Walking Towards Food Sovereignty: Politics of Food in Santhal Life-World

Sanjeev Kumar
M.Phil Development Practice
Center for Development Practice
Ambedkar University Delhi
subaltern1@gmail.com
Santhal Community:
• Tribal
• Settled in the region during 19-20th century
• Great Agriculturist and Great Hunters
• Law Obeying Community
Chakai:
- Western Boundary of Santhal
- Immigration of Caste Hindu
- Deforestation
- ‘Modernization’ of Agriculture
- Migration
- Permanent Dependency
Food Security:

- Production Centric
- Carbohydrate Centric
- Top-Down Approach
- Dependency
Reformed Food Security:

- Consumption Centric
- Health Centric
- Marketized
- Dichotomy: Production Vs Hunger
- Non-Material Meanings of Food Still Missing
- Neglects Diversity of Food System
- Further Increases Dependency
Food Sovereignty:

- Community Centric
- Small Scale Farming
- Organic Farming
- Biodiversity
- Localism
- Women
- Prices Vs Value
Critique of Food Sovereignty:

- Does not talk about Poorest of the Poor
- Anti-Trade
- Does not address food shortage
- Slow
But Still:

- Still Health Centric
- Largely Production Centric
- Materialist
- Over-Romanticization
- Dependency
- Fits into Neo-Liberal Regime
Development Practice: Interventions

• Rejects Revivalist/Reformist Approach
• Re-Imaginative Approach
My Work Addresses:

- Gape Between Production, Consumption and Distribution
- Both Materialist & Structural
- Beyond Health
- Beyond Dependency Model
- Jackfruit as Reference Point
Why Jackfruit

- It give space for consumption centric approach
- Rejects Dependency
- Rejects both revivalist as well as reformist approach
Santhal-Jackfruit
• Part of Kitchen Garden
• Cultural relation
• One of the most important fruit of Hindustan
• Stigmatization
• Some varieties has been lost
• Loss of sovereignty over local food system
• Endangered their Food security
Method:

- Inside-Out—Outside-In
- Politics of Space
- Theatre
Theatre:

- First Two Women Theatre Group of Chakai (Ghatwari & Santhal)
- More than 100 performances across Chakai
- Worked on six script (Agriculture, Health, Violence against Women)
- Jackfruit & Theatre Coming Together
Theatre and Jackfruit

- Food centric scripts
- Food Calendar
- Male Jackfruit flowers
- Male jackfruit flower patty, pickle,
- Ripen Jackfruit Halwa
Consumption:

- Kitchen as space through food calendar & Theatre
- Male jackfruit patty and a kind of pickle
- Distributed as refreshment at performance
- Jackfruit Stall at annual meet
- Failure: sauce, vegetable
- Planned to put stall in the other fairs
Distribution:

- Local Haats
- Community to Community Distribution
- Surplus Produces
- Vegetable Market
Production:
- Lost varieties
- Grafting
- Plantation
- Pruning
- Medication
Conclusion:

- Action as Method
- Politics of Space
- Inside Out—Outside In
Thank You

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