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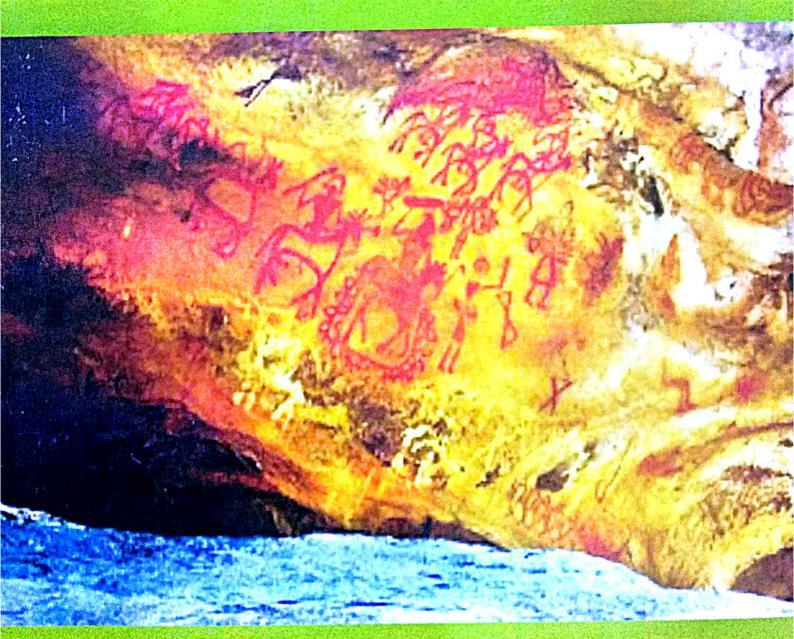
Role of Mahatma Gandhi Towards the Political and Social Empowerment of Women in India (1915-1947 A.D.)

Dr. Narayan Singh Rao

It is often argued by the feminist historians that women had been hidden from history, remained invisible and were deprived from their legitimate role in socio-economic, political and other spheres of society. Questions were also raised by scholars that 'was there a women's history?' Such questions may be relevant for western societies where women were treated as beast of burden and sources of all evils in the society. But in the context of India, such arguments are far from reality. In India right from the inception of human civilization women were visible and they played a dominant role in shaping our destiny, they heralded an era of progress in socio-cultural life and progress of human civilization. Women had been part and parcel of each and every historical event directly or indirectly. Our dharma shastras, smritis, niti shastras are not devoid of the role played by women in all ages in our society. Kautiliya prominently discusses the role of women in each and every sphere of life. Archeological and Archival records also provide mines of data on women to construct gender history. Thus it is not that women were invisible in history but it was failure on the part of modern historians, who could not locate the women in history as they had narrow and biased approach on the issues concerning women.

In India, we have a long list of prominent women such as Gargi, Sita, Maitreyi, Damayanti, Ambapali, Rambha, Urvashi, Menaka, Heidimbha, Draupadee, Usha, Noorjahan, Razia Sultana, Rani Laxmi Bai, Tarabai, Mastani, Rupmati, Chand Bibi, Rani

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A Perspective on Tribal History and Use of Oral Sources: A Case Study of the Tribes of India-Myanmar Border

Dr. Narayan Singh Rao

(A) Perspective on Tribal History

The census records of independent India recorded 212 tribal communities in 1951, 427 in 1961 and 432 tribes in 1971. In 2001 the tribal people constituted 8.2 percent of the total population which increased to 8.6 in census of 2011. The total ST population as per census records of 2011 was recorded as 10,42,81,034 which includes 9,38,19,162 rural and 1,04,61,872 urban people. The percentage of tribal population in Arunachal Pradesh is 68.79, Chhattisgarh 30.62, Gujarat 14.75, Jharkhand 26.21, Madhya Pradesh 21.09, Manipur 35.12, Meghalaya 86.15, Mizoram 94.43, Nagaland 86.48, Orissa 22.85, Rajasthan 13.48, Sikkim 33.80 and Assam 12.45.1 The tribes according to Dr. K.S. Singh are one of the best studied communities of India. They have their rich oral traditions and as many as 449 tribal communities having an ethnographic account. Yet we cannot afford to overlook the fact that historians of every school have not paid attention towards the construction of tribal history. The preoccupations of historians with empire and regional states as units of study and emphasis on analyzing social structure in terms of caste and class led to the neglect of tribal studies. There was greater emphasis and focus on Contract of tribal studies. and focus on Guptas, Mauryas Sultanate, Mughal Maratha British Empire British Empire and so on as if the vanvasis people do not have any history. have any history. For example, as per 1981 census records of