INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT SOCIOLOGY & HUMANITIES



ISSN 2277 – 9809 (online)
ISSN 2348 - 9359 (Print)

An Internationally Indexed Peer Reviewed & Refereed Journal

www.IRJMSH.com
www.isarasolutions.com

Published by iSaRa Solutions

Tribal Life and Ecology: A Historical Analysis of State Forest Policies during Colonial and Post-Colonial Chotanagpur Up to 1960s.

Reena
Department -Political science
Miranda house college
Email - reena27101998@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

The study of environmental history of contemporary world has become important as a natural and inevitable result of a perceived 'environmental crisis'. This perception has resulted in the development of a broad area called Environmental Studies. In this broad area, 'Environmental History' remains a critically important area of inquiry. It is well known that history is essentially a continuous dialogue between the past and the present. Historians give voice to the silences of the archives. The present study throws light on one of the emerging frontiers of historical research. One significant area where the recent approach of historians has yielded result is what has come to be called 'history of the environment'. What is environmental history? Is a complex question and there is no simple answer. But for our general understanding we can say that the origins of environmental history are firmly rooted in social, cultural or economic history, history of science and technology, history of health or beyond.

There are several historical narratives which show that Concern for the environment has always been there in human society. Mauryan Kings of India adopted a highly organized system of forest reserves and elephant protection.[xviii] Similarly, indigenous strategies for environmental management on a small scale, often involving a considerable understanding of environmental processes, had existed in many parts of the world since time immemorial. Historians and philosophers of the past were aware that the natural environment plays an important role in how humans behave, relate to one another, and organize themselves. Historians since Herodotus have understood the value of geography and the environment in the understanding of human societies. W.G. Palmer has opined that the works of Braudel, Bodin, Montesquieu, and Machiavelli may be connected and seen as constituting the foundations of environmental history.[xix]

In ancient India, forests were regarded as abodes of spiritual solace and the concept of preserving forest and wildlife developed around the ashrams of sages. These forest-based ashrams propagated a forest culture and human understanding of the fundamental ecological utility of forest ecosystems and their economic importance, which led to trees and animals being treated with veneration.[xx] The protection of elephants had become serious business by the time of Mauryas. The Arthasastra mentions rules for protecting elephant forests. Babur a keen observer of wildlife gives interesting information about this in his memoir.

Conservationist urge became more pronounced after the industrial revolution that transformed the rural and urban landscapes of Europe. The loss of trees and changing landscapes created space for ideas of the romantic world of nature. Leading literary figures like William Wordsworth and John Ruskin contributed to the setting up of environmental societies in Europe. These organizations supported 'back to the land' movement in Europe.

The United States is very rich in environmental history as a separate sub-discipline. It was there that self-conscious environmental history first began to take shape. George Perkins Marsh,

arguably the first modern environmental historian of the world belongs to United States. Marsh in his work *man and nature*, published in 1864 warned that the environmental disaster that had once divested the old world might well threaten the New World too. He singled out the urgent need of protecting the Adirondack Mountains which contain the head-waters of several of New York's most important rivers, including the Hudson. Such direct concern for the environment or its impact on human societies was, however, rare among professional historians until the 1970s. Barring a few exceptions, until the mid-1970s historians have, by and large, indirectly addressed various environmental or ecological issues while writing economic, social and cultural histories of various types.

In the modern times, number of turns are visible in the pattern of mainstream history writing, accommodating more inter-disciplinary elements and approaches. Environmental history has benefited in recent years from these recent shifts in history writing. The steady expansion of environmental history has given it a separate identity as a sub-discipline. Environmental history has survived the initial unfriendliness it met from the mainstream discipline. The sub-field is now growing and it is being treated with respect and admiration not only by historians but also by scholars belonging to other disciplines.

Present State of Work in This Field

The work that set a global agenda for environmental history was the 1967 book *Traces on the Rhodian Shore* by Clarence Glacken. Glacken was a geographer and not a historian. Number of scholars, following in Glacken's Footsteps, made environmental history intellectually acceptable in the United States. A Major English contribution was *Man and the Natural World* by Keith Thomas (1983). With the publication of Alfred Crosby's *Ecological Imperialism* in 1986, the subject reached another landmark. However, the continents of Asia and Africa did not properly feature in any of these works.[xxi]

In South Asia, environmental history began to emerge in the late 1980s. A series of books and articles brought forth this new quest for an environmental history of South Asia. Two of the earliest articles were written by North Americans, Robert K. Winters, a professional Forester, the other a radical Indianist and political historian, Richard Tucker. Tucker aimed at drawing a link between nationalist protest and the colonial forest policy in western India.[xxii] With his article the whole pace of work changed and in early 1980s writers from a variety of disciplines started to construct a coherent agenda in the environmental history of South and South-East Asia. From this time onwards, environmental history and the forest history of India in particular became intensely politicized. A number of scholars in India, the Duke University, and Oxford approached the subject from different directions. While the Duke project focused more on agrarian changes and land use in the tropics and its impact on environment, researchers in India concentrated on the history of resistance to the colonial Forest policy and the ideological content of that policy.[xxiii]

Ramchandra Guha in his articles and subsequently in his books opined that in the pre-British period there was little or no interference with the customary use of forest and forest produce. Thus, Guha views colonial forest policy and conservation as primarily driven by the materialistic consideration of serving the strategic and revenue interest of the British Empire. In opposition to the argument propounded by Gadgil and Guha that the imperial needs for timber and shipbuilding propelled scientific forestry with its associated bureaucracy, Richard Grove argues that colonial conservationism was based on humanist concerns motivated by growing deforestation and drought. Grove opines that it was desiccationism that promoted the idea of forest conservancy in the colonies. Grove plays down the importance of imperialist or capitalist greed behind the forest policy and focuses on the other considerations which were more humane.[xxiv]

Mahesh Rangarajan, in his work *Fencing The Forest*:conservation and ecological change in India's central provinces, suggests that a convergence of ideas was indeed the case and does not see simple polarities between the two sets of ideas. He writes that the desiccationist fear had only a limited impact and was only one of the influences that shaped the course of the early nineteenth-century Indian Forestry. Ajay Skaria in his book, *Hybrid Histories: Forest, Frontiers and Wilderness in Western India* views forest conservancy which emerged out of the desiccationist discourses also as a part of the broader 'civilising mission' of imperialism. Skaria disagrees with Grove and says that the agenda of forest conservancy was not 'innocent of colonial domination'. D.D. Dangwal, in *'Scientific Forestry and Forest Management in colonial and post colonial India'*, sum up the view of Skaria and showed how desiccationism was frequently used by the state of extend control over the central Himalayan Forest (Uttarakhand).

We now review Richard Grove's work on the origin of modern environmentalism from a South Asian perspective. Credit goes to the work of Grove, First *Green Imperialism* and then *Ecology, Climate and Empire: The Indian Legacy in Global Environmental History*. Modern environmentalism now can be traced as far back as AD 1500 As a result of Richard Grove's unique departure is his attempt to link modern environmental thought with the mental and colonial expansion of Europe during AD 1500-1860. Colonial expansion thus becomes a double-edged sword for him. Firstly, it created an imbalance in the vast part of the world in economic and ecological terms. Secondly, initial 'modern' thought was made possible by the specific contribution of European science, which was variously attached to colonial expansion.

The search for environmental ideas has a long history. Grove emphasizes the importance of the oceanic island 'Eden' as a vehicle of the new conception of nature. During this period (between 15th & 19th century), Grove identifies two major influence which are broadly 'cultural'. First, conservationist practices could not be distinguished from the complex web of economic, religious and cultural arrangements.[xxv] Second, the search for 'Eden' was a phenomenon whose roots lay in a complex mixture of European, Arabic and Indian Philosophical traditions.[xxvi] The book contained description of plants in the East and India, from which medicines sold in Europe were extracted. This text was hostile to European and Arabic knowledge and gave more importance to accurate local knowledge. Grove finds the 1760-1857 as a period of gradual emergence of state conservationism. Grove agrees that, on balance, indigenous knowledge and afforestation methods significantly contributed to the company's environmental policy, though finally these get a less important position in his analogy. During this period, deforestation was linked with the state of agriculture, health and climate.[xxvii] The Grove's thesis brings the colonial framework from the periphery to the central focus in explaining the origins of modern environmentalism. For him, modern environmentalism is the child of European science and colonial experience as well as knowledge.

Three major criticisms for Grove's work can be summarized as: first, he is restrained about the ecological imperialism of Europe, particularly its for-reaching impact on the natural, economic and cultural life of the colonies. Secondly, Grove does not distinguish pre-colonial deforestation from that of the colonial ones, notwithstanding his emphasis on ecological imbalance during 1500-1860. Finally, he has talked about the combination of two knowledge systems in the birth of modern environmentalism, but throughout his work he has maintained a structural pre-eminence of the western knowledge system. The cultural issue is not resolved by this account; it is only heightened. In the final analysis, Grove approached the global and local issues that make up modern environment in South Asia in the broadest sense of the term, more from the global than from the local point of view.

This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India work by Gadgil and Guha one of the first comprehensive societies as well-adjusted caste institutions that regulated resource use where each community occupied a specific ecological niche in society. The book lays stress on prudence and projects the modes of resource use in tribal societies as a part of the hunting-gathering economies that included shifting cultivation. Even though shifting cultivation is considered a part of the hunting-gathering mode of resource use, the links between hunting, gathering and cultivation practices are seldom alluded to in the model promoted by these authors. This is mainly because the economies are projected as stable and mutually exclusive closed systems that are based on prudent use of resources. They harm ecology in a minimal way because their resource use is centred on small populations, limited needs and socio-cultural practices that regulated resource use. Using early anthropology they describe nature worship, sacred groves, taboos and other practices as regulatory factors in resource use.[xxviii] In this way ecological roles and niches were also representative of a particular socio-cultural identity that a community possessed. This work has explained how industrialized economies, whether socialist or capitalist were seen as having an equally devastating impact on the environment and its relationship with the tribals. Authors argue that some hunting-gathering practices (which are considered as harmonious forms of natural resource use) still exist amongst the tribals of Mizoram and Manipur, and are evident in the prevalence of sacred groves and wood lots that promote prudent use of resources. It is for this reason that 'environmentalism of the poor' argues that the state should withdraw from the business of resource management and leave it to community institutions that have managed these resources for long.

Sumit Guha's book *Environment and Ethnicity in India*, examines the people of the Vindhdri, Sahyadri, Satpura and Satmala of Western India over the past few centuries. In analyzing the forest politics of the early modern period and the complex political economy of the region, Guha theoretically engaged with the terms, 'indigenous' and 'tribe', in the process arguing that an uncritical adoption of these categories is not supported by historical records. This exercise is a problematic one, for while he is aware of the political implications of these terms (noting that the use of these very categories determines the entitlements of people, for example, displaced in recent times by dam projects), Guha condemns their usage as being historically inaccurate. But while Guha's revisionism has achieved prominence, he is by no means alone or indeed a pioneer in his revisionism. Indeed, Indian nationalists have traditionally been suspicious of such claims to an authentic 'indigenous' status and their critique of tribal or ethic claims for identity and autonomy have in recent times been co-opted by right-wing proponents of the nation state based on the notion of a unified national culture and a singular national history. Despite these often sinister developments, Guha was preserved in his dismissal of the historical validity of 'tribal' identities. Indeed, he appears to sympathize with the position of the assimilationist sociologist G..S Ghurye, who held the position that adivasi, were part of mainstream Hindu culture and needed to be totally assimilated. In his book Guha looks at the processes, strategies and risks involved in state-formation in the rugged Jungle lands bordering the prosperous plains and wealthy ports of Western India. Guha finds a long history of active participation by isolated tribal peoples in the politics of their regions which was curtailed only by the centralizing drive of the colonial state. He beautifully deals how forest people express their outlooks and aspirations. These are then related to their response to the colonial regime. Its divergent social and political consequences for different groups in the forest areas are analysed. Author had also examined the nature and impact of state policies aimed at the 'welfare' of forest communities before and after the Independence, as well as their interactions with broader social and political changes.

James Beattie in his book *Empire and Environmental Anxiety: Health, Science, Art and Conservation in South Asia and Australasia, (1800-1920),* writes "Imperial environmental history cannot be studied without recourse to considering together subtler ideas about environment, conservation, landscape and health." So argues James Beattic in this forceful new study of those ecological calamities that he labels "anxietics." Focusing on South Asia and Australasia, Beattic claims that trappings of modernity-urbanization, industrialization, pollution, migration, etc. led to an increase in concern for the environment that contributed to the development of scientific bureaucratic institutions throughout the region.

The issue of health proved to be of primary concern to many of the nineteenth-century scientists who worked in India and Australasia. Particularly in tropical climates, fear of general "miasma" was in evidence. Miasma could mean many things-climate, fog, vegetation, swamps, all were potentially harmful to an individual's well-being. As the author notes, "the long standing European recognition that health depended on the interaction of environment and people, climates and constitutions, led to large-scale investigations of newly encountered environments through medical topography as well as monitoring by settlers of any change to their own bodies in response to environmental influences."

Urbanization led to further anxieties. Sewage filled the streets of cities across the region, and air pollution became problematic. Urban medical experts increasingly pushed beautification plans, with many believing "that modifications of behaviour and environment (such as through park making and tree planting, sanitation) could help return areas to their former state of healthiness."

Half may through the book, author switches subjects, focusing individual scientists, first from Scotland, and then from Germany. After 1833, medical students at the University of Edinburgh were required to take course in natural history; this gave them an advantage over other European students. Further he describes the importance of the study of natural history. Then he discusses the influence of German Foresters. Relying on the work of Richard Grove he describes the critical impact of India's first three Inspector-General of Indian Forest Service (IFS), all of whom were German. As he notes, "in India, German – trained scientists effectively developed the foundation of state forest conservation laid by Scottish-trained doctors, moving it into a far more professional footing."

The Germans were replaced by the Americans in terms of influence, as Beattic turns his focus directly to deforestation and desertification. Colonial solutions for deforestation were directed away from the climatic and more toward the hydrological, with an increasing sense that scientific, government-run forest services were the only model for controlling the losses of forest. The IFS became the model for Australia and New Zealand.

The author concludes with a fascinating look at the anxieties caused by shifting sands. As he perceptively points out, desertification had a fundamental effect on the way a nation or an area reflected upon itself. Desert and spreading sands represented the antithesis of all that settlement promised. The Author also talks about the experimentation with the reclamation of ravines proved moderately successful in North India. Lacking only the study of individual line peasants and tribal people and their –anxieties, good reacherched book, to the rise of scientific bureaucracy in the British Empire.

Environmentalism : A Global History by Ramchandra Guha, presents a global history of environmental movement. Its focus is not on the nature and extent of environmental degradation, rather, this is a historical account and analysis of the origins and expressions of environmental concerns, of how individual and institutions have perceived, propagated, and acted upon their

experience of environmental decay. This book is a reflection of human action against environmental degradation. This book goes beyond the literary appreciation of landscapes and the scientific analysis of species. Author argues that environmentalism must be viewed as a social program, a charter of action which seeks to protect habitats, protest against their degradation, and prescribe less destructive technologies and lifestyles.

This book is mainly divided into two parts. the first part deals with first wave of environmentalism, the initial response to the onset of industrialization and the second part deals with the second wave, when a largely intellectual response was given shape and force by public support. In first part of this book, author writes about how the perception of an environmental crisis came in front of human society with growing industrialization in Europe and how this perception was seized upon by the first wave of environmentalism, tracing their evolution and expression across centuries and continents. Part I of this book deals with British tradition and Part II begins with an analysis of American trends as the United Kingdom was the home of the original Industrial Revolution, while the US had led the world in the later elaboration of the Industrial way of life. This book provides a trans-national perspective on the environmental debate, by comparing and contrasting historical processes in six continents.

Situation in Colonial and Post Colonial India

It has been assumed by some historians that the colonial experience was not only highly destructive in environmental terms but that its very destructiveness had its roots in ideologically 'imperialist' attitudes towards the environment.[xxix] The great expansion of European maritime travel and settlement which took place after about 1400 stimulated the emergence of a new and much more complex way of viewing the relationship between man and nature. This involved at least two main kinds of change. Firstly, the capacity of man to radically alter his physical surroundings, and Secondly, the experience of encountering new lands, peoples, animals and plants helped to promote the attachment of a new kind of social significance to nature; reflected especially in the philosophies underlying the transfer to, and development of the middle eastern idea of the botanical as an important new social metaphor and image of nature on its own account.[xxx] In Europe rising population levels, expansion in arable agriculture and demand for timber for urban development and shipbuilding all imposed considerable pressure on the environment of their colonies.

Colonial intervention in India was motivated to some extent by what may be called 'Social Darwinism'. Darwin's thesis strengthened the European's belief that extinction of barbarian tribes and communities through natural selection in the form of their clash with advanced technological societies was an inevitability.[xxxi] So was the surrender of barbarian nature of the East to Western Industrial agencies. Indian Jungles were an important venue for the Europeans to perform their sacred duties of ruling the nature. By the time they established themselves in this country, wildlife in England had almost vanished.[xxxii] It was the Colonialist British that for the first time rejected the Asiatic notion of mutual survival of both trees and men and their inter-productive existence. They disturbed this natural equilibrium first by encouraging cultivation through forest clearance for maximization of land revenue and then by introducing organized forestry for commercial timber production, viz., the sal and deodar which were in great demand for making railway sleepers.

The first objective of the British in settling the jungle mahals in 1767 was to compensate for losses in the plains due to revenue remissions necessitated by floods and droughts.[xxxiii] It was also hoped that additional benefits would come through expansion of commercial agriculture. From 1770's until about 1860 due to fluctuating demand for naval and military (plus some urban

construction), timber represented the main significant commercial and demand factor in British Forest Policy in India. This position was quickly changed when the need for railway sleepers suddenly became significant, indeed dominant at the beginning of the 1860's. The resulting and increasingly extensive search for timber after 1800 in remote, especially mountain districts, bestowed a double benefit on the company, since the need to acquire control over timber resources facilitated the control of unruly tribal groups. This was the case, for example, with the Dangs Bhils in the western Ghats, the Paharia of the Rajmahals hills of Jharkhand and the Rampa tribal groups in North Arcot near Madras.[xxxiv] Resistance by these and other groups to company incursions was periodically controlled by direct suppression by armed force, so that timber could then be removed without further difficulty. The outbreak of the long naval conflict with the French, however, shifted the focus of incipient environmental concern away from Bengal and towards the Malabar coast. The Malabar forests, particularly after the loss of the American sources of supply after 1776, hade come to be heavily drawn upon by both indigenous Indian merchants and the Royal Navy for shipbuilding purposes. The defeat of Tipu Sultan enormously increased shipbuilding activity and more important in terms of Indian Forest History, for the first time allowed unimpeded access to the forests of Malabar and Mysore and thus to a steady supply of teak. The easy access permitted to both British and Indian entrepreneurs under East India Company as a consequence of the political demise of the old west coast princedoms was a critical factor in accelerating deforestation.[xxxv]

The formation of a new conservancy in the Bombay presidency in 1847 and the establishment of Gibson as its first conservator constituted a major turning point in the development of British Colonial Policy towards the environment and its degradation, not only in India but in a much wider context. Forest conservation offered the government opportunities for more direct control over virgin land and over 'tribal' people.

Military annexation of Punjab in 1849 provided the context for a pioneering attempt at state arboriculture in North-West India. The detailed planning for this enterprise, provided the first field experience of state forestry for Dalhousie. The annexation of Sind by Charles Napier provided an opportunity to set up an embryonic forest administration based directly upon the infrastructure of Shikargahs, or game and forest reserves. One of the earliest measures taken by Napiers new forest administration was to open the forest. Expansion in state forest control almost always took place at the expense of traditional rights and customs over forests and grazing. the desire to control rebellious minority tribal groups and to secure a sustained supply of cheap timber encouraged this expansion.[xxxvi]

The 'centre', of course, interpreted destruction of forests in its own way. It blamed the ignorant and desperate Indians and their subsistence rights in forests for the deforestation. state control over forests was suggested as the way out. Colonial intrusion into the forests of Bengal started officially in 1864 when the first conservator of forests was appointed. The next year the first Indian Forest Act was passed creating artificial notions of 'core and buffer' and placing the forests under revenue department. Reservation of forests started in 1874 and within ten years most of the reserve forests were 'gazetted'. This was accompanied by Wildlife Preservation Act (1873) and the Elephant Preservation Act (1879). Forests were now completely ruled by the centre, and were prohibited to the Indian Forest Dwellers of the country. The centre thought it necessary both for commercial purpose and for its increasing hold over the subaltern society which would be a very important part of its task of rural penetration and state making. Next important milestone in the issue of ownership and control over forestlands was the Indian Forest Act, 1927, which is still in force.[xxxvii] The most striking feature of the law of 1927 – which classified forests into reserved,

protected and village forests – is that it does not classify forests according to their biological value, but according to the rights of people. An analysis of these provisions shows that the state enjoys absolute ownership and control over bio-resources in the forests, and the forest settlement officers enjoys arbitrary power to settle the rights in reserved, protected or village forests. The rights of local people are severely constricted and their control over the bio-resources of their area is minimal. This act has been amended occasionally by state and central governments to increase their control over the forests. Under the Act, no local people are entitled and, in most cases, they are to be evicted from the reserved forest areas. The act specified that clearing land for agriculture is prohibited or reserved and protected forests unless the forest settlement officer who excluded this area from the demarcated forest recognizes such a right. Any person contravening this provision is liable to penalty and is an 'encroacher'.[xxxviii] Such situation in Indian forest area generated conflict between the people and the modern state, since a large number of the disadvantaged depend on them for their survival.

History shows that sate control, ownership, and classification of forest produce has remained virtually unchanged since colonial times. Forest produce was classified into major and minor produce in the mid-nineteenth century after the formation of the forest department. At that time the criteria of classification were based on the method of extraction of the product and its commercial value, which was established through demand in the world market. Thus, the Indian Forest Act defined fuel wood and timber as 'major' produce whereas all grasses and non-timber, forest produce were classified as 'minor produce.' But by early twentieth century, it was amply clear that the state was interested in the regulation of non-timber or minor forest produce so it could maximize its revenue from the forest department. In order to do this, the state-established monopoly over non-timber forest produce continued in the early post-colonial period.[xxxix]

In the post colonial period issues related to environment and forest became more complicated and complex. It is, in fact, a struggle between the powerful 'centre' and the powerless 'periphery'. The first post-colonial statement on forests, the National Forest Policy 1952, supported the view that priorities of forest management must subordinate themselves to larger national goals, more specifically the industrialization of the nation. 'National needs' were in turn defined in terms of raising plantations for industrial uses and 75 percent of the expenditure was for the production of forestry. A big programme was introduced in the third five-year plan to clear existing forests and to create mono-plantations for industry.[xl] Such situation led to number of environmental conflicts between state and people after independence; one big example is Chipko movement.

Experience of the Indian Periphery with water resources was more or less similar. In colonial India the Britishers helped drying up water reserves. Cornwallis settlements deprived the tenants of their traditional rights to dig ponds and so the British were responsible for this natural degradation.[xli]

After 1947, big dams which Nehru welcomed as 'the temples of modern India' were erected in the country mainly for irrigating upper lands producing cash crops and for hydroelectric power generation. Interests of the powerless were neglected and the dams were built up under misdirected planning by dominant authorities. It was thus natural that the projects were carried out at the cost of deforestation, hilling of wild animals as was reported from Koyna and Panchet.[xlii] Venkat d. Reddy has highlighted the extent of degradation of forests in South India due to construction of dams. Reddy has estimated the loss of forest lands to river valley projects during the period 1851-76 at 0.49 million hectares which was roughly 10 per cent of the area irrigated by canal.[xliii] The Chipko movement and the Narmada Bachao Andolan are the best examples of

people's environmentalism in the Indian Periphery as against that of the Indian Centre.

Thus we find the thrust of the post-colonial Indian State continued to be the reinforcement of this near-monopoly of the state over forests and their use for revenue and commercial purposes, and the alienation of tribal and forest dweller groups from their traditional rights over forests and forest produce took on a new momentum. There is a long history of conservationist attempts to keep people out of 'protected' areas. This is true of princely India, it is true of British India, and it is true of Independent India. Although the extent and rationale for curtailed local access to and use of forest resources varies enormously in each of these contexts, state attempts to retain control over forested areas has remained a constant feature of Indian conservation over the centuries (Rangarajan 2000). After six decades of our Independence we can see a complete lack of local engagement in resource management.

So, due to the advent of Industrialization and modernization on Indian mainland lives of diverse communities of the woodlands have had several diverse effects on their social, political and economical life. In post independent India growing mining and industrial belts in and around heavily forested areas left those forest people with only two choices, either transform themselves into a settled peasantry or became a laborer in such mining or industrial area. In such a historical process, lords of forest became the lords of land in modern India i.e. Santhal and Munda tribe of Chotanagpur became a rich peasantry class in due course.

Colonial and Post Colonial Situation in Chotanagpur

Chotanagpur is very rich in forests. They are spread over about 12,000 square miles of the Division. The districts of Hazaribagh, Singhbhum, Palamau and Ranchi have the largest Forest areas. About 75 percent of the total forest area of the state is located in these districts. Uptill the year 1855, practically no attention had been paid in India towards forests conservation. It was in that year that Dalhousie Formulated a forest policy and took steps to initiate a proper forest department. It was high time for the establishment of such departments in different parts of the country. Indian Forest Act VII of 1878 divided the forests into two main classes: "Reserved Forests" and "Protected Forests". Before forests could be constituted into either Reserved or protected forests; they had to be selected for regular settlement by a forest settlement officer, who enquired into the existence of the public and private rights. In the case of reserved forests, the existing rights were settled, transferred or commuted; in the case of protected forests the rights were simply recorded and regulated. This act defined what constituted offences in the case of Reserved Forests and what might be constituted as offences by the special orders in the case of protected forests.

British rule significantly affected the livelihood pattern of Chotanagpur, particularly tribal people's economy. Prior to the British annexation they normally enjoyed customary access to all forest produce. They could also clear the forest for extension of cultivation with the increase of population and to graze their cattle. These practices were regulated by the village headman. This was to change under the British when the government embarked on a policy of direct intervention in local agrarian practices, particularly in its attempts to replace shifting cultivation with settled agriculture. One of the major changes that we may therefore associate with British rule was the separation that it brought about between the forest and settled cultivation.[xliv] In 1860s, the government made the first attempts to control Singhbhum's Forests and restrict the traditional access to the forests in the interests of preserving its timber.

The advent of railways created an enormously inflated demand for fuel and timber for railway sleepers. In 1885, it was officially estimated that the Singhbhum Forests were capable for yielding 5,000 mature trees per annum.[xlv] The opening of the Bengal-nagpur railway for goods

traffic in 1890-1891 and the extension of the Railway Bareilly-Benaras Railway boosted the timber trade. A large quantity also went to Sunderbans for boat building.

In 1895, the conservator of forests issued licenses to each village headman for hunting, shooting, fishing or trapping animals in reserved and protected forests of Chotanagpur. Thus we see the entire life of tribal people were regulated through various forest act in colonial India.

Another problem associated with colonial rule was that outsiders in Chotanagpur, gradually came to control the forest-based economy of the tribals. Presence of outsiders was not new during colonial period but the role of outsiders changed during colonial period, they now became contractors for British Raj. Although the land acquisition act of 1894 prohibited transfer of tribal lands to non-tribals, the sate could secure access to village lands on the grounds that industrial development would serve a public purpose.

In Chotanagpur, the most significant change associated with the colonial period was the expansion of settled cultivation, in the late nineteenth century. This constituted one of the methods in which the early colonial administration sought to consolidate its control over the tribal people of the region. But according to K.S. Singh the transition to settled agriculture was facilitated by the use of iron implements and the plough. These has transformed the tribal groups in Chotanagpur into settled peas out communities. He further argued that this process may have been aided by the imitation of the agricultural practices of peasant communities such as Kurnis, Ahirs and Koeris who had migrated into the region.[xlvi]

Vinita Damodaran with the help of colonial government reports has explained what was the process that led to the marginalization of many local forest communities in Chotanagpur. She writes that the dominant trend in the colonial period in Chotanagpur was one of deforestation is not surprising given the fact that the landscape that evolved under colonial rule clearly expressed British attempts to dominate the Forests, mineral and water sources in the interest of production and profit.

Forest and Woodland Changes in Chotanagpur (1870-90)

(In hectares)

Chotanagpur Pleateau	1870	1890
Dhanbad	10,382	9,794
Hazaribagh	31,6,408	3,06,495
Palamau	5,55,413	5,30,025
Santhal Pargana	3,08,138	1,77,577
Singhbhum	2,74,258	2,44,826
Total	**18,08,916**	**16,07,466**

Source : J.f. Richard et.al, 'Changing Land use in Bihar, Punjab and Haryana 1850-1970, Modern Asian Studies

In the nineteenth century many Indian communities were disturbed by the advent of the railways and the inroads of private capital. Such disruptions often destroyed traditional economies, dislocating customary patterns of living and making these communities much more vulnerable to famine and disease.[xlvii]

So in such colonial situation the fate of the traditional Jungle rights of tribal communities can only be imagined.

After 1947, the 'isolationist' thinking of the colonial rulers was heavily criticized by the nationalist. The report of the scheduled tribes commissioner, known as the Dhebar Report on the Indian State's Policy towards tribals, argued that the British Policy of isolating them had resulted in their exploitation. In a conscious attempt to move away from the British Policy towards the tribes, the new policy was unashamedly assimilationist, its professed aim being to draw the tribes

into the mainstream of Indian Political Culture.[xlviii]

The government of Bihar pushed ahead with a massive exploitation of the forest and mineral wealth of the region while maintaining in its official 'tribal' policies that the 'tribals' should be allowed to develop according to their own genius. After the 1950s, thousands of acres of adivasi land was lost to new industries.[xlix] The cities of Ranchi, Dhanbad and Jamshedpur continued to grow rapidly through an ever-increasing immigration of non-adivasi discuss. By 1961, there were already half a million migrants in Dhanbad and Singhbhum.[l]

Lastly, after independence heavy industrialization and modernization adopted by Indian government for country's economic growth converted number of green forested lands into dusty mining belts which had adversely affected the socio-economic life's of people in general and tribals in particular. In long term such situation transformed people's relationship with their environment in Chotanagpur.

Aims and Objectives of Research

- To assess the degree to which colonial policy has been to blame for the destruction of the environment in India generally and Chotanagpur particularly.
- To trace the evolution of colonial forest policy and to evaluate its social, economic and ecological consequences.
- To what extent Indian forest Act prohibited access to forested area by the local population.
- To what extent colonial forest regulations seriously curtailed the customary rights to the forest of the tribal population in Chotanagpur.
- How tribal relationship to their environment was transformed, not just by the changing ecological conditions of the forests as the colonial economy expanded but by changing political circumstances of the frontier as the tribal were drawn into a widening orbit of relations with external powers (Colonial power) in Chotanagpur.
- To find out if there is any difference between colonial and post colonial regimes as both seems to be using and furthering the interests of industrial mode of production. To what extent it has devastating impact on the environment and its relationship with the tribals of Chotanagpur.
- How development of mining and Industries prepared the ground for environmental degradation in Chotanagpur and transformed the social, economic life of Adivasis.

SCOPE OF STUDY

- Documentation of environmental history in micro-regional level.
- Study will help to understand a symbiotic relationship between man and nature.
- To what extent modernization and Industrialization is viable for human society from ecological point of view.

[xviii] T.R. Trautmann, cited in S.N. Mukherjee (Ed), 'Indian History and Thought; Essay in Honour of A.L. Basham', 1982, Cal., p. 254.

[xix] Ibid, p. 12.

[xx] Rawat, A.S., 'A History of Forestry in India', 1991, New Delhi.

[xxi] Grove, Richard et.al., 'Nature and the Orient : The Environmental History of South and South East Asia', 1998, New Delhi.

[xxii] Chakrabarti, Ranjan (ed.), 'Situating Environmental History', London Publisher, 2007, New Delhi.

[xxiii] Grove, Richard et.al., 'Nature and the Orient : The Environmental History of South and South East Asia', 1998, New Delhi.
[xxiv] Grove, Richard, 'Green Imperialism : Colonial Expansion, Tropical Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism', 1996, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
[xxv] Grove, Richard et.al., 'Nature and the Orient : The Environmental History of South and South East Asia', 1998, New Delhi.
[xxvi] Ibid.
[xxvii] Ibid.
[xxviii] Gadgil & Guha, 'This Fissured Land: An Ecological History of India', 1993, university of California press.
[xxix] D. Worster, 'Nature's Economy : A History of Ecological Ideas', 1977, Cambridge.
[xxx] Grove, Richard, 'Green Imperialism : Colonial Expansion, Tropical Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism', 1996, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
[xxxi] Chakarbarti, Rajan (Ed.), 'Situating Environmental History' 2007, Manohar Publication, New Delhi.
[xxxii] Grove, Richard, 'Green Imperialism : Colonial Expansion, Tropical Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism', 1996, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
[xxxiii] Alok Ghosh, 'State Versus People', cited in Chakarbarti, 'Situating Environmental History' 2007, Manohar Publication, New Delhi.

[xxxiv] Grove, Richard, 'Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism', 1996, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
[xxxv] Ibid.
[xxxvi] Grove, Richard, 'Green Imperialism : Colonial Expansion, Tropical Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism', 1996, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
[xxxvii] Prasad, Archana, 'Environmentalism and the Left', 2004, ___Delhi.
[xxxviii] Prasad, Archana, 'Environmentalism and the Left', 2004, ___Delhi.
[xxxix] Ibid.
[xl] Ibid.
[xli] Prasad, Archana, 'Environmentalism and the Left', 2004, Left World, New__Delhi.
[xlii] Alok Ghosh, cited in Ranjan Chakrabarti, Situating Environmental History, 2007, Manohar Publication, New Delhi.
[xliii] Venkat D. Reddy, 'Deforestation; Its Impact on Indian Envirionment', in A.K. Tripathi et.al., (eds.), 'Advances in Environmental Sciences', 1993,New Delhi.
[xliv] Sanjukta Das Gupta, "Accessing Nature: Agrarian Change, Forest Laws and their impact on an Adivasi Economy in Colonial India" cited in *Conservation and Society*, 2009, Vol. 7, p. 230.
[xlv] Ibid.
[xlvi] Singh, K.S., 'Tribal Society in India', 1985, Manohar Publication, New Delhi.
[xlvii] Vinita Damodaran cited in R. Grove 'Nature and the Orient' by.
[xlviii] G.S. Ghurye, The Aborigines, so-called and their future, Delhi, 1943, p. 293.
[xlix] Chakrabarti, situation environmental history, New Delhi, 2007, p. 144.
[l] Ibid.

ISARA INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

WWW.IIMPS.IN

EARN YOUR

MBA



Accreditation & Ranking

UGC / NCTE Approved.

INFO@IIMPS.IN

011-41005174

RESEARCH GATEWAY

STOP PLAGIARISM

1 Submit your content in Word File.

2 Get report in 48 hrs.

3 *Missing content or references will be fixed.

4 Citation for your work.

5 Get accurate user friendly report.

researchgateway.in | info@researchgateway.in

+91-9205579779

AROGYAM ONLINE

Arogyam Ayurveda

Holistic Healing through herbs

100% NATURAL

PARIVARTAN PSYCHOLOGY CENTER

COLOR PSYCHOLOGY : HOW COLOR AFFECT YOUR CHILD

BLUE — Calms your Child's Mind & Body

YELLOW — Promotes Concentration, Stimulates the Memory

PINK — Evokes Empathy, makes your Child Calm

RED — Excites and energizes your Child's body

GREEN — Improves Reading speed and Comprehension

www.parivartan4u.com

Confuse about your children's future?

भारतीय भाषा, शिक्षा, साहित्य एवं शोध

ISSN 2321 – 9726

WWW.BHARTIYASHODH.COM

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

ISSN – 2250 – 1959 (0) 2348 – 9367 (P)

WWW.IRJMST.COM

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF COMMERCE, ARTS AND SCIENCE

ISSN 2319 – 9202

WWW.CASIRJ.COM

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT SOCIOLOGY & HUMANITIES

ISSN 2277 – 9809 (0) 2348 - 9359 (P)

WWW.IRJMSH.COM

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF SCIENCE ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

ISSN 2454-3195 (online)

WWW.RJSET.COM

INTEGRATED RESEARCH JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

ISSN 2582-5445

WWW.IRJMSI.COM

JOURNAL OF LEGAL STUDIES,POLITICS AND ECONOMICS RESEARCH

WWW.JLPER.COM