



Seeding of Separatism in Tribals or *Adivasi* of India

R. Trivedi

Department of Comparative Religion and Philosophy, Demos Foundation Center For Research In Humanities, Shankarrao Kirloskar Marg, Erandwane, Pune.

Email: r.trivedi@demos-foundation.org

ABSTRACT:

India is the most diverse country in Southeast Asia and is home to many ethnic groups, languages, cultures and religions. Despite this remarkable diversity, the Hindu religion is often misunderstood at all levels. This lack of understanding extends to India's lack of understanding of the roots of many separatist groups operating in the region. One of them are missionaries of Christianity that promote isolationism. In India, missionaries of different sects of Christianity work with a view to converting adivasis. In order to convert them into Christianity, they seed the narratives Adivasi are not Hindu, they are indigenous community. In majority areas of tribal population in India, activities of religious conversion are taken up by Christian missionaries. The British Archives reported that influence of Christianity on the tribals began in the Khasi of Meghalaya in 1813; in Urano of Chhota-Nagpur in 1850 and in the Bhils of Madhya Pradesh in 1880. The tribals have been facing the problem of religious conversion for a long time. Many tribal separatist movements are driven by them in name of preserve and protect their unique cultural practices, languages, traditions and ways to life. Project 2030 established in name of "Protecting the rights of Indigenous people in voluntary isolation and initial contact" has a clear aim of separatism of tribals from various parts of the world. In name of indigenous communities they are advocating for recognition of their rights under international law, cultural rights and land rights. Seeking autonomy with hidden agenda of independence to secure these rights and protect against further violations with creates by them only. Overall, the purpose behind separatism in tribes is multifaceted and driven by combination of cultural, economics, historical, and rights based motivation.

Keywords: Tribals of India, Separatist group, Hindu religion, Indigenous people, Project 2030

Separatism as Identity or Politics:

Secessionist theory often refers to politics or promotes the idea of separation or independence of a particular group or region from a larger political entity, such as a state or government. This often involves attempts to create a new state based on ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious, or geographical differences from the dominant group or state. Separatism depends on a sense of identity that is fundamentally irreconcilable with the larger nation. While such movements vary over the degree of autonomy and is to the extent that they are willing to use violence when other means are unsuccessful, they have a common belief that the only means of overcoming oppression is removal of hegemony of oppressor (Audery Kobayashi, 2020). Again, this question varies according to whether secession of separation is a means or an end in itself, and whether secession of separatism involves nationalism. Therefore, the geographical and geographical characteristics of terrorist activities are important for determining how to respond to their targets. The space for radical separation based on geographical interest is very complex and varied.

The key elements of separation theory are mainly developed through the Identity. Remonstrance groups are often driven by a strong sense of distinct identity within a broader local group. These identities may be based on factors such as race, language, religion, or historical grievances. Political Goals also play significant role in the process of separation. The main goal of dissident groups is to achieve autonomy or independence from the central government. These range from seeking greater autonomy for the administrative system to secession and the creation of new administrative organizations. Some examples of separatist movements are Catalonia in Spain, Quebec in Canada, the Basque Country in Spain and France, Scotland in the United Kingdom, and Kurdistan in Iraq, among others. Each of these movements has its unique historical, cultural and political context, which shapes its goals and strategies for achieving autonomy or independence. The causes of separatism lead to Conflicts. That can arise from a variety of factors, including perceived discrimination or exclusion by a dominant group or nation, historical disagreements, cultural and linguistic differences, and economic disparities, new geographical area formation.

Geographers have struggled to develop adequate theories for understanding the politics of identity around radical separatism, especially in situations of violence. Historical materials accounts of the conditions of oppression under which separatist movements have arisen can explain the separation with brutal colonial practices and ongoing denial of the most fundamental human rights.

Seeding of Separatism by British Authors:

From 1735 to 1770, Protestants witnessed and participated in a transatlantic explosion of evangelical revivalism that had an immense impact on indigenous missionary work. Before 1735 only New England Congregationalists had substantial number of native preachers in their missions. Adivasis were seen as a collection of diverse communities located across the subcontinent when Britishers were invaded in India. In the process, they created narration they are were highly neglected and started new ideological subversion, were few never joined. The capturing the mountain, jungles and mines they had made through extensive hunting or used as slaves. They were referred to as "aboriginals" or "early tribes", and among other things, were noted for their clan-based kinship systems and "animistic" religious beliefs. Britishers referring to them as "jungle tribes" (Hardiman, 2006).

In the memorandum of the Census of British India of 1871-72, the tribals were identified as "Aboriginals" or "Aborigines". The Gazette of Bombay Presidency Volume Six, Rewa Kantha, Narukote, Khambhat, and Surat State (1880) in Rewa Kantha Villages of tribal settlements whose huts spread far and wide were identified as "Aboriginal tribes". In the general report on the 1891 Census, Census Commissioner Baines describes the tribals as Aboriginal or Non-Hindu Tribes.

The inhabitants of the former are the different tribes of Bhils, Cols, Gonds, Meenas and Chooars who still live in the forest. In the valley of Sone, Nerbudda and Muhanudde, and in the mountains of Surgooja and Chota-Nagpur. It has retained its original Adivasi culture, religion and linguistic simplicity through all these changes that have shaken India. He seemed to have simple language, faith and good manners (Thompson, 1895).

The different Bhil groups have spread the impact of their religion, culture and underdeveloped world in a small sample of patriarchal areas. They enjoy a life of perfect self-sufficiency, including their own boss, if it is proven, that fifteen thousand bows can be mustered to defend themselves. They are surrounded by high mountains, protected by several fortifications and jungles, and almost heavily defended by the army corps. In fact, we can say that they are still barbarians, because they are actually an indigenous race, if we consider their superstitions, their customs or their language, although Sanskrit had many later derivatives. but their voices are different. The Bhils, Kolis, Gonds and Meenas are just a few examples of rural tribes of India that can be carefully studied to reveal key touchpoints in human history. Even in these places, landscapes and trees, customs and superstitions constitute important points of distinction (Tod, 1839). Tod, one of the first warlords to write about the Bhils, mentions a variety of names by which they are called: *Vanputra* (Children of the Jungle), *Bhumiputra* (sons of the earth), *Mairote* (born of the mountain), *Gond* (lord of the caves), and *Pal-Indra* (lord of the pass) (Tod, 1914).

George Abraham Grierson served in the Indian Civil Service, but his interest in linguistics led him to study the languages and myths of India. According to him, it often happened that the local tribal language was replaced by the Indo-Aryan language. Also, the foreigners gave many names to the Bhils to identify them. Because of their darker skin, they were known as Kaliparaj or blacks. However, Bhil, Sanskrit "Bhila" is a full name. Ethnically, they are sometimes called Dravidians, but also Munds (George, 1907).

Grigson omitted all references to Adivasi religious icons, considering them to be meaningless. According to him, it is impossible to know when his religion ceases to be common or when he becomes Hindu. The percentage of indigenous people returning as animists or tribal members according to their religion has fluctuated according to the censuses conducted in different states. Nor was it an accurate reflection of the tribal religious form of Hinduism. Many have been based on how different researchers have approached this question (Grigson, 1944).

The concept of a "living culture" was developed by the anthropologist Edward Burnett Tyler in his book *Primitive Culture* (1871). In this work he describes as a general principal spirits and other spiritual beings in general. According to Tyler, existentialism usually involves interest in the longer life and part of nature (Tylor, 1871).

During 1871, Henry Waterfield, Census Commissioner, categorized the "Aborigine". And they had the appearances of tribe, who is said to have worshiped demons or some local deities such as the village god, agriculture and goddesses of the forest, and found in the shires among the Aborigine races, different Aborigines are identified. Their cultural life is seen contrarily from the rest of the people, such Aborigine people are mostly found in the hills and forest area (Waterfield, 1875).

In 1881, W. Chichele Plowden, Census Commissioner for India, redefined as "Aboriginal", that communities follow the primitive faith of their ancestors, as the representative of the deity, under various forms or images chosen by them, to be given first place in all their customs by the Aboriginals. For the religious believes they documented as there is a serious flaw, then it is in the purity of the number of people who are true worshipers of nature, because every work is done with the character of nature, which is why the community living a natural life is an Aboriginal race (Plowden, 1883). During 1893, "Aboriginal" term continued but added this form of life cannot live apart from each-other, as they have inherent land (Baines, 1893). In 1901, first time "Animism" term as used and defined as the belief in the existence of spirits or animists. The aboriginal community is the one who brings souls first in all festivals from the work of agriculture to their ancestors (Risley and Gait, 1903).

Census Commissioner E.A. Gait identified "Animist" and "Animism communities" of different parts of India have been referred to as the same name and traditional identity, with that community naturally showing a different identity during the census year 1911. Honouring the different dialects, regions, customs, nature and lifestyles of the animism community is their way of life and their livelihood. In 1921, the Census Commissioner J.T. Martin was reformed to "Tribal religions". Tribal inhabitants have been separated into a large number of poor independent communities, each with its own social organization, customs, social norms and tribal social contexts such as priests performing rituals in birth, marriage and death. Their beliefs have been described as animist type (Marten, 1923). Narration of major separation is started by this census where tribal religion and Hindu religion are separated and define differently. Meanwhile, in 1931 J. H. Hutton continued with narration as "primitive religion" which is discouraged by Hindu, largely since

they have prejudice towards business and food which is prohibited by Hindu. Under these circumstances, non-Hinduism is excluded from the total castes of the hill and wild primitives (Hutton and Singh, 1933). Last British Census during the year 1941 of Commissioner M.W.M. Yeatts identified the names given in the earlier census and classified them as "Tribal" and considered as aboriginal groups that live in hills and forests of the country (Yeatts, 1943).

Separatism and geographical change:

Separatism can lead to complex geographical changes that extend beyond mere political autonomy. These changes can impact regional stability, socio-economic well-being of population. Separatism on base of religion and community belief results in demographic changes, such as population movements or resettlements with establishment of new political entity (Miller, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 1762). Historically in India, tribal communities have been affected by various separatist movements, particularly in states like Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Nagaland, Manipur and trios of Madhya Pradesh-Rajasthan-Gujarat. These movements often intersect with historical grievances related to land rights, resources exploitation influencing the dynamics of tribal autonomy. Many international agencies are working on tribal rights movements and supporting protection of the rights of Indigenous people in voluntary isolation and initial contact for their land rights movement. North-East part of India is suffered with this from centuries. Fundamentally, these agencies are promoting international cooperation and partnerships to support efforts to protect isolated indigenous peoples increasing their strengthen mechanisms for their safeguarding across the borders. International legal support for establishing separatism of land along with FPIC (Free, Prior and Informed consent) model (Morelli, M; D Rohner, 2015). Western Christianity has absorbed western thought-forms, with emphasised between function of missionary and sensitive anthropology. Several other filed of mission that suggesting "ethno sensitivity" by preserving culture (which is already destroyed by them many century ago) shows "anthropologically-developed roles" as caretaker of indigenous culture¹.

¹Friedrich Dierks, 'Communication and World View', *Missionalia*, vol. 11, no. 2, August, 1983, p. 49.

The latter suggestion is remarkable useful. They employed new person that play the role of "insider" and "outsider". Insider role is one where the missionary gains acceptance as a true member of the society and an outsider role, one where missionary accepts their alienness and attempts to provide services¹. Strategies for socio-political organization shows rationale for claiming human rights but change dramatically when territorially biased. Diasporic identity are considerably more potentially powerful because of their global scale goals. Surely, these has been more important or compelling challenge to political geographers. These groups are come with politics of difference agenda, that for rights-seeking groups refers to political movements that use recognition of shared historical experiences as a basis of social recognition as well assimilationists view the politics on the basis for separation.

Project 2030:

For separatism, the conference of intellectual persons, geo-politicians, ecologist, anthropologist organised. These parties also recognised that indigenous rights are the heart of conservation and started to new narration for conversion. As of now it is not only a matter of human rights but also backed by scientist research that indigenous people are the honest stewards of nature. Some international organisation, also the world memorialises and marks the 9th of August as the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, which completes around four decades. This becomes marked day for all Tribals of world, including India. One question is what is 'Indigenous'? There are 10.42 crore Indians who are notified as "Scheduled Tribes" (ST), of which 1.04 crore live in urban India (Prasad, A. 2022). The western narrative states that the "Indigenous are those who are suppressed by an invading and occupying majority by dispossessing them of their land and resources". In Indian social history, these 'Indigenous' groups have much longer histories of residence compared with white settlers who inhabit their land in these continents. The agricultural practices in India by these tribal people are already documented by Britishers. The life style of these groups are always with nature and having sustainable approach. To explained further forms of separatism on the basis of this is global forum organises various country-wise chapters and execute same old theory of leadership (Village leader appointed as chapter coordinator). The goal of the project 2030 is not just to separating the people for their "new land", "new rights" but also for "new religion".

¹Louis J. Luzbetak, 'Unity in Diversity: Ethnotheological Sensitivity in Cross-Cultural Evangelism', *Missiology*, vol. IV, no. 2, April, 1976, pp. 207-15.

All this can be linked surprisingly to the International Labour Organization (ILO) convention on indigenous tribal people whose articles 1 (a) and (b)3 established the ideas of separation of socio-cultural identities from the national community and loss of land due to colonial conquest. Unfortunately, such a false narrative brings to the fore the ills of some extremists, Christian missionary and anti-national movements, which fixated the upon causing a demographic shift in India that lead to geo-political destabilisation.

Conclusion:

The Christian missionaries, during British period, provided education medical facilities therefore tribal people were attracted by them later missionaries chosen headman of the tribal groups to convert the whole community into Christianity. These headman with other intellectual groups established the systematic narrations about Adivasi are indigenous community, they are differ than other Indian culture. After these conversion for separatism, new activities of violence took place in name of religion for retaining the antagonistic relation of missionaries and global indigenous forum. It was observed that the tribes in India practice *Vaghdevta*, *Vandevta*, *Surydev*, *Dhartimata*, *Varun devta*, *Hanuman* which was initially identified as Animistic religion, but due to non-existence of their written historical records, they were often became the victims of misapprehension of their earlier religious faith and undergo the process of conversion. The process of conversion ends with social partition, political separation, that breakup of a nation-state and the creation

of successor states in its place. This approach is established by interstate global set of political sovereign groups with extreme supreme authority. They treats tribes as subjects with imperial authority, rules over tribal people for large separation movements. These movements failed in India within a centuries, among other things, but internal ideological conflicts were cultivated successfully that effect changes in nonterritorial nationalist movements to establish a sense of collective “new identity of tribals of India”.

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