CHAPTER – VII
CONCLUSION

Social movements are an essential part of societies. While in some societies they are more pronounced and apparent. In others they are latent. The study of social movements is primarily a study of the social or cultural change of a social order as well as the values and norms. In this regard Herbert Blumer refers to social movements as “Collective Enterprises to Establish a new social orders of life. In brief a social movement, may be considered to be an organized attempt on the part of a section of society to bring about either partial or total change in society through collective mobilization based on an ideology”.

The social movements that have occurred in India under diverse social and cultural circumstances right from the Upanishads. For instance while in Indian society, it is characterized by the caste system. From Upanishads movement to Bhakti movement to the end of 17th century propagated against ideology of Varna of Caste Brahman domination and rituals which were the focal points of vedic religion. The Bhakti saints and poets of 13th to 17th century viz. Kabir, Tulasidas and Tukaram etc. though criticized Brahmanism in the name of Bhakti movement could not registered any remarkable positive results to bring out the social equality. For that matter various social movements in Indian society could not bring any social equality or eradication of the caste barriers and discrimination till the emergence of Phule’s ideology. Because, the Bhakti Saints and poets never confronted and refused the religious values which emphasized the caste hierarchy and the religious preeminence of the Brahmans. At the same time they never directly questioned or openly challenged the need for the position of Brahmans as ritual performing mediators between Hindus and their Gods.
Phule's protest movements was of a very different order that is more secular humanitarian and rational. He tried to transcend individual appeal and mobilize low caste community at large. He evoked concept of public interest in opposing existing Hindu beliefs and institutions which caused the inequality in socio-cultural and economic order. To build his ideal society, Phule, waged ideological war against Brahmanism and Brahmans domination in the field of education. In this regard, Phule, has given top priority for women education and education to low castes. Because, woman was the first depressed section of the society. So, to uplift the downtrodden women and men, he, started the first school for women folk. Apart from Education Institutions he started press, writing of books to propagate the inculcation about the social equality, human rights, equal opportunities in sharing the political economy in the form of employment to fight the brahmanical hegemony and monopoly in all walks of life of the Indian society.

"Jotirao Phule though contributed a lot of literature and rendered valuable service in establishing many social institutions which condemned caste barriers, socio-economic inequalities, obnoxious social values and buildup social ideology to bring out the secular humanitarian and rational society. But his role was neglected in Indian historiography by scholars, for various reasons which quite possible including caste prejudice and the dominance of scholarship by Brahmans. Another responsible factor for the neglect of Phule's service is that he happened to be a Shudra and conscious of Shudra identity which provoked him in protest against high caste hegemony and exploitation. Such neglected and untrodden areas need a greater attention at this juncture to study this problem."
The first chapter deals with the introduction in which the nature and character of historians of Indian society has been discussed in a manner that the Indian historian could not digest the development and progressive carrier of the low castes. That is why the Indian historians who belong to hegemonic culture and caste could not give any attention towards the contribution of low castes people, has been highlighted. In the second part the objectives of the study has been mentioned. In the third part the methodology in which the literature is used for the study has been listed. In the last part of the chapter the organization of study of the dissertation has been presented.

The second chapter deals with the existing castes of Maharashtra in 19th century. Among the Brahmans, Deshasthas were the largest group and were considered to be the native Brahmans of the Deccan, as their name indicates (desh “country”). They were the traditional priests and accountants in the village, and under Maratha rule, they had migrated to other parts of India where they held many administrative positions. Under Shivaji’s successors, however, their position was eclipsed by that of the Chitpavans or Konkanastha Brahmans. Who had migrated from their original home in the Konken to hold high administrative and feudatory positions throughout Maharashtra. Although at first, it was considered of low status by the Deshasthas, the Chitpavans evidenced a readiness to take to a wide variety of processions, including warfare and they were to continue their dominance under British rule by taking the lead in education and politics. Also included among Brahmans were a number of smaller castes such as the Karhadas and the Saraswats; the latter, originally from the South Konkan, had their claim to the title of “Brahman” refused recognition by the Chitpavan Peshwas regime.
The Prabhus (more fully, chandraseniya Kayastha Prabhus or CKPS) were the "writer" caste of Maharashtra, similar to the Kayasthas of northern India. Educationally they were even more advanced than the Brahmans and many had held administrative positions under Shivaji. However, the Brahmans considered them to be "Shudras" and the Peshwas repressed their efforts to perform high caste rituals, resulting in a longstanding and bitter feud between this caste and the Chitpavans. Their position was ambiguous: in terms of class and education they identified with the Brahman elite, but due to their rivalry with the Chitpavans over status issues, many took part in the non-Brahman movement (though primarily as journalists; few had the mass contacts that elite members of 'intermediate' castes did) and others were to provide important educated's backing for Ambedkar's movement.

Sonars, a well to-do goldsmith caste at the top of the artisan category, were also counted among "Advanced" castes in Bombay.

Vanis or Baniyas were the traditional merchant caste. Under colonial rule they included not only the native Vanis of Maharashtra, but even more importantly Gujars and Marwaris, immigrant merchant castes from Gujarat and Rajasthan.

The large "Intermediate" category included the major artisan and cultivating castes. Most prominent among these were the Maratha Kunbis, making up over a third of the total population in the Deccan and Konkan and nearly a fourth that in Vidarbha. They were, that us generally described as a 'dominant caste' cluster in India, and included an amorphous but stratified group with traditional occupations of cultivation and military service: the name kunbi means simply, "Peasant". Although there were few definably separate sub castes among them, they were by no mean a unified group. Under earlier
Hindu and Muslim rule, only the aristocracy was described as “Maratha”, the rest being simply peasant Kunbis. But the time, of British rule, a distinction between “Kunbi” and “Maratha” was still apparent and was recorded in all the Gazetter accounts; however, it was noted that these lines were often crossed, a rich Kunbi being able to marry into an accepted Maratha family. This had also been true in pre-British times. Distinctions were also made among “Marathas” properly. These were stratified, clearly in theory but very loosely in fact, into the five families, and ninety six families (Shahnav Kuli) of the aristocracy. Below these were a category of semilegitimate Marathas (described as Kabu, Akarmashe, and Kharchi), the offspring of concubine relationships, who were distinguished for wealth, and some generations of good marriage to abolish the stigma of illegitimacy and there was often an indistinct line between these and the pure Marathas.

In the twentieth century the identity of these various ill-defined categories began to merge: in Deccan “Kunbis” practically vanished into the “Maratha” caste, though distinctions continued to be made in the Konkan, and in Vidarbha were “Kunbis” were considered to represent the earlier population and “Marathas” more recent arrival with the troops of Shivaji and his successors. Thus the Maratha-Kunbis were a highly stratified caste cluster, centering among the peasant cultivators but reaching up to feudal aristocrats and rulers; however they showed a greater degree of unification and a greater absorptive power than similar “Peasant-warrior” caste clusters in other Indian regions.

Malis (gardeners) were traditionally vegetable and fruit growers, but otherwise were cultivators like the Maratha-Kunbis and with an equivalent status; under British rule they took most early to commercial and irrigated farming. (An early description of a village in Pune recorded only “Kunbis” among the peasants; many years later these appeared as
two castes, Marathas and Malis). Also a large group were the Dhangars (Shepherds) and the Kolis, traditionally a tribal group but many of whom were simply cultivators indistinguishable from Maratha-Kunbis, while others were included among tribal castes. The remainder of the “intermediate” category were mainly the traditional artisan castes: Shimpis (tailors), parits or Dhobis (washerman), Nhavis (barbers), Koshtis, Devangs and Salis (weavers), Lohars (ironsmiths), Sutars (carpenters) and Telis (oilpressers) who together made up about 5% of the population in the Deccan and Konkan and 10% in Vidarbha. Traditionally they had provided the various services for village cultivators, but by the period of colonial rule many had taken up other professions, most prominently cultivation.

The “Primitive” and “other Backward” castes were a very mixed cluster, mainly comprising the hill tribes who made up a high percentage of the population only in the districts of their concentration (Bhills in Dhulia, Gonds in parts of Vidarbha, and Mahadev Koils in Ahmednagar, Nasik and Thana). They were in many ways groups, in the process of becoming Scheduled Castes thus for example of the diverse Koil group in the Deccan nearly half were counted as “Intermediate” cultivators, the rest as “Primitive” or tribal. In many places during colonial rule such tribal groups became the most oppressed sections of the populations losing their lands to moneylenders and high caste landlords and providing a continual base for first messianic revolts and later communist organizing (e.g. Nazalbari, the region that gave birth to the Maoist “Naxalaite” movement, is a mainly tribal area).

Also included in the “Backward” category were Ramoshis, who often served villages as watchmen but were counted as a “Criminal tribe” by the British because of their proclivities to robbery.
Among the Depressed Classes or untouchables, the largest caste was that of the Mahars, a vigorous caste found in almost all Maharashtrian villages. They were among the almost important of traditional village servants, assisting the headmen and guarding the boundaries of the village (for which they were presumed to have a special traditional knowledge). They lived just outside the main village boundaries. In many ways, their claim to being the typical Maharashtrian caste was as good as that of the Marathas, and it was this caste that was to produce the most vigorous untouchable movement in India in the twentieth century. Mangs, Matangs, were traditionally rope-makers and musicians, while Chambhars were shoemakers and in many ways simply the lowest of the traditional village artisan caste Phule, in the nineteenth century, had never referred to untouchables as such, but used instead the phrase, Mahar-Mang.

In brief traditional caste elites, such as Brahmans, maintained and even increased their social and political power under the colonial regime, but they did so on a new basis, Brahmans, attempting to continue their role as carriers and definers of culture, had to incorporate new secular and ideological themes, and did so in the context of a very new type of challenge from below. The challengers, emerging from the non- Brahman. "Cultural revolutionary" movement, used themes of cultural revolt drawn from past tradition, but unlike those of the past, refused to be absorbed into the normal processes of Brahmanic Hinduism. Their challenge too, had an entirely new social basis, and to understand the class background of this new movement, it is crucial to look at the manner in which colonial rule acted upon the elements of traditional caste society to create the Bahujan Samaj itself.
The third chapter deals with family background, childhood, education and its influence on Phule. The existing land revenue system and charges in Land revenue helped the hegemonic culture to continue their control over the Indian society has been discussed. At the same time the existing educational system through the ages and changes in education with the arrival of East India Companies to India, opened the door and windows to the producing castes that is Shudras and Ati-Shudras has been discussed. The illiterate people of society specially Shudras and Ati-Shudras, how they were deceived by Brahmans through rituals also illustrated. To drive out such ignorance education has been considered as media by the ideology of Phule. So Phule prepared his wife viz. Savitribai as a teacher to impart education to the Shudras and Ati-Shudra girls. Along with above, the early reforms and the impact on Maratha Society are also discussed, as a part of changes in Maratha society in the 19th Century.

The fourth chapter deals with Jotria Phule and ideology of social revolution, in which Phule wanted drastic contrary to the existing society in terms of education, economy, socio-cultural values and agricultural knowledge to the rural poor that is Shudra and Ati-Shudra castes. This could be illustrated in his own demands. He wanted mass education rather than elite "Trickle down" education. But the British did not have the financial resources nor the desire to carry this out, and the very purpose of colonial education was to train the intermediary elite of bureaucrats which Phule opposed. He wanted British Civil Servants and investigatory commissions to heed the testimony of mass representatives rather than the elite; But he was more aware than any nationalist leader that however much the British pretended to be protectors of the peasants, in fact they were far removed from any sharing of interests or life with masses. He was asking an impossibility.
Phule wanted sweeping changes within village society itself. His primary goal was not simply to replace a Brahman-dominated bureaucracy with a non- Brahman bureaucracy and it was not simply to transfer power to the villages. Rather he wanted to revolutions village society. Not only should the position of Kulkami be abolished; also the Patil's and other watan posts should be opened up to all on the basis of merit through special training schools. Thus the entire balutedar system with its relation to traditional caste privileges and functions was to be destroyed along with the hereditary linking of caste and occupation. Similarly, the traditional, moral and social life of the masses had to be drastically reformed Phule urged a strong legislation of morality that would prohibit bigamy, child marriage and concealed prostitution in the form of Kolhatins and tamashas. The equality of women, as well as the equality of Untouchables, demands sweeping changes at the basis of society.

The basic goal was revolutionary change at the base of society. If the British could not carry this out, who would? Phule's other attempt to provide a solution was to look to the development of a non- Brahman elite who would implement such changes. Brahman positions, he argued, should be limited to their percentage of the population and non-Brahmans should be associated with the government at all levels. This was seen not as an end, but as a means. It was based on the belief that a non- Brahman educated elite would continue to have family and cultural ties with the masses would limit their ability and willingness to exploit them as Brahmans did. Yet Phule was aware that educated non-Brahmans of his day also tended to be coopted into accepting the caste hierarchy and "Brahmanic" values and that they were susceptible to nationalist appeals for unity with the peasant masses against the elite.
The fifth Chapter deals with the Phule's Contribution Satyashodhak Samaj and the low castes protest movement led by Phule. The formation of Satyashodhak Samaj, its objectives, propoganda and organization of the Satyashodhak Samaj has been illustrated. As a part of the programme, the low caste movement against the rituals practiced and reinforced on Shudras and Ati-Shudras such as marriage, birth ceremony, cradle ceremony, death ceremony. Phule observed and advocated that there is no need of priest for the above celebration. The priest of the society that is Brahman in the name of the above celebrations, he is booting, plundering the wealth of productive castes with out either his involvement or contribution or participation into the productive process.

At the same time, the new religion has been advocated by Phule to the low castes where the middle man interference does not figured. The list of the Gods and Goddesses was advocated, the performance and celebration of these festivals were been discussed as low caste movement.

Land tenure system and its impact on Maharashtra society and how it helped to boost up the hegemonic culture has been discussed. Under the above lend tenural system the peasant of Maharashtra day to day how alienated from the land due to indebtedness, the factors for the indebtedness were also discussed. The day to day pauparigation of the peasants of Maharashtra led to the unrest, which ultimately led to protest movement that is the Deccan riots.

Satyashoudhak Samaj campaign into the rural Maharashtra which slowly cultivated the literacy among the rural poor which ultimately removed the ignorance of the illiterate of the productive castes. The ultimately inculcated the rural poor to know themselves in terms of how they exploiting by the Shetji and Bhatijes of Maharashtra
society regarding high rate of Kowl, interest, legislation towards land mortgage so and so forth which led to rural unrest under this land litigation cases filed by Moneylenders in Ahamadanagar Court in 1851, 318 cases in 1861 and 689 cases in 1865. Where as in Pune 75 cases in 1851, 282 cases in 1861 and 632 cases in 1865.

The knowledge of agriculture and new methods of agriculture was insisted by Phule and requested the Government to introduce and impart the new methodology of agriculture to the peasants has been discussed. Phule’s demand for irrigational facilities which is quite needed to the peasants is also discussed.

The sixth Chapter deals with the impact of Phule’s ideology on Kerala, Tamilnadu, Coastal Andhra and erstwhile Hyderabad state has been discussed. After the death of Phule, Sahu continued the Satyashodhak Movement in Kolhapur State. He established many hostels for Shudra and Ati-Shudra students. He reserved 50% posts in Administration for Shudras and Ati-Shudras. He celebrated nearly 200 marriages on the ideology of Phule that it without the Brahman priests involvement. Narayanaguru’s contribution to uplife the Ezavas in respect of socio-cultural life, education, political movement to be on a part with dominating castes in Kerala. The creation of new religion that is one God and one religion and imparting education to lower castes which helps in assessing himself to be a human being. Periyar Ramaswamy Nayakar who witnessed degraded socio-economic and politico-cultural aspects of low caste people of the Tamilnadu felt that there is a need of cultural movement against the exploitation of the Brahmans in the name of God, rituals created by Brahmanism. As a part of this Periyar also experienced in congress how he not cared while he proposed certain resolutions regarding socio-economic, political share of the low castes so and so forth has been discussed. In
view of the above Periyar thought that it is better to start a "Self Respect Movement". The organization of self Respective Movement, its objectives and programmes has been discussed. Where as in coastal Andhra the influence and impact of Phule that is foundation of Adi-Andhra Maha Sabha in 1917 and its objectives and various conferences has been discussed. The objectives of this organization were up life of low caste in respect of education, social consciousness towards self respect, economic development have been discussed. The last part is on the impact on erstwhile Hyderabad state. The contribution of Bhagya Reddy Varma towards low caste people to improve their socio-economic, educational and cultural life.

In the last chapter, that is conclusion in which the gist of the dissertation has been illustrated, enough light is thrown on salient points.