

International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

Golden Research Thoughts

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RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2231-5063

Golden Research Thoughts Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial board. Readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

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ABSTRACT:

The new social movements are an integral part of the civil society discourse Neera Chandhoke, in this regard says, "The assertion of democratic social movements in the contemporary world is inextricably linked with... the concept of civil society. If the literature on new social movements describes a phenomenon, civil society provides the conceptual apparatus to comprehend the implications of these struggles".

KEY WORDS: new social movements, civil society, democratic social movements, socio-economic conditions.

INTRODUCTION:

The contemporary social movements are taken as democratic assertion of people's rights that include civil liberties and socio-economic conditions of development and it is a democratic way to realize their goal. They seek to protect civil society from the centralizing State and also to change civil society from within. T.K. Oomen comments, "Movements are enterprises which endeavour to move those in the periphery to the centre, or which attempt to

create new centres of power so that the alienated and marginalized are brought into the orbit of participation which is one of the indices of quality of life."

This present age has witnessed a proliferation of social movements. There has been a wide spectrum of social movements of new type-movements of women, Dalits (former untouchable in the India caste order), tribals, movements of displaced people, the environments, the various kinds of autonomy movements, etc.- are usually designated as New Social Movements (NSMs).

The New Social Movements (NSMs) have following characteristics:

- (i) NSMs are not movements of the oppressed or disadvantaged but have also attracted the young, better educated and relatively affluent.
- (ii) NSMs have a post material orientation and emphasise on issues based upon 'equality of life'.
- (iii) NSMs also subscribe to ideology, even if it is not always clearly defined.
- (iv) Another major highlight of NSMs is that they stress on decentralization and participatory



decision-making and also new forms of political activism. "They practice what is sometimes called the new politics' which turns away from established parties, interest groups and representatives process towards a more innovative and theatrical form of protest politics".

NSMs of India are responses to the discontents of Indian democracy and the major sources of it are planned economic development and failure to implement the constitutional promise of quality and social justice. Democracy in India has to face frequent challenges like political rumblings, insurgencies and secessionist and separatist movements emerging from the civil society. Sometimes, social dissent, discontent and even, popular demanding are often expressed outside the parliamentary framework through various form of social protest like demonstrations, strikes, dharaans, gheraos and bandhs. Social protest become the means of communication between social and political system. According to some scholars, civil society in India consists of very fluid social grouping which are founded on primordial identities of caste, ethnicity, kinship and religious, etc. Manoranjan Mohanty observes this phenomena, "The last decade of the 20th century and the early years of the new century saw momentous developments in India signaling intensification of political struggles involving class, gender and ethnic identity."

New Social Movements have built on or further contribution to what we know as the politics of identity. They have provided a platform for national and international alliances among the marginalized groups. So, when large groups of people in any society get marginalized, to protest against their conditions of life and work, the mobilization can and does take different forms like strikes, campaigns in the media, work-to-rule, violent agitations, legal actions, etc.

Eighteenth century is known as the age of enlightenment, which opened a new vista of thinking in Europe and America. Thinkers of enlightenment age, such as John Locke, Thomas Jefferson. Thomas Paine and Voltaire fought against irrationality, superstition, rigidity and tried to incorporate ideologies supported by reason, logic science and rationality. They believed that systematic thinking should be applied to all spheres of human activity. These ideas gradually caught the attention of Indian scientist around the latter half of the 19th century. The Constitution of India adopted in 1950. can be regarded as the product of enlightenment convention. Other social movements that have come up in India claiming to represent the downtrodden have a very different ideology. It is trying to cover the common issues, which are otherwise overlooked. The work on environment disaster, inequality and human rights deprivation are some of the movements that can be pronounced as postmodern movement or precisely new social movement. Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, Periyar E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Mahatma Gandhi can be regarded as forerunner of enlightened humanist social movements.

Since 1960s, post industrial economy a number of new social movements flourished among them the students movements, various national and ethnic movements, the women's movement and the environment become immensely popular. It became extremely active in political life, and more attention has been given by sociologists to such forms of political action which may be seen not only as constituting a basic context for the development of more highly organized political activities but also as political forces in their own right, existing alongside and sometimes in conflict with, established parties and pressure groups. There was a paradigm shift from the conventional social movement in objectives, methodology and strategies. There are two claims of New Social Movement. First, that the rise of post-industrial economy is responsible for a new wave of social movement, and second, it is primarily different from previous movements. This new movement emphasizes social changes in identity, life style and culture instead of changing public. The protagonists of this movement belonged to the new middle class and comprised informal loosely organized social network.

We may define a social movement, in broader terms, as a collective endeavour to product or resist change in the society of which it forms part.¹ One way of doing this is to point out the less organized character of a movement, in which there may be no regular or easily identifiable membership (no party card or dues), and little in the way of a central office or staff. Belonging to a movement is more a matter of sympathizing with a particular social outlook or doctrine, expressing it in everyday political debate and being ready to participate in occasional activities, such as demonstrations or riotous assemblies.

The distinction between and a party, or other organized group, is shown also by the fact that large-scale movements tend to produce within themselves a variety of more or less directly political groups, as did the nineteenth-century labour movement: and the subsequent course of political action as then to be understood partly in terms of the relation between the broader movement and the various organized groups.² Indian National congress was movement for the liberation of the country, with the independence of India it turned into a political party and ideological differences within the party emerged. So it can be assessed that there is blurred distinction between a movement and a party.

Having established a distinction between social movements and organized political formations, and indicated in a preliminary way the characteristics of social movements, it would not be too difficult to construct a typology of such movements, as a number of writers have attempted,³ in terms of their size (number of participants), range (local, national, International), duration, objectives (specific or general, directed toward transforming individuals or supra-individual systems and so on.⁴

Lorenz von Stein, in his work "History of the social movement in France from 1789 to the present day,"⁵ portrays social movement as struggle for greater social independence culminating in the class struggle of the proletariat. Steins's book may have influenced the initial formation of Marx's conception of the proletariat in capitalist society.⁶

To such an extent, which the social movement came to be largely identified, especially in Germany, with the labour movement. Of course, the identification was not complete, for as we have seen, Tocqueville attached greater importance to the democratic movement, animated and sustained by the middle class rather than the working class, but the impact of the labour movement grew steadily, and to a large extent it was represented as a prolongation of the democratic movement, as the term "social democracy" indicates.⁷

Beyond any such differences of interpretation, in any case, there common recognition that in one form or another large numbers of people in the post-revolutionary societies of Europe and North America had began to take part actively and consciously, in the construction and reconstruction of their societies.

It is on the basis of this historical experience of modern social movements, and with the aid of concepts which were introduce in order to understand them, that social scientists and historians have gone on to study movements of a similar though more restricted kind in other societies; for example millenarian movements,⁸ peasant rebellions,⁹ the actions of 'crowds' and 'mobs'.¹⁰ The value of such studies is that they show plainly the ubiquity of popular political action, which may be defuse, lacking any clearly formulated doctrine or expressing itself mainly in religious or cultural terms, but always which provides a matrix from which political organizations can emerge in favourable circumstances.

Nevertheless, the gap between movements of this kind (which have sometimes been called 'pre-political') and modern social movements remains large, for the latter exist on a vastly greater scale, are more directly involved in political conflict, are influenced by more rigorous and elaborate ideologies, and have as a rule a more enduring, less ephemeral, character.

Political apathy which was noted in many countries, and especially in Britain, in the mid-1970s,

was itself an indication of the instability of existing political regimes, for it expressed a disenchantment with established political organization and their policies.

The long-term success of social movements depends also on several general conditions. In the first place, it is essential that such movements should formulate a doctrine, which is capable of arousing enthusiasm and commitment to sustained political activity. The doctrine, which may be concerned with national liberation, the emancipation of a class, the emancipation of women, or some other general aim which is felt to be important by large number of people, has to include or be founded upon a social theory which can elucidate the principal issues, clarify the objective and ways of attaining them, and outline alternative forms of society.¹¹

There is a second important requirement for the success of a social movement. At some point in its development it must create more organized political groups, or covert or capture existing political organization, which are able to engage directly in a struggle for power, and have the capacity to use power when they have gained it in order to reconstruct society.¹²

What is perhaps most striking in the past two decades is the way in which social movements of very diverse kinds have become an accepted part of political life in the democracies where the expression of criticism, dissent and opposition through formal political institution is virtually impossible. There are three phases of new social movement.

The first is that in which movements such as the democratic movement and the labour movement in Europe. The women's suffrage movement and independence movements in colonial territories at a later time, or present-day, movement in autocratic status provide only effective means for expressing grievances and seeking to bring about political changes. A second stage emerges when the achievement, universal and equal suffrage, and free election seems to diminish the importance of political action outside the formal institutional sphere, although in periods of crisis social movements such as the unemployed worker's movements or the fascist movements in some European countries, may develop. The third, present stage in the democracies seems to be one in which there is a considerable revival and proliferation of social movements as a more or less permanent feature of political life, reflecting a broader movement to extend democracy. Representative government, parties and election are now seem increasingly as providing an essential framework, but as inadequate by themselves to establish a democratic society in the radical sense of government by the people.¹³

Example of new social movements include women's movement gay rights movements economy movements. Paul Byrne, F. Parkin, Beuchler, Kendall, Alain Tourinain, Ernesto laclau, Chanatal Mouffe, Claus offe, Sundar Singh Bahuguna, Indira Jai Singh, Medha Patkar, are some of the propounders in this field. It also promote the role of civil society and NGOs for collective action rather than focusing on the instrumental role of the state.

The various types of social movements very explicitly reveal the fact that it grows out frustration, dissatisfaction and mass awareness. The recent anti-corruption movement of Anna Hazare is also a glaring example of such a movement. It essentially requires a leader to mobilize masses and translate the issue into political conflict and change. The initiative is always taken by a few (elite) and then they conspire and propagates to involve masses for social cause or goal. In fine, it is the result of awareness drive of media, zeal of a touch bearer and popular support for a longer period.

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