



SOCIAL AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN HYDERABAD STATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY

History

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KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

The Socio-Religious reform movements, intellectual assimilation, literary expression, economic and political changes are all manifestations of the social transformation and indications of public awakening. This awakening helps not only in the fast assimilation of new ideas but also leads new forces and movements to operate in favor of the emergence of a new society. This period was also influenced by socio-political movements, institutions, ideas prevailing in British India, as also educational progress within the State, and the opening of new avenues and services in the State - all of which led to the rise of the new middle class elite like Aghoranath Cattopadhyaya.¹ Thus by the beginning of the 20th century, the nationalist movements in British India in particular and the activities of national leaders in general influenced the thinking of the people of Telangana, which gave a great impetus to the library movement. The library movement became a strong source of public awakening through supplying literature and through the conduct of meeting on various public issues.

The beginning of nineteenth century witnessed the rise of social consciousness throughout the world. In nineteenth century prepared a congenial ground to emancipate women from the unsympathetic social posture. By the turn of twentieth century social movements grew in their status by participating in all shades of freedom struggle.² Hyderabad state needs special mention because the Telugu speaking people were divided into two separate political units; the coastal Andhra was under the Madras State while Telangana was ruled by the Nizam. The social transformation movements emancipation movement was a sequel to various feminist movements in the international sphere and demanded education and social development. By the end of the first-half of the twentieth century, culture franchise was granted in most of the developed countries, however, the social reality remained far behind men in their social status. The root cause of oppression and exploitation of Socio-culture movements found in the existing social systems which needed radical reform to bring about the emancipation of women. The primitive societies restricted women's sphere of activity and confined her to biological functions and domestic work and did not allow them access to education.

Hence the objective of this lesson is to make the reader understand the socio-cultural and political awakening in Telangana. An attempt is made to examine the condition of Telangana in the 20th century and how it led to the emergence of Dalit movement in Telangana. The lesson also throws light. On the emergence of Andhra Maha Sabha and its activities, the people's attitude towards the Nizam Government and finally how it resulted in the integration of Hyderabad state with the Indian union.

The love of fine arts and literature of the Nizams inspired the people of Hyderabad to a great extent. The Nizams themselves were men of letters. They encouraged and patronized literary activities in the State. The Nizam rulers were also great poet's, Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah I, Nasir Jung, Mir Mahabub Ali Khan Asaf Jah VI and Mir Osman Ali Khan Asaf Jah VII. Urdu and Persian were mostly employed by them in their poetic work. Some of the noted literary men who came to Hyderabad.⁴ The Hyderabad State, comprised of the Telangana region, Marathwada and Karnataka. People in the Nizam State spoke Telugu, Marathi, Kannada, Hindi and Urdu languages. The Telugu speaking population in the region were about 10 millions. The percentage of literacy in the entire state was only 4.8% of which 3.3% were the non - Urdu speaking people though they constituted 89% of the total population.⁵

Urdu was the medium of instruction in all middle and high schools.

This was one of the causes of the educational backwardness among the non-Urdu speaking population. On the other hand the number of private educational institutions were less. The Government did not encourage the private schools. In addition to this physical education was not given its due importance in the State. This must have been mainly due to the prevailing social set up in the Nizam State. Of all the three regions of the State, Telangana was culturally rich and economically better. The rich section of the population included the Zamindars, Deshmukhs, Deshpandes and the local chiefs. They owned large tracts of lands⁶. The majority of the population were the farmers and the peasants. Though poor, they were honest and hard working. With the spread of education and the newspapers, political consciousness was created among them. Last quarter of the nineteenth century were Mirza Khan Dagh, Hafiz Jilil Hasan Jilil and Maushi Amir Ahmed Minai. Maunshi Amir migrated from Rampur to Hyderabad. Their works widened the outlook of the younger generation of Hyderabad. At the same time the Osmania University, which later emerged as a great centre of learning was established with Urdu as the medium of instruction. A translation Bureau of Osmania University translated subjects from other languages to Urdu. To promote Urdu language a society called Anjuman Taraqi-Urdu was founded by Maulvi Abdul Haq.⁷

The patronage of the rulers promoted literary activities in the state. At the same time the growth and development of press channelized the public opinion in the state. The press helped in the creation of socio-political awakening among the people⁸. A number of journals and newspapers in Urdu, Persian, Telugu, Marathi and English were published. The prominent English journals and dailies were, The Hyderabad Telegraph, The Deccan Standard, The Deccan Times, the Hyderabad Record, the Deccan Budget, the Deccan Mail and Hyderabad Chronicle.

In Telangana, Telugu journalism was sphere headed by Oddiraju brothers, called Seetha Ramachandra Rao and Raghava Ranga Rao, They were the founders of 'Telugu Patrika'. From Nalgonda the Nilagiri Patrika was edited by Shabnavisu Rama Narasimha Rao. The Telugu publications included Dinavarthamani, Sarojini Vilas, Andhra Math, Telugu Patrika, Andhrabyudayam and the Nizam Vijay. The Gulbarga Samachar, Nizam Vaibhav, Sri Bhageshya Vijaya and Champavathi were published in Marathi language⁹. The Urdu papers included 'Hazar Dastan' and 'Safiri Dekhan'. The English paper 'Deccan Chronicle' was edited by Bukkapatnam Ramanuja Charyulu. The Telugu Patrika was brought out from Nalgonda village in Mahaboobabad Taluq in Warangal Dist.¹⁰ The other papers included *Rayyath*, *Payam*, *Introze and Meezan* in Urdu. Many of these championed the cause of National Movement and social reforms. They criticized the Nizam's Government for its repressive policies.

Telangana had contributed immensely to Telugu literature. Some of the noted writers in Telugu language were Madapati Hanumantha Rao, Burgula Ramakrishna Rao, Suravaram Pratapa Reddy and Ravi Narayana Reddy. The first noted work in Telugu was "Andhrula Sanghika Charitra"¹¹ written by Suravaram Pratapa Reddy. It won the award of the Sahitya Akademi. He was also a great poet. His masterpiece poems were 'Champakamma Vishadam' and 'Premarpanam'. His books entitled "Hinduvula Pandugalu, Haindava Dharmaveerulu and "Ramayana Visheshamulu" were the products of historical research. He was also a great journalist and prominent public activist. He was the founder editor of Gokonda Patrika'. He also took an active part in the activities of Andhra Maha Sabha.¹²

Burgula Ramakrishna Rao was a great political and social activist. He wrote two important books in Telugu namely 'Panditaraja Pancharitram' and 'Krishna Satakam'. Vanamamalai Varadachari, was a great literary figure and was known as Abhinava Potana. He was the author of Pothana Charitra and Vipralabdha. Another great scholar was Madapati Hanumantha Rao.¹³ His book 'Telanganalo Andhrodyamamu' gives a vivid account of the Andhra movement in Telangana. Similarly Ravi Narayana Reddy's "Veera Telangana" gives the inside story of the Telangana armed struggle during 1946 to 1951. P. V. Narasimha Rao was a man with good command over Telugu, Hindi and Marathi, and he translated into Hindi. In Hindi it was named as 'Sahasra Phan'. Other meritorious poets of the day were Kaloji Narayana Rao and Devulapalli Ramanuja Rao. Illindala Saraswati Devi was one of the women writers who occupied a high place. She was famous for her short stories.¹⁴

In order to encourage the development of Telugu language and literature the Andhra Saraswati Parishad was established in Hyderabad in 1943. The first president of the Parishad was Lokanandi Shankara Narayana Rao. Burgula Ranganatha Rao and Bhaskara Batla Krishna Rao were the Secretaries. Prominent scholars like Suravaram Pratapa Reddy, Madapati Hanumantha Rao, Kodati Narayan Rao, Pulijala Hanumantha Rao, Devulapalli Ramanuja Rao, Adiraju Veerabhadra Rao also played a significant role in the activities of the Parishad.¹⁵ To preserve the heritage of Telugu language and literature a number of inscriptions, manuscripts and books were acquired and a library was established by Saraswati Parishad,

Among the literary scholars Dasarathi Krishnamacharya occupied a prominent place. His novels include Agnidhara and Rudraveena. He became popular for his famous line of a poem, "Na Telangana koti Ratnala Veena". It became a popular slogan in the Telangana region, which articulated the specific Telangana identity. His brother Dasarathi Rangacharyulu was also a great novelist and literary figure of Telangana. His novels Chillara Devullu and Janapadam depicted the life in Telangana. Another prominent literary figure of Telangana was Vattikota Alwarswamy. He wrote the famous novels like Prajasa Manishi, Ganguand Ramappa Rabhasa. These novels reflect the socio-economic and political conditions of Telangana during the Nizam period.¹⁶

The first Telugu library in Hyderabad called Sri Krishna Devaraya Andhra Bhasha Nilayam was established in 1901. It was mainly due to the efforts of Komaraju Lakshmana Rao and Ravichettu Ranga Rao. Few years later in 1908, a literary association called Vignana Chandrika Grantha Mandali was established with an object of promoting historical, literary and scientific publications. However, the Vignana Chandrika Mandali had to be shifted to Madras due to pressure from the Nizam's Government. The Government became suspicious of the activities of the Mandali during the Vande Mataram Movement in India. During the same period two more Telugu libraries namely Sri Raja Raju Narendra Andhra Bhasha Nilayam and Andhra Samvardhini Library were founded in 1904 and 1905 at Hanamkonda and Secunderabad respectively.¹⁷ The Vignana Chandrika Parishad also conducted examinations in Telugu. This was mainly due to the efforts of Komaraju Lakshmana Rao. Another important person who was actively involved in the Library movement was Vattikota Alwarswamy. He had toured various places and collected the books. These books were brought to Hyderabad by him personally and housed them in the City Central Library, at Chikkadpally, Hyderabad. He also established Ana Grandha Mala and popularised the Library movement in Telangana.¹⁸

The Maharashtrian leaders in Hyderabad contributed towards the cause of education. Pandit Keshav Rao Koratkar, Vaman Ramachandra Naik and Ganapat Rao Hardikar founded the Vivek Vardhini Patasala in 1906. Soon it developed into a leading educational society called the Vivek Vardhini Education Society.¹⁹

The Library Movement in Telangana coordinated its activities with the Kendra Sangham. The Jana Sangham formed a historical research society called Lakshmana Raya Parishodhana Mandali. In 1930 a conference of historians and scholars was held at Warangal to discuss the history of Kakatiyas. A Journal called 'Kakatiya Sanchika' was brought out. It contained many research articles on the history and culture of the Andhras.²⁰

The period 1883 -1921 witnessed the entry of Arya Samaj into

Hyderabad. With its entry the Indian National Movement received a fresh energy. The social reforms of the Arya Samaj were in a way, a great support and strength to the National Movement. The awakened intelligentsia struggled to identify and propagate the Indian language and culture.²¹ The Arya Samaj movements, basically a socio-cultural movement, took a political colour in Hyderabad. The Samaj had some of the dynamic leaders like Mahatma Narayan Swamy, Keshav Rao Koratkar, Pandit Vinayak Rao Vidyalkar and Pandit Narendarji. Pandit Keshav Rao was the president of Arya Samaj till 1932. He established many branches of the Samaj in the state. The Samaj had spread education through schools and libraries.²² As part of its social service activities, the Samaj collected large funds and helped the distressed in Malabar during the Mopla rebellion of 1922. In 1924 the Samaj gave cash donation to the educational institutions in Kangdi, Haridwar.²³ Many questions will rise on the causes for Socio-economic and cultural stagnation. In the last two decades of the 19th century, the people were set very much against domination and economic exploitation in the form of bonded labour and cheap labour engaged by the Zamindars, Jagirdars, and exploitation by money lenders, harassment of the merchants and trading community through various taxes and illegal exactions.²⁴ But the Nizam Government was indifferent to and incompetent in solving these problems which subsequently brought about political awakening in the people.

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