

**Dalit Assertion in Independent India: A
Study of Dalit Panther Movement (Uttar Pradesh)**

DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO

**BABASAHEB BHIMRAO AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY
LUCKNOW**



**FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY
IN**

HISTORY

SUBMITTED BY

**BASANT KUMAR KANAUIYA
ENROLLMENT NO: 666/12**

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF

DR. V. M. RAVI KUMAR

Assistant Professor

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
SCHOOL FOR AMBEDKAR STUDIES
BABASAHEB BHIMRAO AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY
(A CENTRAL UNIVERSITY)
VIDYA VIHAR, RAEBARELI ROAD
LUCKNOW-226025
UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA**

2019

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “**Dalit Assertion in Independent India: A Study of Dalit Panther Movement (Uttar Pradesh)**” submitted in fulfilment for the degree of **Master of Philosophy** is an authentic record of original work carried out by me under the supervision of **Dr. V.M. Ravi Kumar**, Assistant Professor, Department of History, School for Ambedkar Studies, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (A Central University) Lucknow. I further declare that this research work has not been previously submitted before for the award of any other degree or diploma to any University or Institution. In keeping with the ethical practice in reporting research information, due acknowledgement have been made wherever the findings of others have been cited. This is also declare that the M.Phil. Dissertation is free from all kinds of plagiarism.

Place: Lucknow

Date: 03.06.2019



BASANT KUMAR KANAUJIYA

Research Scholar

Department of History

School for Ambedkar Studies

BBAU, Lucknow

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the M. Phil. Dissertation titled “**Dalit Assertion in Independent India: A Study of Dalit Panther Movement (Uttar Pradesh)**” submitted by **Mr. Basant Kumar Kanaujiya** Enrollment No. 666/12, is an original research work and has not been previously submitted in part or full for the award of any other degree or diploma to this or any other university.

The M. Phil. dissertation submitted to Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University Lucknow satisfies all the requirements as stipulated in the *Master of Philosophy (M. Phil.) Regulations, 2015* and it is fit for submission and evaluation for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of the University.

Date: 03-06-2019


Supervisor


Head of the Department

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*I would like to express my deep sense of gratitude to my supervisor **Dr. V.M. Ravi Kumar** who always motivated me for doing my research work regarding the topic. He always inspired me for doing this research work in a proper way. He has not only guided for me as a research supervisor but he always guides me in my other field of life as well. I would like to express my sincere thank to sir for continues support of my M. Phil. work. His guidance help me in all the time of research writing of this my M.Phil. dissertation. About him, I would like to say only that if had not there my supervisor then my dissertation would not be finalized.*

*I am special indebted of Head of Department of History **Prof. S. Victor Babu** for support, valuable and guidance during M. Phil. Admission process. He not only guided for extra support when I needed for it but he also motivated me to complete my work. His contribution and valuable support for my work is very obligable for me.*

*I would also like thank **Prof. Shura Darapuri** for support and valuable suggestions throughout the process of my research work and otherwise as well. I would also extend my heart full thanks to **Dr. Siddharth Shankar Rai** and **Dr. Renu Pandey**, faculty of Department of History for encouraging my during my research and I also obliged to office staff department of History for their helpfulness.*

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Uttar Pradesh State Archives Lucknow. I thank all the staff of the libraries of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University Lucknow, University of Lucknow, Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi, for permitting me to consult

the necessary records and books. I would like to give special thanks to interviewer with District President, Bhim Army, Saharanpur, Mr. Kamal Singh Waliya.

I obliged a special thanks to my Senior Scholars Arvind Swaroop, Ashraf Wani, Ishan Khan, Becha Lal, Shivangi, Pankaj Kumar, Rakesh Kumar, Ranjeet Kumar, Alok Saroj, Arun Kumar Varma for their encouragement and support. My grateful thanks go to my batch mates Mukesh Chandra, Raj Kumar and Shiv Yadav for their kind support and cooperation and more than my freind I shall be very obliged to Ramesh kumar, Kranti kumar and Gajendra kumar.

I would like to express my Cordially gratitude to Prof. Vivek Kumar, Chairperson, Centre for the Study of Social System, JNU, New Delhi, for their forever, cooperative research guidance and motivational commitment for me, has always inspired for doing special in academic fields.

I would like to record my sincere respects to my parents Mr. Chote Lal Kanaujiya and Mrs. Kamala Devi and Sister Seema for their constant encouragement and emotional support. At last, but not the least, I would like to thank to my Elder brother's Sanjay Kumar and Hemant Kumar and younger brother Sharad Kumar Kanaujiya they need a special mention as they have been my best critic and admirer.

Finally, I express my deep sense of gratitude to my friends for their indispensable encouragement, selfless sacrifice, sustained inspiration & invaluable assistance throughout my life.


(Basant Kumar Kanaujiya)

CONTENTS

Declaration

Certificate

Acknowledgement

S.No.	Chapter's Name	Page No.
1.	Chapter: I	01-12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction	
2.	Chapter: II	13-24
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Historical and Cultural Identity of Dalits: Origin and meaning of concept of Dalit	
3.	Chapter: III	25-70
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Origin of Dalit Panther Movement	
4.	Chapter: IV	71-100
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dalit Politics and Dalit Panther Movement in Uttar Pradesh	
5.	Chapter:V	101-106
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conclusion	
	Bibliography	107-114
	Appendix	115-126

CHAPTER: I

TITLE OF CHAPTER:

INTRODUCTION

ABSTRACT OF CHAPTER:

This chapter proposes the schematic and thematic structure of this study. This chapter has been organised into the following sections: introduction of study, context of the study, objective of study, hypothesis of study, methodology of study, review of literature and note on chapters of study. The main objective of this chapter is to propose a thematic picture of this study.

CHAPTER -1

INTRODUCTION

Conceptually Dalit assertion denotes a process in which the former untouchable communities of India fought against several stigmas that they were subjected to in colonial and post-colonial period. It has been a process having multiple movements, personalities, incidents that have operated with the objective of demanding social justice to Dalits in all walks of life. This study is an attempt to track the trajectory of Dalit movement in India with particular reference to the Dalit Panther Movement. This topic has been chosen as the Dalit Panther Movement represents more aggressive assertion of Dalit identity at one level and exercised significant impact upon the politics of Dalits at another level. In order to explore this unique trend in Dalit politics, this study attempts to explore the discourse and practice of the Dalit Panther Movement and its role in creation of identity-based politics under the umbrella of Dalit as a socio-cultural and political category.

The concept of Dalit as a representational category represents multiple castes, which are traditionally treated as untouchable communities, by caste Hindus as a tradition sanctioned by customs. Even though it was prohibited as a practice by the Constitution of India, its practice could still be seen in different domains of Indian life. The caste system is basically a system of elaborately stratified social hierarchy- this phenomenon distinguishes India from most other societies. Indian society is divided into numerous castes and sub-castes numbering roughly over four thousand, besides the sizeable number of tribes and other religious communities. This hereditary based caste system is broadly classified into three: the *dwijas* (twice born) or the upper castes, which are also called, in some regions, the intermediate castes commonly known as backward castes or classes, and the lowest castes or

Untouchables of the earlier times. Sanctified by religious texts and solidified through norms of restrictions on intermarriage and inter-dinning, the caste system essentially orders different groups in the Hindu Indian society into an occupation based hierarchy.¹

The caste system in India not only determines the individual's social status on the basis of group to which he/she is born but also differentiates and assigns occupational and economic roles. This caste system puts the Brahmans or the priests at the pinnacle while the 'Shudra' *Varna* was kept at the bottom, and the population outside the *Varna* system being subsequently categorized as Untouchables. This class of population constitutes nearly 17 percent (over 20 crore) of the total population in India. But, despite being one of the largest sections of the population, they have been subjected to oppression and exploitation for centuries and many of them forced to live miserable life. The process of Dalit assertion is thus a reflection of their quest for shedding untouchable status and attempt for gaining respectable identity and improvement in material status.²

For representation of Dalit communities in public discourse and literary expressions, different nomenclature has been used. Officially they are known as the Scheduled Castes and at the level of social discourse the words Harijan and Dalits are being used. The term Dalit has acquired wider circulation after popularity of the Dalit Panthers in 1972-73, when they add various religious minorities, women, tribes, backward castes and economically deprived sections in their definition of the term Dalit. But, the term Dalit is currently used for the ex-untouchables all over the country. Over a period of time the social scientists have begun referring to the Dalits and Untouchables or the Scheduled Castes inter-changeably. We have

¹ C.J. Fuller, *The Camphor Flame: Popular Hinduism and Society in India*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1992,

² Rajani Kothari, *Caste in Indian Politics*, Oriental Longman, Delhi, 1954.

also used the term Dalit, in this work, for ex-Untouchables or the Scheduled Castes by articulating their self-realization and their struggle against the caste-oppression, their "will to act against exploitation and a rise from oppression. Dalit as a conceptual category rooted in ideological discourse of Jotiba Phule, Babasaheb Ambedkar and E.V. Ramaswami Periyar, with many others throughout India (Narayanswami Guru in Kerala, Acchutanand in U.P., Mangoo Ram in Punjab etc.).³ It was a social collectivist discourse that represents a common history and aspirations of former untouchable communities.

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

There has been an upsurge of the Dalit movement in all over India right from the late nineteenth century. As a matter of fact, "the broader anti-caste movements" have become a central democratic movement of Indian society. In the pre-independence period this anti-caste movement comprised strong non-Brahmans movements in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu as well as Dalit movements in Maharashtra, Punjab (the *Adi-Dharma* movement), Kerala (Narayana swami Guru's movement), and Hyderabad (*Adi-Hindus*). Independent India saw two decades of quiescence for anti-caste struggle, then a renewed upsurge from the early 1970s marked by the founding of the Dalit Panthers in 1972. This time the Dalits and their organisations were clearly in the vanguard with the non-Brahmin castes, now known as Other Backward Castes (OBC's). Then during the 1980s, a new wave of assertion was felt when the Dalits wanted to exercise the political power themselves, particularly in the northern states of India, more specifically in Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Bihar.⁴

³ J. Michael Mahar, *The Untouchables in Contemporary India*, Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 1972.

⁴ Barbara R. Joshi, *Democracy in Search of Equality: Untouchable Politics and Indian Social Change*, Delhi, Hindustan Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 1982.

Dalit movement has been one of the vocal and vibrant social movements that demanded social justice for lower sections of Indian society. It had strong roots in colonial period by the way of put forwarding several demands for gaining access to respectable life. The tempo of Dalit movement continued in independent India. Increased level of literacy rate at one level and access to employment opportunities offered by the Indian Constitution at another level resulted in sustained and vibrant movement for social justice by Dalits. Ascendency of Bahujan Samaj Party in politics of Utter Pradesh (biggest state in terms of population in India) at one level and emergence of Dalit militancy in the form of Bhim Army, which had advanced aggressive assertion of for human rights, captured the attention of public and academia. In the contemporary times, the atrocities over Dalits have been increasing steadily. This context necessitated a historical approach to study Dalit movement to track the trajectory of demands and strategies of Dalit movement for social justice. This investigation can be done better by exploring the activities of the Dalit Panther Movement. Historically Dalit Panther Movement created a literary consciousness among Dalits; its manifestation could be seen in the contemporary times as the category of Dalits acquired a status of social discourse. Hence, this study attempts to capture the historical roots of Dalit extremism by focusing on ideas and strategies of DPM and its ideological and activist dimension and their impact upon the subsequent movement by Dalits.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

While narrating the history of Dalit assertion movement with particular reference to DPM, this study revolves around the following objectives. These objectives guide the organisation of this study in a systematic way:

- 1- To explore the process of emerge of Dalit assertion in India and offers an analysis on the factors responsible for assertive discourse of Dalits.
- 2- To document the factors responsible for emergence of Dalit Panther Movement.
- 3- To document history of Dalit Panther Movement.
- 4- To analyse context of Dalit radical assertion in independent India.
- 5- To illustrate the core demands and strategies of Dalit Panther Movement.
- 6- To capture the literature representation of Demands made by Dalit Panther Movement for development of Dalit communities.
- 7- To document the impact of Dalit Panther Movement in Uttar Pradesh.
- 8- Analyzing the impact of Dalit Panther Movement and Dalit politics of India.

HYPOTHESIS OF STUDY

While narrating the historical roots of Dalit assertion with particular reference to Dalit Panther Movement, the proposed study attempts to address the following points of hypothesis:

- 1- Dalit Panther Movement brought about psychological revolution among the lower and marginalized section of India.
- 2- Dalit Panther Movement had significant impact upon assertion and mobilization of Dalit politics.
- 3- The literature produced by Dalit Panther Movement significantly popularized the work and concept Dalits all over India.
- 4- Dalit Panther Movement influenced the Dalit youth and created significant assertive awareness among them.

5- Dalit Panther Movement gave significant impetus to political activities of Dalit communities all over India.

6- Dalit Panther Movement played a significant role in shaping the political activities of Dalit communities in Utter Pradesh.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

The proposed study is basically a historical analysis of Dalit movement by using analytical and descriptive methods. This is done by focusing on the literature available in Hindi and English languages. So far as secondary sources are concern, book, articles related to Dalit movement in general, and Dalit Panther Movement in particular have been explored. Besides this, attempt has also been made to explore the primary sources such as manifesto of Dalit Panther Movement, books and poems written by activists of the Movement. For narration of history of Dalit Panther Movement the conceptual framework of discourse analysis has been used in order the capture the assertive narratives put forwarded by activists belong the movement. The present study will attempt to analyse this assertion, its spread and impact upon the lives of the Dalits. For this purpose, the present study will analyse the roots and the course of the Dalit movement in Uttar Pradesh, its socio-political context, leadership factor and its limitations.

The proposed study is basically an historical analysis of Dalit movement in India with particular reference to Dalit Panther Movement. This task is done by focusing on the politics of Dalit movement and the narratives that are being put forwarded by activists involved in the movement. In a way this study use the concept of discourse analysis in order to explore the meaning and intention of activists engaged in the movement and its impact upon the

collectivist consciousness of Dalit assertion. This study mainly depended upon literary as the main intention of the study is to capture the pattern of Dalit assertion that took shape from the early 1970s when the Dalit Panther Movement acquired prominence.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature on Dalit assertion and movement acquired significant popularity in independent India. The fact, however, is that it is the Dalit Panther Movement that had popularised the conceptual meaning of the word Dalits and a strong sense of identity that it has associated with former untouchable communities in India. The identity formation process for Dalits thus not only expedited but also popularised in India. The literature on Dalit Panther Movement has been analysed in the following section:

The first category of studies on Dalit Panther Movement is that of macro level historical accounts on history of Dalit movement. The macro level approach for history of Dalit movement focused on the role of intellectuals,⁵ the associations which had played a crucial role in mobilisation of Dalit masses,⁶ the strategies that were being adopted for mobilisation, assertion for pressing demands for better life,⁷ the demands that were advanced for social justice and other gains critically required for empowerment of Dalits,⁸ and the democratic spirit that the Dalit movement exhibited in order to put their demands before political class and socially oppressive classes.⁹ Attempt has also been made to explore

⁵ R.K Kshirsagar, *Dalit movement in India and Its Leaders (1857-1956)*, M.D.Publications New Delhi, 1994.

⁶ S.M. Michael, *Dalits in Modern India: Vision and Values*, Vistaar Publication, New Delhi, 1999.

⁷ Gail Omvedt, *Dalit Visions*, Orient Longman Private Limited, Delhi, 2008.

⁸ Gail, Omvedt, *Dalits and the Democratic Revolution: Dr Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement in Colonial India*, Sage Publication, New Delhi 1994.

⁹ S. Pai, *Dalit Assertion and the unfinished Democratic Revolution: The Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh, Cultural Subordination and the Dalit Challenge*, Vol-3, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2002.

cultural forms of assertion that were being used by Dalit movement.¹⁰ The main objective of these studies is that exploring and documentation of the origin, growth and impact of Dalit movement in different parts of India. These studies also highlight the millstones of Dalit movement and treat Dalit Panther Movement as one of the milestones of Dalit movement.

The second category of studies on Dalit movement in general and Dalit Panther Movement in particular is that studies focusing history of the Dalit movement in Maharashtra, which was epicentre of Phule-Ambedkar movement and ideologies. O’hanlon, Rosalind offers a penetrating analysis on cultural factors that were responsible for emergence of vibrant Dalit movement in western part of India in general and Maharashtra in particular. The cultural conflicts expressed in the form of cultural discourse of non-Brahman movement for Rosalind created a solid framework for emergence of vibrant and radical assertive Dalit movement in which Dalit Panther Movement happens to be one of the movements.¹¹ By focusing on Ambedkar, attempt was made to construct the history of Dalit movement in Maharashtra.¹² It has been proposed by these studies that the ideas of Ambedkar provide an ideological base for assertive Dalit movement in different parts of India.

The third category of studies on Dalit movement in general and Panther Movement in particular is that studies exclusively dealing with history of Dalit Panther Movement in general and various aspects of the movement in particular. This category of studies attempts

¹⁰ Ghansham Shah, *Dalit identity and Politics, Culture Subordination and Dalit Challenge*, Vol-2, Sage Publication, Delhi, 2001.

¹¹ Rosalind O’hanlon, *Caste, Conflict and Ideology: Mahatma Jotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in Nineteenth-Century Western India*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985.

¹² Eleanor Zelliot, *From Untouchable to Dalit: Essays on the Ambedkar Movement*, Manohar Publisher, Delhi, 1992.

to document the historical trajectory of Dalit Panther Movement and highlighted the contribution and impact it exercised on Dalit movement in different parts of India.

Among several books on Dalit Panther Movement, Lata Murugkar's book entitled *Dalit Panther Movement in Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal* is very important for it presents a detailed picture of various aspects of the Movement. It explains how a strong presence of Phule-Ambedkar ideological movement already created a base for the Dalit Panther Movement in Maharashtra. She also present a penetrating picture on how several factors prevailed in the society of Maharashtra were responsible for emergence of Dalit Panther Movement. In her view Dalit Panther Movement was not a simply a political movement but also a cultural and literacy outbreak of ideological conflicts between Dalits and their oppressors.

Noted writer Gail Omvedt's book *Dalit Vision*, even though presents an all India level picture of Dalit movement, but major portion was devoted to documentation of Dalit movement in Maharashtra. This book graphically highlights the modes of Dalit assertion and core demands that are put forwarded by the movement in a bid to mobilise Dalit across the country. This book also highlights the role of Dalit Panther Movement in populating the concept and idea of Dalits in all over India, which exercised significant impact on Dalit movement.

A book by J.V. Pawar entitled *Dalit Panthers: An Authoritative History* is indeed an exhaustive study on the ideas and practices of Dalit Panther Movement. This book focus on the various strategies that are being adopted by activists engaged in Dalit Panther Movement and the core issues that are taken up by the movement for emancipation of Dalit sections in

India. The main contribution of this book is to present a comprehensive analysis on history and politics of Dalit Panther Movement in India. We do not claim that an exhaustive list of books and studies that are covered in this section, but we tried to review some of the important books that have represented the history and politics of Dalit movement in general and Dalit Panther Movement in particular.

CHAPTERISATION OF STUDY

This study has been organised into the following chapters:

The first chapter of this study entitled introduction presents schematic and thematic structure of this study. Concepts such as context of the study, objectives of study, hypothesis of study, methodology of study, review of literature and a brief narration of chapters of study have been explained.

The second chapter entitled origin of Dalit Panther Movement deals with the historical roots of Dalit movement with particular reference to Dalit Panther Movement. The main objective of this chapter is to analyse the factors that are responsible for emergence of vibrant, assertive and extremist form of Dalit protest in the form of Dalit Panther Movement. Attempt has also been made highlights the discourse and strategies of Dalit Panther Movement in order to capture the core message of the Movement.

The third chapter entitled Dalit Panther Movement and Dalit politics in Uttar Pradesh mainly focused on the impact of the movement on the Dalit politics of Uttar Pradesh. The main objective of this chapter is to capture the way in which Dalit Panther Movement

unleashed a new dimension of more aggressive form of political mobilisation among Dalits of Utter Pradesh.

The final chapter of this study entitled conclusion and findings proposes a summary of the study and highlight some of the important findings that are not being covered in the existing literature on Dalit Panther Movement.

CHAPTER: II

TITLE OF CHAPTER:

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITY OF DALITS: ORIGIN AND MEANING OF CONCEPT OF DALIT

ABSTRACT OF CHAPTER:

This chapter attempts to construct a historical and linguistic trajectory of the concept Dalit. This is done by exploring the etymological, phenomenological, hermeneutic, sociological and historical context and meaning of the word Dalits. The main objective of this chapter is to capture the evolutionary trajectory of meaning of Dalit.

CHAPTER-2

INTRODUCTION

The word Dalit as a linguistic signifier of a group of people having a similar socio-economic and history acquired wider popularity in the last fifty years in India. Particularly the shared oppressive history of scheduled caste (constitutional name to ex-untouchable communities of India) created a context for forging a common linguistic and sociological identity. It is this context that the concept of Dalit emerged and gained wider acceptance as a representative category of ex-untouchable communities of India. This chapter attempts to explore the historical process of emergence of identity around the concept of Dalits in socio-cultural context of Indian history. It has been proposed in this chapter that the word 'Dalit' represent a set of discourses that are woven around an identity for the communities historically subjected to various forms of exploitation. This discourse was aimed at representation of aspiration of communities to escape from exploitation and step into an optimistic world, which expected to change their live the way they wanted.

For construction of Dalit quest for creation of a distinctive identity for themselves, this chapter has been divided into three sections: the first section proposes a brief note on nomenclature that existed before emergence of the word Dalit: the second section explores the entomological meaning of the word Dalits in different language and the third section documents the context and factors that popularized the word Dalits.

UNTOUCHABLE COMMUNITIES IN COLONIAL PERIOD

Before analyzing the meaning, origin and history the word Dalit we need to understand the meaning of Dalit in terms of political and social context. Sociologist Vivek Kumar had explained the meaning of Dalit in his book *Dalit Leadership in India* as an umbrella term that represents the multiple castes that are traditionally treated as untouchables. The term Dalit has been used in his study exclusively for the ex-untouchable or the scheduled castes. Before advent of the concept of Dalits, diversified terms are used to represent the numerous castes that are considered as untouchable castes in different parts of India. We do not want to go to pre-colonial past as it vast and contentious, we would confine to British colonial period.¹³

Colonial ethnographic writings used several terms to denote the untouchable communities such as criminal castes, lower castes, untouchable castes, degraded castes etc. The official name given to untouchable castes by the British was depressed castes. On the other hand, on account of assertive movements of Dalit intellectual different terms came into existence to represent untouchable castes. In Punjab the word Adi-Dharmi and Raidasi represented untouchable communities, similarly Adi-Hindu in Utter Pradesh, Adi-Dravida in south India were evolved. The word Harijan that was used by Mahatma Gandhi to represent untouchable communities became massively popular after the 1920s. It became a social discourse for representation of untouchable communities. After promulgation of the Indian Constitution, the word-scheduled caste became an official word referring to former untouchable communities in India.

¹³ Vivek Kumar, *Dalit Leadership in India*, Kalpaz Publication, Delhi, 2002.

MEANING OF THE WORD 'DALIT'

It is necessary for us to explore the meaning and essence of the word Dalit in a more detailed way in order to track its evolutionary trajectory. Generally, it is accepted fact that the term Dalit is derived from the Sanskrit root *Dal*, which means burst, split, broken, and downtrodden. Thus, the word Dalit as a concept emerged to represent the communities subjected to socio-economic and cultural marginalisation. Particularly this term acquired prominence in the vocabulary of north-Indian languages. For example, in Punjabi the well-known Punjabi dictionary 'The Mahan Kosh' by Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha defines Dalit as one who belongs to the lowest caste (*Hinijati*) and has been trampled down by or broken under the feet of the upper castes (*Uchi jati*).¹⁴

Undoubtedly, the word Dalit had different meanings in different Indian languages. According to James Thamos Molesworth, Marathi English Dictionary of 1831, the term Dalit is a Marathi word, which means "ground" or "broken" or 'reduced to pieces', but the word Dalit has indeed been popularized by the Dalit Panthers Movement which became popular in the early 1970s, in Bombay, Maharashtra. The Panthers had defined Dalit term in a broad way by including "members of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, neo-Buddhists, the working people, landless people and who are exploited in the name of religion".¹⁵ Over the many years, the term has been used for so-called untouchables as a symbol of assertion. The fact however is that all untouchable communities do not use this term. It is apparent that only educated, political and socially conscious people use the terms and associate their identity with it.

¹⁴ Nabha Bhai Kahan Singh, '*Mahan Kosh*', (Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature), Language Department, Patiala, Punjab, 1930, p.468.

¹⁵ *The Manifesto of Dalit Panthers*

So far, the term Dalit has defined in terms of social and political context but no serious research has taken place to find out history of Dalit identity in a systematic way. However, in his recent publication Karunyakara attempted to offer a penetrating analysis on the meaning of word Dalit in different Indian languages. According to him, "the term Dalit represents the power of philosophy which has shaped Indian thought and wisdom for making world better."¹⁶ According Karunyakara, The term Dalit originated from Hebrew language and it is a beautiful Hebrew name, which is given to the both boys (male), and girls (female) even today in Israeli society. It is a very popular Hebrew name of Jews. He thus claims that the word Dalit is a Hebrew word and originated from Israeli culture. The name Dalit is pronounced /d (a)-lit/ (de-lit). The word Dalit is originated from Hebrew ethnicity and Hebrew nationality and the name Dalit is popularly used in Hebrew speaking countries.¹⁷

It has been claimed by Karunyakara that the etymological meaning of the term Dalit in Hebrew language is "gentle, kind, tender, caring and loving." The popular Hebrew meaning of the term Dalit in Israeli society is gentle. For Karunyakara, in Israeli society, if a person name is Dalit he/she is expected to be caring, gentle, tender and loving towards others. In India, the Dalit means Scheduled Castes. If you take Hebrew definition of Dalit in India all Indian Dalits are gentle, tender, caring and loving towards others.¹⁸

In his book, Karunyakara also mentions that Dalit also means "Knowledgeable" or 'one who possesses the knowledge of life'.¹⁹ According to Israeli tradition, "the word of God is knowledge of life." The definition of Dalit is "one who knows the knowledge of life' that is the word of god. The fact however is that these claims are aimed at broadening of the concept

¹⁶ Lella Karunyakara, *From Dalit to Pavitra Dalit: History of Dalit Identity*, Dalwis Publishers, Nagpur, 2018,

¹⁷, Ibid, p. 2

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Ibid

of Dalits by the way of inducing new meanings. These claims however need to be further researched and authenticated by details that are more empirical.

DALIT MEANING IN PALI:

Karunayakara claims that Pali language offers a meaning to Dalits. This means according to him offers more positive meaning than the Sanskrit version of word Dalit which bring a lot of negativity. He proposes that in Pali language Dalit means "Indigenous people, "people of the land," 'community of the land' and 'race of the land or nation of the land". If we split the word Dalit into "DAL" means people, race, community, nation and group of people. "IT" means "land." Therefore, Dalit means Indigenous people or people of the land. The term Dalit found in Pali Buddhist text Culluvagga Vinaya Pittaka.²⁰

MEANING OF DALIT IN MARATHI

James Thomas Molesworth's A Dictionary of Marathi and English in 1831 was the earliest evidence to make all of us to know the presence of Dalit term in Marathi language. It was published in 1831, later on its revised and enlarged 2nd edition which was published by Bombay Education Society's Press in 1857. The term Dalit got negative meaning in Marathi itself because Marathi language and their literature strongly influenced by Sanskrit speakers. Even J.T. Molesworth had adopted Sanskrit meaning of Dalit in his English and Marathi Dictionary. According to James Thomas Molesworth Marathi dictionary, the term Dalit

²⁰ Ibid

means in Marathi is that ground, broken, and reduced to pieces. Even we have same meaning of Dalit in Sanskrit language, Dalit means Split, Crack or Crushed or broken people.²¹

From early 20th century of British period, the term Dalit started to gain positive meaning in Marathi language same as in Telugu. During the British period, Dalit means “man of great dignity” and “revolutionary” in Marathi language. For instance, during British period, Maharashtrian Scheduled Castes argued that Ambedkar was hailed as ‘King of Dalits’. All India Scheduled Castes Federation gave title to Ambedkar as a “king of Dalits” in the context of Ambedkar vision for social revolution in India. This is the reason by Dalit term has both positive and negative meaning in Marathi language. The positive meaning of Dalit is in Marathi language as “dignified” and “revolutionary’. The negative meaning of Dalit in Marathi language is ‘broken people’.²²

Karunayakara proposed that Aranyasied Marathi writers revived and popularized Sanskrit meaning of Dalit in the Marathi literature for constructing negative identity for Dalits in post-Ambedkar India. They attributed negative meaning to Dalit word in post-Ambedkar Marathi literature. They started to define Dalit as broken people, split people etc. That is the reason according to Karunayakara some sections of Dalits misguided by Sanskrit meaning and they hesitated to accept Dalit identity as their own identity. The misguided Dalits are very scared to adopt Dalit identity due to its negative meaning given by the Sanskrit language. However, well-educated and well-informed Ambedkarites are very receptive to Dalit Identity as they know not only the necessity of social identity and also the

²¹ J.T. Molesworth, *A Dictionary, Marathi and English*, 2nd ed., rev. and enl. Bombay Education Society's Pres, Bombay, 1857, p.228, Digital Dictionaries of South Asia', <http://dsaluchicago.edu/dictionarie/Molesworth/>

²² Karunayakara, op cit

power of positive identity. They use Dalit identity to refer term Dalit as dignified and revolutionary.

PHULE-AMBEDKAR AND DALIT IDENTITY

Undoubtedly, Jotirao Phule happens to be the pioneer in creating socio-cultural consciousness among the oppressed communities of Maharashtra. The identity formation process of Dalits in fact starts from the writings of Phule who went away from Brahmanical tradition and attempted to carve out a distinctive identity to non-Brahman social groups. He became socially conscious after he encountered caste discrimination in one of his friends marriage procession in 1848. It was seemingly first used in the context of caste oppression by the great nineteenth century reformer Jotirao Phule.²³ After 1848, he had started working for the society due to that bitter incident. Phule actually coined ‘Ati-Shudra’ term to refer Untouchable. However, it is said that he used the term Dalitodhar to mean that uplift of the depressed.²⁴ The term Dalit used in the popular usage before the birth of Phule, which is evidenced by J.T. Thomas Molesworth English and Marathi dictionary, which found Dalit meaning in 1831. This is the earliest evidence to know the presence of the term Dalit in Marathi language. It shows that the term Dalit in popular usage even before the birth of not only Ambedkar and even Phule. Therefore, it is wrong to state that Phule and Ambedkar coined the term Dalit. Moreover, Phule used the term Ati-Shudra to refer Dalits in all his writings.

²³ Oliver Mendelsohn & Marika Vicziany, *The Untouchables : Subordination, Poverty and the State in Modern India*, Cambridge University Press, U.K. 1998, p. 4.

²⁴ Eleanor Zelliott, Maintained, “Phule seems to have been the first to use the word dalit in connection with caste in the term dalitodhar (uplift of the depressed)”, in her work, “From Untouchable to dalit”, Manohar, New Delhi, 1998, p.271.

Even Ambedkar used the word Dalit not to make this as official word to represent untouchable communities, rather to describe the miserable condition of untouchable. Ambedkar in his fortnightly *Bahiskrit Bharat* defines it comprehensively: ‘Dalithood is a kind of life condition which characterizes the exploitation, suppression and marginalization of Dalits by the Social, economic, cultural and political domination of the upper caste Brahminical order’.²⁵

MEANING OF DALIT NOMENCLATURE IN HINDI

Sanskrit speakers strongly influenced Hindi scholars to give negative meaning to the term ‘Dalit’. That is the reason the Sanskrit speaking Hindi scholars adopted Sanskrit meaning of Dalit in Hindi language. Like Sanskrit language, we have negative meaning given by Hindi scholars about Dalit term. On the same lines as the Sanskrit meaning, in Hindi also, Dalit means spilt, crack or crushed people. However, under the influence of Ambedkar thoughts, the Hindi speaking Dalit scholars adopted positive and powerful meaning to the term Dalit. While the Sanskrit speaking Hindi scholars revived and popularized the negative Dalit identity, the English speaking Hindi scholar has propounded positive Dalit identity. The present meaning of Dalit is same in Hindi as in Telugu and Marathi. The term Dalit means as a noun “Dignity”, as an adjective “dignified” and as an applied adjective the term means “a man of great dignity” in some vernacular languages such as Telugu, Marathi, Hindi, Tamil and Gujarati etc.²⁶

²⁵ Gopal Guru, *The Politics of Naming' Seminar*, No.471, Nov.1998, p.16.

²⁶ Karunyakara, op cit.

DALIT MEANING IN TELUGU:

Dalit term has also positive meaning in Telugu language as like in other vernacular languages such as Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati etc. During British period, the word Dalit seemed to be the most popular identity among the Andhra Pradesh Dalits. In Telugu language, Dalit means “gentle.” The Telugu meaning of the term Dalit conveys the message that economically Dalit may be poor or rich, but socially and culturally, a Dalit is a gentle man.²⁷

Kusuma Dharmanna was organized first ‘Andhra Dalit Conference’ held at Eluru in Andhra Pradesh, in the year 1920s. He wrote 108 poems ending with an appeal “HEAR O DALIT” in 1933. Kusuma Dharmanna’s main message is that ‘all are equal’ with Andhra Dalit Conference. It is evident that the Telugu speaking Dalits adopted Dalit identity with positive definition since beginning of 20th century. The Dalit identity became popular positive identity for the Telugu speaking Dalits of coastal Andhra Pradesh in 1920s. He used the term Dalit in his poems with positive meaning that is Dalit means ‘a great gentle man’.²⁸

COMMUNIST UNDERSTANDING ON DALIT TERM

Indian communists contextualized the Dalit identity in terms of “Class.” To them Dalit means ‘exploited class’. For them all people who belong to exploited class are Dalits irrespective of caste, religion and gender etc. Indian communists argue that economic backwardness is the cause of the exclusion and oppression of Dalits in India. Therefore, Dalit means oppressed

²⁷ Katti Padmara, *Dalita Mahakavyam: Atmagaurava parvam*, (Telugu Language) Hyderabad, 2010.

²⁸ Karunayakara, op cit, p.29

class. The Marxists argues that there are two classes in all ages, one is oppressor and oppressed class. Dalits are belonged to a class that is lacking means of production.²⁹

According to communists, Dalits are slaves in the agriculture system and labor class in industrial system. There is a conflict between oppressor and oppressed class in the agriculture system. In other words, there is a conflict between landlords and slaves. In the industrial system, the conflict took place between capitalist class and labour class. Therefore, communist defined Dalit by including women, tribes, workers and agricultural laborers are categorized as oppressed.³⁰

Karunyakara argued that Indian communist's definition the term Dalit is strongly influenced by Sanskrit speakers. That is the reason they failed to see dignity in Dalit identity. They are many Dalits who are well-educated and working in decent jobs. On the other hand, they are many Dalit intellectual, Dalit millionaires, Dalit ministries, Dalit Judges and Dalit Civil servants. On the basis of these evident, we could not call Dalit elites as labour class or exploited class. Hence, the definition of Dalit identity given by Indian communists has no historical justification.

In this chapter attempt has been made to trace the journey of the word and concept Dalits in different historical contexts and languages. This exercise is pertinent as it enable us to see the evolutionary process of identity formation among different untouchable castes and their quest for a well-defined identity. This chapter also highlights the contested meanings of Dalits in different languages. The fact however is that irrespective of contested meanings the

²⁹ Anand Teltumbede, *Dalits: Past, Present and Future*, Rutledge, London, 2016.

³⁰ Karunyakara, op cit, p.32.

concept of Dalits signifies the quest of Dalits for common identity and mobilization of different untouchable castes in order to forge a common struggle for civil and human rights. The identify formation process of Dalits however is aggressively put forwarded by the Dalit Panther Movement from the early 1970s.

CHAPTER: III

TITLE OF CHAPTER:

ORIGIN OF DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT

ABSTRACT OF CHAPTER:

This chapter deals with history of Dalit Panther Movement. By so doing focus was devoted to factors responsible for the movement and strategies adapted by it to mobilise Dalit mass in different parts of Maharashtra. The main objective of this chapter is to document the way in which Dalit Panther Movement became popular not only in Maharashtra but also in different parts of India.

CHAPTER: III

INTRODUCTION

A vibrant movement by Dalits and for Dalits took place in British India. Independent India also witness if not the same but similar movement by Dalits. The main demands of this movement were civic and legal rights to Dalit communities. The hopes of Dalits and other marginalised sections for positive changes were high after independence, but their hopes gradually faded on account of slow pace of reform process at one level and continued presence of atrocities at another level. It was this context that resulted in more aggressive form of resistance of Dalits came into existence and articulated more militant views than that of liberal views and strategies adopted by Dr. Ambedkar and as tools for emancipation of Dalits. Emergence of Dalit Panther Movement is part of this process.

The region of Maharashtra has been an epicentre of Dalit movement on account of presence of Phule-Ambedkar ideology. Emergence of the Dalit Panther Movement in the early 1970s is a part of the process however with a difference. Apparently, the name with its insurrectionist symbolism was borrowed from the Black Panthers of the United States. Ideologically, the Dalit Panthers emphasized class-based Dalit political activism. Rise of Dalit Panthers movement coincided with wide spread famine, pervasive student activism and a non-party opposition politics in India. The movement was more driven by ideological and personality differences. The core ideological split was publicly evident by 1974, and was personified in its two pre-eminent leaders of the movement, Namdeo Dhasal and Raja Dhale. For Dhale's faction, the agenda of the movement was to deepen and widen Buddhist consciousness as the defining moment in Dalit history was the mass conversion to Buddhism

under the leadership of Ambedkar. Namdeo Dhasal, on the other hand, represented a more orthodox leftist position and reduced caste to class. This faction accorded both Ambedkar and conversion movement less of defining role. Later on Indira Gandhi was successful in extracting support of the Dhasal faction on the plank of poverty amelioration programmes. On balance, the Dalit Panthers had failed to organize properly, both ideologically and as a political party. Lack of strategy and factionalism doomed this radical movement to insignificance. Nevertheless, this movement was successful in the sense that it had brought the issues of Dalits more shapely to the public domain than before.³¹

Studying the social movement of any country remains incomplete until the reasons behind that movement and its historical location are not taken into account. That is why it is very important to know the factors that were responsible for emergence of Dalit Panther Movement. The Dalit Panther movement in Maharashtra arose due to the following circumstances and environment.

AMERICA'S BLACK PANTHER MOVEMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT

International context played a crucial role in emergence of Dalit Panther Movement. The American Black Panther Movement was one of the important inspirational factors for Dalit Panther Movement in India. A brief background of American Black Panther Movement is required here. In the 18th century, black people were discriminated by white people in America. Abraham Lincoln first launched the movement to liberate the blacks from enslavement. This movement was based on the principle of equality in 1896. Black leaders

³¹ K.C. Das, *Indian Dalits – Voice, Vision and Politics*, Global Vision Publishing House, Delhi, 2004.

such as William E.B. Dubois Negro created more self-respect and confidence among the people.³² During 1920-30, black literature put the real problems of black people in front of the public. Black literature provided a direction and ideology to the Black Panther movement.

Marcus Garvey, activist and leader called for black nationalization for the self-esteem of black people. In 1955, Dr. Martin Luther King woke up a black non-violence warrior movement in Montgomery (Alabama State). The white men used to sit in buses in Atlanta and Georgia, and passengers from the black community used to sit behind. As a result, despite having suffered atrocities of the police, he played a key role in passing the Civil Rights Act from the American Congress in 1964.³³ This act used to declare caste isolation illegal in public facilities. However, atrocities on blacks continued by police and white persecutions. From this tyranny, blacks abandoned violence and turned violent paths.

The Black Panther Party was organized in the US in October 1966, at Oakland in California, with the aim of protecting the black from police brutality and other harassment by the whites. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seal organized the Black Panther Party and the Black Panther Movement for self-defense by carrying arms. It was an extremist development in the protest movement of black American, which held that war could be stopped only by war and not by soft means. The Black Panther emphasized revolutionary nationalism rather than cultural nationalism. They were very radical and militant and were able to penetrate into the poor working class of the urban ghettos in the US.³⁴

³² Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015, p.31.

³³ J. Blom and W.E. Martin Jr, *Black against Empire: The History and Politics of Dalit Panther Party*, University of California Press, California, 2013.

³⁴ C.E. Jones, *The Black Panther Party* (reconsidered), Classic Press, New York, 1998.

The Black Panther movement was a revolutionary movement against whites of culture and established a system in society. The Black Panther movement in America was indeed an inspiring force for Dalits of India who also underwent similar trauma. Inspired by the Black Panther Movement, Dalit youth writer and poet Namdev Dhasal and Raja Dhale in Maharashtra initiated Dalit movement under the name of the Dalit Panther movement as the name of their organization, which was conceptualized for Dalit free on the lines of the Black Panther movement. The Black Panthers, as the basis of literature, make black people aware.³⁵ In the same way, the Dalit Panther people also resorted to Dalit literature to make the Dalits aware of their miserable plight.³⁶ It is evident from the above that the Black Panther Movement played an active role in the emergence of the Dalit Panther Movement, which cannot be forgotten.

REPUBLICAN PARTY OF INDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT

From 1890s onwards, we can trace explicit Dalit movement, which consistently demanded civic and political rights to Dalits. In the center of Dalit politics, Dr. Ambedkar's leadership was specially established. His unique life, political struggle and the political movement had a profound effect on the political movement of Dalits subsequently. Dr. Ambedkar thus left behind a strong legacy for Dalits to follow. He established the All India Schedule Caste Federation in 1942.³⁷ This organization has achieved tremendous success in explaining the importance of votes for Dalits. Dr. Ambedkar tried to establish the Republican Party of India, he could not dream of establishing RPI due to his sudden death. However, Republican Party

³⁵ S.M Michael, *Dalits in Modern India: Vision and Values*, Vistaar Publication, New Delhi, 1999.

³⁶ Ibid p. 156

³⁷ Sharan Kumar Limbale, *Dalit Panther :Bhumika evam Aandolan* (Hindi Book), Vani Prakashan, New Delhi, 2017, p.142.

of India was formed in October 1957 by followers of Dr. Ambedkar. It was formed from All India Schedule Caste Federation.³⁸ The first president of the Republican Party of India was N. Shivraj, who was president until 1964. The first conference of the Republican Party of India was held in Nagpur in 1957; the second in Aurangabad in 1959, third in Nagpur in 1961, fourth in 1961 in Ahmadabad in 1975, fifth in Delhi in 1966, six in Nagpur in 1969 and seventh in Pune in 1975.³⁹

In the beginning, the Republican Party of India did a good job for the development of the Dalit society and also tried to solve the problems of the Dalits. The period of October 3, 1957, to October 3, 1959, is considered as the “Golden Age” of the Republican Party of India.⁴⁰ During this period, Republican Party leaders accepted the problems of Dalit and attempted to solve them with the cooperation of no-Dalits as well.

According to Kshirsagar, during the year 1957, the number of members of the Republican Party of India was nine (in the parliament). When a member of the Hindu Mahasabha had 27 members, the Communist Party and 19 members of the Praja Samajwadi Party and the Congress Party had 370 members. The fact need to be observed here is that Republican Party of India able to stand up in the political landscape of India.⁴¹

The leaders of the Republican Party of India, like B.P. Maurya, B.K. Gaikwad, and others, were given the application of their demands in 1964 to the then Prime Minister. The demands are the following-

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015, pp-33.

⁴⁰ Mohandash Naimisharanya, *Bharatiya Dalit Andolan Ka Itihas-49* (Hindi Book), Radhakrishnan Publication, New Delhi, 2013, pp-402.

⁴¹ Ibid

1. The portrait of Dr. Ambedkar in the Central Hall of Parliament as a father of the Indian Constitution.
2. Barren and unemployed land should be given to landless laborers.
3. The Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes who have adopted Buddhism should increase their privileges.
4. The atrocities on Dalits should be stopped.
5. To be complete justice should be done under the Untouchability Crime Act.
6. Under the reservation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, jobs are provided until 1970.
7. The Republican Party of India started its weekly magazine “Enlightened India” to the campaign.⁴²

The functioning of the Republican Party of India, the revolutionary behaviour and passion of all the party leaders weakened in the due course of time. Due to the mutual dispute, and migration of several leaders to other parties. Consequently the Republican Party of India lost its relevance. Due to the collapse of the Republican Party of India, party leaders have ended the party due to their reputation and personal political motives. In fact, the leaders of the Republican Party of India failed to understand the problems of the Dalits. At one level the Republican Party of India lost relevance, at another level the problems of Dalits increased. It is in this context that the Dalit Panther Movement in Maharashtra emerged as acquired prominence quickly.

⁴² Ibid

AMBEDKAR VIEWS AND ITS IMPACT ON BAHUJAN YOUTH

Undoubtedly one of important factors for emergence of Dalit Panther Movement is the ideology of Ambedkar and inspiration he provided to the oppressed sections of Indian society. He strongly believed that access to education is the only option for Dalit community to occupy high positions in different areas. According to Ambedkar, this process leads to the improvement of living conditions of Dalits. His famous slogan regarding education as follows: **‘Education is the lioness's milk that whoever drinks it, they will roar like a lion.** Due to this foresight, he established colleges for higher education of the scheduled castes that is “People's Education Society” was the first such college for the Dalit youth.⁴³ The Siddhartha Art and Science College, Mumbai in 1946-47, and the Milind College of Art and Science were opened in Aurangabad in 1949. In 1946-47, the Dalit students were number 19 in the Society College. By 1973-74, the number had increased to 7185, the number of female students reached 4 to 104, and the number of Dalit teachers reached 104.⁴⁴ With the increase of education, the number of educated classes in Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes was increasing day by day.

The decades of 1960 and 70s are interesting in the social history of Dalits in India. During these decades, Dalits gradually acquired access to education and begun to understand the reasons which deprived them for several generations. Gradually writers, poets and activists have emerged from Dalit society and begun to question the oppressive ideology of upper strata of Indian society. The Dalit writers became knowledgeable in the Hindu texts. In the 1970s, the socialist youth organization was formed to fight for the problems of Dalit sections and unemployed youth. Namdev Dhasal was such a revolutionary young man who

⁴³ Lata Murugkar, *Dalit Panther Movement In Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1991, p.38.

⁴⁴ Ibid

laid the foundation of the Dalit Panther movement. On October 14, 1971, a memorandum presented to Indira Gandhi the than prime minister of India regarding the problems of unemployment and several other problems that are faced by Dalit society.⁴⁵ Activist like Raja Dhale who campaigned against the atrocities on Dalits in Bawade village actively furthered this process. He became one of the important funding members of Dalit Panther Movement.

THE DRAVIDIAN AND BHIMSENA MOVEMENT OF KARNATAKA ON DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT

We had already discussed the impact of the Black Panther Movement and politics of Ambedkar movement on Dalit Panther Movement. Besides, external factors, we do have some strong internal factors that were responsible for emergence of Dalit Panther Movement. Periyar E V. Ramaswamy Naikar who campaigned against the Brahmanical domination in South India had significantly influenced the educated Dalit youth of Maharashtra. Like Periyar, the Dalit youth of Maharashtra wanted that they should have developed their own culture, and have a strong identity. When Periyar visited Bombay in 1972, he had strongly criticized the Hindu Varna system and pressed upon the non-Brahman youth to respect their cultural practices rather than following the Brahmanical culture. The radical view of Periyar attracted the attention of the youth of Maharashtra. In Periyar's book *True Ramayana* he attempted to prove that Ravana as a great hero.⁴⁶ This book had a great effect on the Dalit Panther Movement by the way of radicalising their views on Brahmanical culture. The

⁴⁵ Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015, p.40.

⁴⁶ Lata Murugkar, *Dalit Panther Movement In Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1991, p.43.

Dravidian movement says that "If you look at the snakes and Brahmins together, then kill Brahmins first".⁴⁷ These views exercise significant impact upon the Dalit youth of Maharashtra.

After the Mahaparinirvana of Dr. Ambedkar, the first word of his name was started in the name of Bhima. The word Bhim became extremely popular among the youth of Dalits. In the due course of time, this word became a representative symbol to the social protest movement of Dalits. This symbolism transformed into political protest movement. The Bhim Sena movement initiated by Shyam Sunder in Karnataka is a classic example of this process. He was a passionate follower of Ambedkar and his ideas. It is to be noted that the Bhim Sena movement started several years before the Dalit Panther movement in Maharashtra. On the 77th anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar, the Bhim Sena Movement organised a large rally in the city of Gulbarga on April 29, 1968 under leadership of Shyam Sunder.⁴⁸ It was successful in not only highlighting the issues of Dalits but also attracted the attention of caste Hindus. This movement gradually spread to different parts of country including some parts of South India, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Punjab. It also played an important role in the formation of the Dalit Panther Movement.

CULTURAL CONFLICT

The emergence of Dalit Panther Movement is actually a political manifestation of the quest of Dalits to evolve and promote an alternative cultural system. This trend had roots in the ideological formations created by Phule-Ambedkar. The seminal contribution of Phule-Ambedkar's discourse is that it had laboriously propagated the spirit of reason, rationality and scientific spirit in opposition to the Brahmanical mysticism that justifies the caste based

⁴⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸ Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015, p.41.

inequalities. Along with this, the constitutional safeguards for Dalits inspired the youth to question the injustice that was perpetuated against them. In the 1970s, the socio-political landscape of Maharashtra two broad groups existed and represented two distinctive ideologies. While one group subscribes to feudal ideology believes in caste as foundation of Indian society and the second group namely progressive group believed in equality, humanity and scientific approach. The conscious Dalit youth believed that the reason for growing atrocities against Dalits is Hindu conservatism and feudal values. We have a classic example of this trend. The Shankaracharya of Puri roamed around the entire country and promoted the Manusmriti and other Hindu texts as guiding principle of Indian population. Shankaracharya also ran a campaign in Maharashtra to protect the system of untouchability and caste system, as well as denying the rights given to Dalits in the Constitution.⁴⁹ This was one of the reasons for aggressive attitude of caste Hindus towards the rights of Dalits and retaliation exhibited by Dalits.

A progressive section among the Hindus and Dalit had begun to feel that the teaching and philosophy of Hindu religion, which defended the caste system was out dated and was responsible for the enmity between man and man and also responsible for plight of the down-trodden. To protest against the atrocities on Dalits, Yuavak Kranti Dal the youth wing of the Socialist Party members burn '**Manusmriti**' a Hindu sacred book of law as they considered it the root cause of inequality amongst Hindus.⁵⁰ The meeting held in front of Sachivalaya soon after progressive thinker Prof. A.B. Shah who urged young Dalit to come forward and organize them against injustice addressed the burning act.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Lata Murugkar, *Dalit Panther Movement in Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1991, p.39.

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Ibid

Anti Hindu orthodoxy, sentiments gradually became strong among the Dalit youth of Maharashtra. The social identity and social discrimination of the Dalits were being defined by the principles of Hindu caste system. Then the Dalits realized to discard such an imposed social order and redefine their social position vis-a-vis other caste groups. They wanted to generate a new social-cultural identity, which provides them more respectable identity than the degraded identity provided by Hinduism. Through the mass conversion to Buddhism, they have defined their social position vis-a-vis the caste Hindus. The method of cultural nihilism was used as a strategy to create its social cultural identity. Cultural conflict then was one of the main reasons for the emergence of the movement. Cultural assertion of Dalits thus has been one of the important factors that inspired the youth of Maharashtra and who formed Dalit Panther Movement.⁵²

INCREASE OF ATROCITIES ON DALITS

Caste based discrimination and its manifestation in the form of atrocities against Dalits is a frequent and all Indian phenomenon. Increase of atrocities on Dalits in Maharashtra became a matter of concern among educated Dalit youths. The Dalit community wanted to oppose atrocities generally committed by upper castes. They looked to the leaders to check this harassment. However, leaders were unimpressed to remove these atrocities. The government was completely unsuccessful in preventing atrocities against the Dalits. Due to rising atrocities on Dalits in the country, an assertive movement by Dalit youth emerged in the form of Dalit Panther Movement.⁵³ A few prominent of atrocities against Dalits as follows:

- In a village called Bawada in the Indrapur tehsil of Pune district in June 1972 a social and economic boycott of the scheduled caste was initiated by the caste Hindu by

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ N. Mishra, *Exploitation and Atrocities on Dalits in India*, Kalpaz, New Delhi, 2003.

denying them the basic necessities of life. This reason for this was that a Dalit youth had dared to contest an election to the local Zilla Parishad.⁵⁴

- In May 1972, in the Brahmin village of Parbhani, two Scheduled Castes women were objected by Hindu caste and they were paraded naked in front of the whole village because they had filled their pots with water from the wells located in Hindu locality.
- In 1970, at Iran village, a Dalit youth Ramdash Narnavare was sacrificed by caste Hindus to appease their god, whose wrath they believed had caused cholera in that small village.

The violence against Dalits takes place in different domain. They were prevented from accessing water from common water source wells. Violence against them in the form of threats, killing and rape common. They were forbidden to wash clothes and haircut and a separate sitting arrangement was made for them in Panchayat meeting. Every kind of boycott was done with the Dalits.⁵⁵

The Mahars being the most politically conscious and assertive in the matter of their constitutional and legal rights had to bear the brunt of the caste Hindu hostility. Police and official in rural areas were caste Hindus and did little to protect Dalits against the violence perpetrated on them. In statement made in the Lok Sabha on 1970, the Minister of state for Home Ram Nivas Mirdha informed that during period 1967 to 1969, 63 Dalits were murdered in Maharashtra, 332 in Utter Pradesh, 76 in Punjab and 34 in Gujarat.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015, pp.42.

⁵⁵ G.S. Narvani, *Atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes*, Rawat, New Delhi, 2011.

⁵⁶ Lata Murugkar, *Dalit Panther Movement In Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1991, P-41.

It is generally said at the level of Dalit social discourse that there was no such day in any part of Maharashtra where Dalits were not able to hear the incidents of tyranny. The increase in the number of such cases is confirmed by the finding of the Perumal Committee Report published in 1971. There was a long list of incidents of atrocities.

THE ILAYA PERUMAL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Ilaya Perumal report highlighted the pathetic conditions of Dalits in all over India. Ilaya Perumal Committee report has carefully documented the statistics on atrocities against Dalits.⁵⁷ However, this report did not get the deserved attention in public discourse as well as academic circles. Raja Dhale quoted extensively from this report released in 1971, which the newspaper never took adequate note. According to the report, landlords murdered nearly 1,117 Dalits in just one and a half years. Regarding legal awareness, the Perumal Committee Report said that out of 241 people who were interviewed only 128 were aware of the prohibition of the untouchability Crime Act. Incidents of Dalits women rapes were reported.⁵⁸ At the same time in Uttar Pradesh, the Scheduled Castes registered 3038 complaints whereas in Maharashtra the second number was 1084. The Perumal Committee Report gives the reasons for the failure of the untouchability prohibition law as awareness level among Dalits were low and at the same time implementation, authorities were not serious enough to implement the law.

⁵⁷ J.V. Pawar, *Dalit Panthers: An Authoritative History*, The Marginalised Publication, New Delhi, 2017, p.33

⁵⁸ Ibid p-27

ROLE OF DALIT LITERATURE FOR THE ORIGIN OF THE DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT

Undoubtedly, Dalit literature has been played a major role for the origin of the Dalit Panther Movement. There have been many revolutions in the world took place because of literature and philosophy. Important revolutions such as the France Revolution, the Revolution of Russia and the Revolution of England are some examples. Literature produced by philosophers played major role for great revolutions happened in European and American continents.⁵⁹ Similarly, Dalits were inspired to revolutionary writings and ideas of Jyotirao Phule, Dr. Ambedkar, and E.V. Ramaswamy in India. The Dalit Panther Movement and Dalit literature are both inter-related. Ambedkar's book *the Buddha and his Dharma* in fact deeply influenced the Dalit Panther Movement and political and socio-cultural orientation.

In his numerous writings and speeches, Ambedkar has taught Dalits to fight against caste based social order as a means to escape from its evil effects. Similar concern and tone can be found in Dalit writers and poets. Leftist and Buddhist ideologies attract Dalit literature and Dalit Panthers and the authors and activist were militant in their rhetoric.⁶⁰ The literary genre initiated by Ambedkar created a paradigm for writings on oppressed and by oppressed. The life-world of Dalits and their grievances were translated into literary works and inspired the movement of Dalit Panthers. The main focal themes of Dalit writers were to display the atrocities of Dalits, rising poverty and atrocities committed by upper castes on Dalits.

Attempt was made to compare the grievances and attitudes of both Black Panther and Dalit Panther movements. M. Waghmare, while drawing the comparison between Dalit

⁵⁹ Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015, p.46.

⁶⁰ Eva-Maria Hardtmann, *The Dalit Movement In India: Local Practices*, Global Connecyions, Oxford University Press, 2012.

Panther and Black Panther, wrote that "Both Dalit Panther and Black Panther are exploring their cultural identity, both of which are based on social and cultural inequality, both writes on the social agreement. Both have the language of literary and cultural revolutions, both of which are tied to creative needs."⁶¹

Obviously literary production and its dissemination became one of the main objectives of Dalit Panther Movement with a view to mobilise Dalit mass and prepared them for a common struggle. Dalit writers provided a competent leadership in the Dalit movements; especially the Dalit Panthers enthusiastically pursued this objective. They vehemently challenged orthodox traditions, which were perceived as source of degraded conditions of Dalits. As a result, Dalit literature gradually able to generate consciousness among Dalits and prepared them for collective action in the form of movement with active articulation of civic rights and social justice.

Undoubtedly, Ambedkar and his commitment for upliftment of Dalits were the backbone and provide inspiration for emergence of literature cantered on Dalits. He gave a great benchmark to the literature of the Dalits and the intellectual proceedings of the Dalits. The language of the Dalit writers arose from the miserable conditions created by poverty, ignorance and oppression. Even today, the framework of Manu dominates the orthodox sections of Hindus, which does not recognise the natural and civic rights of Dalits. In response to the Manuvadi mindset, Dalit writers voiced their views through various literary forms and movements.

The writers associated with Dalit Panther Movement attempted to mobilise Dalits in general and youth in particular for active assertion for rights and justice. Dalit youth was

⁶¹ Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015.

perceived as an import agency for unleashing changes that are required for Dalit society. To educate the Dalit youth, **Daya Pawar** wrote that **"Jog was better than doing yoga in the forests, wandering in the poor of the Buddha"**.⁶² This critique often advanced by writers which attack Brahmanical practices at one level and proposes solutions to problems that victimise Dalits.

The peculiar feature of Dalit Panther Movement is that while Ambedkar was slightly moderate in voicing the problems of Dalits, but Panthers are more radical and never mind to prefer violence as a means to achieve their objective of social justice. For example, J.V. Pawar wrote that Dalit youth should prepare for possible revolution to over throw Manuvadi attitude and replace with Bhimvadi attitude in India. His ideas on this theme can be observed from the following theme:

Revolution cannot be waited, now let's face my cock, let it not loose.

I have tolerated much, now it is not tolerated.

I cannot be dishonest against my blood.

Therefore, order me to wear arms.⁶³

If not the same, but similar views can be captured from the narratives of Namdev Dhasal whose ideas can be traced from the poetic works of 'Mandakini', 'Patil' and 'hunger'. In all these works, he explicitly drifts towards radicalism and violence as a means to achieve social justice to Dalits. According to Namdev Dhasal, **"There are innumerable suns inside me, so opens my blood to remove the front and wants to burn one city from one city to the front."** The ferocious and radical views on emancipation of Dalit from the yoke orthodox

⁶² Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015, pp-51

⁶³ Ibid, pp-51

and feudal elements of Indian society was and main thrust of the Dalit Panther Movement and Dalit literature thus played a major role in the emergence of the Panther movement.

ORGANIZATION OF DALIT PANTHER MOIVEMENT

Independence from the British colonial rule and promulgation of the Indian constitution brought about optimism among Dalits of India. However, within two decades, the optimism transformed into pessimism. The Dalit society was continued to be subjected to traditional disadvantages and oppression in independent India as well. It was this context the compelled the Dalit youth to revisit of ideas of Phule and Ambedkar and reinterpret them in accordance with the context of 1970s. While Phule, Ambedkar and Pariyar provided ideological orientation to Dalit society and Dalit Panther Movement is political and cultural assertive version of such ideas.⁶⁴

Each social movement possess an objective and it strives to meet and achieve such an objective. Similarly, the Dalit Panther Movement had an objective of establishing social justice in the country, which had a glimpse of the combined ideology of the Buddha, Ambedkar and Marx.⁶⁵ The Dalit Panther Movement was the biggest revolutionary movement in the country since the 1970s that influenced politics from Maharashtra to the states of South India and North India. The activities of the movement led to the creation of Marathi Dalit literature and the Dalit word in the country was rapidly in circulation.

⁶⁴ S.M. Michael, *Dalits in Modern India: Vision and Values*, Vistaar Publication, New Delhi, 1999.

⁶⁵ Sudha Pai, *Dalit Assertion*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2013.

According to Dalit activist **Sharan Kumar Limbale**, after the death of Ambedkar, Dalit Panther Movement was another historic and significant movement that aroused to keep the mission of Ambedkar alive. The Dalits did the conversion from Hinduism to Buddhism at a large level in 1956. In which lakhs of Dalits became followers of Buddhism. They came to see a new life. The Republican Party of India was formed in mid-1957. These sequences of events show the quest of Dalit society for its articulation of social justice. Therefore, Dalit Panther Movement is part of the process in which Dalit assertion was put forwarded.⁶⁶ In order to narrate the activities and strategies of Dalit Panther Movement, a period of eight years from 1972 to 1979 has been taken up for this study. The rationale for this selection is that it was a period of intense political activity. This period can be divided into the following three phases on the basis of the events which took place during this period.

Around 1970, incidents of direct torture and violence on the scheduled castes had increased in the country. The issue became so serious that Madhu Limaye raised it in the Lok Sabha on 24 May 1972.⁶⁷ Representatives of Republican Party of India and Dalit youth demonstrated in the Legislative Council of Maharashtra to draw the attention of members of the Legislative Council against incidents of atrocities and violence on Dalit society throughout Maharashtra. The Dalit youth especially became impatient due to lack of employment opportunities. This context attracted the Dalit youth towards radicalism.

These conditions can be considered immediate cause for the emergence of the Dalit Panther Movement in Maharashtra. The emergence of the Dalit Panther Movement was due to the increasing exploitation and humiliation of the Dalit community in the villages and city

⁶⁶ Sharan Kumar Limbale, *Dalit Panther: Bhumika evam Aandolan* (Hindi Book), Vani Prakashan, New Delhi, 2017.

⁶⁷ Ibid

of Maharashtra.⁶⁸ The first meeting of Dalit Panther was held on July 9, 1972, in Siddhartha Nagar, Mumbai. A large number of Dalit youth and some members belonging to the Socialist Parties such as Yuavak Kranti Dal were also present. The meeting was preceded by the publication of a handbill announcing the formation of the Dalit panther organization. This handbill was to show that continuous atrocities were on the Dalits even after independence, along with this, it also declared that the government and the leaders of the community failed to address Dalit issues. It appealed to the Dalit youth to come under the Dalit Panther banner fight the injustices they suffered. The handbill was signed and released by the Soratte, who was in the form of President of the organization. However, Namdev Dhasal as an organiser signed the memorandum presented to Jagjeevan Ram the then Defence minister on 24 September 1972. J.V. Pawar also cites this in his book that 64 young Panthers had to go to jail even because of obstruction to Jagjeevan Ram's meeting.⁶⁹

Not only was the name of Panther not taken from America's Black Panther movement, but also the organisational structure to execute the political programme of Dalit Panthers. They called themselves 'Panther' because they were supposed to fight for their rights like a Panther and not get suppressed by the strength and might of their oppressors. Famous Articles of Raja Dhale, 'Kala Swatantra Din' (Black Independence Day) which was published on August 15, 1972, in the special issue of Sadhana, created an immense sensation and publicised the Dalit Panther Movement throughout Maharashtra.⁷⁰ And between 1972 and 1974 branches were opened at Nasik, Devlali, Parai, Latur, Kalam, Nanded, Pune, Beed, Belgaum, Sangli, Nipani, Satara, Solapur, Jalgaon, Bhusawal, Chalisgaon, Buldhana, Aurangabad, Dhule, Pulgaon, Wardha, Akola, Dhigras, Nagpur, Katol, Kamti, Chandrapur,

⁶⁸ Ghanshyam Shah, *Dalit Identity and Politics: Cultural Subordination and the Dalit Challenge*, Vol.2, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2001.

⁶⁹ J.V. Pawar, *Dalit Panthers: An Authoritative History*, The Marginalised Publication, New Delhi, 2017.

⁷⁰ Ibid pp.42

Yawatmal, Ballarpur, Bandra, Ahmedabad, Chindwada, Bhopal and Hinganghat.⁷¹ A new branch was declared open even in London under the leadership of Gamare after the Worli riots. According to Namdev Dhasal, it had 100 branches throughout Mumbai. The rapid expansion of the movement shows social roots of the movement and enthusiasm exhibited by Dalits for the ideology of the movement.

In the first phase of the Dalit Panther, there was a good gathering of leaders who were committed to this organization and their influence and their actions were quite thoughtful and intellectual, but it did not have an impressive structure for decision-making. This reduction made the implementation of formulation and strategy difficult, and this disorderly pre-organizational nature appeared in the Dalit Panther organization. The dilemma of ideology and the barrier of the police did not allow the combat movement to come out of this pre-organizational nature.

In the meeting held on 20 may 1973 the following office bearers were elected:

- President : Raja Dhale
- Vice-President : Vithal Sathe
- Secretary : J.V.Pawar
- Joint-Secretary : Bhai Sangare
- Treasurer : Avinash Mahatekar
- Defence Minister : Namdev Dhasal
- Minister for
Communication : Thorat
- Public Minister : Uddhav Salve

⁷¹Lata Murugkar, *Dalit Panther Movement In Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1991, p.64.

- In charge of
Women's wing : Jayawanta Jagdani

Though the organization had a hierarchical structure, there was no supreme authority as such because of the acceptance of the principle of presidium or group leadership. It was decided by the founders of the organization that no single leader would lead the organization.⁷² On August 15, 1972, Dalit Panthers marched against the celebration of 25 the annual anniversary of independence. Dalit youths raised the black flag against the resentment on government and marched for Vidhan Sabha in order to present their demands.

As a mark of symbolic protest, the Panthers took the decision of celebrating 15, August as black day. To expedite their demands the Panthers marched towards the Pune council hall on September 10, 1972 where the cabinet meeting had been held. The demonstration of the Panthers went on for three days long. One of the main demand of the protest was that the police case lodged against Raja Dhale should be taken back. On 4 November 1972, the march of a demonstration against the police demanded that discriminatory attitude of police towards should be put to an end and also demanded that case against the Panthers should be withdrawn by the government.

The activities of the Panther Movement increased rapidly. Long March of about people 2000, was held on 14, August 1973 against the secretariat and district collector-office,⁷³ and a memorandum of 11 pages was given to the then chief minister, Basant Rao Naik by a delegation under leadership of Raja Dhale. After consulting the chief minister, the

⁷² Lata Murugkar, *Dalit Panther Movement In Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1991, pp-65

⁷³ J.V. Pawar, *Dalit Panthers: An Authoritative History*, The Marginalised Publication, New Delhi, 2017, pp.111.

leaders of Panthers leaders like Raja Dhale, Dhasale, Pawar smt. Jagdani and others addressed the Morcha in their ways. This was appealed in a periodical way in several magazines. It was realised among the leaders of the movement that they should stop the unbehavior language and don't try to hurt the others by their absurd languages.

A Morcha was set in front of the assistant commissioner of police at Bhoiwada Police Station on 10 January 1974 in lieu of against the arrest of Raja Dhale and atrocities over Dalits. In this morcha, the strength of about the 10000 -12000 youths was to be enumerated of the age below than 30, under the leadership of leaders like Sangare, Mahtekar, Pawar, Dhasal, etc. When the Morcha reached at railways zone, which was the bastion of Shiv Sena, and pelting over this was done that resulted in the consequences of the death of panther Jadhav.

A Morcha was sought on the 21, January 1974 from Azad Maidan to secretariat combining by all parties in which about the youths of strength 3000 of approx. Ten youth organizations had participated in which participant were, Dalit Panther, Magowan Mandal, Progressive Youth Movements, Samajwadi Yuwajan Sabha, Yuvak Kranti Dal, and Muslim Satyashodhak Mandal, etc. In participating in this leadership the leaders were doing matters to be raised in Lathy charge in the 6-10 January 1974 and its investigation, to be withdrawal the cases against the Panthers leaders and transfer of A.C.P. Balsara and to be rusticated him, transfer of police from Worli Chawl and an additional commissioner of police for special investigation for Dalit atrocities. Besides this, the Dalit Panther leaders also demanded the reservation of police post up to 30-40 for the Dalits.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015, p-64.

Another Morcha of Panthers was marched on 5, February 1974 from the Azad Maidan to secretariat against of cruelty of police. This Morcha was held with the assistance of Leftist Trade Union. All the two Morchas were converged at the Oval Maidan in the form of huge rallies, of which addressing was done by the Comrade Dange, Dhasal, and Dhale. In this, the memorandum before chief minister was put as demanded the earlier issues. Besides this, the demand was also put that Shiv Shena leader Pramod Navalkar should be outpost from the police advisory committee.⁷⁵

The Panther continued to use the strategy of collective action as a means to press their demands on certain issues that Dalit society was subjected to. In order to highlights the problem of unemployment a Morcha was held to the secretariat on 29 March 1974. It was lead by Dhasal Sangare, Mahtekar, and Pagare like Panthers combining, made the delegation and proposed a memorandum to the minister of labour affairs Mr, Tirake.

As aggressive from of Dalit assertion exhibited by the Panthers, the repressive measures of oppressors begun to appear. The repressive measures from government started to handle the tide of Dalit Panther Movement. Due to the aggressive policy of Dalit Panthers in the charge of breaking many laws in Bombay, about 11 court cases were sought against the main leaders of Dalit panther beside that the entry in Nasik, Thane, and Sangali was banned as well.

⁷⁵ Ibid p.64

PHASE TWO OF DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT: THE DHALE FACTION

Raja Dhale who had more leftist lenience and believed in Marxist model for solving the problems of Dalits was made the president of the Dhale group and J.V. Pawar as secretary. Raja Dhale rejoined his job and become free and devoted himself for the organisation leader like Mahatekar, Sangare, and Pawar also joined the mission. As a part of expansion, several new branches in places like Bombay Aagwala, Chawl, Bhimnagar, Chembur and Gautam Nagar were opened by Dhale group and a new constitution was made during the conference organised at Nagpur on 23 to 24 October. The declaration was made that only the persons having the Ambedkarite ideology and has completed the age of 18 of years would be the members of organisation.⁷⁶

Attempts however were made to unite the factions of Dalit Panther Movement. Dhasal, Mahatekar and Sangare, played a role of intermediaries, made proposal for unity but Sangare continued to be as the connection with the Dhale group but he considered the Dhasal as his 'guru'. He also used to attend the meeting of the CPI. This matter made the Dhasal and other member of Dalit community and considered the Sangare for cheating of and spying Dhasal.

Raja Dhale was more orientation towards the Buddhism and the conversion of ideas. In Dhale group the factional division took place due to the Sangare and Mahatekar clash. Dhale was alleged that he tried to impose own ideas and thought on others and he was also made a cause of separating Ambedkar ideology from the Ambedkarism organisation. Sangare and Mahatekar also blamed acquired to wander from republican concept of Ambedkar which

⁷⁶ Lata Murugkar, *Dalit Panther Movement In Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1991, p.73.

he had shaped Sangare and Mahatekar took the breath of relax, when Dhale and Dhasal departed from Panther organisation.

REASON FOR SPLIT

Ideological clash among the Panthers brewed and reached to a point of split in the movement. Dhale tried to strengthen the organisation by weeding away unwanted and undesirable elements. Dhale also assumed that he could not claim entire credit for setting the organisation fully on his own. Others reason for splitting the group was that Dhale ousted the people one by one from it through his own way. Dhale on behalf of the Ambedkar ideology tried to use his ideology and thought of perception on others people. People accused him for departing the Ambedkar ideology from organisation. Thus, the organisation become so loose to split and Dhale group become separate from Dhasal group.

Dhale was the man of Buddhist nature. His ideology and organisational ideology was based on the Buddhist approach. Dhale was accused of to be communalist and was also alleged of making the organisation neo Buddhist.

In this phase, the Dhale faction (group) also continued to raise the demonstration against the atrocities over Dalits. Several rallies and demonstration were held against of atrocities over the inhabitant of Sherpur, Uttar Pradesh and also for the opposing the fact that Gawai brothers were made blind. During the meeting held with the chief minister S. B. Chavan, Dhale demanded the M.I.S.A. ACT that was being provoked during the emergency should be used against of the caste based atrocities. Dhale raised the issue of humiliating condition of blind Gawai brother for making in public the press conference was held on by Dhale and Pawar 21, January 1975.

Besides political activism, the Panthers also tried to carve out a distinctive identity for Dalits. For establishing the special identity for Dalit and making them Buddhists, the Dhale group organised many programmes. He roped in Buddhists such as Bhaiya Saheb Ambedkar and Mai (Savita) Ambedkar for promotion of conversion of Dalits into Buddhism. Buddhist literature and Dalit literature had got more prestige and explained the literature as ambedkarite literature and Marxist literature respectably. Beside that Dhale in 1976 made the intelligent group which used to raise the problem of Dalit for making broadcasting over rational issues and that thought were promoted through the Mukta Chhand Patrika.⁷⁷

Besides that, the Dhale group presented the 1st memorandum before the chief minister on 1 December 1975 which posed the following demands:-

1. Illegally snatched land should be distributed in a rightful way to authoritative person.
2. People listed in caste atrocities should be charged and arrested in act MISA.
3. Scholarship of Dalit students should increase and employment for Dalit should also rise.
4. Dr. Ambedkar writing should also translate in other languages;
5. Home loans facility for Dalit should also increase.
6. Dalit should have to register as a share holder in co-operative societies.

These demands show the nature of activities that the Panthers undertaken for empowerment of Dalits. The 2nd memorandum was proposed on 31 January 1976 in which the following demands were put:

1. All the cases alleged against the Dalit Panthers should be taken back.
2. There should made proper land provision for blind Gawain brother.

⁷⁷ Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015, p.67.

3. There should be provision for a scholarship for 12 class students.
4. The loudspeaker restriction on Ambedkar Jayanti should be relaxed.
5. For Dalit, there have to be employment office separately.⁷⁸

As a result, all the cases against the Panthers had taken back by circulating the order on 2 February 1976. It shows the popularity of the Panthers, which were able to force the authorities to take cognizance of their assertion.

THE DHASAL FACTION

The Dhasal group means the followers of Dhasal and his ideology. This group was of the people of different in nature and its inclination towards the Buddhism and was in favour of parliamentary democratic approach. This group wanted the annihilation of caste through the expansion of the Buddhism and Cultural Revolution and that matter was of much importance for him. On the other hand Dhale was the man of aggressiveness and militant nature and he wanted to change and make reformation through connecting the class struggle to caste struggle. Dhasal alleged Dhale for making the Dalit Movement as a part of communalist movement. Neo-Buddhist while Dhale charged of Dhasal of introducing the Marxism in Ambedkarism. Both of the Dhale and Dhasal thought of perception enforced the split in organisation. However some others leader consider that the main reason for the splitting is the role of leadership between the Dhale and Dhasal and the ideological differentiation was another factor.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Ibid

⁷⁹ J.V Pawar, *Dalit Panther: An Authoritative History*, The Marginalised Publication, New Delhi, 2017, p.188

After splitting, the Dhasal group made their workplace at the Pune, declared the executive council for the faction and pursued their own programme of action. The committee as follows:

- President: Latif khatik
- Vice president: Sunil Dighe
- General Secretary: Namdeo Dhasal
- Joint Secretary: Arjun Dangale
- Treasurer: S.M. Khadtale
- Organizer: P. Chandevkar
- Members: Bal Khailmode, Mallika Dhasal, Uttam Kambale, Hiranman Pagahe, C. Nikalje and B. Rathaur.

In the Pune Branch, L.D. Bhonsale and Jaidev Gaikwad became the president and Secretary General respectively. Members of the managing committee either were members of ex. Communist or they had been attached with the Marxist pro ideology. The ex-mayor of Pune Santa Ram also joined the Dalit Panther of this branch. Obviously, this branch was opened in the home.

Known as dark phase of Indian politics, the emergency was pressed into action on 25 June 1975 the differences among the Panthers surfaced. While the Dhasal group was engaged in programming to the sponsoring the agenda of his faction and were representing the group himself while another group was being represented by the Divekar and Dighe (who made them self hide elsewhere during the emergency provoked). Later in Dhasal group on 1 March

1977, L.D. Bhonsale were made the president in place of Khatik. Anil Kambale the founder leader of the Pune Branch condemned the representation of Dhasal.⁸⁰

NAMDEV DHASAL GROUP PRIORITY ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

The Namdev group focused on the grassroots level issues that are more important for empowerment of Dalits. Obviously, the issue of land became the focal point, as it is the pressing need of Dalit society. A programme was also launched for the giving back the land of the poor farmers from the rich zamindars. In 1973, the Panthers unit launched this programme. However, this agenda reached at the level of climax on 4 January 1976 in Raj guru Nagar near Pune in the conference of a landless and poor farmer. This conference was organised with the help of Congress (I). The inauguration of this conference was being done by the then chief minister of Maharashtra S.B. Chavan and many Congress leaders like the minister of agriculture Sharad Pawar, minister of revenue B.J. Kharat, and many labour class members were present making a total strength of about 5000. The comment was sought in this conference was that the congress member were more than the labour member as a present. Dhasal presented a 20 demands agenda programme in this meeting. He repeated the statement of Ambedkar that political equality does not mean, without economic and social equality. He motivated the Panthers for organising the conference as like. In this conference, the government was being enforced to back the land of those whose land had been annexed in, due to which people are migrating towards towns. Before implementing the ceiling act the problem of annexed land should be solved. There should have provided free fertiliser and seeds. Land free movement should be starting to free the captured land.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Lata Murugkar, *Dalit Panther Movement In Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1991, pp.78.

⁸¹ Ibid

The Dasal group organised the another conference relating to draw the attention towards the slum area inhabitants on 15 November 1976. This conference was presided over by the Dalit writer Bagul at Ahilya Ashram Pune. The Dhasal group also tried to raise the issue of Neo Buddhist to uphold the right as the schedule caste and schedule tribe have and to recover the reservation, which they were getting before conversion in neo-Buddhism.

The movement evolved around the issue of chaing the name of Marathwada university name as Ambedkar University highlighted the issue supported by the Dhasal group. They criticized the chief minister Basant Rao Patil for delaying in changing the name of Marathwada University to Dr. Ambedkar Marathwara University. In July 1978 the demonstration march was held in front of council hall for changing the name of the university.

THE PANTHER MOVEMENT IN PHASE THIRD

In the due course of time, the Dalit Panther Movement was divided into several groups. These groups were active with the focused objectives and different strategies expressed through their movements aimed at empowerment of Dalits with different emphasises. By 1977 the Dalit Panther Movement was divided into the following categories:

- Mass Movement of Raja Dhale
- Maharashtra Dalit Panther of Arun Kambale
- Dalit Panther of Sangare and Mahatekar
- Dalit Panther of Namdeo Dhasal

In the third phase, all groups of Dalit Panther Movement focused on mass movements in order to press their demands for Dalit empowerment forcefully. Raja Dhale becomes the President of Mass Movement Group and its headquarter was situated in Wadala Mumbai in room no 51 of Siddhartha hostel. According to police, about 1000 member was mainly neo Buddhist youth of Maharashtra who were active in this movement.⁸² The main source of its income was only the fee of membership. As a symbolic respect to Ambedkar, on this party letter head, the following statement of Dr. Ambedkar was written: 'Buddhist could not do the rule with armed and weapons so they have to rule according to the power of brain and pen'. There was much focus over the approach of peacefulness and nonviolence in this movement. This movement mostly raised the issues of priority-oriented programme. This group organised the meetings and conference in October 1977 Nagpur, in January 1978 Mumbai, in 1978 Nanded, in February 1979 Nasik.⁸³

So far as political activism of the Panthers is concern, the Nagpur group of Dalit Panther Movement was more active than the other group in Mumbai because when the Mumbai group was busy in cultural programme then the Nagpur group focused on the priority issues and the genuine matters related to Dalits which directly impact upon their livelihoods.

MAHARASHTRA DALIT PANTHER OF ARUN KAMBALE

After the announcement of Dhale, dissolution of the Dalit Panther Movement, a meeting was organised at Aurangabad on 11 and 12 April 1977 in which out of 11 members 9 were present. Meeting organised at B.D.D. Chawls on 28 April, the name of Maharashtra Dalit Panther was changed to Bhartiya Dalit Panther on the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti. On this occasion, S.M. Pradhan was made Vice President Ramdas Athawale Organiser and D.

⁸² Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015, pp.71

⁸³ *Ibid* p.72

Mhaske was nominated as secretary. According to official records, there were about 2500 members of the group. This group mostly focused on issues of urban Dalits, particularly focused on issues of Dalits in Bombay city.⁸⁴

DALIT PANTHER OF SANGARE AND MAHATEKAR

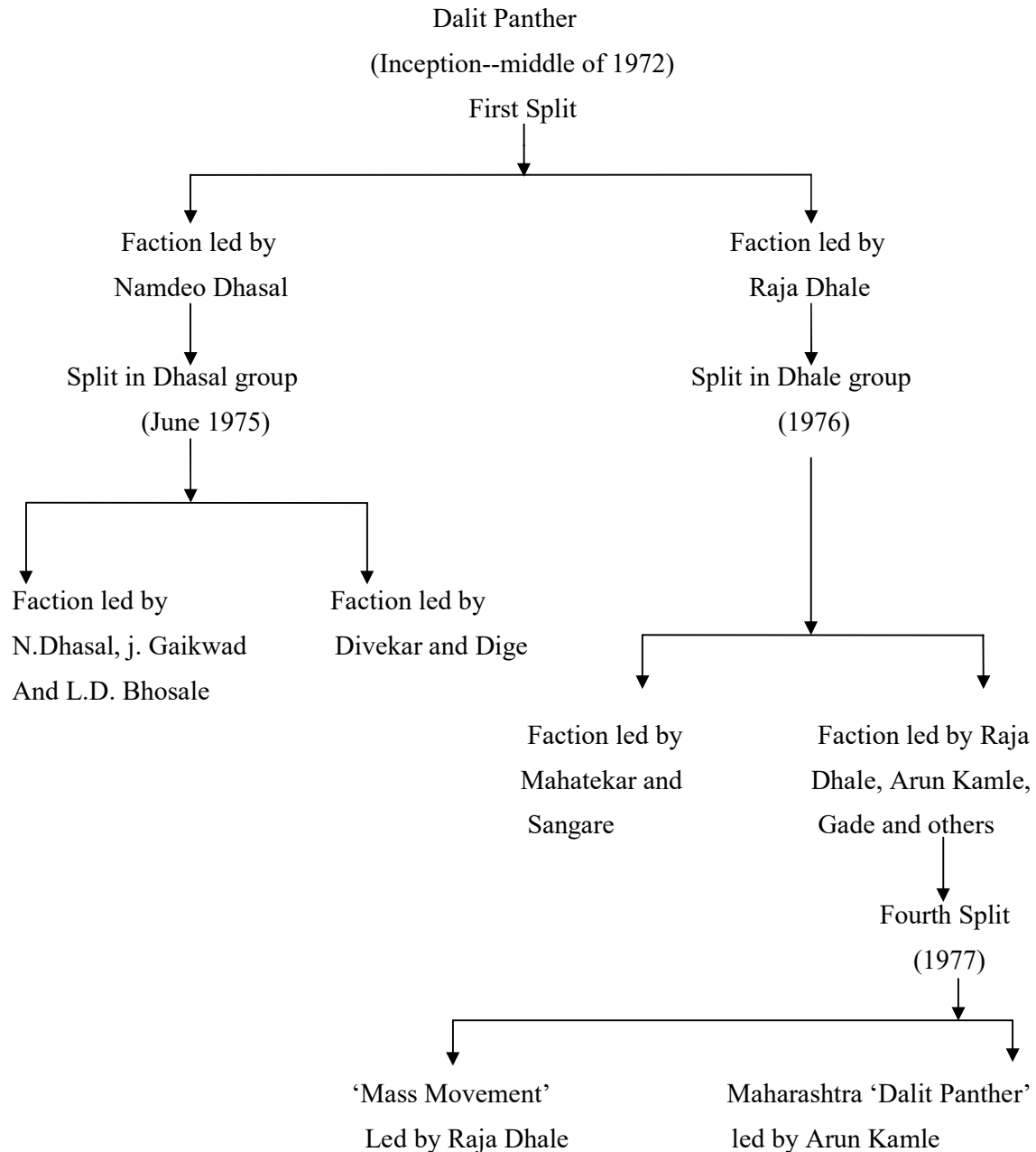
Within the broad spectrum of Dalit Panther Movement, another fraction lead by Sangare and Mahatekar came into existence in 1976. According to police, the membership of this group was about 2000. This group had its office at Sangare house at Jacob circle Bombay.⁸⁵ This group was named as Maharashtra state Panther and its president was made Mahtekar, Sangare, as an organiser, and Ramtek as secretary, other members of the organisation were Tansen Nanavare, Baburao Sejwal, Manohar Aukush, Umar Pathan and Chandrakant Handone. This group too focused on the issues of Dalits in Bombay slum areas.

DALIT PANTHER OF NAMDEO DHASAL

After the split in Dhasal group, the group led by Dhasal continued to carry on its activities. Bhosale was made president of this group in place of Khatik. During a conference held in the Ahilya Ashram, Pune under the chairmanship of Bhosale, a declaration was made that more stress would be on building up of organisation and not on programmes and decision for the formation of youth wing and women wing also discussed.

⁸⁴ Lata Murugkar, *Dalit Panther Movement In Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1991, p.80.

⁸⁵ *Ibid* p.81



IDEOLOGY OF DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT

Ideology is a crucial phenomenon that determines the process of production of reality and existence. It provides the base for activist framework of any social movement by the way of providing inspiration and justification to the movement. It is also an important aspect around

which members of group shares common feelings and come together for launching a collective action to achieve their shared objectives. The Dalit Panther Movement also possess a distinctive ideology which aimed as devising multiple strategies for empowerment of Dalit masses and demanding socio-economic justice denied by the caste ridden society. The ideology of the movement can be captured from the following points:

- Published literature during the movement, its manifesto, memorandum, advertisements, and magazines.
- Audio clip of its leader addressed time to time in public.
- Press statement given by its leader, media news and reports
- Persons related with movements (Dalit and Non-Dalit) and interview of these people collected before media
- Mainly the Dalit Panther followed the ideology of Dr. Ambedkar as a weapon, they developed this ideology and used to publish in its manifesto, according to which the organisation was set up. Dalit Panther Manifesto declared that Dalit Panthers were not only emotional but also set up a target strives to achieve it. This movement should be considered as the movement against the feudalism, capitalism, orthodoxies of Congress government, Hindu religion, and religious text. Dalit Panthers wanted that all down trodden Dalits should unite in the missionary work. They used the Dalit word in the inclusive terms.
- Dalit Panthers declared Zamindar, Capitalist, agents, and the government all those who are a supporter of exploiter all are enemy of Dalit Panther and all those who are against of caste and class atrocities are friends.
- Dalit manifesto ideology declared the ideology of, instant issues to be raised, related to the water, foods, home, jobs, lack of land, and their unequal social status in society, etc.

- Dalit freedom struggle means a total revolution. Group asserted that it does not want simple change but a total change.⁸⁶

The aforementioned points are the ideological aspects of the Dalit Panthers. These points provided a unified structure to the movement having certain broad objectives. All these objectives were mainly aimed at launching a fight against injustice perpetuated against Dalits and attempt to provide dignified identity at one level and development of Dalits at another level by the way of providing access to land, jobs resources and other requirements.

STRATEGIES OF DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT

Since the time of Dr. Ambedkar the Dalit movement had been in favor of annihilation caste system. It was treated as inhuman practice and considered to be a weapon of caste Hindus over the Dalits. The Republican Party of India had also clichéd in the politics and also it had neglected the socio-cultural issues. It did not heed towards the slums, contempt of Dalits, and disabilities of the Dalits as well, but some attention given by the leftist towards this. It also notified that the caste system is become a hindrance for holistic unity that is not being tackled. By 1970s in evident that political parties and the Indian state did not give adequate attention to the problems that victimised Dalit society.

Dalit struggle for better life is a combination of quest for social dignity, material progress and representation in political and social life. Dalits had been deprived of human right since earlier that's why the aim is first to have these. The ideology of Ambedkar thus became popular among educated and socially conscious Dalits.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Lata Murugkar, *Dalit Panther Movement In Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1991.

⁸⁷ Ghanshyam Shah, '*Dalit Movement and Search for Identify*', *Dalit Identity and Politics*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2001.

The fact wherever needs to be taken into consideration is that Dalit leaders neglected the economic factors, firstly, of being anti of Marxism and class struggle as well, secondly of giving the priority to the cultural factor as considered by the Dr. Ambedkar and thirdly assumption of treating the caste as directly related to the rituals, likewise treating the class struggle as like economic factors. Dalit leaders undoubtedly failed to understand this connectivity and decided to run the movement unidirectional approach, which focused on socio-cultural aspects of caste, based discrimination rather than the economic dimension of caste based oppression.⁸⁸

Since the untouchability is the cultural problem concerned with Hinduism and caste system that's why the anti-untouchability movement had been concerned with the cultural movements directly. However, none of the movements was attached directly with economic factors, which were responsible for untouchability. The Dalit Panther Movement attempted to focus on this missing dimension of Dalit movement in India. Therefore, its strategy was more concern able in comparison to other movement broaches out earlier.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT

Several vibrant activities were undertaken by the Panthers in order to give economic dimension to Ambedkar ideology, which focuses on the economic empowerment of Dalits as a pre-condition for overall development of Dalit society. The Panthers for empowerment of Dalits undertook the following activities:

⁸⁸ Oliver Mendelsohn & Marika Vicziany, *The Untouchables: Subordination, Poverty and the State in Modern India*, Cambridge University Press, U.K. 1998.

- During the entire Dalit Panther Movement, the Panthers excelled such determination in the Dalits that Ambedkarism exposed in them solidarily. This movement in one way ended the orthodoxy but for this achievement, the enmity had to hand, with others members of the society of upper caste people. The movement could run smoothly, Panthers had also to, departed away from the brotherhood of community. Panthers group what were made was not totally unusual, but they became beneficiary in the sense that this movement first broke out in the corner to corner in Maharashtra and then in the entire nation in the corner to corner. What those who take it least one but this movement tried to change the nature of the discriminated society fully through its achievements might say? We can assert the achievement of the Dalit Panther Movement in the following way as well-
- Despite of being in the limit, the Dalit Panther Movement provided the motivational courage the thousands of schedule caste youths. That's why such type of movement was needed for the eradication of untouchability. Dalit did the sound efforts for what had not been done earlier by them.
- Panthers exposed the thing that Dalits are not more about to have silent and passive. Panthers sought their voices in demonstration marches that their problems would not be resolved through donation mendicancy. Their contribution in the social and political sphere is considerable in India. Panthers realised the Dalits that in a democracy they have to take their right on its own way.
- Panthers could be considered the first movement exist who sought the voice against the injustice, cruelty, exploitation and unequal caste systems well. Panthers raised those issues and matter that was not made discussed after the

independence since long 25 years later. This movement used to draw the attention of the people towards the atrocities over the Dalits, inequality in the society and awarded the people. That s why, when the Dalit Panther movement emerged Dalit youth enclosed themselves more and more.

- Panthers made the disturbance in the political power through the courageous speeches in the Republic Party of India.
- Panther's at large extent awarded the policy, makers problems related to Dalits and used to focus over the institutional sources for their diagnostics. For example, they pressurized the government to fill the backlog vacancy in the banks and government departments under reservation quota. L8
- Panthers were the people, those tried to enhance the Ambedkarite ideology.
- Panthers used to call themselves well, Dalit rather than Harijan or untouchable.
- Panthers tried to understand the situation of the young generation and teached them well, in extreme and all strategy agenda.
- Panthers sought a special type of tradition of writing the literature in a motivational way, for making the liveness in the movement under the approach of poetry like the title, Golpitha. Probably all these achievements seemed to be the result of these poems. Another example was that "Vidroh" was the poetry that was considered to the catalyzer for those who wanted to do the armed rebellion out of literature field as well. Dalit writers found the contemporary Marathi literature to be false as it did not try to show the actual reality and social status of the Dalit society. Panther wanted the literature of the type, which could see human exploitation. Panthers' tried to expose their discontent in the contemporary writings about the untouchables and hazardous

life of Dalits and used to make them stand at the support for Dalits about empowering the bad condition and controlling atrocities over the Dalits. As a result, the Dalit literature used to put forward itself, towards to see the exploitation of the downtrodden Dalit and their changing demands in Marathi literature emerged as “Vidroh” in contemporary writing. In this way, the Dalit poems, stories, and autobiographies also tried to develop the revolutionary retention in against of Dalit atrocities, of which credit goes to Panthers.⁸⁹

Thus, the credential achievements of Dalit Panthers could not be neglected. Had there been how, the rift between of its leaders even, but what the action they had taken, such action were not taken by anymore in this concern for the Dalit priority orientation.

FAILURE OF THE DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT

The Dalit Panther Movement was mainly run by the Dalit youths. This movement was considered very different from that of all those movement that were started before the Panther movement. However, due to internal conflicts among the groups made the organisation not as upgradable as it should be, and also could not reach at its apex as it was fired in flings in its initial form. The Dalit Panthers Movement, in fact, the rise and fell like a flash. Their first split came within only two years rhetorically structured on the lines of “Buddhism versus Marxism.”⁹⁰ There are many shortcomings within organisational, structural, financial, adjustment and ideological problem. If this movement would had run on its unidirectional

⁸⁹ Lata Murugkar, *Dalit Panther Movement in Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1991.

⁹⁰ Gail Omvedt, *Dalit Visions: The anti-caste movement and the construction of an Indian identity*, Orient Black Swan, New Delhi, 2006, p.78.

ideology by neglecting the all its intra conflicts it had its scenario as different to that of all earlier movements and would be helpful in the eradication of untouchability, isolation, poverty, and caste, etc. All that reasons for the failure of its reason are those due to which the organisation could not stand itself as being the more prominent movements of its own time and was also lacked its nationwide impact as well.

STRUCTURAL FAILURE

- For a vast movement there need the continuity of its agenda and smoothness to be propagated, but the Dalit Panther Movement could not maintain its initial pro movement ideology. Panthers did not maintain the rural organisational structure that made the failure over the atrocities.⁹¹ Panther's militancy character also made a bad effect now and then. The militancy character of Panthers did not always remain beneficiary.
- Membership of organisation always not remained constant, it was used to increase and decrease time to time. The youths were of neo Buddhist community and schedule caste even, educated unemployment youths were playing the role in leadership.
- Dhale group used to represent the student worker s while Dhasal group used to represent the urban common class that made the organisation more conflicting. All these defaults made the organisation considering the only herd of Dalit youths.
- Organisation become perfect through its value and quality, for taking the accountability of the organisation on its shoulder it has to prepare its member

⁹¹ Ajay Kumar, *Dalit Panther Andolan* (Hindi Book), Gautam Book Center, Delhi, 2015, p.116.

at a very mature level and needed training strategy. This helps in excelling the confidence in political culture and participatory ideology in organisation. Panthers did take this type of approach into consideration.

FINANCIAL FAILURE

- There is needed the prosperous and continues sources to be running for all programme of the movement smoothly. Whenever an organisation starts source should be also created, but Panthers did not give heed attention towards this. In an organisation the most were the unemployed youths, which totally depended on other donation that was not to be considered sufficient for smooth running of Dalit Panther Movement.
- The movement were remained to be ineffective due to the ambiguity in the ideology and weak leadership that is , no one paid attention toward the source of income and budgeting, intellectual gave the Panthers advise not to connect much with a politician but did not considered as what they told.
- The relationship between the Dalit Panthers and other organisation were not so smooth that not all these groups helped in financial support.

FLEXIBILITY IN LEADERSHIP AND DEFECTED DISCIPLINE

- Before the emergence of Dalit movement, leaders did not take any assertion in the direction of the eradication of the atrocities and humiliation over the Dalits except the high frequency speaking, the new generation youths of the Dalit

community were not in the capacity to tolerate it so there had no reason besides that of confrontation.

- Dalit Panthers could not remain themselves isolate from atrocious shouting of people, then these courageous Dalit youths came in front of the fighting with atrocities in militancy form, these were youths in exciting form, experience less, and was void of political stanch. However, these were so sensitive emotional and educated person and Dhale and Dhasal awakened the Dalits and were in a hurry, but there was not so stigma and stability in any leader of this movement that made the movement flexible and indiscipline in some context.

LESS REPRESENTATION OF RURAL DALITS

- According to the census of 1971, 24 lakh out of 33 lakh Buddhist were living in rural areas mostly were of landless or farming labour. The movement could not be a success unless the participation of rural areas also enclosed. For this being the rural mass away from the deprived situation, this is necessary for to awaken them illiteracy and orthodoxy. The revolution took place when there develops a spirit of scarifies, the base formation of the organisation on this basis become too necessary as well, but Dalit Panther Movement had neglected these factors at the base level making the organisation looser.

LACK OF BEHAVIOR OF RATIONALITY

- Panther's leaders were composed of a specific type of dearth of logical behavior. They had to conduct according to the changing situation of society,

but Dalit Panther leaders were isolated from this strategy. Lack of this rationality dropped into the breach in organisation.

DIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE AND STRATEGY FAILURE

- The Panthers neglected what the values were present in the society, and they tried to set up new values and specific parameters for the Dalit culture as well. Panthers used to speak the abetting language in the society that was not suitable at all condition. They could not stand themselves at diplomatic base more strongly; this failure of nondiplomatic language also was an obstacle in the progressive formation of Dalit Panther. Lastly, it was said that the agitation and hard speaking language style did let not go ahead and hindered the movement.

OPPORTUNISTIC APPROACH

- Dalit Panther movement was the follower of specific ideology but some people violated all the rule and regulation of the organisation and used to follow the opportunistic approach in this concern. Dhasal used to change the attitude of his in this concern. He wanted to give a specific cultural identity to the neo-Buddhist. Worli riots and Marathwara University name-changing campaign laid the Dalit Panthers incoming focus and made so many leaders in media highlighted completing their personal concerns as well.
- Panthers leaders did not focus over the base fact of organization but run it without taking any more strategic decision in future used to conduct the

movement continued while the movement was facing the sociocultural problem in this concern, they did not take attention as for, nor did the suit analysis for the done work.

- All active members took the benefit of the got chance and tried to create their own group as an opportunity they got, thought their selfishness but not of whole society, for this they neglected the so for the huge Dalit mass group, took the much interest in the choice of high post in organisation . Thus, Dalit Panther movement enlisted in the corrupt leading approach, after fractioning in organisation each leader made an objection on each other and tried to show his personality divine. Panther's leader did not make unite and maintained the accountability of his personality.

IDEOLOGY FAILURE

- The Dr. Ambedkar and Republic Party of Idea inspired the ideology of Dalit panther. Dr. Ambedkar was in favor of liberal ideology, he wanted the solution of the Dalit problem within the boundary of religion system while panthers were in attachment with common class, extremist and radical movement. Initially Panthers followed the Ambedkar ideology without any hesitation but not in latter as was proved by the working style of panthers in concern of brotherhood and unity. Thus, the legacy of Dr. Ambedkar of which they were claiming to be a successor, the scenario took place against, being of revolutionary approach.
- Concern with society, Ambedkar was in favour of social control, and wanted the eradication of capitalism social system. Panther's movement was anti

social movement that wanted the radical change in society through revolution in fields of socio economic system. Dr. Ambedkar wanted the change in upper class structure if it not happens then wanted the change through whole society revolution. While panthers followed non-institutional path of struggle, being not followed the path of democratic way of Dr. Ambedkar. Panther's ideology was in bourgeoisie extreme concepts, but there was no match in their ideological and working culture. Thus, Dalit panther movement could not success itself, as it should have to be in its vision.

Even though it was a short history, but the history Dalit Panther Movement represents a fascinating dimension of subaltern groups protest against oppression and hegemony. This movement was able to generate high degree of awareness among Dalits on their rights. Interestingly the Dalit Panther Movement not only confined to Maharashtra, but also spreads to other part of India. The next chapter of this study attempts to capture Dalit Politics and impact of the Dalit Panther Movement in Uttar Pradesh.

CHAPTER-IV

TITLE OF CHAPTER:

DALIT POLITICS DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT AND IN UTTAR PRADESH

ABSTRACT OF CHAPTER:

This chapter attempts to capture the emergence of Dalit movement in Uttar Pradesh and the role of Dalit Panther Movement in shaping its course. The main objective of this chapter is to demonstrate the ascendancy of Dalit Politics and the impact of Dalit Panther Movement in facilitating this process.

CHAPTER-IV

INTRODUCTION

Dalit leaders created numerous organisations for Dalits in different parts of India during the British colonial rule in order to situate themselves into the colonial modernity. These organisations attempted to address the problems of Dalit society and proposed certain possible solutions. The main demand of those organisations was that adequate attention should be paid for the advancement of Dalits who were traditionally subjected to several inhuman social practices. The spirit of this movement continued after independence in the form of Dalit Panther Movement. The previous chapter maps out ideas and practices of Panthers and their role in disseminating more vibrant and often radical attitude towards empowerment of Dalits. This process indeed had an impact on different parts of India. This chapter attempts to capture the implicit and explicit impact of the Panther movement on the politics of Dalits in Uttar Pradesh.

DALIT MOVEMENT PRE INDEPENDENCE IN UNITED PROVINCES

Uttar Pradesh, contrary to the Southern States, did not experience any large scale or radical anti-caste movement during the colonial period. The reasons lie in the rigid and unchanging character of the social structure at one level and intervention of the Arya Samaj, which made the Dalit society more traditional oriented rather than forward looking. Another phenomenon is that the impact of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar ideas was felt much later than in Maharashtra. However, we can trace emergence of an active Dalit movement representing the demands of Dalits.

In the Uttar Pradesh plains there is a greater continuity in the ritual ranking of castes which led to a better sharing of social status and political power. Anti-Brahmanism seems to have developed in the regions with steep and discontinuous traditional social hierarchies. "Regions with relatively higher proportion of twice-born castes and having more gradual and continuous hierarchies seem to be less susceptible to horizontal mobilization from below comprising ritually deprived castes seeking opportunities to improve their status and political power".⁹² The classic examples of this trend can be seen in Uttar Pradesh wherein ritual based social relations dominate the social intercourse of population.

Secondly, the rigidity of caste system in Maharashtra was very strict and carried to its extreme creating problems for those at the bottom of the caste hierarchy. This prejudicially compartmentalized system in turn contributed to the feelings of anti-Brahmanism. Maharashtra also experienced level of many anti-caste movements beginning with the Mahanubhava Saint Chakradhar in 1196, and the Bhakti movement under Janeshwar, Chokhamela and Eknath. Socio-cultural revolutionary Jyotirao Phule was also instrumental in awakening and raising the Dalit consciousness. His Satyashodhak Samaj attempted its best to provide a non-Brahman social order.⁹³

The Jatavs of Agra much more influenced by the teachings of the Arya Samaj from the late 1880s began to follow Sanskritization in order to gain respect and higher status in the caste system but later on, they were disillusioned by the treatment of Arya Samaj towards Dalits. This breaking away of Dalits from the Arya Samaj has been effectively highlighted by

⁹² L. I. Rudolph, *The modernity of tradition: Political development in India*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1984.

⁹³ S. Patil, *Caste and class in Maharashtra*, K.L. Sharma (ed.), *Caste and Class in India*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 1994, p. 272.

Nandani Gooptu who says that, "From the early 1920s in the aftermath of the Khilafat movement, in response to the religious ferment it generated among Muslims, and in an attempt to strengthen the Hindu community, the Arya Samaj stepped up its *Shuddi* or reclamation activities for the inclusion back into the Hindu fold, of lower caste and Hindu converts to Islam. The *Samaj*, in this period, increasingly found itself drawn into political action in defence of Hinduism. The growing emphasis on the Vedas by the *Arya Samaj*, however implied the fortification of caste distinction. This gradually disillusioned the Untouchables who had joined it, especially because the Samaj did not accord them equality of status even though it admitted lower castes to Hindu hierarchy through *Shuddi*. The distinction between high caste Hindus and the purified low castes had remained and continued to be followed. The untouchables engaged in *Arya Samaj* gradually became convinced that *Samaj* acted as the 'army of high caste Hindus' whose only intention was to rally the Hindu community against Muslims, and that the *Samaj's* attempt to uplift the lower castes was merely a part of this strategy. They argued that the *Samaj* did not aim to eradicate untouchability and that the *Shuddi* was cunning ploy to perpetuate the hold of higher castes over the Untouchables.⁹⁴

Soon after their break-up with the *Arya Samaj* in the early 1920s, the Dalit leaders began to propagate the concept of an *Adi-Hindu* (original race) and the Bhakti as their separate, Pre-Aryan religion. They organized intra-region conferences to spread the *Adi-Hindu* ideology. It is during this period that the *Adi-Hindu* movement of Uttar Pradesh came in contact with *Adi-Dharma* of Punjab and *Adi-Hindu* movement of Andhra Pradesh. Swami Acchutanand in Delhi convened an inter-region conference in early 1926. The leaders of *Adi-*

⁹⁴ N. Gooptu, *Caste and Labour: Untouchable Social Movements in Urban Uttar Pradesh*, 1993. In P. Robb (ed.), *Dalit Movements and the Meanings of Labour in India* (pp. 286-287). Oxford University Press, New Delhi (quoted in Kumar, *Opcit*, pp. 99-100).

Dharma, of Punjab attended the meeting.⁹⁵ The purpose of this meeting was to unite the Dalit forces from different parts of the country.

The Bhakti resurgence gave rise to the Dalit leadership, which was more religious in nature. It tried to project the Dalits as adherents of Bhakti (reverence). Caste Panchayats (caste councils) were reconstituted in urban neighbourhoods, which dealt with internal disputes among the members of caste groups and stipulated the social and religious practices to be observed by them. This movement gave Dalits a new identity as *Bhagats*, often added with the terms like *Kabirpanthi*, *Shivnaryani* or *Ravidasis* after their names to indicate the gurus they revered.⁹⁶

In different parts of Uttar Pradesh, especially urban centres like Lucknow, Kanpur, Allahabad, and Varanasi (then Benaras) temples dedicated to Bhakti Gurus were erected. Such temples were financed by small donations from members of the caste groups and by holding religious ceremonies and congregations where the devotees offered small subscriptions. By the 1920s, the organization of processions and celebrations on the birth anniversaries of the Bhakti Gurus had started. Religious congregations, Satsangs and Bhajans were held regularly in the masses. The important Dalit leaders who made some significant impact were Baba Sita Ram Das Sant, Gopi Dom, and Swami Shiv Narayan etc. In the early 1920s, the adherents of this ideology argued that the Bhakti was the religion of the original

⁹⁵ N. Gooptu, *Caste and Labour: Untouchable Social Movements in Urban Uttar Pradesh*, 1993. In P. Robb (ed.), *Dalit Movements and the Meanings of Labour in India* (pp. 286-287). Oxford University Press, New Delhi (quoted in Kumar, Opcit, pp. 99-100).

⁹⁶ M. Juergensmeyer, *Religion as Social Vision: The Movement against Untouchability in 20th Century Punjab*, University of California Press, Berkely, 1982, pp. 26. (quoted in Kumar, Opcit., p. 100).

inhabitants and rulers of India and hence, they gave it a shape of religious movement. The movement sought to preach caste equality but it could not question the caste structure.⁹⁷

On the other hand, of the Dalit leadership that simultaneously emerged in the social context of urbanization and Dalit assertion was more political in nature though it had a definite ideological plank and intellectual fervour to counter the suppression, oppression and exploitation of the Dalits. This leadership had constructed a theory of the ancient racial origin of the Dalits known as 'Adi-Hindu' theory this claims that the Adi-Hindus were the original inhabitants and rulers of India from whom the Untouchables or Dalits had descended. This argument sounded the contention of Jyotiba Phule who stated that the Dalits are the original inhabitants' of India and the caste system and the untouchability has been forcefully imposed upon them by the foreign Aryans. The persuasion of this theory took the form of Adi -Hindu movement and the two most important leaders led this movement were Swami Acchutanand (1879-1933) of Lucknow and Baba Ram Charan Das of Kanpur. Swami Acchutanand was born in a Chamar family in Farrukhabad district. Supported by several Dalit leaders, he had published a small newspaper in Hindi entitled '*Adi-Hindu*.' More significantly, he had testified and submitted a memorandum to the Simon Commission in 1928 asking for separate status and rights, and representation to be given to the Dalits.

According to Lynch, the Swami also preached in Agra but because of his radical doctrines, the leaders of the Jatav Kshatriyas movement drove him out.⁹⁸ Baba Ram Charan Das, another *Adi-Hindu* leader of Lucknow was born in a slum area at Gwaltoli in Kanpur. He worked in the Railway Audit office and took a law degree. Afterwards, he shifted to

⁹⁷ V. Kumar, *India's Roaring Revolution: Dalit Assertion and New Horizon*, Ganga deep Publications, Delhi 2006, p. 97.

⁹⁸ O.M. Lynch, *The Politics of Untouchability: Social Mobility and Social Change in a City of India*, National Publishing House, New Delhi, 1974, p. 68.

Lucknow and struggled his rest of life for making social conditions of Dalits better. Although the Arya Samaj failed to eradicate the feelings of caste discrimination, because of its fully dominated by the Brahmans and the people from other upper castes those who have that caste consciousness in their mind, it certainly brought about a significant change among the Jatavs by imparting them the upper caste values of acknowledged cultural symbols, rites and beliefs. It played an important role in convincing some of the Dalits of the mobility within Hindu society. The younger generation of Jatavs got education from the Missionary Schools, Arya Samaj, and the government schools. Equipped with education in 1917, they formed the Jatav Men's Association (Jatav Veer Mahasabha). Later in 1924, the Jatavs formed another group called Jatav Propaganda Circle (Jatav Pracharak Mandal) to bring about social reforms among them and propagate their new identity of Jatav. Thus, through association and society the Dalit leaders succeeded in motivating the Jatavs towards achieving education, Sanskritization, and changing of their identity from Chamar to Jatav.⁹⁹

Besides undertaking to change and uplift the social status of their community by using cultural values, rituals and behaviour patterns this new generation of Dalit leaders also took to politics for this purpose. The Jatavs became politically conscious of action from 1920s when they started demanding rights for their community.¹⁰⁰ In 1920, Khem Chand Bohare was appointed as a member of the Legislative Council of Uttar Pradesh, in which he served two terms. After his appointment, appoint Khem Chand Bohare proposed in the Council that one member of the Jatav community to each district board in Uttar Pradesh. He further proposed that one member of his community be appointed to every municipal board, town area, and notified area committee in the state of Uttar Pradesh. These statuses including

⁹⁹ V. Kumar, *India's Roaring Revolution: Dalit Assertion and New Horizon*, Gagandeep Publications, Delhi 2006, p. 101

¹⁰⁰ O.M. Lynch, *The Politics of Untouchability: Social Mobility and Social Change in a City of India*, National Publishing House, New Delhi, 1974, p. 78.

political positions held by the Dalits made them conscious of their position in the power structure. More importantly, they became aware of political instrumentalities. These educated Jatavs formed the Jatav Youth League in 1930, which supported Ambedkar claims for representing Dalits in Round Table Conference in London against Gandhi,¹⁰¹ Which by 1941, had branches in Rajasthan, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh.

As *Adi-Hindu* movement was simultaneously in progress, Ambedkar declared his intentions of leaving Hinduism in 1935.¹⁰² With this so-called process of *Sanskritization* as a trend among Dalit lost momentum. By 1940s, large numbers of Dalits were drawn into Ambedkar movement. Outside Maharashtra, the North Indian Chamars provided the strongest base for the Scheduled Castes Federation.¹⁰³ Then in 1944-45, the Scheduled Castes Federation of Agra was formed which was affiliated to All-India Scheduled Castes Federation of Dr. Ambedkar.¹⁰⁴

The emergence of transitional period of 1945-50 brought new change led by the newly educated elite among Jatavs. Their self-identity had undergone a change after them becoming a part of All India Scheduled Castes Federation. Their reference group of identity now became the Scheduled Castes with whom they identified as a part of the oppressed, deprived and 'Untouchable' section of the population. Independence brought with it parliamentary democracy, a constitution and Universal Suffrage with other protective

¹⁰¹ W.N. Kuber, *Ambedkar: A Critical Study*, Peoples Publishing House, New Delhi, 1991, p. 347.

¹⁰² At the Mahad Conference Ambedkar declared "I will not die a Hindu"

¹⁰³ G. Omvedt, *Kanshi Ram and the Bahujan Samaj Party*. In K.L. Sharma (ed.), *Caste and Class in India*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 1998 p. 160.

¹⁰⁴ V. Kumar, *India's Roaring Revolution: Dalit Assertion and New Horizon*, Gagandeep Publications, Delhi, 2006, pp. 102-103.

measures. All this emerged as a functional alternative to *Sanskritization* and a better means for entering the new power structure.¹⁰⁵

After this, the attempts to realize the status of citizens based on a secular axis became the agenda of Dalit mobilization in the state. With the new democratic institutions functioning in the society, power base shifted from religion to politics. The political participation appeared to be the way out for Dalits.¹⁰⁶ Two other major events happened in the 1950s i.e., the 'Conversion Movement' and formation of the Republican Party of India (RPI) in 1956 are indeed landmarks in history of Dalit assertion. Substantial numbers of Jatavs in Agra, Scheduled Castes in Aligarh and other districts of Uttar Pradesh followed Ambedkar into Buddhism, which was an indigenous but non-Hindu tradition and presented an alternative to the caste-system within which the Scheduled Castes had failed to rise. Thus, these two events were put in complimentary relations. The principles of equality enshrined in the constitution, in Buddhism and in the ideology of RPI were described as virtually the same and allowed an appeal to both the religious and traditional and the revolutionary and secular groups among the Scheduled Castes.

POST INDEPENDENCE PERIOD AND DALIT MOVEMENT IN UTTER PRADESH

Sudha Pai has divided the history of the post-independence Dalit movement in Uttar Pradesh into three phases. The **first phase** ranges from 1956-1969, when Dalits decided to form their own political party, the Republican Party of India, under the leadership of DR. Ambedkar. The **second** phase is about the failure of Dalit political parties that enabled the Congress to secure Dalit support under the leadership of Ms. Indira Gandhi by the sharing in the

¹⁰⁵ O. Lynch, *The Politics of Untouchability: Social Mobility and Change in a City in India*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1969.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p.217.

consensus on 'Garibi Hatao'. The **third phase** begins from the early 1980s when the Dalit movement entered into competitive Democratic politics. This phase saw the emergence, expansion, and consolidation of the BSP with the criticism that Dalit Movement had distanced itself from the initiatives for social transformation and focused only on political motives and goals.¹⁰⁷

So far as the first phase (1956-1969) is concern, the presence of a well-organized Dalit movement in Uttar Pradesh was not strongly felt. This period was replete with political and economic turbulence created by the land reforms. Though, the vigour of the Dalit movement in Uttar Pradesh was not impressive, Dalit issues got predominance in the interpretation of the effectiveness and impact of land reforms in Uttar Pradesh. Several agrarian reforms were introduced in the post-colonial period with a view to bring about social and economic equality and equity within the framework of the socialist pattern of Indian society, to improve the quality of life of the depressed classes, which of course is reflected in the constitution of India. The outcome of these agrarian reforms, however, did not prove fruitful for the target groups. Many scholars called the agrarian reforms as a 'failed task' or 'a fiasco'.¹⁰⁸ A study of the agrarian reforms in Basti, a district in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, shows that the Untouchable class got very little or nothing from the Zamindari Abolition Act of 1954.¹⁰⁹ Taking away land from the landlords was a historical development, even if it proved less beneficial.

¹⁰⁷ S. Pai, *From Harijan to Dalits: Identity Formation, Political Consciousness, and Electoral Mobilization of the Scheduled Castes in Uttar Pradesh*. In G. Shah (ed.), *Dalit Identity and Politics*, Sage Publications, New Delhi 2001.

¹⁰⁸ B. Sen, *Evolution of Agrarian Reforms in India*, Peoples Publishing House, Delhi, 1962.

¹⁰⁹ R. Singh, *Peasant Movement in Uttar Pradesh: A Study in the Politics of Land Control in Basti District*. In M. S. A. Rao (ed.), *Social Movements in India*, Manohar Publication, Delhi, 1978.

There existed a strong connection between Dalits and land reforms as most of Dalits happen to be land less. According to Omvedt and Patankar, two parallel hierarchies developed in the caste system of India. One hierarchy developed in the domain of agrarian relations ranging from landlords to independent peasants to tenant-cultivator to field servant. The last comprised the untouchables-a form of semi-slavery. The parallel hierarchy developed in the field of services, ranging from priest at the top to the goldsmith, barber to washer man and leather worker. The entire land policy evolved in the colonial period and during the freedom struggle was focused on the ideology of 'land to tillers', which excluded the lowest hierarchy in the agrarian system i.e. the untouchable field servants. The failure of the land reforms in bringing about equality among the Dalits in Uttar Pradesh was enough to encourage them to launch the Dalit movement. This was not a tough task because the contemporary Dalit movement had a strong presence in the political and social spheres in other parts of the country. Surprisingly so, it did not happen. The Dalits continued to keep their faith in the Congress, which was the chief articulator of land reforms. For the Dalits, snatching away land from the upper caste land owners was a crucial development. Land owning capacity of the upper castes enabled them to exercise the power over the deprived classes. Thus while the failed land reforms should have galvanized the Dalits to strike while the iron was hot, this whole phenomenon cemented their trust in the Congress which was also enjoying the reputation it had earned throughout the freedom movement as 'protector of the nation'. The nationalist sentiments also protected the political interests of the Congress and the upper caste people who were then largely associated with it.¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ G. Omvedt, *Kanshi Ram and the Bahujan Samaj Party*. In K.L. Sharma (ed.), *Caste and Class in India*, (pp.156) Rawat Publications, Jaipur.2005.

In Uttar Pradesh, the social structure is largely comprised of Hindu traditions and beliefs, which obstructed any initiative towards organizing the depressed classes on the part of the Dalits. The values and norms of Hindu society to a great extent determine the distribution of opportunities to ownership of land and they have influenced the economic and political relation of people in Uttar Pradesh. Although Dalits have rejected social and economic relationships based on the religious interpretations they were deeply internalized by them. The second important reason was that Dalits, floating from bondage from one landowner to others could not develop a solid base in rural Uttar Pradesh. This restricted the ability of the Dalits in raising and maintaining a movement against the well-established social hierarchy.¹¹¹

DALIT PANTHERS MOVEMENT IN UTTER PRADESH

Significantly, in the early 1970s Maharashtra witnessed an emergence of the Dalit Panthers movement. The name with its insurrectionist symbolism was borrowed from the Black Panthers of the United States. Ideologically, the Dalit Panthers emphasized class-based Dalit political activism. Rise of Dalit Panthers Movement coincided with wide spread famine, pervasive student activism and a non-party opposition politics in India. But the Dalit Panthers proved unable to build coalition with broader leftist politics. The movement was more driven by ideological and personality differences. The core ideological split was publicly evident by 1974, and was personified in its two pre-eminent leaders of the movement, Namdeo Dhasal and Raja Dhale. For Dhale's faction, the agenda of the movement was to deepen and widen Buddhist consciousness as the defining moment in Dalit history was the mass conversion to Buddhism under the leadership of Ambedkar. Another leader Namdeo Dhasal, on the other

¹¹¹ Singh, Opcit.

hand, represented a more orthodox leftist position and gave more importance to class rather than castes. This faction accorded both Ambedkar and conversion movement less of defining role. Later on Indira Gandhi was successfully in extracting support of the Dhasal faction on the plank of poverty amelioration programmes. On balance, the Dalit Panthers had failed to organize properly, both ideologically and as a political party. Lack of strategy and factionalism doomed this radical movement to insignificance.

Apparently, the trajectory of the Dalit Panthers Movement in Uttar Pradesh was not very impressive which can be attributed to the growing ideological schism within the movement itself. Vivek Kumar explains the origin and decimation of the Dalit Panthers movement in following words:

"On 5 December, 1980, the Dalit Panthers movement was born in Lucknow besides in Kanpur. Shyamlal of Jaunpur was its president and D.K. Anand of Sarojani Nagar, Lucknow was its General Secretary.... The Dalit Panthers in Uttar Pradesh were militant and specially rose against the atrocities on the Dalits specially after the 1980s when the Congress Government came to power again after a brief gap of two and half years of the Janta Party Government. The main demands of the Panthers were that, "in case of a death of the Dalit due to atrocity, he should be paid Rs. 5 lakh as compensation along with 5 Bighas of land, one weapon (a pistol or gun) and service to one person in the family."¹¹²

The fact is that there is no evidence to prove that whether they had succeeded in forcing the government to pay such compensation, but one thing is clear that the demands

¹¹² V. Kumar, *India's Roaring Revolution: Dalit Assertion and New Horizon*, Gagandeep Publications, Delhi, 2006, p. 108.

itself looked impractical and the Panthers were not in good numbers to exert the required pressure on the government for getting their demands realized. Later on, the General Secretary of the Panthers was booked under the National Security Act (NSA) because of his provocative speeches and violent demonstrations organized at the district headquarters in 1986. Thus, with his arrest, the Panthers movement faded out paving the way to the gradual emergence of the BAMCEF in 1979 in Lucknow, the Capital of the State.¹¹³

Even though the Dalit Panther Movement was short-lived in Uttar Pradesh, we cannot underestimate its impact upon the Dalit assertion. Undoubtedly, the socio-political radicalism advocated by the panther movement created an assertive mood among the Dalit youth of Uttar Pradesh at one level and emergence of a distinctive identity around the category of Dalit also took place. On account of these changes it can safely be assumed that Dalit Panther Movement exercised significant impact upon the politics of Dalits in Uttar Pradesh if not directly but certainly indirectly.

The decade of 1970 was important not only because of the demise of two major organized Dalit political attempts through the RPI and Dalit Panthers, but also because of the emergence of an extraordinary Dalit literary movement. The void left by the demise of the RPI and the Dalit Panthers has been filled by two complimentary developments: (a) Literary Dalit movement, (b) Emergence of Kanshi Ram and Ms. Mayawati as new Dalit icons. Here we will discuss the unprecedented mobilization of the Dalits in UP under the iconic leadership of Kanshi Ram who had capitalised the awareness created by the Dalit Panther Movement in India in general and Uttar Pradesh in particular.

¹¹³ V. Kumar, *India's Roaring Revolution: Dalit Assertion and New Horizon*, Gagandeep Publications, Delhi, 2006, p. 108.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF KANSHI RAM

Before discussing the emergence and development of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), it is important to give a brief account of the BSP founder Kanshi Ram. BSP cadres and Bahujan masses called Kanshi Ram as 'Dadasaheb' or 'Mannyavar' very popularly, But the origin and social background of Mannyavar Kanshi Ram has somewhat got mystified, some people saying he was a civil servant and so on and so forth. To do away all these mysteries surrounding Kanshi Ram, BSP's central office released a pamphlet on his life. According to this pamphlet, Kanshi Ram was born on 15 March 1934, in Khawaspur, Ropar District, Punjab.¹¹⁴ He completed his early education in his Village Khawaspur, later on; he completed his B.Sc (Graduation) from Ropar District in 1956. In 1957, he qualified a competition for 'Geological Survey of India' (GSI) and took the training, but he resigned from the job because of the condition of 'service bond'⁴⁸

Then he moved to Pune in Maharashtra and joined the Explosive Research and Development Laboratory at Kirkee, where he was exposed to the bad breath of Hindu social order i.e., terrible caste system. After joining the Explosive Research and Development Laboratory of Kirkee near Pune as a Chemist, Kanshi Ram faced caste discrimination for the first time.¹¹⁵ During this period in Maharashtra, particularly in Pune, society was sharply polarized between Dalits and the upper castes leading various types of Ambedkarite organizations, and the upper castes, who remained conservative and Brahminical in outlook.¹¹⁶ Kanshi Ram could not tolerate the humiliation which had become the destiny of

¹¹⁴ S. Pai, *Dalit Assertion and the Unfinished Democratic Revolution: The Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2002, pp. 68.

¹¹⁵ Pai, Op cit., p. 87.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p.87.

the Dalit employees all across India. His assertive personality forced him to resign from the job in 1964; in fact, he sacrificed his job while fighting for the rights of his colleague.¹¹⁷

After resigning from the Government service, Kanshi Ram got involved in reading Dalit literature with a view to discover the root cause of Brahminical social order. In this process, the journey of Kanshi Ram and his movement of socio-cultural revolution and economic emancipation of 'Bahujan Samaj' started from 1964 onwards. Kanshi Ram took inspiration from Ambedkar's thoughts and innovative ideas by reading "Annihilation of Caste", and he travelled the whole of Maharashtra to explore Ambedkarism. He joined number of organizations prevalent in Maharashtra at that time, such as People's Education Society, Buddha Club, etc. The RPI was the major Dalit political organization prevalent in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. However, Kanshi Ram was not attracted to it, though he worked for four years. He felt it was a stooge of the Congress. Nor was Kanshi Ram attracted to the radical Dalit movements emerging in various states, such as the Dalit Panthers in Maharashtra, or the Dalit Sangharsh Samiti in Kamataka.¹¹⁸

Kanshi Ram and his colleagues established the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Minorities Employees Welfare Association in 1971, which was duly registered under the Poona Charity Commissioner. The primary objective of this organization was to find out problems of government employees and provide equitable solutions to the problems of injustice and harassment of Dalit employees. This brought new change in Dalit movement in Uttar Pradesh and finally it had created an "All India Backward and Minority Communities Employees Federation" (BAMCEF), on 6th December 1978, the

¹¹⁷ Kumar, Op cit., p. 115.

¹¹⁸ Pai Op cit. p. 88

death anniversary of Ambedkar. This organization was formally launched with a rally at the Boat Club lawns in New Delhi.¹¹⁹

DALIT SHOSHIT SAMAJ SANGHARSH SAMITI (DS-4)

Kanshi Ram was launched an organization to strengthen grassroots struggle to challenge the upper castes. Since the Indian democratic system does not allow the government employees to participate in political activities. Finally they formed an organization made by bureaucrats was limited in its actions. Kanshi Ram planned the formation of an organization that would be able to mobilize a larger section of the Dalits into political activities. The DS4 came into being to prepare mass base for political activities, which would help formation of a political party. This organization was formed to include and mobilize other sections of the society besides employees. Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti i.e., DS-4 was established on 6 December 1981. The main aim of this organization was to highlight the grievances of the oppressed Dalits and to educate them about their rights.⁶² It was not a political outfit; in fact it served as a link between Kanshi Ram's trade union organization BAMCEF and his yet to be formed political party, the BSP.

In North India, since the formation of the DS-4 the momentum for political mobilization picked up. Since the DS-4 was a quasi-rather than full-fledged political party [partly because government servants were forbidden to take part in political mobilization process], the DS-4 made little concrete progress. Unlike BAMCEF, which was more oriented towards urban Scheduled Caste elites, the target of the DS-4 was rural Dalits. The DS-4, because of its aggressive posture in agitational campaigns made quick inroads in North

¹¹⁹ Pai, *ibid*, p. 88.

Indian villages. Between 15 March and 17 April 1983, the DS-4 organized a 3000 km cycle procession covering seven states in order to educate the oppressed and the exploited people that they need to build up their own organization and an independent movement.¹²⁰

THE RISE OF BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY (BSP) AND ITS LEADERSHIP

Soon after independence, the constitutional revolution sought to build up a new social order with dynamic changes in the Indian society through democratic means. Democratically elected governments were left with the responsibility to achieve the unfinished agenda of social revolution or social democracy as emphasized by constitution's architect Ambedkar in his last speech in the Constituent Assembly. Today it is a fact that Bahujan Samaj Party with a firmly deep ideological foundation of Mahatma Phule, Periyar, Narayan Guru and Babasaheb Ambedkar, is a socio-political power at national level and has occupied a central place in the Indian Politics. Undeniably, this journey is of a super strategy masterminded by BSP leadership. The Bahujan Samaj Party has become the symbol of self-respect for Dalits, Backwards and Minorities in the country.

The ground work done by Kanshi Ram through BAMCEF, DS-4 and Media- 'The Oppressed Indian', 'Bahujan Times', 'Bahujan Sangathak' etc, gave him substantial mass base to launch a full-fledged political party. Hence, Bahujan Samaj Party was launched on 14th April 1984 on Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar's 83rd birth anniversary.⁶⁴ The BSP is the political expression of the changing socio-political context of Uttar Pradesh. In contrast to the other Dalit organizations, its formation appears "deliberate and not reactive".⁶⁵ Emerging almost twenty years after Kanshi Ram's resignation from the government job. It has

¹²⁰ V. Kumar, *India's Roaring Revolution: Dalit Assertion and New Horizon*, Gagandeep Publication, Delhi, 2006, p. 121.

consistently refused a reactive imitational stance and a reformatory agitation as well. It is in fact, a political organization with an aim to capture power and use it to elevate the problems of the Bahujan Samaj.

In adopting the motive of Bahujan for mobilizational purposes, Kanshi Ram was prompted by both tactical and ideological considerations. Kanchan Chandra argues that "the Scheduled Caste population [alone] was not sufficient to put a new political party in power in any state in India in 1984 [the year of the BSP's birth], with three exceptions: Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. Even in these states, the Scheduled Caste population was large enough not necessarily to assure victory, but to barely permit a political party with Scheduled Caste support to cross the minimum threshold necessary.¹²¹ Given this limitation, it made strategic sense for Kanshi Ram to "enlarge the definition of his 'own' ethnic category."¹²² Winning elections, therefore, was an important consideration that guided Kanshi Ram's choice of name for his party.¹²³

The theme of the 'Bahujan Samaj' also allowed the BSP to communicate its social justice agenda to its target constituency. Kanshi Ram would often employ a discourse of "85 percent versus 15 percent," where 85 percent represented the Bahujan, and 15 percent the higher caste groups. Though imprecise, these figures were effective in conveying the injustice that the BSP saw as characterizing the Indian political situation, in which the minority ruled over, oppressed and exploited the majority. The discourse of injustice, and the pressing need to quash it, took on a peculiar potency when symbolized through the simple "metaphor of the ball-pen, repeated endlessly by Kanshi Ram on platforms or before the cameras," the top of

¹²¹ Ibid. pp.147-148.

¹²² Ibid. p. 149.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 149

the pen representing the upper castes who, despite being in a minority, rule the country, with the pen itself representing "the remaining 85% who have to become aware of their fate and of their numerical strength."¹²⁴

This majoritarian and polarizing discourse was a remarkable feature of the BSP's early politics, with Kanshi Ram often beginning "his public speeches with an injunction to the upper castes.... [Present] to leave the meeting place"¹²⁵. This discourse also informed the slogans engineered by the BSP in the 1980s and early 1990s: *Jiski Jitni sankhya bhari, uski utni bhagidari* (For everyone's representation/participation should be on the basis of his numbers or according to percentage of population); and *85 par 15 ka raj nahi chalega nahi chalega* (The rule of 15 percent over 85 percent cannot last, cannot last).¹²⁶

According to Kanshi Ram, the BSP doesn't regard any difference between the philosophy of Ambedkar, the emancipation of the Dalits and the ideals enshrined in the constitution. But, this principle is seemingly, not fully realised in practice when Kanshi Ram first took outside support of the Bahartiya Janta Party (BJP) to install Ms. Mayawati as the Chief Minister in Uttar Pradesh and since then, this process of alliance formation and alliance diversion, where by the BSP not only entered into coalitions with both the Congress and the BJP, but also gave party tickets to the upper castes, notably, Brahmans, in order to strengthen its electoral base.

¹²⁴ C. Jaf&elot, *India's Silent Revolution: The Rise of Low Castes in North Indian Politics*, Ferment Black, New Delhi, 2003, pp. 396-97.

¹²⁵ Ibid. p. 397.

¹²⁶ V. Kumar, *India's Roaring Revolution: Dalit Assertion and New Horizon*, Gagandeep Publication, Delhi, 2006, p.131.

BHIM ARMY: BHARAT EKTA MISSION

When the oppressive oppression of the Dalit society was at a peak in Maharashtra between 1967 and 1970. Maharashtra's Dalit writer Namdev Dhasal, Raja Dhale, and J.V. Pawar, influenced by America's Black Panther movement, started the organization called Dalit Panther in Maharashtra. The people of the Dalit Panther used to reach where the reports of racial harassment reached them. The Dalit Panther organization did not believe in the demonstration - this organization believed in action only. In many parts of Maharashtra, the Dalit Panther organization has spread its legs. Wherever the Dalit Panther went, the people of the downtrodden society got the weapon to fight a consensus or racial harassment and people went on joining this organization. Between 1972 and 1979, there was a huge difference of Dalit Panther on Dalit society, which gradually became so high among the upper castes that people in the areas influenced by Dalit Panther were afraid and frightened by oppressing Dalits.

In the current round, Bhim Army organization of North India seems to be struggling like Dalit Panther. Over the country, high-caste people are constantly being tortured on Dalits. The Dalit youth of the Bhim Army organization is coming out against the flag of protest. This is a significant change in the country but the question arises that how the oppression of Dalits should stop and what Bhim Army organization can do for it? It must think seriously about this, then this organization has no significance, otherwise, this organization will be a mere means of living for some people.¹²⁷

¹²⁷ Dalit Dasatak (Magazine), Delhi, Jan. 2019. p.1

The Bhim Army organization was established on July 21, 2015, in Saharanpur district of Uttar Pradesh, founder, and national president Chandrashekhar Azad Ravan, who is a lawyer by profession. His education took place in Dehradun. In the Delhi based Jantar-Mantar movement, I asked Chandrashekhar Azad in an interview, Where did you get inspiration to fight with casteism, touching and tyranny, Chandrashekhar told that when we came to Saharanpur by getting education, then in the same way in small villages I saw the untouchables we read in books and they used to question his uncle Satish Kumar on this subject, who was Dr. Ambedkar and Kanshiram's activity and struggles were closely watched And used to go on campaigns for Bamef's promotion. Uncle Satish Kumar used to make daily aware of incidents of casteism, the inhumanity of Hindu religion and Dalit oppression in the evening meetings in the village. Chandrashekhar Azad was very impressed with his uncle and after that, he started fighting against Dalit atrocities.

The first incident of Dalit harassment was done by the Rajput students who beat the Dalit student after drinking the water of the Dalit student before a Rajput student at A. H. D. Inter College, Chhotmalpur in Saharanpur. Bhim Army founder Chandrashekhar found information of this incident; he collected hundreds of Dalit youth from the organization and stirred up the agitation against the oppression of the Dalit student, which resulted in the written apology that the college administration had to give back the autonomy of the Dalit students.¹²⁸

The second incident, some of the upper castes in the village Bhatauli of Saharanpur gave a soiled ship on the statue of Saint Ravidas and dissolved the statue of Saint Ravidas. The Dalits of the village called Chandrashekhar Azad in the village and conveyed the

¹²⁸ N. Singh, *Shabeerpur: Jalte Ghar-Sulgate sawal* (Hindi Book), Das Publication, New Delhi 2018, p.89.

incident. After that, thousands of members of the Bhim Army raised a big movement against the upper castes and the administration. As a result, the district administration had to set up a new statue of Saint Ravidas there. Outside the village, the upper castes had written on a government board, “The Great Rajput”, then there Chandrashekhar Azad placed his board on which, “the Great Chamar.” The upper castes did not like it, soot ship. Due to which there was a large movement of Dalits due to the result, “the Great Rajput” the Police Administration removed Board because it had written on the government board but “the Great Chamar’ was holding the board.¹²⁹

The objective of the Bhim Army organization was to provide the society with a conscious society and to bring the ideology of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar to the masses. Members of the Bhim Army used to collect donations for the marriage of poor Dalit girls by visiting village-village. The education of the children of the Dalit society in the village has been affected due to mid-day meal, so people of Bhim Army used to go to village-village and give free education to the Dalit children who were studying at primary school in the night and At the same time, the work of linking the Dalit youth of the village was also linked to the Bhim Army organization.¹³⁰

Given the commendable work of the Bhim Army, the people of the Dalit society of Saharanpur are seen with great respect. After the ethnic conflict in Shabeerpur of Saharanpur in June 2017, a special organization named after the Dalit police constituted in Ramnagar, came out against the country whose name is “Bhim Army”, Bhim Army's full name is Bharat Ekta Mission Bhim Army. 6 years ago it was decided to set up Bhim Army keeping in mind

¹²⁹ Ibid p.90.

¹³⁰ Dalit Dasatak (Magzine), Delhi, March 2018.

the cases of oppression of Dalits, today this organization has become the first favorite organization of Dalit youth of the country and abroad.

Bhim Army founder Chandrashekhar Azad said in an interview that, “our organization believes in the constitution of India, believes in non-violent movement while fulfilling the traditions of democracy, but Bhim Army is fully committed to preventing Dalit oppression.” when it comes to Ravana Asked why you write your name Ravana? Therefore, he told that Ravana was a brave warrior and a mighty warrior.

Bhim Army organization has been continuously struggling against the tyranny of Dalits since 2015 But Bhim Army was identified on May 5, 2017, in protest against the horrific racist violence in Shabeerpur village of Saharanpur on May 9, 2017, after a violent clash with Bhim Army and police. On the 5th of May 2017, it was as simple as the other days of summer that happened in the morning of Shabeerpur village, to work for their livelihood every day, from the Dalit settlement of the village. Rajput people were celebrating the birth anniversary of Maharana Pratap in the M. R. M Inter College, Shimlana of Saharanpur, but at around 10:00 in the morning, thousands of Rajput members of the Shabeerpur district were broken up as attackers.¹³¹ Shabeerpur that in this racist violence, around 56 houses, cattle, grains, and livestock and animals and all the valuables of the house were burnt to ashes. In this racist violence, Rajputs murdered a Dalit youth and the son of village Shabeerpur, Shabeerpur left Rajputs in a dead state whose treatment was treated at Jolly Grant Hospital Dehradun for 3 months. In this racist violence, nearly two dozen women and the men were injured.¹³²

¹³¹ Khilafat Buletin (weekly magazine, Hindi), Dewband, Tuesday 9-15 2017, p.3

¹³² Umar Ujala, Merath, 6 may 2017 (News Paper)

Due to the incident of Shabeerpur, entire Uttar Pradesh, Haryana including Delhi, Punjab, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand, Dalit organizations, provided financial and mental assistance to the oppressed Dalits of Shabeerpur. All political parties except the BJP party of this racist incident strongly condemned. BSP's national president, sister Kumari Mayawati, sent a team to Shabeerpur village for financial support and help in one way, to the afflicted Dalit families.¹³³

Bhim Army and other group organizations had organized a Dalit panchayat on Ravidas hostel, located at Dehradun Road in protest against the casteist violence in Sabbirpur on May 5, 2017, but from the morning on the Ravidas hostel, the police administration had tightened the guard, due to which the Bhim Army had to cancel this meeting. After that, a letter was issued by the district administration by the Bhim Army on May 9, 2017 to the Maha Panchayat in Gandhi Park, as well as the administration was warned that if the action of the Shabeerpur convicts was not immediately taken, then the Dalit youth should get off the road Doing will show aggression. Whom whose responsibility I shall be responsible for the administration of the government. When people of Dalit organizations started gathering at Gandhi Park on May 9, 2017, the police lathi-charged on Dalit youths. Dozens of people including Bhim Army leader Chandrashekhar and district president Kamal Singh Walia were taken into police custody and Naming Chandrasekhar has filed a lawsuit against nearly 300 Dalit youths.¹³⁴

Bhim Army appealed to organizations of Dalit society living in the country that through the administration sent a memorandum to the President's Prime Minister and Chief

¹³³ <http://www.natioanaldastak.com>

¹³⁴ Umar Ujala, Dainik, Merath, 10 May 2017, p-2

Ministers and asked strict action against the culprits of Shabeerpur incident. In addition to reaching lakhs of people on the Jantar-Mantar of Delhi on May 21, 2017, in protest against the Shabeerpur incident, appearing in the Constitution, against the Uttar Pradesh and the Central Government. On 21 May 2017, about 500,000 people participated in the rally at Jantar-Mantar of Bhim Army. The most widely read popular magazine in the Dalit society, Dalit Knock Monthly printed the photo of the rally on his June cover page and gave captions to, “Neela Janta Jantar-Mantar.” He reported this rally in his editorial, which follows- “Against Dalit atrocities in Shabeerpur of Saharanpur on May 21, 2017, Jantar-Mantar was able to see a big crowd of Dalit youth. The sky above was blue and Jantar Mantar on earth. Look where blue. The crowd of millions and the most important thing was that 99 percent of Dalit youth in the crowd were all Ambedkarites.¹³⁵ The group of youth from all over the country reached Jantar Mantar in Delhi on May 21, 2017, to support Chandra Shekhar Ravana, chairman of Bhim Army, who took the iron from the Rajputs of Shabeerpur village of Saharanpur.”

This movement shocked the Dalit youth across the country, in fact, through this movement, it also showed that both the understanding and strength of the followers of Ambedkar are increasing. Dalit youth is ready to fight the war against atrocities due to Dalit youth, not dependent on the leader of any political party. They have told that “they want to be organized, they are India's only dreams of Babasaheb and Kashiram and they should have just one chance. This opportunity is also the right of these youths.”¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Dalit Dasatak (Magzine), Delhi, June 2017. p-1

¹³⁶ Ibid p.5

On June 8, 2017, Chandrashekhar was arrested from Dalhousie in Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh. By late evening, the police took him to Saharanpur and presented in court, the court sent Chandrasekhar to jail in judicial custody.¹³⁷ As soon as Saharanpur received the information of Chandrashekhar's arrest in Saharanpur, Saharanpur district administration completely shut down the internet service in the district. In the protest against the Shabeerpur incident, on May 9, 2017, after the battle, Chandrashekhar had ruled 19. In which 14 cases were of the same stream, members of Bhim Army fought the battle and merged these 14 cases, in a lawsuit Saharanpur District Court and in four suits, they got bail from the Allahabad High Court. The way to get Chandra Shekhar out of jail was cleared, but as soon as his papers of Saharanpur reached the Saharanpur Police, the police here gave the Rasuka to Chandrasekhar at the behest of the government.¹³⁸

Bhim Army organization is continuously developing for the downtrodden society and the widespread public support of Dalit society is getting. There are 30000 Dalit youth members in the Saharanpur district of Bhim Army, between the ages of 18 and 30. As Chandrasekhar said in an interview given to Aaj Tak news channel that his organization is working, fast in order to sensitize the Dalit society in Uttar Pradesh Uttarakhand, Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh and Bhim Army organization will work for the upliftment of Dalit society in all states.

Bhim Army founder Chandrasekhar Azad was released from jail by the Uttar Pradesh government on September 14, 2018, at 2:42 pm. Azad was made on 2 November 2017 under which he had been in jail for 464 days and his sentence was to be completed on November 1, 2018, but the Uttar Pradesh Government released him from jail 48 days earlier. Whatever the

¹³⁷ Amar Ujala, Dainik, Merath, 9 June 2017, p-1,11

¹³⁸ Ambedkar In India, Monthly (Magzine), Lucknow, August 2017

reason the government has been with, the Uttar Pradesh government and the central government had to file their reply in the case of Chandrasekhar Azad and there was no specific reason for the government to impose rasa on them, so before the punishment was completed Chandrasekhar released from jail.¹³⁹

The strong reaction of the Bhim Army to protest against the heinous incident of communal violence in Shabeerpur has proved that the Dalits have now completely woken up and now against the oppression, there are no flags and poles.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF DALIT PANTHER MOVEMENT AND BHIM ARMY MOVEMENT UTTER PRADESH

Dalit movement has eminence presence in Uttar Pradesh since few decades mainly after the emergence of Dalit Panther and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). Dalit Panther movement was underway with the aim to counter everyday caste discrimination and violence in the same manner whereas BSP was focused to deal with the issues of caste discrimination and violence by democratic agitation and political power and to ensure social justice. However, a strong presence of BSP has contributed significantly in the development of Dalits and to deal with their everyday discrimination and exclusion but still, Dalits are experiencing caste violence at large extent in UP. Despite the fact that larger Dalit movement of Uttar Pradesh is aim to achieve equality and emancipate against prolonged caste discrimination but even after four decades of the presence of Dalit Panther movement and BSP's several time in power, Dalits are still experiencing caste violence. Since Dalit Panther movement has almost faded in UP and BSP's focus is to deal with Dalit issues through only political means has triggered

¹³⁹.N Singh, Shabeerpur: Jalte Ghar-Sulgate sawal (Hindi Book), Das Publication, New Delhi 2018, p.180.

emergence of Bhim Army which uses different means to deal with the issues of Dalits and caste discrimination such as direct help of Dalit victims by providing them legal support and monetary assistance mass support . Therefore, this paper tries to examine the emergence and significance of Bhim Army in contemporary Dalit movement in the UP and how its strategies are different from Dalit panther to deal with the issues of Dalit.

Drawing from ethnographic research with Bhim Army and archival work about Dalit Panther movement, this study argues that Dalit movement in UP has shifted from traditional means to the idea of radical changes and direct action to fight against caste discrimination, violence, and exclusion. It also suggest that Dalit panther's approach to fight against caste inequality and exclusion was to retaliate in same manner as discrimination and violence occurs and can be considered as a radical organization whereas Bhim Army is using Babasaheb Ambedkar's philosophy of mass movement and dalit mobilization for the right griping providing support in financial and legal term to the victim of caste violence and exclusion and also extend its financial support for needy people of Dalit community.

Dalits emerged as one of the important vocal section of India society in independent India. Dalit as a class and force rooted in strong ideological structure, which rooted in Phule-Ambedkar ideas. This study is an attempt to capture the militant version of Dalit movement by focusing on history of Dalit Panther Movement took birth in Maharashtra, which subsequently inspired young generation of Dalits. This study also attempts to capture the impact of the Bhim Army on politics of Utter Pradesh recent year running Government.

Emergence of Dalit extremism in the form of Bhim Army and aggressive assertion of for human rights captured the attention of public and academia. While the Dalit Panther Movement created a literary consciousness among Dalits, its manifestation could be seen in the contemporary times. Hence, this study attempts to capture the historical roots of Dalit extremism. Dalit Panther Movement brought about psychological revolution among the lower and marginalized section of India and had significant impact upon assertion and mobilization of Dalit and Dalit politics.

CHAPTER: V

TITLE OF CHAPTER:

CONCLUSION

ABSTRACT OF CHAPTER:

This chapter proposes conclusion and some of the brief findings of this study. Dalit Panther Movement has played a significant role in popularization of the concept of Dalit as a political and sociological category. DPM exercised a significant impact on the politics of Dalit movement all over India in general and north India in particular. The assertion and awareness generated by DPM has transformed into BSP movement in Utter Pradesh.

CHAPTER-V

CONCLUSION

Dalit Panther Movement has played a significant role in popularization of the concept of Dalit as a political and sociological category. This movement also shows a departure from stigmatised identity to assertive identity for Dalits. It was due to Dalit Panther Movement, the conceptual category of Dalit has acquired significant degree of acceptance in both public discourse and academic domain. It provides an umbrella conceptual term to represent the oppressed in general and former untouchable communities of India in particular.

The linguistic terminology for representing any community plays a crucial role in identity politics. This terminology provides respect to some communities and humiliation to some other. So far as the representative signifiers used for representing the social mass belong to untouchable communities in India is concern often degraded terminology was used to perpetuate their subordination at the level of social relationship. Attempt was being made by intellectual and reforms to provide respectable identity for Dalits. But such an attempt was unable to bring about significant relief and confidence to untouchable communities in India. Emergence of the word Dalit from the early 1970s along with militant movement Dalit Panther brought about significant popularity to the word Dalit as conceptual signifier to the multiple communist subjected to untouchable practices and constitutionally referred to as scheduled castes.

The chapter number two of this study attempts to construct a linguistic history of the word Dalits and various aspects related to its emergence. It is a apparent fact that the word Dalit had long history and had its origin in the Phule-Ambedkar discourse of representing the life world of untouchable communities in India. However, the word never gains popularity before emergence of Dalit Panther Movement. It is the panther movement that made the word Dalit popular for representing the degraded conditions of untouchable communities at one level and assertive tone of untouchable communities at another level against injustice doe to them by the exploited sections of Indian society.

Psychological militancy of Dalits has always been existed for the miserable conditions bestowed upon the by the oppressive forces of Indian society. The degree of psychological militancy has gone up during the British colonial rule. This trend was visible in rejection of dominant Hindu religious practices by Dalit reforms. The Adi movement in Punjab, Utter Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh shows the fact that Dalit movement and reforms never scared of rejecting the hegemonic religious sanctions imposed upon them. The Ambedkarite movement had carry forwarded this movement by the way of providing constitutional protection and morality at one level and rejection of Hinduism and conversion to Buddhism at another level. This psychological militancy was gradually transformed to physical militancy by the early 1970s.

The third chapter of this study document the background from which the Dalit Panther Movement emerged in Maharashtra and evolution of the movement as one of the prominent movements by Dalits even though it had shot life span. The material factors such as increase in atrocities against Dalits, lack of employment opportunities, education, economic sources, and continued oppression by upper class/caste Hindus created a context

for emergence of more aggressive Dalit movement. This material context was furthered by ideological factors. Maharashtra indeed happens to be the epicentre of Dalit politics from Phule to Ambedkar. The Phule-Ambedkar discourse was further carry forwarded by Marxist emphasis on mobilisation of the poor class for attacking the source of oppression and suppression. Hence Dalit panther movement is to some extent a convergence of Phule-Ambedkar approach for Dalit emancipation and Marxist focus on mobilisation or the poor.

As the Republican Party of India lost its relevance, the Dalit Panther Movement gained popularity in Maharashtra. The strategies of the Panther movement had two broad trends. Firstly, it unleashed an active mode of mass movement for representation of various issues that the Dalit community was subjected to in Maharashtra. It had mobilised large number of youth and conducted several marches for representation of issues to authorities. This strategy closely resembles the left wing model of mass mobilisation to launch peoples struggle. In fact the mobilisational politics of the Panther movement was very much influenced by the mobilisation style of communist party of India which perceives the assertion of oppressed need to be demonstrated for intimidating the oppressors.

The second method of assertion that the Dalit Panther Movement adopted was that of production of Dalit centric literature following the genre laid down by Dr. Ambedkar. In fact one of the significant contributions of the Dalit Panther Movement is that of literary production touching various themes of Dalit life. It had created a platform from where several poets, intellectual engaged in capturing the life of Dalits with the letters. This process resulted in emergence of Dalit literature as a distinctive genre which gradually significant popularity in only in Maharashtra but also in different parts of India where Dalit populations lives.

The apparent fact is that the Dalit Panther Movement even though seriously engaged in representation of Dalit issues, could not sustain for a long period of time. The chapter number three of this dissertation shows the reasons for its short life. One of the important reasons was this division within the Panther movement. In a short span of time, differences and factions within the movement emerged. Each faction has its own emphasis and model of Dalit emancipation. The fact is that due to ideological differences the Panther movement could not build sustained pressures on its intended enemies. As a result of this, the movement gradually lost its rigour and some of the leaders migrated to different political parties in search of political opportunities.

One of the important and unique factors is that the Dalit Panther Movement also had significant impact upon Dalit movement in different parts of India. The assertive degree of Dalit movement was indeed had gone up after the popularity of Dalit Panther Movement. Further research needs to be done further to capture the impact of the Panther movement in different parts of India. The fourth chapter of this study attempts to explore the impact of the Panther movement on Dalit movement in Uttar Pradesh. We do not claim that the impact is significant, but implicit forms of impact could be seen with the chain of events. The Panther movement was followed by establishment of DS4, Bahujan Samaj Party by Kanshi Ram and its further political popularity under the leadership of Mayawati. The link between rise of Dalit assertion and Dalit Panther Movement needs to be seriously probed further before arriving at any concrete generalisation.

We would honestly like to confess the fact that history of Dalit Panther Movement is a complex and vast topic. We have tried to capture its origin, context of origin, its material and

ideological evolution, emergence of fractions, strategies of the movement and finally politics of movement itself. Attempt has also been made to capture the presence of the Panther movement in Uttar Pradesh. In a way this study attempted to capture the history of the Dalit Panther Movement and its presence in Uttar Pradesh.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Murugkar, Lata (1991). *Dalit Panther Movement Maharashtra: A Sociological Appraisal*, Bombay Popular Prakashan, Bombay.
2. Kshirsagar, R. K. (2017). *Dalit Movement in India and Its Leaders* (Second Edition), Prints Publication Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.
3. O'hanlon, Rosalind, (1985) *Caste, Conflict and Ideology: Mahatma Jotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in Nineteenth-Century Western India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
4. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha,(2008) '*Mahan Kosh*', (Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature), Language Department, Patiala, Punjab.
5. Guru, Gopal (1993). *Dr. Ambedkar Concept of Political Power and the Question of Dalit Movement*, Dr, B.R. Ambedkar Trust, Hyderabad.
6. Omvet, Gail (1994). *Dalit and the Democratic Revolution, Dr. Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement in Colonial India*, Sage Publication, New Delhi.
7. Omvet, Gail (1995). *Dalit Vision: The Anti-Cast Movement and the construction of Indian identity*, Orient Longman, New Delhi.
8. Kumar, Vivek (2002). *Dalit leadership in India*, Kalpaz Publication, Delhi.
9. Jelliot, Elleanor, (1996), *From Untouchable to Dalit essay an Ambedkar movement*, Manohar, New Delhi.
10. Pawar, J.V. (2017). Co-founder, *DALIT PANTHER an Authoritative History*, the Marginalised Publication, New Delhi.
11. Pai, Sudha (2002). *Dalit Assertion and the Unfinished Democratic Revolution: The Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh*, Sage Publications Pvt. Ltd
12. Michael. S.M. (2007). *Dalit in Modern India: vision and values*, Sage Publication, New Delhi.

13. Karunyakara, Lella. (2018) *From Dalit to Pavitra Dalit: History of Dalit Identity*, Dalwis Publishers, Maharashtra.
14. Molesworth, J.T., '*A Dictionary, Marathi and English*', 2nd ed., rev. and enl. Bombay Education Society's Pres, Bombay, 1857, p.228, Digital Dictionaries of South Asia', <http://dsaluchicago.edu/dictionarie/Molesworth/>
15. Zelliott, Eleanor. Maintained, (1996) "Phule seems to have been the first to use the word dalit in connection with caste in the term dalitodhar (uplift of the depressed)", in her work, "*From Untouchable to Dalit*", Manohar, New Delhi, Second revised edition (reprinted 1998).
16. Jodhka, S. Surinder., (2013). *Caste: Oxford India Short Introductions*, Oxford University Press.
17. Jogdand P. G. (1999). *Dalit Movement in Maharashtra*, Kanak Publication, New Delhi.
18. Kumar, V. (2006). *Indias Roaring Revolution: Dalit Assertion and New Horizon*, Gagandeep Publication, Delhi.
19. Mody, Navroz (Jan 19, 1974). 'Atrocities on Dalit Panthers', *Economic and Political Weekly*, P- 44 – via JSTOR.
20. Kothari, Rajni (1970). *Caste in Indian Politics*, Orient Longman, Delhi.
21. Bandhopadhyay, Shekhar (1997). *Caste, Protest, and Identity in colonial India: The Namsudras of Bengal 1872-1947*, Curzon, London.
22. Basu, Swaraj (2003). *Dynamics of a caste movement, The Rajvanshis of North Bengal 1910-1947*, Manohar Publication, New Delhi.
23. Kumar, Raj (2011). *Dalit Personal Narratives Reading Caste, Nation and Identity*, Orient Blackswan.
24. Prasad, Chandra Bhan (2004). *Dalit Dairy, 1999-2003 Reflections on Aparitics in India*, Pondicherry, Navayana.

25. Rao, Anupama (2009). *The caste question Dalits and the politics of modern India*, Permanent Black, Delhi.
26. Shah, Ghanshyam (1990). *Social Movement A Review of Literature*, Sage Publication, New Delhi.
27. Ram, Nandu (1995). *Beyond Ambedkar: Essay on Dalits in India*, Har-Anand Publication, Delhi.
28. Sharma, Sanjay Prakash (2004). *Dalit Society Upliftment*, Mohit Publication, New Delhi.
29. Narayan, Badri (2009). *Fascinating Hindutva: Saffron Politics and Dalit Mobilisation*, Sage Publication, New Delhi.
30. Gooptu, Nandini (2006). *Swami Achhutanand and the Adi-Hindu Movement*, Critical Quest Publication, New Delhi.
31. Dirk, Nicholas (2001). *Caste of Mind: Colonialism and the making of Modern India*, Princeton, Permanent Black, New Delhi.
32. Singh, Buta (2004). *Dalit and Awakening in India*, Gyan Publication. Delhi.
33. Jefforlet, Christofar (1982). *Dr Ambedkar and untouchability fighting the Indian caste system*, Permanent Black.
34. Jelliot, Elleanoe (1996). *From Untouchable to Dalit: Essay an Ambedkar Movement*, Manohar, New Delhi.
35. Gupta, S. K. (1985). *The Scheduled caste in modern Indian Politics: Their emergence as a political power*, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi.
36. Jefforlet, Christofar (2003). *India's Silent Revolution: The Rise of the low caste in North Indian Politics*, Permanent Black, Delhi.
37. Kamle, J.R. (1979). *Rise and Awakening of Depressed Classes in India*, National Publishing House, New Delhi.

38. Varma, L.B. (2000). *What and How of Oral History: Transforming of Past into History*, Indian Historical Review, Delhi.
39. Rao, Yagati Chinna (2007). *Writing Dalit History and other Essay*, Kanishka, New Delhi.
40. Singh, Manohar (1947). *The Depressed Classes: The Economics and Social Condition*, Hind Kitab. Ltd., Bombay.
41. Shah, Ghanshyam. (2001). *Dalit Identity and Politics: Cultural Subordination and the Dalit Challenge*, Vol.-2, Sage Publication, New Delhi.
42. Omvedt, Gail. (2004). *Ambedkar: Towards an Enlightened India*, Penguin Viking, New Delhi.
43. Lal, Shyam. (2008). *Ambedkar and Dalit Movement*, Rawat Publication, Delhi.
44. Omvedt, Gail (2012). *Understanding Caste from Buddha to Ambedkar and Beyond*, Orients Blackswan, New Delhi.
45. Rudolph, L. I. (1984). *The modernity of tradition: Political development in India*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
46. Patil, S. (1994). *Caste and class in Maharashtra*. In K.L. Sharma (ed.). *Caste and Class in India* (pp. 272). Jaipur: Rawat Publications.
47. Gooptu, N. (1993). *Caste and Labour: Untouchable Social Movements in Urban Uttar Pradesh*. In P. Robb (ed.), *Dalit Movements and the Meanings of Labour in India* (pp. 286-287). New Delhi: Oxford University Press, (quoted in Kumar, Opcit, p. 99-100).
48. Juergensmeyer, M. (1982). *Religion as Social Vision: The Movement against Untouchability in 20th Century Punjab*. Berkely: University of California Press.
49. Lynch, O.M. (1974). *The Politics of Untouchability: Social Mobility and Social Change in a City of India*. New Delhi: National Publishing House.

50. Kuber, W.N. (1991). *Ambedkar: A Critical Study*. New Delhi: Peoples Publishing House, p. 347. At the Mahad Conference Ambedkar declared "I will not die a Hindu.
51. Pai, S. (2001). *From Harijan to Dalits: Identity Formation, Political Consciousness and Electoral Mobilization of the Scheduled Castes in Uttar Pradesh*. In G. Shah (ed.), *Dalit Identity and Politics*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
52. Sen, B. (1962). *Evolution of Agrarian Reforms in India*. Delhi:Peoples Publishing House.
53. Singh, R. (1978). *Peasant Movement in Uttar Pradesh: A Study in the Politics of Land Control in Basti District*. In M. S. A. Rao (ed.). *Social Movements in India*. Delhi: Manohar Publication.
54. Kumar, A. (2004). '*A Comparative Study of the Black Panthers and Dalit Panthers*', unpublished PhD thesis. New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru University.
55. Lynch, O. (1969). *The Politics of Untouchability: Social Mobility and Change in a City in India*. New York: Columbia University Press.
56. Singh, Har Mohinder, Kaushik, K.C., Sharma, S.R.,(2008). *History and Development of Dalit Leadership in India: Kanshi Ram The Messiah Of Dalits*, Vol.13, Sarup & Sons Publication, New Delhi.

संदर्भ-ग्रन्थ सूची

- ओमवेट, गेल (2006), दलित और प्रजातांत्रिक क्रांति, रावत पब्लिकेशंस, नई दिल्ली।
- वाल्मीकी, प्रकाश ओम, (2015) दलित साहित्य का सौंदर्यशास्त्र, राधाकृष्ण, नई दिल्ली।
- सिंह, सतनाम (2014) चमार जाति का गौरवशाली इतिहास, सम्यक प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली।
- विजय, देवेश (2008) सांस्कृतिक इतिहास, एक तुलनात्मक सर्वेक्षण हिन्दी माध्यम कार्यान्वय निदेशालय, दिल्ली, दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय।
- ब्लॉक, मार्क, (2013) इतिहासकार का शिल्प, ग्रंथ शिल्पी
- कार, ई. एच., (2012) इतिहास क्या है? मैकमिलन पब्लिशर्स।
- लिबाले, डॉ० शरणकुमार (2017), दलित पैन्थर-भूमिका एवं आन्दोलन, वाणी पब्लिकेशन, नई दिल्ली।
- सिंह, डॉ० एन, (2018) शब्बीपुर, जलते घर-सुलगते सवाल, दास पब्लिकेशन, नई दिल्ली।
- नैमिशराय, मोहनदास (2013), भारतीय दलित आन्दोलन का इतिहास-4, राधाकृष्णन प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली।
- सिंह, महेन्द्रप्रसाद (2011), भारतीय शासन और राजनीति, ओटियट ब्लैकस्वांन, नई दिल्ली।
- कुमार, अजय (2015) दलित पैन्थर आंदोलन, गौतम बुक सेंटर, नई दिल्ली
- किशोर, राज (2008) दलित राजनीति की समस्याएं वाणी प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली।
- किशोर, राज (2008) हरिजन से दलित, वाणी प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली
- ओमवेट, गेल (2011) दलित दृष्टि, वाणी प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली।
- वर्मा, आर.पी. (2011) क्रान्तदर्शी युगपुरुष डॉ० अम्बेडकर, कांति पब्लिकेशन, नई दिल्ली।
- वर्मा, आर.पी. (2011) सुश्री मायावती का जीवन संघर्ष, कान्ति पब्लिकेशन, नई दिल्ली।

- भारती, रामविलास (2011) बीसवीं सदी में दलित समाज, अनामिका पब्लिकेशन प्रा0लि0, नई दिल्ली।
- खालसा, मदनमोहन सिंह — दलित आन्दोलन रावत प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली।
- मल, पूरण दलित संघर्ष और सामाजिक न्याय, आविष्कार पब्लिशर्स, जयपुर।
- चौधरी, उमाशंकर (2011) दलित विमर्श, कुछ मुद्दे कुछ सवाल, आधार प्रकाशन, पंचकूला हरियाणा।
- गौतम, एस0एस0 (2014) दलित उद्यमियों के संघर्ष और सफलता की कहानी, गौतम बुक सेंटर, दिल्ली।
- बद्रीनारायण, (2006) उपेक्षित समुदायों का आत्म इतिहास, वाणी प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली।
- प्रसाद, माता (2015) चमार जाति का इतिहास, उ0प्र0 के संदर्भ में, सम्यक प्रकाशन,
- नैमिषराय, दास मोहन (1857) की क्रांति में दलितों को योगदान, श्री नटराज प्रकाशन, दिल्ली।
- लाल, श्याल सामाजिक न्याय एवं दलित राजनीति, सबलाइम पब्लिकेशंस, जयपुर।
- विद्रोही, आर0एम0 (2004) दलित दस्तावेज, सम्यक प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली।
- 'स्नेही', चरण काली दलित विमर्श और हिन्दी दलित काव्य, न्यू रॉयल बुक कंपनी, लखनऊ।
- चंचरीक, लाल कन्हैया, (2008) आधुनिक भारत का दलित, आंदोलन, यूनिवर्सिटी पब्लिकेशन, नई दिल्ली,
- धर्मवीर, (2008) दलित चिंतन का विकास, अभिशप्त चिंतन से इतिहास चिंतन की ओर, वाणी प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली।
- प्रसाद, माता (1995) उत्तर प्रदेश की दलित जातियां, दिल्ली किताब घर, दिल्ली।
- प्रसार, माता (2010) भारत में दलित जागरण और उसके अग्रदूत, सम्यक प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली।
- प्रसाद, माता (2006) भारत में सामाजिक परिवर्तन के प्रश्न, सम्यक प्राकशन, दिल्ली।

- सिंह, सतनाम (1857) की क्रान्ति में दलितों का योगदान, सम्यक प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली।
- सिंह, के० आर० (1996) कांशीराम और बी०एस०पी० : दलित आंदोलन का वैचारिक आधार, ब्राह्मणवाद विरोध, कुशवाहा बुक डिस्ट्रीब्यूटर्स, इलाहाबाद।
- ढसाल, नामदेव— गोलपीठा

पत्र-पत्रिकायें-

- दलित दस्तक, मासिक, जून 2017, नई दिल्ली।
- दलित दस्तक, मासिक, जनवरी 2019, नई दिल्ली।
- दलित दस्तक, मासिक, मार्च 2018, नई दिल्ली।
- अम्बेडकर यंग इण्डिया, मासिक, अगस्त 2017 लखनऊ।
- अमर उजाला, दैनिक समाचार पत्र, मेरठ संस्करण।

APPENDIX-I

DALIT PANTHERS MANIFESTO

(BOMBAY, 1973)

THE REVOLUTIONARY STAND OF THE PANTHERS

Today we, the 'Dalit Panther' complete one year of our existence. Because of its clear revolutionary position, the 'Panthers' is growing in strength despite the strong resistance faced by it from many sides. It is bound to grow because it has recognized the revolutionary nature and aspiration of the masses with whose smiles and tears it has been bound up since its inception. During last year, motivated attempts have been made, especially in the far corners of Maharashtra, to create misunderstanding about our members and our activities. Misconceptions about the objective of the 'Panthers' about our commitment to total revolutionary and democratic struggle and about its policies are being spread. It has, therefore, become necessary clearly to put forward our position. Because of 'Panthers' no longer represent an emotional outburst of the Dalits. Instead, its character has changed into that of a political organization. Dr Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar always taught his followers to base their calculations about their political strategy on deep study of the political situation confronting them. It is necessary and indispensable for us to keep this ideal before us. Otherwise, we might mistake the back of tortoise for rock and may be drowned into time.

The present Congress knowledge rule is essentially a constitution of the old Hindu feudalism which kept the Dalit deprived of power, wealth and status for thousands of years. Therefore this Congress role cannot bring about social change. Under pressure of the masses it passed many laws but it cannot implement them. because the entire state machinery is dominated by the feudal interested the same hands who for thousands of year under religious

sanctions, controlled all the wealth and power today on most of the agricultural land, industrial, economic resources and all other instruments of power.

Therefore in spite of independence and the democratic set-ups, the problems of the Dalit remain unsolved. Untouchability has remained intact. It remains intact because the government did not do anything to eradicate it except passing some laws against it. To eradicate untouchability all the land will have to be redistributed. Age-old customs and scripture will have to be destroyed and new ideas included. The village organization the Social Organisation, people's attitude all these will have to be restructured to suit true democratic objectives. We must pay attention to the objective process of the power that impression the Dalit and which the succeeded in making him by his own hands.

The Hindu feudal rule can be a hundred time more ruthless today in oppressing the Dalits than it was in the Muslim period or the British period. Because this Hindu feudal rule has in its hands all the arteries of production, bureaucracy, judiciary, army and police forces in the safe of feudal, landlords, capitalist and religious leaders who stand behind and enable these instruments to thrive. Hence the problem of untouchability of the Dalits is no more one of mere slavery.

Untouchability is the most violent form of exploitation on the surface of the earth, which survives the ever-changing forms of the power structure. Today it is necessary to seek its soil, its root cause. If we understand them, we can definitely strike at the heart of this exploitation. The oppression of Dalits still exists despite the lives and work of our two great leaders- Jotiba Phule and Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar. It is not only alive, it is stronger. Hence unless we understand and give shape to the revolutionary content latent in the

downtrodden lives of the untouchables not a single individual seeking a social revolution would be able to remain alive in India.

Truly speaking the problem of Dalits or scheduled caste and tribes has become a broad problem, the Dalit is no longer merely an untouchable outside the village walls and the scriptures. He is untouchable and he is a Dalit but he is also a worker, a landless labourer, a proletarian. And unless we strengthen this growing revolutionary unity of the many with all our efforts, our existence has no future. The Dalit must accordingly accept the section of masses, the other revolutionary forces as part of his own movement. Only then will he be able to fight his enemies effectively. If this does not take place, we shall be condemned to a condition worse than slavery. We must develop and help this consciousness ripen every year, every month, day, hour and every moment. Then alone shall we possess the right to be called human beings at all.

It was for this that Dr. Ambedkar made us realize our humanity even in our state of beast-like exploitation. We should be successful, accept and understand a thing only after deep study, with a calm mind. We should not fall prey to slogans and outbursts. We must uproot the varna system, the caste system that enslaves us in its snares. The soil in which it survives and grows must be made infertile. We must understand that the caste nature of the term Dalit is breaking down.

WHAT HAS THE GOVERNMENT DONE FOR THE DALITS?

When India obtained Independence in 1947, the face of the administrative class changed. In the place of the kings, the prime minister came the 'peoples representative.' In the place of the Vedas, Upanishads, Manusmriti, and Gita, came the Constitution. On a blank page,

Independence, equality, brotherhood proliferated. From 1947 to 1974 is a long period of time. In these 27 years the Congress government, turning the freedom struggle into its own capital, has been ruling with a monopoly. Four five year plans. Five general election and three wars have gone by in this post-independence 'coming of age'. But the problems and needs of the Dalits, of the entire population, have been kept in a sort of deep freeze by the government.

Beyond preserving state power in its hands the government has done nothing else. On the contrary, by raising slogans of peoples rule, of socialism, 'garibi hatao' (eliminate poverty), and green revolution, it has crushed the Dalits, the landless, poor peasants and the working class under its feet. Gambling with their lives, tempting a handful amongst them, them government tried persistently to endanger their very existence. Using divisive tactics that split people along religious, caste and other lines, they endangered the very integrity of democracy.

In a democracy where men cannot exercise self-respect, well being and an importance to their lives, where men cannot develop his individuality and his society where those who with their blood wet every grain of the country's soil have to starve, where men have to forgo the land under their feet, the roof over their heads, where the upright have to break down and fall, where men have to see their mothers and sisters raped, in such a democracy, independence cannot be called true independence.

The struggle for independence was a struggle under the leadership of national capitalist, landlords, feudal, for their own benefit. It was not under the leadership of the people or of the Dalits. And Dr. Ambedkar had always said that it should be of the latter. That man called Gandhi in whose hands the leadership of the struggle rested, was deceitful,

cunning, an orthodox casteist and one who gave shelter to those who wanted to preserve class rule. Merely to preserve the unity of the Independence struggle, he flirted with problems of the Dalits, of untouchability, of the people. And that is why Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar called him, time and again, the enemy of the people, the villain of the nation. Babasaheb used to say, Gandhism means the preservation of religious authority, Gandhism means traditionalism, Gandhism means casteism, Gandhism means the preservation of traditional divisions of labour, Gandhism means incarnation, Gandhism means the holy cow, Gandhism means worship of images, Gandhism means an unscientific outlook.

The British gave up their rule because of the seamen's mutiny, the emergence of the Azad Hind Army, because of the struggle of the peasant's worker and Dalits. Because of these, they could no longer remain in power. Giving independence to Gandhi and Gandhians meant that the British wanted their own interests in the country to be looked after. This was the sort of borrowed independence we got. True independence is one that is snatched forcibly out of the hands of the enemy. One that is like bits thrown to a helpless beggar is no independence. In every house and every mind, the flame of true independence has to be ignited. This did not happen. That is why the Dalit, the worker, the landless and the poor peasant did not become free; the muck at the bottom of the pond remained where it was and, in fact, the government that retained the status quo kept on telling bigger and bigger lies to the Dalits.

WHAT HAVE OTHER PARTIES DONE FOR THE DALITS?

The left parties, having fought five elections, have grown bankrupt. They are now interested in moving from election to election. In 1967, the left parties united against the Congress. There was such opportunism in the united front that parties like the communists joined hands

with communalist parties such as Jan Sangh and Muslim League. In some states, Left united fronts came to power. But the absence of a clear cut programme made the anti-Congress stand useless. In the task of putting some alternative before the people, of solving the problems of the Dalits, of establishing the rule of the poor in the country, all the Left parties proved powerless. As a result, revolutionary peoples groups lost faith in electoral democracy. Uprising like Naxalbari took place and the spark spread around the country.

With the 1972 elections, things came back to square one. The Congress sat like a beast on the heads of the Dalits, of the people, famine struck, the very livelihoods of crores of people were uprooted, animals perished. Factories were shut down, workers faced unemployment, everyone was harassed by the mounting price rise.

The full eclipse that Congress rule represents for the life of the country has not yet terminated. But our Left parties, playing the politics of parliamentary seats, are still wasting time trying to get recognition from the Congress. Not one dares to turn revolutionary to take up the problems of the people. All those Left parties who do not possess political power have ignored questions of a social revolution. They have not to combine the class struggle with the struggle against untouchability, have not raised a voice against cultural and social domination along with economic exploitation.

Untouchability is nothing but an extremely poisonous sort of exploitation. This exploitative system was given birth to by Hindu feudalism and thrives for its benefit. The framework of untouchability is simply widening with the help of the army, the prisons, the legal system, and the soul (moksha, nirvana), Dalits have been deprived of earthly happiness, and have been looted of all they possess.

With the industrial revolution, machines came into being. Dalits were harnessed to the machines. But in the minds of the upper castes, feudalism survived. Because the owners of the machines could make a profit only by keeping the social structure intact. Only if a social revolution grips the minds of the Dalits, will there be a political revolution? If this takes place, the upper caste, the upper class, will lose the power it possesses. The stand that is taken by the Left parties prevents the spread of revolutionary ideology amongst the people. Because struggles really and truly meaningful to the Dalits were not conducted, Dalits have grown poorer. They have had to face innumerable atrocities.

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AND DALIT PANTHERS

The problems of the Dalits today, be they social, political or ethical, cannot be solved within the framework of religion and caste. This is what Dr. Babasaheb realized after his defeat in the 1952 general elections. A scientific outlook, class consciousness, and a completely atheistic approach and fighting for humanism alone could add an edge to the struggle of the Dalits. For this purpose, Dr. Ambedkar wanted to transfer the then-existing Scheduled Caste Federation (SCF) into a broad-based party. This could not happen during his lifetime. After his death, his 'followers' simply renamed SCF as the Republican Party started to pursue casteist politics. They never united all the Dalits and all the oppressed. Above all, they conducted the politics of a revolutionary community like the Dalits in a legalistic manner. The party got enmeshed in the web of votes, demands, select places for a handful of the Dalits and concessions. So the Dalit population scattered over the country, in many villages, remained politically where they were. The leadership of the party went into the hands of the middle class in the community. Intrigue, selfishness, and division became rife.

Destroying the revolutionary voice of Dr. Ambedkar, these contemptible leaders made capital out of his name and set up their beggars bowls. This is Dr. Ambedkar's party, they said. This Dr. Ambedkar's flag, they said and filled their coffers. And thus, except the satyagraha of the landless conducted under the Dadasaheb Gaekwad's leadership, the party did not take up any programme worth its name. The atrocities against Dalits grew endemic. In a period of one and a half years, 1,117 Dalits were murdered. The land grew barren, not a drop of water was available. Honour was violated, houses gutted, people killed. Along with the very question of living, physical indignities grew sharper. What did the Republican Party do? The party got caught in the net cast by a cunning ruling class leader like Yaswantrao Chavan. Its life perished. Unity vanished, impotence filled the party. If we put our future in the hands of such impotent leaders, we will forgo our very lives, and that is why today we have to announce with deep pain that we are no blood relatives of the Republican Party.

THE DALITS OF THE WORLD AND PANTHERS

Due to the hideous plot of American imperialism, the Third Dalit World, that is, oppressed nations and Dalit people are suffering. Even in America, a handful of reactionary whites are exploiting blacks. To meet the force of reaction and remove this exploitation, the Black Panther Movement grew. From the Black Panther, Black Power emerged. The fire of the struggles has thrown out sparks into the country. We claim a close relationship with this struggle. We have before our eyes the example of Vietnam, Cambodia, Africa and the like.

WHO IS A DALIT?

Members of scheduled caste and tribes, Neo-Buddhists, the working people, the landless and poor peasants, women and all those who are being exploited politically, economically and in the name of religion.

WHO ARE OUR FRIENDS?

1. Revolutionary parties set to break down the caste system and class rule. Left parties that are left in a true sense.
2. All other sections of society that are suffering due to economic and political oppression.

WHO ARE OUR ENEMIES?

1. Power, wealth, price.
2. Landlords, capitalists, money-lenders and their lackeys.
3. Those parties who indulge in religious or casteist politics, and the government which depends on them.

BURNING QUESTIONS BEFORE DALITS TODAY

1. Food, clothing, shelter
2. Employment, land, untouchability
3. Social and physical injustice

The struggle for the emancipation of the Dalits needs a complete revolution. Partial change is impossible. We do not want it either. We want a complete and total revolutionary change. Even if we want to move out of the present state of social degradation alone, we will have to exercise our power in economic, political, cultural fields as well. We will not be satisfied easily now. We do not want a little place in the brahmin alley. We want to rule the whole country. We are not looking at persons but at a system. Change of heart, liberal education, etc. Will not end our state of exploitation. When we gather a revolutionary mass, rouse the people, out of the struggle of this giant mass will come to the tidal wave of revolutions. Legalistic appeals, requests, demands for concessions, elections, satyagraha- out

of these, society will never change. Our ideas of social revolution and rebellion will be too strong for such paper-made vehicles of protest. They will sprout in the soil flower in the mind and then will come forward with full force with the help of steel-strong means.

DALIT PANTHER IS NOT A MERE SLOGAN

The way we look at our questions is the first step to solving them. Panthers will paralyzingly attack untouchability, casteism and economic exploitation. This social system and state have taken may a cruel path to convert us into slaves. Turned us long back into 'shudras'. In the present modern forms of slavery, there are mental chains of slavishness. We will try to break them. In our struggle, we will become free.

OUR PROGRAMMES:

1. More than 80 percent of India's population lives in the villages. Of those, landless peasants are 35 percent, and 33 percent of all landless agricultural labourers belong to a scheduled caste. (Those Dalit poor peasants who do own pieces of land, own a negligible amount). The question of landlessness of the Dalit peasants must be resolved.
2. Landless peasants must immediately get excess land through the application of the Land Ceiling Act. Waste and jungle land must likewise be distributed.
3. Feudal survivals are still to be found in the villages. Due to this, Dalits are cruelly oppressed and exploited. Landlords and rich peasants get social prestige along with wealth. Due to this, the atrocities on Dalits have grown endemic. This system has clamped itself on the Dalits chest, affecting every part of his life, from day to day living to the deeper economic questions. This system must be destroyed.
4. The wages of landless labourers must be increased.

5. Dalits must be allowed to draw water from public wells.
6. Dalits must live, not outside the village in a separate settlement, but in the village itself.
7. All means of production must belong to the Dalits.
8. Exploitation by private capital must cease.
9. Social, cultural and economic exploitation must remove and socialism must be built in India. Misleading nationalization must give way to a true introduction of socialism.
10. All Dalits must be assured of daily wages.
11. Unemployed Dalits must be given unemployment benefits.
12. All Dalits must be given free education, medical facilities, housing, and good quality cheap grains.
13. When giving employment in educational institutions, the requirements to declare one's caste and religion must be immediately removed.
14. The government must stop giving grants to religious institutions immediately and the wealth of religious places must be used for the benefit of Dalits.
15. Religious and casteist literature must be banned.
16. The division in the army along caste lines must be ended.
17. Black marketeers, hoarders, money-lenders and all those exploiting the people economically must be destroyed.
18. The prices of essential commodities must be refunded.

We will build the organization of workers, Dalits, landless, poor peasants through all city factories, in all the village. We will hit back against all injustices perpetrated on Dalits. We will well and truly destroy the caste and varna system that thrives on the people misery, which exploits the people and liberates the Dalits. The present legal system and state have turned all our dreams to dust. To eradicate all the injustice against the Dalits, they must

themselves become rulers. This is the people's democracy. Sympathizers and members of the Dalit Panthers be ready for the final struggle of Dalits.



Urkund Analysis Result

Analysed Document: Basant latest 21 05 19.docx (D52519035)
Submitted: 5/22/2019 7:28:00 AM
Submitted By: gbl.bbau@gmail.com
Significance: 1 %

Sources included in the report:

Dalit panthers.pdf (D50905786)
DALIT BOOK.docx (D44366893)

Instances where selected sources appear:

3