

Ideological Inspirations of the Movements of Denotified-Nomadic Tribes

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ABSTRACT

The struggles of notified-nomadic tribes highlight issues of resistance, identity and the quest for justice within Indian society. This paper delves into the ideological motivations behind these movements, focusing on the influence of Marxism, Dalit Panther ideology, and literary expressions. It examines how these movements emerged as a response to systemic oppression, analyzed through historical, social, and cultural lenses. In Maharashtra, the De-notified nomadic tribes initiated a social movement to claim their fundamental rights, beginning with opposition to the Tribal Crime Act of 1871. This act labeled certain tribes as criminals, though they were de-notified after 1952. Despite this, these tribes faced persistent challenges in voicing their issues. The study provides an in-depth exploration of the ideas and motivations driving these movements. The Dalit movements in Maharashtra served as a catalyst for the educated youth of De-notified nomadic tribes, inspiring them to organize and mobilize. Influenced by ideologies from the Rashtriya Seva Dal, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, and Marxism, these youth laid the foundation for the De-notified nomadic tribal movements, shaped by the principles and aspirations of these diverse schools of thought.

Key Words: De-notified nomadic tribal, Movements Ideology, Dalit Panther Movement

Introduction The principle of "survival of the fittest," as articulated by Charles Darwin, applies aptly to human society. Communities within society often stratify themselves based on perceived superiority or inferiority. In this dynamic, stronger communities exert dominance over weaker ones, compelling the latter to fight for survival and identity. Such struggles not only represent the resilience of marginalized groups but also encapsulate the socio-political history of human societies.

Movements arise when communities recognize systemic injustices. These movements challenge existing structures and force governments and administrations to acknowledge their demands. The Indian freedom movement is one such example, but history also records the tribal, Dalit, labor, women's, and farmers' movements as significant contributors to social change. These movements frequently found expression through literature, articulating their causes and envisioning a better future.

The denotified-nomadic tribes of India have been waging a sustained struggle for recognition and justice for over four decades. Despite their efforts, their plight has largely been ignored by governments, historians, and social reformers. This paper explores the ideological inspirations underpinning their movements, with a particular focus on Maharashtra, where these struggles have seen significant development.

Movements Influenced by Communist Ideology: The post-1952 period saw a growing awareness among educated members of denotified-nomadic tribes about the injustices faced by their communities. Education and exposure to labor union movements, influenced by Marxist ideas, played a pivotal role in fostering this awareness.

Laxman Gaikwad, a key figure in these movements, attributes his activism to his experiences as a laborer in a cotton mill in Latur. He noted the impact of Marxist ideologies on labor unions and their role in challenging systemic injustices. Inspired by these ideas, Gaikwad formed the "Vadar Patharwat Samaj

Sangathan," an organization aimed at addressing the grievances of his tribe. In 1976, this effort expanded to include other tribes, such as the Kaikadi, under a broader "Denotified-Nomadic Organization." This marked the beginning of a coordinated movement advocating for fundamental rights, including livelihood and property access.

Influence of the Dalit Panther Movement: The Dalit Panther movement, founded in 1972 under the ideological influence of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, inspired many young activists from denotified-nomadic tribes. This movement's aggressive stance against caste oppression resonated strongly, particularly among youth migrating to urban centers like Mumbai for employment.

Balkrishna Renke, a prominent activist, drew heavily from the Dalit Panther movement. In his early days, Renke organized community members in Mumbai's slums, mobilizing them to challenge systemic discrimination. He observed that caste-based organizations among denotified -nomadic tribes often lacked unity and effectiveness. Inspired by the broader, inclusive approach of the Dalit Panthers, Renke emphasized the need to dismantle caste-based divisions and foster solidarity across tribes. This vision culminated in the first statewide conference of denotified-nomadic tribes in 1972, signaling a significant step toward collective action.

Movements emerging from the Literary: Sphere Literature has been a powerful medium for social awakening among marginalized communities. The emergence of Dalit literature in the 1960s, following Dr. Ambedkar's passing, played a pivotal role in shaping the consciousness of denotified-nomadic tribes. Dalit literature, characterized by autobiographies and poetry, articulated the harsh realities of oppression, poverty, and systemic discrimination. These works inspired similar expressions among denotified-nomadic tribes.

Notable literary contributions from this community include Laxman Mane's *Upara* and Laxman Gaikwad's *Uchalya*. These autobiographies vividly depicted the struggles and resilience of their communities, shedding light on issues like extreme poverty, social ostracization, and systemic neglect. Such works not only fostered social awareness but also mobilized the younger generation to demand justice and equality. This literary movement created a ripple effect, inspiring activists like Bhimrao Gasti and Balkrishna Renke to use literature as a tool for advocacy and reform.

Challenges and Future Directions The movements of denotified-nomadic tribes face significant challenges, including limited political representation, inadequate implementation of welfare schemes, and pervasive social stigma. While efforts like the establishment of the Khade Commission in Maharashtra and the 4% reservation policy have been initiated, their impact has been minimal due to systemic inefficiencies and a lack of political will.

Activists argue that overcoming these challenges requires dismantling caste hierarchies and fostering unity among all marginalized groups. Additionally, there is a pressing need for sustained advocacy, leveraging both grassroots mobilization and intellectual discourse to compel the government to address their demands comprehensively.

Here is a rewritten version of your research paper, maintaining its core ideas and reorganizing it for better readability and coherence:

Contributions of Authors to the Denotified-Nomadic Tribes Movement and Literature

The history and struggles of the Denotified-Nomadic Tribes (DNTs) in India have been illuminated through the writings and activism of several influential leaders and authors. This paper explores the contributions of these figures, their literary works, and the ideological movements that shaped the fight for the rights and recognition of the DNTs.

Prominent Contributors and Literary Efforts

Motiram Rathod was a pioneer in highlighting the plight of the Denotified-Nomadic Tribes through his extensive writings on their history, social conditions, and the impact of the Criminal Tribes Act. His works

covered over fifty tribes, encouraging activists to raise their voices through writing. Inspired by the reformist thoughts of Phule, Shahu Maharaj, and Ambedkar, Rathod played a key role in fostering literary and activist engagement within the DNT community.

The emergence of autobiographies from the DNT community post-1980 marked a transformative phase in literature. Notable works include Laxman Mane's *Upura* (1980), which vividly portrayed the hardships of the Denotified Tribes, and Dadasaheb More's *Gabal* (1983). These were followed by Laxman Gaikwad's *The Branded* (1987) and Bhimrao Gasti's *Baird* (2012), which gave a powerful voice to the experiences of the nomads. Together, these writings brought national attention to the DNTs and provided a platform for their advocacy.

The formation of the Denotified-Nomadic Federation, under the leadership of authors and activists like Rathod, became instrumental in championing the rights of the DNTs for over three decades.

Movements Arising from Socialist Ideology

Post-independence, the *Rashtra Seva Dal* emerged as a key proponent of socialism, with Kolhapur being a significant hub of activity. Leaders like Madhavrao Bagal, Ravindra Sabnis, and Bapusaheb Patil influenced the socialist orientation of movements among the DNTs.

Laxman Mane and Venkappa Bhosale, inspired by the *Seva Dal*, initiated campaigns addressing the social and economic challenges faced by the nomads in Kolhapur. Their leadership drove significant agitations, protest marches, and campaigns that pressured the government to enact reforms aimed at uplifting the DNTs.

Movements Arising from Fundamentalist Ideology

Bhimrao Gasti, a prominent activist from the Baird community in Belgaum, transitioned from a successful academic career to full-time social work after encountering the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)* during his studies in Hyderabad. Gasti's activism was rooted in addressing police brutality and systemic oppression faced by the DNTs.

Through persistent organizing and negotiation, Gasti secured jobs for hundreds of displaced individuals and compensation for affected families. His efforts in creating self-reliant communities included establishing village committees and promoting education, agriculture, and cultural awareness.

Major Movements and Achievements

The period between 1978 and 1987 was a critical phase for the DNT movement. Leaders like Gasti led peaceful yet disciplined marches and protests, advocating for justice and recognition of the community's rights. These efforts culminated in several victories, including:

1. Reduction in police brutality.
2. Land allocation and economic rehabilitation.
3. Increased educational and employment opportunities through reservation policies.
4. Successful inclusion of several DNTs in the Scheduled Tribes list by 1991.

These movements emphasized the importance of grassroots organization, self-reliance, and cultural revival, significantly improving the lives of the DNTs.

CONCLUSION

The movements of denotified-nomadic tribes are a testament to the resilience and determination of marginalized communities striving for justice and identity. Drawing inspiration from Marxism, the Dalit Panther movement, and literary activism, these movements have laid a foundation for collective action and social transformation. However, much work remains to be done to achieve their goals of rehabilitation,

equality, and recognition. Through unity, advocacy, and continued efforts, the denotified-nomadic tribes can secure their rightful place in Indian society.

Interviews with key leaders and activists, including Laxman Mane, Balkrishna Renke, and Bhimrao Gasti, reveal the multifaceted nature of the DNT movement. Emerging from the socio-economic and cultural marginalization imposed by the British Criminal Tribes Act of 1871, the DNTs have navigated a path of struggle and resilience.

Despite the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act in 1952, systemic neglect and discrimination persisted. However, leaders from diverse ideological backgrounds—socialist, Marxist, and nationalist—worked tirelessly to organize and empower the DNTs. Their collective efforts resulted in significant milestones, such as economic rehabilitation, increased representation, and a gradual shift in societal perceptions.

The Denotified-Nomadic Tribes movement continues to evolve, drawing strength from its history of resistance and the unwavering commitment of its leaders.

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