

**SOCIOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS INTO INDIAN TRIBAL
MOVEMENTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO UDAYACHAL
MOVEMENT IN THE BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY OF ASSAM**

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DECLARATION

Certified that the dissertation entitled "Sociological Explorations into Indian Tribal Movements with Special Reference to Udayachal Movement in the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam" submitted by Shri Madan C. Paul 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. This dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this or any other University and is his own work.

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


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M. C. Paul

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The 'Tribals' in India display a distinct cultural and demographic position. Despite their comparative insulation they have maintained a unique place in the Indian history and civilization. They are ecologically more or less isolated, demographically concentrated in certain contiguous geographical regions, economically wedded to land and forests, culturally enjoying a distinct style of life, characterised by distinct language and heritage, forms of religion, love for freedom, and respect for self-identity.

Though historically their self-awareness may be of limited range and depth, there are numerous instances of their participation in the socio-cultural life of the country as a whole. For the last two centuries the tribals have been undergoing a variety of socio-economic transformations and a large number of which were initiated by the penetration of colonial rulers. The rulers introduced a new commercial economy characterized by commercialisation of land and forests, marketing of agricultural surplus, etc. These in turn, produced unprecedented contradictions in the tribal society which was based earlier on relatively undifferentiated economic relations and collective mode of production and consumption. The penetration of colonial rulers had diverse purposes and motives to exploit the socio-economic resources of the native economy and this produced a qualitative transformations in the form of tensions

and conflicts in the said society. In other words, the colonial intervention resulted in the gradual encroachment upon their lives and property. On numerous occasions, there were series of riots, revolts, uprisings, etc. against colonial rulers and their exploitative socio-economic production relations.

Almost in all the pockets of India, tribals were surging with 'resistance' of this sort against the deprivation of their lands and forests. Surface-observation of this phenomena may lead us to categorise them as 'events' or 'episodes' and not as 'movements'. But these 'events' of resistance by the tribal people were centred around issues affecting their existence itself. Resistance is a core-characteristic of a social 'movement'.¹ Viewed from a particular period of time and space it may not look a 'movement' in the proper sense of the term but these 'events' were surely phases of a 'movement' where several persons in hundreds to and thousands rose against the exploitative forces. Over a period of time during the colonial era such movements might have taken different forms, dimensions and magnitudes. But these were surely sustained attempts on their part to oppose the exploitative system. Such attempts have continued even after independence and have not ceased.

We wish to note at this stage that the objective factors

1 K. S. Singh, "Colonial Transformation of Tribal Society in Middle India", Economic and Political Weekly, July 29, 1978, p. 1229; see also M.S.A. Rao, Social Movements and Social Transformations, 1979, p. 16.

or the contradictions within the socio-economic system provided a necessary impetus to bring forth 'movements' of varied nature. However, the subjective factors like consciousness, ideology, contributed to acceleration and maturation of the 'movements'. As Marx put it, it is the awareness of the contradictions in the material condition of life which provide the sufficient reason and impetus to 'fight it out'.

(The transformations brought out by the colonial system, thus, caused deprivation, frustration and deep-seated resentment amongst the tribal masses. This irretrievable discontentment and deprivation generated an emotional state of mind wherein the tribals were compelled to move for a better alternative of equitable social order free from exploitation and injustice.)
The glaring examples that of 'Udayachal³ movement' in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam. It is a product of the socio-economic crisis introduced long back by the colonial rulers.

We find that the tribals reacted fiercely when their economic interests got affected, religious beliefs scoffed at and their freedom attacked. They got infuriated when their traditional customs and manners, civic rights were curtailed, their judicial system and tribal codes were ignored. During

2 Karl Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, 1970, p. 20.

3 Udayachal means land of dawn: Uday-dawn, achal-land.

the independence movement: in India the tribals did participate with other non-tribal people in their common goal of driving out the Britishers from India. But, by keeping the salient features of the colonial socio-economic system, the post-independence rulers under the garb of 'welfare economy' accentuated deprivations and inequalities among the tribals. It is this system which produces at present, lot of contradictions that make the tribals prone to 'movements' of various types and dimensions.

The chapterisation of this dissertation is as follows: Chapter II is intended to clarify certain concepts employed in the study of social movements. We have also discussed analytically three important theories of social movements: structural functional theory,⁵ Revitalistic theory,⁶ and the relative deprivation theory in terms of social conflict.⁷ Chapter III is intended to conceptualize and classify the various tribal movements and fundamental causes of eruptions in various pockets of India during the colonial and post-colonial periods.

The next chapter (IV) has tried to observe the trans-

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- 4 Hamza Alavi, "Imperialism: Old and New", *The Socialist Register*, 1964, p. 11.
- 5 N. J. Smelser, Theory of Collective Behaviour, 1967; see Talcott Parsons, The Social System, 1951.
- 6 A.F.C. Wallace, "Revitalisation Theory", in American Anthropologist, no. 58, 1956.
- 7 Karl Marx, A Contribution..., op.cit., pp. 1-232.

formations of the self-sufficient simple tribal social system of the Assam valley into a more complex social system based on exploitative socio-economic relations. The contradictions brought once by the latter could not be resolved by the post-colonial rulers but have rather accentuated and matured into inequalities, deprivations and discriminations. These have been analysed in the case of the 'Udayachal Movement' in Assam which is a product of the legacy of the contradictions of the colonial socio-economic system. We have analysed the social bases of conflict and tensions within the existing set up with the help of the relative deprivation theory. This means that we have drawn upon the theory of 'conflict' rather than trying to bring in the entire theory of Marxian dialectism. However, this chapter is only exploratory and attempts to make use of whatever meagre data on the Udayachal movement is available.

Finally, the last chapter has analysed the present state of the 'Udayachal movement'. It has also peeped into the viability of its activation in course of time and its further implications for the socio-political atmosphere in the tribal society.

Chapter II

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AS AN AREA OF STUDY

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Content of the Chapter

There is a considerable body of theoretical literature on the sociology of social movements, but this area is still in the formative stage. A body of concepts which developed so far has been briefly discussed in this chapter. This may enable us to interpret the genesis of a social movement, its development and evolution, the development of its normative focus and ideology, internal dynamics and the social consequences. But the logical nature of this phenomenon needs to be identified clearly and sharply so as to facilitate further thinking in this area. It is our endeavour in this chapter, to discuss the various theoretical framework of interpretation and explanation in the study of social movements.

The next chapter will deal more specifically with various social movements which have occurred in the course of historical times in various pockets of India.

Social movements, regarded as epiphenomena,¹ is a byproduct of social and political developments. This epiphenomena has been there down through the ages as a symptom of discontent with the existing social order. Social movements have been defined in various ways with emphasis on different aspects or

1 Barry McLaughlin, ed., Studies in Social Movement. New York, 1969, p. 1; see also Paul Wilkinson, Social Movement, 1971, p. 52.

2 7

facets of it. The term 'Social Movement' is widely used but yet one of the least precise and apprehended in social science literature. But Cameron's definition is perhaps more acceptable, that "a social movement occurs when a fairly large number of people are bound together in order to alter or supplant some position of existing culture or social order or

2 Some definitions of social movements:-

- a. Herbert Blumer defines social movements as "collective enterprise to establish a new order of life." From New Outline of the Principles of Sociology. Barnestand Noble, New York, 1951, p. 1.
- b. C. W. King stressed geographic scope and persistence through time in defining a social movement as "a group venture extending beyond a local community or a single event and involving a systematic effort to inaugurate changes in thought, behaviour and social relationships." Social Movements in United States, New York, 1956, p. 27. He treats social movements in the context of social change.
- c. Lewis Turner and L. M. Killian defined social movement as "a collectivity which acts with some continuity to promote or resist a change in the society or group of which it is a part. He noted the conservative nature of some social movements also." Collective Behaviour, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall, N.J., 1957, p. 308.
- d. Hans Toch, who placed more emphasis on the psychological aspect of social movement. He defined movement as "an effort by a large number of people involve collectively in a problem they feel they have in common." The Psychology of Social Movements. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965, p. 5.
- e. T. K. Oommen has given some working concept for the analysis of social movements. These are: a movement is a conscious effort on the part of a group to mitigate their deprivation and secure justice; a movement is conditioned by the factors in the social structure; a movement is perhaps the chief mechanism through which the deprived section demonstrates its power united by an ideology to redress the evils or grievances. T. K. Oommen, "Sociological issues in the analysis.....", op. cit., p. 15.

to redistribute the power of control within a society." ³

Generally, the difficulties which arise with the definitions of social movement are in maintaining the ambiguity of the term involved. It first weaned away from its numerous connotative meanings, given a more precise conceptual denotation, which in turn should stand the test of adequacy in relation to analysis and interpretation of the social reality like social movement. For instance, here with Cameron's definition such as 'fairly large number of people' which is very ambiguous, could not provide us any sort of specificity. How could we define 'a fairly large number of people'? A fairly large number of people cannot always lead to a movement, e.g. panic, hostile crowd, or outburst which are also a large number of people, relatively short-lived and unorganised with no affiliation to ideology. Here we need to have to identify means and ends, scope and content. ⁴ Secondly, the difficulty is with the term 'to alter or supplant some position of existing culture or social order.' This is again very much ambiguous and he has not specifically defined which part of the social order the social movement is intended to change or supplant or which aspect of human social life should be the 'target' on which the movement operates and in turn plays, as

3 W. B. Cameron, Modern Social Movements. New York, 1967, pp. 7-8.

4 P. N. Mukherjee, "Social movements and social change: towards....", op. cit., 1977, p. 39.

an 'agent'⁵ of change (though it is not the only agent of change). The latter function of social movement demands mass mobilisation, which is an essential ingredient of social movement. Mobilisation generally refers to situations where an affected group is brought into action. But all collective mobilisation for action may not lead to a movement.⁶ So, here we cannot generalise that a collective mobilisation will qualify to be conceptualised as social movement. So the term social movement denotes that the members of the movement must have common norm, an ideology, which bind them together for a collective action or they identify themselves with it. Of course the motivation for social movement may range from rational belief in movements' aim (value-rational orientation) to pure opportunism. It is also noted that social movements of historical significance have specific goals and attract more groups of persons and it aims at comprehensive and fundamental changes in the social order.⁷

Movements can be of various types: protest movement, reform movement, revitalistic movement, nativistic, revolutionary and so forth. Yet whatever may be its nature, a social movement usually includes among its salient features a shared value system, a sense of community, norm for social action, and

5 T. K. Oommen, Charisma, Stability and Change, 1972, pp. 13-14.

6 P. N. Mukherjee, op. cit., 1977, p. 39.

7 Rudolf Heberle, "Social Movements", International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, vol. 14, 1968, p. 439.

an organisational structure.

Social Movements and Political Party

The essential characteristic of social movements is that they are oriented to a certain definite goal or objectives to achieve. A social movement is essentially a phenomenon of mass mobilisation on any specific issues or problems concerning social life and may disintegrate on the accomplishments of such specific objectives. On the other hand, a political party does not concern with any specific goals. It aims to carry on its functioning according to certain principles.⁸ Social movements must develop sooner or later a comprehensive ideology, and theory which should be convincing to the participants of the movement. It is this ideology ('a complex of ideas' as Mannheim put it)⁹ that gives directionality to change by specifying the proximate and ultimate goals and it becomes the basis of cohesion and solidarity. This usually involves the following: 1. the goals or ends of the movement; 2. the ways and means by which the goal has to be attained; 3. the reasons for the endeavour of the movement, i.e., the justification of the movement on its social philosophy. When a movement accomplishes its goal, it dies off, but the party stays on. The movement is only a part, a component of political party in such situations.

8 According to Max Weber, Party is for capturing power and once in power to stay in power, see "Class, Status and Party", in Parsons and Shils, eds., Theories of Society, New York, 1965, p. 15

9 Karl Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, New York, 1936.

On the other hand, certain movements gradually turn into political parties. It may reject the political party also.¹⁰ This occurs when the issues on which they agitated are accomplished or turn obsolete and the organisation of the movement takes on the task of achieving like a political party. Historically, political parties are of recent development and movements are older in history. All social movements have political implications even if their members do not strive for political power.¹¹ To sum up, we find four basic types of relationship between political parties and social movements.¹² These are: 1. A party may be part of a broader social movement, or serve as a mouthpiece of the movement;

2. The Party may be independent of any particular social movement;

3. The same social movement may be represented or exert influence in several political parties; and

4. Finally, a social movement may reject on principle the affiliation with any political party.

Social movements have been studied through various theoretical orientations. We shall now discuss here three main

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

11 Paul Wilkinson, op. cit., 1971, p. 52; see also: Rudolf Heberle, op. cit., 'International Encyclopedia...', No. 14, p. 439.

12 Rudolf Heberle, op. cit., 1951, pp. 279-80.

theories which try to explain the structural conditions and motivational forces which give rise to movement. These are:

1. Strain theory - by Smelser, Robert K. Merton
2. Revitalisation theory - by Wallace; and
3. Relative deprivation theory - Karl Marx, Ted Gurr.

1. Strain Theory

The Strain theory which views social movements in relation to social change, and is propounded by Neil Smelser, treats structural strain as the underlying factor leading to collective behaviour (he condensed the two terms 'Collective Outburst' and 'Collective Movements' into 'Collective Behaviour'). Structural strain occurs at different levels of norms, values, mobilisations of motivations, and structural conditions. The crystallisation of a generalised belief marks the attempt of persons under strain to assess their situation, and to explain the situation by creating or assembling a generalised belief. Both strain and generalised belief require precipitating factor to trigger off a movement.

Smelser's analysis of the genesis of social movement is in the structural-functional framework. He defines strain as the impairment of relations among parts of a system, and includes deprivation under strain, e.g., the emergence of specialised and autonomous units, elaboration of division of labour and intensification of role specialisation may release considerable stresses and strains in the system rendering one or another social category deprived which in turn may inspire movements. But here the movements are viewed as essentially transient anomalies or pathological. In this tradition,

the movements are viewed as necessary accomplishments of the tension released by structural differentiation and movement manipulation as a tension-management mechanism by specialised role incumbents. Since differentiation renders existing norms and roles obsolete it is necessary to develop new mechanisms of reintegration, which follows a three phase model. Due to dissatisfaction men no longer perform role adequately, this is followed by protests from the deprived who organise movements and finally new mechanisms of regulation and coordination such as unions, associations, and welfare agencies are created to mobilise resources and commitments. Inevitably a more flexible and specialised system emerges. Thus, here, in this theory, the movements are viewed essentially^{as} an adaptive mechanisms in a period of rapid social change. With adaptation change is institutionalised to bring functional equilibrium.

There are some basic flaws of this approach. It does not specify the sources of deprivation; it treats every movement as disfunctional, anomic and disintegrative phenomena, obstruct the path of smooth development of society; it considers human beings as mere creatures of social determinism sapping them of their creative vitality; its unit of analysis is not appropriate for analysing movements; its framework is more attuned to the maintenance of the social structure rather than to change it; and it is an ahistorical approach.

For Talcott Parsons, the architect of Functionalism, a social system is a system of action. It is made up of interactions of individuals. They are not chaotic but governed by the

norms which have a common standard which Parsons calls "standard of value orientation."¹³ There is a general consensus in relation to social norms and this consensus comes to be equated with social equilibrium.¹⁴

Functionalist reacts to the problem of change "endogenous change is seen as a variance from the dominant pattern which tends to resolve itself through institutionalization"¹⁵ and "social systems adjust gradually to change from outside",¹⁶ i.e. exogenous sources of change. Structural-functionalism professes to go beyond the limits of pure organic functionalism, and as a matter of fact dynamics are inbuilt into it. That is its cornerstone.¹⁷

In fact functionalism treats social change as a departure from normalcy. Change is seen here, therefore, as a departure from stability. The stability of social system depends on the consensual absorption of value patterns, and instability depends on the variation from this pattern. Therefore, change is dependent to the degree the value patterns are not inter-

13 Kingsley Davis, Human Society, 1949, pp. 52-63.

14 I. L. Horowitz, "Consensus, Conflict and Cooperation" in Demerath and Peterson, eds., System, Change and Conflict, New York, 1968, p. 256; see also T. Parsons, The Social System, Free Press, 1951, p. 507. The same view is expressed more categorically by T. Parsons in "Point of View of the Author" in Sociological Theory by T. Parsons, Max Black (eds.).

15 Pierre L. Van den Bughe, "Dialectics and Functionalism", in American Sociological Review, October 1963, p. 698.

16 Ibid., p. 699.

17 Ibid., p. 699.

nalised. In the process of change the fissiparous tendencies which come into being tend to be institutionalised in the course of time.¹⁸ In the functional or strain theory, change is seen as marginal to the system maintaining structure, and mechanism is posited by the functionalists which systematically make for deviance and change.

Smelser's is a value-added approach which goes on defining different forms of collective behaviour and encompasses within its scope ^{the} concepts, such as, craze, panic. Value-added is an arrangement where many determinants, or necessary conditions, make collective behaviour (collective movements) to occur. The determinants must combine in a definite pattern. These are: Structural conduciveness; Structural strain; Growth and spread of generalised belief; precipitating factors; mobilisation of participants for action; and operation of social control. All these determinants, to him, are the necessary conditions which constitute the sufficient condition for collective movement. Thus, there is a definite sequence for activation of determinants. He says: "According to the logic of the value-added approach, any event or situation, in order to become a determinant of collective episode, must operate within the limits established by other determinants...." In its simplest form, this approach involves the claim that there exist empirical uniformities of sequence in the unfold-

ing of an episode of collective behaviour.... The value-added logic implies a temporal sequence of activation of determinants, but any or all of these determinants, may have existed for an indefinite period before activation."¹⁹ The sequence of value-added approach is something like this.²⁰

Structural conduciveness of the system - Strain--
Anxiety - precipitating factors - Hysteria - Mobilisation.
(The major determinants of value-added process are structural conduciveness, strain, crystallisation of generalised belief, precipitating factors, mobilisation for action, and social control.)²¹ According to Smelser each determinant is^a necessary condition for the next to operate as a determinant in an episode of collective behaviour. As the necessary conditions accumulate, the explanation of the episode becomes more determinate. Together the necessary conditions constitute the sufficient condition for the episode.

In the course of mobilisation there is first craze,²² then panic, then hostile outburst. These find open expression²³ in the development of a norm-oriented movement and on a higher level value-oriented movement.²⁴

19 Neil Smelser, Theory of Collective Behaviour, 1967, pp. 18-19.

20 Ibid., p. 134.

21 Ibid., pp. 382-4.

22 Ibid., p. 270.

23 Ibid., p. 271.

24 Ibid., pp. 313-16.

The value-added approach, as propounded by Smelser, is more in the realm of pure methodology than theory. Our problem is with the generality of his concepts such as structural conduciveness, precipitating factor, etc.

Smelser's theory does give us the sequence of mobilisation. ~~but~~ does not provide us ~~with~~ the exact social determinants of collective behaviour (in our case social mobilisation) rather than on a very general level. His theory of collective behaviour ultimately ends up in being an empirical generalisation.

2. Revitalisation Theory

Wallace is one of the champions of organismic analogical approach, posited that revitalisation movements develop out of a "deliberate, organised and conscious effort on the part of members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture." His analogy is, in fact, an integral part of the concept of revitalisation. Society is regarded, here, as a definite kind of organism, and its culture consists of patterns of learned behaviour which certain "parts" of the system characteristically display. Therefore, to him, revitalisation is thus, from a cultural standpoint, a special kind of culture change phenomenon. He said, the persons involved in the process of revitalisation must perceive their culture, or some major areas of it, as a system (whether accurately or not); they must feel that this cultural system is unsatisfactory; and they must innovate not

merely discrete items, but a new cultural system, specifying new relationships as well as, in some areas, new traits. The classic processes of cultural change, he said, are evolution, drift, diffusion, historical change, acculturation, all produce changes in culture as system. Of course, he said, this change does not depend on deliberate intent by members of a society, but rather on gradual chain-reaction ad infinitum.

Thus the main focus of this theory is on the cultural aspect of the social structure. It mainly deals with the dynamics of revitalisation process and the transformation occurs in it. He tried to synthesise various types of revitalisation movements into one category, i.e., revitalisation movement. It denotes a very class of phenomena. It includes nativistic movement, revivalistic movement, cargo cults movements, vitalistic movement, Millenarian movement, messianic movement. Stephen Fuch's elaborately discussed this type of revitalisation movements in Indian society among the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and the other backward classes. He said in northern India today the tribals form a negligible minority, messianic movements are active among the Mohammedan and Sikh converts from the lower castes of Hinduism. In Western India also (Maharashtra, Gujarat) we find this movement among the primitive Naikdas and Warlis, the low-caste Kolis, and some stray muslim groups under the influence of

Mohammedan conceptions while the insurrection headed by Wasudeo Balwant Phadke is of unique and extraordinary type. A number of Hindu reform movements taken place among the Bhils of Madhya Pradesh. In South India also the Pulayas and Parayas in Kerala and the Madigas in Andhra Pradesh brought to surface this type of movements. This movement is usually conceived in a prophet's revelatory visions, which provide for him a satisfying relationship ^{with} the supernatural and outline a new way of life under divine sanction.

He tried to show that under two conditions only the revitalisation movement as a general type can occur: (1) when there is a high stress on individual members of society; and (2) when people are disillusioned with the distorted cultural gestalt.

Wallace analysed the dynamics of revitalisation movements in four phases:

1. Period of cultural stability;
2. Period of increased individual stress;
3. Period of cultural distortion; and subsequent disillusionment; and
4. Period of revitalisation.

This approach of Wallace places emphasis not only on the sociological dimension of the problem such as social mobilisation, social bases, and goal of the movement, but on the innovation of new cultural elements and social change and

preserve its own integrity by maintaining a minimum fluctuation of its matrix. The theory, however, emphasises, [✓] the corollary principles of stress and homeostasis, i.e., on the adaptive process which is employed to establish equilibrium situation. This point is much more similar to Smelser's theory which also tries to maintain the stability of the social system. Although social movement develops a positive programme of action, they tend to be double-edged. On the one hand, they express dissatisfaction, dissent and protest against the existing conditions, and on the other, they offer positive programme of action to remedy the dissatisfactory situation.

The question here is how the organismic model of Wallace acts? According to him, it works "by means of coordinated actions by all or some of its parts to preserve its own integrity by maintaining a minimally fluctuating life-supporting matrix for its individual members, and will, under stress, take emergency measures to preserve the constancy of this matrix."²⁸ He defined stress as a condition in which some part, or the whole, of social organism (system) is threatened with more or less serious damage. He sees society as an organic system which is constantly exposed to stress induced in it from outside, unlike Marx who said otherwise. The sub-system provides sufficient mechanism to the total system to handle the stress. This type of movement is basically organised essentially on religious aspects to construct a more satisfying culture, which may take

the form of revolutionary, millenarian, or nativistic forms of movement to establish some satisfying order in the society.²⁹ McLaughline says that the revitalisation movement is oriented "more towards revolutionary than the reform end of the continuum."³⁰ Whereas Rao says it is a sort of reform movement.³¹

Wallace's formulation of theory of revitalisation suffers from some flaws: he did not clarify how stress on one part of cultural system can affect the other; his framework is more attuned to the maintenance of structural continuity, i.e., the matrix of the cultural structure than to change it; he least considers the perception of an intolerable gap in culture which may be the product of decline in the rate of socio-economic development and in the level of need satisfaction; this approach deals basically with culture rather than the socio-economic deprivation; his "type formulations" are capable of serving a limited and preliminary purpose for the study of social movements with specific category.

3. Relative Deprivation Theory

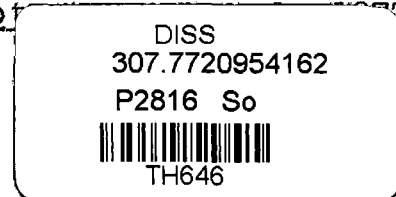
There have been two distinct trends in the development of the concept of relative deprivation. Relative deprivation is perceived by a group of people in respect of their economic, political, educational and ethnic positions, acts as the bedrock

29 Ted Robert, Gurr, Why Men Rebel?, 1970, p. 314.

30 G. Bhardwaj, "Socio-Political Movements Among the Tribes of India", in S. C. Dubey, ed., Tribal Heritage in India, vol. I, 1977, pp. 143-4.

31 M.S.A. Rao, "Themes in the Ideology of Protest Movement", in S. C. Malik, ed., Dissent, Pro, p. 63.

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of movements. The relative deprivation theory has been developed on two different lines:

- i. Theory of relative deprivation in relation to social structure and social mobility; and
- ii. Relative deprivation in relation to social conflict, i.e. the dialectical approach of Marx and Engel.

The former line of development, i.e., the relative deprivation in relation to social structure by Merton and Runciman. Merton systematically developed this concept of relative deprivation to analyse the social mobility in relation to reference group model. Of course the word 'relative deprivation' first used by Samuel A. Stouffer in his book American Soldier in 1949. Merton says that the relative deprivation is a special concept in reference group theory. ³² The function of the concept of relative deprivation (as with other concepts of reference groups) is precisely that of helping to account for observed definitions of a situation. He attempted to show how this concept of relative deprivation can be incorporated in a more general, though still primitive, theory of reference group behaviour. ³³ Reference group theory, of course, assumes that individuals comparing their own lot with that of others have some knowledge of the situation in which others find themselves. Later on, Runciman following Merton, further developed the concept of relative deprivation in relation to reference group behaviour and problems of inequalities and

32 R. K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, 1968, p. 289.

33 Ibid., p. 304.

social justice. In their approach relative deprivation is made the basis of a study of social mobility as occurring through emulation and positive reference group behaviour. He used this concept widely in sociological research.

As against this approach Karl Marx and Engels developed the concept of relative deprivation with emphasis on the element of conflict and social change and it gained importance in the study of social movements since 40's.³⁴

Marx and Engels recognised that dissatisfaction with the status quo was not determined by absolute social condition but by the relative expectations. Dissatisfactions, here are due to the unequal distribution of wealth, property and other means of existence. This gives rise to ideology of movements which is double-edged: (i) Expressing the feeling of dissatisfaction and protest with the existing situation (with deprivation); and (ii) finding out a positive action programme for ultimate redressal. We have discussed in the next chapter how socio-economic deprivation can provide a sufficient ground to surface various types of movement in India.

To Marx the basis of society is the mode of production and the relations of production into which men enter, and the history i.e., the material history, is founded on the different stages of development of the modes and relationships of production. Movement is the vehicle through which new social

34 M.S.A.Rao in S. C. Malik, ed., op. cit., 1977, p. 58.

relationships eventually emerge. So what needs to be understood is the dialectic process of history and dynamics of social change. Marx writes: "In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relation of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of society - the real foundation on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life."³⁵

Thus, Marx's basic propositions constitute a grand theory of socio-economic development. The motor and regulator of social change is the character of material production. The conditions of man's material existence determine his social relations, they determine his consciousness, and they create and regulate the development of classes and the pattern of social conflict, i.e., the conflict between the free men and slaves, barons and serfs, dominated and dominating, in short, oppressors and the oppressed; have carried an unceasing struggle, at times secret, at times open, at various levels of historical development and it assumed "different forms at different epochs" of

history. He writes: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of development the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or, this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms, with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto...."³⁶ He also says in his Communist Manifesto "... man's ideas, views and conceptions, in a word man's consciousness, change with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations, and in his social life...."³⁷

The awareness of degraded position in the society with a long period of rising expectations, accompanied by the deprivation of socio-economic needs geared the suffering lot, i.e., the oppressed to movements of various types throughout the historical periods. He writes: "all previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious independent movement of intense and immense majority, in the interest of the immense of majority."³⁸ This will be the historical movement, a class struggle, which will bring a revolutionary transformation of the whole society and will usher a new

36 Karl Marx, A Contribution..., op. cit., 1970, p. 20.

37 Marx and Engels, Communist Manifesto, p.72 ; see also Marx & Engels, Selected Works in Two Volumes, Moscow, 1950, p. 49.

38 Marx and Engels, Selected Works, op. cit., 1950, p. 42.

classless society and a society without exploitation.

Thus, Marx treats social movements as a process of natural history which is always dialectical in nature, governed by laws not only independent of human will, consciousness and intelligence but rather on the contrary determining that will, consciousness and intelligence. So to him "the material phenomenon alone can serve as a starting point,"³⁹ as "every historical period has its own laws." His attempt was to categorise every movement in terms of social conditions prevalent at the movement's inception. As to him, movement reflects the real historical development.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society and traditional communities has established new classes, new conditions of oppressions (new forces of production and production relations). This engenders profound dissatisfaction among the suffering masses with relative economic deprivation. This breeds antagonism between the oppressors and the oppressed, i.e., the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Marx's whole canon is, thus, an attempt to show the antagonistic character in the social system which is inseparable from the fundamental structure of the capitalistic system and is, at the same time, the mechanism of the historical movement, i.e., the class struggle. According to Marx this "antagonism ... emanates from the individual's social existence."⁴⁰

39 Ibid., pp. 412-13.

40 Marx and Engels, Critique to Political Economy..., op. cit., p. 20.

But how can we solve this antagonism which has come out from the social conditions, full of deprivation and injustice? He says "the productive forces developing in the womb of bourgeoisie society create also the material condition for a solution to the antagonism."⁴¹ So it is the contradiction between the forces and the relations of production. The class antagonism sharpens with the development of the forces of production in the capitalist system which produces more and more but in spite of this increase in wealth, poverty remains the life partner of the immense majority. The oppressed class is relatively being deprived of the materials produced. This contradiction will eventually produce a revolutionary crisis to bring a final break with the course of all previous history. What is the indication of this final stage? He says, no final order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is a room in it have been developed; and the new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society.⁴²

From the above analysis we can identify three important points:

- (i) Marx regards the basis of society is the mode of production and the relations of production;
- (ii) he regards social consciousness as manifestations of the existing modes of production; and

41 Ibid., p. 21.

42 Ibid., p. 21.

- (iii) at a certain stage of development, the productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production.

I feel this is the crucial point of the Marxian approach. It is not the mere existence of deprivation but the awareness or consciousness of the "contradictions in the material life" which provide sufficient reason and impetus to "fight it out" and here the movement plays a crucial role to bring a fundamental change in the existing social order. This point of Marx provides us a starting point of our inquiry of a social phenomena like social movement. Marx is rightly known as the prophet of revolution and social change.

According to a other author, Marx's proposition is a critical one implying that the prevailing relations between consciousness and social existence is a false one, that must be overcome before the true relation comes to light. The truth of materialistic thesis is to be fulfilled through negations. ⁴³

The Marxian dialectical approach, as we have seen, tries to discover the various potential forms of human social life, as he seeks to locate change in society, identify the various variables, and provides us with directions to look for the incongruity of the social system and the mechanisms to remove the incongruity. As conservative advocate of social reform like Lorenz Von Stein also says that Marxism in fact give expressions and direction towards a new social order which abolish economic

exploitation and give chance to achieve full personality development.⁴⁴ Eduard Spranger also says "that certain theories are justifiable and understandable not because they truthfully describe objective facts and bring them into logical relations, but because they create a higher will to life and victory. For instance, Marxism is a militant doctrine,... political theories as well as constructions in the philosophy of history are often rooted more in the will to live."⁴⁵

Marx critically investigates social reality and determine the social bases of probable negations. Also his linking up of idealist reality, to the existential reality, make even an inconspicuous entity such as ideology, values, beliefs, religion, in short knowledge amenable to sociological analysis and hence not unapproachable for scientific study. So social analysis should not be a mere matter of understanding the reality but it must also necessarily pave the way for rectifying such a reality.⁴⁶

In the following chapter we will see the various social movements in India and particularly the Udayachal movement of the Brahmaputra valley of Assam from the framework of relative deprivation in relation to conflicts by Marx and Engels. Let us be clear in the beginning that we are trying to explore whether it is possible to study the social movement like Udayachal

44 Rufold Heberle, 1951, op. cit., pp. 14-15.

45 Eduard Spranger, Types of Men, trans. P. W. Figors, 1928, p. 93.

46 Y. B. Damle, "Protest, dissent and social reform: A conceptual note," in S. C. Malik, ed., op. cit., 1977, p. 29.

movement through the dialectical approach provided by Marx. AS Rao lucidly put it, This theory of relative deprivation ... has a greater explanatory power as it places the perception of contradiction, conflict and protest at the centre of social movements.⁴⁷

This may be just to put more emphasis on the actual social bases of the social conflict rather than trying to explicate the entirety of the Marxian theory. This is because of the limited nature of the study itself. Our examination, therefore, at this stage is only exploratory in nature keeping in view the stages like, the bases of the social movement, the causes of the movement, and the factors strengthening the movement.

47 M.S.A. Rao, Social Movements in India, vol. II, p. xi.

Chapter III

CONCEPTUALISATION AND CLARIFICATION OF
TRIBAL MOVEMENTS

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF TRIBAL
MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

It is intended in this chapter to briefly survey a few tribal movements and the underlying causes of their eruptions in various forms and dimensions in different pockets of India. Social movements among the tribals have been widely prevalent during and since the British Rule. It can be seen that the basic forces underlying these movements are more of economic and ethnic and could be regarded as an attempt on the part of a group of people to effect change in the face of resistance.¹ In course of time these movements have become political. This political culture of the movements, we find, was a sort of strategy or a consequence² of the various forces, rather than a determining factor.

The tribals were basically engaged in agricultural or related production systems with their primitive social relations before the colonial exploitative system entered into the tribal economy. Theirs was a compact economy with tribal forms of property relationship with a simple mode of production. In other words, they were ecologically more or less isolated, demographically concentrated in certain contiguous geographical areas, economically

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- 1 David F. Aberle, The Peyote Religion Among the Navaho, 1966, p. 315.
 - 2 K. L. Sharma, "Jharkhand Movements in Bihar", Economic and Political Weekly, 10 January 1976, pp. 38-45.



wedded to land and forests, culturally enjoyed a distinct style of life characterised by distinct language heritage, love of freedom, and respect of self-identity. Two types of interests were closely entwined and had provided the required momentum to the tribal movements in India. They reacted sharply when their property relationships and their collective pattern of living had been disturbed by giving rise to a new kind of individualistic pattern of landholding. Secondly, when their religious belief was scoffed at, independence was attacked, traditional customs and manners, civic rights, judicial systems, standards of etiquette and prestige and code of conduct brushed aside, and deep rooted conventions ignored, insulted and violated.

Colonial Setting

The ultimate aim of the colonial rulers of the British India was to exploit the socio-economic resources of the region and drain them off the country to make the British Empire prosper. With this aim in view they subjugated most of India and spread their network of capitalist consolidation and expansion in every nook and corner of the country which did not even spare the tribals. The consolidation and expansion of colonial exploitative system set different forces free to exploit the economy and brought it into the orbit of 'world capitalist order'. The rulers of the Princely States and landlords were either crushed totally or coopted by the British through concessions.

3 Kathleen Gough, "Indian Peasant Uprisings", Economic and Political Weekly, Special Number, August 1974, p. 1392.

The growth of a new type of property owning system, mode of production, social formations and polity crept into the tribal economy, which were probably unknown to them previously. They were attached to peasant cultures, a new type of commercial relations and mode of productions as well, and interlinked them with the great traditions like Hinduism, Christianity. Thus, they faced the challenges of the historical processes of conflict and change. The latter has broken the compactness of the feudal tribal economy and transformed it into multi-caste or multi-community village organisation, and a territorial system of new type emerged. The tribal-feudalism came in direct conflict with the mercantile-capitalism of the British Raj, with the administrative and politico-legal system to safeguard the emerging socio-economic system. This led to the collapse of the tribal-feudal system based on communal land relationship.⁴ Money became capital. Land was transformed into commodities and was thrown open to the market for sale. This has made the hereditary communal rights on land defunct and provisions were made so that ^{they} could be evicted at any time if, their landlords or governmental agents found them unnecessarily recalcitrant or unable to pay their land rents.⁵ The policy on the ownership of private property to the highest bidder resulted in the emergence

4 S. M. Dubey, "Transformation in Tribal Societies: Issues and Policies", in Seminar Paper, 14th All-India Sociological Conference, Jabalpur.

5 K. Gough, op. cit., p. 1393.

of new zamindar class, a lower rank cultivating tenants and a large-scale agricultural labourers. The tribals had to face this new challenges of survival. They were linked with the world capitalist system, a new type of bourgeois economy, as expressed by Marx, "has made the country dependent on towns, so it had made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on civilization, nation of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the east on the west."⁶ In other words, it has created a world after its own image. So, the image of tribals' own world came in direct conflict with the new world image of imperialism imposed on them.

The colonial land system has set free various forces increasingly which encroached upon land and forests belonging to the tribals. The oppression on the tribals, which knew no bounds, by both the Europeans and the Indian usurpers, landlords, merchants and moneylenders from outside the region, was the order of the day.⁷ The expansion of money market with rack-renting, unequal terms of trade, usury, corvee, and even the slave labour was rampant, and the obligation to grow more cash crops for little or no return made the tribal life bitter and choked.⁸ The diversification of cropping pattern to feed the industrial growth in Britain and the introduction of industries in the tribal

6 Bottomore and Rubel, Karl Marx, 1969, pp. 146-7.

7 K. Gough, op. cit., p. 1393.

8 Ibid., p. 1393.

economy brought in dramatic and drastic changes in the overall economy or regions. Land ownership gradually slipped away from the tribals to the outsiders, non-tribals, who came along with the expansion of exploitative commercial network and, the administrative and politico-legal system to safeguard their interests. New forces of modernization like modern education, Missionaries both foreign and Indian also, came in. All these forces created a number of contradictions and complicated problems. ⁹ The colonial and historical socio-economic setting of the country could not improve the material conditions of the tribals. They were either remained as they were or aggravated. On the other hand, a slow moving economic foundations of the life of the people and rapidly changing superstructure (e.g., religion, education, language, script, political concepts and idioms) have superimposed. This has disturbed the age-old balance between the structure (material conditions of life) and the superstructure (ideology, etc.)

It can be argued and perhaps legitimately from the analysis that the social movements among the tribals in India are ¹⁰ the inevitable legacy of colonial exploitation and also the post-colonial regime's policy of socio-economic development under ¹¹ the influence of imperialism.

9 R. A. Schermerhorn, Ethnic Plurality in India, 1978, p. 23.

10 Bipan Chandra, Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India, 1979, p. 6.

11 Hamza Alavi, "Imperialism: Old and New", The Socialist Register, 1964, pp. 104-26.

Contemporary Setting

The above conditions form the background of tribal movements since the British colonial rule till today. The content of the tribal movement is, more or less, same as it was during the colonial rule; the only difference is in the formation, ideological overtone, locus of the movement, dynamics and consequences. It has also, been seen that when the socio-economic contradictions in the social system sharpened; the forms, bases, and structure of protests also, took their own shape according to the social condition. It takes a vigorous and sharp shape when the discontent is high and the political system also, does not discourage the legitimate mobilisation to ventilate the grievances of the masses. The colonial rulers perpetrated the repressive measures to any sort of mobilisations on any grievances. Every kind of movement, whether legitimate or illegitimate, was termed either as 'communal riots' or 'law and order problem' and put them down with iron hand. The national movement in India was the outcome of the increasing integration of conscious forces. The surge of the nationalist movement was only on one point, i.e., of forcing the colonial rulers to quit India who perpetrated all kinds of exploitative measures on the people. The tribals also got a new surge and identified themselves with the national movement to drive the colonial usurpers along with their systems of exploitation, out of Indian soil. This single event brought to them a new awakening and a new consciousness about their position in the society. Of course, the people of India succeeded in

driving the colonial rulers out but the colonial socio-economic set up, with minor modification, has been kept. This has created a structure of inequal development and/or underdevelopment in the countryside which has never been eradicated in the post-colonial period.¹² In addition to it, the independent government of India introduced a democratic political set up with ideals of the 'welfare economy' with a 'special reservations' for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and backward classes. But the 'special policy' has helped the tribals and backward communities a little, who are still in perpetual economic deprivation and social oppression. This condition has given a boost to the eruptions of tribal movements of diverse ideological overtones and forms. Some have taken the line of the 'ballot box revolution' and others 'the armed revolution' e.g., the Bodo-kacharis of the Brahmaputra valley of Assam and the Mizo National Front respectively. Thus, the movements on the various socio-economic grievances have taken diverse forms. The goals and methods also, vary with their circumstances.

Earlier, the tribal movement was rudimentary and unorganised in the form of sporadic attacks. In other words, it was 'archaic type', in the pre-capitalistic socio-economic formations.¹³ Their movements were in many respects blind and

12 Bipan Chandra, op. cit., pp. 6-25.

13 E. J. Hobsbawm, Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries, 1965, pp. 1-90.

groping, by the standards of modern ones, but they are neither unimportant nor marginal. This sort of movements were epidemic rather than endemic when a peasant society knew no other better means of self-defence in a condition of tension, deprivation and disruption.¹⁴ Normally, it may be regarded as reformist, in so far as it rarely, if ever, conceived of the establishment of new order of society, as distinct from the correction of abnormalities and injustice in a traditional old order. In course of development, a new type of political and democratic consciousness crept in. With the changing of socio-economic and political system various other issues affected their existence. This has brought to them diverse ideologies and organisational forms, and gradually the movements have also taken formal shapes. In both colonial and post-colonial periods the eruptions of various tribal movements were seem to have occurred under conditions of relative deprivation and socio-economic oppressions. Now the bases of mobilisation were either based on primordial sentiments like ethnicity, religion, languages, or the proletarian ideologies. Earlier, the mobilisation was in a small scale or was concentrated in small area. Now, it is in large-scale, encompassing a region or regions or the nation. In other words, it is in a mass-scale with a certain political ideology.¹⁵

14 Ibid., pp. 2-6.

15 K. L. Sharma, op. cit., p. 38.

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Theoretical Placements of
Tribal Movements

We shall now try to classify and conceptualise the various tribal movements, so far in records in India, in terms of various theoretical categories as identified in the preceding discussions of the thesis. As we have already mentioned that the tribal movements in India is widely prevalent since the penetration of colonial rule till today. There were more than seventy tribal uprisings over a period of nearly two centuries. Among the tribals in India there were about fifty messianic or millenarian movements which were led by various prophetic leaders who convinced their fellow tribals that to make a "successful attack against their oppressors and external enemies" they have to follow them. These movements were the outcome of severe socio-economic problems faced by the tribals under the colonial rulers. These movements were of resistance with varying ideologies, modes of organization, and effectiveness. Each of these revolts, uprisings, attacks, rebellions expressed the desperation of the tribal groups against the conditions of economic exploitation and and social oppressions. These were ruthlessly suppressed by the colonial rulers. Gough has classified five-types of tribal

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- 16 V. Raghavaiah, Tribal Revolts, 1971.
- 17 S. Fuchs, Rebellious Prophets: A Study of Messianic Movements in Indian Religion, 1965, p. 239.
- 18 Ibid., pp. 238-9.
- 19 Kathleen Gough, op. cit., pp. 1391-1412.

Peasants movements during the colonial rule in terms of their goals, ideology, and methods of organisation. These are: restorative rebellions which were launched to drive out the colonial usurpers from the tribal areas and restore the earlier rules and social relations; Religious movements launched for the liberation of region or an ethnic group under a new form of social relations free from oppression and which looked forward to a terrestrial state of righteousness and justice, i.e., to, ^{an} utopian vision of 'Golden Age'; Social banditry, a primitive 20 form of organised social protest against injustice and oppression; terrorist vengeance was surfaced with ideas of meting out collective justice; and mass insurrections were led for the redress of particular grievance.

The first and second of the cited types of movements are transformative, in the sense that they sought from the beginning a large-scale alteration or restructuring of the tribal social relations. The restorative rebellions were, however, backward looking. The religious movements of the tribals have been 'nativistic' in combining traditional cultural elements and values with new themes, sometimes derived from the oppressing groups.

1. Restorative Rebellions

During and since colonial penetration a large proportion of revolts were led by the tribal peasants in various tribal

pockets of India. These revolts took diverse shapes according to the circumstances. These were supported by the masses of tribal peasants either actively or so, and were against the British Colonialists and their supporters who imposed heavy tax revenues on their lands and forests. The enemies in these rebellions included the British officials, troops, police, moneylenders, landlords and merchants. The participants in these rebellions were varying in numbers, from a few hundred to several thousands, robbing and killing officials, looting and burning treasuries, police outposts, plundering business houses, homes of landlords and moneylenders with knives, clubs, bows and arrows. Major uprisings of this type were the uprisings of the Chuar tribes of Midnapur in 1799.²¹ The famous 'Santhal Tribal Revolt' of 1855-56 involving a peasant army of between 30 and 50 thousands attacked the landlords and colonial agents or officials. This revolt was eventually crushed by the superior armed British troops of ten thousands. Troisi remarked that this event is not "a mere spasmodic outburst of the crude instincts of semi-savage Santhals, but the outcome of a long course of oppression silently and patiently submitted to by these unsophisticated people unaccustomed to fight for their own rights in the legitimate ways of their neighbours."²² This historic movement was led by two Santhal Sidhu and Kanhu. The Synteng of Jaintia Hills of North Eastern

21 Benoy Ghose, "Pre-political Rebellions in Bengal", Frontier, vol. 5, nos. 27-29, October 4, 1972, pp.9-14.

22 Joseph Troisi, "Social Movements Among the Santhals", in M.S.A. Rao, ed., Social Movements in India, 1979, pp.126-8; see also, L. Natarajan, "The Santhal Insurrections: 1855-56", in A. R. Desai, ed., The Peasants Struggles in India, 1979, pp. 138-9.

India also revolted in 1860-62. These revolts were of serious nature. The whole tribal peasants rose against the imposition of various taxes on them. They resented in 'Mel' (the village assembly) and fought resolutely against this interference of the Britishers in their internal affairs of the social order. Their customs and traditions were also threatened by the 'ban' imposed on their 'war dances with weapons'. These policies of interference in their society by the colonial rulers was resented by the Synteng and they made several attacks on military outposts and burnt down several of them. Thousands of peasants participated in their sustained attack with arms. The Garo tribes of Khasi Hills and Garo Hills of N.E. India also made several revolts in 1852, 1857 and again in 1872; The Lushai and Kukis also made raids in 1860, 1871, 1888, 1889-90 and in 1892; The Manipur rebellions occurred in 1891; the 'Assam Riot' in 1894; and so forth are the sustained revolts against the colonialists and were the products of the colonial exploitation and deprivation. During and since the colonial rule till today the North-eastern India is the hotbed of revolts, insurrections, raids, murders, and armed movements against the colonialists and their agents along with their socio-economic exploitations. The British occupation of the North-east India was followed by a period of "administrative confusion, of extor-

tions and oppressions, miseries of the people." ²⁴ The tribals, peasants, were squeezed in their own lands. Perhaps Gough has rightly observed that these tribal movements or uprisings were having a deeper cause behind, that is, they have suffered from incursion, loss of land, swindling, bankruptcy, and undermining of their cultures and traditions were done by literate and technologically superior invaders, both British as well as the Indians. ²⁵ Moreover, during period of colonisation, 1840-59, Assam was centered around tea industry, oil refineries and other cash crops like jute, poppy, etc. Although impressive in appearance the growth of tea industry did not lead to an equivalent generation of incomes and diffusion of gains amongst the indigenous population, rather it made the poor peasants to starve by evicting them from lands and forests. So that the network of capitalist expansion and consolidation can be strengthened. These exploitative measures heightened up the impoverishment and discontent of the people. In addition to all these there was heavy enhancement of taxes befallen on them. These ²⁶ brought to the surface a series of agrarian outbursts. For example, the worst affected peasants of Phulaguri (Nowgong district of Assam) rose with arms against the British authority

24 H. R. Barpujari, ed., op. cit., 1977, p. ix.

25 K. Gough, op. cit., 1974, p.1399; see also, N.K. Dutt, op. cit., p. xi.

26 K. N. Dutt, op.cit., p. 27; see also, H. R. Barpujari, ed., op. cit., 1977, p. 88.

in 1861. Peasants over 3000 armed with clubs, lathis attacked the British officials and killed a junior assistant commissioner, Lt. Singer, who went to crush the revolt with armed force. The rebellious peasants killed Lt. Singer on the spot and threw him down the river Kalang. ²⁷ This episode is still fresh in the ^{28a} memories of the tribal peasants of Assam. Barpujari remarked that this episode of the tribal peasants of Phulaguri should not be glossed as a mere 'riot' of local nature without any consequence! It is also, far from truth that it was a movement of tribals alone. Of course, the leadership was given by the tribals like the Bodo-kacharis and Lalung tribes and it was the tribal people who were hard hit by the 'ban of poppy cultivation'. The tribals were coopted by the poor oppressed peasants and backward classes. As a result of this rebellion the colonial government had to withdraw the unpopular excessive measures of taxation on land and forests from 50% to 25%.

The largest restorative rebellion was the 'Mutiny' of 1857-58. Started by Hindus and Muslim soldiers against their miserable conditions and against the disrespect to their religions. This rebellion has drawn the support of millions of impoverished peasants, tribal chiefs, landlords, ruined artisans, low caste landless labourers and workers in the European plantations and factories. For the peasants the resentment was against rack-

27 H. R. Barpujari, ed., op.cit., 1977, pp. 94-95.

28a Ibid., P.94

renting, famines, high price, taxes, debts, seizures of land and physical brutalities. For the workers it was low wages and sub-human conditions, and for the tribals it was the incursions, heavy taxes and debts, and loss of land to the outsiders due to colonial land policy. These rebellious peasants and soldiers were engaged in massacring the British officials, burning the government buildings, revenue courts and court records, railways, churches - in short, every organ of the British colonial rule. It was a great assault on the colonial rulers against their exploitative system. It failed, because it did not spread to all over India and was not centrally coordinated. Nevertheless, the tribal peasants, low castes, and landless peasant formed the backbone of the resistance. ^{28b} These were the restorative movements for the liberation, kill or terrorise in pursuit of their aim to drive out the colonial oppressors and the socio-economic system ²⁹ they introduced.

The popular uprising of 1893-94, after the first Indian mutiny in 1957-58, (colonial government named it 'Assam Riots') was in fact, an agrarian movement of the peasantry. It was a serious movement unlike other uprisings in the North-Eastern region. It was an open rebellion against the colonial exploitation of their

28b K. Gough, "Indian Peasant Uprising", in A.R.Desai, ed., Peasants Struggle in India, 1979, pp.98-99.

29 K. Gough, "Indian Peasants Uprisings", op. cit., pp. 1401-2.

means of subsistence. People protested, rebelled and questioned the propriety of the colonial government, of their tax assessment and their repressive policies on the people of this region. People demonstrated in thousands for several days in Rangia Bazar (Kamrup district) on common issues like non-payment of taxes/^{at} enhanced rates and the legal attachment of the property of the tax defaulters, etc. The colonial rulers left no stone unturned to crush the popular uprisings against all their unjust policies and rule.

The turbulent Bhils of Rajasthan, Gujrat, and Madhya Pradesh also revolted against the British occupation of their lands. Since then, the Bhils occasionally rose against their hated oppressors. For example, in 1817 in Khandesh they rose in a concerted attempt and mobilised 8000 strong peasants against the British imperialist over the issue of the encroachment of their agricultural lands. Again in 1819 the Bhils rose against the colonial expansionists and burnt down several military outposts and ravaged the neighbouring plains. But, the imperialist rulers took punitive action and killed many of them, and subjected others to severe punishment with their superior arms. With occasional lull, they again rose under their leaders like, Sewaram, who was a blacksmith by profession. Perhaps, K. Gough is right when she said that this sort of revolts occurred when the tribal peasants "were deprived of their livelihood, evicted from their homestead, or squeezed in their tribal territories."³⁰

The gonds of Adilabad district also revolted against the policies of the government on the encroachment of land and forests and the land revenue by the state government of Hyderabad. The imposition of taxes put a lot of pressure on the tribals and they were thrown in severe distress. They rose, when they were evicted from their land and forest by the Telugu and Maratha landlords who came from outside the state and encroached upon the fertile lands of the tribal peasants. This form of alienation of lands and forest tracts from them by the petty traders and landlords with the help of forest officials and police force made the tribal peasants discontented. In 1940 the bitterness has reached an extreme height and this led hundreds of tribals under the leadership of Kumara Bhimu to attack the rapacious non-tribal landlords, and land grabbers. This movement can be seen in the light of a 'class struggle'. The leader, Bhimu, was an educated landless labourer who mobilised the landless and oppressed peasants and organised a revolt against the colonial policies of land eviction even at the face of death from the government force. He was supported by hundreds of Gond peasants and Kolam tribes as well, who were burning with resentment against eviction which deprived them of the land of their forefathers and the only means of livelihood of theirs. The colonial armed forces crushed this uprisings of the peasants and killed the leader, Bhimu, and ten others on the spot, and severely injured many others. This episode threw the Gonds in a "state

of unrelieved gloom and frustration."³² All over India, the tribal peasants were affected by the capitalist social relations which has been introduced by the colonial rulers to fulfil their interests. This has made the peasants in perpetual ferment but, as a mass, incapable of providing a centralized expression for their aspirations and their needs.³³

2. Religious Movements

There were several instances of religious movements under charismatic religious or messianic leaders in various pockets of India. Fuchs described more than fifty messianic movements or millenarian type. He mentioned fourteen characteristic feature of messianic movements.³⁴³⁵

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- 32 C. Von Fuerer-Haimendorf, "Aboriginal Rebellion in the Deccan", Man in India, vol. 25, 1945, pp. 213-47.
- 33 E. J. Hobsbawm, op. cit., 1965, p. 10.
- 34 S. Fuchs, op. cit.,
- 35 The characteristic features are: when a society intensely dissatisfied with the social and economic conditions which it is forced to accept; the existence in this society of emotional unrest with certain hysterical symptoms; the appearance of a charismatic leader; the demand of the leader for implicit faith and obedience from his followers; the test of this unquestioned faith and obedience consisting either in a radical change of life (cessation of cultivation of land, change of occupation, etc.) or even the wholesale destruction of property (furniture, houses, livestock, etc.); the rejection of established authority and call for rebellion against it; the threat of severe punishment of opponents of, and traitors to, the movement; the remembrance of a 'Golden Age'; ~~Revivalism~~ Revivalism, i.e., renewed

(footnote contd.)

36

Cohn cited five characteristics of messianic movements: they are collective; they look forward to a reign of bliss on this earth; the transformation from the present evil age will be total; and it is imminent, its followers are waiting for this days of millenium; and it will come through supernatural means.

37

Hobsbawm said that the various millenarian movements are revolutionary and not reformist, and because, for this reason, they are more easily encompassed into modern social

(previous footnote contd.)

interest in traditional religion, coming as a rule after a period of indifference or decline, and accompanied with expressions of great emotional excitement; 'Nativism', i.e., the attempt of a backward people to restore selected parts of its pristine culture and to reject certain alien elements adopted from foreign culture; 'vitalism', i.e., the desire of the members in the movement for alien goods, especially, spiritual ones, from heaven, through magic or supernatural powers; 'syncretism', i.e., the indiscriminate adoption of various cultural traits of a superior civilization by a backward people; 'Eschatologism', i.e., the expectation of a world renewal through world-wide catastrophic revolutions and upheavals; 'Millenarianism', or 'Chiliasm', i.e., the hope or expectation of a paradise on earth for a thousand years or some such long-period of time.

36

Norman Cohn, "Medieval Millenarism: Its Bearing on the Contemporary Study of Millenarian Movements", in Sylvia L. Thrupp, ed., Millennial Dreams in Action, 1962, p. 43.

37

E. J. Hobsbawm, op. cit., pp. 3-6.

movements, which have considerable historical evolution behind them. These movements occurred when the peasants economic condition have scarcely improved, whose traditional beliefs and modes of life were being uprooted and subjected to severe onslaught. It was this condition which provided a fertile soil for messianic movements.³⁸ These movements, as already mentioned, had divine or prophetic leaders who were believed to possess supernatural powers and looked forward to a kingdom of righteousness and justice and in which their enemies would be removed or defeated. So, in that sense, these movements were transformative rather than reformative in their expectations of a sudden, total change of their society, and most believed that the 'Golden Age' was imminent and subjected to some kind of supernatural intervention. Thus, we find this type of religious movements among the various tribals in India. For example, the Naikda tribal movements in Gujrat under the religious leader, Joria Bhagat, in 1867-70,³⁹ the Munda tribals of Bihar also organised a powerful religious movement in 1890, under a powerful charismatic leader, Birsa, who claimed to be the 'Dharti Aba' (Father of the World). He also claimed to be the deliverer of 'Munda Raj' which would be free from exploitation and social oppression. Although started as a religious movement but politics and violence gradually took the movement over and thus, led to armed clashes in several

38 S. Fuchs, op. cit., 1965, p. 239.

39 Ibid., pp. 218-21.

40
occasions, with the colonial rulers, landlords and moneylenders in 1789, 1796 and 1832. Among the Bhils also messianic movements occurred under Govindgiri, a tribal convert to Hinduism in 1900-1912, following a severe famine in 1900. A series of movements occurred among the Bhils like Lasodia (1890-1900), Gulia, Viswanath, Mavji, to alleviate the economic distress and social oppressions. The Bhils of the Panch Mahal and the Naikdas believed and organised movements under their tribal leaders. They believed their leaders as an incarnation of the supreme deity (Parameswar or Siva among the Naikdas and Vishnu among the Bhils). They thought and were convinced that their leaders would deliver them from rapacious colonial rulers and establish an independent, ethical kingdom for the tribals, which the Naikdas named 'Dharmaraj' (Kingdom of virtue). These movements were participated about ten thousands. The Gonds tribes also organized a movement by a charismatic leader in 1930s, who claimed the 'kshatriya status' for the Gonds and sought to purify their religion and socio-economic institutions in tune with the practice of high Hindu caste and would also, save them from economic exploitations and oppressions let loose by the non-tribal alien rulers. Bhausingh Rejnegi started one of such movements in 1929 and mirrored the hoary past by saying that in the past they were all kshatriyas but with the passage of time

40

K. Gough, "Indian Peasants Uprising", op. cit., p. 1399; K. L. Sharma, op. cit., 1976, p. 39; and also G. S. Ghurye, The Scheduled Tribes, 1953, p. 46.

they gradually declined to the degraded position. So he preached to regain their pristine past by radical movements keeping Brahmanic socio-cultural ethics in the forefront. They were motivated by conviction that the improvement of the Gonds tribals laid in the spiritual reform.⁴¹

The Bhagat movement among the Oraons of Chhotanagpur (1895) to instal their 'kurukh dharam' in its pure form by worshipping 'Bhagawan', the one true God, was a religious movement of messianic overtone. The 'faith of Messiah' among them and Mundas was planted by the Missionaries. They propagated that the Messiah would deliver them terrestrial state of righteousness and justice. The charismatic or prophetic leaders claimed that they would secure for them a higher status than that of Christians and Hindu missionaries. Thus, they wanted the tribals to revert to their Munda religion. The 'Tana Bhagat' movement threatened to develop a campaign of hatred and revolt against the outsiders, oppressors and the Christian Missionaries, so the religious movement turned into a more political and violent form toward the end and was the outcome of socio-economic repressions. They had notable years of revolts under religious leaders in 1820, 1832, 1895 and 1895-1900. The Hos or the Larka Kols who were allied to Mundas ethnically, linguistically, and culturally, has revolted in 1931 under a charismatic leader against the

41

S. Fuchs, op. cit., 1965, p. 79.

unjustified socio-economic subjugation of colonial rulers and also, the new class of landlords who came along with them.⁴²

Gough observed that the religious movements among the tribals of Northeastern India was of violent millenarian type.⁴³ For example, the Moamoria movements of the Vaishnavites of Assam in 1769-1839 was predominantly of tribal and low caste origin, who were suffering unusual deprivation from evictions, famine, and excessive taxes on land. These religious movements were of revolutionary nature to throw the colonial exploitative system out and bring a new socio-economic system.⁴⁴ Agrarian issues were of supreme importance in these movements as for the tribal peasants the land provides not only economic security but also a powerful link with one's ancestors. Thus, for them land is a part of their spiritual and economic heritage as well. Fuchs was of the opinion that the messianic movements of revolutionary fervour surfaced when the tribal peasants "experienced economic, social or political oppressions."⁴⁵

3. Social Banditry

It is one of the simple form of revolt, is little more more than endemic peasant protest against oppression and poverty.

42 Joseph Troisi, op. cit., 1979, pp. 123-24.

43 K. Gough, in A. R. Desai, ed., op. cit., p100.

44 K. S. Singh, "Agrarian Issues in Chotanagpur", in K. S. Singh, ed., Tribal Situation in India, 1977, pp. 370-76; see also, K. L. Sharma, op. cit., 1976, pp. 39-40.

45 S. Fuchs, op. cit., 1965, pp. 17-58.

It did not have any organization or ideology. But it had a cry for vengeance on the rich and the oppressors, a vague dream of some curb upon them, a righting of individual wrongs.⁴⁶ This was a more effective methods of social agitation. Social banditry, though a protest, but is a modest and unrevolutionary protest. In the sense, that it protests not against the fact that peasants are poor and oppressed, but against the fact they are sometimes excessively poor and oppressed by the new society which he cannot understand. It "involves assassination, whether routine or occasional, but which is mainly for survival or pre-⁴⁷ dation."⁴⁸ Gough included the following five types into 'social banditry'. These are: the 'Thuggee' of north and central India of 1650-1850 or later; the 'Sanyasis' and 'Fakirs' of Bengal in the late 18th century; the dispossessed military chief Narasimha Reddy and his followers in Kurnool (Andhra Pradesh) in 1846-47; the tribal Lodhas of Midnapur; and the tribal Kallar of South India.

The tribal Lodhas of Midnapur became a 'criminal caste' ('social bandits')⁴⁹ in the 19th century when they were evicted from their homesteads; the Kallar tribal peasants of South India became 'social bandits', some of whom operated from their hill region in

46 E. J. Hobsbawm, op. cit., pp. 5-25.

47 K. Gough, "Indian Peasants Uprisings", op.cit., pp. 1401-2.

48 Ibid., p. 1399.

49 S. Fuchs, op. cit., 1965, pp. 71-72.

Madura into low land Madura, Pudukottai and Thanjavur from 18th to 20th century. These groups formed only a small proportion of the large number of peasants, tribesmen, disinherited landlords, and disbanded soldiers who turned to part-time/a full-time banditry when they were deprived of their livelihood, evicted from their homesteads or progressively squeezed in their own territories. Hobsbawm observed that social bandits were essentially engaged in "class war" as they were concerned with the interests of the poor oppressed peasants from whom they sought protection and with whom they shared their loot. For example, having fought many unsuccessful piece-battles to maintain their tribal lands tax-free from the Nayak rulers of Madura and the British in the mid-18th century, some Kallar became bandits who did rob merchants and officials on the high roads out of Madura. They are still engaged in plundering landlords and rich-peasants in famine seasons and shared their loots with their kinsmen. They sometimes led ordinary peasants in driving out the rulers and landlords.

4. Terrorist Acts with Ideas of Vengeance and Justice

Every tribal village in India has its legends of individual or small group acts of violence against landlords, revenue agents, moneylenders, and officials. When there is extreme suffering

50 K. Gough, in A. R. Desai, ed., op. cit., pp. 106-7.

51 Ibid., p. 107.

when it is difficult to drive the enemy out, patterns of violence might emerge in which members of a minority engaged in epidemic assassinations of key enemies, or burnt down buildings, stacks or other property. The individual terrorist killed and did risk his life for his community, in vengeance but also partly with a sense of group pride and natural justice. Sometimes, the terrorist group was organised with a religious belief which they believed as an unavoidable destiny and his road to salvation. This sort of terrorism was prevalent among north-eastern Indian tribes like Lushai-Kukis. Although the custom was ancient among them, the Lushai-Kukis' headhunting raids into Sylhet and Cachar in the first half of the 19th century seem to have been in vengeance. It was done against the unfair dealings of some business community at the frontier marts.

5. Mass Insurrections

The mass insurrections were sudden and dramatic. In the sense, they were aimed initially at the redress of particular grievances and thus, were at first seemed to be reformative. The mass insurrections lacked the ideology of a religious movement and a single prophetic or charismatic leader. They started characteristically with peaceful mass boycotts or demanded for the undoing of the wrong done to them. They fought tooth and nail when reprisals were taken against them. These

insurrections or revolts seem to become revolutionary in aim as they progressed.

Gough observed that these uprisings were the outcome of economic deprivations resulting from colonial policies on land and in most cases also from landlord's unjust exactions.⁵³ For example, the Santhals uprisings of Bengal in 1870 became revolutionary and plains peasants also took part in it.⁵⁴ These revolts, however, politically progressive. In the sense that they sought to free them from the colonial network of exploitation and social oppressions. As there was no central coordination among these revolts or insurrections these could not properly succeed. Moreover, these were not addressed to the future of the nation state.⁵⁵

Modern Tribal Uprisings

The modern tribal movements for regional autonomy or independence, is a phenomena of modern period. The nationalist movement for independence from the shackle of colonial rule encompassed the tribals too. The independence movement provided the peasants a new awareness to be free and fight for their right. The notable of these tribal movements for an independent

53 K. Gough, in A. R. Desai, op. cit., p. 109.

54 S. B. Choudhuri, Civil Disturbances During the British Rule in India, 1765-1857. 1955, p. 61.

55 K. Gough, in A. R. Desai, op. cit., p. 112.

state are the Naga and Mizo tribals. The movements for regional autonomy was also launched by various tribals like the Santhals movements for a separate Jharkhand State, the Bodo-kacharis of the Brahmaputra valley of Assam for autonomous state, etc.

Nevertheless, the modern tribal movements share common features with and also may draw experience, inspiration from earlier tribal revolts. And in course of time these movements developed a comprehensive ideology and theory. In other words, these movements involved a large number of tribal peasants, and sometimes supported by the communist party. All these movements began as strikes or other forms of popular action initiated by the peasants or with their consent for the redress of specific grievances, e.g., Naxalbari Movement in 1967 where a large component of tribal peasants participated.⁵⁶

Conclusions

The various uprisings or movements, so far discussed, except in post-colonial periods, were basically to resist and drive out the colonial rulers and restore their traditional principalities. The first and second types of these movements were transformative. In the sense that they sought from the beginning a large-scale restructuring of the socio-economic relations. Restorative rebellions were, however, backward looking. Whereas the tribal religious movements have been 'nativistic' in combining the traditional cultural elements and values with new themes,

sometimes derived from the oppressing groups, in an utopian vision of a 'Golden Age'. The third, fourth and fifth types were initially reformatory in the sense that they aimed at only partial changes within the society. Both third and fifth have, however, sometimes become transformative and have led to the seizure of a liberated zone, e.g., the Naxalbari movements by the peasants did control some zone in Naxalbari areas in 1972.⁵⁷ The fourth type could take place sporadically and spontaneously with little or no organisation. It has probably occurred very often in all pockets of the country in the form of small outbursts, of retaliation against landlords and money-lenders, etc. However, occasionally, terrorist vengeance seemed to develop into an organised movement with a religious cult.⁵⁸ It is also usually present to some degree in all of the other four types. Religious movements were thus, not completely confined to attempts to liberate an ethnic group or a region. Some bandit groups, indeed have special religious cults.⁵⁹ Some terrorism and both restorative rebellions and mass insurrections have usually been regarded as sanctioned by religion. The religious movements for freedom and bringing a terrestrial state of righteousness and justice were, however, of a distinct type, bearing messianic or millenarian overtone. Finally, the messianic

57 Sumantra Banerjee, In the Wake of Naxalbari, 1980, p. 289.

58 E. J. Hobsbawm, op. cit., p. 7

59 K. Gough, "Indian Peasants Uprisings", op. cit. p. 1395.

movements and agitations occurred for the redress of grievances were non-violent in the beginning but took violent turn in their course. For example, the Munda tribal movements under charismatic messianic leader, Birsa in 1890's.

It can be argued that the penetration of colonial network of exploitative system surfaced the recurrence and repetition of revolts, which is the most significant aspect of the tribal movements against the imperialism and its agents. Of course, these revolts never achieved a complete ideological content on a programme of demands, tactics and strategy. However, these revolts were politically progressive to arise an awareness and also sought to have a new social order which would combine freedom from alien rulers together with socio-economic oppressions. The revolts were directed against an explicit threat to an alteration or transformation of tribal socio-economic order. In that sense, this can be properly understood as a social movement.⁶⁰

The goals and methods of these movements varied with the circumstances. Of course, the movements emerged either as a correctives and erect structures to safeguard or promote groups adversely affected by such colonial policies to alter the traditional tribal social order.⁶¹

60 P. N. Mukherjee, "Social Movement and Social Change: Towards a Conceptual Clarification and Theoretical Framework", Sociological Bulletin, vol. 26, no.1, March 1977, pp. 44-45.

61 Ibid., pp. 42-43.

The post-colonial tribal movements are much more organised, sustained and aimed at bringing about a partial or total change in the society, based on a certain ideology. Gough perhaps, rightly observed when she said that "all of the tribal movements seem to have occurred under conditions of relative deprivations, that is, of deprivations considered outrageous by comparison with the past or with the condition of others in the present. All of them embodied ideas of freedom from undue socio-economic exploitations or deprivations, of some form of collective independence from a domination conceived as alien and unjustified, and of a just social order sanctioned by some religious faith or all-embracing modern ideology, especially that of Marxism."⁶²

It is crystal clear that directly or indirectly the policies of the colonial governments have created a capitalistic structure, i.e., a structure of underdevelopment, which became endemic. This structure has been modified by the post-colonial governments keeping the salient features intact rather than completely eradicated them.⁶³ This structure of underdevelopment has brought lot of contradictions and deprivations. On the other hand, this system could neither improve the material conditions of the masses nor remove the oppressive socio-economic order.

62 K. Gough, "Indian Peasants Uprisings", op. cit., p. 1396.

63 Hamza Alavi, "Imperialism: Old and New", in The Socialist Register, 1964, pp. 104-26; Bipan Chandra, op. cit., 1979, p. 6; and A. R. Desai, Peasant Struggles in India, 1979, p. 10.

62
been

The trend of strengthening the capitalist structure has ^{been} marked by the emergence of movements of diverse nature, shape, and compositions. As we have seen, these movements have passed through various stages of mobilisation and actions, from impassioned informal protests to organised armed revolts. Consciousness of their socio-economic backwardness and the aspirations for a better life have assiduously been increasing among the tribals of India. In other words, the awareness of their relative position in the socio-economic condition has encouraged or rather forced them to find out the best alternative possible. As Marx said, "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness."⁶⁴ Perhaps, it is the sharpness of consciousness of the conditions and the intensity of deprivations that facilitates the movements of diverse types, natures and forms, and also the ideological overtones, to come up.

We find strong movements in Chhotanagpur region in Bihar for the creation of an autonomous Jharkhand State. The tribals of Chhattisgarh and Gondwana regions of Madhya Pradesh have also advanced their movements for a separate state in 1960;⁶⁵ The Bastar tribes, too, raised their voice for an autonomous state in the past.⁶⁶ The tribes of South Gujrat also led a movement for

64 Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Works in Two Volumes, vol. I, 1950, p.329.

65 G. S. Ghurye, The Scheduled Tribes, 1963, pp. 388-9.

66 M. M. Joshi, Bastar: India's Sleeping Giant, 1967.

67

a separate autonomous state. There are some tribal groups who are persistently in revolts against the colonial structure and its oppressive systems. These are Naga, Mizos, Manipuris (Neitheis), etc. for their independent states. Of late, a new awakening has encompassed the tribal peoples. The term 'Tribal' ('Adivasi') itself suggests them an ideological base. Hence, they are going beyond a particular tribal group or groups, and forging ahead a stable unity through ideologically conceived common socio-economic and political programmes. For example, the sponsors of the Jharkhand movements are trying to develop a common heritage of all the tribes of Chhotanagpur region of Bihar, parts of Orissa, West Bengal, and Madhya Pradesh or the 'Pan-tribals' movements in the North Eastern India.

A similar process, on another level, has also taken root very strongly recently. They are being organised and mobilised through the communist tribal leaders like for example, the former shifting cultivators, Warli, of Western India, since 1946 have become a part and parcel of peasants movements. In Koraput district the local Kond peasants have joined a rather localised tribal organisation led by communist workers which claim the solidarity with all other tribals and the proletariat of the world. ⁶⁸ In recent years, the Saora and other tribal groups in Visakhapatnam agency of Andhra Pradesh have taken up arms under

67 B. R. Chauhan, Towns in Tribal Setting, 1970.

68 L. K. Mahapatra, "Tribal Movements in India", in K. S. Singh, ed., op. cit., 1977, pp. 407-8.

extreme communist leadership to fight the exploiting landlords and oppressors of the land. So also, the cases of armed movements among the North-eastern tribals under the extreme leftists leadership.⁶⁹ Similar movements occurred among the Naxalbari tribals in West Bengal in 1969-71.

The trend of initiating a movement among the tribes seeking to tie up the fate not only with other tribes but also with the have-nots of India, and in that case, with the world's proletariat class to redress their grievances, is growing. So, we can see a sort of 'class struggle' is in the making to uproot the shackles of capitalistic structure. The tribes of North-eastern India are much more active in this line by forging a link with the various tribal groups of this region under communist parties like P.L.A. (Peoples Liberation Army), S.U.L.A. (Seven Units Liberation Army) and so forth. The aim is to bring a new kind of socio-economic formation where the basic problems of pauperisation and proletarianisation can be eliminated and preconditions new social order, based on equality, fraternity and justice, can be established. Thus, it can be argued and perhaps legitimately from the analysis that the movements of diverse forms and contents among the tribals are the inevitable legacy of colonial network of exploitations as well as the post-colonial government's policy of keeping the modified forms of colonial structure which fosters unequal socio-economic development

69

T. K. Oommen, "Sociological Issues in the Analysis of Social Movements in Independent India", Sociological Bulletin, vol. 26, no. 1, March 1977, p. 19.

of the social constituents as a whole. In other words, social movements are due to the inadequate welding of the social constituents into the national milieu.⁷⁰ The process seems to be an ongoing one with the kind of socio-economic set up we are nursing in India.

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T.K. Oommen, "Social Movements, National Crisis, and Social Change: The Indian Situation", in Discussion Paper, read at India International Centre, New Delhi, 1979.

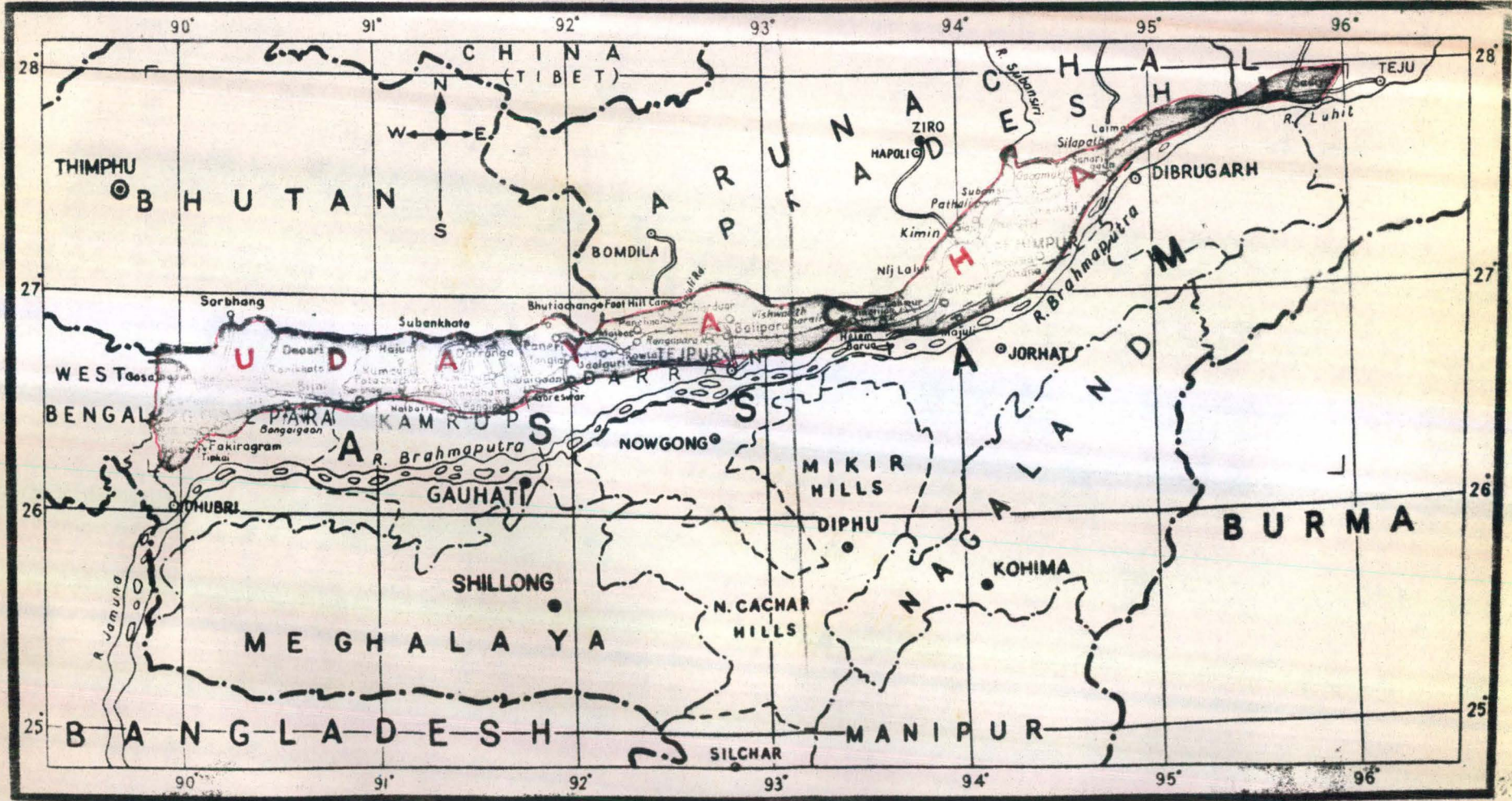
Chapter IV

MOVEMENT AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE: THE CASE OF
UDAYACHAL MOVEMENT

MAP OF UDAYACHAL THE PROPOSED AUTONOMOUS PLAINS TRIBAL REGION

Boundary: International	— · — · —
State	- - - - -
District	— — — — —
Capital: Country; State	⊙ ●
District H.Q.; other towns	⊙ ○
Railway Line; Road	—+—+— — — —

Approximate Population (1971).....12 Lakhs
Tribal Population..... 8 Lakhs
Approximate Area.....17,000 km²



Designed and Published by:
The Plains Tribals Council of Assam, Kokrajhar.

1 : 21,00,000.

MOVEMENT AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE: THE CASE OF
UDAYACHAL MOVEMENT IN ASSAM

In this chapter it is intended to observe the nature of the colonial transformation of the tribal social structure and the inner contradictions which have been brought by the underdevelopment of tribal-peasant societies. Efforts have been made to explore the sociological genesis of 'Udayachal Movement', as it is a product of social change. Emphasis is put on the social bases of conflict in terms of relations of production rather than trying to explicate the entirety of the relative deprivation theory in relation to conflict by Marx and Engels. It is due to the limited nature of the study itself. Our observation, therefore, is exploratory keeping in view the social bases of the movement. It is also an impressionistic study in the light of the analysis we have so far done in conceptualising the various other tribal movements in India. Although, this tribal movement started more than a decade back but it never came out from a vacuum, rather it coincided with the rise, expansion and the establishment of the British Empire. This we have seen in our preceding chapter how the tribal people resisted when the colonial system bore harshly on the tribal communities. Resistance was inherent in all these spontaneous, elemental and widespread acts of violence, uprisings and rebellions involving not only one tribe but many tribal communities in Assam. These were the part of the social system.

TRIBAL SOCIAL STRUCTURE:
PRE-COLONIAL SITUATION

The pre-colonial tribal situation has, generally, been described as 'static' by ethnographers. Historical evidence, however, suggests at least three major trends. First, there was colonisation and establishment of settlements by the Ahom rulers, who had entered Assam as conquerors. Secondly, the Ahom rulers were statutory owners of the land and they remained satisfied with poll tax or plough tax in kinds or service to royal family. The land was considered as 'communal' or joint property of the community or belonged to a group who occupied it. Thirdly, the Ahom kings, after the adoption of Hinduism, began to patronise the Brahmins, nobles and other officers of the royal court by making free gifts of land. In other words, the Hindu Brahmin and artisan castes were encouraged by the Ahom royal families to settled cultivation. The land granted to the temples, religions and charitable institutions was revenue-free. In course of time, the owners of these land called themselves 'Lakhirajdars', the term denoting a 'class' exempted from payment of taxes.

Thus, we witness the rise of the state out of the tribal matrix. A crucial precondition of the formation of state in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam was the extension of cultivation through the reclamation of land and the introduction of a new agricultural technology by the peasant castes from outside the region. ¹ These peasant castes were encouraged and given

1 Ashit Chakrabarty, "Boro BhashaBhasi Ancholer Bhougalik Parichay", Dainik Sambad, May 22, 1980, pp. 1, 3.

settlements among the tribal village communities. A new mode of production based on settled cultivation emerged. It was a feudal superstructure gradually being imposed on the tribal society. This resulted in the breakdown and fragmentation of tribal society into distinct social strata based on corresponding distribution of power and economic interest in land, which was defined in terms of ritual status. The tribal was undergoing through a process of 'peasantisation'. The new state acted as the agent of Brahmanic culture. The state formation was expedited with the development of trade routes through various 'duars' (pass/gate) along with the Bhutan border, and this stimulated commercial activities and encounters by promoting new townships.

The Brahmins and the peasant castes of non-tribal origin had a settled way of life and their settlements by the royal decree were like islands of 'Brahmanic Hindu civilization' in the midst of tribal villages. These non-tribal caste people became the main instrument of change from shifting to settled-plough-cultivation through new technology. Land has never been made as private property, except in some exceptional cases, but belonged to the community as a whole. There was no hereditary rights of property on paddy lands, and the concept of communal land ownership was embedded in the cultural tradition of the tribal society.² The king was, however, the leader of the

2 Amalendu Guha, "Land Rights and Social Classes in Medieval Assam", Indian Economic and Social History Review, vol. III, September 1966, p. 223.

community at large. Almost cent per cent people were associated, wholly or partially, with land for subsistence and the surplus was for consumption, if there was any. The self-subsistence economy with little specialization became stratified as it was being transformed to feudalism. The individual 'rayat' had given rights only to his 'bari' land (homestead) and garden lands. There was no saleable rights in land, in general. Every adult of the village community has got the right to cultivate the land. If a 'rayat' mortgaged his land he did not give away the land but the right to cultivate only. The hereditary landed property, e.g., the homestead or garden land, was unsaleable. But it is during the Ahom rule that the question of permanent inheritable land rights could first arise in a significant manner.³ A feudalisation of land was resulted in with the introduction of settled cultivation.

All in all, a complex socio-economic system had emerged in the tribal society of the Brahmaputra valley, even before the colonial system was established. In the absence of a proper money-economy land was not yet considered as a commodity until the British colonial regime entered Assam in 1826. Thus commercial exploitation of various forms and dimensions were out of scene. Communal mode of production and relations of production were the characteristic of the village self-sufficient economy, even though there was growth of different types of property

3 Ibid., p. 218.

relations, social formations and polity which were probably unknown at the previous stage. The contact with Hinduism, through the patronage of Ahom kings, brought about significant transformations in the beliefs, rituals, forms of worship, myths, folklores, dietary habits and polity of various plains tribals in the Brahmaputra valley, viz Kacharis, Bodo-kacharis, Dimasa, Mikirs, etc. It was a transformation towards peasant regional culture and Sanskritic way of life which occurred simultaneously among the plains tribals. ✓

By coming within the fold of the peasant society and economy, and embracing Hinduism the tribes of the Brahmaputra valley, on the one hand, became part of a composite regional culture and through Hinduism and the caste system linked themselves, on the other, with the great tradition. This has broken the compactness of the tribal territory and a multi-caste and multi-community village organisation and settled communal system of production relations emerged.⁴ The anti-feudal rebellions by peasants, oppressed tribals, and artisans as well as unemployed soldiers of small feudals against the feudal Ahom rulers, internal dissension between the big-feudals and the external Burmese invasion led the Ahom rulers, finally to surrender their political authority to the British.

COLONIZATION, STRUCTURAL DISPLACEMENTS AND CONTRADICTIONS

Annexation of the Brahmaputra valley by the British

4 Census of Assam, 1891, pp. 211-15.

colonial rulers had marked the termination of Ahom rule and beginning of the colonial exploitation. Establishment and expansion of new colonial relations of production and mode of production by the British regime brought to surface a conflict of interests between the semi-feudal rulers and the mercantile bourgeois. The internal contradictions brought by the latter witness a series of rebellions, uprisings and resistance from the tribal communities. Resistance was inherent in all these movements which were a part of the social system. The most striking feature of the colonial system of production was the breakdown of the communal mode of production, i.e. pre-capitalist mode of production and relations of production, and the introduction of private ownership of land. This led to the collapse of the former. After the advent of colonial rule, the tribal peasants and non-tribal population of this area came in contact with a new type of commercial economy, politico-legal system, western culture and ideals. In other words, the feudal tribal economy was now, in varying degrees, absorbed into the commodity economy based on monetary transactions. The characteristics of which are: generate surplus and marketing the amounts of agricultural produce; disappearance of hereditary tenancies

5 K. S. Singh, "Colonial Transformation of Tribal Society in Middle India", Economic and Political Weekly, July 19, 1978, p. 1229.

6 Jairus Banaji, "For a Theory of Colonial Mode of Production", Economic and Political Weekly, December 27, 1972, p. 2499.

or tenants hereditary rights on land; introduction of new land revenue system; a kind of marketing of labour through contractual, competitive, and often short-term tenancies; and polarisation of classes. Land was transformed into commodity, the money became capital. Thus the 'barter oriented', 'money's short economy', was being replaced by the monetised commodity economy. Money became capital.

At this stage of transformation, the colonial government conferred a permanent, heritable, transferable, and saleable right to different classes of owners of land, through "The Assam Land and Revenue Regulation Act, 1886"⁷. The land system in this region was integrated within the two broad systems of land tenure: the Zamindari and the Rayatwari Systems. The districts of Goalpara and Cachar of the Brahmaputra valley were belonged to the Zamindari system whereas the other regions of the valley were under Rayatwari system. Between these two a series of other tenures existed with varying nature of relationship between them and the government from the point of view of revenue demand.⁸ The distinguishing features of these two types of land tenure systems were: the revenue was fixed in perpetuity under the zamindari system and was revisable under rayatwari system; the unit in Zamindari system was the 'estate';

7 N. C. Dutta, Land Problems and Land Reforms in Assam, 1968, p.11.

8 Ibid., p. 15.

the holder of the unit, i.e. proprietor, was not the actual occupant of land, became responsible for the payment of revenue but in the case of rayatwari system, the revenue was fixed on individual pieces of land and the actual occupants became liable for its payment. The owners of the land were divided into three classes, viz. (1) Proprietors, including the owners of the revenue-free estates, 'fee simple' waste land grants and permanently-settled estates; (2) Land-holders, including the settlement holders of land held direct from government under leases for a period exceeding ten years, or who had held for ten years continuously before the Regulation came into force; (3) Settlement-holders other than landholders, including persons holding land direct from government under annual leases, or the like. The colonial government for the first time defined the rights of the different classes of land owners. This policy of land regulation has drastically changed the relations of production in land. The outstanding features of the land tenure systems were: the existence of intermediaries between the state and actual cultivators, high rent and insecurity of tenure, increasing number of uneconomic holdings, fragmentation of holdings and landlessness of peasant population. The recognition of free transfer and subletting encouraged the creation of a host of rent-receivers between the zamindars and the actual cultivators. This has created an unnecessary and functionless buffer rent-receivers between the state and the cultivators. This tenancy system again created

many problems of insecurity and rack-renting.⁹ The right to own and the right to occupy had given the rich zamindars to exact a very high rate of land revenues from the tenants and sub-tenants. This colonial exploitative land system gradually alienated and pauperised the tribals.

Alienation: The British policy of enhanced rate of revenue and the policy of 'if you do not pay, your property will be legally attached to the government'¹⁰ and the insufficient supply of British currency into the economy¹¹ created the following problems which were never experienced by the peasantry earlier. Firstly, short-supply of money made the peasantry difficult to pay off their land taxes in cash. Secondly, demand for money was created to defray expenditure on various necessities from the market. Thirdly, this has given chance to the mushroom growth of non-indigenous money lenders and traders to charge heavy interest rates from the tribal peasants. Thus, the tribal peasant defaulters were forced to flee from their fertile homestead lands in hundreds or squatted on waste lands to evade heavy taxation and in many cases, they sold themselves and their children¹² into slavery for a trifle. For example, the peasants of

9 Ibid., p. 28.

10 H. R. Barpujari, ed., Political History of Assam, 1826-1919. 1977, pp. 98-99.

11 A. Guha, "Colonisation of Assam: Years of Transitional Crisis", Indian Economic and Social History Review, vol. V, no.4, December 1968, p. 131.

12 Amalendu Guha, "Colonisation of Assam: Years of Transitional Crisis, 1825-1840", Indian Economic and Social History Review, vol. V, no. 4, December 1968, pp. 130-3.

Bureegam Pargana fled their homestead and lands, so, too, the poor oppressed peasants of Chutagari village. ¹³ A process of deprivation caught them.

With the introduction of tea plantation industry the process of 'depeasantisation' was started. The poor oppressed peasants were squeezed to pay the enhanced land taxes, failure of which forced them to seek wage earning jobs in the plantation industry or flee to interior places. This has virtually made the agriculture stagnant, as every enhancement of new assessment of tax compelled the poor either to leave peasantry or to work in the tea plantations. ¹⁴ There was also emerged a serious imbalance between the fast growing modern sector comprising the plantations, cash crops, coal mines, oil fields and the associated infrastructure, and on the other, the near stagnant traditional agricultural sector which was suffering from ¹⁵ substantial capital investment. ¹⁶ Once 'self-sufficient economy' turned into a 'surplus generating economy' and was linked with the operation of 'World Market System'. So the fluctuation in the international prices of jute and tea could impoverish the

13 H. K. Barpujari, Assam in the Days of the Company, 1826-1858. 1963, p. 26.

14 A. Guha, "Colonisation of Assam: Second Phase (1840-1859)", Indian Economic Social History Review, vol. 5, 1968, p. 302.

15 A. Guha, Planter Raj to Swaraj, 1977, p. 40.

16 Hiren Gohain, "Politics of Plantation Economy", Economic and Political Weekly, April 1, 1978, p. 579.

local peasants and tea plantation labourers respectively. For example, the post-war economic depression had adversely affected the tea-industry in the 20's. This has been solved by resorting to 'great reductions' and 'wholesale dismissals' of tea-plantation labourers without bothering about their plight.¹⁷

Although impressive in appearance, the growth of tea-industry did not lead to an equivalent generation of income and diffusion of gains amongst the indigenous population. To expand the economic frontier of tea-plantation many tribal tracts¹⁸ were encroached upon which resulted in the alienation of land from the tribal peasants.¹⁹ The British mercantile capitalist had to import labour from other parts of the country because the indigenous peasants were reluctant to work as wage labourers as it was not a part of their tradition.²⁰ That is why, the tea-planters had to import labourers from other regions of India. The table 4.1 (for the year 1884-85) alone could show the extent of importation of labour.

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- 17 A. C. Bhuyan, ed., Political History of Assam, vol. II, 1978, p. 26.
- 18 D. R. Gadgil, The Industrial Evolution of India in Recent Times, 1860-1939. 1971, pp. 50-52.
- 19 M. L. Bose, "Impact of British Administration in North East Frontier", North Eastern Research Bulletin, vol. II, 1972, p. 67.
- 20 A. Guha, op. cit., vol. 5, 1968, p. 294; see also H. K. Barpujari, ed., op. cit., p. 55.

TABLE 4.1

Importation of Tea Plantation Labourers in
1884-1885

Place of Import	Percentage
Chhotanagpur	44.7
Bengal	27.2
Uttar Pradesh	21.6
Bombay	0.2
Madras	0.7
Assam	5.5

Source: A. Guha, Planter Raj to Swaraj, 1977, p. 45.

Besides, the new technology of wet and dry land farming to generate surplus agricultural production made the colonialists to bring the land hungry agricultural peasants from the then East Bengal. This 'inflow' of peasants was continued decade after decade. They were encouraged because the indigenous peasants were not knowing the wet land cultivation and the jute cultivation as well.²¹ These 'immigrants' put tremendous pressure on Tribal land. They tempted the local poor tribals by offering exorbitant prices and compelled them to part with their land.²² This alienated and evicted the tribals from their own lands.

Moreover, the colonial administration opened up a new

21 Myron Weiner, Sons of the Soil, 1978, pp. 38-45; see A. C. Bhuyan, ed., op. cit., pp. 308-9.

22 A. C. Bhuyan, ed., op. cit., p. 309.

market network which brought the tribals in contact with the world market forces. With the operation of market forces and development of transport, communication there came the middlemen. They performed a variety of functions: as middlemen in administrative matters, as money lenders, as traders who controlled production of foodgrains through the system of advance credit. All these gradually transformed the social, cultural, demographic, economic and political landscape of Assam. They could identify that their rights and privileges are being taken away which they enjoyed in the traditional social structure.

Pauperisation: Pauperisation of the tribal peasantry occurred when their communal property relation was broken by the imposition of colonial private property relations and when the colonial policy of enhancement of tax assessment was forced on them without providing them the essential inputs for the production. The pauperisation became a product of the 'development of underdevelopment'. The process of 'depeasantisation' also pauperised thousands of tribal peasant who were forced to work at low wages in the tea-plantations of Assam. They were the victims of money lenders, traders, merchants who usurped their lands through various illegal procedures. Illiteracy and ignorance of the tribals were being extensively exploited. They have not been given proper safeguard. Moreover, uneconomic landholding resulted in all kinds of diseconomies and deterioration of the economic

conditions of the poor peasants. Money lenders squeezed them with high rates of interest. Enhancement of taxes on lands periodically without considering the poor peasants' well-being given them a feeling of deprivation. All these policies of the colonial regime have created a class of pauperised peasants. This pauperisation of peasantry was not taken as guaranteed by the peasants. There were several agrarian outbursts which we have already discussed in the preceding chapter. Colonial period was known for administrative confusion, of extortions and oppressions and miseries of the people. This occurred when the land became commodity and money became capital, and government made the land transferable and saleable. As a result the tribals were exposed to evictions and rack-renting by the well-to-do 'class'. The colonial relations of production on land and their novel system of governance based on rule of law, and an administration composed of a hierarchy of officers, made a heavy blow on tribals' life and property relations. This onslaught of the colonial regime was resisted by the tribals but the superior armed forces of the colonial rulers subdued them very often. During the whole period of colonial rule the indigenous tribal people had come in contact with various advanced social groups and had gone through existential experiences of conflict

24 N. C. Dutta, op. cit., p. 30.

25 H. R. Barpujari, ed., op. cit., p. ix.

26 N. C. Dutta, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

and change. That is, they have gone through a number of contradictions such as inter-tribal inequality the grabbing of land of the poor tribal peasants by the money lenders and landlords; the differential interaction and communication with the agents of civilization, viz. administration, educational facilities had led to the creation inequality; the new forces of modernization had developed a unique middle class; the mercantile capitalism had developed a dependent economy characterised by the surplus production of raw material and agro-industrial products like jute, tea, pulses. In Assam the tea and oil industries were in the hands of the British bourgeois. The trade and commerce were in the hands of migrant businessmen. Wage earning labourer class was imported. Thus in every way the interest of the indigenous tribal people was ignored or neglected. Thus, in other words, they were under perpetual hunger and poverty, economically dependent, and politically subservient to colonial rulers, and their 'middlemen'.

The struggle for independence from the colonial rulers had awoken the tribals, too. The deprived educated tribal leaders with their followers identified their common enemy, the colonial rulers, and sacrificed their blood to drive the enemy out. ²⁷ Taruharam Phookun, a Freedom fighter of Assam, remarked: "... with all that amazing ignorance and absolute poverty I found them ready to respond to our call more promptly

and ungrudgingly ... in determined and concerted action..., their sacrifices and sufferings ... sincerity and ability made the government look to them with awe."²⁸

CRYSTALLIZATION OF DISSENT:
CONTEMPORARY SITUATION

Contemporary social and political movements are important from the historical and contemporary developmental point of view. This evolution, however, occurred not only in constant interaction with colonialism and under its hydraheaded domination, but as an integral part of the development of colonialism.²⁹ The perpetuation of the inherited colonial state system without the benefit of industrialisation could not change the structure of inequality, deprivation and underdevelopment. The problems become more acute in contemporary period. The various forces which set free during colonial regime are now vigorously operating after independence. This has brought socio-economic paradoxes at its height. Tribals were forced to be dependent economically and subservient politically to the 'Hindu upper caste landlords' ruling class in the post-colonial period. This relative position of the tribals and the 'development of underdevelopment' of the tribal society have shattered their levels of expectation over a period of time. The 'development of underdevelopment' is characterised by their ignorance, illiteracy,

28 A. C. Bhuyan, ed., op. cit., p. 48.

29 Bipan Chandra, Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India, 1979, p. 6.

perpetual poverty, unemployment and chronic indebtedness.

When the tribal peoples of the valley are in this pathetic condition and on the brink of disaster, the state government of Assam rightly stated their ignorance of the position of tribals people. It said that "there was lack of adequate socio-economic-cum-statistical data relating to scheduled tribes. Secondly, the non-availability of detailed and systematic economic profile of the scheduled tribes, the patterns and practices pertaining to various productive activities, the pattern of ownership of the means of production and other relevant matters required for plan formulation."³¹ This made the 'welfare and democratic government', based on the principles of equality and justice, difficult to resolve their problems!

Planning and Social Change

The planned transformation (in terms of change, development and modernization) was introduced by the post-independent government with the beginning of first five-year plan (1951-56). The problems of development, modernization and transformation are closely interlinked with the tribals' existing image, the

30 Planning and Development Department (Government of Assam), Drafts Outline Fifth Five Year Sub-Plan for Scheduled Tribes (Plains), Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes, vol. I, 1974, p.5; see also A. Bhattacharyya, "Blood Bath of Tribals", in People's Democracy, 24 November 1974, p. i, ii.

31 Government of Assam, Some Highlights of Fifth Five-Year Sub-Plan for Scheduled Tribes (Plains), March, 1974, p. 1.

collective conscience of society, value preferences and normative choices of the political elite and policy formulations. Keeping in view the experiences of the period of the struggle for independence the government set the national goals. The constitution of India resolved India as a secular democratic socialist republic based on the principles of equality and justice. For the purposes of planning and development, Indian rulers decided to follow the policy of mixed economy (i.e. the Public Sector or State controlled and the Private sector or private ownership of the means of production). For the development of the tribal society in the Brahmaputra valley, as elsewhere, the Indian government adopted the policy of the nation building through expansion of administration, reorganization of political units from state down to the panchayat level; the economic development through input of financial resources, planning and community development; and modernization through the building of new institutions and political organisations.

The planning and development could not resolve the tribal problems of unemployment, injustice, land alienation and inequalities. The problems of indebtedness and starvation are more acute due to the exploitation by the rapacious landlords and money lenders most of whom are non-tribals. The tribal economy has remained

32 Achintya Bhattacharyya, "The Plains Tribal Movement in Assam", People's Democracy, June 23, 1968, p. 11.

33 Ibid., p. 11.

at the level of peasant economy without the benefit of industrialisation. Consequently, the material culture is lagging behind the non-material culture which has advanced more rapidly due to the development of transport, communication, modern education and administration. In other words, the introduction of modern education, political reorganisation and expansion of modern administration have created new role differentiation, social and spatial mobility and occupational differentiation, although in a limited way. Differential utilisation of educational and occupational opportunities, and differential access to power and resources produced a growing inequality and under-³⁴development of the tribal society. This has produced a deep discontentment between the tribal (plains) and the non-tribal feudal ruling class.

The dynamics of any society cannot possibly be understood without the reference to the dialectics or tensions that are generated through the planned change. After independence the Government of Assam was forced to constitute thirty-three 'Tribal Belts and Blocks' under the provision of 'The Assam Land and Regu-³⁵lation (Amendment) Act, 1947, to protect the tribal lands from alienation and encroachment by the non-tribals which challenged their existence. But the 'loopholed Act' did not provide "adequate

34 A. Bhattacharyya, "The Tribal Question Again", People's Democracy, June 9, 1968, p. 3.

35 See Appendix I for provisions under the Act.

protection to the tribals from the pressure of non-tribals",³⁶ even though the 'Amendment Act' spelt that "no person shall acquire or possess by transfer, exchange, lease, agreement or settlement any land in any area or areas constituted into belts and blocks."³⁷ There are numerous instances of land alienation from the tribals both by the government and non-governmental agencies. For example, in the month of May, 1952 the government has alienated an area of 4037 bighas of cultivable land from the 'Bijni Tribal Block'; in 1960, an area of about 1000 bighas of cultivable land has been alienated from the tribals to accommodate outsider in the said tribal Block.³⁸ All these omission and commission of the government have given rise to deep discontentment and resentment amongst the plains tribals.

Apart from this, there are numerous instances of lands being purchased at exorbitant prices by the non-tribals traders, moneylenders who have entered interior areas with the opening up of communications. This consequently made a large number of tribals landless.³⁹ For example, a number of 'non-bonafide' outsiders encroached the tribal lands in the Bijni Tribal Block.⁴⁰

36 Government of India, Dhebar Commission Report, 1960-61, vol. I, p. 118.

37 See Appendix I, Art. 162(2).

38 P.T.C.A., Memorandum to the President of India, May 20, 1967, Appendix 'D', p. viii.

39 Dhebar Commission Report, op. cit., p. 365; see also S. B. Choudhury, Janajatiir Tez Kiman Ranga, 1968, p. 4.

40 See Appendix II for cases of encroachment on Tribal lands.

In several cases 'rioting' took place between the indigenous tribal peasants and the non-tribal encroachers, but the "government of Assam never took the necessary interest to take adequate steps to amend the wrong done to these tribal belts and blocks."⁴¹ Moreover, the government of Assam made the plains tribals homeless and rootless by disregarding the provisions in the 'Assam Land and (Amendment) Act, 1947'. For example, government had given 'pattas' to the non-bonafide outsiders in the Sidli Tribal Belt and Bijni Tribal Block. In 48 villages of the Bijni Block area and in 14 other villages like Hasraobari, Hatipota, etc. the local tribal peasants have been deprived of their land to give illegal possession to more than 20,000 refu-⁴²gees from the then East Bengal.

The Dhebar Commission observed rightly that the zamindars, moneylenders and contractors exploited the tribals to the maximum and the programme of preservation and conservation of forests for commercial exploitation resulted in a 'progressive encroachment' on the land enjoyed by the tribals for centuries, led to the dislocation of tribal economy and the consequent frustration⁴³ in the tribal mind. The various planning and land reform policies taken up by the government under the constitutional provisions to safeguard the tribals' socio-economic and cultural life were either neglected or implemented slowly. This was due to the

41 P.T.C.A., op. cit., p. 7.

42 Ibid., pp. x-xi.

43 Dhebar Commission Report, op.cit., pp. 22-23.

resistance from the vested interest groups. The vested interest groups did "thrive on the ignorance of the tribal and take full advantage on them."⁴⁵ So the benefits from these legislations for the tribals were nominal. The reasons are: lacunae in the laws; the ignorance of the tribal people of these modern laws; and the complicated legal procedures to be followed. Thus, the shrewd opponents (the exploiters) have hitherto had a clear win over the tribal lands through the monetary, legal and technical grounds.⁴⁶

Moreover, the planning for industrial set up displaced thousands of tribal peasants from their land without rehabilitating them in other alternative settlements. For example, the Bongaigaon Petro-chemical Complex encroached and alienated thousands of acres of tribal land. The present capital of Assam, Dispur, was a tribal village, now not a single tribal family could be traced.⁴⁷ This shook the last foothold of sustenance of the tribal peasantry, and the consequent feeling of deprivation has crystallised the dissension. It is understood that to plan for the whole society; sometimes individual interest has to be subordinated but "when this is done, the man to whom land

44 Planning and Development Department, op. cit., p. 79.

45 Dhebar Commission, op. cit., p. 107; see N. C. Dutta, op. cit., p. 132.

46 Ibid., p. 110.

47 G. C. Basumatari, "Forewarned is Forearmed", in PTCA Souvenir, April, 1979, pp. 10-11.

belongs is often forgotten." ⁴⁸ There are lot of other glaring examples of injustice done to the plains tribal people of Assam. This can be seen/in the case of plan outlay for various backward communities. Due to the 'discriminatory treatment' the per capita plan outlay for the plains tribals was meagre in comparison to Assam Hill Areas. Table 4.2 shows the plan outlay for North Eastern States.

TABLE 4.2

State/Union Territories	Fourth Plan outlays (Rs. in crores)	Population (in lakhs, 1961)	Per Capita outlay (in rupees)
1. Nagaland	40.00	3.96	1084
2. Arunachal Pradesh	16.99	3.37	534
3. Hills Assam including Meghalaya and Mizoram	27.75	2.79	500
4. Scheduled Tribes (Plains) Assam	2.89	9.53	*191
5. Scheduled Castes living in plains Assam	1.12	7.25	*176
6. Other Backward classes	1.03	28.51	*163

* inclusive of welfare of Backward classes programmes as well as general programmes

Source: Government of Assam, Draft Outline Fifth Five-Year SubaPlan for Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes, 1974, pp.3-4.

Dhebar Commission remarked: "broadly speaking, the plains tribals have not received much attention. Behind all ~~this~~ there is lack of a proper, adequate and suitable institutional framework."⁴⁹

Indebtedness is another serious problem, as it is widespread and chronic and is attributed to their worst economic condition. According to a socio-economic survey conducted by the government of Assam in 1969, 24% of the tribal families were indebtedness. The main source of loans they get were from the moneylenders, traders, mostly Marwaris and Kabuliwala who provided them more than 70% of the loans at interest rates going up to 100%.⁵⁰ In a district level survey, viz. Goalpara district, where the proportion of scheduled (plains) tribes is much more, revealed that the proportion of indebted households was 53.2% as the institutional credit facilities have not yet reached to them and are being exploited by the private moneylenders. Failure to repay back the loan eventually resulted in many poor cultivators losing their land and becoming landless agricultural labourers as there are no employment opportunities for them in the secondary and tertiary sectors.⁵¹ The condition of the plains tribals has progressively deteriorated in the past three decades with consequent adverse impact on their income and standard of

49 Ibid., pp. 5-6.

50 Government of Assam, "Draft Outline....", op. cit., p.4.

51 Ibid., pp. 4, 8.

living. This kept them in perpetual poverty and deprivations.

The paucity of productive facilities, capital investment, social and economic infrastructure, educational and public health facilities resulted in over dependence on low productive agriculture. Due to the absence of a conscious and deliberately planned programme to arrest the widening disparities and deprivations they have been put in a state of penury. This resulted in severe socio-economic tensions and a deep feeling of discontentment.

Political Consciousness and Mobilisation

The extreme socio-economic deprivations and oppressions have thrown the plains tribals from the peaceful protest and agitation to the vortex of political struggle. The political consciousness of the plains tribals has to be seen from this background as their very existence has been challenged by the ruling class. A new idiom of 'tribal ethnicity' has surfaced as a product of this inner contradictions in the social structure itself. The deprived sections of tribals became a 'class' against the 'privileged' class. This 'privileged' class consists of upper caste landowning bourgeois. For their 'class interest' they opposed the genuine equality and equal opportunities for the socio-economically subjugated tribals of Assam. They were rather

52 Ibid., pp. 5-6.

53 Ibid., p. 11.

54 Achintya Bhattacharyya, "The Plains Tribal....", op. cit., p. 11.

subjected to discrimination, ruthless exploitation and social
⁵⁵ oppression. The plains tribals were also being treated by
 the 'upper caste landowning classes as 'untouchables', unclean
⁵⁶ people of a low race.

All the injustice and oppression gradually brought them
 on the brink of disaster. The educated tribals rose against
 the injustice and socio-economic oppressions. They strongly
 urged the government to protect their economic interests, safe-
⁵⁷ guard their culture and ensure equality and social justice.

Polarisation

This 'deprived' tribal people became conscious of their
 'identity' under their tribal leaders who made it the foci of
 group mobilisation and demanded an autonomous plains tribal
 region. It is now crystal clear that the 'structure of under-
 development' which the colonial rulers imposed on the tribal-
 feudal economy became endemic in the post-colonial period. Be-
 cause the independent government kept the salient features of
 the state system introduced by the colonial rulers rather than
⁵⁸ completely eradicated them. The characteristic inner contradic-

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- 55 A. Bhattacharyya, "The Tribal Question Again", op. cit.,
 p. 3.
- 56 Ibid., p. 4.
- 57 P.T.C.A., "Memorandum...", op. cit., p. 8.
- 58 Hamza Alavi, "Imperialism: Old and New", in The Socialist
 Register, 1964, pp. 104-26; see Bipan Chandra, Nationalism
 and Colonialism in Modern India, 1979, p. 6.

tions of this state system became more sharp in the post-independence period. Thus this system could neither improve the material conditions of the masses equally nor remove the oppressive socio-economic relations. Rather it has given rise to polarisation of social groups in terms of religion, language, ethnic groups, etc. like the 'privileged' Hindu upper caste, and landlord class on the one hand, and 'deprived' tribals on the other.

Thus we can conclude that the growing inner contradictions in the present 'semi-feudal and semi-colonial' social structure has sharpened the tribal groups' aspirations in the Brahmaputra valley for a more equitable social order. In other words, the contradictions which have started emerging during the colonial regime, through the expansion and consolidation of colonial production relations, expansion of market network, concentration of productive forces in a few hands have sharpened during post-independence period. This has manifested through systematic pillage, exploitation and injustice by the 'privileged' few on the 'deprived' majority. This has surfaced the tension in terms of antagonistic relations between the upper caste, non-tribal landlord class and the tribals peasants under their leaders. During this crucial period the plains tribals leaders formed the Plains Tribals Council of Assam as an opponent political party and started mobilising the tribals. Thus a new movement for a separate 'Udayachal State' came out from the womb

of socio-economic and political contradictions in the society. The P.T.C.A. now stood firm as a political response to the socio-economic challenges and to usher an equitable social order.

Chapter V

INTERPRETATION AND IMPLICATIONS

INTERPRETATION AND IMPLICATIONS

The 'Udayachal Movement' in Assam is the outcome of the contradictions introduced by the colonial rulers through a new system of production relations. This ceased the relative isolation of tribal society, and brought it into the mainstream of new socio-economic set up, policy and programme. This also put an end to the concept of direct tribal political dominance in this region, and robbed the plains tribal communities of Assam which had so far been spared the strain of surplus generation through a new system of production relations. The colonialist here, as elsewhere, followed the dual policy of strengthening the feudal crust in the tribal society, formed by the feudal chiefs and zamindars, and simultaneously created conditions in which their economy and socio-political system were undermined by the rampaging market forces.

The entrance of colonial rule in Assam valley was marked by a series of riots, rebellions, insurrections, and even killings. These 'events' of a 'movement' were the direct outcome of contradictions of imperialist system introduced in the tribal-feudal society. These 'events' cannot be taken as mere 'outbursts' of savage instincts, but a set of 'events', centring around issues which impelled the tribals to 'fight it out'. As is well recognized, movements never come from a vacuum, but evolve within the social structure, and are always related to the various social processes. Udayachal movement is one such movement. The

processes involved in this movement are: relative deprivation and the consequent social contradictions. The plains tribal people of Brahmaputra valley, after independence, organised themselves under the banner of 'Plains Tribals Council of Assam' (P.T.C.A.) to seek justice against the exploitations which brought them to the condition of 'dispossessed class'. For this, they started the Udayachal Movement in the year 1967. This movement was not a revolutionary movement since it was never aimed so far to bring about structural changes. This movement was aimed at achieving an autonomous region within the existing political set up, through the redistribution of power and the system of differential allocation of resources, rights and privileges. Consequently, the movement attacked the monopoly of ruling non-tribal 'privileged' classes and Hindu-upper castes in different spheres of life.

In view of our preceding discussion regarding theories and types of social movements, we can thus class the 'Udayachal Movement' as a 'transformative' type.¹ The important aspect of this movement is the emergence of politically articulate ethnic groups. They have a common ideology (world view), share common interests and are deprived, so they have emerged as a politically viable opponent group. In 1974, the P.T.C.A. had shed lot of blood and achieved the recognition of Bodo language as a

1 M. S. A. Rao, op. cit., 1979, pp.16, 255.

medium of instruction in the schools in tribal 'Belts and Blocks'. P.T.C.A. now acts as an 'interest group' with an ideology, organisation, and widespread political mobilisation make them become a part of the democratic political set up of the country. In the process they are, being transformed into a large ethnic group, competing and agitating for a separate autonomous territory to have a greater share of economic and political power. They developed an ideology based on relative deprivation in various fields and involved themselves in conflicting relations with the opposition-reference groups, i.e. the 'Hindu Upper Caste privileged' ruling groups, to bring about change in the traditional distribution of power. So the conflict is now based more on ethnic-tribal and non-tribal groups, though not without elements of class struggle, because leaders do conceive of conflict in 'class' terms, that is, in terms of 'privileged' and 'deprived' classes, the exploiters and exploited. Now tribals are being identified as 'deprived' class.

However, in 'Udayachal Movement' the class conflict overlaps the ethnic conflict, and is articulated through the idiom of class conflict. And the movement is based on relative deprivation, protest ideology and ethnic-class conflict.

The movement has passed through certain stages in its career. The 'event structure' of the movement with sequences and consequences was not uniform. Some time it was very active

like in 1974 when they shed blood and agitated for the recognition of Bodo language to establish their separate identity. Afterwards, the leadership of movement became passive. But the present lull may not continue for long. Slow development of consciousness about the glaring socio-economic deprivation among the tribal youth is continuing. It may get activated once the militant leaders take it up. It may be undertaken by forming a separate organization which may come out from the womb of the parent organisation. For the present, we have already taken a note of this trend when we met the P.T.C.A's militant youth leaders. Activisation depends, however, upon the leadership, organisation and mobilisation on the one hand, and the resistance from the opposition-reference group, i.e. the ruling class. All these elements and ingredients are becoming increasingly more manifest.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

CHAPTER X OF THE ASSAM LAND AND REVENUE REGULATION,
1886

Added by the Assam Land and (Amendment) Act 1947
(Assam Act XV of 1947)*

Protection of backward classes

160. (1) Notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, the ¹/State Government may adopt such measures as it deems fit for the protection of those classes who on account of their primitive condition and lack of education or material advantages are incapable of looking after their welfare in so far as such welfare depends upon their having sufficient land for their maintenance.

(2) The ¹/State Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, specify the classes of people whom it considers entitled to protection by such measures as aforesaid.

161. The protective measures may include the constitution of compact areas, in regions predominantly peopled by the classes of people notified under the provisions of sub-section (2) of section 160, into belts or blocks. The boundaries of the areas so constituted shall as far as possible coincide with mauza boundaries or be otherwise easily distinguishable.

162. (1) The ¹/State may, by notification in the official Gazette, direct that the provisions of this Chapter shall apply to the areas, or any of the areas constituted into belts or blocks under the provisions of section 161. On such applica-

1 Substituted for the word "Provincial" by Adaptation of laws Order, 1950.

* Source: P.T.C.A., Memorandum to the President of India, May 27, 1967, pp. iv-vii.

tion, the disposal of land by lease for ordinary cultivation, the nature and extent of right conveyed by annual or periodic leases, the termination or forfeiture of such rights, the ejectment of persons in occupation who have no valid right in the land, the management or letting out in form of land in certain circumstances by the Deputy Commissioner, and other allied or connected matters shall, so far as possible, be Governed by the provisions of this Chapter and the rules made thereunder. Where this is not possible, the Deputy Commissioner shall be guided by the spirit of the provisions of the foregoing Chapters of the Regulation and the rules made thereunder.

*(2) Notwithstanding anything in the contrary in any law, usage, contract or agreement no person shall acquire or possess by transfer, exchange, lease, agreement or settlement any land in any area or areas constituted into belts and blocks in contravention of the provisions of sub-section (1).

*(3) From and after the commencement of the Assam Land and Revenue Regulation (Amendment) Act, 1964 no document evidencing any transaction for acquisition or possession of any land by way of transfer, exchange, lease, agreement or settlement shall be registered under the Indian Registration Act, 1908, if it appears to the registering authority that the transaction has been effected in contravention of the provisions of sub-section (2)

(1) Substituted for the word "Provincial" by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.

* Added by the Assam Land and Revenue Regulation (Amendment) Act XVI of 1964).

(4) The ¹(State) Government may in like manner direct that the provisions of this Chapter shall cease to apply to any area or areas or portions of any area or areas, to which they have been applied under the provisions of sub-section (1).

(5) The applications of the provision of this Chapter to any area as aforesaid will not affect:

(a) land settled for special cultivation or purposes ancillary to special cultivation (including grants made for tea cultivation).

(b) lakheraj, nisfkheraj or special estates settled with non cultivators for their maintenance, which land and estates and the rights and interests therein shall continue to be governed by the provisions of the foregoing Chapters of the Regulation and the rules made thereunder.

163. (1) The disposal of land, in areas to which the provisions of this Chapter apply for the purpose of ordinary cultivation or purposes ancillary thereto, shall be in accordance with such policy and procedure as may be adopted and directed by the State Government.

(2) In adopting and directing such policy or procedure the ¹(State) Government shall take into consideration -

(a) the bonafide needs of those who are permanently residing in the area on the date of the notification under sub-section (1) of section 162.

(b) the bonafide needs of those who are temporarily residing in the area, on the aforesaid date, and who are likely to

undertake to become permanently residence therein within a reasonable time.

(c) the bonafide needs of members of the classes notified under sub-section (2) of section 160, who are living elsewhere in the district and

(d) if the extent of cultivable land available for settlement in the belt block be large enough, the bonafide needs of other classes of persons residing in the neighbourhood of the belt or block. Preferences shall be given to persons whose religion, mode of life, agriculture customs and habits are more akin to those of the classes for whose protection the belt or block was constituted.

164(1) A settlement holder other than a land holder shall have no rights in the land held by him beyond such as expressed in his settlement lease.

(2) A land holder shall have a right of use and occupy in the land held by him subject to any restrictions or modifications prescribed in rules made under this Chapter and to the provisions of section 9.

(3) The rights of a land-holder derived from a periodic lease in respect of land to which the provisions of this Chapter have been applied, and issued before the date of the notification under sub-section (1) of section 162 shall, for the period during which the area remains subject to the provisions of the Chapter, be the same as described in sub-section (2).

Substituted for the word Provincial by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.

165. (1) In the case of unsettled land, any person who without valid authority has encroached upon or occupied it shall be liable to ejectment forthwith.

(2) In the case of annually settled land, persons or other than settlement holders, members of their families and hired servants, if found in occupation thereof, shall be liable to ejectment forthwith. The settlement with the settlement-holder shall, unless terminated earlier for infringement of the conditions of the lease or for any action contrary to or inconsistent with the right conferred on him by the lease, automatically terminate at the end of the period covered by the lease.

(3) (a) In the case of periodically settled land, persons who have entered into occupation without valid authority from the land holders or whose entry or occupation is or has come about in a manner inconsistent with the provisions of this Chapter shall be liable to eviction.

(b) Such eviction shall be preceded by service of notice requiring the occupants to vacate the land, and to remove all buildings and other constructions erected, and crops raised, within a period not exceeding one month from the date of receipt of the notice.

(c) The Deputy Commissioner may, after the persons concerned have evacuated or been evicted from the land take the land under his own management or may let it in farm, for such period as he thinks fit, but shall give the land-holder reasonable opportunity of undertaking in writing that he will do everything in his power to prevent unauthorised occupation by other persons in future

and of agreeing in writing that, on his failure to do so, he will forfeit his rights and status of a land-holder in respect of the land. If satisfied with an undertaking and agreement as aforesaid, the Deputy Commissioner shall accept them, and they shall be deemed to govern the land-holder's future rights and status in respect of the land, and the land shall then be restored to the land-holder. If the land-holder subsequently contravenes the undertaking as aforesaid, or any of the provisions of section 9 he shall be liable to forfeiture of his rights and status in respect of the land, which will then be available for settlement afresh, subject to any lawful encumbrances subsisting upon it.

166. No suit shall lie against any public servant for anything done by him in good faith under this Chapter.

167. No civil court shall exercise jurisdiction in any of the matters covered by this Chapter.

168. The ¹(State) Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, invest any Revenue Officer with the powers of the Deputy Commissioner under all or any of the provisions of this Chapter within such limits, with such restriction and for such period as may be specified, and may withdraw from any such officers any of the powers so conferred upon him.

169. (1) An appeal shall lie under this Chapter:-

(a) to the Deputy Commissioner, from any original order passed by any officer subordinate to him and

(b) to the ²[Board] from any original order passed by a

1 Substituted for the word 'Provincial' by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.

2 Substituted for the word 'Revenue' Tribunal by the Assam Act XXII of 1962.

Deputy Commissioner.

(2) Except in regard to orders relating to periodically settled land an order passed on appeal under sub-section (1) clause (a) shall be final.

(3) In regard to orders relating to periodically settled land an appeal will lie to the ²Board from an appellate order of the Deputy Commissioner.

170. The ²Board or the Deputy Commissioner may call for the proceedings held by any officer sub-ordinate to it or him, and pass such orders thereon as it or he thinks fit.

171. The ¹(State) Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, make rules for purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Chapter.

Encroachment list in Bijni Tribal Block by non-bonafide outsiders vide the records of the Bijni Circle Office

	Village	B	K	L.
1.	Kumarchali Pothar	463	0	15
2.	Kumarchali village	207	0	8
3.	Kochpara	112	2	8
4.	Gargaon	148	0	3
5.	Bogidara No. 1	697	1	12
6.	Ballimari	436	3	19
7.	Bogidara No. 2	394	3	10
8.	Thaisobari No. 1	432	3	1
9.	Thaisobari No. 2	346	2	6
10.	Kochubil No. 2	374	3	17
11.	Kochubil No. 1	531	3	17
12.	Barpathar No. 1	1564	0	1
13.	Barpathar No. 2	1098	1	11
14.	Barpathar No. 3	581	1	8
15.	Lakhijhora No.1	1027	4	9
16.	Lakhijhora No. 2	676	1	9
17.	Lakhijhora No. 3	748	1	18

Name of the revenue villages of Bijni Tribal Block encroached upon by the non-bonafide outsiders as per the record of the Bijni circle office.

Indication : - B - Bigha, L - Lecha, k - katha.

* Source: P.T.C.A., Memorandum..., op. cit., pp. xii-xiii.

Name of the revenue villages of Bijni Tribal Block encroached upon by the non-bonafide outsiders as per the record of the Bijni circle office.

1. Bhetagaon No. 1	11. Betbari I	21. Lakhijhora I
2. Bhetagaon No. II	12. Betbari II	22. Lakhijhora II
3. Chatinaguri No. I	13. Lasatipara	23. Lakhijhora III
4. do No. II	14. Bagidara I	24. Bamunijhora
5. Barlengsigaon	15. Taisobari I	25. Doilung I
6. Matiapara	16. Taisobari II	26. Doilung II
7. Maneswari	17. Kachubil II	27. Doilung III
8. Charagaon I	18. Barpathar I	28. Doilung IV
9. Charagaon II	19. Barpathar II	29. Bishpani
10. Dhupuri	20. Barpathar III	30. Phulkumari
31. Thao Bishpani	37. Okshiguri	43. Batabari
32. Sonaikola	38. Bhumkipara	44. Baghmara
33. Agrang I	39. Kumarchali pathar	45. Shishubari II
34. Agrang II	40. Kumarchali	46. Shishubari III
35. Dakhin Makra I	41. Mainaguri	47. Gargaon II
36. Dakhin Makra III	42. Kochpara	

Some instances of land settlement granted to the non-bonafide outsiders in various Tribal Belts & Blocks

Bijni Tribal Block : Barpathar village

Name of settlement holders	Patta No.	Area
1. Harendra Roy	95	10 B- 0 K- 0 L
2. Deb Chandra Roy	96	10 ₁ - 0 K - 0 L
3. Prasanna Roy	69	9 " - 4 K - 4 L
4. Parashu Ram Roy	94	12 " - 0 K - 0 L

Sidli Tribal Belt : Hasrabari village

Name of the settlement holders	Dag No.	Area		
		B	K	L
1. Dhajendra Barman	332,333	4	3	11
2. Ananta Kumar Barman	16	8	3	5
3. Krisna Chandra Barman	21	5	2	4
4. Ambika Charan Barman	22	7	4	8
5. Latish Ch. Barman I	57	4	3	18
6. Prafulla Kr. Roy	335	7	0	0
7. Satish Chandra Barman II	336	5	0	0
8. Peskar Barman	337	6	0	9
9. Panchananda Barman	338	6	2	12
10. Banamali Barman	46,105,109,341	13	1	14
11. Jatindra Mandal	45,52	12	1	11
12. Narendra Barman	29,54	10	1	12
13. Subal Chandra Barman	27	8	3	4
14. Nilo Kumar Barman	20,56	10	3	9

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