CHAPTER-3

TRIBAL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL CHANGE: AN OVERVIEW

Social change as defined by Bottomore (1962) is an alteration in social structure (including the alteration in the size of a society) or in a particular social institution or in the relation between institutions. Sociological studies have focused on changes caused by industrialisation, specially the disharmonies in the transitional period and the adaptation of the individual to the rapid changes. In the technologically and industrially advanced societies studies have focused on changes in the family, social stratification, low, moral and religious ideas, attitudes and the social problems stimulated by rapid economic advancement. A change from one source may lead to a sequence of changes. It is being emphasized that social change is brought about due to cumulative impact of a host of inter-related factors. Conquest demographic, technological, geographical factors, decisions and action of individuals and planning are the factors in social change.

Planned changes in economic, social, political and other spheres have been more recently defined as development. Industrialisation, urbanisation and development are related processes. Yogendra Singh (1987) while formulating on integrated approach to social change in India states that changes have taken place both at the level of cultural structure and social structure due to hetrogenetic factors. In the cultural domain the processes of changes have been conceptualised as Sanskritisation, westernization, modernisation conversion and cultural renaissance. Changes have taken place in the domain of social structure in tribal society of Jharkhand though
with a low momentum. At the micro-level the processes at work are role differentiation, new legitimization and migration. At micro-level the society has seen political innovation, urbanisation and industrialisation. Decline and disappearance of the old social strata along with the emergence and growth of new ones have been witnessed throughout Indian history.

**Impact of Development, Education and Cultural Contact**

Tribes in India are characterized by extreme heterogeneity being placed at different levels of social and economic development. Each one has reacted differently to the forces of modernisation. Some have become devastated as they have come into contact with highly developed societies. In contrast, there are some who have richly benefited from the gain of modernisation because of the differential impact the tribals have received; it is hazardous to generalise, although some of the basic trends of modernisation and change may be conveniently outlined.

Tribal systems are most popularly known as indigenous systems and their culture, tradition, social practices, occupational pattern, and so forth, have grown and strengthened from their own experience. But once the outside elements start penetrating into the tribal system, it experiences tremendous change both from within and outside. The social order which used to regulate the interaction with the tribesmen routed in the same or related tradition cannot withstand the presence of intruders motivated by aims and value system entirely distinct from those of the indigenous population. In areas where there is a massive immigration into tribal areas, next to nothing is left of the latter indigenous authority system, because of the tribesmen's increasing dependence on economic forces over which they have no control.
British Policy in Jharkhand

The British policy towards the tribals had two major elements; firstly, it favored isolation of the tribal areas from the main stream. Thus was given the concept of, excluded and partially excluded areas. Secondly, at the level of reform, the British administration was interested in civilizing these people. So missionaries were sent to some of the different areas inhabited by tribals.

In Chotanagpur, the colonial rule clearly attempts to dominate the forest, mineral and water sources in the interest of production and profit. In the process it threatened the small and relatively autonomous economics of the tribal communities with catastrophic effects on the subsistence ethic of all groups, particularly of women.

The British imposed zamindari system in the whole of Chotanagpur region. The money lenders and zamindars had flocked into the tribal areas, the legal procedures and financial institutions they imposed were patronized by the colonial government. The crops of the tribals were forcibly seized and heavy interests were charged on loans. Vinita Damodran (2002) in her article clearly stated both the state and the landlords secure large areas of forest; as providential asset to be exploited for payment of debt and the state looked over most of the forest reserves under rigorous policy of forest conservation, totally extinguishing the traditional common rights of the people. Latter, the spread of railway system further aided the process of forest and land destruction. The results of these changes had a far-reaching impact on the lives of tribals and especially on women.

Due to such oppressive rule many socio-religious movements took place in the whole Jharkhand. Socio-religious movement may emerge as a
result of changes within a group but mostly they are products of contact within the out group.

The Birsa Munda Movement

During the second half of the 19th century the whole of Chotanagpur underwent a tremendous change. The old Munda system of Khuntkati tenure gave in to a new alien system of exploitation by the landlords known as jagirdar and thikadar. Under their greed and cruelty the tribal population was squeezed out of their land and other possessions. Suffering economically and politically, the Mundas were assigned a very low social status. Later the Christian missionaries’ tried to give the Mundas back their land, but soon the tribals realized that conversion to Christianity was not the solution. The missionaries had failed to redeem them from abject poverty and oppression. At this time when the Munda community was seething with discontent in 1895 Birsa Munda started a movement. In him the Mundas found the embodiments of their aspirations. He organised a force to fight oppressive land lords, Christian missionaries and British officials. He gave the tribals leadership, a religion and a code of life. But later on he was imprisoned.

The Santhal Uprising: 1855 - 1857

On 30th June 1855, a massive rally of Santhals, over ten thousands protested against their exploitation and oppression. The rally, led by Sidhu and Kanhu, took an oath to end the oppressive rule of the British, zamindar and moneylenders and it decided to set up and independent Santhali raj. It is estimated that fifteen to twenty five Santhals ware killed in this uprising.
The courage of the Santhals against the oppressive rule is still commemorated in the local folk songs and traditions.

Due to such socio-political tribal uprising, the Chotanagpur tenancy Act was introduced. The Chotanagpur Act of 1908 prohibited the transfer of tribal land to non-tribals. But the indigenous people got dispossessed of their land by the so called “legal” methods of acquiring land for public purposes. This Act was amended in 1947 to suit the purposes of urbanisation and industrialization in the name of development.

**Impact of Christianity**

Conversion to Christianity gave the tribals a model of westernization. Christianity was the sole vehicle of modernisation. The neo-converts not only become a part of the great tradition of Christianity, but were also linked to the great tradition of western culture. English language, western dress mannerism and medicines being unelectable components of the rulers, cultural flourished as far superior and advanced to the local culture. Christianity was a prime mover in initiating modern changes among the tribals. These Christian missionaries opened educational institutions preparing people to enter new occupations. Institutions like hospitals and schools that came with the missionaries, introduced them to the wider world, beyond the interaction they had within themselves and with other non-tribals. The advent of Christianity had a positive impact on the tribal society. They become aware of their rights on the land and the persistent suppression and victimization at the hands of landlords. The missionaries took steps to educate the tribals. Christianity introduced new ideas, values and several practices amongst the tribals and reoriented their personal and social lives.
Christianity also had a negative effect on tribals. The missionaries disapproved of certain customs like the communal dancing and the youth dormitories that led to the free-mixing of the youths. The missionaries could not understand that the dormitory was a place where the young were initiated into adulthood. The youth was also introduced to various customs and practices which had economic significance. But the most important aspect is that both the community dancing and youth dormitory were part of a symbol of collective conscience. Education brought western valued system but it didn’t support the tribal practices and declared it unscientific. It also created a gap between the Christian and non-Christian tribals. Thus a clear cut division was created within the egalitarian society.

**Impact of Industrialisation**

The installation of industries in tribal dominated areas was another very important factor of change and modernisation. There has been an acceleration of mining and manufacturing industries. Forest resources have been gradually exploited, leading eventually to deforestation, in the hilly and forested belts of Jharkhand. Most of these industries came to be established in or around tribal areas because they were rich in mineral and other resources. There was a rapid increase of urban population in these areas. According to Bose (1962), with the concentration of industries in these areas, there was a relatively shift of urban population from Indo-geographic plain to the hilly and plateau areas which are abundant on industrial and natural resources.

The establishment of heavy industries, construction of dams and launching of development plans in tribal zones has necessitated the displacement of the local population. Thousands of tribal families were
displaced from their traditional habitats. Proper compensation was not provided in terms of money and alternative land. Moreover the compensation provided to them in cash was recklessly spent. The tribals were not fully conversant with cash economy, and squandered the money on various attractions that were available in nearby industrial towns. Soon their funds depleted, with their land gone for development activities and left with no training, equipment or aptitude for skilled or semi skilled jobs, they had no option but to enter the town as unskilled labourers, taking up various marginal jobs of rickshaw pullers, vendors, hawkers, domestic workers etc. They could enter the industrial sector at the lowest level and their chances of moving up were meagre as they remained untrained for industrial technical know-how. Apart from industries, dams, mines and other development projects was the biggest agent of displacement. It was not only industrialisation that was responsible for the migration promote by pull and push or forced factors of tribals from their homesteads but also other economic institutions. In certain states like Assam and of south India, tea, coffee and rubber estates were formed. The tribals who were disposed of their land were made to work as plantation labourers.

The historical process has been to assimilate the tribes into feudal and later also bourgeois society. In the bourgeois industrial society they have been taken in at the bottom rung of the working class.

Irfan Habib (1985) had analysed the assimilation of tribals into the wider society. He points out that the food gatherers have become the menial caste and agricultural labourers, untouchable dalits. The agriculturist tribes have become middle peasant caste. A few from the ruling lineage or clans, like the Nagabanshis of Jharkhand have been admitted into a sort of Kshatriya status.
The tribals of Jharkhand whether as providers of forest products or as suppliers of labour power they come at the bottom of the scale as coolie labour. National oppression deprives the workers of dignity and weakens them in the fight against exploitation. What imperialism and the Indian ruling classes want is that the Jharkhand to become a “coolie nation”, so that they can be easily suppressed as the lowest paid workers and producers. This coolie status is evident not only among the migrant tribals of Jharkhand in the tea garden of Assam and Bengal, but also in the Jharkhandis' own homeland. This status of Jharkhandis has not changed to this day.

Industrialisation in the tribal areas offered new jobs. But the tribals who remained unskilled in the initial stages could only get the jobs at the lower ranks. The occupational structure has changed and it has important implications. A sense of mobility is gradually being instilled in the community. As a result of over exploitation of the forest resources by the outsiders, the tribal economies which to a large extent were forest based dwindled. Thus a combination of local impoverishment and availability of new opportunities sent these tribals to see jobs in heavy industries, tea plantation, construction sites etc.

Modernisation created economic disparities in various sections of the society. Those who could take advantages of new economic and educational frontier were able to better their lot, while a large section of tribals were not adequately prepared to deal with new challenges, gradually depressed into poorer sections of the society. Against economic and social disparities, they have raised a collective voice. Govind Kelker and Dev Nathan (1991) have quoted an intellectual of CPI (M) West Bengal that “today it is a curious fact that the people of Jharkhand agitate against the construction of major irrigation projects or the setting up of big industries. For them, even the
construction of a road means, primarily opening the area to the dikus and the police i.e. to exploitation and terror. Historically viewed, developmental activities have meant land alienation and pauperization for the people of Jharkhand."

Likewise both industrialisation and modernisation has adverse effects on Jharkhand, but still modernization has given rise to a new consciousness amongst the people.

Another study of a number of tribal people in different industries at Jamshedpur was made by the Bihar tribal research institute Ranchi. In this study Sachchidananda (1965) points out that the impact of industrialisation is especially important in tribal areas because of the fact that many of its values are in contrast to the traditional tribal ethos. For many tribals, this impact has led to a process of detribalization. Traditionally, tribals were living in a close society where social mobility is strictly limited and their socio-economic and political relationships were concentrated in a particular area. But that completely changed in the city. Regarding the impact on the socio-economic aspects of tribals, he writes “-----the introduction of money economy has led to radical changes in tribal economic system. It has transformed the tradition, communal goals of the extended kinship groups to those changing the structure of the family and position of individual in it. An individual, who enters as a mere labourer by successive rises, becomes a middle class man. Such social mobility is unknown in traditional tribal society. It also leads to the creation of a self-conscious status group and ultimately to the growth of a class system. This is generally unknown among the tribal groups and militates against the tribal norms of egalitarian society.
But apart from this industrialisation has fostered a new sense of solidarity between the co-workers. Once there already exist ethnic and social ties between the tribals, the relations in the industry cement further.

Cultural Contact and Sanskritisation

In Jharkhand the original inhabitants have lived in a symbiotic relationship with various artisan and service caste referred to as Sadan. Though these sadan are often of the same caste as are found in the adjoining plains yet there is little contact between Jharkhandi castes and their corresponding caste outside. Marriage which is a very good indicator of the existence of social relation is even for these castes confined to Jharkhandi circle. The symbiotic relation between the adivasi and sadan has resulted in the creation of a composite culture and a common world outlook. There are many other aspects of the cultural life of tribals like the structuring of political power, their judicial system, which is on the way out being lost with the advent of the police, modern legal system and judiciary. The cultures of tribal have a symbiotic relationship with forest and land which was their major source of livelihood. With the dying culture came the end of there various sources. The cultural integration of tribal and non tribals was inevitable. Due to extreme oppression the people of wider society were termed as Diku (exploiter-outsider) by the tribals. The tribals residing in the main stream areas were given the low position of an untouchable or a sudra. In this process of Sanskritisation, they adopted Hindu norms and value system based on the concept of pollution and purity. For example, the Tana Bhagat movement amongst the Oraon tribe was aimed at being at par with the Hindu neighbors who looked down upon them. To gain honour they
embraced Hindu practices; the Tana Bhagats wore sacred threads and abstained from eating meat.

In this process of cultural contact, some of the traditional institutions weaken. Vidyarthi (1968) in his study of tribal working in Bokaro steel plants says that their village institution like the jajmani system, the cycle of festivals and rituals, the caste affiliations etc. have completely been disintegrated and all round depression and despair seems to have affected the life of the uprooted villages. This however does not mean that there is also a subsequent decline in the feeling of oneness amongst the tribals in a new set-up. Various cultural association based on tribal line have come up and the feeling of ethnicity becomes strong and they begin exerting pressure on the state and centre.

**Role of Education**

The ultimate goal of education is to assist in achieving socio-economic objective by innovation, and by helping them to acquire new vocational skills, knowledge and attitude which they could use effectively in their respective profession. It also creates an awareness of the prevailing situation and makes people look for and find direction of change. It cultivates rational, objective and scientific temper, enriches human potential and its latter stage, and stimulates a greater degree of individual, social, cultural and economic developments through participation and sharing of knowledge among various section of society.

But in India, the tribal literacy rate is highly disappointing. Moreover when the literacy percentage is calculated separately for males and females the disparity is glaring. The chief causes of low literacy rate among the tribals are the lack of schools and teachers in tribal areas, high drop out
rates, poor and backward economy, disinclination of parents towards their children’s education. The total 98 percent of the tribals live in rural areas and 93% depend on agriculture and allied sectors. So boys and girls are drawn away from the school to help in cultivation and shepherding in middle of the academic sessions. School hours fail to accommodate the rush hours in cultivating households. The economic backwardness and physical distance from the centers of development are responsible for their educational backwardness. The parents find it more lucrative to engage their children, even of school going age in some income generating activities. A study of the patterns of tribal education in India raises two important issues. The drop out rate of the tribal children is very high. Secondly, the number of tribal students reaching professional and university courses is very low. According to 1981 census only 16.9% tribals were literate (out of which 26.17% males and only 7.75% were females). As a comparison, the literacy rates for the total general population and for the males females respectively, are 26.20%, 38.11%, and 13.62%. And according to 1991 census the literacy rate in Chotanagpur presents a very gloomy picture, the male literacy rate is 45.52% and female literacy is around 21.03%.

There are several reasons accounting for high drop out rate. The curriculum in most cases is not relevant to the conditions in which the tribals live. They find education a kind of onerous burden. Low standard of teaching and facilities in tribal school is another factor.
The educational background of Jharkhand in 1989-90

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<td>Illiterate</td>
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<td>Primary Education</td>
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<td>Middle Education</td>
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<td>Matriculation</td>
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<td>Post Matric</td>
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Source: Jayanti Alam. 2000. Tribal women workers, New Delhi

But education has also helped for improvement in lifestyle. Education system plays an important role in the training, development and allocation of resources. It is not only a key mechanism for the economic developments of various sections of its people but also a powerful instrument for accelerating the process of social change. Education has provided them with the closeness to a town and an opportunity to imbibe the characteristics of an urban culture. This has also provided them with increased job opportunities. But this actually does not happen due to the bias against the tribals. They are considered primitive and uncivilized. The constitution and laws are in their place and they seem to have the least influence on the minds of those who wield power and take decisions.

But the govt. has to consider what Grigson (1943) has written. According to him, "we need to introduce among the tribals such a kind of education, which would restore and foster the aboriginals self-respect by protecting him from loss of land, bond service, debt and oppression,........and to educate him not merely to retain and value his own tribal culture, but also to take and hold his due place in the economic, political and cultural life of modern India."
Implication of Social Change on Tribal Women

Social change generally implies shifts in the pattern of activities and possibly also, a new common orientation, a new role, a new relationship, a new status or a value or a new institution and consequent rearrangement in the social structure. These changes may be induced or directed or attracted or gained through struggles which may found possible due to active cultural contact between two different cultural system and speedy socio-economic development initiated by state agencies or through a revolution. Change if it follows as its own accord or in a process of natural phenomena, it does not necessarily bring in many far reaching consequences. On the contrary if is thrust upon or induced as a measure of rapid economic development, it would necessarily result in many implications.

As far as women’s position is concerned, the penetration of alien culture has harmed them more then anything else, affecting their peaceful lives. The change in the subsistence and land holding patterns adaptation of commercial crops, the development of market economy and the emergence of new employment opportunity provide new power basis and increased the control of men over women with the increasing complexity of social formation,-foraging to agriculture those seem to be a clear assertion of patriarchal values and decrease the status of women.

With the growth of industrialization, the search for raw material and its requirements in the manufacturing industry, paved the way for different industrial and other capitalist groups to enter tribal areas and monopolize the forests and mineral resources, besides all these cheap tribal labour is an added attraction to the mining and industrial activity and construction of big projects and dams, with huge capital output in tribal areas where it has totally disturbed the tranquility in tribal areas. Such “Internal Colonization”
also started the process of migration of groups of peasants and non-peasant cultivators, and traders-cum-moneylenders and their settlements in tribals areas, while getting the entire tribal area to be under their effective control.

Due to construction of dams, industries, mines and other development projects, thousands of tribal families had lost their homestead. This phenomenon of mass displacement of people proceeds with far reaching consequences, leading to deep seated disturbances and derangement in the habits and life patterns of the tribal people.

Women became the worst sufferer, because in the traditional division of work, it is the women's duty to make provisions for the basic necessities like food, fuel, and water. These women who used to have a dominant position in their earlier homes are compelled to lose most of their customary rights and rights of possessions and privileges. Due to this forcible deprivation in the name of national development or otherwise they suddenly become aliens in their own lands and natal homes. Innocent tribal women born and brought up in a simple and natural environment are forced to enter into a complex and artificial environment, without their will and approval.

Forest economy is more dependent on tribal women then on men. They preserved forest and other natural resources by keeping a balance between human needs and environment imperatives. With control of transfer over forests and natural resources to the external commercial industrial forces, that treats them exclusively as raw materials and as source of revenue. This has destroyed the tribal sources of food, fuel, medicines and fodder in order to get higher profits. Likewise the tribals have been impoverished and their women have been marginalized.

Vandana Shiva (1998) has described the gender issues in terms of the environmental issues. She observes that the western patriarchal forms of
development had led to the destruction of forest ecosystem and the
displacement of women in third. The women in India has always protected
and preserved nature as Prakriti—the living force that supports life. But the
western concept of nature is an object of exploitation, which is copied by
most of the third world countries, resulting in acute deforestation.

Land and forest are the twin major sources of living of the tribals and
they have become so close a part of their life that it become a philosophy
and prime mover of their civilization. The alienation from the land along
with other factors led to the alienation of the tribals from the forest. In
addition deforestation has thrown up new problems for the tribal women.
She has to spend twice her domestic labour to do household tasks like,
fetching water, collecting fire wood and fodder etc.

The tribal women’s status therefore is also severely affected by the
changes in tribal land structure such as land alienation and dispossession of
the movable and immovable property from the hands of tribals and the
ownership of non tribal affluent classes.

In industrial and urban sector, her labour contribution in mines,
mineral collection, construction industry and other industrial operations
stands no less important. Tribal women are preferred by the contractors, as
their bargaining capacity for justified wages remains minimal and more
often absent. Non payment, under payment for the entrusted work,
preferential wage payment, discriminatory work allotment, allocation of
menial jobs and service oriented work, export of women to distant places
adds to the misery of tribal women. Changes in their environment and
traditional wages create not only a psychological disenchantment but also
render them physically helpless. The tribal women are subjected to all forms
of harassment and exploitation by the traders, forest and exercise officials, contractors and state police.

In the market economy, another source of exploitation is the sale of forest produce or farm produce; women are more easily cheated in measuring, pricing etc. though they are well aware of this cheating but are not prepared to do anything. When the businessmen sells them modern goods, clothes, utensils etc they again cheated by selling these things for double rate. Unless the tribal women themselves learn the ways of commercial economy, they cannot dispute this exploitation.

Expansion of the industrial capital to the tribal region further resulted in a two way process of change, that is immigration of the outsiders into the tribal regions and emigration of the tribal to the urban towns. Affluent non tribal communities entering tribal areas, displace the tribal population. A mass of the tribals also began entering urban and metropolitan areas in search of livelihood. Thus, a two way process of migration has further resulted in denigration of the status of tribal women, more than that of their men folk. V.Xaxa (2004) points out that acculturation like Sanskritisation and Hinduisation led to change of a certain kind among tribal, the conversion to Christianity resulted in different changes. For instances, it opened up the space for tribal women to participated in religious worship side by side with men, a practice that was denied them in the earlier religious traditions of many tribal societies. Christianity has also made modern education accessible to women in tribal societies. But at same time, it has introduced a variety of restriction in the name of ethics and laws of the church, which go against the kind of freedom that tribal women enjoy in their traditional set-up.
Sanskritisation and Tribal Women

The culture, tradition, social practices and occupational pattern of tribals have grown out of and strengthened by their own experiences. But gradually the tribal population is opening up to the outside forces. Non tribal population is coming in close proximity with the tribals, thus triggering a process of Sanskritisation. In this process of Sanskritisation, they adopted Hindu norms and value system based on the concept of pollution and purity. The exposure to Hindu culture has its worse effects on the women who were till then enjoying certain amount of freedom. It has affected the life of tribal women from the time of birth itself. The birth of a daughter was always an occasion for rejoicing in a tribal family. She was considered to be an asset to the family. But now the preference for a male child is surfacing. The equal freedom of movement to both male and female is disappearing. There seems to be a trend in tribal society to restrict the freedom of girls. This is because of freedom of tribal women is misconceived as license for non tribals. They believe that taking liberty with tribal women would not raise much opposition from tribal society or general society. So restriction had to be imposed on women to control this abuse by the Dikus (outsiders-exploiter).

The cultural contact introduced the notion of child marriage and Purda. A girl’s freedom to choose her partner is reducing. Like in Hindu society, in tribal families also the parents and their voice are becoming the deciding force. Different kinds of Hindu rituals have also entered the tribal systems and traditions. Marriage are becoming expansive as even tribals are going for proper arrange marriage and accompanying extravaganza even the bride price is being replaced by dowry. Even women’s right to divorce and widow remarriage have suffered from stigma. With the introduction of expansive court of law, the tribal councils are loosing their power. Women
find it difficult to move a court, since it involves heavy expenditure and a number of formalities. Even in religious and other ceremonies, celebration of festivals etc. women being relegated to the position of submission, subordination and segregation.

Among several implications of these affects of women's life, deprivation of traditional livelihood by displacement, changes in occupation and venue of work, lack of employment opportunities due to their illiteracy and lack of skills, negative experiences of industrial discipline and conflicts, discriminatory treatment by natives, exploitation and harassment by govt. officials, contractors, moneylenders and replacement of elders control and cohesive family system, forced migration and consequent disintegration and disorganization of family, class, kinship and flouting of values, taboos and customs in violation of traditional setting, loss of human touch and purity of mind, emergence of different attitudes, artificiality, suspicion, helplessness and alienation are the main among others, which make women's life miserable and meaningless. She looses a language and a culture, because it has no value in a newly induced environment. She has to adopt alien culture, otherwise she cannot survive. She has to forget her original mode of living and depends on the market’s mercy not only to live but also to make a living. Her children and coming generation will be totally deprived of the experiences of their brave old world and its matrilineal character of love, affection and sympathetic understanding. Both Hinduisation and Christianisation thus led to a number of restrictions on the kinds of freedom that tribal women traditionally enjoyed. For Hinduisation, such restrictions were a part of the concern for respectability/ status; in Christianity, it was more to do with religious morals and values.
But now there is a shift towards detribalization that means going back to their roots. The educated middle class tribals specifically played a central role in the cultural revivalist movement. There is a strong feeling to revitalize and preserve the tribal cultural identity. Even community dancing and hero worshiping of great leaders like Birsa Munda and Sidhu Kanhu is being given importance. Many tribal language scripts have been devised, like Santhali script- "Ol Chiki". After failing to get absorbed in Hindi mainstream, many tribals are returning to their indigenous customs and traditions. The women's right to choose a partner and to divorce, widow remarriage and bride price etc are being taken normally once again. Even if the return is not complete, tribals might be able to shed some of the bad customs ingrained under the influence of caste Hindu society. But in these societies women may never be able to regain their lost status fully.

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