



Who wants a 'development' that doesn't recognise alternatives?: Working with and against postdevelopment in Jagatsinghpur, India

Citation of the final chapter:

Pattnaik, Sandeep and Balaton-Chrimes, Samantha 2019, Who wants a 'development' that doesn't recognise alternatives?: Working with and against postdevelopment in Jagatsinghpur, India. In Klein, Elise and Morreo, Carlos Eduardo (ed), *Postdevelopment in practice: alternatives, economies, ontologies*, Routledge, Abingdon, Eng., pp.149-162.

This is an **Accepted Manuscript** of a chapter published by Routledge in *Postdevelopment in practice* in 2019, available at: <http://doi.org/10.4324/9780429492136-12>

© 2019

Downloaded from DRO:

<http://hdl.handle.net/10536/DRO/DU:30128580>

"Who wants a 'Development' that doesn't recognize alternatives? Working with and against post-development in Jagatsinghpur, India"

Sandeep Pattnaik and Samantha Balaton-Chrimes (ORCID ID 0000-0002-7917-284)

This is a pre-publication version of the following:

Balaton-Chrimes, S. and S. K. Pattnaik (2019). "Who wants a 'Development' that doesn't recognize alternatives? Working with and against post-development in Jagatsinghpur, India". Postdevelopment in Practice. E. Klein and C. M. Boada, Routledge: 149-162.

Please refer to the official publication for page numbers when citing.

Abstract:

Jagatsinghpur, a district in the eastern Indian state of Odisha, has attracted media attention for a lengthy fight over land between a community of betel-farmers, fisher folk and livestock herders on one side, and the state and state patronized corporations seeking to build a steel plant, port and captive power plant on the other. The struggle has lasted over a decade amidst reports of killings, arrests and gross human rights violations. In 2017, after 12 years, Korean steel giant POSCO withdrew, only to be replaced by Indian corporations seeking the same land. In this chapter, we examine the anti-POSCO People's Movement (POSCO Pratirodh Sangram Samiti) as an example of post-development in practice. The movement's anti-corporate stance, and its defence of a sustainable and dignified land-based livelihood and the right to self-governance align with key tenets of post-development. However, in other areas the movement's stance is more aligned with a traditional development paradigm, including desire for markets for petty commodities, and belief in the state as the inevitable, appropriate site of self-governance, and an agent of development. We conclude that to work towards a

pluriverse, we must attend to aspirations that entail tensions between post-development and more traditional development principles.

Introduction

In the district of Jagatsinghpur, in the eastern Indian state of Odisha, a community of betel-farmers, fisherfolk and livestock herders spent more than a decade in a protracted struggle against South Korean steel giant POSCO to retain their coastal farming, grazing lands, waterbodies and other environmental resources that are shared in common and used for livelihoods. In 2017, POSCO finally withdrew, and the community has enjoyed a temporary reprieve from forced land acquisition threats, though rumours are rife that other companies are interested in the land. The communities believe that their struggle is not over.

In this chapter, we examine the anti-POSCO People's Movement (*POSCO Pratirodh Sangram Samiti*, PPSS) as an example of post-development in practice. The movement's anti-corporate stance, its defence of its members' common and private land and resources, its resistance to a forcible transition to wage labour and exclusion from land-based sustainable livelihoods, its concern for the environment, and its insistence on members' rights to determine their own futures, all align with key tenets of post-development. Because the movement has developed as inherently oppositional, and is situated within a highly polarised political economy of development in Odisha, it is easy and indeed tempting to understand the movement as almost quintessentially post-development. However, upon closer inspection, there are a number of axes on which the movement's stance is more aligned with some quite traditional (pre-neoliberal) ideas around development, including the importance of access to markets for petty commodities, and a strong belief in the state as both the inevitable and appropriate site of self-governance, and an agent of development (in this case through the

provision of infrastructure for petty commodity production and trade). We offer this actually existing practice, then, as an example of how an exceptionally resilient community has resisted unwanted development, while also engaging in and negotiating not only post-development principles, but also development ones, generating its own vision of the future and the good life that rejects globalised and heavily industrialised capitalism; but seeks engagement with and benefit from local small-scale industrialised capitalist trade and the state. In general, villagers have not displaced development as the set of discourses and practices through which living conditions are understood (Escobar 2012, pp. xii-xiii), but rather they imagine a development alternative (not an alternative to development). As Corbridge (1998, p. 139) notes, opting out of development is not the only option.

In this chapter we draw on publicly available documents and qualitative research with PPSS leaders. We draw on research we have conducted independently and together since Sandeep began working with the movement in 2009, and Sam began researching the POSCO case in 2011. This includes knowledge Sandeep has gleaned as a solidarity activist working on displacement and the rights of scheduled tribes and castes, and documenting the movement's work (Pattnaik 2011) and knowledge Sam has gained researching the movement's efforts to oust POSCO (Balaton-Chrimes 2016; Balaton-Chrimes & Haines 2016). In addition, we also draw on recent interviews (five with PPSS members, two with PPSS leaders) conducted by Sandeep in April 2018, a time in which the movement was regrouping after POSCO's withdrawal a little over a year earlier, strategizing about possible future threats of land acquisition, and reflecting on how to reconfigure its goals in light of POSCO's exit.

We are exploring here the movement's ideas of what it is to live well, their formulation of the good life. At this point, a few methodological caveats are in order. In speaking of 'the movement's' view of the good life, we are not suggesting this is a singular vision. The villagers who are members of the movement include different people with different skills and livelihoods, and different property rights, and these differences (among others) generate variation in people's desires. We consider this normal and attend to the variation in our analysis. We also wish to be clear that, when we deal with recent interview material, this picture of villagers' aspirations is a snapshot of a particular point in time, albeit situated against the lengthy backdrop of opposition to globalised and industrialised capitalist expansion. We are not suggesting this snapshot captures a fixed set of desires, nor that it covers everything members of the movement might want now or in the future. We labour this point in order to ward against a common criticism made of post-development, namely that it romanticises and essentialises social movements (Ziai 2017, pp.2547-8). We wish to do neither, but rather to keep open space for internal diversity and changes over time in how these communities conceptualise what it is to live well. Finally, our research has been conducted only with members of the movement, and so does not take into account the desires of villagers who were pro-POSCO because they expected (unrealistically high levels of) compensation and benefits from the project (Balaton-Chrimes 2016, p.21). These pro-POSCO villagers have formed the United Action Committee, consisting of around 1000 members, demanding a compensation package for loss of betel vines, prawn gheries and cultivable land at the proposed project site. We exclude these people from our research not to invalidate their development aspirations, but because of the focus of this edited volume on post-development in practice.

We focus here on PPSS in order to contribute to the growing post-development literature that is rich in empirical detail, and therefore much greater nuance than the early work on post-development (Escobar 2012, p.xv-xvi). We are not suggesting our analysis of PPSS can be generalised to all people's movements, or even all anti-displacement or anti-corporate people's movements in India. Rather, this snapshot is intended to be generative of insights about the interplay between development and post-development principles and aspirations (Hage 2016). It is, in de Sousa Santos' (2014, p.ix, p.44) terms, 'rearguard theory', anchored in an empirical account of the movement that seeks to know *with*, understand, facilitate and share, rather than acting as a theoretical vanguard that claims to know *about*, explain and guide.

In what follows, we outline the history of the movement in the context of Odisha, where a very traditional modernist development project is being vigorously pursued by the state government. We go on to explore two areas in which there is tension between development and post-development sensibilities: the role of the state in self-governance, and a commitment to state-supported small-scale light industrial capitalist production and trade. We conclude by arguing that if we are committed to building a pluriverse, then we need to attend to aspirations that entail tensions between post-development and more traditional development principles.

Oppositional development politics

The political economy of Odisha is one that heavily privileges a modernist imaginary of development as occurring through economic growth, fuelled by industrialisation (especially private sector), and is hostile to alternative understandings of development or ways of life.

Until the 1980s, Odisha's economy was predominantly agricultural, with some light manufacturing (Adduci 2012). Where there were industrial developments, such as the state-owned Rourkela steel plant, NALCO Aluminium or the Hirakud dam, these were designed to meet the needs of the state for energy or broader India for the expansion of its industrial base, but they did little to contribute to the state's economic growth (Adduci 2012). Beginning as early as the 1980s and accelerating under the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) government with Naveen Patnaik as Chief Minister since 1997, the state government has sought to reorient the economy towards industrialization.ⁱ The state government sees industrialization, particularly through mining of the state's abundant mineral resources (Department of Steel & Mines 2015) and value-adding processes (such as steel manufacturing) as the key to generating employment (Adduci 2012, p.78). In order to exploit these natural resources, the state has sought to out-compete other states to attract private, including foreign, capital and concentrated its efforts in the iron ore and steel sectors.ⁱⁱ A progressively established policy framework seeks to facilitate this investment through committing to deregulation, with a focus on the mineral sector, and orienting the government's role to the establishment of infrastructure through public-private partnerships (via the Odisha Industrial Policy 2001, Industries Facilitation Act 2004 and Industrial Policy 2007, Policy for Special Economic Zone 2015), providing special security for industrial projects through the Odisha Industrial Security Forces Act (2012), and the establishment of the country's first Single Window Clearance mechanism (following the Odisha Industries (Facilitation) Act 2004) to speed up clearances and approvals (Odisha State Government 2018). The government has been particularly proactive in providing support for land acquisition through the Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) of Odisha, which is a state nodal agency for land acquisition. The IDCO has already reserved at least 59,000 acres under a land bank

project for industrial infrastructure, partly in response to POSCO's withdrawal over difficulties in land acquisition (Times of India 2017).

The shift in state economic policy towards industrialization and liberalization has led to high economic growth rates, an estimated 7.14% for 2017-2018, surpassing the national growth rate of 6.5% (New Indian Express 2018). Poverty has also decreased significantly in the state, from 57.2% in 2004-05 (60.8% in rural areas and 37.6% in urban areas) to 32.59% in 2011-12 (35.69% in rural areas and 17.29% in urban areas). Nevertheless, Odisha remains one of the poorest states in India (where national poverty rates had dropped to 21.92% in 2011-12 (Planning Commission 2014, pp.28-29) and poverty is particularly concentrated among the state's large population of vulnerable populations, where poverty rates are at 63.52% for Scheduled Tribes and 41.39% for Scheduled Castes in 2011-12 (Planning and Coordination Department 2014, p.271).

Conventional critics of the state's development model have not departed from a modernist imaginary of development, but rather focus on problems with its implementation. Some have argued that increases in mining and industry have not had the anticipated effect of also increasing production and employment in downstream sectors such as manufacturing (Adduci 2012, pp.86-88). Others argue that the failure of mining-led industrialization to bring benefit to all the people of Odisha is, in part, the result of the government's failure to adequately regulate the industry to ensure that private investments adhere to the rule of law and make adequate assessments of the costs and benefits of private (or public) industrial projects (Maringanti et al 2013, p.71). Some on the Indian left attribute this 'growth without inclusion' to the parallel neglect of agriculture (Panda 2008; Mishra 2010). The agricultural

sector provides more employment than the industrial sector, yet the state government has allowed the sector to stagnate through lack of investment, as well as slow but steady dispossession of agricultural land and other forms of common property, such as forests and water resources, that traditional agriculturalists use in farming (Mishra 2011).

Both the state's development model and the most common criticisms of it subscribe to what Ziai (2013:126-127) identifies as the core assumptions of development that post-developmentalists are concerned about: The existential assumption that there is such a thing as development, the normative assumption that development is a good thing, the practical assumption that development can be achieved, and the methodological assumption that units (states) can be compared according to their development.ⁱⁱⁱ Furthermore, both the state's model and its main critics also share in three additional assumptions Ziai identifies as associated with the *classical* paradigm of development: that the goal is to be industrialised like the countries of North America and Europe; that this is to be achieved through economic growth, industrialisation and modernisation; and that such interventions can be readily legitimated by basing them on expert knowledge.^{iv}

Though academic criticism has largely shared in these assumptions and sought to better implement programs of industrialisation and growth, a number of anti-corporate and anti-displacement people's movements have mounted more fundamental challenges to this model. These movements have questioned the extreme social, economic and environmental costs that ordinary people face when displaced for large-scale industrial projects. They typically seek to stop major industrial projects, but sometimes seek to negotiate better terms for benefit sharing, usually in cases where there is no realistic hope of retaining their land (Dash and

Samal 2008). By rejecting industrialisation and global capitalism as development mechanisms, these people's movements demonstrate some post-development leanings. Between 2005, when the state government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with POSCO, and 2017 when the company pulled out, PPSS was one of the most resilient and successful of these.

The proposed POSCO project was a US\$12 billion investment – the biggest foreign direct investment ever in India – that would have included construction of an integrated steel plant, mine and associated infrastructure. It had unprecedented levels of support from the state government of Odisha, as well as the Union government of India, and the South Korean government, and the MoU offered particularly generous terms for POSCO with respect to access to land and minerals, taxes and support for clearing regulatory hurdles (Balaton-Chrimes 2016, pp.14-15). The most controversy was around the proposed plant site of 4004 acres, covering 8 villages in the three gram panchayats of Dhinkia, Gobindapur and Gadakujanga, and a total population of 22 000 people (Pingle et al., 2010, p.52; IHRC and ESCR-Net, 2013, p.12; Asher, 2009:11; MZPSG, 2010: 6). A total of 718 families would have been displaced (Balaton-Chrimes 2016, p.14). The compensation package offered by POSCO was inadequate to protect against impoverishment, there was inadequate consultation around the project and its impacts, and there were high levels of government sponsored violence, intimidation and harassment against PPSS members (Balaton-Chrimes 2016; IHRC and ESCR-net 2013). Supporters helped the movement with legal and regulatory appeals, national and transnational campaigning, and a complaint to the OECD National Contact Point (Balaton-Chrimes 2016), but the most decisive factor in making the project untenable for POSCO was the resistance of the people's movement.

Formed within weeks of the signing of the POSCO MoU, PPSS claims to represent 80% of the people in the areas affected by the proposed POSCO steel plant in Jagatsinghpur, with Dhinkia panchayat the movement's consistent stronghold (Ceresna, 2011, p.20). The movements' objective was to prevent the POSCO project from going ahead; to retain their ancestral lands and livelihoods; and to protect the local environment. Its strategy to achieve these objectives has been two-fold: non-violent direct action, and a policy of non-engagement with the company or government on anything other than protection of their land and environmental rights. The movement is structured through village committees, an inter-village general council of 50 to 150 members (it changes over time), an executive committee consisting of 51 members, 40% of whom are women, and a smaller core leadership group of approximately 10 people responsible for urgent decisions, led by the movement's chairman, Abhay Sahoo, who is a member of the Communist Party of India (CPI) (Pattnaik, 2011, p.54; Interview with Prasant Paikray, spokesperson PPSS, Bhubaneswar, December 2012; Interview with Abhay Sahoo, leader PPSS, Jagatsinghpur, December 2013). Members of PPSS make small financial contributions to the movement to sustain its activities, and participate in non-violent direct-action protests. Day to day, members of the movement provide mutual support, for example through resolving conflict to avoid having to deal with the police, or through working on collective projects such as unblocking waterways, or preparing for cyclones (Pattnaik, 2011, p.58; Interview with Prasant Paikray, spokesperson PPSS, Bhubaneswar, December 2012). PPSS thus functions both as a resistance movement and a self-help movement that filled the gap left by a state they saw as promoting POSCO's interests over that of its citizens. PPSS liaises with more formal organisations, such as civil society organisations, legal activists or journalists, academics, anti-displacement movements, political parties, and national and international solidarity committees to take advantage of their technical expertise and networks. Other organisations can make their own decisions

regarding their strategies and tactics, which, by engaging the law and other more formal channels, are complementary to non-violent direct action and non-engagement. However, PPSS operates on the principle of solidarity, constituted by a strict policy of non-interference from outside organisations in PPSS's internal matters (Interview with Prasant Paikray, Spokesperson PPSS, Bhubaneswar, December 2012). Though POSCO has quit the project, the issue of land already acquired and transferred to POSCO still remains. Odisha's Industry minister has told the state assembly the land will be kept in a land bank and plans are being made to fence the land. Since POSCO's withdrawal, PPSS has called on the government to return the land, and has mobilised people to repossess their farm lands and reconstruct their vineyards for the cultivation of betel leaves.

As an 'anti' movement, PPSS's goals have been defined primarily in oppositional terms – what they are against, rather than what they are for. The initial formation of the movement was facilitated by Gandhian activists who had a presence in the area as part of a humanitarian effort after the 1999 super cyclone, and who shared the early information about the project and its impacts with the villagers. Their non-violent approach, even in the face of attacks from pro-POSCO villagers, attracted many new members to the movement. They organised mass dharanas (sit-ins) outside government offices, and had roving satyagrahis (proponents of non-violence) raising awareness throughout the villages (Pattnaik 2011, p.55). A few months later, opposition political parties, particularly CPI, began touring the area and also became involved in the movement (Pattnaik 2011, p.56), quickly forming a leadership group. The movement therefore has its ideological origins both in Gandhian notions of swaraj (self-rule) and in leftist opposition to (particularly global) capitalism.^v However, neither of these ideological orientations has firmly shaped the aspirations of the villagers, who instead hold a less ideologically developed commitment simply to a source of livelihood that is both

adequate and sustainable over the long term, and which is often (but not always) deemed by villagers to include guaranteed access to communal resources.

Development and post-development

PPSS' emphasis on political self-governance (particularly through the activities of the gram sabhas (Village Councils), economic self-determination and ecological preservation in many ways aligns neatly with a post-development sensibility. The movement does not trust that the state' modernist development will deliver on its promise of improved quality of life (Sachs 2010, p.xii). It is critical of devaluing of non-industrial and non-economised ways of life, and of the violence and domination that takes place in the name of the expansion of capitalism and a westernised way of life (Ziai 2015, p. 840-842; Ziai 2017, p.2457-8). More specifically, the movement objects to the enclosure of the commons, the associated transformation of farmers or fisherfolk into (surplus) wage labourers, and the risks this poses to their very survival, and adopts civil disobedience as a strategy to combat these risks (Shiva 2005). However, looking more closely, villagers' aspirations – as opposed to their rejections – reveal a more complex engagement with some of the core tenets of post-development scholarship.

The state and self-governance

The post-development literature, in its earliest iterations, held a stance of suspicion toward the state. Esteva and Prakash's (2014, p.13) idealised post-modern grassroots movements, for example, were "independent from and antagonistic to the state and its formal and corporative structures." More recent scholarship both within and critical of post-development has rightly corrected this hostile stance to ask more nuanced questions about the role of the state in what

this volume is calling post-development in practice. Following Corbridge's call for field research that reveals the everyday experiences of state (and market) (Corbridge 2010, p.87; see also Corbridge et al 2005), we agree that attention to actually existing practices of state-citizen relations is more useful for understanding and advancing the aspirations of people in the South. In the case of India, Vandana Shiva (2005, p.35) characterises the state as having an ambivalent role in a 'zone of contest in conflicts between enclosures and reclamation of the commons'. While the state can sometimes be 'inverted', more committed to foreign investment than its citizens' wellbeing (Shiva 2005, pp.77-78), it is also the case that some post-development arguments are problematic insofar as they call for a weakening of states that can expose communities to the vagaries and violence of global capitalism (McGregor 2009, p.1696). PPSS's struggle is situated within precisely this predicament: the actually existing state *is* more committed to foreign capital than citizen welfare, but if not the state, then who will protect the villagers from that very same capital?

PPSS has been continuously and keenly alive to the dilemma this poses. One of the movement's most central and consistent strategies has thus been to advocate for proper implementation of citizen rights to self-governance outlined in Indian legislation via the PanchayatiRaj (rule by village councils) system. The 73rd amendment of the Indian Constitution recognises the Panchayats as self-governing units at the district and sub-district levels, and as the main locus of democratic decentralization.^{vi}In 2006, a further important piece of legislation, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, commonly known simply as the Forest Rights Act (FRA) came into force. This Act proposes to set right the historical injustices done to those living in and around forests. In order to protect their existing livelihoods and way of life, people in the villages affected by the proposed POSCO project applied – without success - for recognition

of their status as Other traditional Forest Dwellers (Balaton-Chrimes 2016, p.17). This is a category afforded special land rights under FRA, namely (in section ii, 3a) the “right to hold and live in the forest land under the individual or common occupation for habitation or for self cultivation for livelihood.” In short, Indian law provides for considerable decision-making autonomy for PPSS members, and one of the movement’s primary objectives is to activate these laws.

Since the signing of the POSCO MoU in 2005, Gram Sabha resolutions rejecting the POSCO project were passed in all three Gram Panchayats, though these have been ignored by the state government (Balaton-Chrimes 2016, p.18). These resolutions demonstrate how the movement has utilised a robust collective decision taking process and a strong sense of camaraderie among themselves to combat the state’s efforts to avoid its responsibilities and forcibly displace them, of which they are keenly aware.

This strategy reflects the movement’s commitment to strengthen existing mechanisms of self-governance. We deliberately use the term self-governance here, rather than self-determination, because the implication is not that the movement’s members seek some form of independence from the state, either in the sense of separatism or in the sense of a lack of dependence.^{vii} On the contrary, the movement sees the state as having responsibilities to respect and fulfil the aspirations of villagers. This does not necessarily mean the claim is not a radical one, however – it is quite radical insofar as it calls on the state for resources and investment, but in a way that is *entirely deferent* to local decision-making processes. The relationship the movement is trying to establish, then, is one of mutual interdependence between people and the state. The effort is to move from the current state hostility, toward a situation in which the state is theirs.

The state, small-scale industrialised capitalism and wage labour

Perhaps even more so than the state, the post-development literature has a very hostile attitude toward markets. Ziai (2017, p. 2458) identifies one of the core tenets of post-development as conceptualising development as an economic rationality centred around accumulation, and possessing a capitalist logic of privileging activities earning money through the market. Esteva (2010, p.17) claims that ‘disengaging from the economic logic of the market or the plan has become the very condition for survival’. Shiva (2010, p. 238) is also critical of market-centred economies, compared to earth-centred economies, which she holds are infinitely better at ‘providing better human sustenance for all.’ Yet, PPSS and its members depend on national and state-level markets in petty commodities for their survival, and intend to continue to do so.

The district of Jagatsinghpur hosts a highly productive and relatively (by rural Indian standards) lucrative agricultural economy. The majority of villagers cultivate a range of crops including betel,^{viii}paddy, cashew and other tree species, as well as collecting minor forest products such as bamboo and fuel (Pingle et al., 2010, p.19), while some engage in fishing, operate shrimp farms (pisciculture) or practice animal husbandry (IHRC and ESCR-Net, 2013, pp.12-13). Of these livelihood activities, betel cultivation and trading is the most lucrative, earning an average annual profit of about Rs. 200,000 [U.S. \$ 3374] in 2010 for the owner (IHRC and ESCR-Net, 2013: 12), and providing additional employment for landless labourers (Asher, 2009, p.12). In addition to the income stream provided by cultivation of betel, shrimp or cashews, families in the affected villages in Jagatsinghpur also supplement their livelihood in significant ways by accessing common resources, including rice, fish and

forest products that are gathered locally and used for household consumption (MZPSG, 2010, pp.37-38). Furthermore, these livelihoods engage all members of the family in productive work (MZPSG, 2010, p.35). In a context of deteriorating agricultural production and associated impoverishment and marginalization of rural populations in Odisha, this successful agricultural way of life is significant (cf. Mishra, 2011).

As such, PPSS members are very committed to retaining these livelihood sources. The vision articulated in our interviews with PPSS members, and in PPSS communications with supporters (sent out via email regularly), is one of a light industrial form of capitalism that supports small scale petty commodity production and trade. The emphasis is on livelihoods that are both sustainable, in terms of protecting natural resources for the long-term future, and dignified, in terms of enabling people some autonomy, financial security and a reasonable standard of living. To support these aspirations, villagers want the state to provide infrastructure, such as roads and small-scale processing factories for commodities like cashews. In this sense, they want to benefit from modern technologies, not to return any kind of idealised pre-technological era, as post-developmentalists can sometimes demand (see also Nanda 1999). However, they see technology as playing a complementary role in the preservation of livelihood and natural resources. Far from constituting Rahnema's vernacular society in which 'abundance is perceived as a state of nature' (2010, p.187), villagers are, in fact, worried about the security of their natural resources, and actively seek to protect them, but in order that they might be exploited over the long-term, in a sustainable way. The effort here is, then, to push the state to become a sustainably developmental state.

In addition to this commitment to small-scale petty commodity production and trade, supported by the state, there is some ambivalence around wage labour among PPSS members that also complicates the post-development paradigm. Though there is some willingness among men to become proletarianized or semi-proletarianised by accepting wage labouring positions in nearby heavy industry, this is generally only understood as acceptable as a supplement to secure land rights and ongoing production of betel and so on. PPSS members do not want to sacrifice their own land and resources, but are willing to benefit from the employment opportunities offered by heavy industrialisation in other areas. Women are much less enthusiastic about a move to wage labouring, understandably given the very few employment opportunities for women in heavy industry. Equally, many people who either were landless to begin with, or have become landless through forcible land acquisition, are dalit or low-caste people. They find themselves in a particularly precarious position, making a living by wage labouring on other people's land, and willing to take wage labour positions in factories, but ultimately still desiring land or land restitution as their first priority.

One of the reasons for the ambivalence around wage labour and the staunch commitment to land-based livelihoods is the villagers' witnessing of the experience of a nearby village with heavy industrialisation – the Indian Oil refinery. PPSS members have seen the plight of 5000 displaced villagers of Trilochanpur (part of Dinkia Panchayat but not in the proposed POSCO area) who gave their land to Indian Oil corporation limited in the 1990s, but did not get ongoing employment in the factory built there. In 2017, affected villagers – neighbours of PPSS members – organised under the banner of JamiharaKrushak Ekta Manch(Solidarity platform of families who lost land to Indian Oil) and launched an indefinite hunger strike demanding permanent jobs, and more adequate compensation and rehabilitation for their earlier displacement. This case, and many others like it in the state, have demonstrated that

the promise of a position in the proletariat is often a false one, and that displaced people are far more likely to be surplus to labour demands, and to fall into a vicious cycle of impoverishment and social dysfunction. Individual villagers' interest in becoming a wage labourer is, then, contingent upon their degree of optimism regarding opportunity, and their assessment of their other livelihood options, particularly for women (who have few wage opportunities) and the landless (who are more in need of income than those with land).

Concluding reflections

One of the long-standing critiques of post-development scholarship is that it has an inconsistent theory of power (Lehmann 1997, p.573; Ziai 2004, p.1047). On the one hand, post-developmentalists (especially the early ones) paint a picture of a developmental power so ubiquitous it is inescapable, and yet on the other they glorify autonomous and untainted people's movements that have somehow escaped development's reach to imagine and pursue alternative life projects. Our research with PPSS shows that neither extreme is the case. In practice, the power of the conventional development imaginary is significant and has shaped the aspirations of members of the people's movement, but not so much that they have come to resemble only *homo oeconomicus* desiring nothing but a western way of life. Desires for improvement are a negotiation on a messy terrain of power's effects.

The case of the anti-POSCO people's movement is inspiring in many ways. Their resilience in the face of more than a decade of violence and hostility from government and the private sector, in order to protect a dignified and sustainable way of life is remarkable. However, the movement does not align neatly with all that the post-development literature proposes as core to post-development. It is our contention that this does not simply mean the movement has

been co-opted by the development machine, but that the pluriversality the movement aims at is more subtle in nature. We don't want to imply some kind of pure and autochthonous emergence of untainted ideas and desires, but nor do we wish to imply false consciousness. What this research shows instead is a thick social, economic and political fabric in which a plurality of desires exist in conversation with each-other.

References

- Adduci, M. (2012). 'Neoliberalism and class reproduction in India: The political economy of privatisation of the mineral sector in the Indian state of Orissa' *Forum for Social Economics*, vol. 41, no.1, pp.68-96.
- Asher, M. (2009). *Striking while the iron is hot: A case study of the Pohang Steel Company's (POSCO) proposed project in Orissa*. Pune, National Centre for Advocacy Studies.
- Balaton-Chrimes, S. (2016). *POSCO's Odisha project: OECD National Contact Point complaints and a decade of resistance*. Melbourne, The Non-Judicial Grievance Mechanisms Project.
- Balaton-Chrimes, S., & Haines, F. (2016). 'Redress and Corporate Human Rights Harms: An Analysis of New Governance and the POSCO Odisha Project' *Globalizations*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 596-610.
- Ceresna, L. (2011). *A Manual on Corporate Accountability in India*. Bangalore, Cividep India.
- Corbridge, S. (1998). "Beneath the pavement only soil": The poverty of post-development' *The Journal of Development Studies* vol. 34, no. 6, pp.138-148.
- Corbridge, S. (2010). 'Beyond Developmentalism: The Turn to Cultural Anthropology' *New Political Economy* vol. 6, no.1, pp.81-88.
- Corbridge, S., G. Williams, M. Srivastava and R. Véron (2005). *Seeing the State: Governance and Governmentality in India*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

- Dash, K. C. and K. C. Samal (2008). 'New mega projects in Orissa: Protests by potential displaced persons' *Social Change* vol.38, no.4, pp.627-644
- Department of Steel & Mines, Orissa website, "Mineral Based industries"
<http://www.orissaminerals.gov.in/website/MineralProc.aspx?GL=mines&PL=2> Accessed 22 January 2015.
- de Sousa Santos, B. (2014). *Epistemologies of the South. Justice against Epistemicide*. Paradigm Publishers, Boulder and London.
- Escobar, A. (2012). *Encountering development: The making and unmaking of the third world*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.
- Esteva, G. (2010) 'Development' W. Sachs (ed.) *The Development Dictionary*, Zed Books, London and New York.
- Esteva, G. and M. Prakash (2014). *Grassroots post-modernism: remaking the soil of cultures*. Zed books, London.
- Hage, G. (2016). 'Towards an ethics of the theoretical encounter' *Anthropological Theory* vol.16, no.2-3, pp.221-226.
- International Human Rights Clinic and ESCR-Net (2013). *The Price of Steel: Human Rights and Forced Evictions in the POSCO-India Project*. NYU School of Law, New York.
- Lehmann, D. (1997) 'An Opportunity Lost: Escobar's Deconstruction of Development' *The Journal of Development Studies* vol.33, no.4, pp.568-578.
- Maringanti, A., B. Mathew and S. C. Naidu (2013). 'Contemporary Fault Lines in Applied Economic Research' *Economic & Political Weekly* vol.XLVIII, no.3, pp.71-77.
- McGregor, A. (2009). 'New Possibilities? Shifts in Post-Development Theory and Practice' *Geography Compass* vol.3, no.5, pp.1688-1702.
- Mining Zone Peoples' Solidarity Group (2010). *Iron and steal: The POSCO-India Story*. Mining Zone Peoples' Solidarity Group, USA.

- Mishra, B. (2010) 'Agriculture, Industry and Mining in Orissa in the Post-Liberalisation Era: An Inter-District and Inter-State Panel Analysis' *Economic and Political Weekly* vol. XLV, no.20, pp.49-68.
- Mishra, D. K. (2011). 'Behind Dispossession: State, Land Grabbing and Agrarian Change in Rural Orissa'. *International Conference on Global Land Grabbing*, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.
- Nanda, M. (1999). 'Who Needs Post-Development? Discourses of Difference, Green Revolution and Agrarian Populism in India.' *Journal of Developing Societies* vol. 15, pp.5-31.
- New Indian Express (2018) 'Odisha's economy estimated to grow at 7.14% 2017-18' March 22. Accessed 30 July 2018.
- Odisha State Government (2018) 'Single Window Clearance' on 'Invest Odisha website, <https://investodisha.gov.in/eodb/single-window> , Accessed 30 July 2018.
- Panda, M. (2008). *Economic Development in Orissa: Growth without inclusion?* Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai.
- Pattnaik, S. K. (2011) 'Case study 3: Story from India' in *Organising and Mobilising in People Centred Advocacy in South Asia*. National Centre for Advocacy Studies, Pune.
- Pingle, U., D. Pandey and V. Suresh (2010). *Majority Report of the Committee Constituted to Investigate into the proposal submitted by POSCO India Pvt. Limited for establishment of an Integrated Steel Plant and Captive Port in Jagatsinghpur District, Orissa*. Ministry of Environment and Forests, New Delhi.
- Planning and Coordination Department (Government of Odisha) (2014). *Odisha Economic Survey 2013–2014* Planning and Coordination Department, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar:
- Planning Commission (Government of India) (2014) *Annual Report 2013–2014*. Planning Commission (Government of India), New Delhi.

- Rahnema, M. (2010) 'Poverty' in W. Sachs (ed.) *The Development Dictionary*, Zed Books, London and New York.
- Sachs, W., Ed. (2010). *The Development Dictionary*. Zed Books, London and New York.
- Shiva, V. (2005). *Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability and Peace*. South End Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Shiva, V. (2010) 'Resources' in W. Sachs (ed.) *The Development Dictionary*, Zed Books, London and New York.
- Times of India (2017) 'Odisha government sets aside 59,000 acres as land bank for industrial use' December 31. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bhubaneswar/odisha-government-sets-aside-59000-acre-as-land-bank-for-industrial-use/articleshow/62313808.cms> Accessed 30 July 2018.
- Ziai, A. (2004). 'The Ambivalence of Post-Development: Between Reactionary Populism and Radical Democracy' *Third World Quarterly* vol.25, no.6, pp.1045-1060.
- Ziai, A. (2013). 'The discourse of "development" and why the concept should be abandoned' *Development in Practice* vol.23, no.1, pp.123-136.
- Ziai, A. (2015). 'Post-Development: Premature Burials and Haunting Ghosts' *Development and Change* vol.46, pp.833-854.
- Ziai, A. (2017). 'Post-development 25 years after The Development Dictionary' *Third World Quarterly* vol.38, no.12, pp.2547-2558.

ⁱ Naveen Pattnaik is son of Biju Pattnaik, the founding father of the state of Odisha. Pattnaik and his party, BJD, were in an alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from 1998 until 2009, after which time BJD was able to gain a majority in the Legislative Assembly alone. BJD's platform is one of neoliberal economic policy and industrialization. The party's success is often attributed to the lack of a strong opposition, as neither BJP nor Congress are strong at state level. BJD is not, however, popular in tribal areas or areas where there are peoples' movements.

ⁱⁱ 80% of mining leases in the state since liberalization have been for private companies (Adduci 2012, p.79).

ⁱⁱⁱ Ziai is referring to states as in nation-states, though the same principle applies when considering comparison of states within India.

^{iv} This is particularly so in the case of POSCO, where its use of technology was one of the major justifications for seeking foreign rather than domestic investment.

^v CPI and other opposition parties also had clear electoral interests in joining and leading these movements.

^{vi} An additional piece of important legislation for decentralised democratic decision making is The Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) (PESA) Act 1996, which extended Part IX of the Constitution, constituting the panchayat system, to Scheduled areas. The Fifth Schedule deals with administration of scheduled areas where tribal communities are in a majority. The PESA Act aims to empower the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the Scheduled areas for economic development and social justice. Under this Act, a Gram Sabha has the power to safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people of the area, their cultural identity, community resources and customary dispute resolution processes. However, Jagatsinghpur was not a Scheduled Area so this legislation is less directly relevant to PPSS, but important in empowering other anti-corporate and anti-displacement people's movements in the state.

^{vii} In addition, the term 'self-determination' has connotations of state secession in India that are not relevant here.

^{viii} Paan is a mix of betel leaves and other ingredients that is consumed widely in Asia.