13 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN MODERN INDIA

- Peasants and farmers movements.
- Women's movement.
- Backward classes and Dalit movements.
- Environmental movements.
- Ethnicity and Identity movements.

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

People may damage a bus and attack its driver when the bus has run over a child. This is an isolated incident of protest. Since it flares up and dies down, it is not a social movement.

- A social movement requires sustained collective action over time.

- Such action is often directed against the state and takes the form of demanding changes in state policy or practice.

- Spontaneous, disorganized protest cannot be called a social movement either. Collective action must be market by some degree of organization.

- This organization may include a leadership and a structure that defines how members relate to each other, make decisions and carry them out.

- Those participating in a social movement also have shared objectives and ideologies.

- A social movement has a general orientation or way of approaching to bring about (or to prevent) change.

- These defining features are not constant. They may change over the course of a social movement's life.

Social movements often arise with the aim or bringing about changes on a public issue, such as ensuring the right of the tribal population to use the forests or the right of displaced people to settlement and compensation. While social movements seek to bring in social change, counter movements sometimes arise in defence of status quo. There are many instances of such counter movements.

- When Raja Rammohun Roy campaigned against sati and formed the Brahmo Samaj, defenders of sati formed Dharma Sabha and petitioned the British not to legislate against sati.

- When reformers demanded education for girls, many protested that this would be disastrous for society. When reformers campaigned for widow remarriage, they were socially boycotted.

- When the so called 'lower caste' children enrolled in schools, some so called 'upper caste' children were withdrawn from the schools by their families.

- Peasant movements have often been brutally suppressed.

- More recently the social movements of erstwhile excluded groups like the Dalits have often invoked retaliatory action.

- Likewise proposals for extending reservation in educational institutions have led to counter movements.

Social movements cannot change society easily. Since it goes against both entrenched interests and values, there is bound to be opposition and resistance. But over a period changes to take place.

Social Movement and Social Change

It is important to distinguish between social change in general and social movements. Social change is continuous and ongoing. The broad historical processes of social change are the sum total of countless individual and collective actions gathered across time and space. Social movements are directed towards some specific goals. It involves long and continuous social effort and action by people. Sanskritisation and westernization are examples of social change and the 19th century social reformers effort to change society are examples of social movements.

Social movements in India have not only been protest and dissent movements but also reform and reactionary as well as socio-religious and freedom movements. These movements defined as "collective effort to promote/resist change" came into origin only after uniformity in intellectual orientations, social structures, ideological presences, and perceptions of truth came into existence. It is a well-known fact that characteristics of society shape the styles of movements. Therefore, the elements of social structure and the future vision of society provide the focal point of analysis of social movements.

The orientation of social movements

Till the British period, the orientation of social movements in our country was religious, though national liberation movement also emerged after the 1930s which was overtly against the forces of imperialism and colonialism. But, after independence, the new situation that emerged led to divergence in the targets of attack, say political authority, economic exploitation, cultural domination, male domination and humiliation of women and so forth. This led to proliferation of diverse movements.

Classification of Social Movements

Social movements have been classified on the basis of numerous criteria. Nature of change intended, organizational mode and strategy, nature of demands, groups and collectivities involved are some of the major criteria used for the purpose, e.g., tribal movement, Harijan movement, women's movement, peasant movement, student movement, industrial workers' movement, and on the basis of the nature of collectivities against which they are led, e.g., anti-Brahminism, anti-leftist, anti-Dalits and so on. Yet other basis of classification is their territorial anchorage, e.g., locality in which they originate and operate, e.g., Vidharbha movement, Telangana movement, Chhattisgarh movement, Jharkhand or Vananchal movement, Uttaranchal movement, and so on. Such names indirectly point out the goals pursued. Movements are also named after the issues they pursue, e.g., Anti-Hindi movement. Movement are named after their initial or top leadership too, e.g., Gandhian movement, Ramakrishna movement, J.P. (Jayaprakash) movement, etc. M.S.A.Rao has talked of three types of movement–reformist, transformative, and revolutionary.

All these movements are characterized by five elements :

- collective goal
- common ideology of widely accepted programme
- collective action
- Minimal degree of organization and leadership.
- Thus, a 'social movement' with above characteristics is different from 'agitation' as the latter has no ideology and no organization.
- Ghanshyam Shah holds that some coactive actions termed by some scholars as 'agitations' are considered by others as movements; e.g., demand for the formation of linguistic states. Shah himself considers them as 'movements' or a part of a social

movement of a particular stratum of society. Thus demand for Jharkhand in Bihar, Uttaranchal in Uttar Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh in Madhya Pradesh can be described as social movements according to him.

- Desai held that some movements are caused by the inability of our Constitution to protect the civil and the democratic rights of people. Rajni Kothari is of the opinion that failure of the state in 'social transformation' of society in which repression and intimidation of large masses of people has become common compels people to assert their rights through various struggles.

- Gurr and M.S.A. Rao have explained social movements in terms of 'relative deprivation.' Rao focuses on the 'possibility of doing something by the sufferer' along with relative deprivation.

- Ghanshyam Shah and T.K. Oommen do not accept Relative Deprivation Approach in explaining social movements. Oommen's argument is that deprivation theorists do not view movements as 'ongoing process of change'. They also do not deal with the sources of deprivation. Shah holds that deprivation theorist ignore the importance of consciousness and the ideological aspects of the participants.

PEASANT AND FARMERS MOVEMENTS

The study of peasant movements has emerged as an important area in the study of social movement in India. Since India is essentially an agrarian country, it is natural that the study of agrarian problems has assumed a central place in sociological issues.

Patterns of landownership, tenancy, use and control of land, all reflect the complex nature of agrarian structure. The complexity of agrarian structure is also manifested in the agrarian class structure which has existed since long in rural areas. The diversity of land systems and agrarian relations has produced an elaborate structure of agrarian classes. The later vary from one region to another. However, based on the nature of rights in land and the type of income derived from it, Daniel Thorner has identified three major agrarian classes in India. They are Maliks, Kisans and Mazdoors. Big landlords and rich landowners are included under the category of Maliks. Kisans are inferior to Maliks comprising self-cultivating owners of land. They are small landowners and tenant Mazdoors earn their livelihood from working on others lands. This category includes poor tenants, share-croppers and landless labourers. This classification of agrarian classes broadly reflects the Indian reality.

But it needs to be recognized that the agrarian hierarchy, as indicated just now, corresponds with the caste hierarchy which we find in different parts of the country. The rich landowners and moneylenders mainly belong to the upper castes. The middle and small peasants come from the traditional peasants castes. The landless labourers belong primarily to the lower classes. Such a position merely shows a pattern. It does not refer to the exact situation in the rural areas.

The nature of agrarian class structure has been mentioned here to understand the structural background in which movements have been launched by different classes of peasantry. **D.N. Dhanagare** study of peasant movements in India helps us to know the nature of these movements. According to Dhanagare, the term 'peasant movement' refers to all kinds of collective attempts of different strata of the peasantry either to change the system which they felt was exploitative, or to seek redress for particular grievances without necessarily aiming at overthrowing the system. Peasant movements thus include all kinds of movements, violent and non-violent, organized and specific.

Issues Involved in Peasant Movements:

- Some were related to conflicts between tenants and landlords; some were because of the oppression by zamindars of majority religious community (Hindus), and

Some were because of the factors like communal outburst, provocation by government officials and police etc., for improving economic conditions, demands for higher wages, forced labour (beggar) and so on.

- It is held by some writers that Gandhi mobilized the peasantry for the cause of national freedom and not for fighting against zamindars and money lenders.

- There are other writers who suggest that the relationship between peasant movements and the national movements was one of reciprocity, i.e., give and take. The tasks of taking up peasants class demands as well as fighting against imperialists were dealt with simultaneously. In any case peasants specific needs and interests of security of tenure, debt relief and cheap credit etc., could not be emphasized strongly by the nationalist leaders.

After independence, however, the leaders tried to mobilize peasantry against zamindars and landlords. The exploited peasantry was not a united group as they were vertically aligned with the masters through factional ties. Initially, the poor peasants were least militant but as the anti-landlords and anti-rich peasant sentiment was built up by the middle peasant, the revolutionary energy of the poor peasant was transformed into a revolutionary force. But peasants taking up revolutionary action were not on all India basis. It was only in some regions.

Six different viewpoints of the agrarian movements in India have been studied by sociologists:

- in terms of their functioning as associations at micro levels;

- Relationship between politics and agrarian movements, i.e., mobilizing peasants by political parties like Congress, communities, etc.

- relationship between social structure (caste, class and power) and agrarian movements;

- relationship between the green revolution and agrarian movements. (The green revolution not only affected the traditional agrarian relations but it also accentuated economic disparities and accelerated social aspirations of villagers);

- relationship between agrarian legislation and movements (i.e., movements causing legislation and legislation causing movements); and

- Relationship between mobilization and organization of movements.

Some movements for the welfare of peasants were organized on Gandhian principles. Two such movements were Bhoodan movement of Vinoba Bhave and Sarvodya movement of Jayaprakash Narayan. The immediate object of the Bhoodan movement was collecting land from the rich and its distribution to the poor. However, this movement failed in achieving its goal.

India has a long history of peasant movements. The nineteenth century India is considered a treasure house of materials on peasant heroism. The movements in the period between 1858 and 1914 tended to remain localized disjointed and confined to particular grievances. The most militant peasant movement of this period was the Indigo Revolt 1859-60 in Bengal. Only a decade later, similar violent disturbance took place in Babana and Bogara in Bengal in 1872-73. These struggles were directed against Zamindars who were the symbols of exploitation and atrocities.

The landowning and money-lending classes had consolidated their position not only in zamindari areas but also in Ryotwari and Mahalwari areas. The small landholders, tenants and share-croppers were the victims of the moneylender's tyranny. Accordingly, the peasants revolted against the oppression of the powerful agrarian classes. One of such revolts in Ryotwari area is known as the Deccan Riots of 1875 that occurred in western Maharashtra. A series of

Moplah uprisings in Malabar region of southern India also took place throughout the nineteenth century. They were expressions of long-standing agrarian discontent among the poor Moplah peasantry.

It is fascinating to note that peasants' grievances also became a component of the India's freedom struggle during the early twentieth century. The Champaran Movement in 1917, the Kheda Satyagrah of 1918 and Bardoli Satyagrah of 1928 were the major non-violent anti-British struggles. Since Mahatma Gandhi was involved in these satyagrahas, they are popularly known as Gandhian agrarian movements. Most of these movements took up relatively major agrarian issues but they succeeded in arousing political awareness among the masses. Thus, the most significant aspect of these movements was their simultaneous involvement in the nation-wide struggle for freedom.

However, peasants in other parts of the country were not inactive. They were equally restive and raised their grievances. Between 1920 and 1946 several peasant organizations and movements emerged in Bihar and Bengal which protested against the deplorable condition of the middle and poor peasants. The first organization to be founded was the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha and in 1936 the All India Kisan Sabha. The peasants organized by the Sabha. The peasants organized by the Sabhas demanded freedom from economic exploitation for peasants, workers and all other exploited classes. The more important peasant movements in different regions were: Tebhaga, Telangana and Naxalite. The Bhoodan and Sarvodya movements also took up peasants interests but they were taken up not by the peasants themselves but by Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan.

Pesant Movement After Independence

We have briefly discussed above the nature and features of peasant movements to familiarize ourselves with the role of social movements in social change. True, these movements have not always been successful in achieving the immediate goals but they created the climate which produced post-Independence agrarian reforms. Certain issues which had dominated colonial times changed after independce. For land reforms, zamindari abolition, declining importance of land revenue and public credit system began to alter rural areas. The period after 1947 was characterized by two major social movements— the Naxalite struggle and the 'new farmer's movements'.

Tebhaga movement (1946-47) was caused and facilitated by a large number of factors :

- the 1943 famine,
- drive against jotedars, hoarders and black-marketeers,
- social solidarity of the tribals involved in the movement, and
- the increased bargaining capacity of share-croppers.

Since this movement was limited in its spread, it failed. The wedge between Hindus and Muslims— the participants groups i.e., communal politics, lack of harmony between caste and class and the upper class manipulation of loyalties within the peasants also contributed to its failure (Dhanagare).

The **Telangana movement** (1946-51) in south India was initially a success but ultimately a failure because of communist support to the Muslim Razakars against the Indian army, which ran counter to the nationalist sentiment and movements. Dhanagare has to this movement as broad class-base movements as it involved middle, poor and landless peasants against landlords.

The **Naxalbari Movement:** When the United Front government with CPI participation came into power in West Bengal in February 1967, some active and vocal groups emerged. One of them under the leadership of **Charu Majumdar and Kanu Sanyal** insisted on developing militancy on the peasant front, and preparing peasants for an armed struggle. Initially, the leaders preached

massive participation of peasants for forcible occupation of benami land but later on they emphasized liquidation of class enemies through the use of guerrilla tactics. Thus, mass movements were replaced by underground small group squads. This guerrilla activity of Naxalbari movement struck most in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh and later on in Bihar and presently in Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

The peasant revolt in Naxalbari started in 1972 in three areas in Darjeeling district of West Bengal. Landowners were called jotedars and tenants were called adhiari. The status of adhiari was precarious. They were so much exploited and treated like bonded labour that it led to peasant revolt in the 1950s and the 1960s.

Kanu Sanyal and others made their first entry amongst the exploited peasants in the 1960s, demanding abolition of zamindari, land to the tiller, prevention of tenant eviction, etc. In the second phase of Naxalbari peasant uprising in the late 60s and early 1970s, secret combat groups were formed and peasants were urged to seize the lands of judders and the plantation workers who had purchased land from poor peasants, cultivate the seized land and retain all the produce from lands, ask landlord for food and if he refused, take it by force, deprive jotedars of his firearms.

- The important characteristics of Naxalbari peasant uprising in West Bengal were:

- mobilization to protect the interests of the peasant and the labourer classes and covering all ethnic (including tribes) and caste groups;

- the means adopted were non-institutionalized and violence was encouraged;

- leadership was provided by communist party leaders;

- it aimed at downward mobility of jotedars and upward mobility.

Sarvodya movement and Naxalbari movement was different that the former aimed at replacing individual ownership of land with communal ownership while the latter aimed at individual ownership.

- The factors which had contributed to the failure of this movement were:

- its anti-national slant as manifested in the Chinese support for it,

- its vocal denunciation of the Indian national leadership and acceptance of Chinese leadership as source of its aspiration

- it's declared intention to capture state power its open support to violence and factionalism among the leftists.

- **R.K. Mukherjee** has analyzed this movement in terms of relationship between social structure and social change. He argues that although the declared intention of the movement was capturing state power, in reality, the revolt was not directed against the system but against its excesses. It was the exchange of goods between the peasant and the owner landlord that was sought to be properly regulated.

The so called **'new farmer's movements** began in the 1970s in Punjab and Tamil Nadu. These movements were regionally organized, were non-party, and involved farmers rather than peasants (farmers are said to be market-involved as both commodity producers and purchasers). The basic ideology of the movement was strongly anti-state and anti-urban. The focus of demand was price for agricultural inputs, taxation and non-repayment of loans. Novel methods of agitation were used: blocking of roads and railways, refusing politicians and bureaucrats entry to villages, and so on. It has been argued that the farmers' movements have broadened their agenda and ideology and include environment and women's issues. Therefore, they can be seen as a part of the worldwide 'new social movements'.

Nature of Peasant Movements

- that these movements originated only after independence and that these are purely social and cultural in nature;

- These movements existed long before independence and were against colonial rulers as well as zamindars and money-lenders, i.e., they were political and cultural.
- **Moore Junior** (quoted by Ghanshyam Shah), writing about the peasant movements in India has not accepted the revolutionary potential of the Indian peasantry. According to him, Indian peasants are traditionally docile and passive because of which cultivation remained lackadaisical and inefficient during the Mughal and the British periods. Hence, there were no widespread peasant movements.
- But Moore's contention has been challenged by A.R.Desai, Katleen Gough and D.N. Dhanagare. They argue that a number of peasant revolts have been overlooked by historians.
- Gough has talked of 77 revolts in the last two centuries, the smallest of which engaged several thousand peasants in active support.
- A.R. Desai has also observed that the Indian rural scene during the entire British period and thereafter had been bristling with protests, revolts and even large scale militant struggles involving hundreds of villages and lasting for years.
- Ranjit Guha has said that agrarian disturbances of different forms and scales were endemic until the end of the nineteenth century. There were no fewer than 110 known revolts during 117 years of the British rule.
- Dhanagare has argued that Moore's generalizations are questionable because there were various peasant resistance movements and revolts in India.

Classification of Peasant Movements

- According to A.R. Desai and Ghanshyam Shah, peasant movements in India, have been classified on the basis of time period–into pre-British and post-independence. The post-independence period is classified into pre-Naxalite and post-Naxalite periods or pre and post-green revolution periods. The latter period is further divided into pre and post-Emergency periods.

- A.R. Desai is also of the opinion that the nature of peasant movements varies according to the agrarian structures which have undergone changes during different periods. He has classified colonial India into ryotwari areas under British territory, zamindari areas under princely authority and tribal zones. The peasant struggles in these areas had different characteristics, raised different issues and involved different strata of the peasantry.
- He further divides post-independence agrarian into two categories: struggles launched by rich farmers and by poor farmers. The agrarian structure has thus not evolved a unified pattern throughout the country.

Kathleen Gough has classified peasant revolts on the basis of their goals, ideology and methods of organization into five types:

- restorative rebellions to drive out the Britishers and restore earlier rulers,
- religious movements,
- social banditry,
- terrorist for collective justice, and
- mass insurrections for the redress of particular grievances.

WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS

It is difficult to trace the origin of Women's movement in India. Most accounts of the movement start from the nineteenth century. But recently, social historians have discussed its history from the pre-colonial times. They suggest that the evidence of women's movement first appeared in the Bhakti and Sufi movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The important issue for us is to realize that the authority of men necessarily determined the status of women. The oppressive condition of women was reflected in the social practices such as child marriage, polygamy, and prohibition of widow remarriage, sati and the purda system. These practices continued till they were challenged by the social reformers of the nineteenth century.

The factors that provided the required incentive to women's movements were

- The status of women has been the central concern of many reform movements before and after independence. Leaders of the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj were concerned with issues like sati, remarriage, divorce, female education, purdah system, polygamy and dowry.

- Justice Ranade criticized child marriages, polygon, restrictions on remarriage of widows, and non-access to education.

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy played an important role in getting the sati system abolished. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Maharishi Karve pleaded for remarriage of widows.

- Therefore, most scholars maintain that women's movement in India began as a part of social reform movements. We may say that the process of highlighting women's issues began in the nineteenth century.

- effect of western education on the male domination on women and on the concept of complementary sex roles.

- leadership provided by educated elite women, interest of male social reformers in changing social practices sanctioned by religion,

- changing socio-religious attitudes and philosophies, and decreasing social hostility and opposition of males to women's associations engaged in self-help activities.

- benevolent attitude of political national leaders towards fledgling women's movements and their enthusiastic support to women campaigns.

- The declaring of 1975-85 decade as the International Women's decade also gave impetus to women's movements for removing the notion of inferiority of women and giving them a sense of identity.

- The Central Social Welfare Board (GSWB) established by the Government of India in 1953, also promotes and strengthens voluntary efforts for the welfare of women.

- The Ministry of Welfare, Government of India, too gives grants to voluntary organizations for activities like construction/expansion of hostels for working women in cities.

In the early phase of the twentieth century, Mahatma Gandhi voiced his concern about the degrading status of women. Gandhiji took interest in collective mobilization of women to fight for political freedom as well as for their social and political rights. It was because of his efforts that a large number of women came out of their homes and joined the freedom struggle. He adopted a revolutionary approach to raise the status of women. Gandhiji argued that women should be freed from social and legal disabilities. He emphasized particularly on the issues of women's inferior position in matters of guardianship inheritance and marriage.

Women who joined the national movement recognized the importance of self-reliance, swadeshi and women's education. Such a political consciousness among women expanded the space available to women in public sphere. Some scholars have examined the role of women in political independence movements at micro level, i.e., on regional basis. For example, Aparna Basu and Pravin Seth studied it in Gujarat, Raghavendra Rao in Karnataka, and Uma Rao in Uttar Pradesh. According to Govind Kelkar, women's role in the freedom movement was that of the 'helpers' rather than that of comrades.

Ghanshyam Shah has referred to some scholars who have pointed out women's role in tribal, peasant and other movements in Bihar and Maharashtra. For example, Manoshi Mitra and Indra Munshi Saldanha have analyzed women's militant role in tribal movements when women confronted authorities, wielding traditional weapons and maintaining lines of supplies to the rebels in their hidden places. Sunil Sen, Peter Casters, etc., have analyzed their role in peasants' movements in Telangana, West Bengal and Maharashtra. Meena Velayudhan has analyzed their role in communist-led movement of coir

workers in Kerala. Sen has pointed out women's participation in struggles launched by trade unions in iron ore mines in Madhya Pradesh.

During freedom struggle several women's organizations emerged which paved the way for increasing role of women in socio-political activities. The liberal egalitarian ideology under the British Raj created conditions for a social awakening among Indian women. Banga Mahila Samaj and the ladies Theosophical Society functioned at local levels to promote modern ideals for women. Important national organizations were: Bharat Mahila Parishad, Bharat Stri Mahamandal, and Women's Indian Association, National Council of Women in India and All India Women's Conference and Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust. These organizations took up issues like women's education, abolition of evil social customs i.e., purdah, child marriage, equality and with the support of the Congress party, demanded right of franchise and representation in legislatures. Prominent among these organizations were All India Women's Association and the Indian Women's Association. These organizations had branches in different parts of the country. Their activities were centered mainly on issues like women's education, improvements in health and sanitation, right to suffrage for women and the maternity benefits for women workers. In this manner, these organizations were successful in initiating a discourse on gender equality and women's rights.

The nationalist phase of women's movement ended after independence with an assurance to remove all forms of gender inequalities. The task of social reconstruction undertaken subsequently further confirmed the goal. Consequentially, the women's movements were subdued for almost two decades till 1970s. However, during this period women participated in large numbers in several local level struggles in different parts of the country. The role and participation of women in the Shahada movement in Maharashtra, the anti-price rise movements in Gujarat and Maharashtra, and the Bihar movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan are still fresh in our memory. The twin objectives of struggle and development were adopted by organizations like SEWA–Self Employed Women's Association who fought against all forms of injustice.

CONTEMPORARY WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Contemporary Women's Movement which started in the seventies and eighties was very different from the earlier movements and is influenced by two factors :

- The WMI which emerged in the seventies was greatly influenced by powerful women movement in the USA which ignited a world-wide debate and protest by women for their emancipation and rights. This influenced the women in India, particularly the urban educated elite classes. There was abundant feminist literature available in the universities, colleges and shops. At the same time there was a lot of growth of Indian literature on socio-economic and socio-cultural issues focusing on women. But this was limited to the urban areas.

- The Indian movement had basically emerged due to the widespread disillusionment of women at the grassroots level with the process and model of development, which failed to eliminate poverty, discrimination, and injustice to the women. By the 1970s, there was widespread disillusionment among women groups with the process of development and the attitude has gradually started shifting to confrontation.

- Four movements played a crucial role in the consolidation of the WMI at the grassroots level.

Shahada Movement

Shahada is a Bhil adivasi settlement in Maharashtra. Many young Sarvodya workers started the Shramik Sangathan to help the adivasis suffering due to drought and famine. These organizations took a more militant approach, initiated land-grab, demanded minimum wages, and held women shivirs (camps).

- Women played active role in mobilizing the masses. As militancy developed in the movement, women- issues also began to be raised along with the wider issues. Women applied their consciousness to the question of their oppression on the basis of gender.

- The movement shortly led to the anti-alcohol, because many men after getting drunk beat their wives. Women shivirs were organized to discuss and help each other to eradicate this evil which is one of the main causes of their oppression.

- The Shahada movement started as a protest movement against landlords turned into a movement against the sale and consumption of alcohol and attack on wife-beaters. It was an indirect protest against violence in the family, which had so far been held as a private matter of the family. Shahada movement, in a way, challenged some aspects of patriarchy.

Self Employed Women Association

The first attempt to organize a women trade union was made in Ahmadabad by a Gandhian socialist leader, Ella Bhatt, attached to the women wing of Textile Labour Association. She formed the Self Employed Women Association in the year 1972 to organize the women working in various trades in the informal sector. They all suffered due to extremely low wages, poor working conditions lack of training, harassment by the authorities or middlemen and police.

- The aim of the SEWA was to improve their working provide technical and economic assistance, help them to sell their products at better prices by collective bargaining and improve their economic status.

- The SEVA helped the women to become economically self-sufficient to give them freedom from exploitation by assurance of regular work and access to opportunities for development.

- Thus the SEWA helped the poor working women to improve their economic status and become self-sufficient, because economic dependence is one of the major causes of their exploitation by men.

Anti-Price-Rise Front

The conditions of famine and drought affected the urban areas in Maharashtra, which led to the rising prices and black-marketing. Mrinal Gore of the Socialist Party and Ahilya Rangekar of CPI(M) formed the United Front, Anti-Price-Rise Front, to mobilize the women in the cities against inflation. It became a mass movement demanding price-control and proper distribution of essential commodities at the fair prices. The women groups also raided the premises of the black-marketeers. It was a mass movement of urban housewives against economic hardships affecting their daily life.

Nav Nirman Samiti

It was initially a student protest against rising prices and political disorder but became a massive movement when middle-class women joined it. Women participated in these movements because rise in expenditure of essential commodities had adversely affected them and hoarding and black-marketing had caused a lot of hardships to them. The Anti-Price-Rise Front and Nav Nirman Samiti indirectly helped in crystallizing women's identity as a group.

- In Andhra the first feminist group formed the **Progressive Organization of Women (POW)**. This group stressed the existence of gender-based oppression and organized women against it. The manifesto of this group emphasized on the concept of equality between men and women in every walk of life. According to them the two primary structures of exploitation are sexual division of labour on the biological basis and the culture which provides justification to such division.

- The year 1975 saw a sudden development of the feminist movement. It was also declared as the International Women's Year by the United Nations. The declaration also provided

some focus on the various activates. Influenced by the POW, the progressive women in Pune formed the Purogami Stree Sangathan and in Bombay founded Stree Mukti Sangathan.

- Lal Nishan Party, a splinter group of the CPI, brought out a special issue on women. Socialists organized a conference on devdasis and Muslim women. In Hyderabad radical women students of the POW organized campaign against sexual harassment, dowry and bride-burning. Issues such as dowry, bride-burning, violence, and sexual harassment of the women were debated all over India.

- The proclamation of Emergency in 1975 and the suspension of civil liberties led to the suspension of the WMI. But with the coming of Janata Party to power in 1977, the movement was again revived. In the later seventies and early eighties the WMI was mainly dominated by urban groups.

- By 1980s women groups were active all over India. They organized poster-exhibitions, meetings, study circles and activists' meetings to debate issues related with women and started campaigns against them. A Forum Against Rape was formed against the Supreme Court's judgement in the Mathura rape case.

- The WMI is also concerned with woman's control over her body. It debated issues such as women's health, violence, rape, wife-battering, divorce, right to maintenance, child custody, etc.

- They are also concerned not only with the enactment of legislation in favour of women but also with amendments to exist laws a anti-women. The WMI is equally concerned about the proper implementation of existing laws concerning women and their rights.

- WMI in its current phase is not only concerned with education of the women but is also equally concerned acute the right kind of education, textbooks having women content in the proper perspective. Many universities have opened women and development centres, introduced women-oriented courses. Women Development Centres are conducting academic researches on women issues.

- The WMI in is now concerned with equality which is genuine. They do not want reservations alone but want proper share in all material resources, means of production, education and in decision-making process. The progressive WMI is the outcome of changing social, economic, and political reality.

The WMI is an ongoing process. It started as a protest against negative attitude towards women and their problems. It moved on to its second phase where they denied biological explanation of existing disparities between the two sexes, then to the third where men and women are equal. In the early nineteenth century it started with humanitarian concerns for the suffering of the women, and need for reform. By twentieth century the emphasis has shifted to stressing women's right to be treated as useful members of society. By the late twentieth century it has moved to women's right to self-determination.

Forms of women's participation in movements

- for social, economic and political rights of specific categories of people like tribals, peasants and industrial workers,

- for improvements in conditions of work and autonomy to women,

- for equal remuneration for work,

- In renewal social movements on issues affecting men and children like abortions, adoption of children, sexual exploitation, etc.

It could be said that Indian women's movements worked for two goals:

- liberation or uplift of women, i.e., reforming social practices so as to enable women to

play more important and constructive role in society, and

- Equal right for men and women, i.e., extension of civil right enjoyed by men in the political, economic and familial spheres to women also.

Jana Everett calls the former as 'corporate feminism' and the latter as 'liberal feminism'. The strategies used by women's bodies were: making demands by organizing public meetings, presenting views to government officials, forming committees to investigate conditions and holding conferences to mobilize women.

It is important to note that in course of the autonomous women's movements in India, a serious debate cropped up about the idea of feminism. Feminism is a complex set of political ideologies used by the women's movement to advance the cause of women's equality. Feminism is also defined as a variety of inter-related frameworks used to observe and analyze the ways in which the social reality of gender inequality is constructed and enforced. Given this perspective of feminism, some activists questioned the applicability of the western notion of feminism to the Indian reality. They argued that the nature of male dominance in India is different from that in western society. Therefore, the demands and resistance of women against males are also different.

Madhu Kishwar, activist and the editor of Manushi, has emphasized the need to look into our traditions in this respect. She argues that we should try to separate the debate within the cultural traditions, and start using the strengths to transform the traditions. Our cultural tradition have tremendous potential within them to combat reactionary and anti-women ideas, if we can identify their points of strength and use them creatively. Thus, feminism in the Indian context is not merely taken as an issue of theoretical debate for analysis but an approach to bring about social change. We may affirm that women's movements in India have played an important role in bringing and driving the women's issue to the national agenda.

BACKWARD CLASSES AND DALIT MOVEMENTS:

The emergence of backward castes/classes as political entities has occurred both in the colonial and post-colonial contexts. The colonial state often distributed patronage on the basis of caste. It made sense, therefore, for people to stay within their caste for social and political identity in institutional life. It also influenced similarly placed caste groups to unite themselves and to form what has been termed a 'horizontal stretch'. Caste thus began to lose its ritual content and become more and more secularized for political mobilization.

Historical Background

The term 'Backward Classes' has been in use in different parts of the country since the late 19th Century. It began to be used more widely in Madras presidency since 1872, in the princely state of Mysore since 1918, and in Bombay presidency since 1925. From the 1920s a number of organizations united around the issue of caste sprang up in different parts of the country. These included the United Provinces Hindu Backward Classes League, All India Backward Classes Federation, and All India Backward Classes League. In 1954, 88 organizations were counted working for the Backward Classes.

The increasing visibility of both Dalits and other backward classes has led to a feeling among sections of the upper caste that they are being given special treatment. The government, they feel, does not pay any heed to them because they are numerically not significant enough. As sociologists we need to recognize that such a 'feeling' does exist and then we need to scrutinize to what extent such an impression is grounded on empirical facts. We also need to ask why earlier generations from the so called 'upper castes" did not think of "caste" as a living reality of modern India.

By and large, when compared to the situation prevailing before independence, the condition of all social groups, including the lowest caste and tribes, has improved today. But by how much has it improved? It is true that in the early part of the

21st century, the variety of occupations and professions among all caste groups is much wider than it was in the past. However, this does not change the massive social reality that the overwhelming majority of those in the 'highest' or most preferred occupations are from the upper castes, while the vast majority of those in the menial and despised occupations belong to the lowest castes.

Backward class movements emerged among depressed castes and deprived sections of society in different parts of India with the spread of the national movement. The difference between the religious and the caste movement is that while the former attacked evils of Hinduism, the latter exhorted its followers to seek solutions to their problems within the framework of Hinduism, i.e., without rejecting their religion.

Nature of Backward Class Movement

- protests against discrimination of various kinds,
- to gain self-respect, honour and status,
- status mobility movements,
- caste unity movements, and
- caste welfare movements.

The status mobility movements can be further sub-classified as :

- adaptive movements,
- movements oriented to cultural revolts, and
- counter-cultural movements.

The backward castes suffered from relative deprivation in the fields of religion, education, economics and politics. They accepted their lot till certain external influences provided favourable conditions to create an awakening among them.

Factors which Awaken Backward Class for Movements

- Organizing of programme by Christian Missionaries for the SCs who then referred to as the 'depressed classes'.

- Other condition was the national movement which provided an ideology of egalitarianism and supported social movements which revolved against discrimination of any kind.

- Third condition was that of reform movements organized by the upper castes which initiated programmes of education and welfare for the backward or the depressed classes. These movements were against many orthodox Brahminical practices.

- Finally, the egalitarian system of law introduced by the British also provided an opportunity to the backward castes to protest against discrimination.

According to M.S.A. Rao the backward caste movements for higher status were based on three ideologies.

- First, many Gopas in West Bengal, the Gaulis in Maharashtra, the Gollas in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka and the Konars in Tamil Nadu claimed descent from the Kshatriya dynasty. This also included adopting the lifestyle of higher castes in their regions, what **M.N.Srinivas** has described the process of sanskritisation. **Imtiaz Ahmad** has stated that this process of mobility should be viewed as an initiative process or as protest-oriented movement or as counter-mobilization. The upper class invariably opposed such attempts. Besides, the desire to claim high status prompted groups, they could collectively impress upon the census officers to describe them as castes with higher ritual status. This mechanism of mobilizing caste collectivities became significant by 1931.Other method was reinterpreting Hindu religion in search of self-determination, e.g., Sri Narayan Dharma Paripalana Movement among the Ezhavas (toddy tapers) of Kerala. Ezhavas of Kerala took an overt anti-Brahmin slant and resorted to mass mobilization and protest to acquire their right.

- Second variety of protest ideology was the rejection of Brahminical Aryan religion and

culture, e.g., Dravida Kazhagam Movements in Tamil Nadu.

- Third ideology was abandoning Hinduism and embracing another religion, e.g., Mahars in Maharashtra. Nadirs of Tamil Nadu used political process of influence to achieve high status, while Malis of Maharashtra used cultural revolt process.

According to Oommen, factors which helped classes/castes in their mobility movements

- ritually castes were not at the rock bottom,
- economically they were well-off by local standards,
- their numerical strength was substantial, and they had the support of rulers in their regions, like Maharaja of Kolhapur in Maharashtra,
- occupational diversifications,
- exposure to education, urbanization,
- outstanding and charismatic leadership.

Of course, many castes did not succeed in achieving higher status within the Hindu fold which prompted them to embrace Buddhism. Few castes achieved this remaining within Hindu fold through counter-cultural movements. The counter-cultural movements referred to

- developing a counter-culture against caste Hindus, particularly Brahminical supremacy, but remaining within the Hindu fold. This process was adopted by Dravidian movements of Tamil Nadu, and
- building a new parallel culture of their own rather than getting themselves adsorbed in the 'mainstream' culture, or merely protesting against it. The Dalit Panther movement of Maharashtra exemplified this trend.

The Dravidian movement in the South developed in two phases: anti-Brahmin (caste) phase and anti-north (region) phase. In the first phase, the Dravidians identified Brahmins as aliens (Aryans) and intruders into Dravidian. They also ridiculed the Brahmin-created piranhas and varnashram dharma irrational. They created a counter-culture which was Dravidian in nature, by denouncing Brahmanicial practices of idol worship, child marriage and enforced widowhood. Gradually, this movement shifted its goal from anti-Brahminism to North Indian domination with the goal of establishing a sovereign Dravidian State.

While the Dravidian movement was confined to Tamil Nadu, Dalit Panthers movement spread from urban Maharashtra to other states. Its main emphasis was on intellectual awakening and creating consciousness among the oppressed. The movement of Mahars in Maharashtra is also worth-mentioning here. First, they used counter-cultural strategy of abandoning Hinduism altogether, but, later on; they adopted new political strategy for their uplift.

Though the movements of backward castes succeeded in achieving their goals only partially, yet they provided a mobilization a model to higher castes of forming associations for their mobilization activities. But the associations of forward castes were mainly reform-oriented, opposing child marriage, and encouraging widow remarriage, women's education, occupational diversification, education and breaking social barriers between numerous castes.

Present Situation: Government's policy of protective discrimination for the Backward castes prompted them to fight for their interests and welfare by organizing themselves politically instead of issuing of census appeals, sanskritisation, cultural revolts or the building of counter-cultures. This political strategy aimed at getting them enlisted as SCs and OBCs getting the time-period of reservation extended and insisting on faithful implementation of government policies and programmes. After the implementation of Mandal Commission's recommendations in August 1990 and the establishment of the Minority Commissions in various states, large number of castes are trying for recognition as OBCs and getting the reserved quota (15% for SCs and 27% for OBCs) seats.

DALIT MOVEMENT

Broadly speaking, the untouchables of the Hindu caste system are officially known as the Scheduled Castes. The same category of castes is also called Harijan, the children of God, a term coined by Mahatma Gandhi in 1933. However, the word harijan has now acquired a negative meaning. The members of these castes prefer to be called dalit, the oppressed.

We use the term **dalit movements and social movements against untouchability** led by Mahatma Gandhi. Other nationalist movements like peasant and reform movements, dalit movements also emerged during the pre-independence period. These movements have been examined keeping them under two broader categories, non-Brahman movements and dalit movements.

While the anti-caste non-Brahman movements were strong in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, dalit movements were spread all over the country. The Adi Dharma movements in Punjab, the Satnami movement in Uttar Pradesh, Narayan Guru movements in Kerala and Adi-Dravida movements in Tamil Nadu have been some of the major Dalit movements. The larger anti-caste movements were led by prominent figures like Jyotiba Phule, Babasaheb Ambedkar and E.V. Ramaswami Periyar. They all attacked the system of exploitation at all levels.

According to Ghanshyam Shah there has not been a single, unified Dalit movement in the country now or in the past. Different movements have highlighted different issues related to Dalits, around different ideologies. However, all of them assert a Dalit identity though the meaning may not be identical or precise for everyone. Notwithstanding differences in the nature of Dalit movements and the meaning of identity, there has been a common quest for equality, self-dignity and eradication of untrouchability. This can be seen in the Satnami Movement of the Chamars in the Chhattisgarh plains in eastern MP, Adi Dharma Movement in Punjab, 'the Mahar Movement in Maharashtra, the socio-political mobilization among the Jatavas of Agra and the Anti Brahman Movement in south India.

Nevertheless, the dalit movement is necessarily linked with the name of Dr. Ambedkar. He was the historical leader and the founder of its ideology. Initially, the movement was confined to Maharashtra, but during 1930s and 1940s it spread to different parts of the country. Although the organizations, such as the Scheduled Caste Federation and its successor, the Republican Party, formed by Dr. Ambedkar, never attained all India status, but their ideas had an impact on various local level dalit movements in different parts of the country. The growth of these movements reflects the increasing self-consciousness of the group. Thus, dalits have emerged as a distinct political group. They are no longer politically dependent upon the upper castes. Eventually, they have made an impact on the structure of power in India.

Another important trend in the dalit movement is manifested in the emergence of the Dalit Panther Movement which was launched by dalits of Maharashtra in the early 1970s. It was initially confined to the urban areas of Maharashtra but has subsequently spread to several other states. The Dalit Panthers denounce the dominant culture and attempt to articulate an alternative, cultural identity of the oppressed classes. To propagate their ideas they have been publishing poems, stories and plays, which are now popularly known as dalit literature and are used to challenge the intellectual tradition of the upper caste Hindus.

The most vital consequence of these movements has been the consolidation of dalit identity. The pressure created by the mobilization of the dalits has led to amelioration of their social conditions. Compared to their conditions a decade ago, their social and economic position has relatively improved. The emancipation of dalits is essentially linked with their freedom from the bondage to the existing economic systems. As the economic system is still monopolized by the upper castes, their position in the caste as well as class system continues to be at the lower end.

Social movements of Dalits show a particular character. The movements cannot be explained satisfactorily by reference to economic exploitations alone or political oppression, although these dimensions are important.

- This is a struggle for recognition as fellow human beings.
- It is a struggle for self-confidence and a space for self-determination.
- It is a struggle for abolishment of stigmatization, that unsociability implied.
- It has been called a struggle to be touched.

The word Dalit is commonly used in Marathi, Hindi, Gujrarati and many other Indian languages, meaning the poor and oppressed persons. It was first used in the new context in Marathi by neo-Buddhist activists, the followers of Babasaheb Ambedkar in the early 1970s. It refers to those who have been broken, ground down by those above them in a deliberate way. There is, in the word itself, inherent denial of pollution, karma and justified caste hierarchy.

In the contemporary period the Dalit movement has unquestionably acquired a place in the public sphere that cannot be ignored. This has been accompanied by a growing body of Dalit literature. Dalit literature is squarely opposed to the Chaturvarna system and caste hierarchy which it considers as responsible for crushing the creativity and very existence of lower castes. Dalit writers are insistent on using their own imageries and expressions rooted in their own experiences and perceptions. Many felt that the high-flown social imageries of mainstream society would hide the truth rather than reveal it. Dalit literature gives a call for social and cultural revolt. While some emphasise the cultural struggle for dignity and identity, others also bring in the structural features of society including the economic dimensions.

ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS

For much of the modern period, the greatest emphasis has been laid on development. Over the decades there has been a great deal of concern about the unchecked use of natural resources and a model of development that creates new needs that further demands greater exploitation of the already depleted natural resources. This model of developments has also been critiqued for assuming that all sections of people will be beneficiaries of development. Thus big dams displace people from their homes and sources of livelihood. Industries displace agriculturalists from their homes and livelihood. The impact of industrial pollution is yet another story. Here we take just one example of an ecological movement to examine the many issues that are interlinked in an ecological movement.

The Chipko movement, an example of the ecological movement, in the Himalayan foothills is a good example of such intermingled interests and ideologies. According to Ramachandra Guha in his book Unquiet Woods, villagers rallied together to save the oak and rhododendron forests near their villages. When government forest contractors came to cut down the trees, villagers, including large numbers of women, stepped forward to hug the trees to prevent their being felled. At stake was the question of villagers subsistence. All of them relied on the forest to get firewood, fodder and other daily necessities. This conflict placed the livelihood needs of poor villagers against the government's desire to generate revenues from selling timber. The economy of subsistence was pitted against the economy of profit.

Along with this issue of social inequality (villagers versus a government that represented commercial, capitalist interests), the Chipko movement also raised the issue of ecological sustainability. Cutting down natural forests was a form of environmental destruction that had resulted in devastating floods and landslides in the region. For the villagers, these 'red' and 'green' issues were inter-linked. While their survival depended on the survival of the forest, they also valued the forest for its own sake as a form of ecological wealth that benefits all.

In addition, the Chipko movement also expressed the resentment of hill villagers against

a distant government headquartered in the plains that seemed indifferent and hostile to their concerns. So concerns about economy, ecology and political representation underlay the Chipko movement.

We may now conclude our discussion on social movements by stating that social movements in India mainly focused either

- on achieving system stability by arresting the onslaught of rapid social change and reinforcing the existing values and norms and
- attempting system change through the destruction and replacement of old and induction of new structures.

ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY MOVEMENTS

For a proper understanding of ethnic movement it is necessary to understand what we mean by ethnicity as such movements are associated with it. Ethnicity is denotes towards identification of a group of people on the basis of certain criteria or markers which they are supposed to share with each other. These markers include culture, race, language, religion, customs, history, economic experiences, etc. For a group of people to share such attributes another requirement is that they get mobilized into some collective action for attainment of certain demands. The number of markers or attributes which form the basis of an ethnic group depends on the choice of these factors by the ethnic group or its leadership. But there are differences among the scholars regarding the number of attributes which constitute an ethnic group.

Scholars in India generally consider that mobilization as ethnic which is based on the multiple attributes – language, religion, culture, history, economy, etc. For example, the language based mobilization is considered as linguistic mobilization and the groups as such are considered the linguistic groups. Similarly caste based mobilization is considered as dalit, backward or any other caste mobilization. In India there is religion-based mobilization. But the scholars who follow American and European traditions categories even the mobilization based on the single attribute – language, religion, caste, etc., as ethnic mobilization. They also do not distinguish between the movement and ethnic mobilization. For example, Paul R. Brass uses ethnic and communal mobilization interchangeably.

On the other hand, **Dipankar Gupta** in his book *The Context of Ethnicity: The Sikh Identity in a Comparative Perspective* differentiates between communalism and ethnicity. He argues that the ethnic mobilization is related to the nation-state – the territory and the sovereignty. And the communal mobilization does not involve the nation-state. It is confined to the government and two or more communities in the conflict, one of which alleges that the government discriminates against it in preference to the other. The point in dispute could be job, specific rights of the communities, etc. According to him in the ethnic mobilization the loyalty of one ethnic group to the referent of nation-state is questioned. It is not so in the case of communal mobilization. Also, the group identities are not permanent. In the changing context of time and space an ethnic identity can become communal and vice versa. However, the general tendency among the scholars is to consider the multi-attributes mobilization of the communities as ethnic.

Ethnicity is also a relative term. An ethnic group differentiates itself from another groups which also share certain attributes which are different from it. It feels that it has to preserve its identity and interests from the perceived or real threats of other ethnic groups and institutions, and processes associated of the cultural identities of the ethnic groups and their other interests. Another concept which is related to the ethnicity, nationalities or even nations they are used interchangeably. If one section of scholars considers a multiple-marker based mobilization as ethnic, there are others which call these as the mobilization of the nations or the nationalities. Therefore, in the light of the literature terms ethnicity and nationalities/nations are used interchangeably in this used how can ethnic group

gets mobilized into the collective action, the "instrumentalist" approach does not explain as to why an ethnic group responds to the call of the elite, leaders or politicians. They advocate a combination of both the primordial and instrumentalist approaches instead of 'bi-polar' approach.

Ethnic Movements During Post Independence Period in India

Almost all the major regions of the country have witnessed ethnic movements. They take the forms of movements for regional autonomy, for creation of separate states, demand for secession or insurgency. These manifestations of ethnic movements are also called self-determination movements. In several cases ethnic movements give rise to conflicts or riots on the lines of ethnic divide based on all or some the makers – tribe, caste, language, religion, etc., the self-determination movements actually question the nation-state building model which was introduced by the Independent India.

Known as Nehruvian or the Mahalanobis model this model presumed that in the course of development or modernization the identities formed on the basis of inscriptive factors – language, caste, tribe and religion will disappear and the development will take place on the secular lines. But much before the effect of this model could be felt, it was questioned on the all major consideration – language, region and nationality. Although the movements started with the demand based on single marker like language or culture, they drew support of people who shared more than one attribute in a particular region. Movements Started with:

- the rejection of the Indian Constitution by the Nagas in the North-East, it spread in the form of
- Dravidian ethnic movement and demand for the formation of linguistic states,
- movement of for creation of separate state of Andhra Pradesh in South,

- movements in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab, and
- Shiv Sana's against South Indians in Mumbai

In Tamil Nadu following the legacy of E.V Ramaswami Naicker three issues formed the basis of ethnic movement in the first two decades following independence –

- language,
- Dravidian culture, and
- Religion.

The leadership of the movement argued that imposition of the North Indian Hindi language: Brahminical Hindu religion and Aryan culture were detrimental to the development of the Dravidian identity. Therefore, the Tamil ethnic movement had demanded, stopping of the imposition of Hindu language secession from India. However, towards the end of the 1960s the demand for secession was given up by the Tamil nationality ethnic group. It then shifts its demand to get autonomy to the states. Though the Dravidian assertion in India has become milder since the late 1960s, sentiments against the imposition of Hindi language still are important factors of mobilization there. In the light of the movements and violence generated by them prompted S. Harrison to describe the decades of the 1950s-1960s as the "most dangerous decades"?

The state of Andhra was initially reluctant to reconsider the demand for the linguistic reorganization of the state. But it had to consider this demand following the death of a Gandhian P. Srinivasulu who died of hunger strike demanding a linguistic state of Andhra Pradesh. Government's acceptance of demand to create Andhra Pradesh led to the reorganization of the states on the linguistic basis in 1953. But reorganization of the state did not halt the demand for the separate states.

The ethnic movement in Punjab was based on three types of issues – regional, religious and economic. Spearheaded by the Akali Dal, the leadership in Punjab argued that since Sikhs follow

a separate religion and speak different language, they should get a separate state. On some occasions, it got reflected in the communal divide between the Hindus and Sikhs in the state, resulting in the ethnic conflict. They launched a Punjabi Suba movement during the 1950s and 1960s demanding a separate state of Punjab for them. **Baldev Raj Nayar** observes that Akali Dal's strategy during the Punjabi Suba movement included constitutional means like memoranda, rallies and marches, penetration into the Congress organization in order to influence the party in favour of a separate state, and, agitational means which included marches to shrines, intimidation and force. As a result of the Punjabi Suba movement, Punjab was created as separate state on November 1, 1966.

According to **Paul R. Brass**, the attitude of the central government towards the ethnic conflicts or mobilization in the 1950s and 1960s was marked by an unwritten code – aversion to the demands for creation of the states on the religious grounds, no concession to the demands of the linguistic, regional or other culturally defined groups, no concession to groups involved in ethnic dispute unless there was support to the demand from both groups involved in the conflict. In his opinion, demand for creation of a separate state of Punjab was accepted only when there was also a demand for creation of the separate state of Haryana for Hindi-speaking population of the same state.

The ethnic movement in Punjab again arose in the 1980s. It challenged the sovereignty of the Indian state the notion of India as a nation-state. It sought to establish a sovereign state of Khalistan, to be based on the tenets of Sikhism. The Khalistan movement and the issues related to were generally referred to as "Punjab Crisis". The movement became violent and came to be identified with terrorism in the popular, academic and political discourse. The advocates of the Khalistan movement argued that Sikhs, as followers of the minority religion have been discriminated in India despite their contribution to

Indian economy and army. The rise of Khalistan movement, terrorism or the rioting in the 1980s has been a sequence to the political developments in the country which preceded it.

The 1970s were marked by the challenge of the Akali Dal to the dominance of the Congress in Punjab. In order to meet this challenge the Congress took the help of Sikh religious leader Sant Jarnail Singh Bhinderanwale in the 1980 Legislative assembly elections in Punjab. The use of services of Bhinderanwale had its cultural and political implication for the country and the state. It encouraged Bhinderanwale to assert his authority independently and assume the leadership of the Khalistan movement. Not only a large number of Sikh youths were attracted to the movement, the movement also received support of the foreign forces. The state responded with the Operation Blue Star sending of the armed forces to nab terrorists who were hiding in the Golden Temple at Amritsar including Sant Bhinderanwale. This ultimately led to the assassination of Indira Gandhi. The Khalistan movement also resulted in the ethnic divide between the Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab.

The scholars have explained the ethnic movement of the 1970s and 1980s in Punjab in terms of socio-economic and political factors.

- Those who explain it in terms of the socio-economic factors follow the Marxian perspective. They argue that the 'Punjab Crisis" occurred in the wake of green revolution; inability of the Sikh farmers to meet the rising cost of investment in agriculture, rising unemployment among the youth and growth of the consumerist culture which gave rise to the feeling of losing Sikh identity, etc., contributed to the rise of militancy in Punjab.

- The scholars who give the political explanation find the socio-economic explanation inadequate. They argue that the Punjab crisis was the result of a manipulation of the religion and problems of the people by the politicians.

The basis of ethnic movement in Jammu and Kashmir is language, religion and geographical location. A section of people of the state have argued since the ethnic composition of state in terms of language, religion and geography is different from the dominant ethnic groups in the country, region should be treated differently. Some of them have not considered themselves as members of the Union of India. As a result, they have demanded cessation from India, some have advocated merger with Pakistan, some have demanded a separate state for the region and some have advocated merger of two Kashmirs – one occupied by Pakistan and other of India, to become a single state. Supporters of this perspective have launched insurgency involving violence and loss human beings and material. They are supported by the foreign forces, especially Pakistan. The popular leadership in the state has also been divided on the issue of relationship of the state with the nation-state. Hari Singh, the ruler of the Jammu and Kashmir initially opposed the accession of the state into the union of India. But he had to agree to it in the face of attack of the Pakistan forces Sheikh Abdullah had supported the merger of the state with Union of India. But in the course of time he wavered on the issue. He formed Plebiscite Front, which led to his incarceration by the central government from 1953 till 1964.

According to Balraj Puri the reasons for the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir include: attitude of the central government, the lack of opposition unemployment and other problems of people, cold war and Pakistan. Even within Jammu and Kashmir there are ethnic movements by the smaller groups in Laddakh and Jammu and Kashmir, demanding autonomy within the state of Jammu and Kashmir. These regions alleged that they are discriminated against by the dominant religious communities and prosperous regions – Muslims of Kashmir.

TRIBAL ETHNIC AND IDENTITY MOVEMENTS:

The tribals provide the most appropriate examples of the ethnic movements in the country.

In their case, almost all factors, both real and imagined, which the tribal communities share among themselves – culture, customs, language, race, religion (indigenous or otherwise), economic issues, contribute to their mobilization. Even if the their mobilization starts with a single marker, it is the multiple markers which come to play their roles in the due course. Tribal ethnic movements find their expression in all forms, – insurgency, protection of the culture and economy of the "sons of the soil" from the outside exploiters, secession from the Union of India, autonomy movements demand for the separate state, and, ethnic conflicts and riots.

The most common issues which account for the tribals ethnic mobilization are perceived or real threat to their indigenous culture and economy including the natural resources like mineral, forest and modern market opportunities by the outsiders

Numerous uprising of tribals have taken place beginning with one in Bihar, followed by many revolts in Andhra Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Mizoram and Nagaland. The important tribes involved in revolt in the nineteenth century were Mizos, Kols, Mundas, Daflas, Khasi and Garo, Kacharis and Kondhas.

Some scholars like Desai, Gough and Guha have treated tribal movements after independence as peasant movements, but K.S. Singh has criticized such approach because of the nature of tribals' social and political organization, their relative social isolation from the mainstream, their leadership pattern and the modus operandi of their political mobilization. Tribals' community consciousness is strong. Tribal movements were not only agrarian but also forest-based. Some revolts were ethnic in nature as these were directed against zamindars, money land and petty government officials who were not only exploiters but too.

When tribals were unable to pay their loan or the interest thereon, money-lenders and landlords usurped their lands. The tribals thus became

tenants on their own land and sometimes even bonded labourers. The police and the revenue officers never helped them. On the contrary, they also used the tribals for personal and government work without any payment. The courts were not only ignorant of the tribal agrarian system and customs but also were unaware of the plight of the tribals. All these factors of land alienation, usurpation, forced labour, minimum wages and land grabbing compelled many tribes like Munda, Santhals, kol, Bhils, Warli, etc., in many regions like Assam, Orissa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra to revolt.

The management of forests also led some tribes to revolt, as forests in some regions are the main sources of their livelihood. The British government had introduced certain legislations permitting merchants and contractors to cut the forests. These rules not only deprived the tribals of several forest officials. This led tribes in Andhra Pradesh and some other areas to launch movements.

Raghavaiah in his analysis in 1971 of revolts from 1778 to 1970 listed 70 revolts and gave their chronology. The Anthropological Survey of India in their survey in 1976 of tribal movements identified 36 on-going tribal movements in India. It was said that through these revolts were neither numerous nor gravely frequent, yet there was scarcely any major tribe in middle or eastern India which at some time in the last 150 years had not resorted to launching movements to register their protest and despair. Some studies on tribal movements have been conducted and reported in North-East and Central India. However, there were a significant number of movements or none at all among the tribals of the southern states. This is so because the tribes down south are too primitive, too small in number, and too isolated in their habitat to organize movements, in spite of their exploitation and the resultant discontent. L.K. Mahapatra also has observed that we do not find any significant social, religious, status-mobility, or political movement among the numerically small and migratory tribes.

After independence, the tribal movements may be classified into three groups:

- movements due to exploitation by outsiders (like those of the Santhals and Mundas),

- movements due to economic deprivation (like those of the Gonads in Madhya Pradesh and the Mahars in Andhra Pradesh), and

- movements due to separatist tendencies (like those of the Nagas and Mizos).

The tribal movements may also be classified on the basis of their orientation into four types:

- movements seeking political autonomy and formation of a state (Nagas, Mizos, Jharkhand),

- agrarian movements,

- forest- based movements, and

- socio-religious or socio-cultural movements (the Bhagat movement among Bhils of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, movements among tribals of south Gujarat or Raghunath Murmu's movement among the Santhals).

Mahapatra has classified tribal movements in three groups: reactionary, conservative and revolutionary.

- The reactionary movements tries to bring back 'the good old days',

- the conservative movement tries to maintain the status quo.

- The revolutionary or the reversionary movements are those which are organized for 'improvement' or 'purification' of the cultural or social by eliminating evil customs, beliefs or institutions.

Surajit Sinha has classified movements into five groups:

- ethnic rebellion,

- reform movements,

- political autonomy movements within the India Union,

- Secessionist movements, and

- agrarian unrest.

S.M. Dube has classified them in four categories:

- religious and social reform movements,
- movements for separate statehood,
- insurgent movements, and
- cultural rights movements.

Ghanshyam Shah has classified them in three groups: ethic, agrarian and political. If we take into consideration all the tribal movements, including the Naga revolution (which started in 1948 and continued up to 1972), the Mizo movement (guerrilla warfare which ended with the formation of Meghalaya state in April 1970, created out of Assam and Mizoram in 1972), the Gond Raj movement (of Gonds of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, started in 1941 for a separate state and reaching its peak in 1962-63), the Naxalite movements (of the tribals in Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Assam), the agrarian movements (of the Gonds and the Bhils in Madhya Pradesh), and the forest-based movements (of the Gonds for getting customary rights in forests), it could be said that the tribal unrest and resultant movements were mainly movements launched for liberation from

- oppression and discrimination,
- neglect and backwardness, and
- a government which was callous to the tribals' plight of poverty, hunger, unemployment and exploitation.

Tribal movements after independence have been classified by **K.S. Singh** in four categories: agrarian, sanskritisation, cultural and political. In the first phases before independence, K.S. Singh holds that in their effort to introduce British Administration in the tribal areas, the British came in conflict with the tribal chiefs. The rebellious tribal leaders revolted against the British and exhorted their followers to drive out the outsiders. Such movements were launched by Oraon, Mundas, etc., in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and North-East India. After independence, tribal movements were launched either for maintaining cultural identity or for demanding a separate state or for asserting their statues as caste Hindus through sanskritisation process or on economic issues.

Stephen Fuchs has dealt with a large number of first types of tribal movements. He has called them messianic movements led by rebellious persons gifted with abilities for assuming the role of a Messiah, or these gifted people (Messiahs) are this messianic role by the community when it faces economic distress, social or political oppression. Fuchs has suggested that success of such a movement would depend upon the individual ability of charismatic leaders, thereby ignoring the relevance of system characteristics. Fuchs' analysis of movements is mostly descriptive which lists host of factors for the success or failure of these movements. None of them propose a theoretical framework.

Not many studies have been conducted on the political-separatist dimension in Nagaland, Mizoram, Chhotanagpur and Madhya Pradesh. The Jharkhand movement in Bihar is a movement of tribal communities consisting of settled agriculturalists which are sensitized to vaishnavism. Further, Chhotanagpur was the most advanced of the tribal regions in terms of literacy, political consciousness and industrial progress. Christian Missions influenced the lives of tribals here substantially. These Missions promoted education, planted the notion of private rights in land, and emphasized a since of separateness from the rest. The Jharkhand movement after 1950 developed in phases—from ethnicity to regionalism (Singh). Of these, the phase (1963-1975) after the fourth general elations is characterized by fragmentation of the Jharkhand party and fictionalization of tribal political. The BJP-led government at the Centre announced in 1998 the creation of two tribal states—one in Bihar and another in Madhya Pradesh.

B. K. Roy Burman has distinguished between prevocational and substantial movements among tribes. Proto-national movements emerge when tribes experience a transformation from tribal level

of interaction. In contrast, sub-national movements are a product of social disorganization pioneered by acculturated elite engaged in contraction of relationship and not exclusion of it with the outside world. While proto-nationalism results from exclusion expansion of the orbit of development, sub-nationalism is the result of disparities of developments. Sub-nationalism is based on the coercive power of the community.

L.K.Mahapatra in his study of tribal movements based on a time-sequence and the nature of stimulus in their existence noted certain general tendencies.

- Most reformist tribal movements, although initiated by charismatic leaders, gradually led to rationalization and institutionalization, affecting structure but not always affecting basic changes.

- Tribal movements, irrespective of their goal orientation, invariably appeared among the numerically strong, usually settled agriculturalists and economically well-off tribals.

- Primitive and small tribals directly took to large-scale conversion and separatist tendencies are marked amongst them.

- Given the geographical distribution, a pan-Indian tribes movement is unlikely to emerge.

- Democratic politics among tribes is fragmentary which in turn blocks the emergence of civil collectivism.

Concludingly it can be said that when the law does not help tribals, when the government remains callous, and the police fails to protect them even harasses them, they take to arms against their exploiters. These movements indicate that tribals adopted two paths: non-violent path of bargaining and negotiating with the government and using a variety of pressure tactics without resorting to violence/revolts, and militant path of revolts or mass struggles based on developing the fighting power of the exploited/oppressed tribal strata. The consequences of both these paths are different. One indicates struggle oriented to reforms, while the other indicates structural transformation of the community. The fact that tribals continue to be faced with problems and also continue to feel discontented and deprived, brings to the fore the conclusion that both paths have not helped them to achieve their goals.

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