CHAPTER 1

STRUCTURE OF EXPLOITATION AND STYLES OF PROTEST:
A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The question of exploitation lies at the very heart of the economic, socio-cultural and political systems of a society. It is central to relations of power. It is also crucial because it is concerned with the well being of people living in a society and covers a fundamental dimension of social inequality and of struggles for distributive justice. The term exploitation (1) has two connotations, the first being the more general one of making use of an object for its potential benefits. In this sense it would refer to the exploitation of natural resources. Its second meaning bearing Marxist connotation, however, is quite precise. According to this, exploitation occurs when one section of the population produces surplus whose use is controlled by another section. It is exploitation that gives rise to class conflict in its final stage. Thus the manner in which exploitation is defined in Marxian sense gives us the idea of asymmetrical arrangement of power relations. This asymmetrical arrangement we have referred to as the 'structures of deprivations'.

In the present study we propose to use the political economy framework with a view to understand the structure of deprivation operating at the economic, socio-cultural and political level. This orientation facilitated the use of insights of history, economics and political science in sociology. For a
detailed analysis we have focussed our attention on studying one of the major tribal community's (the Santhals) involvement in the Jharkhand movement in two phase colonial as well as post colonial. An attempt has been made to analyse the styles of Santhal protest in relation to their being exposed to structures of deprivations at three levels i.e., economic, socio-cultural and political.

The political economy perspective examines social relations evolving between people in the process of the production, distribution, exchange and consumption of the material resources. It's more specific meaning in a Marxist context deals with the distribution and accumulation of economic surplus and the attendant problems of determination of prices, wages, employment etc., (T.B. Bootomore;1983:375). The Marxian understanding of political economy perspective derives its strength from the writings of William Petty, F.Quesnary, Adam smith and David Ricardo who shifted their analysis from the sphere of circulation to the sphere of production. (M.I.Volkov;1985:275). The method of Marxist-Leninist political economy is dialectical materialism, which studies the general laws of governing the dynamics of development of society and human thought.

The studies of social movement involves not only a theory of a social structure but also a vision about the future of society. We are concerned here with what T.K.Oommen holds as essential, in
the study of social movement (1990:32) i.e., the dialectics between historicity (past experiences), social structure (Present existential conditions) and the urge for a better future (human creativity). Besides mapping out social structure in the economic, socio-cultural and political field, the nature of state during colonial and post-colonial period and a brief review of Movement studies in sociology and the mode of production debate have also been dealt with here to examine its relevance in the context of exploitation and protest overtime.

The colonial rule marked a turning point in the history of tribal people in India. Although the colonial rulers exploited India at various levels, the bases of exploitation were primarily economic. In order to fully exploit the economic resources of the country the British rulers introduced various institutional structures. A new land tenure pattern and new legal, educational and new administrative systems were some of the institutional structures created by them. They created these structures to administer and exploit the rich material and manpower resources of the country. The tribals were not an exception to this design.

The purpose of our study is to identify the operational mechanism of the exploitative structure developed over time and its consequences on the tribal communities in general and the Santhals in particular. For this we propose to examine three concepts: Exploitation, Discrimination and Oppression. These three concepts were used by Partha Nath Mukherji (1986:9-10)
while discussing the arrangement of asymmetrical relations. He argued that:

a social system free from DEO (discrimination, exploitation and oppression) exists in utopia. Therefore, every system is an interrelation of these three structures. The contradictions, generation of conflicts and movements, can be traced from this arrangement of DEO.

With the help of these three concepts we further propose to analyse the nature and character of the exploitation during colonial and post-colonial period and the tribal response to it. In other words, we propose to historically examine the structures of exploitation and the styles of protest in the tribal regions of Santhal Pargana during 1855 to 1985.

From the focus on the tribal community it should not be inferred that the exploitative structure operate only in their case; what is implied here is that it is more acute in their case. The tribal population constitute only 7.76 per cent and the scheduled caste population constitute 15.75 per cent of the total Indian population. One can easily isolate scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population as two distinct and major sections of the Indian society subjected to structures of deprivation. We have examined the structures of deprivations with the help of concepts like—exploitation, discrimination and oppression.
1.1 FORMS AND STRUCTURES OF EXPLOITATION

Two major forms of exploitation that have always existed in Indian society are: the institutional, and the structural. The institutional frame includes the caste based exploitation. As an empirical reality the caste system includes a system of gradation based on ascriptive and religious values. That is, the internal division existing within the caste hierarchy have institutionalised the graded positions of each unit along a vertical order. As opposed to this (in ideal sense) a tribal society is not characterised by hierarchy but is organised on egalitarian lines.

Alongside the institutional frame of caste the other form of deprivation that existed was the structural, which included the organisation of productive resources, creating structures of asymmetry. Both the institutional and the structural frame encouraged exploitation but the nature of exploitation in each was different. For example, the nature of exploitation under institutional frame, to borrow Talcott Parson’s (1951) phrase was ‘particularistic’ while the exploitation under the structural was ‘universalistic’. The institutional frame of exploitation encouraged hierarchy whereas structural frame encouraged stratification. The former was rooted in the socio-cultural arrangements of society under question while the latter into the socio-economic arrangements of society. In the
former, society was organised in a manner so as to allow differences by recognising the ascriptive criteria whereas in the latter the unequal distribution of economic resources was based on general criteria.

For the purpose of intense and focussed discussion we are taking up the Santhal case (which is one of the major tribal group of Central India). In this context, it is important to notice that the structures of deprivation which came into existence during the colonial time have not completely disappeared. On the contrary, they have persisted and penetrated in the changing economy of the tribal society. Whatever change is visible in their structure is partly due to the change in the present political context which has transformed their social, economic and political life. With the change of economic, political, and social set up corresponding changes have also come about in the tribal life affecting their economic, social and political life.

1.2 MAPPING OF A SOCIAL SYSTEM

When we discuss a system, what we have in mind is a set of structures interlinked by certain rules (laws). And similarly by a structure we mean a group of objects interlinked by certain rules (laws). Rules would mean explicit principles (regulations, institutions etc.) whereby the elements of a system are combined and related, and the norms intentionally created and applied in order to organise social life. Thus a social system has to be
viewed from different perspectives whereby it is possible to identify those explicit principles and norms which were used as the defining criteria of the system. For example, while the functionalists view a social system as an arrangement of social relation based on harmony, the Marxists view it as an arrangement of asymmetrical relations based on contradictions. It is the nature of contradiction that has been spelt out through the concept of exploitation, discrimination and oppression. It would be somewhat unrealistic to presume that a society characterised by asymmetrical relations always remains in a fluid state and therefore, the structural elements and its dynamism invariably threaten the stability of the society.

The idea of conflict has increasingly preoccupied sociologists' and anthropologists' attention. There has been revival of interest in the writings of Simmel and in the work of Coser (1956). One of the dominant spokesmen of conflict school, Dahrendorf (1959) has provided an account of class conflict in industrial society by revising Marx's idea. He also takes issue with Parsons and suggests the need for conflict model to supplement Parson's model of the stable social system. Amongst anthropologists Gluckman's writing deal with the nature of conflict in primitive societies. According to Coser (1956:151):

Conflict frequently helps to revitalise existent norms or it contributes to the emergence of new norms. In this sense, social
conflict is a mechanism for adjustments of norms adequate to new conditions. A flexible society benefits from conflicts because such behaviour, by helping to create and modify norms, assures its continuance under changed conditions.

He thinks that while examining change from one type of system to another (i.e. from feudalism to a different type of social system) it would be desirable to understand it only through an investigation of the stresses and strains within the system. It is also interesting to note here that some of the concepts such as conflict, change and movement derive their theoretical relevance from some kind of conceptualisation of the social system. A social system in some sense refers to an arrangement of its parts (structures) and the change in one or some of these parts have consequences for one, some or all of others. Various theoretical approaches analyse the manner in which the relationships of the parts constitute the system. The Marxist perspective highlights asymmetrical interrelation of parts where the functionalists postulate an interdependence of asymmetries. Both the approaches view movements as the product of social system. The Marxists view conflict to be arising out of contradictions inherent in the asymmetrical interrelationships of parts leading to movement and subsequent transformations. In contrast the functionalists presume the adaptation, integration, goal attainment and tension management as detrimental to a system of interdependence of asymmetry and therefore, 'dynamic
equilibrium' of social system. Thus, while the Marxists would interpret asymmetry of relations as being inherent in the arrangement of structural elements, the neo-functionalists such as Coser believes that the conflict brings about changes not only in the relations within the existing social structures but also in the total social system. The distinction between the Marxist's view of conflict and of Coser's is that while for the former it is inherent in and essential to the social system for the latter it is only a functional aspect of social dynamics.

For our purpose it would be useful to examine the styles of protest by identifying the asymmetrical relations contained in the arrangement of structural elements. Further the notions of asymmetrical interrelations of parts are implicit in the concept of domination. It can also be identified in the economic, socio-cultural and political domain. In the economic, socio-cultural and political context we propose to view asymmetrical relations in terms of an arrangement of structures of exploitation, discrimination and oppression respectively.

P.N. Mukherji (1986) has viewed social system as an arrangement of structural relations with the help of three analytical concepts viz., discrimination, exploitation and oppression. By discrimination he means those asymmetrical relations which according to him are normatively legitimated by societal norms. According to him these are conditioned by family and childhood socialisation which according to P.N. Mukherji;
...strengthen primordial, ascriptive loyalties and provide major available anchorages for individuals forming solidarities on the basis of language, caste, race, creed and sex and so on.

Exploitation has been examined in the

...context of unequal economic exchanges, resulting in differential distribution of material and other resources as well as differential access to such resources by different groups, who are differentially located in the productive system.

Oppression is a political term that has a close association with power. It refers to

a process or means by which the dominant group (or individuals) is able to impose its conditions on those who are weak or unwilling or are deviant. It also implies deliberate impediments and barriers created to construct access to power. (Ibid:10).

While using the concepts DEO the economic domain has been analysed with the help of economic activities such as production, distribution and consumption. These three economic activities have been identified as the main activities by the substantivists in economic anthropology for analysing the dynamics of the economy of the primitive people (For an exhaustive summary on it, see Leclair and Schneider, 1972).

Thus exploitation has been analysed as the built-in process of asymmetrical relations contained in the economic activities of production, distribution and consumption. Similarly, the
asymmetry of structure and the structures of deprivation in socio-cultural domain have been identified in terms of discrimination which takes place due to primordial factors. Tribal groups are considered to be backward Hindus and therefore, the relationship of tribal groups with that of non-tribals is also characterised by asymmetry. Finally, in political domain the relationship is uneven due to the fact that the tribal groups do not have an access to power.

1.3 ECONOMIC DOMAIN

We will examine first the economic structure to identify the sources of tribal deprivation. In the economic domain asymmetrical relations exist in the operational mechanism which may vary from society to society over time and space. The classical economic thinkers from Plato to Adam Smith defined economic activity as those parts of human activity which are closely connected with the attainment and the use of material resources. Since all social systems include realities, made up of objects and relations in totality the economic system in Parsonian sense of the term remains a sub-system of the social system. That means economic system has its parts or structures which are governed by certain explicit principles and norms. Thus the economic system i.e., production, distribution and consumption activities are governed by the rules of the society in exclusive manner. In general, economy refers to an aggregate
of the economic sectors, the characteristic features of which corresponds to historical conditions of the society under question. It is determined by its geographical position, historical traditions and level of the forces of production.

1.3.1 PRODUCTION: Production is the totality of the operation aimed at procuring for a society its material means of existence (Godelier, 1972:263). Its important component, i.e., factors of production include resources, labour and men which may combine to produce wealth. The factors of production combine in two types of structures which are called the 'forces of production' and 'relations of production'. Marx conceived productive forces to include means of production and labour power (T.B.Bottomore, 1983:307). The forces of production basically includes the technical rules or the norms of the social organisation which define the manner in which the factors of production are combined, which, in turn, determine the productivity of the system. The relations of production are constituted by the economic ownership of productive forces (T.B.Bottomore, 1983:178-180). Its economic ownership may mean the rights of appropriation of the conditions of production, i.e., devising rules and owning labour and resources and, finally, its outcome, i.e., the social product.

Who controls the productive forces in a particular society largely depends upon the stage of development of the mode of
production. The structure of exploitation and its mode vary in capitalist and feudal modes of production.

1.3.2 DISTRIBUTION: Associated with the structures of production is another economic operation called distribution. In a given society it is the distribution operation that determines the forms of appropriation and use of the conditions of production and its outcome, i.e., the social product. The mode of appropriating the social product, i.e., objects, according to Godelier (1972:269), are subject to "Explicit rules which define the right (written or unwritten) that the various members of this society possess in relation to those objects".

The rules governing the appropriation of resources are implicit in the mode of economic organisation of the society concerned. Karl Polanyi (1957:218-37) has discussed the mechanism of distribution under three principles: reciprocity, redistribution and exchange. Illustrations of the first principle, according to Godelier, can be seen in the game of gifts and counter-gifts, the Potlatch, of the Kwakiutl; the second principle can be observed in the Inca empire where the redistribution of product by order from above is the rule, and in the third principle, there is universal circulation of the commodities, land, labour and other objects in capitalistic economy. Godelier further goes on to stress that if objects that are transacted in distribution are given a value, the criteria of
doing so might "enable us eventually to analyse different forms of social equality and inequality" (Godelier; 1972:276).

Marx recognised exploitation in the capitalistic organisation of the productive and distributive process. It is the organisation of the redistribution of goods by a minority within a tribal community that has created a possibility of exploitation of the majority of the tribals by the minority. In this process there emerged a dominant class within a tribe. Earlier, when the tribals had not come in contact with the non-tribals, the rules that governed the appropriation of resources hinged on the principles of either reciprocity or redistribution which changed substantially during the colonial rule.

1.3.3 CONSUMPTION: According to Godelier (1972:277):

Consumption of the factors of production—resources, equipment, labour is nothing other than the actual process of production, the existence and continuity of which it ensures. It is thus subject to the technical rules of production and to the social rules governing appropriation of the factors of production.

Since it operates within the framework of production unit, the conditions that influence the items of production affect the consumption pattern. The consumption pattern is also subject to the norms of some definite social authority(such as family head or the heads of the village, clan etc.).

Consumption is basically the utilisation of the material benefit created in the process of production (Volkov; 1985:65).
According to Ernest Mandel (1983:92):

Consumption of products of human labour is the way in which human beings maintain and reproduce themselves both as individual and social individuals i.e., both in the physical-mental sense (as human beings with a given personality) and in a concrete socio-historical framework (as members of a given social formation, in a specific historical period).

That means consumption has both a physiological and a historical dimension, when we keep in mind the physiological need we are simply talking about the personal needs of individuals who are basically interested in satisfying needs of food, clothing, hunger etc., and when we talk about consumption having historical dimension in mind, we basically have in mind the productive consumption which includes both consumption of consumer goods by producers and consumption of means of production in the productive process. The rules that determine the consumption patterns of unproductive type in a tribal case was the result of colonial state and continued further in the post colonial set up perpetuating exploitation of the tribal communities.

1.4 SOCIO-CULTURAL DOMAIN

The socio-cultural framework of economic activities may also be relevant in understanding the deprivation that a group may suffer. The economic activities which involve the mutual interaction of individual in the process of production are governed by the rights and obligations which are socially defined. Thus social organisation of agriculture of a community
may be related to other aspects of social system viz., kinship, ethnicity and locality. Further, the mode of organising agricultural activity involves certain norms which reflect the cultural trait of the community under question. The tribal groups, before they came in contact with colonial ruler's administrative agencies, and the people who were non-tribals, had a communitarian style of living which was based on reciprocity and mutual obligation between the members of the group. They placed a high value on informal and personalised relations. Hierarchy was conspicuous by its absence among them and, therefore, no lines of distinction existed between the individuals of an ethnic group. Commitment to equality among the tribal community was a fundamental social value.

Until the tribals came in contact with indirect rule of colonial power, egalitarian principles dominated their styles of living. During the colonial rule, missionary influence brought about their conversion into Christianity and thus the differences began to surface between the converted and the non-converted tribals. Theoretically speaking forms of inequality did not exist among the tribals.

However, those who argue that inequality has been the salient features of almost all societies suggest that inequality can be distinguished from one another in at least two respects. First, a distinction could be between the inequality of natural capability
and those of position. Secondly, a distinction could be between inequalities that do not involve any evaluative rank order and those that do. According to Dahrendorf (1968:19), a combination of the two may result in four types of inequality:

(a) Natural differences of kind in features, character and interests (b) Natural differences of rank, intelligence, talent and strength. Correspondingly in relation to society there are, (c) Social differentiations of positions essentially equal in rank (d) Social stratification based on reputation and wealth and expressed in a rank order of social status.

In case of the tribal groups it was the inequality of the natural differences that existed in terms of age, orientation and sex etc. People could be assigned unequal roles to perform but there did not exist any explicit rules which justified asymmetry in social relations.

1.4.1 DISCRIMINATION AND INEQUALITY: As a matter of fact, Indian society is largely considered to be a society harbouring inequalitarian values. According to Beteille (1974:64) it is the caste system "which is supposed to have provided the most powerful and elaborate ideological justification for social inequality". That means the Indian social life under the overall influence of caste system exhibited what Kingsley Davis (1981:366) calls, 'the universal features of social stratification'. And when the tribals came in contact with the colonial and neo-colonial power its egalitarian principles of organising society gave way to what Kingsley Davis calls, 'variable features of social
stratification”. It created divisions within the tribal groups between the converted and the non-converted tribals and further, between the tribals and the non-tribals. Thus within the socio-cultural domain, an arrangement of asymmetrical relations can be viewed in terms of an arrangement of structures of discrimination. The mobilisation of the tribal group has acquired the forms of protest movement basically directed against the non-tribals.

P.K. Bose (1985:123) has analysed the class differentiation among the tribals in terms of relations of production. He presumes that the question of tribal identity is to be examined in the context of divergent economic interests. He observes:

In fact the economic interests of the different classes among the tribals are contradictory. Though the ‘tribal identity’ is often projected in the context of different protective and development measures on closure inspection this ‘identity’ turns out to be illusive one. This is the same kind of manipulation by upper class tribals in ethnic symbols and idioms to help their own interests as one finds is happening among the other minority groups in India.

The horizontal consolidation of the tribal groups surmounts the intra-divisions of the tribal community. Even the economic interests of the different classes among the tribal groups do not create points of protests between the positively privileged tribals and the negatively privileged tribals. This issue is quite complicated and needs to be examined in terms of overall arrangement of asymmetrical relations existing in economic, socio-
cultural and political domain.

There is yet another aspect of discrimination which is rooted in its distributive aspect. It is reflected in the uneven distribution of property, income, literacy and education etc. Beteille used the expression, 'cumulative inequality' to discuss the nature of its concentration. The asymmetrical arrangement has not only created structures of discrimination but it has also established a system of cumulative inequalities in which privileges, property and power are concentrated in the hands of zamindars, moneylenders and merchants. As against their united and combined positions, the tribals continued to be socially discriminated, economically exploited and politically oppressed.

One of the basic principles of mobilising masses during the movement against the colonial rule by the tribals was to bring about equalitarian values. The nationalist leaders also made efforts to mobilise the disadvantaged, deprived and exploited mass of people to join the national chorus of removing the British rule. But even after the end of the colonial rule, the creation of egalitarian society remained a distant goal. According to Beteille (1974:70), values associated with inequality "have taken firmer roots in post-colonial societies where they are coming into conflict at every point with the traditional concept of hierarchy."
Further the tribal discrimination is associated with their minority positions. During the colonial time they were deprived of their traditional rights over land. Their exposure with the colonial state had aroused rebellious tendencies among them. After independence the role of state did not change. The contradictions of this sort do not inspire nationalist ideals and therefore, altruistic concern with the nation in them is absent. In fact their protest in the forms of achieving cessationist goals demonstrate their concern to establish their sub-nationalist identity. They have the language of their own but due to the outsiders' migration in the tribal region they have been marginalised on their own land. After independence the government's development strategy has further deprived them of their land. Needless to mention here that their land which was usurped by the outsiders during the British time has not yet been restored to them even after independence and the encroachment on their land still continues despite government's legislation against it. Their demand for a separate state called Jharkhand may also be seen as an assertion and determination on their part to secure a territory of their own.

1.5 POLITICAL DOMAIN

In the political field as well there exists structures of asymmetrical arrangement which are regulated by the norms and obligation that divide groups living in society into dominant and subordinate positions. When we talk about the political system we
simply mean the formal structures of the political order. This however, does not mean that we are not aware of the informed manifestation of power. Earlier when the tribal groups had not come in contact with the colonial rulers, their political system was dominated by what Morris-Jones (1971) termed 'traditional language of politics'. Their communitarian life style did not allow the tribal chiefs to appropriate power for their individual gains and, therefore, structures of asymmetrical arrangement were conspicuously absent.

The structure of Indian political system may be analysed at two levels: first, in legal terms, including the constitution which acts as the theoretical instrument of power; second, in administrative and organisational terms wherein the bureaucracy constitutes the executive machinery of the goals identified by the forces, that is, the politically and ideologically organised political parties. While discussing the formal structures of political order Djurfeldt and Lindberg (1975:255) have talked about two common types of function which are commonly identified as social function and functions of repression. The social function, according to them, must be understood as outside the purview of smaller, individual unit but brought within their conscious, collective control by means of a representative agent or structure acting on behalf of the collectivity. The substantive structure of society shapes both the degree and kind of collective control that it requires to reproduce itself....Thus, the
political function is an element in societal reproduction.

The second function, that is, the repressive function, pre-supposes the recognition of class rule. Djurfeldt and Lindberg (1975:255) observe that repression can be seen as part of the reproductive function of politics and as an instrument used to preserve class relations and ensure the existing social structure against the threat posed by rebellion or deviance.

When we analyse the structure of deprivation, marginalisation and domination by the outsiders in the tribal regions under question, we have also to examine the specific structures of a given political system in which the outsiders have gained control over the state power. The structures of the political system that began to affect the tribal population date back to 1855 when the Santhal Pargana district was created by the colonial state. Subsequently there developed a definite formal apparatus such as military and police forces to deal with tribal rebellion. Since the tribals defied the state imposition of excessive rent on land they had to confront police. After independence, the state in India operated within the framework of the constitution and the administrative agency, which included police, bureaucracy and law courts.

1.6 CONCEPT OF THE STATE

At this stage it would be useful to examine the concept of state and its operational dynamics. Two distinct notions of state
are worth mentioning here. They are (a) welfare notion of state and (b) the absolutionist notion of state. According to the first, due to the increasing differentiation of social function when some societies become larger and complex, there arises the need for a superior authority in society capable of regulating conflicts of interests among individuals and groups and of representing in some fashion the general interest. In a situation of this sort the state engages itself in welfare activities. Every political system faces the problems of state building, when the political elite creates new structures and organisation designed to penetrate the society to regulate behaviour in it and draw a larger volume of resources from it. According to Almond and Powell (1966:35-36):

State building is commonly associated with significant increases in the regulative and extractive capabilities of the political system, with the development of a centralised and penetrative bureaucracy related to the increase in these capabilities and with the development of attitudes of obedience and compliance in the population which are associated with the emergence of such a bureaucracy.

Among the earliest political thinkers starting from Aristotle, Plato and Kautilya down to the European thinkers of the 17th and 18th centuries, especially Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Emile Rousseau, the state was viewed as the pivot around which the society revolved. Stressing the regulative capabilities of the state, the proponents of the structural-functional school namely
Emile Durkheim, Radcliffe-Brown and Talcott Parsons largely regard state as the key agency of maintaining order, stability and peace in society. The functionalists position has succinctly been summarised by Hamza Alavi (1982:290) who said that in "its key organising conception essentially society is constituted on the basis of the complementarity and reciprocity of roles in the social division of labour". While the structural functionalists emphasise the regulative function of the state in maintaining harmony in the society, the proponents of conflict theory specially Marx and Engels conceived the state as a product of the division of society into classes and as a means by which a dominant class, the master of the conditions of production, consolidates and maintains its rule over society.(Patrick and Goode; 1983:119)

The Marxist notion of the state is viewed as primarily attaching predominant position to the class element in the society. Engels formulation of the state gives testimony to this when he states:

Since the state emerged from the need to keep class antagonisms in check, but also in the midst of the conflict between these classes, it is as a rule the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which also becomes, by this means, the politically dominant class and so acquires new instruments for subordinating and exploiting the oppressed...in most historical states the rights accorded to citizens are graded according to property, and so express directly the fact that the state is an organisation for the defence of the possessing class against the non-possessing class. (Engels quoted in
The views expressed by Marx and Engels contrasts with notions of exploitation and oppression, domination and subordination and hostility and antagonisms of class interests. The political system and the state are the structures created with the sole purpose of functioning for the betterment of society. But the Marxist argument rejects the welfare motive of the capitalist state as they see it essentially as a means of class domination. It is the class power that is automatically translated into state power and the state becomes the instrument of a ruling class.

Ralph Miliband has identified three aspects of a state as an instrument of the ruling class. The first relates to the personnel of the state system, that is, those who are located in the commanding heights of the state in the executive, administrative, judicial, repressive and legislative branches. They have also dominated the other strategic height of the society, notably the economic and the cultural ones. The second relates to the economic power of the capitalist ruling class which wields that power by virtue of its ownership and control of economic and other resources. The third is a structural dimension of an objective and impersonal kind. The contention is that it cannot be anything else. Thus, the character of state’s leading personnel, the pressures exercised by the economically dominant class and the structural constraints imposed by the mode of production constitute state as the instrument of the ruling class (Bottomore and Goode 1983:128).
Hamza Alavi (1982:294) considers both the functionalist and the instrumentalist view to be reductionist in one way or the other and expounds his own concept of structural imperative which "refers to the basis of economic calculation in a capitalist society and the conditions that govern their outcome, both at the level of the individual enterprise and at the level of the states." In our view however, the Marxist concept is not a deterministic and mechanistic one as it refers to the evolution of state along with the property and social institutions and dynamics of capitalist development and its contradictions which are analysed in Marxist political economy. It is important to note that the dominant class not only enhances its status within the given socio-cultural milieu but also exercises dominance over the subordinate class. In the context of state power and state apparatus the observation of Nicos Poulantzas (1978:115) is quite perceptive.

Power of social classes is organised in specific institutions which are power centres. In this context the state is the centre of the exercise of political power. But this does not mean that power centres, the various institutions of an economic, political, military, cultural, etc., are mere instruments, organs or appendices of the power of social classes. They possess their autonomy and structural specificity which is not as such immediately reducible to analysis in terms of power.
T.K. Oommen has analysed the Indian situation in the context of social movements and response of the state. He (1990:183-84) suggests that besides 'values of society', 'state ideology' and the means defined by it as legitimate constitute two major dimensions of 'environmental milieu' which moulds the nature of movements. Viewed in terms of state movement relations, four major phases could be distinctly identified: first is the pre-political or stateless phase - it refers to the spontaneous mobilisation in limited geographical locales accounting for primitive rebellions, tribal outbreaks, slave riots etc. The second phase was the phase of dominant imperial colonial state when the notion of nation-state assumed wide currency and several territorially bounded primordial collectivities-religious, linguistic, regional groups began to claim the status of nation states. The movement during this phase saw anti-imperial and anti-colonial mobilisation. The third phase saw the spread of science and technology followed by the industrial revolution and the development of modern capitalism. It brought about a new class of political power holders who identified themselves with poor, disadvantaged and the oppressed and thus tried to actualise the socialist and the welfare states respectively. In this phase the movements of particular class or occupational categories i.e., working class, peasant movement and women's movement etc., pressurised the state to continue with liberal and
welfare measures. The fourth phase saw the consolidation of capitalist and socialist states on the one side and a limited number of post-industrial societies on the other. It caused a global division of nation-states based on types of economy and the level of economic development.

The Santhal's protest movement was at its peak during the colonial period which belongs to the second phase according to the above classification. By 1930s, before developing some affinity with the national movement, the Santhal protest culminated into Santhal insurrection of 1855 and Kherwar movement of 1872. Their involvement in these movements challenged the authoritarian nature of imperial and colonial state. Since the nature of the state was authoritarian, the movement of tribal groups that challenged the domination of state was ruthlessly suppressed. As against this the post-colonial phase saw the establishment of welfare and democratic state having a little more tolerant attitude towards the groups that launched movements. The Santhals' involvement in this sense was not only tolerated but an attempt was made by the leaders' to bring the tribal movements into the political mainstream. The tribals perceive the so called nationalist leader's intention with suspicion simply because the nationalist leaders represent the economic interest of those classes that have a vested interest in exploiting the natural resources of the tribal regions, such as
forestry, mineral resources and even the unskilled labour force. Capitalist design and the reminiscent feudal legacy of the colonial days have established structures of deprivation in economic, socio-cultural and political field. This is the reason why the motives of the nationalist leaders are viewed with suspicion by the tribal leaders. And therefore the tribal leaders voice their demand for a separate state called Jharkhand. It is their disillusionment with the national leaders and the role of state that has forced them to agitate for such a goal.

After independence, the welfare measures operate in such a manner that it has helped only the interest of the Dikus. During the colonial period the British regime extended patronage to the zamindars, the merchants and the mahajans and now after independence, the bureaucrats, the merchants, the contractors and the officials of the law courts are the ones who exploit the tribals in the name of the functionaries of the state. Therefore, the government officials are also regarded as the Dikus.

The tribal groups represent what T.K. Oommen terms as primordial collectivity. Unlike the two other sets of collectivities termed as 'biological' (which are given to us and cannot be acquired e.g., sex, race, age groups etc.) and civil (which are acquired e.g., Workers, peasants, students and professionals etc.) the primordial collectivity is partly given and partly acquired, the typical example being caste (jati), tribe, religion, language and region. In order to gain access to
capital resources - wealth, power and privilege - the primordial collectivities resort to certain pressure tactics. Myron Weiner (1963) has used a term community organisation to refer to such primordial collectivity and demand for separation is viewed by him as the manifestation of the pressure group tactics. Such a portrayal of tribal demand would mean legitimising the role of authoritarian state and underplaying the importance of primordial collectivity. T.K. Oommen contests this position by stating:

Generally speaking primordial collectivities pursuing symbolic goals cannot be viewed as weakening the national social fabric. This is for two reasons: First, they attempt only changes within the system, and second, they do not question the legitimacy of the nation state as an entity. (T.K. Oommen; 1990:169).

Further so far as the policy of state in granting statehood is concerned, the Indian state has not evolved any rational criteria. Paul Brass (1974) has also lamented that the criteria to grant statehood has always been based on adhoc measures determined largely by pragmatic considerations. He has pointed out that even language has not been used as the only basis of granting statehood in a uniform manner. The demand for separate Punjab started on religious grounds: When the leaders felt that as long as religion is projected as the criterion for demanding statehood, they would not succeed in their objectives and therefore, language was put forward as the criterion for demanding statehood and the demand as such was conceded. Logically speaking when Haryana got the status
of statehood the same criterion was not followed. As a matter of fact the demand for separate statehood was not put forward by its leader when Haryana was declared a state on November 1,1966. It was the by-product of the demand for a separate Sikh state (later having projected as a state of Punjabi speaking people) which led to the creation of Haryana. In a situation like this even on a flimsy ground the demand for a separate state has been conceded. Thus it makes the movement of separation all the more salient.

T.K.Oommen has rightly observed:" ... in the absence of any set of rational criteria for the formation of political-administrative units the demand for further divisions can be endemic" (Ibid:169).

Rajni Kothari (1986) also examined state and its presumed role as liberator, equaliser, moderniser and mobiliser. He considers state:

"... as a mediator in ameliorating the harshness of traditional social structures for the purpose of ensuring justice and equality, a protector of vulnerable peoples and liberator of oppressed and colonised populations, and an engine of growth and development that would usher in a new civil order based on progress and prosperity and confer rights to life and liberty, equality and dignity on the people at large." (R.Kothari;1986:211)

He further stated:

whether it was Lenin or Mao, Nehru or Nkrumah, Nyere or Nasser— they all pinned their visions of transformation on state power. The presumed alliance between the state and the masses seemed to have eroded. State is
seen to have betrayed the masses, as having become the prisoner of the dominant classes and their transnational patrons and having turned anti-people (Ibid:212).

It is this anti-people role of state that Rajni Kothari has highlighted in a rather emotive tone. According to him it was the growing disenchantment with the presumed role of state that resulted into a flurry of mass action in various social settings. Although the masses seem to be unorganised and have not found institutionalised channels of protest but he thinks that:

it is from such convergence of new grassroots politics and new grassroots thinking that new definitions of the scope and range of politics are surfacing and around these redefinitions new social movements are emerging.... new building blocks are going to emerge partly through the non-party political process, partly through nationality type of movements for regional autonomy and within the caste and a community framework for texturing a pluralist social order supported by decentralised political order (Ibid:212-14).

Rajni Kothari seems to be suggesting that it is the grassroot model of mass politics which is assuming importance more than the state. Therefore, the dominant tendency and mode of thought today is to place the state above the people, the security of the nation state above people's security, the removal of real or imaginary threats to the state more pertinent than those to the people. According to R.Kothari (Ibid,216) the transformation of state can take place in four simple ways: first, through the transformation of the civil society; second, by ensuring that the role of centralised state must decline; third, by ensuring that
the state must regain its autonomy from dominant interests and classes—it should wither away as an instrument of class and ethnic oppression and fourthly, by moving beyond the nation state syndrome of statehood.

From the perceptive views and the insight provided by the writings of the social scientists on the state in the Indian situation, it seems obvious that so long as the 'imagined role of state' is not translated into action along the lines suggested by T.K. Oommen i.e., recognising 'cultural nationalism as important ingredients of political nationalism', the movements, mass action, protests are going to be endemic. Our submission is that these movements based on primordial identities assumes saliency depending upon structures of deprivation operating at the economic, socio-cultural and political level.

1.7 MOVEMENT STUDIES IN SOCIOLOGY

Although social movement studies by Sociologists started late in their studies the focus was remarkably different from that of the studies conducted by historians. In sociology the decade of 1970 marked the beginning of studies on social movement. The first book by a sociologist on social movement in India was that of T.K. Oommen published in 1972: with the title Charisma, Stability and Change. Subsequently, sociologists started examining different issues in movement. For example S.C Malik (1977) tried to clarify concepts relevant in the study of movement; in a
special number of Sociological Bulletin (1977) T.K.Oommen and P.N.Mukherji discussed conceptual and theoretical issues. Studies of different types of movement were reported in works of M.S.A.Rao (1978 & 1979) and A.R.Desai (1979). The decade of 1970 could be recognised as the formative decade in the study of social movements in India. The Centre for the Study of Social Systems of the Jawaharlal Nehru University took lead in pursuing the systematic study of different kinds of movement: Agrarian Movements in Kerala (T.K.Oommen), Naxalbari Movement in West Bengal (P.N.Mukherji), Jharkhand Movement in Bihar (K.L.Sharma) and Lingayat Movement in Karnataka (C.N.Venugopal).

According to M.S.A.Rao, movements may be classified keeping in mind different criteria viz., consequence of a movement; superordinate and subordinate relationships-transformative nature of the movement; locus of a movement; scale and spatial period; dominant issue of interest. He also observed that classification only helps to identify the main features of a movement, it does not fully explain its origin, growth, dynamic and consequences. Any classification is bound to be inadequate for a movement tends to acquire new features during its course and any classification can only be relative to a particular phase in its development.

A.R.Desai’s volume published in 1979 besides providing a dialectical perspective on social movement also tried to expose the myth that the Indian peasant had been passive, fatalistic, docile unresisting and bogged down in the quagmire of
superstitions and otherworldly fantasies. According to him (1979: XII):

The Indian rural scene during the entire British period and thereafter, has been bristling with protests, revolts, and even large scale militant struggles involving hundreds of villages and lasting for years.

And providing an explanation as to why scholars have glossed over the study on social movement, he writes:

Operating under the modernisation syndrome, and evolving an a historical structural-functional approach, they conducted rural studies in a manner wherein peasant struggles were treated almost as non-issue. ... For them tribal and peasant struggles were considered as disfunctional, anomic and disintegrative phenomena, obstructing the rapid and smooth development of the capitalist path since independence. In short, the established scholarship with few exceptions, treated tribal and peasant struggles as a law and order problem.

T.K.Oommen (1972,1977,1984,1985&1990) has advanced some tentative propositions to explain the neglect by sociologists of the study of social movement. Writing on the conceptual frameworks, substantive themes and methodological issues of movement he suggested that studies of movements used to be typically an 'ex-post-facto enterprise' and since India won her freedom through 'national liberation struggle', the scholars could have attempted to study it only after its termination. Secondly, almost all movements during liberation struggle were subsumed under it and therefore a meaningful study of particular
social movements could be attempted only in relation to the national liberation movement. Thirdly, the scholars whose number was limited concentrated more on analysing structures rather than processes (1985:136). The key areas of research were caste, family and village. According to his estimate during the period between 1948-1967 nine books and ten articles were published and during the period between 1968-77 thirty books and eighty articles were published on social movements.

If we bear in mind the nature and character of the movement, the studies on tribal movement during the period of 1960s and onwards could be put under two broad headings i.e., the studies having a regional, local or micro-focus and those having an All India or macro-focus. The studies that fall in the first category are the studies of: Verrier Elwin (1960,1961); N.B. Roy (1960); A.P. Jha (1960); Edward Jay (1962); J.C. Jha (1963, 1967); L.P. Vidyarthi (1964); L.K. Mahapatra (1968); Jyoti Sen (1972); Philip Ekka (1972); A.N. Das (1975); K.S. Singh (1966,1977,1982,1983); Joseph Troisi (1976); K.L. Sharma (1976); Ranjit K. Bhadra (1977); Myron Weiner (1978); S.M. Dube (1982); S.C. Panchbhai (1983); K.G. Iyer and R.N. Maharaj (1988); Edward Duyker (1984,1987). The studies that fall in the second category are the studies conducted by: Stephen Fuches(1965), G.S. Ghurye (1963), N.K. Bose (1967), R. Raghavaiah (1971), Kathleen Gough (1974), Gopal Bhardwaj (1977), Ranjit Guha (1983) and K.S. Singh (1985).
The studies of the second type had wider scope as it attempted on movement typification and conceptual understanding. T.K. Oommen, while discussing the types of tribal movements has brought into focus their geographical and political anchorages. According to him (1985:99):

Movements among the encysted tribes of Central and Eastern India have been mainly oriented to their betterment within the Indian union and movements among tribes of North Eastern Frontier have often shown secessionist tendencies which cast doubt on the very possibility of their improvement within the national framework and question the legitimacy of the nation state to encapsulate them.

Thus two types of tribal movements identified by him has been termed as : those which emphasise the 'religious/revivalistic/developmental orientation' and those which focus on the political separatist orientation. It is relevant to note here that some of the tribal movements have undergone a course of evolution. For example, the Jharkhand Movement in its formative stage i.e., before independence reflected what has been termed by Surajit Sinha (1972:411) as 'tribal solidarity' which aim at asserting solidarity of a tribe or a group of tribes vis-a-vis the non-tribals. And subsequently the same Jharkhand movement after independence acquired the unity of goals and therefore tenedency to demand a separate state for a tribe or a group of tribes is the political manifestation of tribal solidarity. Besides, some of these tribal movements have been perceived as
Proto-national and others sub-national. B.K. Roy Burman (1978:118) who formulated these two concepts states:

Proto-nationalism is a phase of 'expansion of identity'; sub-nationalism is a phase of 'contraction of identity'. One results from the expansion of the orbit of development, the other results from the disparities of development ... in sub-nationalism the ultimate sanction is the coercive power of the community, whereas... in proto-nationalism it is primarily the moral consensus of the community.

B.K. Roy Burman's dichotomous characterisation of proto-nationalism and sub-nationalism rests on the issue of tribal identity. In the former, he sees 'positive' element whereas in the latter he sees 'parochial' orientation of the tribal elites. The tribal movements however, unfolds variety of orientations. The Anthropological Survey of India in a seminar organised on tribal movements in 1976 identified several tribal movements in Middle India which could be put under following four categories: (a) Movements for Political autonomy, (b) Agrarian and Forest-based movements, (c) Sanskritisation process and (d) Cultural Movements based on Script and language.

The participant observation method as an important method of data collection was used by the social anthropologists and the secondary sources of data including settlement reports, gazetteers, official records and the archival materials were used by the historians for conducting study on tribal movements. The studies conducted by Verrier Elwin, L.P. Vidyarthi, Sachchidanand
Sinha, George Somers etc., belong to the former category whereas the studies of J.C. Jha, K.S. Singh, K.K. Datta etc., belong to the latter. The study of movement during the 1960s belonged mainly to the domain of history and anthropology and sociologists were the late arrivals. Therefore, when in the decades of 1970s and 1980s sociologists began to take interest in studying social movement, late M.S.A.Rao cautioned "...It is necessary for a sociologist to acquire the skills of a historian to collect historical data. However, the nature of interpretation remains sociological..." He (1978:13) further clarified the misconstrued conception that a sociologist cannot do participant observation in an ongoing movement. Finally he suggested:

In order to handle problems of analysing dynamic social processes over a period of time, we not only need to acquire diverse skills of techniques of gathering data but also to develop a conceptual framework to interpret and explain social movements.

Taking clue from the classification of movements and conceptions of studying a movement by M.S.A.Rao an attempt has been made to examine tribal protest in relation to social structure in the present study. In sociological theories the structural condition and motivational orientations have been emphasised. The sociological theories of movement are: theory of relative deprivation, strain theory and revitalisation theory.

The theory of relative deprivation has been discussed in terms of mobility and conflict. R.K.Merton (1950) has emphasised
the mobility aspect in the context of reference group theory and extending Merton's argument, Runciman (1966) developed the concept in relation to reference group and problems of inequalities and social justice. Marx (1904), Abrele (1966) and Gurr (1970) have discussed the concept of relative deprivation by emphasising the element of conflict. Smelser's analysis of social movement incorporates structural-functional framework wherein he considers strain as the impairment of relations among parts of a system leading to the malfunctioning of the system and includes deprivation under strain. It was Wallace (1956) who used the term 'Revitalisation' to refer to that type of social movement in which people make deliberate, organised and conscious effort to construct a more satisfying culture for themselves. That means in this theory of movement adaptive processes are employed to establish equilibirium situations (see Chart- 1.1).
### Chart 1.1

**Nature and character of Tribal Movement in Santhal Pargana**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Basis of Mobilisation</th>
<th>Nature, forms &amp; Character of Movement</th>
<th>Issues and Demands Raised</th>
<th>Leadership &amp; Forms of Authority</th>
<th>Major Protests Structure</th>
<th>Organisational Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Phase-I</td>
<td>Proto-ethnicity &amp; Nationalism Traditional</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Nativistic (4) Encroachment on tribal land</td>
<td>Traditional Santhal (10)</td>
<td>Kajor (9)</td>
<td>(-) Charismatic (9) (1855-56)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(1855-1878)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Restorative-rebellion (5) the Dikus (i.e., Zamindars, Money-lenders and the Merchants)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1878-1947)</td>
<td>Infra-nationalism</td>
<td>Revitalisation order and peaceful protest against the colonial</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Kherwar (11) Chotanagpur (14)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nationalism</td>
<td>&amp; Non-violent legislations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-colonial</td>
<td>Sub-ethnicity cum Political &amp; Regional &amp; Democratic</td>
<td>Non-violent</td>
<td>Separate State (8)</td>
<td>Modern &amp; Movement (1948)</td>
<td>Jharkhand Jharkhand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase-I (1947-72)</td>
<td>Nationalism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-colonial</td>
<td>Sub-ethnicity cum Political &amp; Regional &amp; Democratic Linguistic (13)</td>
<td>Non-violent</td>
<td>Preservation of forest, Armed</td>
<td>Modern &amp; Movement</td>
<td>Jharkhand Jharkhand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase-II (1972- onwards)</td>
<td>Nationalism &amp; Regional</td>
<td>Protest against Dikus, Forcible</td>
<td>Legal &amp;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linguistic</td>
<td>Cultivation of land, Tribal</td>
<td>Administrative Management</td>
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While these approaches to the study of movement have been employed by sociologists a fuller understanding of a social movement can be had only when the linkage between the history, structure and future vision of society is understood. Rightly observed T.K. Oommen (1977:37) when he stated:

"... an adequate framework for the study of social movements should take into account the historicity, the elements of social structure and the future vision of society in which they originate and operate and it is the dialectics between them which provides the focal point of analysis of social movements."

In this context we find that the theory of relative deprivation is quite useful. The manner in which the supporters of structural-functional school studied movements did not bring into sharp focus the conflict inherent in the social system. Similarly, the revitalisation and strain theory attach importance to motivational orientations i.e., the psychic element in collective action which tend to overlook the contradictions implicit in the social structure. In fact processual changes are related to the pre-existing structural conditions. Rightly observed Rao (1984:VIII) when he stated:

In studying social movements, as some critics would fear, the structural context is not neglected but is studied in detail so as to locate the areas of conflict and contradiction which provide the necessary conditions for the emergence of social movements. It is also realised that the awareness and consciousness of the conditions of existence on the part of the concerned section in an effort (collective mobilisation) to change them, provide the
sufficient conditions in the emergence of movements.

It would also be significant to understand the nature of colonial state and its policies with a view to identify the colonial structure of exploitation. But the colonial state and its policies were not the only instruments to maintain colonialism. It was a complex integration of political structure enmeshing the Indian economy. Therefore, the economic structure during the colonial rule served the interest of those who had dominant role in moulding the state policy. After the withdrawal of British rule, the post-colonial state tried to work out policies which would remove the exploitative structures and bring about harmonious relations between groups and classes. The nature of Indian economy and the role of dominant class may be evaluated when we examine at length the debate relating to the modes of production.

1.8 CONCEPT OF MODE OF PRODUCTION

The debate on the mode of production has generated doubts regarding whether Indian society is characterised by one or several modes of production. It would therefore be useful to examine what constitutes the mode of production. Writing about mode of production Marx states:

In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The totality of
these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society— the real foundation, on which legal and political superstructures arise and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production of material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production. From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then occurs a period of social revolution. In broad outline we can designate the Asiatic, the Ancient, the Feudal, and the Modern bourgeois modes of production as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society. (Quoted in Bottomore and Goode, 1983:49-50).

Marx analysed the mode of production and its development in different epochs of society in a progressive order. He also identified contradiction inherent in each epoch in the process of development. He saw contradictions in material life between the social forces of production and relations of production. According to Eric Hobsbawm (1984:46):

... the modes of production constitute the structures which determine what form the growth of productive forces and the distribution of surplus will take, how society can or cannot change its structures and how, at suitable moments, the transition to another mode of production can or will take place. It also establishes the range of superstructural possibilities. Therefore, it is the base of our understanding of the variety of human societies and their interactions as well of their historical dynamics.

It is significant to bear in mind that the discussion and debate that centre around the mode of production are essentially
grounded in Marxist terminology and framework. Hence the references to classics by Marx, Engels, Kautsky, Lenin and Mao-Tse-tung form part of the abstract conceptualisation. Barry Hindess and Paul Q. Hirst (1979:9-15) pointing out the significance of these concepts think that these general concepts provide the means for the determination and theoretical definition of particular current situations and which determine the criteria of the construction and validation of the concept of particular social formations...It is not a description of a particular structure of social relations but a means for the analysis of social relations.

1.8.1 CAPITALIST PATH OF DEVELOPMENT

The debate started with a report published (based on sample survey) by Ashok Rudra in the Punjab region. His purpose was to identify the trends emerging in Indian agriculture. The survey was conducted during 1968-69 and a year later Utsa Patnaik (1971) provided a detailed critique of Ashok Rudra's argument. Therefore Alice Thorner (1982:1963) who has summed up the debate has termed them as, 'the original protagonists'. The point of difference is noticed in their conceptualisation of capitalist mode of production. For example, Ashok Rudra who thinks that the Indian rural society is characterised by the capitalist mode of production suggests following five criteria for identifying capitalist mode of production:

- the capitalists (a) tend to cultivate his land himself rather than to give it out on lease; (b) tend to use hired labour in a much
greater proportion than family labour; (c) tend to use farm machinery; (d) market an important share of his produce; and (e) so organise his production as to yield a high rate of return on his investments (Quoted in Alice Thorner; 1982: 1964).

According to Utsa Patnaik as India is an ex-colonial country, it is characterised by a limited and distorted development of capitalism which has not revolutionised the mode of production. She counters the proposition of Ashok Rudra by stating that the capitalist development in agriculture in India rests neither on the employment of hired labour nor on production for the market. Utsa Patnaik’s contention that there is limited and distorted development of capitalism is further elaborated in her empirical studies. She maintains that the imperialistic design of the British regime was the root cause of pauperisation and proletarianisation of the peasantry. The use of cheap labour to be hired was based on the circumstantial factors such as their availability in a particular locality at a particular time. According to her the capitalist development in agriculture can be recognised when there is accumulation and reinvestment of surplus value so as to generate more surplus value on an ever expanding scale.

Paresh Chattopadhyya, while taking part in this debate, cited Lenin’s definition of capitalism according to which capitalism, “was the highest stage of commodity production where labour power itself becomes a commodity.” Commenting on Utsa
Patnaik's definition he suggested that Lenin's definition of capitalism was wide enough to accommodate her emphasis on the criteria such as accumulation and reinvestment of surplus value. Responding to Chattopadhaya's comment, Patnaik (1972) once again clarified that Chattopadhya had not tried to make a fair distinction between capital in the sphere of exchange and capital in the sphere of production.

Utsa Patnaik (1976) cited the results of her own field survey carried out in 1969 covering 66 big farmers of five states—Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Mysore, Madras and Gujarat and suggested that a new capitalist class of farmers was indeed emerging. She has discussed two main forms in which the labour of others is employed. One is direct hiring for wages and the other is indirect, i.e., leasing out land on rent. In the former the wage worker comes under the direct supervision and organising activity of the employers and is recompensed only by wages. In the latter the cultivator employs means of production of his own and is not subject to the same degree of control by another over the labour process. He is recompensed by a sufficient share of the gross product to replace the means of production with advanced ones and achieves a more or less adequate level of subsistence (Patnaik, 1987:52). She has also described the third type of producer who is self-employed. In this case the chance of exploiting the labour of others does not arise at all. The operational unit to measure the extent of exploitation is
identified by her in terms of labour days which could include either product or value (income).

1.8.2 SEMI-FEUDALISM: AN EASTERN INDIA SYNDROME

Some economists are of the view that the development process of the eastern regions could not be characterised as capitalist-they identify it as semi-feudal. High incidence of bonded labour, usurious form of credit system, non-monetised mode of wage payment, under-developed market, relations of production bordering around master-serf status based on share cropping, feudalistic power arrangement and underutilisation of resources with less investment in agriculture, dependence of agriculture labour on consumption loans leading to perpetual indebtedness of the people depending on agriculture are some of the salient features of the semi-feudal set up (see Amit Bhaduri 1973a 1973b; Pradhan H.Prasad 1973,1974,1979 and 1980; N.K. Chandra 1974 and 1975; Ranjit Sau 1973, 1975 and 1976).

According to Amit Bhaduri there are four prominent features of the type of agriculture characterised as semi-feudal and they are:

(a) share cropping, (b) perpetual indebtedness of the small peasants, (c) concentration of two modes of exploitation, namely usury and land ownership in the hands of some economic class; (d) lack of accessibility for small tenants to the market (1973:120-121).

Substantiating the finding of Amit Bhaduri, Pradhan H. Prasad (1974, 1979) stated that a farmer gets trapped in a circle
of ever growing debt. The inability to repay earlier debts due to usury forces personal bondage relations on the labour. He (1979:484) observes that "there is also an antagonistic contradiction between the landlord, cultivators and big peasantry, on the one side, and the poor peasantry, on the other, arising out of semi-feudal bondage." Servile attitude on the part of labour further consolidates the position of the landlord as it also becomes a stable source of political power. He furnishes data from Purnea, Saharsa and Monghyr districts of Bihar in which he surveyed over two thousand households in a couple of dozen villages. According to him (1979:483):

... the land reform measures and various enactments led to emergence of the middle and poor middle peasantry, a most efficient class in the context of agricultural development in semi-feudal Bihar. With their newly acquired economic power they made a succesful bid for the capture of political power.

Quite a few scholars (Newberry 1974 and Schoer 1977) have criticised the argument of scholars regarding the semi-feudal mode of production as the dominant mode. On the grounds of its internal logic and on the ground that the political power of the landlord does not rest on the debt bondage alone- they contest their arguments.

1.8.3 COLONIAL LEGACY AND MODE OF PRODUCTION

Apart from the economists characterisation of a particular type of mode of production, the historians have also expressed
their views about the mode of production in a wider context, i.e., "in the context of the worldwide structure of imperialism into which it is articulated." (Hamza Alavi 1975:1235). Alavi describes the colonial mode of production as "the structural specificity that distinguishes it from both feudalism and capitalism in the metropolis." Further he (1982:173) observes:

The term 'mode of production' designates coherent structures within social formations, i.e., societies conceived of as systematically structured entities. It designates social relations of production and identifies fundamental classes that are embedded in them, that is, for each mode of production a class of exploited producers and a corresponding class of exploiting non-producers. Other auxiliary classes in social formations derive their significance from their relationship with either the pre-existing fundamental classes or new ascendant classes in a social formation in which a mode of production develops.

Alavi emphasises the nature of class alignment in social formations in a particular mode of production. It is this concern which necessitates a discussion of structural features which are specific to the colonial mode of production. He strikes a word of caution when he (1975:1253) states that: "it is wrong to describe colonial economies as those in which pre-capitalist relationships co-exist with capitalist relations". Discussing the destitution of the colonial economy and the relative lowering of the organic composition of capital, Alavi says that about 75 per cent of all farms in modern India could be destitute small
holdings. Another significant point according to him (1975: 1253) is:

The question of the form of the relationship between the direct producer and the exploiting class cannot be understood except within the framework of the structure of power and the legal and the institutional structures in which such relationships are embedded.

On the basis of a distinction between relations of exploitation and relations of production and the rejection of co-existing modes of production, Banaji (1972-73) argues for the recognition of a specific entity, the colonial mode of production. The distinguishing characteristics of colonial modes of production were their subordination to metropolitan accumulation and the predominance of semi-feudal relations of exploitation in agriculture. Another historian, Bipan Chandra (1979: 27), has examined the role of colonialism in modernisation and development process of the Indian economy. He considers the impact of colonialism to be vital and, therefore, it may be regarded as a well structured whole which intervened in the process of India's passage from the semi-feudal to the capitalist stage of development.

A.K. Bagchi (1975) thinks that the colonial period was marked by de-industrialisation and de-commercialisation of agriculture. In fact he is of the view that complete disappearance of pre-capitalist relations has not taken place even in contemporary times. Therefore, he talks about a symbiotic relationship between
pre-capitalist and capitalist mode of exploitation. Overpopulation and low rate of capital accumulation, according to him, have accounted for this continuity. For him the capitalist profit making venture itself requires use of precapitalist methods. The capitalist farmers depend on other propertied groups for maintaining their social and political power. He finds the amalgam of usury, bondage, wage labour and tenancy prevailing in the Indian countryside. Therefore, according to him, any label such as semi-feudalism, semi-capitalism, neither feudalism nor capitalism etc., with the exception of colonial mode of production could be possible so long as the basic laws of motion of society are correctly understood. He sees a symbiotic relationship between precapitalist and capitalist mode of production.

The economists and the historians whose studies have been referred to here, have not only raised theoretical issues but have also marshalled data from field research. Sociologists and Social Anthropologists too have not remained indifferent to the issues raised on mode of production. However, the concern assumed importance after 1975 and during 1980s it became predominant among those who analysed the Indian situation (3). Kathleen Gough who conducted a study of social structures and political economy of Thanjavaur district in Tamil Nadu identified several modes of production over time. She (1979:286) observed:
I choose to refer to three modes of production—Asiatic, Feudal, and Capitalist—because it did seem to me that they hit upon essential difference between the states of Kerala and Thanjavaur in the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries and between them and the modern period.

She stated that the social organisation of Thanjavaur district reflected the characteristic features of Asiatic mode of production where the exploitative mechanism and its operational dimension rested on the mode of surplus appropriation which existed both in kind and in the form of labour. Similarly, according to her, Kerala state was feudal in character because land was privately owned and serfdom and service tenures of house-holds were the basis of production relations in village. But according to her the contemporary situation reflected the pre-dominant characteristic features of the capitalist mode of production as it is integrated with the world market having commodity production by wage labour. Tracing the evolutionary changes in the modes of production in India, like Hamza Alavi, she explicated the emergence of new classes and changing class relationships.

Colonial exposure caused infrastructural changes resulting in the emergence of an elite group, that is, national bourgeoisie, which was interested in capitalistic growth. Therefore, the post-independent period saw a new class contradiction leading to the polarisation of peasantry on the one
hand and immiserisation of working class groups on the other. She also acknowledged the continuation of pre-capitalist features in production relations in agriculture. Along with the pre-capitalist features in India, the close links between Indian political economy and colonialism before independence and now the neo-colonial set up have all put India on a capitalist path.

Gail Omvedt (1978) thinks that such contacts with capitalist economy have reinforced the feudal arrangements with some modifications. While studying agrarian structure in the context of social movement of the Dalit panthers in Maharashtra and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha in South Bihar, she found closer links between class and caste identities. Class identities have not crystallised independent of caste identities. Therefore, the class based exploitation has found its expression through the feudal structures. In the Indian situation class based exploitation is complicated by caste oppression. Mobilisation of the oppressed caste groups alone can bring about revolutionary transformation. (Omvedt; 1971 and 1981).

Some sociologists and social anthropologists, (while analysing social structures by using the concepts of mode of production), have included class among the bases of their analysis. Joan Mencher's (1974) study of class analysis and its social formation in analysing the contradictory features of South Indian society provide a good example. After having compared the development of peasant organisation and movements in the
Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu and Kuttanad in Kerala with the Chingelput district in Tamil Nadu, she found out the middle peasants as the critical group who took key roles in activating peasant uprisings. Like Eric Wolf's hypotheses, (that middle peasant has a crucial role in activating peasant uprising) she tried to work out a classification of groups in order to identify the class structure. Her six-fold classification included: the landless; poor peasant; middle peasant; rich farmers; capitalist farmers and traditional landlord and an intermediate class of large landlords. Joan Mencher's classification comes closer to the three-fold classification of occupational groups by Ramkrishan Mukherjee (1957:93), viz., land holders and supervisory farmers; the self-sufficient peasantry viz., the cultivators (including the artisans & traders) and the share-croppers, agricultural labourers, service holders etc. He found a close relation between the economic structure (i.e., class-based hierarchy) and the caste-based hierarchy and therefore, concluded that caste hierarchy has dovetailed itself into the economic structure. Joan Mencher's study concluded that caste loyalties penetrate and subjugate class loyalties and that the caste and class hierarchies overlap. That means the affluent sections of the society come from the higher caste groups whereas the poor and underprivileged groups largely come from the lower caste groups. The tribal communities belong to this
category, as they share the misery of the low caste people. P.K. Bose (1985:51-52) in his study of four villages from Birbhum and Purulia districts of West Bengal has provided a five-fold classification of rural classes: the landlords; the rich peasants; the middle peasants; the poor peasants and the agricultural labourers. While formulating the structure of classes he considered the relations, the modes of production and the levels of class consciousness. He also noticed that the upper classes belonging to the upper caste groups enjoy powerful positions in the villages despite increasing opposition from the lower classes. The agrarian structure and the modes of production evident in villages testify to the continuation of pre-capitalist characteristics which are neither capitalist nor feudal in pure form (see Chart 1.2).
Chart-1.2

Social scientists defining criteria of Mode of Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Social Scientists</th>
<th>Defining criteria employed</th>
<th>Mode of production identified</th>
<th>Nature of Study</th>
<th>Year of Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Precursors:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C. Gupta</td>
<td>Hired labour exceeded family labour (U.P)</td>
<td>Capitalist mode a dominant trend</td>
<td>Theoretical</td>
<td>1953-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.G. Kотовский</td>
<td>Area cultivated wholly or mainly through hired labour (25 to 30 per cent for India)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Theoretical &amp;</td>
<td>1953-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Thorne</td>
<td>Alert, enterprising cultivators, use of scientific method, use of hired labour, ready to invest, leasing out land on rent, designated- capitalist farmers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Empirical</td>
<td>1967-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Original Protagonists:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Budra</td>
<td>Self cultivation, greater use of hired labour, use of farm machinery, marketing crop, receiving high return on investment</td>
<td>capitalist mode as the main feature</td>
<td>Empirical</td>
<td>1969-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utsa Patnaik</td>
<td>Appropriation of surplus value—accumulation and reinvestment of surplus value to generate more surplus (extended reproduction &amp; accumulation)</td>
<td>Restricted growth of capitalism due to colonial power</td>
<td>Based on field survey of 1969 covering 66 big farmers of Orissa, A.P, Mysore, Madras and Gujarat</td>
<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Chattopadhya</td>
<td>Uses Lenin’s definition of capitalism - it is the highest stage of commodity production where labour power itself becomes a commodity</td>
<td>Capitalist mode exists</td>
<td>Polemical</td>
<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jairus Banaji</td>
<td>During the colonial time capitalist trend was absent in manufacturing and for a century in agriculture</td>
<td>Colonial mode dominated</td>
<td>Polemical</td>
<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.G. Frank</td>
<td>Colonial power tied its colonies with the world market dominated by capitalist M.O.P; reinvestment of surplus need not take place in the same spot</td>
<td>Capitalist mode a dominant trend</td>
<td>Polemical</td>
<td>1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protagonists of Semi-feudalism:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amit Bhaduri</td>
<td>Share cropping; indebtedness; exploitation (usury; concentration of land in the hands of few); market inaccessibility</td>
<td>Semi-feudal mode a dominant trend</td>
<td>Based on field survey of 26 villages of W.Bengal</td>
<td>1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of the Social Scientists</td>
<td>Defining criteria employed</td>
<td>Mode of production identified</td>
<td>Nature of Study</td>
<td>Year of Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.H. Prasad</td>
<td>Underutilisation of resources, big landlords used hired labourers (preferably attached labourers), indebtedness, mode of appropriation (share cropping and usury), Negligible investment in agriculture</td>
<td>Semi-feudal mode exists in rural India</td>
<td>Based on field survey 1973, 1974 &amp; of 2000 households in 1980</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Chandra</td>
<td>Massive underemployment of productive resources</td>
<td>Semi-feudal mode</td>
<td>Used official data</td>
<td>1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranjit Sau</td>
<td>Unemployment weakened the impulse of capitalist growth, absence of job in industry, reduced consumption need</td>
<td>Semi-feudal a dominant mode</td>
<td>Empirical</td>
<td>1975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Emphasising Class Element:**

| John Harris                   | Two criteria used for defining classes: size of production resources (including land & labour relations); identified a class of landowning moneylenders and merchants | Capitalist a dominant trend             | Field survey in some districts of Tamil Nadu | 1979          |

**Emphasising M.O.P in Colonial India:**

| Khan Aziz Alavi               | Colonial agrarian economy subsumed under highly Industrialised world economy; surplus of colonial industries is appropriated by the imperialist bourgeoisie | Peripheral growth of capitalism theoretical | 1975 & 1982 |
| Gall Omvedt                   | Rural people depend on wages, cultivators produce for the market, growth of capital inputs (fertilizers and oil engines), generalised commodity production, exploitation of labour power & mobility of labour | Feudal during British time & Capitalist thereafter | Polemical 1981 |
| Kathleen Gough                | Free labour, privatisation of means of production, extended reproduction in agriculture, subsumption of capitalist labour under capital, specialised production of crop M.O.P | Developed Fieldwork in Madras (dist. Thanjavur) in 1951-53 & onwards | 1980         |
| A.K. Bagchi                  | Colonial phase characterised by deindustrialisation & decommercialisation of agriculture, symbiotic relations between precapitalist and capitalist modes of exploitation, exploitation of labour in plantation areas | Colonial M.O.P | Theoretical 1975 |
Commenting on mode of production debate T.K.Oommen (1990:232) states that the entire debate is about the nature and directionality of social transformation in India and in a meaningful discussion of the process of social transformation three points i.e., the point of departure, the process of displacement and the point of destination must be kept in mind. So far as the displacement of any mode of production is concerned that has not yet occurred. The point of destination cannot be analysed unless one understands the participants involvement and goal in the process of social transformation.

So far as the middle peasant [Eric Wolf (1971) and Alavi (1973)] is concerned its involvement in social transformation is not significant, both on logical and on empirical grounds. While putting forward the thesis of class collaboration and the dominant peasant being the driving force in the context of the peasant movement even Pouchepadass (1980:142-43) disapproves the role of middle peasant on the ground of their revolutionary potential being uncertain. Having discounted the middle peasant and dominant peasant thesis T.K.Oommen has grouped agrarian classes under five major heads: landlords, rich farmers, middle peasants, poor peasants and the landless agricultural labourers. During pre-independence phase the peasant movements saw the mobilisation of agrarian classes, because the colonial rulers were identified as the primary enemy and the secondary enemy included the landlords, the mahajans and the
merchants. The mobilisation of the agrarian classes among the tribal groups took place in terms of primordial identity. That the class identity of the mobilisation in agrarian movement of the tribal groups was not evident in the Santhals case also. In this regard the observation of T.K. Oommen (1990:247) seems relevant for the Santhals too:

Agrarian movements in India are not simple and straightforward mobilisations of specific agrarian categories possessing certain class/occupational attributes. The class confrontations that take place in India are often conflicts between caste/religious collectivities which share certain class attributes; insofar as the congruity between caste and class is not uniform, class actions often break down in concrete situations.

Therefore, we need to recognise (T.K. Oommen; 1990:247) that three identities i.e., status (caste), class (economic and occupational) and ideological (party or political) tend to coexist in a movement in the case of participants. Therefore, the present study proposes to examine structures of deprivation at the economic, socio-cultural and political levels.

The application of mode of production approach to identify the structures of exploitation actually leads one to examine the social formation of a society. Those involved in the debate have tried to produce empirical proofs in support of the domination of capitalist, semi-feudal or colonial mode of production. There are others who have found co-existence of capitalist and feudal modes of production as well. Since the position taken by various
scholars on this issue pertains to the domain specific to the situation, it is not possible to generalize their contentions either in favour of dominant mode of production identified by them or rejected by them. Keeping this consideration in mind the present study has focussed attention on the agrarian structure of the Santhals of Santhal Pargana.

The problems that have been identified for detailed study pertains to studying historically the structural basis of the Santhal exploitation and their reaction to it. A synoptic review of the mode of production debate helps in locating the multiple dimensions of domination, exploitation and marginalisation of a particular class engaged in organisation of productive activities. In such a situation the marginalised and exploited class may engage in organising themselves against the dominant and the exploiting class. The organised protest by the exploited lot were directed against the structures of deprivation created by the colonial states. Our basic concern has been to identify structures of deprivation existing in economic, socio-cultural and political domain. The political economy perspective makes it almost obligatory on our part to examine the structure of exploitation in terms of mode of production as well. In the economy we propose to examine the structures of deprivation in terms of exploitation, in the socio-cultural field, in terms of discrimination and in the political context in terms of oppression. The political economy perspective that studies the
social relations evolving in the process of production, distribution and consumption has largely been used here to examine the structure of deprivation and styles of protest.

For a detailed mapping out of the deprivation exploitation at the three levels we have identified the Santhals, one of the most populous tribes in India. As their concentration in the Santhal Pargana district of Bihar is quite conspicuous we have selected the district for a detailed study.

Since the colonial time the santhals have been involved in organising themselves against the British colonial rulers. Although the policies and ideology of the colonial rule subjected the entire population of the country to exploitation it was the tribal groups that suffered the most. The legacy of the colonial administration however, continues even after India's independence. The neo-colonial state no doubt aroused liberal expectancy among the tribals but the policies and the programmes of the government strengthened the positions of the privileged groups. The question, to what extent the nature of the state and dynamics of Indian economy has adversely affected the Santhals is of prime concern to us.

The ethnic factor has gained precedence over class factor in mobilisation of the Santhals in giving vent to the tribal protest. Despite the cross-cutting economic interest of the poor Santhals and the privileged Santhals, the ethnic identity
accounts for the vertical solidarity of the Santhals as homogeneous group. It is of course interesting to note that the economic factor brings the Santhal close to the Sadans i.e., the low caste people of the non-tribal origin. The Sadans who live in the Santhal Pargana district of Bihar are also socially and economically backward groups which bring them close to the Santhal. Both the ethnic and economic factor supplement each other and it is the combination of these two which account for the saliency of the tribal movement.

The present chapter i.e., the introductory chapter dealt with the framework of the study. The second chapter deals with the sources of data and the plan of the study. This chapter also describes the fieldwork research and the criteria behind selection of the villages. The third chapter deals with the Santhal agrarian social structure during the colonial time and the Santhals response to the colonial policy culminating in the Santhal insurrection of 1855-56. Chapter 4 is an extension of the argument provided in the third chapter. Here the structures of deprivation in the economic, socio-cultural and political fields have been analysed in relation to Kherwar movement, revitalisation movement that took place in 1872. Chapter 5 deals with contemporary santhal agrarian structure. It gives some idea about the development measures undertaken by the government and its impact on Santhal villages. The sixth chapter attempts detailed analysis of Jharkhand movement. Finally, the concluding
chapter i.e., chapter seven brings out the implications of our argument by once again analysing the structures of deprivation in economic, socio-cultural and political fields and the responses of the Santhals to it.
NOTES:

1. The term exploitation has been used in a variety of contexts by the social scientists. Sociologists, have used the term while describing the patterns of social stratification i.e., in its specific context of the class based nature of exploitation over time. Three structures of deprivation recognised in the study of tribal organisation of productive resources are exploitation, discrimination and oppression. Exploitation is economic, discrimination is socio-cultural and oppression is political in content.

2. To define caste, Max Weber (1964:425) has used two phrases that clearly bring out the notion of hierarchy and they are 'positively privileged group' and the 'negatively privileged group'.

3. Y. Singh (1986) has made a pointed reference of sociologist and social anthropologists' studies on mode of production by providing a synoptic view of their positions on it.