Chapter IV: THE CULTURAL ENCOUNTER – RESPONSE AND RESISTANCE TO MISSIONS

The cultural encounter between European missionaries and the Indian religions on one hand and the Indians response to the colonialism and missions on the other hand is a subject of debate through the years. There have been endless discussions also on the nature of conversions and the cultural barriers that had confronted the Indians, and on the Indian converts in particular in their encounter with western Christianity. One has to contextualize these debates on the proselytizing Christian presence. This is primarily a study of a Christian elite and this encourages an intellectual rather than a sociological account. But a study of Indian religion and culture is also essential for this project. Before any exploration of missionary attitudes and those of converts, some preliminary appraisal from both the quarters of Christian elite as well as missionaries may be observed as part of their research and scholarly pursuit to better understand the India’s literature and cultural past. It implied a more inclusive approach to Hinduism for positive responses from Indians without loosing any ground of such steadfastness in their religion.

Here William Carey’s scholarly approach is thus a context for discussion. Carey, in general, was a reflection of some of 19th century missionaries towards Indian religion and culture. Some historians appreciated Carey’s intellectual approach. Brian Stanley, the latest historian of the Baptist Mission observed that ‘the Serampore pioneers were more prepared than many later missionaries to see good qualities in Hindu culture, their

essential conviction remained that Hinduism was a religion of darkness waiting for the light of the Christian gospel to dawn.’ Carey also fell heavily upon the evil social practices of Hindu society. Therefore, he took uncompromising and confrontational stand towards Hindu practices such as ‘sati’ and positive outlook on affirmation of Christianity.3 Stanley passed certain remarks that Carey’s joining in the faculty of Fort William College was as part of his vocation to train the native priesthood, which would be a boon for the progression of mission in India4 and Lord Wellesley, subsidized his translation of the Scripture into Sanskrit and other vernaculars like Bengali, Urdu, Oriya, Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese and Marathi.5 Carey seems a symbol of inclusiveness, but this was a means to the propagation of Christianity. Therefore his literary pursuit entwined in imperialism, and bred cultural conflict with the Indian religions.

Another English scholar classically proficient in Sanskrit was William Hodge Mill (1820 – 1837) from Cambridge.6 Having come to India in 1820 he received priestly ordination of Rector or High Churchman of Bishop’s College, as was sponsored by famous Bishop Middleton, in Calcutta. As a High Churchman, Mill, introduced church Sanskrit in the literature of Indian church. In 1823 the Bishop’s college Press printed Mill’s Sanskrit copy of Ten Commandments. The Sanskrit text of Ten Commandments was in the form of an exposition of Mahadharma (The Great Law). Mill declared that the Greek and Latin were mere hills compared to the Himalayas of Sanskrit after having read Upanishads, Shankara etc. He also composed Pratiti Vakya and Shrikrishta Samgitha in

6 A.W. Ward, A.R. Waller, ed., The Cambridge History of English And American Literature (18 vol ), vol.xii, chapter xv, 4th column, includes his name at the very first line under Oriental Scholars. He was also better known as Theologian.
Sanskrit.\(^7\) The *Shrikrishta Samgitha* was a text of 5000 stanzas. In this memorable work Christ was converted to Sanskrit and Sanskrit to Christ. Christ was portrayed as Oriental Christ. This book reflected India’s cultural and religious realities with the beauty of the classical heritage of Indian antiquity. At a farewell on the eve of his return to Cambridge, his friend and Hindu Pundit Kamalakanta Vidyalankara called Mill a Kalidasa reborn to the world. William Hodge Mill, though an obscure figure in the colonial history, his encounter with East was a point of tangency, transformed his sense of Christianity’s relevance to Hinduism.\(^8\) Carey and Hodge Mill’s intellectual approach can rightly be called a theology in philology and both were pioneers in Church Sanskrit.\(^9\) Alike Carey’s, Mill’s literary orientation was aimed to supply Christian workers through Bishop’s college, Calcutta as it was explicit when he writes, ‘there is still no permanent supply of Christian labourer for the growing wants of this vast country, but that which this college promises’\(^10\).

An English government civil servant of Madras who, immortal in the memory of Andhra people and the most determined, industrious and learned Telugu scholar of all times, was that of Charles Philip Brown (1798-1884). He was a well-known Orientalist till his end, who lived for the progress of Telugu literature. When he began this task first,
Telugu literature was moribund. He, a foreigner, revived the language single handed, and accomplished arduous task of compiling English-Telugu dictionary and the Grammar in a printed form.

Born in 1798 to Rev. David Brown, the Provost of Fort William College at Calcutta, C.P. Brown later was educated in Haileybury to take up service in the company. He joined in Madras civil service in 1817. Till then he was a stranger to Telugu language. During this time he scrupulously followed the advice of Sir Thomas Munro, the then Governor of Madras that the Junior Civil Servants learn the language of the people to enable them to carryout better administration. He was taught Telugu by a Brahmin, Velagapudi Kodandarama Pantulu in Madras. Having been appointed as Junior Civil Servant at Cuddapah in 1820, very soon he achieved mastery over Telugu language. He made innumerable collections of ancient manuscripts of Telugu and commenced printing them. He used to preside over the meetings of Telugu pundits to find the merits of great works and about innovative print skills to be introduced in grammar. He spent money lavishly to bring out the printed copies of the books to the Telugu readers and students. In 1824 Brown started reading the poems of Vemana in the vernacular and began collecting palm leaf manuscripts from different parts of Andhra. He was greatly influenced by the moral and religious views of Vemana as they were very similar in style and standard with Christian rhetoric and ethical practices. In 1829, the first edition was published entitled ‘The Verses of Vemana: Moral, Religious and Satirical’. His translation of Vemana’s poems received enormous popularity among the Europeans and the Telugus and he used them as means in bridging the gulf between the Christian West and the religions of the

east. Brown’s translations of the Bible, The pilgrims’ Progress etc., into the vernacular and the Hindu Sastras into English speaks a syncretization of cultures without loosing ground in his fore fathers faith.

Eventually the missionaries, the administrators and the government tended to see little merit in the indigenous texts and indigenous knowledge systems, though they would concede the utility of learning native tongues as a means by which to rule the colony. William Carey had been and continued to be a champion of the Bengali language, not just for the language but also for its utility as a proselytizing vehicle. But, as David Kopf notes in his documented history of this period, even Serampore College, feeling the pressure from the Bentinck government, anglicized its curriculum and thereby lost its attractiveness to Indians. Throughout the 19th century Christianity was represented by the Christian elite, not just as a religion but also as an intellectual, even civilizational tradition. They argued that Christianity stood for the European Enlightenment and Western Civilization. Diverse responses from the Indian side were witnessed about the possible vitalizing contribution of missionaries and evangelical administrators.

I

The Indian Traditionalist And Modernist Responses to Colonialism and Missions:-

The traditionalist Indians, on one hand, were content in the greatness of their civilization. They were convinced that the state of their civilization was good and the

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offensive practices, as sati, female infanticide and child marriages were inevitable in an old civilization. Therefore the civilization of Europe, which was materialistic, selfish, violent need not be imposed on India. They believed that Britain’s conquest of India did not signify the moral superiority of its culture. This view was shared by many in opposing the west and its religion.15 However, in view of a cultural encounter with the west, some of these groups used resources from within Hindu myths and traditions to reconfigure Hinduism to modern postulates. This coincided with the founding of various socio-religious movements in India, and in the Andhra region led to various organizations like Veda Samaj, Deva Samaj, Hindu Sreyobhivardini Sabha etc. The founders of these organizations (most of them were from western educated middle class, who were also founders of socio-religious organizations) attempted to spread the modern and reformist ideas within Hinduism as a resistance to foreign missions 16. Some of the radical thinkers like B.R. Ambedkar and his untouchable followers who abandoned Hinduism used the religious and cultural resources of Buddhism. Few others did respond to Christianity.

The modernists, on the other hand, like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, had thanked providence for sending the British to India and believed that India had much to learn from them in the fields of governance, science, literature and political thoughts and institutions. Therefore the colonial state was engaged in establishing new structures and social order. The Hindu morality was based on varna dharma and closely bound up with the caste system. Hindu society faced not just a socio economic but a deep moral and religious crisis. The Raja saw the new rulers not as a body of conquerors but as deliverers

from socio-religious crises. K.C. Sen said that the contact of England with India was Providential and not a mere accident. The other great leaders like Dwarakanath Tagore, Ranade, Tilak, Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerji, Ravindranath Tagore, Aurobindo, Pandit Nehru and Gandhi all hailed the British rule as the outcome of India’s degenerate state, and thus presented to India and Indians an opportunity to turn the tide. Dr. Muthu Lakshmi Reddy of Madras freedom fighters and former Deputy Chairman of Madras legislative council observed in her presidential address at All India Women’s Conference, Lahore (1931) said ‘I honestly believe that the missionaries have done more for women’s education in this country…even at this day, in every province, we find missionary women teachers working hard in a spirit of love and faith, in out-of-the-way villages, where the Hindu and Muslim women dare not penetrate’. B.N.Dhar in his presidential address at the Congress session enumerated the blessings of the British Raj: ‘I thank God that I am a British subject, and feel no hesitation in saying that the Government of India by England – faulty as it is in many respects, and greatly it needs to be reformed and renovated from top to bottom – is still the greatest gift of Providence to my race. For England is the only country, which knows how to govern those who cannot govern themselves’. These Indians developed a deep awareness that they were living in a changing world where their socio-religious traditions were being challenged by secular and religious forces emanating from the western world. The colonial encounter of the west was widely understood to include the spiritual, social and material- diverse aspects.

of a changing situation that enabled people to make new meaning of their inner lives and of their lives as a group, and to situate themselves in new locations in the wider society. Early nationalists, though, took pride in their loyalty towards the British Empire, and were anxious to represent the needs of the loyal subjects of that empire. Even though the British colonialism was despotic, racist, and repressive, the early nationalists constantly dwelt on its less inhuman face. Many Indians were benefited by the services of engineers, missionary doctors, educational missionaries etc., and had their studies from schools and colleges run by missionaries and sometimes the poor were financed from the pockets of these men and women of ‘service’. For example, the all time memorable contribution of a missionary administrator (An Engineer), Sir Arthur Cotton in the Godavari-Krishna Delta was in the field of irrigation by constructing barrages across the two rivers. With civil engineering skills and with missionary zeal he converted the Godavari district into a garden with natural water and the spiritual water of Christian Gospel, by associating himself with the Brethren missionaries in this part of Andhra. He was an instrument to introduce the Brethren missionaries and the Brethren movement in Andhra. Very recently, the people of the Godavari districts paid fitting homage to this father of irrigation out of gratitude for his unremitting service. He spent his own money to do good, a fact remembered by local popular culture. There are cases of missionary benevolence espoused within the area in which this thesis delves. At Narsapur, West

20 Sanjay Joshi, *Colonial notion of South Asia, South Asian Journal*, Issue No 1, August-September, 2003
Godavari Dt. of Andhra, the Brethren Female missionary, Dr. Pring, who was physically challenged, had started a women’s hospital in 1915. Like her counterpart Eda Scudder of Vellore, she wanted to remedy the scarcity in female doctors. Women’s shyness of male doctors led to deaths during pregnancy and parturition. The indigenous perceptions at the instance of the medical equipment aided by missionary of better technological innovation and useful knowledge produced encouraging results in the field of medicine till very recently.23 The vast majority of Hindu leaders had acknowledged that, in absence of any intercourse with the west, they had, as a people, become inert, degenerate, lifeless, and were in deep slumber. ‘Indians needed to improve themselves, sit at the feet of their rulers and learn all the skills and virtues for their regeneration’.24 In the autobiographical novel ‘Saguna’, the writer Krupabhai narrates the convictions of her brother Bhasker, who was her life model and moulded her future. He used to share the legacies of western Christianity in his usual discussions with his sister which: “Shadowy, dark, mystic, weird, with superstition and bigotry lurking in every corner, before the light of Christianity comes in to a land. When the sun rises, he said, all the glories of the trees and the rocks comes in to view, each thing assumes its proper proportions and is drawn out in greater

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23 The Brethren Missionary Journal, *Rayabari* (Messenger), Vol. 25, No. 12, published by G.D.M., Narsapur, Dec. 1975, p.8. During 1974, under trained Indian doctors 10,000 lab tests performed and 79, 477 in and outpatient women were treated in this hospital (Dr. Pring’s hospital) through the year without any discrimination of caste, colour creed etc. This hospital occupied II place in India as record maternity cases were attended


29 Krupabai Sathianadhan, op-cit, p.23. Krupabai Sathianadhan was originally born in Ahmedabad to Haripant and Radhabai Khisty, the first Brahmin converts to Christianity in the Bombay Presidency. Krupabai and her elder brother Bhasker were brought up in a Christian atmosphere by their father, who felt Christianity his mission, and the mother was a conservative and traditional woman. The early death of the father led Krupabai attached to her elder brother Bhasker, who was in fond of western language and culture taught her the admiration for the same.
beauty and perfection. So it is when the sunbeams of Christianity dispel the darkness of superstition in a land”.  

II

Western Christianity And Contextualisation

Dubois had portrayed Hinduism of the Brahmins and indeed they dominate his account. Each caste and each sect had their own gurus. Dubois described Hinduism as a mere formulaic faith. He further states that in its theology sin was pollution and could be absolved by penance, reading the puranas, going on pilgrimage, and even looking at high mountains. He observed that Hinduism possessed no theory of sin, atonement, grace and salvation.

So far the trend of this account has been towards a view of Hinduism as decadent at this time, and that which had occasioned the missionaries to conclude that ‘there never was a nation more ripe for Christianity than India’. Stephen Neill, while stating the condition of Hinduism, remarked that ‘when Duff started his work in Calcutta, many educated young Hindus were deeply discontented with their own religion as they knew it, evinced much admiration for western ideas, and showed readiness at least to listen to the precepts of the western religion. Some times this openness took bizarre forms, as when a group of young Hindus in Calcutta deliberately ate beef, thus breaking one of the cardinal taboos of Hinduism, in order to show that they were ‘modern’, ‘progressive’ and

‘rational’. Satyavrata Mukherjee wrote that ‘there was a rush for everything English and English ideals dominated our lives and thoughts’. Hinduism could not continue in its present state, but for its renewal and purification it needed an injection from Christian principles. This was the conviction of Ram Mohan Roy. In one of the English works of Roy published in Calcutta in 1887, he affirmed that ‘the consequences of my long and uninterrupted researches into religious truth has been that I have found the doctrines of Christ more conducive to moral principles, and better adopted for the use of rational beings, than any other which have come to my knowledge’. When Duff started his new school, Roy encouraged the Hindu boys to learn Christian Sastras, from which he himself reaped rich harvest. He already organized the Brahma Samaj to reform Hinduism on vedantic ideals. In 1880 Keshub Chandra Sen addressed the people saying that ‘Gentlemen, you cannot deny that your hearts have been touched, conquered and subjugated by a supreme power. That power, need I tell you? Is Christ. It is Christ who rules British India, and not the British Government ... None but Jesus, none but Jesus, ever deserved this bright, this precious diadem, India, and Jesus shall have it’. Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen admits that ‘the spirit of Christianity has already pervaded the whole atmosphere of Indian society, and we breath, think, move, and feel in a Christian atmosphere. Native society is being roused, enlightened, and reformed under the influences of Christian education’. However, He died a Die-Hard Hindu. He gave up Brahmoism. The Andhra Brahma and the social reformer, Veeresalingam Pantulu of

Godavari Dt. alike the Brahmos- Rammohan Roy and K.C. Sen, nurtured under the impact of western religion and education extolled the virtues of British rule and believed in the Providence instrumentality of British rule for the regeneration of Indian society. He wrote in 1875 ‘It is admitted by one and all that western lore has worked wonders among the natives of India…’

J.N. Farquahar, a missionary and a historian, strongly opined that Christianity influenced the 19th century religious movements in India. Among several examples, he elucidated one that Dr. Atmaram Panduranga was a personal friend of Dr. Wilson, a Scotland missionary in Bombay, and under the influence of Dr. Wilson he founded Prarthana Samaj. It was the general opinion of most writers of the west that the reform movements of 19th century were the direct consequence of an encounter between the triumphal Christianity and the decadent Hinduism. Thus Christianity was both a challenge and an inspiration. The missionary criticism of the state of Hinduism and social evils led the intellectuals of India to start social and religious reform movements to redefine Indian religion and society. The inspiration from Christianity cannot be denied for its influence in the development of social and religious consciousness among the Indians even before the 19th century. Prof. Monier Williams observes, “It ushered in the dawn of the greatest change that has ever passed over the Hindu mind. A new phase of

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30 A Telugu Journal, ‘Vivekavardhini’, October 1875; V. Ramakrishna, Social Reform in Andhra, New Delhi, 1983. p.67
31 J.N. Farquhar, Ibid p. 76.
33 There is much in the teaching of Madhva (13th century), which is very similar to Christian teaching, so that a western historian of Indian culture, A.L. Basham observes, “The resemblance of Madhva’s system to Christianity is so striking that influence, perhaps, through the Syrian churches of Malabar, is almost certain.” (A. L. Basham, The Wonder That was India, p. 333). A similar encounter took place between Christianity and Hinduism in the 19th century, which partly resulted in new religious and social movements within Hinduism itself.
the Hindu religion then took definite shape, which differed essentially from every other
that had preceded it. No other reformation has resulted in the same way from the
influence of European education and Christian ideas”. Socio-religious reformers of 19th
century, despite their confrontation of western form of Christianity, revered Jesus Christ
and followed his ethics. Such intellectuals Ram Mohan Roy, K.C.Sen and Sisir Kumar
Gosh, apart from their attachment to ancient Indian traditions, had admiration and
reverence for Jesus Christ. Even though, there was an admiration for Christianity and
its principles, why is it that English education did not produce the effect the early
evangelicals had envisaged? The introduction of western learning and William
Bentinck’s Angicism had led to a Hindu renaissance. The writings of Max Muller and
Deutsch helped enormously to revive the interest of educated Hindus in their ancient
literature and earlier forms of religion. This led to the Indian intellectual transformation
who, increasingly took to the defense of indigenous institutions traditional culture.
Resurrection of the past, identity and development of externally stimulated thought, an
inquiry to establish the superiority of traditional knowledge and achievements,
contextualising and highlighting the religious truths in Hinduism were the chief
characteristics of this intellectual response. The resistance was particularly sharp against
the areas, such as religion, language and education, where the evangelizing endeavours of
missionaries functioned. Various reformers like Dayananda Saraswathi and
Vivekananda purged Hinduism of its flaws and rejuvenated it. The Christian

35 The United Church Herald, Vol 1 No.8, November 1909, p.92.
missionaries, on the other hand, were unsuccessful to contextualize Christianity to Indian thought and culture.\textsuperscript{38}

One of the issues, very often missionaries failed to realize was the way they reached the traditional religious people of other cultures. They forgot that they were preaching something of sacred and eternal significance. They seldom gave sanctity to the holy book they carried with them. They kept the Bible on the bare floor, violating its sacrality and thus ended the interests of the traditional people in their religion. This is one small example often committed by the westerners. More often missionaries failed to draw the attention of the traditional people; for example the Hindus didn’t perceive Christian churches as places of worship because they appeared more as houses where membership was likely to be restricted. The traditional and the primitive religious societies recognized conventional symbols of sacredness rather than modern and secular of a ‘modern’ religion. The changes were considered by them as an abomination and a change of religion was as more of a treason. This invulnerable and unchanging attitude was a major reason for the resistance of traditional people. Unless the missionary was a relativist, with readiness to respect their invulnerability, it would not possible for him to evangelize.

These so called religious taboos and traditions were in fact constructed by human interpretations, what A.N. Whitehead featured as a system of general truths\textsuperscript{39} and Geertz as a general order of existence in their respective definitions of religion.\textsuperscript{40} There would not have been a Christian Gospel if Jesus had not challenged the taboos, traditions and assumptions of his own Jewish people. No Buddhism would have existed if Buddha had

\textsuperscript{38} C.B. Firth, \textit{An Introduction to Indian Church History}, p.248.
not criticized the Vedic traditions and rituals. The traditional religious societies, constructed by human interpretations, were constantly challenged. However, the marginalized strategies of the missionaries did not yield the desired response but evoked resistance.

Missionaries, despite the contextualisation of above doctrines to traditional religions, were generally committed to a certain claim in a hierarchy of religions as such. Christianity and the Christian West were at the top and all other religions were under it. This was largely the serious contention between the oriental and western cultures. The works of J.N. Farquhar explains an increasing openness and sympathy for non-Christian religions even among the Evangelicals, a trend visible in their literature and speeches.\(^\text{41}\) Unless the contextualisation of the gospel in forms that were rooted in the religious worlds of the traditional religious people was not expressed, the Gospel would be a foreign implant and not an indigenous innovation and transformation. Pramod Aghamkar, an oriental missiologist popularized the term spontaneous contextualisation i.e. understanding Christianity in a traditional Hindu way.\(^\text{42}\) What is essential in the cross-cultural meeting of religions was to avoid westernization and secularization, why because; the traditional or ancient religious people resist these as much or more than they respond to Christianity.

CONVERSIONS IN THE CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

The association of Christian missionaries with Telugu speaking people dates back to the 16th century. For instance, St. Francis Xavier who arrived in Goa in 1542 proselytized along the Coromandal coast of the Telugu country. Later Robert De Nobili of Madurai mission (1606) had acquaintance with the Telugus and the Telugu language, and at least 4 of his Telugu works are a living proof of this. In 1700 King Louis XIV of France sent 6 French Jesuits to India. They founded the Carnatic mission at Pondicherry. The Jesuit missionaries spread Christianity to several villages and towns of Andhra beginning at Punganur (Chittore Dt.) and reached as far as Vizag. Several thousands of converts chiefly from the Reddis, the Kammas, the Brahmins etc., of the upper castes and a few lower Sudras were formed as Christian Communities and were associated to newly built churches at various places. Therefore, the 16th, 17th and the 18th centuries were significant in the History of Christianity in Andhra, as the initial conversions were mostly from upper castes of the society. The Protestant missions of the 19th century until 1860 believed that the conversational experiences of the Brahmins would filter downwards and result in the conversion of lower castes and would be the way to evangelize Andhra. The Church Missionary Society (CMS), the London Missionary Society (LMS) Telugu missions etc., as such, from the beginning were involved in upper caste conversions. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) won high caste converts through Anglo-Vernacular High Schools at Masulipatnam (1843), Eluru (1855), and Vijayawada (1857) and by 1880, there had been 23 high caste converts and one Muslim convert. The high caste

43 J. Mangamma, Book Printing in India: With Special Reference to the Contribution of the European Scholars to Telugu (1746-1857), Bangore Books, Nellore, 1975, p.p.21, 294. The books of Nobili were noted already.
conversions took place at fairly regular intervals and continued even after 1880. Therefore, it is suggestive that the study of cultural perspectives upon the conversions begins from the high castes as initial conversions in Andhra were from the upper castes. The mid 19\textsuperscript{th} century was a remarkable period in two aspects. Firstly, there was a religious and cultural confrontation of missions with traditional religions, which resulted in few high caste conversions and secondly, the significantly large mass conversions among the depressed and lower castes.\textsuperscript{45} However, this doesn’t mean the missionary movement was successful. Infact, two factors hindered the ongoing conversions: Firstly, the all-powerful element of caste and secondly, the slackness of missionaries in Indianising Christianity. The case study of some Indian converts on these lines, were also headway under this heading

Accepting a new religion or beliefs were entirely a new experience to Indians till an encounter with Christianity, even though there were times when conversions took place during the rise of Buddhism and Islam in the sub continent. Professing Christianity had uniquely raised fresh problems to Indian converts since it was a religion of the west. Amidst so many cultural barriers, the convert had to make a hard choice between breaking away from his traditional faith and adopting Christianity.\textsuperscript{46} A person who embraced Christianity became a proscribed and outlawed man; he lost at once all that can attach him to life. A husband, a father was forthwith forsaken and deserted by his own

\textsuperscript{45} J.W. Pickett, \textit{Christian Mass Movements in India}, The Abingdon Press, New York, 1933, Lucknow Publishing House, Lucknow, 1934. This book is an outcome of the experience of a missionary author for nearly twenty years in South India. It deals primarily with Mass conversions to Christianity from within the socially backward classes, but it seldom makes study of upper and middle class conversions in parts of the Telugu country of South India. This onward movement of conversions and the live interviews with thousands of new converts from all sections of the Telugu country was also entered by the same author in his book, \textit{Christ’s Way To India’s Heart}, Lucknow Publishing House, Lucknow, 1937.

wife and children, who refused to have any further intercourse with their degraded relative. A son was abandoned and disinherited by his paternal family.\textsuperscript{47} It was also generally assumed by the missionaries, that converts must separate themselves from their kin to enter a new and exclusive community. The 19th century high caste converts of Andhra such as Purushotham Choudhay, Pulipaka Jagannadham and later Yedguri Sandinti Venkat Reddy (the grand father of former chief minister Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy) created no ordinary tumult and agitation in their respective castes and in the society in general. They were isolated from the rest of the society and put to shame and suffering and spurned by friends and relatives\textsuperscript{48}. Becoming a Christian was entirely a kind of cultural migration from one faith to the other. The Hindu society sealed itself against them from possibility of further contamination. The book ‘\textit{I Follow After}’ written by Lakshmibai Tilak (Trans.Text 1998) was a good example and it showed how a late 19th century Indian convert, N.V.Tilak, was deserted by his close relatives and wife and suffered excommunication from his caste and religion.\textsuperscript{49}

The high caste convert had to sacrifice the best of privileges, offered by his home, by his caste people and erstwhile religion. Rev. Sorabji Kharsedji, an Indian convert and the father of Cornelia Sorabji, when he became Christian, physically and emotionally was tortured by his parents and relatives. His daughter testifies that ‘imprisonment, desertion, stoning were the least he had to suffer. They cast him out of the community…his father

\textsuperscript{48} The Testimony of Yedguri Sandinti Venkat Reddy, A Booklet compiled by the ‘Y.S. Families’.
and his uncle disinherited him, and his mother died of a broken heart'. 50 Almost all the Brahmin and other high caste converts were generally forced to break with their families and former caste connections. ‘Saguna’ the first autobiographical Indian novel in English by Krupa Bhai, was a factual picture of a high caste Brahmin converts who were, on one side, disowned and discarded by kith and kin once for all, and the indifferent treatment of missionaries towards such genuine converts on the other side, which resulted in their revolt against the racial superiority of the missionaries. The missionaries’ power identified with the British ruling race, and they reckoned that the native converts, even Brahmin converts, to be socially inferior to white/western missionaries 51. This partisan attitude of missionaries mingled in an implication of cultural and social superiority and was more abominable and evil than the Indian caste hierarchy. It was also a mark of regression in the method of contextualization of Christianity to Indian conditions.

A Hindu was a admirer of the others faith, but it was almost impossible for him to break caste. How deeply the caste phobia was rooted in the minds of people was well depicted in the novel 'I Follow After' written by Lakshmibai Tilak. When Tilak was baptized and became a Christian his whole community treated him as an Out caste and his wife was maintained by her own kith and kin and separated from her husband. When his wife joined him, she was also branded as an out caste. One day there was some food leftover in Tilak’s house. His wife Lakshmibai offered it to a low caste Mang woman. The woman too refused to eat the food on the ground that a Christian cooked the food. To add further misery, a Maratha woman who cleaned the dishes and a Gujarathi man who

drew water from the well discontinued work in Tilak's home on the pretext that they would lose their caste, as their employers were Christians. In another instance, their landlady, disallowed them from using lavatory and girded herself to protect its holiness. Faced by insults from all quarters, Lakshmi in tears said 'If these people would not even take anything touched by me, how could my relations permit even my shadow to fall upon them.' Dr. Abbot and Dr. Hume, the Europeans, took pains to create a Brahminical atmosphere to Lakshmi to save her Christian faith from disaster.\textsuperscript{52} The caste obstruction made the converts' lives miserable on one hand, and hampered the missionary prospects of conversions on the other and therefore very few elite responded to conversions. It took time for the missions to adjust their thinking and strategy to this cultural resistance, which quickly transformed the whole mission scene, and forced missionaries to reassess their attitude to caste\textsuperscript{53}.

Louise Dumont may be right in saying that: 'a sect can not survive on Indian soil if it denies caste, and it has long been recognized that Buddha himself, even if he transcended caste, did not attack or reform it'.\textsuperscript{54} Missionaries and their allies were involved in much debate on the causes of the 1857 revolt and the flaws in the policies of the government. Their arguments were heard both in Britain and in India. As they belonged to the ruling class, they urged the government to adopt a firmly interventionist policy on caste and caste codes, for they saw the caste system against the values of humane and progressive society and as antagonistic to a stable and effective government. The missionaries were without success and the policy of non-intervention was

\textsuperscript{52} Lakshmibai Tilak, 'I Follow After', p.p.176-180.

\textsuperscript{53} It was the Protestant movement, when compared to Catholicism, was new and which seemed to challenge to a much greater extent the values of established traditions such as caste, forms of worship and even dress.

reaffirmed\textsuperscript{55}. It made it clear to the depressed castes that if they were looking for patrons to uphold their cause they could only expect limited help from the government but unparalleled support from missionaries. Thus there was an upsurge of discontent among the depressed classes from the middle of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century against the oppressions and they desired for improvement in their lot and status. As a result of it, heavy inflow of converts to Christianity from depressed classes was witnessed in this period. There was hardly a region of India that was left unaffected by this mass movement. The nature and the scale of these mass movements even took the missionaries by surprise. A case of mass conversion, accompanied by some general features common to all such mass conversion, can be mentioned here.

Increasingly throughout the 19\textsuperscript{th} century the missionary presence was able to thrive under the protective structures of British imperial rule. Therefore, the missionaries were widely known as agents of power to the subalterns in particular. John Clough, a missionary, during the famine of 1877-78 in the Telugu country,\textsuperscript{56} took the contract for digging a part of Buckingham canal for the assistance of his converts, which was sponsored by the government. The lower caste Madigas were reluctant to join in the work, as they believed that they would be oppressed and maltreated on account of their caste. To their surprise the missionary treated them as equals.\textsuperscript{57} Therefore the Madigas came over him and asked for Baptism. Clough suspected them as they were after material gains. In Clough’s own words: 'then the cry arose from every portion of the crowd: 'we

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid. p.69

\textsuperscript{56} Emma Rauschenburch Clough, \textit{While Sewing Sandals: Tales of a Telugu Pariah Tribe}, Asian Educational Services, Madras, 2000, p.p. 271-284. The Famine of 1876-78 was the worst of all famines that had visited the Telugu country. The missionary wife Emma Clough recorded the then widespread doubt that men ate men and their children especially among the downtrodden classes. The missionaries fed the multitudes with grain irrespective of their caste and religion.

do not want help. By the blisters on our hands we can prove to you that we have worked and will continue to work. If the next crop fails, we shall die. We want to die as Christians. Baptize us therefore.\textsuperscript{58} Converts who were baptized, received an added prestige by association with Christianity, an indelible mark of ruling class. New educational opportunities were available to converts. They gave up alcohol, carrion eating and other evils and observed greater cleanliness\textsuperscript{59}. It was against great protest that the missionary in India raised their voices against the inequalities of the caste system, and was the reason why Christianity in India has proved so attractive to many of the oppressed dalit population.

In the conversion enterprise there may well be the presence of push and pull factors in motion.\textsuperscript{60} The push factors with regard to conversions of depressed and lower castes were the indifferent attitudes of the upper castes towards lower castes. Here the push factor of conversion was an escape of lower caste converts from oppression and was an improvement of their lot and status in the society. One observation by non-Christians was that Christianity serves as a means to the lower castes for their social up gradation and a symbol of self-respect. The social generosities and charities of the mission, the reforming ideology of missionaries, the educational prospects and the employment facilities in the mission fields and organizations corresponds to push conversions. The pull factors of the attractions of western Christian culture were even less impressive before the thrusting push factors. The economic and materialistic aspects have played major role in mass conversions in the 19th century. The employment portals in the

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid. p.279. The motive behind this was identity crisis, a negative rejection of their lowly place in Hindu society to a positive affirmation of a new social and religious identity.
\textsuperscript{60} Anthony Copley, Religions In Conflict, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1997, p. 54
mission parishes were always a bone of contention among the Indian converts\textsuperscript{61} and the new European arrivals. Lower caste Indians were a better choice, as they could be lured by material benefits offered by Christian groups.

Group conversions often led to fresh problems in the village community and even the converts faced strong reactions from the upper castes.\textsuperscript{62} Karl Marx was right in anticipating the effect of in India as essentially destructive of traditional village structures. Having been converted into Christianity, and with promising help from missionary circles, the converts refused to continue in their traditional occupations in the villages. They disassociated themselves from village rituals. This change of their social behaviour was often met with repression from the upper castes. When severe persecution took place normally the convert left his native village and sought shelter in the mission compound. Eventually there emerged the Christian villages in various parts of India for mass movement converts. Thus the missionaries seldom bore the blame of having disturbed the community life in India. Certainly some customary sources of income for untouchables lost importance.\textsuperscript{63} The Malas of the Krishna- Godavari districts of the Telugu country, whose traditional occupation was weaving, had suffered loss in view of competition from Lancashire. G.A.Oddie says that the mass movements in the Krishna-Godavari districts started among more economically independent castes.\textsuperscript{64} The cases of Nadar conversions in Tamilnadu were the most interesting of all mass movements. The

\textsuperscript{61} Here conversion meant, not an 'atmaparivartan' or a change of heart within the same religious tradition, but a 'dharmantar', a change of one’s religious allegiance across such traditions. This is a conversion with vested interests drawing towards center of power. An Article by Rudolf C.Herald ‘No Entry, No Exit: Savarna Aversion Towards Dalit Conversion’ in \textit{Economic and Political Weekly}, Oct. 2004, Vol XXXIX, No 41, p.p.4543-45.


\textsuperscript{63} Duncan Forester, \textit{Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and policies On Caste Of Anglo- Saxon.}, p.74.

\textsuperscript{64} G.A. Oddie, \textit{Hindu and Christian in South-East India}, p. 65
Travancore and Tinnevelly churches are known as Nadar churches. The first Bishop of India and Andhra Pradesh, V.S. Azariah, was an offspring of the Nadar mass movements. The Madigas of the cult of Pothuluri Veera brahmam (a sage from Cuddapah) were also in a latter stage drawn to Christianity, as it was more assertive in their claims. Very soon, after their conversion, they received equal treatment in the new faith. Generally, the missionaries had neither desired nor welcomed the conversion of whole social groups. Neither did the caste markers disappear with conversion. Uma Ramaswamy observes that 'missionaries in the Telugu country did nothing to whittle down caste distinctions within the church itself. Rather they exploited caste cleavages in their efforts at conversions'.

Missionaries did not remain blind or mute to the attractions of the Indian culture. The missionaries responded to the pressures of cultural encounter by developing liberal attitudes to Indian culture. Therefore, the missionaries of the 19th century in most places maintained caste distinctions, as it would retain some continuity with the traditional structure. Ideologically caste was denounced. In the missionary conference of 1858 they viewed caste as the monster evil of India and resolved to denounce the wickedness of caste in all levels. No man should be regarded as worthy of the name of Christian who refuses to renounce caste. The missionary conference of 1879 (Bangalore) was an

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invitation to mass conversions, but reaffirmed the terms opposing caste of the previous conferences. To counter the caste issue, a Caste Suppression Society was formed in 1893. It arranged inter dining and inter caste marriages. But it was no good. After mass conversions, attitudes, tensions and policies on caste changed to a great extent. Gradually many protestant Churches adopted a tolerant attitude and asserted that the caste feelings helped rather than hindered the conversion. In 1889 J. W. Pickett interviewed almost a thousand adult converts from forty-two castes, mainly of sudra rank, but including Brahmans and Vaishyas in Andhra Pradesh. In a high proportion of such interviews, convincing testimonies were heard. Converts from higher castes without exception affirmed that their attitudes towards the depressed castes had changed since they and the depressed castes come under the graces of Christianity. He interviewed about 90% of all higher caste converts in Andhra Pradesh. They attributed their conversion wholly, or in part, to the influence upon them of changes they had observed in converts from the depressed castes. Therefore, the egalitarian conviction of brotherhood improved between the upper and lower castes in the new faith, bridging the gulf initially laid by the notions of caste prejudice and communal enmity. The converts from depressed castes too testified that they (upper caste) recognized now that we too are men and some of those who formerly oppressed us now treat us as blood brothers. However, the lower and upper communities did not merge to form into one social group.

'Saguna', an outstanding literary work, written in 1894, and the first book of its kind, was well received and widely read at that time, even finding its way into the hands of Queen Victoria. Krupabhai had entered in the book an interaction that had taken place

69 J.W. Pickett, Christ Way To India’s Heart, Lucknow, 1937, p.p. 3-61.
between her and an England-Returned young man Barrister of Indian origin. His appearance and speech was similar to that of a typical English gentleman of the 19th century. He styled himself as though he was a stranger in his own motherland, and smacked of western artificiality. He claimed England as his home. Krupabhai reminded him of his country, and his old parents. Some Indians like this young man went under the influence of a borrowed culture. Saguna records such instances as she celebrated her own deep-rooted traditions while she also simultaneously resisted mindless borrowing from the west.

The western confrontationalism towards Hinduism does not arise from the Bible and sensitive study of Hinduism but rather from the western cultural and intellectual heritage. Only when this bondage to foreign ways of thought and life is broken, Christianity is Indianised. This version is more acceptable to Hindus listening and responding to Christianity. One missionary, Benjamin Robinson who spent his whole time in India, had flung himself with greater zeal and determination in to the life, language and thought of the people among whom he was appointed to labour. He adopted native food and manners as it would help to make one's work more effective and was the only means of saving missionary work from failure. However, it was felt by few missionaries as the need of the hour and urgent necessity to relate Christ to the background of ancient Indian culture and spiritual heritage but majority of missionaries failed to do so. The missionary confronted but subdued.

70 Krupa Bhai Sathianathan, Chandani Lokuge (ed), Saguna, p.p.146-147.
The clash between East and west is primarily one of culture and civilization. These cultural problems bred tensions in the minds of the converts. Social migration from old allegiance to the new created insecurities and anxieties even became aggressive and violent. Therefore, most converts sought a synthesis of the two cultures, while following the spirituality of their own cultural traditions besides yielding in religious sense to progressive demands of westernization. In this process of cultural synthesis, to relate to the life of Christ, it is necessary to make a serious study of and to be well versed both in Sanskrit or the respective vernaculars and also in Christian theology. The biggest difficulty of the western missionary was in learning to proclaim the Gospel confidently in the language and style of the Indian people. One missionary wrote "some day one will be born who shall rouse India from North to South, and bring it to the feet of Christ. He will not be an English man, but a native of the country, that he might be Indian John Wesley". William Goudie writes 'India will never to any large extent be converted by foreign Missionaries, but by her own sons”. The program of our duty is not the conversion of India, but the raising up of such an Indian church as will send forth her own messengers. Few case studies of such Indians, like Narayan Vaman Tilak, Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya, Nilakantha Nehemiah Goreh, Panditha Ramabhai, Purushoththam Choudhary, Pulipaka Jagannadam, Sadhu Sunder Singh etc., who related to the life of Christ and Christian theology shows a movement in that direction.

**Narayan Vaman Tilak** (1862-1919): - Tilak firmly believed that India's spiritual heritage is of great importance for a richer expression of Indian Christianity. Indian

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76 William Goudie, *The Place of The Missionary in the Indian Church*, Excerpts From a Paper. p.120.
Christianity would become more compatible and favourable to the Indian spirit if Christian ideas were expressed in Indian spiritual forms. Tilak, a poet in Marathi, was born to Chitpavan Brahmin in a family of Ratnagiri in Maharashtra. The other well-known brilliant people from Chitpavan group were Ranade, Ghokale, Lokamanya Tilak, Pandita Rama bhai, Nehemiah Goreh ete;77 Probably Rev. J.J. Johnson gave a Sanskrit Bible to Tilak. The Sermon on the Mount and Bushnel' s book 'The character of Jesus' truly tore his heart, he himself said. He felt that Christ was the Living Guru whom India and the World needed.78 He was baptised in 1895; He drew inspiration for his own poetic genius from the great poet saints of Maharashtra,79 especially the most popular of them all—Tukaram. While keeping the original Christian ideas, he took the Hindu cultural expressions to meet the Indian mind.80 He presented it poetically in his Bhakti Niranjana as ‘Christ is life of all that is; Dharma and Artha both is in Indian religious traditions’, the male and female aspects of divinity is expressed in the idea of god with a consort goddess. Tilak finds it useful to conceive of the idea of God as Father and Mother in this stanza ‘Father and Mother both thou art; whence may I fonder title seeks?’81 He referred to himself as the elected Tukaram of Maharashtra, a Tukaram and St. Paul blended together. He was intellectually convinced that Christianity was the true religion.

He wrote great Marathi bhajans and enriched the Christian church with Hymns. His great work 'Christayana' was unfortunately never completed. He realized that a

77 Sir Valentine Chirole,
78 Rebecca J. Parker, How They Found Christ: Stories of Indian Christians, ISPCK, London, 1940, p.p.63. The profound conviction that Jesus Christ alone could save his country and all the world was one potent reason leading N.V. Tilak to dedicate his great powers of literary excellency to Christ.
80 Lakshmibai Tilak, 'I Follow After', p.70.
81 J.C. Winslow, Narayan Vaman Tilak, p.5.
Hindu-Christian synthesis was simply not possible unless the Christian religion had deep roots in Indian culture.\textsuperscript{82} At 19, Tilak married Lakshmi bai. At 33 years of age in 1890 he became Christian. For a while his wife remained a Brahmin Hindu and was separated from him. She overcame Brahminical prejudices and reasoned about caste differences when she had made up her mind to join her husband and reasoned like 'did God create different castes, or did man?' Her life was also changed; she chose her husband's faith and was baptized. She adopted two untouchable children also.\textsuperscript{83} Tilak passed away on 9th May 1919. He was intellectually convinced that Christianity was true religion. Looking back, the way Tilak's conversion was handled by both missionaries and Tilak himself must be criticized. Tilak left his home telling no one where he was going; the next they heard was the news of his baptism in Bombay. He became a meat-eater and often dressed in western clothes. As his wife did not join him in professing Christ, some Christians urged him to remarry a Christian and even went so far as arranging marriages for him. Thankfully he did not remarry, and eventually (after four and a half years) his wife Lakshmibai joined him. Hindu society, and especially Tilak's own family, reacted with anguish and outrage on learning of his baptism. Lakshmibai especially suffered immensely and attempted suicide a few times. Is it not time for evangelicals to seriously listen to and empathize with the honest expressions of pain from Hindu society at the conversion of one of their friends? Are the true roots and reasons for such distress properly understood and accounted for? Does not the love of Christ demand that strong steps be taken to mitigate anguish that is inevitably felt when a Hindu confesses faith in

\textsuperscript{82} Lakshmibai Tilak, \textit{I Follow After}, p.313.
\textsuperscript{83} \textit{Indian Express Front Page}, Friday Oct 23, 1998.
Christ?\textsuperscript{84} The answer generally lies in the way Christianity presented to the cross-cultural people. Christianity must be Indianised and de-westernized in the cultural, social, economic and political spheres - all treated evangelically. Christ must be presented as Asiatic and must be distinguished from western culture. Tilak followed Indian road and started a newspaper called '\textit{Christi} and 'Dyanodaya' where he provided articles on Christian faith for non-Christians and on Indian culture for the Christians. Tilak in his later years adopted Indian asceticism and became a sanyasi. Tilak is a typical extraction convert, pulled from his culture and family to start a whole new life. Tilak initially could only have understood this as part and parcel of following Christ. He would no longer be a Brahmin, but a Christian; like Ruth in the Old Testament. His baptism (at least implicitly) involved the profession to missionaries and Indian Christians that 'your people are now my people', and the Brahmans are no longer "my people". Some will say that such extraction is necessary, but Tilak’s testimony indicates otherwise. He was able to rebuild many of his relationships in Hindu society, largely due to his poetic gifts and continued ardent patriotism.\textsuperscript{85}

\textbf{Nilakanth Nehemiah Goreh} (1825-1885): - Benares, the Ganges city sacred to the Hindus and more commonly called Kashi or Varanasi was a centre of Hindu-Christian interactions during the mid-19th century. The Brahminical custodians of India’s great traditions of Hinduism had thickly populated this city, spending time in preserving and learning the ancient Sanskrit literature, the London Missionary Society, Church Missionary Society, Baptist Missionary Society

\textsuperscript{84} Lakshmibai Tilak, \textit{I Follow After}, p.p.122-129.
\textsuperscript{85} C.B. Firth, \textit{An Introduction To Indian Church History}, ISPCK, New Delhi, 2000, p.250
Missionaries were active in the city propagating Christianity. Even though missionary presence was there in Benares the pundits of Sanskrit Hinduism made no attempt to respond to the missionary challenge by entering into a dialogue.\(^86\) There was a Benares Sanskrit College, which was established under the British patronage in the late 18th century. One Vitthal Sastry, a Maratha Pundit, who was a lecturer in Benares Sanskrit College, commented on the missionaries as "Krishta Dharma Pracharopagivin", meaning -people who depend for their livelihood on the propagation of Christianity. This led to the constant dialogue-taking place between the missionaries and the Sanskrit pundits.\(^87\) The missionaries used to preach in the Bazars, Ghats, and chowks of the city: seldom there was resistance to missionaries in the mid 1840's. Perhaps for the first time, a 19 years old Maratha youth, a Chitpavan Brahman from Bundhelkhund by the name of Nilakanth Goreh, who confronted the missionary William Smith in the Bazar on religious issues\(^88\). William Smith, in sarcastic Sanskrit, involved Goreh in the religious discourse. Goreh responded positively to the teaching of Smith.\(^89\) Nilakanth was actually a seeker of the truth. Eventually he was converted to Christianity and received at Baptism the name Nehemiah.

Halbfass says the conversion of Nilakanth was a first attempt of a dialogue between Hinduism and Christianity.\(^90\) There are literary works of Nilakanth's own

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\(^{86}\) Antony Copley, *Religions in Conflict*; p. 107.

\(^{87}\) Ballantyne, *Christianity Contrasted with Hindu Philosophy*, Medical Hall Press, Benares, 1860, xli.

\(^{88}\) Church Missionary Record, Vol. V, No. 6, June 1834, pp.104-106.

\(^{89}\) M.A. Sherring, *The Missionary Life and Labours: the Rev. William Smith, Missionary of the Church Missionary Society*, Medical Hall Press, Benares, 1879, p. 5. The present author Sherring was also a missionary in Banaras, often confronted by people and by the editors of the Dailies. He faced polemic or fierce attacks from all quarters. But no sooner heard of his death than the Dailies published a eulogium on that missionary scholar of his goodness. In spite of reproaches the missionaries won the respect of the people. The Indian Evangelical Review, Vol. LVIII, Oct. 1888, p.189.

writings which exposes about what Christianity looked like to him as Hindu and what Hinduism looked like to him as a Christian. He wrote three texts series: The first 'Shastratattvavinirnaya (A verdict on the truth of the scriptures) in Sanskrit (1844-45) explains his pre-conversion. The second 'Vedant mat ka bicar aur Krishtiya mat ka sar: (An enquiry into vedantism and essence of Christianity) in Hindi (1853) explains his early conversion days. The third Shaddarshandarpan (A mirror of the six Hindu philosophical systems) in Hindi dated in 1860.91

Nilakanth served the church missionary society as catechist; William Smith, in his biography of Goreh ‘Dwiji’ (1850) wrote that a Brahmin twice born had experienced a spiritual rebirth to Christianity. He used to describe his conversion from Hinduism to Christianity, which for him was not from sin but from ‘ajnana’ (ignorance) to ‘jnana’ (wisdom), and culturally an important step towards acceptance of a different doctrine. His enlightenment experience, he said in his book ‘An Enquiry into Vedantism and the Essence of Christianity’ (1853), was not Hindu asceticism (vairagya) or world renunciation (sanyasa), because he exercised his new faith through the material world, while simultaneously loving god. In the last years of his life Goreh became a Christian Sanyasi of theological orientation. Ballantyne, an oriental philosopher from Scotland, came as a superintendent of Sanskrit college. He followed a very different programme for an interfaith dialogue among the pundits of Benares and the Christianity in the premises of the college. Nilakantha's life was tinctured with Vedanta. He contradicted the Vedanta of Ballantyne as he was defining the transforming Vedanta of Nilakanth himself in a way that was new and original. The argument of Nilakanth was that there was no middle

ground between his Vedanta and Christianity and his Hindu Vedanta was encompassed by Christianity. He knew that the Vedanta was a reason and Christianity was a transforming faith. His style of functioning and writing was Indianising and dewesterning in the cultural, socio, economic and political spheres. Max Muller twice met Nilakanth in Oxford and had a dialogue.92

**Brahmabandav Upadhyaya:** (1861-1907) In Christian ecclesiological history, a leading personality was Brahmobandav Upadyaya. He was born to Bhavani Charan Banerjee at Khanyan near Calcutta. In his youth he was influenced by Brahmo samaj of Keshub Chandra Sen and served as missionary of the Brahmo samaj. In 1888 he joined as a teacher, at this time he happened to convert to Christianity and attached himself to Roman Catholic Church. He then decided to bring India to Christ. He tried to find a synthesis between the religion he was born in and the religion he stepped in i.e. Christianity. From 1892 to 1898 he envisioned the idea of Indian or Hindu Christianity, which he believed would gather more hearers to the new faith. He wore the saffron robe of a sanyasin and communicated his ideas through his magazines *Sophia* and *The Twentieth Century*. He contributed a lot to the cultural harmony between Hinduism and Christianity. In 1899 he started a monastery at Jabalpore where the interfaith practices of Indian asterism and present Christian beliefs were observed. In 1902 he left for England on his mission of religious dialogue. He came back with a heavy heart of repentance for having uncritically accepted western materialism.93 He played a great role while Vivekananda started the department of Hindu philosophy in both Oxford and Cambridge.

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92 M.D. David, *Missions: Cross Cultural Encounter And Change In Western India*’ ISPCK,2001, p.358.
On his return he revived his journalist vocation and founded the daily 'Sandhya'. While Bengal was stirred up on Curzon's announcement of Partition Sandhya played a significant role in the political history of the country insisting the people upon working for Swaraj. Upadhyaya, the editor, and his associates were arrested. He observed during his trial 'I do not believe that in carrying out my humble share of the God-appointed mission of swaraj, I am in any way accountable to the alien people who happen to rule over us'. He was released and was affected by serious health problems and died on October 27th in 1907. Bipin Chandra Pal entered Bengal politics late in the year 1905, whereas till then it was Upadhyaya who stood alone from the beginning of the movement. Pal himself told that 'of all men, it was he who imparted a militant character to our Swadeshi movement'. Apart from his Christian idealism, he was also one of the pioneers in sowing the seeds of nationalism in the hearts of Indians. He also published a monthly, 'The Harmony' where he best expressed his views on the synthesis of Hinduism and Christianity, and making Hindu philosophy the handmaid of Christianity.

**Pandita Ramabai** (1858-1922): - Pandita Ramabai Saraswati was one of the pioneering Indian women to propagate education for women in India. Her father, Anant Shastri Dongre, was a liberal and progressive man who encouraged his daughter's education in Sanskrit despite contemporary belief that such an education was improper for young girls. Her mother taught her and her brother at home. The family was touring the places of religious importance chanting the sacred verses of Hindu scriptures in temples and public places. Ramabai had inherited from her parents the courage to defy
orthodox social customs, when she married Bipin Behare Medhavi, a lower caste man and a friend of her brother. During this period sir Isaac Allen, a Christian missionary in Sylhet often visited their house. She got a copy of Luca's Subha Varthaman of the New Testament. She explains that 'I had lost faith in the religion of my fore fathers. I was in search for something better. I wanted to read and understand more about Christianity'. She was very much convinced of Christianity and was led to Christ by Nilakanth Nehemiah Goreh, another chitpavan Brahman convert like her. She was also critical of the domination of the Christian clergy and said 'I am not bound to accept every word. …from the lips of the priests or Bishops. Obedience to the word of God is quite different from perfect obedience to priests' only. I have just with great effort freed myself from the yoke of the Indian priestly tribe, So I am not at present willing to place myself under another similar yoke'. Unfortunately, within two years of her marriage, her husband died and in 1882, Ramabai Saraswati returned to Pune.97

Ramabai Saraswati laid the foundation of the movement of women's liberation in India and was also the first woman to establish a women's association in western India, the Arya Mahila Samaj in 1882. The aims of the Samaj were: "(1) to work for the deliverance of women from the evil practices such as child marriage, Sati etc., and (2) to work for the betterment of the condition of women. In 1882 she expressed her plans on women's education before Hunter commission and proposed women teachers and Inspectors for Girls schools. She also suggested that 'women feel shy of male doctors and that leads to deaths in pregnancy and maternity'. As a result of it, Lady Duffrin responded

positively and had medical dispensaries started for women and Ramabai herself opened Sharda Sadan, which was a school for girls, a Home for widows and a vocational training centre.

Pandita Ramabai Saraswati wrote many books during her life, in both the Marathi and English languages. *The High Caste Hindu Widow*, was a book that Ramabai Saraswati wrote as an appeal to American women, in order to expose to her readers the plight of Indian women and to give assistance to the widows and destitute women of India.98 She wrote many instances from her own experiences in this book and she was very critical over the Laws of Manu. She criticized Manu as one who treated women as hateful beings in the world. Women were forbidden of chanting the sacred scriptures and thus:

'She, the loving mother of the nation, the devoted wife, the tender sister and affectionate daughter is never fit for independence'.

She also attacked men for their exploitation of the ignorance and backwardness of the women.99 She also made men responsible for their misconduct, as was the case with the women for their misconduct. She reviled the terms of the patriarchal discourse, both in scriptures and in the current time as advantageous only to men.100

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98 C.B. Firth, *An Introduction to Indian Church History*, p.194.
100 The fifth session of the Indian national Congress was held in Bombay in 1889. Ramabai rose to address the gathering. The people at the back rows were not able to listen to her. "Brothers excuse me for centuries did you ever try to listen to the voice of a woman? Did you give her the strength to make her voice audible to you?" The participants had no reply. No woman delegate represented the Congress till that time. But for the efforts of Ramabai nine woman delegates were present in the session. Sushila Nayar, Kamala Mankekar, ed., *Women Pioneers in India’s Renaissance*, p.37.
In her book, Ramabai also dealt with poverty and misfortunes of widowhood. She argued that 'Suttee' the self-immolation of widows on their deceased husband's pyre was "a custom invented by the priesthood." She again says "Now that the Suttee-rite, partly by the will of the people and partly by the law of the empire, is prohibited, many good people feel easy in their minds, thinking that the Hindu widow has been delivered from the hand of her terrible fate; but little do they realize the true state of affairs." She blamed the authorities that the abolition of Suttee was not the liberation of Indian women, but actually a form of further control and repression for women: "the poor helpless high-caste widow with the one chance of ending her miseries in the Suttee rite taken away from her, remains as in past ages with no one to help her." The reform movement to protect Hindu widows, she argues, was insignificant and meaningless in comparison to the suffering that living widows confront in their day-to-day life. "The momentary agony of suffocation in the flames is nothing compared to her lot as a widow."

During the Plague epidemic in Pune, and famine relief works in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarath, men sold women and children to fetch their food to sustain themselves. She received such discarded destitutes in to her Home. Ramabai inherited this vigour of protest and struggle from her father and a spirit of love for others from her practising Christian faith.

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102 In her book ‘Between the Twilights’ (1908), p.p.144-46, Cornelia Sorabji says that ‘nothing can minimize the evils of her lot. For some sin committed in a previous birth, the gods have deprived her of a husband. What is left to her now but to work out his ‘salvation’ and by her prayers and penances to win him a better place in his next genesis…For the mother-in-law what is left but the obligation to curse…But for this luckless one, her son might still be in the land of the living…There is no determined animosity in the attitude. The person cursing is as much an instrument of Fate as the person cursed’.
Purushotham Choudhary (1803 -1890): - William Carey has provided the Andhra people with the Telugu Bible, translated from the old and original tongues of Hebrew and the Greek. Nevertheless, Purushotham Choudhary enriched the Telugu Church music and hymns with an amalgam of Hindu lyrical tradition and Christian faith. In his hymns he had made use of all the music and the rhythm that the Telugu language could produce.104

He was born in 1803 in a family of Bengali Brahmans Kurmanath Choudhary and Subhadra Devi, who settled in Parlakamidi Zamindari. His ancestors served as Mirasidars (Tax Collectors) in the native kingdoms and in the service of East India Company, and therefore, they were honored with the title of Choudhary. In his early childhood, Purushotham involved himself in all observances of Hindu rituals and practiced bhakti, jnana, karma, and yoga of Hindu Vedanta. He adopted a teaching profession and took interest in writing insightful Prose and Poetry in Telugu. He led an ascetic life during the days of his spiritual unrest in the company of Digambara Sanyasis.105

One Gospel Tract of William Carey of Serampore mission fell in his hands and he was curious to learn more Christian Scriptures. Finally it led him to accept Christianity. In 1833 he denounced links with his caste and claims to property and was baptized by Rev. Charles Lacy.106 Very soon he was alienated from his family and friends and endured persecutions from his kith and kin. Even his wife disassociated herself for a time being and later in 1835, she took the religion of her husband. He later joined as a catechist in the Baptist mission. He led five Gospel campaigns covering a distance of

104 C.B.Firth, An Introduction to Indian Church History, p. 250.
105 James Jayasheel Choudhary (Composer-) Andhra Kraistava Sarvabhouma: Purushotham Choudhary, Rajahmundry.
4000 miles through the length and breadth of the Telugu country alluring Telugu people with his Sanskrit-Telugu hymns. Choudhary grew up familiarizing himself with the great traditions of poetry in Andhra. He drew his inspiration in producing poetry from his own poetic genius and combined it with a rich Hindu inheritance of religious poetry. He introduced theme songs of contextual meaning to everyday life of humans. He tried to blend the old religious poetry with contextual meaning in Christian life and the independent and indigenous Christian ideas mostly preoccupied the poetic style and literary works imbibed in the Hindu vocabulary of Choudhary. He wrote hymns: Trahimam Kristunatha', Mangalam Yesunaku', Deva divyananthaprabhava mampahi Ghana Yehova. His religious poetry consists of 180 hymns and religious songs, such as kirtans, bhajans, dvipada songs etc., He felt that he should make full use of the glorious lyrical heritage of Andhra set by Annamachary, Kshetrayya and Thyagaraja in his kirtans, bhajans and dvipada songs.107 Muktimaya pradarshanam (1833), Yesunayaka satakam (1845), Jagannadha pariksha (1846), Nistara ratnakaram (1847), Vigrahanirmanam, Panchachamara pannamulu, Pancharatnamulu (1851), Kraistavaneethi prakasam, Brahma gnanam(1853), Satyaveda sara sagraham(1871), Satya bhajana(1874) were some of his works. He added an Indian spiritual flavour of poetic, philosophic, spiritual and cultural insights while providing a more referred language of worship among the Andhra Christians. Almost all the Telugu Hindu tunes that were in vogue among the Telugus were applied in his compositions.108 Today there is no Telugu Christian in the entire world, who does not know the name of Purushotham Choudhary, as he is immortal in

every soul through his songs. The Brethren missionaries in association with other missions composed the Andhra Christian Hymnal where his hymns were placed in bulk.

**Pulipaka Jagannadham:** - (1826-1896) Mr. Thomas was a District Judge stationed at Rajamundry about 1838. He and Mrs. Thomas\(^{109}\) spent a few days in Samuldevi village in the Godavari district in their temporary hot season retreat in that year, where the Brethren missionaries Mr. Beer and Bowden used to visit them from Narsapur and distribute tracts in and around Samuldevi village. A Brahmin brought the tract back to Beer and asked him to explain it. He further requested Beer to start an English oriented school at Samuldevi. Therefore Mr. Thomas and Beer made their mind to setup a school there. In the meantime Mr. Thomas was shifted on transfer to Chittoor. Hence the plan did not materialize. This event prejudiced many young boys, among who was a Brahmin boy, Pulipaka Jagannadham. Mr. Beer visited him many times and gave tracts in English these induced him with a desire to learn English.\(^{110}\)

Jagannadham was born and brought up in Samuldevi and had family connections with Narsapur where Mr. Beer was residing. Jagannadham was discouraged when the school in Samuldevi remained a distant dream and was admitted to an English school in Visakhapatnam under Mr. Hay, the missionary custodian of the school.

Jagannadham grew up as a most zealous Hindu, very orthodox in observing the rituals and rites directed by shastras. He was a Vishnavite and thoroughly pursued Bhagavatha, and was staunchly devoted to the worship of Vishnu. He was the most

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\(^{109}\) She was Julia Thomas, identified with ‘*Letters From Madras During 1836-1839 By A Lady* (London, 1846). She and her husband were friendly with Brethren missionaries and made special mention of A. N. Groves at Chittoor, op.cit p.72.

superstitious caste Hindu boy in Mr. Hays school. He was already in touch with the Christian literature through Mr. Beer at his native village Samuldevi. His great ambition to learn English led him to read the Bible as it was one of the subjects of instruction in Hay’s school. In spite of his increased opposition he was convinced that he was a most sinful man, and in need of salvation through Christ. He turned in his misery to Hindu Vedanta. After a while when the death of his older brother occurred, he was convinced of the uncertainty of life. He was converted to Christianity in 1847. His family, relatives and a hoard of people, enraged by his conversion, stormed into the school. Soon his family members had him arrested and he was brought before the Magistrate. He declared he was a Christian and nobody compelled him to change his religion. Nearly ten thousand people awaited on the roads to kidnap Jagannadham and Mr. Hay’s party. The sepoys took care of the situation and escorted the party to safety. Thus, his family and relatives deserted Jagannadham.\textsuperscript{111} He became a prominent church member and was a faithful pastor for thirty-eight years working in and around Vizag. He wrote excellent Telugu hymns in the Andhra Christian Hymnal following the Hindu traditional tunes and composed Andhra Christian Poetry.\textsuperscript{112} He also took up the task of translating the Bible into Telugu along with the son of the Brethren missionary, Mr. Beer.

\textbf{Sadhu Sunder Singh} (1889-1929) - Sundar Singh was one of the earliest pioneers practicing Christian faith in an indigenous way. The religious and cultural environment of his day turned him as an Indian Christian sadhu. Many missionaries and even Indian leaders of Christianity recognized him as a highly radical convert, who went beyond the bounds of contemporary Christianity as he wandered the roads in his yellow

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid, p.56.
\textsuperscript{112} C.B. Firth, \textit{An Introduction to Indian Church History}, p.250.
robe and turban of a sadhu. He had ventured to establish indigenization of Christianity and to him Jesus looked more like an Indian.

He was born in a traditional Sikh family and was raised a devout Sikh and was brought up by his mother to become a Hindu sadhu. His mother led him very often to sit at the feet of a sadhu, who lived in a jungle, besides sending him to a mission school. Her death in his fourteenth year turned him desperate and violent.\textsuperscript{113} He blasphemed against the missionaries and their converts for his misfortune. He bought a new Bible and set to fire, page after page, while his friends were watching. As he was contemplating suicide Christ appeared to him and his spiritual quest was satisfied.\textsuperscript{114} On his 16th birthday he was publicly baptized in the church at Simla. He was expelled from his family in view of the severity of his caste regulations. He became a bridge between Indian religious culture and the Christian faith and travelled to different places as a wandering sanyasi, as was done by innumerable sadhus over centuries in India.\textsuperscript{115} He made it clear that Christianity was not an imported, alien, foreign religion but is indigenous to Indian needs.\textsuperscript{116}

His books have remained as a lasting contribution to indigenous Christianity in India. The sadhu's writings have an irresistible appeal to the Indian mind. ‘At the master's feet’, a book, was first published in 1922. He emphasized on renunciation and

\textsuperscript{114} Mrs. Arthur Parker, \textit{Sadhu Sunder Singh}, New York, 1920, p. 120.
\textsuperscript{116} Sadhu Sunder Singh envisaged the Indian Christianity upon one incident took place in a train compartment. A Brahmin had collapsed in the hot summer for want of water. The Anglo-Indian stationmaster brought a cup of water in the next station. The Brahmin, a high caste Hindu was unwilling to drink the water. He needed water but he could only accept it in his own drinking vessel and when that was brought he drank and revived. In the same way Sunder Singh was convinced India would not accept Gospel of Christ offered in western guise. That, he recognized, was why many listeners responded to him in his Hindu Sadhu's robe. Ibid. p. 191.
dedication and preached the Biblical Gospel to Indians in the Indian form. He used to spend much of his time spreading Gospel to the villages at the very foot of Himalayan Mountains and sharing the same with the sadhus of jungles. In the year 1912 he found a 300-year-old Christian hermit in a mountain cave of the maharishi of Kailash with whom he spent some weeks in deep fellowship. In 1918-20 he traveled in South India, Ceylon, China, Japan, U.K, U.S.A and Australia where he was appalled by the materialism, emptiness and irreligion, contrary to Asia's awareness of God. He lived till 1929 to introduce his own people to "the Christ of Indian road".

The above sketch of the lives of Indian converts made head way deep in to confrontational issues between Indian and western cultures and adopted more favourable measures of inculturation.

Indian Christianity was believed to have been brought by St. Thomas in the 1st century of Christian era. When Portuguese first arrived in India, it was said that they observed that the churches much-resembled Hindu temples and the early Christians practiced oriental Christianity. When Indian Christianity came into contact with the West, it lost its earlier form. However the Catholic Christians had made progress in Indianisation. The Protestants too were heading towards indianisation, rather cautiously. V. Chakkarai, P. Chenchaiah, Sadhu Sunder Singh, Sadhu Yoseph and Bishop Appaswamy, who were of the Bhakti strand of Indian thought, accepted Jesus as the avatar and manifestation of God. Indian Christian workers conferences were held till

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117 C.B.Firth, *An Introduction to Indian Church History*, p.252.
1914 in connection to the contextualisation of Christianity to Indian culture and form. Bhajans, Kirtans, Burrakathas etc. were composed and practiced with the advent of Ashram system i.e. Christukula Ashram, Seva sangh and Dhyan sangh systems from about 1921 onwards.\textsuperscript{119} Rt. Rev. P. Solomon, Rtd. Bishop of CSI, started Dhyan ashram in Paloncha and similar ashrams were established in Nandyal diocese of Andhra Pradesh. Even the titles of Church personnel was recommended to be revised, Bishop as sabha sevak, Moderator as Prarthana sevak and presbyter as sangha sevak, the congregation as sangham and the diocese as mandala sabha. The fact here emphasized was that the Indian student (trained under a foreign missionary) who returns as a missionary to his own people is likely to be a far better missionary than any foreigner and he and his indigenous approach is more favoured by people of his own culture.\textsuperscript{120}

As I discussed in the first Chapter, British imperial power, westernization etc, had made Christianity in India quite central to many cultural debates and encounters. To say in other words, conversion and Christianity became far more problematic and challenging than it had been in the previous centuries. Likewise the presence of English missionaries became ambiguous, and at times, even threatening to those Indians who were seeking to understand and reformulate their traditions and identities in Christian pattern. In these complex processes Christian practice and belief were themselves modified by the encounter with South Asian religions, simultaneously contributing to the processes of religious and cultural revaluation and reform in the subcontinent. In the long imperial history, the Church of England or the Anglican missions firmly represented imperial

\textsuperscript{119} C.B. Firth, \textit{An Introduction to Indian Church History}, p.254-258.
ecclesiology in India where as one large sect, the Brethren missionaries or the Brethren movement, was the first of its kind, anti-imperialist and anti-racist in attitude and manners, which represented Asiatic Christianity of 1st century A.D. and contributed to the shaping of indigenous Christianity and Indian leadership. Brethren movement was wide enough to absorb in its fold all that is good in the indigenous culture. In this connection, a survey of the conditions in Andhra are dealt in detail under the succeeding heading to follow, at the instance of ever first footing laid by the Brethren missionaries in Andhra.
POLITICAL, SOCIO, ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS OF 18th AND 19th CENTURY ANDHRA

The area of the present study ‘Andhra’, consists of the Coastal districts and Rayalaseema districts of Andhra Pradesh. The area is located between Northern latitudes 12°14' and 19°15' and the eastern latitudes 84°50' and 85°12' and is bounded by the Bay of Bengal on the east, Tamil Nadu on the south, Karnataka on the west, Telangana of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa on the north. This study area has a coast of 950 kms along the Bay of Bengal. The population of the area was 2,02,16,637 in 1951. 1953 marked the formation of the separate state of Andhra, until then the Telugu country formed part of the Madras presidency. The Telengana of present Andhra Pradesh was an integral part of a large section of the dominion of the Nizam of Hyderabad on the northwest side. Andhradesa was over a hundred thousand sq.miles or nearly twice the area of England (see Map of Andhra at the end page of this volume). Really, the Andhras were ‘the pride of the orient’.

The term Andhra is an archaic phrase appearing from hoary past. If one understands the term: ‘An’ meaning ‘not’ and ‘dra’ from the root ‘dru’ in Sanskrit meaning to run, therefore the word ‘Andra’ would mean, not driven, could not be driven or withstood and consequently resisted. Later on Andhras formed a race of mixed

121 The Eleven Districts of Andhra have an area of 67,212.98 sq.miles and spread about 52.7% of the Madras Presidency. The Districts comprised of the Ceded or Rayalaseema Districts of Cuddapah, Anantapur and Kurnool (Bellary), the Chittoor and Nellore and the Northern Circars comprising Srikakulam (Ganjam), Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna and Guntur. Dr.A.G.Menon, An Inquiry on the Socio-Economic Policy of the British Rule in Madras Presidency and its impact on Freedom movement in Andhra and Kerala 1905-1942, Hyderabad, 1992, p.90.
122 Andhra Pradesh Darsini (Telugu), Hyderabad, 1976, p.81.
123 It is said that the Andhras drove the Aryans. Therefore, the Aryans addressed the Andhras as ‘Paisachas’ or demons (terrible Andhras) and their language ‘Paisachi’. J.M. Anthos, The Origin and the Glorious Past of the Andhras: A Historical Sketch’, A.E.S, Reprint ed., New Delhi, 1989, p.p.40-44.
origin- Aryo-Andhras. As the time went on the Andhras were scattered over a large tract of land known as ‘Trilinga’ or ‘Andhradesa’. 1500 years before the advent of Christ, the merchants of Andhra brought muslins, silks, spices and pearls to the known world. The ships of Assyria and Babylonia sailed forth in all their glory to buy from Andhra and other parts of India, the teak wood, where with the people of Ur built their palaces and the gold of the east, with which they adorned their maidens and guilded their temples. Solomon, the king of Israel summoned skilled men from Tyre to bring gold, ivory, sandalwood and silver from the east. Thus the early greatness and glory of Andhras were washed away by the tides of time.

Political Conditions: -

In the heyday of Vijayanagar Empire in the Deccan, its rulers extended their sway to the uttermost borders of South India. Nevertheless, during an infamous rule of the Saluvas, the Portuguese made inroads into South India in 1498. In quick succession, the Dutch, the English and the French East India companies entered the arena of commercial contest for spice trade. Concerning the rule of Great Mughals, a period of disintegration set in after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 and continued to be ineffectual over South India. The Deccan subha, which was under the Mughals, was divided into twenty-two paraganas and the state of Golconda, which was one of them, stretched afar into Ganjam in the east coast and comprised entire Andhradesa. The period between 1707 and 1761 witnessed the rise of the provinces or princely states against Delhi.

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127 K.A. Nilakanta Sastrī, G. Srinivasachari, Advanced History of India, New Delhi, 1989, p.p. 551-583
such attempt was made by Mir Kamaruddin (who assumed the title of Nizam-ul-Mulk), a noble and a courtier of the Mughal emperor, Muhammad Shah, in 1724, carving out for him an independent kingdom in erstwhile Deccan subha with their capital (initial) at Aurangabad.129

Besides the Marathas, the Nizam of Hyderabad in Deccan, who became an almost independent warlord recognized the Mughal emperor in name only. The Nizam used to rely on the support of the lesser nobility, the Nawabs of Carnatic, Kurnool and Cuddapah in Rayalaseema and the Rajahas and the Zamindars in the Coastal Andhra. Wars of succession followed in both the provinces of Deccan and Carnatic about 1748. This breakdown of authority gave an opportunity as well as an excuse for East India trading companies to enter the political scenario of Andhra and Deccan and to stabilize themselves in power.

It was said of the Portuguese of their connections with the Telugus as ‘except for missions, the range of Portuguese influences was limited by the extent of their territorial possessions’.131 The Dutch and the French disputed the rising influence of the English.132 The Dutch met its doom at last. In their flourishing days the Dutch had chaplains in India, who were called ‘predikants’, and they seem to have devoted themselves more to the subversion of Roman Catholics than to the evangelization of the people.133

129 Ibid., p.569
130 R.C. Majumdar, V.G. Dighe (ed) The Maratha Supremacy (History and Culture of Indian People, Vol. viii), New Delhi, 1977, p.p. 119-123, 323, 325-29
131 L.S.S. O’Malley, Modern India and the West, OUP, 1941, p.47.
settlements of the Dutch in coastal Andhra\textsuperscript{134} were also the earliest attempts at the introduction of Protestant influences in Andhra.

With the establishment of the authority of the English East India Company, there started an important, fascinating and culminating chapter in the history of India in general and the Deccan in particular\textsuperscript{135}. The English traders\textsuperscript{136} founded colonies at Machilipatnam and afterwards at Madras, Hoogli and Calcutta\textsuperscript{137} on the East coast, and a chaplain was settled at each station. The first Anglican Church\textsuperscript{138} was built in Fort St. George in 1680.

Arriving at the situation in Andhra, earlier the English had concentrated their energies on Masulipatnam, the principal port of the kingdom of Golconda on the East coast\textsuperscript{139}. They used to purchase the locally woven piece goods, which they exported to Persia and Bantam in Java. In 1632 they obtained from the Sultan of Golconda a Golden Firman\textsuperscript{140}, which permitted them to trade freely in the ports of Golconda on payment of 500 pagodas as duty. After completion of the construction of Fort St. George, which was

\textsuperscript{134} M. Venkataramaiya, ed., \textit{The Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh (Andhra)}, Vol. I, APSA & RI, Hyderabad, 1997, p.p.7-9. The Dutch had their factories in Palkol, Narsapur, Jagannayaka puram, Masulipatnam and Bhimunipatnam. One English Company agent writes ‘the Dutch have there (Pulicat) a factory of a large compound where they do dye much blew cloth, having above three hundred jars set in the ground for that work; also they make many their best paintings there, the town being first rented by them at 2000 old pagodas, and is now given them free by the king’. Notes on and Extracts from the Govt. Records of Fort St. George. Second series, 1871, p.32.


\textsuperscript{136} Foster, W. ed., \textit{Early Travels in India,} 1538-1619, Reprint in India, New Delhi, 1968.

\textsuperscript{137} E.W. Thompson, \textit{History of India,} CLS, London, 1908, p.245.

\textsuperscript{138} Mughal emperors from Akbar to Aurangzeb were not indifferent to Christianity. Jahangir used to visit the church on Christamas days (Austin or Bordeaux’s Letter dated April 7, 1632) and Aurangzeb had regard for Christianity and he treated the Bible with respect and kissed it. Indian Antiquities, XXXV, 1906, p.p.205-206.


\textsuperscript{140} The Fifth Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Affairs of the East India Company, Vol. III, 1918, p. xi.
started by Francis Day\textsuperscript{141} at Madras by 1641, Madras soon superseded Masulipatnam as the headquarters of the English Settlements on the Coramandal Coast. The English warehouses at new trade centers, Injaram and Bendamurlanka of the Godavari were also prospering till the armies of the French at Rajahmundry took possession of the coastal trade centers in 1757\textsuperscript{142}. During the phase from 1750 (or 1760) to 1800, the English had prevailed over the French and emerged as a super power over the major parts of South India, in all practicability by the close of eighteenth century.

As mentioned earlier, the Nizams of Hyderabad established their hereditary rule in Coastal Andhra as part of the Deccan subha since 1724. For the purpose of administration, it was divided into various circars ranging from Ganjam to Guntur. They were Chicacole, Rajahmundry, Ellore, Kondapalli and Guntur, each under a Fauzdar. The Rayalaseema districts of Cuddapah, Kurnool and Anantapur were under the control of the Nawabs of Cuddapah, Kurnool and Adoni, who were again the vassals under Nizam\textsuperscript{143}. In the political hierarchy existing in Andhra, the lower stratum of leaders were petty chiefs like the Polygars in Rayalaseema and the Rajahs and Zamindars in Coastal districts, who exercised extensive hereditary rights in collecting revenue and maintaining

\textsuperscript{141} Ibid, p. xii; Mr. Day was one of the council at Masulipatnam and the head of the factory at Armagaon, who negotiated with the Rajah of Chandragiri, a descendent of Vijayanagar kings and acquired a land of 5 miles in length and one mile in breadth by the local governor Damerla Venkatadri, where the said fort was built and the place known by the name Chenna patnam after the name of Chennappa, the father of Damerla Venkatadri. C.D. Maclean, ed., \textit{Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency}, Vol. II, Reprint, New Delhi, 1989, p.p.279-281.

\textsuperscript{142} \textit{The Fifth Report}, p. xv; Report of Fort St. George, Letters to Fort St. George, April 28, 1703, p.59; RFSG, letters to Fort St. George, Dec. 28, 1710, p.p.4-5; RFSG, Diary, 1711, p.66.

\textsuperscript{143} The Fifth Report, op-cit., p.p.11-18.
law and order. They had their own band of army to meet these goals. Their collection of
tax was kind of barbaric and people suffered a great deal.\footnote{H.H. Dodwell, *The Cambridge History of India Vol.V, British India (1497-1858)*, Chand & Co., New Delhi, p. 474.}

**Annexation of Coastal Andhra (Northern Circars)**

Generally, the annexation of Andhra by the English began from 1764 onwards till 1800 or 1802, featured in terms of constant negotiations and pitched battles carried out by the English exclusively with the local chiefs of both the zamindars of Coastal Andhra and the Polygars of Rayalaseema and Nellore (South Andhra). A treaty was signed in 1766 to cede entire Coastal Andhra (Northern Circars) to the English.\footnote{C.D. Maclean, ed., *Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency*, Vol. II, Reprint, New Delhi, 1989, p.p.272-278.} The English were patiently overcoming the hurdles one after the other. About 1767 the relations between Nizam and the English were strained as the Nizam entered into an alliance with Hyder Ali of Mysore against the British. The English armies advanced towards Hyderabad and this brought the two opposite camps to another treaty in 1768. The treaty once more confirmed the sovereignty of the English over Coastal Andhra from Ganjam to Guntur. The Guntur (Murtaza nagar) circar, at that time, was under the rule of Basalat Jung, a brother of Nizam. It took another twenty years for the English to own it in 1788 after the death of Basalat Jung.\footnote{The Fifth Report, p.p.15-18.}

During the period from 1768 to 1794 the English resorted to subversive methods against the Zamindars of Coastal Andhra.\footnote{In 1784 the circuit committee, in reporting on the district brought it to the notice of the Madras government. *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series*, Madras, I, 1908, p.255.} They understood that the Zamindars were
neither lords nor proprietors\textsuperscript{148}, therefore, made up their mind to reduce the power of
Zamindars in Northern Circars. In 1803 the introduction of Permanent settlement in the
Northern Circars was a last glow of the diminishing powers of the Zamindars. However,
two thirds of the gross produce received by the Zamindars from ryots was fixed as
Peshcush or the share of the Circar\textsuperscript{149}. Defaulted Zamindars and their lands came to be
owned by the government. Vast majority of villages in Godavari, Krishna and Guntur
districts became the government property\textsuperscript{150}. Sir Thomas Munroe, the governor of
Madras visited coastal Andhra in 1822 and was moved by the deplorable condition of the
cultivator at all times, and saw some lands under the Zamindari estates come under the
ryotwari system of assessment\textsuperscript{151}. The constructions of Godavary anicut in 1847 and of
the Krishna anicut in 1853 by Sir. Arthur Cotton were an added strength to the ryotwari
system. The real ryotwari system worked out in Andhra only during the administration of
the Crown\textsuperscript{152}. The Estates Land Act of 1908 evoked the right of ownership of the
cultivator over the land and zamindars were forbidden from revising the rents where the
land revenue was fixed permanently\textsuperscript{153}. The ryots of Coastal Andhra trod the path of
filing suits in the court to end the zamindari system\textsuperscript{154}. Over the years the people of
Andhra gradually succumbed to the socialist ideas and socialist leaders like Prof. N.G

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[148] The Fifth Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Affairs of the East India
\item[150] The default zamindars were dealt severely by the Madras government. Letters between the zamindars
and the revenue department of the company during the year 1812 testifies this. The estates of
Veeravasaram, Gautavaram, Goosaula, Polavaram, Raghavapuram etc., were reported attachments to
Rajamundry Collectorate for arrears of revenue. District Collectorate Records (Pre-Mutiny), Godavary
Collectorate Headquarters at Rajamundry; Letters From Revenue Department of Fort St.George, dated 4\textsuperscript{th},
7\textsuperscript{th} May 1812; General Report of Board of Revenue, dated 1\textsuperscript{st} August 1805, p.47.
\item[151] Index to the Proceedings of the Governor for the purpose of making laws and regulations for the year
\item[152] The Company government created a new department under the Director of Revenue Settlement in 1858
for a systematic survey and settlement in the entire Madras Presidency.
\item[153] Legislative Department G.O. NO. 10, 9\textsuperscript{th} Jan. 1908.
\item[154] Revenue Department G.O.612 dated 19\textsuperscript{th} March 1919, p.p. 1-2.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Ranga and intensified the movement of peasants for the total abolition of zamindari system\textsuperscript{155}. Simultaneously the Kisan conferences were held in national level and during 1935 and 1940 conferences, the ryots’ proprietorship over the lands was upheld. The Madras presidency government appointed a committee under the chairmanship of T. Prakasam, which confirmed the cultivators’ proprietorship. At last the government of Independent India abolished the rights of zamindars through a law in 1949.

\textbf{Annexation of South Andhra (Ceded Districts, Chittore & Nellore):-}

A part of Andhra country that was under the direct rule of the illustrious Vijayanagar empire, and later under the English, was called ‘Rayalaseema’(Ceded Districts), which comprised in the beginning the districts of Cuddapah, Kurnool and Bellary\textsuperscript{156} and consequently Anantapur was formed out of Bellary. The rulers of Vijayanagar appointed chieftains in Rayalaseema for better administrative control of the region. These chieftains came to be known as ‘polygars’\textsuperscript{157} and were responsible for law and order and revenue collection in their respective areas. After the downfall of Vijayanagar and during the ineffectual rule of the Qutb Shahis, the poligars of Rayalaseema became independent\textsuperscript{158}. Later the Mughal Viceroy of Hyderabad, Nizam-ul-Mulk established the Asaf Jahi dynasty of Nizams in 1724. The state of affairs was still worse after the death of Nizam-ul-Mulk in 1748. This anarchy contributed much in

\textsuperscript{155} Fortnightly Reports: History of Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh (HFSAP) Vol IV, 1933, p.p.4774-4776 Fort St. George dated 20\textsuperscript{th} Nov. & 4\textsuperscript{th} Dec. 1933.
\textsuperscript{156} Nilmani Mukherjee, \textit{The Ryotwari System in Madras (1792-1827)}, Calcutta, Reprint 2001, p.20.
\textsuperscript{157} \textit{Ibid.}p.p.20-22. The military chieftains that ruled inherently the ‘pollams’ or ‘palayams’ or territories of their jurisdiction were called Poligars. Besides military savages, their revenue extraction was a kind of plunder. Delay in payment of revenue on the part of farmers and peasants followed by burning away villages to ashes or driving away of many inhabitants.
giving a new turn to Deccan history\textsuperscript{159}. In the early stage of his rule Nizam Ali Khan crossed swords with the British and later, pressed by problems he maintained friendly relations with the English and entered into a subsidiary alliance with the British in 1798\textsuperscript{160} and ceded the districts of Rayalaseema in 1800.

The local chiefs of Rayalaseema, the Polegars, occupied a position more or less similar to that of the Rajahs and zamindars of Northern Circars. The Polegars continued to oppose the existing authority and discontinued payment of tributes. Thomas Munroe, the principal collector of Ceded Districts suppressed the Polygars\textsuperscript{161}. The rest of the territory of the districts of Nellore and Chittoor, in 18\textsuperscript{th} century, formed part of the Carnatic. These districts were also in the hands of the Polegars. Wellesley annexed the Carnatic in 1802 and as a consequence of it Nellore and Chittore came under the British rule\textsuperscript{162}. Interestingly, some of these erstwhile local chieftains (Rajahs and Polygars) were very receptive of the Christian missionaries of their respective areas in the propagation of Christianity. Some Polygars were even admired in the contemporary Jesuit records\textsuperscript{163}. Thus, by 1802 entire Andhra (Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema) formed part of the Madras Presidency.

The later half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century in Madras Presidency, as a result of growing nationalism, witnessed the birth of native associations such as Madras Chamber of Commerce, Madras Native Association etc\textsuperscript{164}. Some sections of merchants and

\textsuperscript{159} Raza Alikhan, Hyderabad 400 Years (1591-1991), Hyderabad, 1990, p.p.88-89.
\textsuperscript{160} Dr. Sheela Raj, Trans. Text, The Legacy of the Nizams, New Delhi, 2002, p.31.
\textsuperscript{163} R. Hambye, History of Christianity in India., p.307.
intelligentsia brought into existence the Mahajana Sabha of Madras in 1884 and its first conference was held in Pachayappa’s Hall from 29 December to 2 January 1884. It was a representative gathering of hundred delegates from all parts of the Madras presidency. The secretary P. Ananda Charyulu, a lawyer, and a future president of the Indian National Congress, stated that the sabha has affiliated to itself a number of associations in the presidency. He said that the conference was convened to create ‘mutual understanding between the ruler and the ruled on the one hand and to tackle the problems of land tenure on the other hand, for there were already ‘clear and visible signs of misunderstanding on the land.’ He wanted similar conferences to be held in different towns to develop national feeling. Papers were read at the conference on the constitution of the legislative council, separation of justice from the revenue functions, the conditions of the ryots etc. Similarly, the missionary initiatives, the modern education and the printing technology, witnessed the birth of a number of District associations and specialized associations in Andhra as well as the circulation of Telugu journals like Bhasha Sanjivini, Vivekavardhini, Andhra Prakasika etc., in the last quarter of the 19th century, which expounded the political, economic and social disgrace of the people and educated them on the need for like reforms. Specialized associations like the Local Reform Association at Vijayawada, Balasamajam at Endagandi, Veeresalingam Kavi Club at Kumudavalli, Stri Santana Dharmamandali in Guntur etc., although worked for social reform and gender identities, did create the necessary ground for political

165 Public Department - Details of the Proceedings, 10th July 1886, No.1433.
166 The Krishna District Association was the first of its kind in the entire country started in 1892. Consecutively the other District Associations, the Godavary (1895), Visakhapatnam (1898), Anantapur (1907), Nellore (1908), Guntur (1913), Kurnool (1914), chittoor (1915) and Cuddapah (1916) were started.
167 Krishna Patrika, November 15, 1905
168 The Hindu, June 7, 1910.
consciousness, which highlighted the failures of British institutions of modern civilization in the interest of imperialism. Eventually this led to the achievement of self-government after a long nationalist struggle for independence.

Social Life: -

During 18th and 19th centuries drastic changes occurred in the Andhra society upon its absorption of, or adjustment with, varied forces. There was a generation of new forces, though the Andhra society retained its own fundamental or eternal values. In Andhra new cultural traits manifested themselves by assimilating the new qualities of western civilization with which it had come into contact. As early as 1712, Christian missionaries introduced the printing press, education on modern lines and things like coffee and tobacco. It was a period of transition where adherence to tradition was being overtaken by an urge to change.

The feudal political structure of society was prevailing in view of the disruption of Mughal Empire and the rise of territorial chiefs. In the absence of an impartial and honest administration of justice, people of the area were condemned to a debased existence. The autocratic chiefs executed power in the most oppressive manner. The rich and the influential classes purchased justice through bribery. The lower classes that specialized in different professions, in general, were very poor and ignorant. The village headman carried the normal day-to-day administration. The civil and judicial powers were generally united, and exercised in each village by the receiver of imposts. They were generally Brahmins. In the villages and towns Panchayets were popular courts of

judicial administration, in most cases headed by the Brahmins. Some of the judges were also drawn from other castes. The lower classes, neglected under the feudal governments, were comparatively benefited from these courts. In his report on the ceded districts dated 15, 1807, Col. Munro states about the excellency of Panchayet system. These village Panchayets thus played a vital role in the society. As else where Brahmins, despite being a minority, dominated social life all the more because they were administrators and also financiers.

Caste had been for a long time presented as a religious phenomenon, supported by a unique system of religious beliefs, attitudes and practices relating to purity and pollution. The French missionary, Dubois stated the traditional four-fold caste system and which had divided the society in Andhra. At the top were the priests, or Brahmans, and the servants or Shudras were who made up the bulk of society. These were the economic classes legitimated by an elaborate religious system and would be eventually subdivided into a huge number of craftspeople of sub-classes, which we call ‘castes.’ Inherently, highly developed stratified community life under the dictatorship of caste was witnessed in the society of Andhra during 18th and 19th centuries. A number of sub-castes evolved in course of history due to new innovative crafts that were encouraged by the society. There were constant movements on the tribe-caste continuance. Kosambi argues that many castes were known to have tribal origins, as evidenced from various totemic features that manifest themselves in these caste groups. Thus the destiny of a person

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171 Ibid, p.15.
was pre-determined by the caste such as his industrial productions, marriage, family life etc. In the light of this fact, Prof. Ramakrishna identified three main groups viz., 1. The privileged 2. The under privileged and 3. the untouchables in Andhra. Eventhough the Varnas were traditionally defined, the use of ‘upper’, ‘middle’, and ‘lower’ was common in the Deccan society\(^{175}\).

The rigidity of caste regarding occupation was loosening. The Brahmans figured prominently in public administration under colonial government\(^{176}\). The Brahmans were even taking to the profession of arms. Likewise, the Kshatriya and Vaisya castes belonged to the privileged group shifted to other occupations. The members of the unprivileged group, the Sudras belonged to the professional groups not only of coppersmiths, blacksmiths, weavers, barbers, potter but also took professions such as teachers, medical practitioners, astrologers, government servants, soldiers, tailors, jugglers etc\(^{177}\). The profession of arms was in great favour with polegars of Rayalaseema and Zamindars of coastal Andhra\(^{178}\).

As we see, the Brahmans despite their domination, particularly in 18\(^{th}\) and 19\(^{th}\) centuries, were challenged not only by the Nayudus as polegars, but also by the land owners and farmers who were the Reddis often known under the generic name of Kapus. Boyas were the traditional fighters serving in the palegars’ forces. But the Reddis could also be good fighters and sometimes held the office of Polygar. From the Jesuit


\(^{176}\) Prof. V. Ramakrishna, *Social Reform in Andhra*, p.p.4-9; J.A. Dubois, op-cit, p.293.


\(^{178}\) The Polygars of Rayalaseema were generally from the upper non-Brahmin castes like Kammas and Reddis whereas Andhra Zamindars were mostly from the upper non-Brahmin castes such as Kshatriyas, Velamas and Kammas. *Census of India*, Madras, 1891, Vol XIII, p.p.220, 235 and 237.
documentation it appears that the caste system was then less rigid and embracing the other faiths (Christianity) was also tolerated among the ruling classes in Andhra than in the rest of South India. Another social fact was that in the 18th and 19th centuries the women folk, particularly among the Reddis and Kammas, were less male dominated, more independent and more free to accept changes in matters of ‘Sati’ etc. ‘Sati’ continued to prevail among middle and lower classes. Therefore, the condition of women in the society was far from satisfactory. The untouchables or the panchamas were subjected to permanent social degradation, denied elementary civil rights and were excluded from all public places. The foreigners expressed horror and bewilderment at the social degradation of a large part of society. These social groups were regarded as the lowest, such as the Madigas (Leather workers and coolies) and the Malas (weavers of coarse cotton stuffs and agricultural workers). The Malas of the Telugu country were not so low in the scale of actual society even though they were outcastes. Many of them were evolved in the irrigated section of the country, and owned fair-sized land-holdings and were tolerably well off. However, their social seclusion drew many towards Christianity. There were tribes of wandering gypsy kind of people such as Yerukalas and Yanadis.

The two institutions of polyandry and polygamy existed in South India. The polygamy was a true Hindu institution and was duly legislated by Manu. The marriage rites and ceremonies were based on the Brahmical rituals, and were common to all

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castes including the untouchables. The Mohammadan rule brought about the settlement of Muslims as well. These Muslims penetrated both in the existing villages and also founded their new settlements. It was only the converted Muslims whose houses could be found in the midst of Hindus. As time went these two groups lived in harmony, what accounted here was the toleration of Hindu social system. However, the British were not that much keen to transform Indian society from a hierarchical to an egalitarian one. The only job they did was to hold the country together and prove that they were not averse to exploiting the divisions of caste and community for that purpose.

The pernicious custom in the 19th century Andhra was the Kanyashulkam (Bride’s price). This custom produced evils such as infant marriage and untimely widowhood. The institution of Devadasis was a form of disguised prostitution, and later they developed into a separate caste. Illiteracy and ignorance bred a medley of countless superstitions. Agricultural produce as well as personal safety were ensured by charms and lexes. Normal disasters and their effects were also attempted to be evaded with charms.

The Northern circars in 18th century and the Rayalaseema in 19th century were the most war-beaten parts of the century with the European wars. The villages were often exposed to loot and plunder. Therefore, the rural society continued to live in the fortified villages and the village houses were built closely together with no intervening spaces for gardens. Perhaps it was the major cause which preserved the joint family

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182 M.N. Srinivas calls this kind of phenomenon as ‘Sanskritization’ of Hindu society. M.N. Srinivas, Social Change in Modern India, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1972, p.3.
183 Dr. Mutthu Laxmi Reddy in 1929 introduced a bill in the Madras state’s Assembly for the abolition of Devadasi system and thus put an end to the evil practice. Itihas (A Journal of State Archives, Hyderabad) Vol XXVI, Jan-Dec. 2000, p.132. The other evils were self torture by fire or by large needles which were abolished by British government.
185 S.C. Raychoudhary, Social, Cultural and Economic History of India: Modern Times., p.29.
system and community feeling within a village. It is an amusing sight, states Rev. Padfield, a missionary at Machilipatnam, ‘in passing through the streets of an evening, to see the droves of cattle coming home from the pasture. As they go along here and there, one or more of the cows or buffaloes would turn aside and go up the steps of a house passing through the door way which has been left open on purpose…proceed straight into … inner verandah’. His surprise was that in the Telugu country people and cattle reside together in a house\textsuperscript{186}.

The regional accounts in vernaculars like Telugu were also giving useful information about the last century. Ayyalaraju Narayanamathyudu, the author of the book ‘\textit{Hamsa Vimsathi}’ gives a lot of information about occupations and amusements of the Andhras\textsuperscript{187}. There were Panchagam Brahmins\textsuperscript{188} in the Andhra society, who were professional mendicants. Religious mendicants often played the role of magicians also. Dubois states that magic had found a favourable abode in peninsular India. The professional storytellers were often seen in the Andhra society. The story tellers of the day used to tell the story of French Bussy and his wars with the English\textsuperscript{189}. Among amusements of the people a kind of chess game, interestingly known among the Telugus as ‘Puli Joodham,’ was very popular and the grid of the game, was carved on stone slabs, which formed the circular platform under Palm and Neem tree groves. Puncheesee (Baracatta) was played with dice. Kite-flying was an amusing sport among children. The street shows and puppet shows were also interesting out-door amusements. The stories of

\textsuperscript{188} These Brahmins held the calendar called Panchangam, which means the five members as it contained five leading subjects. J.A. Dubois, \textit{Hindu Manners}, p.137.
\textsuperscript{189} J.E. Padfield, \textit{The Hindu at Home: Being Sketches of Hindu Daily Life.}, p.p.170-192. There was also a mendicant group of Fakirs in a great number in Andhra society.
the plays were mostly drawn from ancient epics like Ramayana and Mahabaratha. Heyne credits Indian actors with much wit and satire and tells us that in the Northern Circars women of dancing caste took the role of actresses\textsuperscript{190}.

Enugula Veeraswamaiah, a Head interpretor in the Madras Supreme Court gives in Telugu an elaborate description of his pilgrimage during 1830-31 to Benares in his book (Diary), ‘\textit{Kasi yatra Charitra}’. He writes that the people of Kandanur (Kurnool) region were not rising a good breed of Oxen and they forbade using cow milk. The chief food of the people was millet and there was a scarcity of rice. He states that the men and women in Andhra were fond of coloured garments. In return journey from Benares he travelled through Northern Circars, where he observed that the female prostitutes were also the dancing girls on feast days. He also observed that certain communities such as Jogi Jangams, the Washermen and Chandalas had no entry in temples. The road robberies and village thefts were regular features in those days\textsuperscript{191}.

The population of Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema in all probability was around 9 to 10 million in 18\textsuperscript{th} century and was unevenly distributed. Coastal Andhra from the Delta of the Godavari down to the regions south of Krishna River was more populated than the northern parts. Nevertheless, the repeated famines were a usual catastrophe after the wars ravaged the society and took a huge toll of human life. Relief and rehabilitation measures of the foreigners drew many to Christianity irrespective of caste. The famine crisis thus resulted in division among the families and isolation in certain communities.

\textsuperscript{191} Digavalli Venkata Siva Rao (ed),\textit{Enugula Veeraswamaiah Kasi yatra Charitra}, AES, New Delhi, 1991, p.p.11-23 and 310,350
Economic Life:-

Parthasarathi’s micro study of the South Indian agricultural community characterizes the eighteenth-century (pre-colonial era) as a period of commercial expansion and relative prosperity for weavers and agriculturalists. In the early eighteenth century weaving and cloth production in South India was based on contracts between local cloth merchants and head weavers, and between head weavers and the artisans who used to weave cloth on receiving advances in kind. This provided them with a source of financial security. In Northern Circars of Andhra there were individual families that owned half a dozen looms, and all the members of the family were involved in weaving.

Till the close of the 18th century the handloom textiles of Andhra were in high demand in Europe and some parts of Asia. The palempores and chintzes of Masulipatnam, Vizag, Bandamurlanka and the white cloth of Tuni, the hand kerchiefs of Nellore were the rival products of Andhra to that of British cloth. The East India Company discontinued the Andhra textile for export, instead supplied a cheap mill made cloth to England. But when the British required local weavers to produce exclusively for the company and stipulated that the textiles must be of lower cost and higher quality, coupled with its need to gain a profit from the sale of Indian textiles in European markets, difficulties arose for the native weavers. The weavers were punished if they could not produce the cloth in time and were required to pay Re.1/4th per loom as loom tax.

193 Loom tax levied was called ‘Moturpha’. P.Raghunadha Rao, op-cit., p.167
besides duties imposed on woven thread and the Dhobi had to pay tax on bleaching the woven cloth.

The Ceded districts manufactured nearly 200 varieties of cloth with an average produce of 12,35,412 pieces mostly from 19,626 looms at a rate of 5,57,787 pagodas per annum. The cumbly(mantles) weaving of Ceded districts and the carpet products of Northern Circars had to pay large amount of moturpha to the company. There was a variation in payment and non payment of this loom tax in different places of Andhra. In Masulipatnam weavers paid a loom tax of Rs. 56,800 annually. While in Cuddapah the weavers had to pay a loom tax of 1,52,191. The cloth made even for home use was not exempted from tax. The cloth could not be sold or bought until branded. In Madras presidency, according to Munro, utilized cloth was worth 30fanams annually and duty on it 2 fanams. Thus by 1830 the Andhras textiles industry decayed due to heavy taxations and large inflow of British machine made goods into Indian markets. The cloth worth 7 lakhs once exported from Vizag was reduced to 1 lakh in 1844. Andhra districts turned as mere suppliers of raw materials for mill made English goods.\textsuperscript{194} Ports of Andhra such as Ganjam imported English goods worth Rs. 41,000, Rajamundry imported Rs. 1,00,000, etc.

**Foreign Trade**

In the beginning the small native vessels manned by Indian fishermen operated Bengal-Burma trade, carrying salt and coarse cloth to more places of the area and bringing in return paddy. Later on, ships of 500 tonnes and above used to be built in the

port towns of Coringa and Narsapur\textsuperscript{195}. Then onwards the trade of Northern Ciracars expanded on bulk cargo as far as England and other European countries on one side and simultaneously of trade with other ports of India. The exports from Northern Ciracars to European countries included sugar, edible oils, pulses, jaggery, grains, naval stores, cloth etc. The trade with other Indian ports consisted of grains, fruits, drugs, naval stores, timber, betel nuts, coconuts, tobacco etc\textsuperscript{196}. By the beginning of 19\textsuperscript{th} century the native ships operated from the ports of Coringa, Gnjam, Narsapur, Cocanada, Bhmilipatnam, Vishakapatnam and Masulipatnam earned out of above exports an amount worth annually of Rs. 50,000 to 1 lakh. During 1802-07 brisk trade was carried on by the Northern Ciracars\textsuperscript{197}.

Salt manufacture was monopolised by the company government. Illicit manufacture, sale and transportation were declared offence by the provision of regulation I of 1805\textsuperscript{198}. Goods from the Nellore district had a reputation of exported to Europe about 1808 by its own fleet. Ingeram and Coringa ports had a reputation of exporting fine timber. Guntur had also considerable sea trade. Cotton was the chief exportable commodity to the west from the Ceded districts\textsuperscript{199}. Bellary alone made $\frac{1}{2}$ million sterling exports of cotton at the end of 18\textsuperscript{th} century and the same was continued in the 19\textsuperscript{th}

\textsuperscript{195} River Godavary with three of its branches falls into Bay of Bengal at places called Coringa, Narsapur and Bendamurlanka. Incidentally, the three early and important factories of East India Company were built in these three ports. Generally shipbuilding and shipping was in progress here. Edward Thornton, \textit{A Gazetteer of the Territories under the Government of the East India Company and the Native States on the Continent of India}, Vol. IV, London, 1854, p.p. 250-52.
\textsuperscript{196} C.D. Maclean (Ed) \textit{Manual of the administration of the Madras Presidency}, Vol. II, New Delhi, 1885, p.564
\textsuperscript{197} Select Committee Report of the House of Commons on the Trade of the East India Company 1813, p.143; Revenue Consultations: Board of Revenue to Fort St. George, Jan. 1806.
\textsuperscript{198} Letter to the Judge & Magistrate, Rajamundry from Fort St. George 16\textsuperscript{th} Jan. 1812.
\textsuperscript{199} Review of Sea-borne Trade and Navigation of Madras Presidency for the year 1876-77, p. V.
century. The Madras Presidency had linkages with world markets\textsuperscript{200}. The Charter Act of 1813 was the year when the company lost its monopoly of trade and free trade was introduced. Andhra mainly remained as a mere supplier of raw materials to the industries in England and by the middle of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century the imports began to be thrice the value of exports. The heavy duties and the revenue extracting nature of the company led to the fall of Andhra trade. The colonial government in India placed further restrictive duties on exports from British India by the late 18\textsuperscript{th} to early 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries.

**Agriculture**

Agriculture constituted the main economic industry of 80 percent of people of Andhra. During 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries the ryot or peasant was oppressed by the Zamindars and polegars and all the times the company. There were various classes in the agriculture sector, the land lords, tenents and agricultural labourers. Generally, people who connected with the cultivable land other than the agricultural labourers, were around 50 percent of the entire population of the Madras presidency. The agricultural labourers were around 20 percent of the total agriculture population\textsuperscript{201}. The remainder were non-agricultural occupants.

In 1769 on the consolidation of authority over the Northern Circars, the Madras company government continued the traditional Zamindaries on payment of annual rents and the Zamindars of those estate meant their positions as landlords. In reality the Company had never treated them as landlords or chief proprietors\textsuperscript{202}. Actually the duty of zamindar as declared in his appointment or Sanad-I-Milkiyat-Istimrar was to supervise

\textsuperscript{200} T. Vijaya Kumar, *Agrarian Conditions in Andhra Under the British Rule 1858-1900*, Hyderabad, 1992, p.338
\textsuperscript{202} Fifth Report, Vol II, p.7.
the country kept under his charge to maintain law and justice to the Ryots, and provide them with advances of amount for cultivation and finally to collect revenue for the government.203

Land revenue or land tax continued to be the major source of government revenue. In 1841, it constituted 60% of the total British government’s revenue. The British adopted one of three land revenue systems: landlord-based systems (also known as zamindari or malguzari), individual cultivator based systems (ryotwari) or village-based systems (mahalwari). In the landlord areas, Landlords were in effect given property rights on the land, though some measures for protecting the rights of tenants. These Landlord systems were established mainly in Northern Circars of Andhra in Madras Presidency204. The Board of Revenue in 1799 proposed the introduction of the Bengal ‘Permanent Settlement,’ 1793, in Madras presidency. The Madras government accepted the Board’s proposal and in 1803 carried out its implementation, and declared landlords or Zamindars to be proprietors of their estates and cultivators their tenants. The Zamindars were required to pay fixed yearly Peshkash and if the Peshksh fell into arrears their estate could be attached and sold. The same pattern was implemented in ceded districts where Polygars were the ruling class205. Initially the polygars defied the system and opted to fight. Thomas Munro, the Principal collector of the Ceded Districts brought Polygars to order through military call. Eventually, the ryotwari system which had inroads in ceded districts, found its champion in Munro.

The views of Sir Thomas Munro had influenced the land revenue systems in whole provinces. For instance, Thomas Munro, after having convinced the Madras Board of Revenue of its superiority, converted the entire landlord areas into ryotwari areas after 1820. The landlord areas of coastal Andhra, which were under the Permanent Settlement, were converted to the ryotwari system only if the landlord defaulted on his revenue commitments. It was to say that there were still landlord areas here and there in Andhra. Actually speaking the Permanent settlement in landlord areas was neither acceptable to the ryots nor satisfactory to the government. Because most of the landlord areas were being left unsurveyed. The settlement was not done on classification of land. The landlords took to forceful collection of revenue. No relief was given to peasants during famines. It was reported that in Nellore district cattle was auctioned by the landlords to clear the revenue dues.

Given that their interests were probably marginalized, it was plausible that this created an environment where the political energies of the masses were directed more towards depriving the rich of their proprietary rights through land reforms, than towards trying to get more public welfare schemes (schools, tap water, electricity) from the state, and in the same tune the political energies of the rich were aimed at trying to ensure that the poor did not get their way. This was why the colonial state had more stake in the economic prosperity of non-landlord areas rather than in the landlord areas. It also meant that the state had more reason to invest in these areas in irrigation, railways, schools and other infrastructure. In this context, we should note that almost all canals constructed by

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the British were in non-landlord areas\textsuperscript{208}. If indeed these areas had better public goods when the British left, it is plausible that they could continue to have some advantage even now.

Company, on the other hand dealt severely with the default landlords of Peshkash. The jagir of Udayagiri in Nellore district was confiscated. Vassay Reddy zamindari yielding revenue of 60,000 a year was sold. Several zamindaries in Northern Circars were either sold or occupied by the company. Kurnool in Ceded districts became an immediate possession of company upon the disposition of the jagirdar in 1839. The ryotwari system in Ceded districts also proved a failure on the part of government. In 1808, village rents of triennial leases were adopted, and were exchanged for decennial leases in 1811. The settlement was made above half the gross produce. The result was arrears of revenue amounting in 1820 to Rs. 3 lakhs and a quarter while many of the renters were put in jail\textsuperscript{209}. The ryotwari settlement was then again resorted to, upon rates 25\%, lower than those of 1807 on wet and dry land and 33\%, lower on garden land\textsuperscript{210}. Since then, the principal measures of relief had been remission in payment, separate assessment in 1832, reduction of tax on well lands etc. In Nellore district revenue settlement was made at 55\% of gross produce and lasted in 1807-08 when it broke down under bad season. Again in 1822 the government reverted to ryotwari settlement with revenue rates based as usual on half the net produce\textsuperscript{211}. The excesses in land revenue threw Andhra cultivator into the clutches of moneylenders. The economic policy of the British thus proved disastrous to the people.

\textsuperscript{209} C.D. Maclean (Ed) \textit{Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency}, Vol. II, New Delhi, 1885,409-415
\textsuperscript{210} Nilamani Mukherjee, \textit{The Ryotwari system in Madras}, p.116
\textsuperscript{211} C.D. Maclean (Ed) \textit{Manual of the administration of the Madras Presidency}, p.416.
The defects and lapses in the revenue settlements and the revenue extracting nature of the company led to frequent visits of famines and bad seasons in Andhra\textsuperscript{212}. Of all the population, peasants experienced the dearth of food supply. This neglect of the peasant or more widely subaltern domain explains almost the memory of civil government which seemed to be wholly lost. Colonial rule in Andhra further weakened the peasants’ capacity to cope with natural disasters by enhancing taxes of cash rather than crops. Withholding of food grain by ryots and Komatis was a routine deed during the famine. When an Indian deputy collector visited famine affected villages of Cuddapah district, he was approached by the labour protestors with a plea to release grain. Yedavalli in Kurnool district was rich in grain but the ryots with held the grain\textsuperscript{213}. Madras presidency, the seat of great famines and one such, the 1833 Guntur famine affected 5 million people to an area of 38,000 sq. miles. In Guntur district alone 2 lakhs died out of the 5 lakh. Public works were taken up immediately to save people\textsuperscript{214}. About 1836, inhabitants at Ongole reminded us of men eating men. The same was almost repeated during the 1876-78 famine. This time the government charged high rates of revenue on Godavari and Krishna Delta separately against the rates on Ceded and Nellore Districts\textsuperscript{215}.

The conspicuous ability of Sir Arthur Cotton produced the Grand Anicut at Dowleswaram in the Godavary district of peninsular India. The Kurnool-Cuddapah Canal in the ceded districts, which took water from the Tungabhadra at Kurnool to Cuddapah

\textsuperscript{212} The ‘Akasavani’ of 15\textsuperscript{th} Oct. 1907 writes, ‘Famines were few in ancient India, but many in the British Rule’. Native Newspaper Reports (NPR), 1907, p.723.

\textsuperscript{213} David Arnold, \textit{Famine in Peasant Consciousness and Peasant Action: Madras 1876-8} in Ranjit Guha (ed), \textit{Subaltern Studies III}, Writings on South Asian History & Society, OUP.

\textsuperscript{214} Report of the Indian Famine Commission, Part I: famine Relief Commission of Inquiry of Indian Famines Appointed by the Govt. of India, 16\textsuperscript{th} May, 1878, p.p.10-11.

\textsuperscript{215} Report of the Administration of the Madras Presidency during the year 1880-81, Madras, 1881, p.12.
on the Pennar, 300 kilometres south, was a product of Cotton’s grand plan\textsuperscript{216}. The land revenue of Godavari District in 1843-44 was Rs. 17’25’841 and by 1898 the same increased to Rs.60,19,224 and the district occupied 2\textsuperscript{nd} place among 22 districts of Madras presidency on the basis of high returns of revenue\textsuperscript{217}. These public works though effective in irrigated areas, the non-irrigated and semi-irrigated areas fell prey to famines due to inadequate rains in a series of deficient monsoons. The failure of summer rains in 1876 was followed by famine that devastated two lakh sq.miles in Deccan and affected 19,400,000 people in Madras Presidency\textsuperscript{218}. Often 1876-78 famine was remarkable for poor harvests. David Arnold explores ‘a blight, a flood, a drought or a war might provide the immediate cause for a famine, but the underlying reasons lay deep in the social, economic and political subordination of the peasantry\textsuperscript{219}. In 1870 about a fifth of the Madras presidency lay under zamindari estates. However, most part of famine-affected area was under the ryotwari system. The famine brought landlord areas and non-landlord areas into direct subordination to the state to the exclusion of zamindars and other intermediaries. Another tenurial system prevailing since pre-colonial period and was resumed by the colonial government had been the Inamari system. Eric stokes guessed that the inamari villages endowed by local zamindars and polygars to kinsmen were resultant of certain unstable political conditions\textsuperscript{220}. For example, the rebellion of polygar of Uyyalawada, Narasimha Reddy in ceded districts on issue of hereditary rights of

\textsuperscript{219} David Arnold, \textit{Famine in Peasant Consciousness}, p.66
kattubandi inam, the government became more cautious in proceeding against imams\textsuperscript{221}. Baden Powell rather critically observed ‘a record of experiments in assessments, reductions and enhancements, changes in one direction and another following each other in some what bewildering order’\textsuperscript{222}. Later the government set a separate department of revenue settlement, headed by a director to bring order upon core principles of survey and settlement, which had been done for whole of Madras presidency till the end of 19\textsuperscript{th} century.

Under the constitution of independent India, states were granted the power to enact land reforms. Several states passed legislation in the early 1950s formally abolishing landlords and other intermediaries between the government and the cultivator. Several other laws have also been passed regarding tenancy reform, ceiling on land holdings and land consolidation measures by different states at different times. The experimental attitude of the government in agriculture bred multiple untoward consequences such as unending famines. The famines and the mass conversions to Christianity as a wide subject of discussion under the heading follows.

**Religious Life: -**

Religion was a sole inspiration of Indian society in the 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries. Abbe Dubois rather surprisingly writes about the essentially religious temperament of the Hindus in South India. Temples dedicated to various gods shrouded every village and town throughout the country. Most of them were monuments of antiquity. Robert Orme rightly said that the whole extent of India as the holy land to its inhabitants. Sectarianism


was a prominent character of the religious life of people\textsuperscript{223}. The orthodox cults of Siva and Vishnu found among the Hindus were further split into innumerable sub-castes. In South India the Brahmins mostly were Vaishnavites, while the devotees of Siva were mostly of Sudra castes. Siva has a consort in Kali, the mother-goddess and fertility deity, to whom women were a big follow-up. There were often cults of village goddesses to which the poorer sections of society offered worship besides the goddess of cholera and goddess of small pox. People of each caste had a specific goddess and methods of worship\textsuperscript{224}.

Mysticism and asceticism were always the characteristic of a Hindu. Among the Hindu masses the Gurus, Yogis, sadhus and Sanyasis were esteemed as saints. If one wanted to enter into the supreme knowledge of the gods, one must follow the teachings of the Guru. Vemana cult was a popular sect spread in Andhra during 18\textsuperscript{th} century. Vemana revolted against Hinduism, which was engrossed with castes, rituals and superstitions. Another Guru Pothuluri Veera Brahmam flourished in Andhra about the same period. His poems in simple Telugu are known till today as ‘Kalagnana Tatvalu’ and much popular among the Telugus, which aimed at defunct of debasing caste system, idolatry and degenerating superstitions. Like Hindus, Muslims were also strict adherents to their religion and were equally orthodox in the observance of sacred fasts. Many were even prepared to go on pilgrimage to Mecca. There were several orders of Sufis and fakirs, who practiced severe penances and ecstatic modes of worship. Religious pluralism was a universal phenomenon and was an accepted pattern of life in 19\textsuperscript{th} century Andhra. Both Hindus and Muslims gathered together for worship at Hindu Matts and Muslim Durghas.

\textsuperscript{223} V.P.S. Raghuvanshi, \textit{Indian Society in the Eighteenth Century}, p.111
\textsuperscript{224}J.E. Padfield (a missionary at Masulipatnam), \textit{The Hindu at Home: Being Sketches of Hindu Daily Life.}
Vemana and Pothuluri Veerabrahmam in Rayalaseema and Nasraiah, a Muslim Guru in Coastal Andhra had several followers of both religions\(^\text{225}\). These popular movements mostly involved by people of lower castes of sudras and as well the panchamas. They were led by a feeling of social up-gradation, which was unasserted by the orthodox Hinduism. This marked the beginning of a kind of protest in religious and social aspects of Andhra people. The literature in Telugu produced by the Gurus of these sects with its poetic simplicity communicated their ideas modified by the caste rigidities and raised the Sudra classes and the panchamas almost to a state of revolt. Upon these developments, the British missionaries intruded into the religious life of the Andhras.

It is generally accepted by many that India entered into modernity in the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century. For the first time historians testify, an alien civilization was breathed upon every detail of Indian life, changed its patterns and created new values. Western philosophy, education and science introduced reason into daily habits and enlightened the Indians of meaningless ancient customs. Ram Mohan Roy was such an enlightened native who accelerated public opinion through journalism and religious and social reform and initiated a reform movement, the Brahmo samaj. Andhra also experienced the same phenomenon. The first Telugu journal to be published was probably the *Satya Doota* (1835)\(^\text{226}\) by the Christian mission at Bellary. It was Veeresalingam Pantulu of Rajahmundry\(^\text{227}\), an ardent follower of Ram Mohan Roy and K.C. Sen, responsible for the growth of Brahmo samaj in Andhra\(^\text{228}\) and he was equally devoted to Telugu


\(^{227}\) Prof. V. Ramakrishna, *Social Reform in Andhra*, p.p.153-162.

\(^{228}\) D.V. Siva Rao, Article on ‘Sri Veresalingam’ in *A Telugu Daily Andhra Prabha*, Nov.17, 1968.
Journalism to fight against the meaningless and irrational social practices among the people for their social and political emancipation\textsuperscript{229}.

**Poineering and Progression of Christian Missions in Andhra :-**

Christian missionary activity in Andhra was initiated by the French Jesuit missionaries. The first missionary of this sect, Fr. Pierre Mauduit\textsuperscript{230}, dressed as Hindu sanyasi, accompanied by two Brahmin disciples, reached Punganuru of Chittoor district in 1701, where Chikkarayalu, the minor prince was ruling. This was the first mission center opened in 1704 among the Telugus with supportive historical records of information. The first converts were a widow and her three children and a young man of Velama community. In two years duration 270 caste people and nine Brahmins became Christians. The palegar of the place assured all help to them.

In consequence, Jesuit mission stations with Christian communities, also began in and around Anantapur where the Vaishnavite Velanati Reddy chiefs whose surname was Tumma of Alamur (Anantapur Dt.), and their clans, and the Sudra communities of Sale and Togata sects all embraced Christianity. Consequently, the rulers like Prasannappa Naidu, the palegar of Anantapur showed much interest in Christianity. As a result, the Christian communities of his area increased at the rate of two hundred per year. About 1733 there were ten thousand Christians inland of the northern border of Tamilnadu and Rayalaseema. In 1735 the Gandikota (Cuddapah Dt.) Kammas were attracted to Christianity\textsuperscript{231}. They were the first Kammas ever to become Christians following the

\textsuperscript{229} Indian Social Reformer, Vol XII, No. 43, Bombay, 1901-02.
\textsuperscript{230} Christianity in India, Vivekananda Kendra Prakashan, Vol. 8, No. 2, Madras, 1979, p.144.
\textsuperscript{231} Letters of the French Jesuits are of great use here. E.R. Hambye, History of Christianity in India, Vol. III, p.311-318
decision of their chieftain. By 1801 there were 1500 Christians in Kondavidu of Guntur Dt. Many Kamma and Reddy Christians were fairly spread in the districts of Chittoor, Anantapur, Cuddapah, Nellore, Kurnool and Guntur.

In the 18th century the Jesuit missionaries were active in the Northern Circars. Besides the native Christians, most of the Christians of Coastal towns, Vizag, Machilipatnam, Ellore etc., were of cosmopolitan origin and they were especially the Dutch, the French and the English and those of mixed races. According to Abbe Dubois report of 1802, the Christian communities that were formed in a large number at places like Visakhapatnam, Machilipatnam, Corangi and Chicacole consisted of both Indians and Eurasians.

The early Telugu Christians mostly belonged to two great influential communities, the Kammas and the Reddis. These two communities of Andhra did not expect any economic or social advantage on their conversion. Women were particularly noted for their religious zeal. The Jesuit missionaries were acclimatized to the local customs such as accepting vegetarian diet, conversing in local language, scholarly approach in Sanskrit language, participating in debates with Brahmins and rulers like polygars\textsuperscript{232}. The Jesuit missionaries maintained cordial relationship with the Nizam of Hyderabad. In Maratha army it was said that there were Christian sepoys in a large number.

Telugu Christians of the 18th century contributed much to Telugu Christian literature. A Niyogi Brahman convert Ananda, son of Thimmaiah, composed the book

\textsuperscript{232} \textit{Ibid}, p.p.327-330
'The Vedanta rasayanamu’. He was a high rank poet among the Telugus. Around 1852 C.P. Brown printed a Telugu Christian book ‘Nisthara Rathnakaramu’. Jesuit missionary J. Calmette wrote ‘Satyavedasara Sangrahamu’ in Sanskrit, which was later translated into Telugu. There were also historical writings such as ‘Tobia charithra’ written in connection with the conversion of Reddis. This was the work of Niyogi Brahmin poet Pingala Ellanarayudu at the request of one Rayapareddy. Mallela Pullamraju composed Gnana Chinthamani, which narrated the conversions of Gopureddy clan of Alamuru. A noteworthy linguistic work was the Telugu-Sanskrit-French dictionary by Fr. G.L. Coeurdoux. Some of the names of missionaries who associated themselves with Sanskrit were Manduit, Le Gac, Gargam etc\textsuperscript{233}. The letters of the Jesuit missionaries contained valuable information about the experiments concerning Astronomy, Geology, Mathematics, Geography etc. Fr. Le Gac amused the Polygar of Anantapur, Prassanappa Naidu, with scientific instruments such as sphere, a map of the world in two hemispheres etc\textsuperscript{234}. The descriptions of Gargan who travelled in Andhra in 1730 gave information about geological findings in Andhra, the quarries of Cumbum and the diamond mines of Terramala. After 1759 the Jesuits and their activity gradually declined due to Anglo-French rivalry.

Consequent to the fall of Srirangapatnam in 1799, the Madras Presidency was formed in the early years of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, in which the eleven districts of Andhra were integrated. About this time, a new wave called ‘Evangelicalism’ within Protestantism, swept Europe and America and gave birth to various missionary societies in England and America. These societies such as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), the

\textsuperscript{233} Ibid, p.338-345
\textsuperscript{234} Ibid, p.346-348.
London Missionary Society (LMS), the Church Missionary Society (CMS), American Baptist Missionary Society (ABMS), Godavari Delta Mission (GDM or the Brethren Movement) etc., set up their mission centers in all the eleven Telugu Districts. By the end of 19th century, there were more than twenty missionary societies in Andhra involved in evangelism and devoted to philanthropy in the fields of education and health.

**Famines And the Christian Missions:-**

During 1876-78 famine the Rayalaseema districts of Bellary, Cuddapah and Kurnool and the coastal district of Guntur suffered heavily. The distress in Bellary and Cuddapah were terrible. The people sold their cattle, houses and clothes to buy food and flocked naked and thronged into towns, then often to die by hundreds. London Missionary Society missionaries, Mr. Lewis in Bellary and Campbell in Cuddapah and Baptist missionaries, Clough in Ongole and Downie in Nellore ran the relief camps in their respective places. Mostly the Telugu districts, according to the 1871 census, suffered from an estimated loss of human life to 3.5 millions. The famine marked the beginning of a mass conversion by missionaries among Madiga and Mala untouchable labourers of these Telugu districts. There was an allegation that the material benefits

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239 Until 1880 there had been 23 caste Hindu converts i.e. 16 Brahmans, 6 non-Brahmins and 1 Muslim in Andhra. Upon mass conversions in the wake of famine, 1876-78, the overwhelming response was witnessed from untouchables, which is still a landmark in the evangelical history of South India. F.F. Gledstone, *The C.M.S. Telugu Mission*, Mysore, Undated, p.48.
offered by the missionaries drew many to conversion\textsuperscript{240}. However many of the famine converts remained Christians. The growth of Indian Christian community between the years 1851-1890, with emphasis on rate of increase, is given in the following table\textsuperscript{241}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Native Christians (Protestants)</th>
<th>Rate of Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>91,092</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>1,38,731</td>
<td>52.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>2,24,258</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>4,17,372</td>
<td>86.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>5,59,661</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since 1851 the many Malas and Madigas of Telugu districts living in villages expressed their readiness to renounce idol worship and embrace Christianity\textsuperscript{242}. During the 1876-78 famine the rate of increase in conversions was high, and this involved socio

\textsuperscript{240} Mark Laing, \textit{The Consequences of the 'Mass Movements': An Examinations of the Consequences of Mass Conversion to Protestant Christianity in India}, Indian Church History Review, XXXV/2, Dec. 2001, p.p.91-104. Mass alleged conversions to Christianity in SPG areas of S. India following distribution of famine relief funds were reported in 1878. Papers and Correspondence of Secretary, Madras Corresponding Committee of CMS 1878-1880-CMS/B/OMS/C I2 025/Acc.No.s 16-25 of the Birmingham University Library Archive, Birmingham. Conversions multiplied during famines. However, mass conversions were not always resultant of famines. Mr. Lewis, missionary at Bellary, gave relief to famine victims without distinction of caste or creed. In their gratitude many caste Hindus wished to become Christians, his invariable reply was that they should wait until the famine was over. He had a great fear of Rice Christians. His services were recognized beyond missionary circles. Sir Richard Temple, the Governor General too visited Bellary and interviewed Mr. Lewis. Richard Lovett, History of the London Missionary Society, p.p.101-02, ACTC Archives, Hyderabad.


\textsuperscript{242} Ibid, p.138
economic and religious issues. Malas and Madigas of Kurnool, Cuddapah and Nellore from village after village continued to accept Christianity in view of prolonged sufferings from years of famine. This is also evident from the death rate in comparison between famine years and normal years as given in the table below\textsuperscript{243}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>1874</th>
<th>1875</th>
<th>1876</th>
<th>1877</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 yr. Below</td>
<td>88,856</td>
<td>96,457</td>
<td>90,586</td>
<td>109,849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 12 yrs.</td>
<td>110,690</td>
<td>149,449</td>
<td>155,554</td>
<td>405,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 – 50 yrs</td>
<td>172,011</td>
<td>231,661</td>
<td>262,824</td>
<td>635,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50 yrs</td>
<td>149,772</td>
<td>163,693</td>
<td>171,460</td>
<td>405,273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Brahmins suffered very little from the famine in comparison to low castes and therefore many of the low castes responded to Mass conversions (movement) positively as appended in 1881-census year in the former table above. About 3/5 of the Christians in India were in Madras Presidency and the Christians’ ratio in every ten thousand was 228 in the Presidency\textsuperscript{244}. However in 1890, the rate of increase in the population may be seen to have come down. But the growth rate of Christian population

\textsuperscript{243} Report of the Administration of the Madras Presidency during the years 1877-78, Madras, 1879, p.p.74-75
in the Presidency was tremendous at the dawn of 20th century as shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population (All Religions)</th>
<th>Percentage of Increase</th>
<th>Christian Population (Catholic, Protestant)</th>
<th>Percentage of Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>31,597,872</td>
<td></td>
<td>545,120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>38,623,066</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>1,038,854</td>
<td>90.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The census years between 1901 and 1931 shows again a steady growth in the Christian population on par with other major religions. (See Appendix II).

**Education:**

About South India, Dubois: ‘in large towns and in the precincts of some of the more important temples schools were common, and Brahmins imparted instruction, some gratuitously and others for payment’. In Hindu pathasalas of Madras presidency known as ‘Pyal schools’, the Vedas, Upanishads, Sanskrit language and grammar were taught where as in Muslim Madrasas Persian, Arabic Gullistan and Bostan of Sadi were taught. However, in all respects this learning was not scientific and rational and was on the decline. At this instance, Munro, the governor of Madras issued a minute to enquire

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into the condition of native education and asked accordingly the reports of the district
collectors. Campbell, the collector of Bellary writes, ‘I am sorry to state that this is
ascribable to the gradual, but general impoverishment of the country. The means of
manufacturing classes have been of late years greatly diminished by the introduction of
our own European manufactures in lieu of the Indian cotton fabrics…Many of our
troops… affected the demand for grain…The greater part of the middle and lower classes
of the people are now unable to defray the expenses incident upon the education of their
offspring especially when there was no demand of their education by the state.  

Munro’s enquiry resulted in the setting up of a Board of Public Instruction in
1826. Consequently, a Court of Directors permitted to start 14 district schools and 18
Taluk schools and a central school at Madras with an annual grant of Rs.50000, out of
which a sum little more than the half was practically spent on education. In the year 1835,
the government passed a resolution declaring that all educational funds should be
expended only to impart western education through the medium of English to produce
petty baboos to work in the company jobs. Subsequently in the second half of 19th
century greater progress in English education due to the efforts of missionary agencies to
open Anglo-Vernacular schools in many parts of Andhra was witnessed. A large
number of Anglo-Vernacular schools and provincial schools were opened at places like
Rajamundry, Kakinada, Guntur, Bellary etc. Here, special mention of the establishment

247 Ibid, p.p.16-18. Cornwallis implemented imperial policies instead of limited or conservative policies and
introduced British principles and institutions. Cornwallis lacked faith and trusts in the Indian governmental
institutions and Anglicized the Indian administration. George D. Bearce, British Attitudes Towards India,
249 Ibid. Ragged schools or Sunday schools were introduced to the children of the poor at industrial areas in
England, which was called the Madras system in England.
250 Dr.K.Veerabhadrarao, Influence of English on Telugu Literature (Telugu Volume), Secunderabad, 1960,
p.220.
of Rate schools at Narsapur, Palcole, Penugonda and Achanta (Godavary)\textsuperscript{251} may also be made as they attracted the urban and rural landed gentry to educate their children in western learning\textsuperscript{252}.

The Godavari Rate schools continued beyond 1862 with a record opening of ninety-nine such schools\textsuperscript{253} with 2000 inmates in the district\textsuperscript{254}. In 1877, one of the first grade government colleges was established in Rajamundry. The Protestant missionaries of the area played an important role in the spread of education on the same lines as that of the government. This progress in education and the wealthy land ownership due to Godavari anicut\textsuperscript{255} worked together to foster the growth of townships and also western ideas and culture in the district. The irrigation facilities provided by the construction of anicuts on Krishna and Godavari Rivers in 1840s and 1850s by Sir Arthur Cotton made the Krishna and Godavari deltas fertile and differentiated them from other parts due to rising grain prices, improvement in transport facilities, completion of irrigation works, introduction of commercial crops, extension of cultivation, and expansion of agricultural market. The general economic prosperity of the delta region afforded the establishment of schools and colleges, resulted in the spread of education and produced a western educated middle class\textsuperscript{256}.

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{251} J. Mangamma, \textit{The Rate Schools of Godavari}, State Archives, Hyderabad, 1963.
\bibitem{253} These schools are Rate schools because they were partly supported by the native subscriptions, but their establishment was mainly due to the personal influence and aid of English officials. Report of the Administration of the Madras Presidency During the year 1875-76, Madras, 1877, p.358.
\bibitem{254} In 1870-71 there were only 48 Rate schools with 877 pupils in Godavari district. Report on the Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency for the year 1870-71, p.19. This speaks the disinterest among the government officials to literate the natives.
\bibitem{256} D.A. Washbrook, \textit{The Emergence of Provincial Politics 1870-1920}, Vikas publishing house, New Delhi, 1977, p.p.68-92
\end{thebibliography}
produced by the schools of various Andhra districts in Madras presidency starting from 1867 till the end of 19th century, among which Godavari stood first257 and it was needless to say that this was due to reaping the fruit of constructed anicut across the mighty Godavari River by the engineering marvel of Sir Arthur Cotton who pioneered the Brethren Movement in Andhra.

**Birth of Journalism:**

The new education on Western lines and Christianity in the back burn nurtured revolutionary ideas in the minds of people of Andhra in general and Godavari in particular. Every branch of English education shocked Hindu prejudices. Sensible natives declared that if English secular instruction continued Hinduism would perish258. Certainly English secular education infused a rational outlook and brought change among the Andhra students to deprecate their age-old traditions, beliefs and practices259. One section of these students came into direct contact with their Christian teachers who exposed the evils and defects in the socio-religious conditions of Hindu society which resulted in their eventual conversion to Christianity. The other category of students just like those reformers such as Kandukuri Veeresalingam Pantulu of Rajamundry260 were very much influenced by Western education and Christian ethics, renounced idol worship, caste system and were led by a zeal to reform the society and religion in Andhra, contributing to the steady growth of journalism in the delta. Rajamundry, Cocanada, Bezawada, Machilipatnam, Amalapuram, Narasapuram etc. became centers of

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257 Reports of Director of Public Instructions in the Madras Presidency, for the Years 1867-68 (Madras, 1868) and 1898-99 (Madras, 1899)
259 Prof. V. Ramakrishna, *Social Reform in Andhra*, p.56; S.N. Banerjea, *A Nation in Making*, Calcutta, 1925, p.308
260 Prof. V. Ramakrishna, *Social Reform in Andhra*, p.67
journalism spreading progressive and rational ideas. One revolutionary change in this period was the spread of emancipatory traits among women and the outcastes. Separate schools for girls were started by the missionary and non-missionary agencies particularly in Godavari area, at places like Kakinada, Dowleswaram and Rajamundry and attempt was also made to educate the lower classes of sudras and outcastes who, in a large number were converted to Christianity. The new religion promised an all round development of their spiritual, social and economic resources. The ‘Resources’ here must be widely understood to include the very core word ‘spiritual’ besides social and material, which provided a diverse aspect of one changing situation that enabled the converts to make a new meaning of their lives and to forge new identities and roles of evincing a middle path between tradition and modernity. Here conversion must not just be seen as an outward change of religion or allegiance out of materialist interest but demanded a root change in human nature unto ‘doing and being good’ which was vividly highlighted by the Protestant ethic, and more emphatically brought in to force the practices of early Christians of the 1st century by the Brethren missionaries who pioneered the Godavary mission. St. Paul admonished his 1st century converts saying ‘if a man will not work, he shall not eat’ and ‘to work with quietness and eat their own


263 Mrs. J. N. Macrea (1876-1926), a Brethren missionary introduced the most promising skills in handicrafts to the native women of Godavary. The women in thousands survived by these skilled craft products of export quality.

bread’. (II Thess. 3:10-12). Envisioned by scriptural texts and persuasive notions of early Christianity the Brethren missionaries carried on the task of mission work in Andhra.

Initially the Brethren movement had originated in the more enlightened Godavary district (Narsapur and Palcole 1837) of Coastal Andhra (Northern Circars) with a gross missiological intensity and with humble beginnings at Chittoor (1837) of Rayalaseema. These early mission stations of the Brethren were the first of their kind in the entire country, founded by Anthony Norris Groves, the pioneer overseas Brethren missionary and the founder of Brethren Movement in the world. Consecutively many Brethren missionaries worked in Andhra (Appendix V). Generally the churches planted by these missionaries have been called the New Testament or 1st century (of Christian Era) Pattern Assemblies and these at present (2001) number around 2,200 in the entire country with an estimated membership of 1,50,000. So great was the influence of this movement in the world as well as in Andhra that today there are churches connected with the Brethren Movement in over 100 countries and several major and minor movements which has sprung around the world and in Andhra as well, bear testimony to this. This movement had a sweeping effect exclusively in Andhra, as there are about 900 assemblies located in almost every town and in most villages, with an estimated membership of 80,000. These assemblies, since early 19th century, made the scriptures their guide and pattern, and have been entirely free from traditionalism, formalism and worldliness as they have always been away from Ritualism. Unlike the Anglican missionaries the Brethren sect

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265 Andrew Porter, Religion Versus Empire? p.194
266 The number of Assemblies in India are in excess the total number of assemblies in U.K, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand put together.
267 Directory of Brethren Assemblies in India (2001); Ithihas, Vol.XVIII-1, Jan-June 1992, p.56. Godavari Delta Assemblies (Coastal Andhra) constitute about 300 plus Assemblies and other parts of Andhra constitute about 600 Assemblies
concentrated on personal salvation rather than mass conversions\textsuperscript{268}. As a result personal holiness was increasingly emphasized among the adherants. The movement was exemplified by the rise of a social Gospel for breaking the barriers of caste, colour, creed and regionalism among converts. The convocations, Gospel campaigns and the Bible schools held by the missionaries\textsuperscript{269} brought people of all communities from various corners of India together under one roof, entombed social exclusivism and inaugurated social mobility and equality, which were exclusively marked by inter state and inter caste marriages and new relationships. The equality and the egalitarianism were clearly on the agenda of these assemblies and giving quarter to discriminations on the basis of the clergy and the laity and on caste has been a myth among the Brethren. The Brethren assemblies in Andhra, Kerala and elsewhere in India and the Hindu Church (a church in an Indianised form) in Tamilnadu did not ‘accept Christianity in a cow-borne obedience, as the upper caste nationalists claimed, but indeed conciously and deliberately moved away from one set of religious symbolism, now percieved as sectarian and unjust, to another, again percieved as universal and egalitarian and hence suitable for the situation’\textsuperscript{270}. What the author, Aloysius desired to communicate in the above statement was that the Bretheren Church, was not merely a mission but rather a movement.


\textsuperscript{269} Narsapur and Coimbatore conventions held once in a year. Echoes of Service (Brethren Magazine): A Record of Labour of Missionaries in Many lands, No.435, August-Part I, 1899, p.227; About 12000 people attended the Narsapur crusade of 1959. Tatford, \textit{The Challenge of India}, Echoes of Service,1883, p.124.