

ANANTAM IAS · OPTIONAL NOTES

Anthropology Optional Social Change and Contemporary Tribal Issues

Paper 2 · Unit 7

How the world's religions, the market and the modern state have reworked tribal societies, and how tribes have answered back through movements and identity assertion.

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UPSC SYLLABUS

8.3 The concept of ethnicity; Ethnic conflicts and political developments; Ethnicity and confrontation on tribal boundary; unrest among tribal communities, regionalism and demand for autonomy; pseudo-tribalism; Social change among the tribes during colonial and post-Independent India. 9.1 Impact of Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam on the tribes and weaker sections and marginalized communities. 9.2 Tribe and nation state, a comparative study of tribal communities in India and other countries.

Impact of Hinduism and the Hinduization of Tribes

Hinduism has changed Indian tribes more than any other force, but not from outside as a rival: it works by absorption. The exam wants the mechanism named, the concept attributed, and the two-way traffic acknowledged.

- The dominant process is Sanskritization, M.N. Srinivas's term, first advanced in 'Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India' (1952) and elaborated in 'Social Change in Modern India' (1966): a lower group takes over the customs, ritual, diet and ideology of a higher, usually twice-born, caste and, over a generation or two, claims a higher position. Srinivas first called it 'Brahminization', then widened it because groups often imitated Kshatriyas or Vaishyas, not only Brahmins.
- Applied to tribes, Sanskritization is 'Hinduization': a tribe adopts Hindu deities alongside or over its own, takes on vegetarianism or teetotalism, commissions a Kshatriya genealogy, engages Brahmin priests and enters the caste order near the bottom. The Bhil, Gond, Bhumij and many others show it.
- N.K. Bose, 'The Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption' (1941), on the Juang of Odisha, gave the classic account of why tribes accept it: Hinduism absorbed tribes not by force but by offering a guaranteed occupational niche and the economic security of the jajmani order. The tribe entered as a caste and traded autonomy for subsistence.
- Surajit Sinha's study of the Bhumij of Barabhum traced 'Kshatriyization': chiefs claimed Rajput descent, commissioned genealogies, and converted a tribe into a caste through myth and state formation. Sanskritization here worked through the chief, not the whole group at once.
- The traffic runs both ways. G.S. Ghurye read tribes as 'backward Hindus' already inside the Hindu fold, but the absorption also carried tribal deities, cults and practices into regional Hinduism, so the boundary is porous in both directions rather than a one-way conquest.
- The critical caution: Sanskritization changes rank, not the structure of hierarchy itself, and its gains are contested, since dominant castes resist a tribe's claim to higher status. It also has a political cost noted later in the unit, a tribe that Hinduizes may weaken the distinct identity on which its Scheduled Tribe protections and autonomy claims rest.
- Hinduization is best seen as one route along the tribe-caste continuum, the theme of the next section, rather than a separate phenomenon.

KEY TERMS

Sanskritization — Srinivas's term (1952) for a lower group's adoption of higher-caste custom and ideology to claim higher rank; applied to tribes it becomes Hinduization.

Hindu method of tribal absorption — N.K. Bose's account (1941): Hinduism absorbs a tribe by offering an economic niche in the jajmani order, so the tribe enters as a caste in exchange for security.

Kshatriyization — Surajit Sinha's term for a tribe's claim to Rajput/Kshatriya status through genealogy and state formation, usually led by chiefs.

The Tribe-Caste Continuum

Because tribe cannot be defined cleanly against caste as a type, anthropology treats them as poles of one field and studies movement between them. This converts a definitional dead end into a research programme, and it is the frame that holds the whole religion-and-change discussion together.

- F.G. Bailey, 'Tribe, Caste and Nation' (1957), from Bisipara in Odisha: tribe and caste are two ends of a single continuum, and the variable that places a group is access to land. In tribal society access runs through the segmentary lineage and most hold land directly; in caste society access is dependent and hierarchical. Bailey proposed measuring the continuum by the proportion of a group with direct access to land.
- The continuum lets the same society be described as more 'tribal' or more 'caste-like' over time, so Sanskritization, Bose's absorption and Sinha's Kshatriyization become three routes across one boundary rather than three unrelated processes.
- The direction is not fixed. Absorption pulls tribes toward caste, but Sinha also showed chiefs manufacturing caste status upward, and some groups have de-Sanskritized or reasserted tribal identity for political reasons (the theme of the movements sections below).
- The concept has a firm limit: it assumes a single field of ranking anchored by the Brahmin and the land system, so it fits central India well and the Northeast poorly. Naga, Mizo and Khasi societies were never inside the caste order, and the relevant contrast there is with the state, not with the Brahmin.
- For the exam, the continuum is the safest single frame for any 'impact of Hinduism on tribes' answer, because it holds the empirical cases (Bhumij, Juang, Bhil, Gond) and names their limit in one structure.

KEY TERMS

Tribe-caste continuum — Bailey's model treating tribe and caste as poles of one field, with access to land the variable that positions a group; fits central India, not the Northeast.

Khuntkatti — The Munda system of corporate lineage ownership of land by descendants of the original clearers; the kind of direct, lineage-based access that marks the 'tribal' pole of the continuum.

Impact of Christianity, Islam and Buddhism on Tribes

The other three religions reached tribes differently from Hinduism: not by slow absorption into a hierarchy but by conversion, and with sharper effects on literacy, identity and, sometimes, politics. Handle each on its own terms and note where the effect was transformative and where it was marginal.

- Christianity had the deepest and most concentrated impact, through nineteenth and twentieth century missions in two zones: the Chotanagpur plateau (Oraon, Munda, Kharia) and the Northeast hills (Naga, Mizo, Khasi, Garo). The Northeast is now among the most Christianised regions of India.
- The effects were double-edged. On one side: schooling, mass literacy, a Roman script and standardised language, health care, the abolition of some practices such as head-hunting among the Naga, and, crucially, missionary support in disputes over land against the diku, which is why conversion sometimes spread as a form of protection.
- On the other side: conversion cut converts off from clan ritual and the ancestral cult, sometimes split villages, and, in the Northeast, helped consolidate a distinct ethnic-religious identity that later fed autonomy and separatist movements. Christianity there became a marker of the ethnic boundary, not only a faith.

- Islam's impact on tribes has been comparatively limited and localised: pockets such as the Meo (Mewati) of the Aravalli region, some Gujjar and Bakarwal pastoralists of the western Himalaya, the Lakshadweep islanders, and scattered groups in the Northeast. Where it took hold it produced syncretic forms that kept clan exogamy, local shrines and customary law alongside Islamic practice, rather than a clean break.
- Buddhism's tribal impact is older and regional rather than a mass modern conversion. Himalayan and border communities, the Chakma and other groups of the eastern hills, the Bhotia and Monpa of the Himalaya, and populations of Ladakh and Sikkim, are Buddhist by long tradition. The modern Neo-Buddhist movement launched by B.R. Ambedkar in 1956 drew overwhelmingly from Scheduled Castes, not tribes, so keep the two separate.
- The comparative point that answers the syllabus: Hinduism changed tribes by absorption into a hierarchy (they stayed on a continuum with caste); Christianity changed them by conversion that raised literacy and sharpened a separate identity; Islam and Buddhism touched a minority, usually producing syncretism or continuing an old regional tradition. Religion's effect on tribes therefore ranges from assimilation at one end to identity-hardening at the other, and which end a case sits at is itself an exam argument.

KEY TERMS

Conversion vs absorption — Christianity and Islam changed tribes by conversion (a marked break); Hinduism changed them by gradual absorption into the caste order. The two mechanisms have opposite effects on identity.

Neo-Buddhism — Ambedkar's 1956 mass conversion; overwhelmingly a Scheduled Caste movement, not a tribal one, and often wrongly cited as tribal Buddhism.

Processes of Social Change and Modernization among Tribes

Beyond religion, tribes are reshaped by the market, the state and schooling. Anthropology names these processes precisely, and precision is the mark here: use Srinivas's and Yogendra Singh's terms and distinguish them from one another.

- Three processes run together and must be kept apart. Sanskritization (Srinivas): change within the traditional idiom, a group rising by imitating higher castes, so it is 'positional' change that leaves the hierarchy intact. Westernization (Srinivas, 'Social Change in Modern India', 1966): change through contact with the West, in technology, dress, education, law and values, cutting across the caste ladder. Modernization (Yogendra Singh, 'Modernisation of Indian Tradition', 1973): a broader shift toward rationality, science, mobility, individuation and universalistic norms.
- The order matters for tribes: many first Sanskritize (claim caste status) and then Westernize and modernize (school, salaried work, town migration), so the same community can be moving along two different axes at once, one toward caste and one toward the modern economy.
- Detribalization and acculturation are the older descriptive terms for the loss of distinct tribal institutions under sustained outside contact; used carefully they name the erosion of lineage land tenure, the clan cult and the shifting-cultivation economy under settled agriculture, forest law and the market.
- The economic drivers are concrete: the shift from shifting cultivation and forest use to settled plough farming and wage labour; the entry of the market, the trader and the moneylender (the diku); land alienation to non-tribals; and migration to mines, plantations, towns and, now, distant cities and platform work.
- Little and Great tradition (Robert Redfield; McKim Marriott, 'Little Communities in an Indigenous Civilization', 1955) frames the cultural side: tribal 'little' traditions and the pan-Indian 'great' tradition

interact through 'universalization' (a local element rising into the great tradition) and 'parochialization' (a great-tradition element localised). Hinduization is largely universalization working on tribal cults.

- Yogendra Singh's caution, which the strong answer carries: modernization in India is uneven and often 'modernization of tradition', old structures such as caste and kin absorbing new content rather than dissolving. Tribes rarely modernize into rootless individuals; they modernize through lineage, clan and ethnic association, which is exactly why identity assertion (below) grows rather than fades.
- The net effect is not simple westernized uniformity but a layered society: a tribe may hold clan land tenure, a Sanskritized ritual claim, a church, a salaried teacher and a migrant labourer in the same village. Naming that layering is better than declaring the tribe 'modernized'.

KEY TERMS

Sanskritization vs Westernization — Positional change within the caste idiom (Sanskritization) versus change through Western contact that cuts across the hierarchy (Westernization); Srinivas coined both.

Modernization of tradition — Yogendra Singh's finding that Indian modernization works through old structures (caste, kin) rather than dissolving them, so tribes modernize via lineage and ethnic association.

Universalization and parochialization — Marriott's terms for the two-way traffic between little and great traditions; Hinduization of tribal cults is largely universalization.

Tribal Movements: Classifying the Field

The syllabus wants social change among tribes during colonial and post-independence India, and movements are the record of that change. Lead with a typology so the historical cases have somewhere to sit, and attribute the scholarship carefully.

- The literature offers several typologies; the practical one for the exam sorts tribal movements by their dominant aim into reformist or religious, political or autonomy-seeking, and agrarian or forest-rights movements, while noting that most real movements combine two or more of these.
- Reformist and religious movements seek internal purification and often Sanskritization: abstinence from meat and liquor, monotheism, a new prophet, and withdrawal from exploitative relations. The Tana Bhagat movement among the Oraon (from 1914, under Jatra Bhagat) is the model, combining teetotalism and worship of one god with a rent and labour strike, and it later aligned with the Congress.
- Political and autonomy movements demand a separate administrative or political status: statehood, an autonomous council, or, at the edge, sovereignty. These are largely the post-independence form, the long Jharkhand movement (statehood achieved 2000), Bodoland, and the Naga and Mizo movements of the Northeast.
- Agrarian and forest-rights movements target land alienation, tenancy, indebtedness and forest law: restoration of alienated land, cancellation of debt, and rights over forest produce and shifting cultivation. Many colonial revolts were agrarian at root, aimed at the diku (the outsider landlord, trader and moneylender) and the state that installed him.
- Stephen Fuchs, 'Rebellious Prophets: A Study of Messianic Movements in Indian Religions' (1965), is the standard reference for the religious-messianic strand: a prophet promises the restoration of a lost golden age and the expulsion of outsiders, fusing the sacred and the political.
- K.S. Singh, whose compilation 'Tribal Movements in India' (1982) is the standard survey, showed the millenarian and the political as one thing in his work on Birsa Munda: Birsa was 'Bhagwan' and land-restorer at once, so separating 'religious' from 'political' movements too sharply misreads the evidence.

- David Hardiman, 'The Coming of the Devi: Adivasi Assertion in Western India' (1987), on the Devi movement of 1922 among the Bhils and other adivasis of south Gujarat, shows a purification cult (giving up liquor and meat, boycotting Parsi liquor dealers) functioning as economic and political assertion, the reformist and agrarian types fused in one event.
- The historical arc to state plainly: colonial-era movements were mostly restorative and agrarian, against the diku and the Raj; the interwar period added reformist-Sanskritizing movements that often joined the national movement; post-independence movements shifted into the constitutional arena as demands for autonomy and statehood.

KEY TERMS

Reformist / Sanskritizing movement — A tribal movement of internal purification (abstinence, monotheism, a prophet) that claims higher status and withdraws from exploitation; e.g., Tana Bhagat.

Political / autonomy movement — A demand for separate administrative or political status (statehood, autonomous council, sovereignty); largely the post-independence form.

Messianic / millenarian movement — Fuchs's category: a prophet promises a restored golden age and expulsion of outsiders, fusing religion and politics; Birsa Munda is the classic Indian case.

Tribal Movements: The Historical Record

The examiner rewards named movements with correct leaders, regions and dates, framed by type. Keep the periods exact and read the list as three waves, not a jumble.

- Colonial restorative and agrarian revolts against the diku and the state: the Kol uprising (1831-32) in Chotanagpur; the Santhal Hul (1855-56) under Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu against zamindars, moneylenders and the Company, which led to the Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act (1876); Birsa Munda's Ulgulan or 'Great Tumult' (1899-1900) in Chotanagpur, which fed the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (1908) recognising khuntkatti rights; the Bhumkal (1910) in Bastar; and the Rampa rebellion (1922-24) under Alluri Sitarama Raju in the Andhra hills.
- The Bhil movements run through western India: the Bhil risings of the early nineteenth century against the incoming British and princely order, and Govind Guru's Bhagat movement among the Bhils of the Rajasthan-Gujarat borderland, a Sanskritizing devotional reform that ended in the Mangarh Hill firing (1913). Later, the Devi movement (1922) among south Gujarat adivasis (Hardiman) combined purification with a boycott of liquor dealers.
- Reformist and Sanskritizing movements of the interwar decades: the Tana Bhagat movement (from 1914) among the Oraon under Jatra Bhagat, teetotal, monotheist and anti-rent, which allied with the Congress and the non-cooperation movement; and the broader Bhagat and Bhakti reform currents among central Indian tribes.
- Protective law in India was frequently written under the duress of these revolts, the Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act (1876) after the Hul, the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (1908) after the Ulgulan, which is the direct link between tribal movements and the land-alienation safeguards studied in the development unit.
- Post-independence political and autonomy movements moved the struggle into the constitutional arena: the Jharkhand movement, running from the Adivasi Mahasabha (1930s) and Jaipal Singh Munda through to the creation of Jharkhand (2000); the Bodoland movement in Assam, settled through successive territorial councils; and the Naga and Mizo movements, the sharpest autonomy-to-sovereignty demands of the Northeast.

- Read across the waves: the enemy shifts from the diku and the Raj (colonial) to the exploitative order and for reform (interwar) to the Indian state itself, now addressed through demands for autonomy and statehood (post-independence). That shift is 'social change among the tribes during colonial and post-independent India' in one sentence.
- A caution on attribution and detail: state the leader, region and dates you are sure of, and frame the movement by type; do not invent casualty figures or precise membership numbers, which are contested and rarely needed for the argument.

Major tribal movements by type and period

Movement	Community / region	Period	Type	Leader / note
Kol uprising	Kol, Chotanagpur	1831-32	Agrarian / restorative	Against dikus and revenue settlement
Santhal Hul	Santhal, Santhal Parganas	1855-56	Agrarian / restorative	Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu; led to SP Tenancy Act 1876
Munda Ulgulan	Munda, Chotanagpur	1899-1900	Restorative / messianic	Birsa Munda; fed Chotanagpur Tenancy Act 1908
Bhumkal	Bastar	1910	Agrarian / restorative	Against forest and revenue exactions
Govind Guru's Bhagat movement	Bhil, Rajasthan-Gujarat border	early 1900s-1913	Reformist / Sanskritizing	Ended at the Mangarh Hill firing (1913)
Tana Bhagat	Oraon, Chotanagpur	from 1914	Reformist / Sanskritizing	Jatra Bhagat; teetotal, monotheist, anti-rent; joined Congress
Devi movement	Bhil / adivasi, south Gujarat	1922	Reformist + agrarian	Purification cult and liquor boycott (Hardiman)
Rampa rebellion	Hill tribes, Andhra	1922-24	Agrarian / restorative	Alluri Sitarama Raju
Jharkhand movement	Chotanagpur tribes	1930s-2000	Political / autonomy	Jaipal Singh Munda onward; statehood in 2000

Contemporary Issues: Displacement, Identity and Pseudo-Tribalism

The live questions in this unit are about the present: who bears the cost of development, how tribes assert identity in response, and where identity claims become spurious. Handle each precisely, and label estimates as estimates.

- Displacement is the central contemporary grievance. Development projects, dams, mines, industry, sanctuaries, have displaced tribals far out of proportion to their population share, and rehabilitation has been chronically poor. There is no census of the displaced; Walter Fernandes's widely cited estimate puts tribals at roughly two-fifths of those displaced by development since 1947, against an ST population share under nine per cent. Cite it as an estimate.
- Displacement drives a cycle the unit keeps returning to: loss of land and forest, migration to urban margins and distant labour markets, breakdown of clan and lineage support, and the deepening of poverty, indebtedness and poor health already listed among tribal problems.

- Identity assertion is the response, and it has grown, not faded, with modernization. The term 'adivasi' (original inhabitant) is itself a modern political self-description, and tribal identity is increasingly asserted through ethnic associations, statehood and autonomy demands, and cultural revival, exactly the Barthian point that boundary and identity strengthen under competition and contact.
- This assertion often reverses Sanskritization. Groups that once claimed Kshatriya status now emphasise a distinct adivasi identity, because Scheduled Tribe status, reservation, land protection and autonomy all depend on being recognised as tribal, not as low caste. Identity here is partly instrumental, tied to the benefits attached to the ST category.
- Pseudo-tribalism names the spurious or strategic use of tribal identity. In one sense it is the claiming of tribal status by groups without genuine tribal roots, or the manufacture of a 'tribal' cultural performance, to capture the benefits of the ST category; in another it is the capture of ST reservations and development funds by already advanced sections while genuinely vulnerable groups (the PVTGs) are left behind, the tribal version of the creamy-layer problem. Both senses turn on the fact that 'tribe' in India is an administrative category with resources attached.
- The concept is a caution against reading every identity claim as authentic culture and every 'tribal' label as sociologically real: some are, in Beteille's sense, political and administrative before they are cultural. The strong answer distinguishes genuine identity assertion by marginalised groups from opportunistic pseudo-tribal claims, without collapsing the two.
- The connecting thread of the unit: religion, market and state have all pushed tribes toward the mainstream, and the tribal response has moved from armed restoration to Sanskritized reform to modern identity assertion, which is why the current politics is about recognition and resources, not isolation.

KEY TERMS

Pseudo-tribalism — The spurious or strategic use of tribal identity, either false claims to ST status for benefits, or capture of tribal resources by advanced sections while PVTGs are excluded; both exploit 'tribe' as a resourced administrative category.

Adivasi — 'Original inhabitant', a modern pan-tribal political self-description; its rise is itself evidence that tribal identity assertion grows with modernization.

Reverse Sanskritization — The shift from claiming caste status to asserting a distinct tribal identity, driven by the reservation, land and autonomy benefits attached to the ST category.

PRIs in Scheduled Areas, Integration and Nation-Building

The unit closes on the largest question: how tribes fit the nation-state. Bring together the local institutions that are meant to give them voice, the integration idea that frames the whole, and the comparative angle the syllabus asks for.

- Panchayati Raj is meant to give tribal communities a democratic voice, but ordinary Part IX panchayats were extended to Fifth Schedule areas only through PESA (1996), because a uniform panchayat could override tribal custom and the community assembly. PESA therefore makes the Gram Sabha, not the elected panchayat alone, the pivot, and vests it with control over minor forest produce, minor minerals (by recommendation), moneylending, and consultation on acquisition.
- The record is mixed: where PESA Gram Sabhas function they have blocked or delayed acquisition and asserted forest rights (the Niyamgiri Gram Sabhas are the strongest instance), but in most Fifth Schedule

states PESA rules were framed late and weakly, and the elected panchayat and the line bureaucracy often eclipse the Gram Sabha. Democratic institutions have given tribes voice unevenly.

- Integration, not assimilation or isolation, remains the constitutional frame (the position established in the development unit). Nation-building on that model means tribes join the economic and political mainstream while retaining cultural distinctiveness, and the Fifth and Sixth Schedules, reservation in legislatures, PESA and the FRA are its instruments.
- The tension nation-building must manage: the same modern democratic institutions that integrate tribes also sharpen ethnic and regional identity (the Barthian dynamic), so integration and autonomy demands rise together rather than one replacing the other. Bodoland and Jharkhand are integration and assertion at once, autonomy claimed within the Union, not against it.
- The comparative angle (syllabus 9.2, tribe and nation-state). India's model is constitutional accommodation: recognise, schedule, protect and give autonomy inside the Union. This contrasts with settler states such as the United States and Australia, where indigenous peoples were conquered, confined to reservations and long denied recognition, and treaty or land-rights frameworks (for instance the Mabo judgment on native title in Australia, 1992) came late. India's tribes were never a conquered external nation to the same degree; they are constituent communities of the nation-state.
- The comparison sharpens the Indian point: where settler colonialism produced 'first nations' set apart from the polity, India's integration approach folds tribes into the polity with special protection, which is why the Indian debate is about the adequacy of safeguards and the honesty of implementation, not about sovereignty for most groups.
- The closing judgement for the exam: the constitutional design is generous and the doctrine is integrationist, but implementation has leaned assimilationist and extractive, which is why displacement, weak PESA, under-recognised forest rights and identity assertion define contemporary tribal politics. Nation-building here is unfinished, and anthropology's task, the thread from the previous unit, is to keep the state honest about the gap between Panchsheel and practice.

KEY TERMS

PESA and the Gram Sabha — The mechanism that extends Panchayati Raj to Fifth Schedule areas by making the village assembly, not just the elected panchayat, the competent authority over local resources; the institutional face of tribal integration.

Integration (nation-building) — The Nehruvian frame: tribes join the national economy and polity while keeping cultural distinctiveness, delivered through the Schedules, reservation, PESA and the FRA.

Constitutional accommodation vs settler reservation — India folds tribes into the polity with protection and autonomy; settler states (US, Australia) conquered and confined indigenous peoples and recognised rights late (e.g., Mabo, 1992).

Last-mile revision

- Hinduism changes tribes by absorption, not conquest. Sanskritization (Srinivas, 1952) applied to tribes is Hinduization; Bose's 'Hindu method of tribal absorption' (1941) explains why tribes accept it (economic niche); Sinha's Bhumij shows Kshatriyization through chiefs.
- Tribe-caste continuum (Bailey, Bisipara, 1957): access to land is the variable; Hinduization, absorption and Kshatriyization are three routes across one boundary. It fits central India, not the Northeast.
- Christianity: deepest impact (Chotanagpur, Northeast); raises literacy and hardens ethnic identity, sometimes feeding separatism. Islam: limited, syncretic (Meo, Gujjar-Bakarwal, Lakshadweep). Buddhism: old regional tradition (Chakma, Bhotia, Ladakh); Ambedkar's 1956 Neo-Buddhism is SC, not tribal.
- Keep the three processes apart: Sanskritization (positional, within the caste idiom), Westernization (Western contact, cuts across caste), Modernization (Yogendra Singh, 1973, rationality and mobility, but 'modernization of tradition').
- Little/great tradition (Redfield; Marriott, 1955): universalization and parochialization; Hinduization is largely universalization of tribal cults.
- Movement typology: reformist/Sanskritizing (Tana Bhagat), political/autonomy (Jharkhand, Bodoland, Naga), agrarian/forest-rights (colonial revolts against the diku). Most cases combine types; Fuchs (1965) for the messianic strand.
- Colonial revolts with dates: Kol (1831-32), Santhal Hul (1855-56, Sidhu-Kanhu, led to SP Tenancy Act 1876), Munda Ulgulan (1899-1900, Birsa, led to Chotanagpur Tenancy Act 1908), Bhumkal (1910), Rampa (1922-24, Alluri Sitarama Raju).
- Bhil: Govind Guru's Bhagat movement and the Mangarh firing (1913); Devi movement (1922, south Gujarat, Hardiman) fused purification with a liquor boycott.
- The historical arc: colonial restorative/agrarian against the diku and Raj; interwar reformist-Sanskritizing joining the Congress; post-independence political-autonomy inside the constitution (Jharkhand, 2000).
- Displacement: tribals roughly two-fifths of the development-displaced (Fernandes, an estimate) against under nine per cent of population. No official count; label it.
- Identity assertion grows with modernization (Barth), often reversing Sanskritization because ST status carries reservation, land protection and autonomy. Pseudo-tribalism is the spurious or strategic use of that resourced category.
- Tribe and nation-state: India accommodates constitutionally (Schedules, reservation, PESA, FRA) whereas settler states (US, Australia) conquered, confined and recognised late (Mabo, 1992). Doctrine is integrationist; practice has leaned assimilationist and extractive.

Common errors to avoid

- Treating Hinduization as conquest or conversion. It works by absorption into the caste order along the tribe-caste continuum; the mechanism is Sanskritization, and Bose explains the economic incentive.
- Using the tribe-caste continuum as universal. It fits the central belt, not Naga or Mizo society, where the relevant relation is with the state, not the Brahmin.
- Calling Ambedkar's Neo-Buddhism a tribal movement. It was overwhelmingly a Scheduled Caste conversion (1956); tribal Buddhism is the older Himalayan and eastern-hills tradition.
- Blurring Sanskritization, Westernization and Modernization. Sanskritization is positional change inside the caste idiom; Westernization cuts across it; Modernization (Yogendra Singh) is the broader shift, and in India it works through tradition rather than dissolving it.
- Listing tribal movements without dates, leaders or type. State Sidhu-Kanhu for the Hul (1855-56), Birsa for the Ulgulan (1899-1900), Jatra Bhagat for Tana Bhagat (1914), Alluri Sitarama Raju for Rampa (1922-24), and classify each.
- Separating 'religious' and 'political' tribal movements too sharply. K.S. Singh showed Birsa was prophet and land-restorer at once; most movements fuse the sacred, the agrarian and the political.
- Quoting displacement figures as census facts. There is no count of the displaced; Fernandes's two-fifths is an estimate, so label it, and do not invent casualty or membership numbers for revolts.
- Reading every identity claim as authentic and every 'tribal' label as real. Pseudo-tribalism is the caution: 'tribe' is a resourced administrative category, so some claims are strategic; but do not dismiss genuine adivasi assertion as fake.
- Assuming integration and autonomy demands are opposites. Modern institutions sharpen identity even as they integrate, so Jharkhand and Bodoland are assertion within the Union, not against it.
- Ignoring the comparative angle in 9.2. India accommodates tribes constitutionally as constituent communities; settler states conquered and confined indigenous 'first nations' and recognised rights late (Mabo, 1992). That contrast is the point of the tribe and nation-state question.