

Resource Conservation through Religious Sanctions and Social Conventions in a Primitive Tribal Group of Orissa, India

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ABSTRACT Struggling along and against the elements of nature, the tribal in their "little world" largely depends upon its bounty for subsistence. The incidence of dependence is much greater on forest and its product during the lean period. The traditional way of their life is in perfect harmony with nature. It stands in contradiction with ever-growing spirals of higher consumption and higher production ideals of modern man. It is interesting to note that even in a situation of plentiful they foresee the irretrievable depletion of natural resources through over-exploitation. Hence they have developed some indigenous practices for the conservation of their resources. However, this "constructive dependence" of the tribal on forest is fast withering away due to the faulty practices of the government and the infringement of both public and private sectors on the domain of the tribal. Against the backdrop, the paper tries to examine the traditional knowledge system of resource management of the Pungs, a Primitive tribal group of Orissa, India.