

Name: _____ Date: _____

Tribals, Dikus and the Vision of a Golden Age

Q1. What was Birsa's vision of a golden age? Why do you think such a vision appealed to the people of the region?

Ans. _____

Q2. How did different tribal groups live?

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Tribals, Dikus and the Vision of a Golden Age

Q1. What was Birsa's vision of a golden age? Why do you think such a vision appealed to the people of the region?

Ans. Birsa was deeply influenced by many of the ideas he came in touch with in his growing-up years. His movement was aimed at reforming tribal society. He urged the Mundas to give up drinking liquor, clean their village, and stop believing in witchcraft and sorcery. Birsa urged his followers to recover their glorious past. He talked of a golden age in the past – a satyug (the age of truth) – when Mundas lived a good life, constructed embankments, tapped natural springs, planted trees and orchards, practised cultivation to earn their living. They did not kill their brethren and relatives. They lived honestly. Birsa also wanted people to once again work on their land, settle down and cultivate their fields.

Such a vision appealed to the people of the region because they got fed up with British forest laws and the restrictions that were imposed on them.

Q2. How did different tribal groups live?

Ans. Tribal people in different parts of India were involved in a variety of activities.

i. Some of them practised jhum cultivation, that is, shifting cultivation. This was done on small patches of land, mostly in forests.

ii. In many regions tribal groups lived by hunting animals and gathering forest produce. They saw forests as essential for survival. The Khonds were such a community living in the forests of Orissa.

iii. Many tribal groups lived by herding and rearing animals. They were pastoralists who moved with their herds of cattle or sheep according to the seasons. When the grass in one place was exhausted, they moved to another area.

iv. Many from within the tribal groups had begun settling down, and cultivating their fields in one place year after year, instead of moving from place to place.