

CHAPTER - 8

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

NCERT TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

1. Write short notes on:

Ans. (i) Women's Movement: Early 20th Century saw the growth of women's organisations such as 'Women's India Association (WIA) (1917)' All India Women's Conference (AIWC) (1926), 'National Council for Women in India (NCWI) (1925)'. While many of them began with a limited focus, their scope extended overtime.

It is often assumed that only middle class educated women were involved in social movements.

But part of the struggle is to remember the forgotten history of women's participation. Women participated alongwith men in struggles and revolt originated in tribal and rural areas in colonial period. Thus, not only urban women but also rural and tribal women participated in political agitations struggles, gradually empowering themselves. The mid 1970s saw the second phase of Indian women's movement. There was growth of autonomous women's movement, i.e., < They were independent from political parties as well as women's organisations that had links with political parties.

Educated women took radical active politics. Simultaneously promoted an analysis of women's movement. New issues were now being focused upon such as violence against women, application for schools forms had both father's and mother's name: legal changes such as land rights, employment, rights against sexual harassment and dowry. Mathura rape case (1978), Maya Tyagi rape case (1980) Both were custodial rape.

Hence, it was also recognised that in women's movements, there is bound to be disparity because women belong to different classes and thus their needs and concerns are bound to be different.

(ii) Tribal Movements: Most of the tribal movements have been largely located in the so called "tribal belt" in middle India, such as the Santhals, Hos Oraons, Mundas in Chota Nagpur and the Santhal Parganas.

The social movement of Jharkhand had a charismatic leader in Birsa Munda, an adivasi who led a major uprising against the British.

His memory has still been kept alive has continued to be a source of inspiration for generation. An educated middle class among the tribals was created by the Western education given by Christian missionaries. This education class developed the ethnic consciousness – awareness of their identity culture and customs. A sense of marginalisation brought together the tribal population of South Bihar. They identified their common enemies – dikus—migrant traders, money lenders. The adivasis in senior government jobs provided organisational intellectual leadership to the movement and negotiated and lobbied for the creation of their own state on the following issues—acquisition of land for large irrigation projects; survey and settlement operations, which were held up, camps closed, etc; collection of loans, rent and cooperative dues; nationalisation of forest produce.

As far as the NE tribes were concerned, main issue taken up were – ascertain distinct tribal identity of the region; demanding of the traditional autonomy of tribes; misunderstanding & lack of communication in Indian mainstream society which needs to be bridged;

- Rights of the tribes to maintain their own social cultural institutions along with a connection with the rest of the India;

- Anger of Tribes because of the loss of their forest lands.

Thus, tribal movements are good examples of social movements, which incorporates many issues – economic, cultural, ecological.

Earlier many tribal regions of NE, showed tendencies of separating from India but today they have adopted a balanced approach of asking for autonomy with the framework of Indian institution.

2. In India, it is difficult to make a clear distinction between the old and new social movements. Discuss.

Ans. Old Social Movements

- Class based – united to fight for rights.
- Anti-colonial movements.
- Nationalist movement united people into national e.g., liberation struggle.
- Movement against colonialism.
- Nationalist movement mobilised against rule of foreign power and dominance of foreign capital.
- Mainly concerned with struggles between haves and have-nots. Key issue is reorganisation of power relations, i.e. capturing power & transferring it from powerful to powerless, e.g. Workers were mobilised towards capitalists; Women's struggle against male domination.
- Worked under guidance & organisational framework of political parties, eg. Indian National Congress led the Indian National movement; Communist Party of China led the Chinese Revolution.
- Role of political parties was central and poor people had no other effective means to get their voices heard.
- Concerned about social inequality and unequal distribution of resources -important elements.

New Social Movements

- Decades after Second World War- 1960s and early 1970s
 - Take up not just narrow class issues but broad, universal themes, which involved a broad social group irrespective of their class.
 - Vietnam war forces led by US bloody conflict.
 - Paris – Vibrant student's movement joined worker's parties in a series of strikes protesting against the war.
 - USA was experiencing a surge of social protests. Civil rights movement was led by Martin Luther King.
 - Black power movement led by Malcolm X.
 - Women's movement, environmental movement.
 - No longer focus on redistribution of power rather are more concerned with improving the quality of life. eg. Right to education, clean environment.
 - No longer confine themselves within political parties. Instead started joining civil society movements and forming NGOs because they are supposed to be more efficient, less corrupt and less autocratic
 - Globalization – reshaping people's lives, culture, media Firms – transnational. Legal arrangements – international.
- Therefore, many new social movements are international in scope.
- Essential elements – Identity politics, cultural anxieties and aspirations.

3.Environmental movements often also contain economic and identity issues. Discuss.

Ans. The Chipko movement is a suitable example of an ecological or environmental movements. It is an appropriate example of intermingled interests and ideologies. Ramchandra Guha says in his book Unquiet Woods that villagers came together to save the oak and rhododendron forests near their villages. The government forest contractors came to fell the trees but the villagers, including large number of women, came forward to hug the trees to check their being felled. The villagers relied on the forest to get firewood, fodder and other daily requirements. It was a conflict between livelihood needs of poor villagers and government's desire to make revenue from selling timber. Chipko movement raised the issue of ecological sustainability. Felling down natural forests was a form of environmental destruction which resulted in demonstrating floods and landslides in the area. Therefore, concerns about economy, ecology and political representation underlay the Chipko movement.

4.Distinguish between Feasant and New Farmer's Movements.

Ans. (i) Peasant movements have taken place from pre-colonial days. The movement took place between 1858 and 1914 remained localised, disjointed and confined to particular grievances. The well known movement are:

- Bengal Revolt of 1859 – 62 against the indigo plantation system.
- Deccan Riots of 1857 against money lenders.
- The Bardoli Satyagraha – 1928 was a non tax campaign started by Gandhi.
- Champaran Satyagraha 1917-18. It was directed against indigo plantations.
- Tebhaga movement (1946-47)
- Telangana movement (1946-51)

(ii) New farmer's movement started in 1970s in Punjab and Tamil Nadu. Main Characteristics:

- Movements were regionally organised.
- Movements were non-party.
- Movements involved farmers rather than peasants.
- Main ideology- Strongly anti-state and anti-urban
- Focus of demand – Price related issues.