practices related to both wet and dryland farming. The new technology helped tribes to extend cultivation. The transition from the tribal to the peasant system was, however, neither uniform nor complete. Dependence on forest as a source of food, shelter and occupation was still crucial in many ways. By and large, all major tribes in the nineteenth century were emerging as communities of peasants while the minor tribes still depended on forest in India.

In Central India, a further stage in the modernization of the peasant system was the penetration of tribal economy by the market. The colonial system created a demand for money in non-money economies to pay land revenue and other

levies, to defray expenditure of various kinds, and to buy other necessities. The traditional form of barter exchange almost died away. There was some evidence that sections of the tribes took the commodity production on limited scale like the non-tribal peasantry of India. It was not so much the grain as minor forest produce such as lac or honey that brought the tribals into contact with the market. Even the most primitive economies came gradually within the operation of the market system.[4]

With the market came the middlemen, merchants, and moneylenders. The concept of diku the aliens, becomes crucial to the understanding of agrarian relations. A diku was the creature of the colonial system who performed a variety of functions as a middleman in administrative matters, as a moneylender, as a trader who controlled production of foodgrain through the system of advance credit, and as a land grabber.[5]

## The Economic Modernization of Bastar Tribes After Independence

With the attainment of independence it was realized by the national leaders and the masses of the people that

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[4]     K. S. Singh, op. cit., pp. 1225-32.

[5]     For reference see Edward J. Jay, A Tribal Village of Middle India (Calcutta: Anthropological Survey of India, Government of India, 1970), pp. 107-204; see also Stephen Fuchs Fr, "Messianic Movements", in A. R. Desai, ed., Peasant Struggle in India (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 28-46.

in free India the tribals would not have a different fortune
from the rest of the people in the country. Thus the former
policy of their isolation and segregation was finally rejected
by the government of free India in favour of deliberate inter-
vention for their development.

After independence the administration professed to
give priority to developing the tribal areas and the tribal
people which had hitherto been neglected and left under-
developed. The problems of tribes are recognized in article 46
of the Constitution which promises to promote with special care
the educational and economic interests of Scheduled Tribes,
and makes provision for protecting them from social injustices
and all forms of exploitation.

For the economic development of tribes a Tribal
Welfare Department was instituted and launched in 1951.
"Its work was not intended to supplant, but rather to supple-
ment the general development programmes, undertaken by the
Government through such agencies as the National Extension
Service and the Community Development Projects."[6]

The Community Development Programme was started in
1952 in Bastar to build up the rural economy and to generate
the spirit of self-help in rural area. It was well apprecia-
ted at that time that the tribal areas were poorer and required

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6      Stephen Fuchs, The Gond and Bhumia of Eastern Mandla
       (Bombay: New Literature Publishing Co., 1968), p. 506.

special developmental efforts. Special multipurpose tribal developments projects were therefore taken up for tribal areas more or less on the same lines as Community Development Projects but with much larger investments. These projects were initially started in two blocks of the district. Later, 28 out of 32 blocks in the district were converted into T.D. Blocks.

To remove the stranglehold of the indigenous moneylenders, the contractors and traders, attempts were made to set up a strong and competitive cooperative structure in the Bastar project area. Multipurpose cooperative society was opened to supply consumer articles at fair prices to the people in the distantly located tribal areas. Forest labour cooperative society was organized with a view to minimize the exploitation by forest contractors. Service societies were organized with a view to advance productive loans. Tribal cooperative development federation was started with a view to provide technical guidance and supervision to primary level cooperative societies. The main objective behind the expansion of the aforesaid cooperative structure was to modernize the tribal economy and minimize the exploitation of the tribals. They have made some headway in fulfilling these objectives. But these societies and cooperatives are unable to compete with indigenous moneylenders and to free the tribal people from their clutches. According to the Draft Sub Plan,[7] these societies failed to produce the desired results on account of their multiplicity, extremely poor management and supervision and on

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[7] Draft Sub Plan, Jagadalpur Project, District Bastar, Madhya Pradesh (Jagadalpur: Govt. Press Jagadalpur, 1976).

account of the absence of pyramid like organizational struc-
ture. It also suffers from lack of resources for giving
adequate credit not only for the production of goods but also
for their marketing.

## Modernization of Agriculture of Bastar Tribes

Agriculture and forest are main source of livelihood
of Bastar tribes. The total geographical area of the district
according to village papers is 39.18 lakh hectares, out of
this 29.92 lakh hectares (66%) were classified as forest. The
net area sown in the district is 7.04 lakhs hectare. The
cultivable waste land was 0.94 lakh hectare and 2.36 lakh
hectares was permanent pastures and grazing land. Irrigation
facilities in the district is very meagre. The net cropped
area in the year 1969 increased by 28.65% as compared to the
area in 1960-61. The percentage of area under irrigation to
area under crops during the years 1960-61 and 1968-69 comes
to 2.20 and 1.65 respectively. The area under crop in this
period increased by 3.52 per cent. This indicates that the
irrigation facilities have not kept pace with the increase
in the area under crop.[8]

The district is very rich in forest wealth. As per
pre-investment survey of forest-resources, it has a growing
stock of 187 million cubic - meters of industrial woods, and

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[8]     District Census Hand Book, Bastar District,
Census of India, Madhya Pradesh, 1971, p. 53.

4.37 million tons of bamboo. Besides major forest produce
of industrial importance a variety of minor forest produces
are also available i.e. gum, honey, kora-cocoon, tikkur and
fool-bahari. The tribals collect minor forest produce for
their use and for sale. [8A]

For the modernization of agriculture and rural uplift-
ment, government of India made the following recommendations
through intensive Agricultural District Programme and Community
Development Blocks.

1. The field officers could supervise and guide the
agricultural operation in the agricultural operations in the
agricultural colonies.

2. While measures of soil conservation such as bunding,
terracing, etc. should be undertaken, care should be taken to
ensure that cost of the schemes is not disproportionate to the
returns.

3. The scheduled tribes should be encouraged to take
improved methods of agriculture: "(a) by setting up demons-
tration farms (b) by distribution of improved agricultural
implements, fertilizers and high-yielding varieties of seeds,
and (c) providing credit facilities". [9]

4. While distributing improved agricultural implements,

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8A      Ibid., p. 53.

9       "Development of Tribal Areas", Community and Panchayati
        Raj Digest, vol. 3, no. 2, 1971, p. 169.

care should be taken to ensure that repair facilities are

available in the vicinity.

5. Cultivation of high yielding varieties or multi-
ple cropping can be taken up whenever permanent terraced fields
with sufficient water supply are available.

6. Due to the communication and storage difficulties,
there should be sufficient godowns so that fertilizer, seeds,
etc. can be stored properly for distribution to the farmers in
time.

7. Agricultural marketing in the tribal areas has
been rather unregulated due to link road communication diffi-
culties. It is, therefore, considered very necessary to stress
the importance to the farmers regarding link road communications.

For the irrigation, most of the villages in the
tribal areas have not been electrified, not to speak of cen-
trifugal pumps for irrigation purposes in the fields. For
proper planning of agricultural programme and successful imple-
mentation of schemes, electric power line is required both
for sinking tubewells and for connecting pipes for irrigation
purposes. The set up for the implementation of minor irri-
gation programmes in tribal areas is unsatisfactory and inade-
quate in most states.

The most of above recommendations for the moderniza-
tion of agriculture have been introduced in Bastar district.
But its implementation seems to be on very small scale because
of poverty, illiteracy and inadequate financial help from

ment Rs.300/- per hectare would require large quantum of
finance as the cooperative sector may not be able to meet for
quite some time.[11]

In the power sector too considerable development has
yet to take place. The per capita consumption of power in
the district as a whole is very poor owing to non-existence
of industries and irrigation facilities. By the end of March
1974 only 4.43 per cent of the villages were electrified in
the district, whereas 15.3 per cent villages were electrified
in the state as a whole. According to Draft Sub-Plan in
respect of power supply the district is far backward. Conse-
quently the tribals fail to utilize even existing irrigation
facilities. (Power is very essential intermediary input. For
the rapid economic development electric power is urgent require-
ment.)

Lack of communication facilities and sparsely popu-
lated and distantly located villages pose a serious problem
in the execution of any extension programme. The illiterate
tribes are suspicious about outsiders and reluctant to accept
extension facilities from strangers. Besides the adoption
problems, the agricultural extension organization and efforts
in the tribal area are considerably weaker than compared to
the same in non-tribal areas of the state. In the tribal
project areas, one agricultural extension officer and ten gram

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11        Ibid.

sewaks have been provided in each block. Thus, in this pro-
ject (Jagadalpur) area an extension officer looks after
the needs of 80 to 100 villages and a gram sewak has to
look after 10 to 15 villages. In a non-tribal area where
three extension officers and twenty gram sewaks are provided
in a block, an extension officer is required to look after
the needs of only 30 villages and a Gram Sewak only 3 to 5
villages.

Since the high yielding varieties reveal their full
yield potential under higher fertility levels, misconception
regarding their utility in tribal area prevail. The view
that they are no good if large quantity of fertilizer are
not used, has unfortunately grown. This is not correct be-
cause the high yielding strains invariably have capacity to
divert more of the total assimilated plant nutrients to grain
production rather than straw, and thus have a superior har-
vest index even under low fertility condition. Due to various
limitations before the tribals of Bastar district the moderni-
zation of agriculture is not making speedy progress.

## The Industrialization and Mining in Central India

The pace of industrialization and with it that of
urbanization, has been correspondingly accelerated after the
first world war and specially after Indian independence. "The
tribal belt of middle India is in the grip of industrial revo-
lution and consequent to a rapid urbanization comparatively in
a short span of time which has led this region to "industry-

based explosion."[12] In some cases it led to over urbanization which gets reflected in congestion and over-crowding formation of slums particularly in industrial and mining towns, lack of civic amenities like drinking water, electricity, educational, recreational and other facilities as well as under or unemployment. The mining towns generally support large population but urban facilities are lacking to a great extent.

In the present context the industrial urbanization in the tribal belt of Chotanagpur has greatly affected the folk and primitive tribal population which till recently led a homogeneous distinctive and folk style of life. The impact of industrialization urbanization has been differently felt by the thousands of uprooted villagers, the tribal migrants and the villagers of the neighbouring areas. In general, however, as reflected from the study of Hatia in Central India and other industrial complexes "their traditional style of life has been disintegrated and they continue to struggle hard to adjust themselves with rapidly changing situation."[13] The net result of the uprooted tribals in due course has been loss of traditional style of life exhaustion of cash received by way of compensation and unemployment, keen and unfair competition with the migrants in the labour market, high aspiration and

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12      L. P. Vidyarthi, "Tribal Development in Independent India and Its Future", Man in India (Ranchi), vol. 54, no. 1, January-March 1974, pp. 67-68.

13      Ibid., p. 68.

great frustration. All these find reflection in different
types of periodical unrest and agitation in industrially
dominated tribal areas. The above generalizations regarding
the socio-economic exploitation of tribals are too broad
indeed. This prompts us immediately to refer to some specific
data which may tell the exact trends of tribal exploitation.

## Industrialization and Mining in
## Bastar and Tribal Exploitation

District Bastar is more or less dormant from the
standpoint of industrial development, in spite of a vast po-
tential of mineral and forest resources. According to the
live register of Industries Department there are only 133
small scale industries employing about 1700 persons in the
project area.[14] Most of these are traditional industries like
rice mill, oil mill, saw mill, flour mill, etc. The rich
mineral deposits are in most cases located in the remote and
inaccessible areas of the tribals. In Bastar the rich mineral
deposits are located in many areas. These minerals are lime-
stone, dolonite, clays and low grade iron ore,etc. In mining
industry district has developed a lot. For example, Bailadila,
the zone of huge iron ore deposits lies in the heart of the
Muria (Gonds) track in Bastar. To exploit the rich deposits
the National Mineral Development Corporation which went into
operation, has its road built through dense forest and linking

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14          Draft Sub-Plan, Jagadalpur Project, District
            Bastar Madhya Pradesh, (Jagadalpur: Government Press,
            Jagadalpur, 1976), p. 228.

the area with the headquarters of the district and with the port at Visakhapatnam. Several industrial activities followed this. The area, which was for so long remained hidden in the thickest of sal, teak and bija trees, is resounding with "the explosives and the hum of the drills and dumpers." A township of about 725 quarters inhabited by about 12,000 immigrants officers, staff and workers of the mines, has grown in this place with necessary infrastructure of water supply, community centres, school, hospital and welfare activities.[15]

Bailadila in Bastar today has become the largest mechanized iron ore mine in Asia. Similarly the steel plants at Bhilai and Rourkela which are located in tribal areas now crowded with people coming from various parts of India for taking up employment in the mines and the mills. The tribes of these areas and far off places are also drawn to the industrial complex in large numbers. The factors responsible for migration of the tribal communities to the industrial setting is the growth of population depletion of forest resources, stringent legal restrictions on the exploitation of the resources. Of all these, the establishment of the mines and industries in the homeland of the tribes is the most important factor to attract the tribes. "The modernity which the industrial background offers and the external contact which the improved communication facilities provide contribute to the pull of the tribals to the vortex of the industrial complex."[16]

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15    N. Patnaik, "Tribal Economy and Strategies for Development", Community Development and Panchayati Raj Digest, vol. 3, no. 2, National Institute of Community Development, Hyderabad 1971, p. 127.

16    Ibid., p. 127.

Since industries and mining industries are developing on capitalist line, the capitalists are exploiting the tribals cheap labour for their own profit. But it may be futile for capitalists and capitalist system itself when working class will unite through labour union and may throw out capitalism. At present tribes are victims of exploitation in Bailadila mining industry by the capitalists. For example the Murias of Bastar provide unskilled labour in various sectors of the Bailadila iron ore project. But compared with hard labour which they put in various manual jobs, the benefits they derive are very meagre. In many cases the cunning contractors exploit the labour and pay them less than what was their due. Moreover the tribals lose their independence and become economically subservient to the agencies which are more powerful in all respects. Due to very poor representation in the working force of Bailadila iron ore project the local tribals have gained nothing and have lost their lands, independence, forest
produce and often their womenfolk.[17]

The main problem with the influx of more outsiders in tribal area is that of land alienation. This is the direct consequence of exploitation by which the tribals give up ownership rights over their land, despite protective legislation. "The land enactment of 1960 prohibits the sale of their tribal land to non-tribals, but loopholes can be found in every law

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[17]     Draft Sub Plan, Jagadalpur Project, District Bastar
(M.P.), (Jagadalpur : Government Press Jagadalpur, 1976).

and tribal lands do change hands fairly frequently."[18]

It is now mainly by economic exploitation that the tribals are forced to part with their land and to hand it over the non-tribal rich people. The tribals are proverbially improvident and often find themselves without cash and provisions, when they need them most urgently. Then they take refuge to the money lenders who often charge them not only a high interest but often write out fraudulent promissory notes to the illiterate borrowers.

Further, in the tribal regions so remote from larger business centres, market places and railway lines - sometimes the nearest railway station is miles away from their villages, the tribals are obliged to sell their produce at cheap price. While the merchants sell their merchandise at high rate. By both these ways of exploitation, the economic situation of the tribals always remains very precarious and any extra expenses. can only be met by borrowing from the moneylenders. The moneylenders lend their money often in the hope of taking over debtors fields in case they are unable to repay their debts.

Thus we have seen that in the post-independence period the pace of economic modernization in the country as a whole is not matched by the pace of development in the backward tribal district of Bastar. The theoretical perspective on

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18      Stephan Fuchs,"Land Scarcity and Land Hunger Among Some Aborginal Tribes of Western Central India", in K. S. Singh, ed., Tribal Situation in India (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1972), pp.368-9.

modernization spelled out in the first chapter had indicated
that there is nothing like modernization per se; either it is
modernization on capitalist lines or it is modernization on
socialist lines. The path of capitalist modernization, that
India has assumedly taken to, necessarily implies that sectors,
strata, regions and grouping that are initially handicapped
in the formally equal race are likely to be left behind by the
initially advantaged sectors, strata, regions and groupings.
Our brief survey of the economic changes in tribal Bastar
has lent strong support to the theoretical assumptions.

Transport and communication developments have by and
large remained stagnant except when the demand of primary extra-
ction of mining ores have demanded road linkages. The reluctant
growth of ore mining centre has resulted in major technically
trained personnel and supervisory and administrative staff
being drawn from non-tribal and outside element. For the local
tribal population it only meant a little absorption at the
lowest rung of manual labour. This halting urban industrial
growth has disrupted their traditional role organization without
corrrsponding economic benefits. Similarly in the agriculture
sector the increase in the area under crop cultivation is not
matched by increase in irrigation facilities and simultaneously
it meant a shrinkage of land owned or controlled by the tribals
for their primitive agriculture or for wood or other natural
jungle products that they used to consume or barter for other
necessities. The monotization of the tribal economy, in the
absence of protective institutions or appropriate low interest

credit institution has meant for the tribals of Bastar an un-
welcome opening for exploitation by moneylenders contractors
and land-grabbers. In short modernization in advanced sectors,
sections, regions and grouping seems to have resulted in de-
velopments in the reverse direction for the tribal people of
backward Bastar as far as the economic aspect goes.

# Chapter III

## POLITICAL MODERNIZATION AND BASTAR TRIBES

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For centuries Bastar was ruled as an independent state under a Maharaja. The tribals and others in the state had to pay taxes to the Maharaja. He also exercised a certain authority over the peoples of the state. This indigenous administrative system was gradually superseded by the foreign system imposed by the British.[1] The British administration took over the taxation and brought Bastar under direct rule. However, the Raja continued to yield considerable influence over his traditional subjects.

The political system of India was based on the concept of direct rule. Unlike Africa which adopted the system of indirect rule, namely, the rule through the traditional chiefs in many territories, a large part of the tribal region and most of tribal population in India were integrated within the administration of the provinces of British India, or within that of the Indian states where the British Resident kept a watch on the tribal situation and in some cases, even acted as the agent for the tribal regions. However, there were area of tribal concentration which were enclaved to 'reclaim to civilization' the tribes who had often rebelled or were difficult to be pacified. It was in these enclaves that the concept of pro-

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[1] Edward J. Jay, _A Tribal Village of Middle India_ (Calcutta: Anthropological Survey of India, Government of India, 1970), p. 214.

tection of the tribes as an ethnic community developed in
stages.[2] Its main features were:

(a) the paternalistic rule of the district officers.
The tribals needed a government by men and not by a system;

(b) keeping tribal areas out of the operation of the
regulations, laws, etc. which were alien to tribal ethos
and undermined it;

(c) laying down a set of simple rules to settle dispu-
tes, restriction of the jurisdiction of the courts which en-
forced normal laws, and exclusion of the lawyers from courts;

(d) special agrarian laws;

(e) regulation of the entry of the aliens into tribal
areas; and

(f) strengthening of tribal institutions and tradi-
tional leadership.

According to K. S. Singh, the agency system established
with the objective of quelling rebellions was the earliest
mode of protective administration.[3] One agency was set up
to pacify the Bhils (1825), another in Chotanagpur, the south-
west frontier agency (1833), a third in the Meriah tract
(1839-65) to abolish the practice of human sacrifice, and
fourth one in Ganjam (1839), which has survived the longest.
The first were wound up as soon as the objective for which

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2    K. S. Singh, "Colonial Transformation of Tribal
     Society in Middle India", EPW, vol. XIII, 29 July
     1978, pp. 1225-6.

3    Ibid., p. 1226.

they were formed was achieved. The agency settled the tribes, opened up the tribal world, laid lines of communication, established chatties along highways to supply the army which brought in merchants, traders and peddlers and which developed into market later, and set up contonements and centres of administration and trade. The pace of urbanization gradually went up. With the establishment of regular administration the pace of the colonisation of the tribal regions, which had begun in the medieval period, as mentioned in the first chapter, was accelerated.

When Britishers conquered the whole country and got firmly established, they came to clash with the tribal groups, they sought to stop raiding, feuding, head-hunting, human sacrifice or slavery in north eastern India and Orissa, or as they intervened in support of the allegedly harassed, but actually the oppressing landlords, middlemen, moneylenders, police or forest officials, or princely chiefs in Bihar, Bengal, Orissa, Bastar, former Madras agencies and central Indian states and possibly in Rajasthan also.[4]

## Bastar - A Political Introduction

In Bastar, during the reign of Daryao the successor of Dalpat Deo, there was a revolt by the Halbas but it was ruthlessly suppressed. About a century later in 1876 there

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[4]    L. K. Mahapatra, "Social Movements Among Tribes of India", in K. S. Singh, ed., _Tribal Situation in India_ (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1972), p. 403.

was a revolt by the Muria (Gonds). During the hey day of
their rule, the Marathas exercised only a nominal control of
this district. Being cut off, the district was spared the
frequent attacks by invading armies and but for minor internal
discords, the ruling dynasties of Bastar and Kanker continued
to dominate the area.

The first European who appears to have made attempts
to visit Bastar was Captain Blunt in 1775. He had to return
without much exploration because of the hostility of the
tribals. Captain Fenwick was the first European to visit
Bastar in 1850. He was followed by Lake in 1855 and by Glare-
furd in 1860-62. In 1910 there was large-scale disorder in
erstwhile Bastar state when the tribals started all round riot-
ing. It was, however, suppressed by the Britishers.[5] The colo-
nial system bore harshly on the tribal communities who with a
sensitivity born of isolation and with a relatively intact
mechanism of social control revolted more often and far more
violently than any other community including peasants in India.

The official records, scattered over a wide spectrum,
refer to the acts of depredations of pacification, the charac-
ter of which has yet to be studied and ascertained. These
are generally described as incidents and episodes whereas they
have to be studied as movements, as a part of the social system.

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5    Figures from <u>The District Census Handbook, Bastar</u>,
     Census of India, Madhya Pradesh, 1961, p. 14.

Seemingly sporadic outbreaks were actually an indication of the nature of colonial authority that was being imposed and resisted. The tribals realized the implication of the British interference in their economic and political life and protested against it. Their protest were however overlooked by the administrators who denounced them merely as a reaction of a backward tribal polity to their well-meaning efforts to modernize them. This accounts for the 'paternalistic' attitude of the British administrators toward the tribal people, and it hides their vested interests in the modernization process they had imposed. The furthering of the interests of the poor and simple tribal people all in the garb of a programme for tribal welfare, has been recurrent theme in the modernization of tribal people.

It is doubtful if socalled programme of catering to tribal welfare and tribal needs was intended to be a well-meaning programme of modernization. Evidence from all over India bears testimony to the actual intention of the colonial administration to modernize only those sectors that would yield benefits, and obviously the tribal people were drawn into this process only to this extent.

Thus the colonial system ended the relative isolation of the tribal society; brought them into the mainstream of the new administrative set up, policy and programmes; put an end to the political dominance of the region by the tribes. The colonial system, as elsewhere, followed the dual policy of

strengthening the feudal crust of the tribal society, formed by
rajas, chiefs and zamindars and simultaneously creating condi-
tions in which their political system was undermined by the
rampaging colonial administration.

The principle that the normal laws should not auto-
matically apply to tribal areas underlaying the passage of the
Scheduled District Act (1874) and the concept of the backward
areas in the government of India Act of 1919.  Whether or not
this principle should continue to be applied was a matter
that figured in a most lively debate in the early 1930s.
While one school contended that the aborgines formed a distinct
element and should be placed in charge of the British govern-
ment, the nationalists saw in this proposition the continuation
of the imperial policy of divide and rule.  However, the tri-
bal and non-tribal areas were both partly and fully 'excluded'
in the Government of India Act of 1935. The need to provide
adequate safeguards for the tribals was again extensively dis-
cussed in the Constituent Assembly, and the nationalist opin-
ion favoured incorporation of far more radical provinces for
the safeguard of the tribals' interests in the form of the V
and VI Schedules of the Indian Constitution.

This appreciation of the uniqueness of tribal factor
within the framework of Indian nationalism and the extension
of political rights to tribals were beyond the expectation of
the colonial administrators and anthropologists.[6]

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6      For further elaboration of the nationalists approach

(f.note contd.)

## Political Modernization of Bastar Tribes
## After Independence

With the attainment of Independence it was realized by
the national leaders and the masses of the people that in
free India the tribals would not have a different fortune
than the rest of the people in the country. The tribal policy
of the Government is thus a manifestation of the feelings of
the nationalists. Since the attainment of Independence the
tribals have become part and parcel of the general political
system of the country. They are citizens of the nation and
are subjected to the Constitution.[7] Indian constitution
carries a whole array of political and social reforms and this
is to be implemented by modern technology and administration.

The Scheduled Tribes were granted certain economic,
legal, educational, political and administrative privileges
which gradually made it possible for them to hold their own
against the rivalry of their neighbouring groups. They could
claim also higher status because of new acquisitions in educa-
tion, political power, economic benefits, jobs, etc. The
general trend today in the political system is towards greater

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(previous footnote contd.)

to the question of tribal welfare, see, K. S.
Singh, "Mahatma Gandhi and the Adivasis", Man in
India, vol. 50, no. 1, January-March 1970.

7    S. L. Doshi, "Tribals: An Assimilationist Society
and National Integration", in K. S. Singh, ed.,
Tribal Situation in India (Simla: Indian Institute
of Advanced Study, 1969), p. 469.

decentralization of economic and political power. Centralization of administration is regarded as non-conducive to the promotion of a sound democracy.[8]

The Panchayati Raj scheme was initiated in 1959, its object being to give the major role in the people themselves, so that they can participate actively in decision-making about their own welfare. Therefore, decided to establish Gram Panchayat in Bastar district also under the Madhya Pradesh Panchayats Act 1962.[9]

Due to the political modernization, many changes are taking place in political sphere of tribal society in Bastar district. On the whole the changes have come about in two directions. The institutions which were responsible for the regulation of peoples lives have altered in character. Moreover, where they were once ruled by hereditary chiefs, they have now become progressively subjected to democratic control. In other words, both the form of institutions as well as their operation has been undergoing progressive transformation. In traditional society the leaders were hereditary. Now hereditary leaders have been replaced by elected leaders, in which tribes are losing their traditional authority system.

Even though the traditional elite may be influential the newly emerging intelligentsia in the various hitherto back-

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8    S. L. Dubey, "Decentralization and Its Problems", in
     T. B. Naik, ed., Changing Tribes of Madhya Pradesh
     (Indore: Government Regional Press, 1961), p. 22.

9    Draft Sub Plan, Jagadalpur Project, District Bastar,
     Madhya Pradesh (Jagadalpur, Government Press Jagadalpur,
     1976).

ward tribes, became the real repository of power.[10] There is premium on education on the capacity to manipulate the organs of power to one's advantage. In this neither charisma nor traditional status will help. This was the general picture as seen by social scientists. Let us see the actual developments in Bastar.

In Bastar till 1960 the Maharaja Pravin Chand Bhanjdev enjoyed some esteem among his subjects. He felt keenly the loss of power as a product of India's democratic system. He organized a political group known as the Adivasi Sevadal to contest election for local bodies in March 1959 on the issue of independent Bastar state.[11] The Maharaja's demand was part of strategy to maintain some semblance of the traditional authority. But he failed in this attempt because of the development of rival progressive factions to undermine his authority. The Madhya Pradesh Government did not take kindly to his demand of separate state and ordered his expulsion from the district which he resisted and died in a clash between his own supporters and his rivals.

Although the locus of power had shifted decisively from the traditional to modern section of society, it was still concentrated in the hands of a few who were economically well off.

10    L. K. Mahapatra, "Social Movements Among Tribes of India", in K. S. Singh, ed., op. cit., p. 407.

11    Edward J. Jay, A Tribal Village of Middle India (Calcutta: Anthropological Survey of India, 1970), p. 218.

It appears that in the actual performance Panchayati Raj
in most cases adds to the powers of those who were already in
privileged positions in rural society, on account of their
wealth or traditional status. The interest of poorest have
frequently suffered by default while those of the dominant
sections had become more firmly entrenched. [12] This dominant
section is at the helm of cooperative societies, Vikas Mandal
and Panchayats. It is also utilizing all the government aids
for consolidating itself. According to the Jagadalpur Project
most of village leaders in project area belong to non-tribal
land owning section, and they look after the interests of their
own community and a larger section of landless labourers and
Scheduled Castes and Tribes is therefore, mostly neglected. [13]

Electoral Politics

Despite the shortcomings in its implementation, the
new democratic political system is making inroads into the
tribal consciousness, bringing them gradually into the ambit of
wider processes affecting the rest of the country. The Sixth
General Elections and the reservation of seats in Vidhan Sabha
and Lok Sabha have created a political awakening among the
tribals. Here as elsewhere participation in election campaigns
and contact with party bosses tend to create frequent inter-

12      Bijay Chandra Majumdar, "Scheduled Castes and Tribes:
        Their Present Condition", Man in India, vol. 50, no. 19,
        1970, p. 332.

13      Draft Sub Plan, Jagadalpur Projects, District Bastar
        (M.P.) (Jagadalpur, Govt. Press Jagadalpur, 1976).

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group inter-actions. This link is established between the
tribal community and outside the world, and the political wave
affecting the rest of the state also impinges on Bastar district.

In the 1977 elections, the Congress and Janata Party
put up candidates for each of the twelve Scheduled Tribes
Assembly seats. The results of the election were similar to
the general trend in north India with the Janata Party sweep-
ing the poll bagging eleven seats and the Congress getting
one seat. The Communist Party of India also fielded one candi-
date in Dantewara Constituency who was defeated by a Janata
candidate. The Janata Party secured 54.63 per cent of votes
while the Congress secured 23.45 per cent votes polled in the
Assembly election in Bastar district as a whole. The Communist
Party of India secured 1.94 per cent of the votes in the dis-
trict but its lone candidate was able to muster 27.57 per cent
of the votes in his constituency. The percentage of valid
votes cast in Bastar district was 32.75 per cent while the
corresponding figure for the state of Madhya Pradesh as a
whole was 44.40 per cent. The figures indicate that the par-
ticipation of eligible voters in the election in the tribal
area, as judged by their turn out, is less than that of the
state as a whole, but clearly the area is affected as much by
political wave in favour of the Janata Party as the rest of

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14      S. L. Doshi, "Tribals: An Assimilationist Society
        and National Integration", in K. S. Singh, ed.,
        Tribal Situation in India (Simla: Indian Institute
        of Advanced Study, 1969), p. 469.

15      Figures from Sheel Chand Noona, "Fragmentation of

                                            (footnote contd.)

the state. The tribal people are being gradually involved
in the party system and election machinery and this is facil-
itating the development of indigenous leadership potentially
capable of mobilizing the community. Lack of leadership in
the tribal communities is a great handicap. This is one of
the reasons why tribes interests fail to receive proper atten-
tion from the authorities and from the general public.

While the British policy was mainly that of consolida-
tion of tribal separation along with limited welfare measures,
the new political system professed a policy of phased integ-
ration of tribes in the body-politics of India along with
massive welfare activities.[16] As tribes become more and more
politicized, they will make demand on the political system for
the fulfilment of their legitimate rights. The system is being
tested for its efficiency in implementing what it has pro-
fessed. The new system brought such innovations as formal
egalitarian political institutions, expansion of legal poli-
tical system where candidates parties have equal rights to
contest. It has been pointed out in this chapter that these
innovations have had a somewhat limited impact in Bastar. The

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(previous footnote contd.)

Political Behaviour in India: An Analysis Report of
Electoral Trends", M.Phil. Dissertation submitted in
the Centre for Regional Development, JNU, 1979.

16    Surjit Sinha, "Tribal Solidarity Movements in India:
A Review", in K. S. Singh, ed., Tribal Situation in
India, op. cit., pp. 414-15.

backward tribal folk continued to be excluded from decision-making bodies at all levels, local and regional and their participation in political system is limited to casting their votes during elections. Political power is monopolized by economically dominant sections, strata, regions and groupings.[17] The uneven impact of political system is due to the capitalist line which favours the already privileged and leaves the common people deprived, economically and politically. In Bastar, it leads to a small group of leadership of tribal being incorporated into the state and central leadership as second rate leadership and cut of from the local tribal interests. On the basis of this limited study on Bastar, it seems that present politico-economic system is unable to fulfil the rising aspirations of the Bastar tribes.

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17      Ratna Dutta, "The Process of Modernization: Some
        Structural Constraints", in Suren Navalekha, ed.,
        Studies in Asian Social Development (Delhi: Vikas
        Publishing House, 1974), pp. 129-57.

Chapter  V


EDUCATIONAL MODERNIZATION OF BASTAR TRIBES

Chapter V

EDUCATIONAL MODERNIZATION OF BASTAR TRIBES

In traditional societies the positions, statuses and roles are generally based on the hereditary principle and are ascribed.[1] On the other hand it is generally assumed that in modern societies, positions, statuses and roles are based on achievement, merit, qualification and training rather than on ascription. In this simplified conceptual dichotomy of traditional and modern societies the achievement orientation of the latter against the ascriptive basis of the former, we can logically discuss an increasing role of education and training for acquiring skill, knowledge and demonstrable merit. This necessarily implies that recruitment to various roles and statuses will be more and more open based on tested merit and the recruitment would not be foreclosed on the basis of heredity. This also implies that classes and groups which were formerly denied access to educational facilities would be allowed to avail of them to provide a broader base for recruitment. Does this simple logical dichotomy work? Does modernization mean a unilinear broadening of the educational reach and an all

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[1] A. R. Desai, "Social Change and Educational Polity", and R. N. Saksena, "The Traditional System and Education in India", in M. S. Gore, ed., Papers in the Sociology of Education in India (New Delhi: National Council of Educational Research and Training, 1975).

round diversification of educational opportunities for all
irrespective of ascription due to birth? Does the demand for
scientific and technological personnel generated by modernized
economy seek out recruits from all sectors and areas, These
are some of the questions that demand concrete answers.

Social change in the form of modernization was intro-
duced in India by the British rulers. The traditional social
structure of Indian society was changed and the processes of
modernization were initiated by the British rulers. The new
social context had its impact on the education system which
rendered more open. The British rulers elaborated a bureau-
cratic administrative machinery which required a rational
system of education.

This requirement was in consonance with the British
aim of establishing a colonial social order, subservient
and dependent on them in every way. They desired an educa-
tion system that would provide the necessary training and
skills for personnel to fill up the subordinate bureaucratic
structure and to be loyal to the British at all time. Exigen-
cies of the colonial expansion demanded a system of education
that would fulfil this limited objective and it was not
intended to satisy the aspirations of the mass of the people
for modern learning.

British trained Indians, with a view to staff the vast
politico-administrative machinery, and to imbue the personnel
with the underlying principles and procedures governing

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it. British trained and educated people to acquire skills
and assimilate values arising out of the new capitalist
economic system which the British were creating in India, and
which had different laws of operation based on a money
economy, contractual relations, and production for profit
and for the market. The aim of the colonial rulers was to
win over the confidence of the upper classes of society
who had lost their political influence through the British
conquest and make them allies of the British government, in
short to create a class Indian by birth but English in
taste, manners and outlook who could be relied upon as strong
supporters of the British rule. For example, according to
Desai the policy of "downward filtration theory" was formu-
lated in order to prevent the mass of people from taking
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advantage of modern education.

Changes in the politico-administrative set up after
independence have created a new demand for education. The

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2       For reference see, Bipan Chandra, "Karl Marx, His
        Theories of Asian Societies and Colonial Rule",
        Unpublished, Centre for Historical Studies, JNU,
        1978, pp. 124-25.

3       In making English the medium of instruction the
        British rulers adopted a policy of concentration
        on a small sector of population via English and
        left the task of educating the masses in the native
        language to this educated elite. A. R. Desai,
        "Social Change and Educational Policy", in M. S.
        Gore, ed., op. cit., p. 12. Also see Yogendra
        Singh, Modernization of Indian Tradition (Delhi:
        Thomson Press, 1973), p. 102. Kuppuswami, Social

Government of India, in contrast to the British rulers took
a more positive interest in the shaping of the educational
policy. An important requirement after independence was the
extension and diversification of educational opportunities
and educational institutions necessary to provide the diverse
skills and techniques required for the new economy and polity.
The conscious and deliberate process of planning introduced
with the First Five Year Plan and the universal adult franchise
introduced in the Constitution both required participation
by the mass of people.

Education is necessary to enable citizens to parti-
cipate intelligently in the economic and political processes.
The right to work and right to vote, logically and inevi-
tably demands for its effective use the right to education.
The Constitution and the planning mechanism initiated by
it have neglected the right to work and the right to education,
which are and should be concomitants of the right to vote.
The right to work and right to education do not find a place
in the Chapter on Fundamental Rights guaranteed by the Indian
Constitution. Instead they have been included in the direc-
tive principles, mere resolutions to be fulfilled rather than
rights to be guaranteed. Denying the people work and educa-
tion as fundamental rights is to deny them their potential
power to create the kind of society they wish. So far moderni-
zation on capitalist lines has precluded the possibility of
providing those rights to the citizens and consequently the

(Delhi: Thomson Press, 1973),p. 102, B. Kuppuswami,
Social Change in India (Delhi: Vikas, 1972), p. 230 and
S.H. Rudolf and L. I. Rudolph, eds., Education and
Politics in India Studies in Organization, Society and
Polity (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 1.

possibilities of creating a different social order.

## Educational Modernization of Tribes
## During British Rule in India

Some credit must be given to the Christian mission-
aries for their laudable efforts made towards the spread
of education among the tribals throughout India. The mission-
aries have a rare sense of dedication to the cause. Their
teachers learn the tribal language of the area and visit
the homes of their students. Thus they gain the confidence of
all villagers. The amount of labour they put in is very much
greater than that of other teachers. They create, in the
heart of the tribals, the zest for education. All these quali-
ties should be emulated by teachers employed by other educa-
tional agencies. Besides the efforts of missionaries, the
British administration also took some steps to impart the
education among the tribes of India. In the Central Provinces
and Berar, an officer on Special Duty was appointed in 1940,
to investigate into the conditions of the aboriginal tribes.
The officer on special duty Mr W. V. Garigson, ICS, made use-
ful suggestion for the spread of education among the tribals
resulting in increase in the number of primary schools for the
tribals. Special hostels were also established and a scheme
for granting scholarships to the tribal students instituted.[4]

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[4]    Vimal Chandra, "A Historical Review of the Progress
       of Education Amongst the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled
       Castes", in L. P. Vidyarthi, ed., Applied Anthropology
       in India (Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1968), p. 298.
       Specific details of the implementation of the above
       recommendations among the Bastar tribes are not avail-
       able.

Arrangements for mid-day refreshment for boys and girls were also made. The existence of the recommendations does not indicate the extent to which tribal people availed of the facilities.

According to the Jagadalpur project during British times, the efforts to spread education among the tribal folk of Bastar were almost non-existent.[5] This was in keeping with British intentions of providing only those facilities to only those people that were strategically necessary to maintain their domination. All the steps the British undertook in these areas at that time were with a view to having a more smooth administration than to ameoliorating the conditions continued till after the attainment of the independence.[6] Consequently they never thought seriously of taking any constructive steps for the education, and for that matter even social and economic development of tribal people. The percentage of literacy among them was as low as 0.7 per cent in 1931 as compared to the general literacy rate of 8.3 per cent corresponding figures of literacy amongst the tribal woman being 0.2 per cent only as compared to the general female literacy rate of 2.3 per cent.

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5    <u>Draft Sub-Plan, Jagadalpur Project</u>, District Bastar, Madhya Pradesh, (Jagadalpur: Government Press Jagadalpur, 1976), p. 190.

6    Vimal Chandra, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 298.

## Educational Modernization of Bastar
## Tribes After Independence

After the attainment of independence the government
of India made special efforts to spread education among the
tribes of Bastar district under the all India scheme of
education. Attempts were also made to impart education to
the tribal youth in their regional languages and primers
were prepared in various tribal dialects. Emphasis was laid
on vocational and technical training.[7] The makers of the
Constitution took special note of the conditions in which
these weaker sections lived and provided a number of safe-
guards for the promotion of their interests, including educa-
tional in the Constitution. Special mention in this connec-
tion must be made of Article 47 of the Constitution in order
to promote with special care inter alia, the educational
interests of the weaker sections of the people particularly
the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.[8] After inde-
pendence for the educational development of tribes government
professed a policy which included the following recommenda-
tions.[9] The tribal areas should be equipped to educate

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7       Stephen Fuchs, The Gond and Bhumia of Eastern India
        (Bombay: New Literature Publishing Co., 1968), p. 587.

8       Vimal Chandra, op. cit., p. 305.

9       See the recommendations in Development of Tribal
        Areas, Community and Panchayati Raj Digest, vol. 3,
        no. 2, 1971.

children with skill, knowledge and values which will enable them to take initiative in development of their areas to face the problems of life with a scientific outlook and to participate in the national affairs as responsible citizens.

1. Census of school-going children has to be taken up and completed in each and every village.

2. For every 300 tribal population and within a radius of the inhabitation a school must be opened.

3. To meet the needs of the tribal children living in scattered or thinly populated areas where, because of the norms laid down for opening the middle school it is not possible to establish the school, Ashram schools, which are fairly popular with the tribal, should be provided and expanded.

4. As far as possible and practicable, local people with the requisite qualifications should be appointed as teachers. If suitable persons are not available, people from the neighbouring areas within a distance of five miles may be appointed. Even if this is not feasible willing persons with zeal and missionary spirit may be appointed.

5. Education up to primary stage must be made free, universal and compulsory.

6. Text books, stationery, school uniform, etc. for the poor and needy children should be supplied free. Book bank may be started in secondary schools to ensure that all tribal students are provided with all text books needed at the beginning of the year.

7. In all tribal school free mid-day meals should be given.

8. The problem of education of the tribal girls should receive the special attention of the government. Ashram types of schools for tribal girls should be established where general education should be combined with home science education.

9. Separate cells should be set up into tribal welfare department to follow up the careers of tribal students, who have received technical or higher education.

10. Education in Bastar district is being run by the Tribal Welfare Department as well the Education Department. Some assistance programme like free distribution of books and slates and other learning aids to primary schools, stipend and scholarship facilities are run by the Tribal Welfare Department with a view to encourage tribal students to join schools. The Tribal Welfare Department is also running a 'Mid-day Meals Programme' and a special nutrition programme in this district since 1966-1970.[10]

Due to various developmental schemes of education the literacy percentage in the district seems to be increasing. In 1951, the literacy rate was 4.1 for Bastar (out of which 7.1 per cent were males and 1.1 per cent were females) as against the general literacy rate of Madhya Pradesh 9.8 per cent (out of

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10    Draft Sub Plan, Jagadalpur Project, District Bastar, Madhya Pradesh, (Jagadalpur : Government Press, Jagadalpur, 1976).

which 16.2 per cent were males and 3.2 per cent were females). In 1961, the literacy rate was 6.9 per cent for Bastar (out of which 11.7 were males and 2.2 per cent were females) as against the general literacy rate of state 17.13 per cent (out of which 27.0 per cent were males and 6.7 per cent were females). According to the census of India 1971, the percentage of literacy in the district comes to about 10 per cent as against the state literacy percentage of about 22 per cent. The district, however, has made some progress to increase the rate of literacy during the decade 1961-71. The literacy percentage among the males in the district (15.17) is lower than the state percentage of about 33. Among female also, the literacy percentage in the district (4.07) is lower than the state percentage of about 11. Among the tahsils, Kanker tahsil has the highest literacy percentage of about 17.5 while Konta tahsil has the lowest percentage of about 3. It will be observed that although the literacy rate for the three census have shown a marked difference between the figures for the district and the state and also between figures for males and females, there has been a consistent rise in the percentage for all the categories.

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11    Figures are taken from District Census Handbook, Bastar District, Census of India, Madhya Pradesh, 1961.

12    Figures of 1951 also available in 1961 Census of India.

13    District Census Handbook, Bastar District, Census of India, Madhya Pradesh, 1971.

Further the implementation of the above policy
has led to the establishment by the government of educa-
tional institutions at all the levels. It has opened 1,362
primary schools, 152 Middle schools and 16 higher secondary
schools. Kanker has an arts and commerce college. While
Jagadalpur is served by a combined college which is located in
Dharmapura village at distance of about 3 kms. from the town.
Higher secondary and High schools have been established in all
the three towns, Kanker, Kirandul and Jagadalpur.[14]

For example Jay found in his empirical study of Orcha
village in Narayan Ganj of Bastar District that about one
year before the field work was begun in 1958 a government
school had been established by the Tribal Welfare Department
of Madhya Pradesh. The curriculum of that time consisted
exclusively of Hindi. By 1968 a number of government induced
changes, supervised mainly by the State Tribal Welfare Depart-
ment, were visible at Orcha. The school had been enlarged
and its curriculum expanded. It now includes six forms opposed
to four previously, and has a full primary school curriculum,
in contrast to the limited curriculum of 1958-60. The school
building itself is larger, and attached to it is an Ashram
or dormitory where male students stay. Thirty-six boys are
housed there, about half of them are from Orcha and the other
half from surrounding villages. For boys who stay in the Ashram

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14      Ibid.

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meals are also provided.

In the Jagadalpur project, it was found that there has been a lot of quantitative expansion of education but the standard of education and itsacceptance amongst the ~~amongst the~~ tribals is very poor. [16] At the primary stage 14468 scheduled tribes boys and 7160 girls enrolled. At the middle level 529 tribal boys and 70 girls enrolled; at higher secondary level 435 tribal boys and 53 tribal girls enrolled. The total enrolment at each of these levels was respectively 45244 (28609 boys and 16635 girls), 2303 (1747 boys and 456 girls), 3362 (2107 boys and 1255 girls). The number of teachers at the primary level were 1194, at the middle school level 199 and at the higher secondary level 175. The corresponding percentage at each level of tribal children was 47.8, 27.2 and 14.5 respectively. It is clear that the less tribal children attend schools at higher level, and the reason for this is that the tribal families consider their children an economic asset and use them for work in fields and forests rather than sending them to the schools. At the middle and higher secondary level, the percentage of dropout after the primary stage is very high 96% among the boys and 99% among the girls. It is

15      Edward J. Jay, "Some Aspects of Change in a Hill
        Maria Gond Village", in Indian Anthropologist, a
        Journal of the Indian Anthropological Association,
        vol. 1, no. 1, 1971, pp. 69-70.

16      Draft Sub Plan, Jagadalpur Project, District Bastar,
        Madhya Pradesh, (Jagadalpur: Govt. Press, Jagadalpur;   ,
        1976, p. 196.

## TABLE NO. 1

### Enrolment of tribal students in Jagadalpur Project area of Bastar District

| Education stage | Boys | Girls | Total No. of students | Tribal percentage of total students |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Primary level | 28,609 | 16,635 | 45,244 | 47.8 |
| Middle level | 1,747 | 456 | 2,203 | 27.2 |
| Higher secondary level | 2,107 | 1,255 | 3,362 | 14.5 |

## TABLE NO. 2

### Staff position in Jagadalpur Project area of Bastar District

| Education stage | Male | Female | Total teachers |
|---|---|---|---|
| Primary stage | 963 | 231 | 1194 |
| Middle stage | 155 | 44 | 199 |
| Higher secondary | 111 | 65 | 176 |

Figures of Table No. 1 and Table 2 are taken from Draft Sub Plan, Jagadalpur Project, District Bastar, Madhya Pradesh, (Jagadalpur: Govt. Press Jagadalpur 1976, pp. 191 and 195.

said that at the middle and higher secondary level of education almost all the tribals who join these institutions do it for the attraction of free meals, etc. at this level.

In terms of quality of education being imparted to tribal children much remains to be done. For the expansion of qualitative education the facilities which are given to schools are not sufficient. The buildings of schools are badly constructed and are very small in size. Out of 528 primary schools approximately 136 schools are running in rented buildings while many of the schools are without any buildings at all. Science teaching at girls higher secondary school Jagadalpur, higher secondary school, Bastar and a agriculture teaching at higher secondary school Bastar need improvement.[18] Higher secondary schools at present are poorly equipped in respect of science agriculture tools and teaching staff.

Since district is very large, there has to be adequate hostel facilities for college education. Jagadalpur Degree College for example lacks adequate residential accommodation as well as good library facilities and teaching staff. There is 80 seater hostel available for all students, five per cent of those seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and five per cent for other, the rest being for Scheduled Tribe

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17      Figures are taken from Draft Sub Plan,Jagadalpur Project, District Bastar, Madhya Pradesh (Jagadalpur: Government Press Jagadalpur, 1976).

18      Draft Sub Plan, Jagadalpur Project, District Bastar, Madhya Pradesh (Jagadalpur: Government Press Jagadalpur, 1976).

students. For girls only 20 seater hostel is available.
There are only two public libraries located at Jagadalpur
and Kanker towns. So far there is no polytechnique college
for imparting necessary skills in the technical area, and no
medical college has been established to take care of health
needs of the tribes in Bastar for educating the tribes in
Bastar about prevention and cure of diseases.

✓It has been pointed out that the educational policy
had aimed for the extension of the percentage of literacy and
and necessary skills so that a well educated and aware tribal
society may emerge in future. It is expected that peoples par-
ticipation will come forth from such educated society and there-
by it would be easier to implement various developmental and
welfare schemes. Apart from this education would, it was
hoped, contribute to the prevention of exploitation by out-
siders by making the tribal people conscious of their rights.

Analysing the shortcomings in the implementation of
the policy, it has also been pointed out that there is a
considerable quantitative expansion of school education all
the three levels, but the tribal children of Bastar are unable
to take advantage of these opportunities. The higher rate of
dropouts at the primary stage itself indicates that higher
education in Bastar is restricted to a very small section of
the population. This fact must be stressed in addition to the
lack of adequate facilities for quality education because even

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19    Ibid.

existing facilities do not cater to the bulk of tribal population. In a subsistence economy, children are regarded as an economic asset and only a development of the economic viability of the family would make their education meaningful.

Efforts at economic development of the tribal area have taken the capitalist path, with its inherent uneven impact on different sections. It benefits those strategically placed _vis-a-vis_ the politico-economic structure and least privileged are for every left ignorant and exploited. Education modernization has similarly taken the capitalist path which is bound to fulfil the aspirations of the few at the expense of many. It is two-edged weapon and its utilisation depends on overall system under which it functions. It seems from limited data available that it has not served the interests of the many by raising their level of awareness, instead it has served the interest of the few by increasing their overall domination.

CONCLUSION

# CONCLUSION

As I have discussed in Chapter I, modernization covers a large number of heterogenous trends: organization of societies at the national level, industrialization, commercialization, increasing participation and mobilization of population at large, secularization and rationalization of political culture and life ways etc. The process of modernization is inextricably bound up with the type of society where it takes place. There is nothing like modernization per se, but modernization takes place either on capitalist line or on socialist line depending on the kind of societal organization. The process of capitalist modernization by its very nature, has an uneven impact on the various classes, sectors, regions, groupings in society. Those, that were more strategically placed vis-a-vis the colonial economy, were modernized first and were thus in a position to dominate and exploit others. It has been posited in this dissertation that modernization in India has been taking place on capitalist line, with all its concommitants and consequences. It has been further asserted that the same type of modernization has been taking place in tribal communities all over India, and in this process the disadvantaged tribal communities were placed at the mercy of the more modernized and advantaged classes. The tribes in Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh had been selected to analyse the implications of modernization on capitalist line.

With the limited data available, the major trend of modernization have been outlined with this perspective, so that a more constructive and creative approach to both its

study and its planning can be evolved. More intensive work
carried out in Bastar itself would hopefully support the
above contention, which admittedly is tentative, based as it
is on only secondary material and that too sporadically
collected.

Modernization in Bastar started during British time,
with the advent and the expansion of the colonial economic,
political and administrative framework. It has been shown
that the British adopted a policy of enforced isolation
under the garb of tribal protection. In practice the British
policy could not prevent other people from taking advantage of
the simple and innocent tribal folk. The privileged sections
continued to be active in tribal areas despite the British
pretension of safeguarding the tribal interests. The founda-
tion of the capitalist path of modernization was thus laid by
the British and it has continued to dominate efforts for
'tribal welfare' even afterwards.

The attainment of independence marked a conscious
shift from the British policy. The nationalist leaders now
were anxious to integrate the tribal society into the main-
stream of Indian life fromwhere they had been kept away all
along by the British masters for reasons suited to their
colonial design. In retrospect, it seems that new policies
were formulated in a mood of enthusiasm for the welfare of the
tribal people. They were idealistic and ignored the real
character of colonial development. Consequently, in practice,

the new policy had the same effect on the tribal people of
Bastar as those pursued by the British. Lack of understanding
and anticipation of practical consequences was due to a lack
of understanding of the history of tribal domination and ex-
ploitation.

(The tribes all over India were exposed to directed
change through the operation of Tribal Development Blocks
and other welfare activities. But they have not benefited
much from this endeavour. The reason of failure of the welfare
schemes was their incompatibility with the indigenous
economic structure that has become established. Therefore,
arbitrary implementation of the development programmes which
are unsuited to the local conditions and felt needs is bound
to meet with failure. This has been the fate of all the
schemes launched by the government in economic, political and
educational spheres. Efforts for the economic modernization
have not yielded professed results because of defining the aims
of tribal upliftment, all round prosperity and equal oppor-
tunities for development as not distinct from those for other
communities. Actually it has resulted in the concentration of
economic resources in the hands of the few, already privileged
sections. These sections have prospered and modernized at the
expense of the stagnation and continued backwardness of the
vast majority.

The same people have continued to monopolize the poli-
tical power and decision-making, to further their position

among Bastar tribes. The political participation of mass of people is confined to voting at the time of election and they have not yet been able to produce an indigenous leadership, which can look after their interest and can articulate their needs. Such a leadership may gradually emerge with the spread of education, facilitated by the provision of reservation of seats and scholarship in educational institutions established by the government.

The process of modernization of the tribals through education has made some headway in Bastar as more children are being drawn into primary schools and a continuation of this process would hold hope for producing a conscious tribal community in the future. Perhaps this would result in the devolution of economic resources and political power from the few to the many. Alternately spread of even limited educational facilities may result in at least consciousness among the underprivileged that what is promised them from the house-top is actually cornered by other groups. With this consciousness tensions increased which can logically be resolved either by giving these underprivileged groups a better share or clamping more repressive cultural and political arrangement saying good bye to formal egalitarian ideologies.

The professed aims are to establish a prosperous and equitable social order guaranteeing human rights and equal opportunities for the hitherto ignorant and consequently exploited tribal folk. These objectives, set by the planners

after independence are laudable, but they have fallen far short
of expectations in their implementation. It has been emphasized
that the tribal problem is a problem which raises the funda-
mental issue viz. the issue of the established social order
founded on elimination of exploitation. The very pressure of
the exploitative, competitive profit oriented forces of pre-
vailing system have been reducing the tribals into objects
of exploitation. These forces were active in British time
and they have continued to impinge the tribes of Bastar even
after Independence.

The plans formulated for tribals welfare did not take
into consideration the politico-economic system entrenched
among Bastar tribes. Independent India inherited the same
system and the tribal problem from the British colonial rule
and has not been able to tackle the latter because of the
inability to understand the former. Like the British, adminis-
trators and social anthropologists, Indian government, adminis-
trators and the most of social anthropologists have focussed
on superficial issues. They discuss how to maintain tribal
cultural identity, preserving their indigenous customs and
practices while bringing them into the mainstream of Indian
life. So far, this is what has been labeled the tribal
"problem". No attention was ever focussed on the systematic
politico-economic system being imposed on the tribes during
colonial rule and its continuance after Independence. These
problems fundamentally are not whether they should be permitted

to practise the habits and customs or be allowed to perpetuate
their tribal culture including colourful dances and leaf
dresses.  All those aspects of their life were organically
bound up with their tribal mode of subsistence, which has
been systematically eroded by powerful vested interests. The
politico-economic system caters to the needs of these domi-
nant sections and leaves the vast bulk of the tribal population
in the same miserable condition they were in during British
colonial period.

The fundamental problems of the Bastar tribes are
and have always been security of job, decent standard of living
easy accessibility to resources of civilized life and acqui-
sition of education.  The plans for tribal welfare have touched
only the fringe of their fundamental problems. Further progress
depends on a proper understanding of the politico-economic
dimensions of the problem in the historical context.  Through-
out the dissertation this dimension has been stressed because
it provides the explanation for the shortcomings and loopholes
in formulation and implementation of plans for the modernization
of Bastar tribes.  It has been maintained these problems,
shortcomings and loopholes in planning and implementation are
inherent in the system itself.  With the departure of the
British rule, the path of modernization that the rulers of
Independent India have embarked upon is the same capitalist one
with egalitarian ideological professions.  The tribal situation
in Bastar brings out the basic issues of contradiction between

what is professed and what is done, between ideals and reality.
Under the mask of democratic polity, adult franchise, parti-
cipatory institutions and egalitarian education professions an
attempt is being made to hide the continuity of the system of
exploitation and domination of the people by the few privileged
people.

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