

The study falls into the domains of both resistance and development studies. The thesis lays out three theoretical stakes of the study. I begin with a general review of *development* critique only to find that there exist critiques of critique suggesting multiple solutions to a single problem. “Development” in fact has not only dominated the life-worlds of the marginalised but also produced “underdevelopment” and marginality. I turn then to discuss *marginality* as a problem created in the discourse and practice of anthropology and development endeavours alike. The tribals of India, for example, have been considered as poor and underdeveloped that a thoughtful development planning should bring transformation to their lives, however, though they are not satisfied with any solution. Therefore, the tribals resist the authoritative and mainstream development endeavours. This sets the stage for a close consideration of *resistance* as a twofold enterprise: a weapon for challenging domination, and a strategy for mitigating misery.

The study therefore confronts a simple question: **how does marginality as a site of resistance create a space and possibility for the *adivasis* not only to resist domination but also to mitigate misery?** Exploring five different resistance movements among the tribals of Orissa, I have traced the workings of power through rich, complex and sometimes contradictory details of resistance. Through the study of these complex and contradictory forms of resistance, I have gestured how the relations of power have historically transformed, particularly with the introduction of different forms and techniques of power characterized by modern state and capitalist economy. This study helps us to understand the ways in which the complex and conflicting structures of power work together in tribal communities that are becoming gradually “non-local”. I argue that the working of such power of resistance has been central to the pursuit of modernity in tribal Orissa in awakening the tribal’s insurgent and critical consciousness, questioning and resisting the authoritative and undemocratic projects of development, lobbying and pressuring state government in soliciting their own mission, providing services to the people as a supplement to the state delivery deficiency, creating models of alternative to development, and making the survival of the marginalized possible. But as a project, the endeavour of the subalterns to materialize these dimensions of the resistance has very often been riven with uncertainty and disappointment. The thesis therefore also confronts another question, one that very often shadows the first with a melancholy tinge: why does marginality as a space of resistance fail to challenge tyranny and mitigate misery?