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Guest Editors Foreword

State, Development and Marginalization: *Adivasis* (Tribal) and Identity Politics in India

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The 'indigenous people', popularly known as 'adivasis' in India have a very contested history of origin (Béteille, 1998; Kuper, 2003). Though considered as the first citizens (Radhakrishna, 2016) and enjoying 'kingly citizenship' (Nayak, 2011, 2012), these communities, for centuries, have been subjected to inimical historical processes which have led to their destitution and marginalization. Since the arrival of the Indo-Aryans in northern India (Thapar, 1971), these communities have not only been considered as a problem, but also represented as almost lesser-humans. Colonial anthropology, ignoring the historically built differences between tribal communities, resulted in stigmatizing the tribals of India as aboriginal, primitive, savage, indigenous, uncivilized, illiterate, banbasi (forest dwellers), autochthonous and even "exotic" (Mahana, 2019: 10). In the late nineteenth century, the colonial British administration arbitrarily classified the Indian population, into 'caste' and 'tribes'. By 1950, the Constitution of India deliberately denied these communities their "indigenous" status for their disputed origins (Shah, 2010) and designated them as Scheduled Tribes (STs), which became a sought-after title today to ensure their political and economic entitlements. Constituting of 8.6 percentage of total population, there are 705 ST communities (which increased from 212 in 1950) in India today.

In the post-independence Indian context, due to the intervention of electoral politics, the traditional political structure underwent transformation and indigenous/tribal citizenship came to be affected by the undergoing changes. Waves of 'development' interventions have been implemented (both by the state and civil societies) in the name of 'progress', 'development' and 'civilization', which, in turn, have simultaneously dispossessed the indigenous/tribals of their resources, language, culture and identity (Nayak, 2001, 2004). As evident from the 'process of dispossession' (Harvey, 2014), the coming of market and multinational companies to tribal areas, for instance, have reduced the tribal land owners to a marginalized status. Such populations were now termed as 'encroachers' and dubbed 'illegal'. The need is to understand the process through which they were marginalized.

Starting with mid 1970's, a number of indigenous groups have emerged, seeking to become instrumental for political mobilization and representation, contributing at a new political consciousness and awareness, referred in terms of 'identity consciousness' or 'identity politics'. In the context of the ever-increasing marginalization and of the indigenous/tribal populations of India, the question of identity becomes of primordial importance ('who we are?'). As the concept of 'identity politics' is linked with marginalization, it can be used to describe phenomena such as multiculturalism, women's movements, Dalit, Adivasi movements, civil rights, lesbian and gay movements, separatist movements and violent ethnic and nationalist conflicts in different parts of the world. The new theories of 'identity- politics' have shifted explanations from 'interests' and 'norms' to identities and solidarities, from the notion of the universal social agent to particularistic categories of concrete persons (Bernstein, 2005: 47-74, Brosio, 2000: 245-301). There has also been remarked a growing consensus to record these groups claims for identity recognition as a means to counteract inequality and oppression. However, the politics of recognition potentially "diverts attention from the struggle for economic inequality and social justice", leaving the prevailing social order intact (Parekh, 2004: 202; also Fraser, 1997).

In India, there has been a growing impetus for tribal/indigenous studies, in various academic disciplines starting from anthropology, sociology, history, development studies,

rural management to environmental studies, so as order to record the distinctive cultural practices of the Adivasis, analyse state-subject making process of the tribes, deconstruct/reconstruct their identities, honor their claims for recognition and to ensure economic equality and social justice. This special issue of the International Review of Social Research aims to engage with the historical, social and political processes which undergo into making of Indian tribes, as well as to explore various critical issues and challenges that this extremely vulnerable section of Indian society today is confronted with nowadays. The research articles included in this special issue dedicated to the Adivasis (Tribal) and Identity Politics in India are organized thematically, on three axes: articles which approach tribal identity, in relation to the socio-cultural and political structures; articles which discuss different aspects of development, from a theoretical as well as empirical viewpoint; and articles which critically discuss the impact of development programmes, that lead to marginalization of these communities.

The first research paper, authored by Prasanna K. Nayak, Rajakishor Mahana and Angelica Marinescu, sheds light on Adivasi Identity, Kingly-citizenship and Ethno-cultural Politics in the Jungle Kingdoms of Odisha. Building on long term ethnographic research of Professor Prasanna Kumar Nayak (1972-2005) and enforced by theoretical underpinnings, the research emphasizes that the Adivasis in the once "Jungle Kingdoms" of Odisha organized community-based rituals and festivals not merely as social groups, lineage groups or clan groups but also as politically organized groups, with the purpose of upholding and renewing the legitimacy over their lands and territories. Even nowadays the use of royal symbols and insignia in ritual rites shows that the authority of the king is of foremost importance in reinforcing their tribal identity and status as legitimate citizens of the state.

The article authored by Jagannath Ambagudia and Sasmita Mohanty, Adivasis, Integration and the State in India: Experiences of Incompatibilities, critically discusses the contemporary dynamics of the integration approach that sought to integrate the Adivasis into the post-colonial and post-independent Indian nation state. Following the approach, though the Indian nation state made a series of commitments to the tribals to ensure equal citizenship rights in social, economic, political and cultural spheres; equal opportunities; and equal rights in preserving and protecting their culture and identity, the Adivasis continue to experience different forms of marginalization, dispossession and deprivation, or even exclusion.

In her article Territorialisation of Ethnic Space: Politics of Identity among the Bodo Tribes of Assam, Himani Ramchiary discusses the "Bodoland" movement in the State of Assam, India, by bringing out the relation between land alienation and the government policies of land allotment used for development purposes. As the author points out, though the Bodoland movement challenges the distribution of autonomy over territory, it enhances the Bodo question of identity and tribal affiliation, as reflected in the imagined boundaries, in connection to the problem of land alienation, rendering it in terms of ethnic space.

In his article The Politics of Difference: Ol-Chiki and Santal Identity in Eastern India, Rajakishor Mahana seeks to explore the role of Santali script (Ol-Chiki) movement in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha in challenging the state hegemony enforcing the tribals to accept and adapt the "ways of being", particularly the language, of the dominant groups. Building on the politics of difference, the paper argues that the Santals' struggle for equal rights of citizenship and distribution along with taking pride in their own tribal identity (especially the linguistic identity) has not merely been in the forms of demands

for some degree of political autonomy but has also led to the growth of subnationalism among the Santals in Eastern India.

Dhiraj Kumar, in his article titled State in Development: De-codify the Cultural Politics of Will to Develop the Adivasi of Jharkhand, examines how state development interventions work and at what social and ecological cost, for the indigenous community of Jharkhand state, India. The paper focuses on the issues regarding the development intervention mediated and facilitated by State and the changes it has brought to local ecology of Jharkhand. Using political ecology framework, the paper argues that the development interventions induced the local communities for state building, albeit at a cost of ecological degradation.

Manas Ranjan Kar approaches the Augmenting of Tribal Economy through Leveraging Common and Private Land, by a series of case studies from the Koraput district of Odisha. While confronted with the loss of forest and agriculture land, a disintegrated economy has a negative consequence on socio-cultural lives of the tribals, leading to marginalization. In this background, the article discusses how leveraging common and private land for agriculture purposes can help the poor and marginalized people in expanding their livelihood base, thus adding to their income. Starting from the observation that livelihood security depends on access to productive assets like land, water and trees, the author shows how facilitation of common and private land in three villages by an Odisha based NGO has helped the marginalized tribal communities in expanding their agricultural activities, thus augmenting their livelihood base.

In her research paper, Community Management of Forests and Social Capital in Tribal and Non-Tribal Villages of Odisha, Ananya Behera examines the role of social capital in community forest management (CFM) among the tribal and non-tribal villages in Koraput district in Odisha. Drawing on the case study method, the paper focuses on the creation of different forms of social capital in the context of Community Management of Forests, both in tribal and non-tribal communities. The outcomes of the research are that CFM has made a substantial contribution to the building of social capital, as bonding, bridging capital, close similarities are observed between the tribal and non-tribal villages. The paper authored by Ranju Hasini Sahoo and Anil Kumar, Understanding Totemism and Environmental Conservation among the Oraons of Madhya Pradesh, emphasizes how traditional knowledge of totemism of the Oraon tribe of Achanakmar- Amarkantak Biosphere supports the conservation of biosphere. The naming of the clan totems after plants, animals, and other objects of daily needs or environment reveals their importance to the biological diversity inevitable for their survival, as well as the need for their conservation. The authors observe how each clan group has its own faith, taboos and practices which protect those species expressed in the form of clan totem, thus helping the conservation of biodiversity and natural resources.

In her research paper Conservation Induced Marginalisation: The Case of Two Tribal Communities of Assam, India, Shapna Medhi explores the relationship between the marginalised tribal communities and their forest. While declaring the protected areas, the conservation plans have mostly overlooked the dependence of these tribes on nature. Thus, the paper approaches the adverse impact of conservation on two tribes, the Karbi and Mishing, residing near the Kaziranga National Park (KNP) of Assam, India. It points out that the case of KNP shows a marked deviation regarding support for conservation by the marginalized communities, while also considering the community related initiatives undertaken on the fringes of the KNP for the betterment of their socio-economic conditions.

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