CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION
I. INTRODUCTION

The present study is intended to examine the impact of religion on different economic, social, and cultural aspects of the social system. Religion, in fact, has never been isolated from other institutions. It has significantly influenced economic politics, family patterns, technology, and other important aspects of life. The secular institution, in turn, affects religious forms, values and beliefs.

It is in the light of what has been recognised as the true character of religious life that the present study is undertaken. It pertains to the organisational nexus of a religious complex situated at the Seven Hills of Tirumala in the State of Andhra Pradesh, drawing its devotees from various parts of India and the world too. And what is unique about this religious complex is the way that tradition and modernity are blended together.

Temples bring people together from different parts of the country and make them feel that they are one with the common aims of life. One may worship Lord Vishnu, and another, Lord Siva, but all of them follow the same path of Bhakthi, and to achieve the same goal, namely, Salvation or Eternal life, or otherwise becoming one with God after death.
Temple worship among the Hindus is quite common in India. It may not be possible to discover the origin of temples, which, by and large, have sacrificial altars. Temples enable the individuals to worship the idols (Gods) directly, and sacrifices and temples establish relationship between the world of spirits and the world of human beings on earth, which symbolise the union. The establishment of the temple on the Hills is another kind of association between the unseen Heaven and materialistic earth.

Generally speaking, Indian temples act as potent factors towards social, cultural, economic, and educational progress. At the same time, temples also serve as means of dispelling ideas of social inequality among the people, irrespective of status or sex. One significant example is Lord Venkateswara temple where society is brought to a common level of unity. Not only this, the temple acts as a centre of religious worship and learning where eminent scholars in vedanta, science and philosophy teach the younger generation. Besides, vedas are not only recited, but also taught. Puranas are read, and Hindu philosophy is expounded; fine arts are encouraged. In fact, in the presence of Lord Venkateswara, Tallapaka Annamacharyulu composed songs in praise of Lord incarnate. Thus, the temple

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has great impact not only on the religious life, but also on
the social and cultural life of the people, contributing to
their growth and well-being, blending the "old" and the
"new" ideas, correspondingly identified as the "tradition"
and the "modern". Each of them has its strength and weakness
against the background of modern times. It is important to
realise that good ideas from each aspect may be discovered
and applied to matters pertaining to tradition and
modernity.

In this study, an attempt has been made to examine
how this temple complex at Tirumala has tried to reconcile
itself to the goals of religious life with economic and
organisational network of the interest and needs of the
temple complex. The study also aims at investigating whether
some of the institutionalised forms of religion are being
transformed as a result of changing forces in the society.
To what extent, changes in their own goals and policies in
recent times have accommodated to meet the compulsions of
changing interests of the pilgrims, and whether the
significant changes in their policy affect the decision-
making process in recent times? If so, how are they being
caus ed — some of these questions have been raised in the
thesis.
Scope of the study:

The study concerns with the society, and the organisational, religious, economic, social and cultural aspects at Tirumala complex; also, how a transformation is taking place from tradition to modernity. The study, in general, also deals with the organisation responsible for the operation of the religious and socio-economic activities of the temple complex.

Objectives of the study:

To study the society relating to social and religious organisations at Tirumala complex;

To study the economic frame work of the religious complex in terms of income and expenditure;

To study the temple economy and the services offered by the T.T.D.

To study the tradition and its role to hold the pilgrims perform various rituals;

To study the changing trends of tradition towards modernity.

Methodology and field work:

Methodology is a system of rules, principles and procedures that regulate scientific investigation and which provides guidelines for collecting data, here with reference
to the study of Tirumala-Tirupati complex. This is a descriptive study, which largely involves books, scientific and professional journals, newspaper articles, and official records and reports of the T.T.D., together with answers in open-ended questionnaire schedule administered to officials and pilgrims by the researcher, to elicit information. This is supplemented by 'participant observation' to study the social behaviour of groups and individuals about whom very little is known to the outsiders and for which structured techniques such as the questionnaire study cannot be employed. Data analysis of this method involves the researcher many things such as noting of important themes, formulation of hypotheses and refinement and examination of conditions which they hold true. These are followed by coding important conversational topics and construction of typologies. The question of researcher's bias which is likely to enter into analysis should be minimised as much as possible.

Limitations of the study:

The vastness of the research project, the limitation of funds available for the study, fast-changing activities and developments in temple complex, greater need for procuring records and materials connected with the origin and legends of Tirumala Hills and Lord Venkateswara.
temple in particular, are some of the limitations envisaged by the researcher.

Reviewing the Literature:

The review of literature is a task that continues throughout the study. It begins with a search for a suitable topic. The thesis aims at a contribution to knowledge and understanding. Since the topic has been decided upon, it is essential to review all relevant material which has a bearing on the proposed study.

L.P. Vidyarathi, studied the values of the sacred city, Hindu Gaya in 1953-54, and published the same in 1961. His main concern was the study of the History of the temple, the study of community of Gayawals (Sacred Specialists). He also studied the sacred complex of the temple (Sacred Geography - Rituals and Specialists). This study was useful to a large extent in understanding the cultural role of the temple town - sacred Gaya. In order to understand the religion, society and economy in Hindu Gaya, the researcher has to mention some of the works of the sociologists and anthropologists.

B.N. Saraswathi published an article on 'The Holy Circuits of Nimsa', and brought out the pilgrimage and the relationship between the pilgrims, the ritual specialists
and the peasant village located on a parikararam route (1962). In the succeeding year, the same author made a study on temple organisation of Gaya, and examined elaborately the role of sacred institutions and the temple organisation. The author also made a study on sacred complex of Kashi in the year 1971. The various types of cultural institutions connected with the sacred complex were examined.

B.B.Goswamy and B.G.Morab studied the various temples in Karnataka, and they discussed some of the aspects of the temples. In another article, they had mentioned the nature of change in the occupations of the religious functionaries, like the priests. According to their observations, the tendency regarding the adoption of other new occupations was largely seen from the descending generations. This was due to the impact of several factors such as the Western types of education, industrialisation, mainly the economic position.

N.K.Bose, in the year 1967, studied the temple of Linga Raj in Orissa State. He dealt with the study of temple organisation, daily services, rituals, religious specialists, and distribution of services. He noted that even a sudra caste performed certain important tasks such as clothing of the idol, though major functions like worshipping the God, preparing the sacred food were done by
the Brahmins. Some of the non-Brahmin castes like the potters, washermen, barbers attended to various non-priestly duties. In a similar manner, even a very low caste called souri performed certain duties like the sweeping and cleaning the temple.

Makhan jha concentrated on the sacred complexes of Janakpur and the sacred town Rathnapur, in Chhatisgarrah in the State of Madhya Pradesh in the years 1971-73, following the formulation already introduced by L.P.Vidyarthi. He studied the pilgrims' life conditions, the fairs and festivals of Rathnapur temple. On studying further the temple of Chhatisgarh, he observed that the sacred complex of the Hindu place of pilgrimage in itself was a dual organisation of the great and the little traditions.

L.K.Mahapatra's work on sacred geography of Guptha Kashi (Bhuvaneshwar) revealed that the author observed a number of temples, tanks, sacred rivers, caste associations, and residential areas of the religious functionaries existing within the sacred complex. He followed the concepts of Prof. L.P.Vidyarthi. In fact, the author Mahapatra mostly adopted Vidhyarthi's concept on Sacred Geography, religion and segment assigned to different religious specialists, and also pointed out the festivals of all types within these religious centres.
Prof. K.N. Sahay, likewise, made a study of the shrines of Rameswaram and Tirupati, and discussed the geography, background and history of those sacred religious centres.

S. Narayan's study of the sacred complex in Deoghar revealed the preliminary observation of the sacred complex in Rajgir, situated in the ancient city of Magadh. The study of the sacred complex of Kashi by Vidhyarthi, B.N. Saraswathi, and M. Jha confirmed the cross-regional applicability of the terms and concepts used in the study of the sacred Gaya. Rajendra Jindal's work revealed the cultural values of the sacred town Natdwara in Rajasthan, about which the author studied the cultural transformation of the temple town.

Chakravarthi studied the attitude of the pilgrims of the famous Tarakeswar temple and noted the composition and the behavioural differences among them. The study was conducted on a particular section of pilgrims, that was the Jaljatris of a particular season.

Upadhyaya studied the Dwaraka temple in the year 1974. He mainly stressed on the aspects of historical background and sacred geography of the temple. He also brought out the various types of the rituals pertaining to
the deity in the sacred complex. Further, he compared and developed the concept of 'sacred complex' introduced by L.P.Vidhyarthi.

Prof. B.S.Cohn in 1974 published an article titled 'The Role of the Gossain in the economy of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries in upper India'. In this article, the author discussed the use of the place of pilgrims as trade and manufacturing centres and Mathas by the Gossains' for developing their trade.

S.Narayan studied the pilgrims of Kashi in 1974. He noted that the pilgrim's visit from different parts of the country has varied socio-economic background. Generally, some changes had taken place in the content and attributed to pilgrimage. Pilgrims did not take the assistance from the religious specialists in performing sacred functions. In fact, the Kashi temple reflected the traditions of both Brahmanic and non-Brahmanic sections of India.

E.Alan Morinishi's study on pilgrimage in the Hindu tradition - a case study of West Bengal, revealed the philosophical roots of the pilgrimage-tradition in West Bengal. He studied the three temples of Tarakeswar, Navadweep and Tarapith in the districts of Hoogli, Nadia district and Birbhum, and each of the three main sects of Bengali hindus. He also studied the cultural traditions and
similar institutions elsewhere in the region. He emphasised on the relationship between the pilgrimage institution and the socio-cultural environment necessary as a basis for a comparative study. The fundamental concepts he adopted was from the works of Emile Durkheim and Gregory Betison. Each temple in the study was in a significant way, different from the others - the main distinction between the temples in the Shrine-deity of Tarakeswara in Shiva of Navadweep Vishnu and Tarapith Shakthi of Devi. The sect of Hinduism associated with each temple was in relation to the deity. He had given a detailed ethnographic study of the three temples and made a comparison of the three.

A.B.Shah in his book "Religion and Society in India" was mainly concerned with the Hindu religion and the tradition and the modernity in India. he also dealt with Islam and its elite in India.

Emile Durkheim visualised that society was bound by the beliefs and values of its members. Elementary forms of religious life is one of his monumental works. He had undertaken Australian aboriginal tribes for his research work, and studied the social organisation of the Arunta tribe. He classified religion into two domains - one containing 'sacred', and the other 'profane'. The beliefs, myths, dogmas, and legends are either representations or
systems of representation which express the nature of sacred things; the virtues and powers which are attributed to them or their relations with one another, are profane things. Durkheim examined the clan of organisation of the aboriginal tribes of Australia. He explained the idea of the souls, spirits, and gods, and emphasised the concept of beliefs and practices. He described elaborately the ritual attitudes and sacrifices for various ceremonies. According to Durkheim, religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden - beliefs and practices which united into one single immoral community called a church, and all those who adhere to them.

Max Weber believed that religious ideas could independently play an important role in sociological analysis and that sociologists should be 'value free' in their professional work. From his thesis on 'Protestant Ethic and Sprit of Capitalism', there are numerous studies and seminars discussing the characteristics of the Hindu society and religion vis-a-vis economic growth and socio-cultural change. Weber in his classic work of protestant ethics has compared different ethics of world religions. Although he related this ethical content to its relationship with economic institutions, a careful analysis of Weber's
work shows that he has analysed religion in the manner in which religion promotes other worldly interests. While this is the framework of Weber, Durkheim's analogy of religion seems to be different, and involves belief and rituals as the first step towards the analysis of the meaning of religious participation. There are also some other studies which highlight the relationship between the social class influence on religious participation and non-participation. The present study of Tirumala Tirupati - A Study in Religion and Society, tries to explore the transformation of the structure of the temple organisation as the complexity of the religious organisation concerning the pilgrims and the temple growth.

Max Weber's empirical interest following his economic bent came to be focussed on the phenomena of the modern economic order as a socio-economic system. Undoubtedly, the main starting point of Weber's treatment was Karl Marx, who introduced the concept of class conflict, that is, the struggle between those who controlled production and those who did not. He advocated a 'classless society' to replace exploitation by the capitalists.

Two of Max Weber's works are both theoretically and empirically useful and interesting. In the first place, Weber stressed on the relationship between protestant ethics
and the rise of the spirit of capitalism, and secondly, his main intention was that the ethics of the oriental religions had not been conducive to capitalistic development in Asian countries. Weber also demonstrated how religious developments are influenced by historical, cultural, and economic circumstances. In fact, all religious organisations seem to express man's conception of himself, his position in the universe and the normative order of society. Social order is not constant because man is always attempting to clarify it intellectually.

The concept of capitalism is a system of profit-making enterprise bound together with market relationships. Such enterprises are by no means peculiar to modern Western society.

Indeed Weber does not hesitate to speak of 'capitalism' existing at many times and places, and according to the source of the opportunities for profits, as of many different kinds. In this respect, the difference of the modern West from other societies is only a difference of degree, though a highly significant one. Having established his descriptive account of phenomenon 'Modern Capitalism' he proceeds to point out that it is empirically associated with a set of values.

Prof. M.N.Srinivas has introduced two important
concepts, viz., 'Sanskritisation' and 'Westernisation' in his book titled "Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India" published in 1952. Srinivas has analysed and described the religio-ritual practices of Coorgs in a vivid manner. According to him, religious behaviour is a part of social life. He has clearly explained the Indian ways of thought, because he himself hails from a Brahmin community. He has given a religious behaviour pattern of a community, that is Coorges in a scientific manner, having elaborately explained the domestic cult. He tried to link up the religious behaviour patterns with social structure, after examining the ritual idiom of the Coorgs. Since most villagers took active part in ritual practices of various types, he dealt with the study of the local deities of the village, namely, the gods and the goddesses of the Hindu pantheon. He emphasised the concepts of purity and pollution. After having examined the important characteristic features of Hinduism, he concluded that the structural basis of Hinduism is the caste system.

Malonowisky and Radcliffe Brown, A.R., showed how religion works in primitive society to maintain social cohesion, and control individual conduct.

Durkheim's emphasis on rituals has a meaningful framework. The group identity in the society is through a
religious organisation. While this may be a point of departure for understanding the religion and its relationship with society, Weber's treatment of a religious belief is basically on the question of connection between religious ethics and economic order.

The economic behaviour and the relation between the position of economic groups in an economic system and types of religious beliefs of Max Weber, do provide an important theoretical framework of the study of sociology of religion. However, those studies with a masterpiece of methodology of framework warrant the need for studying the specific micro-level understanding of the religious complexes on its organisational evolution. The growth and development of a unique kind of economy called the 'service economy' and 'service occupation' the net-work of emerging social organisation as a supplementary form of the religious complex to meet the needs of pilgrims and change and continuity in the relationship between the society and religious complex at the micro-level - these are the contemporary trends of the sociological studies of religion.

Although there is enough study centering around religious complex and its social organisation, there is a need to study the impact of the complexity of social force and the differentiated social and economic organisation
around the concept of "deity worship", which is the hallmark of Hindu religion. This study has a strong inference from the classical thinkers of religion and focused itself on the uniqueness of new approach to deity worship by the masses in a society. The new approach is the blend of sacredness of a modern trend of organisational and institutional establishment to meet the needs of the pilgrims and worshippers. This is a new trend in contemporary religious establishment which attracts a great number of people to congregate in a specific place for worship. The congregation includes pilgrims with different educational and professional background as indicated in Tables 1 and 2.

The Tirumala temple is such worship centre in India, which may even be called a sacred complex. But the emphasis of this study is how the place of worship in this context of mass congregation gets transformed from a simple traditional socio-religious organisation into a complex under modernised economic organisation without shedding the real value of a religious fervour.
# TABLE 1.1
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF PILGRIMS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Educational Background</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Illiterates</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Literates</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Matriculates</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Post-graduates</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 250 100

*Source: Based on Researcher's Survey*
TABLE 1.2
PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY OF PILGRIMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Professionals</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Agriculturists</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total                                   250    100

Source: Based on Researcher's Survey