Chapter-3

Changing Political Context and Backward Castes

The long history of Telugu people experienced the rule of local dynasties, unified monarchies, conquered rulers, autocratic Zamindars, jagirdars, colonial authority, post-independent dominant castes\(^1\) rule. Economically and politically Telugu-speaking area was conquered by many dynasties but socially caste was not eradicated by any intervention. Even in the modern democratic era also, it is the caste, which is determining the direction of democracy rather than democracy deciding the direction of caste. Therefore, Caste is playing a significant role in the political process of Andhra Pradesh, like any other state in India, since beginning of the modern period. The foundations for the contemporary political domination of the upper castes in Andhra Pradesh were laid before the formation of Separate State. The then existing social economic structure discussed in the last chapter, social reform, anti-zamindari, anti-Jagirdari and anti-colonial movements legitimized the upper caste domination, such as Brahmins, Kammas, Reddies, Velamas, Kapus etc, after the formation of separate state as Andhra in 1953 and Andhra Pradesh in 1956. In this process of the upper caste domination, the backward castes are politically marginalized.

In order to locate the political marginalization of backward castes in the politics of Andhra Pradesh, it would be relevant here to discuss the political process of the State. Before Andhra Pradesh was constituted into a new State, its land area formed part of the Madras Presidency and the erstwhile Hyderabad State. With the sacrifice of Sri Potti Sriramulu on 1\(^{st}\) October 1953, eleven Telugu-speaking districts were first separated from the Composite State of Madras for carving out the new State of Andhra. Later, on the recommendations of the States Re-organization Commission, nine districts of the former princely Hyderabad

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\(^1\) Dominant caste means having substantial and better quality agricultural land control, ritual rank, numerical strength and willingness to use that strength to acquire or continue dominance.
State were merged with the Andhra State. The full-fledged State of Andhra Pradesh with twenty districts was born on 1\textsuperscript{st} November 1956. Later three more districts Vizianagaram, Ongole, and Ranga Reddy were created.

Three Regions: Andhra Pradesh came into being through a fusion of three regions with diverse political, economic and social background.

1) **Coastal Andhra Region** consists of nine districts, namely Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna, Gunture, Nellore and Prakasham (Ongole). The fertile delta areas formed by the three major rivers, the Godavari, the Krishna, and the Pennar, are located here. In addition to this, nature is bounteous with sufficient rainfall, alluvial soil and good climate. The important seaports are also very near to these districts and they help the development of internal and external trade. Large-scale irrigation, communication, rail, road and navigation facilities are better developed here than in other regions. In agricultural techniques and social and economic spheres these districts are better developed than the other parts of the State. It occupies about one-third area of the State. It has an average rainfall of 1,016 mm. Ground water resources are plenty and the water level is fairly high except in a few areas. Most of the paddy and other important food grains as well as commercial crops, like chillies and tobacco, cotton, sugar cane are grown in this area, which has come to be known as the "Granary of the south".

The construction of the major irrigational projects on Krishna and Godavari rivers during the mid 19\textsuperscript{th} century had greatly influenced the socio-economic conditions of Coastal Andhra region. After the development of irrigational facilities, agriculture became remunerative for peasant castes. The marketisation of agricultural surplus led to emergence of trading centers like Guntur, Vijayawada, Kakinada, and Rajahmundry. Since there was limitation for profit earning in agriculture, Kammas, the most populous cultivating and land owning caste and Reddys entered agro-based industries like rice mills, tobacco

Andhra State refers to Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema.
grading and sugar mills. Thus by the early twentieth century a new stratum of rich peasants had emerged in the deltas that was rapidly developing into an entrepreneurial commercial farmer-capitalist class. This class comprised of Kamma and Kapu/Reddy castes in this region. In addition to agricultural growth, there were other changes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that contributed to the development of this class: rural-urban migration, the spread of education and the development of caste consciousness.

Social Reform Movement in Andhra:

As a result of all these changes there was a reaction to colonial cultural intervention in the form of social reform. The introduction of new education was conceived as a major tool of western ideological influence. The growth of English education was nevertheless slow, but significant after mid-19th century and various higher secondary schools and colleges were established in Andhra by early 20th century. The growth of primary and secondary education also registered a satisfactory progress by this time. Besides, the new agrarian economy in Godavari delta region influenced middle peasant non-Brahmin castes in founding schools to impart education to their children. The growth of education witnessed the emergence of an urban-based middle class, which formed the main base of social reform movements and early public associations. In the initial stage the social reform movement confined to the Brahmins later to the non-Brahmin upper castes and then followed by the lower castes.

Veeresalingam has best represented the reform efforts after mid 19th century. He evinced a keen interest in the spread of scientific knowledge and growth of rational thinking. The central concern of his reform efforts was emancipation of woman from bondage and blind religious impositions. The areas of his major concentration were female education, bride price, child

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4 Ibid., P. 1376.
marriages and widow marriages. He founded a separate girl's school at Dhawaleswaaram and, established a journal, Vivekavardhani to advocate the cause of his reform efforts. But the reform efforts of Veeresalingam era were, however, operating under constraints. Most of these initiatives were soon confined to Brahminical households.

Spread of reform ideas was equally evident in many non-Brahmin castes unlike in 19th century. The emergence of social awareness among non-Brahmin caste groups was facilitated by three important developments viz., the break-up early Brahminical order under the colonial regime and the growth of agrarian economy in the post-anicut era in Godavari and Krishna delta regions; the spread of English education which, for non-Brahmin peasant castes, meant the end of Brahminical domination over the realm of knowledge and learning; the intense urge for social change in the light of new socio-economic and cultural values under the colonial regime and the emergence of social reform campaign. Non-Brahmins reactions and reform drives could be seen at three different levels. The denouncement of Brahminical superiority and the deconstruction of Brahminical religious texts. 19th century and early 20th century non-Brahmin intellectuals best represented the former. At the social level, their demand for equal share in education and employment was again constructed as reform drive, which was supposed to rectify the social erring of Brahminical maneuvers over a period of time. Political power was considered, as a remedy to achieve those ends and, it was believed by non-Brahminical undoing. The broad spectrum of activities of Justice Party truly reflects this politics of reform in early 20th century before independence.

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Leaders from different caste groups emerged on the social scene and shouldered the responsibility of effecting a change in the mental make-up of people belonging to their respective castes. For instance, the activities of people like Atmuri Lakshminarasimham and Darsi Chenchaiah (Vaisyas), Gopalkrishna Yachendra alias Kumara Yachama Naidu (Velama), Suryadevara Raghavaiah Choudari and Tripuraneni Ramaswami Choudari (Kamma), Chinta Raghunatha Reddy and C. R. Reddy (Reddy), Dommeti Venkata Reddy (Setti Balija) and Kondiparthy Veerabhadra Charyulu (Viswabrahmins) symbolized the multi-dimensional aspect of reform leadership.

The reform endeavors could not succeed in affecting a radical change in the minds of people with regard to issues like caste and untouchability. They failed in recognizing caste as an issue for reform, but helped the dominant castes to strengthen their hold.

_Anti-Zamindari Peasant Movement_: Since Coastal Andhra was part of the Madras Presidency, like any other regions in the country, this area too was subject to various changes effected by colonial government in socio-economic and cultural fields. New revenue policies, creation of a unified market, destruction of indigenous industry, artisans and handicrafts, super imposition of a more exploitative capitalist economy in post-1857, adverse effect on agriculture, traditional occupations, outbreak of 'man-made' famines with an unfailing periodicity witnessed structural imbalance in society and existence of Zamindari system in the agrarian relations. Consequent upon all these, resentment started building up among peasant and agrarian communities. The anti-zamindari struggles in the first half of the 20th century took place under the leadership of the Congress and the Communists. The rich coastal Andhra Kammas led these two political organizations and subsequently the issue of the backward is neglected.

Until the emergence of the Communist Party of India and its intrusion into the All India Kisan Sabha, the Congress served as the only spokesman of the
peasants. N.G. Ranga took it upon himself to stop the Communist inroads into the peasant struggles. From 1930s onwards, the peasant movement in Andhra ran on rival parallel lines, one section of the peasantry being led by N.G.Ranga under Congress banner and the other section being drawn into the Communist fold. The mass of Zamindari peasants, however, stood behind the Communists during struggles and shifted their allegiance to Congress during the elections.

The final result of these anti-zamindari struggles, i.e. the abolition of Zamindari system exposes the true nature of the entire movement as a whole. The beneficiaries were surely the non-Brahmin occupancy tenants than the OBC and Dalit agricultural laborers. The impact of the reform was subtle. Zamindari as a legal institution was gone but its abolition produced no miraculous transformation of the agrarian scene. Hundreds and thousands of acres still remained in the hands of Zamindaris as private lands. Large amount of money was paid to the Zamindars as compensation. No agricultural income tax existed. The Congress had made the Zamindars viable, though the system was abolished.

The Communists were working in the agricultural front with tactics of anti-imperial united bloc, making every joint action with the Congress. Their slogan of peasant unity meant drawing all peasant sections into the peasant and freedom struggle. In such a process there were all possibilities for the rich peasant, with their sheer number and position in the production relations to dominate the struggles and thus entering the ranks of the political parties that led the movement.

The Congress with its limited and reformist outlook based itself mainly on the landlord and rich peasant classes, but mobilized all the peasant section on their immediate grievance as a part of the freedom struggle. On the other hand, the Communists waged more militant struggles and widened their peasant base by including the poor peasant and agricultural laborers. But basically they too moved along reformist lines because the landowning peasants also dominated
CPI, and the issues on which agitations were conducted were mainly beneficial to these sections.

Thus in the name of peasant unity, the Communists and in the name of class-collaboration to fight against colonialism, the Congress sacrificed the interests of the lowest stratum of rural society, but achieved the demands of the substantial peasants. The political consequences of the anti-zamindari struggles, i.e., the abolition of the Zamindari system, were very far-reaching. By strengthening the principle of private property the reforms multiplied the number of independent land-owning peasants thereby creating a middle of the road stable rural society.

The leadership was basically in the hands of rich peasant castes under the hegemony of the nationalist bourgeois. This can be explained by the fact that these particular sections alone had some tactical and secure control over its resources, which gave them political leverage. They also created a situation in which their leadership and privileged position seemed natural.

(2) Rayalaseema Region consists of four districts, namely, Cuddapah, Kurnool, Anantapur and Chittor. It occupies 27.4 percent of the State's area and lies mostly at an altitude of 1,000 to 2,000 feet above the sea level. This is a typical dry tract of Andhra Pradesh situated in an unfavorable natural zone and has been declared as the famine zone of South India. The greatest part of the land in this area is rocky and sandy. The weather conditions are not favorable to agriculture, with the normal rainfall at only 533 mm. against a minimum rainfall of 762 mm required for the sustenance of crops. The region has thus a rainfall approximately half of the Circar districts. Not only is the rainfall meager and ill timed but also the fluctuations are wide from year to year. The sub-soil level is pretty deep and hence the chances of tapping sweet water springs in the black cotton soil areas are slender.

There are no big rivers and river projects, except for some minor irrigation projects constructed and based on rivulets and small rivers. Dry crops are grown, thanks to well and tank irrigation. Tanks are mostly concentrated in Anantapur district because of numerous hillocks. The entire land is mostly undulating and soil erosion common, resulting from downpours from Southeast monsoons. An encouraging factor is the presence in a substantial part of this region of deep black cotton soil, which has the highest moisture-retaining capacity.

Famine and drought are frequent once every five years and one or the other part of Rayalaseema is affected badly. This region has considerable forest resources and good irrigation potential. The region has rich mineral deposits, but it is in the clutches of the factionists.⁸

The history of this region, after the fall of Vijayanagar Empire, was one of the continuous warfare's and crucial area for the rival political groups like the Bahamanis, the Marathas, the Nizam, the Mysore Nawabs and the British. Thus Rayalassemia though economically a backward region, played a significant role in the past. The Nizam of Hyderabad ceded the districts of Kurnool, Cuddaph and Bellary to East- India Company in 1800. Soon after the acquisition of these districts the Company introduced the Ryotwari Settlement. Thomas Munro was the author of the Ryotwari settlements. During this period, the concentration of land ownership increased in the village. The political disturbances and military skirmishes to which the region was subjected to for such a long time also gave the people of this region the feeling of common identity which could be seen as reflected in the struggle for freedom against the foreign rule.⁹


There was good response for the struggle for independence in Rayalaseema to the major phases of the national movement like Swadeshi, Home Rule, Non-Co-operation, Civil Disobedience and Quit India Movements. Even the State's peoples' movement for constitutional rights carried on in the numerous Native States reflected in similar movement that occurred in Banaganapalle princely State, where the people opposed the twin evils of the British imperialism and the authoritarian regime of the Nawab. While contributing to the success of the movements at the national level, the people of this region also evolved and carried on the movements based on the local needs addressing themselves to the local problems. This provides an interesting scenario explaining how local leadership emerged in motivating the peasants, workers, students, women and other sections of the society and thus making the movement broad-based.

But Rayalaseema was not willing to cooperate for the formation of a separate state, as the Rayalaseema felt that their position in a separate state would be inferior to that of people in coastal districts due to various reasons. Coastal districts, which had already progressed in all fields, caused much concern among others. The fears of Rayalaseema were allayed by a committee represented by the Andhra Mahasabha at a meeting at Vijayawada in 1937. Under the terms of Sri Bagh Pact both the parties came to an agreement regarding the distribution of power and the spoils of office after the formation of the state.

(3) Telangana comprises ten districts, namely, Hyderabad, RangaReddy, Mahbubnagar, Warangal, Karimnagar, Nalgonda, Nizamabad, Medak, Adilabad and Khammam.

This region, except for Hyderabad City, being backward in almost every respect occupies 39.4 percent of total area of the State. Centuries of feudal rule have left its economy stagnant and undeveloped. The people are poor and its agriculture is confined to some dry crops raised with the help of tank irrigation.
Being the most backward of all agricultural regions in the State, it is an extensive plateau with an average elevation of 1,200 feet above the sea level. From the point of rainfall, the region gets one bad year in every five years. Enjoying all the advantages of coastal districts in respect of rainfall, its topography presents a serious handicap to the development of agriculture. Almost the entire area has been rugged with reddish brown soil to brownish red sandy loam known as 'chalakas'.

There are no major river projects in this region. There are, however, a few tank projects: the Nizamsagar project in Nizamabad, district is the largest one in the State and in India. In addition to this some small projects are constructed such as Pochampadu, Musi, Ramadugu, etc. Tanks irrigate much of the land in this region only. Well-irrigation is common in almost all the districts of this region. Rainfall in this region is 910mm., which is less than in coastal districts and fairly more than in Rayalaseema.

In more recent times a number of major and medium industries were developed around the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. Industrially this region is now more advanced compared to other parts of the State, but the emigrated people started most of them. The mineral resources of this region are quite rich: the biggest coalfield in the State at Kothagudam is located in this area. The potentialities for starting large and small-scale industries, particularly agro-industries, are very considerable. The region is also well known for the class-based struggles since long time.

**Anti-Jagirdari Peasant Movement in Telangana:**

The feudal nature of the state, existence of *Jagirdari* system of revenue, concentration of land in a few hands, the utter poverty of the millions of peasants kept the people ignorant of the outside world. The land is dry and unfertile. The state has had a poor agricultural economy; it has had a low rate of literacy. Social relations among different groups remained feudal. Prior to its merger with the Indian union, its economy had been very much exploitative and the people have
been forced to live in poverty. The feudal exploitation of the peasantry was more intense in this region. Here some of the biggest landlords whether *jagirdars* or *deshmukhs*, owned thousands of acres of land each. In the local idiom these powerful *jagirdars* and *deshmukhs* were called *durra or dora* which means 'sir', 'master or 'lord of the village'. A *durra*, often a combination of landlord, moneylender, and village official, traditionally enjoyed several privileges including the services of occupational castes in return for some payments either in cash or in kind. But he tended to exact these services free owing to his power and position. Such exactions had become somewhat legitimized by what was known as the *vetti* system under which a landlord could force a family from among his customary retainers to cultivate his land and to do one job or the other. *Vetti* has been developed to an extraordinarily comprehensive extent in Telangana. Not only do the peasants do *vetti* in the fields of the landlords, all the working people suffer from this abuse. The *dhobi*, the shepherd, the barber, the toddy-tapper, everybody has to provide unpaid services on customarily specified occasions. Added to this the abuse of women belonging to the toiling classes by the landlords, and other feudal customs like the working people (particularly those belonging to the lowest castes) was being expected not to wear a shirt or chappals in the presence of the *dora* (lord)\(^\text{10}\). The *vetti* exactions were a symbol of the dominance of landlords in Telangana. Most of the agricultural labourers, on whom the *vetti* obligations fell, were from the lower castes\(^\text{11}\). Among the substantial landowners and *pattadars* in Telangana districts, *Brahmins* were once predominant. With the rise of the *Reddis*, *Velamas* and *Kammas*- the influential castes of peasant proprietors, the influence of *Brahmins* as a landowning caste declined, although in the field of politics they continued to be


powerful. Komatis, a caste of traders and moneylenders, had considerable influence on the economic life in the countryside. Marwadi Sahukars gradually penetrated rural Telangana and established their ascendancy as moneylenders although the Komatis still remained on the scene as traders, shopkeepers, and merchants. The bulk of the rural masses, poor peasants, unprotected tenants, sharecroppers, and agricultural labourers—came from either backward classes or dalits or tribes.

The despotic rule of the Nizam permitted neither political freedom nor any representative institutions. Harassment of suspected political activists, detention of leaders and potential agitators were so common forms of repression that a straightforward political movement was almost ruled out in the state till 1930 or so. After 1920 several members of the intelligentsia and liberal professional class in Hyderabad, inspired by the Indian national movement, formed three different cultural-literary forums. The Andhra Conference was set up in 1928 and began to mobilize public opinion on issues like administrative and constitutional reforms, schools, civil liberties, recruitment to services etc., reflecting partly the regional economic and political aspirations and partly the urban middle class and elitist character of the new political commotion. In the Telangana region the branches of Andhra Conference and the Andhra Mahasabha started.

Congressmen and their sympathizers operated chiefly through the three 'mask organizations, such as the Arya Samaj, Hindu Mahasabha and Congress for constitutional reforms. The Communists arrived on the Telangana scene only during the latter half of the Second World War period. They had been active in the delta districts since 1934 when the Andhra Communist Party was

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13 Launched a political movement for the unification of all Telugu-speaking regions into a separate Vishalandhra
established. The party drew its strength from Kammas, well-to-do peasant proprietors—for whom other political alternatives did not exist as their archrivals—Brahmins and Reddys-dominated the Congress.

As in Andhra, the leading communists in Telangana were, by and large, wealthy landholders, pattadars of substantial holdings, and men of some hereditary standing in their villages and taluks. Both Ravi Narayana Reddy and B. Yella Reddy referred to, earlier, were prominent landlords. D. Venkateshwar Rao could be cited as yet another example.

The principal participants in the sustained revolt were unquestionably the poor peasants and the landless labourers. Most of the recruits in the dalams came from the backward classes, dalit and tribals. The caste Hindus treated them as socially inferior. The deprived and peripheral groups had also lost all their rights in land owing to the fact that for the past several decades the power and instruments of justice were in the hands of the landlords and deshmikhs. Lack of alternative avenues of work had rendered them weak in bargaining for their rights. They were doubly exploited, culturally as well as economically.

It seems reasonably certain that peasants of a single agrarian stratum did not stage the Telangana revolt. Its adherents had a mixed class character. As mentioned earlier, the leading communists of Andhra delta and Telangana were well-to-do peasants and came from either the Kamma or the reddy caste of peasant proprietors. It was, therefore, basic to the interests of rich peasants, who dominated the party, that all other subordinate agrarian classes, such as the small holders and the tenants and sharecroppers quite as much as the landless labourers, formed an alliance and launched a combined offensive against the handful of big absentee landlords whose power and dominance could not be

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14 For example, G. Rajeshwar Rao, M. Basavapunniah, N. Prasad Rao, M. Hanumat Rao, C. Vasudeo Rao were all Kamma, P. Sundarayya, Ravi Narayana Reddy, and B. Yella Reddy were all reddies. They were either rich landowners themselves or came from such families. See Harrison 1956:381-2; Sheshadri 1967:388
threatened otherwise. From this it is clear that before the formation of the state, its socio-economic structure was feudal whereas the political system was transformed into parliamentary democracy.

formation of the First Linguistic State:

It was only after Potti Sriramulu, a prominent Gandhian advocate of provincial autonomy, fasted unto death in 1952 that the Nehru Government demarcated Andhra as a separate state. When the new unit was inaugurated in October 1953, the 160 Telugu members of the Madras legislature, including a 41 member Communist bloc, became the new Andhra legislature. On the other hand the Andhra state was formed in October 1953 by separating the Telugu-speaking districts of the Madras presidency, consequent upon an agitation by the Telugu-speaking people for a separate state of their own. The Andhra state itself consisted of two regions: the rich and fertile coastal Andhra districts and the poor and backward districts of Rayalaseema region. A Congress cabinet took office, but factionalism within and Communist pressure from the outside brought its collapse on a no-confidence motion by November 1954. New elections had to be conducted in February 1955, the third in less than ten years.

The State of Andhra Pradesh was formed in November 1956, by merging Telangana-a region of nine Telugu-speaking districts of the erstwhile Hyderabad state with the 11 districts of Andhra state. The Hyderabad state that was under the rule of Nizam became a part of the Indian union as a result of the police action in September 1948. The people of Hyderabad under the leadership of the Communist Party of India (CPI) had waged a prolonged struggle against the Nizam's oppressive rule. The Congress Party had also been in the forefront of the people's struggle in this area.

Caste has been the basis of political grouping and mobilization of electoral support in the state right from the beginning. Reddys and Kammas, who constitute only 6.5 and 4.8 (according to Muralidhar Rao) percent of the state's population respectively, are two politically dominant communities. The most important
source of their power has been their control over land (Selig Harrison, 1956; Elliot, 1970; K. Balagopal, 1988; G. Ram Reddy 1989; K. Srinivasulu 1998). As the major landholders and occupants of important positions in the village, they have traditionally controlled village political life. In the course of time they have expanded their activities into other spheres of the economy, i.e., business, transport, contracts and industry (Upadhya 1988; 1997). The reddies are distributed in all the three regions of the state, but their dominance is noticeable especially in the Telangana and Rayalaseema regions. The Kammas, on the other hand, are dominant primarily in the coastal districts and their influence in other regions is negligible.

The Brahmins are numerically very small, comprising as they do a mere 3 percent. They were politically active during social reform and nationalist movement, they are not economically powerful group, and hence, their influence has declined during the last few decades. Among the other forward class peasant castes, the kapus, Velamas and rajus are important castes that matter to a significant extent in state politics though they are confined only to smaller pockets in terms of their numerical presence and influence.

The other backward castes (OBCs) comprising 52 percent constitute a very large proportion of the population in the state\(^{15}\). There has been process of gradual realization of their numerical strength and collective interests in political and economic spheres. This is a consequence of the nature of political system, process of economic development, state policies and expansion of educational opportunities and the politics of patronage pursued by the Congress under Indira Gandhi and the influence of NT Rama Rao.

The Scheduled castes constituting 15.5 percent of the population. The two most numerous castes among them, the malas and madigas, comprising the bulk of agricultural labour are present all over the state. Andhra Pradesh has 6 percent

tribal population, which is largely concentrated in the forest areas of the Andhra and Telangana regions. Similarly, the Muslims who constitute about 8 percent of the state's population have their distinctive impact on the politics of the Telangana and Rayalaseema regions.

The Reddies and Kammas are similar in status to the highest placed non-Brahmin land owning castes in the state. They also form roughly the same proportion of the population in the areas they occupy. Their experiences in modern electoral politics are also similar. Both have been accommodated into leadership of factions in the Congress, Communist, B.J.P, and Telugu desham. Therefore, since formation of the state these two castes only dictating the political process.
Table - 1 shows the list of Chief Ministers, their duration, region, caste and party

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. No</th>
<th>Name of the Chief Minister</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Party</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>N. Sanjeeva Reddy</td>
<td>01-11-1956 to 16-4-1957</td>
<td>Rayalaseema</td>
<td>Reddy</td>
<td>Congress</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>N. Sanjeeva Reddy</td>
<td>17-04-1957 to 10-01-1960</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>D. Sanjevaiah</td>
<td>11-01-1960 to 12-03-1962</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>N. Sanjeeva Reddy</td>
<td>12-03-1962 to 29-02-1964</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>K. Brahmananda Reddy</td>
<td>29-02-1964 to 06-03-1967</td>
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<td>K. Brahmananda Reddy</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>K. Brahmananda Reddy</td>
<td>18-07-1969 to 30-09-1971</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>P. V. Narasimha Rao</td>
<td>30-09-1971 to 20-03-1972</td>
<td>Telangana</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>P. V. Narasimha Rao</td>
<td>23-03-1972 to 18-01-1973</td>
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<td>Brahmin</td>
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<td>President rule</td>
<td>18-01-1973 to 10-12-1973</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Jelagam Vengala Rao</td>
<td>10-12-1973 to 06-03-1978</td>
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<td>Velama</td>
<td>Congress</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Dr. M. Marri Chenna Reddy</td>
<td>06-03-1978 to 11-10-1980</td>
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<td>Reddy</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>T. Anjaiah</td>
<td>11-10-1980 to 24-02-1982</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reddy</td>
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<td>Bhavanam</td>
<td>24-02-1982 to 20-09-1982</td>
<td>Circar</td>
<td>Reddy</td>
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<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>K. Vijay Bhaskar Reddy</td>
<td>20-09-1982 to 09-01-1983</td>
<td>Rayalaseema</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>NT Rama Rao</td>
<td>09-01-1983 to 16-08-1984</td>
<td>Circar</td>
<td>Kamma</td>
<td>Telugu Desam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>N. Bhaskar Rao</td>
<td>16-08-1984 to 16-09-1984</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>NT Rama Rao</td>
<td>16-01-1984 to 09-03-1985</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>NT Rama Rao</td>
<td>09-03-1985 to 03-12-1989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Dr. Marri. Chenna Reddy</td>
<td>03-12-1989 to 07-12-1990</td>
<td>Telangana</td>
<td>Reddy</td>
<td>Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>N. Janardhana Reddy</td>
<td>07-12-1990 to 09-10-1992</td>
<td>Circar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>K. Vijaya Bhaskar Reddy</td>
<td>09-10-1992 to 12-12-1994</td>
<td>Rayalaseema</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>NT Rama Rao</td>
<td>12-12-1994 to 01-09-1995</td>
<td>Circar</td>
<td>Kamma</td>
<td>Telugu Desam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>N. Chandra Babu Naidu</td>
<td>01-09-1995 to 10-10-1999</td>
<td>Rayalaseema</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>N. Chandra Babu Naidu</td>
<td>11-10-1999 to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Data collected by the researcher)

To analyze the monopolization of the Chief Ministership three factors are taken such as region, caste and party. Since the formation of Andhra Pradesh two parties, Congress and Telugu desham have been ruling the state. In the thirty two years of Congress rule in the state seven reddies were chief ministers for thirteen times, one Dalit for two years two months, one Brahmin for two times, and there is not even single B.C Chief Minister was held the post so far in the State. The reddy community enjoyed the longest period of political power, on the decision of the high command only D. Sanjeevaiah was made the first *dalit*
chief minister. On Telugu desham party during its 15 years rule three Kammas became chief ministers. Out of 25 chief ministers of Andhra Pradesh sometime same persons have been repeated, eight times from Rayalaseema, ten times from Circar, and six times from Telangana and for one year there was the president rule in the state.

One important generalization based on the above data is that to become the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh he must be a Reddy of Congress party or Kamma of Telugudesharm party.

Table-2 showing the Ministries-percentage of castes represented

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Period of Ministry</th>
<th>Dominant castes</th>
<th>Backward castes</th>
<th>S.C/S.T</th>
<th>Minorities</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>66.65</td>
<td>22.22</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>29.41</td>
<td>11.76</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>71.85</td>
<td>28.12</td>
<td>12.49</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>73.24</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>20.83</td>
<td>16.66</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1994</td>
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<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All the ministries formed after the formation of Andhra Pradesh have been dominated by upper castes. Dominant castes had a representation of more than 50 percent except in 1972, then it was 45 percent due to two reasons one is that there is an increase in the backward classes representation from 16% in 1971 to 20% and another reason is 14% representatives social background is not known. More or less the dominant castes maintaining consistency in their percentage in the cabinet. There is an increasing tendency of the backward classes and dalits in the percentage of ministers. But increasing percentage of backward classes in the cabinet does not correspond to their population. Scheduled castes and tribes have been given 10 percent in the ministerial berths before 1974. Later they are given 16% of the portfolios. There is declining phenomenon in the position of the minorities.

**Table-3 showing the caste composition of the M.L.As**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brahmins</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Reddy</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kamma</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Muslims/Christians</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>B.Cs</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>SC/STs</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No information</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>294</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 1957 assembly, the social background of the M.L.As was basically upper caste centric. In 300 members assembly there were 23 Brahmins from all parties, gradually over the years their political share has been declining. In the case of Reddies there is a consistency even in the Telugu desham their representation continuous unaffected. With regard to Kammas the trend is towards an increase in their total number of M.L.As, but a majority of them are elected on non-Congress plank. There is not much of change in the position of the minorities. In respect of OBCs there has been an increase in their number among the elected representatives from the first assembly onwards, but it is not matching the percentage of the backward castes population. That is the reason they are under represented. Since the SC/STs are having political reservations, they are getting their representation according to their population. It is quite doubtful to imagine that from the OBCs the required percentage of representatives be elected to the assembly without reservations.

One important conclusion from the above table is that higher the caste, lesser the population but greater the number of Members of Legislative Assembly (MLA), lower the caste, higher the population but lesser the representation of the weaker communities. It is also proved that when there is Constitutional guarantee in the form of reservations then only disadvantaged sections will be getting elected. That is why control over the physical assets and Constitutional guarantees are essential for backward castes to get a proper share in the power structure of Andhra Pradesh.

It would be relevant here to discuss the factors, which helped the dominant castes (or Reddy and Kamma) hegemony in the state. Carolyn M. Elliott\(^\text{16}\) traced their power to control over land. As the major landholders in the village employ agriculture labour, they have the financial capital to loan, and have resources to represent the cases to administration. This base of power is

further augmented by the state's appointment of certain dominant caste persons as official headmen of the village, giving them the power of tax collection and the prestige of state authority. With these resources, Reddies and Kammas have become the political leaders of the village.

The political potential of the dominant caste is increased by their strength in the population. Political power depends much more directly on followers that can be rallied for competition than possession of resources or power in other arenas. Since kin and caste ties are two important means of rallying followers in the village, the leaders from a large caste group in the village have more followers than one from a small caste group. And if a caste group has many powerful men within it who have their own patron-client ties to lower caste persons in the village, than leaders from that caste have potential for gathering even more followers. In this way a rich Reddy family with many castes brethren from their own caste in the village may become more powerful than a rich Brahmin family, which is alone in the village and heterogeneous backward castes, who are largest in the population of the village but lacking financial resources and nexus with the administration. Therefore, the large number of Reddies and Kammas are assured their political power, even though they seldom form a majority in a village.

The same dominant caste persons have carried on politics outside the village. The political relationships between villages are uneven in breadth and direction. Usually several villages are grouped as a cluster around a particularly dominant village. The most formal ordering of that clusters are those based on the designation of revenue villages for administrative purposes. These villages are usually collection of hamlets, which are grouped around a main village that gives the official name to the cluster. These clusters function more or less like single villages, depending on the nature of caste, economic and political, relationship between the units. The most integrated units are those which consist of a main village with hamlets of only service caste persons living outside the
village because of caste restrictions, but who are wholly dependent on the main village for employment and representation of cases to outside authorities. Such clusters may properly considered to be one village. Among hamlets with more than one caste group, however, there are lesser degrees of integration, particularly in the hamlets containing members of the dominant caste, social and political relationships may exist quite independent of the main village.

Informal clusters are formed by groups of villages connected to a particularly dominant village through a network of other ties. These clusters are less well defined than market or revenue clusters and is usually smaller. They do, however, sustain a network of political relationships, which are more intense within the network than with villages of other networks. The direction of politics is uneven because it is based on a pattern of dominance, in which the public events of the dominant village are more relevant to the whole cluster than are the events of any other single village. Factions within the dominant village provide opportunities for disputants within the other villages to find representation of their disputes, whereas unity in the dominant village prevents factional disputes in the other villages from being expressed outside the village this is because the dominant village assumes the functions of arbitration and representation for the other villages in the same way that dominant castes do for lower castes in a single village.

The intensity of these political relationships varies considerably. In some cases the dominant village is merely a strategically located village, one through which villagers from other villages must pass on their way to markets, public transportation, etc. At the most informal level these relationships establish more intense networks of communication, which may become useful in subsequent political activity. These relationships may assume political importance if the visitors accept hospitality, seek advice, or in other ways establish client relationships with leading members of the dominant village. At this low level of interaction, the idea of dominance may be too strong for describing the nature of
the relationship between the villages. There are many clusters, however, in which the relationships of dominance are very similar to those within single villages. These are clusters gathered around a dominant village, which is dominated by a single powerful elite. In these instances the dominance usually centers on one large family, which had extended its influence throughout a region of villages through landholdings, money lending, arbitration, and representation to the administration. Villagers living under these dominant families participate in politics in the same manner as subordinate persons within the single village, except that in these clusters there is a higher level to which disputes may be taken for arbitration.

There are many villages, which are not clustered around such dominant villages, but sustain political interaction with surrounding villages through regional elite acting as local influential person in concert. These are relationships between equally powerful families, each of which is head of a 'natural association' based on traditional dominance. Kinship ties are frequently the basis of such relationships, but there are others. Landholders may have occasion to meet other landholders in the course of their dealings with revenue and settlement officials of the administration. Some landholders become known as having good contacts with officials and may be called upon for help in cases. Others become known as particularly judicious men through arbitrations and are called into to settle other disputes. Each other have known for many years with no memory of their first acquaintance. As transportation, communication and monetisation of agriculture have increased mobility, larger and larger circles of influential persons have been formed. Mobility has enabled the expansion of kinship ties, which has brought about further interaction. More recently delineation of electoral constituencies has brought elites into the same political arena that had not previously interacted. As the influential persons attempted to win political support in unfamiliar arenas, they have turned to their local counter parts to build wider coalitions of village elites. The political purposes and
methods of the new district level leaders are very greatly from those of the traditional society. But the basic structures emanate directly from the local influential persons acting in concert.

These informal networks are sustained by a common culture of dominance, which make persons at similar levels of rural society feel comfortable with each other. The culture is identified partially by life styles, which demarcate elites from others of lesser status. Certainly no elites would do physical labour, and wealthier persons would not even go directly to their fields. They are reluctant to allow their women to go out in public, through the degree to which the Hindu castes observe *pardah* varies by region and by caste. More important is the deference, which they demand from subordinates, from lower castes in their own villages, and from landlords of less important families in other villages. Elites know which families can be summoned to their verandah and which can summon them.

Caste ties are an important source of this common culture among the dominant peasant castes. This type of culture did not exist among the backward castes, whose elite is scattered and loyal to the dominant castes. It is generally accepted that in early times the dominant castes were indistinct from each other, forming a class of field chiefs under various kings. There are several legends, which trace the origins of the three major peasant castes in Andhra to an undivided group of *Kapus* living under the Kakatiya King Pratap Rudra who ruled in the 13th century. The story of common ancestry is supported by the borrowing of names among the castes even now many persons from the peasant caste of Kamma have surnames containing Reddy, while one sub-caste of the Reddy caste calls itself Chowdhary, a name often used by Kammas as a surname. Caste legends thus provide legitimacy to their recognition of each other as equals. Therefore, when the Kammas were trying to articulate more conscious caste solidarity, their caste historian had to devote much effort to separating the origin of Kammas from that of Reddies before claiming higher ritual status for
Kammans as kshatriyas. This equality of caste status is important in sustaining the culture of dominance, for in a culture in which authority has been associated with status; it means that Reddies and Kammans accept each other's right to rule. This becomes an important issue when persons of lower traditional status rise to position of dominance. Such persons are accepted on the basis of their power, but only grudgingly, as *nouveau riche*.

Explicit caste organization, however, has little to do with the sustenance of this culture. In contrast to many of the lower castes, dominant castes in Andhra have not maintained caste *panchayats*, within the village or outside, within the memory of persons today. Their organization is primarily through the lines of kinship, which may encompass several districts, particularly among the elites of the caste. These kinship ties are made stronger by the common South Indian practice of marrying within the family. Marriage ceremonies bring together persons who have met many times before parties provide occasions for continuing interaction. The culture is transmitted through informal ties arising from the transactions of a regional elite and maintains the common cultural expectations of rule.

As Reddies and Kammans sought to advance into modern society and politics, they drew upon these traditional caste and kinship ties, forming broader networks of interaction. Throughout the districts there were wealthy landlords known for their contacts with Government who aided peasants to obtain services. Caste members who had moved into the towns provided accommodation and advice to villagers' unfamiliar with the urban world. These persons became informal persons of the caste. Their relationships within the caste were based on ever-widening circles of family ties through which work of their benefactions spread. Through broader than the face-to-face groups of village caste society, these were still 'natural caste relationships in their comparative unself-consciousness.
Another argument, according to Ram Reddy\textsuperscript{17} for the continuation of the Reddies and Kammas rule, is that the post-independent dominant caste rulers created the competition among the backward classes leaders to share the resources to prevent them from forming a united political force of the backward classes and the control the lower caste vote bank with the expansion of the adult franchise. Therefore, instead of demanding for the structural changes, which can help the castes or communities at larger scale, confined to their selfish family members and factional interests only. The strategy of creating competition among the backward classes to avoid any threat to them is successful (see next chapter).

Last but not least factor for the political dominance of the dominant castes is the capturing of the party leadership. Since the political parties are guiding the modern democratic politics, therefore, to be a party leader is essential for making and unmaking of the government. From the very beginning of the political parties in Andhra Pradesh it is the upper castes that have been leading and setting the agenda for the people. The following analysis will give the clear picture about the political changes in the state.

The political scenario in both the Andhra and Telangana regions immediately after Independence was one of the emergencies of the Congress and Communist Parties as powerful contenders. As early as 1948 the Congress Government of Madras moved to undercut Communist support among the Andhra peasants bypassing the Madras Estate Abolition and Conversion into Ryotwari Act. The legislation abolished all Zamindari and inamdari estates and gave the ryots the pattas of their lands over 33 percent of the area in the Andhra districts.

Nevertheless, The Communist Party continued to concentrate on agrarian problems. The leadership emphasised the need for structural changes that alone could alleviate the distress of the landless, and went to the extent of demanding nationalisation of land. As an immediate programme, they campaigned for minimum wages and allotment of wastelands to agricultural labours.

In the first state election in Madras held in 1952, the CPI pledged to work for the formation of Visalandhra, and to carry on the struggle, in alliance with the rich peasantry against exploitation of middle and poor peasants as well as agricultural labours. In the Andhra region, the Communist polled 20.9% of the votes and won 41 seats. Its main support came from the advanced coastal districts with their numbers of landless and poor peasants-Krishna, Guntur, West Godavari and East Godavari.

Similarly, in the 1952 elections held in Hyderabad State, the Communist won 36 out of the 42 Assembly seats they contested. Their main support was concentrated in the three districts-Warangal, Karimnagar and Nalgonda- where the armed struggle had been most intense.

As the merger of all Telugu speaking districts drew near, there was a strong feeling that the Communist would form the government in a united Andhra Pradesh. Despite such expectation, mid-term elections in 1955 to the Legislative Assembly of Andhra State resulted in a clear and convincing Congress victory, leaving the Communists with only 16 seats. More surprising, when elections were held in the Telangana region in 1957, the Communist Party won only 20 seats out of the 65 seats they contested. In Andhra Pradesh as a whole, the Congress triumphed in more than double the number of constituencies as the Communists, securing 70 out of 105 seats in the new Legislative Assembly, compared to 26 out of 105 for the Communists.

The dominance of the Congress Party in the political history of Andhra Pradesh continued uninterrupted for three decades till it was upset by the emergence of Telugu Desham Party in the 1983 assembly elections. In early years
of independence, this region had witnessed a credible anti-Congress ideological articulation and popular vote. The left, comprising of the Communists and different shades of Socialists, was mainstay of this opposition both in the Telangana region of Hyderabad State and Andhra State. Their failure to evolve into an alternative strong enough to displace the Congress is an instance of a lost possibility. After the formation of Andhra Pradesh the left has started a gradual decline both organizationally and ideologically. Organizationally, it had been weakened and ideologically it got diffused as a result of successive splits following serious disputes on crucial politico-ideological questions.

In contrast to the left, the Congress during this period, displayed tremendous dynamism and political tact in tackling the challenges facing it by conceding the demand for the 'Vishalandhra' state, organized on a linguistic basis, the Congress virtually hijacked an important issue of the left agenda. Further, through different agrarian reform measures, like the Zamindari and Jagirdari abolition, tenancy and land reform legislation, the Congress regime sought to address the crucial agrarian and land questions brought to the center of Indian politics by the agrarian struggles of the 1940s. The overall changes, induced by earlier agrarian radicalism and subsequent state reform have substantially altered the agrarian structure thus leading to the decline of the support base of the left. Added to these factors, there was ideological confusion and uncertainty in the Communist camp as a result of Soviet Union's support for the Congress Party's formal commitment to create a 'Socialist Pattern of Society'. In part this confusion and uncertainty was both a cause and an effect of the split in the party between the CPI and CPI (M). In the meanwhile, the Congress party was consolidating its position by accommodating in its fold splinter groups, which had earlier defeated from the party, especially the Krishikar Lok Party of N.G. Ranga and Kisan Mazdoor Party of T. Prakasham. It was also trying very hard to win over sizeable support from the Muslim community, which was disenchanted after the police action and the merger of Hyderabad in the Indian Union.
The Congress Party maintained its absolute supremacy for almost two and a half decades, starting from the state's first election in 1957. In the five elections to the legislative assembly during this period, it won between 57.5 percent and 76.3 percent seats and between 39.3 percent and 52.3 percent votes. In the six Lok Sabha elections during this period, its share of seats in the state varied from 68.3% to 97.6% and its vote share varied from 46.8% to %57.4%. It is interesting to note that the Congress Party did not lose its dominance in any of the elections, not even in the 1967 elections when it lost power in as many as eight states nor in the 1977 election, when it was completely routed in almost every corner of the country. On the contrary, it sent a record number of 41 members to the Lok Sabha in 1977. Thus, the Congress Party performance during this period was significantly better than that of any other political party. Apart from the Communist Parties, the other parties which contested elections at different phases but had only a marginal influence on the state's politics were the Swantatra Party, Socialist Party, Praja Socialist, Republican Party of India, Majlis-e-Ittehadul-Muslimeen, Congress (O), and Janata Party.

The Congress Party's sterling electoral performance during this period however, conceals of major weakness, its internal factionalism. It was the clash of personalities among Congress leaders which was reflected in several powerful agitations in the state: for a steel plant during the mid 1960s, for a separate Telangana in the late 1960s and the Jai Andhra movement in the early 1970s, these agitations also partly symbolized a struggle for power among different strata of society. Several of Indira Gandhi’s initiatives in introducing socio-economic programs aimed at progressing the interests of, and rallying the support of marginalized groups like backward castes, dalits, tribals and women.

18 Srinivasulu.k and Prakash Sarangi, Political Realignment in post-NTR Andhra Pradesh, Economic and Political Weekly, August 21-28,1999, vol xxxiv, No. 34, p. 2450,

19 Ibid, p.2450.
Indira Gandhi's populist radicalism and political strategy of mobilization and accommodation of marginalized groups was instrumental in increasing the social polarization along both caste and class lines. This not only led to the breakdown of the traditional patron-client relationships at the local level but also paved the way for the decline of the political control of dominant landed castes. Indira Gandhi populism and radical rhetoric, by raising the aspirations and expectations of the marginalized social groups and communities, opened up a new phase of political contradictions. Thus caught up in the contradictions and intense factionalism—a reflection of the contradictions—the Congress under Indira Gandhi increasingly resorted to centralization of power at the political organizational level in the high command of the party and at the governmental level in the center. The consequence of this process was the erosion of regional leadership and initiative. The failure of the Congress Party to accommodate contending interests, its inability to channelise the politicization of marginalized communities opened up new political possibilities. It is against this background that the emergence of the TDP in AP has to be appreciated.

The rise of NTR and his Telugu Desam Party is generally seen as the long overdue assertion of the rich Kamma community. Till 1983 for the Kammas, the Reddies dominating Congress Party was big obstacle in occupying the dominant position in term of political power. The leadership, predominantly, to the Telugu Desam party came from the wealthy Kamma by caste and agrarian in its origins, which came of age in the period of the nationalist movement and the agrarian struggles against the Zamindars and the colonial rule. These struggles that attended its birth have also given in the largest share of participation in radical movements: socialism, rationalism, atheism, communism, and Radical-Humanism. Over the period, they have also grown substantially rich, and have multiplied their riches since the Green Revolution. But while wealth has come their way, they have been systematically kept out of the prime seats of power at Hyderabad. They lost it symbolically when they had to concede the name
Vishalandhra for the state for which they fought the hardest, and had to simultaneously concede their demand for making Vijayawada capital city; and they lost it substantially as part of the general 'Congress culture' of keeping the economically dominant classes and communities in the state away from the seats of political power\textsuperscript{20}.

In fact the political conflict between these two communities were started when N.G. Ranga was defeated to become the President of the Congress Party in the Andhra State. The second incident that intensified the conflict is making Kurnool as the capital, N.G. Ranga and the coastal Andhra Communists opposed the Kurnool to be a capital of Andhra State and third event was Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy becoming the chief minister of newly formed Andhra Pradesh. These three incidents were symbols of the victory of reddy domination within the Congress Party.

With the merger of Telangana with the Andhra for the formation of Andhra Pradesh, numerically negligible Kammas in Telangana and Rayalaseema had to compete with the reddy community of the two regions. Throughout thirty years period of Congress rule Kamma never occupied the position Chief Minister.

Though the top-level leaders of the Communist Party were from Kamma caste, they hardly secured the majority to form the Government in the state; their influence was confined to some assembly and parliament seats in coastal Andhra and Telangana. Therefore, since long time the kammas were waiting for capturing of the state political power. The dream was realized in N.T.Rama Rao becoming Chief Minister.

It is true that NTR and his most vociferous followers belong to this class, whether the main body in the coastal districts is the expatriates settled along the irrigation canals around perennial tanks in Telangana and Rayalaseema. It is also true that most of his ardent voters belong to East Godavri, West Godavri,

\textsuperscript{20} Balagopal, K., op.cit pp. 156-57.
Krishna and Gunture districts. Another important feature is that one man who almost single handedly led the campaign was Ramoji Rao, the editor of the largest circulated Telugu daily Eenadu, which operated as a pamphlet for NTR both at the time of his election and during the crisis in TDP (Nadendle Bhaskar Rao incident). This is a typical manifestation of commercial enterprise of this class.

The 1980s brought about an important change in the political history of the state. The Congress Party tasted defeat for the first time in the electoral history of the state. It was a sequel to the intra-party factional conflict and repeated 'diktat' from the 'high command' leading to frequent changes of Chief Ministers, as witnessed by four changes in a five-year period preceding the 1983 assembly election. As a reaction to these centralising tendencies in the Congress, neglect of the weaker sections, a regional party emerged with a proclaimed objective to represent the interests of Telugu people. NT.Rama Rao, who belongs to coastal Andhra Kamma caste, a popular film star launched the TDP on March 29th 1982, which within nine months of its formation emerged with full-fledged majority in the 1983 assembly elections by successfully rallying the non-Congress vote. The TDP won 202 seats out of the total of 294, where as the Congress Party could secure only 60 seats.

For the first time a non-Congress government was established, a similar pattern was discernible in the 1984 Lok Sabha elections. The Congress Party secured only 6 seats out of a total of 42 it contested, the TDP got 30 out of the 34 seats it contested. The emergence of NTR as political force not only changed the course of political developments but also the very style of politics itself. "While Indira Gandhi broke patron-client ties at the local level, she herself emerges as the key patron. NTR's entry into politics also altered the traditional caste calculus in the state's electoral politics. He tried to create a support base among

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22 Srinivas.k and Prakash Sarangi, op.cit, p. 2451.
backward castes, rural poor women by means of several populist policies by facilitating their accommodation in the power structure.

An event of critical significance to the consolidation of NTR in state politics was the revolt of section within the TDP in 84. Nadendla Bhaskar Rao, NTR's finance minister, revolted against NTR and became the Chief Minister with the support of the Congress after having got NTR dismissed from the chief ministership. NTR went back to the masses with an appeal to 'save democracy'. He was reinstated in power within a month because of massive public protest. But he recommended the dissolution of the assembly and fresh elections were conducted in March 1985. This time NTR entered into seat adjustments with non-Congress (I) parties like CPI, CPM, Janata and BJP. NTR's TDP cornered as many as 202 seats, whereas Congress could secure only 50 seats. With this massive mandate NTR went ahead with vengeance to introduce his welfare schemes and administrative reforms. He became very popular with his subsidised rice scheme, which provided rice at Rs 2/- a kilo for the poor and a slab rate of electricity for the farmers. To strike at an important institutional support base of the Congress, NTR abolished the village officers system, 'patel-patwaris', and to make the bureaucracy responsive to the people, NTR initiated administrative decentralisation by dismantling revenue taluka and panchayat samitis.  

The next Assembly and Loksabha elections were held in 1989, in which the TDP lost its dominant position to the Congress (I). The reasons for the defeat

Patel-patwaris' were traditional village officers: the former was vested with powers to maintain law and order and the latter to collect land revenue. These hereditary positions invariably held by the upper castes, the former by the reddies and latter by the kammas or Brahmins, not only provided access to power and wealth but were also sources of corruption. Further they were traditional support structures of the Congress Party. By abolishing them, NTR not only gained popular appreciation as these institutions had acquired notoriety of sorts in the perception of the popular classes but also struck a serious blow at the Congress support system. In their place NTR created village administrative officers to be recruited through open competition. Some of the patels and patwaris fulfilling the requisite qualification were also accommodated. These reforms were part of the larger administrative reforms (which include the restructuring of the revenue and panchayat raj institutions) introduced by NTR during his first term (1983-89) in office (Srinivasulu 1990).
of the Telugudesham party are the failure of the Government in fulfilling the promises, which are given in the 1984 elections, authoritarian attitude of NT. Rama Rao, hike in the prices of the consumable and productive goods, corruption at the high level, upper hand of the Kamma domination and negligence of the backward castes in distribution of tickets, not showing interest in filing case in the Supreme Court on the increased reservations based on Muralidhar Rao Commission report, which was rejected by the High Court of Andhra Pradesh in 1986, women and other lower castes in terms of accommodation etc. These have become positive points for the Congress party to win 181 seats in the Assembly and came back to the power after a gap of seven years. TDP won only 74 seats. Similarly, in the Loksabha elections the Congress party secured 39 out of 42 seats and 51% votes, whereas TDP secured a mere two seats and 34.5% votes. Though the Congress party came back to power it did not seem to have learnt anything from its past mistakes. It continued with the old culture of internal bickering and factional conflicts resulting in frequent change of chief ministers. These factors in significant sense contributed to the TDP's come back to power in 1994 elections. In the Assembly elections of December 1994, the TDP swept the polls capturing a massive 217 seats (251, if the share of its allies, the CPM and CPI is added) out of a total of 292 seats for which elections were held. The Congress party won only 25 seats.

Strategic to the TDP's overwhelming victory in the 1994 assembly elections were the promises of prohibition, subsidised rice, allotment of house sights and the supply of subsidised Janatha cloth. These promises could capture the imagination of the weaker sections, especially the SCs and OBCs and women. After NTR's comeback to power in 1994, the TDP, which had all along appeared as a monolithic organisation under the total grip of the supremo, saw an internecine struggle in its rank and file, which finally culminated in coup against NTR. In this coup Chandra Babu Naidu overthrown NTR and rallied a support of 190 MLAs and forced NTR to resign from the chief ministership and himself
assumed the leadership of both the party and the government. His strategies and tactics are successful in winning the TDP in 1996, 1998 and 1999 Loksabha and assembly (1999) elections. It appears in Naidu cabinet that backward classes are given priority but in reality, it is the Chief Minister dominating the entire cabinet and there are no major policy initiatives in favour of backward classes.

On Telugu Desham Party three Kammas have become chief ministers of Andhra Pradesh. They are NT Rama Rao, Nandendra Bhaskara Rao and Nara Chandra Babu Naidu. Though the representation of the backward classes in the cabinet has been increased, their control in the exercise of substance of power is nominal. None of the backward classes ministers are able to take independent decisions on either the matter relating to their ministry or the issues concerning backward castes.

Summing up: Changing political scenario in the state from prior to independence times to the present indicates that it is being dominated by the upper castes. During the social reform and national movements it was the Brahmins, in the peasant movements it is the Kammas, and Reddies that dominated the political leadership. In the post-independent period the landed dominant communities like, Reddies, Kammas, Velamas, and Kapus leading Congress and Telugu desham have been ruling the state. These regional ruling castes have been occupying the highest number of positions than their population in politics, government employment, contracts and other economic activities. But in this process the backward castes that constitute the largest chunk in the population of the state are marginalized.

The analysis, which is made in this chapter beginning from historical antecedent to contemporary political scenario, indicates that like any other state in the Indian sub-continent caste playing a significant role in the politics of Andhra Pradesh too. As far as caste dimension is concerned, Andhra Pradesh experience reveals that in order to become chief minister it should be either Reddy of Congress party or Kamma of Telugudesham party irrespective of the
region. In terms of distribution of the tickets higher the caste more the seats and lower the caste lesser the seats, but in the case of dalits, it is the Constitution, which is providing the reservation of seats, therefore, they are getting elected. So far as representation of the backward classes in the decision-making institutions is concern, their representation is very nominal. Since the formation of Andhra Pradesh, the total number of MLAs in the legislative Assembly never crossed 70 members. They are supposed to, according to their population, be more than 150 MLAs. Therefore, in the political process of Andhra Pradesh the backward castes are politically marginalized.

Even though there is a highly sophisticated contradiction between the dominant castes vs. the backward castes, the backward caste so far has not posed a big threat to the ruling party by forming an alternative political force. There is every possibility for the alliance of dalits, backward castes and women for the rise of potential political organisation, but that possibility is not yet realised in the state. The backward castes being the highest number in population among the deprived sections of the society, still they are not politically consolidating themselves due to the heterogeneous and social stratification, economic deprivation and class differences within the backward castes led to the political marginalisation. All these factors are reflected even in the inadequate mobilisation of the backward castes, which is discussed in the next chapter.