

1 Sanskritic and colonial representations of tribe

This chapter unfolds and critically examines the context and content of how others, that is, dominant Sanskritic and colonial elements, represented the tribal communities. It may broadly be summed up as 'tribalism/tribalist' after Van Schendel, which falls in line with the more generic notion of 'Orientalism' (1992: 103). What is common about both is the ethnocentric way the dominant groups like the Sanskritic-colonial elements and western/European communities looked at servile communities. Guided by a hegemonising mindset, this resulted in the epistemic diminution and misrepresentation of the tribals in the former, and non-western/European peoples in the latter. Cederlof adds, 'The problem of the silenced, indigenous voices is not merely an issue of Europe vs. (in this case) India. People in forest and hill tracts faced the same lack of representation with regard to any state that claimed lordship over the territory in which they lived' (2013: 382).

We notice certain continuity in representation in early colonial ethnography in India due to the impact of Sanskritic/Brahmanical tradition. But subsequently, western ethnological studies, particularly the racial theory of classification of cultures and peoples (Stocking 1991; Bayly 1997; Bates 1995b), had begun to impact colonial scholars. The idea of race was based on (a) linguistic and ethnological divisions of mankind; and (b) where communities were categorised into superior and inferior groups on the basis of their physical and moral traits. This section will address the above ideas under two parts of unequal length – the Sanskritic followed by colonial representation.

The Sanskritic representation

The term Sanskritic representation stands for the depiction of the tribe in the Sanskrit texts. This embodies the views not only of their authors, but also of those who were votaries of the ideology. Often identified as

Brahmanic, this propagated a high culture value represented by higher castes. Though Brahmins were the maker and carrier of these values, these seeped into the lower caste groups who later played a key role in transmitting and popularising these ideas. At this level, this assumed a broader nomenclature of Hindu. Significantly, colonial ethnographer/administrators preferred to club Brahmin and Hindu together rather than making a rigid distinction between the two. This section explores the broader Hindu vision of the tribe, the context, mode and motives of representation; and how this portrayal survived to finally shape the tribalist ideology.

With regard to the context of this representation, we learn that the ethnic communities (the Kolarian groups) were in control over large tracts of middle India (Grierson 1967: 35). The Aryans invaded this politico-cultural space and started their military and cultural expansion. But, they posed that they were out to spread the light of civilisation among a savage and sanguinary people. They, therefore, reiterated corporal and cerebral inferiority of the conquered. We should not take this representation as fully neutral. Since a considerable part of this representation was appropriated from the reading of these Sanskrit texts by western scholars, the textualisation often displayed their ethnocentric mindset. Trautmann remarked:

What I want to show is that the Vedic evidence that has been brought forward has been subjected to a consistent over reading in favor of a racializing interpretation, and that the image of the 'dark-skinned savage' is only imposed on the Vedic evidence with a considerable amount of text-torturing, both 'substantive' and 'adjectival' in character.

(1997: 208)

In Sanskrit texts, tribal communities in India were variously designated as *das* (slave), *dasyu* (robbers), *rakshasa*, *asura*, *danava*, *savara* and *pulinda* (demon) (Roy 1970: 14–18, 20–38). They were not only identified as ethnologically different, but also culturally inferior and low people. Distinction of physical feature was one measure. The Aryans were superior due to their fair complexion and sharpness of features (Trautmann 1997: 162). On the contrary, the tribals were considered inferior by the *Rig Veda* because of their black skin (*twacham Krishnam*), fierce eyes (*ghora chakshas*), deformed nose (*visipra*) or noseless (*anasa*) (Roy 1970: 14–18, 20–38). The other measure was cultural. Considering their own tongue as more refined, the aboriginal speech was termed *mridhravach* (imperfect); their culinary habit was

unclean because they were *kolabidhvasin* or pig eaters; and they were a fallen people as they did not perform 'sacred rites' of the Aryans. In addition, they were characterised as a savage and oppressive group of people. To quote the *Ramayana*: 'Men-devouring Rakshas of various shapes, and wild beasts, (or serpents) which feed on blood, dwell in this vast forest. They harass the devotees who reside in the settlements and slay them in the forest.' Further, these 'shapeless and ill-looking monsters', '*anarya* wretches', 'uttering frightful sounds' were castigated as a 'treacherous race' (ibid.: 17, 38-9).

However, Sanskrit texts make both tacit and candid admission of the nativity of the 'black aborigines' and their politico-cultural advance. The *Taittiriya Upanishad* affirmed that the country was first occupied by the *asuras*. Kulindas, who were identified as the Kolarian aborigines by the Aryans, held sway over the hilly region between the river Beas in Punjab and river Tons (Tamasa) in Oudh. Similarly, the Rig Veda wrote about the supremacy of the Savaras over large tracts of northern India (ibid.: 14, 24-7). These texts also admitted that the pastoralist aboriginal communities had developed their state system of urban 'commonwealth'; the Dasa chief headed a city or group of cities; the Dasyu chief named Sambara was the lord of 100 cities. These settlements were protected by large forts and castles. They used stone and flint weapons during warfare and stone implements for domestic use (ibid.: 23, 26-8). With this polity, they were able to amass wealth to the envy of their Aryan adversary. These facts testify that the Aryans implicitly considered the non-Aryan groups superior to the Aryans in the scale of civilisation. The Rig Veda averred that when the 'poor' Aryan 'has not even ordinary water to wash himself in, the wives of the enemy in the insolent pride of their wealth bathe in milk'. Similarly, their patriarchal social order sustained by individual marriage was deemed as a sign of superiority (ibid.: 29).

The Sanskrit texts narrate the story of confrontation and conflict between the non-Aryans and Aryans. We learn of initial Aryan reverses as also the final defeat, displacement and migration of the aboriginal peoples. The *Markandeya Purana* depicts the defeat of the Aryan King Suratha at the hands of an 'unclean' tribe; the *Mahabharata* narrates the asura conquest over Aryan gods; the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* mention about the suffering of Indra, the chief of gods, at the hands of *asura* chief Bali (ibid.: 17-18). The *Rig Veda Samhita* mentions about numerous conflicts between the Aryans and the aborigines, ending in the gradual expansion of the Aryans from the Indus Valley to the Gangetic Plains and beyond, and consequent recession of the aboriginal communities to the hill and forested regions in northern and eastern India (ibid.: 13; Chapter II).

However, militarism was not the only course resorted to by the Aryans. They also conducted the absorption of the enemy in their fold, famously characterised as 'Hindu mode of absorption' by later scholars. Initially, it was done through marriage. The *Manu Samhita* describes that all castes and the tribes originated out of the crosses between the original four castes. About the biological linkage, the *Vishnu Purana* mentions that the asuras were 'the first born of Brahman, from whose thigh they sprang'. But greater emphasis was on the systematic relegation of these people. The reasons given were that the aboriginals did not observe the 'sacred rites' (ibid.: 14-15) and that they had no respect for the Brahmins ('seeing no Brahmanas'). As a result, they were cast out from the fold and relegated to the rank of Sudra. And so it was with the Kols and Bhils: the story goes that they were born out of Raja Bena's left hand, but he was cursed as he was not courteous to the sages (ibid.: 16). Though S.C. Roy dismissed these legends as 'fanciful theories and legendary inventions' (ibid.), one may discern, in the different versions of aboriginal origin, the Aryan ploy to absorb the conquered within the conqueror's fold – a reverse version of the Adivasi origin myth.

It is significant that the Sanskritic representation of the ethnic groups considerably impacted colonial ethnographers. Justice Campbell, a strong exponent of knowledge making through observation and the agency of officers, collated information from the Puranas where the aborigines were designated as 'vile monsters', 'allied to monkeys', 'as black as crows', of flattened features and of dwarfish stature' (1866: 23). Similarly, Dalton relied on the works of orientalist researchers to find out about the epithets of abuse such as 'worshippers of *mad* gods', 'haters of Brahmins', 'ferocious lookers', 'inhuman', 'flesh-eaters', 'devourers of life', 'possessed of magical powers', 'changing their shapes at will' (1866: 158). Hunter, too, was initiated to the Vedic literature as an important source of information through the writings of orientalist scholars like Colebrooke and Dr Muir (1975: 90-129). He, therefore, borrowed the Sanskritic representation of the aboriginals as 'enemy', 'evil spirit', 'lower animal' and 'the slave of the nobler race' (ibid.: 124-5).

Colonial scholars underlined the hegemonising strategy adopted by the Hindus. Characterising this as 'peaceful colonization by the brahmins', Max Müller observed that in south india they 'followed the wiser policy of adopting the language of the aboriginal people, and of conveying through its medium their knowledge and instruction to the minds of uncivilized tribes' (Trautman 1997: 176). But Dalton remarked that tribals had generally emulated a non-tribal

way of life, which split them into aborigines and Hinduised aborigines (1973: 3). This idea was extended further by Risley, who affirmed 'the gradual Brahmanising of the aboriginal', while the latter underlined that the growing Hindu influence might jeopardise tribal identity itself (1998: III). These sources impacted the colonial representation of the Indian ethnic communities up to a certain time. But later, other sources came to shape colonial minds. Therefore, it becomes pertinent to apprehend the context and content of the colonial conceptualisation of tribe.

Colonial representation as tribe/aborigine¹

This has surfaced as a widely debatable issue ever since Edward Said's famous conceptualisation of Orient occupied the academic centre stage (1985: 5, 8).² Questions were raised whether this was really ethnocentric and imaginative. While scholars broadly agree on the ethnocentric aspect of knowledge making, like 'orientalism', 'tribalism' was not ideologically a uniform discourse (Bayly 1997: 167). Similarly, scholars are not in agreement about its imaginary character. Damodaran, for instance, argues that the notion of tribe in India emerged out of specific historical situations and was not the product simply of colonial imaginings (2006b: 44–75). It is, therefore, imperative to understand the methodology of colonial knowledge making. Hence, this section will seek to examine the function of such sources as observation and direct field experience of the administrators and ethnographers, official network as well as the role of native sources in crystallising the knowledge bank. But the crucial point for this study should be to grapple with the actual share of the Adivasi informant. This becomes necessary in view of the observation about the gradual displacement of the 'native informant' in the making of colonial discourse (Dasgupta 2007a). This will usher us first into the ideological complexities in operation to be followed by how and by whom colonial discourse was produced.

Ideology and appropriation of colonial knowledge

Colonial knowledge was the product of two distinct yet complementary processes – exploration of the self by the western scholars and seeking 'moral justification' for the imperialistic agenda of the west. Europe's progress through renaissance, religious reformation and scientific and technological revolutions prompted scholars to argue that western society was modern and civilised as against medieval and backward

non-western societies (Bates 1995b: 220). This prompted them to invent 'an ideal-typical model of *traditional society*' so that it could be 'increasingly tied to the dynamics of imperial governance' (Mantena 2010: 56-7). While non-western peoples were generally considered inferior, they could discover the dichotomies between 'barbarian' Chinese and Indian and 'savage' and 'primitive' Africans and Melanesians (Adas 1989: 194-5). Their primary concern was to understand why western societies had progressed more than their non-western counterparts. Anthropologists, historians and philosophers as also evangelists, free traders, colonial administrator-ethnographers focussed on the communities, variously termed as aborigine, tribe and autochthon, to explore why they occupied the lowest position. Western scientists, medical practitioners, anthropologists and linguists worked in tandem to formulate and systematise essentials of primitivism and tribalism to map the anthropomorphic progress from primitivism to western modernity. In a sense, they wanted 'to comprehend non-European social formations in relation to the prehistory (and future) of European man and society . . . to chart the unique trajectory of Western modernity' that would foster 'a fundamental rethinking of the idea of the primitive' (Mantena 2010: 57). Accordingly, the primitive or tribe in India was characterised as blood-centric descent groups, savage, sensuous, body-centric, irrational, presentist, stateless and historyless (Kuper 1988: 4-34; Sivaramakrishnan 1996: 243-82; Skaria 1997: 726-45; Guha 2002; Banerjee 2006: 2-25). They reasoned that these attributes rendered them non-contemporary, rather anachronistic or the 'other', (Skaria 1999: Chapter I) of the modern society.

The intellectuals believed that practical 'physiological, moral and intellectual' evidences justified 'evolutionary racial hierarchies' (Bayly 1997: 165-87). They, therefore, classified people into superior/inferior, civilised/savage and dominant/subservient races. This project gained momentum since the British census operations and the Ethnographic Conference of 1885 in Lahore. In collaboration with the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the Bengal and Supreme governments directed 'all local authorities to furnish complete and accurate lists of various races found within their respective jurisdictions' (Dalton 1973: i). Though the avowed objective was to be 'of some service to students of comparative ethnology in Europe', it was actually to appropriate knowledge for the sake of 'good administration' and solving 'possible social problems' (Risley 1998: iv). We can draw a parallel from the African history: 'To rule Africa, colonial officials needed knowledge about African languages, cultures, and laws, which in many regions began

to be compiled with the assistance of local intermediaries within a few years of occupation' (Parker and Rathbone 2007: 107).

There was yet another aspect – administrator-ethnographers in India became conscious of the weakness in the policy of 'homogenization'.³ The census of 1891 revealed 'how rapidly the old aboriginal faiths are being effaced' (Risley 1998: iii). But the idea of conservation of the aboriginals was not fully altruistic. It worked under the overriding imperialist compulsion of stalling the growth of Indian nationalism (Cohn 1997: ix, Chapter ii) by highlighting racial, caste, religious and linguistic differences among Indians. We can draw support from Hunter, who asserted: 'We are too accustomed to speak of India as a single country and of its inhabitants as a single nation; but the truth is, that as regards its history, its extent, and its population, India displays the diversities rather of a continent than of a single state' (1975: 96). Consequently, an important item of colonialist agenda was to underline, besides religious and linguistic heterogeneity, the tribe-non-tribe and intra-ethnic divide in India.

The British in India believed that their task was not simply to conquer and expropriate tribal land and resources, but also to civilise them so that they might be attuned to British rule. This inaugurated the policy of paternalism as the cornerstone of colonial rule in tribal Bihar. The bedrock of this policy was to form a direct and intimate relation with them. The following quote elaborates the policy and purpose behind it:

We approve of your selection of Captain Wilkinson to fill that situation . . . We observe from the tenor of his directions to his Assistants, that he very justly regards it as his own and their first duty to come into immediate communication with the people, for the purpose of acquiring a knowledge of their real sentiments, and of promoting their welfare. . . .⁴

In pursuit of this policy, Thomas Wilkinson, the political agent to the Governor General of the South-Western Frontier Agency, directed Lt. S.R. Tickell, his assistant in charge of the Kolhan Government Estate in Singhbhum, to act as the *Ma-bap* (father-mother) of the Ho. The purpose of the paternal rule was to civilise the 'savage' tribals.⁵ This could be done by segregating them from the supposed polluting influence of local chiefs and indoctrinating them to English law and administrative institutions which was deemed necessary 'for the improvement, civilization and happiness of this Pergunnah'.⁶

22 Other representation

The other strategy was religious and linguistic proselytism in which the administrator acted often as the subterfuge for a missionary. This, in a sense, is comparable to Tswana where, as Comaroffs observed, 'spatial semantics of the missionary vision . . . went forth to chart the terra incognita of the interior onto the glorious map of Christendom' (1991: 200). About Jharkhand, this may be corroborated by the following quote:

He [administrative officer] ought to possess good sound judgment, great firmness patience, and Tact in Managing the Natives & should be accessible at all hours schools should also be established and the rising generation instructed & *probably no finer field could be found in India for missionaries* (italics added).⁷

What was in the 1830s an appendage to political imperialism developed later into a louder and seemingly independent programme. Justice Campbell spelled this in the context of the 'Kolarian tribes of the Chota-Nagpore division':

To make such a people thoroughly our own – *to render the central and healthy plateau occupied by them a completely Christian and Anglicised country* (italics mine) would be (higher considerations apart) a very great source of strength and comfort to the English in India. I think that every effort should be made in this direction. (1866: 151–2)

Dalton lauded the civilising import of this effort: 'It is gratifying that the darkness in which this primitive and interesting people have so long dwelt, is now being dispelled by a brighter light: that their paganism is at length yielding to the gentle influence of Christian teaching' (1866: 159).

The next project was partial literary Anglicisation/Europeanisation of the aborigines in India. Though some of the British administrators and missionaries promoted tribal languages by preparing and publishing grammatical texts and lexicons, some of them were not ardent in the full growth of these languages. This was why they showed a clear preference for the Roman script as against the development of independent tribal scripts. To substantiate my argument, I quote Campbell: 'For although I have not advocated the Romanising of the written vernacular languages, I should prefer to give to the Kolarian tribes, hitherto entirely without a written character, our own Roman letters' (1866: 152).

Colonial representation of tribe/aborigine

Influenced by the above ideologies, colonial scholars, travellers and missionaries formulated their ideas about the aborigines. These 'reflected the working of a series of colonial lenses – departmental agenda, scientific concerns, and of course, the oft-referred personal biases of an individual' (Dasgupta 2007a). However, we should not be oblivious of the dialectical character of colonial discourse. Cederlof observes that 'colonial knowledge' could never emerge as 'a single package of coherent ideas about superiority and empire' due to conflicts within colonial bureaucracy (2013: 418). To illustrate, while William Jones,⁸ the founder of The Asiatic Society of Bengal, propounded the linguistic and cultural divisions of races, the approach of James Forbes, the author of *Oriental Memoirs*, was environmentalist, who observed that racial distinctions were determined by 'climate, terrain and physical environment' closely in line with the 18th-century Scottish theorists (Bayly 1997: 172–4).

The appropriation of information about the ethnic communities in Jharkhand region had different phases, the function of which is more clearly discernible in Singhbhum. The first was making an early acquaintance with the landscape and people.⁹ This was why in 1819, Roughsedge, the British political agent, deputed his assistant to collect information about 'the extraordinary race called Larka' (O'Malley 1910: 31–2). At this stage, besides the native *sepoys*, local chiefs like Ghanashyam Singh (Raja of Porahat) and chiefs of Seraikela and Kharsawan like Bikram Singh and Chaitan Singh provided necessary information¹⁰: they mostly reported about the depredations of the Ho and pleaded with the British to come to their rescue.

At the same time, direct observation and field experiences during military expeditions were valid sources for colonial ethnography. In fact, observation of colonial bureaucracy gained the status of authenticity. The Nilgiri experience inspired Cederlof to observe that 'personal observations were considered superior as sources of knowledge about Indian society' (2013: 393). In Bihar, we have the instance of Capt. Jacob Carmac, the commander of the southern frontier, who moved across the hilly and forested terrain to quell Chero disturbances in Palamau in the 1770s. The result of his personal contact was diverse. He castigated Kharwars and Cheros as a 'race of border robbers' and the Cheros as 'the most refractory and turbulent natives', 'notorious inhabitants' and 'vile, rebellious and intriguing' (Jha 1987: 9–21). But later, he called the tribals of Palamau as a 'hardy and bolder race' and admired their 'utmost courage and perseverance' (ibid.: 10–11,

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27-9). This diversity, in fact, featured bureaucratic representation of the ethnic communities in India. For instance, the Toda community was represented as 'a hardy and fearless one, superior in stature, distinct in language, customs and mode of living' (Cederlof 2013: 393). This ambivalence may be assigned to the source from which the information was derived. In some cases, Hindu and Muslim subordinate officials and local zamindari officials acted as a major source of information (Jha 1987: 48-9), who generally held a very low image of the Adivasis. Consequently,

British masters also did pretty nearly the same, and it need not create surprise therefore that the epithets "chuars" and "dakaits" were indiscriminately applied to the Kols of Chota Nagpore whenever there was occasion to allude to them in official correspondence.¹¹

These facts make it clear that the colonial bureaucracy in India derived information from native informants. Under the British, a knowledge network functioned; in the Nilgiri region, the district collector depended on subordinate officials for appropriating data which the latter collated from Indian informants who functioned both as the repository and interpreter of local knowledge (Cederlof 2013: 388). After the British extended their indirect control over the Chota Nagpur plateau, the native sources informed the military and civil officials about the terrain, growth of agriculture in more hospitable regions, Adivasi village system, Hinduisation of these people and their forced migration due to feudal oppression.¹² Cuthbert revealed the bureaucratic mechanism of appropriating ground knowledge:

On halting at a village it was practice to send for the principal person as well as heads of each possessions that I might question them as to the peculiar customs prevalent in the Villages, the rights of the peasantry, the profits derived from the different trades and the general treatment the people received from the proprietors. The Iztehars which I took on these occasions have been deposited in the Sheristah as Official documents.¹³

Similarly, in Kolhan, officials elicited information of the land and people mostly through direct contact with the natives. Wilkinson instructed Tickell, 'At all time (be) accessible to the people under your charge, except at your hours for meals and recreation.'¹⁴ For the early history of Ho migration and expansion, Tickell gathered information from the Ho and Oraon 'narrators'. While the Ho story of creation

of the world was related to him by the Mankis (heads of *pirs*, i.e. cluster of villages), details of socio-religious life were provided by the other – ‘the natives’. He replenished his knowledge through visits to the archaeological sites during official tours across the Ho land (1840: 706–7). But a few factors generally impinged on the perception and portrayal of colonial officials, as emphasised by D.J. Rycroft about the Santals. These were: whether the ethnic group was a collaborator or antagonistic to British rule; whether the region had capitalistic potential and the people were development-prone; and last, the extent of observation allowed to the ‘colonial observer’ by the concerned community (2006: 1–107).

However, since the 1850s, ethnological studies conducted by Victorian scholars began influencing British ethnographer-administrators. Protagonists formed and functioned on such platforms as the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Anthropological Society of Paris, the Great Exhibition organised at the Crystal Palace in London in 1851 and the other at Jabalpur in 1866–67. These conducted anthropometric and phrenological investigations that fed into the contemporary official surveys and reports. The reports of the Ethnological Committee, chaired by Alfred Lyall, Justice Campbell’s paper ‘The Ethnology of India’ published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1865), E.T. Dalton’s *The Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal* (1872), the *Imperial Gazetteer* by W.W. Hunter (1881), Ethnographic Survey of Bengal under H.H. Risley (1885) followed by the survey of other parts of India and H.H. Risley’s *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal* (1895) were some of the major colonial attempts to construct an imperialist notion of Indian ethnic groups (Bates 1995b: 219–59). But in the name of providing a scientific basis, these more or less formulated and popularised what has been critiqued as ‘pseudo-science of evolutionist racial ethnology’ (Bayly 1997: 167).

At this phase, Sanskrit texts and historical studies were relegated to the background. Instead, anthropometry and physical examination of ‘specimens’ and ‘actual observation and practical inquiry’, being aided by the officials stationed in India, were accepted as more dependable sources of knowledge (Campbell 1866: 1). But even then, colonial officials continued to collate their data from the ethnic informants. The hybrid nature of colonial knowledge will become clear if we study the roles of Dalton, Hunter and Risley.

Dalton’s writings showed the obvious impact of ethnology. He identified the Ho of Singhbhum and the Mundas of the southern parganas of Lohardaga as ‘physically a much finer people’ than the Bhumij and Santals; this he assigned to the mixture with the Aryan and Mongoloid

people (1973: 190). About the physical features of the Santals, he observed that 'their cast of countenance almost approaches the Negro type' (ibid.: 212). But since local officials had mostly 'little knowledge of Ethnology as a science' and their 'practical knowledge' was 'limited', they deemed it necessary to elicit information from the published works of the knowledgeable officials as also travel accounts for authenticity and comprehensiveness (ibid.: 1-2). About the Ho, besides the family legends of the Singh Dynasty of Porahat, Dalton relied on Roughsedge's despatches, papers and correspondences related to the later period - Tickell and V. Ball of the Geological Survey. Similarly, about Munda, he culled information from Davidson, about the Santal from E.G. Mann, Hunter and G. Campbell, about the Oraon from Davidson and linguistic researches of Rev. Frederic Batsch and Rev. William Luther of the Chota Nagpur Mission (1866: 157, 163, 165-8, 170, 173; 1973: 177-207, 245-6).

Dalton's other source was, however, local informants with whom he came into contact during his long stay in Chota Nagpur. While touring Munda-dominated 'principal settlement' of Bassea Pargana in southern Chota Nagpur, 'elders of the tribe' gathered round him (1866: 155). The local informants related their 'traditions', legends and myths to him (1973: 207-9). The history of the Oraon migration from the western coast of India was collated from his 'most venerable and learned . . . Oraon acquaintances' (ibid.: 245). He similarly collected the Munda and Bhuiyan folklore on the 'early history of the race', their story of migration, strong Hindu influence on them, particularly Rajputisation of their chiefs, as well as their pre-state confederation of villages and *parhas*. Likewise, Dalton's ethnographic narration of the Ho traditions was gathered during his conversations with the local informants, besides his own field experiences as the commissioner particularly during 1857-58 (ibid.: 177-207).

Ethnological studies on tribal society in India made crucial advance under W.W. Hunter and H.H. Risley. They were identified as the major contributors to the contemporary ethnological debate centring around race (Bayly 1997: 167). But the colonial officials could not totally ignore the empirical and the earlier official data, as we find in the representation of the Nilgiri region (Cederlof 2013: 392-3). Hunter, for instance, authored the 16-volume book *A Statistical Account of Bengal* (1877) to produce an administratively useful district-wise account of the land and people in Bengal. Impacted by contemporary ethnological writings, this study mooted the idea of division of Indians into Aryan and non-Aryan or aboriginal races (Vol. XVI, 1976: 5-6, 59). He depended on data empirically derived by the health, police, jail,

census, education and postal departments as well as the surveyor general and commissioners. The information was provided by the heads of the districts on the basis of 'five series of questions' sent to them (ibid.: 17; Vol. XVII 1976: 17). Moreover, Hunter made copious use of earlier reports and ethnographic writings of Lt. S.R. Tickell (1840b), H. Ricketts (1854) and Capt. J.C. Haughton published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1854) and G.C. Depree (1868), Dalton and V. Ball published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1867) (ibid.: 18-22, 47-53, 65-75; ibid.: 24-57, 99-114). Naturally, the account was largely empirical, ethnographic, repetitive and ahistorical (ibid. Vol. XVII: 71-4).

Risley's quest evinced perceptible impact of his academic predilections and administrative responsibilities. During his tenure in the Indian Civil Service (1873-1910), he served as the honorary director of the Ethnological Survey of the Indian Empire, the census commissioner and the president of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. He could thus guide 'the ethnographic projects of the colonial state from the 1880s for the next two decades' (1915: Introduction). The net result was his *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal* in two volumes (1891), *The People of India*, *The Annals of Rural Bengal* and *The Census of India* (1901). These works were the product of his 'fieldwork' and knowledge with the 'discipline of anthropology'. Significantly, his personal experiences during field investigations were replenished by the data supplied by native informants.¹⁵ In the Preface to his first work, he observed that the 'volumes contain the results of what is, I believe, the first attempt to apply to Indian ethnography the methods of systematic research sanctioned by the authority of European anthropologists' (1998: Preface). The results, it was hoped, 'might be of some service to students of comparative ethnology in Europe'. However, for his more ambitious and voluminous project, the *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, Risley mainly used the official network to collect data from the native informants. But, these were responses to officially prepared questionnaire which showed a perceptible impact of contemporary ethnological ideas. The interesting fact was that despite the centrality of race, contemporary scholars debated whether race should be philologically or physiologically defined (Dasgupta 2007a). This landed them in a fix as to whether their task was to prepare ethnography or ethnology. Risley defined ethnography to be a discipline that collected and arranged large masses of social data; while ethnology applied the comparative method of investigation, and framed by this means, hypotheses concerning the origin of the tribes themselves. While the first was seen to embrace descriptive details, the second was a rational exposition

of the human aggregates and organisations known as hordes, clans, tribes and nations, especially in the earlier, the savage and barbarous stages of their progress (Risley, Vol. I 1998: xxvi). Thus, Risley was able to combine contemporary anthropological theories and categories with his ground knowledge about 'some of the strongest and most typical Animistic races in India'. This 'gave him the edge over the academic anthropologist of the West' (Dasgupta 2007a). But as his ethnographic writings largely reproduced the information provided by Dalton in his ethnology and despite the scope of replenishment, which the dialogue with the district officials made possible, ethnographic knowledge remained virtually stagnant.¹⁶

Risley's *The Annals* derived information from diverse sources. He rued the absence of 'indigenous account', which he attributed to the lack of sense of history among the Indians. Therefore, his account was based largely on official records, contributed by unnamed 'learned native employed to compile district histories' and missionaries (1915: 6-11). His initiation to western ethnological notions impacted his mapping of Indian demography. Disproving the centrality of four-fold caste divisions, he emphasised the idea of two distinct ethnical elements, the Aryan and non-Aryan (aboriginal) races (ibid.: 5, 88, 101).

Thus, colonial representation of the aborigines carried perceptible impact of ethnographic as well as ethnological ideologies. But often theories were toned down by local and individual preferences. Next, even if a literate trans-local source impacted British understanding, it could not totally relegate local informants as a source of knowledge. The above readings unfold the broad themes under which the study was pursued, points and shifts in emphasis, uniformity and dissonance among officials, and finally, the quantum and quality of the colonial information. In a large measure, these writings lead us to the debate among officials between the essence and accretions (being and becoming) with respect to the category under review.

Problem of nomenclature

Colonial officials were confused whether to designate the ethnic groups as tribe, aborigine, race or nation. Campbell admitted: 'In the matter of nomenclature, it is surprising how much confusion arises, both from calling the same tribe by different names, and also from calling different tribes by the same name' about tribal communities in India. (1866: 3). He assigned this to various such factors as peculiar empirical situation of 'the tribes variously known in various localities'; 'the same term is applied both to a Tribe or Caste', as also to the

impact of acculturation (ibid.: 4–5). However, they more commonly used tribe either as an independent category (ibid.: 20–1) or as distinct from the caste groups (ibid.: 13). Here, tribe conformed to its lexical usage, 'a group of people of the same race, and with the same customs, language, religion, etc., living in a particular area and often led by a chief' (Hornby 2005: 1638). Used in this sense, the term assumed an inclusive meaning that covered the caste groups also (Campbell 1866: 13–14). But confusion was confounded when *killi* (clan) and tribe were deemed synonymous; for instance, Dalton noted 'various tribes or killis' of Hos (1973: 213, 254).

Aborigine was the other expression applied in absolute sense. First, the word was used both as a noun and adjective for a distinct ethnic category (Campbell 1866: 14, 20–56). Campbell substantiated: 'I take as a great division the black aboriginal tribes of the interior hills and jungles. There can, I suppose, be no doubt that they are the remnants of the race which occupied India before the Hindus' (ibid.: 13). British ethnographers/officials posted in the Nilgiri region identified the Toda as the 'original inhabitants of the hills' and then as 'lords of the soil' (Cederlof 2013: 392–3). Similarly, Dalton considered the Oraons as the 'aborigines of Chota Nagpur' (1973: 263).

Racial representation of the tribe/aborigine was a global phenomenon invoked by European imperialists largely to justify their conquest (Parker and Rathbone 2007: 3). In India, this was evidently due to the impact of contemporary ethnological ideas on the British officials. Though he was aware of the racial mixture of Indian population at large, Campbell represented them in racial terms. He underlined the purest aboriginal tribes as having 'small and slight, very black, face broad and flat, the thick lips . . . noses broad and nostrils wide' (1866: 5, 11, 20). As early as 1799, the tribals of Palamau were addressed as a 'hardy and bolder race' (Jha 1987: 16); the Santals as a 'rude race of people'; and the Oraons as a race (Dalton 1973: 245). Besides this singular use, the entire bunch of 'aboriginal' tribal peoples was clubbed under Kolarian race. This was done in the context of the power clash between the native aborigines and immigrant Aryans. As its major exponent, Risley observed that Indians represented 'two tribes of widely different origin, struggling for the mastery', the 'tall, fair-complexioned' Aryan race immigrating from outside, and the aboriginals, 'the people of the land . . . the children of the soil', 'reduced to vilenage, or driven back into the forest' (1915: 90–1).

The term 'nation', which was initially invoked along with 'tribe' or 'race', as an innocent denominator gradually emerged as a politically loaded term. Campbell mentioned the Santals and Rajmahalees as two

distinct nations because of their cultural and physical differences (1866: 28). Dalton wrote about the formation of tribal 'nationalities in the secure asylum' in the Chota Nagpur plateau (1866: 153). Thus, ethnology was deployed as a counter-nationalist rhetoric to identify these natives as distinct nationalities. This is evident in Risley's remark above.

We are too much accustomed to speak of India as a single country, and of its inhabitants as a single nation; but the truth is, that as regards its history, its extent, and its population, India displays the diversities rather of a continent than of a single State.

(1915: 96)

Despite the confusion over nomenclature, a preference to identify the ethnic groups in India as aboriginal and indigenous is discernible (Campbell 1866: 22-3). But contrary empirical evidences precluded ethnographers from propping up a homogenous tribal category. They were aware of such intra- and interethnic cleavages among Indian tribals as: pervasive Hindu influence splitting tribes into pure tribe and its Hinduised variant; difference in the level of growth as between savage and more civilised Gonds in the Bombay Presidency region; differences of the Ho from the Munda, Bhumij and Santals in traits (Hunter, XVII, 1976: 57; Campbell 1866: 5, 11, 20); and varying response to agricultural development between the Mals and Santals (Rycroft 2006: 108; Campbell 1866: 29).

The mapping of the exclusiveness of ethnic communities had another context. British ethnographers were apprehensive that these communities, concentrated in the hilly and forested zones, might totally disappear. In the pan-Indian context, Campbell succinctly observed:

The fact is that the Aboriginal tribes now remaining are but like scattered remnants of a substance floating here and there in a mass of water, into which they have been all but melted, and in which they are on the point of disappearing.

(1866: 20)

However, the quest of tribalism remained a continual agenda of colonial ethnographers and administrators in India. Appropriation of knowledge was harnessed by them to forge a distinction between the aborigines and the Hindus, and then between tribals and general population (*ibid.*: 11, 17, 31). This followed a prefixed classificatory pattern not only in India, but also in Africa. About Tanganyika, Iliffe observed that the colonial government 'conceived of tribes as cultural units with a common language, social system and 'an established

system of customary law' (quoted in Chanock 1985: 20). This invites a discussion on how their Indian counterparts designed tribes.

In this context, a comparison with the standard anthropological definition of its more widely used variant, that is, tribe, is in order (Helm 1968; Beteille 1992: 57-78). Despite the fact that anthropologists do not agree on the precise definition of the word, their approach may be invoked as a useful analytical tool in reading the representation more meaningfully. This will inform how British ethnographers had conceptualised the tribe, and to what extent there was correspondence between anthropological theory and colonial ethnographic formulation. However, what we notice is that the theoretical link of British ethnographers was more implicational than precise. This imprecision may be attributed to the changing tribal scenario over time as well as the imperialistic agenda that forced the officials to serve the master more than the muse. Consequently, colonial ethnographers underlined only a few criteria as more or less primary and constant, whereas they found others as variable and non-essential. One can discern here the creative tension between being and becoming in the colonial discourse due to historical reasons.

Parameters of identity: language

Language was used as one of the parameters of ethnicity. First, this was defined as a generic category in terms of racial categorisation of demography into tribal and non-tribal linguistic groups. Campbell observed:

It may then generally be said, that both in physique and in the structure of their language, the Aborigines present a type analogous to that of the Negritoes of the South Seas, Papuans, Tasmanians and others, as well as to the nearer Negritoes of Malacca and Andamans.

(1866: 24)

Similarly, mooting the distinction between Kolarian and Sanskrit group of languages, Dalton remarked:

Ethnologically their position is singular and interesting; speaking themselves the Kol language only, they occupy a basin whose barrier of hills restrains the flow and blending together of the three great Sanskrit derivatives Hindi, Bengali, and Uriya, which but for this obstacle of an isolated language would have found a trijunction boundary point in the center of Singhbhum.

(1973: 179)

If we read it in the context of power struggle between the Aryans and Kolarians over the Gangetic provinces (cited in Campbell 1866: 150), political overtone of the above polarisation would become evident.

Second, scholars projected the idea of interethnic linguistic cleavages in India. It was remarked that due to dislocation and acculturation, tribal communities fissured into Dravidian and Kolaraian linguistic groups rather than remaining as a single linguistic category (ibid.: 24-34). Last, they underlined the fruition of distinct linguistic ethnicities. Tickell underlined the linguistic basis of Honess by identifying their dialect as separate from the Munda root (1840b: 803). Along with other cultural differences, this implies the transformation of a sub-ethnic linguistic group into an independent linguistic ethnic category.

However, we should not miss two other objectives which operated among administrators and missionaries. The administrators were interested, as Comaroffs reason, in gaining a 'command of the language' for 'mastery of the structures and terms of communication' to bolster up a rule through force, while the missionaries' motive was to rescue tribals from a 'primitive disorder' by means of 'colonization of consciousness' that would ultimately entrench their faith among the tribals (1991: 216-24). Ethnographers and linguists undertook researches on the structure of tribal dialects and languages in order to gain a command over their tongue. This was part of their more generic scheme of supplying 'the rough elements for a comparison of all the dialects of India' (Campbell 1866: 152). In the tribal region of Bihar, Tickell produced 'Grammatical Construction of the Ho Language' and 'The Vocabulary of the Ho Language' (1840a: 997-1107, 1063-90). Other instances were Dalton's tables showing different dialects of the Munda or Kol languages spoken in Chota Nagpur and elsewhere; Rev. A. Notrott's *Grammar of the Kol Language* in 1905; and *Ho Grammar* in 1915 by L.B. Burrows (1973: 235-42; 1915: Preface). In this connection, the observation of Burrows is very significant. While citing the linguistic affinity among the Ho, Munda and Santal, he mentioned that change in time and environment brought linguistic differences among these groups. This finally identified 'Ho to the dignity of a distinct language' (Burrows 1915: Preface).

This linguistic categorisation by the officials in respect of the Hos was extended by missionaries when they chose other communities of Jharkhand. Rev. Batsch prepared the grammar of the Oraon language while Rev. Phillips wrote *Introduction to the Santal Language* in 1852 in Bengali script (Campbell 1866: 152; Hunter 1975: 157fn). Rev. Notrott of the German Evangelical Mission in Ranchi wrote *Mundari Grammar*, besides 'a few grammatical notes' by Rev. Whitley of the Anglican Mission. Rev. J. Hoffmann published *Mundari Grammar*

followed by an article on Mundari poetry, music and dances in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society* in 1907. He finally authored his voluminous work *Encyclopaedia Mundarica* with Rev. A.V. Emelen in 1924 (Vol. 1 1998: X–XI).

However, British ethnographers and linguists gradually found that the growing trend of bilingualism among tribals diluted the linguistic basis of ethnicity. Campbell remarked: 'All these people (Munda, Santal, Ho, Oraon, Bhumij, Kharia, Kharwars etc.) have in their faces unmistakable marks of their aboriginal origin. But they speak Hindee. This then brings us to the difficulty about language' (1866: 38). Although Risley identified language as a criterion of distinction, he observed that 'a number of tribes concerning whose non-Aryan origin there can be no manner of doubt, have within recent times adopted Aryan dialects and abandoned their original language' (Vol. I 1998: xii). Dalton noted that though the older generation was susceptible to their own dialect, the younger Hos showed a clear predilection towards bilingualism (1973: 185). This was obviously the result of the introduction of non-tribal languages like Hindi, Bengali and Uriya in the school curriculum and growing contact with the people speaking these languages. Introduction of non-Ho languages in Kolhan since 1841 is suggestive of the British policy of promoting them at the cost of the tribal dialect,¹⁷ though one may argue that the Ho had not till then developed linguistically to be incorporated in the curriculum.

Territoriality

Territoriality was the other determining criterion. The argument was that demographic and territorial identities were interrelated; and it was this interrelationship that shaped the colonial perception of land and people which was critical in deciding the issue of the latter's right. To illustrate, the Toda community was identified in early colonial ethnography as the 'people who had lived longest in the hills and therefore had hereditary rights in the land on the plateau'. But so far as the issue of their empowerment was concerned, it had to be commensurate with the ultimate purpose of establishing British sovereign rule (Cederlof 2013: 384). Hence, as the colonial rule became deep-rooted, the meaning of territory in relation to its inhabitants shifted from an ecological zone to a resource zone – a movement from nature to culture or anachronism to history. The topographical knowledge became initially relevant to aid British military expeditions. The British administrator generals wanted to know whether the abundance of hills and forests, as also the fear of disease like malaria, might not handicap the free movement of troops. In 1828, Lt. Col. Hamilton wrote: 'The nature of

the country is such as would render it extremely difficult either to penetrate or subdue on account of the unhealthy jungles, so deleterious to troops not born on the spot' (Quoted in Jha 1987: 25). Inhospitability of space for conquest was later accompanied by other considerations. These were, as Cederlof informed, whether the landscape 'would be plenty of place for innovation, no hostile savages to fear, the natives would happily collaborate in establishing a modern society together with British . . .' (2013: 392). This collaboration was to be sustained by the financial potential of the subjugated territory. Therefore, ethnographic accounts (Tickell 1840b; Dalton 1973; Dunbar 1861; Depree 1868) were prepared as a composite but synoptic package that revealed its natural and demographic resources. These were followed by the making of elaborate specific monographs like the Hunter's Statistical Account and the genre of District Gazetteer (Hunter 1976; O'Malley 1910). These mapped both the plateau regions and open country in terms of agrarian growth¹⁸ that would raise the quantum of revenue and stave off drought and famine. Another purpose was to evaluate the commercial prospect that its forest and agrarian products, more so the mineral resources, provided (Depree 1868: 13). All these facilitated the final co-option of the anomalous and border zones of the forested tracts to the mainstream political economy.

Together with this, assessing the capacity of the Indians to effectively collaborate with colonial masters and British entrepreneurs became part of the official agenda. The Mundas and Dhangar Kols of Chota Nagpur came in for special mention and praise (Jha 1987: 28–9), mainly because of their role as an effective labour force (Dalton 1866: 169; Depree 1868: 10). Cuthbert stated: 'The Coles emigrate in great number annually in search of employment, and are entertained by Indigo planters and others. They are generally preferred to the labourers of other parts of the Country on account of their performing more work and at a lower rate.'¹⁹

The determination of the original settler was very crucial for this invention of the landscape. Despite the knowledge of the history of the displacement and intermittent migration²⁰ of the tribals, colonial ethnographers reiterated their nativity. Deriving from the Munda tradition, Dalton called the Kols as the 'first settlers' (1866: 153–4). Depree observed that the Mundas were 'believed to be the descendants of the aborigines who cleared the soil from jungle' (1868: 13). It was thus that they came to be identified as the original settler; *Hodesum* was the original home of the Hos and the *Damin-i-Koh* (Skirt of the Hills) that of the Santals. This reinforced the idea of an indissoluble link of the tribals with the land they occupied as well as their nativity.

Notion of cultural lag

Aboriginality or tribalism was also defined in developmental terms, determined as it was by the capability of the tribals to respond to new ideas and techniques. Skaria underlined that the inability to adapt to superior techniques by the Dangis, Bhils and Varlis could be assigned to their inherent laziness, which he characterised as their 'distinctive aesthetics' (1999: 63–4). Therefore, taking cue from the double dealings of the superior west and inferior orient/Indian, scholars developed the idea of the division of Indians into civilised mainstream and primitive-savage tribe.

To justify the Ho as essentially savage-primitive, Roughsedge used the epithet 'wild inhabitants'²¹ and 'the savages'.²² The same terms were used for the Mundas also (Dalton 1866: 153, 158, 165). Savagery was defined in terms of ferocity and bloodthirstiness, which prompted Roughsedge to equate Larka Kols with tigers (Sen 2011b: 52–66). Similarly, official reports waxed eloquent about the 'unmitigated series of plundering and burning villages, and murdering men, women, and children, with every aggravation of outrage and cruelty' perpetrated by the Santals during the *Hul* (rebellion; 1855–56).²³ Therefore, in British perception, barbarity was a mark of tribalism. However, empiricism apprised ethnographers about the existence of such layers among them as perfect and most savage and imperfect or less savage. Samuells found the wild tribe in the jungles of Cuttack as 'perfect savages, small, slender, nearly naked, and horrid in appearance' who spoke a 'strange language' (Campbell 1866: 36). Dalton believed that 'the wildest and most savage' of them had 'powers as wizards and witches', 'to transform themselves into tigers and other beasts of prey' (1866: 158). On the other hand, ethnographers also found tribal communities making some strides in civilisation in the form of an organised village life, traditional system of governance, adult marriage, peasantisation and much more.²⁴ These facts underlined the play of evolutionism in the representation of tribes.

The cultural lag of the Adivasis was also locationally defined. Cederlof points out that the colonial officials considered locale to be essentially responsible for the 'marginalization of backwardness of the land and people' (2008: 263). Campbell characterised the tribals as communities living in isolation in the hilly and forested areas (1866: 20). Likewise, Tickell found that the *Larka Kol* (Fighting Kol) colonies were 'insulated, semi-barbarous and confined to the wildest parts of that country' (1840b: 694). This isolation was believed to be both forced and deliberate, forced on them by 'Brahmanical invaders' and

deliberate because they wanted to live a peaceful and solitary existence 'out of the reach of their enemies' and maintain 'their independence and idiosyncrasy' (Dalton 1866: 153). This inspired an administrator to formulate the notion of close affinity between nature and tribals, rather nature's selection of them as the inhabitant (Bradley-Birt 1903: 85-6). But I would like to point out that isolation could not be overemphasised, because of the commercial linkage between the tribes of central India and the Banjara trading community (Sivaramakrishnan 1999: 40), and then the Hos carting their way to distant Puri for salt or itinerant merchants visiting their territory (Tickell 1840b: 805). Campbell considered this link to be inescapable because tribal 'retreats' were either 'closely surrounded' or considerably 'penetrated' and 'saturated with an Arian element' (1866: 20).

Ethnic communities in India were often classified as pre-civilisation hunting and foraging groups. The famous dichotomy between tribe and peasant in anthropology argues that as their economy was based on hunting, fishing, foraging and shifting cultivation, tribal community should be regarded as pre-peasant (Bose 2004: 6-7). Also, in colonial ethnography, the 'lowest stage of savageness' was associated with 'scarcely any agriculture, mere men of the woods' (Campbell 1866: 31; Dalton 1866: 169). However, ethnographers gradually learnt of their movement towards cultivation. Depree observed:

Rice is the staple production of the country, as it is the main food of the people. It is grown on the terraced fields which occupy all the low grounds of Chota Nagpore, as well as on the high lands as an early crop cut in October.

(1868: 5)

This change in material culture registers the transformation of the pre-peasant Adivasis into a peasant community.

Tribe as the other

Besides identifying Adivasis as the other of the civilised mainstream, we find the function of other parameters of distinction. First was their distinction from the Hindus 'in appearance, religion, language, and manners' (Dalton 1973: 164). Sometimes, they were deemed as superior to Hindus in dress, appearance and lifestyle as well as in nature (Tickell 1840b: 784, 788). However, their non-Hindu identity could not remain stable because British ethnographers could notice subterranean current of Hinduisation. Tickell revealed about the Ho adopting Hindu

ceremonies, rites, festivals and prejudices (ibid.: 803); and this did not stop even later (Tuckey 1920: 128; Areeparampil 1993: 394–436). Second was that ethnographer-administrators underlined interethnic distinctions. Tickell found Ho and Munda differing 'not only in manners, dialect, and dress, but also in appearance'. Dalton considered the Ho of Singhbhum 'physically much finer people than the Bhumij, Santals or any other of the Kolarians' (1840b: 803; 1973: 190).

The identification of ethnic communities as the other of the civilised mainstream had considerable bearing on knowledge making. But before broaching the impact, we should understand how this otherness was formulated in the west. It began with the ethnocentric classification of the world demography into state/pre-state, literate/oral and historied/historyless societies (Guha 2002: 4–12). Accordingly, the first of these sets was accorded the status of civilised while the latter was classified as uncivilised. Testing the Hos against this scale, ethnographers identified the tribals as belonging to a pre-state 'constitution of confederate village communities' or republics without the notion of a centralised government (Dalton 1973: 178; Baden-Powell 1972: 153). They were then classed as a pre-literate people as they spoke a dialect of Munda origin and had no script of their own.²⁵ For these reasons, these groups were considered inferior and historyless. Therefore, colonial ethnographers in India showed a visible inertia in recording the Adivasi past and their voices. Likewise, in Africa, the Europeans considered only the colonial present as important. So, on one hand, they neglected the precolonial past of the Africans, and on the other, African histories that they wrote turned out to be 'nothing more than the justification of European imperialism' (Ekeh 1990: 670–2). Therefore, the lingering ethnocentrism and failure to retrieve native voice make an understanding of Adivasi self-fashioning with the help of intrinsic sources necessary.

Notes

- 1 This section has developed out of my essay 'Conceptualization of the Hos of Singhbhum as a Tribe' (Sen 2003: 1–15).
- 2 The cue was carried forward by Ronald Inden (1990: 36–8).
- 3 Dalton observed, 'I think in this craving for homogeneity, the heterogeneous character of the component parts of the population of India should always be borne in mind' (1973: 3).
- 4 'Disturbances in Chota Nagpore, Jungle Mehals and Midnapore', IOR/E/4/745, 361–83, para 9. Bengal Judicial, No. 4 of 16 September 1835.
- 5 'His Excellency in Council confidently trusts that the measures of conciliation and encouragement which should be pursued towards them on their complete submission to our arms, will gradually effect a change in their lawless

- habits and that they will advance from their present state of barbarism to that of civilization and order'. Mr. Secretary G. Swinton to Major Roughsedge, 12 May 1821, para 2. Operations against the Larka Kols of Singhbum, Vol 2. Bengal Pol 9 November 1825, draft 40/1825-26, IOR/E/4/715.
- 6 S.T. Cuthbert, Magistrate of Ramghur, to Mr. Secretary Shakespear, Bengal Jud. Cons. No. 53 of 14 June 1827, letter dt. 21 April 1827, paras 7-123. Reports of Seignilay Thomas Cuthbert on his tours through Chota Nagpur and Palamau in 1826 (with associated correspondence) (Vol 2) Bengal Jud (LP) 2 February 1831, draft 157/1830-31, IOR/E/4/731.
 - 7 Extract Bengal Jud. Cons. No. 12 of 11 October 1836: Captain Wilkinson to R.D. Mangles, Secy. to the GOB in the Jud. Dept, dt. 22 August 1836, 13-43, para 56. IOR/F/4/1666/66546: Operations in Singhbhum Mayurbhanj Bamunghatti & co. for the suppression of the predatory and turbulent habits of the Coles.
 - 8 William Jones, Henry Prinsep and H. H. Wilson, famous as orientologists, acted on the platform of the Asiatic Society of Bengal under the patronage of Warren Hastings, the Governor General. For details, see Kopf 1969; Kejriwal 1988; Stokes 1969.
 - 9 Though the main purpose was to collect information to help conquer a particular territory, other reasons were economic and administrative.
 - 10 See, for instance, the reference of a letter written by Ghanashyam Singh to Roughsedge. Roughsedge to Metcalfe, 9 May 1820, para 2.
 - 11 Letter No. 11, dated 22 May 1880, Ranchi, from Babu Rakhil Das Hal-dar, special commissioner under the Chota Nagpore Tenures Act, to the deputy commissioner, Lohardugga; Papers Relating to the Chota Nagpur Agrarian Disputes, 2, para 19.
 - 12 Letter No. 11, dated 22 May 1880, 28-30, 32-4, 40-1.
 - 13 Cuthbert to Shakespear, para 98.
 - 14 Wilkinson to Tickell, 13 May 1837, paras 23-4.
 - 15 Risley started his service in Midnapur, part of which fringed on Chota Nagpur. Here, he had his initial opportunity for work in anthropology. He prepared the volume on the hill districts of Hazaribagh and Lohardaga for Hunter's *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, published in 1881 (1915: xii).
 - 16 This comment is relevant when we peruse the sections on Ho, Munda, Santal and Oraon (Risley Vol. I, 1998: 319-35; Vol. II, 1998: 101-8, 138-50, 224-35).
 - 17 However, the helplessness of Burrows in procuring official grant for publishing his work on Ho grammar may be cited as an instance of official indifference to Ho language. Kanti Bhusan Sen, PA to the commissioner of Chota Nagpur and to the deputy commissioner of Singhbhum, No 28, 4 April 1910, Preparation of a Ho Grammar by Mr. L.B. Burrows. FL, DCOS, GD, RB, CN I Gr, FN 107 of 1909-10, FS 3.
 - 18 The company government appointed a registrar at Ramgarh for 'the collection of the revenue of the hill and jungle estates' (Jha 1987: 15). On 30 March 1832, *The Bengal Hurkaru* reported: 'A rich soil, capable of the highest cultivation, well wooded and beautifully undulated with all the variety of hill, dale and rock - watered by many streams rippling from the pure spring' (ibid.: 30).
 - 19 Cuthbert to Shakespear, para. 45.
 - 20 Depree wrote that the Oraons immigrated into Chota Nagpur from the Northwest (1868: 13).

- 21 E. Roughsedge, agent to the Governor General, to Lt. Col. James Nicol, adjutant general, 31 March 1820, para 2, No. 109, Extract Bengal Political Consultations, 15 April 1820, para 2.
- 22 Ibid., paras 4, 30; E. Roughsedge to Mr Secretary Metcalfe, 9 May 1820, No. 38, Extract Bengal Political Consultations, 3 June 1820, para 11.
- 23 IOR/E/4/834, India Judicial Dept., London, No. 7 of 13 February 1856, 799-852: The Sonthal Insurrection.
- 24 Roughsedge to Metcalfe, 9 May 1820, paras 15, 17-19, 21, 29.
- 25 In fact, after the formation of the Ho-dominated parts of Singhbhum into a separate administrative unit called the Kolhan Government Estate, Lt. S. R. Tickell did researches on the structure of the Ho language (1840a).