CHAPTER 3

BRAHMINISM UNDER THE BRITISH RULE AND

THE ORIGIN OF NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT
It is a well-established fact that the failure of Maratha empire resulted in Brahmin dominance. "The Maratha empire long worn out with the disease of deep-rooted caste jealousies and dissensions, and overpowered by the superiority of British power, ultimately collapsed under the pressure of wily diplomacy and the conquering spirit of the empire builders of England. "Bajiro-II, Chief of the Brahmin raj, was a worthless profligate. He was surrounded by weak female characters who were representatives of a decrepit society that bred spies, produced greed, pampered depraved wine-bibbers. That society also conducted gambling houses, fostered corruption and connived at debauchery. The scene of these vices was so abnoxious that Robertson, the first British collector of Poona, was terribly shocked to see that the people had lost all notions of morality. Both Bajirao in the South and Daulatrao Shinde in the North became traitors to the nation and lost the independence of Marathas."¹ As a result the Brahmins came in direct touch with the British. British history starts from the South, especially from Madras, and then later extended to Maharashtra and Bengal. With the advent

¹ Dhananjay Keer: Mahatma Jotirao Phooley, Father of Our Social Revolution, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1964, p.3.
of the British, the earliest participants in the new politics came from the higher castes, the Brahmins "who were not noted so much as founders of any empire, had here in Maharashtra their turn for a century to govern an empire founded by Shivaji, and expanded and consolidated by Bajirao I." Brahmins spread in all these areas, where Maratha empire had its rule (see map on page No. 73), and when the British came, they were also influenced much by the hold of the Brahmins on the society. When the British arrived, India was completely torn and exhausted. It was also the unity of the British power and its supremacy in navy, that gave victory to the British over the Marathas. It was also the spread of Brahmins in the Deccan which the British made use of to establish their rule. Brahmins were mainly responsible for the British East-India Company to come to prominence and this further resulted in dividing the whole of Southern India into two main Presidencies - the Bombay and the Madras presidencies; which were formerly under one empire i.e., the Maratha empire. Bombay and Madras presidencies under British rule were very much influenced by each other in respect of political

2 Ibid., p.6.
history, as they had come under the same Brahminical influence. These two presidencies covered the areas which had many similarities historically. Of course no presidency with geographic contiguity can remain isolated from its neighbouring presidency in any way, i.e., economic, social or political.

"... Madras presidency was one of the most extensive of the British territories in India. It stretched from the tip of the Indian peninsula, to Cape Comrín, half way up the east coast to Bengal. A part of it lay on the Indian ocean, touching Bombay presidency to the North, and another segment extended west-ward from the Bay of Bengal, bordering on both Bombay presidency and the native state of Hyderabad." The western sea board as Konkan and the Deccan table land sloping east-wards roughly constitute Maharashtra. History of the region could be traced to the millenium before the Christian era. Since the Satavahanas, large number of dynasties of the Hindus and Muslims, have come and gone, enriching the history of Maharashtra and their exploits and administration.

"Throughout this period, the history of Maharashtra was

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always a part of the history of India. With the rise of Shivaji, Maharashtra gained in importance in the broader context of Indian history. The history of the eighteenth century is to a great extent the history of India."\(^4\) With regards to the areas of Karnataka under the former Madras presidency and the Hyderabad state, there are no regular histories written. The region (Karnataka) was included in the kingdom of Haidar and Tipu Sultan in the second half of the 18th Century. Earlier, these Kannada speaking areas were divided between Wodeyars of Mysore and the Marathas and other minor dynasties like those of Keladi. "After Tipu's defeat in 1799, his dominions were distributed between the old Mysore state, under the Wodeyars and the British provinces of Bombay, Madras and the Native state of Hyderabad and other smaller native states, and the centrally administered area of the Coorg."\(^5\) Besides these integrated territories, "... the Deccan region or the Dakshina-patha comprising broadly of the states of

\(^4\) S.P.Sen (Ed.), *Studies in Modern Indian History* (A Regional Survey)

Maharashtra, Andhra and Karnataka has considerably influenced the course of the Indian history and culture, from whose influences Madras could not remain isolated. The Kanarese speaking districts of Belgaum, Bijapur, Dharwar and North Kanara were dominant as well, although it was quiet more of submersion than of contentment. These districts, laying south of the Konkan and Deccan, were sections of the Karnataka which time and chance had bundled into Bombay presidency. These factors which got consolidated historically and territorially with the advent of the British, further influenced the course of British history in India, and under the British rule the dominance of Brahmins became more acute because of the past history.

The migration of the Aryans and their Sanskrit culture towards the South does not seem to have absorbed within its fold dominant castes of the region. Such castes in South performed Kshatriya and Vaishya functions and occupied equivalent social (but not ritual) statuses to those of


7 Anil Seal, The Emergence of Indian Nationalism, Cambridge, 1968, p. 70.
their northern counterparts but remained Sudras." "As a result Brahmans in the South have tended to be more separated from the rest of the population than Brahmans in the North. In the South they blend into large twice-born population of other significant and powerful castes. The range of social distance between top and the bottom of the caste structure is greater in the South than it is in the North, where pollution is conveyed by touch, not proximity, as in the South." Both in Maharashtra and in Madras, "the relative absence of non-Brahmans twice-born castes helped to make Brahmans the target of movements directed against their social and political dominance. Many Marathas like Vellalas and Mudaliars in Madras, first entered politics in response to Anti-Brahmin slogan." "The social structure was so much firmly based of which the Brahmans had a monopoly throughout Southern India which neither the triumph of Buddhism which lasted for nearly 500 years, nor the successive wave of Mohamedan conquest

availed to destroy the power of Brahmanism, nor has it been broken by British supremacy. " In Southern India, Brahminism has remained more fiercely militant than in any other part of India, chiefly perhaps nowhere had it wielded such absolute power within times which may still be called recent."

The immediate consequence of British rule was that it helped in increasing the cleavage in the caste structure of the society. It created a big gulf between Brahmins and the rest of the society. Brahmins were the first to take to Western education, and to enter the various professions through which they patronaged their own caste people. The British rule never destroyed the power of the Brahmins, but on the other hand, the Brahmins were quick to adopt themselves to Western education and system. "The British - as East-India Company was reluctant to introduce English education - it also tried not to influence Indian customs or religious belief since it felt that to do so might upset Indians," and hence for a long

11 Valentine Chirol, Indian Unrest, p.34.
12 Ibid., p.37.
time the East India Company thought of only looking after the British interest, by which they limited themselves to few contacts, especially with the Brahmins. In this process of British politics, it gave Brahmins an opportunity again, and "it was only since 1833, the missionaries started schools and colleges which taught and used English as the medium of instruction at school and college level." Hence both, before English education was introduced and after, it was these higher castes who took the advantage of this British attitude. The Brahmins regarded themselves as the governing class, enjoying all advantages, and harassed the poor and toiling masses. They were all in all - landlords, agriculturists, white collars and, above all, professional caste lords. They seized everything from the peasants, in one or the other way, their reign was a reign of terror and despotism and they never tolerated any reform in the existing caste system. Those few Brahmins who agitated for reforms, as they felt that society was changing fast under the impact of Western education, came to play the role of reformers. Brahminic influence right since its past has always played two roles: of simultaneously defending its religion and 14 Ibid., p.31.
maintaining its superiority and position in tact. Rajaram Mohan Roy who has been called the father of modern India, worked for reforming Hinduism, but he refused to abandon Hinduism, and while re-defining Hinduism, he tended to use Christianity as a norm. Rajaram Mohan Roy was himself a Brahmin of a high order. "The leaders of the higher classes like Ram Mohan Roy and the Government policy makers stood clearly for educating the upper classes believing that education would filter downwards."15

The British policy on the subject is clear from what the Honourable Court wrote to Madras Government in 1830:

"The improvements in education, however, which might effectively contribute to elevate the moral and intellectual condition of a people are those which concern the education, of the higher classes of the person, possessing leisure and natural influence over the minds of their countrymen. By raising the standard of instruction amongst these classes you could eventually produce a much greater, a more beneficial change in the ideas and the feelings of the community than you can hope to produce by acting on the more numerous class. You are, moreover, acquainted with our anxious desire to have at our disposal a body of natives qualified by their habits and occupy higher

15 Keer D., Mahatma Jotirao Phooley, Father of our Social Revolution, Popular, Bombay, 1964, p.52.
The British were in search of loyal servants, who could also learn English and help them to stabilise themselves in this country. Hence it was the British policy to rely on the upper caste because of the hold they had on society, and they believed that the 'Filtration' theory would help the other people who were at the bottom of the society. They felt that the Brahmins would prove beneficial to them in every respect, and it is also clearly stated in the introduction of the report in 1818 on the Brahmin domination in Maratha kingdom following the British conquest that "the Brahmins were employed by the British in the subordinate positions, because they had lost their commanding influence and a certain discontent and longing for a return to power naturally remained." in the Brahmins of South India. And to the British it was in their own political interest, to provide employment opportunity to the Brahmins. Hence Brahmins made all their efforts to gain their lost ascendancy, and under the impact of the West they could achieve their objective.

17 E. Irshick, op. cit., p. 104.
What the British required was loyalty. "and it was also the great administrative abilities which compelled recognition, and Chitpavans swarm in every Government office of the Deccan as they did in the days of Nana Phadnavis. "They occupied, the bench dominated Bar, taught as teachers in schools, controlled Vernacular Press, and also furnished almost all the conspicuous names in modern literature and drama of Western India as well as in Politics." This was the result of the British policy of education known as the filtration theory.

"British education in India became closely associated and connected with religion, by which the higher education of the Hindus was in the hands of the Brahmins and mainly intended for them. Lord Erksikne's policy of the Filtration Theory encouraged and advised the Boards to leave the education of the masses to the indirect influence of the downward filtration. He believed that even morality would spread from the higher classes to the lower one." 19

The effects of such a policy was the same in both the presidencies (Bombay and Madras). An analysis of the membership of the various local bodies in the


19 N.N.Vaidya, *History of Primary Education* (From 1815 to 1940), p.15.
Presidencies of Bombay and Madras clearly prove that the Non-Brahmins became conscious of their rights and are generally keen to conduct a strong campaign against any measure which they feel unjust to them. "A number of motions tabled and questions asked in Bombay Legislative Council tell the same story." 20 Brahmin domination was the bane of public life in both these presidencies. English education meant jobs, and this was limited to a section of the society. "Prior to 1856, the Poona Sanskrit College taught only Brahmin students and refused even to teach the sacred law to any one except the Brahmins." 21 Hence in the whole of South India, Brahminism was making untiring efforts to continue their ascendancy. Besides these two Presidencies, Mysore and Andhra were also not immune from the Brahminical influences.

"Towards the end of the last century the Tamil Brahmins had thus come to quite uncommon extent to dominate public life, the bar and the bench, education especially the university, and the higher clerical grades of government employment. In 1852 Madras had 1,185 mission

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schools with 38,055 students while Bombay and Bengal together had 472 mission schools with an enrolment of 26,791. There were in all 62 Arts Colleges in India in 1882, of which Madras had 25, Bombay had 6, Bengal 22. Brahmins formed the majority of the educated in Madras presidency. In 1890-91, if the 3,200 students in arts colleges, 38 were Europeans and Anglo-Indian, 244 Indian Christians, 46 Muslims, 658 Non-Brahmins and 2,208 Brahmins. Brahmins formed 81% (per cent) of the aggregate. In the whole of India 895 out of every 1,000 males were illiterate in 1891 census. In Madras Presidency the corresponding figure was only 276, of every 1,000 Brahmins in Madras. 722 were literate whereas in Bombay 645, and 638 in Mysore.22

"The Indian Public Service Commission reported in 1877 that out of 1866 Hindu members of the judicial services, as many as 904 were Brahmins and 454 Kayasthas (Prabhus in Bombay). The number of Kshatriyas or Rajputs was 147, of Vaishyas 113, of Shudras 146, and of the other 102. The Brahmins were especially dominant in Madras, with 202 out of a total of 297, and in Bombay with 211 out of 328."23

British rule in India helped Brahminism to become more dominant in economic, political and social life of India again. Suffering with hunger and suppression, the lower classes of society in the South were economically handicapped. It was virtually slavery that existed and this was continued since thousands of years. In the name of religion the upper caste had divided the society to such an extent that it resulted in slavery. The divisions and separations which took place because of Brahminisation had affected social conditions to such an extent that if one caste or Jati was being tortured, or being subjected to severe discriminations, the other castes did not unite over the issue, but instead, enjoyed seeing the suppressions and tortures. Under such conditions, the upper castes have always made themselves the masters of all situations. A remarkable picture of South India when the British first appeared on the scene, was drawn by a Madras Brahmin, late Mr. Srinivasaraghava Iyengar, which illustrates the position of Brahminism:

"Southern India had been devastated by wars, famines, were ground down by oppressive taxation, and bonds of plunderers, the cultivating class were ground down by oppressive taxation by the illegal exactions of the officers of Governments, of the renters employed to collect the
Government dues, and the Sowkars without whose assistance the ryots could not subsist and carry on their perpetual bondage, trade was hampered by insecurity of property, defective communications, and onerous transit duties, the vast majority of the population suffered extreme hardships when there was even a partial failure of crops in small tracts, owing to the great difficulty and cost of obtaining supplies of grain from more favoured regions, the peasantry and even possessors of landed property, when not holding office under Government themselves, were lowering before the pettiest Government officer and submitting to tortures and degrading personal ill-treatment inflicted on the slightest pretext, persons who had chanced to acquire wealth, if they belonged to the lower classes, dared not openly use it for purposes of enjoyment or display of fear of being plundered by the classes above them; the agricultural classes as a whole had few wants beyond those imposed by the necessity for bare subsistence, no ambition or enterprise to try untrodden ways, and no example to stimulate them to endeavour to better their condition, while the rigid usages of castes and communities in which society was organised repressed all freedom of action and restricted the scope for individual initiative. To understand the full significance of the change which has come over the country one has to contrast what he sees at present, unsatisfactory as it may appear from some points of view, with the state of things described above.... Remembering that method of progress calculated to evoke national feeling and religious enthusiasm are unavailable under the conditions of the case, the progress that has been made. ... is little short of marvellous."24

24 Valentine Chirol, op.cit., p.142.
British rule in India was both controlled and suppressed by the Brahmin domination, because Brahmins did not allow the 'Rule of Law' to prevail over their 'Rule of religion'. 'Rule of Religion' has always prevailed over the 'Rule of Law'. 'Caste' is not static, it has changed; but in the traditional sense it is still an important feature of social and political life of the country. Due to 'Industrialisation', caste has no doubt lost its original meaning, and today it is based on various factors like income, occupation, education, western style of life, but still 'Caste' functions in one or the other way. On this traditionally based society the British education system which was notoriously unegalitarian further helped the Brahminical tyranny to continue and M.N. Srinivas has very aptly pointed in his book 'Social Change in Modern India', that "the Brahmin writers on law propounded a model caste system which placed them on the top and gave them the privilege of declaring the duties of the other castes. It is my hunch that the 'Varna' model became more popular during the British period as a result of variety of forces, the institution which prevailed till 1864, of attaching Brahmin Pandits to the British - established law courts, the presence in every town of a body of Western educated
lawyers who tried to apply Brahminical law to all Hindus.
The translation of a vast mass of sacred literature from Sanskrit into English, the rise everywhere of "Caste Sabhas" which tried to introduce reforms by Sanskritizing the way of life of their respective castes, and the growth of a vigorous ANTI-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT which attempted to displace Brahmins from the positions of power and influence which they occupied in some parts of the country."25 These parts were especially the Bombay Presidency and Madras Presidency, which as already stated, have been much influenced historically, which lead to the Brahmin domination under British rule. Further, it may be added that Brahminism was more severe under British days than what it was in the Pre-British days. What Brahmins practised before 1864, was different from what they practised under British rule. They had perfectly Brahminized British India, and especially Madras and Bombay Presidencies suffered a great deal. There was dominance in the economic, political and social fields, and perhaps Brahminism itself was in important factor which

influenced the growth of the Non-Brahmin Movement.

"There were men in India then who liked to see India once again dominated by the Brahmins, by pure Brahminism, they tried to re-establish caste with all its rigidity, they tried to exclude all modern industrialism. Fifteen hundred years ago the Brahmin drove the Buddhists and Buddhism."  

Buddhism, Jainism and even Islam and the Maratha empire were eclipsed by Brahminism. Under the British also they tried in all manners to throw out British if possible and seize political power.

The Brahmins had always shown a clear apathy for mass education. But the British had planted many missionaries who were interested in the spread of Christianity and these missionaries preached a sense of brotherhood, gave the message of service, humanity, equality, brotherhood of man enshrine in the Holy Bible which had a profound impression on the minds of the masses. Perhaps this is another factor which influenced the rise of the Non-Brahmins. Ignorance and poverty were the two fatal diseases harassing the masses. Education being the monopoly of the Brahmins, they occupied most of the

salaried posts. Ignorance and poverty squeezed the life and blood out of the common man. Masses lived in total ignorance and ignorance itself was the root cause of all the evils and sufferings of the Non-Brahmins, on which the Brahmins existed. For the Non-Brahmins - Home, Sweet Home was the earliest school, mother was the natural teacher, who herself was again ignorant, superstitious and illiterate. Western education, though it was monopolised by the Brahmins with their control over it, but still they could not control the liberal ideas which were the outcome of British education and the preachings of the Christian missionaries. They reached the masses and the teachings of the missionaries and their liberal outlook, became eye-opening facts to the mass who had been subjected to all sorts of bondages. No wonder the Non-Brahmin Movement was the natural outcome of all these sufferings.

**Origin of the Non-Brahmin Movement**

Brahminism was the bane of public life in Southern India. The gulf which was created by this domination of the Brahmins over the Non-Brahmins was similar both in Bombay and Madras presidencies. The Madras presidency was more influenced by the developments of social thought in Maharashtra, "because Madras had a direct line to Bombay,
but only a loop through central India gave it access to Calcutta.\textsuperscript{27} Hence Madras presidency was under the influence of the Bombay presidency in many respects. "The problem of Brahmin domination at times was more acute in Madras presidency, because pariahs, or untouchables, were more numerous than in other parts of the country and their disabilities were more crippling."\textsuperscript{28} "British in order to pacify Brahmins, to stabilise the British rule in India followed a policy of appeasement towards the Brahmins."\textsuperscript{29} The British knew that the "Brahmins had a great hold on society. In matters of social structure of the society the Brahmin superiority was unchallenged for centuries. As the Brahmins alone could understand Sanskrit they possessed the key to all sacred knowledge."\textsuperscript{30} The British encouraged the Brahmins in their own interest and introduced western education, but this education influenced social condition \textit{vis-à-vis} traditional position of the Brahmins. Liberal ideas of this system of education made

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{Seal} Seal Anil, \textit{The Emergence of Indian Nationalism, Competition and Collaboration in Latter 19th Century}, p. 102.
\bibitem{Ibid} Ibid., p.99.
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the lower classes of the society to realise how they were suppressed in the name of Dharma.

The advent of the British rule helped Brahminism to continue their traditions, and at the same time the spread of English education affected the traditional politics of caste system (Brahminical). The special caste grievances of the Brahmins against western education are very frankly set-forth in a speech on "Duties of Brahmins", delivered in Bombay by Rao Sahib Joshi, a distinguished and very enlightened member of Yajurvedi Palshikar sect of Brahmins. Mr. Joshi, who laid great stress upon the duty of loyalty to the British Raj, began by recalling the patent conferred upon them by a British Governor of Bombay at the beginning of the eighteenth century for the protection of their privileges, especially in connection with the teaching of medicine. But their community had gradually lost ground for various reasons, and amongst those which he enumerated, he laid the chief stress upon the diffusion of secular education. He fully recognized the benefits of English education, but "all education being of secular character, it made the new generation a class of Sceptics. People brought up with English ideas, and in the atmosphere of secular education, now began to/pay less
respect to their Gurus and hereditary priests, the Guru is Brahma, the Guru is Vishnu, the Guru is Shiva, verily the Guru is sublime Brahman! This idea, this respect the secular education shattered to pieces, and so the income and importance of the hereditary priests dwindled down."\(^3^1\)

With the spread of secular education, the Brahmins had been exposed to the society, and the traditional bars which they had set, were being understood by the lower class of the society. This gave rise to the Non-Brahman outlook. The supremacy of the Brahmins was challenged by the Non-Brahmin Movement. "The Non-Brahmins of Madras, followed by those of Bombay and the central provinces, have in recent years organized themselves on the basis of Non-Brahmins which often degenerated into anti-Brahmanism."\(^3^2\)

The beginnings of political consciousness on 'Caste-lines' came to be first formed in Maharashtra. They are caste-alliances and not caste sabhas. 'Caste-Sabhas' i.e. combined association of a number of sub-castes of one caste

\(^{3^1}\) The Brahmans and Western Education, Quoted by Valentine Chirol, Indian Unrest, (Note No.20), Macmillan, 1910, p.353.

began to be formed in Maharashtra at least in the eighties of the last century and became common by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. 'The Deccan Sabha', a politico-economic association started by Justice M.G. Ranade and the Satya Shodhak Samaj founded by Jotiba Phule were the inspirers of these Sabhas. The object of these Sabhas was to "reunite the sub-castes of a caste and carry on propaganda for the acquisition of higher social status than was generally accorded to the caste." 33

The term 'Non-Brahmana' to be clear, assumed importance in the Jotiba Phule era; and this included various castes other than the Brahmins. Jotiba Phule's writings were much influenced by various other religions i.e. Christianity, Islam etc. This indicates that the Satya Shodhak Samaj was the result of an alliance of all other castes and Jatis except the Brahmins. Further in the latter period the term Non-Brahmin was also known in vernacular as Bahujan Samaj, which again includes the meaning, the majority communities. Under the British rule when this alliance of various communities started protesting, it was also known as

Brahmanetar-chalval, which means a movement of all except Brahmins. One aspect needs to be made clear. It need not be understood or taken as a movement against the Brahmins; because the movement is the outcome of a protest against the British to change their policy towards the Non-Brahmin masses in the economic, social and political life of the country.

The origins of the Non-Brahmin Movement, and the rise of caste-sabhas to reform the society had its birth in Maharashtra, and this was later on followed in Madras presidency. Non-Brahmin Movement is usually taken for granted by many scholars with a sense which is strictly limited to Tamil Nadu politics of D.K. and D.M.K. today. The Non-Brahmin Movement of Madras, today known as D.K. or D.M.K., is a recent development, but its antecedents can be traced back to the 1840's. Because of the past history, territorial influence, and the social structure of Brahminical influence, they looked upon the British as their masters.) Maharashtra had become an important centre for the Brahmin-Non-Brahmin conflict, whereas the D.M.K. party has its roots in the Justice Party established in 1916. Dr.T.M.Nair is usually described as the principal leader of the movement in its earlier phase. "Dr.T.M.Nair
practised in Madras city, and was one of the most respected figures in public life in the presidency. He attended Congress sessions from 1890's, and took active part in the party. In 1916 he expected to be elected by the Madras Legislative Council to the Imperial Legislative Council in Delhi, but two Brahmins, B.N.Sarma and V.S.Srinivas Sastrī, were elected. This incident supplied the impetus to the formation of a Non-Brahmin political party. In the previous year, 1915, Dr.T.M.Nair, Dr.C.Natesa Mudaliar and the Raja of Panagal had formed a Dravidian Association, which professed the object of forming a Dravidian State — an idea, however, of which little was to be heard for another thirty years. In 1916, these leaders with Sir P.T.Chettiar established the South Indian Peoples Association, which in the same year published the Non-Brahmin Manifesto, and early in the following year launched three daily papers, the English 'Justice', the Tamil 'Dravidian' and the Telugu 'Andhra Prakasika'. Finally in August, 1917, they set up the South Indian Liberal Federation, which came unofficially to be called the JUSTICE PARTY. "34 This movement has been much influenced

by the Non-Brahmin Movement of Maharashtra, known as the Satya Shodhak Samaj Movement. "A partial exception is Jotiba Phule, a Maharashtrian of the gardner caste, who wrote angry attacks on Hinduism half a century before Mr. Naicker. He had little influence in his time, but he is the original source of the Non-Brahmin Movement in Maharashtra. It is possible, but unlikely that Mr. Naicker owes something to Phule." Philip Spratt has mentioned the importance of Jotiba Phule and referred to him as the original source of the Non-Brahmin Movement of Maharashtra in his book 'P.M.K. in Power.' He further refers to the possibility of his influence on Mr. Naicker, but it is to be pointed out that one need not have any doubt on this, because "Jotirao Phooley was the first Indian leader to start a movement for the removal of the social and economic ills of the lower classes who were starved, stunned, and suffering untold privations. He gave vent to their age-long rage and grief. His movement aimed at establishing social equality and securing social justice. He struggled for the dignity of human personality and human rights, as he considered all Indians equal." His movement has

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35 Ibid., Refer footnotes, p.31.
influenced all those areas wherever Brahmin domination was felt. "Phooley's revolt was a revolt against caste in so far as caste denied ordinary human rights to all the members of Hindu Society, and not merely a Non-Brahmin Movement to cast off the domination of the Brahmins. In his writings he demanded representation for all classes of the Hindus in all the local bodies, the services and the institutions." This movement of Jotiba Phule did not receive much support from the Brahmins in general, but did not go without its influence, because this movement does not end with Jotiba Phule (1890). It was further carried out by His Highness Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaja of Kolhapur. "It was the late Shri Shahu Maharaja of Kolhapur who infused new life into the agitation, so much so that Montague and Chelmsford, in their Indian political reforms had to grant the demand." What was lacking in Jotiba Phule's movement was financial support in its earlier stages, but even this was solved because he had unique type of followers, who removed this difficulty too. Men of wealth and influence actually gathered under Jotiba's banner. P.Rajanna Linga was one

38 John Wilson, Indian Caste, foot-notes, p.89, op.cit., Quoted by G.S.Ghurye, Caste and Race in India.
such influential person. He hailed from Telugu Mali community. In Bombay they were called Kamathis. The entire Kamathi community backed Jotiba Phooley. Another important leader was Ramayya Vankaya Aiyyavaru. A rich man and devoted worker, he followed Jotiba through the thick and thin. These Telugu Mali leaders financed Jotiba’s every project and supported his movement.\(^\text{39}\)

Towards the end of the nineteenth century Tamil and Telugu Non-Brahmins, alike began to trespass upon the preserve of the Brahmins, setting the pattern for the latter’s politics of Madras.\(^\text{40}\) Jotiba Phule was not less popular among the non-Maharashtrians, because “one feature of the peninsular Non-Brahmin Movement was a dislike of, if not hatred for the Brahmin.”\(^\text{41}\)

Further, a reference may be made to the leaders of the Non-Brahmin Movement of Madras like Sir P.T. Chettiar, a Telugu Beri Chetty, and others like Dr. Nair, who hailed


\(^{41}\) Srinivas M.F., Social Change in Modern India and Other Essays, Asia, 1970, p. 22.
from Kerala and Andhra and who were in touch with Maharashtra. They chose Madras as the centre of the Non-Brahmin Movement since 1910. Hence there is every possibility that Mr. Naicker has been certainly influenced by Jotiba Phule's Satya Shodhak Samaj Movement, the same way His Highness Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaja was influenced. These two Presidencies (Madras and Bombay) have much in common in their political and social thought and its development. Both the Presidencies had mutual influences, historically, socially and politically. Philip Spratt is right when he points out that Jotiba Phule was the original source, but it would also be correct to state that he had a great influence upon the growth of the Non-Brahmin Movement in Madras, because, even the British had to acknowledge his services to the lower classes. The movement led by Jotiba Phule had its influence all over the South, and this was further strengthened by His Highness Shri Shahu Maharaja of Kolhapur. It was also the influence of Shri Shahu Maharaja which led to the establishment of the Justice Party in Madras Presidency in 1916.

The Non-Brahmin Movement in peninsular India is a century old movement, and this movement cannot be assessed scientifically without an assessment of the role played by
Jotiba Phule and His Highness Shri Shahu of Kolhapur. The study of Non-Brahmin Movement without a reference to them would not help in understanding the movement fully. Perhaps a comparative study of the roles played by them would also provide a better perspective. Hence it is necessary to assess Jotiba Phule's contribution to the Non-Brahmin Movement and that of His Highness Shahu Maharaja to analyse the rise of the Justice Party and the Non-Brahminism in Tamil Nadu. Besides, Shahu's actively propagating for Communal Representation coincides with the rise of the Justice Party, but Jotiba Phule had already sown the seeds of the Non-Brahmin Movement, which has become part of the party programmes of today's Non-Brahmin political parties especially in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. Under the British rule Shri Shahu of Kolhapur, actively propagating the cause of the Non-Brahmins, contributed much to the constitution-making. From 1900 onwards, it was a period of serious efforts for constitution making. The British authorities had promised a further step towards responsible government. Under these circumstances Shri Shahu consolidated various Non-Brahmin organisations. He supported the cause of the poor people who were trying to throw off the yoke of Brahmin Bureaucracy. Shri Shahu's concern over the Non-Brahmin cause was mainly because, in Maharashtra in his
own words, owing to the Peshwa regime their influence had greatly increased and after the fall of the Peshwa, Kolhapur has been their centre. Owing to the large minorities and the Government of Brahmin Bureaucracy, this place was considered a suitable centre. The late Messrs. Ranade, Gokhale, Kelkar and others who played an important political part belonged to this place and made my work most difficult." Shri Shahu came in direct conflict with the Brahmin Bureaucracy and Poona (another centre of the Peshwa's) directed its tactics against Kolhapur. Jotiba Phule had contributed much to the rise of Non-Brahmins and he had faced many problems created by the Brahmin influence; and when Shri Shahu took up the cause a battle was pitched against Shri Shahu. Shri Shahu made the movement so popular that, to weaken the Non-Brahmin cause the 'Home Rule Movement' was launched in both the Presidencies by Mrs. Annie Besant in Madras and B.G. Tilak in Bombay.

Before going into the details of Shri Shahu's concern with the Non-Brahmin Movement, it is necessary to assess Jotiba Phule's contribution to the Non-Brahmin cause, and then assess Shri Shahu's contribution to the Non-Brahmin

42 K.R.O. Shri Shahu to George Lloyd, 23rd June 1919, L.Nos. R.9918 to 19.
Movement which would make the study both chronological, accurate and scientific. It was a favourable political climate for the Non-Brahmin castes to express their views, not only in Madras but everywhere in India. The movement, when it was started, was known as the 'Non-Brahmin Movement', but before the movement could arouse considerable interest and become popular, it was to a very great extent the 'Satya Shodhak Samaj' movement of Jotiba Phule that was working for protecting the interest of the Non-Brahmins.