CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter an attempt is made to analyze the rise of backward castes movements in modern India. These movements came into existence in response to the hierarchically structured, unequal, exploitative, suppressive and oppressive social system, which has denied the basic human rights like education, property and power. Even though there were movements against the caste system in Indian history, it is during the colonial and the post-colonial period only one can find the sophisticated social movements in various parts of the country. Due to lack of co-ordination, networking at the national level, homogeneity and existence of the class differences within the backward castes, therefore, these movements are unable to consolidate them. As a consequence of which, they are getting fragmented and, politically, marginalized in various states and at the center.

The dynamics of these movements can be understood by analyzing them in an integrated framework in order to understand the nature of backward castes mobilization in Andhra Pradesh. For this purpose various aspects, which are discussed in this chapter, can be divided into three parts, (I) deals with the response to the exploitative caste system in the form of social movements, (II) review of the literature and (III) methodology and chapterisation.

(I)

The lines of exploitation in pre-British India, in terms of the production, extraction and accumulation of surplus, were structured through the caste system\(^1\). This identified a particular caste division of labour involving specific forms of hierarchy among the exploited, with at least three major groups identified in most villages: toiling peasant castes, most of whom were simply cultivators but with some village management powers held by a dominant

lineage, artisans and service castes performing particular caste-duties within a jajmani system: a large caste of general labourers working for the village and its dominant sections and classes as 'untouchable'. Tribals and pastoralists outside the village were also among the exploited sections. The exploited as a whole included a very wide range of castes, the broad 'toiling caste majority'\(^2\).

The toiling caste majorities also known as the backward classes, which is a general term applied to three different categories of people who have been identified, they are the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward castes, which together constitute about one third of the total population of India. Among three the other backward castes constitute, in terms of numerical strength and castes, more. The term other backward classes was widely used by the British administration come to mean 'other Backward castes' in administrative usage. It is used in the Constitution of India to designate backward classes other than the scheduled castes and scheduled Tribes. Article 15 (4) refers to them as 'socially and educationally backward classes (SEBC) of citizens' and article 340 as 'socially and educationally backward classes'. Article 16 (4) mentions 'backward class of citizens' and article 46 refers to 'the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people'. No doubt, the constitutional recognition of the other backward classes as a category of public policy made it one of an all-India scope but by contrast it is a more nebulous category. The other backward classes were mentioned in the constitution in general terms. There were no all India lists drawn for the other backward classes. They were not separately enumerated in the Constitution, and in fact, one has to work with only a rough estimate of their population. Their position was sought to be defined in more specific terms by the backward classes commission\(^3\).

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The Other Backward Castes also termed as backward classes in the policy matter and bureaucratic circles is having theoretical limitation. In fact, in the Indian context all the forward castes and dalits have got the class character due to their privileged and under privileged social and economic position, therefore, they may be characterized as the upper class and lower class or exploiting class and exploited class. The backward castes also come under the exploited category by the upper caste but in a different form. The backward castes are collectively exploited and deprived all the privileges along with dalits. But untouchability is not practiced in the case of backward castes. For practicing the traditional caste based occupations to provide goods and services to the rulers in particular and mass in general got the higher position than the dalits and lower position than the upper castes and they are highly heterogeneous and stratified with similar socio-economic backwardness and interdependence nature of all these occupational castes. The traditional occupation prevented them to come out of the social stranglehold resulting in continued backwardness. Therefore, instead of calling them as backward classes, it would be more appropriate to term them as the 'Backward Castes'.

Therefore, OBCs are defined as the producing classes in India either in agriculture or in secondary manufacture through household hand craft production or in guilds of the goods that were of common use for society or specifically for the ruling classes, All these sections of society were made up of dependent 'jatis' whether as peasants or agricultural labour or as artisans upon superior castes: dependence, in other words, were of the collectivities and not merely of the individuals. In other words the direct producers in India was of a 'collective' kind unlike the 'individual unfreedoms of the European serf or earlier of the slaves'.

Socially deprived backward castes lived in a social limbo somewhere between the upper caste *Shudras* and the untouchables. The Other Backward Castes existed all over the country in general and in every village in the State in particular. According to Nomita Yadav⁵ "the core of the other backward classes consists of peasant castes of various descriptions. Frequently they occupy a low position in the *Varna* hierarchy and they have in general been devoid of traditions of literacy. Further, since they have also lagged behind in the pursuit of western education, they are often poorly represented in Government jobs and white-collar occupations in general. In spite of this, such castes sometimes occupy a dominant position in the economic and political systems of the village-life. Not frequently, they are small landowners and when they are numerically preponderant, their control over a village, a group of villages or even a district can be decisive. They are known as what Srinivas (1959) calls the 'dominant castes' ".

Since Nomita Yadav defining the backward castes, while keeping in mind exclusively the north India yadavs, it may not be applicable to all the backward castes in the country. The author tried to project the homogeneity of the backward castes but it is contrasting with the existing reality of the caste stratification and heterogeneous character of the backward castes.

The caste stratification, the occupation division and its hierarchical nature always posed problems in backward castes social mobilization. It is a vicious circle in the sense that stratification cannot be altered without social mobilization and mobilization is a problem due to stratification. It is this enigma that needs to be probed into get at the law of change of these communities.

In order to overcome the caste-feudal exploitation and for the protection of the rights, a number of lower caste movements came into existence during the colonial and post-colonial period. These movements have questioned the very

⁵ Nomita Yadav, op.cit; p. 4495.
foundations of the caste-feudalism to overcome the exploitation, social suppression and for the human dignity. Before, going into the analysis of these social movements, it would be appropriate here to discuss the conceptual framework of the social movements.

**Conceptual Framework of the social movements:**

A social movement essentially involves a sustained collective mobilization through either formal or informal organization. A social movement, which rejects the existing institutions, will in turn attempt to codify the belief system and provide institutionalized arrangement to enforce its code of conduct.

A social movement may also be seen as symptomatic of some malfunctioning of society like deprivation, discrimination, inequalities, social imbalance, but not sufficient to spurn a social movement. An awareness of the discrimination or deprived condition is necessary. This awakening created in a sufficiently large number of people leads to a widespread collective mobilization. Often this consciousness exists in the middle class and the intelligentsia, who tend to be the leaders of the movement. Movements begin in the minds of men with ideas. Hungry men do not revolt as such, as they are deeply involved in the primary struggle for survival. The genesis of different kinds of social and cultural movements has been analyzed with reference to the concepts of strain, revitalization and relative deprivation:

**Strain:** Smelser treats structural strain as the underlying factor leading to collective action or movement. According to him, there can be no social movement without a previous sub-system strain. This theory fits in the structural-functional explanation. The structure of society affects the origin and form of movements in a variety of ways. This phenomenon has been referred to by Smelser as 'structural conduciveness. Sub-systems of a society all related and independent of each other. So strain even in our sub-system affects the functioning of society as a whole.
**Revitalization:** Anthony Wallace has defined Revitalization as a conscious organized effort on the part of some members of a society to create a more satisfying culture. Nativism is an attitude of rejection of alien persons or culture or rejection of everything from a dominant society. In revivalism, the aim of the movement is to return to a former era of happiness, to go back to a golden age, to revive a previous condition of social virtue. This theory indicates adaptive processes like an imitative or evaluative process of social change centered on acquiescence. Revitalization is considered to be an adaptive process in establishing equilibrium, which is a postulate of the structural functional approach. Hence, the significance of conflict in bringing about change is underplayed.

**Relative deprivation:** Relative deprivation means a widespread feeling that people are deprived of some deigned state or thing in comparison with some standard or with the real or imagined conditions of other people. The notion of relative deprivation is to be found in the thoughts of Marx and Engels. Marx, Engels and Aberle used the term relative deprivation as the basis of conflict to explain the genesis of social movements and social change. Merton and Runciman used it as the basis of social mobility in relation to the life styles of positive reference groups. The credit of developing this concept goes to Aberle. He defined relative deprivation as a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectation and of poverty or prosperity, but what people have come to feel as their just due as compared with their present or threatened future existence.

A position of relative deprivation alone will not generate a movement. But it is the perception of a situation and the estimation of capabilities by activity. MSA Rao further stresses that relative deprivation refers not only to material condition but also to the other spheres of life such as religion, education, politics and civic life.

It is found that the notion of relative deprivation adequate in analyzing the structural conditions, which provide the necessary conditions in explaining
the genesis of backward classes movement. The concept of relative deprivation incorporates the virtue of Marxian analysis without accepting the caste struggle as the only ideology. It is important to realize that caste, ethnicity and class are not mutually exclusive categories. They interact and intersect and articulate either in caste, ethnic or class idioms. For example on the surface the conflict between the backward classes and the upper castes (Brahmins, reddies, kammas, Velamas and kapus), looks like caste conflict, but it has class underpinnings. The upper castes own land and exercised control over productive resources, whereas backward castes are occupancy tenants, small peasants and labourers.

There are two distinct ways in which the concept has been developed, one by Merton (1950) and Runciman (1966) and another is Marx and Engels (1973) and Aberle (1966) while the former used relative deprivation in relation to reference groups, the social mobility, the later used it as the basis of conflict, to explain the genesis of social movements and social change. The concept of relative deprivation is used here to refer to both the objective conditions of a group of people, in terms of rights and privileges, values and norms and the perceptions of the leaders about their ability to remedy the situation through collective mobilization. The backward classes occupy a lower status characterized by disadvantages and discrimination of several kinds, and of different degrees, which go under the term relative deprivation.

Movement is the conscious efforts on the part of men to mitigate their deprivation and to secure justice. While movements are conditioned by social and structural factors, they imply voluntary action. Men create movements to achieve goals they hold dear. Movements are perhaps the chief mechanism through which the deprived categories demonstrate their power. Heberle defines movement as a collective attempt to bring about a change in certain social institutions or to create an entirely new order. Only when collective action is somewhat sustained and is able to create an interest and awakening in a sufficiently large number of people, then it takes the form of a social movement.
Ideology is considered to be a crucial aspect of a social movement. According to MSA Rao it is an essential component distinguishing a movement from any organized effort involving collective mobilization. Ideology, according to the Oxford Dictionary is the manner of thinking characteristic of a class or an individual. A movement implies sustained pursuit of shared and collective action, which is either organized or spontaneous. The process of social mobilization includes meetings, campaigns, demonstrations, conferences, and literature—all expressive of interests and beliefs. Interest, which is immediate in terms of motivation and demands, is rooted in a more fundamental belief system, which is called ideology. Thus Andre Beteille defines movement as a kind of collective behavior mobilized on the basis of a belief, which redefines social action.

A social movement has to justify the need for social change. It therefore, must develop sooner or later a comprehensive ideology or a theory, which should be convincing to the participants in the movement. It would, therefore, have to project a cause to struggle for and present a version of a more valued alternate system. Ideology helps the concerned sections gain self-respect, honor and worth. The shared ideology forms the basis for the identity of the group in a movement while an ideology directs the cause of events; the results of the events themselves have a crucial influence on the character of the ideology, changing the pattern of communication with different symbols and codes. Thus, it is a dynamic system. It helps in the codification of beliefs and myths in order to define a group's aspirations and responses to the reality. Ideology then is closely related to the problems of identity, i.e., the way in which a group perceives itself in relation to other relevant groups and vice-versa. It provides the yardstick for accessing the nature and degree of commitment of both leaders and followers and for evaluating the results of events. Besides, it provides the logic of the communication system in a social movement encoding and decoding messages.
as it presents the participants view, which enables us to understand the meanings of the symbolic actions of the participants.

In the absence of a charismatic leadership, social movement remains an elaborate belief system or a definite action program. Ideology is based on the structural conditions of existence of the concerned group, on the one hand, and the level of consciousness and resources on the other. A movement may start with an ideology or it may acquire one in the course of its development. In either case, it is continually revised in the light of subsequent events and the reaction of opposition reference groups.

United by an ideology, the leaders of the movement create organizational devices to fight the evils and reduce grievances. A social movement must have a minimum degree of organization, yet it is not organized like clubs and other associations. Some kind of organization enables certain persons to act as authorized spokesmen and representatives. Ideology is an important component of all social movements. However the social movements among the backward classes develop a protest ideology based on their conditions and perceptions of relative deprivation.

A social movement is a deliberate collective endeavor to promote a change in any direction and by any means not excluding violence, illegal means, revolution or withdrawal into 'utopian' community. The social mobility and changes that are brought about by protest movement are based on challenges, protest dissent, confrontation, aggression and revolt as opposed to acquiescence.

All movements have political implications even if their members do not strive for political power. Heberle holds that all social movements fulfill two key functions in society. They help both in the process of socialization, and train the elites. Movements that are directed only at change in ideology or culture movements that are primarily non-political can have a fairly widespread impact but this impact tends to be diffused and impermanent.
The study of social movements logically belongs to the realm of social process, it is related to both social structure and the consequence of change. Although there are variations in how social scientists define social movements (See Gus field, 1968, Rush and Denis 1971, Wilson 1973). These are collective mobilization, the presence of an ideology and an orientation towards change.

Social movements may be classified on the basis of one or the other criterion (See Heberle 1966, Smelser 1962, Wallace 1956) on the basis of locus, social movements may be classified into linguistic, religious, sectarian, caste, peasant, worker, tribal, racial, ethnic, women and students. Taking the nature of social change as the criterion movements may be classified into reformative, transformative and revolutionary. Similarly, the nature of their ideology provides another criterion by which social movements may be classified into either protest, millenarian or revitalizing. The present study falls broadly under the general category of caste and class movements based on locus. The movements are transformative with regard to the nature of the social changes being brought about.

**Lower Caste Movements in Various Parts of the Country:** The lower caste movements have a long history of struggle against the dominant upper castes. The lower caste movement began in south India in the 19th century and became a major political force by the first quarter of the 20th century. In Uttar Pradesh and Bihar it began in the beginning of the 20th century. The movements both in south and north India were initiated and led by the upper strata, mainly the landed peasantry backward castes having improved economic conditions due to the changes in agrarian structure and/or penetration of market economy and/or access to education⁶.

Important demands of these movements are reservation in government jobs and educational institutions, in the field of politics both in the south and in the north, backward caste elite demanded political positions in parties, State assemblies, cabinet and public institutions. Different backward castes, particularly the upper layer among them launched struggles separately for Sanskritisation and political positions on caste lines. Later they came together under the banner of backward castes and mobilized the lower backward castes for enlarged support in the political sphere. The first such organized movement, and arguably the most widespread was launched by the non-Brahmins of the Madras Presidency.

The Self-Respect Movement in Tamil Nad: In the process of struggling against iniquitous social order and for reservations in the Government services, the backward classes acquired the state power in Tamil Nadu. The social movement of the backward classes for the reservations was started during the colonial period itself and continuing, but the social character of the movement is subjected to a lot of changes. In the changing process of the reservation category the advanced castes are excluded from the Backward Classes list and most deprived castes are included in the list.

The non-Brahmin movement of the 1910s and 1920s and much more violent 'radical' Dravidian or anti-Aryan movement launched by E.V. Ramaswami Naicker in the 1930s are the important phases in the history of Tamil Nadu backward castes movement. One of Naicker's main targets was the temple and he mobilized a militantly anti-Hindu campaign, ostensibly in the name of atheism, to smash the temples and destroy the gods. The important factor,

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7 For a review of literature on various social movements, including the Backward Class movements, see Ghanshyam Shah, Social Movements in India: A review of Literature Sage pubs, Delhi.1977, pp.605.

8 Washbrook, D.A, Caste, Class and Dominance in Modern Tamil Nadu in Frankel and Rao (eds), Dominance and State Power in Modern India Decline of a Social Order. Vol-1, OUP, 191993, p. 214
which created the strain for the origin of the *non-Brahmin* movement, is the domination of *Brahmins* in education and government employment. The *Mandal* Commission comes to a conclusion that the *non-Brahmin* movement was started when the runaway lead taken by the *Tamil* and *Telugu Brahmins* in the field of education in the erstwhile Madras Presidency and it is well documented⁹. By the turn of the century the male literacy rate among the *Tamil Brahmins* was 73.6% as against a similar rate among the vellalas of 6.9%. Whereas the male literacy in English was 17.9% among the *Tamil Brahmins*; it was only 0.19% among the *Vellals*. The *Brahmins* had established a near monopoly of the government services and the professions. As far back as 1851, the Madras Revenue board had instructed the District Collectors to restrict the number of the *Brahmin* entrants into the services. In spite of this, the *Brahmin* domination of the government services and the professions went on unabated. The caste's domination in the Provincial Congress Committee had been well established. Alerted by the advent of the *Montague-Chelmsford* reforms and diarchy, the *non-Brahmin* elite castes took the lead in establishing first the South Indian Liberal Federation, and secondly, the *justice Party* in 1916. After coming to power in 1920, the party extended in 1921 the scope of the 1881 order, by requiring all the heads of the departments to distribute appointments of all the grades among the various communities.

But for the first time in the history of the Communal CO., in Madras, a clear-cut reservation procedure was laid down by the order of 1927, providing compartmental reservation of posts for different categories. This scheme of reservation was in operation till 1947. As can be seen from the CO., the Scheduled Castes were earmarked only 8% of the jobs, far less than warranted by

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their share in the population. In view of the Congress Party in the thirties by inducting more and more non-Brahmin elites into the party, the first Congress ministry in the Province headed by Rajaji, did not even touch the G.O\textsuperscript{10}.

In the Tamil areas of Madras, the 1927 G.O represented a victory for the Vellala caste, particularly the Modaliars. They had provided the leadership to the Justice Party, although there were leaders from other non-Brahmin castes as well. The party leaders were drawn from the landed classes and were not much keen on broadening their base by including the landless castes\textsuperscript{11}. By the thirties, the Justice Party had served its historic purpose of reducing to a great extent the sense of deprivation on the part of the Zamindar interests, particularly in the field of government jobs and education. In the meantime, angered by the domination of the Congress by the Brahmins, and annoyed at Gandhi’s adherence to a purified Varna ideology, E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker walked out of the party in 1925 and started the self-respect movement, subsequently the Government issued the communal G. O of 1927.

In 1947, the communal G.O of 1927 was revised. The 1947 G.O was historic because for the first time the non-Brahmin castes were bifurcated into non-Brahmin Hindus and non-Brahmin backward Hindus. Obviously, the non-Brahmin Hindus consists of the forward Vellala, Naidu, Chettiyar, and Reddy. Castes did not resent this bifurcation since they were given a compartmental reservation of 43% of the jobs.

After the adoption of the Constitution, the Supreme Court struck down the compartmental reservation. Then the 1947 scheme was converted into the

\textsuperscript{10} Mandal Commission Report, Vol. IV, p. 147.

\textsuperscript{11} A slow erosion of the ranks of the party and defections to the Congress had already begun in the twenties; and the non-Brahmin strategy was to infiltrate into the Congress and capture the organization from within.
following scheme of job reservation by an order of 1951: open competition; 60%: backward classes; 25% and scheduled castes; 15%. In the light of the population figures of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes (after the 1951 census) and after the separation of Andhra, the Madras Government promulgated in 1954 the following reservation scheme- open competition: 59%; backward classes 25%; and Scheduled Castes and Tribes: 16%.

In actual operation, the benefits of reservation have gone primarily to the relatively more advanced castes among the notified backward classes. The Tamil Nad Backward Classes Commission took special note of it and suggested compartmental reservation for different categories of Other Backward Classes, but the State Government did not heed this suggestion. The main question here is why did the weaker and minor backward castes constituting 88.7% of the backward classes population not feel the resentment against the benefits of reservation going to only a handful of castes? The answer will have to be found in the peculiar Dravid Kazhagam culture, which has been forged both by the DMK and the AIADMK. As long as the Tamil cultural revivalism continue to grip the State and as long as the anti-Hindu, anti-Aryan issues dominant the minds of the people, a real backward classes movement espousing the cause of the really backward will not emerge. The same factors continue to provide cohesion between the various non-Brahmin castes. The DMK leaders particularly are not interested in anything, which will weaken the ethos of the Tamil movement.

The backward class movement did not proceed to its logical end of sustaining and expanding its base for eradicating the caste system, which would also have destroyed traditional status superiority of upper backward castes over lower backward castes in general and untouchable castes in particular. The leadership raised the issue of imperialism of north Indians or Drairidians vs. Aryans that sidetracked the cause of backward castes who are at the bottom. And in course of time, the DMK leadership who led the movement in the fifties ”
shifted its emphasis in Tamil nationalism from that of race, which would have emphasized downward alliances with the 'Adi-Dravidas' or former untouchables to that of language which permitted an accommodation upward to include Tamil Brahmins". Therefore, today the electoral politics in TamilNadu is between Backward Classes Vs Brahmins rather than Backward Classes and Dalits on the one hand and upper castes on the other hand and a great deal of polarization has taken place. Simultaneously the educationally backward castes of neighboring Mysore State also launched a parallel movement.

The Rise of non-Brahmins Movement in Karnataka:

During the first two decades of 20th century the Mysore Brahmins started gaining an upper hand and completely established their ascendancy. In the Princely Mysore State, the Brahmins constituted 3.8% of the population, Vokkalingas 20.4%, Lingayats 12% and depressed classes 15%. At the turn of the century, according to 1901 Census, 68% of the Mysore Brahmins were literate. Like their counterparts in Madras, the Brahmins had established a runaway lead over the two dominant landed gentry castes of the Lingayats and the Vokkaligas. During the next 40 years the percentage of the English knowing Brahmins increased from 1.02% to 2.34% and among the vokkaligas from 0.7% to 1.09%. Almost contemporaneously with the rise of the Justice Movement in Madras in the second decade of the 20th century, Lingayats and vokkaligas of the Mysore Princely State became agitated over the Brahmins' preponderance in the government service and education. In the first decade of the 20th century, their castes' associations appeared and by 1917 under the leadership of C. K. Reddy, Praja Mitra Mandali was established to voice the claims of the non-Brahmins. 

On the basis of the representations received from the aggrieved communities, a Committee was appointed by the Maharaja in 1918 under the chairmanship of L.C. Miller (the Chief Justice of Mysore) "to consider steps

necessary for the adequate representation of non-Brahmin communities in public service”. The Miller Committee, in its report submitted in July 1919, vindicated the complaint of the non-Brahmins that the civil service in Mysore was dominated by Brahmins: "we find that the results obtained have not shown any progressive reduction of the inequality each year”\textsuperscript{13}. After accepting the Miller report, the government passed orders in May 1921. The order, inter alia, constituted a Central Recruitment Board and reserved 75% of the vacancies for the backward classes\textsuperscript{14}. Meanwhile, in the absence of a sharp focus, the Praja Mitra Mandali disintegrated and yet another party of non-Brahmins, Prajapaksha, took up its place in 1928. The party consisted of young elements belonging mainly to the two dominant castes that had considerable exposure to the caste conflicts in the neighboring States. The Indian National Congress had also begun organizing the people of the Princely States on parallel lines to obtain democratic concessions. In this way the entry of the Lingayat and Vokkalinga landed gentry into the movement considerably intensified the Congress Movement in the State. In 1930 the non-Brahmans revived a moribund non-Brahmin association and begun, noisily demanding greater justice for the increasing number of non-Brahmins who were emerging from the colleges of the state and of British India. In seeking to understand the non-Brahmin movement in Karnataka, it may be helpful to look carefully at the perceptions of the vokkaligas who were involved. This is true partly because it was under their leadership between 1947 and 1956 that opportunities for Brahmins in government service were closed down and partly because vokkaligas lack the lingayats' anti-Brahmincal ideology. These people joined the non-Brahmin movement not because they wanted to overturn the

\textsuperscript{13} The Report shows that the Brahmin percentage in all grades ranged from 67% to 82% and even 100% in the grade of Rs 100 to 200. The Committee opined that backward classes should include all communities other than Brahmins, Anglo-Indians and Europeans.

social order, but because they wanted to conserve it by extending the rules and logic of power relations in the vokkaligas to the newly developing urban sector. The non-Brahmin movement in Karnataka was not a force seeking radical change. It is also wrong to assume that the non-Brahmin movement in Karnataka amounted to a successful challenge to the place of Brahmans at the apex of the socio-cultural structure in rural Karnataka. It was in no sense a 'cultural revolution' in the way that the movement in Tamil Nadu is often described (James Manor; 1989). After the merger in 1947 of the Princely Mysore State into the Indian Union, the Vokkaligas started controlling the State apparatus and the Congress Party, while the Lingayats constituted their junior partners.\footnote{Mandal Commission Report, Vol, IV, PP.151-52.}

The formation of the unified Karnataka State in 1956 altered the caste balance considerably. The Lingayats constituted 15% of the State population and Vokkaligas about 11%. The first Chief Ministers of the expanded Karnataka State belonged to the Lingayat caste. The community dominated not only the land but also other sources of political patronage. After the Reorganization, the new leaders extended the communal reservation scheme to the entire State. As a result of a number of Court cases culminating in the famous Balaji judgment, the Government ordered in 1963, 30% reservation for other backward classes and 18% for Scheduled Castes and Tribes. The beneficiaries of this scheme were the politically dominant castes of Lingayats and Vokkaligas. This gave rise to considerable resentment among other minority castes, which found themselves left high and dry. Devraj Urs, who raised the leader of the Congress (I), very carefully and sedulously, cultivated the non-lingayat and non-Vokkaliga communities. It was primarily the consolidation of this base that enabled him to rule the State from 1972 to 1980.

In 1972, he set up Karnataka Backward Classes Commission (headed by Mr. L.G. Havanur). The Commission did not include the Brahmins, Bunts,
Lingayats, and Kshatriyas, and Jains in the list of Backward Classes. After modifying the Commission's recommendations the Government divided the underprivileged classes into six categories and made separate reservation for each group. The special feature of this scheme was that some sub-caste of the Lingayats had been classified as backward and majority of the sub-castes classified as forward. While the Vokkaligas have been classified as a backward community, their erstwhile senior partner in Karnataka politics, the Lingayats had been classified as mostly forward. As a result, the Lingayats find themselves divided on the issue. Also, on this issue an alliance of the Vokkaligas with the Lingayats cannot take place as they find themselves in different from the backward and the forward. This is in total contrast with the Bihar and Uttar Pradesh situation, where all the major forward caste groups, i.e., Brahmins, Kayasthas, Rajputs and Bhumihars have been classified as forward and can find a platform to unite upon.

The Havanur Commission Report caused considerable controversy between Lingayats and other backward classes. But owing to effective mobilization, protests and agitations organized by Lingayats did not cut much ice. The coalition of minority backward castes forged by Devraj Urs had been pretty powerful and durable.

The Karnataka non-Brahmin movement, in the decades following the twenties failed to produce any overarching revivalist Kannada ideology, which might have prevented the cleavage among the non-Brahmins from emerging to the surface. As discussed, the more recent cleavage has displaced the older Brahmin, non-Brahmin cleavage. Like the Brahmins and Bunts of Karnataka have been kept out of the reservation scheme. As the backward castes split between upper and lower backward castes, the Lingayats and Vokkaligas of the upper backward castes fought against each other to be included or excluded from
backward caste lists in the 1970s\textsuperscript{16}. In Karnataka as long as the \textit{Lingayats} had been classified as backward, there was not much public agitation. But their exclusion first by Havnur Commission and then in the G.Os based on the report provoked the ire of the community. As the competition among backward castes gets intensified and new castes began to assert their claim with the dominant backward castes, the backward caste get split, for the purpose of reservation. When the dominant stratum realizes that it is not possible for it to get reservation in the name of caste, but they emphasize the economic criteria\textsuperscript{17}. Similarly, \textit{Lingayat} and \textit{Vokkaliga} communities having realized that they would not get backward status as caste insisted that Chinnappa Reddy Commission (1990) should adopt economic criteria to identify the SEBCs\textsuperscript{18}.

The \textit{non-Brahmin} movement or the Backward Class movement in Karnataka can be classified into two types one is that it is led by the \textit{vokkaligas} and \textit{lingayats} against the \textit{Brahmin} and second is creation of the political force with the disadvantaged castes by Devaraj Urs to protect his political position from the threat of the two landed dominant castes, i.e., \textit{vokkaligas} and \textit{lingayats}. Therefore Urs patronized the caste associations among artisan and service castes. He channeled money and resources to these associations and spoke at their conferences and public rallies. When he revived or founded such associations, he naturally saw to it that his own allies from those social groups were inserted as very prominent figures in them. These people then served as agents for and as

\textsuperscript{16} In Tamil Nadu When M.G. Ramachandran super imposed an income criterion of Rs 9000 on the OBC list in 1979, the backward caste elite protested and the order had to be withdrawn.

\textsuperscript{17} For instance the Gujarat Kshatriya Sabha, which mobilized Kshartiyas-forward and backward-demanded backward caste status for all Kshatriyas before the first Backward Classes Commission in the 1950s. But having failed to get backward status for forward Kshatriyas who dominated the caste organization, it demanded economic criteria to determine backwardness.

\textsuperscript{18} Ghanshyam Shah, op.cit. 605
monitors of the flow of spoils to the caste associations. But this strategy was not sustained and did not help the marginalized people to capture the political power in the state, therefore, again, the dominant caste rule has been continuing.

Whereas the untouchable *Ezhavas* for the self-respect, self-dignity and spiritual life led by Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Movement in Kerala in the beginning of the 20th century has brought about a radical transformation in the social order and democratization of the civil society. That is why still now also the SNDP movement is considered as the classic one in modern India.

**The SNDP Movement in Kerala for Human Dignity:**

One of the most influential social movements in modern Kerala is the Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) Movement, which is not only for the reforms or Sanskritization but also for the structural change in the caste system, modernization, rejection of the traditional occupation, accessibility to the education, employment, industry, commerce and spiritual life and alternative religion.\(^\text{19}\)

Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Movement took place against the Hindu upper caste system and for the protection of the denied human rights. Basically, the SNDP movement is initiated for the upliftment of the untouchable community i.e., the *Ezhavas*, who had been practicing the socially degrading occupation of toddy tapping. According to 1961 Census *Ezhavas* constitute about 26% in the total population of Kerala. This untouchable caste is at present in the OBC list.

The *Ezhavas* along with practice of the traditional toddy tapping, they also used to be the tenants, agricultural laborers, weavers, and Ayurvedic doctors, Astrologists etc. In the Hindu hierarchical caste system of Kerala society, the first place was occupied by the *Nambudris, Kshtatriyas, Amblavasis* (servants in the

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temples), Zamindar Nayars and other Nayars and the Ezhavas in the order. The Nayars used to maintain the distance of 36 feet from the Ezhavas in order to avoid the pollution. The Ezhavas were not supposed to avail water from the wells, tanks of the upper caste Hindus. There was no entrance in the schools of the latter and in Government employment opportunities. Wearing the shoes, umbrella, jacket to upper part of the Ezhava woman, ornaments, carrying of the drinking water pots and milk pats on the shoulders of the Ezhavas was prohibited. They were permitted to build small huts and inns only. Ezhavas were not supposed to spit in the bazaars. When the upper caste people are coming, the Ezhava should reveal his/her physical presence and walk on the knees. The Nayars demanded the Ezhavas to render the free service due to three reasons. One is that insecure tenancy, two agreement to render the service of traditional agriculture labour, and three, since the residing places of the Ezhavas were belonging to upper caste landlords, they may ask to vacate at any time.

The social movement among the Ezhavas to question the degraded position, untouchability, injustice and exploitation was started with the breaking of the then social system, when the introduction of new systems by the British rule and the Christian Missionaries, such as education, spread of new ideas. The British colonial rulers politically unified all the small Princely States and uniformed legal system was introduced, therefore, consciousness among the lower castes had started to grow about their rights. The Christian Missionaries started struggle against the custom of not to wear the jacket by the Ezhava woman and achieved it. The Missionaries helped in terms of education and employment and other facilities to the lower castes with the cooperation of British Government. And also the missionaries extended help to liberate these people from the age-old traditions. In 1812 Colonel Munro declared that the woman who convert to Christianity are permitted to wear the jacket. This was a big blow to the century's together custom of subordination to the upper castes, such as Nambudris and Nayars; therefore, the violent incidents took place.
the attack of Nayars in 1858 on the Ezhava woman for wearing jacket, then there was an agitation against the attack. It had become inevitable to the Maharaja to declare that his Government does not have any objection if the Ezhava women wear the jacket. But they should not imitate and not in the style of upper caste woman. With this victory the level of confidence and unity was increased among Ezhava woman in particular and lower caste woman in general. But in other aspects the upper caste domination had been continuing. In the public offices such as Post office, Railway stations there were no equal opportunities for the Ezhavas. If there are upper caste people, the lower castes had to maintain the distance and sought to reveal his presence.

There is tremendous impact of the British rulers effort on the Ezhavas with regard to land tenancy. In 1773 the British Government recognized the 'Janmi' as the owner and Kasamdar as the kattudar. With this Act the rights of the tenants were clarified. Now they were liberated from the dependence on mercy of the landlords. In 1867 the relations between the landlord and the tenants were legalized. The tenancy duration Act was introduced in 1867. The Act gave the right to move to the Court by the tenant, if the landlord takes back his land.

Education played a significant role in the realization of the oppression and suppression of the Ezhavas. Though the Ezhavas were the experts in Sanskrit, Malayali literature, Astrology, Ayurveda etc, the Nambudris and Nayars enjoyed the high social status. Ezhavas got the opportunity to learn Sanskrit with spread of Buddhism in Ancient Kerala society. The Buddhist monks not only spread the Sanskrit through Pali books, but knowledge about the indigenous medicine. During the British rule English educational institutions were established in many places. The discrimination in the Government jobs forced them to revolt against the injustice. Because of English education the upper caste occupied the positions in administration, judiciary, medicine, and education related, these were denied to the Ezhavas. All these factors contributed to the origin of Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Movement. The movement has got clear ideology, leadership, aims
and objectives. The spirit of this social movement brought about a lot of changes in the future.

The movement was started against the then social discrimination, dissatisfaction, disharmony, upper castes oppression, exploitation and all other kinds of injustice. It began with Dr. Palpu and Velu brothers, when there was no priority in the education and employment for the Ezhavas. Therefore, these brothers are considered as the political fathers of the Ezhavas. Dr. Palpu sent an application for the practice of the law, since he belonged to the untouchable community, the application was not accepted and fee was not sent back. Velu who passed B.A; and the Travancore Government refused to give the job. He joined as small clerk in the revenue department in the neighboring Madras State in 1885 and rose to the position of Assistant Commissioner. He started, for the first time, the journal called Kerala in Malayalam. The struggle of these two was confined only to requests and submitting the memorandums to the Government. They had no clear ideology, strategy of the movement, and methods of the alternative culture. The SNDP had fulfilled all these gaps.

The charismatic leader of the Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Movement, Sri Narayana guru was born on 28th August 1855 in a small village, Chembajhati is 4 k.m away from Trivendram in a poor schoolteacher family. He learnt Sanskrit, Malayalam, and Tamil, Astrology from his father and uncle and higher education from Sri Kummanpalli Raman Pillai. Since his childhood was spent in the nearby forest, while meditating, he used to frequently come and had the food in the houses of the untouchables, Christians, and Muslims. While wandering in various places he studied the Vedas, Epics, and other Classical literature. In this process he got the spiritual knowledge to cure the diseases of human beings and animals. By 1890 he emerged as the prominent social and religious reformer and died on 20, September 1928.
During the 40 years of period he proposed a lot of revolutionary ideas. Guru himself studied the Shankara's philosophy of \textit{Adwaitha} and wrote book in \textit{Sanskrit} known as '\textit{Atmopadesha sathakam}'. He taught Vedas to his disciples.

He preached the ideology for the social reform in the Hindu religion to liberate the common man and for social change. He advocated that faith in one God. There is one religion and one caste. He directly attacked the base of \textit{Brahminical} domination, i.e., Caste system. For the opposition of the \textit{Brahminical} domination and social order he took the 12th century Basaveswara of Karnataka as his ideal. Basaveswara started an alternative religious movement against the rituals of the Brahmanism. Narayana guru opposed the caste system of the Nambudris and other Brahmins who denied the right to study the Vedas and worshipping of the vegetarian Gods. In view of Narayana guru, in order to study the Vedas it is not an essential qualification to born in the upper caste Brahmin family. He said that the learning process depends upon the environment or the conditions in which a person lives and the kind of training not on the caste in which he or she is born. Therefore he suggested that not to believe in the system built on the inequalities and asked his disciples to work for the abolition of this type of caste system. To achieve the goal he emphasized the brotherhood among the lower castes.

Since the traditional occupation is linked with caste, he appealed the \textit{Ezhavas} to give up the toddy tapping. He also discouraged the drinking and production of toddy and encouraged to enter into the trade, commerce and industry. He patronized the industrial exhibition to emphasis that the education, and employment is base for the social well being. He also started the weaving for the \textit{Ezhavas} and \textit{Puliyas} an alternative livelihood.

He asked the \textit{Ezhavas} to stop the animal sacrifice in the traditional temples, unnecessary expenditure on marriages and other religious rituals. Not to have the marriages of 8-10 years girls with the 60 years old men. He opposed all the rituals during maturity and pregnancy.
For the purpose of having effectiveness in the religious reforms, and to build the alternative to Hindu religion the temples, *muttas, Ashramas* for the priests and *Sanyasas*, who were campaigners of the Guru ideology, is the *Ezhavas* achievement of denied right to religion. By this Guru not only removed the inferiority complex among the *Ezhavas* but also stopped the corruption in the upper caste temples. The mirrors and palanquins in the *Ezhavas* temples replaced the idols. He strongly believed that man is God and rendering the service to the mankind is the serving of the God. He told his disciples that instead of magical powers and ritual in the temples, it is better to have the public welfare activities, and they should be the centers of cleanliness, devotion, education and economic affairs. He proposed for the equal rights to women in all the fields.

The *muttas* had taken the responsibility of discussions on the *Dharma* of Narayana Guru, training to the youth on His philosophy, well being of the *Sanyasas*. The common people use Temples for the worship of the vegetarian Gods. Prior to these temples the *Ezhavas* used to practice the animal sacrifices, drinking liquor while dancing and worshipping of the evil Gods. Narayan guru worked hard to collect the funds for the building of the temples to use for the movements, marriages, some of them were used as the schools, *muttas*, libraries, lodgings and boarding for the devotes. The Ashram schools were also established for the spiritual knowledge. In his view school is temple to reduce the caste differences. He emphasized the English education, technical skills for the industry and woman education.

In order to spread the philosophy of Sri Narayana guru among the common mass a secular institution called *Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yagam* was established in 1903 at Arivipuram. The SNDP Society was registered at the last days of Guru's life in 1928 and dedicated to spread the theme of universal brotherhood of 'all are equal, one religion and one caste.

The new life was started among the Ezhavas and lower castes with SNDP movement and its philosophy. The movement opposed the non-vegetarianism,
drinking, expensive and unnecessary rituals, preaching of the moral values, giving up of the traditional toddy tapping, and encouraged to enter in to the modern education, employment, industry, business and the spiritual change.

Due to the social movement, lower caste people built the alternative religion, change in the social position, entered in to the education and Government jobs, industry, commerce and business and politics.

Gradually over the years, with spread of left movement the Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Movement was declined. The SNDP temples are used as libraries centers of intercaste marriages, and political activities. There was a division within the Ezhavas as the supporters of the SNDP Yagam and the C.P.M. Latter the Communists and the Congress started giving considerable number of seats in the elections to attract the 26% vote bank of the Ezhavas.

Unlike the Backward Class movement of Tamilnadu, Karnataka, and Kerala the anti-Brahmin movement of Maharashtra took slightly different course and emerged at two levels: one led by the non-Brahmin Marathas and the other by the untouchable caste of Mahars. The organizational triumphs of these two large and effective protest movements in this century were dependent on the democratizing process of the period in the last half of the Nineteenth century.

**The anti-Brahmin Movement in Maharashtra:**

From the second half of the 19th century, particularly, in South India, and in the Bombay Presidency, the sons of rich peasants among the dominant land-owning castes, and of local traders and moneylenders who expanded into commerce, started acquiring English education. A small fraction of this newly educated class came from lower Shudra cultivating, artisan and trading castes, and even from among untouchables. In the 19th century Maharashtra, Poona and Kolhapur provided leadership to the emergence of backward castes

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movement in India. One of the first products of Christian missionary education was Jothiba Phule of Poona, who belonged to the Shudra caste of gardeners. Phule (1827-90) is acknowledged as the father of non-Brahmin movement in India. He wrote several books, like *Gulamgiri* for the material and spiritual improvement of the lower classes. The condition of the untouchables horrified him. He called upon the people to revolt against Hindu casteist gods and degrading religious practices. He wanted the lower castes to form their own associations, create an, *esprit de corps* and work for their emancipation from the age-old degradation as *Shudras* in society, education and religion. Jothiba founded the *Satya Shodak Samaj* to unite all the backward castes on a common platform. He advocated the principle of adequate representation for members of all castes in public services.

The *non-Brahman* movement generated in Bombay province (now Maharashtra) had its effect in Kolhapur—a small Maratha State under the control of the Bombay Government by Maharaja Chatrapati Shahu\(^2\). The Maharaja, displeased with the Brahmins, devoted much of his time to the non-Brahman movement. He declared in 1902 that he would reserve at least half the posts in the State for qualified men of *non-Brahmin* communities. To give fair opportunities to all communities, the Prince started a hostel in Kolhapur city for *non-Brahman* youths. Kolhapur may be set to be the first State to adopt the reservation policy, though there had been some ineffective attempts earlier by the British government to break the monopoly of one community. Kolhapur therefore, has been a landmark in the backward classes movement towards equality\(^2\). The backward classes movement in India originated in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Gail Omvedt considers Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu to be

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\(^2\) The Brahmin-non-Brahmin controversy in Bombay began in 1891 when R.P. Paranjepe with new claim of the Maharaja of Kolhapur, a descendent of great Shivaji, To Vedic rites, as his Brahmin hereditary priest

(Children of god), and to adopt an alternative identity of the Scheduled Castes identified in the 1935 Constitution. In effect declaring that the deficiencies they showed had been imposed upon them by servitude under the traditional social order and could be removed by the contemporary policies of the modern State.\(^{25}\)

The other backward classes of Maharashtra, whose number grew from 125 castes in 1953 to 160 castes in 1967, also mobilized themselves as social groups. But the Government policy was to move from caste to income criterion. In November 1961, the State Government appointed a Backward Classes Committee (headed by B.D. Deshmukh). The Committee in its report of January 1964, grouped backward classes into four categories and recommended that reservations for backward classes should be related to the percentage of their population in the State. The Government broadly accepted the above recommendations and made the following reservations in the State services and educational institutions for backward classes: Scheduled Castes and Scheduled castes converts to Buddhism; 13%; Scheduled Tribes, Denotified Tribes and Nomadic Tribes; 4%; and Other Backward Communities; 10%. Interesting, the above scheme provides reservation, in proportion to population, only in the case of the first two categories but not in the case of the other backward communities who were extended only 10% of the vacancies. Subsequently, in April 1979, the State Government issued orders that 80% of all vacancies should be reserved for economically weaker sections of society, i.e., families whose income was less than Rs 200/- per month. Where adequate numbers of suitably qualified candidates were not available, preference for the balance of reserved seats was to be given to candidates whose family income ranged from Rs 200/- to Rs 400/- per month. And the 80% reservation was inclusive of the earlier reservations for the OBCs, SCs and STs.\(^{26}\)

\(^{25}\) Francine Frankel, op.cit. Pp 11-12.

Jotirao Phule was the ideologue of the *non-Brahmin* movement in Maharashtra. He rejected the *Hindu* scriptures and the caste system. According to Phule, *Hindu* religion was both the ideological means of suppression and the cause of poverty of the low castes. Phule's ideas, education and organization were the means to create unity and sense of identity among the *non-Brahmin* castes and thereby create free and just society. Therefore Phule and Ambedkar are still a powerful source of inspiration for the lower castes to mobilize themselves.

**Backward Castes Mobilization in North India:**

The backward classes movements have varied in their support basis, extent of relative deprivation, goals they were seeking and the means they adopted. The variations were strongly determined by the different cleavages provided by the inherited social structure, and the impact of the British rule and different public policies adopted by the post-independence governments, both at the Center and in the States. The rise of the backward castes in north India, unlike in the peninsular India is, basically a post-independent phenomena. In the south, the backward classes movement had its origin in the *Brahmin-non-Brahmin* polarization whereas in the north the conflict emerged between the generally forward and "twice-born" castes of *Brahmins. Kayasthas, Bhumihars, Rajputs* on the one hand and the intermediate castes of *Yadavs, Ahirs, Kurmis*, etc., on the other.

According to the 1931 census for the united provinces- the most populous contemporary State of Uttar Pradesh-Brahmins constituted 9% of the population, that is 40% of the entire Brahmin Varna category in India. *Brahmins* and *Rajputs* accounted for over 16% of the population, with *vaishyas (Banias)* adding 2.5%. A similar *Varna* order prevailed in adjacent Bihar, Where twice-born castes constituted more than 12% of the population and *Kayasthas* accorded elite status as a *literati* caste, added little more than 1%. Although, *Rajputs* rather than
Brahmins exercised the greatest power as land controllers. Brahminical ideology played the most important role in legitimizing the status and occupational hierarchy.

The Varna divide between the twice-born castes and Shudras in the Hindi heart-land areas as historically demarcated a rigid social hierarchy, one in which the lower castes were deprived of education, denied social dignity, and confined to manual work of cultivation or other low status artisan and service occupations. It is possible to divide the Shudra category in north India into two clearly identifiable sub-categories—what are called the upper Shudras and lower Shudras. The former comprise such economically powerful and politically aggressive groups as the Jats, Yadavs, Kurmis and Koiris, while the latter include the humble Hajjam, Kumbhar, Lohar, Teli, Tatwa, Dhanuk and Mallah. The Jats included in the backward classes list and regard themselves as the leaders of the backward castes. It is the inclusion of all these heterogeneous groups within the Shudra category that made for its large size and has enabled leaders of the backward castes to press hard their claim for special status in the post-independent period. They have alleged that Congress Party has been instrumental in empowering a small group of upper castes, a pro-industry, at the expense of the rural majority. This has left the backward castes with no opinion but to launch an all out attack on the Congress system and all that it stands for. And the upper castes dominance in the Congress Party has been well documented. But the Congress was also instrumental in bringing about a


28 “For example: Kochenek, Stanley. A. The Congress Party of India, Princeton Univ, Press, Princeton, 1960. Johi Osgood Field and Myron Weiner (Eds) Studies in Electoral Politics in the Indian States, Vol: 4, Manohar Book Service, Delhi, 1977: and Blair, Harry W. "Rising Kulkas and Backward Classes in Bihar." EPW, 12, January 1980. Kochanek's study shows that 46% of the ministers in the Union cabinet were Brahmins and the forward castes (Brahmins, Kayasthas, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas) together constituted 46% of the members of the Congress Parliamentary Party as against the 10% Shudras. Nor was the situation any different at the State level. In the 1962 UP Legislative Assembly, almost 63% of the Congress MLAs belonged to the
veritable revolution in the countryside. Through its land reform legislations it was primarily responsible for dispossessing the big Zamindars and empowering the backward castes. The reforms created a substantial class of medium-sized owner-cultivators. Many of them belonged to the backward classes. Unlike large landowners whose origins and resources are located in the history of the British Raj, self-employed cultivators are largely a product of post-independence agrarian policies. As a consequence the center of power shifted from the feudal landlords to the market-oriented independent cultivators.

In caste terms the principal losers in northern India were Rajput-Thakurs and to lesser extent Bania, Kayastha and Muslim landlords. The main beneficiaries were the erstwhile tenants among Jats, Yadavs, Kurmis, and Koiris, who are belonged to the upper strata of the Shudra castes after cornering the benefits of this first wave of agrarian legislation. These groups took the lead in blocking all subsequent attempts at reform designed to benefit the marginal farmers and the landless who usually also belonged to castes and groups further down the hierarchy. Bullock capitalists (as middle peasants are referred by Rudolph and Rudolph) refer primarily to those members of the Shudra castes who are self-employed, operate holding between 2.5-1.5 acres, use a pair of bullocks and the new inputs associated with the green revolution.

The middle farmers today constitute the most powerful group in the countryside economically as well as politically. They have more voters than any other agrarian class taken by itself-about 25% of the total population- and have emerged as the principal spokesmen of agrarian interests. But agrarian interests

elite castes and only 6.8% to the backward classes. In the same year, the Congress Ministry in Bihar, as Blair's study shows had 58% cabinet ministers from the forward castes and 8% from the backward castes.


for them remain confined to the interests of the middle farmers, which explains why their major demands have been remunerative prices and other input costs-and lately administrative jobs via the Mandal Commission. Politically the rise of the middle farmer was the single most important cause of the decline of the Congress in north India. Despite its electoral dependence on the forward castes, scheduled castes, tribes and minorities till 1967, the party was also successful in incorporating sections of the backward castes even though they did not serve as its "vote bank". After all, Charan Singh remained an important leader and pre-eminent spokes man of rural interests in the Congress until he quit the party in 1967\textsuperscript{31}.

The middle peasant challenge emerged clearly for the first time in 1967 when the Congress Party lost power at the State level in all north Indian States and middle peasants took over as chief ministers in Haryana (Rao Birendra Singh), Utter Pradesh (chaudhury Charan Singh) Madhya Pradesh (G. N. Singh) and Bihar (B.P. Mandal)\textsuperscript{32}.

The backward class upsurge had spawned, among other things, arguably the most comprehensive system of affirmative action in the world. More importantly, the political mobilization of the under privileged castes had started changing the very configuration of Indian society, economy and polity. Such process gathered momentum in the post-Independence era under a democratic and secular Constitution.

\textbf{Backward Castes at the National Level:} The response of the post-independent Indian State to the backward castes can be classified into three phases such as Congress, Janata and Janata Dal and National Democratic Alliance regimes.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid. pp. 141-42.

\textsuperscript{32} A study of the composition of these non- Congress Governments would reveal the magnitude of the backward caste revolt. Backward Castes constituted 30% of the ministers in Charan Singh's Government and 345 of the B.P. Mandal ministry in Bihar. 45% of the ministers in Rao Birendra Singh's Government in Haryana were Jats.
Congress Regime: The identification of the Other Backward Classes had been contentious, in north India in general and at the national level in particular. So no reservation schemes could be adopted for them at the central level till independence. The Socially, Educationally Backward Classes constitute the largest and the most heterogeneous category. Because these "middle castes" are located between the "twice-born" (Dwija) higher castes and the "untouchables" (Scheduled Castes). Moreover the Constitution neither defines the SEBCs nor provides the criteria for their identification. Resultantly, the efforts to centralize reservation programmes for the OBCs had been unsteady and half-hearted. More importantly the origins of political mobilization of OBCs at the national level go back to the early years of post-Independence period. So the Center had initiated the efforts to designate the SEBCs only after Independence. Therefore, it is relevant here to start with discussion of the first decisive attempt by the Union Government during period of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of the country from the Congress Party, at specifying the OBCs, i.e., the setting up of the first national Backward Classes Commission.

In view of the varied conditions of development among the different communities of India, from the primitive to the most advanced, the framers of the Constitution deemed it necessary to make adequate provisions for the protection and uplift of the backward classes and to afford equal opportunities for their advancement in order to bring them up to a common level. The Constitution envisages the establishment of "classless and casteless society", free from all kinds of exploitation. The Preamble of the Constitution makes it abundantly clear, and the relevant provisions are included in Articles 15(4), 16(4), 38,39©, 41,43,45,46, 330 and 334.

It was only after Independence that the Central Government tried to define the OBCs with a view to making special provisions for their advancement. Article 15(4) and 16(4) refer to the making of such provisions for the advancement of SEBCs. It was this objective that the President in pursuance of
Article 340, appointed the Backward Classes Commission, the first national
inquiry of its kind, under the chairmanship of Kaka saheb Kalelkar (M.P)\(^{33}\).

After shifting and sorting the facts collected, the Commission formulated
the following criteria for identifying SEBCs:

- Low social position in the traditional caste hierarchy of Hindu society;
- Lack of general educational advancement among the major section of a
caste or community;
- Inadequate or no representation in Government service;
- Inadequate representation in the field of trade, commerce and industry.

It also prepared a list of 2,399 backward castes or communities for the
entire country, and 837 of these were classified as "most backward"\(^{34}\) and made
comprehensive recommendations (see annexure-1) for the upliftment of the
backward castes

**Minutes of Dissent:**

It is pertinent to note that the Kalelkar Commission could not present a
unanimous report. In fact five of its members recorded minutes of dissent.
Messrs. Anup Singh, Arunangshu De and P.G. Shaw were opposed to the view
of linking caste with backwardness and reservation of posts on caste basis. But
Mr. Chaurasia strongly advocated the acceptance of caste as the criterion for the
backwardness in his 67-page minute of dissent. Mr. Mariapp's minute of dissent
was concerned only with the inclusion of a couple of castes in the list of SEBCs.

Chairman Kalelkar took rather equivocal stand on the issue. Interestingly
in a last minute *Volta face*, he virtually repudiated the Commission's work.
Though he did not record a formal minute of dissent, in his 29-page Forwarding

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\(^{33}\) The other members of the Commission are Messrs. N.S. Kajralkar (M.P). Bheeka Mariappa
(M.L.A). L. Jagannadh, A. S. Namdari (M.P). N.R.M. Swamy (M.P) and Arunangshu.De(member
secretary).

\(^{34}\) *Report of the Backward Classes Commission* (Chairman: B.P. Mandal), Vol-I (part-I) Govt of India,
Letter to the President, he opposed the acceptance of caste as the basis of backwardness. He also expressed his reservations regarding several other important recommendations made by the Commission.

**Government Action on Kalelkar Commission Report:**

After a detailed examination of the Commission's Report the Government laid its copy together with a Memorandum of action taken in each House of Parliament on 3rd September 1956. In this Memorandum it was observed: "For the purpose of inquiry specifically contemplated in Article 340 of the Constitution it was necessary to consider whether these other backward sections could be properly classified and the Commission had to find objective tests and criteria by which such classifications were to be made. They had to find indisputable yardsticks by which social and educational backwardness could be measured. The report of the Commission has not been unanimous on this point, in fact it reveals considerable divergence of opinion". It was further stated; the Commission's list contains as many as 2,399 communities out of which 930 alone account for an estimated population of 11.5 crores; Scheduled Caste and Tribes will makeup another 7 crores (on the basis of 1951 Census). Regarding the acceptance of caste as criteria for backwardness it was stated: "it cannot be denied that the caste system is the greatest hindrance in the way of one's progress towards an egalitarian society and recognition of the specified caste as backward may serve to maintain and even perpetuate the existing distinctions on the basis of caste".

Regarding the recognition of a large number of castes and communities as backward it was pointed out: "if entire community, barring a few exceptions, has thus to be regarded as backward, the really needy would be swamped by the multitude and hardly receive any specially attention or adequate assistance, nor

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would such a dispensation fulfill the conditions laid down in Article 340 of the Constitution.

In view of the above, the government considered it necessary that "some positive and workable criteria should be devised for the specification of the socially and educationally backward classes and to undertake further investigations". So that deficiencies that have been noticed in the findings of the Commission are made good. It was also pointed out in the Memorandum that the Planning Commission had already formulated the development programmes for the removal of backwardness and "the main point to be stressed was whether the special needs of the backward classes could be intensively and effectively served by appropriate shifts of emphasis or by re-arrangement of priorities within the framework of the existing programmes or whether additional programmes needed to be drawn up".36

Incidentally the Commission's Report was not discussed by the Parliament, when Jawaharlal Nehru was the Prime Minister of India. After presenting the Memorandum to the Parliament, the Government made efforts "to discovery some criteria other than caste which could not be of practical application in determining the backward classes". The Deputy Registrar General was asked to conduct a pilot survey to see if backwardness could be linked to occupational communities instead of caste. Such a survey was undertaken but it failed to throw up the desired criteria. The matter was also discussed at a conference of State representatives on 7th April 1959 and subsequently reviewed at a meeting of State officers convened by the Ministry of Home Affairs, but no consensus emerged as a result of these efforts.

The Central Government ultimately took a decision that no all India lists of backward classes should be drawn up, nor any reservation made in the Central Government service for any group of backward classes other than the SCs and STs. Consequently, on 14th August 1961, the Home Ministry addressed

all State Governments stating: "while the State Government have the discretion to choose their own criteria for defining backwardness, in the view of Government of India, it would be better to apply economic tests than to go by castes". Regarding the preparation of the lists of backward classes it was observed: "Even if the Central Government were to specify under Article 338(3) certain groups of people as belonging to 'other backward classes', it was still be opened to every state government to draw up its lists for the purposes of the Article 15 and 16. As, therefore, the state Governments may adhere to their own lists, any all-India lists drawn up by the Center would have no practical utility".

Though the above failings are serious, yet the real weakness of the Report lies in its internal contradictions as discussed above three of the members were opposed to one of the most crucial recommendations of the Report, that is the acceptance of castes as a criterion for social backwardness and reservation of posts in Government services on that basis. This degree of dissidence greatly compromised the force of the Commission's recommendations. But it was the 29 page-forwarding letter of the chairman to the President which demolished the very basis of the Report. Thus the matter went back to the States: the Commission's Report remained on the table, and despite occasional agitations was not taken up by the Parliament until 1965.

The Tanata Party and Janatha Dal Regimes:

The recommendations of the First Backward Classes Commission (1953-55) had not been accepted by the Central Government on the ground that the Commission had not applied any objective test for identifying backward classes. The Government was also opposed to the adoption of caste as one of the criteria for backward classes and preferred the application of the economic test.

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37 ibid, pp.2-3

38 Ranjan Prasad Yadav, "Why Mandal Commission", Third Concept, August 1990, p. 42
The Article 340 has been invoked twice: in 1953 (Kalelkar Commission) and in 1979 (Mandal Commission). But the sobering fact remains that the Union of India decided not to adopt any policy measures for four decades after independence. The reasons were many and complex. The Kalelkar Commission Report was a house divider. The division rested on the question whether the Constitution permitted organization of State policy on the basis of caste rather than class as a criterion of backwardness. No action on the Kalelkar Report resulted during the Nehru era and it was only after 30 years of independence that the Mandal Commission was constituted during the Janata Party rule at the Center. In the mean time, a large number of States proceeded to have their own Backward Classes Commission and arrived at different formulas of reservation in education and employment for the backward classes.\(^39\)

Though free India's secular and republican Constitution provides for equality of opportunity to all its citizens, irrespective of caste, creed or gender, and for redress of the inherited or imposed disadvantages suffered by the sections of the people, the traditional hold of the upper castes over positions of power and privileges rendered both "equal opportunity" and "redress" less effective instruments for positive changes. Operation of the Constitution, circumscribed by the superior social and political influence of the privileged castes or classes, has thus been able to bring about only some shifts in emphasis than any material alteration in the basic social structure. The erosion of Congress as a credible instrument of social, economic and political change and redress, the emergence of castes and community based pressure groups that are coalescing into alternative platforms of change that encompass all sections of people, and the loosing of the Brahmin centered Hindu hierarchy has seemed to provide

fresh scope for disadvantaged classes-increasingly identified as castes in the political electoral context-to seek their place in the sun.

As these disadvantaged groups saw it, the first break in their favour came in 1977, when the Congress lost power at the Center for the first time in free India. A splinter Congress group in power for a brief two years with the support of caste and community based groups set the country's second Backward Commission to report on steps to fully enfranchise the "socially and educationally backward classes". The first such Commission (headed by Kakakalelkar) failed to present a unanimous report favoring the use of caste as criterion to assess backwardness and thus it was put aside by the Jawaharlal Nehru Government\textsuperscript{40}.

A class of rich peasants, who mainly belonged to the intermediate level of caste in the traditional social structure emerged and deeply entrenched itself in the rural power structure; it was also making its presence felt in the political process at the regional and national levels. This class was not however, homogenous in its composition and different segments of it did not have identical social history. There were continuous shuffling and reshuffling of power equations among the segments. Simultaneously, technological developments were taking place in the non-agricultural sectors, including village industries and various traditional occupations. This in some cases led to marginalization of the traditional occupations and induction of others into these fields; in some other cases this triggered social mobility movement. It was in this context of socio-political churning that the Second Backward Classes Commission was setup\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{40} Venugopal Rao, M., "Caste war out in the open", Mainstream, September, 29,1990, pp.3-4.

In the exercise of the powers conferred by the article 340 of the Constitution, the President appointed a Backward Classes Commission\textsuperscript{42} popularly known as the Mandal Commission after its chairman, On 1\textsuperscript{st} January 1979 to investigate the conditions of Socially and Educationally Backward Classes within the territory of India. (Notification setting up of the Commission was issued on January 1\textsuperscript{st} 1979, when Morarji Desai was the Prime Minister.)

The Mandal Commission submitted the report in 1980, while observing that the upliftment of the other backward classes is not just part of the larger problem of the removal of the poverty. The deprivation of OBCs is a very special case of social and educational backwardness and poverty is a direct consequence of these two crippling caste-based handicaps. As these handicaps are embedded in our social structure their removal will require far-reaching structural changes. Keeping in view the 52\% of the Other Backward Classes population the Mandal Commission made wide-ranging recommendations (see annexure-2).

The Post-Mandal phenomena:

The Janata victory in 1977 reflects the emergence of the intermediate castes in north India. And the Backward Classes returned to the national political agenda. Pursuant to its electoral promise the Janata Government appointed the Mandal Commission. The Report of Mandal Commission (submitted on 31\textsuperscript{st} December 1980) was placed before the Parliament in April 1982. The Report was unanimously "endorsed" by the Parliament on 11\textsuperscript{th} August. All political parties in the Parliament acclaimed the spirit of equality embedded in the Commission's Report\textsuperscript{43}

The Report was neither rejected nor categorically accepted by the two successive Congress Governments. The Congress Government was unwilling to implement the Report as it enjoyed the electoral support twice-born caste along

\textsuperscript{42} This is the Second, and the last so far, Backward Classes Commission appointed by the Central Government under the Article 340.

with the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. It did not have much of supporting among the other backward classes. Hence it was not under pressure to implement the Report, though there were repeated demands from the OBCs and their support to implement the recommendations. The Congress kept on promising to consider the implementation of the Report but had not fulfilled its promise. Resultantly the Report gathered dust till 1990.

The National Front-Led minority Central government announced, when Mr. Viswanath Prathap Singh was the Prime Minister of India, on 7th August 1990, its decision (based on the Mandal Commission) to reserve 27% of civil posts for the SEBCs. In a quick follow up action, the Union Government issued an Office Memorandum (on 13th August, 1990) giving effect to its decision. The momentous policy announcement triggered a massive anti-reservation agitation on an unprecedented scale. The violent resistance to OBCs reservations culminated in the unprecedented phenomena of self-immolations. And the nation got polarized into pro and anti-reservation camps.

The anti-Mandal agitation reflects the resistance by the privileged upper castes to the claim of the ascendant OBCs on the state resources. Inadequate mobilization of the SEBCs; equally inadequate education of the upper castes about social justice through affirmative action; and the growing competition for the dwindling public sector jobs made the anti-OBC agitation more violent and one-sided. The movement also symbolizes the extra-institutional struggle of the dominant castes in defense of the statuesque and hence against reform and redistribution.

The Judiciary, though divided, played a decisive part during the anti-Mandal agitation. The Court categorically recognized the reality of caste-based

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44 Asghar Ali Engineer (Ed) in his "Introduction" to Mandal Commission Controversy, Ajanta pubs, Delhi, 1991, p. IX.

45 Ibid, p. IX.
inequalities and caste as a basis of compensatory discrimination. It also emphasized that share of State power is the basis of reservation in appointment under Article 16(4). Nevertheless, the Court struck a delicate balance between positive discrimination and principles of equality and efficiency by reconciling the conflicting interests of backward castes and forward castes.

The NDA Regime: The National Democratic Alliance led by the Bharatiya Janatha Party at the Center hardly taken any action for the advancement of the backward classes. Basically the NDA is being dominated by the upper class and castes, which led the anti-Mandal movement, when Janatha Dal Government announced for the implementation of the 27% reservations in the central Government appointments. It has hardly responded to even single problem of the backward castes, though there are demands from the Backward Classes Associations all over the country. The demands are to introduce the reservations in the Central Government educational institutions, to appoint a Parliamentary Committee to look after the implementation of 27% reservations, reservations in the Legislative bodies, to have OBC category in the Census, quota within the quota of the women reservation Bill, measures to economic development, to appoint at least one member in the Constitution Review Committee, to implement all the recommendations of the Mandal Commission etc., Instead of taking actions for the upliftment of the backward classes, the NDA Government adopted the antagonistic policy\textsuperscript{46} and started reviving the social deprivation by dropping and not implementing the reservations in the University Grants Commission recruitments and other public sector organizations\textsuperscript{47}.

It is concluded from the above analysis that the social movements, wherever they have taken place, have uplifted the lower castes and put the


\textsuperscript{47} Interview with Bojja Tarakam, prominent S.C, ST, and OBC leader and Advocate in AP High Court, at Hyderabad on Sep, 12\textsuperscript{th} 2003.
pressure on the State to introduce the affirmative action policy, as result of which a new class is emerged within the lower castes. Most of the time times this new class did not try to mobilize below castes but diverted the movements in order to continue their domination. For instance Vellalas, Mudaliars, Kamma, Reddiars, Shettiarst etc, in TamilNad, Vokkaligas and Lingayats in Karnataka, Marathas in Maharashtra and Yadavas in North India. Due to lack of support from the lower backward castes to the mainstream backward castes movements, still they are lagging beyond in capturing the power.

As far as the Backward Classes at the National level is concerned it was during the Janata and Janata Dal Government only favorable policy output is seen. During the Congress rule at the Center, the backward classes were set aside to the principle of social justice and democracy by rejecting the first all India Backward Classes Commission, i.e., the Kakakalelkar Commission. It is at the time of Janata and Janata Dal regimes, in the Center, only appointed the second National Backward Classes Commission and implemented the 27% of reservations in the Central Government recruitments. It reveals that it is essential to have non-Congress Government with a non-Brahmin Prime Minister to do justice for the backward classes. And the National Democratic Alliance at the center is not interested not only in implementing the existing reservations and taking any actions for the advancement of the backward classes but replacing the very concept of social justice through its actions.

The lower caste movements, which are discussed above not only questioned the foundations of the caste-feudal exploitation in modern India but also brought the identity to backward castes and influenced the policy matters. These movements also produced the lower caste leaders, theoreticians, ideology, literature, alternative culture and inspiration to the future movements. But these movements are lacking the network and coordination to expand all over the country, therefore, there is weak alliance at the national level. The studies on
these movements are also specific, but not comprehensive to give the national picture of the backward castes in the country.

(II)

In the light of the above analysis, it would be relevant here to review the existing literature on the social mobilization.

**Review of the literature:** There is a lot of literature, on the mobilization of the lower castes in the country, which is reviewed in the present thesis to understand the mobilization of BCs in Andhra Pradesh. The following literature is being reviewed based on a chronological order.

Even though the backward caste movements have got long history, which was begun in the colonial period and continuing till date, the studies have started only in the 1960s. Lack of focus on the backward caste movements until 60s might be due to idealistic rhetoric, classless socialistic pattern of society and welfare state, of the first Prime Minister of the country Jawaharlal Nehru and subsequent negligence of the Congress party in mobilizing the backward castes. From 1960s onwards the backward castes started challenging the upper castes dominating political parties and making alternative arrangements to emerge in the post-independent democratic political system, therefore, studies on the social mobilization of the lower castes came into existence from that time onwards only. These studies, which are relevant as follows.

Rudolph and Rudolph's *Modernity of Tradition Political development in India (1969)* is one of the earliest works on the political development of India. The authors discussed in detail about the role of caste associations in the modernization, and horizontal and differential mobilization. One important point, which is emphasized by the writers is that changes in the culture, structures and public functions of caste are necessary but not sufficient conditions for its democratic incarnation. A profound change in the nature of

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48 Rudolph and Rudolph, The *Modernity of Tradition*, Orient Long man, New Delhi, 1967
human sensibility is also required i.e. universalisation of fellow feelings because the traditional society patterns the emotional universe narrowly.

*Caste in Indian Politics (1970)*[^49] is edited by Rajni Kothari. The work is, basically, an empirical study of the role of caste in Indian politics. In the introduction Rajni Kothari offers a theoretical framework to understand the role of caste in the modern democratic political system. He adopted the liberal democratic theoretical approach to study the changing nature of the caste in the age of electoral politics. He observes that the democratic, for that matter any type of politics will not operate in the vacuum, but require a social base. In Indian context the caste system filling the gap, i.e. providing the social base to the functioning of the democracy.

In this work there are number of essays on political mobilization of various castes in various states in the country, such as the Nadars in TamilNad, factions between Kammas and Reddies in Andhra Pradesh, the Kshtriya Mahasabha in Gujarat, and other essays. All these essays gave blueprint to think about changing role of the caste in modern politics, but there is a need to give different type of interpretation to the role of caste in politics from contemporary point of view in the changing global situation.

The study on Kshatriya Mahasabha in Gujarat by Ghanshyam Shah is titled as *Caste Association and Political Process in Gujarat (1975)*[^50]. The study covers interactions between caste associations and political parties. It clarifies many doubts, raised by the western and eastern scholars, about the role of traditional ascriptive or parochial elements in the modern political process. The author supports the argument that social base is needed for recruitment of personnel in administration and enlistment of members for political parties, decision makers

[^49]: Rajni Kothari (ed), *Caste in Indian Politics*, Orient Long man, New Delhi, 1970

and contestants for elections. Caste also serves as a base for interest articulation, channel of communication and basis of leadership and organization. He also agrees with the view that caste is not the only factor, which influences the politics but it is one among many factors. The politics have potential capability to bring about the social change and create intra group competition within the caste association.

In order to support these arguments, he gives the illustrations based on the study of the Kshatriya Mahasabha in Gujarat. The Sabha has played a significant role for two decades in promoting political leaders and attracting the national political parties like Congress. One important lesson one can learn is that whoever support the local community based associations will gain support. Since Congress party supported the Sabha, it has got the support in the form of votes, whereas the Swatantra party has failed and Sabha also started declining due to the intra group competition.

*Social Movements and Social Transformation- A study of two Backward Classes Movements (1979)*[^51] is a significant work of M.S.A Rao who studied two backward castes movements such as SNDP movement in Kerala and *Yadava* movement in Bihar in particular and north India in general. He studied these two movements from the theory of relative deprivation point of view. He maintains that organization; ideology; collective mobilization and leadership are the essential elements of any movement. He also assessed the nature of social change among the *Ezhavas* of Kerala and *Yadavas* of Bihar due to social mobilization. Theses two communities are highly successful in terms of education, employment, economy, politics and culture in the post-independent period.

Competing Equalities (1984)\textsuperscript{52} by Marc Galantar traces the historical evolution of the legal framework of the compensatory discrimination policy for the socially, educationally disadvantaged people, such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Castes. It explains the origin and extension of the reservation policy in India from the Dalits to economically backward castes. According to him the deliberate interest in introducing the reservations is that the socially and educationally disadvantaged can nourish their accomplishments and enlarge their capabilities until the day that the protective barrier can be lowered and the special protections abandoned. The author elaborately discussed Constitutional provisions relating to reservations with illustrations of the Court cases.

Frankel and Rao's commendable work on the state politics in India is Dominance and State Power in Modern India-Decline of a social order (1989)\textsuperscript{53} The work covers political changes, political process and impact of policy rather than the institutions and individuals. According to the writers the rigid Indian social system started declining with the beginning of the democratic era. These essays also analyzed the changing power structure and sharing of power by the new castes/communities who started playing a significant role in the process of modern politics. Most of the writers have a consensus on the factors, such as numerical strength and possession of the land in determining the democratic politics.

The Politics of Accommodation Caste, Class and Dominance in Andhra Pradesh is an article in the above work\textsuperscript{54}. According to Ram Reddy the policy of accommodation is strategy for the colonial and post-colonial rulers in the state.

\textsuperscript{52} Marc Galantar, Competing Equalities: Lau) and Backward Classes in India, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1984.

\textsuperscript{53} Frankel and Rao, Dominance and State Power in Modern India-Decline of a Social Order, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1989.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid. pp. 265-321,
In the area of Madras presidency the colonial rulers accommodated the growing elites, in the post-independent period it is the politics of patronage and populism perpetuated the provincial dominant caste rule by accommodating the emerging elite from the backward castes, lower castes and other sections. This process of accommodation prevented the political consolidation of the backward castes in specific and other lower castes in general to form an alternative political platform.

The author well perceived the continuous contradictions since pre-formation of Andhra Pradesh. In his view political process of Andhra Pradesh is the expression of the contradictions like Brahmins vs. non-Brahmins, Zamindars and jagirdars vs. the peasants, rich peasants vs. agriculture labour, Telugu vs. non-Telugu, coastal Andhra vs. Rayalaseema, Reddies vs. Kammas etc. The Congress party is successful in accommodating the contradictory forces and weakening the opposition political force, but from 1970s onwards the strategy of the accommodation has failed, therefore, internal confrontations and factions within the Congress party gave space to the rise of regional movements, social movements and a regional party in the state.

The author rightly grasped the creation of the lower caste elite through the instrumental policies to protect the interests of the rulers rather than the structural changes for the benefit of the larger mass.

New Social Movements-Empowerment of the people (1993) edited by Ponna Wignaraja (ed) 55: The work deals with human development and participatory democracy as core values of the contemporary social mobilization, it is grass roots subaltern marginalized communities as the social bases. All these communities got their own historical, socio-economic, political, cultural specificities, which are manifest in mobilization and for the paradigm shift in the developmental strategy and participatory democracy.

Another aspect in the search for new paradigms is to identify the fundamental nature of the process of social change itself: Is it 'big bang' type of revolution results from a sharpening of contradictions or more commonly they are preceded by marginal reforms and incremental change? Both the processes can be observed in reality. There may be other intermediate processes and transitional pathways to social change, as the new social movements are located in various political spaces in the given historical context.

_Dalits and Democratic Revolution (1994)_\(^{56}\) by Gail Omvedt is an important work on the lower caste movements during colonial period in Nagapur, Hyderabad, Andhra, Mysore, Bombay presidency etc. The author claims to understand the lower caste movements in a more creative than the official orthodox communists. In this work the author analyses the three trends, which were represented by Congress and Gandhi against the colonial rule, the Communists anti-feudal and Ambedkar against the caste system in the country. In her view Ambedkar's path of liberation of the lower castes is overthrowing of the Hindu religious ideological hegemony. Ambedkar tended to see economic and social oppression as separate structures, taking up cultural change as the way to challenge Hinduism and socialism as the way to overcome economic exploitation.

_Why lam not a Hindu (1996)_\(^{57}\) is the critical work of Kancha Ilaiah from the political culture approach. His main argument is that there is a contradiction between two cultures. One is the productive culture of the _dalitbahujans_ and unproductive culture of the Brahmins. The former is responsible for the entire material wealth, whereas the latter exploiting the _dalitbahujans_ with the device of the _Brahminical_ ideology by using Sanskrit language, which cannot be

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understood by the producing castes. He critically assessed the state, market and relations in civil society and the emergence of the upper caste *shudras* as the ruling class, their ideology and process of action to legitimize.

**Limitations of the existing literature:** The literature, which is reviewed above, has got certain limitations.

i). Most of these studies are broadly focusing on the over all political process in the country rather than social mobilization of the backward castes.

ii). One can hardly find any study on the nature of contradictions in India like social system, the kind of development model and type of democracy practiced in the post-independent period vs. backward castes and internal contradictions within the backward castes.

iii). If there are any studies on the mobilization, they are limited to a specific caste or organization and a region rather than comprehensive study of the instruments of the mobilization.

iv). These studies did not focus much on the link between social mobilization and response of the state in the form of public policies.

**( III)**

**Nature and scope of the study:**

In the light of above analysis the present study focus on the nature of social mobilization of backward castes in post-independent period in Andhra Pradesh, which is neither a powerful social movement like pre-independence social movements nor post-independent mobilization in north India. The backward castes mobilization in Andhra Pradesh has got its own specific characteristic features. Therefore, the present study broadly discusses the social, economic and political deprivation of the backward castes, instruments and forces of the mobilization, process of accommodation through ineffective, incremental and inadequate policies. In this process of the study an attempt is made to give the answers for the important questions like what are the factors, which prevented the backward castes from the share in the development and
decision-making? Why they have been marginalized in politics and fragmented in terms of mobilization? And why state is introducing weak policies only? In a sense the present thesis is dealing with three contradictions; one, social system vs. backward castes, two, developmental strategy vs. backward castes and three nature of democracy vs. backward castes.

Hypothesis: The social mobilization of the backward castes is based on the following hypothesis.

1. Development strategy of the state adversely affects the traditional source of livelihoods of the backward castes and creating class among them to perpetuate the upper strata dominance.

2. In the absence of control over the economic resources and Constitutional guarantees for political representation coupled with lack of unity lead to marginalisation of the backward castes.

3. The factional politics of the dominant castes and negligence of the lower backward castes by the advanced backward castes elite lead to fragmentation of the backward castes mobilization.

4. Weak policies of the state towards backward castes result in strengthening of the process of dominant castes and weakening of the backward castes.

Methodology: The study relies on primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data is collected through interviews, dialogue, and transect walk, participatory method like focus group discussion, household survey and observation method for developing case studies. The secondary data includes important sources, besides existing works, reports and documents journals published by the caste associations, and the reports and other documents (published and unpublished) that are available with the associations, organizations, leaders and Government sources like documents, reports, Government orders etc. Other sources of information are biographies, personal interviews with the leaders, and visits to various centers of activity, not only to
get more information but also to check the information available in the caste journals. The data from these sources have been supplemented by participating in conferences, meetings, training classes, and festivals, visiting the relative's houses and gossip groups at various places. Based on this data mobilization of the backward classes is analyzed from the historical, socio-economic and political point of view.

**Chapterisation:** Based on the above data chapterisation of the present thesis is done as follows.

Chapter-1 is introduction, which deals, essentially, with the nature of social movements, review of the literature, methodology and chapterisation. Chapter-2 deals with socio-economic profile of the backward castes in Andhra Pradesh. The important question, which is being addressed, is that why the backward castes are socially and economically deprived. Both external factors as well as internal factors are discussed. Chapter-3 discusses on the changing political context and backward castes. The important factors for the political deprivations of the backward castes such as lack of control over the physical assets and Constitutional guarantees and subsequent results like political marginalisation are covered. Chapter-4 focuses on the mobilization aspect of the backward castes. It looks at four important instruments such as Caste Associations, Federation of caste associations, political parties and non-party organizations, and nature of fragmentation in terms of mobilization. Chapter-5 presents the response of the state to the backward castes mobilization in the form of policies such as ineffective policies of occupational cooperatives, Adarana and anti-poverty programmes, incremental policies of affirmative action like reservations in educational institutions, employment and local body institutions and inadequate policies such as scholarships, hostels, and institutional arrangements to implement the policies. The last chapter presents the conclusions.
limitations of the study:

The present study as concentrating itself from post-independent to post-economic reforms period in Andhra Pradesh, which is very comprehensive, it naturally bestows with limitations such as

a). The present study is general to specific rather than specific to general, which means that, first, it study the nature of social mobilization in various states and at the national level and come to the specific study of the mobilization of backward castes in Andhra Pradesh.

b). The study on the social mobilization of the backward castes in Andhra Pradesh is macro rather than micro. It covers the general bird eye view on the backward castes in the state rather than the specific micro level village study, but some of the micro level field based case studies are used as source of information to supplement the secondary data and

c). Due to time and financial constraints in collecting the primary data, mostly secondary data, which is relevant, is used for the analysis.

However, keen interest and proper care is taken in doing complete justification to the study.