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## GOPINATH MOHANTY'S *TADPA*: A STUDY OF TRIBALS' EXPLOITATION AND GLOBALIZATION

Ishtiaq Ahmed

PhD Research Scholar

Department of English,

Mahatma Gandhi Central University Bihar, Motihari-845401, India

**Abstract:** This research explored how globalization is a threat to the tribals' existence; and become a cause of tribals' exploitation. It also highlighted that how the 'Organization-extended globalization' and 'embodied and disembodied globalization' create new problems in the life of tribal people. This paper also highlighted that how Gopinath Mohanty has portrayed a vivid picture of tribals' exploitation due to globalization. The short story '*Tadpa*' has been chosen to highlight the impacts of globalization on the tribal life. This story reflects the tribals' struggle for existence, and the impacts of globalization through the new waves of political transformation wide through rural India which sooner or later influenced the lives of tribal people. The short story, '*Tadpa*', has been taken from the collection of short stories *BETWEEN WORLDS*. This research paper explores the problem of land alienation and deprivation which has increased due to globalization like complexity of the migration of non-tribal as well as outsiders. The tribal people have an innate sense of honesty and morality, they trusts one and all, the result of which, the 'wily colonizers' exploit their goodness and cheat them by indirect means to capture their land.

**Keywords:** Tribals, Globalization, Institutions, Developments, Problems and Suggestions.

## INTRODUCTION

Globalization is the process of steady flowing of information, technologies, commodities, economics, ideas, power politics, ideologies, notions, and so on, through out the world as well as on the Earth planet. It enhances the interconnection and interdependence among the people around the globe. There are so many definitions of globalization given by different authors but I would like to add here some certain definitions. These are “Globalization refers to the multidimensional and uneven intensification of social relations and consciousness across world-time and world-space.” and “Globalization is about intensifying planetary interconnectivity.” by Manfred B. Steger; and “globalization is what we in the Third World have for several centuries called colonization.” by Martin Khor. The short story ‘Tadapa’ has been chosen to highlight the impacts of globalization on the tribal life. This story reflects the tribals’ struggle for existence, and the impacts of globalization through the new waves of political transformation wide through rural India which sooner or later influenced the tribals immensely. The short story, “Tadpa”, has been taken from the collection of short stories *BETWEEN WORLDS*. Mohanty questions the un-usefulness of transportation of civilization to the life and culture of tribal people who are inherently superior to the so called civilized and developed cultures. The story explores the problem of land alienation and deprivation which has increased due to Globalization like complexity with the migration of non-tribal as well as outsiders. The tribal people have an innate sense of honesty and morality, they trust one and all with the result that ‘wily colonizers’ exploit their goodness and cheat them through indirect means to capture their land. The communication, network of roads which is categorized as ‘embodied globalization’ and one of the principal qualities of globalization known as “expansion or stretching of social relations, activities, and connections” (Steger), have made easy the inflow of non-tribal invaders subsequent in ‘internal colonization’. Mostly the tribals have to depend upon the caprices and fancies of the local forest officials who act upon and misrepresent the actual land records adding fuel to the fire of discontentment among the tribals. For the tribals land is the mother-goddess, the life giver and sustainer, in short the avatar of life itself. Decline agriculture at the cost of urbanization and undermining the values of humanity, the story shows mirror to asymmetrical development projects in the name of tribal development. The forest of Niyamgiri hills is the

dwelling of Dongria Kondhs who have settled this place since time interval. Dongria Kondhs call themselves Jharnia means those who living by the Jharana (streams). They are also well thought out to be the protectors of these streams, hills and jungles by the people of nearby locations. Obviously there is no small indefinite quantity of civilization here as there was “no hospitals, no post office, no shops, no bazaars, no police stations, no houses with tile roofs - let alone brick buildings, no ponds or lakes; in short no signs of civilization.” (59). In this quote Mohanty has portrayed the primitive condition of Dongria Kondhs’ tribe in the age of globalization. Mohanty has efficaciously highlighted their social system of having a unique self-sufficient life style which now under threat due to globalization. It is pertinent to point out that the tribal values are the result of their tie with nature. They are real rational beings in the sense as Madhusudan, the forest guard says, “You’ll not find better human beings in the whole world-they’ll never commit an injustice or tell a lie, never go back on their promises no matter how stupid and unreasonable these might be.”(62). All endeavours to change their condition and lifestyle sprouts from the greed and self interests of the outsiders or colonizers to reach in the resources of the forests. They perceive any change in their ecology as a latent threat to their very culture.

In a civilized society the thing’s importance can be categorized under the subheading of wealth, security, and success, but in tribal culture the important things are traditions and beliefs, and their success lies in survival, both their own survival, and the survival of their culture. But due to globalization both their culture and their existence cannot be safe.

Dongria Kondh have a firm believe that a child should never hesitate to ask from his parents whatever needed anytime. But it is unusual that he nonchalantly drops money and went away, Mohanty has noted “It is enough for him to get whatever he needed at a given time. Money is like pebbles in his eyes” (68). This facet of tribal life is opposite to twentieth century cat race where there is a inclination towards commercialization and commodification of life due to which greed and corruption have become uncontrolled order of the day. In ‘*Tadpa*’ Mohanty has also depicted the tribals struggle to survive and their exploitation at the hands of globalization. In it, a group of seven people, who are representatives of globalization mission, came to study the Dongria Kondhs in their habitat, with the noble purpose to civilize

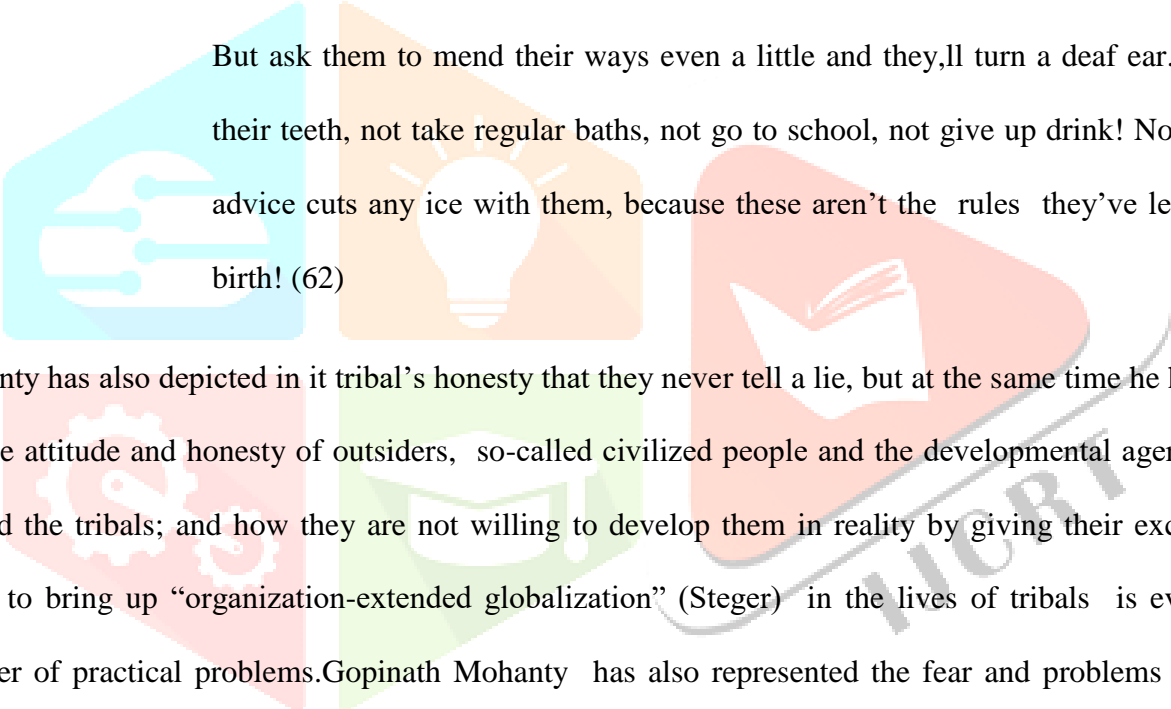
them. The group was including Parsuram, the development officer, Bharat, the anthropology professor, Hari Pani, the development assistant, Madhusudan, the forest guard who was a guide to them and three peons- Makar, Naziru and Rammaya. The group was on visit of Niyamgiri Hills in Orissa, to take note on Dongria Kondhs. They started their trudge from Bishamkatak railway station to the Niyamgiri range of hills. It was a very long and tiring for them. There was no regular roads, no decent shelter for night; only narrow tracks alongside stream and drop-off, exhausting cliffs, range upon range of hills to climb up and to climb down. Mohanty has portrayed the primitive condition of Dongria Kondhs as there was “no hospitals, no post office, no bazars, no police stations, no houses with tile roofs, - let alone brick buildings, no ponds or lakes; in short signs of civilization. Only hills, forests, paddy fields, cut out of hillsides, and fruit orchards. And some ancient inhabitants - Dongria Kondhs.” (59) In it he showed the geographical location with the lack of facilities, where there is no sign of development in the age of globalization and modernism. Further Mohanty painted the picture of, how the Doms, outsiders had come from the plain in search of livelihood. They sell liquor and lend money to the innocent Kondhs and get them to mortgage their fields and fruits tree, in the accelerated globalization age. As mentioned:

One bottle of liquor was enough for an orange tree for a year or four jackfruit trees; for two rupees a huge banana plantation could be taken over; for twenty rupees an acre of pineapples. The same method worked for taking over the crops - turmeric, gram, sesame - all of which the poor Kondhs had toiled over the whole year, planting and protecting them from deer and other animals through winter nights, through rains and mists. But in the end the Doms claimed the harvest and carted away the entire produce from the hills to markets down below, making a pretty pile of money for themselves. (59)

In it Mohanty made clear how the tribals of Dongria Kondhs are being cheated and looted by outsiders, Doms. How the tribals are becoming poor to poorer and outsiders are becoming rich by pushing the tribals towards edge. The outsiders, Doms are busy in the rat race of to collect a huge pile of money, which is the main objective of globalization, by exploiting the tribals. He has also pointed out that how the Doms are

snatching the fields, fruit trees and the crops like turmeric, gram, sesame from the tribals in the exchange of one liquor bottle and two or twenty rupees only, to which they planting and protecting from the animals through out the year in both hot and cold climates. In this way the statement of Jimmy Carter, the 39th president of United State of America, become true that “if you are totally illiterate and living on one dollar a day, the benefits of globalization never comes to you.” (Babar)

Mohanty has also depicted the thought and attitude of globalization’s agents of so called development as in the report of Madhusudan, the forest guard when he was narrating it to the other members of team:



Sir, I’ve grown grey watching these people; their condition hasn’t changed one bit... But ask them to mend their ways even a little and they, ll turn a deaf ear. Not brush their teeth, not take regular baths, not go to school, not give up drink! No amount of advice cuts any ice with them, because these aren’t the rules they’ve learned from birth! (62)

Mohanty has also depicted in it tribal’s honesty that they never tell a lie, but at the same time he has pointed out the attitude and honesty of outsiders, so-called civilized people and the developmental agents’ as well toward the tribals; and how they are not willing to develop them in reality by giving their excuses. The effort to bring up “organization-extended globalization” (Steger) in the lives of tribals is evident by a number of practical problems. Gopinath Mohanty has also represented the fear and problems of tribal’s exploitation as narrated by his character Hari Pani due to ‘organization-extended globalization, as:

Once outsider are here, there’ll be a need for houses, water and other facilities. All that will take lots of money - maybe twenty lakhs. Then attention will have to be paid to the rest: horticulture, poultry and goat farming, schools, hospitals, factories and all. Forget all this, if resources are discovered, then another Rourkela will spring up tomorrow and the face of the hill will be changed in a moment! (62-63)

In this way Mohanty has represented the fear of tribal's land alienation and exploitation at the name of so-called developmental globalization and civilization which is the part of 'object-extended globalization'. As he expressed the fear of land alienation because of, if mineral resources discovered in the Niyamgiri Hills then this tribal area will automatically be converted into a big city like Rourkela and original residents of these hills will be removed from there and alienated from their land; and would be made beggars. Because, it is obvious that at the site of mineral resources there would be a need of skilled workers, for which outsiders skilled workers would be recruited by the multinational corporation and factories' owner. The unskilled tribals have no place in the factories, so they would be pushed to from there and compelled to beg instead of to civilize and develop them. It led to possibly greater exploitation of the voiceless (Dongria Kondhs) and greater pressure on undefendable natural resources. And such prediction of fear and problem has become true in 2003 when Vedanta, an MNC, has been trying to mine Niyamgiri's bauxite, the company built a plant at the foot of the hills and began on the transporter that would bring bauxite out of the hills. The Kondh villagers expelled from their homes for the industrial plant, have suffered, threats and discouragement. They have automatically lost both their land and their means of supporting themselves. To the Dongria, Niyam Dongar hill is the place of their god; to the Vedanta it is \$ 2 billion of bauxite. The Dongria tribals passed judgment that Vedanta has come here to destroy them, they do not have any right to touch the mountains, "even if they behead us, we will not allow them to do this." Like other displaced tribal people globally, they would also lose their present good health, their self adequacy and their expert knowledge of the hills, forests and farming system which they have nurtured for long. The tribal society is characterized by their adaptability to the forest environment, with the advent of globalization, modernization and numerous development interventions, the traditions, beliefs and social norms are changing forcefully. The exchange of ideas and argumentation among government officials and academicians which come under the category of 'disembodied globalization', heed the manner in which the illiterate, uncivilized tribals can be brought within the compass of civilization are also afraid about the preservation of the Dongrias' goodness and simplicity which runs the risk of impurity in its contact with the outsiders.

Mohanty has represented the fear of tribals exploitation with the perspective of sceptical approach of globalization through his character Bharat, the professor, as under:

too much money will bring with it new troubles for the Kondhs. Their innocence and honesty will be the first casualties. Contact with outsiders will make them more cunning. They will pick up all the bad things first. They'll become comfort loving, not repay their loans on time, and also sell their produce in secret....That will lead to new problems.(65)

Here it can be seen clearly that how Mohanty has brought out the negative impact of 'disembodied-globalization' on tribals' lives. They are so innocent and honest people on the earth but due their connection with the outsiders will not only effect their lives and culture but also would change their nature and behaviours as well, and would snatch their honesty and innocence. Further he noted that a wise man who stays committed to truth with his comprehensive open eyes and understand that self-control is greater than pleasure, know to control over himself, treating to his life as an experimentation with the self having clear concepts of his ideals and sticking out firmly to them. "Even such people some time totter and trip: they question their ideals, lose their self-confidence and regret their life of austerity and self-denial. ... Apparently, no ray of wisdom or of culture has penetrated here." (66) In this way, Mohanty has portrayed the bad impact of globalization and modernization on tribals' life. And it also represents the Manfred B. Steger's one dimension of globalization as 'disembodied globalization'.

Gopinath Mohanty also pointed out that the tribal people have a great faith and trust on the officials for their development and betterment. They consider the officials as their parents as we saw Tadpa, a Dongria Kondh took a bidi and matchbox from Madhusudan, forest guard. But he refused to return the matchbox, on Madhusudan's asking for its return back, by saying "I don't care, who will I take things from if not from my fathers and mothers?" (68) On the next stage he also demanded from them money as he said "come on give me a four-anna coin. I'll blow it on something to eat."(73) On it, Parsuram, the development officer and Bharat, the professor of anthropology were entertained not having end, then again he says "Come on, come

on.’ ‘who’ll I demand money from if not from my parents? Give me the money so I can buy something to munch on.’ (73) Here, it becomes clear that how much the tribals have their faith on the govt. Officers and have no any hesitation to demanding from them and outsiders as well. Tadpa took his farewell from the whole team, going up to each of them one by one, as “I am going. Leaving. All right? My fathers and mothers, I am off.” (73) After saying goodbye to each other, when the team on their way, stopped a little way long they found the coins were laying on the side of the path, then they realized and told by the forest guard that Tadpa had not actually need to take rupees from them, even he did not value it. But he took these coins as a present from officials to honour them by calling them his parents and asking for present. From it, appears that how much the tribals have their respect, trust, and believe on the government officials having eyes on them for seeking bless.

Beside it, Gopinath Mohanty also suggested the idea for the development method of tribals, in such a globalized era, through the development officer, Parsuram as he told to other fellows:

It’s better to do something, no matter how little, then to keep waiting. ... Let’s go into every Kondh home and talk to people, try to persuade them, coax and cajole them. Let’s tell them to sell whatever they have to sell only to the government and also buy only from the government. Let the government open a few fair price shops too, and make credit available so they won’t have to borrow money from others and fall into their clutches. Once they see that the new ways are more helpful they’ll take to them. (64-65)

In it, he has suggested the way to motivate and develop the tribals. To the government, he has also imparted the idea to save the tribals from the clutches of moneylenders and other exploiters. Here it can be seen that how Manfred B. Steger’s globalization’s form the ‘*disembodied globalization*’ has been represented by Gopinath Mohanty. Mohanty also told the developmental officers through his character Bharat, the professor that the aggressive ways of outsiders and the unchanging ways of tribals are the responsible for their exploitation, as he marked “Does it take place because of the aggressive ways of the exploiter or because of the unchanging ways of the exploited? Because of both, I think.”(62) And through Bharat, Mohanty also suggested that our objective is to get the tribals to change their way of thinking and to look on the life, as he described “our only objective, that is to get the Dongria Kondhs to change their ways.”(63)



Apart from it he suggested that we should think of what's good for them. So until they having been exploited, having more income would not make much of difference to them. Further he suggested in the words of Hari Pani, the development assistant that firstly, the basic facilities have to be set up. Until these facilities exist, people will say different thing and do different things. But we must act. He also make us to realize the responsibilities being human beings to develop the tribals, by saying that it is a blot on humanity to let the tribal, the Dongria Kondh in their primitive condition.

In this way Gopinath Mohanty has portrayed the picture of tribals' exploitation in the age of globalization as 'the world of winners and losers' in the words of Gidden, and seems to make the words of Jimmy Carter, the 39th president of United State of America, true that "if you are totally illiterate and living on one dollar a day, the benefits of globalization never comes to you" (Babar). so it becomes crystal that globalization is not good for poor and uneducated people like Dongria Kondh tribe in Orissa.

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