CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: ROLE OF THE REGIONAL PARTIES
Political parties play a significant part in elections held under the Parliamentary system. However, there is no law at present regarding the formation and functioning of political parties in India. The fundamental right to form associations which is guaranteed by Article 19 of the Constitution remains unfettered, although under Clause (4) of the Article, it is open to Parliament to make an imposing reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the right in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India or public order or morality. The Representation of the Peoples Act also does not refer to political parties even from an electoral point of view except with regard to one or two ancillary matters only. If, therefore, became necessary for the Election Commission to evolve a procedure by which it could recognise political parties for the limited purpose of regulating the allotment of exclusive election symbols to those which were so recognised. In 1968 the Commission issued the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 to provide for specification, reservation, choice and allotment of symbols at elections in Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies, for the recognition of the political parties in relation thereto and for matters connected therewith' clause 6 of
the aforesaid order specifies and following conditions to be fulfilled by a political party before it could be recognised by the Commission.

A political party shall be treated as a recognised political party in a state if, and only if, either the conditions specified in clause (A) are, or the condition specified in clause (B) is, fulfilled by that party and not otherwise. That is to say:

(A) that such party:

a) has been engaged in political activity for a continuous period of five years; and

b) has, at the general elections in that state to the House of the People, or as the case may be, to the Legislative Assembly for the time being in existence and functioning, returned—either

i) at least one member to the House of the People for every twenty-five members of that House or any fraction of that number elected from that state; or

ii) at least one member of the Legislative Assembly of that state for every thirty members of that Assembly or any fraction of that member;
(B) that the total number of valid votes polled by all contesting candidates set up by such party at the general election in the state to the House of the People, or as the case may be, to the Legislative Assembly, for the time being in existence and functioning (excluding the valid votes of each such contesting candidates in a constituency as has not been elected and has not been polled by the all the contesting candidates in the constituency), is not less than four per cent, of the total number of valid votes polled by all the contesting candidates at such general election in the state (including the valid votes of those contesting candidates who have forfeited their deposits)

A recognised political party has been classified either as a national party or a state party. If a political party is recognised in four or more states, it is deemed to be a national party and a political party recognised in less than four states, is a state party in the state or states in which it is recognised as such.

In the Indian context, regional parties are those which generally and exclusively operate within a limited geographical area of a state, or which represent primordial loyalties. That is, in respect of the narrowly defined
Interests regional parties stand in sharp contrast to the broad-ranging, diverse concerns of the national parties. Duverger classifies that regional parties are minor parties, minority-minded and are of two distinct types. They are 'personality minority parties' and 'permanent minority parties'. Duverger dismisses the personality parties as the clique of the legislators and condemns the permanent minority parties as deviationists. But it is interesting to note that both personality parties and permanent minority parties have freely proliferated in India.

In a country of vast diversity like India, where political fluidity continues indefinitely, because of the transition from the traditional caste politics to the democratic mass politics, primordial groups were the first ones to demand regional identity and personality of their own. For instance, the Akali Dal, the political mouthpiece of the Sikhs, is a regional party with a religious base. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam stands for the welfare of the backward communities of Tamil Nadu. Shiv Sena of Bombay under the leadership of Bal Thakeray has assumed a militant posture against the non-Marathians. Telugu Desam of Andhra and the National Conference of Jammu and Kashmir has
fomented caste, communal, linguistic and regional feelings. The Gorkha League has demanded autonomy for Darjeeling district in West Bengal. Thus every conceivable category of primordial sentiment in India has founded a regional party of its own.

On the other hand, the thrusting of a modern political consciousness upon the mind of a still largely unmodernized population has tended to lead in the stimulation of intense popular interest. But the institutionalization of political participation has not progressed sufficiently to allow the political parties to withstand the stresses of rapidly rising population and to respond to their growing demands. Thus the absence of a balance between the rate of growth of participation and the rate of institutionalization within the political parties had led to the emergence of several regional parties. Congress itself has been subject to this test, Kerala Congress, Tamil Arasu Kazhagam, Bharatiya Kranti Dal, Jana Congress, Indian National Democratic Congress were instances of this phenomenon. It has been not only the congress that gave

rise to despair but several regional parties themselves were responsible for this happening. There has been continuous breeding of regional parties by regional parties themselves. All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, Republican Party of India (Kamble Group), Tamil Nationalist Party, various factions in the Akali Dal and National Conference at local levels in the other national parties have produced many personality-oriented regional parties. Various factions of the Forward Bloc, Revolutionary Communist Party of India, The Bolshevik Party of India, Socialist Unity Centre, Kerala Muslim League and the almost incalculable factions of the Socialists are examples of this happening.

It goes to the credit of the Congress that it has compelled several national parties themselves to behave as though they are regional parties. Bharatiya Janata Party and Lok Dal in the Hindi belt, CPI in Kerala, CPI(M) in West Bengal and Tripura, and Janata Party in Karnataka descend to these levels. Lastly the deliberate strategy of divide and rule of the Congress to contain the opposition has resulted in yet another array of ephemeral regional


On the question of the role of the regional parties, a reassessment of present characteristics of those parties must first be made. Basically, the regional parties no longer advocate secession from the Indian Union. Demands to that extent are heard only from here and there, (for example Khalistan and GNLPS) when Congress is not attentive to the other genuine grievances of the regional parties. Territorial disputes, river disputes and claims for full fledged statehood continue to exist but they do not thwart the existence of the Union. Secondly, most of the regional parties have learnt to shun violence in constitutional and other parleys with the Congress. Very few parties like the CPI (ML) believe in political violence as a means to social regeneration. Positively speaking, the bitterness between the primordialist and or other regional forces and the Congress has led to the crystallisation and consolidation
of the non-congressist ideology, in both the national and regional scenes. However, the regional parties feel that they are unable to match to the organization and resources of the Congress politically, and therefore try to veer towards electoral coalitions mostly and to governmental coalitions in a few instances. That is to say, the regional parties have also mastered the number game of the Congress and repay it in its own coin. When regional loyalties play the game of coalitional strategies, the expectations of the people are more intensely aroused, leading to electoral participation and the stability of the political instrument.

Certainly, the regional parties have awakened the consciousness of the people in their very different statuses and locales. They have made clear to the Congress about the needs of their groups, ideologically and politically. Finding that secessionism and violence could not pay to their demands, they operate now with more efficiency in the parliamentary arenas as opposition. They expect to play a leading role amidst the diversity of India in future.

Regional parties are an inevitable development in India and they have a definite influence and impact upon the body politic. In fact minor parties may be said to condition and modify the major parties, as the habitat of an organism determines its characteristics. The different linguistic status represent not only administrative regions but they stand for different regional nations. Over and above these regional nationalities exists the newly fostered All-India Nationality. While the regional loyalties are strongly rooted, the All-India Nationality is a compromise of these regional loyalties. Whenever India as a whole is threatened by an external element, the whole stands united. However, when there is no such engrossing All-India concern, the regional loyalties dominate the political scene. It stands to reason that the stability of India depends on the maintenance of the balance between these levels of loyalties.

Regional loyalties have made another useful contribution to the Indian state by their very nature of functioning. Since the primordial loyalties operate mostly at the levels of the state governments, they leave the Congress to operate the economic forces with a free will.

A. Iyob Narain, State Politics in India, (Moenakshi Prakasan Meerut, 1963), pp.52-64.
National integration and socio-economic development therefore become tangible.

The conflict between the nationalist and regionalist loyalties has brought several dilemmas to both. For the Congress, the suppression of the regional forces posed moral problems. Also, educating the primordialists has proved to be a difficult exercise. The policies of national integration and socio-economic development rattle the Congress for more and more concentration of powers, which is resented by the regional parties and the public alike. At another level, the demands of the masses for progress make the Congress blink, because resources for responding effectively to the situation do not offer themselves. Congress can choose to ride the tiger of exacerbated pluralism, and possible internal strife and disintegration, or it may choose to restrain social and economic changes to a level that can be handled by it. While so doing, the Congress has two options: It may emphasize building an effective response by giving the younger technical elites their hand and playing down the political party structure (which will invite antagonism of the old nationalists). Or it may collaborate with the regional forces themselves to
foster steady progress.

As for the regional parties, the dilemmas are more inexplicable. As they could not reach the Centre by the nature of the political system, they must collaborate either with the other regional loyalties (which are hitherto competitive) or with the Congress itself. This means that the central authority is not likely to collapse as a result of regional pressures, in spite of the fact that Congress is built upon time-honored foundations and depends upon a relatively small elite. Belig Harrison's prophecies of imminent disintegration of India are not falsified by the regional parties, but their achievements to their respective groups is not much indeed. Congress will not change its policy of instrumentalism and it will continue to survive. Regional parties will not be obsolete but they will not gain much success, given the operational rules of the Indian State set by the Congress. To be sure, the nation does not have any vision or ideology of the uses of political power but has powerful resources and continuously adapting institutions. The region has definite visions of uses of political power but matching

resources and institutions do not exist. It is high time that regionalism is treated as a cure than a disease for this perspective would lead to harmonious political development of India, its salience then to its stalemate.

An indirect reference to regional party is, however, found in Maurice Duverger's concept of "Minor Part". According to Duverger "the concept of minor party" deserves special consideration. He says that, a minor party is one which is minority minded. As to their nature there is a good deal of controversy over these minor parties or small parties as the case may be regarding their role and performance in government and opposition. Of late some distinct types of these minor or small parties have emerged which have played a significant role in the politics of the developing countries. Their emergence and their activities under certain socio-economic milieu have set certain patterns which nevertheless seem significant in the working of the political system.

6.Ibid., p.279.
8.Ibid., p.289.
Duverger's theory of 'minor parties' is primarily based on the distinction between major and minor parties reflecting the difference in their mentality. He has distinguished a minor party from a 'party with a majority bent' and in this case he has clarified that the 'parties with a majority bent' are those which command an absolute majority in parliament or at least they have potential to attain majority. This distinction between a majority and a minority party is more keenly felt in a multiparty system than in a two-party system. "Parties without a majority bent are often led into demagogy by the very nature of the system" as they make irresponsible and unrealistic promises for they very well know that it is quite unlikely for them to shoulder alone the responsibilities of the Government.

Duverger has coined the term 'minor party' referring to those which are 'minority minded' and which seemingly include regional, local and such other smaller parties formed on the basis of linguistic, religious, ethnic and cultural interests. According to him there are two

9. Ibid., p.289.
10. Ibid., p.283.
11. Ibid., p.286.
12. Ibid., p.284.
distinct types of minor parties. They are ‘personality minor parties’ and ‘permanent minor parties’. Duverger has considered ‘personality parties’ as purely legislators’ groups. These parties are not based on any real party organisation. They mostly originate as dissident groups and subsequently appear as separate organisations. Under the hegemony or discipline imposed by major parties. These parties are centered around influential personalities and considerable number of people are attached to the charisma of these personalities for reasons of ‘prestige or favour’. It is for these reasons that such parties lack a true social sub-structure and for that reason also they are neither strong nor stable in character. In the absence of any discipline and precise doctrine they turn out to be what Duverger has called as the most recalcitrant of all parties.

On the other hand, the ‘permanent minority’ parties have organisations in the country which are either national or local. They represent a modern variety of minor party and in this respect they stand in sharp contrast to the

13. Ibid., p.290.
15. Ibid., p.291.
16. Ibid., p.291.
personality parties which are more of an archaic type. These permanent minority parties represent either a race or a region and without accepting complete fusion with the national community they tend to strive to manifest their strong minority bent of mind. However, these parties are relatively stable as they are very strong locally, frequently occupying the position of dominant party or even of single party at the provincial level. These permanent minority parties are supported by a fairly homogeneous and solid fraction of the population either of a geographical, cultural or religious minority which tend to emphasise maintaining a separate identity of their own. Hence permanent minority parties have been found in most of the cases to lend towards opposition.

Thus, from the analysis of Duverger’s concept of ‘minor party’ we can arrive at a conceptual meaning of regional parties. Regional parties are those which generally and exclusively operate within a limited geographical area within a state or which represent the interests of particular linguistic, religious, ethnic or
cultural groups whose population may be concentrated in an area as small as a single Assembly Constituency or as large as an entire state or region. In respect of their narrowly defined interests regional parties stand in sharp contrast to the broad-ranging, diverse concerns of national parties.

The programmatic focus of regional parties is usually restricted towards specific issues of concern to their membership only or at best to their region. Regional parties do not generally aspire to secure control over the country's national government. It may be because they are mostly confined to a limited geographic area. The regional parties are also relatively homogeneous in their policy preferences. These may be the reasons why they aim at securing control over the State governments or over certain policies that have special significance for their constituencies.

Regional parties draw their influence from two major sources. First is the concentration of their supporters in a particular geographic area which helps them to

20. Ibid., 111.
21. Ibid., p. 110.
concentrate their attention on certain constituencies at election time. Because of this concentration of attention, relatively few votes for regional parties are wasted. In fact few votes are cast in constituencies where the candidates of regional parties have no chance of winning. On the other hand, regional parties generally avoid by fielding candidates in those constituencies or areas where they do not have at least a marginal support base. Secondly, regional parties draw considerable influence from the stability they enjoy. Their relatively constant base of support in particular locales helps them in promoting those programmes that would benefit their constituencies. This stability of regional parties proves extremely beneficial in certain circumstances especially when the regional parties are in a position to form government at the state level in coalition with other parties.

ROLE AND RELEVANCE OF REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES

Regional parties are almost an inevitable development and have a definite influence and impact upon the politics of the democratic states, depending upon the right of

22. Ibid., p. 111.
23. Ibid., p. 113.
dissent and the diversity of life in their body politic. In western democracies minor parties may be said to condition and modify major parties somewhat as the habitat of an organism determines its characteristics. The multiplication of minor parties cannot, however, be prevented and they are bound to be an integral part of the political system because of the continuous struggle between various closed social groups, particularly in multiparty systems.

In a country of vast diversity like India where political fluidity continues indefinitely, there have emerged many minor parties or parties of purely local or regional origin and operation and pre-occupies with local issues which have strongly dominated the political scene since the independence. The establishment of such parties marks the "transition from the traditional class politics to the democratic mass politics". With the initiation

26. Ibid., p. 71.
of the constitutional process of regionalisation along primordial lines had commenced in India. The new circumstances immediately after independence led to the growth of several primordial linguistic and sub-cultural groups which demanded regional identity and regional personality of their own. The growth of these Pan-Indian forces had, however, taken shape under the centralisation of power during the British rule. But they were submerged in the national movement. After the independence, growth of regional parties in this vast society composed of numerous groups has been proliferation. These regional parties are not yet in an advantageous position to raise their bargaining power in national politics although some of them have proved their strength against their adversaries including the Congress at the state level.

Regional parties have often been referred to as parochial or particularistic parties in India as they have mostly represented the parochial or particular interests of

certain sections of population. Further they were more concerned with the interests of certain groups than with the regional welfare of the nation. Their limited aggregative potential led them to identify with particular interests. The aggregation and articulation of these regional or other sectarian interests took shape in the hands of certain politicians of middle-class origin as well as of some caste and traditional leaders who saw new opportunities to acquire positions of prominence in the changed circumstances after Independence. Sometimes caste and other traditional loyalties were overlaid by political or ideological statement. However, these regional parties gained commanding influence in some localities or regions, but at the national level their impact has been limited.

AN ACCOUNT OF REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES IN INDIA

Parties in India established on purely caste lines are relatively meagre in number. However, the influence of

31. Ibid., p.142.
32. Ibid., p.143.
certain castes or tribes on some parties which campaign for
greater autonomy of a region or for linguistic rights of a
community in some particular area is nevertheless
important.

In certain cases the people of a certain region,
because of regional imbalance or a minority community owing
to their grievances against the majority, have revolted
against the establishment. The Telengana Praja Samiti
(Telengana People's Conference) of Andhra Pradesh and the
Praja Party of Jammu and Kashmir are the examples of such
kind. Born in 1969 the Telengana Praja Samiti voiced a
strong protest against the neglect of Telengana region by
Andhra and demanded a separate statehood for Telengana.
The Samiti formally became a political party in 1971 and
contested the elections in the same year. But eventually
it merged with the Congress led by Mrs. Gandhi.

The Akali Dal, the political mouth-piece of the Sikhs,
is the only regional party with a strong religious
stance. The party has a compact area of influence and it
draws considerable following from the Punjab, the homeland

33.Ibid., p.145.
34.Hartmann., op.cit, p.147.
of the Sikhs. The Sikhs are a militant community of which the Akalis form the more self-conscious and tenacious section. The Akali Dal from the very inception is a religio-political force which demanded the creation of a separate state "on purely cultural and linguistic basis."

Among the regional parties, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) was by far the strongest. A large fraction under the leadership of C.N. Annadurai came out of the parent fold, E.V.R. Naicker's Dravida Kazhagam (DK) and formed an independent party called DMK in 1949. The goal of DMK as advocated by Annadurai was the attainment of Dravidasthan until the beginning of sixties. After the Chinese aggression the party apparently changed its attitude of separatism on the basis of cultural nationalism. Subsequently the party concentrated on fighting the imposition of Hindi on the South. In 1967 the party was able to defeat the Congress at the poll and came to power in the State. After Annadurai's death in 1967, M. Karunanidhi, a Writer-Journalist, Film Artist and a

36 The Forerunner of the DK was the Justice Party of Madras.

329.95/51
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brilliant Organiser, succeeded him with little opposition. The DMK returned to power again after 1971 elections with an absolute majority. But serious differences cropped up between Karunanidhi and M.G.Ramechandran, a popular Cinestar and the Treasurer of the party. In October 1972 a separate party called the Anna D.M.K. under the leadership of M.G.Ramachandran took birth. The ADMK fought the 1977 elections as All India Anna DMK and assumed power in the state defeating DMK at the polls. It returned to power again in 1980 and since then it has been working as the largest regional party in India.

PERFORMANCE OF THE REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES IN INDIA

With their inherent shortcomings and in spite of the eventual disappearance of many of them, the regional parties have contributed something significant to Indian Democracy. They could not provide alternative governments in all cases. They could not also form durable effective opposition nor could they displace the Congress on their own with however, a few exceptions. But certainly the regional parties have directly or indirectly conveyed the 'message of freedom and democracy' to many remote

corners of the country and have imparted political education to millions of citizens, who "for the first time came to know democracy, its institutions and their working." Further, the regional parties have displayed temperaments, aspirations and ambitions of numerous sections of the society and largely enabled to organise and develop political life at the grass-roots level. Several other regional parties which were born out of the Congress, no doubt lacked the elements of viability to function independently and later either merged with the parent organisation or with other parties. Nevertheless their emergence had some chastening effect upon the Congress for a time. Some of these parties have played the constructive role of opposition with the main objective of reforming the Congress. While corruption is an endemic phenomenon in Indian Politics, many of these regional parties took shape as a revolt against the betrayal of political morals and aimed at eradicating corruption from public life.

Despite their limited range of concerns and their limited pool of potential supporters, regional parties have

38. Ibid., p. 72.
39. Ibid., p. 115.
40. Ibid., p. 118.
played an important role in national, state and local politics. These parties have mobilized their strength in favour of local issues and regional demands to which the leaders at the national level tended to be indifferent or adopted a casual or frivolous attitude. Some of these regional parties not only shared power at the state level but also influenced some of the national decisions, like the medium of official communication (both English and Hindi as link language), change of the name of All India Radio, etc.

The Government of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, for instance, depended in part on the support from Tamil Nadu's DMK in the Lok Sabha between 1969 and 1971 for its survival. The government of Morarji Desai for Presidential election and constitutional amendments relied on the support from the Akali Dal and the All India DMK which led the governments in Punjab and in the Tamil Nadu respectively after the 1977 elections. Several other states including Bihar, West Bengal, Kerala and Orissa have earlier had coalition governments with regional parties among their partners. This dependence of the national parties on the increasing

42.Ibid., p.111.
43.Sadasivam., op.cit, p.75.
influence of the regional parties has greatly enhanced the legitimacy and strength of regional parties in India's political system.

With the increasing conflicting interests at various levels of India's political structure the country has been a fertile soil for regional parties and they seem to continue playing a significant role in future. In spite of the gradual decline of some regional parties which came into existence before 1967 and after, the study of the regional parties in Orissa is nevertheless important for the following reasons. First, all regional parties have not yet gone into oblivion. Besides All India Anna DMK and the Akali Dal which are still powerful in their respective states, several new regional parties have either come into being or are in the offing. Devaraj Urs, after testing his strength with Congress (I) since his break with Mrs. Gandhi in 1979, and failing to unite the opposition parties at the national level formed a regional party, Karnataka Kranti Ranga or the Revolutionary Forum of Karnataka.

Similarly N.T.Rama Rao, the matinee idol and the counterpart of the Tamil actor-politician, M.G.Ramachandran in Andhra Pradesh, has also announced the formation of a regional party called Telugu Desam in his state.

EXISTING LITERATURE ON REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES:

An objective assessment of regional politics and regional political parties in the Indian states is long overdue. Interestingly, many of the regional political parties in most of the states have largely remained unrecognised and unstudies. Although there has been a spate of studies on each of the national parties in India, very little research has been done on the regional parties. This apathy towards the study of regional political parties seems to be partly rooted in the insufficient appreciation of regional politics as an operationally significant level of inquiry even though the regional parties in many states have increasingly gained strength and some of them have repeatedly held the reins of power at the state level.

45. Ibid., p.8.
The complacency of scholars may also be partly due to the continuing emphasis on the study of national parties and the dominance of regional parties by national parties. The net result was that the study of regional parties was not accorded due institutional support and was allowed to remain a dark area in the studies of Indian politics.

The formation of coalition government and the emergence of regional parties as their constituent partners after 1967 elections became yet another important development which attracted the attention of many scholars. This new development of regional parties as coalition partners sharing power in some states increased the legitimacy of the regional parties as well as the importance of their study. The coalition governments in the states were studies from the perspective of the issues involved in their nature and functioning. Several theoretical, constitutional, and developmental issues were raised in the studies of coalition governments. But

48. Ibid., p. 94.
these studies were also too insufficient as they did not make any in-depth study of the regional parties from the perspective of their contextual dimension and intraregional imbalances.

The emergence of regional parties and their continuing political consequences have been studied from the perspective of its threat to national unity and its impact upon centre-state relations.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties in parliamentary democracy contribute to the articulation of the people's will and to the formation of a government with a working ability. Not every organisation which calls itself a party, can fulfil this function. Much depends on the organisational structure of a party which provides a particular form to make it functional. Sigmund Neumann defined a political party as an organisation founded and maintained for the purpose of getting candidates elected to public office.

51. Iqbal Narain., op.cit, p.20,
Modern parties have developed a well-built system based on the principle of any large scale commercial or governmental organization. As Maurice Duverger observes:

In modern parties organisation assumes great importance; it constitutes the general setting for the activity of members, the form imposed on their solidarity; it determines the machinery for the selection of leaders and decides their powers. It often explains the strength and efficiency of certain parties, the weakness and inefficiency of others.

The tool that helps one to have a close view of the organisation of a party in its constitution. The constitution of a party is a document, which broadly speaking, regulates the organisation, working and activities of the party machinery. But a number of parties in India have no constitution at all and some have adopted it only as an exercise in political formality. It is more so of the local "parties of dissidents" at the state level.

The general framework of a regional party is usually a hierarchy of elected committees; at the top is a state

level committee. Below this are District Committees, one for each of the administrative districts and these too have Executive Committees. Below these are Committees for each constituency, and often in theory only, Committees for each polling booth and each village. At different levels of the hierarchy, full-time party workers are recruited to guide and assist the work of the Committees. Besides this general framework, each party usually has auxiliary units on different fronts like labour, student, women, kisan, etc., and in each of these fronts members are to attain specialization.

IDEOLOGY OF THE REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES:

Ideology is the key to an understanding of a political party. It tends to significantly influence a party in structuring its organisation. "Ideology is the religion of the party. It equips the party with a meaningful end, and motivations necessary for mobilising its organisation to achieve that end". "Ideology constitutes the mirror of the core values of a political party and political parties.

57. Ibid., 139.
are said to be the most important ideological carriers and interpreters."

Political parties, from the standpoint of their ideological foundations, may broadly be divided into two groups - rightist and leftist. The parties that believe in status quo maintenance or seek peaceful changes are the rightist parties. Leftist parties on the other hand mainly advocate for a revolutionary change in the existing structure through violent or snap methods. There are a number of intermediate varieties between these two types. As for instance the rightists may be traditional or liberal conservatives and leftists may be either authoritarian or liberal radicals. It may happen also that there may be a party without an ideology. That is, however, a simple classification of political parties on ideological foundations.

LEADERSHIP PATTERN OF THE REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES

Leadership like power has been an age-long concern of political theory. The problem of political leadership in modern parties has been one of the new dimensions of the political systems. It constitutes an important characteristic of modern political processes. The pressing needs of rapid social change have brought about transformation in the social structure with alterations in the old values and attitudes as well. These structural and functional changes in the political systems have called for increased direction and decisions by government and political leadership. Hence, the question of political leadership has been of immense value in modern times.

Leadership and authority in political parties are complex phenomena. Different situations, different communities and different periods in time throw up different styles of leadership. However, the studies of

leadership have not yet come to any agreed conclusion as to what traits constitute leadership qualities. It may be because the confusing and ever changing life situations in politics cannot be subjected to experimental control where manipulation of variables is possible. "Leadership" is an abstract term. In its concrete form it manifests itself in the total process of the rise of a leader, the influence he wields on his followers and the ways by which he not only ensures and gathers power around him and seeks to ascend still further on the rungs of the leadership ladder, but also tries to perpetuate his achieved position. The term leader again is relative since one cannot conceive of a leader without a following. A leader takes the lead affecting the behaviour of other people and in the process he himself may be affected by the demands of those whom he leads. Thus, leadership may be conceived of as a mutual interaction between those who lead and those who are led. Leadership in India followed the pattern of other colonial countries till its independence.

64. Ibid., p.104.
65. Ibid., p.99.
66. Ibid., p.100.
67. Ibid., p.99.
The patterns of political loyalty and political leadership have undergone changes after independence. Rural India has passed through a period of transition. The new social and economic forces have geared up the large-scale development plans. Under the impact of modernising processes in the post-independence period, the traditional leadership in India has undergone a change and new patterns of leadership have emerged on the scene. Thus, the criterion for political leadership has gradually shifted from "ascriptive" to achievement standards as men have ceased to be accepted as leaders mainly because of hereditary status and have begun to make their impact through their own talents.

An attempt has been made here to briefly examine three types of leadership. At the risk of being over simplified, Hugh Tinker's classification has been followed. According to him there are three types of political leadership: (i) traditional, (ii) traditional-modern and (iii) modern. Traditional leaders are those who claim their legitimacy of tradition. These leaders

70. Ibid., p. 64.
enjoy prescriptive rights over the tradition-loving people. In this case a leader ascends to the position not on the basis of his achievement or intrinsic worth, but solely on the basis of traditional values. It is the most universal and even primitive. Traditional leadership might come from within the group or without. While the in-group leader having a limited area of his influence either as head of a clan, village or being a religious head, might exercise profound influence within his own circle, the out-group leader, on the other hand, mostly derives his power and influence from hereditary status. The character of out-group leadership is aloof and withdrawn from the people. It is not obligatory for him to consult the people. This position is claimed to be based on the principle of divine virtue. The examples of such leaders — kings and princes — are to be found in history. But traditional leadership has changed in form and function and it has acquired some modern elements as a result of political socialisation processes. Traditional-modern leadership has often rested upon the success of prescriptive leadership in taking over an achievement role under the new dispensation. In this context, the introduction of

71 Hugh Tinker, op.cit., p.64;
72 Ibid., p.65.
73 Ibid., p.66.
74 Ibid., p.65.
community projects, land reforms, decentralised local administration and adult franchise, all of which aimed at the reconstruction of rural society, have led to the traditional leaders to adapt themselves to the new circumstances and fulfill the new demands of the society. It can be said that these leaders supplement their inherited prestige by an acquired expertise. The traditional-modern leaders are able to preserve their old aloofness and simultaneously come in close contact with the multitudes by exercising their acquired influence. Lastly the modern political leadership emerges from within the group. With the communication and secularization processes being more widened and organised, the traditional and local groups like castes, tribes, or regions which till the other day used to play a very restricted role in their own spheres have now emerged as important elements of the national politics. By making use of new political techniques and exhibiting all the qualities of skills and political manipulations these leaders come to occupy important positions and from there they aspire to ascend to the state leadership and again to the higher national level leadership. Modern political leaders draw their power and

75.Ibid., p.65.
influence as much from the traditional affiliations of the old groups (though not in its purely classical sense) as from promoting responsible participation and reinforcing cooperative interpersonal relations within the group. Thus, modern leadership suggests the need for special skills, personality resources and knowledge of dynamics of leadership on the part of the leader. The new leadership facilitates communication within the group, makes for better morale, increases member’s satisfaction, promotes greater productivity and helps the group to move towards its goals.

With the greater participation of the people in the political processes after independence and especially after the launching of five year plans, a wider avenue was opened up for display of leadership competence. The post-Gandhian era saw the proliferation of politicians at different levels. It brought into broad focus the juxtapositions of the centrifugal and centripetal forces. As a result a new politico-administrative style of leadership emerged with the disappearance of the ‘classical’ style with an accent on intellectualism and for sacrifice. The states

77. Ram Raddy, and Seshadri, op.cit, p.106.
78. Ibid., p.106.
as units of the Indian federation became important centres of political power. The regional parties that successfully contended with the Congress Party and other all-India parties brought about a significant change not only in the party system but also in the leadership pattern as well. The new leaders who emerged at the state level were drawn mostly from the regional milieu. These regional leaders played an important role in capturing the levers of power controlling the channels of inter-party communications at the political base of the democratic framework.

REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTION POLITICS

Elections in a democracy can be defined as a process, as a means through which the political opinion of the public is shaped. They help people to crystallise their interests and to give expression to them. A democratic policy conducts periodical elections for the selection of its rulers. Periodical elections are the appropriate means of expressing popular verdict and political recruitment which, in turn, help in the formation of governments. It is the elections which institutionalise popular participation in the political process of a democratic system. Further,

elections greatly facilitate the development of "intermediate political structures" to articulate public policy, mobiliing public opinion and institutionalising political participation. The inert masses are not merely politically activated but become conversant with the democratic rule of the game through these elections. Thus elections constitute an interesting phenomenon in a democratic life and it plays a vital role as the instrument of democratisation and modernisation of a society.

Elections in British India were held on the basis of restricted franchise. The franchise was gradually enlarged after 1936 according to the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935. The Britishers were compelled to concede voting rights to more persons due to the intensified demand of the nationalists fighting for India's independence. But even after 1936, the franchise was largely based on the considerations of property, education, payment of taxes and other conditions which mostly suited the privileged few. The system of universal adult franchise in India was introduced only after its independence in 1947. The constitution of the Indian Republic, which came into force in 1950 introduced the basis of universal

adult franchise. According to the Representation of the Peoples Act passed thereafter in 1950, any adult in free India on attaining 21 years of age could exercise his right to vote.

The general election of 1952 was the first major test of democracy in the new republic with Indian National Congress in power. One of the most important developments in the aftermath of independence was the emergence of increasingly vigorous opposition parties both at the centre and at the state level in electoral competition with the Congress. The Indian National Congress, the architect of Indian National movement, which assumed the vital task of nation-building after independence, considered this development of various opposing parties challenging its hegemony as a threat to the problem of integration of the nation. But this development of opposition parties in the arena of election politics was, however, considered by others as a contributing factor in politicizing the vast masses of the newly born independent nation.

A number of non-Congress parties had come into being on the eve of the independence and the first general

elections in opposition to the Congress. But their poor results only proved their weakness vis-a-vis the Congress which continued to maintain its dominance in the electoral politics. However, there was some erosion in the electoral politics. However, there was some erosion in the strength of the Congress which it had secured in the elections before independence. India thus continued to be described as 'one-party-dominant system' because a single party - the Congress - remained in control of the national government with no serious threat from the opposition.

But 'one-party-dominant-system', though valid for the national scene, was not applicable to all the states. Exceptions to this general rule were found in case of some of the states. What was more significant in this context was that this exception was evident from the results of the very first general election. It was true of those states in which the Congress failed to win a majority of seats or where it largely contributed towards political instability with only a precarious majority. Thus the picture of state politics was somewhat different from that of the national

politics. The national political parties at the state level could exhibit comparatively a better performance at the poll. The Congress did not fare well in some of the states mostly due to the increased party competitiveness at the state level. The most significant development in the state level was the emergence of the regional political parties. In some states these regional parties fared better obtaining a respectable vote owing to their extra political loyalty and strength. In Andhra Pradesh the Congress failed to secure a majority of seats in the Assembly in the face of the strong challenge from the Telugu Desam Party.

REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES IN INDIA: PROSPECTS IN RETROSPECT

Ever since the independence many regional political parties have emerged in India and gained significant influence in some localities or regions, but at the national level their impact has been minimal. Recently some new regional parties have come into existence. The

85. Ibid., p.192.
growth of such parties in India seems to have had significant impact upon its political and constitutional set-up.

The Congress government at the Centre, not attuned to the idea of non-Congress parties ruling in states, tended to create all types of obstacles for them and to topple them by hook or by crook. The latter, in the face of such hostile stance of the Centre, demanded more powers for themselves with a view to ensuring their survival, if not to challenge the dominance of the Centre. This started serious rethinking on the rebuilding of the Indian federal structure. In course of time, some non-Congress national parties which came to power in some states, have also clamoured for more powers for states, vis-a-vis the Centre in the style of regional parties like the DMK, Telugu Desam Party and the Akali Dal. Thus the tilt of the Indian federation towards the Centre has been subjected to severe criticism and serious debate largely due to the emergence of regional parties.

RESURGENCE OF REGIONAL PARTIES IN 1980s

There has been the resurgence of a few new regional parties in the recent years; they are Telugu Desam in
Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka Kranti Ranga in Karnataka. Two regional parties, one in Kerala and the other in Karnataka, are in the offing. The rise of the film star M.G.Ramachandran and the celluloid god N.T.Rama Rao to power in the two southern states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh has apparently kindled ambitions in the celebrated Malayalam film hero, Pram Nazir, who has announced his intention to enter active politics in Kerala in the next two years and he is believed to be thinking of forming a regional party in the line of AIDMK or Telugu Desam.

The Telugu Desam came to power in Andhra Pradesh after defeating the Congress (I) with as many as 203 seats in a House of 294. The party had the distinction of forming the first non-Congress government in the state. It was able to decisively defeat the Congress in Andhra which was one of the bastions of the Congress from the year of its creation as a separate state.

REACTIONS OF OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES

The spectacular victory of the Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh and the miserable defeat of the Congress (I) in

this southern state have generated widespread reactions in the political circles both at the Centre and in the state. The Congress (I) circle seems to have not accepted the party's defeat in the stronghold in the south and they have largely attributed it local factors and feel that it is a temporary phase. To them the parochial appeal of the regional parties cannot stand for long and there is bound to be change in the attitude of the people in the near future.

POSSIBLE IMPACT ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

The emergence of the Telugu Desam and Kranti Ranga in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka respectively has increased the number of regional parties and regional parties-run-governments in India. It marks a shift towards regionalism. Regional parties have already carved out a place for themselves in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Jammu and Kashmir and are gaining in strength in several other states like Punjab, Assam, Manipur and Nagaland.

The Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka seem to be keen on a fresh look at the federal set-up. The Telugu Desam government under the leadership of N.R. Rama Rao has already taken its decision to set up a high power committee to "go into the question of Centre-State relations including clear demarcation of powers and suggest constitutional amendments if necessary." This again clearly indicate that these states ruled by regional parties will demand more financial autonomy.

SOUTH VS. NORTH

The accession to power of Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh and the kranti Ranga-Janata alliance in Karnataka seemed to some political observers, as containing the seeds of revolt against Central authority - and against the North. This feeling was strengthened by the formation of Southern Council of Chief Ministers and their Conferences in Bangalore and in Vijayawada which are seen not only as a threat to Congress (I) but as an attempt made by the South to assert itself. And these developments seem to have created a vague fear that the Southern states might eventually "gang up" against the North. While taking

into account the cultural gap and mutual suspicion between South India and North India, one fears it will finally lead to the emergence of a new political entity demanding autonomy for it and the replacement of Indian "federalism" by some sort of a confederation with some nominal powers in the hands of the Centre. Such fears are fanned by the fact that the Bangalore meeting which was originally conceived as a forum for discussing the inter-state problems paid more attention to the Centre-State relations and demanded more powers and resources for states vis-a-vis the Centre. The delegation session of the ruling Telugu Desam party which was preceded by the Vijayawada conclave on 26 and 27 May 1983 adopted a resolution which favoured a confederation of regional parties with clear-cut socio-economic outlook and sound political approach. This may be cited as a case in point.

REASONS FOR THE RAISE OF REGIONAL PARTIES :-

The most important issues concerning a regional party in India are :- (1) reconciling the Indian Cultural tradition and social structure with the needs of a modern state; (2) keeping up with mass expectations; and (3) achieving a sense of proportion between the unity and
diversity of India. Pragmatic solutions may issue forth for these problems if only the regional party has a strong base and efficient organisation.

In the eighties, as has been the case earlier, society, politics and the economy of Andhra Pradesh over around the uplift of the backward communities, Scheduled Castes and Tribes and women; a concern for the Telugu language; establishment of the democratic way of life; and the achievement of economic growth together with justice and equality. To achieve these the Telugu Desam Party functions firstly, as a mobilizing movement to enlighten the Andhra society about its social conflicts, social inequalities and the ways by which they can be eliminated. Secondly as an organizational expression, the Telugu Desam Party fosters and preserves the solidarity of the exploited people in Andhra Pradesh. For this N.R. Rama Rao's charisma contributes greatly to the party. Thirdly, as an educational instrument, the party suggests the merits of reforms for orderly and peaceful social change. Power through electoral victories and the consequent administrative actions help the Telugu Desam Party in this.

endeavour.

The Constitution of India founded upon the assumption of the infallibility of the centre, makes available to it enormous powers to deal with an inconvenient state and does not provide any remedy for a state against the 'unconstitutional' acts of the centre. Further the dominance of the Congress Party, both at the centre and in the states has prevented the relationship between the two from developing as contemplated by the Constitution and has subordinated it to party interests.

But, the federal theory neither envisages patriarchal patronage on the part of the centre nor expects feudal fidelity to be observed by the states; and in enabling the states to maintain their cultural identity, to develop themselves as regional democracies and to contribute to the cohesion of Indian society and the integrity of the nation, they must be trusted with a wider and unencroachable autonomy. As in human life, too much parental control can only retard the development of the offspring, so also in politics too much centralization leads to regional imbalances. It is in this context that the Telugu Desam Party believes and works for co-operative and democratic federalism in the direction of enhancing the authority of
the centre sustained by the autonomy of the states.

But the vital question of the future of the Telugu Desam Party remains to be answered. N.T. Rama Rao's charisma, mass following and the social injustices in Andhra Pradesh react with one another today as an inseparable way to produce creative energies for the welfare of one and all. As long as the social injustices and the specific cultural problems of the Telugu endure and as long as people trust N.T. Rama Rao's leadership, the Telugu Desam Party will steer the state for its proper destination. Since the fame and mass following of N.T. Rama Rao is unquestionable, people do not think of the succession now.

Thus, the Telugu Desam Party has first set for itself the task in consonance with the regional and primordial specificities of Andhra Pradesh and proceeded to consolidate its organization through the charisma of N.T. Rama Rao. The mass media, in order to win power through skillful electioneering and masterly electoral alliances. Therefore the Telugu Desam Party, with independence, identification and legitimacy, continues to be the representative manifestation of Andhra Nationalism answering to the continuing social injustices in Andhra Pradesh.