PREFACE

British administration of India, during the 19th century, brought about structural changes in Indian society. It led to large-scale poverty and misery among the Indian peasantry. The introduction of modern means of communication and elements of commercial capitalism resulted in the creation of a national market. This was a period of transition. The impact of Western ideas, coupled with the changes effected in the economic structure of Indian society, stimulated a new outlook towards social change. An urban-based, educated middle class emerged shouldering the pioneering role of disseminating Western ideas and effecting the social and political awakening in India.

Social Reform movements1 should be viewed in this context. These movements were mainly initiated and led by Western educated intellectuals belonging to upper and middle classes.2 They belonged mostly to upper castes. Their upper caste bias

1. The term 'movement' is not used in the sociological context as a study of the environmental and structural changes it brings about. What is attempted here is an analytical account of various social reform ideas which developed into movements, in their own right, attempting to break away from established customs and traditions.

2. In the present thesis I have used the term reformers, though certain historians prefer to call them "intellectual leaders". See K.N. Panikkar, Presidential Address, Section III, Indian History Congress, Thirty-Sixth Session, (Aligarh, 1975), P.2. As most of them were not contented with mere exposition of social evils and involved in practical reform activities, I chose the term "reformers".
could be seen in the nature of causes they fought for. The emancipation of women in all its facets — women's education, widow-remarriages, 'kanyasulkam' and infant marriages — attack on superstitions, rituals, idolatry, marriage expenses, restrictions imposed on sea-voyage and purification of public life were some of the issues they included in their programme.

Social Reform movements in Andhra were a part of the all-India efforts in this direction. They were largely influenced in their origin and growth by similar attempts witnessed earlier in Bengal and Maharashtra. The present thesis covers the Andhra region of the present day Andhra Pradesh which was a part of the erstwhile Madras Presidency and the area which was governed directly by the British. The Telengana region is not included in the present study as it was under the rule of the Nizam of Hyderabad until 1948 comprising several heterogeneous areas of the present Karnataka and Maharashtra states and hence its political, social and cultural developments were distinct from that of the Andhra region.

An attempt is made in the present thesis to study various reform activities undertaken by Andhra reformers during the period 1848-1919. This period corresponds with the life span of Kandukuri Veeresalingam who was the leader of the reform movements in Andhra. Prior to Veeresalingam there did exist
stray but significant reform trends. However, it was Veeresalingam who consolidated these trends providing them with a form and philosophy. He was the first and foremost reformer in Andhra, though people like Raghupati Venkataratnam, Unnava Lakshminarayana, Desiraju Pedabapaiah played a significant role in these movements as his associates and younger partners. Also, significantly enough, the movements showed signs of definite decline by 1907 and almost ceased to be movements by the time Veeresalingam died in 1919. So, for convenience and to give a chronological unity to the movements the period of Veeresalingam’s life (1848-1919) has been chosen for the present study.

Social reform movements were connected with the attitudes and policies of the government. However, the study does not include the attitudes and policies of the government towards social reform as the scope of the thesis is mainly concerned with the reform movements as initiated and led by reformers. Furthermore, the attitude of the Raj with regard to social reforms after 1857, (by which time important state legislations like the abolition of 'Sati' and Widow Remarriages Act were enacted), was one of calculated non-interference and neutral at least until the close of the 19th century when the agitation over Malabari’s Age of Consent Bill gained momentum in Maharashtra.
The thesis contains nine chapters. The first chapter provides background to the proper appreciation of the rise of reform movements in Andhra. Along with the traditional hierarchical caste structure and superstitions and type of social life that existed in Andhra, the changes brought about by the educational and economic measures introduced by the British are discussed in this chapter. The second chapter gives historical survey of the reform trends that existed in Andhra prior to the social reform movements of the modern period. Concern for social reform existed prior to the British conquest of Andhra and an attempt to evaluate the missionary activities and the early British policies such as utilitarianism vis-a-vis reform movements is made in this chapter. The third discusses the political and social ideas of Veeressa-lingam and the fourth deals with the issues concerning the uplift of women - education, infant and 'kanyasulkam' marriages and the widow remarriages. (Alternatively the term 'widow marriages' has also been used in the thesis) The fifth chapter discusses the 'Social Purity' movement, as it came to be known, dealing specifically with the 'nautch' and temperance issues. The Prarthana Samaj movement (otherwise known as the Brahma Samaj) is discussed in chapter sixth. Though this movement appears to be primarily a religious reform movement, it has incorporated in its compass the essential features of
social reform movement and thus became its integral part. Other reform issues such as the marriage expenses, sea voyage and attack against public corruption are dealt with in chapter VII and a discussion of the extent and duration of the reform movements is presented in chapter VIII. Conclusions are given in the last chapter. Biographical notes of prominent men of the period under study are provided. Meanings of most of the technical terms are given in the text itself. However, a glossary is added covering those terms not explained in the text. In the Appendix are given the Memorandum of the Hithakarini Samaj established by Kandukuri Veeresalingam at Rajahmundry and the Trust Deed of Veeresalingam's assets which he donated to the Samaj. Two maps, one showing the centres of the Prarthana Samaj movement in the districts of Andhra and the other of the venues of social reform conferences at the district and taluk headquarters indicating the spread of the movements are included.

Materials on social reform movements in this part of the country are meagre and this was attributed by scholars to the weakness of such movements in the south as a whole. It appears that a number of pamphlets and tracts were published in Andhra during this period. However, all of them could not be traced now. Either they must have been lost or may be with some private individuals. A serious effort has been made
to tap this important source and I could secure quite a few of them, thanks to the efforts of a number of friends and the organisers of a few major libraries. Dealing with different reform issues, these contemporary pamphlets and tracts constitute a major source of our study. Those contemporary vernacular journals and periodicals that are available today, some of them older than a century, have been consulted. Some of this extremely useful source material for the social history of modern Andhra lay with a few libraries and individuals is in a very brittle condition.

Of the ten volumes of the writings of Veeresalingam, in Telugu, seven which include his autobiography, lectures, essays, articles published in his journal 'Vivekavardhani', novels and farces form another major source to the present study. Veeresalingam's letters and diaries, only a fraction of them have been preserved intact, are edited and published. They also provide useful information in this regard. Raghupati Venkataratnam's writings, mostly in English, are available in seven volumes. Besides these two leading reform figures of the period, several other reformers, of comparatively lesser stature, who were contemporaries to and participants in the reform movements left behind them memoirs, autobiographies and stray accounts of reform movements. These are in Telugu language and the autobiographies were not written in a strict
chronological order. Nevertheless, they contain valuable information and one has to carefully edit and select the relevant information he requires from these sources.

Private papers are not many. Enough care was not taken to preserve them. A major portion of Veeresalingam's diaries and letters were destroyed during the Godavari floods. What little remained of the original papers were published. However, the originals could not be traced. The private papers of Pyda Ramakrishnaiah and Raghupati Venkataratnam have been traced and made use of by the author in the writing of the present thesis.

Contemporary literary works provide several useful materials to our study as quite a few of them reflect the contemporary reform issues and problems. Besides this, other relevant contemporary publications, both in Telugu and English, have been consulted. A number of significant points culled from the above, which may not be directly connected with the study, but help in appreciating the complexities of the reform movements have been incorporated into the foot notes of the thesis.

Information that the government records can furnish, on a subject like our present study, is not much as the bias of the official records was towards political and other matters but not social. However, the Educational and Public
proceedings of this period have been consulted. The Native News paper Reports pertaining to the period under study are both valuable and helpful in getting gleanings from the news papers and journals of the period. Useful information has been collected from a number of government publications - Manuals, Gazetteers and Reports - of the period of our study. Secondary source materials - in English and Telugu - have also been extensively consulted.

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