Chapter IX

CONCLUSION
Nationalism in India had originated as an idea rooted in the dominated people's "perception of oppression" and their conscious "desire for self-determination". The development of national consciousness, therefore, was preceded by the realisation of the basic contradiction inherent in colonial domination. The changes in the level of national consciousness corresponded to the stages of colonialism and the level of perception of the principal contradiction. In fact, colonialism and colonial state did not represent the indigenous social classes and their interests but inevitably served the interests of the metropolis. Therefore, colonialism by subordinating the entire society brought into forefront the principal contradiction – dominated people's interests vis-a-vis colonialism. This basic contradiction took the shape of a national liberation struggle initially at the level of culture and ideology and then at the political level.

In Andhra, as in other parts of India, the first stage of this contradiction surfaced by 1800, for by then the total subjugation of all the Andhra districts was complete and the initial impact of colonial rule was experienced by the people. The first half of the 19th century saw the emergence of an 'educated elite', the offshoot of the modernization of Andhra society - cultural, economic and administrative - as a part of second stage of colonialism, to serve as the instruments of colonial rule. As we have shown in the second chapter, by the 1860s and 1890s the changes in the agrarian social structure also facilitated the
emergence of a new 'landed elite' (rich peasantry). The development of commodity production, marketing system, price rise, high rentals, unequal revenue burdens, and system of money-lending helped the emergence and consolidation of a rich peasant class, which in turn tended to polarise the agrarian social structure. It was during this period that the inner contradictions of the second stage of colonialism surfaced. Therefore, despite the 'existence of different streams of contending consciousnesses' rooted in the internal social contradictions, the dominant strand that ultimately got structured was the 'anti-colonial consciousness' due to specific historical conditions under colonialism. The second half of the 19th century also saw the structuring of nationalist ideology and of the process by which it would replace the already fully structured colonial ideology from its hegemonic position. From then onwards a major aspect of the anti-colonial struggle was waged at the level of ideological hegemony.

In the first half of the 19th century, in Andhra, it was the castes and social groups from which traditional intellectuals had come which first took to modern English education and the openings in the lower levels of the colonial bureaucracy. Initially these English educated persons tended to adopt English dress and some of European cultural habits. This tended to alienate them from their own culture and the masses. But as the myth of social and cultural superiority of the Westerner increasingly became a major profes of colonial rule and its cultural-ideological hegemony, the dreams of the English educated elite of being assimilated into colonial culture were shattered.
Increasingly the educated began to perceive and perform the role of intellectuals and began to grasp the inner contradictions of colonialism. They also began to be alienated from colonial cultural ideology. In order to fight degradation and exploitation - cultural, social, political and economic - they endeavoured to modernise the indigenous society through 'cultural renaissance' and formulate national cultural defence to revive the suppressed native culture. Simultaneously, they also laid foundation for the formulation of nationalist political ideology to articulate the interests of the people vis-a-vis colonialism.

In the second half of the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries the numerous petitions submitted by the ryots every year to the Board of Revenue, Government of Madras, pleading for the immediate redressal of their grievances invariably linked with the excess in land revenue demand and 'teerwas' were good indicators of the smouldering popular social discontent. These petitions show mainly the economic character of the social discontent. Whereas the petitions and memorials of the educated elite show predominantly the cultural character of this discontent associated with the hegemony of colonial cultural ideology. By the 1850s, the educated elite also started taking up questions relating to ryots' economic problems. The two important questions they raised were the validity of the 'mode of raising the revenue of the province and of the salt monopoly'.

It was precisely from this period onwards that the Andhra intelligentsia showed an increasing awareness of the cultural-ideological dimension of colonial rule and simultaneously started articulating the national cultural defence to regain the
'cultural personality' of the people. This cultural awareness, for instance, could be seen in the general and united opposition shown to the efforts of the Government of Madras and Christian Missionaries to introduce Bible as a text-book in the schools during 1840s.

The nature of the national cultural defence was, however, conditioned by the intellectuals' perception of the inner contradictions of Indian study and of the nature of colonial rule. The Andhra intelligentsia, as in other parts of India, was weighed down by some of the colonial cultural-ideological elements imbibed through English education; and it very much believed that British rule was instrumental in transforming the indigenous society. Notwithstanding this limitation, the intelligentsia were able to generate a powerful national cultural-ideological defence by regenerating the suppressed indigenous cultural institutions and modernizing them with rational Western ideas. The powerful social reform movement in Andhra in the second half of the 19th century took up on its agenda the revitalisation of indigenous culture by removing what they considered to be backward looking and irrational elements and social practices. The maturation of the national cultural defence was complete by the end of 19th century under the leadership of Kandukuri Veeresalingam (1848-1919). Notable intellectuals who worked in the social reform activities apart from Veeresalingam were Basavaraju Gavarraju, Pulugurtha Lakshminarasamba, Desiraju Pedabapaiah, Pyda Ramakrishnaiah, Gurojada Appa Rao, Bhandaru Atchamamba, Atmuri Lakshminarasimham, Chilakamarthi Lakshminarasimham, Kasibhatta Brahmayya Sastry,
Unnava Lakshminarayana, Tekumalla Rajagopala Rao, Nyapati Subba Rao and Rayasam Venkatasivudu, to name only a few.

In the second half of the 19th century the basic elements of the nationalist ideology started growing. By the 1870s and 1880s, the national consciousness was being slowly transformed into a political ideology. It was in the process of interpreting the needs and voicing the grievances of the people that the Andhra intellectuals formulated the basic elements of the nationalist ideology. For without an ideology and a common programme the people could not be brought into a common terrain for an united national liberation struggle.

By the 1880s and 1890s the economic elements of the nationalist ideology were being popularised among the people, especially by the Telugu press, by exposing the main mechanisms of colonial economic exploitation. The notion of the growing poverty of the people due to excess taxation, etc., was firmly implanted in popular consciousness as an important part of nationalist ideology. This early critique laid bare the impoverishing nature of the colonial rule. The formulation of 'drain theory' by Dadabhai Naoroji and R. C. Dutt completed the basic framework of the nationalist ideology which was actively taken up by the nationalist press and politically conscious individuals of Andhra.

With the establishment of the Indian National Congress in 1885 both political associations and journalism acquired a wider political role. The Andhra intellectuals went in a big way for popular journalism in Telugu to mirror the image of the national movement and spread its ideology and programme among the people.
It was due to the relentless propaganda carried on by the Telugu press that nationalist ideology was internalised by the people in their 'collective consciousness'. In other words by structuring the nationalist ideology in the course of their two decade long struggle the nationalist intelligentsia laid the theoretical foundation for national liberation struggle. With the completion of this primary ideological task, the national cultural defence acquired the character of an organised political struggle. Before 1905 the national movement was yet a gentle breeze and not a storm, for there was no all India level common political programme which could lead to such a transformation.

The transformation of the national movement into a storm occurred with Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal on 16 October 1905. The widespread protest in Andhra during 1905 against the partition of Bengal and the subsequent suppression of the anti-partition movement signified the emerging solidarity among the people in exercising their rights and liberties. For the first time the Swadeshi ideology had provided an all-India level common political programme. The first signs of the practical shape of the national movement came with the Andhra delegates who had gone to attend the I.M.C. annual session at Calcutta in December 1906. They brought with them the four major items or messages to Andhra, namely, sales promotion of swadeshi articles, boycott of foreign goods, national education and 'swarajyam'. Till the emergence of Home Rule movement the Andhra nationalists concentrated on propagating or furthering these four items, and, thus, for the first time a common political programme was provided to Andhra. Bipin Chandra Pal's tour of Andhra in April 1907 further strengthened the 'Vandemataram' or swadeshi movement
in Andhra.

The social base of the movement during this period (1905-1911) was, however, confined to the urban educated middle classes, mostly youth/students. The movement sometimes touched the artisan groups, especially weavers, both in urban centres and villages, and merchants in the urban areas. The rich peasantry in the rural areas was not in favour of the movement despite their grievances against colonial rule. One reason perhaps was the common political programme projected during Swadeshi movement had not fully incorporated the problems of the peasantry-vis-à-vis colonial rule, even though the nationalists talked about peasant problems in general, and sometimes even communicated peasant demands to the Government through resolutions and petitions. The incorporation of peasant grievances into the common political programme was successfully accompanied during the non-cooperation movement, 1920-22. Among other social classes, zamindars and landlords, with individual exceptions, remained loyal to colonial rule.

During 1905-10 the political movement stole the thunder out of social reform activities in Andhra. One immediate and apparent reason was the shifting of the urban educated youth, the main social force of the social reform movement, from purely reform activities to political protest. At a different and crucial level it was due to the transition of the earlier form of national cultural defence into a political struggle. In fact the socio-cultural and political movements were two successive stages of the anti-colonial struggle. Therefore we repeatedly see the continuation of the initial cultural-ideological struggle beneath
the surface of the political struggle when the latter was dominant and above the surface with new dimensions whenever the political movement ebbed and left a void. Hence, after 1910, the Andhra scene was once again dominated by social reform activities till the emergence of the non-cooperation movement.

A most interesting feature of social reform in this period was the sway it had on the peasant caste groups - Kammas, Kapus and Reddies. This period represents the urge and the efforts of the newly emerged rich peasantry - comprised of Non-Brahmin high castes like Kammas, Reddies and Kapus - to modernise their social and cultural outlook through internal reform. For this was seen as a necessary condition for their playing an effective political role in the national movement. Even to articulate their class demands vis-a-vis colonial state as part of national liberation struggle they had to develop an educated 'elite' of their own. The numerous peasant caste associations and the non-Brahmin movement (after 1915-16) took up precisely this task of developing education, internal reform - women's education, widow marriages, removal of child marriages, etc. - and made a determined bid to uplift their ritual status by breaking the framework of the traditional ritual and social hierarchy. Tripuraneni Ramaswami Chowdary and Suryadevara Raghavaiah Chowdary played a crucial role in developing internal social reform among the non-Brahmin castes, especially Kammas. This, in fact, explains the dominant position which the rich peasantry - Kammas, Reddies and Kapus later acquired during the non-cooperation movement.
Meanwhile, at the political level, the Home Rule movement of Mrs. Annie Besant (1915-19) played a crucial role in Andhra. It became instrumental in harmonising or fusing the divergent trends - extremists-vs-moderates - in the Congress and rallied all sections of society behind the slogan of Home Rule or self-government. For the first time an impressive organisational network was also established linking up the taluk and district centres with the all India movement.

Despite massive propaganda, the social base of the movement remained confined to urban educated middle class, professional classes, etc., and did not penetrate into rural areas. It was only with the emergence of Gandhi and the new style of politics that the Congress was able to acquire a mass social base and the national liberation struggle a mass character.

The non-cooperation movement (1920-22), as envisaged by Gandhi, was a two phase movement, one phase that of an extra-legal mass movement and the other of a mere passive movement within the confines of colonial legality. At the first level the concentration was, apart from surrendering titles, offices and mass resignation to the Government jobs, mostly on boycott of British goods and leaving of English schools and Government courts, the establishment of panchayat courts, village Congress committees, national educational institutions, spread of swadeshi 'Khaddar' and Charka, promotion of temperance and Hindu-Muslim unity, the removal of untouchability and the formation of a volunteer force. Throughout the period, the success of the constructive programme had been insisted on as a precondition by Gandhi for launching the second level of non-cooperation i.e.,
the mass civil disobedience movement in which was included the non-payment of all taxes to the British Government. It was the success at the first stage i.e., the constructive programme, which facilitated the Congress to structure the local protests effectively into the main movement, for the village Congress committees were not only the instruments of projecting the Gandhian programme but actually were the intermediary links between the masses and the Congress.

There are a few interesting features in relation to peasantry, tribals and the non-cooperation movement in Andhra which emerge in our study. Firstly, all the civil disobedience movements - second level non-cooperation - in Andhra i.e., Chirala-Peralal struggle, Painad and Rayachoti forest satyagrahas, Pedanandipad non-payment of revenue campaign, were started due to constant peasant pressure from below on the local Congress leadership. In all these cases, despite the disapproval of Gandhi and the A.P.C.C., the peasants launched the local militant movements and then pressurised the provincial leadership to structure them into the general non-cooperation movement. In all these movements the struggles were centred around the local grievances vis-a-vis colonial administration. At no point of time were they disassociated from the general national liberation struggle even when the A.P.C.C. was openly against such local struggles. The questions which we have analysed in detail were related to the very process of the structuring of these struggles, the perceptions which motivated the masses to go in for militant class actions and yet constantly plead, and even put pressure for protection from the nationalist leadership for these militant actions.
Interestingly, the class consciousness of the peasantry was developed and structured in the course of their experience in the movement and indirectly also due to the political perceptions projected by the nationalist intelligentsia in a bid to arouse national consciousness among the masses and mobilise them in favour of the Gandhian programme. One interesting aspect was that the peasantry had always tried to integrate their demands as dominant ones into the general national movement and not aimed at structuring their struggles away from the basic anti-colonial struggle. This was perhaps due to the powerful methods of mass mobilisation and politicisation used by the nationalists to establish the hegemony of the nationalist ideology and the basic anti-colonial struggle over the newly emerging class consciousness of the peasantry.

One drag on the non-cooperation movement, however, was the opposition which the Congress had shown regarding the problems of the tenantry in the zamindaris. In the name of avoiding the so-called 'civil war', their basic demands even vis-a-vis colonial state were not taken up. Consequently, the powerful social base which the national movement had acquired during this period was confined to the ryotwari areas and failed to penetrate the zamindari areas. The main social base of the movement was rural peasantry, artisan groups, merchant class, students and other professional groups. One notable feature was the mass resignations by the village officers in support of the no-tax movements in Guntur and other delta districts. Women no doubt participated but they did so mostly in conducting propaganda tours in the villages by singing 'kirtans' and songs and in
furthering the constructive programme - 'Khadar' and Charka. Despite the emphasis on the anti-untouchability programme, the 'Harijans' in Andhra mostly remained as passive sympathisers and not as active participants, except in Pedanandipad where they refused to accept the lands given by the Government after distraining them from the peasantry who were in the middle of a no-tax campaign during 1921-22. The landlords and zamindars were by now operating openly against the national movement through their political organ, the Justice Party.

The period between 1922-24 was unique not just in Andhra but also perhaps at the all-India level. For it was during this period that Alluri Sitarama Raju conducted a two year war with the British army in the Rampa hills, his aim being to liberate the Manyam people from the colonial yoke. In whole of India it was only in Andhra that a serious attempt was made to overthrow the British by armed rebellion. He carried on the paradigm of armed revolution on the assumption that the country, disillusioned with the Gandhian method of struggle (after the withdrawal of the non-cooperation movement), was ready for an armed rebellion against British rule. Therefore, he tried to liberate Manyam tribals and then extend his liberation struggle by arms to the other areas. Equally fascinating was the realisation on his part of the futility of his paradigm of armed rebellion in relation to the concrete social, political and ideological situation and complexities outside the tribal areas and the ultimate sacrifice of his life to put an early end to the consequences that the tribal society would have to bear due to his paradigm of
struggle. His case also exemplifies the complexities involved in the formulation of a viable political strategy in a complex colonial Indian situation.

The period between the non-cooperation movement and the Salt Satyagraha (1922-30) witnessed a marked change in social and political perceptions which, in turn, influenced the national movement in Andhra. In chapter VII we have analysed how far the shaping of the new perceptions influenced the 'collective consciousness' of the people. A striking feature of this period was the spread of new social and political ideas rooted in the communist ideology. No sphere of life was left untouched by these new ideas. At one level we see the spread of new ideas regarding man-woman relationship, problems of women, peasantry and untouchables. At another level different ideological positions in relation to national liberation struggle were discussed and propagated. Two contradictory visions of the future transformation of society - one rooted in the bourgeois ideology and the other in the left, socialist ideology - started competing for both ideological and political hegemony over the national movement.

The social reform movement in Andhra had acquired a wider dimension and new orientation from 1920s, at least at the intellectual plane. Much broader and crucial social-cultural questions were debated and discussed in a bid to create a new atmosphere conducive to bourgeois social development. One of the major social-cultural questions addressed by the intelligentsia was the problem of untouchability. The aim of
Gandhi in taking up the problem of untouchability was "internal reform and self-purification from the very bottom". But this should be done within his 'consensus' model. Even though the social degradation was rooted in their economic position the 'consensus' model propagated by Andhra nationalists had tended to negate this dimension. We have taken up Unnava Lakshminarayana's famous Telugu novel "Malapalli" as an example to show the perceptions rooted in the bourgeois ideology.

After this we have discussed the new rational social perceptions on man-woman relationship mostly propagated by the young nationalists under the influence of socialist ideas. It was due to these new perceptions and the bourgeois model of social reform that there was a marked change in women's consciousness. This partly explains the phenomenal participation of women in the 1930-34 movement. It was precisely in this social atmosphere that several women daringly crossed over the 'Lakshmanarekha' and started articulating their demands - social, economic and political - as part of the national liberation struggle.

Another aspect to be noted was the propagation of the 'universal character' of 'nationalism' and 'freedom' by the younger radical nationalists. They also showed keen interest in the new radical political ideas that started sweeping the Indian sub-continent after the 1917 October Revolution in Russia. It was due to the influence of these secular, radical and universal perceptions that social classes like peasantry started demanding the integration of their class demands - short term as well as long term - into the national liberation struggle. This period was,
in fact, a period of the development of varied intellectual positions regarding the questions of strategy of the national liberation struggle and the path that should be followed for the future social transformation of society.

When the Indian National Congress gave a call for the civil disobedience movement, the social groups in the forefront in Andhra were women, youth (mostly with a peasant background), peasantry and business groups. The untouchables were not yet brought into the movement on a large scale. They largely remained once again as passive sympathisers. This new wide social base of the national movement could be explained rationally only by taking into consideration the spread of new social and political perceptions preceding this movement. In other words, the radicalisation of the anti-colonial struggle was due to these new perceptions and the consequent shift in the national consciousness.

The civil disobedience movement in Andhra showed three important aspects of the national liberation struggle. One was the fully structured or mature strategy followed by the nationalists in their struggle for 'war of position'. Another interesting aspect was the dominant role of youth, women and peasantry in the two struggles i.e., 1930-31 and 1932-33. In fact, in the non-movement phase, the struggle was kept alive by the women picketers. The third, and the most important, aspect was the mass social base which the national movement had acquired during this period. Each and every village was structured into the movement. The peasant youth was spontaneously thrown up from the villages into the leadership both in the rural and urban areas.
Another interesting development was the emergence of radical Congress youth influenced by the left ideology who began to organise the peasantry on class lines, especially after their first encounter with the revolutionaries in the jails during 1930-31. Throughout this period, i.e., 1930-34, the peasant youth led by N.G.Ranga in the non-movement phase organised the peasantry both in the ryotwari and zamindari areas. The movement under N.G.Ranga, however, represented the class aspirations or interests of the rich peasantry in the ryotwari areas and the substantial tenants in the zamindari areas. It was only during 1933-35 that the communists came on the scene as an important political and ideological factor and started organising for the first time the agricultural labourers on class lines for their class demands. These developments in the national movement were to have an important bearing on the later course of the struggle. In other words it was during the civil disobedience movement, mainly during 1932-34, that a bitter struggle for ideological and political hegemony over the national liberation struggle between the socialist and bourgeois ideologies started emerging.

The civil disobedience movement also brought into forefront new forms of struggle and methods of propaganda when they were faced with an unprecedented Government repression. The integration of the zamindari peasantry into the movement was another important dimension of the national liberation struggle. Right from the beginning the projection of the fact that the struggle for liberation during 1930-34 would not be of the 'swaraj'-in-one-year but rather a prolonged one did bring a difference in the quality of the mass response and the strategy of the movement.
An interesting conclusion that emerges from our study is that
the class character of the national liberation struggle has to be
seen in terms of ideological and social hegemony over the movement
rather than on the dominant role played by a particular social
class or group in the struggle. An analysis of the national
liberation struggle in Andhra (1905-1934) clearly shows that the
social participation in the movement had slowly and steadily
enlarged from that of urban educated middle classes in 1905 to a
very wide social base comprising of peasantry, women, artisans,
merchant groups, professional classes, women and students by 1934.
Even agricultural labourers - mostly untouchables - were drawn into
the movement from that of a passive role to a relatively active
role by the end of 1933-34. The leadership was mainly provided,
initially, by the urban educated middle class (1905). The rich
peasantry, however, moved into leadership positions (after 1920)
once the movement acquired a mass social base from non-cooperation
movement onwards. It is of course true that in the colonial
situation when different social classes were drawn into the
national liberation struggle they came into the movement with the
realisation of their own basic contradictions (of the material
interests) with colonialism. They also brought their class (long
terms and short term) aspirations into the movement along with
them. It was the structuring of these divergent aspirations into a
basic anti-colonial ideology which brought about the necessary
unity and real social strength to the movement. But this was done
under the hegemony of the bourgeois ideology and a rich peasant
leadership. It was the vision of the future social transformation
of the society which made the Indian national liberation movement a
bourgeois movement.