



STRUGGLE OF NOMADIC AND DE-NOTIFIED TRIBES IN VAIJAPUR

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Vaijapur draught prone area. The land is not irrigated. Due to scarcity of the water, farmers opt for crops like cotton, Bajra, Maize corn. People live at the mercy of monsoon. Nomads are not exception to it. These nomads and denotified tribes are always out of the radius of Hindu Four Varna system. These people can only enter and exit at the permission of head of village. If ever they have to set up the tent, they have to seek the permission of village head. They have to visit him together with his domestic and pet animals. After three days, they have to move on after duly examined by village head. As they never settled at one place, they were always considered as pick-pockets, thieves and conmen or bluffers. They always have lack of human sensibilities in their lives. It hints at the different types of struggles in their lives i.e. economic, educational, social, religious, lack of food, basic amenities as well as want of fulfillment of fundamental needs etc. Conditions of women of these communities are rather pathetic and aggravated.

The structure of village system was based on barter system. Within this village view, the nomadic and denotified tribes are beyond the margin. They were the people living at the outskirts of the villages. They were categorized into different castes and sub-castes. Some of them were of little use for the villages. But they were also at the centre of atrocities. These people have to suffer at the hands of settled as well as upper caste people of the village. They survived such atrocities and hoped for the new dawn of peaceful and settled life. Present paper deals with the different types of struggles these nomadic and denotified tribes have faced.

Key Words: *Nomadic and Denotified Tribes, Struggle, Vaijapur, Caste*

Introduction:

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These people believed that they live the wretched life due to the evil deeds of last birth. The staunch blind faith in religion, its rituals and belief system have snatched the rational and common sense from them. They were made to suffer silently the injustices havoiced by upper castes. The question arises to whom they look at for justice. They did not have backbone or moral support system that could stand by them due to their moving existence. Being denotified by British masters, they are still considered as criminals, police, who are beckon of law and order, have behaved with them in atrocious ways which cannot be justified in any kind of legal and judicial framework. It is said who would save from the wrath of king and hailstones. These communities did not have fixed and regular medium of income for livelihood. They would supply the necessary things in barter system in the village for their survival. When no option was left, they have turned into dacoits for livelihood.

Nomadic and denotified tribes also lived the life of untouchables at the hands of Savarna people. They were treated at par with animals irrespective of their being human. Being stamped as criminals, they have to register their presence 4 times a day to the police



station. They were kept into barbed wired fences before independence. They were freed from barbed wired fences in independent India, but the conditions are not improved. People still look at them with disgust and suspicions. Nomadic tribes got some sense of self-existence and purpose of respectful life in the wake of Phule-Shahu-Ambedkar movement together with Dalit and Bahujans. They too sought for redemption of their wretched life through the mantra of Education.

Indian society differs in its makeup from various dimensions especially economic. It consists of highly rich and white collared elite class where as on the other side, the rotten, segregated downtrodden class fighting the two times bread and butter and survival who is looking at the elite class for mercy and favors. The resources of livelihood and respectful life are controlled by this rich and elite class. The economic drift and bi-polar existence has caused discomfort and turmoil in the lives of denotified and nomadic tribes. When they were not welcomed in mainstream life of society, they took refuge in the hills and forests. Living at the mercy of nature, sometimes they opt for thievery and dacoit life for earning bread and butter. This has proved them criminal and threat to the settled society. They were never looked at with sympathy. The unsettled nature and no fixed regular source of income has always played lamentable role in their life.

Life at the outskirts and boycotted by settled community has created its own societal norms and mores. They created their own traditions and rituals. They have their own festivals, celebrations and ceremonies to rejoice life even at the fringes. They organize fares and enjoy different rituals at this places. They have their own belief system. in other words, they have their own culture to live by and lead a kind of content life. But to fulfill these, sometimes they are trapped into the financial crisis as well as burdened under the loans of moneylenders. It initiated another vicious cycle of financial struggle in their lives.

Though education is panacea for upliftment and emancipation, the nomads and denotified tribes were far away from it. The work of Phule-Shahu and Ambedkar shown them the path as well as given strengthened their dreams for redemption of this life of burden and inhuman state. Their children fought against all kind of odds and got education.

Hunger was at the center of life of these communities. They were wandering in search for the fulfilment of fundamental needs. They were directionless leading a life of vagabonds. For satisfying the hunger, they have to move from place to place. Hunger has



trapped their life into a vicious pattern of atrocious life at the mercy of others. Vasudev Mulate has opined about the role of hunger in the wretched lives of Dalits. It can suffice the lives of nomads and denotified tribes also, “the question of Hunger is of terrible and furious nature in the lives of Dalits. Poor people suffer due to their hunger. It makes them dependent and helpless. Half the problems are outcome of hunger in their life. (Mulate)

These tribes have suffered more due to their hunger. It lasts forever. To satisfy the hunger, they have to eat the wasted or thrown food at the garbage. Sometimes they have to steal the food, survive the insults and punishments. They lived together with dogs, pigs and shared their food also. They would catch fish, crabs and face the life threatening situations. They have to include all kinds of crude and wild vegetable found in the jungle. They have to eat the breads made from left over flour on the ground in the grinding mills. All the nomads have struggled to satisfy their hunger.

Women are worst sufferers of this life. They were not treated with respect in their own community and society. They lived the life of insults and negligence. They were exploited physically and psychologically by the males of their own community as well as from the settled community. They were doubly marginalized. They were nowhere in the cognizance of male patriarchy. Women were just for labor work and to satisfy the needs of patriarchy. Her life was limited to hearth and child and labor work at par with male members of her community. she always has secondary status in and outside of the community.

To sum up, nature has made everyman equal with immense possibility to realize their potential. But human beings find out the ways of discrimination in the name of caste, religion, gender, race etc. Indian society too is not exception to it. The Varna System has divided human beings into many castes and sub-castes Shudra and denotified tribes considered untouchables. But these nomads consider, Dalits as untouchables. They too have created their hierarchy to prove their superiority. They are untouchables for upper caste people Nomads and Denotified tribes residing in Vaijapur region to face such kinds of struggles.



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