

# Chuar Revolt in South West Bengal: A Historical Analysis

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## Abstract

The Chuar rebellion was a series of insurrections between 1771 and 1809 by the inhabitants of hills and forests of old Manbhum, Bankura and Midnapore (an area now mostly in West Bengal, India). Such people generally lived off the jungles and practised a sort of primitive agriculture [1]. "It was one of the earliest peasant rebellions against the British rulers' highly exploitative land revenue policies and was brutally crushed". Prior to the arrival of the British, these jungle areas were not directly ruled by the Mughal rulers. Local rulers, who paid some tribute to the Mughals, had control over the area. In turn, the local rulers gave the jungle folk tax-free lands against the protection they provided to the area's rulers. These people were called 'Paiks' meaning guard or police in Bengali. The East India Company forced the local rulers to collect taxes from these people. When they broke out in violent rebellion, they were despised as 'Chuars' meaning uncivilised in Bengali. According to L.S.S. O'Malley, a British administrator who produced the Bengal District Gazetteers, "In March 1766 Government resolved to send an expedition into the country west and north-west of Midnapore in order to coerce them into paying revenue, and to capture and demolish as many of their strongholds as possible." Among the many dispossessed zamindars, who lent support to the rebels were such royalty as Durjan Singh of Raipur, Managat Singh of Panchet, Dubraj Singh Birbhum, the Rani of Karnagar and Raja Madhu Singh of Manbhum. This paper discusses the colonial rule that witnessed numerous uprisings and disturbances in South-West Bengal during the period from 1799 to 1857. The nature of these disturbances varied from elitist to popular grassroots or people's movement. The tribal movements in the nature of ethnic movements usually tended to be resistance movements aimed at opposing the subtle and, at times, secretive efforts on the part of the non-tribals, both British as well as the native people, to penetrate the preserved ethnic domains of the life of the tribals.

**Keywords:** Chuar Rebellion, Jungal Mahals, Peasants Resistance Movement, Historiography, Subaltern Perspective.

## Introduction:

Debates and inconsistencies fill the analysis of every historical event. No clear hypothesis can be accepted for interpreting historical events. It is viewed from many different angles and allows a number of opposing conclusions. In India's case, it is even more fascinating; the study of the anti-colonial struggle in India has been performed from four key perspectives: the imperialist approach, the Marxist approach, the nationalist approach and the subaltern approach. Subaltern studies in modern Indian historiography have launched a new trend in historical study. Scholars, led by Ranajit Guha, were dissatisfied with the perceptions of the anti-colonial movement of India because this historiography was dominated by the elitism of colonialists, bourgeois nationalists, and even orthodox Marxists. They, independently of the elite, had signally refused to take into account the contributions made by the people on their own. According to Ranajit Guha, elitist historiography (the assumption that, because of their perceived superiority, certain persons or members of certain classes or groups deserve favored treatment) ignored the "politics of the people," or the subordinate classes, in the development of such a group or class. For Guha, the Freedom Movement's extensive historiography was "un-historical," "blinker," and "one-sided," since it concentrated exclusively on the realm of elite politics while silencing and refusing to view subaltern passages. The Indian freedom movement against the British imperial force has a glorious past history in South-West Bengal. The so-called Subaltern peoples of this area raised their voices against the colonial rules' economic exploitative politics and strong arm tactics of the unscrupulous elements such as Zamindars, moneylenders, and so on, which not only tended to ruin their livelihoods but also put on them an intolerable financial burden. In elitist historiography, I believe the regional history in general and the anti-colonial movements of South-West Bengal in particular were not properly highlighted. In this paper, I am trying to highlight the subaltern party's contribution to various types of revolts in South-West Bengal during the period from 1799 to 1857. This paper assumes that some essential ideas will be revealed, and the historical rationale will be added.

The Chuar Rebellion was the first formidable peasant-led Adivasi (Tribal) resistance against the East India Company. The Jungle Mehal Adivasis (mostly Southwest Bengal, including a portion of Singbhoom, Manbhum, Chthonagpur and a portion of Orissa) is divided into different ethnic groups, viz. The British policy of resumption of

land they had enjoyed since the Mughal period could not be tolerated by Bagdi, Kurmi, Santal, Bhumij, Bauri, Kora, Mahli and Munda and other groups. They had no other means of livelihood apart from the land and their services to local magnates. Their grievances, combined with the zamindars' precarious situation led to the spark of a widespread uprising commonly referred to as the Chuar uprising. Oppressed by both the East India Company Officials and local magnates, the peasants found no alternative but to participate in the clarion against the colonial regime.

Price described the so-called Chuar Rebellion of 1799, the Settlement Officer of Midnapore, as the result of the "evil passions of the infuriated Sardars and Paiks," which "carried slaughter and flame to very doors of the Magistrate's catchery" [1]. The Paiks ('foot-men', being native, hereditary watchmen and militiamen) had been dismissed in large numbers under the British administration established in 1760 and their land grants (paikan) were reinstated. What is commonly known as the Chuar rebellion was mainly a revolt of the Paiks and Chuars. The Adivasis living in the jungle mahal were commonly called Chuars. Sri Chaitanya, the Vaishnava apostle of Bengal, passed through the area in 1509. At that time he described these tribal communities as the Paiks ('foot-men' being local, hereditary watchmen and militiamen). They were dismissed in large numbers under the British administration establishment [2]. A similar perception, as KavikankanMukundaramChakraborty called them Chooars, was found in KalketuUpakhyan. Jogesh Chandra Basu took the Chuar to mean "outlandish fellow," and the term was applied to the wild tribes in Midnapore that occupied the jungle mahal and the tracts beyond them[3]. According to the District Gazetteer's histories, the ethnic groups of South-West Bengal were primarily Aborigines consisting of Kurmi, Santal, Bhumij, Bauri, Kora, Mahli and Munda and other peoples[4][5]. The Chotonagpur and SardarGhatwals of Bhumij, Mundas, and Mankis formed organized tribal communities and were the main force among the jungle mahalrebels [6].

#### **Literature review:**

We may narrate this in the subaltern term. The word subaltern is used from the Latin roots sub-"below" and alternans-"all others" to identify anyone of a low rank (as in the military) or class (as in a caste system). Subalterns occupy entry-level positions or occupy a lower rung of the 'corporate ladder.' But the term is often used to denote someone who, like a poor person living under a dictatorship, has little political or economic influence. For the word 'Subaltern,' different forms of synonyms are used, such as common people, lower class, underprivileged, oppressed, inferior, minor, poor, etc. "In describing "history told from below," "subaltern" was coined by the Italian Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci, notably through his work on cultural hegemony, which identified the groups that are excluded from the established institutions of a society and thus denied them. The British historian, E.P. Thomson wrote an article in "The Times Magazine," while giving his opinion. He used the words "History from Down below Subaltern means overlooked, dismissed, disregarded, marginalized, and treated with indifference and unconcern. Gramsci started to use the word 'subaltern' to mean those who were subordinated by power hegemonies (of state, class, patriarchy, gender, race, and so on). Understanding how the term subaltern can mean an individual or group in a position "inferior" to others in some fundamental way, Gramsci's concern with the state and culture is relevant (i.e., by class, caste, gender, location, and so on). However, it may also be used as a concept to describe the relationship between two individuals in relation to their access to power or resources (of the material and social varieties). Therefore, one could speak of a "subaltern" human and subalternity as a condition of being for anything from a society to a nation to a specific discourse (a set of texts, practices, histories, and so on). The word 'subaltern' designates the communities in critical theory and post-colonialism that are socially, politically and geographically outside the colony and colonial homeland's hegemonic power structure. That implies that the social groups at the edges of a society are the lower classes.

On the other hand, as given in the Oxford Dictionary, the word 'subaltern' stands for the general attribute of subordination, which is expressed in terms of caste, class, gender, office or any other type. The features of defiance and submission are included. It therefore conveys 'view from below' in the literal sense, i.e., a picture or interpretation from the bottom of society or the flow of understanding from below.

The word subaltern means tribal (Adivasis), agricultural workers of the low caste, sharecroppers, smallholder peasants, craftsmen, shepherds, and landless migrant labour employed in plantations and mines. The concept is also a substitute for peasantry or working poor /common people; it refers to the acceptance in hierarchical social formations of the dialectical relationships of super-ordination and subordination that characterize social relations. That means, in a social, political, or other hierarchy, a subaltern is anyone with a low ranking. It may also tell anyone in the culture which has been disadvantaged or oppressed.

At the end of the 1970s, Subaltern Studies began its remarkable career in England, when discussions between a small group of English and Indian historians on subaltern themes led to a proposal to start a new journal in India. Instead, Oxford University Press in New Delhi agreed to publish three volumes of essays called 'Subaltern Studies: Writings on the History and Culture of South Asia.' These appeared annually from 1982, and in the next five years,

their success spurred three more books, all edited by Ranajit Guha. Ranajit Guha and eight collaborators had published thirty-four of the forty-seven essays in six volumes of Subaltern Studies and fifteen related books when he retired as editor in 1989. Thus, in India, where writing about Subaltern Studies started in book reviews, Subaltern Studies readings began. At first, each volume in the series was reviewed separately as a compilation of essays. Still, by 1986, an accumulation of writing inside and outside the project had formed a distinctive research school whose adherents were called "subalternists" or simply "subalterns." In 1988, when Oxford University published selected Subaltern Studies, their seminal essays appeared in paperback. In the 1990s, Subaltern Studies became a hot topic for scholars across disciplines ranging from history to political science, anthropology, sociology, literary criticism and cultural studies in academic circles on several continents. In the late seventies, the original material of Subaltern Research originated from work-in-progress. In social, economic, and political history, eleven writers in the first three volumes—Shahid Amin, David Arnold, Gautam Bhadra, Dipesh Chakrabarty, N. K. Chandra, Partha Chatterjee, Arvind N. Das, David Hardiman, Stephen Henningham, Gyanendra Pandey, and Sumit Sarkar—were engaged in near empirical work. The scholar referred to above has pointed out the position of the subaltern people.

The Subaltern historian gave a significant approach to the study of the peasant tribal movement. By emphasizing the position of 'the masses' toward elite politics, this perspective aims to restore a balance. Subaltern historiography's entire faith lies in reconstructing the other past, i.e., the history of people's politics and movement and their attempts to make their history. This view stresses seeing peasant or tribal rebels as 'object' of history and seeing them as creators of their own history.

Subaltern writers of social history centred their attention on the elite political circle and stressed the insurrectionary activities and potential of the 'subaltern' classes (poor peasants, landless workers, tribals, etc.) to make these classes have a self-conscious and coherent concept of rebellion directed against rich peasants, urban traders or colonial administrators

The general concern regarding subalterns indicated a dedication to the idea of social justice for marginalized and subordinated citizens. In terms of creating plans for potential action, subaltern historiography allows us to understand individuals' lives, actions, and histories more significantly. The Subaltern Studies build a historiography to establish strategies that helps to create an emancipatory strategy for the subalterns or the lower and subordinated group.

#### **DIFFERENT PHASES OF THE ADIVASI RESISTANCE:**

In 1760, the Company, along with Midnapore, acquired jungle mehals and Dhalbhum from Mir Qasim. The British penetration began in this area after the grant of Diwani in 1765 when Graham the Midnapore resident, dispatched a military force to subjugate the jungle zamindars to the west of Midnapore by pursuing "the process of assessing the income of the jungle district"[7]. Fergusson began by attacking and capturing the Jhargram chief's fort [8]. The zamindars were sent to the British by Ramgarh, Samkakulia (Lalgarh), Jambani and Jatbani (Shilda), who were then able to press on to Balarampur and obtain submissions from the chiefs of Amainagar (Ambikanagar), Super, Manbhum, Chhatna, Barabhum, Rajpur and Phulkusma [9].

However, Fergusson was aware that the tribal chiefs had not been thoroughly subdued by any means. The revenue collection was considered difficult, unless a permanent force was formed in that area [10]. There were some zamindars, despite the opposition of the Chuars, who paid the stipulated tax to the British authorities. In Manbhum and Barabhum, especially in the hills between Ghatsila and Barabhum, the fortress of the Chuars was located. Under a kind of feudal tenure, they kept their lands, but were not attached to the soil, always ready to change the plough for the club, at the behest of their tumultuous jungle bosses or zamindars who could not be intimidated into paying income. The jungle zamindars' rents are mentioned in a letter from the Midnapore Collector to Hastings (November 23, 1781) as a kind of quit rent collected from their Paik's and Chuars, who are inhabitants of these zamindaris. In 1767, 1769 and 1770, several expeditions were sent against them, but without any significant success. So, as a means of temporary protection, a system of building small thanas in the interior with 60 sepoy's each was placed into execution. Later, in 1795, under Regulation XXII of 1793, the landholders of the jungle mehals were vested in the joint charge of the police of their respective estates to act in concert with the darogas.

The Manbhum district records are full of accounts of the Chuar outbreaks in various parts of the world. Lt. Goodyear, Lt. Gall and Lt. Young served in 1771 and Capital Carter in 1772. Significant Crawford suppressed the Jhalda disruptions in 1782 and took care of the collections. He also suggested disarming the inhabitants of the region created by the Jhalda, Pachet and Ramgarh triangles. Again, disturbances broke out in Kuliapal in 1783-84, many of which were linked to an increase in taxation.

"It was reported that Barabhum and other first-evaluated estates got off very lightly, while Jhalda, Katras, Jharia, Nawagarh and other estates, which were taken up later when the British control was substantially reinforced,

had to submit to a comparatively strong evaluation." [11] We can refer to Walter's compilation in this sense. K. Firrninger [12].

The spontaneous coming together of the zamindars of Patkum and Singhum, and the Chhatnazamindar, followed Ghatsila's surrender in August 1767. All three were eager to secure British security against their neighbors' attack; indeed, the Chhatnazamindar proclaimed that he would rather "quit the country and starve than become a Pached vassal." [13] In Ghatsila, trouble was renewed in mid-1768. The tribal people, particularly Bhumijis, living between the pargana of Dhalbhum and Barabhum, were in turmoil and were in turmoil towards the end of 1769 [14]. It appears that the advasis in their initial attempt was not inclined to surrender the gun and matchlocks, which they seized from the Company's forces. They were undaunted and backed by the sardar of Dhadka, Ghatsila [15]. It was resolved that "unless Jagannath Dhal was subdued, the East India Company could never obtain any revenue from the side of Subarnarekha" [16].

In 1770, trouble continued. Lt. Goodyear was sent by the corporation to quench the rebellion and he was immediately engaged against separate rebels [17]. With great difficulty, in 1773, the uprising was eventually suppressed. By restoring the estate of Jagannath, the Raja of Dhalbhum, who was the chief of the zamindars, the British government was compelled to make peace.

Subia Singh and many others, including Kulapaljaghindar, the sardar of Dhadki, revived the Western jungles' disruptions. They declined to recognize the Company's control, to settle profits, and to survey their possessions. Under the Sitaram Thanadar, the Company mobilized a force of a thousand paiks. The main goal was to reduce them to subjection and for a speedy and favourable settlement to bring them to Midnapore. When fresh disturbances erupted in the western jungles under the leadership of Jagannath Dhal of Ghatsila in February 1773, the uprisings took a serious turn. The Haldypukuryots were joined by Jagannath and rose in revolt. The Domparapaiks, led by Mangovin, the Sildazamindar, were encouraged to depredate [18]. However, in fact, most of the early depredations of the Chuars took place outside the district of Midnapore. At this point, Warren Hastings adopted the astute policy of recruiting into the Company's army all skilled adult males of this region, keeping them in the pay of the Company while acknowledging their interest in Paikan lands in this territory. In the First Maratha War, these recruits were employed against the Marathas.

Much of the district of Midnapore was filled with large stretches of jungles, mainly Paiks and Chuars being its residents, who had the reputation of being lazy cultivators but pillage experts. In that area, the hilly and geographical environment of Manbhum helped the insurgents to spread. Manbhum was also heavily forested with salt in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Thus, it was described in 1773 as "mountainous and overgrown with thick woods, making it completely impassable in many places" [19]. In fact, in the early nineteenth century, two-thirds of Midnapore consisted of jungles, the majority of which were uninhabited and inaccessible. Jungles surrounded the Adivasis's major fortresses: Bogree, Bishnupur, Pached, Singhbhum and Mayurbhanj. The difficulty of obtaining income from the jungle estates failed very early and it was recorded that the advasis of the jungle mahal areas were "bred up for pillage as much as cultivation, paying a kind of quit-rent from the profits of both occupations" [20]. If we agree with Hunter's view, it can be said that the Permanent Settlement attempted to replace custom contracts unexpectedly [21]. Their own customs often led tribal farmers and rulers. The new system harmed the interest of both the semi-tribal chiefs and ignorant ryots.

The Midnapore estate's Rani Shiromani, the Raja of Pached, the Raipur zamindar and many others were pushed from pillar to post and had to face uncommon humiliations, e.g. imprisonment, mortgage, selling and property attachment. Pursuant to J.e. Price, the jungle zamindar was a sort of military leader, "who could seek protection from his ryots, who could effectively command his paiks, and whose title should not be doubtful" [22]. The possession of the Rani Shiromani's zamindari, which was caused to be confiscated, created such doubt. The East India Company's reasoning behind such an acquisition was its poor management and sales arrears. She just had the right to a moshaira. The sardars of the rebels tried to make the Rani their leader for a time, but the Rani, although she sympathized secretly with the rebels, was not in a position to antagonize the government of the Company. She could not preserve her neutrality for long as the inevitable confrontation between the Paiks and the government reached its peak in the last decade of the eighteenth century. The zamindar of Simlapal at the same time also encouraged the ryots to rise against the Company. The dispossessed rebels, the Paiks, and the oppressed artisans of the Anandapur factory [23] were very common with Rani Shiromani.

As a victimized widow, there was a lot of public sentiment behind the Rani too. Her zamindari was let out and brought under the protection of the government. A significant factor behind the rebellion of 1799 was support for the cause of the Rani. In this time of the revolt, the rebels were supported by the peasants who had been tilling the land for the Paiks for so long without rent but were now subject to the new system of taxation. As they suffered from the rising salt prices that coincided with the breakup of the Paiks, the situation was exacerbated. Rani Shiromani, with Chunilal Khan of Narajol, also made common cause. The condition escalated to such an extent that the Tehsildar

government could not raise a rupee from the Ryot[24]. Their old chiefs' departure and the entry of new non-tribal zamindars have also greatly disturbed tribal peasants. In all those estates that were auctioned off for tax arrears, there was much unrest from 1795 to 1800. The government had to surrender in the case of Pachet and Raipur. The Bhumijis of Barabhum, Manbhum and other jungle mahals came to Bishnupur in the thousands to help the late Raja Chetan Singh's family get back their zamindari [25].

As the Ghatwals started to become aggrieved by the government's actions, the unrest began to spread. The Midnapore Collector wrote about the ryots in 1799 that these people were 'contented, hard-working, brave, honest, and optimistic, much attached to their owners, but if they were oppressed, a whole village would literally up stick and off to some zamindar in one night, whose overall character promised them better treatment.' [26].

### **TRENDS OF POPULAR REVOLT:**

The key targets of the attacks by the rebels were the Janpur Tehsildars and Serishtadars. Anandpore's tehsildar also announced that the profits could not be realized and there was a significant risk to his life. The striking characteristic of the case was that the police system proved an absolute failure. The police's darogahs were likely to take bribes and manipulate at their will the simple tribal citizens. "Thus, in 1794 Govind Ram, the Chatna and Manbhum police darogah, was accused of "having received bribes for releasing accused persons before them." The British Government believed that the tribals themselves were "generally a courageous and inoffensive people" [27]. Under the circumstances, it was proposed to frame separate regulations for the zamindars and the ryots of the jungle in order to realize that the tribals themselves were "very brave and inoffensive people'. These depredations constantly hold the zamindars and their servants in arms' [28].

The jungle zamindars outside the jungle mahal area were proposed to be responsible for maintaining public peace in their respective estates. In view of the situation, once the revolt had completely ceased, the adoption of a new scheme was postponed because it was argued that such a concession could generate a sense of victory in favour of the Chuars.

Guerrilla warfare was embraced by the Adivasis and avoided any overt confrontation with the soldiers, but they hit the sepoys from behind the jungle and hill. Many of the sepoys had also fallen to the jungle's unhealthy climate. Written assurances (muchalaka) were obtained from Raja Gopinath Dhal of Supur, Motilal Dubraj, Ghatshila's eldest son of Raja Jagannath Dhal, Birchand Hakim, MukhtarGopinath, Ambikanagar's minor zamindar, PratapNarain, Manbhum's zamindar, BansiMaiti, Barabhum's Mukhtar, and Lachmi Narain, and Chhatna's zamindar that they should not in any way assist the Adivasis. In September 1799, the Board recommended, side by side, that the Paiks be restored to their former lands in order to restore agriculture, and that a remission of dues could be permitted [29].

Also entrusted with apprehending the insurgents were the loyal zamindars and it was stated that "any zamindar who may be convicted of having connived at the assemblage or passage of choars" would be punished. In addition, Zamindars will be held accountable for all property stolen in its jurisdictions [30].

The zamindars allowed the Adivasis to commit plunder and outrage upon the faithful zamindars. In addition to revenue, such plundered booty was scattered among the ryots on some occasions. The British found these zamindars to be 'refractory' and the inhabitants of the 'rough and ungovernable' territory [31].

The rebels did not find it appropriate to keep a secret that their main aim was to burn the tehsils and zamindaris and to loot them. Midnapore itself was several times attacked. The zamindars and European officials' situation was so dangerous that it became very difficult to move during the daytime. In 1780, the inhabitants of Bishnupur were plundered by one Rudra Bauri and a hundred Dhalbhum people. The Karnagarh Rani helped the disturbance leaders, and the Simlapal Zamindar urged the ryots and other villagers of that area to rise up. Raja Jadu Singh was the insurgent's brain. They instigated the paiks to open up revolt for the Rani being dispossessed of their lands.

Along with the other chiefs of the Jungle Mehals, the Rani herself and her attendants took up the uprising leadership. After 1794, the resistance of the Adivasis became violent and formidable. The Midnapore Magistrate allowed the Company's offer of reward for the apprehension of Lutchmun Singh and others to be distributed.

There were three places in the vicinity of the town of Midnapore where the Paiks gathered in force, i.e. Bahadurpore, Shalbani, and Karnagarh, the last place being the house of the Midnapore Rani, brought under khas or government leadership. They began their different attacks in these places in search of plunder, returning to break the spoils. Consequently, the ryots left their homes and thus stopped revenue collection [32]. Along with the Paiks and Adivasis, the former Zamindar of Raipur surrounded the daroghakutchery of Gunada and fought from evening until 10 o'clock the following morning. They set the bazaar and kitchen equipment on fire and overran the place, and blocked it. They injured two of the barkandazes and a sepoy and killed two ryots. Durjan Singh, the rebels' principal leader, reportedly had a following of 15,000 men with whom he raided the country. After invading, plundering, and

burning some thirty villages, he was arrested once, but he had to be released when he was put on trial because no one dared to appeal against him. His release from prison lifted the spirit of the rebels on a broader scale to commit depredation, which in turn forced the government to cancel Pachet's sale and return the zamindar to his estate. In May 1798, the followers of Durjan Singh, a body of 1,500 Chuars, made their appearance in Raipur, set the bazaar and cutlery on fire and raided the countryside.

In July 1798, in Chndrakonathana, about 400 adivasis appeared under Gobardhan Dhakpati, a Bagdi chief of pargana Bagri, in Midnapore. Gobardhan Dhakpati decamped from Daibiha but prisoners were made for his wife and daughter. The Paiks were too audacious in December to control six or seven villages, cut down the crops, and plunder their cattle and other things from fifteen villages. Janpore's tehsilder was unable to raise any revenue from the ryots, who, unless armed, declined to pay. It was feared that the Paiks would take control of the estate entirely. In Basudevypore, too, there was trouble. The rebels plundered a village, and Satpati was threatened. A number of Paiks plundered and burned Rajgarh and conducted attacks on Shalbani on a regular basis. It even threatened the town of Midnapore itself. On 1 March 1799, Imhoff, the Collector, wrote to the Magistrate informing him of a report that the Chuars were preparing to loot and burn 'either tonight or tomorrow' the town of Midnapore [33]. On March 14, in the very large village of Shiromani, which was absolutely sacked, the Chuars burnt down two villages and, on the following day, government land amounting to 2,000 acres of paddy was consigned to flames. The Chuars invaded Kishen Charan Chatterjee's zamindari, and plundered Ceamorry, Inaitpur, Ghoshpur, Raghunathpur and Adipur's maujas (villages). Madhab Singh, the brother of the Raja of Barabhum, became so formidable at the head of his Chuar followers that the government of Wellesley had to take special steps to apprehend him.

The Paiks had grown so bold that villages were plundered not more than one coss from Midnapore, and the Collector wrote that about 200 of them with lighted mashals (torches) came to the opposite side of the Having River by Midnapore a few nights earlier. Raghunath Pal, a tehsilder from the recently resumed Paikan ground, was ordered to supply them with many rice, dal, etc. With their cattle and effects, the ryots streamed daily into Midnapore, while others went to other districts to avoid being plundered. The paddy was not cut down yet, nor did any person dare to cut it down, as they were at risk of being killed. They were generally threatened and manhandled when the Collector sent peons, particularly those he sent to demand Abkari Mahals' balances in the month of Baisakh 1205. On September 1 and 3, the rebels killed six people at Shiromani; on September 26, two men were put to death near Anandapur; on October 9, a group of Chuars attacked a village 10 miles from Midnapore; and on December 5 and 30, 1799, several villages near the town were plundered. Around thirty villages were attacked by Durjan Singh, the late zamindar of Raipur, along with a force of 1,500 Paiks. He wounded and killed the ryots, plundered their effects and burned their homes. They also surrounded the houses of the new clerk of the zamindar, and the daroga fled.

The Adivasis were so inspired by this achievement that they again rose in arms with Durjan Singh's help. The naib of the zamindar, Kinu Bakhsi, unable to stay in Raipur for fear of the Paiks, escaped to Balarampore. Zamindar's profits fell into arrears and a portion of his estate was ordered to be sold. The Adivasis were so rebellious that they appeared with lighted torches (mashals) and matches in the villages and burned the zamindar officials' houses so that no one dared to harvest the crops. One surbarakar was cut to pieces, another was beaten badly and then the village and all the golahs were set on fire. The ryots fled to Anandpore where a police outpost once existed, but that position was also attacked. The Tehsildars also abandoned their cutlery in Midnapore and took refuge. The rebels also made a bonfire of village accounts at Salbani and took away the estate of the house of the deceased Surbarakar Baktaram. Amin Ramchandra Chakraborty, deported from Slabani and other villages to make the jamabandi, was surrounded and threatened with death by about fifty men. No one was able to take care of the Bahadurpur collection of revenue. The collector wrote on February 26, 1799 that five villages were plundered and burned near Satpati and twelve zamindariamlahs (officials) were brutally beaten and burned to death. As a result, the ryots fled to the jungles to acquire means of survival. The Collector was concerned about the progress of the Paiks in robbing the treasury. They were so brazen that they hung accused people in the city in open daylight and plundered their property. The town of Midnapore was also threatened with fire, so that many of its inhabitants fled. In a letter of March 19, 1799, the Collector of Midnapore reported, "I am at a loss to point out the condition of a district of Midnapore. I cannot remain an idle spectator of the countless outrages that are committed with impunity on a daily basis. Two villages on the night of the 14th in which a quantity of grain was burning during the whole night and part of the next day... Bahadurpore is also..." [34]. The government's property held in the village of Anandpore was burnt and pillaged in 2000 Pacific. The heads of one of the Sebandisepoys and the barkandaz were cut off, and they hung up a tree; the rest made their escape to Midnapore. When the Paiks announced their intention to loot the city of Midnapore, the Collector was frightened. A reward was offered for the arrest of "the dangerous men" Gobardhan Dagpati and Kanak Singh. Both Paiks or Digwars were unable to obtain any assistance from the police daroga, who actually threatened death to any of the merchants who would dare to supply the sepoys with provisions. They stated

that the Rani Siromani and the Raja of Karnagarh and Narajole were authorized to do so. They were also joined by the friendly ryots and the zamindars from that locality.

The magister ordered Rani and his supporters to be arrested and the fort of Karnagarh, a convenient shelter for the rebels, to be seized. The Rani ordered all the jungle zamindars to meet and take a shared course of action. After the arrest of the Rani and its followers, the Pacific spiritually joined the Adivassis party. The Dhalhara bazaar was destroyed, and a number of animals were taken away.

Despite all the government's steps, one hundred rebels assaulted LakshiCharan Pal Mahapatra and two Anandapore chaukidars. Patra, an eastern Midnapore village, was set on fire and a Gangaram Mondal was put to death who planted a hudda for a decade. The representatives of Bagdi had invaded two villages of Silda and Raipur. The Adivasis captured six or seven villages of Nyabasan and Barjit in September 1798, refused to send income to the state treasury, cut crops, and pillaged the Tehsils' income ready to be deployed. As a result, the large-scale relocation of rural lands from the affected villages triggered the income arrears and agriculture stoppage. Any local thieves and criminals manipulated the situation and sought to terrorize the surrounding regions. Alarmed, the government of the Company set up night watch patrols in Midnapore streets. Some Raipure, Silda, Satpati and Manbhum police officers have failed to work on their 'indisposition' plea. They so are treated as 'crimes.' Therefore, offenders have been told to appear in the District Magistrate's bungalow within fifteen days of the notices' release.

When contemplating the essence of revolt, we must note that obedient zamindars, Tehsildars, grain dealers, and common citizens were the attack's principal goals. Perhaps the farmers had been the victims of the rebellious, but the farmers had supported the rebels in other cases[35]. Between peasant and Adivasis, a common source of friendship was formed. It was hard for the rebels to hide in the thick woods for a long time without the farmers' help. Records can be found in thousands of files stored in the West Bengal National Archives and the Collectorate of the Midnapore District. But Ranajit Guha did not succeed in putting such ties in his tribal lead adivasi resistance.

Benay Bhushan Chowdhury has had a casual reference in his work and has not been further than others' explanations[36][37]. It is true that they either participated as recruit of the armies of a local raj or other chieftains or as a result of pillage or loot revenues, where their means of livelihood were weak. Chowdhury's deep conviction was that "the chuar movements did include a number of tribals who had lost their main occupations as agriculturists." The risk of using multi-dimensional elements to torch the city without a doubt was an evidence of anti-colonial rebellion. A process of Chuar movement was mostly coordinated by the Paiks party, which mostly mixed farming with the "policing" work of their employers. The key impetus behind the rebellious' intense discontent was that paikan land re-entered and that they had no choice but "gaining their livelihood than by entering upon a career of rapine and pillage." This explains why the paiks were humorous at their loyalty to the governing power since the beginning of their colonial rule.

The Chuar rebellion immediately triggered a pause in the negative structure of paikan land management. The jungle mehalszamindars were provided with the force of the police and the inelastic aspects of the Legislation were not applied on defaulting estates. In reaction to interrogations sent by George Dowdeswell, Secretary of State of the Justice Department, in his letter dated 30 January 1802 declared that two years earlier the thousands of Chuars had been burnt and many parganas from Midnapore had been plundered, but he had taken the line to reestablish the zamindars as they were. Investing the zamindars in absolute authority was the primary means of restoring tranquility. The Chuars had not been wholly subdued at that time.

### **Historical Interpretations:**

Since the later half of the eighteenth century, many of the foreign officers, beginning with W.W.Hunter, and J.C.Price, have written many treatises on the Chuarrebellion. According to Pax Britanika's understanding, the British history examine revolt as an issue of the order and rules of an area in which the Zaminders were incapable of upholding the constitution,. The Pahi Rayats in the Paican lands were also recognized as the Thani Rayats in a rent-settled Zamindari area who were badly in need of counterbalancing their losses from the increased rent of reconstructed rentals. The British historians justified their military commitments to restore rule of law in the Mahal jungle that would guarantee a period of peace for improvement and a perfectly competitive marked demand in exchange for increasing the land's capacity of production. This in return would favor settled rays by eliminating the unproductive social parasitism [38]. They shut their eyes to know that the tribal farmer economy is a way to live against hostiles and not dictated by a motivation of advantage in a precapitalistic social formation of Benjamin [39], on the pillar of imperfect monetary markets. The twentieth-century nationalist historians celebrated these resistance movement in the Mughal period as tribal revolts to reclaim political independence. These uprisings result from unrest against the "inductive" policy of the caste Hindu rulers and traders, which split their tribal exclusivity and put the capitalist markets in the Pax-Britain world under their umbrella in the face of the challenges and exploitations.

They have "striven to distinguish between tribal and non-tribal feelings" and the "induced forces" of the tribal rulers from their consequences, "taking the modes and trends of this simple tribal folk culture into consideration" [40].

These movements have been studied as experiences in recent times by several academics. In comparison, for Marxist historians, "the uprising revealed the evil latent in the imperialist system of exploitation ruthlessly. The fundamental characteristic of colonial repression was focused on the overlapping of an extraneous system, thus dismantling the rule of the exploited nation's autonomous social growth. [41].

The Marxist scholars, another class of economic historians, consider these revolts as a mixture of privileged countryside and Zamindar, who sell social surpluses as free labour as from the sixteenth century, are created as 'Abwabs' and have accrued wealth unholy to merchant-money lenders only to spend on competitively unproductive terms [42]. These historians painted Zamindars and Sardar's social leadership as a parasitic greed to extend the sphere of power encouraged by land hunger. To others, the British rule was ruinous to the rural economy because of the persistent discontent of capital format triggered by a decay of the agriculture sector, which is common for famines and migrations to urban areas [43].

Therefore, the goal of the peasant analysis would be to examine known facts and evaluate the contribution made by historic powers in causing and developing the tribal unrest expressed in these peasant countries during the above-noted four phases [44]. But in the peasant resistance struggle in jungalMahal, it will be impossible to see a tribal vs non-tribal dispute [45].

In this case, the question remains: was the Chuar uprising of 1799 and the Jungle-Mahals and Orissa Rebellion of 1817 a deliberate effort by the discontented paiks to bring an end to colonial rule in the Jungle? Analyzing the events, the "Pabna league" of 1873 [46] appeared to be a unionism. Like the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, this was simply a colonial reaction of a few dissatisfied anarchist elements in society, who had little conception of taking Jungle Mahals and Orissa's economic past into the modern industrial phase. The revolutions were neither nationalist nor common. The permanent settlement of 1793 and the settlement of 'Mahalwari' of 1837 can be defined as the imperialist weapon of colonial rule machinery to introduce the norms of capitality and British finance capital [47]. This is a suggestion that involves sufficient analytical research.

### **Conclusions:**

From the above discussion, it is clear that during the period from 1799 to 1857, colonial rule witnessed numerous uprisings and disturbances in South-West Bengal. The essence of these disruptions ranged from elitist to common grassroots or the uprising of individuals. In the nature of ethnic movements, tribal movements traditionally appeared to be resistance movements aimed at resisting the subtle and, at times, covert attempts of non-tribals, both British and indigenous peoples, to infiltrate the maintained ethnic realms of tribal life. For example, when the tribal people felt a certain perceptible challenge to their ethnic identity's fundamental elements like traditions, beliefs, social structures, lifestyles, dialects, etc., they resisted rigidly. In the early phase of the establishment of British rule in India, certain forms of tribal movements were dominant. In the nature of agrarian movements, a number of tribal movements also emerged to protest their exploitation at the hands of both colonial and native exploiters. But the strong feelings of the people against exploitative politics of the colonial rules and strong arm tactics of the unscrupulous elements such as Zamindars, moneylenders, and so on, which not only tended to ruin their livelihoods but also put an intolerable financial strain on them, remained the common point of all the tribal movements launched on agrarian issues. These movements took the primarily political type, despite having their own share of ethnic as well as agrarian problems, probably because of the nationalist viewpoints of their leaders who felt that their problems would be remedied through the national movement process in India.

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