Chapter-II

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY IN COASTAL ANDHRA

Political Background

The onset of 16th century witnessed rapid political and social changes in the history of South India in general and Andhradesa in particular. It marked the collapse of the mighty Vijayanagara empire, the Mughal conquest of Golkonda and the onset of political turmoil among the native states on account of vengeance, hatred and superiority complex.¹ These circumstances were carefully manipulated by the European trading companies to organise their own trading centres at different parts of the country. The first opportunity was seized by the Portuguese who at the beginning of 17th century and established supremacy all along the sea coasts of India including coromandel coast.²

In course of time, the Dutch, the French and the English East India companies also started their trading centres along the East Coast. By 1610, the Dutch successfully established its factories in Andhra coast at Pulicot, Machilipatnam and Nizamapatnam while the French established its factories at Machilipatnam and Petapoli in 1611 and Armagoan in 1625. The English East India Company entered the competition a bit late, but however, established trading centres in Andhra at Veeravasaram in 1634, Madapalem in 1649 and Bobbarlanka and Neelapalli in 1651.³

³ Mackenzie, op. cit, p. 114.
In the beginning, the English East India Company did not enjoy the favour of Aurangazeb. But it improved its relationship with him when the company helped Zulficar Ali Khan, the Mughal general against the Maratha leader, Prince Rajaram. As a result, the Mughals gave the English privileges to mint coins at Madras, access to Diamond mines and compensation for the losses it suffered at Visakhapatnam. The Nawab of Carnatak Daud Khan confirmed the above privileges. The rise of the British East India Company helped the growth of sea ports at Madras and Visakhapatnam and the construction of Fort St. George at the former which in course of time became a major trading centre.4

From 1713 to 1778, the Mughal Viceroy of the Deccan (South India) ruled almost the whole of the Carnatic through various nawabs, viz., those of Cuddapah, Kurnool, Arcot etc. In 1713, Mir Qamruddi, son of Aurengzeb’s general Ghaziuddin Khan Feroz Jung was made the viceroy by Emperor Farrukhsiyar, with the title Nizam-ul-Kulk Feroz Jung. Eleven years later, he became virtually independent with his capital at Hyderabad, replacing the fortress of Golconda.5

Despite the Maratha challenge, the Nizam succeeded in 1743 in imposing his authority over many parts of South India, with the support of his army of half a million men.6

The story of a palayakar’s family in the 18th century fairly represents the vicissitudes of such local princes. All of them may not have been put to so much trouble as those of Anantapur, but they all had their share of it.

6 Ibid., pp. 325-29.
In the second half of the century, Bussy, a French general who was an astute diplomat as well as a remarkable leader, managed to maintain French influence unchallenged in Hyderabad from 1751 to 1758. Bussy succeeded in getting Salabat Jung appointed Nizam as successor to Muzzafar Jung, when the latter was murdered. He also obtained the Northern Circars and some strongholds along the Coromandel coast for the French. But French success was shortlived. When Bussy was sent to the south in 1758, the English captured the Northern Circars from the French. A few years later, the Nizam confirmed the English in their possession of the Northern Circars.

Slowly the Nizam's power became increasingly dependent on the British. In 1778, a British resident supported by a British force, was posted at Hyderabad. One year later, Guntur was rented out to the British. From there they exercised better control over central Andhra. Though Guntur was almost at once handed back to the Nizam on orders from Calcutta, it was definitively acquired by the British in 1788.

After another ten years, Wellesley forced the Nizam into a subsidiary alliance. This has resulted in acquiring four districts called the "ceded districts", i.e., Bellary, Cuddapah, Ananatapur and Kurnool to the Madras Presidency.

As elsewhere in South India, much of the administrative set-up was in the hands of some Hindu chieftains, popularly known as the palayakars, during 18th century. It was mostly with these that the Christians had to deal. Some of them figure prominently in

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7 Ibid., p. 456.
8 Banerji, R.N. Economic Progress of the east India Company and the Coramandal coast 1702-1746, Nagpur, 1974, pp. 11-19.
9 Thanuguntla, S. Structures of the Church in Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, 1976, p. 49.
the Jesuit documents of the period, e.g., those of Anantapur, Tadipatri, Bellary and Kumool in the west, and Darsi, Tenali, etc., in the east. Under the palayakars there were other local chiefs, known as maniakars, who were revenue and police officers. The patel was the head of the village, acting as magistrate and rent-collector.

As elsewhere, Brahmins despite being a minority, dominated social life all the more because they were also administrators and financiers. But they were challenged not only by the nayudus as palayakars, but also by the great land owners and farmers who were the reddis and the kammas, often known under the generic name of kappus. Boyas were the traditional fighters serving in the palayakar's forces (many were found in Haidar Ali's army), but the reddis could also be good fighters, whenever the occasion arose.10

The Physical Features

The coastal Andhra is a long narrow strip – an inclined plane of little width in the northern part which is barely 20-25 KM wide between sea and Eastern Ghats but gradually widen about 150 KM in South owing largely to the vast stretches of alluvial build up by river Godavari in north and river Krishna in South.11 The eastern Ghats rise by gradation in successive ranges roughly to a height of and rightly parallel to the sea into West Godavari district, but in South a awaken chain known as Veligonda and Nallamalai hill ranges. The area is drained principally two rivers Godavari and Krishna which provide vast stretches of fertile alluvial soil built up on either of their branches. The river Kaveri in extreme south and Gundlakamma also provide water sources further

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10 Banerji, R.N. op. cit., pp.36-38.
11 Wadia, D.N., Geology of India, Delhi, 1976, pp. 142-144.
South of the region. There are few other minor rivers such as Vamsadhara, Ghostani, Eluru and Sarada in north and Munneru, Musi and Paleru in the South. Since the area is has gradation from West to east, all these rivers and rainfed streams flow from west to east and ultimately drain into Bay of Bengal.\textsuperscript{12}

The region falls in the semi-arid zone with an average precipitation of 1200 mm in the north and 800-1050 mm in the south. The rainfall is heaviest in the coastal regions and gradually decreases towards the upland areas. No major hill zone traverses the area in the South except for a few isolated hillocks and the Kondapalle and Kondavidu hill ranges. The fertile soils of this region are the alluvium and black regor in mid-land areas while the infertile soils are the coastal sands, sline soils, red soils on either sides.\textsuperscript{13} On the basis of the differences in climate, rainfall and other features, the region may be divided into three physiographic zones – the coastal area, the mid-land area and the upland areas.

The hilly regions are covered with tropical moist deciduous forests while the plains by tropical dry deciduous forests. In between the hill ranges and Bay of Bengal, is spread fertile land mass of black regor type which yield double to triple crops if the water source is adequate. The Godavari and Krishna delta regions are much more fertile and is considered the rice bowl of India. The density of population is very high in these deltaic regions when compared to the other parts of Andhra Pradesh. High density of

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 145.
\textsuperscript{13} Development of Agriculture, Andhra Pradesh, Soils of Andhra Pradesh, Publication No.2, Department of Agriculture, Hyderabad, 1972.
population and criss-cross water channels in Godavari belt also led to inheigenic conditions and led to the spread of different types of diseases.¹⁴

Economic Aspects

Innumerable inscriptions attested to the existence of self-sufficient villages during the ancient and the early part of medieval period. But this situation underwent a radical change during the later part of medieval period. The advent of European trading companies aggrevated this situation and it has resulted it the disintegration of the self-sufficient villages during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Weaving flourished as an independent craft. The production of cloth, especially printed cloth was widespread. All over the coastal region, Machilipatnam, Nizampatnam, Narsapur, Armagoan, Mangalagiri, Pulicat and Nellore gained name as notable centres of weaving. The commodities were produced with a two fold aim: 1) handicraft production for the market interlinked with agriculture in the peasant holds. 2) The production carried out by artisans in towns and villages for sale in the market.¹⁵

The Europeans played a vital role in the changed situation. They introduced in India the agency system, by which, they advanced money to the weavers who were obliged to sell their goods to the concerned European group alone. As a result, the freedom and power enjoyed by the Indian merchants collapsed under the joint stock companies. A hierarchy consisting of chief merchant and subordinate merchants to the chief broker and subordinate brokers, the Dubash, the Vakil etc., came into being. Many

¹⁴ Ramaswamy, Progress report for field season 1950-52, Geological Survey of India, Madras.
¹⁵ Beneiji, op. cit., p. 46.
of the local merchants became agents and middlemen to the English East India Company. The weaver community suffered a lot because of the changes that took place in the market on account of droughts and famines. European factories became focal points of trade activity while the temple centres lost control over the markets.16

It was a misnomer to believe that private property of land did not exist in India until such time, the East India Company introduced the ryotwari system in the early part of the 19th century. A number of inscriptions of the medieval period mentioned eight forms of ownership: Nidhi (Treasuretreve), Nikshepa (property deposited in the land and not claimed by another), Pashama (mines), Siddha (lands yielding produce), Sadhya (produce from lands) etc. Water privilege was also enjoyed by the people. The epigraphical sources17 of the period indicate that the sale and purchase of land was carried out for religious and charitable purposes as well.

Andhra was a land of agriculturists, though it was not uniformly fertile. Weaving was still a craft in the hands of artisans. However, owing to the initiative of colonial powers, first the French, then the British, it assumed a more organised character at Machilipatnam and further north on the coast at Bhimlipatnam.

If we have to believe a description written in 1730 by one of the French Jesuits working then in Andhra, the famous diamond mines of Golconda were being worked at optimum level. New ones had also been started.

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17 Ibid., p. 382.
By comparing Andhra with other regions in the subcontinent during the same period, one can surmise that the population of the territory known today as Andhra might have been 9 to 10 millions.\textsuperscript{18} It was unevenly distributed. Probably the coastal belt from the delta of the Godavari down to the south and the regions situated south of the Krishna were more populated than the northern parts.

From what our sources tell us occasionally, one may assume that the higher classes, such as the brahmins, the \textit{palayakars} and other officials were as a rule well educated. Again, according to Fr. Gargam, children of the upper classes were generally well educated. Among \textit{reddis} and \textit{kammars} literacy was comparatively high. Obviously catechists were literate, sometimes even capable of writing poetry.

The population of Andhra was sometimes threatened by natural and man-made calamities. We do not however come across such frequent mention of floods, drought and other similar calamities as in Tamilnadu. But military operations brought havoc on crops and on the peasantry. Frequently destruction by roving armies was followed by famine and epidemics.\textsuperscript{19}

\textbf{Revenue collection}

The Zamindari system was very much prevalent in the Madras Presidency of British India. The establishment of British rule did not either spell doom or total destruction of the Zamindars. The Zamindars in the Andhra region were mostly from the


\textsuperscript{19} Mackenzie, Gorden, Manual of Krishna District in the Presidency of Madras, Madras, 1883, p. 152.
upper non-Brahmin castes such as Kshatriyas, Velamas or Kammas.\textsuperscript{20} Even though the British had taken a sizeable portion of their land and power, they were allowed to collect rents for the government.

Agriculture was the occupation of the people in the Andhra region. According to 1891 census of Madras Presidency, 8.35 per cent of the entire population in that region were non-cultivating land occupants, 23.39 per cent were cultivating land occupants and 15.36 per cent were cultivation tenants and share-croppers.\textsuperscript{21} The census also showed that about 19.61 per cent of the population were agricultural labourers, working as farm-servants, the labourers employed on yearly basis, normally called as \textit{paleru} and field labourers, people employed for work during the farming and harvesting seasons, normally known as coolie.\textsuperscript{22} Besides this group there were many people engaged in different professions, normally based on their caste, like barbers, washerman, carpenters, pujaris, masons, builders etc. It was the agricultural classes, primarily small peasants, that suffered most in society due to existing laws and regulations. Under ryotwari tenancy, the share of the government was theoretically put at half the value of the net produce of the land. In addition to this, the people had to pay the land tax, normally based on the total produce of the year and may vary from land to land and district to district. A.V. Ramana Rao in his study on “Economic Development of Andhra Pradesh” mentions: “on an average the costs and the profits of a ryot in Krishna district were as follows: The total value of the produce from an acre was Rs.160, out of which the \textit{ryot} had to pay Rs.80 towards government assessment, Rs.27.30 in the form of miscellaneous

\textsuperscript{20} Census of India, Madras Presidency-1891, Vol. XIII, Pages 220, 235 and 235.  
\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 330.  
\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 331-332.
taxes and Rs.42.80 by way of cultivating expenses. The balance he was left with was a paltry sum of Rs. 10 for the whole year.23

To collect revenue, many inhuman methods were employed by the revenue officials and the people being extremely poor, ignorant, and afraid of dire consequences neither complained against tortures nor made representations to the government. Thus, in the first place, the land revenue system became an oppressive force and people were unwillingly pursued cultivation and many left their lands and looked for some other alternatives. Secondly, the frequent famines during the 19th century also discouraged farmers and added to their plight.24 Economically the people in the Dalit villages were very poor. People expressed their willingness to join Christianity, provided they were given some help. Missionary Petersen from Gudur writes: “We go the Dalit village, where I heard people saying that, they were willing to become Christians, provided the missionary gives them something to eat everyday.” Commissioner Sheatsley in his report also mentions “in an economic way India is still very poor”.

The exploitation and injustice

Because of the caste system, ignorance, and illiteracy of the people and the concentration of economy in only one group of people, the gap between the rich and poor was too wide and the missionaries could notice a lot of injustice being done to the poorer and Dalit section of the people, especially by the rich and the upper caste people. The people in power and the rich exploited the poor and the marginalised sections in the community.

24 Ibid., pp. 63-67.
Worrlein says, “Outrageous injustice against the low caste people is on the agenda in India”. He also pointed out that the British was not involved in such unjust practices but the native employees of the British government, who were very few, but were educated and clever. Worrlein sees the problem not only with the employees of the British but also with the low caste people because they could not “read, write and do arithmetic”. Because of their poverty, these people could not open their mouths against any injustice done to them otherwise they would not get any more jobs from the rich Land-lords and had to go hungry. Worrlein expresses his desire to help such people, who were not having regular work, to buy some agricultural land for them, so that they could earn some money for themselves and live in a respectful manner.

In addition, this was the case with regard to the Rajahs and their workers. They practised similar unjust ways to get money from the poor farmers. For example, with regard to water – the rice fields need a lot of water and if the farmers did not give expected money (which is illegal) to the workers of Rajah or his workers, the farmer would not get water and thus could not cultivate his land. There were many cries from the people about these unjust practices by the workers of Rajah but nobody was there to hear them and help them.25

Social conditions

Caste system 17th and 18th centuries witnessed the prevalence of the traditional Varna system in the social structure of Andhra Desa. The Brahmins held supreme position in the social ladder but diversification of professional attitudes was a notable

feature among them. The epigraphical and the literary sources including the foreign travellers accounts refer to the Brahmins as priests, officers, businessmen etc. In the 18th century, the Zamindars of Vissannapet in Krishna District, and Polavarm and Lakkavarma in Godavari Districts were Brahmins.

The Kshatriyas were not very prominent in Andhra and hence the political authority was vested in the hands of Sudras who were a heterogeneous caste. They were divided into several sub-castes each having its own caste rules. Members of each sub-caste married within their fold – though inter-dining was allowed with some restrictions. Hamsarimsati, a Telugu work of the 18th century, refers to the Reddy, Velama, Kamma, Balija, Kammara, Basta Kummari, Vadrangi, Kanchara, Viswabrahmin and Gandla as prominent sudra communities. The state appointed separate heads from each sub-caste for the collection of dues from the people and to pay a part of it as tax. Thus the poliggar system for collection of dues emerged as a significant feature of the period. It was recorded that in the year 1800, there were 80 Poligars in the ceded districts who collectively maintained 30,000 armed men under their control. These Poligars in the course of time, became powerful and became the virtual rulers of their respective localities by the end of 18th century.

The Vaisya community confined itself to trade and commerce. Besides trade, the vaisyas enjoyed revenue and judicial powers which they exercised with a great skill. They were also money lenders and earned high profits by charging exorbitant rates of

26 Francis, W. Vizagapatnam District Gazetteer, Madras, 1907, p. 4.
28 Rao, K.V. The Influence of English in Telugu, Madras, 1890, p. 79.
interest. To perpetuate their earnings they offered valuable presents to the rulers and it led to a great deal of corruption in the society.\textsuperscript{29} Among the professional communities the weavers were notable group. From the 16\textsuperscript{th} century onwards many of them became merchants and the richer among them took to production of cloth and employed a number of workers under them. The communities which took to the profession of weaving were known as Sale, Padmasale, Kuruba and Mala.\textsuperscript{30} The people who worked as blacksmiths, goldsmiths, masons, carpenters and stone workers were called Panchanamvaru. Each of them kept their caste identity by attributing themselves as Kase, Kummri, Kammari, Vadrangi and Agasala.\textsuperscript{31}

\textbf{Caste Rules}

According to the rigid caste system, the society in India, in general, Andhra Pradesh, in particular, is divided into several subgroups within the main system. Although not included in the social hierarchy, caste system had become a part of the social structure and people fitted into this structure by birth. The characteristics of caste include rigid, hereditary membership in the caste into which one is born; the practice of marrying only members of the same caste; restrictions on the choice of occupation and on personal contact with members of other castes; and the acceptance by each individual of a fixed place in society.\textsuperscript{32} The existing realities showed that caste system divided the society into small fragments and given chance for discrimination, oppression and injustices.

\textsuperscript{29} Hanumantha Rao, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 70.
\textsuperscript{31} Hanumantha Rao, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 51.
Thus, caste system not only contributed for the promotion of injustice, oppression and discrimination but also made people to develop a pessimistic attitude toward life. This pessimistic attitude developed into fatalism, by accepting things and events that come by as inevitable, thereby making people not to attempt to do anything to change their life situation. Some, like traders (balijas and komatis), artisans (kamasalas and kommaras) and more skilled weavers (devangas, thogatas, sales) were regarded as caste people. Others such as stone workers, toddy-tappers and farmers were dalits.

From the documentation at hand it appears that the caste system was then less rigid in Andhra than in the rest of South India. Another social fact stands out rather clearly. The womenfolk, particularly among the reddis and kammas, were less male-dominated, more independent and more free to accept changes, for example in religious matters.

DALITS

The next social group which is not included in the fourfold caste system in India are Dalits who are untouchable communities of Mala and Madiga groups, popularly known as Panchamas, Pariyas, Chandalas etc. They were segregated and treated as virtual slaves in the society and hence they were relegated to the bottom of social hierarchy. Despised, abused, abhorred and shunned by all, they did not receive even the same consideration allowed to the cattle and dogs of the land. Their shadow was considered pollution. Even money was not received directly from their hands but must be placed on the ground before it can be accepted by another. If they were to by pass a caste man in

33 Ibid., p. 6.
the street, no matter how heavy the burden they were carrying, they must drop it and retire till he has passed by. They were hardly allowed to enter into the village. If in necessity, if they were to enter the residential areas of upper castes, they were compelled to carry a bowl in one hand to spit and a small bell in other hand to herald their presence in the street and a broom stick be fastened to their back hanging to wipe away their foot prints.\textsuperscript{34}

From the hygienic point of view, the residential areas of the untouchables were in the most miserable conditions. Their houses were small, wretched and closely packed together and were always located at the refuse and insanitary part of a village. Under no circumstances, they were permitted to draw water from the village tank or well. The schools of the land were virtually closed to them. If an exception to find a pariah in any school, save those were sustained only by the missionaries. When admitted to the School they were compelled like culprits to occupy the farther most corner of the class room\textsuperscript{35}.

They were not permitted to enter the courts presided over by native magistrate but were forced to stand outside the door step or window to give their evidence.\textsuperscript{36} Not a temple in the land was open to them, but they had to content themselves with a few unsheltered shapeless stones for their gods and appoint their own ignorant priest to administer their religious rights. They literally have no standing in society.

\textsuperscript{34} Oddie, G.A. "Christian Conversion In Telugu country 1860-1900, A Case study of protestant movement in the Godavari Krishna Delta", Indian Economic and Social History, Vol. XII, No. 1.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.

From the civil point of view, these people were deprived of all rights among their fellow Indians. The acquisition of land was out of question, except to a very few. These people were at the mercy of merciless creditors who can at any time possess themselves of houses, cattle, loom or tools in a civil action from the unfortunate people in lieu of the money they loaned.

Rev. L.L. Uhl, an American Missionary observed that the untouchables were the least cared for and if cared for at all by hospitals and dispensaries having caste men incharge who cannot make full examination of the patient. They were deprived of vaccination in majority of cases and even if any kind hearted persons were willing to give vaccination they were afraid of the social prejudice. This has often resulted in high morbidity among the untouchables as the diseases like malaria, leprosy, guinea worm, hook worm and influenza were endemic among them.\textsuperscript{37}

From the intellectual side, they were not given chance to think systematically. They were denied of all forms and methods of thought with the result that they became almost like monomoniac and their consciousness to new stimulous was painfully slow.

Added to the above features, mention may be made that they were by no means a homogenous group. In fact, they consisted of two main competing communities, the Malas and the Madigas, the social separation between them being almost as great as the gulf dividing untouchables as a whole from their caste neighbourers above. The Malas claimed superior status and considered themselves above the Madigas who were in a clean majority in Krishna, Godavari and Visakhapatnam Districts. They were employed

mainly in weaving and agricultural labour. The Madigas on the other hand lived in hamlets, quite separate from the Malas.\textsuperscript{38} Their main duty was curing and tanning of hides and the manufacture of leather articles which include, sandals, trapings for bullocks and large well buckets used for irrigation purposes. Inspite of the inferior social status, the Madigas were more prosperous and independent than the Malas, because of less competition in tanning work.\textsuperscript{39}

In addition to the primary tasks, Malas and Madigas alike performed many other subsidiary services which though regarded low and polluting were never the less essential for the smooth functioning of the village community. The Malas acted as village grave diggers. They also removed and burnt the bodies of Brahmins and other caste people. Malas and Madigas were employed as porters, sweepers and scavengers and removing and eating the carcasses of the cattle.

The missionaries writing about the people, among whom they were working divided them into two groups, the aborigines and the invaders. The aborigines, they divided into nine groups – Yanadis, Yerukalas, Sakalis or Lambadies, Chenchus, Dommaras, Oddus, Dasaris, Malas and Madigas and the invaders into three groups – Dravidians, Aryans, and the Muslims.\textsuperscript{40} It is difficult to accept such a division, for example Dasaris are part of Mala group and acted as their priests, but it is very much true with the other invaders. It is mentioned that among the Malas there are five groups namely, Pakanativaru, Reddybumyvaru, Murikinativaru, Zavuindlavaru andDasarivaru.

\textsuperscript{38} Oddie, \textit{op. cit.}  
\textsuperscript{40} Witman, J.N. \textit{Herbergen Mission in India-1929}, Handwritten Manuscript, 1929, p. 15f.
Among them existed table (eating) fellowship and not marriage fellowship. Dasaris formed the priestly class among these five groups and performed all religious ceremonies for these people. Because of this, Dasaris felt themselves superior and did not eat in the same line with the other groups.

The Malas were mostly agricultural labourers and some of them were engaged in their duties like watching over the village tanks, performing animal sacrifices at the village festivals (Jatahara) etc. They were mostly dependent on the other caste people in the village for their daily bread and livelihood.\textsuperscript{41}

\textbf{Illiteracy and Ignorance}

Illiteracy and ignorance are two other dominating features common among the people living in villages, especially among the Dalits. The social structure of the society and the dominating role of the Brahmins kept people in dark. There was a deep division among the people – the Brahmins, normally educated people and who claimed authority in interpreting the Hindu Scriptures and the Dalits, who were not allowed to learn to read and write. In between came the other caste people and not all of them have learnt to read and write. Ignorance and illiteracy are two chief hindrances to any effort to aid people in bringing them up in life. This contributed to the inequalities among the people and the dominance of the so-called rich and educated people in the society, especially in the rural context. This division in the society made the educated to dominate and the poor

\textsuperscript{41}Ibid., p. 12.
villagers to accept the traditions as they received from the dominant, and the events as they came to them, without question and logical argument.\textsuperscript{42}

Kiehne talking about the people into consideration, he said: “the chief occupation of the Hindus is agriculture and cattle breeding, besides all the handwork, which were necessary for their daily existence.” For example, the carpenter to build the houses, the smith to repair the plough and carts, the dhobi to wash the cloths, the barbers to shave and cut the hair and also to operate, the night and filed watchman to protect the village and the paddy fields and the most important Brahmins to perform religious ceremonies. All these people do not receive money, but received paddy and other corn for their services. They are dependent on the farmers.\textsuperscript{43} However, these people were not educated but learnt the skills in their craft from their fathers and forefathers.

The Joint Family System

The joint family system was very much popular during the period of this study. However, not much was said about this system among the Dalits, but among the caste Hindus it was very much prevalent. The joint family system was built on old patriarchal idea and according to which three or four generations normally lived under the same roof and enjoyed a community of life and interest. The members of the family pooled all their earnings and were maintained out of common fund.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., p. 75.
It has the peculiar merit of developing a strong sense of responsibility in the whole family for its every member. The members in the joint family system had to follow certain rules for the ceremonies, that were performed at various stages in the life of the individual, like – birth of a child, naming of the child (namakaranam), looking for a marriage partner, marriage ceremony itself, and finally death and the ceremonies connected with it.45 But at the same time, this system made people lazy and make them dependent on others, forgetting their responsibilities. Even though the joint family system was keeping the family together and following certain rule and regulations, it did not prevent child marriages, sati, infesticides in the community.46

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Hinduism

In coastal Andhra, three major religious groups exist, namely, the Hindu, Muslim and Christian. They observe the same religious beliefs and practices as their fellow believers do all over the country and they are too well-known to need any elaborate description.

In 18th century, Hinduism in Andhradesa was divided into two different major sects, i.e., Saivism and Vishnavism. The saivism was divided into lingayats and non-lingayats. To the Saivites, Srisailam, Kalahasthi, Alampur and Pancharamas were the important pilgrimage centres. The Vaishnavism was also divided into two sects viz., Vishnavas & Madhwas. The former were disciples of Ramanuja and the later of

Madhwacharya. Between the two, the teachings of Ramanuja were more liberal. This might have been the reason for the popularity and spread of Vaishnavism as against Madhwaism. Tirumala, Tirupathi, Ahobilam and Bhadrachalam were the important centres of pilgrimage to Vaishnavites. Conflicts between Saivites and Vishnuvites were not uncommon. Both of them had their mathas with a large number of followers. The kernel of both sects was bhakti. The elite participated actively in religious discourses while the masses in bhajans, festivals, kalakshepams etc.\footnote{Mackenzie, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 74.}

The mathas were the centres of learning attached to temples. The gurukula system of education was followed in all the mathas where they imparted higher knowledge of religious ideals. However, the entry to Gurukul schools was restricted to brahmins and in course of time to the rich and elite sections of the society.\footnote{Hanumantba Rao, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 382.} The Sudras and Panchamas were totally denied the learning. Hence, illiteracy and ignorance has become important aspects of the majority of population.

The worship of village Gods and Goddesses was a notable feature during 18th and 19th centuries. The villagers of lower castes and Dalit castes principally worshipped female dieties\footnote{Manual of Madras Presidency, Vol. II, p. 114.} like Ganganamma, Poleramma, Yellamma, Maremma, Sunkulamma and Mulipolokamma. The village deities were considered to bring dreaded contagious diseases such as Malaria, cholera and plague and to appease them different types of sacrifices were performed.

\footnote{47 Mackenzie, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 74.}  
\footnote{48 Hanumantha Rao, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 382.}  
The religious beliefs and practices

Religious life in the Indian society was greatly affected by the supreme position held by the Hinduism. In Andhra Pradesh, the Brahmanical festivals like Sivarathri, Sri Rama Navami, Sankranti, Vinayaka Chaviti, Deepavali, Dasara, Vaikuntha Ekadasi were popular. Large Brahmanical shrines drew huge crowds of pilgrims, mainly from the richer sections of caste people. But the poorer sections of the people normally Sudras and Dalits offered their gifts and prayers to the local Gods and Cults. In the villages, one could notice numerous small shrines built for Grama-devatalu or village female deities such as Muthyalamma, Poleramma, Ganganamma, Maramma, Polamma, and Chengalamma.50 Normally these devathalu did not have any clear history nor any definite attributes and also normally they did not have any specified rituals, except in some cases where buffalo sacrifices were made. But the important feature with these village deities was/is that they were all equally worshipped as gods that avert dreadful diseases like cholera, smallpox, chickenpox, diseases to the animals and also gods that grant boons to the devotees who made vow before them.51 All their worship and religious practices are largely motivated by fear.

Besides regular religious worship and sacrifices, many people, especially in the villages, practice ancestor worship. Ancestor Worship is reverence shown to the deceased relatives who are believed to have become powerful spiritual beings. It is based on the belief that ancestors are active members of society and are still interested in the affairs of their living relatives. Ancestors are believed to exercise great authority, having

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50 Mayer, H.W. Beliefs of Hindu Low Caste groups in The Lutheran Missionary, February 1943, pp. 2-6.
51 Ayyar, P.V.J. South India Customs, New Delhi, 1985, pp. 36-37.
special powers to influence the course of events or to control the well being of their living relatives. Protection of the family is one of their main concerns. They are considered intermediaries between the gods and the people, and can communicate with the living through dreams and/or by possession. The attitude toward them is one of mixed fear and reverence. If neglected, the ancestors may cause disease and other misfortunes. Propitiation, supplication, prayer and sacrifice are various ways in which the living can communicate with their ancestors. Ancestor worship is a strong indication of the value placed on the household and of the strong ties that exist between the past and the present. The beliefs and practices connected with this cult help to integrate the family, to sanction the traditional political structure, and to encourage respect for living elders. Some scholars have also interpreted it as a source of individual well-being and of social harmony and stability. Because family groups practise it, ancestor worship excludes proselytising and rarely involves a separate priesthood. It has no formal doctrines and is ordinarily an aspect of some larger religious system.

This leads to the teachings of karma siddhanta. Karma is the sum total of one’s actions, good or bad. These actions are attached to the soul as it transmigrates and each new body is determined by previous karma. The belief in karma, which can be traced to the Upanishads, is accepted by all Hindus, although they differ on many points. Some aspire to a mass good karma and a good rebirth, while others, regarding all karma a bad, strive for release from the process of rebirth (samsara) altogether, some believe that

52 Ibid., pp. 45-46.
karma determines all that happens to a person, whereas others attribute a larger role to destiny, divine intervention, or human effort.

**The Superstitious Beliefs**

The people of 17th and 18th centuries were very superstitious. They believed in attaining miraculous powers by appeasing Durga or the village deities. To achieve superstitious powers the people resorted to self-torture, and even self-immolation. To appease their favourite god or goddess people performed dangerous deeds such as plucking out their eyes with the nail parer, piercing their ears with arrows, cutting off their tongue with a sword and even chopping off the head with a pair of scissors etc. Some of the devotees dared even to pierce their body to a hook and kept hanging to it. This hook swinging ceremony was performed by both men and women. Another mode of self torture practised by some people was to walk or run over burning coals bare footed. The child marriages, the denouncement of widow remarriages, sati, the self immolation on the pire of the husband were also in practise during this period.\(^4\)

Though society was tradition bound and caste ridden, ancient values were still cherished. Dharma was the code of conduct that regulated a man’s work and activities. One of the virtues always advocated and cherished by the Hindu society was that of alms giving. These virtues of Hinduism include the support and respect to be given to a Brahmin and the protection of cows. Apart from these virtues, the Hindu society also advocated the need for obeying one’s own parents and teachers. The virtues of ‘Maitri’,

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Concerning the sexual morality, the virtue of chastity was always held high with regard to the Indian women. Referring to Indian Women, Abbe Dubois observed that Hindu women are naturally chaste. According to him, the Hindu women are more virtuous than the women of many more other civilized countries. Devadasi system was prevalent. Like Devadasi system, the institution of prostitution was also prevalent in Andhra desa like any other part of the country. This profession was not considered unholy and hence was widely accepted by people. According to an observation by Abbe Dubois “Vesya darisanam punyam papa nasanam” which means that to have intercourse with a prostitute was a virtue which took away sin.55

Adultery for a woman was thought to be a shameful act and it was condemned by the higher castes. But among the lower castes, some sections made it a profession with a certain religious approval.56

Finally, this period was not completely devoid of social and religious reformers who contributed much to improve the quality of life by their teachings. Among the social reformers two names viz., Vemana and Pothuluri Veera Brahmam strike prominent figures. Vemana though his poems and discourses attacked social inequalities and distinctions based on birth. He condemned caste system and emphatically said that it was

55 Ibid., pp. 310-11.
56 Satyanarayana, op. cit., p. 303.
worth and not birth that should determine a man's position. Veerabrahmam on the other hand condemned the hierarchy of caste and stood firmly for the liberation of women.\textsuperscript{57}

Islam

The Muslims, like other followers of the faith everywhere else, believe in Allah the one and only God and in Muhammad the Holy Prophet as His messenger. The Quran is their Holy Book.\textsuperscript{58} Islam which means submission to the divine will, enjoins on all its faithful followers five duties which are (1) the relation of the Kalma (an expression of faith in God and the Holy Prophet), (2) the saying of Namaz (prayer) five times daily either individually or collectively, preferably in a mosque, (3) Roza (fasting in the month of Ramzan), (4) Haji (pilgrimage) to the shrine in Mecca and (5) Zakat (charity in cash or kind). Many Muslims also respect Pirs (saints) and visit their Dargas, particularly on occasions of their anniversaries called Urs.\textsuperscript{59} There are many such Dargas in this district also.

Islam came to Deccan with the advent of Muslim rule. The Mughals, the two Muslim rulers of Mysore, viz., Haidar Ali and Tippu Sultan, the Golkonda Nawabs and the nawabs of Carnatic, Cuddapah and Kurnool helped the Islam to take deeper roots in different parts of Andhra and South India. The doctrine of monotheism, a casteless society and equality of men which were propagated by the Muslims has attracted many people to its fold.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{60} Chopra, P.N. Religions and Communities of India, Vision Books, New Delhi, 1982, pp. 190-193.
The Muslims who are numerically next to Hindus in coastal Andhra belong mostly to the Sunni sect, through there are some Shias also. Generally speaking, the Muslims are not to be found confined to any particular profession. They are to be found in almost all walks of life. The important groups among them are Shaik, Syed, Mughal and Pathan. The Shaiks outnumber the others. Dudekulas, the cotton-cleaning group, can hardly be distinguished from the Hindus in a professional sense.\(^61\)

Christianity

The Christians of coastal Andhra, like their co-religionists all over the world, believe in God as the sole Father of the universe and in Christ, His son, as the messenger, who came down to earth to justify the ways of God to men. Christ is the Saviour of mankind as He viewed with infinite compassion the fallibility of man and redeemed Him by shedding His own blood on the Cross.\(^62\) The Bible is the holy Book of the Christians and the Sermon on the Mount which is one of the most beautiful passages in all religious literature represents the *summum bonum* of Christian ethics.

Almost all the Indian Christians are converts from the Hindu fold. There are both Catholics and Protestants whose missionaries came to India from Europe and America. The protestants however, are numerically larger and belong to the various denominations such as the Christians of the earstwhile church Missionary Society, London Missionary Society later became as Church of South India, Lutherans, Godavari Delta Mission, Indian Pentecostal Church of God, Seventh Day Adventists, Salvation Army and so on.


The Canadian Baptist Church and the American Baptist Church also have considerable following in coastal Andhra. There are well-built churches in coastal Andhra for both the Protestants and Catholics. The Christians of coastal Andhra have taken to a variety of professions, though a large number is engaged in the teaching, nursing and preaching professions. Even though Christianity does not recognise any caste system nevertheless, the influence of the castes to which they belonged before conversion from Hinduism does operate in their general social life particularly in the matter of matrimonial alliances. Converts from the same caste tend to group together in such endogamous practices.

Almost all the sections of the Christians are found in coastal Andhra, a majority of whom are converts from the so called lower castes of Hinduism. In most of the reports from the missionaries sent to the home Board, they had expressed their frustration at the reluctance of the upper Hindu castes to come out openly to be baptised and become members of the congregation. Even though many people had realised that Jesus Christ is the real Saviour and Christianity as the true religion, the caste system and the family bondage, in which they were caught up hindered them to embrace Christianity because by doing so they became aliens to their own people, they were driven away from their parents and relatives and friends and all the bonds of relationship with the community was totally cut off, for which many people were not prepared.

64 Ibid., p. 129.
Therefore, it can be said that Christianity was introduced at the beginning of 17th and 18th centuries in coastal Andhra during the period, the latter was politically in a fluid state, economically much exploited by the European Trading Companies and socially divided by its own caste system and superstitious beliefs.66

THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY IN COASTAL ANDHRA

The Christian presence as part of its eastward expansion to India was first traced to St. Thomas, one of the twelve disciples of Lord Jesus Christ.67 The tradition current among the Syrians slows that St. Thomas landed at Crangamore on the Periyar estuary north of Cochin, Kerala in about 52 A.D.68 He is said to have preached to the Jewish colony settled there and made converts among them and their neighbours. After this, he is said to have founded churches in seven places and later crossed over to east-coast and settled at Mylapore, Madras city. While he was preaching to Brahmins, hostility aroused which led for his death in about 72 A.D.69 Thus, the Syrian orthodox church of East was organised in A.D. 180 on the Malabar coast. The Roman Catholic contacts are traced to India to the year 1319, marked by the visit of Francisean Missionaries. A continuous presence began in 1533 with the Portuguese mission that became the patriarchate of Goa in due course.70

66 Goldie, G.A. *op. cit.*
Catholic Missions in Andhra

The Carnatic missions in Telugu country and its origin dates back to 1505 on the arrival of Fr. Luis de Salvador. He was a Franciscan missionary and came to Vijayanagara empire as an ambassador from Portugal. His trip had two fold objective i.e., to build the friendship of Portuguese with Vijayanagara ruler for the advancement of trade in India and to preach the Gospel.\(^71\) His discussions with the Brahmins in religious matters did not bear fruit; on the other hand, he was ill-treated by them. Although the atmosphere in the South India was not very favourable to the proselytisation, the missionary activity went on. It was Antonia de Padraoe, another Franciscan, who came to India, some time in 1530 built a church and converted many in Vijayanagara empire. During the reign of Ibrahim Adil Shah I (1535-37), a good number of conversions to catholic church took place from the Golla, Sale and Goundla castes\(^72\) at Mudgal and Raichur areas.

Jesuit Mission

The Jesuit missionaries came to India in 1542 and extended their apostolate to Bijapur and Vijayanagara empires. On the request of king of Bijapur, the archbishop sent Gonsalves Rodringuiz and Superior to Bijapur in 1561. Though they were received well by the king, soon the bishops realized that the king of Bijapur asked for them only out of curiosity. Yet according to a Report of 1582, they made a few conversions in Bijapur.\(^73\)

In 1608, two Jesuit missionaries made requests to the ruler of Bijapur to grant permission for a Christian settlement and for a construction of a Church in Bijapur.

\(^{72}\) Ibid., p. 15.
\(^{73}\) Ibid., p. 17.
However, their third attempt in 1662 was successful and thus the mission station was established at Bijapur. This has resulted in the immigration of several catholic Christians from Portuguese territories to Bijapur.

Another Jesuit missionary Francesco Maneo toured the kingdom of Golkonda in 1641. His travel and gospel preaching has resulted in the establishment of two Christian mission stations, one at Golkonda and the other at Masulipatnam. The Jesuit Mission constructed a Church at Masulipatnam in 1652 to facilitate 300 Catholic converts. In due course Francisco Manco expanded his activities as a result of which several churches were established at Narsapur, Bimilipatnam, Chicacol (Srikakulam) etc. Two Churches were also constructed near Hyderabad, thus paved the way for the growth of Christianity in Golkonda kingdom also.

During 18th century, the Carnatic mission became the most flourishing mission in Telugu country owing to different methods, the missionaries have adopted. They were actively involved in the local politics and provided funds and presentations to the local rulers and secured the favour of princes. At times, they entered into secret deals with different warring groups, one against the other and thus avoided hostility and safeguarded their interests from both the groups. They commanded respect from the educated masses by their own scholarship and linguistic ability. They won the confidence of the poor by living with them and suffering with them. They exercised authority over the minds of the credulous by assuming to perform miraculous cures.

75 Ibid., pp. 324-326.
76 Ibid., p. 327.
through their blessings and prayers. They accomplished surprising results by gaining control of mental process of diseased and afflicted persons. Above all, they committed themselves unreservedly to the persecution when it met them. They baptised a large number of people but majority of them were either aged persons or little children, or the sick and the dying.\textsuperscript{77}

**The Jesuit activities in Andhra**

Calmette mentioned in his letter of September 17, 1735 about the conversion of a Lady, Ann, the first convert from the Kamma caste in Andhra. She suffered a lot with the activities of witchcraft and superstitious beliefs but got relieved by the prayers of the missionaries. After she was relieved of her affliction and received baptism with a changed name namely Annamma,\textsuperscript{78} it aroused enthusiasm in her relatives and neighbours. This incident dispelled the beliefs of the people in witchcraft and paved the way for the spread of Christianity in upper castes especially in the villages in Guntur, Nellore and Chingelput districts.\textsuperscript{79}

A large number of Kamma Christians in Guntur, Nellore and Chingulpet districts claimed themselves to be the descendants of the first Kamma converts of Andhradesa. They also adopted the christian name Annamma, the first convert from Kamma caste. In course of time, a large number of Kammas in Guntur and Nellore districts embraced christianity in the later part of 18\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{78} Letters and other writings of the Jesuit missionaries, Jesuit Archives, Secunderabad, p. 296.
\textsuperscript{79} Paul, R.C. *History of the Telugu Christians*, CLS, Madras, 1929, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{80} *Ibid.*, p. 31.
Protestant Missionary Activities in Andhra

The history of Protestant Missionaries in Andhra presents special features when compared with the history of the Catholic Missionaries. First, the Catholic Missionaries were active in India when Portuguese and French were strong in India. Once these powers declined, the Catholics lost their importance. Secondly, the Catholic Missionaries were not very successful in the area of proselytisation or social services. Lastly, Protestant Missionaries took up their work with much zeal and enthusiasm. But such qualities as devotion to duty and sincerity of purpose could not be found among the Catholics in a greater degree. Thus the history of Protestant Missionaries presents some interesting features. Before 1805 there was little protestant missionary activity in Coastal Andhra Desa. This was the situation inspite of the fact that the area was close to Madras and easily accessible from the sea. In 1804, when the London Missionary Society was established in Andhra, the activities of the Protestant Missionaries quickened.

Bartholomeu Ziegenblag was the first Protestant Lutheran Missionary to visit the Andhra Desa. He was sent by King Frederick IV of Denmark in 1706 on behalf of the Royal Danish mission to work among the Tamils. During his course of work at Tranquebar, he made a short visit to Tirupati in 1716. But it was his successor, Benjamin Schultz, who started work among the Telugu people shortly after his coming to Madras in 1726. He learnt Telugu and translated the Cathechism and the New

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82 Ibid., p. 46.
83 Holcomb, Men of Might in Indian Missions, Madras, 1901, pp. 23-24.
84 Firth, C.B. An Introduction to Indian Church History, ISPCK, Delhi, 1998, pp. 134-137.
Testament. As to the point of conversions, the early reports of Schultz do not distinguish between Tamil and Telugu converts. Shultz’s successor John Philip Fabricious continued to work among the Telugu people in Madras.

**London Missionary Society (L.M.S.)**

In 1795, the London Missionary Society was established at London in England. It has sent three of its missionaries who arrived to India during February 1804. Originally they were meant to work in Tamilnadu, but in course of time, they were led by friends in Madras to go to Vizagapatnam. The missionaries Rev. George Gram and Rev. Augustus Des Granges were cordially received by the Collector of Vizagapatnam and the English residents in July of 1805. They immediately turned to the study of Telugu while at the same time held the services for the English population.

In course of time, two more missionaries, Rev. Gordon and Rev. Pritchett of L.M.S. came to Telugu country. They not only made substantial contribution for the development of Christianity in Visakhapatnam district, but also pioneered the translation of the portions of Bible into Telugu thus paving the way for the growth of Telugu Christian literature. Besides the translation work, they also established schools at different places in Northern Coastal Andhra and regularly preached gospel to the natives.

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86 Firth, *op. cit.*, p. 139.
The fruitful results of Northern Coastal Andhra encouraged L.M.S. to open the second Telugu Mission in the Ceded districts of Cuddapah, Bellary, Ananthapur and Kurnool. These districts were taken over by the British from the Nizam of Hyderabad in 1800. From the newly developed station in the Kannada speaking part of Bellary, work was extended into the Telugu speaking sections until Mr. William Howell who was sent in November, 1822, to establish a station at Cuddapah. This mission was more successful than the mission at Vizagapatnam, because it was able to convert more than 100 members to Christianity in 1850. This shows how successful it was in proselytisation work when compared to Vizagapatnam Mission.

**Godavari Delta Mission**

The London Missionary Society was working in Andhra since 1805, initially from Visakhapatnam mission station and from 1822 from Cuddapah mission station. Only after 1833, substantial progress was seen in the protestant missionary activities in India. Sir Arthur Cotton, a Military Engineer who toured India in 1833 received requisitions from the European officers and soldiers stationed at Godavari Delta area to initiate measures to establish a mission station at Godavari Deltaic region to cater to the spiritual needs of the Andhras. Later, in 1836 while Cotton was returning from England, he brought along with him thirteen missionaries of the Plymouth Brethren. Two, of these missionaries, viz., Bowden and Beer, established a mission station at Narsapur in 1836 in the Delta of the Godavari river which in course of time came to be known as the Godavari Delta.

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Mission with its head quarters at Narsapur. This mission station in course of time became a pioneer institution for propagation of Gospel among the Indian officials and workers who were employed by Sir Arthur Cotton in the construction of Godavari barrage near Dhavaleswaram and rail bridge across river Godavari between Rajahmundry and Kovkur in East Godavari District. Besides the evangelical work, the Godavari Delta Mission established several schools in different parts of East and West Godavari Districts. The mission Hospitals at Narsapur and Ambajipeta are the pioneer medical hospitals in West Godavari District established in the second quarter of 19th century and providing valuable services even today. The leprosy asylum at Narasapur established by this mission at Narsapur is also a pioneer hospital in the area and serving the leprosy patients with its several dispensaries established in the nearby villages.

**American Baptist Telugu Mission**

The attention of the American Baptist Mission Union was first directed to the Telugus by Rev. Amos Sutton of the English Baptist Mission of Orissa. In 1835, while on a visit to the United States of America, Mr. Sutton urged the Board to organise a mission among "that numerous and interesting people". The proposal was favourably entertained in 1835 and Rev. Mr. Day was designated to the Telugus. He reached Calcutta in 1835. In 1840, Mr. Day fixed upon Nellore as the place best suited for a mission among the Telugus. On September 27th he baptised in the Pennar river his first convert. A church was organised in 1844, consisting of 8 members. In 1848 Rev. Lyman

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95 Fishman, P.T. For this Purpose, Madras, p. 1.
Jewett offered himself as a missionary and came to India. For five years these two brethren laboured on amidst discouragement.96

The mission, because of discouragement, struggled for life during the first few years. In 1853, the question that was discussed in America was, “Shall the Telugu mission be reinforced or discontinued”. A proposal was made that a letter should be written to Dr. Jewett (in India) requesting him to close the mission and proceed to Burma. The Secretary said: “Who will write the letter?,” giving it to be understood that he would not. Rev. Lansing Borrows speaking in favour of the great commission to India, pointed on the mission map to Nellore, the only station in the mission, and designated it “The Lone Star.”97 Rev. S.F. Smith, author of the American National Hymn, caught up the words “Lone Star” and put the thought into verse before he slept. The following is the opening stanza.

“Shine on, ‘Lone star’, by radiance bright
Shall spread over all the eastern sky;
Morn breaks space from gloom and night
Shine on, and bless the pilgrim’s eye”98

This verse was read, in the meeting on the next morning. Amidst pathos, the Telugu mission, it was resolved, was to be reinforced. This mission is therefore known as the “Lone Star Mission”.

On another occasion the question of abandoning the Lone Star Mission was raised. It was when the health of Mr. Jewett failed in 1862, Mr. Jewett, even if the Board

96 Ibid., p. 3.
abandoned him, showed his resolution to go to Andhra to propagate Gospel single-handed. The secretary replied, "Well, my brother, if you are resolved to go back, we must at least send some one with you to bury you; you at all events should have Christian burial in that heathen land." The Board decided to return Mr. Jewett, if health was restored, and Rev. J.E. Clough was designated as a missionary to Ongole in 1865. Mr. Clough\textsuperscript{99} began his work in Ongole in 1866 and a Church was organised in 1867 composed of 8 souls. By the close of 1868 the Church numbered 148. There was further reinforcement and new stations were created. The realisation that a native agency should be created to evangelise India led to the establishment of a theological seminary at Ramapatnam, also called Brown's Theological Seminary, a name given in honor of the most liberal contributor. In course of time, more Churches and schools were established in different villages.\textsuperscript{100} Industrial training has been given adequate attention since the Great War. In accordance with the resolution of the Ongole Conference in 1919 that vocational training be introduced in High Schools and steps were taken to carry out that policy, Industrial work has been started in both the Kurnool and Nellore High Schools. The name Coles is ever associated with the industrial and agricultural work of the Christian community. In addition to this work in the High Schools much industrial work is being done in the station boarding schools. Gardening, rope-making, carpentry, weaving, tape-making, and lace-work are some of the arts.\textsuperscript{101} The most important industrial enterprise in the Mission was the Erukala Industrial Settlement at Bitragunta. Here, in cooperation with Government, a great experiment was made in applying the

\textsuperscript{100} The Baptist Missionary Magazine, Vol. 47, No.8, August, 1867, p. 301.
\textsuperscript{101} Clough, J.E. From Darkness to Light: A Study of Telugu Awakening, Philadelphia, 1910, p. 47.
gospel to the reclamation of a dangerous and turbulent criminal tribe. Besides Bitragunta, the work was also carried on in the Settlements: Allur and Kavali.102

The work spread in wide dimensions so as to include Kurnool, Nellore, Prakasam and a part of Guntur districts of Madras Presidency and a section of Hyderabad. With an agreement with other missions operating in this area the mission has spread to the nooks and corners of Southern coastal Districts of Andhradesa. The western section of the area under consideration consists of broken hills and tablelands bisected by rivers. The eastern section is a coastal plain with more fertile lands and tripple crop pattern. Forests also cover the rough country. Except Nellore district, this mission field is in a comparatively backward section of the Telugu country.

Table

GROWTH OF THE AMERICAN TELUGU BAPTIST MISSION103

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Organised churches</th>
<th>Self-supporting churches</th>
<th>Church members</th>
<th>Mission stations</th>
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</table>

The Church Missionary Society

The report of the Diocese of Domakal in 1935 says, “A hundred years ago, among the whole ten millions of the Telugu people, there was practically not even one Christian. In two corners only was mission work being done. In the far north-east the London Mission had been in Vizagapatam since 1805, but it was thirty years before they made a convert and even now their numbers are not great. Right at the other side of the Telugu country, in Cuddapah, the same mission began work in 1822 and in a space of twenty years had built up a congregation of about a hundred souls. Exactly one hundred years ago, the American Baptists opened up in a third corner, at Nellore, but in twenty years they had only made forty converts. In all the rest of the Andhra country there was nothing.”

Around 1835, Daniel Corrie, the first Bishop of Madras, travelled through the whole Telugu area. On his return to Madras he routed regretfully that in all that vast territory there had been only four Indian Christians to receive the laying on of hands. He resolved to make the evangelism of the “Telugu country his chief aim and prayer. Even after one hundred years, in the first six months of 1937 no fewer than 5,287 Indian Christians were confirmed in the Domakal Diocese.

In 1837, Mr. Goldingham, the new Collector of the Krishna, gathered round him a few pious friends in Masulipatam to give and work and pray for the evangelisation of the country. They first applied to the S.P.G. which found itself unable at the time to

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105 Ibid., p. 151.
undertake a fresh field, then to the C.M.S. When the C.M.S. refused their request on the
ground of lack of funds, they themselves offered to give or guarantee the necessary
money; when the C.M.S. were unable to find suitable men, they themselves found men
for the work. The holy persistency of Mr. Goldingham and his friends had its reward
when the first two C.M.S. missionaries arrived in the Telugu country in the latter half of
1841. They were Mr. Fox and Mr. Noble.\textsuperscript{107}

For some time, these missionaries met and discussed the negative response from
among the Telugu people for evangelistic work. In coarse of time, Noble founded the
great educational institution known as Noble School\textsuperscript{108} which contributed greatly to the
progress of the area. The first converts were two young men viz., Manchala Ratnam and
Inala Bhushanam from the School, baptized a few months later.\textsuperscript{109} Mr. Fox was the
founder of district work. He was an earnest preacher of the gospel and spent his time
touring through the country. The mass movement of the C.M.S. had begun with a person
named Venkayya\textsuperscript{110} of outcaste origin, who in his youth had been a highway robber.
Along with him, his relatives were baptised. When Venkayya was baptised the converts
of the C.M.S. Telugu mission number 200; when he died in 1891, the numbers (due
largely to his efforts) were 10,000 within 50 years i.e., by 1940, the strength of C.M.S.
has risen to 2,20,000 in Andhra country.\textsuperscript{111}

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., p. 32.
\textsuperscript{108} Gibbs, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 153.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., p. 153.
\textsuperscript{110} Gledstone, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{111} Mission Statistics Presented to Missionary Council, 1941.
The gospel spread to Dummagudem,\textsuperscript{112} far away in the jungles of Godavari, among the Kois, the inhabitants of the jungle. Since it is an unhealthy area, the mission enterprise did not take deep roots.

Thirty-two years ago certain Tamil Christians of the South felt that the Tamil Church, now long established, should take a greater share in the evangelisation of India, determined to find a missionary society of their own to be known as the Indian Missionary Society of Tinnevelly.\textsuperscript{113} They chose as their sphere the eastern corner of the Nizam's Dominions. There were then only seven Christians in the whole of the district. Now they number about 12,000. Since 1931 the diocess has been divided into three archdeaconries corresponding to the Kishna, Nandyal and Deccan areas. The Vens, E.S. Tanner, P.B. Emmet and S.S. Subbayya are archdeacons. There are, at present, working in the diocese one hundred and fifty Indian clergy, ten English ordained missionaries, a half-dozen lay men missionaries, one deaconess and 25 lady missionaries. The various activities of the diocess are carried on under the direction of the Bishop, the Diocesan Council and the standing committee of the Council.\textsuperscript{114}

The studies were conducted in Kishna, West Godavari districts and the Khammammet area in Hyderabad State. Taking the Kishna Church council which includes the Kishna and West Godavari area it is to be noted that the organised congregations increased from 533 in 1920 to 1055 in 1937. The Indian Christian Community from 29,833 in 1920 to 96,983. The clergy increased from 30 to 76, laymen

\textsuperscript{112} Gibbs, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 155.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., p. 74.
\textsuperscript{114} Gledstone, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 38.
from 541 to 1073. This Kishna Church Council is divided into 44 pastorates grouped under fourteen deaneries under the charge of Indian clergymen. In the Khammammet area there are seventeen pastorates and 4 deaneries.\textsuperscript{115}

The United Lutheran Church Mission

The Foreign Missionary Society of the American Lutheran Church after having resolved to establish a mission of their own in the foreign field, appointed Father Heyer to go to India. He began his mission at Guntur in 1942.\textsuperscript{116} Rev. Mr. Heyer commenced operations immediately with the help of an interpreter, and baptised 17 persons before the close of 1842. Thus in a little more than two years, “Father” Heyer (as he is called) had collected a small congregation of native Christians. Besides these, Father Heyer was also pioneered to establish 3 schools one at his bungalow and the other two at Kothapela and Nallapudu.\textsuperscript{117} The Foreign Missionary Society was very much encouraged. Then Rev. Mr. Gunn was sent to assist Mr. Heyer in 1844. In 1849 a mission commenced its work in the Palnad area, where it achieved more success in Evangelism and Education.\textsuperscript{118}

The north German Missionary Society, having established a mission at Rajahmundry in 1845 under the missionary Valett,\textsuperscript{119} transferred their property to the American Lutheran Mission in 1851 in consequence of financial embarrassments in Germany and at the same time Messrs. Groenning and Heisse connected themselves with

\textsuperscript{115} Williams, J.B. \textit{op. cit.}, p. 10.
\textsuperscript{117} Swaveley, \textit{One Hundred Years in the Andhra Country}, New York, 1942, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{118} Swaveley, \textit{op. cit.}.
\textsuperscript{119} Dolbeer, M.L. \textit{A History of Lutheranism in Andhra Desa (1892-1920)}, Board of Foreign Missions, New York, 1959, p. 55.

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this mission. The management of the mission in 1852, consisting of three stations, Guntur, Palnad and Rajahmundry, devolved upon Mr. Groenning.\textsuperscript{120}

The contribution of A.E.L. Church in the field of Medicine is a noteworthy feature. The medical missionaries of the Church established several Hospitals to cater the needs of physical sufferers. Caste, colour, creed differences were not given any priority and as such the people of all walks of life got equal treatment in the hospitals. The hospitals established by the Church include Kuglar Hospital, Guntur (1899), Bear Hospital, Chirala (1903), Mission Hospital, Rentachintala (1914), Mission Hospital, Tarlupadu (1918), Mission Hospital, Bhimavaram (1904), Mission Hospital, Rajahmundry (1902) etc.\textsuperscript{121} Besides these general Hospitals, the Church has established leprosy hospital at Salur to serve contagious disease as well. An important feature of mission Hospitals was that the missionaries treated the untouchables with compassion and on equal footing with those caste Hindus.\textsuperscript{122} In the field of Education, they established several primary, schools in almost all the villages in Guntur District and in majority of villages in East and West Godavari Districts. The secondary schools at Guntur, Rajahmundry, Bhimavaram, Rentachintala, Sakinetipalli, Samalkot were rated for high professionalism and contributed for the academic excellence.

Another contribution of Lutherans was the establishment of Andhra Christian College at Guntur which was a landmark in the history of the education of the district. It was during the principalship of Wolf, the Guntur school was upgraded into a second

\textsuperscript{120} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 65.
\textsuperscript{121} David Raju, B. and N. Suresh Babu. The Lutheran Medical Missionary Enterprise in Guntur District, A.P. History Proceedings, Guntur, Vol. XV, p. 220.
\textsuperscript{122} Fishman, A.T., \textit{op. cit.}, p. 29.
grade college in 1885. The new college was known as American Evangelical Lutheran Mission College\(^{123}\) and was affiliated to Madras University. Two optional groups were offered viz., Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry in science group and Ancient History, Modern History, Logic or Language in Arts group. In 1893, with an enrollment of 29, the college secured 50 per cent passes at the University examinations. In 1903, the strength of the college rose to 64 and the next year the Government Inspector reported that the college bids fair to be the best in the Northern circars.\(^{124}\)

The missionaries of the Lutheran Church in Guntur and Godavari Districts worked strenuously to improve the condition of the widows. The missionaries brought Western Education and modern European thought into coastal Andhra. Through their schools and colleges, they propagated new social values like widow remarriage and discontinuance of child marriage which were major evils in Hindu society.\(^{125}\)

Students from different castes of Hindu society attended these schools. This was indirectly due to the modern education offered in missionary schools. As a result of the influence of the missionaries there was a decline in the number of child marriages and an increase in the number of widow remarriages. This was reflected in the Statistics of the period.\(^{126}\)

**The Canadian Baptist Mission**

The first Baptist missionary to the Telugus was a Canadian, Mr. Day. He was sent out by the Baptists of the United States. The C.B.M. then, as for many years after,
carried on their work through what is now the American Baptist Union.  

The Baptist Mission of Canada finds its chief work in Burma. The missionaries of the Western province of Canada laboured in Nellore district until they were led to the present territory.

The origin is closely connected with the late Rev. Thomas Gabriel, a pure Telugu. In early life he was connected with the Ev. Lutheran Church of Rajahmundry. He joined the Baptist Church at Madras on his way to Bombay where he was transferred and was recalled to Cocanada. He resigned his post in the Telegram Department and became associated with the missionary at Narsapur. He was publicly ordained in 1871. The Mission was offered to the English Strict Baptist Mission, which for lack of funds declined. But the Baptist Mission of Canada who accepted the call and sent Rev. J. McLaurin to take charge at Cocanada in 1874.

The mission became more distinctly Canadian in 1875 by the cooperative union entered into by the Baptists of the Western and Maritime provinces of the Dominion. This resulted in sending four families into the northern Telugu country.

Soon important mission stations were established at Tuni in (1879), Samalkot (1882), Ramachandrapuram (1892), and Pithapuram (1902) in East Godavari District, Srikakulam (1877), Bobbili (1878), Sompeta (1911), Vizayanagaram (1911) in Srikakulam District and Vuyyuru (1891), Akividu (1880), Avanigadda (1912) in Krishna district. The missionaries of C.B.M. Church played vital role in the coastal

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Districts of Andhra to the north of river Krishna contributed much for the overall development in the socio-economic, cultural and religious fields. They established general hospitals at Akividu, Pithapuram, Yelamanchili, Sompeta, Vuyyuru etc., and leprosy homes at Ramachandrapuram and Vijayanagaram and as a result of which they tried to save so many from the physical sufferings irrespective of creed, colour and caste.\textsuperscript{130} In the field of education, the Canadian Baptist mission did yeomen service and established at several schools including the primary, secondary schools, boarding schools, caste girl schools etc. A few such renowned schools include Timpany High School, Visakhapatnam, McLaurin High School, Kakinada etc. Besides these, the industrial schools for the vocational advancement of the people was another important contribution of Canadian Baptist mission. The lace making and knitting industries were encouraged by the missionaries and there by brought economic advancement to the women folk.\textsuperscript{131}

The mission is now being carried on in 23 fields. In 1887, there were 18 churches and a membership of 20,39, but in 1937, 128 churches and a membership of 28,921. The membership in 1928 was 19,690. The C.B.M. work was carried on in an area of 12,340 sq.miles. In 1837, 22 ordained missionaries, 24 ordained pastors and 102 unordained pastors. The mission contained work was spread to 1,046 villages.

The baptist membership has increased from 85,918 in 1918 to 174,068 in 1936. The congregations increased from 1262 in 1923 to 1770 in 1936. Pastors increased from

\textsuperscript{130} John Craig, \textit{Forty Years Among the Telugoos}, Toronto, 1908, p. 90.
\textsuperscript{131} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 173-99.
31 in 1923 to 89 in 1936 teachers 579 to 1942. To sum up the total native force increased from 3221 in 1923 to 2981 in 1936. While the ordained foreign missionaries were 23 in 1923, they were 19 in 1936.132

**Salvation Army**

Though started very late in Andhra under the auspicious of Frederick Booth-Tucker, the Salvation Army did yeomen service in the fields of Medical and Education.133 It has established hospitals such as Booth Leprosy hospital and General hospitals at Bapatla and Evangeline Tuckker Hospital at Nidubrolu. The primary, secondary schools are established at several villages and towns in Guntur District. The most remarkable contribution of Salvation Army was in the field of reformation of the criminals of Yerukula tribe by holding settlements at Stuvartpuram near Bapatla and Sitanagaram, on the right bank of river Krishna near Vijayawada.134 The Salvation Army missionaries successfully reformed the Yerukula tribes which are stamped as criminals by the Government of India. 'The Salvation Army gained success where the Government of India failed'. The Salvation army is an outfit of army not intended to fight against enemies but to fight evil and to bring the people into the true faith i.e., Christian faith.135 It has achieved good succession in Andhra Pradesh.

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The foregoing discussion shows that the missionary activity in the coastal Andhra Pradesh in general and Northern coastal Districts in particular was in high esteem in the 19th and 20th centuries and brought into focus many changes in socio-economic and cultural and religious fields of Andhra Desa.