CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

7.1. Locating the debate

India is simmering with protests having ‘land’ at the centre-stage after the BJP-led government at the Centre attempted to amend the LARR of 2013. The opposition cries foul over the BJP’s initiative to do away with two of the central features of the LARR. First provision relates to the mandatory consent of 70 and 80 per cent of the land owners required in the cases of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and Private projects, respectively. The second provision makes the conducting of Social Impact Assessment (SIA) mandatory for providing enough opportunity to the people to express their opinion on the projects. What is noticeable in this entire episode is that the battle has been taken from the Parliament to the streets and not vice versa. In addition to this, the protests are largely carried on by the mainstream political parties comprising the opposition as against the ruling coalition.

In this entire episode the BJP—which also happens to enjoy a majority in the Lok Sabha for the first time in three decades—is regarded as the main culprit. While the protests have deterred the ruling coalition from pushing the bill seeking amendment, the government has found a way-out by promulgating an ordinance circumventing the democratic procedures. However, amidst the different allegations which are framed against the BJP and its allies there remains more structural as well as immediate questions to be answered. For example, has the land ordinance arrived as an opportunity to redefine the political economy of the Indian state? Can the unity of opposition be regarded as signaling towards a new ideology of ‘development’ devoid of the aggressive neo-liberal strategy? Or, is the entire discourse of resistance organised around the hope for the revival of the otherwise decimated opposition? Although this is not a proper place to engage with all these questions it will perhaps be meaningful to discuss briefly a few of the questions.

Given the way farmers have been incorporated as a political constituency in this entire event the shifting balance in favour of the industrial class has definitely been halted. Even though the farmers themselves are not a homogenous entity the

103 Few of the ruling coalition partners like the Shiv Sena and the Akali Dal have also expressed their reservations towards the proposed amendment in the LARR, 2013.
issue of land shows the potential to forge unity amongst this significant and electorally salient group. It is because of this reason that even organisations which provide the grassroots leverage to the BJP also stood with the opposition. Thus, the entire episode revolving around the amendment of the LARR has the potential to redefine the political economy of the Indian state for a long time to come. Coming to the question of change in the overall belief in neoliberal growth ideology, it can be argued that there certainly is an attempt to curb the aggressive stand adopted by the ruling coalition. In forcing the government to retain the clauses related to consent of the land owners as well as the provision of social impact assessment (SIA) the politics around land ordinance has the potential to decentralise land governance. Legislations like PESA and FRA has been pursuing the goal of ‘radical’ decentralisation for quite some time now. But their stance proved to be highly contingent upon the judicial interpretations as one can see contradictory verdicts in cases related to people’s rights.

However, whether this entire episode is just a means for the opposition parties to revitalise its political fortunes or a genuine attempt to counter the regressive proposal on land acquisition is a controversial one. Nevertheless, it can be reminded that the new Act is one of the most cherished legislation which came after prolonged and hectic deliberations under the UPA coalition. Jairam Ramesh, the then Union Minister for Rural Development, was one of the most prominent figures in drafting of the legislation which in his own words ‘though not an ideal legislation is what can be most practical in the existing circumstances’ (2013). The above account succinctly establishes the centrality of land in the neoliberal growth model and all the controversies which it is capable of provoking. But, how does the entire discourse of land dispossession unfold itself in a particular context?

Plethora of existing studies (Baviskar, 1995; Guha, 1989; Nilsen, 2010; Levien, 2012; Sampat, 2013) have exhausted the available approaches, while also inventing some new ones, to understand land dispossession and the consequent

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104 The Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS) has thrown its weight behind the protestors on the issue of amending the land act of 2013.
105 Samatha case (1997), Narmada case (2000), Niyamgiri case (2012) and several other cases has been discussed in the chapters 3 and 5.
106 Jairam Ramesh, the then Union Rural Development Minister, in an interview given to the Frontline dated May 3rd, 2013.
movements. However, seldom has dispossession been studied as a phenomenon emanating from a “discursive formation” and marked by a politics of dispossession contingent upon the history, culture, society, politics and the economy of the context. In taking up the cases of industrial projects in West Singhbhum of Jharkhand for this study, we have attempted to venture into this area.

An important point which has been emphasised upon throughout the chapters is the salience of tribal constituency in the politics of Jharkhand unlike other central and East Indian States like Chhattisgarh and Odisha; also having significant tribal population of around 32 and 21 per cent, respectively. However, ever since the formation of Jharkhand in 2000 the fractured mandate has seen the State being ruled by different coalition governments. Nevertheless, in keeping with the neo-liberal growth model the BJP government under the leadership of Babulal Marandi framed the New Industrial Policy in 2001 to ensure a resource-propelled (based on exploitation of natural resources) ‘development’ of the State. The NIP further led to the signing of several MoUs with different private companies inviting them to invest in the State.

But attempts of land acquisition and the impending displacement has provoked several resistance movements by the potentially affected people. Whereas resistance movements have successfully halted several large industrial and mining projects, a travel into the hinterlands reveals that many small “dirty industries” have been established. The successful operationalisation of these industrial units draws attention towards the specific nature of political scenario (unstable and fragmented) existing in the State as well as the nature of capital (small and domestic). Moreover, the socio-political context in which the projects are installed or resisted also brings to our notice the intricate negotiations of the companies with the local forces.

7.2. Summarising the key findings

Based on field work conducted in the West Singhbhum district of Jharkhand this study aimed at fulfilling three objectives, viz. to study the influence of state intervention on the socio-political discourse of a tribal-dominated society; to study the local mechanisms through which land acquisition is pursued; and to understand the shifting modalities of anti-dispossession resistance movements. There are five core chapters in the dissertation excluding the introduction and the present one. We
will now briefly summarise the major findings from these five chapters and conclude by locating the utility of this study in not only theoretically and empirically understanding the politics of dispossession but also suggest a policy measure in the domain of rehabilitation and resettlement.

The second chapter of the dissertation provides an historical account of the Jharkhand movement. Apart from this, it helps us to understand the position of the adivasis in the current political discourse of Jharkhand. Despite the claims of Jharkhand-based parties to be the custodians of ethnic politics, for a major part since its formation the State has been ruled by the Hindu right wing BJP. Engaging with some of the notions propagated by scholars like Alpa Shah (2007) and Ipshita Basu (2009), we argue that the tribals have an experience of long association with the ‘state’ and they participate in state-conducted elections not just to ‘keep the state away’ but to access the benefits available in the form of affirmative actions and doles. Contesting yet another notion of adivasis’ aloofness from the Hindu right wing argument is forwarded that the adivasis do not consider the BJP as politically untouchable and their terms of inclusion into the Hindu-fold is not necessarily derogatory. Moreover, the post-Poll surveys have confirmed the BJP’s foothold among the adivasi constituency.

Another assertion made in the chapter is that the resistance against “distributive injustice” around access to land and natural resources is not conducted in an exclusionary fashion by maintaining distance from the political parties. Citing the ongoing protests in the cases of Icha-Kharkai anti-dam movement, Nagri and even the cases considered for this study it has been argued that the anti-dispossession resistance movements enjoy some sort of relationship with the Jharkhand-based political parties. The analysis of adivasi politics is concluded by the assertion that the middle-class adivasis are divided in their preference for the Hindu right wing BJP and other Jharkhandi political outfits and this division is largely determined by their nature of association with the state. Whereas the middle-class professional adivasis are more inclined towards the Jharkhandi political parties the another group of tribal middle-class which relies upon the direct state benefits viz. contracts, brokerage of

107 Winning contracts for village road construction through association with political parties is a common phenomenon. However, the contractors have to pay bribes to the local bureaucracy as well as politicians. In turn, the contractor makes money by compromising with the quality of the work.
deals, etc. associate themselves with the BJP. However, this should not be considered as a conclusive statement but only representative of a major trend.

The third chapter of the dissertation serves as a background against which the land acquisition in West Singhbhum is analysed. It helps us to understand the trajectory of land governance since the colonial era till the drafting of the LARR in 2013. It also traces the evolution of the principle of ‘eminent domain’ which has remained central to land acquisition and explain the former’s changing connotation in the era of neoliberalism. In this background chapter, we made an argument that the neoliberal state is biased towards the resourceful when it comes to land rights. Nevertheless, the state runs the risk of acting recklessly in a democracy as it may lose legitimacy and, therefore, has to meddle through negotiated laws doing the balancing act between the different stakeholders. In so doing, the state enjoys certain amount of autonomy and accommodates the interests of different stakeholders across the spectrum. But when it comes to the implementation of land acquisition the state is largely, guided by its dominant ideological leanings on “development”.

Another section in the chapter provides a conceptualisation of dispossession and helps in understanding its various dimensions. In our attempt to conceptualise land dispossession we have disentangled the dominant narrative of displacement from the environmental pollution regarded in the common parlance as “negative externalities”. However, the major concern relates to its disguised nature and proliferation into the neighbouring arable land violating individual property rights. Hence, the variegated nature of dispossession makes imperative the use of an approach which analyses the history, culture, economy and polity of the social setup which serves as the site of dispossession. Finally, the chapter ends by identifying an approach for the study which emphasises upon a theoretical and empirical embedded research in line with the ‘Land Deal Politics Initiative’ (LDPI), a project on “land grab” across the globe.

The fourth chapter serves as a prelude to the enquiry of dispossession politics as rooted in the inter-play of local factors viz. ethnicity, class, legal provisions, political factions, and so on. Providing a sketch of the adivasi-dominated society in West Singhbhum, we have contested one dominant stream of conceptualising an adivasi society. The romantic view of tribal society derives mostly from the colonial
anthropology and is adopted by the state which wilfully neglects more critical and enriching accounts. We took the panchayat elections of 2010 as an opportune event to explore the Ho adivasi society hitherto governed as per the customary norms and institutions of munda and manki. Contesting the “cosmetic” notion of homogeneity and egalitarianism attributed to adivasi society, this chapter explains how state institutions and competitive social norms have pervaded the village societies. Furthermore, the panchayat election of 2010 has not only made the already existing social cleavages explicit but has further widened them. It is difficult to argue that underdevelopment is exclusively a result of the social fissures and the power politics which inform the adivasi society. But the underdevelopment prevailing in the villages of West Singhbhum definitely facilitates the processes of land acquisition by tilting the power relations in the favour of industrial firms. Thus, underdevelopment serves as the supply side reason for the dispossession of people. Moreover, an attempt to forge a unity against land dispossession in the name of Ho identity also has to overcome the barriers presented by the cleavages in social domain. In such a situation even if the organisers of resistance movements succeed in overcoming the other differences among the participants, only an ‘aggrieved identity’ can form the basis of providing coherence to the movement. Whereas the ambiguity associated with anti-dispossession resistance movements is regarded as their strength, the latter’s encounter with a locally-informed adversary acts to their disadvantage. Taking up from the analysis of the socio-political discourse as revealed under the third chapter the next chapter engaged with the analysis of the processes and politics of dispossession.

Chapter five begins by highlighting a major lacuna in the study of dispossession in India owing to insufficient account on scheduled areas. This chapter also discussed the theoretical terms used to understand the nature of land dispossession taking place in India. Using the construct of “disguised dispossession”, we have made an attempt to elaborate upon its suitability in empirically examining the nature of dispossession. Most of the land acquisition for resource extraction takes place in the scheduled areas where land is governed by some special protective laws like the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (CNTA) 1908. However, in the analysis of land dispossession scholars have hardly noticed the discourse which is a result of people’s perception towards such laws and, consequently, towards the state. The state is not
only regarded as the protector (judiciary) but also the perpetrator of dispossession. In order to understand the legality of the context in which land dispossession is taking place in West Singhbhum, we have analysed the CNTA, PESA and the FRA. The specific context of legality plays an important role in both defining the modalities of dispossession as well as the protest movements. Emphasis in this chapter is upon the politics of dispossession taking place due to projects which require around 200 acres of land and, unlike the mega-projects, do not raise the apprehensions of displacement.

The studied industrial units, for their operationalisation, depend upon the patronage of the local leaders as well as the rent-seeking behaviour of the state. The company representatives are aware of the local conditions and operate through middle-men, mostly belonging to the villages, which helps in brokerage of land deals. This company-middle-men-local strong men nexus has been the central pillar on which the entire future of such projects rest. One important factor which makes the land deals possible is the presence of non-tribal small and marginal land owners in the villages. The companies find it hard to access adivasi land and in two of the cases (Noangona and Barajamda) we have observed that the entire land required for the project was acquired from the non-tribals. This strategy saves the companies from being entangled in legal issues as observed in three other cases (Kotgarh, Bahada-Petetta and Dimbuli) where the former also acquired tribal land. However, there is no uniform reaction by the protestors in the cases of dispossession and their selective approach cannot be assumed to be driven entirely by concern over tribal exploitation. For example, even though acquisition was taking place in Pettetta and Bahada at very low rates of compensation no protest was registered as late as the year 2012. However, despite a high compensation (by local standards) in Kotgarh project protest was registered and the acquisition was legally challenged. In fact, a situation has arisen where one group of village elite in nexus with the companies is poised against another band of village elite.

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to understand dispossession from the perspective of the dispossessed. As against Michael Levien’s ‘rate of accumulation by dispossession’ which emphasises upon the exclusion of the people as the appreciation in land value is accumulated by the capitalists, our study looks into the “stipulated dispossession” characteristic of ‘dirty industries’. Through this study we are able to
identify the loophole in the official lexicon of ‘compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement (CRR)’. The new law on land acquisition has broadened the horizon of CRR to incorporate the project-affected people (PAP) defined as those who lose their livelihood options due to the project. But given the nature of dispossession in the present cases, we can argue that the dispossession of the people in such cases is a prolonged process and unveils itself in consequences like loss of common resources, fertility of land etc. We have used the construct of “disguised dispossession” to analyse and understand the nature of dispossession and define the former as the approximate losses incurred by the dispossessed whenever capitalist projects have both overt and covert dimensions of dispossession. Empirical studies affirming this nature of dispossession has been conducted by independent as well as government agencies\textsuperscript{108}. However, the government is entirely silent in recognising this situation and consideration of this factor is not on its card, at least in Jharkhand. It is against this background of politics of dispossession, that the next chapter deals with the anti-dispossession resistance movements in West Singhbhum.

The chapter five aims at understanding the evolution, major tenets and shifting modalities of anti-globalisation movements. Finally, the resistance movement as organised under the \textit{Jameen Bachao Samanway Samiti} (JBSS) has been analysed to understand the nature of collective action emerging from the grassroots. An effort has been made to understand the ethnic dimension of the Jharkhand politics given the fact that construction of identity around ‘indigeneity’ has served as one of the main axis around which the resistance movements are organised. Exploring the ideological leanings and the course of action for the anti-globalisation movements we have attempted to identify the shift in their modalities. The major tenets of anti-globalisation movement have been identified to serve as the background for analysing the resistance movement in Jharkhand. The major areas where the latter deviates from the former are that of: (1) association with urban-based activists; (2) proximity to political outfits; (3) adoption of ‘adivasi’ identity; and (4) ideological leanings.

The anti-dispossession resistance movement in West Singhbhum is carried under the banner of \textit{Jameen Bachao Samanway Samiti} (JBSS) which is a local

\textsuperscript{108} In 2006, Jan chetana of Raigad and National Centre for Advocacy Studies, Pune conducted a joint study to estimate the hazards caused due to the Sponge Iron Industries operating around Raigad district in Chhatisgarh. The Centre for Science and Environment (2012) report on Sponge Iron Projects is the another one.
organisation and derives support from certain other organisations like Jharkhandi Organisation for Human Rights (JOHAR), Jharkhand Mining Areas Co-ordination Committee (JMACC), etc. dealing with issues of human rights violation and mining operations among others. The membership of JBSS is largely confined to the local people and almost all the protestors are adivasis. Even though educated tribal elders are associated with the protest, non-tribal urban activists are not entertained. The latter attitude is shaped mainly due to the apprehension expressed by the prominent non-adivasi activist, Mr. Xavier Dias that the urban-based activists rob the movements of their capacity to articulate their demands on the basis of local realities and rather impose upon them some ideological positions which is foreign to the protestors’ imagination. On the issue of association with the political parties, the JBSS was found to be deriving support from the local political parties like JMM, JVM as well as the Congress. This sort of association has benefitted the organisation to carry its voice to the larger statist forums.

The appeal to adivasi identity as articulated by the anti-globalisation movements largely rests in a notion of the former which is more ‘static’ and historicised. However, given the fact that the Ho adivasi has a long history of interaction of state and outsiders, challenge for the JBSS is to construct an identity which accommodates the cultural changes. In doing so, the JBSS rely upon the appeal to more deconstructed notion of being Ho rather than the generic term ‘adivasi’. In variation with the broader ideological positions which the anti-globalisation movements acquire the JBSS is largely guided in its action by the immediate concerns of the people. Even though certain strategies like ‘jury politics’ are borrowed from the repertoire of the former the JBSS also enter into negotiations to bargain benefits from the capitalists and do not go for an ‘all-out’ war despite the usage of popular vocabulary viz. ‘jaan denge par jameen nahi denge’ (we will lay our lives but won’t give up land).

7.3. Concluding remarks

On the basis of preceding summarization, it can be argued that the tribal society of West Singhbhum is neither egalitarian nor homogenous. It is rather divided along class and ethnic lines and people enter into competition for capturing resources. Moreover, state intervention through Panchayat elections has further widened the
existing social cleavages and has ushered in a regime of “decentralised corruption” which impacts the implementation of local development programmes. However, the most crucial impact of the social divisiveness can be observed in the domain of land acquisition. As the villages are divided along the ethnic lines also due to the presence of non-tribals, the companies take advantage of this fact in their attempt to circumvent legal complications. In two of the cases where the companies acquired only non-tribal land they have been able to establish factories, whereas in rest three cases they are facing protest and litigation because tribal land was also acquired. Poor compensation and absorption into un-skilled jobs has only ensured an “adverse inclusion” of the people. However, the more alarming fact is the dispossession of individual land owners whose land is rendered infertile due to the resulting pollution from the plants. Recognised as cases of “disguised dispossession”, the phenomenon compels us to revisit the existing discourse of comensation, rehabilitation and resettlement. It needs to be further expanded to incorporate such victims of industrialsation whose livelihood is at stake. Nevertheless, people have responded to the issue of land dispossession by organising local protest movements which adopts the dual tool of acquiring an all-out rhetoric as well as adaptive mechanisms. However, the question arises that: Is this *modus operandi* an indication of the imminent defeat facing the anti-dispossession resistance movements or a viable strategic choice curbing the adverse intentions of the state through democratic options?

In this context, one needs to remember the deliberations preceding the enactment of the LARR in 20013 and the present situation. The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government’s desperate attempt to amend the LARR raises some issues warranting urgent public debate. Amidst the tempting specter of unrelenting political opposition what has been a rather disguised move by the government is an attempt to de-politicise the land question by confining it to ‘institutional deliverance’. Joint Parliamentary committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of S S Ahluwalia in order to “debate” the proposed amendment in LARR and arrive at a “consensus” by excluding those who had been at the epicenter of the land conundrum.

Land acquisition in the liberalised era has been regarded by scholars as one where the state plays the role in “upward redistribution of land”. Even in the present form, the LARR has been regarded as anti-farmer by many while another group of scholars perceive it as “discouraging” for the corporate. Many empirical studies
sufficiently establish that the land owners gain only marginally, if at all, whereas the capitalists reap manyfold profit regarded as “dispossession windfall\(^{109}\), just on the count of developed land parcels. However, the economists who perceive high land price as an untenable factor for the investors should also bother to answer the question that, why did Tata acquired land at Sananad (Gujarat) at a price almost four times higher than what it got at Singur (Rs. 9 lakh/acre) in West Bengal? For all such explanations there cannot be any unambiguous conclusive idea but a turf experiencing the contestation between wide range of actors viz. the state, private capital and the farmers with their own bandwagon of supporters.

Even though scholars like Michael Levien have poignantly raised the issue of revival of political economy debate, the attempt here is to argue for a broader exercise to revise the LARR rather than accentuating few issues with implications solely for the farmers. The question which arises in the present situation is that, what rationale does the attempt to revise LARR hold in overriding the larger processes through which it was framed? As we know, there is the judicial convention (or provision!) to constitute bigger bench to override any previous verdict. Considering the application of the same principle, will it be too much to ask for its replication in case of LARR? This question inevitably invites some appreciation for the then Rural Development Minister, Mr. Jairam Ramesh, who walked a tight rope with pragmatism.

The NDA-proposed land bill has the potential to once again resuscitate the debates hovering around political economy in India. Most of the works on political economy in post-independence India has concentrated on explaining the reasons for the “very limited success” of land reforms implementation. In their diverse analysis scholars have identified a shifting pattern in the nature of class coalition. A rather unconventional shift in this analysis was made by Terence Byres (1997) who argued that class contestation does not necessarily takes place ‘from without’ but also ‘from within’. Apparently, the latest configuration of class coalition has been proposed by Pranab Bardhan (2003) which is said to comprise of the state, industrial bourgeoisie, big farmers and the bureaucracy. Presently, however, the most urgent question facing land is that of its acquisition by the state for private investors.

\(^{109}\) Michael Levien (2015a) argues that the present form of land acquisition is highly objectionable in India as it is largely tilted in the favour of the capitalists. In his previous works, Levien (2012, 2013) has attempted to empirically show the amount of wealth which can be simply accumulated by a capitalist due to land use change. He has regarded this as “rate of accumulation by dispossession”.

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With the farmers – big, small and marginal alike – and virtually the entire opposition poised against the government acting in concert with the business lobby, the land question has the potential to redefine the discourse of political economy for a long time to come. In this entire episode the decimated Congress and other opposition parties also find an opportunity to redeem their political space by using their clout in the upper house of the Parliament. An urgent concern, however, amidst the present brouhaha is the ease with which the land question is being hijacked by institutional politics. Can this change be regarded as a plot to de-radicalise the anti-land dispossession resistance movements? What are the chances that the people’s protest will be de-legitimised by different arms of the government acting coherently? The latter question finds its valence in the example of Narmada Bachao Andolan which suffered huge setback due to unfavourable judicial verdict (*NBA and Others vs. State of India, 2000*).

With the issue of compromise already making rounds in media, the government proposal to do away with the consent clause and Social Impact Assessment (SIA) seems to be nothing more than a gimmick. In fact, despite reissuing the land ordinance the government must have realised beforehand its inability to retain a corporate-friendly gesture for long given the protest from both its sympathisers as well as political opponents. However, the real terms of victory for the government rests in shielding the act of reducing the percentage of consenting people drastically by taking the political sting out of it. In the public debates held by different media houses several union ministers have made an effort to douse the fire raging around the land bill by conceding on only one count. While the provision for consent of 80 and 70 percent of the land owners in private and public-private-partnership (PPP) projects, respectively, is proposed to be retained at somewhere around 40 percent the ruling coalition wants the SIA to be given up altogether.

For a government which has earned the reputation of overlooking the democratic procedures, constituting the Ahluwalia committee will help in regaining the democratic credentials. But democracy can hardly be confined to the parliament or its privileged committees as the recent deliberations on issues of public importance have witnessed wide participation. For example, a wide consensus was built around the *Food Security Act* and other laws through the extra-Parliamentary National
Advisory Council (NAC) headed by Sonia Gandhi. It acted as a forum seeking participation of non-state actors like civil society organisations (CSOs), public intellectuals and different stakeholders. While the NAC also had its own limitations it was, nevertheless, a vibrant forum giving space to alternative voices. A benchmark has, thus, been set for any procedure to qualify as democratic and any retraction from the established norms will be seen with apprehension. In an agitating time like the present one, any government should be guided by the Machiavellian principle of choosing apathy of the people over their abhorrence. Moreover, at a juncture when the pro-farmer lobbies are gearing up for second generation of land reforms it is unlikely that a compromise approved by the committee will have substantial buyers in the public. And, for that matter, the ‘public’ itself is not a homogenous entity which makes the implementation of even the present LARR a daunting task.

Whatever attempt the government is making to resolve the crisis around land question can be largely located within the neoliberal framework which harps upon providing a “just” compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement. In this scheme of things the government simply overlooks the anti-land dispossession resistance with cultural components. For such a perception towards land is largely carried by the adivasi constituency, and given the contiguity of the left-wing extremism with tribal-dominated areas, one can easily contemplate the government’s attitude towards the cultural rights as well as the age old extremist problem. Ostensibly, this attitude can be indicative of the times to come when the political channels of expressing dissent are snatched by the state and the disgruntled masses will be identified as Maoists and, hence, a threat to the prosperity and peace of the country.

Finally, the issue surrounding land amendment bill proliferates to the preference for industrial over agrarian, urban over rural, and so on. In light of this fact, the pro-farmer politics need to rejuvenate its space for political economy by transcending the existing class differences. In so doing, the farmers can construct, what Amita Baviskar calls, an ‘ambiguous’ but common concern for overriding the particularities of big, medium, small and marginal farmers. As for the government, if the pro-market forces derive salience for their claims from the objectivity so do their opponents and, an un-biased government carry the duty to give ear to both.
7.4. Significance and limitations of the study

Studies on politics of dispossession and land acquisition primarily pay attention to the anti-dispossession struggles and confine themselves to analysing the situation as they existed. While identifying the need to understand the ‘processes of dispossession’, scholars (Levien, 2013; Chakravorty, 2013 & Bedi, 2013) have left the issue unaddressed. This study attempts to fill this gap by analysing the politics of dispossession taking place in Jharkhand by taking up the case of West Singhbhum. It is a scheduled area governed simultaneously by varying land governing laws like Land Acquisition Act, 1894 as well as Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (CNTA) 1908 and is hot-bed of culture and identity oriented mobilisation against panchayat elections as well as land acquisition. West Singhbhum gives an opportunity to provide a generic view for entire Jharkhand due to similar cases of land acquisition being pursued throughout the State. An inductive approach towards understanding dispossession and resistance movements has been adopted as the micro-level factors are used to analyse the situation. Presently, no work reflects upon the reasons for perpetual underdevelopment of Jharkhand which was created in the name of ethnicity and underdevelopment. This work attempts to fill the void by a careful analysis of the culture, politics, economy and society of the State.

However, owing to its analytical framework the present study falls short of providing a picture from another perspective, i.e. the state’s perspective. The realisation of this limitation prompts me to extend the present research further to provide a holistic view of land dispossession, not only in Jharkhand but all the central and east Indian states having similar social, cultural, economic, political and legal attributes. Nevertheless, the strength of the present study rests in its ability to provide answers to some of the most astounding questions like the one which we have posed in the first chapter.