PREFACE
Contemporary India has been witnessing a proliferation of various types of protest movements. There are struggles of women, dalits, ecological and environmental groups; various types of autonomy and nationality struggles; and a wide scale armed class-based (peasant) movement (often referred to as the Naxalite movement). On a smaller scale, there are tribal or adivasi struggles and middle-class-based movements for secularism and peace; right to information struggles; mobilisation of various social groups and organization of various forms of protests by the NGOs. Each of these movements has brought into focus new issues, ideological perspectives, organizational forms and strategies of transformation. Collectively they have democratized the State, extended the contours of civil society, and forged social change, for the otherwise politically, economically and culturally marginalised social groups. The study of individual social movement has always been a crucial area of enquiry for the Political Scientists.

However, conventional studies on social movements, in the discipline of Political Science, have concentrated mostly on individual social movements analyzing the nature of its leadership, mobilizational and organizational forms, social base and the transformation they have ushered. These studies have contributed to the expansion of both the substantive and methodological aspects, in the study of social movements. However, since the end of the decade of 1980s, there have been new issues and challenges that have emerged in comprehending the nature of social transformation being forged by these movements. For instance, 'movement as a message'; movements as contesting over meanings; the issue of internal democracy within these movements; etc. Along with all these issues, since many of these movements share a common spatial and temporal dimension, the issue of inter-relation between them has emerged as a crucial nodal point in determining the nature and direction of social change. How do various social movements, with both overlapping and different, social base, ideological perspectives and strategies of transformation relate to each other? Do they perceive each other as potential allies or contenders / competitors who will divide the social base and weaken the process of achieving comprehensive transformation? In other words, the categories of fragmentation, autonomy and solidarity have become extremely decisive in
determining the nature of both individual social movements and the overall direction of social change.

Broadly, fragmentation refers to a process where individual social movement perceives other movements as:

(a) contenders/competitors that divide otherwise cohesive social base and weaken the process of comprehensive social change;

(b) unwarranted/unnecessary and believe in forging comprehensive transformation all by themselves as the issues raised by others are already subsumed by the struggles they are waging;

(c) products of a conspiracy – imperialist or otherwise.

Autonomy and solidarity on the other hand, are mutually reinforcing and strengthening factors. Autonomy refers to a process where social movements,

(a) characterize themselves in a self-limiting mode, vis-à-vis other struggles.

(b) believe in the ‘unevenness’, and contradicitoriness of the social/material conditions that necessitates the recognition of multiple struggles, with primacy to varied issues, strategies, and ideological perspectives.

(c) recognize the aforesaid in tandem with locating the nodal points around which the commonality of interests can be as realized.

Finally, solidarity refers to:

(a) joint activity/alliance or forming of a united front without the merger of individual social movements into a single undifferentiated struggle.

(b) durable and substantive relations between the movements rather than temporary and tactical alliances.

This study shares these contemporary concerns about fragmentation and solidarity between the movements. The cardinal points of enquiry are— whether social movements
in contemporary times are fragmenting from each other or forging solidarity? What are the social / material dynamics for either of these processes?

For the aforesaid purpose, Andhra Pradesh presents ideal and challenging conditions of study. Since the 1980s, there have been powerful and large-scale caste, class and gender movements here. The period from 1985 to 1995, which is the focus of this study, represents the phase in which the social movements actively engaged with each other, constantly experimenting on the aspect of inter-relation between the movements. It is an interesting feature of the social movements in Andhra Pradesh that a large amount of literature (pamphlets, empirical surveys, and ideological booklets, mostly in Telugu) has been written by various organisations part of these movements. An empirical study of the movements was done through the study of the documents issued by various organisations part of each of these movements, along with the interviews of these movement’s leaders and the cadre. The former included both documents written on their own individual issues, and struggles organised by each of these movements; and also documents that reflected on other movements and the possible relation with them.

By the early eighties, autonomous caste and gender movements emerged, along with the class-based naxalite movement. Initially in course of demanding autonomy from each other and establishing a distinct identity, the movements bifurcated and fragmented the issues they were addressing and struggling for. The issues that were dichotomised and thereby potentially fragmented the relations between the movements could be located, again on the basis of the empirical study, at three different (but inter-related) levels. These levels could be referred to as material, discursive and strategic. The conditions of bifurcation need therefore to be comprehended at each of these levels. Initial empirical survey however also revealed a rather intriguing and paradoxical situation. It could be observed that, by 1990s, each movement began to be compelled to address, acknowledge and confront the issues that other movements were independently negotiating, and artificial bifurcation was no longer possible. For instance, rural dalit women within the
Women’s Movement were demanding and protesting on the issue of land and wages, which were of utmost priority to the Marxist–Leninist (ML) movement; Dalits within the ML movements were raising the issue of self-dignity, cultural humiliation, leadership positions, Ambedkarism, etc- issues which were being independently raised by the autonomous Dalit Movement. Various sub-caste organizations were born raising the issues of classes within dalits, which again was the issue being negotiated by the ML movement. These overlapping concerns definitely generated conditions where the movements could grow closer to each other. The intellectual challenge is to locate and comprehend these conditions of fragmentation and overcome them, so as to realise those social-material conditions that are making solidarity both a possibility and necessity for a comprehensive social transformation, as against conditions of fragmentation (which also at a particular phase in the development of the movements ‘appeared’ to provide conditions for social transformation and liberation). In other words, there are no simplistic objective social material conditions waiting to be translated into solidarity between the movements, but have to be comprehended along with the processes that mediate them.

This study is presented in two parts. While the first deals with the theory of solidarity, the second part traces the history of gender, caste, and class movements and the emerging practice of solidarity.

The first chapter- Totality-Anti-Totality Dichotomy: The Material Dimension- is an attempt to negotiate with the dichotomized 'material' practice of all the three movements. While the women’s movement locates itself in the 'socio-cultural' domain, dalit movement ‘attempts’ to exclusively operate in the 'cultural political' domain and the M.L. movement in the 'political-economic' realm. Each movement ascribes primacy exclusively to the issues in their respective domains and believes that other issues are either secondary or subsumed or can be consequentially dealt with and therefore can be postponed. The reason for such a bifurcated practice can be traced in the context of Andhra Pradesh, to the practice of the Communist movement guided by traditional
Marxist distinctions between the base and the superstructure. The artificial discontinuities conceptualised in theory are then replicated in the material practice of the Communist movement. Paradoxically, autonomous movements, which are critical of such bifurcation as a reaction themselves 'privilege' those domains undermined by the Communist movement: It is therefore imperative to argue that alternative notions and readings of 'totality' are present within the Marxist trajectory. It is also important to argue that base-superstructure model presents a reductionist model of reality and a more comprehensive reading of social conditions is necessary. It is with this purpose that the first chapter of this study begins with the conventional notion of 'expressive totality' based on the base-superstructure distinction in Lukacs, and moves on to elaborate upon more complex and comprehensive notions of 'contradictory totality' in Althusser, 'organic totality' in E.P. Thompson and 'inter-subjective totality' in Habermas. These models of totality, plead for an 'integrated' approach to social reality and comprehend multiple struggles and solidarity as both a possibility and a necessity.

The second chapter of the thesis- Subject-Object Dichotomy: The Discursive Dimension -deals with the bifurcated conditions at the discursive level. Caste, class and gender movements have also bifurcated or dichotomized the relation between theory and practice. In other words, study of the documents and interviews on the programmes taken up by each movement reveals that at times movements have accommodated and incorporated the agenda of other movements, however all the three movements lack the language or 'discursive articulations' that can explain the emergence of new identities or subjects of struggle. The failure to articulate, leads to an absence of discourse on solidarity and thereby various attempts remain as temporary and tactical. For instance, most of the M.L. organisations have changed their earlier practice and established separate women's and dalit mass fronts. This shift in practice has no impact on the theory of social transformation; there is a need for new 'subjects' to emerge if politics of durable solidarity are to be possible but this has to be discursively articulated and then, practically/politically realised. There is no conscious attempt by these movements to articulate—recognize and construct—new 'subject positions' because of the underlying
assumption of theory or discourse being a 'reflection' of material practice. The second chapter in the thesis argues that Marxists like Godelier have recognised long back that material and discursive practices operate simultaneously and are inextricably linked. Discursive structures cannot be reduced to an epiphenomenon of material practices. On the contrary, discourse itself has a 'materiality' of its own. 'Subjects' are neither completely conditioned nor automatically constructed from their 'structural positions'. Structure-agency relation is mediated through various cultural/discursive structures. The materiality of discursive structures lies in its character to 'reside' and potential to 'create' novel material practices. Thus, for solidarity between movements, they need new language that can 'recognize' and 'construct' new subjects that exist at the point of interconnection between the movements.

The third chapter—Reform-Revolution Dichotomy: The Strategic Dimension—negotiates with the dichotomization of strategies of transformation by the caste, class and gender movements in Andhra Pradesh. Communist movement in Andhra believes that it is waging a 'revolution' that will achieve comprehensive transformation liberating all the sections of the society. This according to them is possible only through an armed revolution against the State. It also believes that gender and caste movements are 'reformistic' as they are struggling for piece-meal 'social reforms'. Caste and gender movements on the other hand argue that they too are 'revolutionary' struggles and it is neither necessary to wage an armed struggle nor capture State power to bring about a revolution. Reform—Revolution bifurcation is also fragmenting the social movements. Third chapter argues that strategy of social transformation has to be rethought in light of recognition of the fact that all social groups are privileged in some structural positions and disadvantaged and exploited in other. Dalit men are exploited as dalits and privileged as men; urban feminists are privileged as upper caste/class, urban women and underprivileged as women; peasants and workers in the M.L movement are part of various privileged caste/gender structures. The complex vertical–horizontal relations make the process of transformation a highly differentiated process requiring combination of varied strategies. Third chapter of this thesis argues that traditional notions of
revolution as capture of State power through the armed means need to be debunked. Revolution is a much larger process than this. Macro structures such as State and the economic relations do require violence and are prone to radical structural collapse, however such a strategy accounts for only partial transformation and could be referred to as a ‘refolution’ (revolutionary reform). Cultural/internal structures may need non-violent/persuasive additive means and this process could be referred to as ‘social reform’. Revolution can only mean a creative combination of these strategies. Revolution therefore refers to a combination of ‘refolution’ and ‘social reform’ strategies. Finally, it also needs to be noted that ‘reform’ is distinct from ‘reformism’. While the former brings about structural changes, the later creates false contradictions that do no alter structural conditions. Such subtle distinctions need to be constructed to make sense of the practice of different movements.

It is with these theoretical elaborations in the backdrop, the practice of caste, class and gender movements in Andhra Pradesh is revisited in a detailed manner in the second part of this thesis. A more circuitous method of study has been adopted so that empirical issues are studied in light of various theoretical explorations and not delinked from them. The purpose of a detailed enumeration of the history of these movements - issues they have taken up, various incidents, and struggles they have taken up, novel ideological formulations they have made, etc - for over last two decades, is not only to project and highlight the dichotomization of issues at all the three levels but also to discern the concrete social/material processes that are creating conditions for durable solidarity. Those material conditions, in which, social movements are infused to construct and move towards alternative theoretical models.

In chapter four - Autonomous Gender and Caste Movements in Andhra Pradesh: Autonomy or Fragmentation - autonomous caste and gender movements are studied. It is observed that autonomous women’s movement was built primarily around cultural issues such as against practices of dowry, rape, domestic work, dignity, etc, which were neglected by the M.I. movement, which focussed on land reforms, minimum wages, etc.
This strict prioritization tended to fragment the movements. But my mid-1990s rural dalit women’s movement emerged in Andhra Pradesh raising the issue of land, wages and caste violence and demanded autonomy from upper caste-class feminists. This demand for internal autonomy has influenced the practice of urban feminist movement and they are compelled to,

(a) recognize the importance of issues raised by the M.L movement and the dalit movement
(b) recognize the difference between fragmentation and autonomy
(c) recognize the need for more substantial solidarity with both internal and external movements.

Similarly, the dalit movement was also born around cultural-political issues such as self-respect, abolition of untouchability, State power, reservations, etc. The M.L movement neglected these issues. Again by the end of the decade of 90s, sub-caste movement was born raising issues of 'classes within caste groups', practice of untouchability between various dalit groups, need for land reforms that will benefit the most deprived sub-castes among the dalits, etc. These again were the issues raised by the M.L movement. As the women’s movement, dalit movement also recognised the need for solidarity, by providing autonomy, with sub caste movement on the one hand and the M.L movement on the other.

In chapter five- Class Struggle in Andhra Pradesh: Solidarity or Hegemony -on the class based Naxalite movement, it could be observed that it had no or little conception of autonomy and any independent effort was construed as fragmentation. It was only towards the end of the decade of 1980s they formed various mass organisations such as the civil liberties organisation, which enjoyed very little autonomy. Towards mid-90s, they formed separate women’s and dalit organisations, with New Democratic Revolution as their central programme. However, towards the end of the decade of 90s demand for autonomy began within the civil liberties organization raising the demand for an
independent perspective and raised the issue of rights of dalits and women within the M.L. movement. They also demanded that strategies of autonomous movements had to be recognized as revolutionary. This has influenced the practice of the M.L. movement and a notion of autonomy emerged within the functioning of the M.L. movement.

The concluding chapter- Internal-External Continuum: A Tentative Theory of Solidarity - draws on this internal-external continuum between the caste, class and gender movements. The 'internal' autonomy movements within the autonomous movements and the Communist movement generate practices that are drawing them close to the 'external' movements. In other words, in the process of negotiating the 'internal' movement's demands, each movement is growing closer to the agenda of the 'external' movements. This internal-external continuum would make it possible for the dichotomized practices at the material, discursive and strategic levels to be reconfigured into a continuum. Internal-external continuum presents the material-social conditions for the theoretical elaborations made in the first three chapters. Internal-external continuum converts the dichotomized relations at the three levels into a continuum and thus presents a tentative theory of solidarity. This tentative theory is a modest contribution to the politics of solidarity in Andhra Pradesh and in due course social movements would themselves construct more creative and comprehensive theories of solidarity.

This study both due its scope and limitations of the researcher suffers from various limitations. It could not develop the various theoretical issues it raised into a comprehensive model on solidarity, connecting them in a much more detailed way with the empirical events. It however attempts to present an outline of the plausible theoretical model that can be constructed on solidarity.

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