CHAPTER VII: TWO MICRO STUDIES OF BRETHREN MOVEMENT IN ANDHRA

We have seen in previous chapters that the Brethren missionaries worked differently and had their own ethos, objectives and operational styles. Rev. Sherring M.A., the Church Missionary Society missionary of Benares rightly differentiate them of their actions from other missionaries: ‘connected with no home society, but thriving on their own resources with enthusiasm, the mission carried on benevolent enterprise in a quiet and unobtrusive manner’\textsuperscript{1}. They also distanced themselves from western influences\textsuperscript{2} as is evident from individual study of two of their missionaries 1. Anthony Norris Groves 2. Silas Fowler Fox.

ANTHONY NORRIS GROVES (1795-1853): -

The foremost and early Brethren missionary Anthony Norris Groves stepped into mission arena with a vision of reforming mission work overseas and inaugurated in the modern world, the age of ‘Faith Missions’, which had made little or no progress for fifteen successive centuries since the early Apostolic practice.\textsuperscript{3}

A.N. Groves disapproved of the role of missionary society for mission, followed ‘faith in the Providence’ policy rather to fund raising programmes, preferred evangelism by lay or native preachers as well as Europeans in the place of ordained clergyman, and

\textsuperscript{1} Rev. Sherring M.A., \textit{The History of Protestant Missions in India 1706-1871}, London, 1875, p.452.
\textsuperscript{2} Porter, \textit{Religion Versus Empire}, p.324.
delinked western culture with Christianity on the policy of simplicity. His great expectation was Christ’s millennium rule on earth. He formulated ‘persuasive’ new ideas in his famous booklet ‘Christian Devotedness’ (1825). Its publication in India impacted even Alexander Duff and the architect engineer of Godavari Anicut in Andhra, General Arthur Cotton and many in India and abroad. General Arthur Cotton greatly moved by this simple literature, travelled to Baghdad and invited him to India. The book advocated complete surrender of self and money to Christ, and to evangelize without possessions, but with faith in God alone. This was derived from Jesus, his Apostles and the Christianity of earlier centuries. Groves’ motto was ‘labour hard, consume little, give much, and all to God’. Groves, who was a dentist prior to missionary call, gave away all property, retaining only a small part to cover his personal and domestic needs. These ideological convictions of Groves thoroughly contradicted the principle of ‘Christianity, commerce and civilization’ of Anglican and other denominational missionaries and turned Weber’s Protestant ethic of capitalism upside down.

Anthony Norris Groves was born on 1st February 1795 in Newton Valence, Hampshire, England. His father, a well to do businessman, had educated him in dentistry, so, in his 19th year, he earned an income of 1500 Pounds a year from his practice at Plymouth. He had also studied Chemistry and acquired skill in surgery besides his eloquence in the philosophies of Kant, Hegel and Schleiermacher. As a student, Groves was influenced by two Evangelicals, Joseph Richards and Thomas Hitchins, whose

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5 Dr. Duff speaks of his first glow of devotedness, as having arisen from this booklet. A Copy of *Christian Devotedness* re-printed at the Church Mission Press, Madras, 1828 and issued by the CMS in India.
6 *Indian Church History Review*, Bangalore, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, June, 1984, p.59
teaching led him to the knowledge of Christ. He married Mary Bethia Thompson in 1816 and moved his practice to Exeter. He and his wife together decided first to distribute 1/10 of their income, later, a quarter and later most of it, regularly among the poor in the district. These convictions were very soon embodied in his ‘Christian Devotedness’.

Mr. & Mrs. Groves joined Church Missionary Society in order to serve in Persia as missionaries. The Trinity College at Dublin granted examinations to those seeking Anglican ordination to become missionaries or clergy. Groves left his dentistry practice into the hands of his nephew and frequently went to Dublin to pursue examinations. There he became acquainted with many sincere Christians like J.G. Bellet, J.N. Darby, Dr. Cronin, Lord Congleton etc., who were also part of the Brethren movement.

Abandoning his plans for Church Missionary Society ordination and education in language study of Arabic, he withdrew from the Church Missionary Society and in June 1829 set out as a free-lance missionary, travelling with his family of four, his wife, two sons and he to St Peters burg and then overland to Baghdad. Unlike the denominational missionaries, he was not sent by a mission society with fabulous funds to guarantee secure communication and regular salary but by simple reason that he believed God. Groves became pioneer of pioneers as he chose Arab-speaking world. So far, the missionary societies existed prior to him, were functioning at the borders of the Islamic world. But he planted his own at Baghdad, the heart of Islam to become the first Protestant mission.

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9 CMS Minutes: G/C/Acc.1 (20th Feb. 1827), No.9. Library Archive, University of Birmingham, transcribed in CMS Minutes (20 May 1825) no.7 p.517
10 CMS Minutes of the corresponding committee: G/C/Acc.1 (9 Aug 1825) no. 8, p.p.9-10; CMS Archive, G/C/Acc.3 (14March 1826)
11 Henry Martyn, who had been a chaplain in the East India Company serving at Dinapore and Cawnpore since 1805 translated the New Testament into Urdu Persian and Arabic. He decided to travel through
in isolated and unfamiliar territory, as far as possible beyond any European influence or
colonial rule. He also tended to plant early apostolic type church system instead of
western pattern and never advocated the British Christianity.

Some apparently useful contacts were made in Baghdad through Groves’s
medical work as well as evangelism. He conducted cataract operations to several people
but he rarely asked fee and never considered his practice altogether a source of income. He
disapproved of missionary educational work and wrote ‘I think direct preaching to the
natives a much higher and more noble work….’. The educational programmes meant
ultimately the involvement of government control of money and its syllabi robbed
missionaries of independence. This perspective drove Groves to an anti-colonial state
position and to achieve nobleness of missionary character.

During the three years duration of the Groves’ sojourn in Baghdad, the plague
epidemic decimated the local population, including Groves’ wife and little daughter. Meanwhile, a missionary party consisted of Dr. Cronin, Lord Congleton (Parnell) (would
be member of House of Lords), an Oxford Professor, Francis Newman, the younger
brother of the founder of Oxford movement (1833), John Henry Newman etc., who
joined Groves as new Brethren missionaries. The Pasha of Baghdad had once offered the
post of doctor to Dr. Cronin but he politely rejected the offer. A few converts—an orphan

Persia, Damascus and Arabia on his way to England hoping to improve his translations of Persian and
Arabic. But he died in 1812 at Tokat in Persia and thus his mission to Arab speaking world ended in no
time. After 18years about 1830, Anthony Norris Groves entered Arab mission field at Baghdad to pioneer it.
12 Journal of a Residence at Baghdad, 1830-31 (London 1832) p.78. Journals, which Groves kept when
travelling to Persia and during his stay in Baghdad - Such Journals were published in London in 1831 and
1832. He put into practice the Christian Devotedness (1825). He recorded his experiences in his journal
that ‘our little stock will last us…two months longer, and then we know not whence we are to be supplied,
but the Lord does not allow us anxious…’
13 Memoir of the Late Anthony Norris Groves by His Widow, II ed., Nisbet, 1857, p.p.326-327
girl Harnie, a young man Serkies, an Armenian lady (would be wife of Lord Congleton) and Mokayel, a Lebanese Arab, were acquired in Baghdad.

In April 1833, Sir Arthur Cotton invited Groves to India, and he along with Cotton and Mokayel reached Bombay in July 1833. Groves also wanted a Brethren presence in Mesopotamia and Mokayel evangelised in Mesopotamia, as Groves had desired.

Groves first travelled to Tinnevelly (S. India) to help a German missionary Rhenius in his difficulties with Church Missionary Society at the context of indigenous leadership. Here Groves met J.C. Arulappan. Arulappan soon became Groves’ translator. A close father and son relationship grew between them. Groves travelled northward as far as Benares, Patna and Calcutta, starting from Madras. During his stay in the North he was moved at seeing high trafficking of baby girls by poor mothers and gathering 40 such girls, he started an orphanage at Sonamukhi. Back to Calcutta, he met the most celebrated missionary, Dr. Alexander Duff, who some time later fell seriously ill and only survived under watchful nursing by Groves himself. Groves laid an indelible

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16 Groves supported the native leadership as he says ‘I think…our residence in India has been the means of setting this mode of ministry among the native Christians…The Europeans on the other hand, loves to keep the native in subjection and himself in the place of rule…’ Here he was critical at racist and politics of power maintained by the English missionary circles as they were the ruling class. In this connection, Groves was always in allegiance with German missionaries like Rhenius, Gundert etc. Rhenius was influenced by Brethren views. This caused hue and cry among CMS circles. CMS-Book of proceedings 1831-35, Vol. V, Tinnevelly xiii, Series of letters, UTC Archives, Bangalore, pp.354-56.
impression upon Dr. Duff. Duff was doubly indebted to Groves: for care and for his booklet, *Christian Devotedness*.

In August 1834, having completed fourteen-month missionary journey, Groves left Calcutta by ship for England where he married a second time and gathered another missionary party from Germany, Switzerland and England. He returned with them to India in July 1836. He preferred Madras Presidency to start his mission stations because he thought that the southerners were more receptive to the Gospel. Moreover, Rhenius, now an independent missionary, was also in the South. His two sons, Dr. Cronin, Mrs & Mr. Lord Congleton (Parnell), the Baghdad converts, Harnie and Serkies, with his whole missionary band of 17 men and women settled in Madras. For orphanage work at Sonamukhi in Bengal Groves deployed Brice and Kalberer. The Brethren movement, by 1836, had become as strong in India as it was in England in 1826. In May Lord Congleton moved to Pulicat (Present Nellore District, A.P.) getting on his missionary work. In August the Beers and Bowdens left for Machilipatnam (Present Krishna district, A.P) accompanied by Congleton. Beer and Bowden proceeded further east to open their

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17 Duff expressed thus, ‘Never can I forget his earnest, beaming countenance and suffused eyes when pouring out his soul into the responding souls of a class of native youths on the theme of salvation! The image of it is as vividly before my mind’s eye now as if it were an occurrence of yesterday’. C.F. Timothy Stunt, *Turning the World Upside Down: A Century of Missionary Endeavour*, Echoes, U.K., 1973, p.23


20 After Rhenius left CMS, the CMS circles at Madras feared at the possibility of Mr. Cogleton (Parnell) and Dr. Cronin might start the Brethren sect at Tinnevelly. CMS/B/OMS/C 12, 0253, University of Birmingham Repository, Document No.2 out of 35 papers received by CMS in Jan.1836, contains references to this. If Lord Cogleton and Dr. Cronin were onward of their task, the Brethren Movement would have been massive in influence in S.India in the earlier days itself, if not foiled by the CMS missionaries.

base at Narsapur, Palkol etc (see previous chapter). Dr. Cronin went as far as Kerala and stayed at Calicut preaching and teaching the Scriptures.

Groves used his medical training and skills among the Europeans as well as the natives to meet the expenses of his missionary band. Societal missionary circles in India, with their interpretation of the Gospels, spread malicious rumour about Groves and the Brethren movement. Groves was convinced that Europeans and especially Indian converts should only acknowledge the life of faith in the Providence and the indigenous church should only be dependent upon this principle but not a subjection to European missionaries. He thus desired a universal society and equality of human beings without any distinctions of race, colour or country.

He thus demanded that the foreign missionary societies should not hold control over the native churches through their resident workers. He therefore pointed at resident missionaries who were executing power over the natives, as they were the ruling group. He condemned the union of church and state as unscriptural and it was implicit in his ideas that the state principles would not judge the church principles. Hence, the general missionary attitude contrasted between the developed west and the primitive orient in the context of culture and religion. In essence, it was the general missionary imperative to promote the colonial agenda of superiority of Christian civilization, a brainchild of Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson. Venn and Anderson formula was no contextualization or indigenisation but an effort for neo-colonization of native churches.

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23 C.F. Timothy Stunt, Turning the World Upside Down, p. 22
24 Memoir, p.393. He argues that, if the native churches be not strengthened by this principle, the political changes of an hour may sweep away the present form of things, so far as it depends on Europeans, and leave not a trace behind
25 Henry Venn, secretary of CMS and Rufus Anderson, Secretary of American board of Commissars for Foreign Missions are known for formulating the ‘Three-Self’ formula for establishing indigenous churches
Groves was perfectly conscious of this Venn-Anderson formula (1841 onwards) and he took a strong anti-colonial approach, stressing that the societies were not needed to carry on very extensive missionary work. He called the native churches or assemblies as missions by themselves and vice versa. (Churches are Missions and Missions are Churches). Since he was an advocate of the pre-millennial view of Christ’s rule on earth, he believed that civilization was a positive hindrance to the missionary from the very comforts it teaches to raise a civilized nation rather than a holy church. He was also convinced on seeing that ‘the missionary labour of India, as carried by Europeans, is altogether above the natives…(no lasting impression could be made) till they mix with them in a way that is not now attempted…” Groves, therefore, envisaged in India such spheres like indigenous, self supporting, self governing and self propagating churches only under the considerations of local believers in the light of scriptures, and not by subjection to foreign mission or resident missionary. Therefore, Groves can rightly be called the pioneer of the national or indigenous church in India.

His call to Christian workers of India of the importance of establishing Biblical Indian churches instead of imposing foreign denominations where they had no right to be, was an urgent one. He and his missionary group planted home churches of the apostolic days in several places of Madras Presidency, which required no church building for

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28 Ibid, p271

29 Memoir, p.280
worship nor ordained clergymen to serve Lord’s Supper, no stipulated salary for preaching, more independent from missionary societies and boards and all the more egalitarian in appeal. Anglican missionaries in India observed the expansion of the Brethren assemblies on these lines with astonishment and dislike. Their malicious gossip forced Groves to leave Madras for Chittoor in 1837, which soon became his center of activity. Moreover, Groves realized that his native converts lost material support of money and society upon conversion and they had to be provided for. He acquired land in Chittoor and commenced cultivation of silk followed by sugar industry, economic activities which sustained not just his and his followers’ evangelical efforts but also many poor children.

The historical, topographical and demographical picture of Chittoor area are recorded in James Mill’s account, Eastwick’s Hand Book (1859) and other census report accounts conveying the Groves’ Chittoor. Chittoor was formerly a private estate of the zamindars of Arcot family. However once a formidable enemy of the English, Hyder Ali, died at Chittur in December 1781, instantaneously the British troops under Sir Eyre Coote occupied Chittoor and this incident brightened the prospects of the English in South India. Coming to the topography, the then Chittur Taluk was 671 sq. miles in

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30 Church Missionary Intelligencer, August 1860 and February 1861; Church Missionary Recorder, June 1860; Indian Watchman, October 1860.
31 Groves was looked as revolutionary to other missionaries amongst whom he worked. They were not ready to accept his criticism, excluded from their circles and branded him and his fellow missionaries as greatest enemies the Church of England ever had in India. C.F. Timothy Stunt, Turning the World Upside Down, p.23.
32 ‘Chiru’ in Telugu means small and ‘Voor’ means town. Chittoor was a chief town at a distance of 98 miles from Madras and was head quarters for North Arcot District till 1911. The Madras Presidency comprises several distinct linguistic divisions, but about five-sixths of the people use the Telogoo language, which is spoken from Vizagapatam to North Arcot. (At present Chittoor is a Southern District going by the same name in A.P), Henry Waterfield, Memorandum on the Census of British India 1871-72 Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1875, p. 20; Edward Eastwick, Hand Book for India, Part I- Madras Presidency, John Murray, London, 1859, p. 15.
area and had the lowest density of population that was 314 persons per square mile as per the Census of 1901, which contains a large area of forest and has a rainfall of only 65 inches\textsuperscript{34}. Chittur, which was the capital of North Arcot District, inasmuch as it was the residence of the chief civil functionaries such as District Collector and a Judge as it contained the "Subordinate Court" and "Civil Court," which later became a Court of Appeal, substituted by Art. VII. Of 1843, of the Government of India, for the one Provincial Court, which formerly existed here. About 200 Sepoys' lane was there, and both the civil and military officers resided in commodious houses on the South East and South West sides, in compounds thickly planted with trees\textsuperscript{35}. 'Chittur lies in a valley said to be 1,100 feet above the sea, shut in on all sides but the East by hills composed of coarse granite, gneiss and greywacke, and veined occasionally with iron ore. The native town is ill drained, and the exhalations make it very unhealthy. Elevated a little above it is the lower fort, containing the old palace of the former Paligars or chiefs of the place, and a reservoir supplied from a tank above with a perpetual stream of fine water. From this is the ascent of the Drug, or upper fort, under six successive gateways, at different heights, and traversing a labyrinth of fortifications, all of solid masonry, and winding irregularly up from rock to rock, to the summit. The ascent is partly by steps and partly by almost superficial notches, cut in the steep and smooth surface of the rock, and to be scaled only with great difficulty. The fort contains two beautiful tanks and various temples, well sunk in the rocks. There is not much historical interest about Chittur\textsuperscript{36}.

\textsuperscript{34} H.H. Risley and E.A. Gait, \textit{Report on the Census of India 1901}, Calcutta, Superintendent of Government Printing, 1903, p. 20. However, the density of population was high in comparison to 226 persons per sq.mile on average at Madras presidency in 1871 census. Henry Waterfield, \textit{Memorandum on the Census of British India 1871-72}, p.6.
\textsuperscript{35}Edward Eastwick, \textit{Hand Book for India}, Part I, p.45
\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Ibid} p.46.
This was the topographical picture of Chittoor town described by Edward Eastwick’s Hand Book (1859) and was nearly the same in the times of A.N. Groves as he lived there till his last breath in 1853.

Arriving to demographical details of the area, Chittoor taluk had 460 villages with a total of 30,227 habitations, which were mostly resided by Telugu peasantry. The census of 1881, reports that the population of Chittoor town was 5809, namely 4720 Hindus, 1026 Muslims and 63 Christians. The town possessed an English church with a native mission chapel, a Dispensary and a Vernacular school attached to it, which were formerly held by A.N. Groves and later ceded to American Arcot mission on his death in 1853\(^{37}\).

There was a lot of enthusiasm in the Telugu districts of the early nineteenth century for English education, but as already noted, state initiative in the field of education was minimal. There was only limited private European initiative, sometimes from individual Company officers and sometimes from individual missionaries, in setting up English schools. Even though schools never were in Groves’ plan and he never looked on this agency as a substitute for evangelism, yet he rather reluctantly commenced a boarding school for orphaned boys and girls in 1837 who took asylum in his home. Some natives of Chittoor joined their children in the school out of interest in English education. Mrs. Harriot Groves and Julie Dubois, a lady missionary and would be wife of later Malayalam linguist and the close missionary associate of Groves at Chittoor, Hermann Gundert, taught in the Anglo-Vernacular school. People in the villages around Chittoor welcomed Gundert who was 24 in 1838 and was undoubted genius in vernaculars, to start primary schools, whereas he preferred doing evangelism on a bullock cart in the

surrounding villages rather than education. Groves also preached simultaneously with some native converts.

He travelled for several hundreds of miles, over several days and after visiting several villages and thousands of individuals, ended his missionary tour. Groves trained several effective Indian Christian leaders like Arulappan, Andrew, James, Yesadian etc. These co-workers and successors also undertook extensive missionary tours, which kept alive the Brethren movement in the area even after his death. The Scudders of American Arcot mission who succeeded Groves at Chittoor, were greatly benefited by the services of these Indian Christians. By thus hand picking Indian Christians, Groves put into place a genuinely indigenous Church. Groves states that the Church denomination born in one country had no right at all to exist in another country. Carey’s successors, the Baptists missionaries set up Baptist Churches, the Anglicans, the Methodists etc., established their own churches in India as well. Groves’ fundamental concern was to mobilize manpower for the gospel and he was not primarily concerned with labels and affiliations. In Chittoor, the Anglicans and Non-conformists who came into his fold formed an informal fellowship like the movement in England. He encouraged similar groups to develop in the neighboring towns of Chittoor and over the years, which grew into several indigenous and independent assemblies.

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38 *American Arcot Mission Itinerary Book* from Dec 17th 1862 to July 16th 1868: Details of Tours and Services conducted with numbers of villages and individuals visited. For example it was recorded that the 1864 missionary tour was lasted for 17 days, preached 403 times at 248 places in 178 villages to 8832 persons, distributed 1612 books and tracts and returned to Chittoor. (1864 p.p 97,101 and 130).

Groves’ co-missionary Gundert married Julie Dubois, and the new couple left Chittoor for a new mission work in Kerala. Early in 1853 A.N. Groves was seriously ill. His wife Harriet Groves hurriedly packed, keeping the school and the mission in the hands of two native responsible brethren and the followers of Groves, Andrew and Yesadian while she left for England. Soon after the death of Groves, the mission was delivered to the American Arcot Missionaries along with his church congregation, which numbered more than 100 Christians. Andrew and Yesadian who were trained and devout evangelists under the service of A.N. Groves continued as usual in the new mission viz., Andrew as an itinerant evangelist and Yesadian as a schoolmaster of the vernacular school. Groves’ congregation of converts and adherents is given in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Communicants or Native workers</th>
<th>Baptized Christians</th>
<th>Adherants or Unbaptized Christians</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One significant issue relating to Groves’ ecclesiastical ideas was his being convinced of rejecting war. His biographer G.H. Lang writes: ‘It was a usual thing for

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40 After leaving Chittoor, Gundert followed Groves’ example in attempting to form Indian churches independent of Episcopal and Governmental control and he followed the progress of the Brethren movement with interest. *Ibid* p.225.

41 *First Annual Report* of the American Arcot Mission, 1853, UTC Archives, Bangalore, p.4

army and navy officers to resign their commission upon conversion among Brethren…

An early instance of a member of the Plymouth Brethren assembly, Percy Francis Hall was a naval officer who had resigned his commission on conscientious grounds. Hence high percentage of ex-military officers were attached to the early Brethren. Groves himself observed, ‘not particular precepts only but the general spirit of the New Testament I felt to be irreconcilable with a soldier’s duty and the whole system of warfare’. Therefore he spent so much time ministering to soldiers connected with the Anglican chaplaincies in Madras and sepoy lanes in Chittoor. In the military establishment at Madras he spoke to the soldiers that the army was not the place for the Christian’s greatest usefulness. George Baynes, a military officer, quit his commission and joined the Groves party at Chittoor. Later three more British soldiers approached Groves. He denounced imperial wars and conquests as immoral and expensive. His peace movement was consistently anti-imperialist. His anti-colonial and anti-racist mindset offers a useful point of access and does not subscribe to the dominant ideology. Groves described his feelings on hearing the British National Anthem being played- this, Groves declared, was a constraint to those who wish to detach themselves from the motherland in order to become citizens of the world. His team reflected this sense of universal citizenship-Hermann Gundert a German, Julie Dubois a Swiss lady, Harnie an Armenian lady, Arulappan and Andrews both Indians.

Conspicuous to his views, Groves’ influence extended far and wide beyond the limits of Brethren movement. His unusual work ‘Christian Devotedness’, had caused a

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great mental stir, resulting in great missionary activity over the world\textsuperscript{47}. Some of the world missions, such as China Inland Mission, North Africa Mission, Operation Mobilization etc. were launched upon Groves principle of faith policy. In 1883, a Chitpavan Brahmin lady of Maharashtra, Pandita Ramabai was converted to Christianity, and opened a school and orphanage in Bombay and afterwards in Pune. Through Mukti mission she sheltered hundreds of girls and widows ranging from infants to old women. This indigenous movement was conceived and planned by Ramabai in consequence to the inspiration she received from the biography of George Muller\textsuperscript{48}. Some time later she paid a personal visit to Muller’s orphanage in England. One single indigenous enterprise of Ramabai could set the example for the whole country.

Groves’ fifteen years stay at Chittoor was meant to bind Indians and Europeans in Christianity and launch an indigenous Brethren movement. The Christian community gained by Groves continued long after he had gone. Among his 13 communicants or native workers at Chittoor, Arulappan, Andrew, James, Yesadian etc., expressed the heartbeat of Groves’ policy of faith in the extensive evangelical work they exercised among the Telugus and the Tamils of Madras Presidency. These evangelists who once grazed under Groves, in turn, trained dozens of Christian workers, all who heralded several indigenous movements, Brethren in spirit and pattern, in South India, particularly in Andhra viz., Arulappan indigenous movement, the Bakht Singh movement etc.

ARULAPPAN INDIGENOUS MOVEMENT: -

\textsuperscript{47} The Missionary Reporter, March 1, 1856, p.132.
\textsuperscript{48} Pandita Ramabai, A Testimony of our Inexhaustible Treasure, Mukti Mission, Kedgaon, 1977, p.37
One grandson of Arulappan, J.A. Joseph Thangaiah giving the details of his grand father, wrote a letter to missionary, Mrs. Young of Tinnevelly, dated March 29th 1920\textsuperscript{49}. The letter reads: ‘My grand father, Mr. J.C. Arulappan, who was with Mr. Groves, was born at Ukkiraman Kotah…He left Ukkiraman Kotah and started for mission work in his fifteenth year. He was born in the year 1810. He had been in his mission tour to Arcot, Sittoor (Chittoor), and other districts. From there he came down to this valley, which was then uncivilized and unchristianized. He started work in this valley in the year 1840 and established Christian Petah and its church within two years, say in the year, 1842. He founded a village of Christians, and an assembly of the type he had learned from Mr. Groves to be scriptural. He died in the year 1867, March 14\textsuperscript{th}. He was then 57 years old…’

Arulappan was influenced by C.T.E. Rhenius, when he was just 15. Groves was his next major influence and Arulappan in December 1833 left Rhenius and went from Tinnevelly with Groves. When Groves pitched his mission in 1837 at Chittoor Arulappan together with another worker Andrew, joined him. At Chittoor he was very much with Groves, learning his mind and methods in the light of scriptures as well as sharing in schoolwork. He learnt English\textsuperscript{50} in the company of Groves and received salary as an interpreter. While Groves and he as an interpreter were preaching in a street, a Brahmin reproached Arulappan for being hired by the Englishman. Then and there Arulappan resolved neither to take salary from Groves nor to feel himself subordinate or dependant

\textsuperscript{49} G.H. Lang, \textit{The History & Diaries of An Indian Christian}, London, 1939, p.7
\textsuperscript{50} \textit{History & Diaries}, p.p. 29; 115. Arulappan was also familiar with foreign languages, such as Hebrew, Greek, German etc. His Bible interleaved with Hebrew, Greek and English.
to the foreigner. Thus Groves’ example of faith and of independence was acquired by his disciple, Arulappan.

Soon after his marriage with a Telugu girl, Santhana Mary of Chittoor town, he had been in the mission tour as far as Tinnevelly in the far south. During 1840-42 he founded a Christian village called ‘Christian Petah’. Groves recorded that ‘the dear young native, by name, Arulappan, who went from us some months since, has...remained faithful to his purpose. He determined to commence his labours in a populous neighborhood...’ Arulappan was a gifted speaker. He himself had relatives scattered widely over southern India and his visits to preach and teach among them spread Brethren movement over an area extending far beyond his base in Christian Petah. Arulappan’s diaries are filled with experiences of his missionary tours and setting up of Brethren assemblies over large areas in the Madras presidency, besides his early influences in the surroundings of Chittoor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NO. OF VILLAGES</th>
<th>NO. OF CONVERTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1853-54</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855-56</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>1857-58</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859-60</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

51 History & Diaries, p.30. Arulappan stayed for four years in Chittoor (1837-1840) and well acquainted with Brethren principles.
52 Memoir, p.392
53 History & Diaries, p.p.90-98
During 1860-65, an unusual phenomena swept through the South Indian Brethren churches as far as Godavary district in Coastal Andhra was concerned, having its hub at Christian Petah, which included prophecy, healing the sick, women preachers, evangelization of the non-Christians etc., where it is on record that thousands were exposed to Christianity. Arulappan reported a total of 30,000 conversions in the south. The Anglican missionaries noted it as the first entire indigenous effort on the part of Arulappan movement. The special feature of the conversion was that women brought their jewellery as an offering, initially done by the eldest daughter of Arulappan. The non-Christian women followed their example.

As a young man Arulappan learnt from Groves that India needs neither foreign societies nor denominations; the Indian converts required neither foreign authorization to preach nor an ordained priest to conduct prayers. Gospel ministry by an Indian to Indians for 26 years was remarkably successful, which a foreign mission or a missionary could not do throughout the foreign mission enterprise. Though this revival, which peaked in

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54 Memoir, p.467.
55 Charles Edward Van, Engen, David, Burnett, A. Scott Moreau, Harold A. Netland (Ed.), Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions, Baker Book House Company, 2000, p.p.79-80. The CMS missionary Rev. Dibb writes that the movement (Brethren) expanded under Arulappan, distinctively, the lay converts going forth without purse or scrip to preach the Gospel to their fellow countrymen, was indeed a new era in Indian missions (Church Missionary Record, n.s.5, Aug.1860, p.178). He writes ‘heathen have here and there be brought under the influence of the movement’. (Church Missionary Intelligencer, Dec.1860).
56 The experiences of the movement published in issues of The Indian Watchman, July 1860 to October 1861 and is quoted in Memoir of Anthony Norris Groves, Compiled Chiefly from His Journals and Letters, 3d ed. (London: James Nisbet, 1869), p. 616.
1865, admitted by the Anglican missionaries for its unusual phenomena and indigenous leadership, it did contribute to remarkable church growth in Madras Presidency. This acceptance among Indians contributed to the establishment of the National Missionary Society (NMS) in 1905 to evangelize their own nation and later to the National Christian Council. The radical strategy in modern missions linking paranormal phenomena with evangelism was the missiological perspective shared by Brethren fundamentalists. Thus, men like Arulappan were the legacy of A.N. Groves to India and to the world.

BAKHT SINGH MOVEMENT: - Bhakt Singh movement, initiated by the great grandsons of Arulappan viz., Rajamani and Dorairaj in connection to the Gospel meetings they shared with a new Sikh convert, Bakht Singh, from late 40s in Madras. Thus Groves's ideas were later taken up and spread in entire India by these descendants of Arulappan associated with Bakht Singh. In 1935 Rajamani and Dorairaj visited Christian Petah. While in a funeral function at the graveyard, they remembered their long dead grandfather Arulappan, and then undertook public preaching, tracts’ distribution and campaigning for the Gospel in the streets. An increasing number of young men of various churches in Madras joined them and founded a ‘Gospel League’.

By this time G.H. Lang’s biography of Arulappan, compiled from his dairies had found its way to India. The impact of the book on the exemplary life and deeds of their grand father, the Indian Apostle Arulappan, rekindled his memory in his grand children. Rajamani was instrumental in compiling an outstanding book under the title ‘Monsoon’.

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57 Church Missionary Intelligencer, No.7, August 1860, CMS Press, Madras, p.p.175-89. Several missionaries, at first sceptical or even opposed to the movement, were won over when they saw the fruit of it.
58 R.R. Rajamani (as told to Angus I. Kinnear), Monsoon Day Break, CLC, Pennsylvania, 1971, p.45.
‘Day Break’ giving details of his grand father, Arulappan and Groves and the Brethren movement\(^59\).

In 1938 a newly converted Sikh, Bro. Bakht Singh, an itinerant preacher visited Madras. He was in the Madras city for 19 days, preaching at the Methodist Episcopal church. Rajamani and Dorairaj were among those who attended the meetings. They saw in Bhakt Singh a true spirit of their grand father, Arulappan and envisaged truly a 20\(^{th}\) century apostolic revival in Madras, Andhra and other parts of India. They became two of his closest friends. True to their aspirations thousands of people responded to the preaching of Bhakt Singh. They continuously took the initiative for Bhakt Singh’s future meetings, and as co-labourers with him, they together established an assembly of Jehovah-Shammah in Madras and subsequently other assemblies elsewhere. These fervent evangelists, influenced by Bhakt Singh movement also carried forward the principles of Groves, and his understanding of anti-colonialism and the indigenous strength of the church.\(^60\)

This was done through the annual Holy Convocations, the first of which was held at Madras in 1941. Around 1950, ‘Hebron’ in Hyderabad became headquarters of this movement. Bakht Singh put on these Holy Convocations yearly where there were mass gatherings, irrespective of caste, colour, creed, and language. The Indians thus conceived, planned and Indianized the movement. In 1951 Rajamani, grandson of Arulappan settled in the area (Vellore, Chittoor and Arcot) earlier where the Brethren movement pioneered by A.N. Groves and Arulappan. Whether Arulappan or his grand children, they all followed up the progress of the Brethren movement with interest.


\(^60\) Rajamani and Dorairaj were sons of Abraham Rayappa who worked as a Brethren evangelist in close association with the Brethren missionary, Handley Bird at Cholapuram about 1900. *Monsoon Day Break*, p.13.
Thousands of simple Christian fellowships or assemblies dreamt by the early Brethren stalwarts in India were the fruit of Indian initiatives. The Indians live in the nation must reach their own people. Groves was a pioneer figure in advocating these simpler apostolic methods in mission work. Thus the native missionary movement was growing ready to complete the task. As such, this fulfilled A.N. Groves’ vision for the spontaneous growth of early apostolic Indian churches.

SILAS FOWLER FOX (1893-1982):

Among the Brethren missionaries more indigenous in spirit and manners was Silas Fowler Fox. He mastered seven Indian languages including Hindi and Sanskrit. Of all the languages, he was quite at home with the South Indian languages viz., Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam, but exceptionally gifted in use of Telugu language. His command over ‘Telugu’ astonished his audience. Fox, a Christian sanyasi in saffron adopted the garb of a yogic and Brahmanic sub-discipline. Therefore, Fox was truly an indigene of Andhra in ideology as well in manners, though technically a foreigner.

Fox did not have connections earlier with the Plymouth Brethren movement that grew in England. But he came in touch with indigenous Brethren movement in South Andhra comprising the districts of Anantapur, Kurnool, Kadapa, Chittoor, Nellore, Prakasam and Guntur. This entirely indigenous Brethren work, however, was happy to welcome Mr. Fox and the Plymouth Brethren missionaries of Godavari Delta. There seems to be a healthy exchange between these groups. They also attained the original

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61 International Bulletin of Missionary Research, July 1996, p.3
62 He wrote several devotional books in Telugu. Some of them viz., Saptavimarsalu (Seven Censures), Anudina Malika (366 Daily Meditations), 53 Prasangamulu (53 Messages) etc.
63 Barbara Fox, Too Old Too Old for What, Osoyoos, Canada, 1991, p.41.
principles of Groves. In the early years of 20th century, Andhra Pradesh saw a revival break out through the preaching of Silas Fox popularly called ‘White Fox’ and S.K. Agrippa, a native Indian co-worker, who Fox came in touch at a new place, Kalyandrug in Anantapur district, popularly called ‘Black Fox’. Conversions increased in numbers and frequency, in South Andhra (the districts of Kurnool, Kadapa, Anantapur, Chittoor, Nellore, Prakasam and some parts of Guntur). Among his early converts, Thimmaiah, a temple priest, with a big mass followers, was from Amarapuram, a nearby village of Madakasira, was baptized by Fox, and ran the church there till his death. Emma Fox did a fruitful mission work among women. Anantapur became the hub, and two hundred assemblies grew up around it.

His monthly journal, ‘Christian Hope’ or ‘Kraistava Nirikshana’, created a Christian public in India, along with his Bible schools and multilingual convention meetings. These sometimes resulted in the interstate as well as inter caste marriages and other combined evangelical efforts. Silas Fox’s ministry in the villages of Andhra, 30 to 40 years ago, created hundreds of present-day Christian leaders in Andhra Pradesh.

He was the youngest son of attorney Caleb and Bessie Fox, born in Josephburg, AB, Canada on December 22, 1893. At twenty-two, he was admitted to the Toronto Theological College and the English missionary Davidson spotted him. The recruitments for Ceylon and India General Mission were on. However, Silas Fox wanted to work in

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65 Dr. Fredk A. Tatford, *That the World May Know* Vol III,p.p.130-31
66 An extract from Fox’s Diary, Donald S. Fox, *The White Fox of Andhra*, p.p.39-40
South America, not in India, which was under British imperialism. His diary states: ‘…First and foremost, as it was under British rule…Instead; my first love was South America. Here was an unevangelized field and I dearly wanted to go where no one else had been with the Gospel…’ But he was denied South America, and so decided on India. Davidson informed Fox about the Madras Presidency with its three hundred villages of Madakasira in Anantapur district. Fox enrolled himself as a missionary of the Ceylon and India General Mission\textsuperscript{70} and in accordance with the mission policy he married Emma Grau in 1916 and the newly wedded couple arrived in India in 1917.

The Madras Presidency that Silas Fox now entered in was at an interesting epoch in its history of Christian missions. While the First World War was going on, the denominational missionaries in South India were carrying on with the mass conversion movements on war footing\textsuperscript{71}. Silas Fox did not follow this neo-colonial trend in missionary activity\textsuperscript{72}. As a missionary he resolved to identify with the people he planned to reach. A representative of Western missions and organizations would be ineffective. Thus Silas adopted saffron clothing and wore wooden sandals, which brought him closer to the people. He was also, like Groves, keen on creating an indigenous church to be led by the Indians.

\textsuperscript{70} Quoted in Fox’s Diary and referred in Italics by Donald S. Fox, The White Fox of Andhra, Dorrance & Co, 1977, p.19. The book is an account of the life and ministry of Silas Fox in India, to mark the diamond jubilee of his arrival there from Canada, written by his eldest son, Donald S. Fox.

\textsuperscript{71} Between 1921 and 1931, an average of 12,855 converts joined the church each month. The Protestant Christian population during these Mass conversion movements was increased at a rate of 32.5\% to 41\%. Directory of Christian Missions and Churches in India, Burma and Ceylon, 1940-1941, Nagpur, 1940, p.p.33-38.

\textsuperscript{72} In the words of Silas mass conversion movement is nominal Christianity. This tree must be cut down, as it has grown very big. Salvation is an individual matter and not a mass conversion. ‘Uplook’, Vol. 68, No.6, October 2001, p.19
Hindupur and Madakasira were both in Anantapur district and Fox and his wife spent a total of 7 years 3 months in Madakasira, though the initial months were spent in Hindupur. He engaged two masters, Devadoss and a Brahmin Munshi to teach him native languages, Telugu and Sanskrit, which he quickly learnt. Dave Hunt, the writer of the book, ‘God of the Untouchables’, personified Silas Fox as the ‘white Brahmin’ (white sanyasi) and an authority in 6 or 7 Indian languages. In 1924, Silas started a paper and wrote for it himself in fantastic Telugu. This was called ‘the Kalyandrug Sathyadootha’ (Kalyandrug Messenger of Truth). He first referred to the paper as the ‘Little Angel’ and then as ‘Kristava Nirikshina’ (The Christian Hope), to supplement his itinerant evangelism throughout Telugu country. The magazine monopolized more the ‘Questions and Answers’ column in influence on the Telugu reader than any other missionary magazine ever done in Andhra and was the means for over fifty years to create a Christian reading public.

The Foxes' first term ended in 1924 and they returned to Canada on furlough. Fox resigned from the mission, and became an independent missionary who raised his own support. In 1926 he wrote, ‘I launched out, with a wife, and five children, and to the glory of God, after a quarter of a century,…without a mission to support me, and without a deputation secretary to make known our needs at home, and without appeals… I know that He (God) will supply, quite apart from any publicizing of needs on my part.’

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73 This is an extract from the papers ‘Collection 292’ of Silas Fox, which are now preserved in the BGC Archives of Wheaton College, Illinois, USA.
76 Echoes of Service Magazine, February 1984, p. 75.
Fox’s ascetic appearance drew the Indians, but displeased the British officials and his missionary colleagues. The racist British collector of Bangalore took serious note of Fox’s dress and warned him of up keeping white superiority. Fox was dismissive of his opinion. Silas Fox and Agrippa were drawn to Brethren missionaries, who were likeminded independent workers at this point.

Hereafter, Fox became an outspoken advocate of New Testament apostolic practices of the Brethren movement. Silas Fox and Brethren missionaries of all southern India, particularly of the Godavari Delta of Costal Andhra found a kindred spirit. Handley Bird, a Brethren in Madras, met Fox in 1926. An entry in Fox diary reads: ‘One morning after the Calcutta mail had pulled into Madras, I got off and made my way to his little room…at about 6:30 a.m. I was dressed in my saffron robe and looked like a white sanyasi (Holy man)…who are you? He asked. A servant of God just passing through Madras,’ was his reply. Silas Fox along with Bird, preached in Telugu to the many Telugus in the city. This first visit began a friendship between them, which was deepened over the years.

Silas Fox was a dramatic and effective speaker, and used all kinds of flamboyant methods, from magic lantern slides to sandwich boards, to attract attention of the masses for the gospel. Thus he would mime and perform clownish antics, even wrestling in public to gain the attention of huge crowds and to get the gospel message across. Fox even whistled, jumped, juggled and when crowds gathered, spoke about the Gospel of

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77 Donald S. Fox, *The White Fox of Andhra*, p.44
78 Quoted in his Diary and referred in Italics by Donald S. Fox, *The White Fox of Andhra*, p.70.
79 Picture slides having to do with evangelistic work of Fox in India c. 1920 to 1950 are now preserved in Collection 292, Accession 83-102, located in the Billy Graham Center Museum in Wheaton, Illinois, USA.
Christ. This as Fox termed, 'Folklore evangelism' drew many to Christianity. One sergeant in the Indian air force, who was a convert of Fox, testified of Fox’s evangelism thus ‘Fox preaches with demonstration in a local dialect a common man understands. There was no doubt he was master of the language he spoke, very eloquent and dramatic, wearing the national attire of the area’

Adherents from all Christian denominations were brought under the Brethren doctrinal practices and were constituted into 150 assemblies scattered at several villages of South Andhra in particular and other language areas in general. He changed his locations several times. Anantapur (1939-1946) was the hub of activity as it was an educational center of some importance, and drew a big floating population. In 1925 an assembly was created here.

Years and Places of Fox’s earlier ministry of his settled work in Anantapur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of ministry</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1925-1929</td>
<td>Bangalore, Anantapur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-1933</td>
<td>Kuppam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-1938</td>
<td>Ooty</td>
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<tr>
<td>1939-1968</td>
<td>Anantapur, Bangalore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One dignitary Mr. Rothanglien Hmar, a member of the Indian Administrative Service, underwent his training as a Deputy Collector in Anantapur. He was a member in the assembly at Anantapur in 70s. He testifies about this assembly: “the church was organized entirely in an Indian fashion. Members of the congregation sat on the floor with legs crossed. Tablas and harmonium provided the musical instruments…all the hymns were sung in Telugu. Telugu hymns… were harmonized with Indian tunes. Though Indian myself, I never correctly realized before, the need for Indianising our Christian worship and service to make a deeper dent into the Indian way of life…”

Due to his extraordinary fluency in Telugu, he was almost one of them. He also did not want to detach communities from their cultural surroundings and place them on the large mission compounds to be supported by the missionary. The converts were therefore encouraged to live independently. Fox even lived in their homes, ate their food and slept in their beds and integrated totally into the Indian communities. He even started the mobile Bible school at Anantapur which drew large number of adherents from all communities. He states in 1951: ‘God has raised many groups of dear Indian converts in the country and without “help” from outside. They are going on…We are much against “the missionary running the Church”…Men (indigenous leaders)…may be raised up in India…” Here was a vision of an indigenous church, free from outside control or domination by western colonialists through outside money. He took pride in his independence and said: ‘for these 35 years God has supplied my needs and the needs of

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81 Quoted in Fox’s Diary and referred in Italics by Donald S. Fox, *The White Fox of Andhra*, p.123.
82 An extract from Fox’s Diary dated 1951, quoted by Donald S. Fox in *The White Fox of Andhra*, p.173.
my family without funding from West or my asking anybody. I have neither home nor a
door of resting place in this world, except that I will have it in the heavenly places’. This
is my mission. My mission is submission85. The Arab Muslim converts of Egypt who
were settled in the vicinity of Nile, moved by his exemplary faith, often met his needs
unasked. These developments convinced Fox that indigenous Christian movement across
culture was possible. Among the 30 brethren, commended from the 150 assemblies, were
some remarkable young men of caste Hindu background like Paul V.Gupta and
Prabhudas Reddy and traditional Christians such as S.K. Agrippa and G.S. Joseph86.
These four brethren, exclusively, were the living manifestations of Silas Fox in their
vision of indigenous church87.

S.K. AGRIPPA(1886-1967) : - He was born and brought up in a Telugu traditional
Christian family at Kothapalli, a near by village of Proddatur in Kadapa district. During
his early youth he was well known for life of deceit, waywardness and robbery, so well
accrued a name ‘Bayyanna’ (Trickster) and lived in an unimaginable state of notoriety till
he had a striking conversion in 1910 through a visiting evangelist. Later he joined in
Ceylon and India General Mission as an evangelist at Kalyanadurg in 1914. About 1924,
Silas Fox was the missionary at Kalyanadurg, and the rest of the story has been a part of
the career of Silas Fox88. Agrippa, too, was enthusiastic about “folk-lore evangelism”
intercepted with humour and entertainments and used similar strategies as Silas Fox.

85 Christian Hope, Issue 22, No.8-12, April 1949, p.12; Issue 24, No.11, Nov.1949, p.20.
86 Dr. Fredk A. Tatford, That the World May Know, p.131
87 A great deal of attention is paid to gather sources through individual or group interviews with surviving
leaders as well as with other religious functionaries of this sect. (See Appendix VI).
Agrippa, when Silas left the mission also bid farewell to the mission and pursued gospel work independently at Anantapur. Despite poverty and little education he created a missionary centre at Anantapur. Silas shifted his family from Bangalore to Anantapur and both friends toiled for nearly fifty years altogether till the death of Agrippa in 1967 separated them. This was indeed a partnership which held because the western attitude towards evangelicalism could adopt the indigenous culture with ease and even nationalism.

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Dr. N. PAUL V. GUPTA: - Gupta’s child hood name was Nagaruru Vankataswami Gupta. Nagaruru was the family name and Gupta the title of their Vaisya sub caste. He used to make frequent pilgrimages to Hindu shrines until his resolute conversion to Christianity in 1936 while one Anglican missionary preached in his village. During the early years of his conversion, Gupta had good contacts with S.K. Agrippa and Silas Fox who were then in Anantapur. Very soon Paul Gupta and Prabhudas (Y.S. Venkatarami reddy) the caste Hindu converts, came to stay with Silas Fox at Anantapur. Mr.& Mrs. Fox trained them as true gospel workers. Dave Hunt in his book ‘God of the untouchables’, which is a biography of Paul V Gupta, referred to the special care Silas showed towards Gupta, he writes ‘The one person who had the deepest spiritual influence upon Paul was Silas Fox as he spent many hours teaching him from the scriptures. This way V. Gupta had a deeper insight into Christianity.

Afterwards these young men were sent out on a preaching tour to the southern parts of Andhra. Paul Gupta narrates the many hardships he faced in the mass evangelism such as long periods of starvation, penniless and perilous travels etc. Despite hardships, Paul says they propagated Christianity in “hundreds” of villages. Over the years, Paul Gupta was entrusted with a responsibility of founding and leading the ‘Hindustan Bible Institute’ in Madras. Soon after it began functioning, Silas made frequent visits to this Institute, conducted special classes to students and thus tasted the success of an indigenous Christian enterprise.

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90 Ibid p.p.16-17.
91 Dave Hunt, God of the Untouchables, 1976. Entire book is a biographical account of Paul V. Gupta.
92 Barbara Fox, Too Old Too Old for What, 1991, p.47. Donald Fox and Barbara Fox, the son and the daughter-in-law of Silas Fox, were enrolled staff of this Institute. Ibid. p.p.45-52.
PRABHUDAS (Y.S VENKAT RAMI REDDY): - He was born in a caste Hindu family in 1921 at Pulivendula of Kadapa district. His father Yedguri Sandinti Venkat Reddy was a very early convert in the family. His third son Venkat Rami Reddy was encountered with Christian gospel by one of his converted kith about the year 1937. Afterwards he claimed genuine conversion to Christianity in his own words saying: ‘In 1938, in the second year of my conversion, Mr. Fox visited my native place with the late Mr. P.V. George of Kerala for special meetings. I was 17 at that time…and I came to see that a believer ought to be baptized… In 1940, Mr. N. Paul V. Gupta, a Hindu convert, and I came to Anantapur where Mr. Fox and the late, Mr. K.P. Agrippa were working together. Our stay in Anantapur was our training period for the work God had for us. Mr.& Mrs. Fox were like our spiritual parents. She used sometimes to say, “Now that my children are away, you are my sons”. Mr. Fox would have Bible classes every day at his house with us, and sometimes a few more attended…these were very happy days’.

During the Baptismal ceremony, Y.S. Venkat Rami Reddy chose a new name Prabhudas (servant of the Lord). From that day onwards he has been known in Andhra as Prabhudas or Prabhudas Reddy. After his travail apprenticeship in Anantapur at the Bible school, run by Fox, he made several gospel campaigns along with his close associates Paul V. Gupta, Agrippa etc., in Telugu and other language areas and proved himself a gifted evangelist and an itinerant preacher. Unlike his co-workers the evangelical traits of Mr. Fox are manifestly apparent in Brother Prabhudas. Inroads of his evangelical campaign equally affected his native district Cuddapah and there grew an assembly of converts. The Sikh convert, Bakht Singh visited this assembly to help in the work of

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93 Oral Interview with Prabhudas Reddy, Quoted in Donald S. Fox, *The White Fox of Andhra*, p.115.
Prabhudas. Eventually, the brethren contemplated to hand the assembly of Cuddapah to Bakht Singh. Therefore, Prabhudas chose to strive as full time evangelist in Bellary and over the years from 1944 to 1956, carved a Fort Assembly there. Meanwhile his marriage with a girl, Padmamma, belonging to a deprived section of the society, further signified his exemplary life and an aversion towards casteism. In 1956, he changed his headquarters to Nandyal in the Kurnool district and settled there⁹⁴. He is 89 years now, yet he is nurturing many young and growing assemblies in Andhra, equally he has been advocating the cause of Brethren movement for these 70 years since 1938. Unhesitatingly he can be said to be the right successor of Fox.

G.S. JOSEPH : -It was at Anantapur that Silas Fox came into touch with the family of G.S. Joseph. His father, Rao Sahib G. James, was deputy collector of Anantapur. After graduation from Madras University, G.S. Joseph joined in the government service. Having passed a little time, he resigned his job and entered full time gospel ministry. It was to this man that Silas entrusted the responsibility of editing and the task of circulation of his monthly magazine, “Kristhava Nirikshana” or “Christian Hope” through long years of his missionary career in Andhra and even after he finally left India⁹⁵.

G.S. Joseph, from the beginning, shared in labours of running the Brethren Assembly at Anantapur in close association with his co-workers, in addition that he has been a member of the Andhra Pradesh auxiliary committee of the Bible Society of India.

⁹⁴ V. Sambob (ed), ‘Assembly Mail’ Publications (March 2006) dealt in a broader way the Life and Labours of Prabhudas, p.p.1-12; Information also gathered by the researcher through personal interview with Mr.Prabhudas Reddy.
⁹⁵ Souvenir, Anantapur (2005), p.17
The Annual report of the Bible Society reads ‘…Mr. G.S. Joseph, who was associated with the assembly during his father’s stay in Anantapur, after having served the state government in Machilipatnam for about 4 years, resigned his job, and he along with his wife joined the assembly again as full time servants in 1944 and have continued till the present time’. Joseph, a well educated and cultured person, used to move among the government officials and young graduates and accomplished a great work of adding more number of converts to the assembly at Anantapur.

All the four Brethren along with several other fellow leaders, in long association with Silas Fox, founded hundreds of Brethren Christian assemblies in all over Andhra and even beyond Andhra, as some hundreds of Telugu families migrated to other language areas, particularly to erstwhile Mysore state (Present Karnataka), seeking employment in Industrial establishments and in Indian Railways. These Brethren along with Silas Fox planted no less than 10 Telugu assemblies among those in Mysore state during the years from 1938 to 1970 (Appendix VII). All these Christian Brethren groups were well grounded on Brethren principles, fulfilling the vision of the founding fathers of the movement and particularly influenced by the life and labour of two missionaries whose case studies are dealt widely in this chapter.

96 The Annual report of the Bible Society for the years 1973-74; Souvenir, p.17.