

TRIBAL STUDIES IN INDIA: INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES AND APPROACHES

Lecture25

Lecture 25: Resource Rights: Land

Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome back to the NPTEL online course Tribal Studies in India: Interdisciplinary Perspectives and Approaches. So, for today's lecture, we will be focusing on resource rights, which is a very important part when it comes to tribal studies in India or tribal communities. Now, within resource rights, we will be talking about three broad issues pertaining to natural resources: land, forest, and water. So, land, forest, and water, as you know, are pivotal to any human existence.

And in the context of tribes, the issue becomes more pertinent because these resources are not only viewed as economic resources but also have a lot of symbolic and cultural meanings associated with them. Now, in the last 100 years or so, when one talks about issues pertaining to natural resources, their control, and the question of access, particularly in the context of tribal societies, one of the most contested issues that tribal communities face today, as well as in the past, particularly with the onset of colonial rule, was the way in which property relations were altered. Particularly with the coming of the colonial state or the British, a different notion of property was introduced. So, we will try to understand the process in which these changes were taking place and the kind of socio-economic impact they had on the tribes. Now, as you know, in the context of tribal society, what I also wanted to focus on through this lecture is the issue of dispossession.

And land is something which is very central to tribal social life. And in the course of this lecture, we will try to understand how the introduction of a new land system and new property regimes, particularly with the coming of British rule, resulted in a new kind of economic deprivation. This was essentially because tribes were denied access to natural resources, particularly land. Now, as I said,

every community, every human being requires land. Land is very fundamental to the existence of any society or civilization.

So, in the context of tribal society, land is a very important support system around which the tribal economy and knowledge systems have evolved. Now, these tribal knowledge systems were meant to nurture and manage resources at the most sustainable level without disturbing the ecological balance. Now, in some of my previous lectures, we have already briefly discussed the idea of ecological romanticism. Now, many times, it is very easy to paint this picture of trying to project tribal communities in a harmonious relationship with nature. So, there is an element of truth in the kind of criticisms we are seeing—that tribes also exploit resources for their survival, tribes also exploit resources to meet their ends, and tribes also utilize resources for various other purposes.

Now, at the same time, it is also important to understand that beyond this economic reductionism, the socio-cultural lifeworld of the people revolves heavily around these resources, including land. Therefore, a disruption in property relations or in the linkages between the community and the land not only has economic implications but also significant socio-cultural implications. Now, in many tribal societies, why is this happening? Why is it that the community faces many issues and challenges when the relationship between the community and natural resources such as land is disrupted? It is essentially because the nature of property relations in tribal society is predominantly community-based, and their main sustenance relies on common property or community land, which today we call common property resources.

Therefore, their dependence on common property resources is reflected in their community life. Now, this is an important point to understand: in many parts of India or even the world, if you look at tribal societies or indigenous societies, there is hardly any notion of private property. Now, even if there is a notion of private property, it does not imply that a single individual will own vast amounts of land or resources. Now, mostly, the preferred system is ownership by the community. So, therefore, what does this do?

It essentially means that the community has a stake in the resources. So, therefore, the exploitation of the resources, the nature of access to resources is also being curtailed and controlled by the community. Now, everyone has a stake

in the maintenance of natural resources, including land. So, in the context of tribal society, there is therefore this very strong nexus between natural resources such as land and their livelihood system, which is based on their values, beliefs, practices, and cultural norms. Now, like I said, the nature of property ownership systems—sometimes we call it customary, sometimes we call it a more traditional method of organizing economic systems.

Sometimes we even call it informal, or sometimes even backwards. But at the same time, if you try to understand this relationship between tribes and resources from the perspective of the community, then you will have a very different understanding of resources—what resources mean to tribal communities. So, many tribal communities don't necessarily see land, for instance, or forests or water as mere resources. They see them as givers, providers of their needs. Therefore, there is a strong element of belief system within the way they look at natural resources.

So, there is also this intrinsic connection between their socio-cultural beliefs, their everyday life forms, and the natural resources. Now, for instance, there is this scholar cited by Shimray, who notes that for those who regard the natural landscape as sacred, the idea of land as private property—as a marketable commodity—is inconceivable. Most eco-societies believe that, in the beginning, God gave the people—as the tribes are often known to themselves—a territory and its resources from which they were to supply their physical needs. Now, what we can understand is that there is a clash of views in terms of the way indigenous or tribal communities view resources and the way so-called modern society views resources. Before the 18th century, particularly in the pre-Enlightenment period, we know that it was more or less the monarchical system of governance that was prevailing.

But after that, in the post-Enlightenment period and with the emergence of capitalism, we have seen the spread of private property, where feudalism was buried and capitalism emerged out of feudalism. Now, what it did was the emergence of this notion of private property. Now, wherever the colonial rulers went, they introduced new systems of property ownership, which essentially was the introduction of private ownership. Now, in the context of tribal society, there is this clash of views or clash of understanding when it comes to resources. From the tribal point of view, resources belong to everyone.

Resources have to be shared. Now, in the context of so-called modern society, properties are all privately owned. It has to be recorded. It has to be legible to the state. And it is a commodity where ownership allows people to make profit out of such resources.

So, on the basis of such concepts and ecological parameters of tribals, land and forest also have a property value in the form of an individual's landed property that is socially recognized as such within the given territory of tribal communities. Now, in many parts of India today, all of us know that we cannot think outside the box in terms of how to regulate our social life. And that is quite true because we only think that everything has to be individually owned. Therefore, we own our houses. We buy property.

We record it in our names. But in the context of many tribal societies, if you go to places like Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, or even among the tribal communities in Manipur, you will see that they continue to have something known as common property resources. Now, many times, for the state, it means that the state labels all these CPRs as being governed under customary laws. Now, in many tribal societies, these common property resources—and if there are any individual lands—were all maintained and controlled by traditional mechanisms of their customary law and management systems. Such control of land and territory was intrinsic to their livelihood.

Now, what are some of the features of this traditional notion of customary law? For instance, most of the time, they are unwritten. So, it is not written on paper, right? But in the context of modern society, you will see that any form of property, if someone is to claim that it belongs to them, then they should be in a position to prove that it actually belongs to them. So any kind of property, whether in the form of a house or any kind of land, has to be recorded.

But if you go and see the nature of property relations in tribal society—in many tribal societies—you will see that there is still this notion being practiced. The community owns the land. Even in Manipur, among Naga society, you will see that there are still a lot of common property resources where all the villages, everyone in the village, has the right to utilize and access such resources. Therefore, it is very common to see that many tribal communities have a very deep sentimental attachment and socio-cultural orientation toward the land on

which they live. This attachment gives both an individual and the community a sense of belonging to a place.

It is an important social and cultural phenomenon because it is deeply rooted in their homestead, landed property, relatives, clan, and community in general. Now, the foundation of tribal society is not only about the way in which the social structure is organized. It has a lot to do with the economic organization of the society. And many times in tribal society, you cannot separate the two. The social and the economic are quite interlinked.

Now, if you go and talk to anyone from the Naga community, for instance, they will always talk about something known as the ancestral land. Essentially, it means that the land they occupy today, the land in which they are living today, has been passed on from generation to generation. And therefore, they do not call it merely their village. They will specifically refer to it as ancestral land. It means that their ancestors, their great-great-grandfathers, grandparents, have nurtured the land and have tilled the land.

Therefore, they continue to pass down such notions. Therefore, people begin to have a deep emotional attachment to the land, and they also take care of it. Therefore, this kind of sentimental attachment is something that is quite peculiar and common in the context of tribal society. Now, not only in Naga society, but if you look at many other parts of India, even in mainland India, you will see that the idea of property—the idea of who owns the land, the forest, the water, the rivers—is quite different due to the absence of the notion of private property. Now, in the context of common property resources, as I said, the idea is that everyone owns, everyone is part of it, and everyone has a role to play.

Now, if anything is made private property, it means you are creating a kind of enclosure. You are claiming that this belongs solely to you. No one has the right to access it. So, anyone who tries to access it without permission from the person claiming ownership of the property or land becomes a trespasser. But in the context of tribal society, particularly in regions like northeast India, you will see that common property resources continue to define the economic life of the communities.

Now, as I said, you cannot separate the social and economic aspects, nor the socio-cultural life of the people from the economic organization of society.

Therefore, with the introduction of new laws and regulations pertaining to land, particularly under British rule, it continued to have many adverse implications for tribal societies. This is also a very serious issue because one of the most contested matters in tribal society, even today, is the question of land alienation. What it means is that over time, tribal communities are being forcefully evicted from their lands and from their homes. At the same time, they are being continually dispossessed, probably for reasons like the construction of dams, infrastructure projects such as setting up steel plants or hydroelectric projects, and so on.

Prior to the introduction of land-related laws by the colonial administration, tribal communities had their own land structure and divisions. Traditionally, most tribal communities have three land ownership systems. One is community land, second is individual land, and third is clan land. Now, we have already learned and understood that tribal societies are largely based on kinship, right? When a society is based on kinship, it means that the village or the social unit in the community is quite homogenous in the sense that they all belong to one or two clans.

The economic life of the community revolves around clans and kin. So, in terms of property relations, you will see that this is not to say there is a total absence of individual land ownership. Communities do own land. It is not that they own vast amounts of land. No other family or individual has the possibility of owning any land.

Therefore, in most tribal societies, you will see this three-tier land ownership. The first is the community land. Second is the individual land. So in the community land, everyone has, you know, the right to access, right, maybe in terms of forest or maybe in terms of utilizing the land for some purposes that serve the community interest. The individual land, mostly the home state, or maybe some portion of land which, for example, for kitchen gardening, some amount of land which an individual may own.

And then comes the clan land. Now, the community land and the clan land are mostly shared. And many times these things are very important because they serve as a kind of social security in times of need. So clan land, community land

are very important. Its tribal community had well-defined boundaries and traditional administrative systems based on customary law.

Despite the diversity in terms of language, in terms of culture, in terms of their religion, or in terms of the reason that they live, something which is very, very common across tribal communities is customary law. So, most tribal communities will have their distinct customs and distinct traditions that they follow to govern themselves. Now, these customary laws, again, most of the time, are unwritten, mostly passed on through the oral medium. Now, today, with modernization, there are so many socioeconomic changes that are happening for which many tribal communities today have reduced their customary law into written form. Now, the Mizo community is a classic example, a community which has reduced its customary law into a proper written form, and it has been amended again and again.

But like I said, most tribal communities in India have customary laws, but these are largely unwritten laws. Despite the fact that they are unwritten laws, they had definite rules on who could cultivate what land and in which season. Normally it was controlled by the village councils or the village elders, which was made up of men alone. Tribal women had more control over jhum production than their counterparts did in settled agriculture. However, the situation of access to land by both men and particularly with women has changed with the coming of the colonial rule.

So, one of the first land laws that was introduced by the British was the Permanent Settlement in 1793 in Bengal, which was later extended to regions of Central India like Chotanagpur, which had a very, very significant tribal population. And through this the British began to introduce the zamindari system, which over a period of time began to forcefully alienate tribal communities from land. Now, this process of alienation disrupted traditional tribal system of communal land ownership as zamindars were granted absolute ownership leading to widespread tribal dispossession. Now, for the colonial state, this was after the Industrial Revolution, feudalism began to diminish in Europe. And the only way, the idea, a new idea that was becoming very, very popular was private property.

And now thinkers like John Locke, have advocated for the introduction of private property. And many people think that if the property does not belong to you, if the property is not privately owned, why should people even invest in the land? Why should people make use of the kind of resources that is made available to them? Therefore, there was a lot of justification as to why private property is the only way for progress and prosperity. Therefore, there was this class of views when it comes to property relations.

And since the colonial state was in authority and in power, it was capable of enforcing its beliefs and ideas. And that came with the introduction of the Permanent Settlement in 1792 in Bengal. Now, over time, what we see is that, starting from 1793, we began to gradually see the dispossession of tribal communities from their land. And the tribal lands were taken over by non-tribal landlords. In Jharkhand, this is a very popular term in the Chotanagpur region, where the Dikus, often through fraud or coercion, forced many Adivasis into landlessness.

Land was increasingly used for cash crops instead of subsistence farming, affecting tribal food security. Now, one of the motives for introducing this Permanent Settlement was revenue. At the same time, another issue that occurred during the colonial period was the introduction of plantation systems. Now, the British began to introduce a lot of commercial cultivation. For example, in regions like West Bengal, particularly in areas such as Siliguri and Darjeeling, they introduced tea plantations.

Likewise, in Northeast India, in Assam, where many communities practice common property relations, what happened was that with the introduction of tea plantations, all these common properties were changed to private property. This means that the British altered property relations in places like Assam to enable the process of tea plantations. Now, so what does it mean? It means that communities, people, and individuals are continually deprived of access and ownership of their lands. So, over time, many tribals were reduced to tenants or laborers on the same land they once owned.

Now, the situation has changed to the extent that the people who were the actual owners of the land became laborers on their own land. So, many other laws and regulations were introduced, and one of them was by Captain Wilkinson, who

formulated a salutary rule prohibiting the sale, transfer, and mortgage of land for areas of rent or debt belonging to the Adivasis. However, officials often exercised this power in favor of landlords and outsiders, effectively legitimizing the dispossession of Adivasi land. So, it was very clear to the colonial state that tribal communities were not happy. There was a lot of resentment, anger, and protest against land dispossession as well.

It was for this reason also that, if you recall some of the previous lectures, the question of colonial rule, the question of freedom from colonialism for the tribes was not only freedom from the colonial state but also freedom from being controlled and dominated by what they call the Dikus, that is, the outsiders. Now, in the context of tribal society, many scholars have also looked at how dominant communities in India have played a significant role in their marginalization. So, many times, despite the colonial state recognizing that these communities faced a lot of exploitation and dispossession, they often ended up reinforcing the wishes and interests of the landlords and outsiders. Institutions like courts also did not recognize traditional tribal claims to land because Adivasis lacked formal records or legal documents. Like I said, there is no system of writing.

Many tribal communities even today have no system of writing. So it means that when the land and property relations are defined by this idea of common property, what it means is that the boundaries between land, say, but the boundaries of properties are also very fluid, very fuzzy. It's not that people are demarcating, okay, this is my land, this is where their land begins, this is where my property ends, this is where it begins. So there is no such clear demarcation. And at the same time, even despite being the real owners of the land, since they have no land records, like I said, and everything was in the oral form, the courts did not recognise the claims by the communities to their own land.

So this lack of documented ownership enabled outsiders to seize tribal land legally. So the regulation, instead of securing tribal rights over lands, introduced new laws to strengthen landlord-tenant relations. Another important act was the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, which aimed to prohibit land sales to outsiders, prevent the mortgaging of tribal lands, and allow limited land transfer within the Munda community. However, in reality, while appearing to protect Adivasi land, the Act primarily reinforced British administrative control over land ownership and rent collection, ensuring continued exploitation under colonial rule. Now, what we

see is that there was this realization that there was a lot of anger and resentment against the kind of dispossession that the communities were experiencing.

And it was for the first time that tribes were being continually displaced, continually dispossessed of their lands. Now, several efforts were being introduced by the colonial state. But then what actually happened on the ground? On paper, there were efforts. But what actually happened on the ground was that it only ended up reinforcing the interests of the colonial state.

So after the introduction of the Zamindari system by the British, the newly arrived Zamindars forced Adivasis to work in the Raja's land. The British later legalized this. In 1890, the commissioner of Chotanagpur issued a proclamation requiring forced labor of 14 days, which was extended to 60 to 84 days by Zamindars. So, it is not only that the colonial state was exploiting the tribes. Now, you will see that under the Zamindari system, the Zamindars were also engaged in the perpetuation and exploitation of tribal communities.

So, in many tribal areas, the colonial state paved the way for the entry of Zamindars. What this means is that many Adivasis were made to work forcefully in the Raja's land. It means that in the land of the Zamindars. So many times, they were not paid. They were poorly paid or not paid at all.

So these kinds of new forms of systemic exploitation and new forms of bondage began to take root. Another important act introduced by the colonial state, which is still in use today in India, was the Land Acquisition Act of 1894. Now, the Land Acquisition Act of 1894 is a very, very important legal instrument when it comes to the question of land. So, the Land Acquisition Act of 1894 is a very important legal instrument of economic control, oppression, and exploitation promulgated by the British imperialist government. It allowed the British to take land from Indians under the pretext of public use while promising compensation to the owners.

This gave them control over land, which was essential for people's survival, and justified their actions as being for the public good. Now, a central feature of the Land Acquisition Act of 1894 is the idea of eminent domain. Now, what is eminent domain? Eminent domain essentially, in simple words, means that the state has a right—a sovereign power—over any kind of resources. Now, this

justification of the state as the rightful owner of any resources is made on the basis that they utilize these resources.

Whether it is by alienating the vast majority of people is for the public good or public purpose. So, therefore, the colonial state began to acquire vast amounts of land, vast amounts of land. Now, in the post-colonial period also, we continue to witness this process of acquiring vast amounts of land using similar acts and similar justifications. That is, people need to sacrifice. Some people have to make sacrifices for industrialization to happen.

And these things are justified on the basis that it is for the common good. All of this collectively continued the process of tribal land alienation and exploitation in Central India. Similarly, in the northeastern part of India, tribal land alienation began with the introduction of land and revenue regulations in 1886. It laid the foundation for revenue collection, land management systems, and tribal land dispossession in the region. Now, in northeast India, you know that northeast India is a very diverse region.

There are in total seven states. And in many states, you know, tribal communities are the dominant communities, such as in Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, and so on. But then the colonial period in particular was very pivotal in the if one looks at the economic history of the region, primarily because some land and revenue regulations, which were introduced in 1886, laid a foundation for the establishment of new property regimes in the region. Now, why Assam? Essentially because it was in Assam that the colonial state initiated tea plantations.

Or commercial activities like rubber plantations as well. Therefore, to take away or to break down the property from largely community-owned to privately owned. So what the British did was introduce new laws and regulations to define and redefine property relations in the state. Now, some land and revenue regulations continue to remain foundational because it was from these particular legislations that other states in the region also began to introduce new laws following the ones introduced by the British. Now, the colonial state also introduced the concept of scheduled districts and later excluded and partially excluded areas to safeguard tribal land rights.

It also prohibited the transfer of land from indigenous communities to outsiders without government approval. However, at the same time, it also dissolved the customary rights of tribals over land. Now, in many parts of Northeast India, the colonial state, through the Government of India Act 1919, introduced something known as the partially excluded and excluded areas. Now, the partially excluded areas in the context of Northeast India are essentially, you know, today's Meghalaya. But most of the partially excluded areas are in Central India.

When it comes to the excluded areas, particularly like today's Nagaland, Mizoram, and Arunachal Pradesh, most of the laws that are implemented outside were not applicable within the excluded areas. So, it means that, you know, there was some kind of protection that was being laid down by the British to serve the interests of the tribes. But, within the communities, it was not that no change was being initiated by the colonial state. Many changes were happening, and these changes were also happening in relation to property relations or the economic life of the people. So, in many parts of Northeast India, even in regions which were under the excluded areas, the colonial state was capable of altering the customary rules or the customs of governing land.

Therefore, we began to see a lot of contestations pertaining to customary laws, particularly in relation to land among many tribal communities after the entry of the British in these regions. Now, this allowed the classification of land as government land, reserve land, and wasteland. Vast stretches of land were now used for tea plantations, timber extraction, and revenue generation at the expense of indigenous communities. Now, many of the laws and regulations that were introduced by the colonial state enabled the British to have access and a rightful claim. By which they began to introduce plantations.

The plantation economy in North East India would not be possible without bringing in new legislation. It was new legislation that allowed this to happen. Apart from that, the colonial state was not only engaged in tea plantations, it was also engaged in timber extraction. It was also engaged in revenue generation from peasants and farmers all across the region. Now, what about the post-colonial period?

What happened in the post-colonial period? Did this process of dispossession that tribal communities witnessed under the hands of the colonial state halt,

decrease, or has it only worsened? So, in the post-colonial period, the issue of, you know, development-induced land alienation was something which was very, very common. It was pervasive, you know, across India, particularly in central India. And therefore, you will see that many social movements have emerged in these regions that essentially question the model, the kind of development that we are following because it only resulted in the marginalization of tribal communities.

Now, to come to the post-colonial period, modernization also has elements that are being imposed on indigenous communities without them being prepared for it. A major source of changes in the land ownership system, land ownership is the development process that is presented as modernization of the economy. A major area of such modernization is development projects. Now, in the post-colonial period, India had just come out from the yoke of colonial rule. And what nationalist leaders planned and thought about or envisioned for the nation was to take the country forward.

And to take the country forward so many things had to be done. And one among them was the creation of infrastructure. Therefore, there was the introduction of new infrastructure projects—from railways, to steel plants, to hydropower projects, and so on and so forth. Now, these introductions were essentially viewed as a way to modernize Indian society. So, it was a way to come out of our backward and difficult condition that the colonial state had left us with in 1947.

In northeast India, the indigenous communities living there face several displacement-induced threats. Despite legal protections under the Sixth Schedule, indigenous peoples are often recognized as displaced persons due to lack of land records. Resistance movements have emerged, but many communities are forced to accept displacement under state pressure. Some major projects that pose such threats include the Tipaimukh project in Manipur, Gumti Dam in Tripura, Bairabi Dam in Mizoram, and so on. Now, like I said, in the post-colonial period, so many development projects and infrastructure projects were introduced.

And there are different kinds of estimates because it is very difficult to give an accurate picture of the extent of this displacement. But then there are some scholars who estimate that at least 40 percent of the people displaced by

development projects in the post-colonial period belong to tribal communities. And all of us know that tribal communities constitute only about 8.6 percent of India's population. Now, for a population which is only about 8.6 percent, contributing 40 percent of the total displaced population in post-colonial India is quite huge. Now, even in northeast India, many times, people assume that northeast India has strong legal protections under the Sixth Schedule.

Now, it is important to mention that not every tribal community in the region is under the Sixth Schedule. But at the same time, even for communities who are under the Sixth Schedule, it is not that they are not experiencing any kind of dispossession. There are always threats and fears related to their dispossession from their lands. Now, this has come up particularly strongly in states like Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram, even in Assam and Meghalaya, and so on. So, several cases of land alienation of tribals have also occurred in Central India in the post-independence period.

Some of these include the most prominent ones we know, such as the Narmada Valley project in Madhya Pradesh that displaced thousands of tribal families, the Hirakud Dam project in Odisha, which led to the displacement of the Gond and Baiga tribes, the POSCO Steel Project in Odisha, and many more. Now, if you look at these major projects, one of the things is that most of the tribal areas are very rich in resources. Therefore, they face a lot of threats and challenges in terms of trying to protect any kind of intrusion from outsiders. Now, it becomes very challenging and difficult for them to protect themselves from being dispossessed of their lands. But in the post-colonial period, most development projects are undertaken in areas predominantly inhabited by tribal communities.

Therefore, what we are seeing is that over the last 75 years of India's independence, dispossession or land alienation is one of the most serious issues faced by tribal society and communities, and even today, this continues to hold true. So, there were several revisions and several amendments made to the original land acquisition law, which we already talked about, which was introduced by the British in 1894. Now, the 1894 Act was replaced by the land acquisition law and allowed land acquisition for private companies and public-private partnerships. While acknowledging special provisions for scheduled areas in the Forest Rights Act, it still facilitates involuntary displacement and forcible acquisition of forest. There were attempts, even by the colonial state, to actually

ensure that the tribal communities were affected less or to minimize the kind of impacts that the communities were facing.

Because of the kind of pressure, because of the kind of movements that the colonial state as well as the Indian state have witnessed in the past, there were efforts to amend laws that would actually minimize this alienation of land. What we are seeing is that these laws again only ended up facilitating involuntary displacement. And this is not only in the sixth schedule area, this is also happening in the fifth schedule area as well. So, essentially, what we continue to see is that there is this continual dispossession of land resulting in land alienation in the post-liberalization era. This process of land alienation in India has only sped up.

Thus, the trajectory of tribal land alienation from colonial to the post-colonial period reflects enduring challenges in balancing development with the protection of indigenous land rights, calling for a more equitable and sustainable approach. Now, many times when we live in modern society, we cannot just think outside the box in terms of whether they don't have private property, if their properties are not being made legible to the state in a sense that they are not being recorded. They are not registering their lands, or they are not ready to switch from common property or communal land ownership to private land ownership. Then the problem sometimes is that we are treating the communities as a problem. Now, if you start looking at things from the tribal perspective, then you will see that this is something which is working for them, and the system of the property systems that they are following was not introduced a few years ago.

This has been passed on from generation to generation. But with modernization, with industrialization and many other associated developments that we see in human societies and human history, it becomes increasingly challenging. And particularly in the context of tribal society, these challenges have come from this persistent land alienation that they are facing starting from the colonial period. And the introduction of this notion of private property in particular has had these adverse consequences that we continue to see in the context of tribal society till today. Now, across India, one common thing that any tribal community face is the issue of land alienation.

And since land has a lot of symbolic value and people are strongly attached to the land, it sometimes results in different kinds of anger, different kinds of protests, and different kinds of movements that have emerged from within the communities. So, therefore, to understand tribal society, to understand the tribal condition in contemporary India, one has to historicize the problem. Secondly, to really appreciate the kind of challenges facing tribal society, we also have to realize and analyze the fact that these communities have very different conceptions of our property. These communities have very different conceptions about natural resources. So, today to summarize what I have tried to convey in this lecture is essentially that the issue of natural resources, particularly land, is something that is very central when it comes to tribal society.

And this issue is a very old issue. It is a very, very old problem. And the problem begins to magnify itself particularly after the colonial period. And with the colonial period, we have seen that, you know, new laws and legislations were being introduced. And these laws and legislations, many of which were introduced by the colonial state, continue to be followed and practiced even in post-colonial India.

It means that the process of legislation did not stop with the end of colonial rule. It continues even in the post-colonial period. And even today, as we are speaking, the issue continues to be one of the most relevant issues faced by tribal societies. Therefore, it is very important to have a clear understanding of what is actually happening and how to solve the problem by historicizing the issue as well. Thank you so much.