



Review On Tebhaga Movement With Special Reference To Bengal

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ABSTRACT:

In Bengal, there were several types of sum khalasi (non-complete usufructuary mortgages), in which the cultivator gave over the land in exchange for a cash payment or a grain advance. When the loan was repaid with interest, the land was returned, with the mortgagee receiving the proceeds from the land's cultivation. Similar to a regular mortgage, a khas khalasi (full usufructuary mortgage) required repayment of the debt through the sale of the land's crops. All types of possessory mortgages were forbidden by the Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Act of 1929, however khas khalasi remained widely used. In this article, review on Tebhaga movement with special reference to Bengal has been discussed.

Keywords: Tebhaga, Movement, Bengal.

INTRODUCTION:

Robert Clive's victory in the Battle of Plassey in 1757 resulted in the accession of Mir Zafar to the Bengal throne. [1-2] According to the arrangement, the Nawab gave the East India Company a set amount of money, 24-Parganas' landlordship (zamindari), and commercial amenities. The organization deposed Mir Zafar in 1760 and replaced him with Mir Kashim. Regarding internal trade taxes, there was animosity between Mir Kashim and the corporation. On October 22, 1764, a conflict erupted between the Mirkashim and the East India Company at Bauxer. The coalition of Shah Alam, Suja-ud-doula, and Mirkashim was defeated in this conflict. [3] With Suja-ud-doula and Shah Alam, the East India Company signed two distinct contracts in 1765. Suja-ud-doula granted the firm the provinces of Kara and Allahabad in accordance with the first treaty of Allahabad. The two provinces of Kara and Allahabad were given to the Mughal emperor Shah Alam in accordance with the second treaty. Shah Alam provided the corporation with the diwani of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa in exchange for paying a tax of Rs. 26 lakhs. As a result, Bengal now has a dual system of government. The common people suffered as a result. Finally, a devastating famine in 1770 reduced Bengal to a graveyard. Warren Hastings abolished the dual government in 1772. In Bengal, a five-year settlement for the zamindaris' land earnings was made in that year, and once it expired, these were adjusted annually. The decennial agreement was signed in 1790

and made permanent in 1793. We think it will be helpful to briefly summarize a few passages from the original text. [4-5]

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

According to Agnibho Gangopadhyay (2018), the historiography of Communism in India is an underdeveloped sub-discipline in and of itself, and the period of Naxalite politics and thinking within the history of Communism has gotten even less attention. There are several descriptions of the Naxalbari movement, but few on the complex intellectuality of many of its adherents. We present some information for political theorists, sociologists, and intellectual historians to examine Naxalite intellectuality in this essay. Sudhir Bhattacharya (1915-1990), a Calcutta school teacher, wrote on historical and political topics from his own Naxalite partisan base. Patient reading is required to understand his assessment of a previous experience of peasant revolt in twentieth-century India. Suprakash Ray (pseudonym of Sudhir Bhaattacharya) described the peasant movement in Bengal in the 1930s and 1940s in his book *Tebhaga Sangram*, originally published in 1983 and based on unpublished notes from the 1960s. In contrast to the common half-and-half arrangement between sharecroppers and landlords, the sharecroppers sought two-thirds of the crop. He employed documents, newspapers, journals, books, and participant-testimonies in an acute construction of lengthy quotations and a sequencing of diverse occurrences and spatial irruptions into a political question for the present in order to write this history. This declaration arranged the history of 'Tebhaga' politics in chronological order while preserving the episodic nature and local flavor of each insurgency [6].

According to Shyamal Chandra Sarkar (2019), the Tebhaga Agitation in 1946-1950 was India's most intense peasant movement. On the eve of India's independence and the division of Bengal, there was a furious peasant rebellion. Throughout the colonial period, Bengal has had a history of rural resistance. In many ways, the Tebhaga revolt was the pinnacle, sweeping across wide swaths of the countryside and expressing the desire of laboring men and women to be free of exploitation. At its peak, the Tebhaga movement drew sixty lakh individuals. The campaign was launched in response to an economic issue. In September 1946, less than a year before the British partitioned Bengal, the regional Kisan Sabha (peasants' organisation), led by the Communist Party, resolved to start a two-thirds harvest struggle on an experimental basis. This essay attempted to focus on the origins of the Movement and the context in which it arose [7].

According to Kartick Chandra Barman (2017), the land of Dinajpur was previously part of the same territory. Despite the fact that the land has been partitioned in the past. The territory of Dinajpur is now divided into three pieces, each of which is either in India or Bangladesh, but the name 'Dinajpur' has stayed the same. Many historical interpretations of the same name have resulted in increases and decreases in the geographical extent of the

district. In 1765, the British invaded the country's territory, and the country's 400-year-old royal dynasty came to an end. The British had conquered the Ghorghat region and established their headquarters at Dinajpur. Dinajpur was established as a new district in Bengal under British rule in 1786. Dinajpur had been flourishing as the region's commercial centre since the beginning of the East India Company's authority in the Ghorghat region, and had progressively expanded as an urban centre in Eastern Bengal. However, the majority of Dinajpur's region remained rural and backward at the same time. Following the fall of the Dinajpur Raj, the British turned over the landed property to the old and newly emergent landlords. Former Jotedars were unfortunately devastated by the new land revenue system. As a result, under the company's leadership, Zamindary's rule (land lords rule) was established throughout Dinajpur [8].

According to Partha Dutta (2017), the most popular area of history writing in recent years has been the study of local history. Actual local history can be derived through in-depth investigations of diverse historical phenomena of the districts as a result of the paradigm change in historical studies. Through the cross-examinations of Bengal's areas, this understanding may usher in the true history or enhance its historicity. In this regard, the district of West Dinajpur in West Bengal, which had so many post-independence riots, particularly in the 1950s, deserves special consideration. The 'Tebhaga Movement' in 1946-47, on the eve of India's independence, was one of the most significant disturbances in the district. In the then-united Bengal, the ancient Tebhaga movement brought together the rural poor and served as a source of inspiration for kisans. In the 1950s, there was also the 'Anti-Banga-Bihar-Merger Movement.' The 'Movement against the Shifting of District Headquarters' was a severe and challenging movement that erupted into a disturbance in the Balurghat subdivision during the same decade. The 'Refugee Movement,' which began shortly after Independence, was observed by Raigunj, a subdivision of the district. The 'Food Movement of 1959' was the most important and noteworthy. We witnessed the catastrophic state-wide food crisis in the mid-1950s. Balurghat subdivision was severely impacted by the migration. The native Zamindars dominated the district of West Dinajpur to a large extent. They were very aggressive towards the refugees, as well as the general public. [9]

According to Asok Majumdar (2011), the Tebhaga movement is "perhaps the greatest peasant movement in Indian history." The Tebhaga movement was a demand by Bengali sharecroppers for two-thirds of their harvest instead of half. The name 'Tebhaga' movement is derived from this principle demand. As the scope of the demands widened, small peasants joined hands with sharecroppers. Gradually, as the movement grew stronger, the charter of demands incorporated the innovative concept of "land to tiller". [10]

According to Debasish Bandyopadhyay (2001), the Left Front government's flagship land-reform programme in West Bengal, Operation Barga, was billed as the culmination of the failed Tebhaga agitation of the 1940s. But, like the Tebhaga movement, operation barga has

left the future of the recorded bargadars and the issue of giving 'land to the tiller' unaddressed. The article gives a historical perspective on Bengal's land reform efforts. [11]

When Madan Mohan Malaviya, an early ideologue of Hindu nationalism, expressed his opposition to raising the age of consent for marriage in 1928, citing the sanctions of the sastras (Hindu scriptures), some women of the All-India Women's Conference demanded "new sastras," according to Janaki Nair (1994). This signalled the Indian middle-class women's movement's realisation of the need to enter the sphere of knowledge creation, and foreshadowed feminist historians' demand not just for new histories, but also for a reinvention of the historical archive, by many decades. In India, female political activism has gained critical acclaim over the last two decades. A rethinking of history based on the premise that "every facet of reality is gendered" is inherently a contestatory act, a political fight whose retreats and advances must be tracked as such. Despite the fact that the material conditions of feminist historical production in India are not even close to the expanding institutional privileges of women's studies in Euro-America, Indian feminist studies are supported and fed in large part by political activism outside the academia. In turn, a feminist interpretation of history is an important initial step in the feminist social revolution movement. The feminist critique of colonial India historiography has been greatest, especially as epochal developments were compressed into fewer than two centuries of colonial authority in India, and British dominance had long-term material and ideological implications. [12]

THE COLONIAL LAND SYSTEM:

The former 24-Parganas district, which was once unbroken, covered an area between latitudes of 22°57'32" and 21°51'20" north and longitudes of 88°21'51" and 88°6'45" east. According to the Surveyor General's report from 1871, it had a total area of 2536 square miles, not counting the Sundarbans, but containing Calcutta (7.80 square miles) and its suburbs (23.17 square miles). According to the Census of 1870, which estimates the size as 2788 square miles, the district had a population of 2,210,047, omitting the town of Calcutta but including its suburbs. Alipore served as the district's administrative centre.

We must take soil types into account because we are looking at settlement patterns. The soil of the 24-Parganas can be divided into four primary categories: (a) clayey soil (matial), (b) loamy soil (dorasa or doansh), (c) sandy soil (balia), and (d) salty soil (nona).

In accordance with a pact with Mir Zafar, the new Nawab of Bengal, the British East India Company acquired the zamindari of the 24-Parganas in 1757. Article 9 of the contract states that all of the territory south of Calcutta, up to Kulpi, will be under the zamindari of the company, and all of the officials in these areas will be subject to their authority. The company would pay the revenue in a similar way to other zamindars. Since securing the zamindar of Calcutta in 1698, it was the company's first territorial acquisition. The value of the income

from the territorial holding and its use for the provision of the company's investment had already been acknowledged by the local servants of the company by the time it acquired the new zamindari.

The company was only granted the zamindari privilege, which is the authority to collect rent from cultivators within the zamindar's control, and was obligated to pay the Nawab the land revenue assessed on the land. The grant did not confer full proprietary status, which was transferred to Robert Clive in 1759 by a sanad or deed giving him the 24-Parganas as a jagir or military fief in appreciation of the services he had provided, particularly in suppressing the uprising of the emperor's eldest son, who succeeded to the throne as Shah Alam. Through the later deed, all royalties, dues, and rents accrued by the company in its capacity as landowner and paid by Delhi's government were transferred to Clive, who assumed the position of superior landlord over the company, who were still his actual employers. When Clive returned to Bengal in 1765, a fresh document was produced confirming the unconditional grant to him for 10 years with reversion to the company after that. The company had opposed Clive's claims to the property as its overlord in 1764. The original jagir issued in Clive's favour was given absolute legality by the document, which was approved by the Emperor on August 12, 1765. However, the period of the original jagir was only set at ten years, after which the 24-Parganas were to be handed over to the company as a perpetual property. From 1765 until his passing in 1774, when the complete proprietary rights returned to the company, Clive received the sum of Rs 222,958, which represented the annual land revenue assessed upon them when they were transferred over to the company in 1757.

In 1770, the Sundarbans' history of reclamation and habitation began.

In that year, Claud Russell, the Collector-General of Calcutta, allowed private individuals to start farming uncultivated wild areas in the 24-Parganas region close to Calcutta. Since then, numerous studies have been conducted, and criteria for grants have occasionally been written in order to lease out wastelands for reclamation and cultivation.

From 1825, when a set of laws were originally formed for the purpose of distributing grants, until 1904, when raiyatwari with some revisions was introduced in the area, an effort will be made to analyse the land policy and management of the British in different phases in the Sundarbans. The pivotal year in the period between 1825 and 1920 was 1879, when the vast majority of the 24-Parganas Sundarbans were leased out in accordance with the "famous" Large Capitalist Rules. But in the latter years of British control in India, the 1904 Raiyatwari laws set the precedent for all subsequent settlement in the Sundarbans. [13] In this study, an attempt will be made to examine how well the English rulers before 1858 served their trading interests in the long run and how effectively they managed and transformed this uncultured tract into a profitable one and a significant source of revenue. This is because the

English rulers before 1858 were essentially traders bent on profit.

THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE:

The Sundarbans were a vast forest area that stretched from the Hooghly in the west to the Meghna in the east and was occasionally dotted with marshy swamps. It was located south of the districts of the 24-Parganas, Khulna, and Bakargunge, which at the time farmed zamindari fields. Scholars have many ideas about how the name "Sundarbans" came to be. However, it is generally acknowledged that the sundari trees, the most prevalent in the forest, are the source of the term "Sundarbans," or more precisely, "the Sundarban." Whatever its history, there is no doubting that the term "Sundarban" was very recently applied to this tract. The coastal region from Hijli (Midnapore) to the Meghna in the east was referred to by Muslim historians of the 18th century as "Bhali," which is Arabic for lowland.

The area between the Hooghly and the Jamuna was known as the "24-Parganas" region of the larger Sundarbans. Despite not being mentioned in Todarmal's assessment roll, archaeological evidence is abundantly clear that at least some portions of the forest land historically supported a thriving human population.

The ground subsidence, which geologist Oldham predicted, as well as the pillage and destruction committed by the Portuguese and Maghs in the 17th and early 18th centuries, led to the area's depopulation on multiple occasions in the past. In addition to two tiny rendezvous, one at Kulpi on the Hooghly and the other at Tardaha on the Bidyadhari river, the Portuguese maintained one significant naval station on Sagar Island on the bank of the Baratala river.

The mahals to the north of the city, which today's Barrackpore and Bangaon subdivisions make up, were part of the fiscal divisions of Jessore and Nadia until the English took control of the zamindari of the 24-Parganas to Calcutta in 1757. Before taking on its current form in 1948, the district of 24-Parganas underwent a number of physical alterations (1832, 1861, 1883, 1904, and 1915).

In the meantime, permanent settlers began to live in the upper delta's former zamindari farming regions in 1793. The enormous uncultivated Sundarbans tract, which even the Moguls did not include in the revenue register, then caught the attention of the company's authorities in Bengal. The zamindars' tenacious and persistent resistance to the government's repeated attempts to lease out forest lands for financial gain in the late 18th and early 19th centuries was successful because the east, west, and southern sides of this forest-covered area were bordered by the river and the sea.

The location of its northern border with the Zamindari territories, however, quickly became a point of contention.

The matter of the people is brought up next. The lotdars 62, also known as leaseholders, were typically businessmen and professionals from Calcutta. They belonged to the European community in large numbers, especially the British. In actuality, the company's government gave preference to Europeans over Indians when giving forest tracts for farming. 63 On advantageous conditions, some residents of neighbouring districts with landed interests also bought grants. 64 However, the majority of the backward-caste impoverished residents of the nearby districts of Jessore, Khulna, Nadia, and Midnapore were the ones who actually carried the burden of clearing and cultivating the land. They were mostly indigenous people who had migrated from the Chhotanagpur area. In their adopted country, they were known as Bunos, or "forest dwellers." However, the earliest immigration was from Orissa, a distant province. These Oriya people were employed by the local zamindars to produce salt in the Sundarbans khanris. They had the moniker "Molungees." The Maghas of the Arakans, who migrated there and settled in the challenging terrain of the Sundarbans, are also mentioned. Many of these folks had relocated to the 24-Parganas Sundarbans as cultivators when the government's salt monopoly was abolished. [14]

CONCLUSION:

The population has been growing since about 1855, which along with increased agricultural prices has given the zamindars some leeway to abandon the outdated practises. Act X of 1859's provision allowing zamindars to raise rent on the grounds of rising costs was not immediately applicable. Zamindars frequently failed to present the court with convincing evidence of a price increase or the precise magnitude of the increase. The Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 contributed to the zamindars' success by allowing the court to consider the price data gathered by district administrators as reliable proof. Even so, local officials very reluctantly permitted a rent increase on this ground alone since they believed that only a select few peasants benefited from the increase in price. With the sharp increase in prices from 1905, this mindset changed, and zamindars were able to gain a significant rent increase. The 1928 revision of the Bengal Tenancy Act made the modification official. In contrast to areas where population growth occurred naturally, zamindars benefited significantly more in areas where a rapid influx of immigrant peasants raised the demand for land.

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