Chapter – II

Other Backward Classes Movements in India

This chapter is an historical perspective to analyze the genesis of the other backward classes’ movement in India. Backward classes constitute an important segment of India’s population. They are large and mixed category of people with boundaries that are both unclear and elastic. The significance of BCs lies not only in its size and extent but also in the uniquely Indian way of defining its boundaries. The category of backward classes is made up of three principal components. The scheduled castes, the scheduled tribes, the other backward classes are well defined categories. The other backward classes are a residual category; their position is highly ambiguous: and it is very difficult to give an exact statement of their number and socio-economic status. The “other backward classes” for whom prefrontal treatment is authorized are not defined in the Constitution. It is said that a backward class is a class or community which is backward in the opinion of the government. The problem of specifying backward classes poses a great difficulty. Generally one can say socially and educationally backward people fall within the category of the backward classes but so far it has not been possible to list these classes and evolve acceptable criteria for identifying them.\(^1\)

India has been identified with thousands of such Backward Castes mostly found in the middle and lower rungs of caste hierarchy but above the SCs and STs. In every village there used to be a ‘community feeling’ for a long and every BC/SC is involved in one or the other ‘productive operation or exclusive service’ to society and everyone

\(^1\) Garner, Roberts Ash.(1979) ‘Social movements in India’ manohar publication new Delhi
needs such service to maintain their life. The upper castes believe that they have a right to demand the laborer as well as product and service from the BCs and SCs as a natural service or social practice. There are wide variations in these caste groups in terms of their place of living, region, language, work pattern, social practice and so on. It is thus difficult to study and understand the all India phenomena of BCs unless we conduct a long term study and analyze various facts. Unfortunately studies of extensive nature are not found and also in the absence of basic census data much needed to be dependent upon various studies of piecemeal nature.\(^2\)

**Definition and concept of other backward classes**

The origin of the term backward classes may be traced back to the latter part of the 19\(^{th}\) century. For a long time, the terms depressed classes and backward classes were used interchangeably. Some time “depressed classes” included only untouchables and at other places this term included even criminal wondering tribes, aboriginal tribes, besides untouchables. The other words coined to denote the backward groups were such as exterior castes and excluded classes. Sir Henry sharp opined that backward classes included classes pursuing unclean professions, or those belonging to unclean castes whose touch or even shadow is polluting and also classes who were backward and educationally poor and despised and also certain classes of Mohammadens.\(^3\)

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\(^2\) Prof. Murali Manohar K. (2011), Backward Castes Special Plan (BCSP), Mahatma Jyoti Rao Phule Academy of Backward Castes Development and Empowerment (ABCDE), Warangal, Andhra Pradesh

Other Backward Classes: Composition and Characteristics

The term backward class was first used in the 1870s by the Madras administration in the framework of an affirmative action policy favoring the under-educated communities. The colonial sense of undereducated means not from the historical marginalisation, deprivation, and exclusion from the basic rights such as education, property and power, but from the view to serve the needs of the colonial administration in the light of education system which was advocated by Macaulay\(^4\). The state, to fulfill the objectives of Macaulay, administrative needs and pressure from the missionaries, appointed the education commission in 1882. The commission recommended improvement of education among the aborigines, untouchables, low caste of the society. Initially, in 1883, nearly 39 castes were recognized as backwards, which was the first attempt in the history of India to provide state-cum-legal support for the backward communities.\(^5\)

Marc Galanter indicates that the term backward classes had a less fixed and definite reference. It had been there but had a variety of referents. It had shifted rapidly in meaning and it had come to mean different things in different places. He goes on to specify ten such denotations of the term backward classes. These include depressed classes, untouchables, SCs, aboriginals and hill tribes, criminal tribes, all communities deserving special treatment excepting the untouchables, all communities above the


\(^5\) Ibid. P-515
untouchables but below the most advanced ones, communities other than the highest or most advanced, and communities meeting non-communal tests of backwardness.\(^6\)

Further, Galanter proceeds to provide historical examples in different states at different points of time in the pre-Independence period to conclude that the term had never acquired a definite meaning at all-India level. There had been no attempts until then to define it or employ it on the national level. The term had definite meanings in local contexts although these differed somewhat. After separating SCs and the STs, he states, two major species emerged

- as the more inclusive group of all those who need special treatment;
- as a stratum higher than the untouchables but nonetheless depressed.

This double usage continues even today: the former in the usage of BCs in the wider sense (including SCs and STs) the latter in the usage as equivalent to BCs\(^7\).

Analyzing the debates of Constituent Assembly and majority-concurring judgments in the Indra Sawhney case, two definitive treatises on the issue Galanter came to the conclusion that the term OBCs, by whomever designated and according to whatever tests they were chosen, were expected to be a list of castes or communities. In fact, the most authoritative statement on the issue is that of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar given on 18 May 1951 at the time of First Constitutional Amendment (which inserted the Articles 15(4) “what are called backward classes are nothing else, but a collection of certain castes.” This has remained so in so far as the OBCs under Articles 15(4) and

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\(^7\) Sujatha V.S. (2002), o.p.cet
16(4) are concerned. In operational terms, those listed as SEBCs [15(4)] or BCCs [16(4)] are specified in their affiliation terms through listing of communities in the OBC (and also SC, ST) lists but benefits are available to them as individuals, as entitlements of Fundamental Rights guaranteed by Articles 14, 15 and 16.

Other Backward Classes in the States

The position concerning other Backward Classes varies from State to State. At one end, Manipur, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Goa, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep and Mizoram, have not recognized or maintained any official list of other backward classes. The central List of OBCs was issued in respect of 24 states and 6 union Territories so for. Four states- Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Mizoram- are not covered by OBCs quota till now. Similarly, the Union Territory of Lakshadweep is also not covered OBC quota. Orissa and Delhi had at one time prepared their lists of Other Backward Classes on the basis of caste, but had later on withdrawn them and adopted economic criteria for determining backwardness. The Southern States of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh which contain sizeable numbers of scheduled Castes and other converts to Christianity, as well as groups on the periphery of Hindu society, have always followed a liberal policy towards these groups.

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8 Sujatha V.S. (2002), o.p.cet
9 Dr. Ranjan Kumar Biswar, (2008), “SC, ST and other Backward Classes in India” Rajadhani Printer, New Delhi
They have caste-wise lists of other backward classes but qualified with a family income limit. Besides scholarships or exemption from fees in schools and colleges, seats are also reserved for these classes in technical institutions. A substantial percentage of vacancies in all state services are also reserved for them to the extent of 25 percent in Andhra Pradesh, 50 percent in Tamil Nadu, 48 percent in Karnataka, 40 percent in Kerala, 20 percent in Bihar, 10 percent (in class III and IV jobs and services) and 5 percent in Class I and Class II jobs and services in Gujarat, 42 percent in Jammu and Kashmir, 5 percent in Punjab, 15 percent in Uttar Pradesh 10 percent in Haryana and 5 percent in Himachal Pradesh.\(^\text{10}\) The states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Bihar have sub-divisions of the OBCs. However, this sub-division is not of the same variety. In Bihar, the list is sub-divided into (i) OBCs and (ii) Most Backward Classes (MBCs). Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka OBC lists are sub-divided into A, B, C, D. Group A comprise Aboriginal Tribes, Vimukta Jatis. Group B comprises occupational skill groups such as Toddy tappers, Weavers, Carpenters, Iron smiths, Goldsmiths, Kamsalis, etc., Group C pertains to SC converts to Christianity and their progeny. Group D comprises all other classes/communities/groups which are not included in groups, A, B, and C. For, reservation benefits are apportioned among these categorised sub-groups in proportion to their respective population among the OBCs\(^\text{11}\).

In the remaining States, the entire OBC list is one and, therefore, all of them are treated at par officially although a few among them corner a larger share of benefits which Articles 15(4) and 16(4) confer on them. The foregoing sub-division in the

\(^{10}\) ibid

referred three states makes it very clear that categories of communities which should have logically gone into the lists of SCs and STs have actually been included among the OBCs. This has been done in an entirely ingenuous manner under entry 24 of Assam OBC list which has 96 sub-entries the title ‘Tea-Garden Laborers/TG Tribes/Ex-TG Tribes” many of which are either SCs or STs.\(^\textsuperscript{12}\)

**Non-Brahmin movement in states**

The nature of social deprivation can be explained with the illustrations. The field based case studies of shudra castes in Maharashtra, Ezhavas in Kerala\(^\textsuperscript{13}\), Nadars in Tamil Nadu and Yadavas in North India. All these caste groups have been included in the OBC list. Therefore, the collective experience of these communities is a potential source to understand the nature of social deprivation in India.

M.S.A. Rao, classified Backward class Movements into four kinds of variations which could be distinguished on the basis structural cleavages and manifest conflicts.(1) the upper Non-Brahman castes (Reddy, Kamma) (2) the second kind of Backward class Movement hinges around the cleavages within the category of Non-Bahaman castes. It was between the upper castes and the intermediate and lower castes Hindus. For instance in North India the conflict was between Thakurs, Rajputs and Bhumihar Brahmins on the one hand and the intermediate and lower castes such as the Ahir and Noniyas on the other.(3) there was the opposition between certain Non-Bahaman

\(^{12}\) Sujatha V.S. (2002), o.p.cet

\(^{13}\) Rao M.S.A (1979) Social movements and social Transformation: A study of Two Backward classes movements in India, Macmillan co, of India Ltd, Delhi. P 7
castes on the one hand and the depressed classes on the other. The fourth type of movement was a tribal movement.  

Throughout Indian history attempts have been made to reject Brahminical supremacy. According to M.N. Srinivas, the Non-Brahman movement of the present century differs from earlier movements not only in regard to scale and intensity but also as to ideology. The speeches of the Non-Brahmin leaders in Madras particularly the 20th of this century reveal the influence of the liberal and radical thoughts of Western Europe. The Non-Brahmins leaders asserted that they were as good as the Brahmins and that they wanted the British rulers to give them preferential treatment for a time in order that this could become an established fact.

In the 19th century, Poona and Kolhapur (Maharashtra) provided leadership to the emergence of backward castes movement in India. One of the first leaders of Christian missionary education was Jothiba Phule of Poona who came from among the Shudra caste of gardener. Phule (1827-1890) is known as the father of the non-Brahmin movement in India. He provoked the people to revolt against Hindu casteist Gods and humiliating religious practices. He preached for the abolition of false beliefs, meaningless rituals and baseless customs. He inspired the lower castes to from their association create a spirit de corps and work for their emancipation from the age old

15 Srinvas M.N (1962) “Caste in modern India” Asia publishing house Bombay
taboos pertaining to shudras in social status, education and religion. Jothiba founded the Satyashodak mandal to bring together all the backward classes on a common platform. Jyothiba preached the principle of adequate representation for members of all castes in public services. The non-Brahman movement generated in Bombay expanded under the rule of Maharaja Chatrapati Shahu Maharaj. He declared in 1902 that he would keep at least half the posts state for qualified members of the non-Brahman communities. Kolhapur, therefore, has been a landmark in the backward class movement towards equality.

The non-Brahmin movement in Andhra Pradesh as a cultural movement was active for a couple of years in areas of Krishna and Guntur. The spearhead of this movement was Tripuraneni Ramaswamy Choudhary, a non-Brahmin Shudra upper caste Kamma, well-versed in the classical lore of Vedas and Puranas. A good command of Sanskrit helped him examine the Brahminical culture critically. He wrote Suta Purana, Shambhu Ka Vadha and other works, including poetry and essays. Choudhary was a rationalist and be attacked superstitions and false icons found in Puranas. He also attacked the Brahminic hegemony sustained through hierarchical caste system and monopoly by conducting marriages without the aid of Brahmin priests and by simplifying rituals and mantras. He influenced some educated non-Brahmins in the towns of Vijayawada, Guntur and Tenali. However, he could not develop any following in villages.

17 ibid
Although inspired by the Justice Party and Dravida Kazhagam, as said earlier, the non-Brahmin movement in Andhra remained essentially a cultural movement. It could not become a mass political movement. Secondly, it could not generate strident anti-Brahmanism like in Tamilnadu, as the leaders of freedom struggle movement in Andhra were famous Brahmins like Tanguturi Prakasam, Balusu Samba Moorthy, Ayyadevara Kaleshware Rao, Duggirala Gopala Krishnaiah etc.

They were also the epochal leaders with great mass image. These leaders were also the potent symbols of selflessness, sacrifice and intrepidity. This perhaps led to the weakening and withering of the non-Brahmin movement. Later, no major backward caste movement emerged in Andhra. The Communist Party during this period did not participate in the freedom struggle and focused more on anti-capitalist struggles. It organized the landless agricultural laborers, small farmers, students, youth and industrial working class. In the top echelons of leadership of the Communist Party there used to be ideological struggles regarding the character of the state, mode and relation of production and the theory of social mobilization and transformation thereof. The party was influenced by the Yannam thesis of Mao and consequently under the vanguard of peasant leader in 1946 the Telangana armed struggle was launched. Later, on the advice of Stalin, the struggle was withdrawn.\textsuperscript{19}

The Non-Brahmin movement in Tamil Nadu for the emerging social consciousness about the Brahmins was divided into various groups referred to as sub-castes, viz., the Vadamas, the Vatimans, and the Astadas. Further, they are divided into

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.,
regional groups, such as Choladesa Vadama, a jati originally located in the country of the ancient Chola Kingdom, a valley of the Cauvery River. However, the non-Brahmins from Tamil Nadu consider all Brahmins as one and do not make a difference of sub-castes. In Tamil Nadu, Brahmins were the main beneficiaries of the British system of education and the other advantages. The educated Brahmins captured the largest share of government service in the state. ‘The monopoly situation in government service created by Brahmins and Montague-Chelmsford reforms alerted and alarmed non-Brahmins. As a result non-Brahmins elite castes took lead and established first the south Indian liberal federation and secondly justice party in 1916. An interesting fact is that the justice party leaders were drawn from the landed classes and were not much keen on broadening their base by including the landless castes within their ranks. The communal G.O. of 1927 represented a victory for the Villella castes, particularly the mudalliars.

The Non-Brahmin movement in Karnataka was initiated by the Vokkaligas and Lingayats, the two dominant castes. The interesting development that followed the emergence of these dominant categories was the starting of caste associations for effective mobilization. Thus, the Lingayats are quite dominant. It is composed of people of several other castes who are converted into a religious sect, the Veera Shaiva. Among the Lingayats there are several sub-castes of priests, merchants, artisans, servants and untouchables. Thus, within the caste of Lingayats, there is an entire

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21 Mathur M.L. (2004) op.cit
complement of specialists necessary for operating a caste system.\textsuperscript{22} Conversions to this religious sect retain the specialty of their caste or origin. Most parts of the present Karnataka state were parts of the previous Mysore state, between 1851 to 1881 reservations were made for non-Brahmins as the Brahmins had established monopoly in the services and the professions in 1895. An order was issued by the Mysore government reserving some posts for the backward classes. In the year 1882, the Mysore Representative assembly was constituted on limited franchise to make the people capable to voice their grievance and aspirations, but with no legislative powers.\textsuperscript{23}

One of the most influential social movements in modern Kerala is the 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 and spiritual life and alternative religion.\textsuperscript{24} Narayana Guru in his time built around 60 temples in Kerala. Beginning with Aruvippuram, in all these temples he also started teaching to young students the classics in Sanskrit. This did not mean that he was against imparting the education in the modern subjects. In fact, all the temples started schools with this aim.\textsuperscript{25}

The Backward classes’ movement in Uttar Pradesh had three major salient features. First, the movement acquired three dimensional developmental dynamics: it

\textsuperscript{23} Mathur M.L, (2004) op.cit.
\textsuperscript{24} Rao M.S.A (1979) op.cit
\textsuperscript{25} Balakrishnan P.K (1954) Narayana Guru, Kottayam, DC Books
developed horizontally, it rose upwards and it percolated downwards. Second, the backward mobilization used three channels one, through mobilizing peasant castes/class; two, through mobilization of lower middle class of government servants; and three, through mobilization of middle and lower castes. Third, backward movement and mobilization in UP followed neither the Bihar model (through peasant mobilization) nor adopted the Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan model (cooption by congress and BJP), but charted an independent and autonomous trajectory that differed from both. In that sense, the OBC movement in UP could be said to have set a model for other states to emulate.\(^{26}\)

The History of backward caste mobilization in Uttar Pradesh could be traced back to the late 1950s and the 1960s under the leadership of Dr. Rammanohor Lohia, Kanshi Ram and Chaudhury Charan Singh. But, the other backward class (OBC) movement in UP has never had a distinct and autonomous character till the arrival of Mandal in 1989. The OBC mobilization in UP was a first a part of the socialist movement under Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia during 1950s, then become a part of the agrarian movement lead by Chaudhary Charan Singh in 1960s (since 1967) when he quit congress and formed his own party Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD) to be succeeded by the backward and minority community employees federation (BAMCEF) movement under the patronage of Kanshiram in 1970s.\(^{27}\)


\(^{27}\) Duby satya mitra (2011) Dr. Manohar Lohia; a Rebel socialist and a visionary, Mainstream, Vol, XLIX, No13 March 19.
As the backward castes in Bihar as elsewhere in India is a heterogeneous community ranging from the peasant castes to the service and artisan castes. They have also been associated differently with the social structure of caste and production relations. However, common feature of the backward castes is that they are above the pollution line. Therefore, when we make sense of the backward caste movement, the artisan and service castes are not as conscious of their exploitation as the peasant castes among the backward castes. Besides the sanskritisation movements among Yadavas- Kurmis also attempted for their upward mobility through this process\textsuperscript{28}.

In states like Bihar, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh the well entrenched and dominant castes are Bhumihars, Rajputs, Thakurs, Jats and Ahirs. They constitute sizeable proportion of the total population. These caste groups have successfully operated and not only secured political leadership, but also perpetuated very firmly in the seat of power. However, in recent times, the rise of Kurmis, Yadavas and other backward caste have unified and consolidated as a strong force, challenging the hegemony of hitherto dominant middle castes.

**Linkage between OBC and Dalit movements**

There are linkage in the ideologies and movements of the OBCs as well as Dalits both at the levels of ideologues and their explanation by common enemy namely the Brahmincal social order. In spite of linkages both could not come together to wage an untied battle against Brahmin hegemony. The prime reasons are:

\textsuperscript{28} Sanjay Kumar (2014) Understanding Backward Caste Movement in Contemparary Bihar. Epw
• One, their different ritual status which denied the intimate relationship between the two as the OBCs remained within the pale of Hindu social order and Dalits were placed outside it;

• Second, the distribution and rights to own land became the bone of contention between the two.

The OBC are mainly landowners and the Dalit are landless labourers which generate conflicting interests and ultimately hinders their unity. This has been used by the so called upper castes to widen the gap between the OBC and Dalit and helped them to perpetuate their hegemony. The movements launched by ideologues of the OBC and Dalit were sabotaged by them through this ploy. As the rituals and economic inequalities between the OBC and Dalit have been existing since time immemorial, the socio-political realities can bring them together because of compulsion of population numbers in a democratic setup.²⁹


Notwithstanding the OBC ideologues, ideologies and movements launched by them similar sects have also tried to protect the interest Dalits (variously designated as untouchables, Adi-Hindu or Panchamas or Antajas or Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes). The Dalits have also come to believe in their ideology and participated in their movements. They have also started separate movements against Brahminism by taking inspiration from OBC’s ideologues.
It is noteworthy that OBCs also participated in the movements launched by Dalits against Brahmanism. Therefore some important Dalit ideologues, their ideologies and movements need to be mentioned though it does not strictly fall within the ambit of this chapter. It will give impetus to further investigations in this field. For instance, the Dalit ideologues, ideologies and movements have been exhaustively narrated by Kumar (1999). The movements in the south-west have been highlighted by Zelloit (1998) in a systematic manner.\textsuperscript{30}

In the south India (Madras Presidency) Lyothee Thass led Buddhist conversion movement at the turn of twentieth century. It was a conversion movement to discover their lost Buddhist identity. Bhagyreddy Varma in Andhra Pradesh organized the Adi-Hindu movement based on the ideology that Dalits were the original inhabitants of the Indian society which were subjugated by the conqueror Aryans.

In Kerala, Ayyankali and Vellikkary Choti argued for treating Dalits as equal human beings. Similarly in Mysore, Murgesh Pillai along with M.C. Raja wanted their equal rights in educational institutions and other public places. The Dalit struggle in Western India was led by Gopal Bann Walankar of Ranta Giri in Bombay Presidency. He along with Shivram Jamba Kamble, Kisan Fogogi Bansode propagated reforms within their community and took the help of modern institutions for their all round development\textsuperscript{31}.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p.172
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., p.172
These social reformers and leaders demanded reservation in armed forces and also emphasized on the distribution of land. Above all Babasaheb Ambedkar launched a vehement attack on the Brahmin Hindu system in Maharashtra which laid the foundation for wider Dalit movement in India. In the east, the Dalit struggle was a low key affair and only Namshudra movement could achieve some success with the help of a Dalit ideologue Jogendra Nath Mandal.

In northern India, Swami Achutanand of Farrukhabad and Mangoo Ram of Punjab have propagated the ideology of Adi-Hindu and Adi-Dharma respectively. They were of the opinion that Dalits were the real inhabitants of India and their forefathers were rulers. They believed that their development could take place only outside the Hindu-Brahminic social order. The Adi-Hindu ideology of South India had close relationship with the Adi-Hindu ideology of northern India. They wanted to forge an all India alliance but could not succeed.

It is significant that the aforesaid ideologues, their ideologies and movements were also inspired by the ideologues and ideologies of the OBC. It is imperative that in the 21st century the OBC, the Dalit and the minorities should come together to replace Brahminism by humanism. Of late, Kanshi Ram tried to forge unity between the OBC and Dalit through the Bahujan Samaj movement and the BSP. There are also other groups which are trying to bring them together. In any case, the unity between OBC, Dalits and minorities can be established through a process of mobilization. The mobilization patterns, vertical, horizontal and differential/ideological are assuming
relevance because the exploited OBC and Dalits are now mobilizing masses under their leadership. From the womb of this mobilization, a society based on equality, liberty, distributive justice and fraternity will rise in the near future.

Thus, far from dissolving under the impact of modern economic and political forces, caste has become more firmly entrenched in the life of nation. In the words of Norman D. Palmer “although caste seems to be dealing in importance as a social factor it is increasing to be in importance as a political factor.” The role of caste in politics is often referred to as casteism may be defined as the tendency to mould the life of nation on the basis of caste. The caste system as of today seems to have come about as a multiplicity of ethnic groups accepting the hierarchical order, social isolation and inbreeding sanctioned by the belief that ritual pollution was the result from inter-caste marital and sexual relations. Barrington Moore observed the caste and indeed remains tremendously persistent and tremendously flexible, in its concrete manifestation, a huge mass of locally coordinated social cells that tolerate novelty by generating another cell.32

This division was given greater sanctity in the ancient times for making a state self-sufficient. With the passage of time, this caste system became rigidified though it lost its functional basis and got replaced by astrictive character. Among the Western countries, religious groupings and religious division played a pre-dominant role and even several wars took place on the basis of religion. Reference may be made to One Hundred Years War, War of Roses, and War of Flanders and so on.33

Karl Marx, the father of scientific socialism, predicted that a country witnessing industrialization, urbanization and modernization would tend to provide for a class consciousness that is economic class of rich and poor, employers and employees, management and the laborer which eventually paves way for a class war and later establishment of proletarian hegemony. But, such a thesis is unfounded in Indian context wherein the caste has been operating on a dialectical process from that of its traditional posture to its modern orientation.

Simultaneously, the caste, a traditional symbol, is also getting more and more reinforced with the passage of time. Prof Rajni Kothari, in his Politics in India observes that caste and politics representing tradition and modernity respectively have tended to interact with each other. In such a process, the caste is politicized and politics has become castes, thereby both are gradually losing their individual identities. This assertion is quite appropriate in the light of the changing contours of caste and politics in contemporary India.

**Backward classes movement in Andhra Pradesh**

The backward caste and Scheduled Caste mobilization for power and transformation by the Non-Marxist and Marxist parties in Andhra Pradesh is an area well elaborated by various authors. The discussion related to non-Marxist parties is largely limited to important parties, viz., the Congress, Telugu Desam Party (TDP), Telangana Rastra Samithi (TRS) Only on a few occasions caste mobilization and struggles seem to have occurred in conjunction with class mobilization and struggles.

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34 Rajni Kothari (1972) “Politics in India” (Orient Longman) New Delhi, p.6
However, there was no salient mobilization of the backward castes for status and power.\textsuperscript{35}

The British rulers introduced English education through Macaulay reforms. They also implanted modern institutions of government, medicine, judiciary and mass media. The Brahmins of Andhra then a part of the Madras Presidency took advantage of these resources and became administrators, doctors, judges and journalists. This enabled them to graduate to positions of dominance and power in society. Small in numbers they wielded more influence than the other castes could stomach.

The non-Brahmin opposition started in 1861, but got organized in 1920s. It became sharper and widespread in 1930s. The Justice Party was formed in 1919 and it was the precursor of the non-Brahmin movement. In Andhra, it was led by Dr. C.R. Reddy, T. Ramaswamy Chaudhary, Bobbili Raja and the Raja of Tekkali etc., the party attracted a few non-Brahmin Shudra upper caste groups like the Reddys, Kammas and Velamas. A few backward Kapus too joined them. To promote the interests and welfare of their caste groups, they formed caste associations as well they made representations to the government through petitions, memoranda and appeals seeking reservations and concessions, particularly in education and administration.

In 1935-37, the District Board elections were contested on Caste lines. By this time the peasant castes (Reddys, Kammas and Velmas) made notable strides in

education, agriculture and trade. There was growth of rich and middle peasants among them (Sun 1996). Money and status was not enough and they wanted power too. Hence in this election, the contest for power was centered round Brahmin, Reddy and Kamma groups. Gradually, the place of the aforesaid non-Brahmin groups in the power structure acquired visibility.

This was accomplished partly by vote mobilization of a few BC and SC castes that were an appendage in their power game. This decade (1935-45) was also the crucial period when the freedom struggle by the Congress Party was taking a critical turn. There was greater mobilization of different social strata and caste groups to further the sinews of the movement. In Andhra Pradesh the Congress Party was dominated mostly by Brahmins and Reddys. The Kammas, an equally strong and dominant caste, felt that these two powerful castes monopolized power and that they were sidelined in the power structure. Harrison thinks that it was this rivalry between Reddys and Kammas that had compelled the latter to join the Communist Party and work for its expansion and growth. Although there is some truth in this observation, it cannot be fully justified.

**Backward Classes in Constitutional Perspective**

Indian Constitution has provided us with a way of life that is in consonance with the ideals of democracy. These ideals can only be established by providing social, economic and political justice to the people. India is a heterogeneous society having disparities of economic, social and cultural nature. The framers of our Constitution were
aware of a fact that in a caste-ridden society like ours, certain castes and classes were socially oppressed, economically condemned to live the life of penury, and educationally coerced to learn the family trade or occupation and to take the education set out for each caste and class by society, for centuries.\textsuperscript{36}

Analyzing the debates of Constituent Assembly, Galanter and majority-concurring judgments in the Indra Sawhney case, (Appendices\textsuperscript{1}) two definitive treatises on the issue came to the conclusion that the term OBCs, by whomever designated and according to whatever tests they were chosen, were expected to be a list of castes or communities.

The Constituent Assembly thought it necessary to include provisions in the Constitution which would serve as an exception to the general provisions guaranteeing equality so as to enable the government in helping the "Backward Classes" to catch up with rest of the society. These provisions were included in Article 15 (4) that reads: Nothing in this Article or in clause 2 of Article 29 shall prevent the state from making any special provision for the advancement of any ‘socially and educationally backward Classes of citizens’ through Article 340, which later, through the Constitution by the First Amendment Act, 1951, came to be incorporated as Clause (4) under Article 15 of the constitution that governs provision of reservation in educational institutions. “Wherein adequate safeguards shall be provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas and depressed and other backward classes\textsuperscript{37}, “Wherein adequate safeguards shall be

\textsuperscript{37} K.C.Yadav (1994). India’s unequal citizens; a study of backward classes, New Delhi P.13
provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas and depressed and other backward classes,” thus Jawaharlal Nehru, for the first time used the epithet “other backward classes”–OBCs. However “surprisingly, all the other terms in the statement–minorities, backward and tribal areas and depressed classes, were discussed in and defined by the constituent assembly, but not the OBCs.\textsuperscript{38}

Despite the fact that the matter was raised in the assembly, the committee in charge of drafting the constitution refused to be more specific on the definition of backward classes. “Ambedkar also felt no need to spell out more precisely, the meaning of the epithet “backward” but for different reasons,\textsuperscript{39} as opined by the author Christophe Jaffrelot in his “India’s silent resolution” 2003, “Ambedkar seemed to be apprehensive I’ve that a clear cut definition of OBCs would transform them into an all powerful social coalition involving the bulk of the society.\textsuperscript{40}

It is noteworthy that among the twenty most influential people who were drafting the constitution, there were 11 Brahmins, 2 Amil, 1 Kayastha, 1 Baniya, 1 Rajput, 1 Scheduled caste, Ambedkar, 2 Muslims and 1 Christian and not even one was from OBC lower castes.\textsuperscript{41} the response of K.M. Munshi, a senior member in the Drafting committee, in the context of debate in the constituent Assembly for clearly on the meaning of the word, “backward” was indicative of his reluctance to delineate the limits of a clear cut category of “backward classes” the manner of his response is suggestive

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid pp 216,217
of his intention to prepare the ground for the congress the strategy of co-option of schedule castes, there by circumventing the OBC category, which eventually, could challenge the upper castes domination\textsuperscript{42}.

\textbf{Caste-wise breakup of the Hindu members (the constituent Assembly)}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmins</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ksyatriyas</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banias</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajputs</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marathas</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reddys</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totel</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: K.C. Yadav  India’s unequal citizens; a study of backward classes,

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar resignation from Nehru’s cabinet, (10.10.1951) he has made a reference to constitutional safeguards to backward classes, relevant portion which speaks “I was very sorry that the constitution did not embody any safeguards for the backward classes, it was left to be done by the executive Government on the basis of the recommendations of the commission to be appointed by the president\textsuperscript{43}.

\textsuperscript{42} Ambedker, B.R. (1979) writings and speeches  Vol. I. Bombay, p 56
\textsuperscript{43} Lok sabha Secretariat (2003) Constituient Assembly Debeats, official Report, Book No 5
Preamble:-

The preamble of the Constitution of India aimed at securing to all its citizens, “Justice Social economic and political, Equality of status and opportunity”. 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. (Appendices^2)

The First Backward Classes Commission

The First Backward Classes Commission at National level was set up by a Presidential order under Article 340 of the Constitution of India on January 29, 1953, under the Chairmanship of Kaka Saheb Kalelkar^44. This commission submitted its report on March 30, 1955 and prepared a list of 2,399 castes and communities from the entire country and 837 of these were considered ‘most backward’ requiring special attention. Thus the category, backward classes was further bifurcated in two categories – the backwards and the most backwards. The commission set four criteria for the identification of OBCs: (1) low social position in the traditional caste hierarchy of Hindu society, (2) lack of general educational advancement, (3) inadequate or no representation in government service and, (4) inadequate representation in the field of trade, commerce and industry. The commission identified 2,399 castes and communities while representing 32 per cent of Indian population on the basis of colonial census data and prepared the list of socially and educationally backward Classes.

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However, Kaka Kalelkar, the Chairman of the Backward Classes Commission who signed the report, confessed a feeling of grave dissatisfaction against the caste-based reservation. In his covering letter to the president, he said: "My eyes were, however, opened to the dangers of suggesting remedies on caste basis when I discovered that it is going to have a most unhealthy effect on the Muslim and Christian sections of the nation".

He further said: "This was a rude shock and it drove me to the conclusion that the remedies we suggested were worse than the evil we were out to combat. Once we eschew the principle of caste, it will be possible to help the extremely poor and deserving from all communities, care of course must be taken to give preference to those who come from the traditionally neglected classes". Interestingly, the Chairman expressed his distress, as part of the covering letter, in very strong language over the caste basis adopted by the majority commission and ultimately decided to side the majority in formulating remedies on the case basis.

Having considered this report of Backward Classes Commission along with the covering letter of chairman, the central Government apparently did not feel satisfied about the approach adopted by the Commission in determining as to who should be treated as backward classes under article 15 (4). The 'Memorandum' issued by the Government of India on the report of the Commission, inter-alia, pointed out that it could not be denied that the caste system was the greatest hindrance in the way of our progress towards an egalitarian society, and recognition of the specified castes as

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backward may serve to maintain and even perpetuate the existing distinctions on the
basic of castes. It also added that some of the tests applied by the Commission were
more or less of an individual character and even if they were accepted, they would
encompass a large majority of the country.\footnote{Chotalal Vs State of UP, AIR, p.135}

In any case, the report of the Backward Classes Commission was never
discussed in the parliament. Thus the Government of India never acted on the
Commission's report and left it to the State Governments to sanction such reservations.

**Recommendations for A. P. Backward Classes**

The commission estimated the population, on the basis of 1951 census, only for
51 communities out of 151 which were identified by the commission as other Backward
Classes in Hyderabad State. Whereas in the case of Andhra state, the commission had
not estimated the population for any of the 124 communities which were identified as
Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

The commission identified other Backward Classes of the country into two
categories: (i) Other Backward Classes and (ii) Most Backward Classes (MBCs). In
1953, there were two states, namely Hyderabad and Andhra, which constitute the
present Andhra Pradesh State. In Hyderabad state the most backward communities
such as Chakali, Mangali, Poosala and Kummari communities were included in the
‘Other Backward Classes’. In the case of Andhra state, the commission did not follow
the same categorisation but included the said communities in the ‘Most Backward Classes’. This is one of the major drawbacks in the commission’s report47.

**Second Backward Classes Commission**

The second All India Backward Classes Commission, Bindhyeshwari Prasad mandal popularly known as Mandal Commission48 was appointed by the Government of India in 1978 under Article 340 of the Constitution to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes to determine the criteria for defining the socially and educationally backward classes.

This commission submitted its report in 1980, and identified 3,943 castes covering 52 per cent of total population as OBCs in educational institutions and Government services (besides 22% fixed for scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes), it has recommended only 27 per cent reservation. Meanwhile, the report of Mandal Commission has been lying in the cold storage since its submission. Similarly, the report of the Ambasankar Commission (1983) has been set at naught by the Tamil Nadu Government so as to appease some caste allies.49

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48 The Government of Bihar has declared 25th August to be a day of state honor to commemorate the birth anniversary of social justice since 1992. On 1 June 2001, the state government also issued a postal stamp in his memory

**Recommendations for A. P. Backward Classes**

In Andhra Pradesh, the total Other Backward Classes communities are 292 as identified by the commission. Among these, 160 communities belonged to Depressed Backward Classes and the remaining 132 castes belonged to Other Backward Classes. The commission has classified the other Backward Classes into two categories on the basis of their backwardness (i) Other Backward Classes (Intermediate Backward Classes), (ii) Depressed Backward Classes. Thus, the commission prepared a common list for all other Backward Classes in the country. As a result, every state has its own list and each state have both categories of Other Backward Classes.

L.R. Naik, one of the members of the Mandal Commission, classified Other Backward Classes into two groups, namely (i) Intermediate Backward Classes, (ii) Depressed Backward Classes. According to him, Intermediate Backward Classes mean those who have co-existed since times immemorial with upper castes and had, therefore, some scope to imbibe better association than Depressed Classes. Naik estimated the Intermediate Backward Classes population as 26.44 per cent in Indian population.50

Further according to him, Depressed Backward Classes mean, those who intermingle with the Indian society was either denied, prohibited and even segregated obviously on account of stigma of their traditional occupations, stigma of criminality, and stigma of nomadism which resulted in their abysmally low social status. He estimated

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50 M.V.N. Reddy (1990) *an appraisal A Reservation Policy* Unpublished PhD thesis Department of Political Science, Osmania University, Hyderabad
the population of Depressed Backward Classes is 25.66 per cent in the Indian population.

**National Commission for Backward Classes**

In pursuance of the direction of the Supreme Court, the Government of India enacted the National Commission for Backward Classes Act 1993 (Act No.27 of 1993) and set up a National Commission for Backward Classes at the Centre. Section 9(1) of the Act provides that it shall ‘examine the request for inclusion of any class of citizens as a backward class in the lists and hear complains of over-inclusion or under-inclusion of any backward class in such lists and tender such advice to the Central Government as it deems appropriate. Under section 9(2) of the Act, the advice of the Commission shall ordinarily be binding upon the Central Government.\(^{51}\) Incidentally, the Commission formulated following criteria for identifying socially, educationally and economically:

Castes and communities generally considered as socially backward. Of late, on the basis of reports and recommendations of the Commissions/ Committees, various State Governments have adopted different parameters for identification of OBCs and thereby to consider offering reservations and other benefits to these backward communities.

Reservations in Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh had introduced the reservations for backward classes as early as in 1961. The earlier Lists of BCs, comprising 142 and 112 communities prepared by the AP Government, were struck down by the AP High court and the Supreme court respectively in Sukhdev Vs. Government of AP and State of AP Vs. P sagar, being based solely on caste criteria and on the ground that no inquiry or investigation had been made by the Government in preparing the List of BC communities.

K N Anatharaman commission

The Government of Andhra Pradesh appointed the first Backward Classes Commission in April 12th 1968 under the Chairmanship of Manohar Prasad. Due to the demise of Manohar Prasad, Anantharaman was appointed as the Chairman of the Commission. The commission submitted its report on 20th June, 1970. The commission observed regarding caste: “we have ample evidence to show that the idea of caste system is so deep rooted in Hindu society that it is impossible to ignore the existence of castes and caste or community cannot be left out of account and has to be accepted as one of the factors for classification of backward classes. The commission found that the educational backwardness of the people was result of many factors, hence they deserve several benefits. Further, the commission made the following categorical observations in this regard.

The commission to prepare a fresh list of socially and educationally backward classes in the state and apportion the quotas to them the commission indicated that only such persons belonging to community who have traditionally followed unclean, undignified or inferior occupation can be grouped under the classification of BCs. Regarding educational backwardness, the commission applied the principle that communities, whose student population is well below the state average, have to be considered educationally backward. The commission submitted its report on 20th June, 1970. On the recommendations of the commission, 93 BC communities were listed as socially and educationally backward classes and divided into four Groups, namely, Group A B C & D, vide GO Ms No.1793, Education Department, Dated 23-09-1970. Subsequently, the BC reservations were extended to public employment. The commission with a view to give equal opportunities for all backward classes of people, recommended for reservation 30% of seats in all educational institutions, distributed in four groups.

**N.K. Muralidhar Rao commission**

In 1982, the second backward class’s commission was appointed with a retired IAS officer NK Muralidara Rao, on 22nd January 1982; the Commission submitted its report on 25th September, 1982. The Commission recommended increasing the quantum of BC reservations from 25 percent to 44 percent and adding more communities to the BC list, raising the total 102 communities. The list of Backward Classes is divided into 5 group’s viz., A, B, C, D and E in the place of the four existing

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groups. The Commission determined the population of BCs 52 percent, taking caste only as the basis for ascertaining and identifying them. Accepting these recommendations in July 1986, the Government, headed by NT Rama Rao raised the quantum of reservations for BCs from 25 percent to 44 percent and added more communities to the list. This led to widespread protests and violent agitation by upper caste student all over AP. The hike in quota was challenged in the AP High court. A full bench of the AP High court, pronouncing its judgment on 5th September 1986, struck down the increase, holding that the hike in reservations is violative of Articles 15 and 16 of the constitution. The recommendations of the Muralider rao commission were termed arbitrary and vitiated by several factors.

Thereafter, number of commissions has attempted to tackle this complex problem (whether or not caste label should be sufficient to identify social and educational backwardness?). However, both Mandal Commission and Havanur Commission of Karnataka and Bakshi Commission of Gujarat have finally accepted caste as the identifying criterion for determining social and educational backwardness (though it will be presently pointed out that Mandal Commission had serious reservation about caste criterion). Most of these commissions and the Government orders based on their recommendations used communal units to discriminate the backward class. In contrast, the Rané Commission of Gujarat has chalked out a different path, rejecting caste as the basis for ascertaining social and educational backwardness.54

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54 Vasanth Kumar Vs State of Karnataka, AIR, 1985, Supreme Court, 1995
The material one can observe that the term, "Backward Classes", should be interpreted in its real sense keeping the real spirit of the framers of our Constitution into consideration. It should not be narrowly interpreted to mean or confine to "Backward Caste". The group of citizens or a section of the society or peoples, who are educationally and socially backward, can only, be classified into Backward Class. Poverty and backwardness have no caste or religion and economic equality should be provided for achieving the goals of democracy.

Historically, this concept of backward classes owes its origin to the thesis of Ram Manohar Lohia for upliftment of the castes next downtrodden to Harijans and Adivasis, who are economically worse than the higher strata of society, through land reforms and asset building to improve income of peasants and occupational status of artisans through loans and subsidies to modernize the jobs. He did not have the remotest idea this would degenerate into short cut and populist vote-catching devise of reservations in Government jobs.

Finally, the influence of caste permeates every area and level of political and administrative life of the nation. It begins with the electoral politics, all parties including secular, democratic, regional parties was selecting their candidates for elections with an eye on the caste composition of the constituencies concerned. Every party tries to select candidates from the numerically dominant caste in the electoral area.
In electoral campaigns too, party leaders make an open appeal to caste sentiments. It is not uncommon that the voters of a particular caste get mobilized in favor of their respective castes. Of course, it is only when more candidates than one of the same contest from the same constituency that the people vote according to their political inclinations and caste consideration assume secondary position. Thus, a case study of Munnuru Kapus in Telangana of the state of Andhra Pradesh has been undertaken to vindicate the points raised in the preceding paragraphs.

**Caste Associations: Role and Significance**

Caste Association is a very complex phenomenon. It has divided the Hindu society into groups and the grouping is principally based on kinship relation. A peculiar feature of the Hindu society during this century has been a marked tendency for every caste to form its own caste association comprising members of the caste speaking the same language. The earliest of such organizations was started by a caste in Bihar in 1891.

According to Pauline Kolenda, caste association is "a voluntary organization composed of members from the single caste" Further, he observes caste associations linking members of a caste within a region first emerged in the nineteenth century and became possible because of accessible education, communication and transportation.

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According to Lilah Duskhin, a caste association is one the performance of which is to advance the interests of, strengthen solidarity among and perform services for, the members of a birth - ascribed community, whether a single Jati or a group of kindred Jatis. Membership to the association is limited to members of this community.\textsuperscript{57}

M.N. Srinivas observes "the policy which the British adapted to, give a certain amount of power to local self governing bodies, and preference and concessions to backward castes provided new opportunities to castes. In order to be able to take advantage of these opportunities, caste groups as traditionally understood, entered into alliance with each other to form bigger entities".\textsuperscript{58}

**Objectives of Caste Associations\textsuperscript{59}**

- To encourage education among the children by starting schools and hostels
- To rise funds to help the poor students of the caste and offer scholarships.
- To regulate customs, introduce reforms, such as, elimination of child marriages, reduction of marriage expenses;
- To encourage widow marriages and to elevate their position to get a better recognition in the society or caste hierarchy by using caste as an effective instrument.
- To solve inter-caste disputes, promote understanding among sub-caste and their marriages.

\textsuperscript{57} Lelah Dushkin (1980), Caste Association in Bangalor Economic Political Weekly, September 2013.
\textsuperscript{58} Srinivas M.N. op.cit., p.15

To organize the support of caste members by educated people for their domination in the society

To safeguard the interests and status of caste association members by caste solidarity.

Functions of caste associations

A. to further the general interests of the caste and particularly to guard its social status in the hierarchy from actual or potential attacks from other castes;

B. to start funds to provide studentships for the needy and deserving students of the caste, usually at the secondary and college stage of education, and sometimes even to help them to proceed to foreign countries for higher education;

C. Sometimes to try to regulate certain customs of the caste by resolutions passed at the annual general body meetings of the caste.

Only the artisan caste which had strong organizations had some standing provisions for helping the indigent among its members.

Caste Associations - Awareness

Free India created the right atmosphere for this mobilization. Sudra and ati-sudra castes related against their oppressive conditions by forming an association based on caste identity first in Telangana in 1930 and coastal Andhra in 1940.

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The British rule and the modernization it entailed aggravated that status differences between the various castes, particularly the Brahmins, Kshatriyas on the one hand, and the landed gentry castes on the other. Secondly the British rule, the egalitarian system of justice and the liberal education injected into the system, new ideas of equality, equality of opportunity etc., In the beginning the ideas of equality of opportunity, or Maritain principle of justice came in handy for the literate castes, which almost monopolized the government jobs and professional opportunities in the name of full and free competition. The distribution aspects of justice started appealing to the non-literate caste leaders. Social disabilities suffered in varying degrees by different castes came under severe criticism. Thus the western ideals of social equality, equality of opportunity and treatment and distribution of justice in terms of not merely economic but other social values provided a powerful impetus to many caste groups to get organized and demand a fairer dispensation.

The British rule saw the establishment of country wide communication networks like postal system and telegraphs, railways and circulation of newspapers. These facilities punctuated the isolated caste structure and enabled caste or similar caste groups to come together and form caste associations. This to a great extent erased or deleted the structure distinctions and caste assumed a new role, militant reform or rejection movements were facilitated by the modern communication.
In due course of time more militant, aggressive reform movements appeared, seeking to reject the orthodox culture and caste dominance, as in the case of downtrodden movement of Joti Rao Phule of Maharashtra and self-respect movement of E.V.Ramaswamy Naiker in Madras. Narayana guru Dharma paripalana Yogam movement of the izhavas in Kerala was less militant. It gave rise to gentle social reform movements aimed at eliminating caste disabilities, education of women upliftment of the depressed classes etc., These were generally led by some of the enlightened members of the forward castes themselves, at least in the beginning.\textsuperscript{61}

Caste is an important social institution of Hindu society. Each caste distinguished itself from other caste in the manner as behavior, traditions, dresses and food ranked the hierarchy on the basis of the birth. In the caste system many evils prevailed in the Hindu society. Prohibiting inter-caste dining, inter-caste marriages, child marriage, educational backwardness etc., are common phenomenon of the society. However the Hindu society went on many changes after introduction of modern system of education. While the backward Telangana region witnessed class based mobilization of the rural poor, the developed coastal region witnessed an emotional mobilization on the socio-cultural identity of caste.\textsuperscript{62} In the beginning the caste system was an arrangement for the peaceful co-existence of various classes, tribes or social units. It was conceived under an urge for social solidarity and mutual responsibility. Caste had no specific restrictions regards occupation.

The history of the growth of caste system shows that its original functions and occupational basis was later on over burdened with considerations of purity based on ritual concepts led to its ramifications which introduced inflexibility and rigidity. This artificial growth inevitably tended to create a feeling of superiority and inferiority, and to foster narrow caste loyalties. The introduction of railways the establishment of hotels and eateries has further contributed to the relaxation of caste prejudices. Society, no doubt is imperceptibly changing with time. The ideals of the various castes are no longer being maintained. Even as a biological principle, caste has ceased to be useful.63

One of the evil effects of the caste system has been that general education was denied to a large section of the people. Knowledge of the hereditary occupation or craft was all the education which a child got through its parents. The system of education introduced by the British suited the upper castes excellently and has helped them to secure a dominant share in administrative and industrial spheres. The occupation like agriculture labour, weaving, sheep and cattle rearing, hair-cutting, washing of clothes, carpentry, black-smith, brass-smith, basket-making, domestic and menial service, butchery, fishing, leather tanning, toddy-tapping etc., were treated in the past as inferior and social stigma was attached to these occupations. The classes/high castes of citizens who followed these occupations were treated low in society.64

Caste associations enable members of castes to pursue social mobility, political power and economic advantage. Particularly the spread of new ideas and systems of

interaction are improved means of communication, western education, and the subjective and objective effects of new economic opportunities also cited with the growth of a market economy. The aims of the caste association began to suit from sacred to secular goals.65

Two important factors have contributed for the organization of caste associations in Andhra, Telugu speaking areas of Madras presidency. The various castes of Andhra which formed caste associations were Viswa Brahmins in 1903, Arya vaisyas in 1907, Goudas in 1907, Kammas in 1910, Reddys and Kapus in 1916, Yadavas in 1919. Besides these, other castes have also organized their own associations with aims for the betterment of their caste in the social hierarchy as well as modernizing their caste professionals.

Exploitation in terms of production, extraction and accumulation of surplus in Pre-British India was structured through the caste system. With at least three major groups identified in most villages- toiling peasants, artisans and occupational castes performing particular caste duties within a jajmani system i.e.

Munnurukapu community people’s level of consciousness was at its lowest ebb on account of the regimentation of the monarchy-cum-feudal order in 1922, an association was started at Aliyabad, similarly in secunderabad the Munnurukapu sangam established. Bojjam Narasimhulu was founding father of Munnuru Kapus

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movement in particular and backward castes movement in general in the state of Hyderabad. Leaders like Bojjam Narasimhulu, Tunga Sambaiah, Erram Satyanarayana responded to the then contemporary conditions and movements.⁶⁶

The first Munnurukapu conference held on 31st May- 1st June 1935 at Hyderabad, in that conference concerned itself with social, educational backwardness, economic deprivation and social evils like dowry system, child marriages, and indiscriminate pomp in spending money, drinking, enforced widowhood besides addressing itself to the spread of literary and improvement of economic position. Association emphasized on the need of the establishment of co-operative banks to provide loans to poor agriculturists of the community. Leaders were trussed on the discouragement of evils in the society, educational development of girls and reservations for educated girls in government employment.

Due to the efforts of Munnurukapu association in social reform, education facilities, training campus, spreading ideas through campaign, media and continuous motivation, a large section of them entire politics business, real-estate, finance, bureaucracy, academics etc., in the post independent period. In politics, Munnurukapus occupied top positions among the backward castes in Telangana region.⁶⁷

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⁶⁶ Bojjam Narsimhulu, opcit.
⁶⁷ Ibid
Conclusion

The second chapter deals with historical perspective of other backward classes movement in India. A changing caste politics and participation from Independence to present day and awareness of Backward Community in the political era of Andhra Pradesh has also been described and Backward Classes in Constitutional Perspective. The genesis of the Constitutional identity of OBCs can be traced back to the rise of caste associations and social movements in 19th century protests against the then existing oppressive, suppressive, iniquitous social order of chaturvarna system.

The chapter also analyses Non–Brahmin movement and particularly Jyothi Rao Phule’s contribution to such movements in Maharashtra. The movement in Andhra Pradesh is studied and the findings indicate that the backward class community being heterogeneous in character has striking inequalities and thereby preventing the community to act as a politically cohesive group. It also brings out a fact that the social, educational and economic distance among the elite of these castes also encourages factionalism and infighting. At this point, the ruling elite tend to play politics of accommodation. The study pinpoints that there was a tremendous upsurge of political consciousness above the Munnurukapu community to forge the available, community force to share political power structure. It is found that the backward classes’ movement, however modest it may appear, it has succeeded in socializing the masses.

Indian Constitution has provided us with a way of life that is in consonance with the ideals of democracy. These ideals can only be established by providing social,
economic and political justice to the people. India is a heterogeneous society having disparities of economic, social and cultural nature. The framers of our Constitution were aware of a fact that in a caste-ridden society like ours, certain castes and classes were socially oppressed, economically condemned to live the life penury, and educationally coerced to learn the family trade or occupation and to take the education set out for each caste and class by society, for centuries.

The Constituent Assembly thought it necessary to include provisions in the Constitution which would serve as an exception to the general provisions guaranteeing equality so as to enable the government in helping the "Backward Classes" to catch up with rest of the society. These provisions were included in Article 15 (4) that reads Nothing in this Article or in clause 2 of Article 29 shall prevent the state from making any special provision for the advancement of any ‘socially and educationally backward Classes of citizens’ through Article 340, which later, through the Constitution by the First Amendment Act, 1951, came to be incorporated as Clause (4) under Article 15 of the Constitution that governs provision of reservation in educational institutions thus India created the right atmosphere for this mobilization.