CHAPTER - III

FROM PRAYERS AND PETITIONS TO PROTEST :
ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF NATIONAL LIBERATION
STRUGGLE IN ANDHRA, 1885-1919.
"The study of the history of national liberation struggles shows that generally these struggles are preceded by an increase in expression of culture, consolidated progressively into a successful or unsuccessful attempt to affirm the cultural personality of the dominated people, as a means of negating the oppressor culture. Whatever may be the conditions of a people's political and social factors in practicing this domination, it is generally within the culture that we find the seed of opposition, which leads to the structuring and development of liberation movement.

In our opinion, the foundation for national liberation rests in the inalienable right of every people to have their own history... The objective of national liberation, is therefore, to reclaim the right, usurped by imperialist domination, namely: the liberation of the process of development of national productive forces..."

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 objective realisation of the basic contradiction inherent in the colonial domination. "In other words, the formation of anti-colonial consciousness of which the organised political movement is an expression, dates back to the moment the domination, in one form or the other, is experienced. The formation of a political organisation or the launching of a political struggle are not necessarily points of rupture, but only indicators if a change in the level of consciousness".

The changes in the level of national consciousness correspond to the stages of colonialism and the level of perception of the principle contradiction. In fact, colonialism and the colonial state do not represent the indigenous social classes and their interests but initially serve the interests of the metropolis.


2. K.N. Panikkar, Cultural and Ideological Basis of Indian Nationalism : Some Reflections (paper read at Bombay University Seminar, mimeographed, 1985), p.2. He argues that "Nationalism is essentially an idea - an idea central to the evolution of national consciousness and its expression, nationalist politics. In colonial countries this idea is rooted in the contradictions engendered by the reality of domination. The history of the freedom struggle is the history of how this idea develops in the consciousness of the people, affecting the entire spectrum of their activity."(p.2).
Therefore, colonialism by subordinating the entire society brings into forefront the principle contradiction - dominated people's interests vis-a-vis colonialism. This basic contradiction takes the shape of a national liberation struggle initially at the levels 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 second chapter, by 1860s to 1890s the changes in the agrarian social structure also facilitated the emergence of a new 'landed elite' (rich peasantry). It was during this period that the inner contradictions of the second stage of colonialism surfaced. These decades also saw the structuring of nationalist ideology and its bid to replace the already fully structured

colonial ideology from its "hegemony". 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 level 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 profess of colonial rule and its ideological hegemony, the dreams of the English educated elite of being assimilated into colonial culture were shattered by 1860s and '80s. Increasingly, the educated began to perceive and perform the role of intellectuals and began to grasp the inner contradictions in the second stage of colonialism. They also began to be alienated from the colonial cultural ideology. In order to fight the degradation and exploitation - cultural, social, political and economic - they endeavoured to modernise the indigenous society through 'cultural renaissance' and formulate the nationalist political ideology to articulate the interests of the people vis-a-vis colonialism.

Before taking up the political struggles (1905 to 1919) let us

contradictions and the consequent 'cultural renaissance' in Andhra as a necessary part of the national struggle against colonialism. We shall also see in brief the formulation, propagation and consolidation of nationalist ideology in Andhra.

1. National Cultural - Ideological Defence

In the second half of the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries there were several 'revolts' against British domination in Andhra districts. These were all isolated civil disturbances destined to fail, for they were unevenly matched against British military superiority and technology, and were mostly led by the diffused and localised leadership comprised of old Rajas, zamindars, poligars and other elements of the 'traditional political elite'. Moreover to convert into unified political action the original emotion and social discontent that simultaneously took birth with the imposition of British domination required ideological leadership and a language of cultural protest. This was rarely forthcoming during this period in Andhra.

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 excessive in land revenue demand and 'teerwas' were good

5. For a detailed factual narration of these revolts, see M. Venkatarangaiya, The Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh (Andhra), Vol. I (1800-1905) (Hyderabad, 1965), pp.11-14; also see Shashi Bhusan Chaudhuri, Civil Disturbances During the British Rule in India (1765-1857), (Calcutta, 1955).
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 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'. The contents of these petitions and memorials have been summed up by M. Venkatarangaiya as follows:

The people of Andhra were not satisfied with the rule of the East India Company. They became subject to too many taxes, which were all oppressive in character (Documents 2 & 14). The administration of justice was both slow and costly. Very little was spent by Government on irrigation, roads and other works of public utility. Education was totally neglected (Document 14). Above all the pronouncements made now and then by men in authority gave room for the growing suspicion that the Government was bent on converting the people to Christianity, that it was to achieve this aim that it encouraged the introduction of Bible as a class-book in schools and it was for the same purpose that it was in league with the Christian missionaries (Documents 1, 3, 4, 7, 9 & 14). The Minutes of William Bentinck and the Marquis of Tweeddale show how there was ground for the suspicion that Government was bent on Christianizing the people (Documents, 1 & 9).

6. Index to the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, Govt. of Madras, see under the heads, "assessment", "collection" and "petition" from 1786-1791 and 1800 to 1886. Detailed information is also available in the District Records. The index volumes and records are available separately for each Andhra district in A.P. State Archives, Hyderabad.

7. Some of the important petitions have been published as source material by M. Venkatarangaiya, Vol.I, pp.109-135 (covering the period 1800-1857).

8. For instance, see the 'petition of the Madras Native Association', dt. 26th Feb. 1852, in Ibid., document no. 14, pp.131-135.

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 class-book in the schools during 1840s.

The nature of the national cultural defence was, however, conditioned by the intellectuals' perception of the inner contradictions and the nature of colonial rule. As has been shown in detail in a recent study, the Andhra intelligentsia as those in other parts of India were weighed down by some of the colonial cultural-ideological elements imbibed through English education; and they 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

10. M. Venkataramaiya, Vol. 1, document no.9, p.120. For the history of this problem, see ibid., documents 9 & 14, pp.119-120 & 131-135.

11. V. Ramakrishna, Social Reform in Andhra (1848-1919) (New Delhi, 1983); for a detailed analysis of this problem at all India level, see K.N. Panikkar's "Presidential Address", Modern Indian History Section, Indian History Congress, 36th Session, Aligarh, 1975; also see G.A. Oddie (ed.), Religion in South Asia: Religious Conversion and Revival Movements in South Asia in Medieval and Modern Times (New Delhi, 1977); "Christian Conversion in the Telugu Country, 1860-1900: A Case Study of one protestant movement in the Godavari-Kista delta", in Indian Economic and Social History Review, 12(1), Jan.-March 1975, pp.61-79; Charles H. Heimsath, Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform (OUP, 1964).
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 as 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 Gavaraju, Pulugurtha Lakshminarasamamba, Desiraju Pedabapaiah, Pyda Ramakrishnaiah, Gurajada Appa Rao, Bhandaru Atchamamba, Atmuri Lakshminarasimham, Chilkamarthi Lakshminarasimham, Kasibhatta Brahmayya Sastry, Unnava Lakshminarayana, Tekumalla Rajagopala Rao, Nyapati Subba Rao and Rayasam Venkatasivudu to name only some.

The social reformers like Veeresalingam in Andhra showed keen interest in the spread of mass education in Telugu with an emphasis on scientific knowledge and rational secular ideas. Their emphasis on Vernacular education for the masses and especially for women is understandable, for it was through English education that the seeds of the colonial cultural-ideological hegemony were planted. Veeresalingam's ideas on the necessity of popular vernacular education show his awareness of


13. For an indepth analysis of the work done by these reformers, see V. Ramakrishna, op.cit.
the hegemonic role of the colonial education. He championed a system of education which would liberate the minds of intellectuals and the people from the shackles of tradition and colonial ideology. As he put it, "If the people are educated they would know their freedoms and try to achieve them. They will not fear to each and every one and submit to them in a denigrating way and instead they will think and know whether what they are doing is right or wrong."

The Andhra intellectuals also realised the necessity of modernising their cultural outlook. As a part of these efforts they organised a powerful social reform movement with an emphasis on women's emancipation, breaking of caste and religious barriers, fighting against superstitions, rituals and idolatory, propagation of rational, secular and modern national education in vernacular language, temperance, etc.

The contemporary cultural environment and the changes in the people's perceptions were captured with all their complexities in some of the novels, short stories and dramas of the social reformers of that period. These works, in fact, not only take us into the midst of the real drama of contemporary life but also

14. All his ideas were gathered together by AkkiraJI Ramapathi Rao, Veeresalinga Vaani, op.cit., see chapter 7, pp.50-57.
15. Taken from the "Vivekavardhani" of 1881 and reproduced, in Ibid., p.54 (Translated from Telugu).
16. For a detailed analysis of all these activities between 1800 and 1920, see V. Remakrishna, op.cit.; also see C. Eswara Rao (ed.), Gurazada Rachanalu (Telugu, Vijayawada, 1984); AkkiraJu Ramapathi Rao, Komarraju Venkata Lakshmana Rao (Telugu biography, Vijayawada, 1978); Chilakamarthi Lakshmi Narasimham, Sweeyacharitramu (Autobiography in Telugu, Bezawada, 1944); and footnote no.12.
show the intellectuals' vision of the revitalization of the suppressed native culture and of the modernisation of the existing indigenous culture. The first novel in Telugu written by Veeresalingam, "Rajasekharacharitramu", which was serialised in the "Veveekavardhani" in 1878, is a good example. This novel brought alive the contemporary social scenario: the spread of reform ideas among the people, inspiration given by the Brahmo Samaj to Andhra social reformers, miserable social condition of widows and the evil effects of female child marriages, etc. The author also deals with the serious efforts of the contemporary intellectuals to modernise indigenous culture. We see the social environment pervaded with a new outlook and the deep rooted urge to fight evil social practices based on irrational ideas, work for women's emancipation and popularise education and scientific outlook. Interestingly this novel also focused attention on the deeply entrenched traditional outlook in women's consciousness which acted as a social drag on the effort to transform their social position. Through gossip scenes among the women the author tried to reveal the inner world of women and their consciousness. This novel also reveals the limitations of the outlook of the reformers and their movement. For the social stratum at the centre of the story were the upper castes, especially Brahmins, and their economic decay and social degradation.


18. For a brief analysis of this novel, see "Toll Telugu Navala" (First Telugu Novel), in Bharati, Dec. 1967 and R.S. Sudarshanam, "Telugu Navala-Samakalinata" (Telugu novel and contemporaneity), in Telugu Navala Hundred Years (Hyderabad, 1973), pp.41-50). This limitation is also made apparent, in Veeresalingam, Sweyacharitramu (Telugu autobiography, Rajahmundry, 1954, Ist Pub. 1911).
Another important contemporary novel which throws light on the social atmosphere was Chilakamarthi Lakshmi Narasimham’s "Ramachandra Vijayamu" written in 1894. Gurajada Appa Rao’s popular drama "Kanyasulkam" is perhaps the best contemporary work which reveals not only the miserable position of women in the contemporary society but also the new ethos that was slowly penetrating the social life of the people. Through Gireesam, the main male character, the author exposes the dubious social reformers - their public denouncement and the private practice of social practices like prostitution, and the men who went for widow marriages not out of inner conviction but for money and fame. The miserable life of widows and the evil effects of child marriages were exposed with all their social complexities.

19. C.L. Narasimham, Ramachandra Vijayamu (Victory of Ramachandra) (Telugu, 1st Pub. 1894); also see his Rajaratlam (1919) and Ganapati (written in 1920) which shows the women’s position and the miseries of Brahmans in an era of transition.

20. G. Appa Rao, Kanyasulkam (Price offered to the bride) (Telugu, Madras, 1974, 1st staged in 1892 and pub. in 1897); also his "Kondubhattoeyam" (Telugu, Vijayawada, 1954).
The crucial importance of the 19th century in Andhra was the creation of national cultural defence by the intelligentsia through vernacular educational system and creation of an effective opposition to the colonial rulers' efforts to disseminate the colonial cultural ideology to enslave the minds of the people. The Andhra intellectuals through their social reform activities prepared the people with new 'convictions' in new national cultural ideology and goals.

21. In fact, the structuring of national consciousness and the national cultural regeneration went hand in hand. Veeresalingam shows this perception and conviction, in his Autobiography, (Part I, pp.80-1). In 1898 he also said ".... I believe the political development of a country must largely depend upon the social conditions of the community which supplies the physical, intellectual, moral resources of the people". C.Y. Chintamani (ed.), Indian Social Reform (Madras, 1901), quoted in V. Ramakrishna, op.cit., p.83; for similar views, see A. Ramapathi Rao (ed.), Veeresalinga Vaani, op.cit.; and his Collected Works, Vols. II, IV, VII & VIII. For a detailed analysis of his social and political ideas, see V. Ramakrishna, op.cit., chapter 3, pp.62-86.
2. Structuring of Nationalist Ideology

In the second half of the 19th century the basic elements of the nationalist ideology started growing. The national consciousness at the initial stage was concerned more with the regeneration of cultural personality of the subject people. 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 the Andhra intellectuals formulated the basic elements of the nationalist ideology in the later half of the 19th century. For without an ideology and a common programme the people cannot be brought onto a common terrain for an united national liberation struggle. "To the extent that ideologies are historically necessary" says Antonio Gramsci, "they have a validity which is 'psychological'; they 'organise' human masses, and create the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc".

Between 1858 and 1885 several petitions and memorials were submitted to the Government voicing the popular grievances in the Madras Presidency. These petitions, covered quite fairly the needs and grievances of all the different sections of society. The two important subjects which figured prominently in these petitions were the land revenue burden on the peasantry and the salt tax, which weighed heavily on the poor. The growing poverty of the country was the constant theme projected directly or indirectly. They also voiced the problems of the urban educated.

22. A. Gramsci, Prison Notebooks, op.cit., p.337.
middle class like raising of age limit for the Indian Civil Service examination, the right of Indians to enter the higher ranks of Public Service and Indian Medical Service, more educational facilities, etc. At political level they pleaded for greater Indian representation in the Legislative Councils and for local self-government.

Their main instrument of political action was the vernacular press. The petitions and memorials may not have brought immediate redressal of the popular grievances. But by voicing the grievances they actually made the people aware of the problems faced by different social groups under colonialism and the underlying commonality in their lives i.e., the colonial exploitation. The vernacular press by propagating the popular grievances strengthened the common feeling of resentment against colonial exploitation and thereby made them aware of the basic contradiction between the people's interests and colonialism.

The first Telugu weekly was the "Satyaduta" started in 1835,


followed by the "Vruthamini" (1838) and the "Varthamana Tarangini" (1842). These weekly papers, it seems concerned themselves mainly with literary and social issues. Gajula Lakshmi Narasu Setti by starting "The crescent" (English Weekly) on 2 October 1842 started the political trend in journalism. However, it was only during the 1860s that the local nationalists started bringing out political papers in Telugu. The first Telugu political weekly was started in 1863 from Bellary called the "Sri Yakshini". This was followed by the "Swadesa Jana Prasidhabhuprayamu" (1865), "Lokaranjani" (1875), "Vivekavardhani" (started in 1874 by Veeresalingam from Rajahmundry), "Andhra Prakasika" (1885, editor, A.P. Parthasarathi Nayudu), "Sujanamanollasini" (1885), "Suryodaya Prakasika", "Gautami", "Smargadarsini", "Amritabodhini", "Vrittanta Chintamani", "Purusharthapradayini", "Andhrabhashasanjivani" (started by Kokkonda Venkataratnam from Madras), "Vartalahari", "Prakasika", "Hindujana Samskarini", "Sashilekha" (started in 1894 by C. Seshacharyulu as a weekly which later converted into a daily), etc. All these papers actively discussed popular grievances and political affairs along with social and literary issues. To quote M. Venkarantaiya:

.... Vigorous and fearless comments were made by them (papers) on all matters of public importance. They drew pointed attention to the


26. Ibid: The Reports on Native Newspapers - Madras, for years 1877 to 1900 gives us a detailed translated extracts of the Continued/....
growing poverty of the people, the heavy burden of taxation, the racial arrogance and pride displayed by the official and the non-official British, the wasteful expenditure incurred by Government, and numerous defects in the working of all departments of administration.

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 an as important part of nationalist ideology. This early critique laid bare the impoverishing nature of the colonial rule. The formulation of 'drain theory' by

Continued:


27. M. Venkataramaiya, vol.I, p.187. In this volume documents 56-85 (pp.216-232), are the extracts from the 'RNNPM' for the period 1874-1889.
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 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 national movement and spread its ideology and programme among the people. The "Andhra Prakasika" (1885) was the first Telugu weekly started by A.P. Parthasarathi Nayudu to spread nationalist politics. Important papers which came into existence in the beginning of the 20th century were the "Kistna Patrika" (started in 1902 and edited in the first two years by Konda Venkatappayya and Dasu Narayana Rao and later by Mutnuru Krishna Rao), "Swarajya" (1906, from Rajahmundry, editor Gadecherla Harisarvothama Rao) and the famous "Andhra Patrika" (in 1908 first from Bombay as weekly and then shifted to Madras and converted into a first daily paper in Telugu in 1914, editor, Kasinadhuni Nageshvara Rao Pantulu). In English it was "The Hindu" which took the lead in voicing popular

28. The "ideological-programatic" aspects of Indian nationalism have been analysed in minute details at all India level as well as for contemporary Andhra Press by Bipan Chandra, The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India Economic Policies of India National Leadership, 1880-1905 (New Delhi, 1966).

29. For more information, see works cited in footnote numbers 26 K. Subramanyam, The Press and the National Movement in South India Andhra, 1905-1932 (Madras, 1984); RNNPM, 1902 TO 1908; G. Natesan, In the Service of the Nation (Madras, 1947); Prem Narain, Press and Politics in India 1885-1905 (Delhi, 1970); P. Rajeshwara Rao, "Daily Journalism in Telugu", in Modern Review, March 1970.
grievances and popularising the nationalist ideology in the
Madras Presidency.

The nationalist press began to structure some of the main
elements of the nationalist ideology. The "Vivekavardhani" of
January 1881 in its leading article advancing a critique of the
statement of Dr. Hunter that "the gradual increase of population
is the sole cause of poverty in India" expounded the theory of
"poverty of India":

... The principal reason for the reduced state
of India lies in the defective administration of
the country; 20 crores of rupees are thus, e.g.,
annually remitted to England without any gain to
the country, and every European officer takes
with him to his native land, when getting his
pension, lakhs of rupees. During the despotic
Mogul Government the country was not so poor,
for Hindus were then appointed to higher posts,
and the Government taxes amounted only to one-
sixth part of the produce, whilst now more than
one-third, and occasionally even one-half, of
the produce is levied. After the arrival of
machine-made European cloths the indigenous
looms are lying idle. Government should
courage the natives to take up all sorts of
occupations, bestow higher appointments on the
natives, and reduce the pay of the European
officers in higher appointments.

This theme of "poverty of India" due to wasteful Government
expenditure and "drain of wealth" was constantly hammered into

30. See The Hindu (Centenary Supplement), 1978; C.J. Nirmal,
op.cit.; R. Suntharalingam, "The 'Hindu' and the genesis of
nationalist politics in South India, 1878-1885", in South
Asia, (2) August 1972, pp.64-80.

31. "Report on Telugu Newspapers for the Month of January 1881",
peoples' consciousness. It was remarked by the "Sujanamanollasini" of July 1885 that:

no one of the former rulers of India has taken its wealth to other countries and that although the English have followed their example, they have sometimes spent Indian money on subjects as wars, etc., which do not concern India. Moreover, English employees are highly paid compared with the pay they would get at home and natives get here; and, in short, all Englishmen plunder India. The editor hopes that India may, at least in future, be regarded in the same light as an estate administration under minority.

Every aspect of colonial rule and administration was subjected to critical evaluation based on a single criterion: whether it was useful to Indian welfare or not? To quote an instance, it was observed by the "Andhra Prakasika" of May 1886 under the head

32. "Report on Telugu Newspapers for the Month of July 1885", in Ibid., document-82, p.231. It was stated by the "Andhra Prakasika" of 5 November 1887 in its article on 'the poverty of India' that "the wealth of India is gradually carried to foreign countries... That India which was once famous for its wealth and excited the cupidty of foreign kings is now on the brink of poverty. Even the iniquitous administration of the Muhammadans had been better in this respect. In those days merchants and even Government servants were permanently settled in this country, and their earnings were not carried away to other countries. Thus thousands of workmen were employed, grand temples and enormous irrigation works were constructed, and education was well encouraged... If the English would purchase lands and settle permanently in India, and especially if India has secured a representation like the English Parliament, the Natives and the English will live on friendly terms... Famines will not visit the land, public works will be improved, and the ryots will be able to pay their taxes... But if the England neglect all this, and drain the country of its wealth, they will leave India in a miserable condition like cranes, which surround the lakes, so long as they are full of water, but leave as soon as they are empty". Ibid., document-100, p.260.
'India for England and not for India' that:

the ruling power in its dealings towards, India is not only actuated by selfishness, but also extreme wealth for its own sake, irrespective of the means by which it is gained.... Besides, the rulers of India, transform this country into a treasury, wherefrom to draw the necessary funds for enlarging their foreign possessions and maintaining their dignity. India has thus to pay an income-tax for the costs of the Burmese war and for the upkeep of the newly-organised establishment...

Between 1900-05 the structuring of nationalist ideology (its economic critique linked with the very nature of colonial rule) acquired a fuller and coherent shape. Analysing the 'cause of famines in India', the "Vrittanta Chintamani", of 24 April 1901 wrote that "The real cause of famines in India is not the failure of rains or the increase of population, but the negligence of the British and the heavy taxation imposed on the people".

To illustrate our point much more clearly let us see some observations made by the Telugu press during 1904 and 1905. A communication sent by a correspondent, A. Ramachandra Rao Pantulu, B.A., B.L., to the "Kistna Patrika" of 1 April 1904 on

33. "Report on Telugu Newspapers for the Month of May, 1886", in Ibid., document-93, pp.253-54; also see, the "Rasikollasini" for its critique of the income tax, etc., problems, Ibid., document-96, pp.255-56. In 1895 the backward state of Indian industries was attributed to the initial destruction of the indigenous traditional industries by the British rulers and the deliberate policy of not encouraging them to regenerate afterwards. For instance, see RNNPM, 1895, pp.45-46 & 243-44.

34. RNNPM, 1901, p.173. In 1902 the "Sashikala" criticised the large amounts of money collected from poor Indians and wasted on the coronation of Edward VII, as British Emperor and the drain of wealth from India on account of these ceremonies, Quoted in Swatantra Chartira, op.cit., p.13.
the condition of India after a century of British rule, reads:

under the Hindu and Muhammadan rule, the revenues of India were spent in India alone and appointments carrying high salaries were conferred on competent Hindus, so that Indian money was with the Indians themselves and not taken away by foreigners. Under the British rule, on the other hand, the reverse is the case, and India is therefore afflicted with poverty.... Consequently, immensely large amounts of Indian money are remitted to England. Higher appointments of Government are withheld from educated and capable natives. Indian arts and industries are allowed to deteriorate. Agriculture is left to take care of itself under heavy assessment. So the poor people are far more now than they were at the beginning of the British rule. The Government have not taken steps to remedy the above evils.

Similarly the theme of the 'drain of wealth' and consequent 'poverty of India' was propagated by the "Swadesamitran". For instance, discussing the problems of the agriculturists in relation to the Government forest policy the paper of 10 October 1904 observed that "The agriculturists do not at present obtain timber, manure, or fodder for cattle cheaper than before.... Admittedly, there is more abundant growth of forests now than before. But firewood is not cheaper. Why? The answer given is that the Railway Companies purchase enormous quantities of

35. This translation is taken from RNNPM, 1904, pp.138-39 and cross checked with the original Telugu; for similar projections, see the Kistna Patrika, for years 1904-1905. A good example, however, is an article by V. Ramachandra Rao Pantulu, "The Drain from India", dt. 5 April 1905.

firewood. Why let the Railway Company buy coal, so that the people may get their firewood cheaper? 'The truth is this': If the Railway Companies use coal instead of firewood, their profits will be lessened, and the share which the Government gets in these profits will also be decreased in proportion; and therefore will be no inducement for new British capitalists to come to India, lay new railways, and manage them...

"Swadesamitran" dated 21 October 1904 wrote:

What in fact the Government means when it uses the phrase "the good of India" in relation to foreign commerce is the interests of those Englishmen who carry on trade and realise large profits in India. The commercial activity of the British in India has extended to all the towns, and even to the larger villages. They purchase things at the places where they are produced, convey them to the big towns and ports, and export them. This is what the Government calls the trade of India; and it is the prosperity of the English merchants which the Government has in mind when it says - and lies deliberately in saying - that the Indian trade is advancing, that the Indians are getting wealthier, and so on....

Papers like the "Vrittanta Chintamani", "Desopakari", "Sasilekha", "Andhra Prakasika" carried on a systematic dissection of colonialism and exposed the maladies inherent in the system and

37. Ibid., p.344.
38. Ibid., p.350. In 1905 this paper had carried on similar ideological attack on colonialism. See, for instance, ibid., 1905, pp.25, 33, 35-38, 50 & 62.
thus made the people aware of the basic contradiction between the interests of Indian people and colonialism. They simultaneously popularised the theoretical formulations made by Dadabhai Naoroji and R.C. Dutt from 1903-04 onwards and thus completed the structuring of nationalist ideology. Due to the relentless propaganda carried on by the Telugu press, 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 defense acquired the character of an organised political struggle to lead the people "to reclaim the right, usurped by imperialist domination, namely: the liberation of the process of development of national productive forces", and the primary objective of the national liberation struggle was brought into the open.

40. See RNNPM, for years 1903-06 and M. Venkataramaiya, vol.1, pp.124-32; Kistna Patrika, for years 1904-06.

41. Amilcar Cabral, Return to the Source, op.cit., p.43; For detailed views of Cabral on this aspect, see "The role of Culture in the Struggle for Independence", a paper read for a meeting of experts on the Concept of 'Race', 'Identity' and 'Dignity', UNESCO, Paris, 3-7 July 1972; Unity and Struggle Speeches and Writings (Texts selected by the PAIGC, London, 1980), translated by Michael Holfers; also see Jock McCulloh, In The Twilight of Revolution the Political Theory of Amilcar Cabral (R.K.P., 1983).
3. The Emergence of Organised Politics, 1885-1905.

Before the formation of Indian National Congress in 1885 the popular grievances in Madras Presidency like in other provinces were expressed through local level associations. The first public association formed in Madras Presidency was the Madras Native Association. It was established in the Madras city on 26 February 1882 by Gajula Lakshminarasu Chetty, a Telugu businessman supported by prominent landlords like G. Yogambaram Mudaliar and L. Venkateswara Naidu. This association had submitted three important petitions to the Government on behalf of the ‘Native inhabitants of the Presidency’ during 1852 and 1859 and conducted some protest meetings to voice popular grievances. But it was no longer active after the death of Gajula Lakshminarasu Chetty in 1868. Even though this association basically served the interests of business groups and zamindars, it represents a newly emerging trend in national politics i.e., of organised protest.

By 1870s and '80s several nationalists with their initial grounding in national cultural defense or the 'cultural renaissance' saw the necessity of an effective organisation to articulate popular grievances and of bringing together all...

nationalists, scattered in different districts, onto a common political platform. They correctly perceived the necessity of a central organisation at the provincial level to further national consciousness among the people and prepare them for higher forms of political action.

This task of establishing the political hegemony of the nationalist ideology was set in motion, in however moderate a manner with the establishment of the Madras Mahajana Sabha on 16 May 1884, with P.Rangayya Naidu as its president and P. Anandacharlu as secretary. The first provincial meeting was held in the Panchaiyappa Hall, Madras on 28-30 December 1884 and 1-2 January 1885. More than 100 delegates from all over the presidency attended the conference. On the first day of the conference, P.Rangayya Naidu explained the aims of the Sabha as follows:

...to bring to a focus the opinion of the people on certain important questions affecting millions of their countrymen....

Spelling out the object of the Conference P.Anandacharlu observed:

.... The Sabha expects to bring to a focus nearly all the non-official intelligence now spreading without any visible proof of cohesion all over the presidency.... to promote mutual understanding among the people, separated by


44. M.Venkatarangaiya, vol.1, p.213.

45. Ibid., pp.213-14.
space to ascertain what consensus of opinion
there is among them on questions of vital
interest to us and from time to time to submit
for the consideration of Government, the views
and suggestions that such a consensus of opinion
may warrant. One of the necessary conditions to
achieve this object is a free and frequent
interchange of thought and one of the means for
the attainment is to hold periodical
conferences.

... the national intelligence has long been
roused. It has been gathering strength day by
day. It occupies a large enough space outside
the Government service. It has grown to
consciousness of its vast force and urgently
calls for direction. But there is no proper
channel to direct its force to produce and yield
its maximum good... If the renovated national
spirit is to be shaped on right lines and in a
proper way it requires proper objects to be put
before it with well-examined facts and
diligently collected material... By these means
we hope to aid in developing into a national
feeling what has been till quite recently an
essentially local feeling.

During this conference papers were read and resolutions were
passed on subjects like 'the constitution of the Legislative
Council', 'the separation of the Judicial from revenue
functions', and 'on the condition of the ryots'. The major
demand put forward was for a higher number of non-official
members in the Legislative Council. In fact, the basic
objectives of the Madras Mahajana Sabha were identical to those
of the Indian National Congress formed later in 1885 at Bombay.
From 1885 onwards the Madras Mahajana Sabha acted as a provincial
branch of the I.N.C. and sent selected delegates from Madras
presidency to its annual session. From Andhra several delegates

46. Ibid.; The Annual Report of the Madras Mahajana Sabha, 1885-
86 (Madras, 1886).
attended the first I.N.C. session at Bombay in 1885. Delegates were sent from important towns like Berhampore, Bandur, Cuddapah, Bellary and Anantapur. Notable Andhra delegates were P. Anandacharlu, P. Rangayya Naidu, S.N. Narasimhulu Naidu, Gutt Kesheva Pillai (Anantapur), S.V.G. Pantulu and N. Venkatasubbayya Naidu (Bundur).

With the affiliation of nearly sixty local branches, the Madras Mahajana Sabha acted as a headquarters in articulating nationalist politics and voicing popular grievances. With its regular annual conferences the nationalist forces were fused into an organic group and structurally linked with the I.N.C. at the all India level. The third annual session of the I.N.C. was held at Madras in 1887. Nearly 100 delegates attended from Andhra. From Andhra P. Anandacharlu was chosen to preside over the Nagpur I.N.C. session in 1891. The fact that he stressed the common material grievances of the Indian people as a major factor which brought them onto a common political platform and the necessity of strengthening the unity of the people shows the sway of the nationalist ideology over the Andhra nationalist...

47. Swatantra Charitra, Part I, p.29 and Part II p.62. At local level in Andhra - Hospet, Vizagapatam, Gudivada, Gooty, Penugonda, Anantapur, Nellore, Rajahmundry and Guntur - the delegates were elected and sent to the provincial level to represent the respective districts at the A.I.C.C. For examples, see M. Venkataramaiya, vol.I, pp.91-92.


49. A table giving details on number of delegates attended from Andhra to the A.I.C.C. sessions between 1887 and 1905 is given by M. Venkataramaiya, vol.I, p.90; also see Report of the Proceedings of the Third Indian National Congress held at Madras on the 28th, 29th & 30th December 1887 (1888).
intelectuals.

From 1890s, serious efforts were made to form district associations so that nationalist politics and decisions of the I.N.C. could be popularised among the people at local level, and popular grievances right from the lower level could be simultaneously articulated as part of the national movement. In

50. For the full text of his speech, see "The Presidential Address of P.Anandacharlu, Seventh Session of the Indian National Congress, Nagpur, 1891", in Indian National Congress (Madras, not dated); or Sankar Ghose (ed.), Congress Presidential Speeches (Calcutta, 1972).

51. In the Third North Arcot District Conference held at Vellore on 29 March 1902, the President M.Krishnamachariar, in his presidential speech made the two-fold function of the district associations very clear. He said that "the Association and the Conference had to subserve a double, a two-fold function. On the one hand one of the purposes was to be an auxiliary to the National Congress to educate the people in its principles and to throw broadcast the ground principles of its work. That was a function of instruction of the people, teaching the masses in the work of the great organisation of their country - the National Congress. There was another side to the District Association and Conference... It was a function of descending into details, the function of acting more or less as an independent working body, ... for the purpose of propounding measures calculated to benefit the special locality and to advance them by constitutional methods and try as much as possible to achieve them. This was more important. This second function was useful in more than one way. It was necessary to instruct the masses who did not pretend to have higher English Education, persons, who did not pretend to possess the grasp of abstract questions. In order to instruct them in the work of such Associations they must take up such subjects as would immediately appeal to their understanding and instruct them in their discussion and prove beneficial to them. This procedure was necessary not only for the purpose of accomplishing these objects but for the purpose of keeping alive their Associations and it is only by drawing in the interests of these people that they could create and foster public spirit, if it was by maintaining public spirit that they could keep up these Associations. If they did not create sufficient interest in the people by taking up such questions as would conduce to their advantage, they could not keep up their interests and maintain their public spirit". The Hindu, 29 March 1902; also reproduced, in M.Venkatarangaiya, vol.1, pp.280-88.
Andhra "The Kistna District Association" was the first such body formed in 1892 at Masulipatam. The first conference of this district association was held at Guntur under the chairmanship of Vavilala Venkata Sivavadhanulu, B.L. It was the English educated urban middle class persons who formed this association. Prominent among them were Sanagapalli Ramaswami Gupta, Vemuri Subba Rao, Kattamudi Chidambarama Rao, Shedimbi Hanumantha Rao, Dasu Narayana Rao, Konda Venkatappayya, Puranam Venkatappayya, Kodali Sivarama Krishna Rao, Venavarapu Ramadasu Pantulu, etc. The Kistna district's lead was in time followed by other districts - Godavari district (1895), Vizagapatam (1898), North Arcot (1900), Anantapur (1907), Nellore (1908), Guntur (1913), Kurnool (1914), Ganjam (1915), Chittoor (1915), Cuddappah (1916) and Bellary (1917).

The report of the 9th Kistna District Conference held on 15 June 1900 can be cited as an example of the role of these

52. The first meeting was held at Guntur arranged by the "Tax Payer's Association on 29-30 June and 1 July 1892 and presided over by B.Kanakaraju, B.A. Representatives from all the 12 taluqs of the Kistna district had attended and altogether 14 resolutions were passed. The Hindu, 11 June 1903; Swatantra Charitra, Part III, pp.4-5; Maganti Bapineedu, Andhra Sarwaswamu (Rajahmundry, Telugu, 1961), pp.459-60; Nidala Veerabhadra Rao, Desabhakta Jeevitha Charitramu (Biography of 'Desabhakta' Konda Venkatappayya Pantulu, Telugu, Masulipatam, 1966), p.11; Kistna Patrika, 11 & 25 Feb. 1910.


associations in spreading national consciousness among the common people and articulating their grievances:

To carry out the objects of the Indian National Congress, the Kistna District Conference has commenced earnest work ... In the Kistna District, ... the District Conference was year after year meeting at the various important towns in the District. A novel feature of the District Conference this year is that it was held in a village, Angalur, in the Gudivada Taluk ... (no) difference in the proceedings of this conference and those of any other conference or of the National Congress itself. The practical knowledge which the village ryots have in the subjects discussed at the conference enabled them to speak with authority on questions of fact concerning their grievances. Very few of the ryots that attended the conference knew English, but the manner in which the speaker that proposed the first resolution regarding the war in South Africa dealt with it showed to the audience that the subject was studied with interest and great sympathy was felt for the loss of the British soldiers. Two prominent ones that call attention are those that deal with agricultural banks and the constitution of the conference. Steps are being taken to start agricultural banks in our District and about a dozen of our leading gentlemen, deputed to wait on the Hon'ble Mr. Nicholson, and receive from him any suggestions on the subject, will shortly proceed to Madras. The District Association is to appoint a paid Secretary who will go round the villages and convene meetings and make the villages understand the objects of the National Congress. It is expected that at the next conference which is to be held at Yellatoor (village), in Tenali taluk, many more ryots will attend and better work will be turned out by the conference. The arrangements for the conference and the hearty reception given to the delegates go a great way in favour of the ability of the villages. It is a sight-worth seeing when one ryot comes and says how the D.P.H. subordinate officers trouble and worry the villagers in granting water, etc., and another ryot speaks on the question of Poramboke or Agraharam Inams....

55. The Hindu, 26 June 1900. For a report on the 10th Kistna District Conference, where the importance was given to the grievances of ryots - water supply, water-tax, etc., see ibid., 10 June 1901.
In the Godavari, North Arcot and Vizagapatam district conferences also prominence was given both for the spread of national consciousness and the articulation of popular grievances, especially of ryots, at the lower level. To popularise the aims and objectives of the national movement and the necessity of national liberation among the people, especially the peasantry, the Kistna District Association started the "Kistna Patrika" in Telugu during 1902. The real achievement of the district associations was that the people were trained at the lower level to organise themselves into democratic public associations and structure their demands as part of national movement.

The democratisation of the district associations and the Provincial Congress Committee were accomplished by 1903-04. By 1903-04 a constitution was drafted for the Provincial Congress Committee. The spirit of nationalism was slowly penetrating the urban centres. The rural areas were also affected by these associations but as yet in a marginal manner. At the political


57. Swatantra Charitra, Part III, p.5. In 1905 in the Vizagapatam District Conference the immediate object they considered was the creation of a method by which the "masses" can be motivated to perform the task set by the Association. To accomplish this task it was proposed to publish "a special kind of literature for the rural population, whereby it can understand what the Government is doing for them, what it has failed to do, and what it attempts at doing; what it is that it shall ask the Government to give and what it is that they themselves have to do before they can approach the Government". The Hindu, 24 May 1905; also reproduced, in M.Venkatarama, vol.I, document 141, pp.283-84.

58. The Hindu, 5 December 1903.
these associations and the Congress Committee could not achieve anything substantial so far as popular grievances were concerned.

Reporting on the subjects to be discussed at the Provincial Congress Committee in 1903 it was observed by "The Hindu" that:

.... The land revenue question will remain one of the standing subjects for deliberation by the Congress so long as the present policy continues of "bleeding" the agricultural classes even in opposition to the principle laid down by the late Lord Salisbury and there will accordingly be a separate resolution on it. And then with regard to the public service Indians who have been "cheated" persistently and long... We have not been done practical justice even.... (there remains problems associated with) local self-government... official secrets Bill (etc.)....

Thus, 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.
4. "Vande Mataram - Mande Rajyam" (1905-1914).

The transformation of the national movement into a storm occurred with Lord Curzon’s partition of Bengal on 16 October 1905. Suggestions were forthcoming in Andhra from 1904 itself to take up 'Swadeshi' and the demand for political reforms without any ambiguity. For instance, in Nellore, a public meeting was held in 1904 by V. Ramesam, K.S. Subrahmanya Sastri and others to popularise Swadeshi movement. The changing political mood

59. Ibid.

60. The genius of the people was generally reflected in the innovations or new methods which they used to spread nationalism and capturing popular attention. Coining of new slogans was one of those innovations. The most popular Telugu slogan coined in 1905-06 was "Vandemataram-Mande Rajyam" ('Vande Mataram-Rule is ours') which in fact captured the core of the movement.

61. For the origin and development of Swadeshi movement as an idea, see Sudit Sarkar, The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-1908 (New Delhi, 1973).

reflects in the suggestions put forward to I.N.C. by the "Swadesamitran" of 4 October 1904 under the head 'What should be the work of this year's Congress?:

The work of this year's sitting of the I.N.C. should be this: It should unhesitatingly declare that for the last ten years the British Government in India has been cutting short the privileges of the people, burdening them with heavy taxes, squandering their money, and disregarding their aims and aspirations and has produced in their minds a feeling of suspicion, fear, and indignation. The Congress should also boldly affirm that Lord Curzon is for the most part the author of this tension of feeling between the rulers and the ruled. It is doubtful how many persons like Lord Curzon will be put over our heads; and even if a humane Governor as Lord Ripon comes as our ruler, all the good done to us by him may be overturned by the policy of subsequent Viceroy's. So the Congress should demand that India should be governed for the benefit of the Indians and not of the Englishmen; and that, in order to obtain such a state of things, the Council of the Government of India should be composed of a majority of Indians over Englishmen. The Legislative Councils, constituted as they are at present, with only seven or eight representative members, are almost useless: for the Government is always sure of setting a majority of votes on its own side. The Provincial Legislative Councils should contain 50 or 60 representative members, and the Imperial Legislative Council as many. The Government should always act according to the majority of votes in such Councils. In cases where the Viceroy considers that, if the opinion of the majority is given effect to, it affects the interests of the Government the Viceroy may be invested with the power of setting aside the opinion of such majority, and acting on his own reasons for so doing. Such an arrangement will ultimately lead to the opinion of the Indians with reference to the administration of the country being treated with more respect than it now commands.

63. RNNPM, 1904, pp.338-39.
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 example, reporting on a public meeting organised in Madras in December 1905 to protest against government oppression in Bengal, "The Hindu" observed:

The emphatic protest that has gone forth from Madras against the strange doings in Bengal should teach... that at present no province and no section of the people in India stands alone, separated from the rest by the absence of active sympathies or ties of common interest binding all one into organic whole of which one part moves in sympathetic answer when another part is touched....

Therefore when Bengal, one part of the 'organic whole', was repressed, another part, Andhra, had reacted in 'sympathetic answer' by taking up Swadeshi movement.

Several mass meetings were organised to spread the message of 'Vandemataram' and Swadeshi ideology. During 1905-06 public meetings were organised protesting against the partition of Bengal and the arrest of Surendranath Banerji in Rajahmundry, Cocanada, Masulipatam, Vizianagaram, Cuddappah, and other places in Andhra. In every meeting, the people sang the poem, 'Vandematram' and raised the slogan, 'Vandemataram – Mande (or

64. Ibid., 2 December 1905.
In September 1905, led by a few active Andhra students - A. Kaleswara Rao, Rama Sai Naidu, G. Harisarvothama Rao, Komaraju Lakshmana Rao, Gollapudi Sitarama Sastri and other hundreds of students organised a public meeting on the Madras beach to express their solidarity with the 'Vandemataram' movement. In this meeting the young nationalist poet, Subramanya

65. Swatantra Charitra, Part II, p.15; The Hindu, 9, 12 & 27 Sept.; 5 & 13 Oct.; 3 & 18 Nov.; 2 Dec. 1905; Kistna Patrika, 1905 passim. It is very interesting to go through the report of a correspondent sent to this paper. "In Bundur on 1 October 1905 a huge meeting was held. Around 3,000 people turned up. Students went around the city singing songs and extolling the people to use only Swadeshi articles. Great speeches were made. On 6th instant several students took oath to use only Swadeshi goods in a meeting organised at Hindu High School. On 8th in a meeting held at Chintaguntapalem village organised by 'Devanga' caste group, some people promised to bring machines to weave faster. On 8th another mammoth meeting was held at 'Chowk' and decided not to use foreign goods on 'Diwali' festival day. On 11th in a huge meeting held at 'Buttayya Pet Naataka Sala' (drama house) it was resolved to (1) establish Swadeshi stores, (2) develop the production of Swadeshi goods, and (3) to bring the Japanese and English weaving machines and work on them. One company was established with a capital outlay of Rs.25,000, each share costing Rs.10. Around Rs.10,000 shares were sold out. For 14th meeting held at Pedava village, around 1,000 'Devanga' caste men came. Speeches were made upon the necessity of developing the weaving industry. Some decided to bring machines which can weave faster. The 'Devanga' and 'sali' caste groups from neighbouring villages are requesting the leaders to come to their villages and deliver speeches explaining the methods and necessity of developing the weaving industry. For all these meetings the students have not only done enormous help but also are working with great respect for Swadeshi. In these 15 days (1) Kouta Sreerama Sastri, (2) Evana Lakshmana Swami, (3) Mutnuri Krishna Rao, (4) Seetu Brothers, (5) J.D. Swamulu, (6) Chennapragada Bhanumurthi Pantulu, (7) Puranam Venkatappayya Pantulu, (8) Veemuri Subba Rao Pantulu, (9) Udayagiri Gopalaratnamu, (10) Kopella Hanumantha Rao Pantulu, (11) Nidugondi Harasimham Pantulu, (12) Jandhyala Gourinadhha Sastri, etc., have been giving speeches and helping in several ways". Ibid., 15 October 1905 (translated from Telugu).
Bharati aroused the audience with his patriotic poems.

Among the basic aims of all these public meetings was to popularise the new ethos in favour of a movement for indigenous industrial development. For instance, a report on a Swadeshi meeting at Masulipatam in October 1905 reads:

A grand Swadeshi Meeting, which was fully representative, was held in the Robertson Square... All the shops were closed, arches with Swadeshi mottoes were erected and a flag representing "Mother India" hoisted. Patriotic songs were sung and stirring speeches given. Practical steps are being taken to improve the weaving industry in the suburbs where it once flourished. Much enthusiasm prevails.

At Rajahmundry in a public meeting on 25 October 1905 it was resolved to form an association, "Rajahmundry Industrial Institute", basically to help the local industries. "House to house collections" were made to promote local industries and to help them financially. Many nationalist leaders like Nyapathi

66. This meeting was presided over by G. Subrahmanya Iyer, Editor of "The Swadhamitrnan". It was in this meeting that a decision was taken to create a national fund for furthering the 'Swadeshi' movement in the Presidency. G.Harisarvathama Rao and Adipudi Somanadha Rao gave stirring speeches in this meeting. Swatantra Charitra, Part II, p.15; also see A.Kaleswara Rao, Naa Jeevitha Katha - Navyandramu ('The story of my life and New Andhra', Telugu autobiography, Vijayawada, 1959), pp.84nn. For Subramanya Bharati's influence on South Indian nationalists and national movement, see C.S. Subramanyam, "Subramanya Bharati and Early phase of Radical National Movement in South", in Mainstream, 13(1-4), Annual, 1974, pp.75-79.

67. The Madras Mail, 5 Oct. 1905. The perception that "the worship of the Motherland" should be done through Swadeshiism was popularised. Kistna Patrika, 15 Oct. 1905.

68. Ibid., 31 Oct. 1905; The Hindu, 3 Nov. 1905; for some information on other areas, see M.Venkatarangaiya, vol.I, pp.285-88; Swatantra Charitra, Part II, pp.15-16.
Subba Rao and C.V. Chintaman1 (a journalist) also toured Andhra - Nellore, Guntur, Cocanada, Rajahmundry, Vizagapatam and Vizianagaram - and spread the Swadeshi message.

Another interesting feature of this period (1905-06 was the enthusiasm shown in several places in collecting 'four anna fund' and sending students abroad, especially to Japan, to get technical education and training in the arts of small scale industries like Glass manufacturing, so that they could come back and revive the indigenous industries. Japan became a new symbol of hope for despite being a small nation, it had been able to because of its newly adopted modernisation impose a crushing defeat on a large country like Russia in 1905. The Japanese example inspired the Andhra nationalists so much that they brought out some books on its history in Telugu. The best examples were Adipudi Somanadha Rao's "Japan's history" which was dedicated to Munagala Zamindar and the drama, "Japaneeyum", by Sri Rama Veerabrahman. We are told that Munagala Zamindar had named his sons after the Japanese miliatry generals "Togo" and "Nogi". He was also said to have started a weaving factory in Bezwada, inspired by Swadeshi movement.

Right from the beginning, apart from the urban educated middle class, merchants and weavers showed keen interest and took active part in the Swadeshi movement in Andhra. For instance,

69. Ibid., vol.III, p.15; for more information, Kistna Patrika, 1905, passim; RNNPM, 1905-06, PASSIM.

in Gooty public meeting (September 1905) "a number of weavers were present", for the main aim of the meeting was "to encourage local weavers" and "revive" and "encourage indigenous manufactures and industries". The fact that this meeting also resolved to "send some intelligent weavers to attend the exhibition of the improved looms proposed to be held in connection with the anniversary of the Punukonda Agricultural Society on the 23rd instant" explains the enthusiasm shown by the weavers. Since the Swadeshi movement was aimed at encouraging the "local and indigenous industries and arts" and developing a "fund to procure Indian made goods" and their sale by actively discouraging "the habit of going in for foreign made articles", the local level merchant groups also actively supported the movement. In places like Rajahmundry where there was a spurt in the boycott of foreign goods and the sale of Swadeshi goods the local merchants came forward and donated "liberally" to the Swadeshi fund. In several bigger towns the Swadeshi sales depots were established. In Guntur the merchants decided to buy and sell only Swadeshi articles.

71. The Hindu, 14 Sept. 1905. In Bundur meetings and processions apart from the students the prominent social group which participated was weavers of 'Devanga' caste. Kistna Patrika, 15 Oct. 1905.

72. The Madras Mail, 18 Nov. 1905; Ibid.; 3 Nov. 1905.

73. Ibid.; Kistna Patrika, 1905, passim.


75. Ibid., p.15.
Despite this initial enthusiasm and active propaganda the movement remained only at an infant stage. As "the Hindu" put in September 1905, the "whole country (was) alive to the advantages of the (Swadeshi) movement" but was "awaiting with eagerness" for a practical shape to be given to it.

The first signs of the practical shape came with the Andhra delegates who had gone to attend the I.N.C. annual session at Calcutta in December 1906. They brought with them the four major items or the messages to Andhra namely sales promotion of Swadeshi articles, boycott of foreign goods, national education and 'Swarajyam'. By propagating these four items for the first time a common political programme was provided to Andhra around which nationalist politics could be conducted in Andhra. The real practical shape to the movement was, however, given during Bipin Chandra Pal's tour in Andhra during April 1907.

76. The Hindu, 21 Sept. 1905; also see 15 March 1906.
77. Swatantra Charitra, Part II, p.15; Madala Veerabhadra Rao, op.cit., p.32.
78. This brought new spirit into the movement. For instance, in Rajahmundry to further the four items approved by the I.N.C. the young men (students) of Rajahmundry formed into an association, "The Bala Bharati Samiti" during February 1907. On 'Mahasivaratri' day (14th February) they organised a procession to propagate economic Swadeshi. It was reported: "In their march to the Kotilingakshetra, the streets were overcrowded and here and there the procession halted to sing the immortal song of Bankimchandra Chatterjee to the accompaniment of music and a concert party. The whole procession was led with perfect order and self-control but nevertheless the procession appeared to be the embodiment of a new spirit in all its full bloom and vigour...." The Hindu, 14 Feb. 1907; Swatantra Charitra, Part II, p.16.
B.C. Pal's tour in Andhra was arranged by Mutnuri Krishna Rao of the "Kistna Patrika". He visited Vizagapatam (16th), Cocanada (17th), Rajahmundry (stayed here between 19 and 24 April), Bezwada, Masulipatam, and left for Madras on 1 May 1907. Wherever he went enthusiastic students and crowds awaited and welcomed him. He spoke on Vedanta and 'Swaraj'. He spoke of 'Swaraj' as the national ideal and boycott of the foreign goods with simultaneous consolidation of Swadeshi as a means to achieve the final goal. He strongly advocated national education. It was due to his work in Rajahmundry that the movement for national education took off the ground. During his stay at Rajahmundry he also inaugurated a 'Swadeshi' store and a national school. The rousing welcome which he was accorded in Rajahmundry shows the influence of Swadeshi and 'Vandemataram' movements in Andhra, especially in the coastal belt. It was reported in "The Hindu", 20 April 1907 that:


81. Also reproduced, in M.Venkatarangaiya, vol.II, pp.17-18; for a detailed narration of this new spirit on the eve of B.C. Pal's tour, see Swatanta Charitra, part II, p.16.
There were music parties and the general public consisting of a thousand people were standing outside. A procession was formed with flags bearing "Bandemantram" in Telugu, Urdu and Sanskrit. It was half a mile long. In the open square on the way an address on behalf of young men including many graduates and merchants was presented to him. It was read by G. Harisarvottama Rao. The procession stopped in many places on the way where offerings of garlands, fruits, scents and "arati" were made. It took two hours for it to reach the bungalow arranged for his stay.

B.C. Pal's English lectures were translated by Chilakamarthi Lakshminarasimham Pantulu at Rajamundry into Telugu. It was on the last day of his tour that in a public meeting Chilakamarthi composed a verse in Telugu, which was popularised by the students though public recitation and extensive reproduction on the public walls. Dealing with the drain of wealth, it reads:

India is a gentle milk-cow,
And the starved calves are Indians.
The subtle cowherds muzzle them
To snatch the entire store of milk.

Pal's visit to Mosulipatam also produced similar enthusiasm. It was due to his encouragement that the young nationalists formed into an association called "Swarajya Samithi" and established a committee to collect a fund for a national school. Throughout his tour in Aandhra, B.C. Pal spoke extensively on four items of the 'Vandematram' movement i.e., Swadeshi, boycott, national education and 'Swaraj'. The boycott of foreign goods


83. Kopella Hanumantha Rao and Vemuri Ramachandra Rao as President and secretary of the Committee for national school toured villages in Kistna district which at that time was comprised of the present Kistna, Guntur and some portion of Godavari districts, collected donations and constructed the building. It was inaugurated by Konda Venkatappayya in February 1910. See Shri Andhra Jateeya Kala Sala Muslipatam, Work and Appreciations, 1907-1918 (Masulipatam, 1918); Konda Venkatappayya, Sweeyacharitramu ('Autobiography', Telugu, Vijayawada, 1952 & 1956), Vol.1; Madala Veerabhadra Rao, op.cit., pp.32-33; Swatantra Charitra, Part II, pp.18-19.
was projected as a "self-imposed protective tariff". The national education, according to him, should be "on national lines and under national control for the purpose of the realisation of the national identity". Therefore, the essence of Swadeshism was the negation of colonial institutions and the simultaneous regeneration of alternative indigenous institutions. Especially "the positive side consisted in the emphasis on setting up institutions of self-government through the organisation of village, taluk and district associations on a democratic basis and on the principle of self-taxation''.

With B.C. Pal's tour 'Vandemataram' as an idea was transformed into a force in Andhra. The slogan of 'Vandematram' became so popular that people used to greet each other with 'Vandematram'. According to the "Kistna Patrika" of 5 August 1907, Pal's visit had a lasting effect not only on the students, young professionals and merchants but also on the common people. It quoted the example of a washerman in a village who refused to wash foreign clothes. It was further reported by a missionary, Rudolf Alps of Dowlaishwaram, Rajahmundry, that ".... Pal has no doubt sown a powerful and bad seed which has fallen on fertile ground is beginning to grow at some places more rapidly than one was incline to think. The Rajahmundry paper the "Andhra Kesari" and other papers water the seditionary seedling very carefully and

84. The Hindu, 20-29 April 1907; M. Venkatarangaiya, vol.II, pp.19-20. Explaining the necessity and aims of national education he said: "The main object of the officialised public instruction is to strengthen the hold of the foreign power.... National education would remedy these evils and help the development of patriotic manhood among us." The Hindu, 24 April 1907.

85. Swatantra Charitra, Part II, p.16.

86. RNHPM, 1907, p. 269.
eagerly.

The students' revolt in Rajahmundry Government Arts and Training Colleges and the Cocanada riot on 31 May 1907 were largely due to the influence of Pal's tour. In the former case, the college students, inspired by Pal's lecture on 23 April, went to the colleges on the next day wearing 'Vandematram' badges and medals which were prohibited by the principal, Mark Hunter, an European. When they refused to remove them despite Hunters' orders, as a punitive measure out of 222 students, 138 were suspended for one to two years; Gadicherla Harisarvatham Rao, who was a teacher-trainee, was removed and debarred from employment as a teacher in any Government or aided school and Ramachandra Rao was refused permission to appear for his B.A. degree examination.

In Cocanada, on the evening of 31 May 1907, while the District Medical Officer, Captain Kemp, was driving along in his carriage three school boys standing on the road shouted 'Vandematram' after him. Enraged by this he caught one of the boys the 17 years old, Kopalle Krishna Rao, and beat him up severely, dragged the unconscious boy to the police station and left him there without giving any medical aid. Infuriated by this incident a mob of two to three hundred people, armed with sticks, paraded through the streets of the town, attacked the European Club where Kemp and some of his friends were having dinner and damaged it severely. The police dispersed the mob with a lathi-charge and later arrested 50 persons. After a prolonged and lopsided trial,

88. For a detailed narration of this incident, see ibid, documents 7-12, pp.181-205; The Hindu, May-August 1907; RNNPM, 1097, p.140; Swatantra Charitra, Part II, pp.18-19.
13 were convicted and sentenced to periods of rigorous imprisonment ranging from 18 months to 2 years, and Rs. 50 to Rs. 500 fine. A.L. Narasimha Rao, B.A, Secretary of the National (Swadeshi) Warehouse, who was alleged to be the ring-leader, was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment and Rs. 500 fine. The convicted were also required to give bonds to keep the peace for 3 years. This incident acquired added political significance due to the racial prejudices shown in the trial and the consequent resentment among the people against colonial rule and its arbitrary administration.

After the Surat Congress split of December 1907 between the moderates and the extremists, the Andhra nationalists, except in Vizagapatam where the former were in a majority, sympathised with the extremists politics. But the Madras Provincial Congress as such remained with the moderates. After 1908 the earlier form of 'Vandematram' move had subsided. Despite some efforts by the Bengali nationalists the revolutionary or individual terrorism did not take roots in Andhra. During 1908-9 some secret


90. For instance, the Kistna District Association in its meeting held at Tenali during 1908 summer passed resolutions supporting the extremists and their politics. RNNPM, 1908, p.373 & passim; A. Kaleshara Rao, op.cit., pp.102-3 & 110-111; Swatantra Charitra, Part II, pp.19-20; Part-III, pp.9 & 92-93.

91. In the Madras Provincial Conference, Vizagapatam, held during June 1907, a resolution was proposed by the extremists widening the scope of the boycott programme but it was rejected by a majority of 61 to 35 votes. The extremists walked out shouting 'Vandematram'. The Madras Mail, 8 June 1907; also reproduced, in M. Venktarangaiya, vol.II, document 27, pp.227-30.
societies or associations were formed, few letters were issued threatening the lives of officials, and there was a bomb explosion incident in Tenali. Yet revolutionary terrorism did not acquire a serious political dimension.

During 1909 there was mob rioting at Kotappakonda which resulted in the death of 5 persons and the hanging of a ryot by the Government. This riot was attributed to the spirit of 'Vandemataram' movement of the


93. C.I.D. Report on anonymous letter of threat to the collector of Kistna, dt. 24th June 1908, File No.3, p.224, in HFH, B.No.5, Part I, p.227; A post card, dt. Masulipatam, 10th July 1908, was posted to E.Scott Collector, Masulipatam in which both he and the Police Inspector were threatened with death, see ibid., p.229.

94. When Chennadu, a native of Nandivelugu, trod on a bomb which was left on the bank of an irrigation canal near Kattivaram village, Tenali, Guntur district, it exploded killing him on the spot on 27 March 1909. Later three persons were prosecuted but left off on appeal even the one who was initially sentenced to death. GOM, Judicial Dept., G.O. Nos. 667-88 (confid), dt. 25th May 1909; M. Venkatarangaiya, vol. II, document 74, pp.318-321 & 62-4. A different version was also reported, in B. Kesavanarayan, op.cit., pp.54-55.
extremist phase. However, by 1910-11, the tide of the movement had ebbed completely. But the spirit of nationalism embodied in Swadeshism survived in the collective consciousness of the people, for the nationalist had already structured the anti-colonial attitude in their psyche. The social base of the movement during this period (1905-1911) was, however, confined to the urban educated middle classes, mostly youth. 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 as it was made clear by one rich ryot in course of his discussion with a fellow traveller, who happened to be a C.I.D. officer. There was

95. Kotappakonda is a hillock with a Shiva temple, situated in Narasaraopet taluk, Guntur district. It is a custom to hold a car-festival every year on the day of the "Mahasivaratri". For this festival peasants and artisans would bring their cattle and bulls and articles for exhibition and selling. In 1909 when huge crowds gathered as usual for the festival police failed to control them and handled the people roughly. According to the nationalists version when the bulls of one Chinnappa Reddy became restive and unruly, police opened fire and killed them. This infuriated the mobs. They attacked the police station and burnt it down. By carrying 'Vandematram', 'Drive out the Britishers' and 'We want Swarajya' they said to have killed a constable, salt peon and burnt one policeman to death. Two Reddy youth were also found dead. Several police officers were inured. Some 45 persons were later arrested by the police out of which 21 were convicted. Chinnappa Reddy was sentenced to death, four for transportation for life and the rest to various terms of imprisonment. See HFM, B. No.5, Part-I, pp.63-64; K.N. Kesari, Naa Chinnanaati Muchhada ('Memoirs of my Childhood', Telugu, Madras, 1953), pp.78-81; B. Seshagiri Rao, History of Freedom Movement in Guntur District 1921-47 (Ongole, not dated), pp.25-27.


some apprehension in the official circles of the rich peasantry taking up the political movement in a big way due to their grievances-vis-colonial administration, but it proved to be a misapprehension. One reason perhaps was the common political programme projected during the Swadeshi movement had not fully incorporated the problems of the peasantry-vis-a-vis colonial rule, eventhough the nationalists talked about peasant problems in general, at sometime even communicated peasant demands to the Government through resolutions and petitions. The peasant grievances were to be incorporated into the common political programme which was successfully done during the non-cooperation movement, 1920-22, which we shall be analysing in the next chapter. Among the other social classes it was the zamindars and big landlords who barring some individual exceptions remained outside the national liberation struggle and served as the "loyalisits" to the Government. During 1905-1911 the activities of the "Madras Landholders Association" brought out the hostility

98. It was reported by a C.I.D. officer in 1908 that "I and my men have toured in this taluk (Ramachandrapuram, Godavari district) and have seen Ramachandrapuram, Psalapudi, Someswaran, Kothoor, Chodavaram, Draksarma, Kotipalli, Kinumilli, Kapileswaram, Alamur, Mandapet, Tapeswaram, Kaleri and Anaparti. Taking the Taluk as a whole I beg to submit that there is much Swadeshi feeling and in almost all the villages mentioned above there have been lectures on boycott and swaraj especially by boys who were rusticated in Rajahmundry college.... The people of this Taluk consisting mostly of agriculturists (very rich Kamnas, Kapus and Brahmans) are already dissatisfied with the recent introduction of earthenware water-spots (ponds), which curtailed their time honoured privilege of taking as much water as they liked for their fields. Such men readily take up as gospel truth the various misrepresentations of these mischievous archins...." Extract from CID reports on the state of Swadeshi Feeling in the Godavari district, (File No.4, pp.1-55) Confl. Report No.3, in HFM, B.No.5, Part I, pp.231-33.
of the landed aristocracy towards national movement.

The basic methods of propaganda adopted during the 'Vandematram' movement were public meetings, processions and lectures, pamphleteering, writing on walls, railway carriages and other public places, publication of popular books and articles in contemporary papers, staging of dramas, slogan shouting and signing nationalist songs in meetings and public places, etc.

In fact, the press acted as a major channel of propaganda for the national movement in Andhra. Rajahmundry was the centre not

99. For example, see the objectives of this association, in The Mail, 8 December 1909; For details on its and other loyalist groups public activities in support of the colonial rule, see GOM, G.O. No. 808 (Mis), dt. 30th Sept. 1908; No. 837 (press, R.P.), dt. 7th Oct. 1908; also see No. 559 (Mis), dt. 24th July 1905; Nos. 547-48 (Mis), dt. 6th July 1908; No. 307 (Mis), dt. 18th April 1908; No. 744 (Press, R.P.), dt. 28 Sept. 1909; No. 264 (Mis), dt. 15 April 1910; No. 270 (Misc), dt. 4th April 1910; No. 678 (Mis), dt. 26th June 1911.


101. For more information on press, see GOM, pub. Dept., G.O. Nos. 620-21; (Mis, Confid), dt. 25th Aug. 1905; No. 329 A (Mis), 21st April 1908; No. 725 (Mis), dt. 4th Sept. 1908; No. 322 (Press, N.P., Confid), dt. 10th April 1908; No. 686 (Mis, confid), dt. 26th Aug. 1908; No. 704 (Press), dt., 2nd Sept. 1908; Nos. 413-14 (Press, N.P., Confid), dt. 16th May 1908; No. 515 (Press), dt. 22nd July 1909; No. 23 (Mis. Confid), dt. 11th Jan., 1909; No. 886 (Press, N.P., Confid), dt. 26th Sept., 1910; Nos. 984-85 (Mis. Confid), dt. 19th Oct., 1910; No. 88 (Mis. Confid), dt. 24th Jan. 1911; No. 469 (Mis. Confid), dt. 10th May 1911.
only of the movement but also of Telugu journalism. The major Telugu papers of the period were the "Kistna Patrika" from Hasulipatam, "Bharata Maata" from Vizagapatam, "Andhra Vani", "Jyoti", and "Kalinga" from Ganjam, "Bhavani", "Simhapuri", "Aandhra Maata", and "Swatantra" from Nellore and "Sri Sadana", and "Pinakini Patrika" from Anantapur.

5. Social and political Scene in Andhra 1910-1919.

During 1905-10 the political movement-'Vandematram' and Swadesha - stole the fire 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 the political protest. At a different level it was due to the transition of the earlier form of national cultural defense into a political struggle to regain the political personality of the dominated people under colonialism. The socio-cultural and political movements were not two disjointed phenomena. They were two successive stages of the anti-colonial struggle. Therefore, we repeatedly see the continuation of the initial cultural - ideological struggle.

102. The number of Telugu Journals steadily increased from 30 in 1905 to 38 in 1906 and 50 in 1908. Out of which 13 in 1906 and 17 in 1908 were published from Rajamundry alone. Even the circulation had climbed up steadily from 16,025 in 1901 to 37,400 in 1911. See GOM, Pub. Deptt., G.O. No. 515 (Confid), dt. 1st July 1907; Nos. 620-21 (Mis. Confid), op.cit.; No. 425 (Confid), dt. 7th June 1906; No. 851-A (Mis), dt. 15th Oct. 1908; Nos. 88 & 469 (on 1911), ibid.; Census of India 1911, vol. XII, Madras, Part II (Madras, 1912), p.134.

103. The role of the Telugu press in propagating the national movement and its programme is brought out though rather briefly in K. Subramanyam, op.cit.

104. V. Ramakrishna, op.cit., Chapter 7. By making this point as one of the major reasons for the decline of social reform movements in Andhra Ramakrishna attributes a negative impact to the political agitation which perhaps is not true if viewed this change from a different angle as we have done above.
beneath the surface of the political struggle when the later was
dominant and above the surface with new dimensions whenever the
political movement ebbed and left a void. After 1910 the
Andhra scene was once again dominated by social reform
activities till the emergence of the Home Rule movement in 1916–
17 and later the non-cooperation movement.
The social reform movement during 1910–16 brought into its fold
mostly the non-Brahman caste groups - Kammas, Kapus and Reddies. In
other words this period represents the urge and the efforts of
the peasant castes to modernise their social and cultural outlook.
The crusade to uplift women and to reform indigenous culture with
a bitter attack on the irrational social practices like child
marriages and 'Kanyasulkam' (bride price) and backward looking
ideas had continued even during the days of 'Vandematram' a/
movement, in however moderate a manner. For instance, Konda
Ventakappayya, Chennapragada Bhanu Murthi, Mutnuri Krishna Rao and
others had conducted a first widow marriage in Bundur during 1906
despite opposition from the orthodox sections. On 20 April 1908
in Bundur "The Andhra Social Reformers Conference" was held.
Chairman was Pattabhi Sitaramayya and Secretary Mutnuri Krishna
Rao. Here it was resolved to establish schools to uplift the
untouchables to provide education for women, remove social
restrictions on foreign travel and to end the evil practice of
'Kanyasulkam' (Bride price). Between 1905 and 1912 several social
conferences were held to carry on the social reform activities
105. See our analysis of the social and political scene in Andhra
between 1922 and 1930 in Chapter VII.


107. Ibid., p.10.
and mobilise the public opinion in favour of the reform ideas. The district associations also devoted considerable amount of time in their annual conferences to social and cultural issues. They acted as important channels for propagating social reform ideas among the people at the local level.

In this social and political atmosphere several caste associations sprang up (1910-16) basically to develop education, carry on social reform - women's education, widow marriages, removal of child marriages, etc., - and uplift the ritual status of their caste groups by breaking the framework of the traditional ritual and social hierarchy. The first caste association which came into existence with a wide social base was the 'Kamma Association' in 1910. Then came up the Kapu and Reddy associations, closely followed by the association of Vaiyas, padmasalis and others with similar objectives - educational development and internal social reform. The convergence of the interest of all these

108. Ibid.; V. Ramakrishna, op.cit., pp.189-93; Madala, op.cit., pp.12-35; RHNPM, 1905-12; Kistna Patrika, 1910 to 1912; Andhra Patrika, 1907 to 1912.

109. See for detailed information on the annual meetings, resolutions and activities of the different district associations, GOM, pub. Dept., G.O. Nos.946 (Mis), dt. 9th Dec. 1905; No. 627 (Mis), dt. 27th Aug. 1906; No. 830 (Mis), dt. 20th Oct. 1909; No. 131 (Mis), dt. 12th Feb. 1910; No. 986 (Press, N.P.), dt. 19th Oct. 1910; No. 1083 (Mis), 12th Oct. 1911; Letter No. 1583 (Mis), dt. 19th Dec. 1913; No. 1050 (Mis), dt. 20th Aug. 1913; No. 393 (Mis), dt. 25th March 1913; The Hindu, 24 May 1905; 24 Jan. 1907; 10 March & 10 May 1908; 21-22 May 1912 & 3-5 June 1912; 28 March; 4 & 28th April; 21-23 No. 1916; Kistna Patrika, 11 & 25 Feb. 1910; RHNPM, 1907 to 1912.

110. For information on objectives, annual meetings and speeches, etc., of these caste associations, see Andhra Patrika, 22 Feb. 1911; 3 Jan. 1912; 29 Jan; 12 Feb; 16 April 1913; 3-4 April 1914; 4 July 1917; 16 Sept. 1903 (a special issue of the weekly); Kistna Patrika. 17 Nov. 1917; and also for 1910 to 1919.
caste associations resulted in the establishment of a non-Brahman association in 1915-16 by Suryadevara Raghavaiyah Chowdary and Tripuraneni Ramaswami Chowdary. However, unlike the Justice party, formed in 1916-17, the non-Brahman movement in Andhra was not against the national movement. In fact, all these caste associations were pro-nationalist and aimed mainly at internal social reform and educational development of their castemen. It was this internal reform movement which indirectly prepared the peasant castes for the non-cooperation movement in Andhra.

During this period (1910-13) the movement for separate Andhra province also took birth. The aim was the speedy socio-cultural and economic development of Telugu speaking districts of the Madras presidency. The idea of a separate Telugu linguistic province developed into a popular slogan by 1911-12 and was popularised by all the Telugu papers and the majority of the Andhra nationalists. The first Andhra Mahasabha meeting was held at Bapatla, Guntur district on 26 May 1913 and was attended by 2,000 observers and 800 representatives from different districts. The second meeting was held at Vijayawada on 11 April 1914; third at Vizagapatam in May 1915; fourth at Cocanada in 1916 and fifth at Nellore in June 1917. It was due to this movement that the Andhra Congress Committee was finally

111. We have analysed this aspect in the last section of the Second Chapter as part of social change in Andhra.

112. Majority of the caste associations, for example, supported the Congress political reform scheme in 1917. See Kistna Patrika, 15 Dec. 1917; for more information non-Brahman movement, see HFM, B.No.22, on "Non-Brahman Movement" (1910-20) (Tamil Nadu Archives, Madras); RNNPH, 1916 to 1919; Andhra Patrika and Kistna Patrika, 1915 to 1920; Suryadevara Raghavaiyah Chowdary, Brahmanetharodhyamamu and Tripuraneni Ramaswami Chowdary's works (see bibliography); Kaviraju Smaraka Sanchika, op.cit.; K. Bavaiah Chowdary, History of the Kammams (1939); G.V. Subba Rao, Life and Times of sir K.V. Reddi Naidu (Rajahmundry, 1957).
established and authorised by the A.I.C.C. with Nyapati Subba Rao as president and Konda Venkatappayya as secretary on 22 January 1918.

Meanwhile the promise of political reforms by British government as a reward for the Indian support and sacrifices during the First World War had "occasioned great expectations". It was noted by the Madras government that:

The interest of the educated classes has been mainly centred on the Indian National Congress, which met on 28th (Dec. 1914). The tone of the opening speeches was enthusiastically loyal, but prominence has been given to the demands which are likely to be made for privileges which the speakers consider can hardly be denied after the people have proved their loyalty and trustworthiness; and especially the repeal of modification of the Arms Act, the grant of Commissions in the army to Indians and the formulation of Indian Volunteer corps ....

It was in this atmosphere of 'great expectations' and the disappointment due to Governments' failure in taking steps towards self-government that Mrs. Annie Besant started her

113. For a detailed history of this movement, see K.V. Narayana Rao, The Emergence of Andhra Pradesh (Bombay, 1973); Swatantra Charitra, Part II, pp.25-28; M. Venkatatarangaiya, Vol. II, several documents in this deals with Andhra movement; The Madras Mail, (report of 1st conference) 11-12 April 1914; K. Venkatappayya, Seeyacharitra, op.cit.; for details on 2nd conference, see GOM, Pub. Dept. G.O.No. 782 (Ordinary), dt. 20th May 1915.


115. Madras Fortnightly Reports to the Govt. of India, Strictly Confidential, Jud. Dept., Demi Official from the Acting Chief Sec. to the Govt. of Madras, to the Sec. to the Govt. of India, Home Dept., dated the 2nd Jan. 1915, No. 20-1, p.7. (hereafter as Fortnightly Report).
campaign of agitation for "Home Rule for India". Annie Besant's Home Rule League consisted of two divisions, one in India and the other in England, the latter to educate 'the English democracy' in relation to India's complete self-government. The main object of the league was the "education of the masses" in the idea of liberty, the formation of a detailed scheme of Home Rule on the lines of "Colonial self-government" and the organisation of a constitutional and non-violent agitation to get Home Rule. Mrs. Annie Besant agitated continuously in her "New India" and toured personally in the presidency to propagate the idea of Home Rule. By December 1915 her agitation for Home Rule had begun to influence both the Vernacular press and the educated class. In her speeches she projected the necessity of freedom to revive the 'mighty past' and fulfil the 'splendid future'. At the local level the followers of the Home Rule League propagated its aims all over Andhra. In his presidential address to the Twenty-fifth Kistna District Association held on 20 April 1916 at Gudivada, Guttu Kesava Pillai explained to the audience that "what they incessantly demanded was self-governing villages at the bottom, leading up gradually to self-government at the top".


118. For example see her speech at the conference of the Chittoor Dist. Ass. in March 1916, in The Hindu, 18 March 1916.

To suppress her movement and the spread of the Home Rule idea among the people the Government of Madras demanded Rs. 2,000 as security for her "New India" in May-June 1916. This generated protest meetings all over Andhra, and the main target of attack was the Indian press Act of 1910. By 14 June 1916 the Madras government had received "copies of resolution passed in 27 cases including the proceedings of four associations or bodies assembled ...." By August 1916 Besant's propaganda had completely captured the urban centres in the presidency, especially Andhra districts. According to the Fortnightly report, her "... paper 'New India', is undoubtedly widely read and like her pamphlet, appeals especially to the younger generation and the student class...."

Officially the Home Rule League of Annie Besant was started in September 1916 with a strength of 2,000 members and 41 branches spread all over the presidency. It was decided that all the Home Rule Leaguers should establish contact with the peasantry or the masses in the villages and mobilise them for the cause of self-government.

In Andhra, initially, it was the district associations which propagated the idea of Home Rule. For instance, at Cuddapah and Kurnool district conferences of November and December 1916 the main emphasis in the speeches was on Home Rule or self-government. Among the

123. The Hindu, 18 & 21 Nov.; 2 Dec. 1916; also see 18 March; 22 April and 29 Nov. 1916.
Andhra nationalists it was Gadicherla Harisarvoothama Rao, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Unnava Lakshminarayana, Gollapudi Sitarama Sastri and Konda Venkatappayya who welcomed and propagated the Home Rule movement. G. Harisarvoothama Rao wrote several Telugu pamphlets explaining why the necessity of 'Swaraja' or Home Rule. It was reported by the Madras Government that by December 1916:

While Mrs. Besant and her lieutenants pay particular attention to the student class, there are indications of the initiation of a special campaign for village work based mainly on distribution of Vernacular pamphlets and the itineration of Home Rule preachers. Hitherto the district reports have for the most part pictured the Home Rule Movement as confined to the younger vakils and students in central towns, but in the report from the Guntur district for the past fortnight the Collector lays stress upon the activities of the league in the delta villages of the Tenali taluk. "New India", he writes, owing largely to its cheapness, has a very wide circulation in rural areas generally and the fact, in his opinion, is giving the Home Rule movement a market impetus among English-knowing people of all class; the paper has a specially large circulation in the lower ranks of Government service.

The influence of the movement was further strengthened with Annie Besant's tour of Andhra on her way back from INC session held in December 1916. In the first week of January 1917 she visited important towns like Cocanada, Rajahmundry, Ellore and Chittoor and gave lectures on her ideas of Home Rule or self-government.


125. The good examples are "Swarajya Paramodhesam", "Swatantra Vardhana Patram", "Swarajyam Korutaku Kaaranam", etc., and his paper "Nationalist" in English also said to have published several seditious articles and consequently the Government had confiscated its security deposit. The prominent Telugu papers which propagated Home Rule Movement were the "Desamata" of Chilakamothu Lakshminarasimham, "Hitakarini" (Ellore), "Andhra Patrika" of Kasinadhuni Nageswara Rao (started in 1914) and "Kistna Patrika" of Mutnuni Kistrna Rao. See Ibid.


By February 1917 the Home Rule League was said to have 110 branches and 5,000 members in the presidency. From January to June 1917, she "strained every nerve to carry out a vigorous campaign for self-government in the spirit of the resolution of the Lucknow Congress. She organised tours throughout the country (presidency), held meetings, and produced several articles".

Once the Home Rule movement showed its deep imprint on the minds of students and youth, the Government decided to curb the movement with a heavy hand. The students were prohibited from attending political meetings and joining any political organisation or association. But the students at Madras, Guntur, Coimbatore and Rajahmundry disobeyed the order. Annie Besant made a serious effort to start 'National Education' with an elaborate scheme "as a counterblaste to the order of the Madras Government prohibiting the participation of students and school boys in political movements." But all these came to an abrupt end with the internment of Annie Besant and G.S. Arundale and B.P. Wadia on 16 June 1917. Protest meetings were organised against

131. B. Kesvanarayana, op.cit., p.64.
132. Fortnightly Report, dt. 18th June 1917, No. 2372 W-1, pp.123-24; also see New India, 5 & 16 June 1917.
133. Ibid., dt. 2nd July 1917, No. 2143 W-1, pp.126-27; Home Political, A, July 1917, Nos. 291-98 - K.W; Raj Kumar, op.cit., p.111; Peter Robb, op.cit.
this internment in almost all the towns of Andhra and this form of protest continued for more than two months. Due to this public agitation and also due to the coming reforms Besant was released on 17 September 1917. After her release she devoted most of her time in organising Labour at Madras along with Wadia. She was made the president of 1917 December annual session of the I.N.C. The Home Rule Movement thus practically came to an end after her release even though it lingered on in the Andhra districts throughout 1916 mostly through meetings and speeches.

Discussing the downfall of her popularity it was observed by a nationalist that:

The speeches and writings which she made after her release (1917) marked an important change in her angle of vision towards Indian conditions. The change of attitude spelt ruin to her magical influence in the country. Her changed attitude meant a political somersault to all the votaries of the Congress who worshipped her as if she is an angel of happiness and contentment.

After the declaration of Montagu - Chelmsford reforms, when the Congress in August 1918 after "a critical and exhaustive study"


136. Ibid.; Raj Kumar, op.cit., pp.112 - 120; Fortnightly Report, dt. 18th Sept. 1917, No. 5386, W-1, pp.145-46; dt. 5th Jan. 1918, No. 5386, W-1; dt. 17th Jan. 1918, No. 166 W-1; dt. 4th Feb 1918, No. 300 W-1; dt. 16th Feb. 1918, No. 589 W-1; 5th March 1918, No. 719 W-1; dt. 20th March 1918, No. 887 W-1; dt. 2nd April 1918, No. 1016 W-1; dt. 18th June 1918, No. 1949, W-1.

felt "disappointment and resentment" and characterised the new reforms as thoroughly "inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing". Annie Besant at the Delhi Congress in December 1918 pleaded for the acceptance of the reforms and advised the Congressmen to work from within the Councils. Thus by December 1918 Annie Besant "stood isolated from the mainstream of Indian politics. And the isolation was almost-complete at the Congress session at Amritsar in 1919 when even her bonafides were questioned". The emergence of Gandhian leadership and the new style of mass politics had made her slogan of Home Rule obsolete.

The crucial role of the Home Rule Movement was, however, the 'harmonising' role it played in fusing the divergent trends in the Congress, and rallying all sections of society behind the slogans of Home Rule or self-government. For the first time an impressive organisational network was also established linking up the urban centres with the all India movement. However, despite the 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. This will be the theme of the next chapter.


140. Raj Kumar, op.cit., p. 126.