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Transformation of a social movement into political party is not a new phenomenon in the Indian socio-political system. Generally it is believed that a movement, after its transformation into a political party, will wind up and sink into oblivion. But, in reality, it is not so. A movement still persists even after being transformed into a political party. The movement will either redefine or recreate new goals and resume mobilizing its people so as to achieve the new goals.

Research works studying the social movements both in the world and in India are abundant. Sociologists have made attempts to study several movements. In the Indian context they have taken sanskritisation and socio-religious reform movements into consideration. Political scientists have given greater emphasis to the study of social issues against the backdrop of the political institutions or vice versa. Primarily they deal with power and conflict, and refrain from researching the issues of societal conflicts for social change. Political scientists have primarily remained interested in studying the internal conflict of the power elite and not the conflicts between the masses and the rulers. Societal Conflicts have to be resolved by the government and political institutions. Their area of concern begins when conflicts enter the political orbit of the government. For them, conflict resolution is more important than the causes of conflicts. In India the process of social transformation is slow compared to political change and
development. Democratic institutions, by virtue of their power to shape decisions and allocate resources for development, motivate people to reach the power center through various means and more particularly by organizing social groups and conducting social movements.

The political process and its linkages with social movements produce variety of propositions. In India social movements quickly convert their base to politics. The Indian National Liberation Movement transformed itself into a political party as the Indian National Congress. Likewise, regional movements transformed themselves into regional political parties. For example, The Dravidian Movement in Tamilnadu transformed itself into a political party namely the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. In the same way at the district level, caste movements have transformed themselves into political parties now.

**Indian National Congress Movement**

The Indian National Congress (INC) was the organizational weapon of the Indian National Liberation Movement. But this overarching movement encapsulated within it three types of solidarity, each of which created a series of movements. While civic and occupational collectivities such as peasantry, students or workers, and biological collectivities such as youth or women, did not pose any threat to the original vision of the INC, but primordial collectivities did pose threats. Thus, communalism, that is, the claim of religious collectivities to establish exclusive sovereign states, crystallized as a countervailing solidarity to nationalism. The Indian nation-
state could encompass within it the communal interests of all religious
groups except those of the Muslims. And Muslim communalism was
legitimized as nationalism when a new structure representing it, the state of
Pakistan, emerged. But the process did not stop and, with the crystallization
of a new solidarity based on language, a new movement emerged, which in
turn gave birth to a new structure- the state of Bangladesh. Similarly, in
India, a multiplicity of solidarities which lay frozen were animated, several of
which created new structures representing their ideas and interests -
political parties, trade unions, women’s organizations. Thus, the
interpenetration between movements and institutions is obvious.

After Independence, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the chief
architect of the liberation struggle, advised the freedom fighters to dissolve
the INC and constitute themselves into a body of voluntary workers for the
social reconstruction of India. A minority of his followers did dissociate
themselves from the INC and launched a new movement to pursue the
second major Gandhian objective, namely, Sarvodaya (upliftment of all), as
the first, namely, Swaraj (political freedom), had already been achieved.
However, the majority of the freedom fighters either continued with the INC,
converting it into a party, or established new parties. Almost all political
parties in free India emerged out of the INC. Thus, the Congress Socialist
Party, the precursor of the Communist Party of India (CPI) functioned as a
“group” within the Congress Party. In turn, the CPI split into two giving birth
to the Communist Party of India (Marxist)-the CPI (M). Subsequently, the
CPI (M) also split and the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) was
born. The Indian National Congress too split several times, giving birth to several region-based caste-oriented and person-centered parties. But what is important to note here is that, in each of these cases, the new party and the old one were linked through a movement and/or mobilization. While the new parties claimed to be the genuine ones upholding the original vision, the old parties invariably tried to discredit them. Mobilizations and counter-mobilizations were inevitably involved in this process.

Thus, with the emergence of these parties, movements did not disappear. Many of them only redefined their goals and re-targeted their goals. In fact, most of what are labeled “movements” in India are collective actions initiated and guided by these parties through their frontal-organizations. Alternatively, a large number of new “movements” are the result of splits and fractionalization of political parties. But this does not mean that once they move from the fluid state to the solid state they remain in that state forever. These parties often function as movements even as they develop elaborate party bureaucracies.

The situation in different regions and states of India is no different. The link between the Dravidian Movement and the Dravidian Parties of Tamilnadu and that between the Akali Movement and the Akali Party in Punjab in North India go to demonstrate the intricate and visible linkage between movements and parties/institutions in contemporary India.
Dravidian Movement in South India

A political party known as the South Indian Liberation Federation was founded in 1916, principally to oppose the economic and political power of the Brahmin jati groups. The party was later named the Justice Party, and its stated goal was to render social justice to non-Brahmin jati groups.

In order to gain the support of the masses, non-Brahmin politicians began propagating an ideology of equality among all non-Brahmin jati groups. Brahminical priesthood and Sanskritic social class-value (Varna) hierarchy were blamed for the existence of inequalities among non-Brahmin jati groups. It was argued that a classless Dravidian Tamil Society existed before the incorporation of Brahmins into Tamil society. Brahminical priesthood and Sanskritic scriptural tradition were considered responsible for the decay of Dravidian Tamil culture.

In their effort to curtail the economic and political interests of Brahmins, non-Brahmin politicians had the tacit support of the British. The British had become disenchanted with the Brahmins, who, through their involvement in the nationalist movement for independence, posed a serious threat to the British. Non-Brahmin politicians supported the British, arguing that the departure of the British from India would result only in complete domination by the Brahmins.¹

Non-Brahmin politicians claimed and secured “communal representation” or protected employment opportunities for non-Brahmins under the British government. They justified their preference for British
political hegemony by saying that once non-brahmin jati groups acquired enough economic power and educational skill, they could liberate themselves from the foreign yoke, both British and Brahmin. Politically and economically powerful non-Brahmins deserted the national political movement in favour in order to establish a separate political entity in peninsular India composed of all Dravidian linguistic groups. In the latter stages of its history, the Justice Party preached the secession of peninsular India to form a separate nation-state called Dravida Nadu (Dravidian Country) or Dravidasthan (Dravidian nation-state).2

In 1926, a charismatic leader named Periyar E.V.Ramaswamy Naicker launched an open revolt against Brahminical priesthood and Sanskritic scriptural authority. In contrast to the Justice Party, which had the support of only the very wealthy and well-educated members of non-Brahmin jati groups, Periyar attracted thousands of non-Brahmin youths who were mostly semi-literate and poor. Periyar’s association was called the Suya Mariyathai Iyakkam (Self-Respect Movement), and its main goal was to inculcate pride and dignity in non-Brahmin youth.

Periyar was a rationalist and a social reformer. His main thesis was that Brahmins had debased Dravidian culture, which, in turn, had demoralized non-Brahmin youth and that, in order to salvage Dravidian culture from its impure state, Brahminical priesthood and Sanskritic scriptural tradition must be destroyed and Brahmin religious practitioners expelled from Dravidian Tamil society. Young people were exorted to stop performing religious ceremonies that had the sanction of Sanskritic
scriptural authority in temples and at home. They were encouraged not to employ the services of Brahmin priests to officiate over crisis rites, and marriages were often solemnized by the leaders of the movement without a Brahmin priest. It was pointed out that in the primordial Dravidian culture, only the elders of the community officiated over crisis rites. These marriages were called “Self-Respect Marriages” or “Reform Marriages” (Suya Mariyathai Kalyaanam, or Seerthirutha Kalyaanam). The writings of Ingersoll and other rationalists were serialized in the movement’s Journal. The ideology of hierarchy (status differences between Jatis), communsal separation (segregation of jatis) and ritualized vocation (jati vocations) was characterized as alien to Dravidian culture, and non-Brahmin youths were asked to disregard notions of pollution and rank in social intercourse. Books on Tamil culture and ancient Tamil Literature were made available and young men were given training in Tamil rhetoric. A popular slogan of the Self-Respect Movement was, “If you see a snake and a Brahmin, hit the Brahmin first”.

In 1937, when the government, headed by a Brahmin, required that Hindi be taught in the school system, Periyar organized opposition to this policy. Both Brahmin domination and Hindi (northern) domination implied the oppression of Dravidians by Aryans. After 1937, the Dravidian movement derived considerable support from the student community. In later years, opposition to Hindi played a major role in the politics of Tamilnadu. The fear of the Hindi language had its origin in the conflict
between Brahmins and non-Brahmins. To the Tamil, acceptance of Hindi in the school system was a form of bondage.

The Justice Party wilted from in the absence of mass support, and Periyar took over the leadership of the party. Under his leadership the party prospered, but almost all of the party’s conservative members, most of whom were rich and educated, withdrew from active participation. In 1944, Periyar renamed the party Dravida Kazhlagam (Dravidian Association). The Dravidian Association became immensely popular with the urban masses and students, and many villagers were influenced by its propaganda. Hindi, and ceremonies that had become associated with Brahminical priesthood, were projected as alien symbols that should be eliminated from Tamil culture. Brahmins, who were regarded as the guardians of such symbols, came under verbal attack.

In 1949, Periyar’s chief lieutenant, C.N.Annadurai established a separate political party named Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam was generally referred to as the DMK. The DMK made the efforts of Periyar and his self-respect movement relevant to the villagers and the urban students, particularly to male students. Many non-Brahmin leaders and students changed their Aryan names to Tamil ones, usually translating the original name into Tamil. The DMK advocated the thesis that the Tamil language was immensely richer than Sanskrit and Hindi in content, and thus was a key which opened the door to all subjects to be learned. The DMK appealed to the school-going and educated youth both in the cities and in the villages.
Caste or Jati Movements in Tamilnadu

The term *jati movement* refers to the self-conscious, organized activities of the leaders of jati groups to mobilize fellow jati members for the purpose of enhancing the jati’s status. Jati movements are, in this sense, group mobility movements. Movements of this kind are common among jatis of the middle range, i.e., those between the Brahmin and untouchable categories. Although ranked low in the social hierarchy, the jati groups of the middle range are conceptually not far removed from the high-ranking groups. When members of the low-ranking groups have the opportunity to improve their economic conditions, organized efforts are made to acquire a higher status in relation to other groups. This usually involves changing the name and the customs.

The groups do not strive toward altering the system of stratification, but strive toward moving up in relation to other groups. Although there is, in theory, a belief that status is immutable, there is also the belief that the low caste groups once occupied a high status and had moved downward in the hierarchy due to subjugation or because they engaged in “polluting” occupations. Thus when the groups put forward claims to move up in the hierarchy and when they change the caste names, these actions are considered “a return to a former status”.

Traditionally, before the activities of the Dravidian movement began, when a ritually low-ranking jati group in Tamilnadu improved its economic status, such an incongruence was resolved by the Jati group’s incorporation
in a new Sanskritic Varna category, which was often expressed as a rediscovery of the group’s primordial social/economic position. This founding-myth was validated by the Brahminical priesthood, and the high ritual status of the group vis-a-vis other groups became a reality.

One of these jati group movements, in particular, demonstrates the change from an earlier acceptance of the Sanskritic Varna hierarchy (involving an attempt to claim higher ritual status) to rejection of the hierarchy. Such a change came about as the leaders of the jati movement adopted the ideology of the Dravidian Movement.

In the 19th century, when the Nadars became economically powerful, they first claimed high Sanskritic status seeking the sanction of Sanskritic scriptural authority, and strove to project themselves as a group with an Aryan origin.4 When Caldwell, the linguist who contributed to Tamil revivalism, published a book on the Nadars in 1849, in which he characterized them as Dravidians, the Nadars were infuriated. They “disliked his ascribing a non-Aryan origin to their group”.5 About twenty years after the publication of the book an agitation was started and the book was withdrawn from circulation.6

In the 20th century, the Nadars came under the influence of the Dravidian Movement and disavowed the group’s earlier claims of Aryan origin. A number of resolutions were passed against the validation of Sanskritic identity and status. The group’s leader claimed that the resolutions were necessary to show that the Aryans “had invented the caste
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system in order to prevent the Dravidians from overwhelming them". Rudolph and Rudolph⁸ note that the Nadar jati group movement passed through “phases stressing sanskritisation and anti-Brahminical desanskritisation”. They point out that discarding Sanskrit customs is a common feature of many Jati group organizations. Such a generalization is misleading. Repudiation of Brahminical priesthood and Sanskritic scriptural authority cannot be equated with the discarding of what is regarded as Sanskritic customs by a successful jati group once the group has had the opportunity to adopt Western or other urban-industrial customs. Such groups never repudiate the Sanskritic scriptural authority (as the Nadars did), but simply discard those customs which are found to conflict with urban life.

The change in the conception of jati groups regarding Sanskritic Varna categories with the concomitant rejection of high ritual status sanctioned by Sanskritic scriptural authority is documented in the Report of the Backward Classes Commission (1971) of the Government of Tamilnadu. The term Backward classes refers to those groups which have not acquired Western education. Several jati groups which rank high are classified as Backward Classes, and several groups of low status are classified as Forward Classes by the government. The educational criterion of ranking in government classifications does not apply in the ranking of groups in the Sanskritic class system. In the traditional setting of the village, education had reference to the status of Brahmins who were the literati. In the village setting today, the literati are the leaders of the Dravidian Movement. Young
men in the villages emulate the style of Tamil speech and writing developed by these leaders.

Two Tamil villages studied by Gough⁹ and Beteille¹⁰ indicate that the economic interdependence of jati groups in the village social system has almost disappeared. The studies show that villagers are in frequent contact and have economic ties with people in nearby cities. Ritually subordinate jati groups have become traders, and with the accumulation of capital, they have acquired land. Possession of land has led them to compete for higher social status alongside the Brahmin landowning jati groups, and members of ritually subordinate non-Brahmin jati groups who have achieved economic independence refuse to subject themselves to their traditional Brahmin masters. Often, through establishing alliances with jati group members living outside the village, ritually subordinate non-Brahmin jati groups have begun asserting their political power.¹¹

The twin process of industrialisation and urbanisation has led to the migration of Brahmins to the cities, and, in many cases, their land is sold to non-Brahmins. The non-Brahmins often rent land for cultivation if they do not own land. With this strengthened economic status they compete for political power which results in the alteration of the traditional social relationships among the jati groups in the village.

These changes in the traditional relationships between and among the jati groups have not undermined beliefs in ritual hierarchy and purity. However, the use of Varna and Sanskritic symbols of hierarchy is almost
absent. Jati movements seldom use the Varna labels, but continue to manifest the jati emblems of identity, jati names and jati titles.

Vanniar Caste Movement in, Tamilnadu

Rudolph and Rudolph, in *Modernity of Tradition* trace the history of the Vanniar Movement. Vanniars are primarily engaged in agriculture. They are mainly agricultural laborers and many of them live in abject poverty. They are scattered all over Tamilnadu and prominent cities of India, but their concentration is thicker in the districts of South Arcot, North Arcot, Salem, Dharmapuri and Chengalpat in Tamilnadu.

A record dated 1833 shows the Vanniars petitioning for an official decree to the effect that they were not of low caste. They were among the first to use the census for mobility claims, petitioning in 1871 to be listed as Kshatriyas. Their Sangam named Vanniar Kula Kshatriya Sangam was founded in 1888. By 1891 one of their educated men had produced a book to assert and document their merit, and by 1931 their former name, namely, the Palli, no longer appeared in official records.

After national Independence, the state opened new opportunities for improvement and, as a result, the Vanniar Sangam became politically active. Rudolph and Rudolph have traced the history and show the results of the Vanniars’ activities till 1967. The Vanniar Sangam pressed the Congress Party for preferential treatment for the Vanniars. When that party did not respond to their demand, they decided to contest the elections as independents. They were mostly interested in election to the District Boards,
not only because they could muster decisive voting strength in certain districts but also because this is characteristic of the political efforts of most caste Sangams, since the subjects falling under the jurisdiction of District Boards, particularly educational and medical facilities and road building, are of the greatest local and political interest. The Vanniars generally did well as independent candidates.

In 1951 a Vanniar political party named the Tamilnadu Toilors’ Party, was formed, but soon split into two parties, the splinter group being named the Commonwealth Party. Their leaders could mobilize Vanniar voters, using the traditional Panchayat network. In the 1952 election they won 13 percent of the seats in the Madras Legislature. The Vanniars naturally voted for candidates of their caste and grouping, who presumably understood their needs and shared their aspirations. In this traditional mode of alignment in a partisan context, they were repeating the initial, and often continuing trend wherever democratic elections are held.

The two Vanniar parties were later dissolved, their leaders joining other parties. After this the Vanniars did not vote solidly for any single political party. In the election of 1962, in the South Arcot District all the political parties of Tamilnadu chose Vanniar leaders as candidates. The Vanniars contested on the behalf of different political parties. So the Vanniar votes got divided among themselves.

In 1980, Dr.Ramodass started the Vanniar Sangam. It projected the uniqueness of the Vanniar community. This Sangam mobilized the Vanniar
people. The Vanniar Sangam leaders used their writings and speeches in order to mobilize the people. They conducted some conferences and meetings in order to voice their reservation demand. The Sangam also played a significant role in the formation of a political party named the Pattali Katchi, which, however, disappeared after some time. By conducting major agitations, the Vanniar Sangam strengthened its bargaining power. After 1987, the Vanniar Sangam conducted processions and meetings along with Scheduled Castes and minorities, and started a political party named Pattalli Makkal Katchi (PMK).

**Review of Literature**

In spite of the fact that terms such as *protest, dissent*, etc. are invariably used to describe the nature of social movements, the very appropriateness of these terms to characterise Indian social movements has been questioned by some scholars, not simply because these terms are Western in origin, but also because the nature of society in India rendered protest and dissent irrelevant due to the all-pervasive hierarchy since authority not only accepted as the arbiter of truth, but also buttressed by elements of diversity. Further, through the very pluralism of thought, thought itself was neutralized and made socially powerless. Thus a public check on the exercise of authority through responsible protest and dissent as expressed in the West was not tenable in India and hence the impossibility of social movements. Pratap Chandra argues that Indian culture and civilization can be understood only through a multilinear model and therefore terms such as protest and dissent, which imply deviation from
the mainstream, are irrelevant in the Indian context. The reason why movements of dissent, protest or reform did not exist in ancient India was that uniformity in intellectual orientations, social structures, ideological preferences or even perceptions of truth did not exist. Notwithstanding these assertions, there are scholars who characterize social mobilizations in ancient India as protest or dissent.\textsuperscript{14}

It is important to keep in mind here that the characteristics of a society shape the ethos and styles of its movements. Every social structure creates its own style of protests and modes of expressing these protests.\textsuperscript{15} Therefore, an adequate framework for the study of social movements should take into account the historical, elements of the social structure and the future vision of the society in which they originate and operate, and it is the dialectics between these which provides the focal point of analysis of social movements.\textsuperscript{16} Therefore, to argue that a movement as a social phenomenon is impossible in a given society is to ignore the intricate and complex relationships between social structure and social movements. What needs to be investigated is the nature and the types of movements in a particular society and why they partake of these characteristics.

In this section, the literature available on social movements is reviewed only the following categories.

Religious Movements

Tribal Movements

Peasant Movements
Class Movements

Economic Movements

Ethnic Movements

Caste Movements

Religious Movements

This section discusses the religious movements. A society like India with an ancient and plural religious tradition, is bound to have a large number of movements anchored around religion. The ubiquitous Hindu caste system divides the population of India into countless jatis, based on an elaborated value-system and an intricate normative pattern. Many of the early religious movements were revolts against orthodox Brahminism, and this characteristic is shared by contemporary caste movements also.

According to T.K.Oomen, religious movements in India can be divided broadly into three lands in terms of their response to and consequences for Hinduism.

1. Movements which were started essentially as protests against Hinduism and came to be established as independent religions such as Jainism and Buddhism.

2. Bhakthi movements that attempted to purify Hinduism of its evils and fought against the tyranny of the caste system but subsequently crystallized as sects such as Veerasaivism and Arya Samaj.
3. Movements oriented to opting out of the Hindu fold, conversion to other religions.

The emergence of Jainism and Buddhism in the sixth century B.C., repudiating the authority of orthodox Brahminism, is reckoned as the first major known religious protest movement in India. Jainism denied the authority of the Vedas and revolted against Vedic sacrifices. Buddhism, while accepting the essential teachings of the Upanishads, joined hands with Jainism in denouncing Vedic sacrifices and Brahminic supremacy. While Buddhism may be viewed as a bridge between Vedic Brahminism and non-Vedic Jainism, in propagating religious ideas, both Jainism and Buddhism followed the same path, orienting them to the cause of the common people, asserting the common spiritual right of all men acknowledging compassion and love for all, preaching in the language of the common people, and rejecting the authority of the arrogant Brahmin. The next major religious protest movements, Vaishnavism and Saivism, sought to abolish the intermediary between man and god. The movements initiated by Kabir, Chaitanya and Nanak represent this trend.

Some authors have studied the sectarian movements, Veerasaivism, in Karnataka. The general tendency is to argue that, although it started as a movement against the practices of a rigid caste system, idol worship, untouchability, etc., Veerasaivism succumbed to the same evils it had Challenged and that the movement underwent a process of institutionalization leading to the emergence of a certified ideology. Hierarchical organization and religious bureaucracy, inevitably led to a
compromising and reconciling rather than an opposing attitude towards Hindu orthodoxy, thereby eroding its vitality. So the movement ended up as a sect. However, Venugopal says that the Lingayats differ from other castes for two reasons, first, they explicitly reject the notion of ritual pollution that is central to Hindu-caste ideology. Secondly, the sub-groups among the Lingayats have a competitive relationship unlike the Hindu castes that are characterized by complementarity of relationships.

Baidyanath Saraswathi studies another sectarian movement. It was inspired and led by Kabir (1440-1518), a non-literate who declared an open war against important religious forces of the time-orthodox Brahminism and Islam.

Scholars like V.Bhatt, PushpaSru, Kenneth w.Jones, J.T.F.Jordens and V.K.Vashishta have studied the Arya Samaj that originated in the Punjab as a Hindu renaissance movement largely to counter the proselytizing attempts of Christians and Muslims.

K.p.Gupta, in his analysis of the Ramakrishna Mission has suggested that the prevalent perspective of viewing modern religious movements in India as a response to the western challenge is erroneous. Movements such as the Ramakrishna Mission clearly points to the innovative potential of Hinduism. Vivekananda realized the central significance of hierarchy not only as a social fact but also as a mental construct for Hindus. In such a society change can occur only from the top down and the medium of change can only be religion. Social reform and
politics can become relevant to a Hindu only if it comes through his religion, which is all encompassing.

While on the one hand Gupta points out the importance of hierarchy, religious ethos and the vertical transmission of change in Hindu society, on the other he suggests that change is possible only through the individual realizing his divine potential. The relevant question is, whether it is possible for an individual to realize his potential divine or secular in such a society? Further implied in Gupta’s arguments is a synergetic model of the change process and therefore collective involvements and social movements are either impossible or irrelevant in such a society.

Scholars like A.A.Rizvi, E.zelliott, Wgarligton and D.B.Forrester have described group conversion from Hinduism to other religions such as Islam,24 Buddhism,25 the Bahai Faith26 and Christianity27 as a movement. T.K.Oomen analyzed these research findings and he summarized the following points.28

1. It has been frequently argued that conversion, particularly to Islam and Christianity, at particular historical periods, was motivated by economic and political gains. This argument has been contested by pointing out that (a) it ignored the importance of status identity and mobility, especially for converts from untouchable castes, (b) conversion also took place to religions like Buddhism, Sikhism and the Bhai Faith, none of which could have offered material
inducements, and, (c) to convert from well-off sections material incentives could not have been a motivating factor,

2. Conversions being group phenomena, one or more of the following resulted, particularly in conversions to Christianity: (a) if two or more castes of identical status with traditional animosity existed in a region, only one got converted; (b) if both or all were converted they invariably embraced different denominations; (c) if two or more of these castes embraced the same denomination, cleavages continued within the fold of the Church; and (d) irrespective of denominational variations, the social stigma continued and further fissions took place as illustrated by the case of neo-Christians.

3. Individual or family conversions as against mass conversions were usually confined to upper or intermediate castes. This indicates that a certain level of ritual status, social rank and economic independence were pre-requisites to withstand probable local opposition to conversion. However, the lower castes, particularly those who were dependent on the converts from clean castes, followed the example of their masters and the clean caste converts would invariably assume leadership position in the new context (Church), thereby perpetuating their dominance.

4. If, in a region the lower castes were converted first and experienced distinct socio-economic improvements and gained definite political advantage, this demonstration effect often prompted non-Brahmin
caste clean Hindus also to get converted. If upper caste converts were already entrenched in leadership positions in a region, the new converts from low castes found little material gratification and experienced limited social integration, both of which would infuse a sense of alienation among them. In contrast, if a caste of low-ritual and economic status was the first to get converted in a region, it might monopolize the benefits accruing from conversion and experience upward mobility.

5. If only a section of a caste was converted, there was a possibility of a dual social control system—the new religion and the old biradari—regulating their conduct and shaping their style of life emerged, often generating tensions.

6. The strategy of conversions followed by different religious groups differed; Muslims tended to convert the elite first, attesting to a downward filtration theory. The Catholics usually attempted mass conversions, which also meant converting the lower castes, and the Protestants concentrated on individuals and families.

7. If the proselytization technique adopted resembled the Hindu ethos, for instance presenting the prophet as an avatar as the Bahai Faith did, the distinctiveness of the new religion might be lost and the adherents might come to perceive it as an extension of the old one. On the other hand, if in the cognitive map of the people the values and norms of the new religion produce a cultural estrangement, its
attraction for the potential converts might also erode as in the Bahai case.

8. If a religion hopes to draw lower castes into its fold and retain them it should have (a) absolute social equality, (b) a rational outlook, (c) intellectual creativity, (d) the possibility of converts continuing to draw their special privileges from the Government as depressed classes, and, (e) militancy in offering protection but allowing them to retain their own leadership and respectability.

9. Socio-political separation of the lower-caste converts from others, both fellow caste men who continue in the Hindufold and the Hindus as a whole, seems to be an inevitable consequence of conversion. This in turn facilitates the development of a distinct social identity and culture which may lead to psychological emancipation of the converts, if the appropriate climate is created in the new religion.

10. Over a period of time the intensity of conversion movements declined due to (a) the proselytization efforts by Islam and revivalism being discontinued in terms of rigid religious practices as manifested in the emergence of the Tabligh or Ahmadiya movement among the Muslims; (b) the emergence of the Arya samaj and reconversion to Hinduism through Shuddhi; (c) the denunciation of the practice of untouchability by social reformers from among the caste Hindus; (d) the introduction of the policy of protective discrimination and the
denial of caste-based privileges to converts; (e) the initiation of movements which sought self-respect for the backward castes within the Hindu fold; and, (f) the extension of concessions such as allowing untouchables entry into temples, initiated by a responsive political elite from the caste Hindus.

**Tribal Movements**

The Scheduled Tribes (ST) constitute 8 percent of the total population of the country. According to the 1981 census, there were 516 lakh persons classified as belonging to the ST. They can be divided into two categories. 1. frontier tribes, and, 2. non-frontier tribes. The former are inhabitants of the Northeast frontier states—Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura. Except Assam, all the other states are landlocked between Assam and India’s neighbors—Burma, China and Bangladesh. They therefore occupy a special position in the sphere of national politics. They constitute 11 percent of the tribal population. The non-frontier tribes, constituting 89 percent of the total tribal population, are distributed among most of the states, though they are concentrated in large numbers in Madhya Pradesh (23 percent), Orissa (22 percent), Rajasthan (12 percent), Bihar (8 percent), Gujarat (14 percent), Dadra Nagar Haveli (79 percent) and the Laccadive Islands (94 percent).

The ST are known as tribes, adivasis, aboriginals or as autochthonous. Social scientists have not examined the term *tribe* in the Indian context vigorously. They have largely followed government
Article 366(25) of the Constitution has defined Scheduled Tribes as such tribes or tribal communities or parts or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purpose of the Constitution. By the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) order 1950, issued by the President in exercise of the powers conferred by clause (I) of the Article 342 of the Constitution of India, 212 tribes have been declared to be Scheduled Tribes. Later, by an Act of Parliament, some other groups were also included in the schedule.

Tribals are ethnic groups. Different tribes have their own cultures—dialects, life styles, social structures, rituals, values, etc., differing somewhat from those of the dominant non-tribal peasant social groups. At the same time, most of them are settled agriculturists and social differentiations have developed among them. Their agrarian problems were and are, to some extent, the same as those of non-tribal peasants. Studies are now available to show how the tribals have, in course of time, become peasants. Many scholars treat tribal movements as peasant movement's. Peasant leaders like Ranga and Sahajan and Saraswati have described the tribals as aboriginal kisans. K.S. Singh joins issue with these scholars and political activists. He argues that such an approach tends to gloss over the diversities of tribal social formations of which tribal movements are a part, both being structurally related. Because of the concentration of the tribals in certain areas, their social and political organization, their relative isolation from the mainstream their leadership pattern and the modus
operandi of their political mobilization may differ from those of other peasants.³⁵

There seem to be less socio-economic differentiations within a tribe than are seen among caste Hindu peasants: and their community consciousness is strong. Singh argues that while the peasant movements tend to remain purely agrarian as the peasants live off the land, the tribal movements were both agrarian and forest based, because the tribals’ dependence on forests was as crucial as their dependence on land. There was also the ethnic factor. The tribal revolts were directed against zamindars, moneylenders and petty government officials not only because they exploited them but also because they were aliens.³⁵ John MacDougall, in two studies on the Sardar and Kher war movements in Bihar between 1858 and 1898, shows that thenature of movements varies "as the consequence of variations in the peasantisation of adivasi society",

V. Raghavaiah³⁸ lists seventy tribal revolts from 1778 to 1971. He also gives the chronology of these revolts. A survey of tribal movements conducted by the Anthropological Survey of India identified thirty-six ongoing tribal movements in India in 1976. As early as 1945, Man in India brought out a Rebellion number, presenting four papers on various tribal revolts. The editorial of the number remarks: “These revolts have been neither numerous nor gravely frequent, yet there is scarcely any major tribe in middle or eastern India which at some time in the last one hundred and fifty years has not resorted to this gesture of despair”. The publication did not cover tribal revolts in the North-East frontier region.
Two volumes on tribal movements in India, edited by K.S. Singh, are an important contribution to the relatively scant literature on the subject. The first volume deals with the North-East frontier tribes and the second volume deals with Central and South India. These volumes deal primarily with tribal movements which took place in the post-Independence period. The major part of the second volume is confined to the movements in Central India and Andhra Pradesh. There is only one paper on the tribal movements of South India and the Nicobar Islands. The reason is that there was an insignificant number of movements or none at all among the tribals of the Southern States. K.S. Singh states: “The tribes down south are too primitive, too small in numbers, and too isolated in their habitat to organize movements, in spite of their exploitation and the resultant discontent”. L.K. Mahapatra also offers a similar observation: “We do not find any significant social movement, religious, status mobility or political, among the numerically small, migratory tribes, like the Birhor, Karwa, Pahira, the hill Kharia, or the shifting cultivators like the Hill Maria, the Hill Saroa or the more primitive Kond”. Surasit Sinha makes similar observations regarding the small tribes in Bihar. All this may be true, but it is all based on limited, data as very few studies have been undertaken regarding the tribals of South India.

There are quite a few studies dealing with tribal movements in Central and Eastern India during the pre-Independence period. These studies include K. IC Datta’s study of The Santal insurrection of 1855-57, Kumar Suresh Singh’s study of the Birsa Munda Movement in Chota Nagpur.
during 1874-1901, J.C.Jha’s study of the Kol Insurrection of Chota Nagpur during 1831-32 and the Bhumij revolt in 1832-33, Furer-Haimendorfs and David Arnold’s studies on the Gudem Rampa Risings in Andhra Pradesh, (the former covers the Rampa rebellion of 1879-80 and the latter covers the series of tribal uprisings between 1839 and 1924) and L.P.Mathur's study of the 'resistance movement' of the Bhilis of Rajasthan in the nineteenth century. There are only a few studies on tribal movements involving North-East frontier tribes during the pre-Independence era. They include Stephen Fuchs's sketchy study of the Kabui rebellion and D.Mukherjee's and others studies of the Zelliangroy movement in 1925, the messianic movements among the Kacha Nagas during 1881-1930 and Gautam Bhadra’s study of the Kuki uprising in Manipur during 1917-1919.

Different scholars have evolved different typologies of tribal movements. Mahapatra applies the typologies widely used for social movements to tribal movements: (1) Reactionary; (2) Conservative; and (3) Revisionary or revolutionary. The reactionary movement tries to launch a movement to bring back the good old days, whereas the conservative movement tries to maintain the status quo. The revisionary or revolutionary movements are those which are organized for improvement or purification of the cultural or social order by eliminating evil or low customs, beliefs or institutions. Surajit Sinha classifies the movements into (1) Ethnic rebellions, (2) Reform movements, (3) Political autonomy movements within the Indian union, (4) Secessionist movements, and, (5) Agrarian unrests.
K.S. Singh makes more or less the same classification except that he uses the terms sanskritisation instead of reform movement and cultural movements instead of ethnic movements. S.M. Dubey divides the tribal movements in North-East India into four categories: (a) Religious and social reform movements, (b) movements for separate statehood, (c) insurgent movements, and (d) cultural rights movements.

Economic issues involved in the tribal movements were often somewhat similar to those affecting non-tribal peasant movements. The main difference between the two in the last century was that the tribals had their own communal agrarian structure which was different from that of the non-tribal peasants. The non-tribals started penetrating the forest and hill areas to exploit economic resources, thereby undermining the traditional economy and society of the tribals. The newly imposed British land system was radically different from that prevailing among many tribals. Suresh Singh observes, “The transformation of the mundari agrarian system into non-communal, feudal, zamindari or individual tenures was the key to agrarian disorders that climaxed in religious-political movements of Birsa.”

Recently a few political sociologists and historians have started examining class differentiation among the tribals. It is argued that Naga, Mizo, Thankhand and similar movements demanding political autonomy are dominated by the tribal educated middle classes. H.K. Sareen alleges that earlier the British government, and during the last few decades America and China have encouraged secessionist tendencies among the English educated tribals of North-East India.
Many studies show that the leadership in post-Independence movements has come from educated elite tribals. The recent tribal solidarity movements are primarily the product of the initiative and interest of a limited criteria of the educated tribal elite, and there is a considerable communication gap between the interests and ideas of the elite leaders and the tribal masses.60

The leadership of some of the tribal peasant, movements such as those of the Telengana, the Warli, the Shahada, the Bhumi Sena and the Naxalbari, was provided by non-tribals coming from different political groups.61 At the same time, local leadership among the tribals has also emerged.62

Peasant Movements

*Kisan* is often translated as *peasant* in the academic literature published in English. It is used for those agriculturists who are homogeneous, with small holdings operated mainly by family labour, and on other hand. It includes all those who depend on land including landless laborers, as well as supervisory agriculturists.63 Studies on peasant movements in India are of recent origin. Most of the studies have been published after the mid-seventies. The Chinese Revolution, the series of agrarian movements in Latin American countries and studies thereon by Western political sociologists and anthropologists64 and the Naxalite Movement at home in the late sixties, provided an impetus to Indian scholars to study various peasant movements. Bartington Moore Jr.65 in his
celebrated work *Social Origin of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, questions the revolutionary potential of the Indian peasantry. He observes that the landed upper classes and the peasants played an important role in the bourgeois revolutions leading to capitalist societies in England and France, the abortive bourgeois revolutions leading to fascism in Germany and Italy, and the peasant revolutions leading to communism in Russia and China. But peasant rebellions in pre-modern India were relatively rare and completely ineffective and that modernization impoverished the Indian peasants at least as much as in China and over as long a period of time. Desai argues that attempting integration of the peasantry with the rest of the nation in the context of the freedom movement amounted to ignoring its specific interests and to thwarting the crystallization of its specific consciousness. Alavi’s study relates to mobilizing peasantry. He suggests that Gandhi played a vital role in mobilizing the peasantry for the cause of national freedom and accuses him of invoking non-violence to curb the peasant tendency to fight against the landlord and the moneylender. Siddiqui suggests that the relationship between peasant movements and the national movement was one of reciprocity. Barrington Moore suggests that the tradition of peasant movements in India has been weak due to (a) the caste system (b) the strength of the bourgeois leadership against the landlords and the British, and, (c) the pacifying influence of Gandhi on the peasantry.

A large number of studies are available on certain regions, such as Bihar, Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Malabar. They include case studies on
specific movements as well as historical accounts covering periods of a decade to a century or more. Certain movements such as the Indigo Movement in Bengal and Bihar\textsuperscript{71} the Moplash Rebellion in Malabar,\textsuperscript{72} Kerala, the Tebhaga movement in Bengal,\textsuperscript{73} the Telengana Movement in Andhra Pradesh,\textsuperscript{7/1} the Naxalite Movement in West Bengal, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh\textsuperscript{75} are well researched. Historical analyses of peasant struggles from different perspectives are offered by B.B. Chaudhuri\textsuperscript{76} Kaviraj\textsuperscript{77} and Sunil Sen\textsuperscript{TM} on West Bengal, Arvind Das\textsuperscript{79} and Hennigham\textsuperscript{80} on Bihar, N.G. Ranga\textsuperscript{81} on Andhra pradesh and Namboodripad\textsuperscript{82}, Oommen\textsuperscript{83} and Kannan\textsuperscript{83*} on Kerala. A number of detailed case studies on different peasant struggles in pre-and post-Independence periods in different parts of the country are now available. They include studies on peasant struggles in Uttar Pradesh by Majid Hayat,\textsuperscript{85} Kapil Kumar\textsuperscript{86} and Paul Brass,\textsuperscript{87} those in Punjab by Barrier\textsuperscript{88} and S.Gill,\textsuperscript{89} those in Rajasthan by Ram Pande\textsuperscript{90} and Pushendra Surana,\textsuperscript{91} those in Gurajat by David Hardiman, Ghanshyam Shan,\textsuperscript{92} Shirin Mehta\textsuperscript{93} and Jan Br email,\textsuperscript{94} those in Maharashtra by G. Parulekar,\textsuperscript{95} Gail Govecl\textsuperscript{96} and Ashik Upadhyay,\textsuperscript{97} and those in Orissa by Binod Das\textsuperscript{98} and Sadasiba Pradhan\textsuperscript{"}. It should however be noted that the studies on peasant struggles in the North Eastern States such as Assam, Nagland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, and in Madhya Pradesh and Orissa are very few and less comprehensive.
Class Movements

This section reviews the studies on class movements from two segments, namely, 1. Middle Class movements and 2. Industrial Working Class Movements.

Middle Class Movement

The middle class is placed between labor and capital. It neither directly owns the means of production that pumps out the surplus generated by wage labor power, nor does it, by its own labor, produce the surplus which has use and exchange value. Broadly speaking, this class consists of the petty-bourgeois and the white collar workers. The former are either self-employed or involved in the distribution of commodities and the latter are non-manual office workers, supervisors and professionals. Thus, in terms of occupation, shopkeepers, salesmen, brokers, government and non-government office-workers, writers, teachers, and self-employed professionals such as engineers, pleaders, doctors, etc. constitute the middle class. Most of these occupations require at least some degree of formal education. British rule established and introduced a capitalist economy, a new administrative system and English education in the early nineteenth century. Consequently a tiny educated class emerged in urban areas. They belonged to the upper caste Hindu segment; Muslims were, for a variety of reasons, late in availing themselves of an English education. A few individuals in different parts of the country not only raised questions but also revolted against social systems. Raja Ram Mohan
Roy, who protested against the sati system, formed the Brahmo Samaj that remained the center for social reform activities in Bengal. The Prarthana Samaj came into existence in Bombay under the leadership of Mahadev Govind Ranade. The Arya Samaj formed by Dayan and Saraswati was the predominant influence in Punjab and North India.

The middle class participated at various stages of India’s freedom movement. The major events of their collective action were the Partition of Bengal in 1906, the Non-Cooperation Campaign in the early twenties, and the Anti-Simon Agitation in the mid-twenties, Civil Disobedience movements in the early thirties, and the Quit India Movement in 1942. Besides these, there were a number of local level campaigns—organized and spontaneous—against the British Raj. Though there are a large number of studies on the freedom movement, most of them are mainly focused on the leadership and their decisions. In his study of popular movements between 1945 and 1947 Sumit Sarkar argues that, in this as well as in other periods of modern Indian history, the decisions and actions of leaders, British or Indian, cannot really be understood without the counterpoint provided by pressures from below.

A few studies on the Bang-Bhang Movement, the Civil Disobedience movement and the Quit India Movement point out that there were close links between local politics and national agitations. A small section of the urban middle class intelligentsia, university and college teachers, researchers and lawyers have formed organizations at state and national
levels for the protection of civil and democratic rights. They raised issues related to violation of civil and democratic rights of various strata of society, including the oppressed classes.\textsuperscript{108} The existing constitutional channels, such as the judiciary, the state assemblies and parliament are used for challenging the government's decisions and the power of vested interests. The media are used to highlight issues and create public opinion. Fact-finding committees are appointed. The intelligentsia has also raised ecological issues. They organize conferences and submit memoranda to the government. Studies on these organizations and their mobilization efforts have yet to be undertaken.\textsuperscript{109}

**Industrial Working Class Movements**

This section is primarily concerned with bluecollar workers in organized and unorganized industrial sectors. Historians have recently begun to explore this area and a few well-researched studies are now available.\textsuperscript{110} There are, of course, a number of studies bearing the title "working class movements", but they are mainly confined to the growth and activities of trade unions rather than collective mobilization for direct action by workers.\textsuperscript{115}

Some studies give statistical information of strikes staged over a period of time in an industry or a city, a region or at the all India level.\textsuperscript{117} Notwithstanding the limitations of the data, V.K.Karnik's\textsuperscript{113} study of strikes in India is a very useful work, providing historical information. It is a chronological account of the major strikes between 1850 and 1950.
G.K. Sharma’s book is another study that provides a historical account covering the hundred years between 1885 and 1980 of the labor movement, focusing on working class organizations.

**Economic Movements**

Some sections of the whitecollar government employees, school and university teachers, etc. launched movements on economic issues affecting them, such as revision of pay scales, bonus, and job security. Though there is no systematic study on the struggles, a few of the recent movements led by the middle class began with economic issues like price rise, scarcity of essential commodities and unemployment. But, in the course of the development of these movements, these issues were sidetracked and the movements raised populist issues, which appeal to various classes. They raised moral and cultural issues. They sometimes provided an ideological basis for democratic capitalism and sometimes also for non-capitalist development strategy. Instances are the 1974 Gujarat Movement, popularly known as the Nav Nirman (reconstruction) Movement, and the Bihar Movement known as the movement for total revolution. Though both these movements began with economic issues, they also raised the issues of corruption, democratic rights and social reform. These issues were not spelled out, nor were they linked with the economic and political structure of the society. They succeeded in ousting the Chief Minister in Gujarat and the Congress Party in Bihar. Ghanshyam Shah has observed that they wanted more economic benefits by bringing about certain changes in the
system. They do not believe in changing the basic aspects of the system. They have a stake in the system. To them revolution is a slogan.

Ethnic Movements

Ethnic movement is a broad area. This section reviews some ethnic movements based on ethno regional movements.¹¹⁸

At the end of the nineteenth century, the educated Hindus of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh launched a series of agitations for the removal of Urdu and for its replacement by Hindi in the Devanagri script. Muslim intellectuals also launched a counter agitation in defense of Urdu.¹¹⁹ In South India people launched struggles during the fifties and sixties against the imposition of Hindi and for the retention of English. For them it was a struggle against Hindi imperialism.¹²⁰ Linguistic groups such as Marathi, Gujarati, Telugu and Punjabi demanded the formation of linguistic states in the fifties. They launched agitations for these demands.¹²¹ For maintenance of their cultural identity, the Tamils, the Punjabis, the Nagas, the Mizos and the tribals of Chota Nagpur area spearheaded agitations for the formation of separate states within or outside the Indian Union.

The Dravidian Movement in Tamilnadu was a backward caste or non-Brahmin movement. It was directed against North Indians, and demanded a separate state named Dravidasthan i.e. homeland of the Dravidians outside the Indian Union.¹²² Periyar E.V.Ramasamy, a leader of the Dravidian movement said that Tamilnadu was all along a nation and is still a nation and is known as Dravidasthan. The civilization, customs and manners of the
Tamils are different from those of Bengaleis and the Bombayans. Hindi language and literature are haranful to the interests of Tamilians in general and to all other non-Brahmins elsewhere in particular.

The Sikh community of Punjab also demanded a separate state called Khalistan. The Shri Anandpur Sahib Resolution demanded that one of the aims of the Akali Dal be maintaining the feeling of a separate independent entity of the Sikh panth and the creation of an environment in which the national expression of the Sikhs can be full and satisfactory.\textsuperscript{123}

The recent Assam agitation, which began in the late 1970s with the formation of the All Assam Students Union, also raised issues regarding the identity of the Assamese and the development of Assam. In a sense, it was a nationality movement.\textsuperscript{124} Regional or linguistic identities have been sharpened in India since Independence and they have become a potential force in mobilizing the middle class, which faces competition from other classes in the economic field.

Caste Movement

In the nineteenth century, with the origin and spread of the national movement, a qualitatively different type of movement the Scheduled Castes Movements and the Backward Castes Movement emerged in different parts of India among the various depressed caste groups. This section reviews under two headings the Scheduled Castes Movement, and Backward Castes Movement.
Scheduled Caste Movements

The SCs constitute 16 percent of India's population. Thirty-six percent of them are workers. Among the workers, 48 percent are agricultural labourers. Many of them are engaged in traditional occupations, such as flaying and scavenging. The SCs are scattered all over the country, though their number is insignificant, in the predominantly tribal states of the North-East frontier.

The studies on SC socio-political movements are very few. The Mahar Movement of Maharashtra has been projected more often than not as an all-India movement. The leader of the Mahar movement, Dr. Ambedkar, was an all-India leader and he claimed to represent all the dalits of the country. But his role in mobilizing the SCs outside Maharashtra is not well known.

There is no full-fledged study or even anthology giving information about various SC movements in different parts of the country. Two papers, one by Bharat Patankar and Gail Omvedt, and the other by Ghanshyam Shah, give an overview of the SC liberation or anti-untouchability movements in India. The former deals with the colonial period, whereas the latter looks at both the colonial and the post-colonial periods.

Ghanshyam Shah classifies SC movement into reformative movements and alternative movements. The former try to reform the caste system to solve the problem of untouchability. They are further divided into Bhakti movements, Neo-Vedantik movements, and Sanskritisation movements. The alternative movements attempt to create an alternative
socio-cultural structure by conversion to some other religion or by acquiring education, economic status and political power. The alternative movements are further divided into conversion movements and religious or secular movements.

A section of untouchables who could improve their economic condition, either by abandoning or continuing their traditional occupations, have launched struggles for higher status into the caste hierarchy. They follow Sanskrit norms and rituals. They try to justify their claim to a higher social status in the caste hierarchy by inventing suitable mythologies. All untouchable jatis, however, have not succeeded in removing the civic disabilities traditionally imposed upon them. Practically, they are still treated as untouchables in their places of residence. The Shanars or Nadars of Tamilnadu, however, have crossed the boundary of untouchability. The Nadars organized movements in the late nineteenth century against the civic disabilities they suffered. They entered the political system by first supporting the Justice Party in the early 1930's and later the Congress Party. They have moved from the lower rungs of the ritual hierarchy to a position of status and power. The Izhavas of Kerala formed their caste organization in 1903 known as the SNDA Yogam (that is Association for the Maintenance of Dharma founded by Shri.Narayanal). The Association launched activities for sanskritising the norms and customs of the Izhavas. They launched a satyagraha for temple entry in the twenties. They bargained with the government for economic opportunities and political positions.
Dr. Ambedkar launched a major anti-untouchability movement in the 1920s in Maharashtra. Ambedkar organized the Independent Labour Party (ILP) on secular lines for protecting the interests of the laboring classes. Though the party was open to the laborers belonging to all the castes, the Mahars dominated it. It did not make much of an impact. Eleanor Zelliot observes, "Their political movement efforts to claim religious rights, failed in its attempts to represent class or labour, and took on much of the nature of a caste Sangam functioning in the political area." Owen Lynch examines the charisma of Ambedkar at the micro-level in Agra City.

Backward. Caste Movements

The term backward classes has been used in terms of weaker sections of society, particularly the scheduled castes, the scheduled tribes and other backward classes. The term has also been used to designate any other backward classes. In the beginning, after India's Independence, the term depressed classes was used for the untouchables and other backward groups. It is certainly a fact that the backward classes are above the ex-untouchable groups and below the twice-born castes. The Kakakalekar Commission, appointed by the Government of India, identified more than three thousands castes or communities as other Backward classes (OBC) in 1956. The Mandal Commission (1980) calculated that 52 percent of the population, including non-Hindus, constitutes other Backward Castes.

M.S.A. Rao classified backward caste movements in India into four types on the basis of structural cleavages and manifest conflicts. The first type is that of the movements led by upper non-Brahmin castes such as the
Vellala, the Reddis and the Kanimas of the old Madras Presidency, the Vokkaligas and the Lingayats of Mysore and the Marathas of Maharashtra. Ramaswamy Naicker of Tamilnadu launched the Self-Respect Movement in Madras in the late 1920s to perform marriage ceremonies without Brahmin priests. The Non-Brahmin Movements in Maharashtra and Tamilnadu raised cultural issues. The leaders of non-Brahmin Movements attacked caste and condemned it as a tool of Brahmin oppression. These are known as non-Brahmin movements against the Brahmins.

The Rudolphs and Rudolph consider the backward classes (castes) of the northern, western and upper southern states bullock capitalists some Scholar have studied the sanskritisation process. Rudolph and Rudolph observe that some of the backward or non-Brahmin castes in Maharashtra and Tamilnadu demanded separate electorates so that they could elect their own representatives and that the demand for reservation in government jobs and educational institutions has continued in the eighties. Rao studied the leadership of the Yadava Movement in Bihar.

Various backward castes organized caste Sangams for social reforms and the struggle for political power. The Yadavas formed not only district level but also state and all-India level caste Sangams. It was the same with the Marathas and the Malis of Maharashtra and the Koils of Gujarat. These Sangams were loose and ad hoc. They organized conferences, passed resolutions and occasionally submitted memoranda. The backward castes of South India formed political parties—first the Justice
Party and later the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and now the Pattali Makkal Katchi.

The foregoing review of the literature available reveals that hitherto no systematic study has been undertaken of the dynamics of a social movement transforming itself into a political party. Hence this study of the Dynamics of the Vanniar Movement transforming itself into the Pattali Makkal Katchi in Tamilnadu.

Statement of the Problem

The Vanniar Caste Movement mobilized its caste people in order to achieve its demands. To pressurize the government to accept its demands it adopted certain strategies like giving petitions, boycotting the assembly elections, conducting road roko, rail roko and so on. These activities helped the movement to mobilize its people *en masse*. After achieving its demand, the Vanniar Caste Movement transformed itself into a political party, namely the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK). Then the political party put forward some other demands and adopted certain other strategies to mobilize its caste people.

How a caste movement mobilizes its caste people in order to achieve its goals and how a caste movement transforms itself into a political party are major questions. The present study aims at analysing the mobilization and transformation process of a caste movement into a political party with special reference to the caste movement of the vanniar community which transformed itself into the Pattali Makkal Katchi.
T.K. Oommen studied the process of mobilization to institutionalization in his work, *protest and change*. According to Oommen, movements are conscious collective actions informed by an ideology, aided by an organizational weapon and initiated by a core person/group to bring about change in any direction (past/future) using any means (violent/non-violent). That is, movements are deliberately initiated and guided collective mobilizations to bring about relatively rapid social transformation. But, to consolidate and stabilize the gains of a movement, one needs the instrumentality of the institution. Often the organizational core of the movement provides the nucleus of the institution. That is, a movement contains within it the embryo of an institution. In the process of institutionalization of a movement, the characteristic activity of the movement, namely, mobilization, is relegated to the background and becomes less salient. But the process of institutionalization carries with it the seeds of the movement.

An institution may be viewed as a cluster of interrelated roles resulting from the institutionalization of socially desirable and legitimized values, norms, rules and procedures. But institutions are not eternally stable and institutional legitimacy is continually questioned. The response to institutionalization may be manifested in different forms: conformity, differential interpretation, acceptance of values but rejection of the institutional role-incumbents, opposition, etc. This means institutionalization can occasion both bureaucratization and mobilization,
that is, the process of institutionalization may and often does provide the momentum for movements to emerge.

There are several reasons for conceptualizing institutions and movements as disengaged entities. The first is the inadequate accounting of the time element in the analysis. The transformation of movements into institutions, and vice versa, is generally gradual and is seldom sudden. There is a social state between the two phases—movements and institutions—and social scientists have scarcely paid attention to this dimension of social reality. The initial, even if faltering, steps taken to view society as a process or an event would go a long way toward recognizing the interim social state between the solid state (institutions) and the fluid state (movements).

The second reason is the widespread tendency to confuse synergetic behaviour with collective action. Synergism refers to the process wherein the isolated actions of an aggregate of individuals produce conditions of exigency which in turn result in social change. But the social actors are not consciously contributing towards change or motivated to bring about change. Quite a few of the social phenomena that are designated collective are only nominally so. For example, if individuals made independent decisions to improve their life chances through migration or planned parenthood (though these decisions could be collective as well) the impact of their independent action may have a group effect. But the impact is not the result of collective action but only that of synergetic behaviour. The individual actors are not collectively aware but only individually conscious; there is no interaction between them. In contrast, there are instances which
produce change precisely because participants interact and have or develop relationships or collectively pursue the aim. The collective consciousness may be based either on an antecedent common identity anchored in an institution, or a newly emerging one, provided by a movement. In either case, the identity is shared and acknowledged through the medium of either a movement or an institution which is interlocked and not disengaged.

The third reason is that movements are usually defined and perceived as large scale or mass efforts. Most movements, however large they might eventually become usually have small beginnings in the form of a small group, Association or sect. That is, the formation of a small institution or structure could be the starting point of a movement. Alternatively, a movement may emerge from a sudden event or happening. But soon an organization becomes a necessary condition for the survival of the movement. Thus, there is a chain linkage between institutions and movements. So one can conceive of empirical situations wherein the intertwining between movements and institutions is perennially present and continuing.

If institutions do not produce movements, that is, if they do not respond to the challenges posed to them periodically, they will become structurally and culturally obsolete: they will perish. Therefore, institutions require movements for their very survival through periodic replenishment. Movements provide institutions with the possibility of re-legitimization, if and when the latter experience an erosion of their legitimacy. On the other hand, unless movements crystallize into institutions, unless the visions of
movements are translated into reality through institutional mechanisms, they will embody mere aspirations. That is, institutions are the instruments movements employ to translate ideology into programme, theory into praxis, without which they will remain shells without substance. In fact, every revolutionary ideology is in search of a structure—party, institution—capable of translating its vision into reality.

Movements emerge not only to correct the lags in praxis in the prevailing institutions, but to identify the gaps in theory as well. That is, movements not only produce collective actors but also provide them with new values. These values are to be rendered collective to begin with, for which the involvement of the people is a prerequisite. But if the resultant mobilization is left unchartered it will not lead to the pursued goal, the institutionalization of a new set of values. Mobilization and institutionalization are often counterposed in contemporary social science theory, ignoring the fact that they constitute a continuum. The prevalent tendency is to view movement and mobilization as degenerating into institutions and institutionalization. In contrast, it should be noted that the institutionalization of the values pursued by movements is possible only through building appropriate institutions.

It is true that movement surface when institutions fail and the emerging collective consciousness is articulated through movements. Yet, if a movement does not create institutions embodying the new values it upholds and articulates, it serves no purpose: it vanishes without any impact. Sometimes movements tend to retain their glory by dissolving
themselves after achieving their goal. But what really happens is that, even
as a movement is disbanded formally, it actually takes on a new incarnation
either in the form of a political party or as a new movement with a new goal.
It should be emphasized here that, if a movement wants to translate its
ideology into reality, it needs an institutional vehicle, for example, a party.
This in turn leads to institutionalization of power and authority. But the
tendency in social science writings has been to decry this development as
pathological and undesirable.

Institutions and movements are reciprocally linked in three significant
ways. First, institutions and structures are cleansed by movements. What
are often labeled fundamentalist or revivalist movements are essentially
attempts to rescue institutions from their current degeneration and restore
them to their original state of pristine purity as defined by the visionaries of
these movements. Thus, a large number of religious movements are merely
efforts to cleanse the prevailing religious establishment of its undesirable
accretions which were not a part of the original vision. Even movements
which challenge the bases of authority in the existing institutions succeed
only in cleansing the old structure. The student movement attempted to
question the basis of authority in the university system but could only
partially reform it (through institutionalized student participation in
decisional processes), since knowledge remains the basis of authority.
Conversely, institutions tend to check the adventurism of movements. It is
well known how the rebels in institutions are contained or liquidated
depending upon the nature and the intensity of the threats posed by them to the institutions.

Secondly, movements deliberately create institutions which are new instruments to achieve their vision and aspiration. Conversely, institutions may float movements to sustain their legitimacy. Thirdly, movements tend to redefine old institutions the effort being not simply to purify and inject institutions with new verve and vitality, nor to abandon them completely and create new ones, but to recreate them. The break from the past is evident but the link is not simply tenuous. For instance, most feminists vehemently criticize the family, but do not abandon it as an institution; they hope to recreate a non-violent and human family. Conversely, institutions tend to revitalize movements in such a way that the balance between stability and change is maintained.

It is important to remind ourselves here that the cleansed, created, and recreated institutions coexist: accretion rather than displacement takes place. Further, movements require institutions to concretize their vision while, reciprocally, institutions need movements to sustain their legitimacy.

The prevalent tendency to view movements and institutions as mutually antagonistic is essentially in line with the natural history or life-cycle approach to the analysis of social movements, by now conventional in social science. The argument runs roughly as follows: The development of an organization, however rudimentary, is inevitable for the realization of movement goals. But the emergence of such an organization inevitably sets
in motion influences which defeat the very purpose which occasioned it. A paradoxical situation arises: that which is needed as an instrument—the organisation—for the translation of movement ideology into specific programmes often tends to become instrumental in frustrating the very purpose for which it emerged. Thus, the emergence of movement organizations lead to routinisation of charisma, development of bureaucratic structures, persistence beyond the purpose for which it emerged, all of which invariably lead to the institutionalization of the social movement. In this strand of thinking, institutions are viewed as degenerate entities emerging from movements. In contrast, it is necessary to define and perceive institutions as indicators of goal fulfillment of movements. As and when institutions become rigid and non-responsive to the purpose for which they emerged, it becomes imperative to challenge and de-legitimize them. That is, the relationship between movements and institutions is dialectical and multi-polar. In fact, mobilization and institutionalization coexist and, furthermore, the process of institutionalization provides new possibilities for mobilization.

The institutionalization of a movement is believed to occur as the goals it pursued are achieved as an elaborate machinery for the implementation of the movement goals emerges, or as associational proliferation takes place leading to the substitution of the movement by these associations.

The basic thrust of Oommen’s argument is that the processes of mobilization and institutionalization are to be viewed essentially as two
different dimensions of a movement rather than mutually inimical processes. However, the emphasis on different movement aspects vary at different phases of a given movement as Table 1 shows.

**Table 1**

Characteristics of Different Aspects of a Movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Mobilisational Phase</th>
<th>Institutionalisation Phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>Very important emphasis on mass appeal—centered issues of deprivation—stress on collective participation.</td>
<td>Not so significant—emphasis on translating movement ideology into specific programmes—stress on implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Embryonic and rudimentary-leader-follower relationship emphatic-Stress on functioning as propaganda vehicle-emphasis on martyrdom.</td>
<td>Crystallized and complex—leader-follower relationship replaced by professional-client relations—operating as interest group—stress on administration of justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy and tactics</td>
<td>Stress on collective action—(agitations, strikes, gheraos, satyagrahas, demonstrations etc) emphasis on propaganda and communication of ideology to sensitize participants to their rights.</td>
<td>Interest articulation (bargaining, submission of memoranda, petition, lobbying for legislation)—emphasize on the Tier and now’ goal, namely, welfare of participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Professional revolutionary (typical roles: prophet, charismatic hero, demagogue)</td>
<td>Institutional entrepreneur (typical roles: manager, bureaucrat, bargainer, legalist).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>Inclusive, expansive, undefined</td>
<td>Exclusive and defined, clear boundary demarcation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The aspects mentioned above need not proceed in the same way as indicated by Oommen and it is not necessary to use all the categories. As a movement moves from the mobilizational phase to the institutionalization phase, several aspects undergo change. Yet, it seems safe to conclude that:

a) At the initial stages of institutionalization of a movement, mobilizational activities are likely to continue unabated. In fact, the process of institutionalization may provide new occasions for the continuance of mobilizational activities, insofar as the lag between the induction of set of norms and their actual acceptance by the critical collectivity is universal;

b) The pace of mobilization may continue and persist, if the degree of institutionalization is kept within certain limits, that is, if the mechanisms of institutionalization do not attempt to formalize social relations beyond a point. In the final analysis, mobilization is not displaced by institutionalization but both go hand in hand to a large extent and often the latter process may accentuate the former.

Admittedly, movements and institutions are to be viewed as processually linked. Institutions often trigger off movements while movements encapsulate within them the seeds of institutions.

This conceptual framework has been adopted to study the mobilization of the Vanniar Caste Movement in Tamilnadu and its subsequent transformation into the Pattali Makkal Katchi.

Objectives

The objectives of the present study are:
1. to study the methods and strategies adopted by the caste movement to mobilize its people;

2. to study the methods and strategies adopted by the caste movement to mobilize the masses after having transformed itself into political party; and

3. to study the transformation process of a caste movement into a political party.

Methodology

The Vanniar Movement has a long history with a clear continuum. Though the Vanniar Movement started in the later part of the 19th century, it has not yet reached the state of extinction. The fact that the movement still continues to strive for its goals makes this study an ex-post facto research work. This study is basically descriptive in nature.

Sources of Data

The proceedings of the movement’s conferences, rallies and meetings were also attended and observed. Focus group interview was administered among the members of the Vanniar Sangam office in Villupuram. Moreover brief interviews were conducted with some leaders of the movement. The required secondary data were collected from magazines published by the caste Sangams and from newspaper reports of movement and party activities. Data were also collected from books published by Vanniar caste members as personal accounts and also through political parties. Information related to the movement was collected from books and articles written by scholars who have made scientific and objective analyses of the
movement. The Sangam’s souvenirs and other non-periodical publications such as commemorative volumes were also used for collecting information.

Chapterization

This thesis is organised as here under. The first chapter introduces the subject of the study, reviews the literature available, points out the research gap, specifies the topic of the study, explains the conceptual framework on which it is based, and, spells out the objectives of the study, the methodology adopted and the sources of the data collected. Chapter two deals with the formation and mobilization of the Vanniar Kula Kshatriya Sangams. Chapter three presents the formation and mobilization of the Vanniar Sangam. Chapter four deals with the formation and mobilization of the Pattalli Makkal Katchi (PMK). Chapter five provides an integrated analysis. Chapter six forms the conclusion.
NOTES


2. Ibid


6. Ibid

7. Ibid


11. Ibid


18. It may be noted here that a large number of "Sectarian" or Guru-centred movements in India awaits sociological attention. The more well known among them are the Divin light mission, the Brahmakuman movement, the Ananda Margi, the Nirankari, the
Radha Swami movement etc. Almost all of them are centred in a Guru, whom his followers accept as a charismatic here devotes.


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66. Ibid.


90. Ram Rpande, 1983. Agrarian movement in Rajasthan, Delhi: University Publisher.

91. Pushpendra Surana, 1983. Social movements and social structure, Delhi: Manohar,


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113. V.B.Karnik, 1961. Strikes in India Bombay, Manaktales,


118. Ethnoregional movement, social movement and a number of related concepts are used interchangeably and basically all movements had their origin in ethnicity.


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128. Ibid.


K.P.Kannan, Rural Proletarian struggles: Mobilizattom and organisation of Rural workers in South-West India. Delhi: Oxford University Press.


145. Ibid.

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