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Questioning Borders: Social Movements, Political Parties and the Creation of New States in India

Louise Tillin

ABSTRACT

As the world's largest multi-ethnic democracy, India has a federal constitution that is well-equipped with administrative devices that offer apparent recognition and measures of self-governance to territorially concentrated ethnic groups. This article analyzes how demands for political autonomy—or statehood—within the federal system have been used as a frame for social movement mobilization. It focuses on the most recent states to have been created in India: Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand, which came into being in 2000. These are the first states to have been created in India on a non-linguistic basis. Their creation has triggered questions about whether the creation of more, smaller states can improve political representation and help to make the state more responsive to diverse needs in India. This article draws attention to the processes which have brought borders into question, drawing social movements and political parties into alignment about the idea of creating new states. It ultimately looks at why the creation of states as a result of such processes may not lead to more substantive forms of political and economic citizenship on the part of marginalized communities. While the focus of the analysis will be on the processes that led up to statehood, the conclusions offer some insights into why pro-poor policy shifts at the national level in India have uneven regional effects. Despite the change in national political regime in India with the election of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance in 2004, marginalized groups in India continue to experience the state through the refractive lens of multiple regional political histories.

This article focuses on one part of the ever complex field of popular politics and resistance. It examines how, why and with what consequences some social movements in India have drawn on regional identity frames in electoral politics and demanded political autonomy in the form of statehood within the federal system. Explanations for the creation

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of India's newest states, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand in 2000, often draw implicitly on the idea that state formation reflects the successful mobilization of identity frames by social movements, in the context of a multi-ethnic federal system that provides institutional recognition of the country's diversity. The dominant shorthand narrative about the formation of these new states can be summarized as the view that they were formed to better represent tribal or hill-dwelling communities, whose interests had been expressed by long-running regional social movements. Ramachandra Guha, for instance, expresses a commonly offered opinion when he states that: "Official acknowledgement of the history of *adivasi* suffering ... came through the creation ... of two states of the Union named Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh ... Also formed was the state of Uttaranchal,¹ from the hill districts of Uttar Pradesh, likewise rich in natural resources and likewise subject to exploitation by powerful external interests."² Alternatively, TK Oommen makes a direct link between social movement mobilization and the achievement of statehood when he suggests that "faced with the irresistible force of mobilization the Jharkhand state was finally formed in the year 2000."³

The processes by which social movements come to foreground identity and in some cases link this to statehood are, however, often quite opaque in the existing literature on social movements in India. This article submits that it is not the case that social movements fall neatly into identity- or interest-based categories. Instead, some movements are encouraged to foreground identity claims as a result of the broader political context in which they operate. A change in borders did not simply constitute an institutional attempt to redress the marginalization of certain groups in the population through a "politics of recognition" that acknowledged the suffering of local communities. Instead, the questioning of borders took place in the course of the processing of social movement demands in local politics.

The discussion will be organized around a comparison of the reasons that social movement activity in the two new states of Jharkhand and Uttarakhand became increasingly concerned with demands for statehood. The first of the case study states, Jharkhand was formed from the southern districts of Bihar. These districts contain substantial deposits of minerals and large areas of forest. The Tata steel plant established in 1908 in Jamshedpur in Jharkhand was the first of its kind in India. These districts are also home to a once majority tribal population that today accounts for approximately 26 percent of the

¹ "Uttaranchal" was the name given to the state at the time of its creation. However, Uttarakhand had been the preferred term of the regional movement and in January 2007, the name of the state was also officially changed to Uttarakhand.

² Ramachandra Guha, *India after Gandhi: the history of the world's largest democracy* (London: Macmillan, 2007), 621.

³ T.K. Oommen, *Nation, Civil Society and Social Movements* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2004), 140.

state's population (2001 census), but had been at the heart of a long-standing demand for political autonomy in the region. Today, Jharkhand has the second-highest level of rural poverty in the country. Uttarakhand comprises the former hill districts and two neighbouring plains districts of Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state. Uttarakhand is also heavily forested. The hill districts which were the epicentre of the statehood demand are home to a predominantly upper-caste population, in contrast to the plains of Uttar Pradesh which, along with Bihar, saw the rise of new types of political parties specifically mobilizing lower castes in the 1990s. The population of Uttarakhand is considerably less poor than Jharkhand and its parent state of Uttar Pradesh.⁴ Jharkhand and Uttarakhand were both home to iconic "new social movements" formed in the 1970s, which raised questions about the impact on local communities of new patterns of development involving the exploitation of natural resources, and sought to assert the rights of local populations to land and livelihoods in the countryside. The third new state, Chhattisgarh formed from Madhya Pradesh, did not see a strong popular movement for statehood, although it too is rich in natural resources, and saw sustained social movement activity in the 1970s.

This article builds on the increasing recognition of the porosity of the boundary between institutionalized and non-institutionalized politics, or between social movements, electoral politics and the state.⁵ As Jack Goldstone argues, social movements in most of the world have become an essential part of "normal politics." The "actors, fates and organisations" of social movements are often closely intertwined with political parties: they are not simply "challengers" outside the polity, as the traditional image of social movements implied.⁶ Such an emphasis on the interconnections between movements and the political sphere builds on the work of Sidney Tarrow, which emphasizes the importance of the political context in which movements operate in determining their strategy and ability to achieve their goals.⁷

A focus on such relationships is a departure from earlier conceptualizations of the new types of social movement that emerged in India in the 1970s,

⁴ According to the Government of India's "headcount ratio" measure of poverty in 2004-05, 42.9 percent of rural Jharkhandis live below the poverty line compared to 42.2 percent of Biharis, 33.9 percent of people in Uttar Pradesh and 14.9 percent of those in Uttarakhand. See Himanshu, "Recent Trends in Poverty and Inequality: Some Preliminary Results," *Economic and Political Weekly* 10 February 2007, 497-508.

⁵ For an overview see Doug McAdam et al., *Dynamics of Contention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Jack A. Goldstone, ed., *States, Parties and Social Movements* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). McAdam and Tarrow, however, continue to see this as an under-researched area: see Doug McAdam and Sidney Tarrow "Ballots and Barricades: On the Reciprocal Relationship between Elections and Social Movements," *Perspectives on Politics* 8, no. 2 (2010): 529-542.

⁶ Jack A. Goldstone, "Introduction: Bridging Institutionalised and Noninstitutionalised Politics," in *States, Parties and Social Movements*, ed. J.A. Goldstone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁷ Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

including in the regions that became new states. These were commonly described as “non-party political formations,” reflecting their emergence at a moment of crisis in India’s established political system.⁸ Many of the “new social movements” raised critiques of prevailing processes of development in different regions of India. Authors such as Gail Omvedt and Smitu Kothari have argued that they represented the failure of the established organs of opposition including political parties, trade unions and intellectuals on the left, to represent issues affecting the marginalized.⁹ Furthermore, as Rajni Kothari noted, the emergence of new movements was linked to a shift towards a more participatory vision of decentralized democracy and development, in which grassroots issues became the subject of political activism.¹⁰ Partly because their birth is linked to a crisis in the party system, social movements in India have tended to be analyzed separately from political parties. In part, this reflects something of a disciplinary division of labour with political parties and social movements analyzed in separate bodies of work. But social movements are also commonly seen as an alternative mode of enabling social change outside the party system, and social activists themselves have often sought to retain autonomy from party politics because of the fear of co-option.

Whatever the origins of social movements, however, the trajectory of social movement activity in India since the 1970s suggests a symbiosis between the development of movements, the transformation of the Congress Party from the dominant party of Indian politics and the emergence of new political parties, many of which have politicized new types of identity based on caste and/or region and taken up some of the issues raised by social movements of the 1970s. Gradually, many non-party movements have moved into a degree of alignment with electoral politics.

Furthermore, broader changes within electoral politics reflect different modes of mobilization by marginalized communities. There is growing recognition of a wider range of political participation on the part of the poor in India, from higher levels of voting, to the ad hoc demonstrations and negotiations with the state within the realm of what Partha Chatterjee, drawing on a Gramscian concept, defines as “political society.”¹¹ The success of new forms of caste-based political party in some states of northern India, especially Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, from the 1990s has altered spaces for participation and engagement with the state. This has coincided with what

⁸ See, for example, Rajni Kothari, “The Non-Party Political Process,” *Praxis International* no. 3 (1985): 333-349.

⁹ Gail Omvedt, *Reinventing Revolution: New Social Movements and the Socialist Tradition in India* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1993); Smitu Kothari, “Social Movements and the Redefinition of Democracy,” in *India Briefing*, 1993, ed. P. Oldenburg (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 139-140.

¹⁰ Kothari, “The Non-Party Political Process,” 341.

¹¹ Partha Chatterjee, *The politics of the governed: reflections on popular politics in most of the world* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

Ajay Gudavarthy describes as a shift away from a “civil society versus the state” model of human rights activism, towards a “civil society versus political society” model. Human rights organizations have begun to question the utility of an anti-state framework for rights movements. More attention has been paid to some of the silences of earlier movements about issues of caste and gender, for instance, and there is increasing recognition of the alternative spaces of empowerment offered by democratic politics.¹² The poor may have little choice but to engage in the shorter-term, transactional thickets of political society without the luxury of autonomy from politicians and political brokers, but there is also some optimism about the changing grounds for engagement with the state in this space.¹³

Nevertheless, it seems likely that the changing nature of political space offers greater opportunities to certain types of movement than others. Mary Katzenstein, Smitu Kothari and Uday Mehta argue that identity-based movements (around caste, regional or religious identities) have engaged more successfully with electoral politics. By contrast, they suggest, movements concerned with wider social or economic change, such as environmental or women’s movements, have been more confined to bureaucratic or judicial activism.¹⁴ In slight contrast, this article resists positing too sharp a distinction between identity- and interest-based movements. Rather, it seeks to examine why some social movements, or parts of such movements, have chosen to foreground claims based on regional identity at particular points in time.

The discussion draws on archival research and field interviews conducted as part of wider research into the politics of federal reorganization in India. The first section will show that the social movements that were formed in Jharkhand and Uttarakhand in the early 1970s were not primarily preoccupied with demands for statehood, and that a view of social movements as primarily challengers outside the party system is fairly accurate in this period. The second section will argue that a focus on statehood in both regions resulted from interactions between social movements, political parties and the state (in both coercive and accommodating guises) in the 1980s. As the government sought to accommodate elements of the original social movements, more radical actors within the movements began to foreground demands for statehood. Furthermore the idea of statehood was seized on by other political parties, in particular the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at a critical phase in its expansion as a national party. These developments are important because they challenge the idea that these states were the simple

¹² Ajay Gudavarthy, “Human rights movements in India,” *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 42, no. 1 (2008): 29-57.

¹³ See for instance, Stuart Corbridge et al., *Seeing the state: governance and governmentality in India* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

¹⁴ Mary Katzenstein et al., “Social Movement Politics in India: institutions, interests, and identities,” in *The Success of India’s Democracy*, ed. A. Kohli (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

product of resistance by marginalized groups. An epilogue to the paper will look beyond 2000 to ask whether the interactions between social movements, political parties and the state in the process of state formation have continued to shape the space for a “politics of the marginalized” to the present.

Social Movements and the Idea of Statehood in the 1970s

All three of the regions that became states in 2000 saw the emergence of distinctive types of social movement in the early 1970s: Chipko, the people’s forestry movement in the Uttarakhand hills; the trade union movement among miners, the Chhattisgarh Mines Shramik Sangh; and the worker-peasantry movement in Jharkhand led by the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM). These regions were all distinguished from the remainder of their parent states by their distinctive ecology and concentration of natural resources. In all three cases, the issues raised by social movements related primarily to the role of the state in the management of natural resources and the rights of local communities to substantive economic inclusion. The movements of the early 1970s drew on the idea of statehood where it was useful to them but for none of them was it a primary organizational device or motivating idea. In Jharkhand and Uttarakhand, social movement activists gradually became more focused on demanding statehood. This was in contrast to Chhattisgarh, however, where statehood did not become a subject for strong popular mobilization. For this reason, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand form the focus of this article.

Land and Forest Struggles in Jharkhand in the 1970s

Jharkhand has a two-century-old history of resistance in tribal areas, and the demand for a tribal-dominated Jharkhand state had been articulated by the Adivasi Mahasabha, led by Jaipal Singh since 1938. This was reformed as the Jharkhand Party after independence. The “Greater Jharkhand” state demanded by Jaipal Singh contained tribal-majority districts of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal.¹⁵ The party became the main elected opposition to Congress in Bihar in the 1950s, but declined in the late 1950s and especially after the party accepted an invitation to merge with Congress in 1963. In the 1960s and 1970s, a new, more radical phase of activism began that developed at arm’s length from existing political parties. The demand for statehood was less central to the activities of these new groups.

The most prominent of the new social movements was the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) which was formed in late 1972 by the Bengali Marxist trade unionist AK Roy, Santal tribal leader Shibu Soren and a Kurmi-Mahato

¹⁵ For an overview see K.S. Singh, “Tribal Autonomy Movements in Chotanagpur,” in *Tribal Movement in India*, ed. K.S. Singh (New Delhi: Manohar, 1983).

leader Binod Bihari Mahato. The JMM sought to unite protests of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe workers in the colliery sector in Dhanbad, with movements of the peasantry occurring in the rural hinterland around Dhanbad. Dhanbad and surrounding areas had not been strongholds of the old, pro-statehood Jharkhand Party. The background to the agitation in Dhanbad was stagnation across the agrarian sector, the increasing transfer of land to industry and flouting of land alienation laws,¹⁶ plus migration into the region. Shibu Soren organized a *dhan katti andolan* ("cut down paddy" movement) in which groups of Santal *adivasis* as well as non-tribal Kurmi-Mahatos organized as part of BB Mahato's Shivaji Samaj and forcibly harvested paddy and reclaimed tribal land.¹⁷ The *dhan katti andolan* and land reclamation movements reached their climax in the harvests of 1974-1975. The JMM, and Shibu Soren in particular, developed a reputation for delivering summary justice against landlords, moneylenders and "exploitative outsiders," or *dikus* as they were known in local languages.

Later in the 1970s, the JMM again took a leadership role in protests against teak plantations in the forests of Singhbhum in Chotanagpur. Alongside the agitations associated with the JMM, a number of other regional protest movements began in this period. These included the activities of the Kisan Samitis of the far-left CPI (ML), sympathetic to the Naxalbari movement in neighbouring West Bengal. There were also protests against the displacement to be entailed by the construction of the Koel Karo dam and the Subarnarekha River multipurpose project. Some parts of these movements, particularly in the forests, were repressed forcefully, culminating in a series of deaths in shooting by police between 1978 and 1980.

The JMM also demanded statehood, but this was not a primary tool of mobilization. Instead, the JMM sought to provide leadership to existing protest movements. They also appealed to a common identity of Jharkhandis as "workers" in both rural and urban areas. The Marxist AK Roy argued that the Jharkhandi "nation" was suffering from a situation of "internal colonialism," exploited by outside interests.¹⁸ Thus, the idea of a Jharkhandi nationality provided a useful frame to unite local agitations, but social movement activity in Jharkhand in the 1970s was not driven primarily by the urge for a separate state. As a correspondent for *Economic and Political Weekly* wrote, what distinguished the "Jharkhand" movement of the 1970s from its earlier incarnations was its use of direct action more than its commitment to achieving a concrete state:

¹⁶ The Chotanagpur Tenancy Act 1908 had made the sale of tribal lands to non-tribals illegal, but much land had been acquired by moneylenders from tribals despite this act. See R.N. Maharaj and K.G. Iyer, "Agrarian Movement in Dhanbad," in *Fourth World Dynamics: Jharkhand*, ed. N. Sengupta (Delhi: Authors Guild Publications, 1982).

¹⁷ Maharaj and Iyer, "Agrarian Movement in Dhanbad," 180.

¹⁸ A.K. Roy, "Jharkhand: Internal Colonialism," in *The Jharkhand Movement: Indigenous Peoples' Struggle for Autonomy in India*, eds. R. Munda and S.B. Mullick (Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2003).

None of the organisations, not even the Jharkhand party, is in great haste to get a separate state. The reason for the revival of the movement, according to Horo [then leader of the Jharkhand Party], is to help the oppressed train themselves in mass struggles. Shibu Soren, the general secretary of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, has a similar view: “Even if Jharkhand does not come into being in my lifetime, why should I be bothered? Our first concern is to chase away the blood-suckers and help the people lead a respectable, quiet and fraternal life.” ...It is not that until Jharkhand is attained, the ‘liberation’ should be postponed; what they would do as the government, the organisations are doing meanwhile, by mass struggles. That is when...the current movement radically differs from Jaipal Singh’s agitation. *To sum up, the current movement is basically for a political Jharkhand, and not for a territorial Jharkhand*, though this aim is never to be lost sight of (emphasis added).¹⁹

But in contrast to Chipko in Uttarakhand, which will be discussed in the next section, the JMM did have a strong repertoire of demands for statehood on a cultural or ethnic basis to draw on. As Shibu Soren said during an interview: “At the beginning I told the others that establishing the JMM wasn’t enough—we have to do something to unite the people. And the Jharkhand *andolan* is very old so we should support it and we should demand a new state.” He went on to suggest that a link to the Jharkhand movement was something of an act of translation, a bridging mechanism between the ideals of the JMM and the sphere of reference of the local people: “I used to tell Roy-ji (AK Roy) ... that the people in Jharkhand understand the language of Birsa Munda, Tilka Manjhi, Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu and Shekh Bhikhari [leaders of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century revolts]. They don’t understand the language of Lenin. People here have a right to land, forest and water.”²⁰

Despite this the idea of statehood, *per se*, was not central to the JMM’s activities in the early 1970s. It was part of a broader repertoire on which the JMM could and did draw, but not the driving force for their activities. This observation helps to break from a teleology that suggests that the creation of the new states in 2000 should be seen as the culmination of the long-running agitations in the region. Statehood was not the necessary, or primary focus of social movement activity in the 1970s.

The Chipko Movement: Keeping Statehood at Arm’s Length

In Uttarakhand, the attitude of social movements in the region towards the demand for statehood was quite different from the 1970s onwards. For a long time many social activists were outwardly hostile to the idea, seeing it

¹⁹ “From our Correspondents, Bihar: Containing the Jharkhand Movement,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 14, no. 14 (1979): 648-650.

²⁰ Interview with Shibu Soren, 20 October 2007, Morabadi, Ranchi.

as one that had been pushed by political parties from outside and not an appropriate response to the issues raised by social movements. The Chipko movement in Uttarakhand began a matter of months after the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM). The movement started in Chamoli district in Garhwal in early 1973 after the Forest Department allocated 300 ash trees to Symonds Company, having previously refused to allocate trees to a cooperative set up to generate local employment by Chand Prasad Bhatt. Members of the cooperative began hugging trees to prevent them being felled and the movement became known as Chipko (the Hindi verb *chipna* means “to stick to”). A series of similar local agitations followed in other parts of Garhwal and from 1974 in Kumaon, the other region of the Uttarakhand Himalayas.

Chipko has been read as a series of local “peasant protests” that reflected the moral political economy of peasant communities in regions which had been disturbed by the advent of commercial forestry.²¹ Authors such as Emma Mawdsley and Haripriya Rangan have argued, somewhat differently, that participation in the movement was motivated by concerns of people throughout the hills who relied for their livelihoods on similar economic activities including village-based agroforestry, and paid work in the hills and plains.²² Different groups, in more or less remote regions, had common concerns which Mawdsley summarizes as the growing sense “that the state’s management of the forests offered few dividends for the local people in this already economically marginalised area, and further that it was degrading the ecological base upon which local people depended.”²³

There were three major streams within the broader movement that became known as Chipko: one led by the “Gandhian,” Sunderlal Bahugana in Garhwal, the second by Chandi Prasad Bhatt, who was more influenced by socialism, and a third by the Uttarakhand Sangarsh Vahini (USV) in Kumaon, which was more Marxist in orientation.²⁴ None of these streams, despite their different ideological proclivities, found it useful to promote the goal of statehood.

Unlike Jharkhand, the demand for an Uttarakhand state before the 1970s had been primarily made by national political parties. The leader of the Communist Party of India, PC Joshi, made a case for statehood soon after independence. After the Janata Party formed governments in both Delhi and Uttar Pradesh from 1977 to 1980, Janata Party MP Trepan Singh Negi

²¹ Ramachandra Guha, *The Unquiet Woods: Ecological Change and Peasant Resistance in the Himalaya*, expanded edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

²² Emma Mawdsley, “After Chipko: From Environment to Region in Uttaranchal,” *Journal of Peasant Studies* 25, no. 4 (1998): 36-54; Haripriya Rangan, “From Chipko to Uttaranchal: The environment of protest and development in the Indian Himalaya,” in *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements*, eds. R. Peet and M. Watts (London and New York: Routledge, 2004).

²³ Mawdsley, “After Chipko: From Environment to Region in Uttaranchal,” 40.

²⁴ Guha, *The Unquiet Woods*, 180-84.

led a campaign for statehood for the region and sought to reach out particularly to residents of Uttarakhand who were now living outside the hills. It was at this time, with a Janata government at the centre that was perceived to be sympathetic to regional movements more generally, that more concerted voices were raised in favour of statehood within the region. A local newspaper editorial summarized the rationale behind the emergent demand: "The problem is that the majority of the state [UP], moreover the country, are plains areas and when it comes to planning no close attention is given to the fact that the hills have special needs."²⁵

In a bid to consolidate this kind of sentiment, and seeking to build a movement in the hills rather than among Uttarakhandis resident outside the region, a new regional party—the Uttarakhand Kranti Dal (UKD)—was established in 1979 with the sole agenda of campaigning for statehood.

Activists in the broader movements, however, continued to keep a demand for statehood at arm's length, asking whether the creation of a new state would do anything to alter the nature of politics or the developmental environment in the hills. After a degree of openness to the idea of statehood in the late 1970s, articles in the *Nainital Samachar*, a newspaper sympathetic to social movements in the region (especially the USV), began to express hesitation about the idea of statehood. In 1979, one writer expressed doubts about what statehood could achieve: "by thinking about the idea of 'our state,' we build castles in the air in our hearts."²⁶ Writers frequently sought to distance the social movements from the demand for statehood. Some highlighted the fact that the demand was mostly raised at election time and was disproportionately backed by people who had left the hills to live in Delhi or Lucknow. "These Delhi-walas think that they are the contractors of the votes and trees of this region," wrote Narendra Rautela.²⁷

This section has highlighted the decision made by movement leaders not to use a demand for political autonomy as a primary frame for the struggles in Jharkhand and Uttarakhand in the 1970s. At this stage, the conception of social movements as challengers outside formal politics holds fairly well. The next section will demonstrate how interactions between social movements, political parties and the state brought a demand for statehood to centre stage, as the activities of social movements were met with responses within the formal political sphere. The processes of negotiation and selected co-option that ensued have influenced the longer-term nature of political inclusion in the emergent new regimes in these regions.

²⁵ "Prthak Uttarakhand ka Adhar" [The Basis for a Separate Uttarakhand], *Nainital Samachar*, 12 November 1977.

²⁶ Rajiv Shah, "Kaisa Hoga voh Parvatiya Rajya" [How will it be, this hill state?], *Nainital Samachar*, 1-14 May 1979.

²⁷ Narendra Rautela, "Andhere Me Duba Unka Parvatiya Rajya" [Their hill state gets lost in darkness], *Nainital Samachar*, 1 April 1981.

From Social to Statehood Movements

The push for statehood in both Jharkhand and Uttarakhand arose as a result of increasing competition between different actors within the social movements in each region from 1980 onwards, in light of the growing interventions of the central government. As the central government from 1980 to 1984 responded to elements of movement demands and sought to co-opt the mainstream of each movement, more radical elements came to foreground the idea of statehood.²⁸ In both cases, however, local BJP politicians also began to demand statehood. Support for statehood by the BJP locally began to weaken the connection between statehood demands and the critique of the state and patterns of regional economic development that had been central to earlier local struggles.

Jharkhand: Co-option, Electoral Competition and Statehood in the 1980s

The first sign of the attempted co-option of social movements in Jharkhand was Shibu Soren's electoral pact with Congress. Indira Gandhi sought to lessen the challenge posed by the JMM in Jharkhand by drawing its less ideologically driven wing into electoral politics. Soren was apparently promised immunity from prosecution for his activities while "underground" during the Emergency in return for a seat-sharing arrangement with Congress in elections in 1980.²⁹ However, despite the JMM's electoral success in 1980, when it won 11 seats, the pact was strongly opposed by more left-wing JMM leaders such as A.K. Roy and Binod Bihari Mahato. The JMM formally split for the first time at the end of 1984, when Mahato formed a breakaway "real" JMM, accusing Soren of having been bought by Congress.³⁰

In June 1986, a new generation of activists in the Jharkhand movement less connected to the older forest and land struggles set up a student wing of the JMM—the All Jharkhand Students Union—under the leadership of Surya Singh Besra, a Santal *adivasi* student. Besra drew inspiration from the students' movement in Assam, whose leader had recently become chief minister, travelling to Assam as well as to Gorkhaland to learn from the more radical tactics used by activists there. The murder of 37-year-old Nirmal Mahato, president of the JMM, in August 1987 strengthened the resolve of

²⁸ This process can be compared to the "radical flank" effect outlined in literature on social movements. The phrase was first coined by Herbert Haines to describe the process whereby the emergence of a radical wing increases the receptivity of third parties to the demands of moderate social movement actors. See Herbert H. Haines, *Black radicals and the civil rights mainstream, 1954-1970* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988). McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly are also interested in cycles of polarization within social movements. See McAdam et al., *Dynamics of Contention*.

²⁹ Discussion with Professor V.P. Sharan, head of the political science department, St Xavier's College, Ranchi, 5 October 2007.

³⁰ Balbir Dutt, *Kahani Jharkhand Andolan Ki* [The story of the Jharkhand movement] (Ranchi: Crown Publications, 2005), 225.

Besra and his colleagues to push for statehood.³¹ A month later, the Jharkhand Coordination Committee was also formed in a bid to strengthen the Jharkhand movement by acting as an umbrella organization for different groups and emphasizing the cultural unity of the Jharkhand region. The founders of the JCC also sought to sideline the more right-wing elements of the JMM, especially those who had moved closer to Congress and were perceived to be less committed to pushing the demand for statehood. In 1980 Ram Dayal Munda had returned to Jharkhand and became vice chancellor of Ranchi University, setting up a Centre for Tribal Languages and Literature which became the centre of Jharkhandi cultural revivalism. In 1988 and 1989, AJSU and the JCC (sometimes acting in harmony, sometimes independently) organized a number of mass rallies demanding statehood and introduced a new tactic of economic blockades.³² After a series of strikes, the central government offered to hold talks with Jharkhand leaders.

The decision by the leaders of the AJSU and the JCC to connect more determinedly to historical discourses of place, territory and identity in Jharkhand arose out of competition between social movement actors and opposition to attempts by the state to co-opt malleable leaders. It can also be seen as logical for a movement seeking to consolidate a base for collective action. The most sustained struggles led by the JMM had been in the Santal Parganas, along with the forest movements in Singhbhum, Chotanagpur. Elsewhere in the Chotanagpur region, which had been the main base for the older Jharkhand Party, the JMM did not have such strong roots. As Stephen Marandi, a former JMM politician said, “We raised all these issues [land alienation, forest rights, etc.] but not in an organised way so we didn’t get a good response in the Chotanagpur region. But everyone supported the creation of Jharkhand.”³³

The idea of statehood had deep popular resonance as a result of the much longer-term mobilizations by the Jharkhand Party. Extracts from focus-group discussions held in Jharkhand after the achievement of statehood exemplified the significance and sophistication of local understandings of the idea of becoming a new state among *adivasis*:

[Focus Group Member 1] We knew that if we had a separate state everything would be ours. I remember that our elders told us that we would be gifted with a state which would give prosperity specifically to us *adivasis*.

[Focus Group Member 2] The need for a state that would belong to us—the land owners in this part—was very important for me because

³¹ Interview with Surya Singh Besra, 10 October 2007, Jamshedpur.

³² For a good discussion of the emergence of AJSU and the JCC see Susanna Devalle, *Discourses of Ethnicity: Culture and Protest in Jharkhand* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1992).

³³ Interview with Stephen Marandi, 4 October 2007, Ranchi. Marandi was deputy chief minister of Jharkhand between 2006 and 2008.

somehow it was a question of my, as well as all my *adivasi* brothers' and sisters' existence.

[Focus Group Member 3] Jharkhand: a piece of a promised land that we had been waiting for ever since we got freedom, the land of Lord Birsa, the land of his beloved children—the *adivasis*. We don't want anyone's money, just respect, and this was it.³⁴

Thus we should not see the shift to a focus on the goal of statehood among prominent social movement activists as a betrayal of broader struggles around social and economic rights. Nevertheless, many other local activists consciously kept the campaign for statehood—both cultural and electoral—at arms' length.³⁵

The forceful campaign for regional autonomy encouraged other political parties to join the statehood bandwagon. One major development of the late 1980s which was of critical importance in building political momentum behind the demand for statehood was the adoption of the demand as official BJP party policy. The Jana Sangh, forerunner to the BJP, had been building a base in Jharkhand from the late 1960s. Its original support was drawn from non-tribal groups, especially trading and industrial elites, who were often the “dikus” (exploitative outsiders) who had been the targets of the earlier Jharkhand movements. It stepped up its organization in Jharkhand in a period of uncertainty for the Jharkhand “movement,” after the Jharkhand Party's 1963 merger with Congress. It hoped to counter the activities of the Church in tribal regions (which had been closely associated with the Jharkhand Party) and increasingly to mobilize the non-Christian tribals, who constituted the majority of the tribal population, and to assimilate them into mainstream Hindu society.³⁶

In the late 1970s under the Janata government in Bihar, Jana Sangh politicians in Jharkhand began to discuss statehood. But it was really in the 1980s, in response to the emergence of the JMM in electoral politics and the new agitational politics of AJSU and the JCC, that the BJP adopted a determined focus on statehood. The BJP's longer-term advocates of statehood for Jharkhand used the fact that the region's developmental needs differed from the rest of Bihar to explain their support for the idea. Inder Singh Namdhari, BJP state president between 1988 and 1990 and a pivotal player in getting the party nationally to officially support the demand for statehood in 1989, says that he got involved in politics because of “an obsession that

³⁴ Extracts from focus group discussions in Mandar and Torpa assembly constituencies of Khunti district, November 2007. Thanks to Anuj Kumar and Saurabh Suman for research assistance.

³⁵ Kaushik Ghosh, for instance, describes well the distance that the leader of the Koel Karo movement put between himself and Jharkhand leaders involved in electoral politics. Kaushik Ghosh, “Between Global Flows and Local Dams: Indigenism, Locality, and the Transnational Sphere in Jharkhand, India,” *Cultural Anthropology* 21, no. 4 (2004): 501-534.

³⁶ The religious practice or form of worship of Non-Christian tribals is often described as “sarna,” which is derived from the name given to the place of worship in each *adivasi* village. The RSS sought to imbue non-Christian tribals with a Hindu identity.

there should be a separate state. If nature's resources were properly utilised or exploited then we could be the first state in the country. The resources here are greater than any other state."³⁷

Importantly, he also sensed that support for statehood would allow the BJP to compete better against the JMM. Namdhari proposed that the state be named Vananchal rather than Jharkhand, and that the new state should comprise only the districts of south Bihar, distinguishing the BJP's demand for a new state from the Greater Jharkhand of the historical Jharkhand movement. He underlined the fact that because the tribal population was no longer in the majority in the region, it was important for the movement to have a regional rather than "racial" character.³⁸

There were strong concerns among many activists about the role of political parties in demanding statehood, especially about the extent to which the BJP should be offered instrumental support as the party "most likely" to create a state. Was statehood to be seen by Jharkhand activists as a good in and of itself? One focus group participant expressed a commonly held view that statehood was to be achieved as the outcome of a popular struggle, not through the ballot box: "I felt it would be a people's movement that would create the state," he said. "I never really felt a political party or a candidate could do this." Nevertheless, a number of JMM politicians joined the BJP in this period, apparently inspired by its commitment to statehood. One former JMM MP said that he joined the BJP in 1996 after falling out with the JMM leadership because he felt that the BJP was the most likely party to create the state.³⁹ Arjun Munda, a tribal politician from the JMM and the BJP's second chief minister of the new state of Jharkhand, also joined the party in 1998. The traditional support base of the BJP was among upper castes and non-tribals in Jharkhand, but it increasingly reached out to non-Christian tribals too in the 1990s. The party's support for statehood helped to break down notions of cultural or ethnic exclusivity associated with the demand. Some upper-caste villagers, for example, reported that they had begun to welcome the idea of statehood during Lalu Prasad Yadav's anti-upper caste regime in Bihar, even though many were wary about a state that they felt was being created primarily for *adivasis*. As one Rajput villager explained, "I voted for the party which would give a new state as I was fed up of Lalu's atrocities. We just wished that his cruel name would be separate from our land."⁴⁰

The emergent consensus between civil society activists and political parties around the idea of statehood concealed fundamental conflicts and

³⁷ Interview with Inder Singh Namdhari, 13 October 2007, Ranchi.

³⁸ Dutt, *Kahani Jharkhand Andolan Ki* [The story of the Jharkhand movement], 225.

³⁹ Telephone interview with Shailendra Mahato, 17 October 2007.

⁴⁰ Extracts from focus group discussions in Mandar and Torpa assembly constituencies of Khunti district, November 2007.

ambiguities surrounding the meaning of statehood. What should be the borders of a new state? How would a new state reorient itself to the needs and expectations of different communities? The contraction to just those districts that fell into South Bihar perforce reduced the centrality of tribal identity to the idea of Jharkhand because it did not take in neighbouring regions with large tribal communities. The case for statehood made by the BJP reflected a vision of a state which would support the expansion of industry and natural resource extraction and help to absorb tribals into the economic mainstream, supported by their assimilation into Hinduism. This stood in contrast to the movements of the 1970s which had grown from concern about exclusionary patterns of development and dispossession. This tension at the heart of the growing consensus around the desirability of statehood led some of those who had led the call for statehood in the 1980s to feel uneasy about the compromises involved in the state's formation. A veteran activist who had been deeply involved with the JCC questioned the extent to which the BJP's eventual concession to use the name Jharkhand, rather than Vananchal, for the new state represented a fundamental shift in their understanding of the demand for statehood. For him, there was no distinction between a "territorial" and "political" Jharkhand. The simple achievement of a state in the name of Jharkhand was a matter for ambivalence not celebration in and of itself:

Freedom from exploitation would only be possible in a different type of state...The problem was one of protecting the political and economic rights of the people in terms of the control of natural resources (jal, jungle and jamin): their 'usufructory' rights. First, you need autonomy in the form of a separate state, and then the larger goal is to build on this movement in the interests of the larger Indian population towards a socialist revolution.⁴¹

In Jharkhand, then, a shift from social to statehood movement(s) took place in the 1980s after part of the JMM leadership led by Shibu Soren had been brought within the Congress' sphere of influence and began to contest elections. In the later 1980s, a more radical wing of the movement emerged in the All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU) and the Jharkhand Coordination Committee (JCC), which increasingly underscored the urgency of the need for statehood. At the same time, local BJP workers became convinced that the adoption of the statehood goal would improve their chances of competing against the JMM. The idea of statehood arguably came from the "movement" but political parties played a key role in shaping the new electoral arena, in which support for statehood became the lowest common denominator among groups competing for electoral space in the region.

⁴¹ Interview with Sanjay Bosu Mullick, Ranchi, 16 October 2007.

Uttarakhand: Political Parties and Popular Mobilization

In Uttarakhand, the transmission of the idea of statehood largely went the other way: from parties to movements. Despite a history of protest movements in the hills of Uttarakhand, it was not until the mid-1990s that a *movement* focused on statehood could be said to have emerged. This happened after political parties raised the call for statehood and the political context in Uttar Pradesh encouraged fresh mass mobilization in protest at the treatment of the hills.

In 1980, after Indira Gandhi returned to power, a new Forest Act had been introduced which increased state control over forestry in the name of preventing deforestation. In 1981, in direct response to Chipko, a 15-year moratorium on felling trees at over 1000 feet was implemented. The Chipko movement itself declined from this point but a new wave of protest movement began in the hills. Now protests occurred because there were incidents of the Forest Department continuing to fell trees while such opportunities were closed to local industry. Furthermore, a *jungle katao andolan*, a movement to cut *down* trees took place in 1988-89 as part of a protest against the new Forest Regulations which had what many considered to be the perverse effect of preventing other much-needed development projects (such as electricity, roads, schools) from taking place across the region. The leadership of this *andolan* was drawn from the Uttarakhand Kranti Dal (UKD), the regional party established in 1979 to fight for statehood.⁴² Also in 1988, the Uttarakhand Sangharsh Vahini (USV)—the most left-wing of the organizations involved in Chipko—decided to take up the campaign for statehood. They claimed to be fighting for more than simply statehood, however. Their vision was of a radically decentralized federalism in which all matters except foreign affairs, defence, communications, currency and railways would be devolved to the state level (their slogan was “New Bharat [India] new Uttarakhand”). They gradually began to link various strands of movement activity in the hills, such as the anti-liquor *andolan* of the early 1990s and protests about new forest regulations, to the demand for statehood.

At a similar time, local BJP politicians began to pass resolutions on the need for statehood and demanded the national leadership of the party support the demand for a hill state as early as 1983.⁴³ Like the UKD, local leaders of the BJP were concerned about the implications of the 1980 Forest Act. Shoban Singh Jina, an elderly leader of the BJP, organized a meeting in Almora district in 1984 to discuss the act. At the meeting, Jina argued against the Forest Act and in favour of the need for a separate hill state.⁴⁴ Another

⁴² Interview with Narayan Singh Jantawal, Nainital, 3 November 2007 (acting president of UKD in 2007).

⁴³ Interview with Bachi Singh Rawat, BJP MP for Nainital, 24 October 2007.

⁴⁴ Dr Nityanand, *Uttaranchal: Itihasik Paridrshya evam Vikas Ke Aayam* [Uttaranchal: Historical Perspective and Extent of Development] (Dehra Dun: Chavi Prakashan, 2004).

proponent of the idea of statehood within the Sangh Parivar, the “family” of Hindu nationalist organizations, was the senior Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh leader Bhaurao Deveras. The RSS believed that national security would be at risk in this border region without economic development. They were particularly keen to stem migration from the hills, which they saw as weakening India against its enemies.⁴⁵ Dr Nityanand, another RSS worker and professor at a college in Dehra Dun, suggests that the RSS were also responding to the increasing agitations on the statehood question in the 1980s. He writes: “The campaign for the creation of Uttarakhand gradually became intense in the 1980s and the Naxalite factor also started to be invited from its platforms.”⁴⁶ The BJP national executive first passed a resolution supporting statehood for what the BJP called Uttarakhand, as well as Jharkhand (Jharkhand) in 1989. It highlighted the issue during the frequent elections of this period in Uttar Pradesh in 1989, 1991 and 1993.

The real moment at which social movement actors and parties fused around the idea of statehood, however, came in 1994. The Uttar Pradesh state government had introduced new reservations (affirmative action) for lower-caste communities designated as “Other Backward Classes” (OBCs) in higher education institutions across Uttar Pradesh (including the hills with their predominantly upper caste and only 2 percent OBC population). A series of protests against the impact of this new reservations policy in the hills, organized by student leaders, spiralled into a mass regional movement demanding statehood. The movement gained momentum after a number of instances of police firing on demonstrators, and apparently deliberately incendiary statements by state leaders such as Mulayam Singh Yadav and Mayawati. The OBC chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Mulayam Singh Yadav, had seemingly deliberately seized an opportunity to make political capital out of anti-reservations protests in the hills. He sought to cement his own fraying social coalition among lower castes and highlight his own social justice credentials by portraying the protestors in the hills as chauvinistic upper castes whose main concern was their opposition to affirmative action for lower castes *tout court*. In fact the movement in the hills drew together a diverse coalition of social groups including ex-servicemen, students’ and women’s groups. These groups were galvanized by the provocations of the state government and began to bring together a broader set of grievances about the treatment of the hills under the banner of statehood. Months of protests, road blockades and disruption to local services followed. Much of the leadership came from a younger generation, and hailed from outside the movement or political realm (such as the ex-servicemen) but older

⁴⁵ Interview with Rishiraj Debral, son of Devendra Shastri (first RSS full-timer in Uttarakhand, founding member of the Jan Sangh and Janata Party MLA 1977-80), Dehra Dun, 15 November 2007.

⁴⁶ Nityanand, *Uttarakhand: Itihasik Paridrshya evam Vikas Ke Aayam* [Uttarakhand: Historical Perspective and extent of Development].

activists with memories of the Chipko era also became involved. There was in fact no explicit caste character to the Uttarakhand regional movement, in a way comparable to the ethnic content of the original Jharkhand demand, regardless of the attempts by UP's political leadership to paint it in this light.⁴⁷ Here, as in Jharkhand, the idea of statehood became a subject for mass mobilization as a result of changes in the broader political context. Statehood was by no means naturally connected to a politics of resistance in the hills. It was the interactions between social movements, the state and new types of political party that helped to produce a focus on statehood.

Conclusion and Epilogue

This article has shown how the intersection of movement and party politics helped to shape the goals and strategies adopted by social activists in Jharkhand and Uttarakhand, bringing a demand for new states to pre-eminence. Through a discussion of some of India's most iconic social movements, the article makes it clear that we must pay attention to such interactions when thinking about the spaces for, and possibility of, an autonomous field of subaltern politics. These themes have been taken up not to diminish the agency of the marginalized but to argue that any account of the politics of marginality must take account of the interrelationships between institutionalized and non-institutionalized politics.

The narratives presented in this paper stop short of the actual moment of state creation because the aim has been to demonstrate the nature of the coalitions that developed locally in support of statehood as a result of interactions between social movements and political parties. The explanations for the final act of state creation in the year 2000 lie at other levels of the federal system.⁴⁸ The compromises involved in the emergence of broad pro-statehood coalitions suggest that seeking statehood within the federation—questioning borders—may not be a reliable route to creating new pro-poor regimes. In an argument developed further elsewhere, I have suggested that one of the reasons for the emergence of political consensus around particular regional identities was an attempt by some political parties to depoliticize ethnic cleavages and/or unsettle an attempt by social movements to associate a regional political identity with an emancipatory politics of particular marginalized communities.⁴⁹ Rather than representing a moment at which political regimes with new, more inclusive social bases were constituted, such developments meant that the process of state formation

⁴⁷ See Emma Mawdsley, "Uttarakhand agitation and Other Backward Classes," *Economic and Political Weekly* 31 no. 4 (1996): 205-210.

⁴⁸ See Louise Tillin, *Changing States: The Politics of Borders in India* (forthcoming).

⁴⁹ Louise Tillin, "Ethnic 'Inbidding' and Democratic Stability: Indian Regionalism and the Politics of Ethnicity," unpublished manuscript; see also Tillin, *Changing States*.

left an uneasy legacy of superficial political inclusion that masked continued practices of exclusion. This brief epilogue will consider the impact of these legacies in the new states. Such regional political histories help to explain why the reception of the anti-poverty initiatives of the central government differs on a regional basis. As John Harriss reminds us, state-level political regimes, and in particular the extent to which the political power of lower castes/classes has been well-institutionalized, matter in explaining rates of poverty reduction.⁵⁰

Since the granting of statehood, Jharkhand has displayed greater political instability than possibly any other Indian state. In ten years (2000-2010) it has seen the formation of eight different short-lived governments with four different chief ministers, and two periods of President's Rule.⁵¹ Since state formation, the BJP's rising *adivasi* leader of the 1990s and Jharkhand's first chief minister, Babulal Marandi, has left the BJP to form his own party, the Jharkhand Vikas Morcha. There is a strong impression that weakly organized political parties offer limited mobility for aspiring candidates, even as the promise to extract rents from mining and industrial ventures increases the lure of political careers. Jharkhand appears to be moving close to what Yadav and Palshikar have described as a "malady" of "systemless competition." This is a situation of extreme fluidity in which electoral competition is not bound by political party conventions and where individual entrepreneurship or loose, very short-term groupings hold sway.⁵² The absence of a stable political regime has reduced the ability of the state to pursue long-term developmental goals. It has delayed the agreement, for example, of minimum, implementable standards for rehabilitation and resettlement following industrial development. Equally, such instability has also forestalled movement on dozens of memorandums of understanding with business signed by the government. In some senses, the paralysis in governance in Jharkhand reflects the strength and spaces maintained by local resistance movements. But it also marks the absence of a political settlement that can effectively mediate between deeply divergent visions of development. Agreement in favour of statehood masked such tensions rather than representing a new political contract. Without functioning state institutions, inclusive economic growth looks set to remain elusive. Furthermore, in Jharkhand (and Chhattisgarh), there has been a reversion to movements outside the electoral system since state creation with the spread of a variety of groups under the loose umbrella of Naxalism (as well as counter-Naxal movements). This reflects in part a

⁵⁰ John Harriss, "Poverty Reduction and Regime Differences Across India," in *Changing Paths: International Development and the New Politics of Inclusion*, eds. P. Houtzager and M. Moore (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003).

⁵¹ These details are correct as of November 2010.

⁵² Yogendra Yadav and Suhas Palshikar, "Party System and Electoral Politics in the Indian States, 1952-2002: From Hegemony to Convergence," in *India's Political Parties*, eds. P.R. de Souza and E. Sridharan (New Delhi: Sage, 2006), 92.

dissatisfaction with the functioning of institutionalized politics, as well as contests over the ownership of natural resources in the context of increasing Maoist activity across central India.

All political parties play lip-service to tribal leadership—all four chief ministers have been *adivasis*—but substantive improvements in the material lives of *adivasis* or their political representation are harder to discern. In some ways Jharkhand has become a more hostile space for civil society since 2000, despite attempts by ministers in the UPA-led coalition between 2006-08 to institute consultations with key activists over issues such as rehabilitation and resettlement, and over the design of a “common minimum program” mirroring the initiatives of the central UPA government. Shortly after the state was created in 2001, police opened fire on villagers taking part in the decades-old protest against the Koel Karo dam, leading to eight deaths. There are serious reports of irregularities in the implementation of one of the UPA’s flagship schemes, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, and of the intimidation of activists campaigning against corruption in its implementation.⁵³ Until December 2010, Jharkhand is the only state in India not to have held elections to panchayats since the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments were enacted. This followed a 2005 ruling by the Jharkhand High Court challenging the reservation of the posts of *pradhan* (chairperson) for *adivasis* in scheduled areas where the tribal population had fallen below 50 percent.⁵⁴

Uttarakhand has seen far greater political stability than Jharkhand since 2000 but it too has been affected by the nature of its formation. The manipulation of the borders of the new state by the central government to include large plains areas, as well as the hills, has allowed for the effective sidelining of calls for more careful attention to development in the distinctive geography of the hills (central to the original idea of statehood). The plains districts of Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar were included in the new state at the insistence of the central government on the ostensible grounds of improving the new state’s economic viability. The main axes of exclusion are thus topographical in this region, which is much more ethnically homogenous than Jharkhand. Some veteran activists complain, for instance, that the state capital Dehra Dun is on the edge of the plains, rather than their preferred remote location of Gairsain, nestled on the border of the Kumaon and Garhwal hills, which they argue would have encouraged local legislators to become cognizant of the specific needs of the hills.

⁵³ See, for instance, Aruna Roy, “Attacking the right to ask,” *Indian Express*, 14 June 2008, <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/attacking-the-right-to-ask/322527/>.

⁵⁴ The 2005 Jharkhand High Court verdict which challenged the reservation of seats was overturned by the Supreme Court in January 2010, paving the way for panchayat elections to be held.

Questioning Borders in India

In short, the long-term history of state formation matters. Supporting territorial reorganization allowed national political parties to negotiate or blunt a critique of the forms of development taking place in resource-rich regions such as Jharkhand and Uttarakhand, or at least shift it from the centre of electoral politics. Political inclusion requires stable, responsive political regimes that can negotiate between different interests with a degree of autonomy. The state that has been produced out of the struggles and counter-struggles in Jharkhand lacks these characteristics. The state produced in Uttarakhand is quite different to the hill-state imagined by activists in the hills, but is considerably more stable.

University of Cambridge, UK, November 2010



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