CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Indian Christianity is not only a pre-colonial phenomena but one dating back to antiquity. Christianity is as old in India as the Apostolic times dating to the second century. The old Christians on the Malabar Coast trace their conversion to the Apostle St. Thomas who, tradition has it, actually laid down his life in India. These Christians, however, while maintaining their identity through the centuries, never expanded beyond their original habitat. Banerjee opines that "Christianity found its roots in India and subsequently extended to countries like England, Portugal, and Spain. Christianity is as much a religion of the Indian soil as any other religion of India" Dr. S. Radhakrishan also wrote about the Christianity, "Christianity has been with us from the second century A.D. It has not merely the rights of a guest but the rights of a native". He also further expressed that "Christianity has flourished in India from the beginning of the Christian era. The Syrian Christians of Malabar believe that their religion Christianity is Apostolic and has derived directly from the Apostle Thomas.1

I. India and the Apostle Thomas

Historically speaking, the Indian Christians, who claim to trace their descent from the Apostle Thomas, is commonly called "Christians of St.


Thomas”, “Thomas Christians”. Writers in Malayalam invariably refer to them as "Mar Thoma Kristyanikal”. Christianity first came into India in the first century (52 A.D.). One of the source books regarding the life and mission of St. Thomas the Apostle is the work called: “The Acts of St. Thomas” which probably dates back to early third century. 52 A.D. that St. Thomas first visited India and eventually reached the Hindu temple-town of Mylapore also known as the city of peacocks near modern Chennai. He underwent death penalty for persistence in Christian faith in 68 A.D. The site of his martyrdom is said to be at Mylapore in Madras. St. Ephrem in the fourth century has made many references to St. Thomas the Apostle and India in his famous 'hymns' In these hymns St. Ephrem clearly says that Thomas the Apostle worked miracles in India, suffered martyrdom in India and was buried there only.  

St. Thomas was the first of the twelve Apostles – the leader of the silent, almost mute Apostles to enter the Gospels practically unnoticed. The Synoptic Gospels (i.e. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke), are silent about Thomas, save the mere mention of his name along with that of other Apostles. In the Canon of the masses, in the Litany of the saints, and in the Acts of the Apostles, Thomas is portrayed as a specially important witness to the resurrection. He is placed before Philip, Bartholomew and Matthew and not after them, as is mentioned in the gospels. St John, in his gospel has made

3 "The Syrian Christians are called St. Thomas Christian or Nasrani Mapilas. The name of Nasrani or Marthoma Nasranikal, by which these Christians are universally known in Malabar, denotes an antiquity of origin".
4 D’Souza, Herman (1983) In the Steps of St. Thomas, Madras Mylapore, Madras, p. 6.
5 St. Thomas was also known as Peacock.
7 D’Souza, Herman (1983) op.cit. p. 8, also see Firth, C.B. (1992) An Introduction to Indian Church History Published for the Senate of Serampore College by the Christian Literature Society, Madras, p.5.
some marked references to Thomas who is called "Didymous" (twin)⁸ St. Thomas appears prominently in this Gospel immediately before the account of the raising of "Lazarus from the dead"⁹ and at the Lord Supper.¹⁰

The origin of the phrase 'Doubting Thomas' is well known. Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus who gloriously rose from the dead, appeared to them. When the other disciples told him, "we have seen the Lord", he said to them, "Until I have seen the mark of the nails on his hands; until I have put my finger into the mark of the nails and put my hand into His side, you will never make me believe."¹¹ Pain is the price of doubt and uncertainty. No one could help him but Jesus Himself.

St. Thomas one of twelve Apostle of Christ, actually came to India. Some scholars believe that St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew both disciples of Christ, came to India in the first century to preach the Gospel of Jesus. George Mark Moraes writes about them.¹² "It is the tradition of the Universal Church that India was evangelized by two immediate disciples of Christ: St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew. Recent research tends to confirm this tradition, though its history is still questioned in certain quarters. This suspicion is based on the belief that in ancient times the West was likely to have known little about India, a belief which is strengthened by the confusion made by later writers in the use of the term "India and Parthia."

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⁸ The New Testament, John, Chapters 11: 16; 20: 24. Therefore Thomas, who was called the twin Didymous (gr; Didymos; It Didymus) said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him".


The tradition regarding the Christian faith is that St. Thomas had preached the word of God in the Southern parts of India, especially in Kerala and Bartholomew in the western parts, especially around Kalyan, near Bombay.

Some scholars believe that St. Thomas had a twin brother and that they both propagated the Christian faith in India. Apostle Matthew, whose other name was Levi, and who has been mentioned in Buddhist literature as Jew Levi Buddha, became a martyr in northern India and Apostle Thomas became a martyr in southern India. But it is not clear whether St. Thomas' brother came to India to propagate Christianity. Regarding Christianity in India, it is also believed that when a number of countries in Europe had not yet embraced the religion, Indians had already accepted the Gospel of Christ and had converted to Christianity. It is historically accepted that the ancient tomb at Mylapore made during the first century A.D., is one of the testifying monuments of present times.

The reports of the visitors to the tomb in the subsequent centuries testify to the continued existence of a series of architectural structures there. These archaeological attestations are confirmed by the recorded presence of pilgrims at the tomb. And finally there is the age old tradition of the St. Thomas Christians which has all along identified this very tomb as the one in which

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13 ST Bartholomew first preached at the Jewish Synagogues and then to the Local people latter when the Persian Church established its control over the Indian Christians of Bartholomew and were intermingled with that of ST. Thomas Christian that their tradition was lost. See also Moraes, G.M., op.cit., pp. 43-45.

14 Moraes, George Mark, op.cit., pp. 44-45.

15 St. Thomas made two voyages to India for his Evangelical work.

their Apostle Thomas had been interred.\textsuperscript{17}

Many details concerning the actual tomb of the Apostle at Mylapore coincide with those furnished by the ecclesiastical writers. Gregory of Tours (+ ca 594 AD) says that it was from Theodore that he learnt of the standing miracle of the lamp at the tomb of the Apostle Thomas in India. The lamp was said to be burning continuously though never replenished by human hand. Marco Polo (a Venetian traveller) also speaks of a lamp at Mylapore. It was this lamp from which the pilgrims took away the oil, but the flame remained burning due to the efforts of a curator.\textsuperscript{18} In the sixteenth century the Portuguese saw the burning lamp at the tomb. The Portuguese who visited during the sixteenth century have also mention above burning lamp at Mylapore.

Traditionally the identity of Apostle Thomas is marked clearly and there is nothing equivocal about it. It is precisely because Thomas is one of the Lord’s twelve Apostles and his teaching has inviolability and authoritativeness attached to it. It was the Apostle Thomas who made the proclamation, “My Lord and My God”, in the memory of which event they hold a solemn day of commemoration every year. The way they celebrate the feast of Dukrana on the third of July is unique.\textsuperscript{19} Their tradition, which is a consensus belief of the whole community appears as a concrete reality with an individuality of its own. The Malabar society at large bestowed its recognition on this tradition of theirs. The community took its origin, maintained its identity down the centuries, and still continues to hold its members together. The weight of the Apostle’s personality provided it with cohesiveness. The only unifying force that bound the members together was their shared faith that the Apostle had

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., p. 467.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 459.
preached their ancestors.  

Thus the perception and strong belief among a section of Christians in South India that St. Thomas went there and converted their ancestors is of great psychological and sociological significance. Psychologically, such a perception is important, in that it helps to attach the involved population to a long tradition which in turn bestows them with dignity and pride. Sociologically, such a cognition defines Indian Christianity as a pre-colonial phenomenon which is of tremendous existential consequence.  

There is historical evidence of Christian settlement in the third century in Kerala. The distinctive marks of these precolonial Christians, invariably referred to as “Thomas Christian” or “Syrian Christians”, consisted of the following: (1) They were a small community; (2) they claimed to be the descendants of those converted by St. Thomas; (3) They were geographically congreged in a specific part of India – mainly present day Kerala; and (4) a substantial number of them were converts from upper castes and the local landed aristocracy. St. Thomas founded seven churches or group of Christians at the various places.  

It is believed that St. Thomas died in India. The Apostle could have visited various places in India. But it is not proved where he died in India. Today. The Roman Catholic, the Syrian Orthodox, the Anglican and the

20 Ibid., p. 460  
22 Ibid., p. 40  
23 Herman’s D Souza op.cit, p. 20. Name of the Churches (1) Cranganore or Maliankara (2) Palur or Palayur, (3) Parur or Kotta Kavu, (4) Kokkmangalam (5) Niranam. (6) Chayal or Nilakal, (7) Quilon or Kollam, all the Churches, save the one at Chayal, are on the coast or very near to it. Chayal is situated very much in the interior on the Sabariamala Hills and also See Pothan, S.G. (1963) The Syrian Christians of Kerala. Asian Publishing House, New Delhi, p. 5.
Church of the East hold the belief that the Indian Christians of St. Thomas were founded in India by the Apostle Thomas.

Some of the historians have rejected the tradition altogether and denied that St. Thomas ever came to India. The criticism was made by the French historians Basnaye (Protestant) and Tillemont (Roman Catholic) at the end of the seventeenth century, La-Croze (Protestant) in the eighteenth century, and the English Protestants James Hough and Sir John Kaye in the nineteenth. Some of these denials may have been due to the assumption that in the state of communications then prevailing, a Palestinian Jew would not be likely to travel to India in the first century A.D. But. It is now known that there were regular communication and lucrative trade by sea between the west coasts of India and the Roman Empire at that time, via the Red Sea and Alexandria; so that such a journey is by no means as improbable as it once seemed. Moreover it seems that there were Jews in India both on the west coast and in the north west.

Some are willing to admit that St. Thomas not only visited South India but also North India whereas others hold the view's that he never went to South India. A former professor; G. Milne Rae, in his book 'The Syrian Church in India' (1892) criticised the Syrian tradition and said that these tradition were produced by the local Malabar people not belonging to St. Thomas. F.E. Keay also mentioned St. Thomas in his book 'History of the Syrian Church in India'.

"The visit of St. Thomas to South India cannot be positively proved.


26 Keay, F.E., op.cit., p. 14, and also see Firth, C.B. op.cit., p. 15.
The question has been much discussed and there seems little prospect that a final verdict can be given. The local views with regard to his visit is very strong and there are no rival local views as to the origin of the Church in South India. The tradition has also been held outside India both in the West and in the East from the very early times. There is nothing improbable in the story that the Apostle should have travelled as far as India preach the Gospel. If the story cannot be proved, it certainly is by no means unlikely.

But L.W. Brown also expresses his views that traders from East Syria and Persia, settling in Malabar, brought the tradition of a church founded by St. Thomas with them and, so to say, naturalized it. Confirming the Malabar tradition, E.M. Philip also pointed that the trade relations of the Roman Empire with India were chiefly with South India and the Dravidian peoples; so that if St. Thomas came by sea, he would be more likely to reach to Malabar than the north-wst. T.K. Oommen and Hunter P. Mabry also express that there are at least five strands of opinion articulated with regard to the tradition of St. Thomas in India:

(a) The general tradition which holds the belief that St. Thomas preached and suffered martyrdom in India;

(b) the view that St. Thomas may have come to north India (Now Pakistan) but not to South India;

(c) the position which denies that St. Thomas went to North India but insists that he came to South India and

28 Firth, C.B. op. cit., p. 16
the opinion that the apostle visited both the North and the South

On the other hand, F.A. Plattner expressed the following facts:

(a) Stone – relief representing St. Thomas found in the Apostle’s tomb near Mylapore;

(b) Ancient Syrian Cross dating lack to seventh century, in the Church at Valliapally;

( ) Church at Kuravilangad where the Cross stands in front of it;

( ) The priest’s house built in Malabar style at Kadumattam.

( ) Procession of Thomas – Christians bearing Silver Cross

In the nutshell, 52 A.D. is now accepted by most of the scholars, as the period for the arrival of St. Thomas at the reputed port of Cranganor in Malabar. The traditions of the Malabar witnessed and certified that St. Thomas was the disciple who came to India to preach the Gospel and suffered martyrdom in India.

Colonel - Yule a strong supporter of the Malabar tradition was among those who held the view. "It carries conviction, especially, since it is known that the inhabitants’ of the island of Socotra, also further expressed views about the St. Francis Xavier of landing of St. Thomas on the Malabar coast." It may be said that the Apostle stayed for approximately seventeen years in India viz. about four years in Sindh, six years, at the most in Malabar and seven years at Mailepuram or Mylapore.

II

31 Herman, D’ Souza, op. cit., p. 23
Syrian Christians in India

Regarding the expansion of Christianity in India the two centuries immediately following the Apostolic age are a complete blank. There are no means of understanding Christianity for the communities left behind by St. Thomas. An Indian writer of the eighteenth century says32 “After the death of the Apostle Thomas, India and Malabar were without a preacher and a leader apart from the priests ordained by St. Thomas. After ninety two years, India and Malabar were left without priests had only believing men and women. Further he also expresses that India received Christianity in the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine I (313-337) through Edesius and Frumentius.

The history of Christianity in India from the first century A.D. up to the sixteenth Century is virtually the history of the Syrian Christians of Kerala, who first came to Malabar (India). It is one of the oldest Christian Communities in the world. Whatever views are held about it by various scholars their is no doubt that the Syrian Christians settled at Malabar and established the Christian Church in South India from very early times, probably from the third century. They converted many Nambudiri Brahmin families and also those from high castes and classes of society. Oommen and Marby have expressed the opinion, that demographically, the descendants of those who were believed to be converts by St. Thomas were usually of high caste origin and were referred to as the Northists, and the small band of merchants and traders who migrated from Syria and were referred to St. Francis Xavier Land33 or as the Southists. These groups seem to have

33 St. Thomas Xavier Land Including the following States, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.
maintained their socio-cultural boundaries through the practice of endogamy.\textsuperscript{34}

In the year 345 A.D. many Syrian Christians migrated into Malabar under the leadership of a Merchant Prince called Canai Thomas or Thomas of Canaan. They developed rituals and a life style distinct to Malabar. The Christians of Malabar also followed the Syrian rites. The Syrian and Malabar Christians soon entered into matrimonial relations and merged into a single community Canai Thoma himself married a Christian lady from Malabar.\textsuperscript{35} But according to Christian doctrine and beliefs Malabar people were dependant upon the East Syrian or Persian Church. Thus they lived in two worlds simultaneously – the socio-culture world of Indian and the ecclesiastical world of Persia.\textsuperscript{36}

From time to time, we get glimpses of the church in this country; sometimes in the writing of people of other lands which deals with India. Many missionaries came to India to preach the Gospel. A well-known Christian teacher of Alexandria named Pantaenus also came in A.D. 190 along with a copy of Gospel and preached in India. Pantaenus preached among Brahmins and philosophers of India. Father Heras, who followed Father A.C. Perumalil, also accepted the mission of Pantaenus which was also the mission of St Bartholomew. Thomas of Cana is slightly different name and has appeared variously as a merchant reported to have a traveller and pilgrim. Thomas of Cana and the Chaldean Christians\textsuperscript{37} played a great role in the

\textsuperscript{34} Oommen, T.K. and Mabry, Hunter P.: – \textit{op. cit.}, p.41
\textsuperscript{37} The Church of the East or East Syrian living either in Kerala or more northwards along the West coast. In the other words, the label “Chaldean” is affixed to those groups of St. Thomas Christians whose cult and worship are based on the East Syria. There Christians were previously Nestorians but now are Catholics.
organization and building the Church and community of Cranganore.

In the third century, Dudi (David) Bishop, Bishop of Basra (in Mesopotamia near the head of the Persian Gulf) came between A.D. 295-300 and evangelized many people. At that time, they were under the jurisdiction of Bishop of Persia around the year of 354 A.D. The Roman Emperor, Constantius sent a Christian embassy to certain countries bordering the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea, under the leadership of an Arian Bishop known in history as Theophilus. Theophilus reached Maladive Islands and reformed many customs and changed the life styles of people.

Kaniska of the Kushan dynasty (Kans) of India, in the third century, became a follower of Christianity. Later he gave up the Christian faith and became a follower of Manak. Before the fourth century there were many Christian Churches at Malaber and there are indications that Christianity spread its influence over the whole of the South India.

There is a little evidence of relations between the Indian and Syrian Churches in the fifth century in the matter of study of Christianity. A Syrian commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, produced at Edessa, has been translated by Markomai from Greek into Syriac with the help of Daniel a priest of India. Daniel was the first Indian theological student known to history. Again another Syrian scholar, Mana Bishop of Persia in about 470 A.D. wrote hymns and translated them from Greek into Syriac and sent them

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38 This is the first reference to a Bishop's being in the country and it is noteworthy that he was a Mesopotamian Bishop.
40 Manak was called Maming Mahayan by Chinese. Manak is also known as Mani, Manis or Maning in the west and the Chinese called him Maming.
42 Firth, C.B., op.cit., p. 21.
The Bishop and the clergy reorganized the church and introduced the Syrian liturgy. Churches sprang up throughout the length and breadth of the perumals’ Kingdom and Canai Thomas and his followers endowed them magnificently. A regular flow of clergy and Bishops was kept up from Syria.\textsuperscript{45}

**Antagonism towards Christianity:**

In India, the period of the Syrian Christians opened a new gate not only for merchants and pilgrims of Syria but also for the European missionaries in India. They put a lot of efforts to preach the Gospel and also tried to maintain the mission of St. Thomas and Bartholomew in India. The Church of the East not only suffered in the fourth century but were also harassed by the antagonistic authority in the fifth century. The antagonism of the prevailing religion became more pronounced after the rise of the Islam in the seventh century, when Mesopotamia and Persia came under the rule of Mohammedan Arabs.

The rise of Islam and the dominance of the Indian sea by Muslims affected the affairs of the Syrian Christians badly. The sea dominance resulted in transfer of trade of Malabar from the Christians to the Muslims. There was considerable animosity between the two and the flow of Bishops from Syria was obstructed by the Muslims. Persecution bewildered the Christian communities of Western Asia and only those Bishops who had the approval of their Muslim rulers were permitted to occupy their seats. The political upheavals in Syria and Persia had their repercussions in Malabar too. Christian fleets disappeared from the trade routes and Muslims captured the trade of the Malabar ports.\textsuperscript{46}

The history of the Syrian Church in India in the middle ages is almost a

\textsuperscript{45} Thomas, P., op.cit., p.33.

\textsuperscript{46} Thomas, P., op.cit., p. 38
to India. Around the year 522 A.D., a Christian merchant of Alexandria, Cosmas also visited India and became a monk in the Sinai. He wrote a book on the basis of his travels, called *Universal Christian Topography*. He also gave details, in his book, about the churches existing in Malabar and some parts of India. Cosmas also expressed the relation between the Churches in India and those in Mesopotamia\textsuperscript{43} or East Syria in his book.

In the third and fourth century, under the Persian region the Christian were terribly persecuted partly on religious grounds because the Persian kings wanted to revive the national religion of Zoroastrianism. Again in the fifth century, the Christians faced many problems. A number of Bishops were expelled from the Roman Empire because of their support of the teachings of Nestorius. Later many Nestorius became Patriarch and thereafter Nestorianism became the official doctrine of the Church of the East on the whole. Hence it is often called the Nestorian Church.\textsuperscript{44} It was the church of the East of which the Christian communities in India were a part of the East Syrian or Chaldean had strong links in India particularly the north and north western borders of India. Patriarch Timothy I also mentioned about the Metropolitan Bishop for Tibet at the beginning of the Nineteenth century and also about the Eastern Christians who had settled near Leh, the Buddhist region of Kashmir (India).

From time to time many Syrian Merchants, travellers, preachers and pilgrims came to India. They brought a new vigour to the Malabar Church.

\textsuperscript{43} Mesopotamia was politically a part of Persia Moreover, it was a Syriac speaking church connected with Edessa that early center of Syiran Christianity in East Syria. After the middle of the fourth century the region of Edessa, which had long been squeezed in a dispute between the Roman Empire and its eastern enemies also become part of the Persian Empire. The name Persia therefore divided into two different names, Mesopotamia and East Syria. The church which Commas mentioned is in fact the East Syrian Church.

\textsuperscript{44} Because of Political difference and the ecology, the Church in the Persian dominions became separated from Christians further west in the fifth century, and thereafter became an independent entity. It is known as the Nestorian Church.
blank. This is probably due to the fact that after the rise of Islam, the communication between India and the Church in Middle East became difficult as Christianity in that region suffered persecution.

After the Muslim dominance, there is little history of the Syrian Christian in India. Both the communities, Romo Syrian and Jacobite struggled to maintain themselves in face of the superior power and organization of the Church of Rome. Both built churches in various places particular in South India. Several times, they unsuccessfully tried to write the community in and outside India. To attain the unification of Romo Syrian, persons like Kariattil Joseph were appointed for the unification of Romo Syrian. In 1708, Mesopotamian Bishop, Mar Gabrial was sent to Malabar, for unity, by the Nestorian Patriarch. After 1751 one of Syrian Church branch Jacobite also appointed three bishops named Mar Baselios, Mar Gregorios and Mar Ivanios: All of them were aiming at a union of Jacobites and Romo-Syrians.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century, Malabar, like the eastern side of the Peninsula, suffered the ravages of war. About 10,000 Syrian Christians are said to have perished in the invasion of Tipu Sultan in 1780 and many Churches and temples were destroyed including the Catterdral Church of Angamali.47 But in 1799, Tipu Sultan was defeated by the British government who appointed two officials named Colonel Munro and Colonel Macqulay to protect the interests of Syrian Christians in India. Colonel Munro also encouraged and advised the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to provide training for the teaching of pure scriptural doctrine. Syrian Christians received all types of benefits from the British and their missionaries: British missionaries gave full cooperation to the Syrian Christians. But the trouble between the Syrian Christians and the missionaries arose and reached a climax when Bishop Wilson visited Travancore and stressed the need to introduce

47 Firth, C.B., op.cit., p. 166.
many reforms in the Syrian Church along protestant lines. But Syrian Christians rejected the idea of Bishop Wilson in January 1836 and refused to accept the supremacy of protestant church.

The work of the missionaries did not, however, go in vain. Some of the Syrian Christians were deeply affected by the simplicity of protestant worship. The movement which was launched by the British and protestant missionaries to reform the system of Syrian Christians naturally found favour and under this influence the people of Travancore and Cochin Durbars recognized the new church and the Bishop. The members of the new autonomous church are known as Mar Thoma Syrian. Thus the Syrian Church has, at present, three main divisions: The Catholics, The Jacobites and the Mar Thomaites. The orthodox Syrian Church is known as original mission which owes allegiance, both to the patriarch of Antioch and the Catholics of the East, his Holiness. Moranman Basalious, who resides at Kottayam. It is known as Mar-Thoma Church, whose religious head is His Grace, Jahanon Mar Thoma in Kerala. Today, all the divisions of the churches are working in the various states of India.

III

Western Missionaries in India

The expansion of Christianity in India began with the arrival of the Portuguese in the Malabar coast. The ships that were sent out to trade also carried missionaries, whose sole object was evangelization. This was due to the keen interest, taken by the Portuguese Kings, in the spreading of Christianity.48

In fact, the Portuguese at first took all non-Muslims as Christians. Their hostility was aimed at Muslims and not Hindus. Vasco-da-Gama’s first

group to land in 1498 at Calicut mistook two Hindu temples as Christian Churches. They even prayed to a statue as if it was a statue of Mother Marry, when they heard it called Marien.\textsuperscript{49} St. Francis Xavier's arrived in 1542 in Goa to begin his missionary work in the East. The Syrian Church which, for almost a thousand years, was under the Nestorian church and acknowledged the Nestorian Patriarch of Babylon also got influenced by Missionaries. It is believed that the first European missionary to come to India was Friar John of Monte Corvino. He came in 1291-92 to China and also stayed for thirteen months in Malapore. He preached the Gospel to the Hindus and baptized many families. Further it is also believed that the founding by Pope Innocent IV in 1252 AD of the Society of Way fares for Christ may be said to have started a new era of European mission in India.\textsuperscript{50}

The Roman Catholic Portuguese, who settled on the West Coast, early in the sixteenth century, proceeded to follow their usual policy of rapid conversion of the Indian people to Christianity who came under their influence. Thus, Goa remains primarily Christian to this day. This juncture in Indian history is very important because it provided St. Francis Xavier and his fellow Jesuits with an opportunity for evangelistic work in south India. The Portuguese soon discovered the Nestorian Christians in Malabar, and immediately sought, by all possible means, fair and foul, to bring them under the obedience of the Pope and to a profession of the orthodox faith.\textsuperscript{51}

During the long gap of period between the coming of the Apostle Thomas and the arrival of the Portuguese, the Nestorian Churches of western

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., p. 30

\textsuperscript{50} Thomas, P., op. cit., p. 42.

\textsuperscript{51} Heritage of the Indian Christian, op. cit., p. 152. Before the first Roman Catholic western missionary Francis Xavier in 1497 arrived, the first Portuguese trader Vasco da Game in South India, he came with the title of Admiral of the Eastern's Seas from the king of Portugal. Also see Massey James op. cit. p. 86.
Asia and Christians of St. Thomas Mission from Syriac speaking communities came in contact and found communities of Christians in the south. For past many centuries, there were close ties between the Churches of south India and western Asia. Then Portuguese Catholics, brought to Goa, some of the most remarkable missionaries since the Apostle Paul.32

Evangelisation (associated with Portuguese commercial and political Ventures) began as early as in the Sixteenth century in the islands of Bombay, Bassian and Salsette. Already in 1533, John III, King of Portugal obtained from Pope Clement VII not only the erection of the diocese of Goa, but also the right of intervention in the nomination of its bishops. A fourth significant group in eastern India, composed of various Catholic groups, converted from the various tribes in Chottanagpur Plateau of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Bengal and Orissa. They traced their origin to the missionary work of Belgian Jesuits. In the North-Eastern States, conversions were initiated by the Selessian Fathers. Some of the well known missionaries came to India and they worked for humanity among the downtrodden people. They also preached the word of God (Jesus Christ) and converted many people in India.

Francis Xavier:

The first western missionary was a Roman Catholic Jesuit Francis Xavier, who arrived in Mylapore in October, 154233. He adopted a simple method of preaching. He translated the Apostles’ Creed, the Lord’s Prayer and the Ten Commandments into Tamil. He took a bell in his hands and roamed the streets of Goa and further from village to village on the western coast among the fishermen. It is believed that he baptised 7,00,000 people belonging

52 Firth, C.F., op.cit., pp. 74-76.
53 Various scholars mentioned the different years. Rev. D’Souze, Herman, wrote, Francis Xavier who came in 1545.
to different caste groups. The Latin rite Churches of South-India, which fall within the four Southern States of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and the Tamil Nadu claim their origin from the missionary efforts of Saint Francis Xavier.

The Jesuit mission was cordially received at the court of Akbar (reigned 1556-1605) but his tolerance of all religions was disliked by the Jesuits who had not digested the idea of Portuguese dominance.

In the sixteenth century the great Mughal Emperor Akbar requested the presence of some Jesuit priests at his court to discuss religious matters. He also expressed his desire to study the teachings of Christianity and asked the Priest to send some learned men. Akbar granted a piece of land to build a small Church at the Agra Court around 1599. Later generations of missionaries continued to be accepted in the country. The missionaries did a lot of socio-religious work and also wrote the first Sanskrit grammar in a western language. It is also known as Grammer of Colebrooke in length.

Roberto-de-Nobili

The next well known missionary who played an important role in the history of the Christians was a Jesuit missionary named Roberto-de-Nobili. He arrived in Madurai (south India) in 1606 A.D. He found that the Christian

54 Massey, James op.cit, p. 87
55 Akbar expressed his desire to study the teaching of Christianity and asked the father to send some learned men. Three Jesuits, Rudolfo Acquaviva, Antonio Monserrat and Francisco Henriques were selected and arrived at Akbar's court in February 1580.
57 Roberto Robert De Nobili is regarded as the pearl of India, and well known Italian scholar who is titled as a great scholar by the Tamils wrote he came in 1605 and went to Madras in 1606. And also see Pinto, J.P. Inculturation Through Basic Communities, Asia Trading Corporation, Bangalore 1985, p. 81, and also see Firth, C.B. op. cit.,p. 110.
religion had succeeded only among the low castes. De Nobili acquired a fine command of Sanskrit and Tamil. He adopted the dress, diet and social customs of the Brahmans and took up, at first, the ascetical life of a recluse, because it was troubled centuries Muslim rule had established firmly in North India and had spread to various areas of the South. This was the reason for Roberto-de-Nobili to adopt the new approach to express the Gospel message in terms of Hindu culture so that caste Pundits might not feel Christianity to be an assault on their established way of life. For 40 years, he conducted an active and successful Apostale all over the Southern areas and his work was continued by a Portuguese John de Britto, and another Italian, Joseph Beschi, Keay makes an interesting remark about the overall work of Roberto De Nobili and his associates. He says.

“...That these Jesuits made a surprising number of converts in the south....They baptized many thousands of people, the record is doubtless true. If the sprinkling of water and the utterance of a certain formula be enough to make a Christian, as many professing Protestants seem to believe, even in the middle of seventeenth century, doubtless made multitudes of Christians. According, however, to their own showing, their success among the Brahmins was very small, and they soon began to see the necessity of flying at lower game.”

After De-Nobili, the work was continued by John de-Britto, another Jesuit, a greater intellectual and zealost than De-Nobili himself. This praise of a protestant missionary is well deserved. Britto worked in the Madurai Mission for over sixteen years. But the anarchical society did not allow him to continue the missionary work. He was arrested, tortured and put to death in

58 Thomas, P. op.cit., pp. 63-65.
59 Massey, James, op.cit., p. 88.
1693. De Nobili and De Britto both had impressed South India by their ascetic and wandering life.

**Joseph Beschi**

In 1700, an Italian, by the name of Constantineous Joseph Beschi, well known in Tamilnadu as Veeramamunivar, embraced Christianity with a fervent desire of proclaim the Gospel of Christ. He command over the Tamil language was astounding. He succeeded in writing some Tamil books of literature, renowned for their practical diction, grammar and prosody. His Christian adaptation of the language of communication of the Gospel was so good that no foreigner ever succeeded in standing equal to Beschi. Even no student of Tamil literature would dream of denying the fact that the work of Beschi is one of the greatest outstanding contribution to Tamil literature.\(^{60}\)

It was not until some fifty years after de Nobili’s death that the first Protestant missionaries came to India. But at that time the French and the British were already ousting the Portuguese from their position of advantage, and had started the long rivalry between themselves which eventually ended in favour of the British. Meanwhile the Danish arid the Dutch had also acquired settlements on the last coast of India and it was from Denmark that the next missionary movement started, the German Pietist Movement. But, in fact, three countries share the honour of establishing this first Protestant Movement. Denmark, Germany and England. The original impulse came from Tranquabar and the mission commenced. But he could not find men of his own land who were willing to serve the Church and the first missionary was the German Ziegenbalg, who arrived in India on 9 July 1706.\(^{61}\)

\(^{60}\) Firth, C.B., *op.cit.*, pp. 122-123.

Ziegenbalg and Plutschall : First Protestant Missionaries in India.

The first protestant missionaries who came to India were the German Lutheran Ziegenblag and Henry Plutschau. They studied at the University of Halle, a great centre of Evangelical Christianity, under the learned and pious Professor A.H. Francke. In 1706, both started translating the scripture. They decided to keep the scripture as basis for their teaching. Their first convert who was poor slave, was baptized on May 12, 1707. Their later converts were mostly from the down trodden people.

Ziegenbalg gave wide publicity to the teaching of the Gospel and the simple Christian ideals taught by the Saviour. "Jesus Christ". He translated The New Testament into Tamil. He was not only a good missionary but an able publicist. He remained in constant touch with the German authorities and with other Protestant countries, especially England and took care to acquaint them to the activities of the Tranquebar mission. The work of this mission was continued by a band of devoted men of whom Friederick Schwartz was the greatest. When he arrived in Tranquebar on July 30th, 1750, the seed sown by Ziegenbalg had taken root and was growing rapidly. It is recorded that the congregation had increased to 8000 souls, and the mission had established outposts in Madras, Tanjore Cuddalore and Negapatam etc. Thomas further added that Schwartz studied Tamil and generally followed the beaten track of Ziegenbalg. The greatness of Schwartz was not in the intellectual, brilliance,
nor in his pioneering zeal, but in his devotion to work. After Schwartz no great missionary worked in the Tranquebar mission. 66

In the eastern India, the first western Protestant missionary of the English Church J. Kiernander, began his work at the invitation of Lord Clive in 1758. Kiernander also was educated at the University of Halle under the son of Professor Francke. According to C.F. Andrews, Kiernander’s period till his death at the close of the eighteenth century was one of the worst periods of Indian Church history. 67 Because, during the closing decade of the eighteenth century the rule of East India Company reached its lowest ebb. Under British Rule East India Company resisted the deployment of missionaries, judging that their presence would exacerbate existing religious tensions between Hindus and Muslims. But in nineteenth century6 missionaries were allowed into most of British India. International Encyclopaedia of Social and Behavioural Sciences Smelser and Battes, op.cit. p.1762. Moral interests and the welfare of the people were sacrificed to trade profits.

William Carey:

A well-known Baptist missionary named William Carey along with his associates began his work in Calcutta in 1773 which was followed by the Bishop Middleton of the Church of England68 in 1814. A well known Presbyterian missionary, Alexander Duff also began his work in Calcutta. Regarding the contribution of William Carey who was the first Englishman to introduce the steam engine in India and the first to make indigenous paper for the publishing industries. Carey encouraged Indian blacksmith to make indigenous copies of his engine. William was the father of printing technology

67 Massey, James, op.cit., p. 90.
68 By the end of the eighteenth century it was abundantly clear that the next period in the history of India was to be the British period.
in India. He brought to India and then taught and developed the modern science of printing and publishing. He wrote Gospel ballads in Bengali to bring the Hindu love of musical recitations to the service of his lord. He also wrote the first Sanskrit dictionary for scholars. One of the most basic contributions of Carey to India was the modern outlook that reform is possible. About his missionary spirit and methods John Webster Grant has observed.

"The core of Carey's strategy was the establishment of permanent centers of Christian work comparable in function to monasteries from which Europe was first Christianised. The mission compound was to be the cell from which the Church would grow. From it evangelists would go out into neighbouring areas. Witnesses would be established in a variety of auxiliaries to Christian preaching, a school, a center of study, a printing press to supply evangelists with Bibles and texts..... As part of their programme for reading the Indian mind, Carey and his associates undertook serious study of Indian literature, including the ancient sacred scripture...... To the generation of missionaries that followed the Serampore group, however, progress seemed depressingly slow. A few of the low caste were converted, but the Indian mind remained closed."

With the coming of Protestant missions to India in the 18th century Christianity began to permeate all strata of Indian life. The most outstanding are Bartholomaeus Zie-genbalg who formed the nucleus of Tamil Literature;

70 Massey, James, op. cit., pp. 91-92.
William Carey, the English Cobber turned orientalist who translated the Bible into 36 languages, founded the first newspaper to be printed in any oriental language.

IV
Pastoral Phase (1857 to 1947)

The immediate consequence of the Mutiny of 1857, was the end of the rule of East India company in India and also end of resistance to deployment of missionaries. From 1858 India came under the rule of Queen Victoria. She wanted the new government to commit itself to a policy of encouraging Christian propaganda. The new British Government encouraged the missionaries to work in India. The missionaries took a purely pastoral approach to development which was most suitable to the interest of the colonial rule. The missionaries started taking active interest in the education and social reforms. They started education and social work as a tool to attract the people towards Christian religion and to gain sympathy among the Indian people. The famine and epidemics became rampant in the rural areas. They got involved in relief work, thus entering into a new area of activity: village Medicare. They baptized many educated and noble men. Many people felt the influence and adopted the Christian religion in India.

To start the western educational system and propagation of English in various parts of the country was the aim of enlightened Christians. This system helped the upper class people and Christian to build up contacts with their western counterparts. Many converted Christians got the opportunity to visit foreign countries and to get western education.

During the early nineteenth century, depressed communities had remained out-castes in society. The missionaries who combined conversions along with education to the ultimate economic and political interest of British imperialism, undertook social reforms as an important political strategy. Backward castes were attracted to the educational attempts of the missionaries because of the social emancipation it guaranteed them. The missionaries
backed by the British government also engineered struggle against the Hindu orthodoxy to create illusion in the minds of the people regarding British rule.\textsuperscript{71}

The work of the missionaries (protestant missions) was entirely different from the Portuguese (Catholic). Protestant missionaries pioneered work relating to reform, language and development among the dalits and poor people. These activities gave a development orientation to their work in India. The emergence of an enlightened local leadership within Christianity paved the way of systematization of church activities. Important steps were taken to organize the people though various organization like, the \textit{Young Men Christian Association} (YMCA), the \textit{Young Women Christian Association} (YWCA) and The Catholic ladies club etc. and also set up a Christian press. This provided a new tool in the armoury of the church establishment in India.\textsuperscript{72}

Among the growing activities of Christian mission in the nineteenth century, particularly in the second half of it, was to work for women. Various missionary organizations were also launched, various movements against child marriage, female infanticide, sati (the burning of widows) were started to get support of the Indian people. They also established various types of the educational and medical institutions to serve humanity. On the other side, organized efforts were also made by the Christian leaders, churches and missions to mobilize agricultural surplus and the meager savings of the poor Christians. The aim of this was to develop the industry in India. In the crux, the East India Company showed interest only in business and trade in India.\textsuperscript{73}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Mathew, P.M. Christianity and Politics in India, \textit{op-cit}, p.228.
\item Ibid., pp.228-230.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
the British Government turned it into a political approach. As far as the work of Christian missionaries was concerned, it had in many ways influenced the situation in India. The various religious traditions were for the upbringing of the down trodden groups.

The role played by the missionaries in India from time to time has been remarkable. Vasco da Gamo reached the shores of India in 1498 and opened the sea way to Indian land from the west. Robert De Nabili is regarded as the Pearl of India. Beschi did a lot of work in literature that cannot be ignored. William Carey, Marden and Ward, the trio of the Seramporer Mission, also contributed to the growth of Bengali Marathi and Sanskrit Literature and their most valuable contribution was the introduction of the printing press in India. It was Ziegenbalg and Plutschau who landed at Transquebar and set up a Tamil printing press in the Tamil country.

In brief, the history of community, Christian traditions have been present in India since at least the Sixth century of the common Era and possibly even earlier. The Malabar Christian community (also called the “Thomas Christian community) in Kerala and Tamil Nadu claims to have been founded by the Apostle Thomas who purportedly was martyred in Madras in 52 A.D. of the common Era. This is probably a legendary account, but there is some evidence that Christian communities may have been present in South India by the middle of the fourth century, and certainly by the middle of the Sixth century. These early Christian communities were of the Orthodox Syrian tradition having ties with both Nestorian and Monophysite traditions in the region of Antioch in Syria. Roman Catholicism came to India with the coming of the Portuguese in 1498 and the mission work of the Jesuits, St. Francis Xavier (1506-1552). Robert de Nobili (1577-1656) and others largely in South India. Protestant missionary work first began with Danish Lutherans at the beginning of the eighteenth Century and gained great momentum eventually at the end of the eighteenth century and thereafter with the coming
of the Baptist William Carey to the Danish Settlement of Serampore near Calcutta in 1793.

V

Expansion of Christianity in Northern India

The Apostle St. Thomas one of the disciples of Jesus Christ not only visited south India but also came to Taxila in Northern India (Punjab). Sometime in the middle of the first century (51 A.D.) of the Christian era during the King Godophoros time the Acts (The New Testament) describes the activities of the Apostle. King Godophoros invited St. Thomas and offered money and asked him to build a beautiful palace for him. But the Apostle spent all the money on the poor and needy people. The angry king put him in prison. Thereafter, king Godophoros’s brother died and when brought to life, he narrated the beauty of the palace that St. Thomas had built in Heaven for King’s family. The king received baptism together with his brother and the Apostle preached faith all through the country. After this, he was also involved in various wonderful miracles. He also ordained leaders of the church.

It is therefore just possible that Thomas preached at Taxila and made some converts. There may be some connection between the fact that the Kushan invasion of the Punjab, and the overthrow of Taxila, took place in 51 A.D., and that south Indian tradition puts the arrival of Thomas in Malabar at

74 Gondaphoros is the Greek from of the Parthian name Vindafarma, and a King of that name reigned in Punjab from the capital city of Taxila from 20 to 48 A.D. Various spellings of this name are found Gondophares, Gondapharna and Gundaphar etc. One used above comes from the Greek version of the Acts Gondaphores and his brother God both were baptized by the St. Thomas. See S.G.Pothan, op.cit. pp. 12-14 Also see Chopra, P.N. Religions and communities of India, Vision Books Publication, New Delhi, 1982, p. 228.

75 George Mark, Moraes, op.cit.,p. 26, also see Menachery George (ed.), the St. Thomas Christian Encyclopaedia of India, Vol. I, op.cit., p. 4.
52 A.D. It is also possible that Thomas preached in Parthia, but the Church of the East had no Thomas tradition for Parthia proper, while Vindafarna was from a Parthian ruling in the Punjab. The matter, however will remain a conjecture until we have solid historical or archaeological proof.

Numerous coins have been found in 1834 in the western and southern (Punjab) and in Kabul and Kandhar (Afganistan) bearing his name in Greek on one side and in Pali on the other: they are dated on Palaeographical grounds in the first half of the first century A.D. and their number suggests that his reign was a fairly long one. There is a stone inscription (The Takht-i-Bahi Stone, now in the Lahore Museum, Pakistan) inscribed with his name and date which is interpreted as 46 A.D.: this is described as the twenty-sixth year of his reign. In some of the coins the name of God is also found. According to Benedict, Vadakkekara also added that the coins bearing the name Gondaphares discovered in North-West India, are viewed as constituting a collateral evidence for the presence of the Apostle Thomas in North West India.

The small cross of black stone, found at Taxila in 1935 was adopted by the newly United Church of Pakistan both as central in its badge, and as a pectoral Cross for its Bishops in 1970.

In 226 A.D. shortly after the break up of the Kushan Empire the Parthian Empire also fell, and the Sassanid or New Persian Empire took its place. This

76 Parthia is generally means is Persia. Parthian era which is mentioned in the inscription of the year 58 A.D. This inscription was issued from Takshasila which was probably his Capital.

77 Firth, C.B., op.cit., p. 11 and also see Herman D’Souza, op.cit, p. 7.

78 Vadakkekara, Benedict, op.cit., p. 75

79 It is also called ‘Taxila Cross’.

80 Webster, John C.B. (1976) The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India, MacMillian India Limited, New Delhi, p. 34.
expanded till it stretched from the eastern border, of the Roman Empire to the river Indus, including Iran Iraq, Russia, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, northern Arabia, Christianity had attained foothold in the Parthian Empire mainly in Mesopotamia. From 410 A.D. the Church had organized its working and independent churches of Roman Empire were in existence. The records of the Synods of the Churches of the East also showed the work of Bishops in the 5th and 6th centuries in Pakistan (Punjab). Harat had a Bishop of Harat (from 424 A.D. and by 585) he became a Bishop in whose province were at least 8 Bishops, south-wards and then east-wards as far as Kandahar. There was definitely an organised church in east and south Afghanistan. The only indication in the Synod record of a church in present day Pakistan, is the claim of 420 A.D. that the land of “Ardushir Pharidii” was included in the area ruled by the Catholicos. This is probably northern Baluchistan and no Bishop from this area is however mentioned.

Important eyewitness accounts of the Church in the early sixth century are given by Cosmos Indikopleustes in his Christian topography, written about 547 A.D. Also he himself had visited India about 525 A.D. and he wrote about Christians. “So likewise among the Bactrians, and Huns and Persians and the rest of Indians, Persarmenians Medes and Elamites and throughout the whole land of Persia there is no limit of the number of Churches with Bishops and very large communities of Christian people.

A letter of the Patriarch Ishu-Yab III, written about 650 A.D. speaks of Christians extending to a distance of 4,000 miles from the Persian border, but another letter makes it clear that the attendance at synods was not required of

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81 St Thomas Encyclopaedia, op.cit., p. 134.
82 This is confirmed by "a Jewal found in an archaeological find at Baluchi area of Afghanistan" dated 735; with an engraving of the virgin and child besides a palm tree.
83 Ibid., p. 135.
metropolitans and bishops in distant provinces. They were instead required to correspond with the patriarch. In 1301 there was manuscript evidence that the Metropolitan of India was definitely stationed at Cranganur near Bombay and Thane. A Franciscan missionary wrote that there were 15 Nestorian families at Thane near Bombay and further he said, “In India there are scattered people one here, one there, who call themselves Christians, but are not so, nor have they baptism, and they have no knowledge about the faith. They may be believing that St. Thomas was as Great as the Christ.”

Between 1425 and 1430 an Italian traveller, Niccolo-di-conti, stated that “The Nestorians are scattered all over India as the Jews among us” This may well be a true picture of the situation in places like Punjab and Sind. Under Shah Abbas from Iran who (1587-1629) built 24 Churches to influence merchant community just to maintain good relations in the field of trade and started many education institutions. An American colony was established in Kabul by Iran. The Jesuit missionaries in Lahore found many Americans there and tried to convert them to Roman Catholicism. In 1711 Dutch Ambassador also visited Lahore and met to an American Bishop and some Jesuit priests. In 1735, a Jesuit priest stated that the elite of the Mughal army consisting mostly of Christian officers was stationed in Lahore.

Akbar the Great invited the Jesuits mission of Goa and requested to send missionaries to his court. A group of Missionaries visited Lahore in 1591 but did not stay for a long time. The missionaries work began in 1594 with the arrival of Father Jerome Xavier (1549-1617). He was a son of a nephew of the great St. Francis Xavier. He remained with the Mughal court for 20 years, and did a lot of evangelistic work among Muslims. He wrote several books in

84 The voluminous correspondence of the Patriarch Timothy I (780-823) has specifically mentioned in it's area that is now in Pakistan.
85 The St. Thomas Christian Encyclopaedia of India, op.cit, p. 135.
86 Ibid., p. 135.
their language, including the life of Christ. He also stressed against social evils like Sati.87 He built a Church in Lahore in 1597, and F.J. Xavier used the main occasions of its Christian year, especially Christmas and Holy week. Missionary work in Sind began on a promising note in 1618 but fizzled out pathetically in 1672. The first missionary, Father Louis Francis, a Spanish Carmelite Friar, was in his limited social sphere an apostolic figure. In 1591, the Portuguese had set up a trading station at Thatha on the Indus and in 1610 the Pope sent Carmelite missionaries to Iran, Basra and Muscat etc. He also built many stations and Churches in various places at Thatha and Goa to maintain various schemes. But in 1624 the Archbishop of Goa annoyed at the direct missionary work done by the Carmelities. He claimed his province and sent Augustinia Chaplains to Thatha to see the whole work of Portugese mission. After some years he built Churches with the help of Portugese mission and also converted and baptized many people.

During the rebellion of Shah Jahan against the Emperor, his father, the Portuguese helped the Emperor, and this led to trouble when Shah Jahan descended to the throne. The Church at Thatta was looted and destroyed three times between 1633 and 1639. With the waning of Portuguese Power and the rise of the Dutch and British, missionary work grew more difficult. In 1654 Thatha was "considered a place of exile by the missionaries."

PAKISTAN

Protestant missionary work in Pakistan did not take office effectively until the area came under British occupations. It is recorded that J.C. Lowrie, the Pioneer American Presbyterian missionary, travelled from Ludhiana to Lahore in 1834 on an elephant, with an escort of 20 soldiers and 20 servants provided by Maharajah Ranjit Singh. He was invited to start an English

medium school in Lahore. In 1849 after the Second Sikh War, the Presbyterian opened missionary work in Lahore under John Newton and also extended their work to Rawalpindi and Peshawar. He did a lot of literary work including the translation of the New Testament into Punjabi and a Punjabi grammar and dictionary.

The Church Missionary Society (CMS) followed in 1852, by starting work in Amritsar first, but soon branched out to Peshawar and Multan and also starting work in Karachi. The American United Presbyterians started work in Sialkot in 1855 under Andrew Gordon and the Church of Scotland also began in Sialkot in 1857 by Thomas Hunter. During January and February 1857, Dr. Dealtry, Bishop of Madras, consecrated Station Churches in Lahore, Sialkot, Jhelum, Rawalpindi and Peshawar. The various missions like Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Church of Scotland Mission and Roman Catholic also established their roots and churches in Pakistan from time to time. They Baptised and converted many down trodden people. From 1857 to 1921 the Christian community increased very speedily particularly in the old Punjab with the help of various missions. The Socio-economic and religious work attracted the poor people to the new reform to raise their status.

The boundaries of Punjab have changed many times. It has included at various times the present Indian States of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab as well as the Union Territory of Chandigarh. The Church Missionary Society in particular carried on educational, medical and evangelistic work in the hill areas of these states.

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

As far as the Jammu and Kashmir State is concerned, no serious missionary work had been done in this state. The Jesuits visited Kashmir and

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88 The St. Thomas Christian Encyclopaedia of India, op.cit., p. 136.
passed through it on their way to Tibet. Father Jerome Xavier, nephew of St. Francis Xavier and Brother Goes, both Portuguese, accompanied the Mughal Emperor Akbar on a Journey from Agra to Kashmir in 1597 and Again in 1627 Father Corsi and Joseph De-Castro accompanied Jehangir to Kashmir. From time to time many missionaries took interest in this area but could not attain any success. Actually this area was surrounded with Muslims who referred to them as Kafirs. It was an area inaccessible to any outsider. And in Kashmir religious Conversions were not permitted. Secondly this area was cut off by snow for nearly six months every year. Some of the Mill Hill missionaries from London came in 1887 and started systematic missionary work. They made a plan to start electronic work in this area. In 1888, St. Peter’s mission began their work. Frs. Kelty, Frs Donson and Hanlon tried to work in Leh, Kashmir and Ladakh but could not get success due to snow and dominance of Muslim Community in these areas.

First Missionary work began in Baramulla Valley in 1891 when they built a small house and Chapel. Missionaries also started schools in this area particularly in Baramulla in 1909. St. Joseph’s School at Baramulla was affiliated to Lahore University in 1919. In 1921 the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary began a hospital. In 1894 a small mission was begun in Srinagar. The Maharajah gave the land to build a small chapel and house on the other side. The Mill Hill Missionaries also opened a Cambridge School in 1936 and similar school in 1942 in Kashmir. In July 1947, Kashmir and Kafiristan had become the diocese of Rawalpindi. In August 1947, India and Pakistan became two separate nations.

**Himachal Pradesh**

Himachal Pradesh became the 18th State of the Indian Union in 1971. Prior to this Himachal Pradesh was the part of the present day Punjab. The population of Christians is very small. In Himachal Pradesh. The Christian mission had been established in 1854 at Keylang in Lahul and shortly
afterwards at Poo and Chini on the Indo-Tibetan humanity road in North Eastern Kinnaur. The American Presbyterian Mission, Catholic Church, Baptist Mission, and Church Missionary Society did a lot of work and established many Churches and educational institutions and Hospitals in various places like Shimla, Sabhathu, Sanawar, Jutogh, Dagshai, Mandi, Kullu, Kasauli, Solan and Kumarhatti.

Haryana

Haryana State was also a part of the Punjab, before it became a separate state of Indian Union in November 1966. The Christian population of this state is very small and limited to places like Ambala, Karnal, Panchkula and Kaithal. (Santokh Majra). In 1848, the Punjab Mission came here and established the station at Ambala for their socio-economic and religious activities. (See more stations of Punjab Mission in, Appendix No. II) They also established the railway and Military centre in the same year at Ambala. From the very beginning for the attraction of the people, they opened the school, leper colony, asylum, dispensary and hospital at Ambala.

The Presbyterian Church established permanent missionary work in the Punjab beginning at Ludhiana in 1834, from there they started spreading westward up to the Rawalpindi and eastward to Ambala, Lahore to Uttar Pradesh State. Opening of various kinds of institutions influenced on the people to adopt Christianity. The missionary also provided jobs in various missionary institutions in Haryana.89

American Presbyterian also built institutions for women and children at Ambala. Jessica Cereleton established the "Philadelphia Hospital" for women in 1898. Punjab Mission made successful attempts to establish Christian village. "Santokh Majra" in 1914 (Now, village Santokh Majra has been

89 Webster, C.B. John, op.cit., p. 73.
divided into two parts one is known as Perla Kerha and another is Orla Kerha). Rev. M.M. Careleton began work in this village in 1870. After his death, the Punjab Mission took over in 1920 (This village is also known as Pastor's village). According to John C.B. Webster, the land of this village was waste land, suitable only for grazing cattle.⁹⁰ The occupation of the village people was to keep the animals like cows, goats, sheep, pigs, buffalos, etc. They were totally depended on the dairy sector. With the efforts of the Punjab Mission, irrigation facility was made available for cultivation of land. Some land was given to the people of the village on very nominal rates. Rest of the agricultural land was distributed among the downtrodden people who were converted from lower castes like Chamar and Balmiki etc. to Christianity. Many people of this village became Christians in order to improve their social status and particularly to remove the stigma of untouchability.

VI

Expansion of Christianity in Punjab

The main concern of this study is only with the present day Christian Minority of Punjab. However, the advent of Christianity in Punjab more or less coincides with the expansion of operations of the British East India Company. The Christian faith spread in Punjab virtually through conversion of the downtrodden people of the society by the missionaries. While the Church missionary society, in particular carried on educational, medical and evangelistic work in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi North and West frontier provinces in Pakistan. They were greatly successful among the lower, deprived and depressed castes/sections and classes of the Punjab society.

The history of Christianity in the present Punjab state may, therefore,

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 73
be dated from 1834 when John C. Lowrie an American Presbyterian, established the first mission at Ludhiana on the invitation of Captain Wade who was the first British political agent in India. Ludhiana was the central place for the presbyterian Mission of America to maintain link and contact with Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tibet. Gradually the number of presbyterian mission stations in north-western provinces and the Punjab multiplied. By 1870 they had almost a net work of mission stations stretching from Allahabad in the east to Peshawar in the west. The Presbyterian Church of Ludhiana Mission had stations at Lahore, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Ludhiana, Sharanpur, Jallandhar, Ambala, Sabatthu, Dehra Dun and Rookree. (See Appendix II)

American mission also started the earliest printing press in 1835 and produced stream of tracts, pamphlets and journalism in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Persian, Kashmiri and English. The humanitarian activities impressed the depressed people and facilitated conversion. Miss Brown did wonderful work in Medical field. The hospital established by her at Ludhiana is still popularly known as Miss Brown’s Hospital. It was easy place for them to introduce the Gospel. The initial church membership was small and restricted to the families of the missionaries and some Europeans and Indians. The origin of the church as community in north and north east India took place much later and was a part of what is now known as the mass movement. A large number

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92 Note : Jallandhar was initially a sub-station of Ludhiana under the superintendent of the missionaries there. At the time the mission send appeals for a foreign missionary to come and take charge, but these were dropped after 1853. The first foreign missionaries came to Jallandhar only in 1886 when Golak Nath was an old man of 70.

of people from numerous caste groups who were victims of social discrimination and oppression moved to acquire a new identity, which was Christianity.

Missionary work was undertaken by after members including Mrs. Lowrie. However, before work could even begin in Ludhiana, Mrs. Lowrie died and William Reed became so ill that he and his family had to return to the USA. Thus only Mr. Lowrie was left to carry on. He established the mission station at Ludhiana and also explored the surrounding region, making recommendations on how and where the work of the mission might best expand. His career in India was cut short by illness in 1836 but not before a second contingent of missionaries had arrived at Ludhiana.

With the arrival of the Rev. John Newton, the James Wilson, and the James Campbell in 1836 new mission stations and new kinds of social and religious work began. Besides Ludhiana, mission stations were first established at Saharanpur in 1836, at Sabathu in 1836, at Allahabad in 1836, and at Fatehgarh in 1836. The next mission was the Church Missionary Society (CMS) which began work in the Shimla hills in 1840 and at Amritsar in 1851. The Amritsar Mission dates back to 1852. The first missionaries of the Church of England appointed to Punjab, arrived here. The principal mission in the district was conducted jointly by the Church Missionary Society and the Church of England Zanana Missionary society. The Sub-stations of the United Mission were also opened in important towns of the Majha tract such as Tarn Taran, Anjnala and Jandiala Guru.94

The United Presbyterian Church of North America and the Church of Scotland followed, by establishing mission at Sialkot in 1855 and 1856 respectively. These four missions were the earliest and largest in Punjab.

94 See Gazetteer of India Amritsar (Punjab) (1976) Revenue Department Punjab, Chandigarh, 1976, p. 84.
The United Presbyterian decided to send the Rev. Andrew Gordon in 1855 in Punjab. He opened mission stations at Sialkot and Gujranwala. The American Presbyterians, along with the church missionary society which followed them, were the leading missionary society working in Punjab during the period 1834-1910.

The geographical distribution of American protestant mission was not even. The main provinces where they concentrated were Punjab, the North Western Provinces, Bombay, Madras Presidencies and Assam. They were completely absent in such provinces, as Bengal, where the British missionaries were already active. Likewise, their work in the metropolitan areas of Bombay and Madras was less effective than the work of British and Madras missionaries who had preceded them. Their stations and mission were generally located in the mofussil and rural areas where they could contribute freely to educational and evangelical work.

In northern India particularly, their stations were located both in the mofussil and in important urban centres like Ludhiana and Lahore. In Punjab their missions were the first and one of the most important. The mission in Jallandhar was run by the American Presbyterian mission’s first convert in Punjab. Rev. Goloknath. Most of these mission stations and school were supervised by a missionary. In fact, the mission school offering education became the major sign of the Christians in Punjab. They were to become an important means through which Christianity made its social and cultural impact upon Punjab.

During the 1857 revolt in Punjab, the tiny Christian community was attacked by the rebels. The rebels killed many Christians. The missionaries of

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96 Richter, Julius *op. cit.*, p. 200.
Scotland mission in Sialkot were killed. These rebels also set a fire all the mission buildings at Jallandhar and Ludhiana. In Lahore mission work was suspended but no damage was done.

During the period of the revolution, the rebels also compelled the missionaries to stop the religious activities in Punjab and they also harassed the Christians. But the missionaries did not stop their social work. From 1858 to 1885, twenty four new mission stations were set up, including American Methodists, the Roman Catholics and the Salvation Army. The number of inquiries and converts increased accordingly. The 1881 census of India reported 3912 Indian Christians in Punjab and its surroundings. A new era of definite importance and significance influenced. It made its impact primarily through evangelism, education, and such acts of benevolence as medical and relief work.

The Church Missionary Society started its work at Amritsar in 1852. In the 1860s the Church Mission Society opened medical missions, particularly along the frontier with its heavily Muslim population. These missions attracted numerous patients but few converts. The Zanana mission and the Christian colony extended missionary activities into new directions. The Methodists founded the station at Lahore in 1880. Salvation Army arrived much later in year 1914 and was actively involved among the out-castes of the Punjab. Fredric Booth Thucker, a senior British officer and commission of Amritsar, read an article about the formation of the Salvation Army in the United Kingdom and decided to join it. He started singing and preaching in the streets of Punjab and became an embarrassment to his colleagues. He was transferred to Shimla Hills and later sent back to United Kingdom. He returned India with his friends. He became instrumental in converting a large number of people. He came to be known as Faquir Singh.97

The Roman Catholics came to the Punjab in 1880 and built Churches among the indigenous population in Sialkot, Lahore, Amritsar, Jallandhar, Muktsar and Ferozepur. Another notable name among the missionaries was Rev. John Hyde popularly known as 'Praying Hyde'. He came to Indian in 1894 and worked mainly in the area of Ferozepur and Moga. He was instrumental in starting Punjab Prayer Union at a gathering in Sialkot in 1904. He returned to England in 1911 due to ill health. Before he left he had already established a Bible School in Punjab and a spiritually vibrant congregation of about a thousand people.98

The Role of Missionaries in Punjab

As in the initial stages, the location of new mission station was carefully planned in Punjab. The primary consideration seems to have been that the place should be in a city, which because of its political, commercial, or religious importance might be a centre of diffusion of the gospel. This consideration alone would explain the choice of Ludhiana (a political centre), Allahabad (a political and religious centre), Fatehgarh (a trading centre) and later on Lahore and Rawalpindi. Cities with a moderate climate and European physicians were also prepared for reason of health Sabathu, a hill station in the Shimla hills, was clearly chosen for this purpose. The other consideration was the political situation.99

It is also believed that at the initial stages, the Christian missionaries came to Punjab on the invitation of the British officials and they prepared to establish missions in the areas ruled directly by the British rather than in princely states. This was so because they were not sure of the kind of freedom and protection they would be granted in the princely states. Moreover, there

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was added incentive to the missionaries given by the British officials in terms of acquiring buildings, land as well as financial support.

The primary purpose of the missionaries who came to Punjab in the nineteenth century was evangelism. They preached the Gospel in towns, villages and Bashti (colonies) and distributed the sacred scriptures among the people. They established schools, college, clinics, hospitals, leper asylums and orphanages. They engaged themselves in relief work in times of famine, earthquakes and epidemics. They wrote, translated and published large quantities of literature ranging from Sunday school lessons to the first Punjabi grammar and dictionary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Year (Established)</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Year (Established)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambala City</td>
<td>1848</td>
<td>Zafarwal (Dhariwal)</td>
<td>1884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambala Cantt.</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>Ropar</td>
<td>1890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sialkot</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>Kausauli</td>
<td>1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rawalpindi</td>
<td>1856</td>
<td>Moga</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapurthala</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>Moga</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Jagadhari</td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferozepur</td>
<td>1869</td>
<td>Dhariwal</td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurdaspur</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>Kharar</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathankot</td>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Jallandhar</td>
<td>1946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td>1948</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the native Christians were trained as clergies, the Church started working in a more organised manner. The first Presbyterian convert and ordained clergy was Golakh Nath.\(^{100}\) Punjab Missionary Conference held in 1862 at Lahore was a landmark in the organizational set up of the Presbyterian Church in Punjab. This was the first Conference held in Punjab. In this Conference, Golakht Nath participated, and important discussion took place pertaining to the Church work in Punjab and the participation of the native clergies in the Church organisation. This led to ecclesiastical independence of the Indian Church, and ultimately in December 1904 Presbyterian Church in

\(^{100}\) Webster, John C. Fe - 6-47.
India became an independent entity. Kalicharan Chatterjee\textsuperscript{101} was elected the first moderator.

The Missions and their Churches cooperated in the work of consolidation and development. The missions were integrated into the Church, so that mission as such no longer existed, but put their personnel and resources at the disposal of the local church. This brought the more organised form and structure to the church in Punjab. The pattern of the Presbyterian church of America, which means the church was congregational in its nature, though they had the Diocese and Synods as the governing bodies in their administrative setup.\textsuperscript{102} Finally, the Churches in Punjab began affected by the movement towards church union. This movement began among various Presbyterian churches from America, Scotland, Ireland, New Zealand and Canada which were working in Punjab with the Punjab Missionary Conference held at Lahore in 1862 and continued through the years. The formation of the Presbyterian alliance in 1875 led to the formation of the Presbyterian church in India in 1904 and then of the United Church of Northern India (UCNI) in 1924.\textsuperscript{103}

With this union the basic nature and structure of the Presbyterian church did not change. It was a union for working cooperation and consolidation of Indian Churches. In 1947, Punjab was divided into Punjab of Pakistan and Punjab of India. The partition of the church which fell in the area

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{101} Chatterjee, Kali Charan was a Kulin Brahmin. In 1861 Chatterjee accepted an invitation from Rev. Golak Nath to become head master of the mission school, Jallandhar. A year latter he married Golak Nath’s daughter Marry. He thought Mathematics at the Mission College in Lahore from 1865-68 and then moved to Hoshiarpur as the missionary in charge. He died in 1916. See in detail about Kali Charan in John Webester, C.B. \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 51-53.
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{102} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 220
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\end{flushleft}
of Pakistan formed a separate autonomous church of Pakistan.

Many outstanding educational institutions were established by the various missions to develop the western education in the English language. Thomas Jottan also wrote "comparative grammar and also added Punjabi grammar in this. In addition Gram Newton made supple-dictionary in Punjab in 1904." The Punjabi Dictionary was prepared by John Newton and his cousin Levi Janvier in 1854 and Hindi Grammar prepared by Samuel Kellogg (1876) which was revised in 1893). The language considered necessary were Urdu for the cities and Hindi (United Provinces) or Punjabi (Punjab) for the villages. The Punjab Mission had the practice of examining new missionaries in Language.\textsuperscript{104}

In Punjab, Dr. Henry Martyn Clark and Rev. T. Williams were quite active in Publishing tracts exposing the Arya Samaj, the latter being particularly vicious in his attacks. At government request Earnest Trump translated the sikh scriptures, the Adi-Granth into English. The whole credit for introducing the modern system of education in India and particularly in Punjab goes to the foreign missionaries. The main aim was to develop an educated clergy and prepare Christians layman for public life.\textsuperscript{105}

During this period, the Arya Samaj, the Singh Sabhas and various Anjumans also trained their own preachers and published their own tracts to set forth their own true claims. In Punjab, Arya Samaj adopted a number of general and specific strategies to ameliorate the social status of untouchables or out castes like chamars, Mochis, Dumnes and Chuhras so that their crossing to other religions could be checked. It may be recalled that conversions to other religions were affecting the strength of Hinduism adversely. According

\textsuperscript{104} Webster, John, C.B., \textit{op.cit.}, p. 41.
to Satish K. Sharma, the Brahmanic hegemony which existed in the traditional society had been questioned by the new religions and converts. In the Brahmanic model of Hindu social system, the untouchables were deprived of various religious and socio-economic rights. This could be one of the reason for these untouchable castes to get drawn to Christianity, Sikhism and Islam. He also further expressed that the untouchables were a part of the Hindu society, as they were supposed to serve the Hindus as scavengers, menials and agricultural labours. Second, they were outside the Hindu Society as far as distribution of power was concerned. The spread of western education ideas and values not only liberalized the educated sections of Punjabi Hindus but also laid the foundation of their cultural alienation. The Influence of Christian ideals on downtrodden people awakened them to their values and higher classes of people felt threatened from this awakening and in turn from Christianity.

The influence of the Christian evangelistic work did not come from the educated urban elites but from rural Dalits primarily in the central Punjab. The majority of Dalits and Mazhabis were in search of dignity and respect in the society. Their lower status, and Brahmanic hegemony compelled these untouchables and caste hierarchy to change their castes for dignity and respect. So many adopted Islam, Sikhism and Christianity in Punjab. Secondly, many dalits converted to Christianity to get jobs in hospitals and educational institutions and Dhariwal woollen mill, which were established by the British government. Thirdly, it was the central place of missionary activities so many downtrodden people came under the influence of missionary in the districts Gurdaspur, Amritsar and Ferozepur. Fourthly, the poor, needy, educated

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young people and illiterate people were won over by abundant provisions of hospitals and educational institutions.  

Missionary educators in the Christian colleges proved to be a bond of spiritual fellowship between America and India. The intimate relations between pupils and teachers existing in these institutions, it tended to remove prejudice and misconception and contributed to a better understanding between the two cultures. Some missionary teachers and students became life long friends. Rev. Dr. James CR Ewing, the Principal of the Forman Christian College, Lahore (1888-1918), was not only loved but also respected by his students. He was one of the best known and most trusted foreigners in Punjab.  

The ideal of Christianity for exercising Christian love in the service of those who are in need was expressed through the social service activities of many Punjab Colleges. The Lahore College was noted for their social service League and their activities. The Young Men’s Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.s) and the student Christian association were active in these colleges in Punjab. The college, hostel and the chapel were important elements in the creation of a Christians atmosphere in Punjab. The contribution to the growth of the Indian Church by men of character and ability added respect to the prestige of the Indian Christians community. Some of the prominent Indian Christian who distinguished themselves in social reforms and education were alumni of these Christian colleges. Messrs. K.T. Paul, S.K. Rudra, Dr (Mrs.) Satthianadhan and S.K. Datta had a widely recognized status and influence. Many prominent non Christians were also product of these Christian colleges. Late Sir Shanti Swaroop Bhatnagar a famous physicist, was a product of the Forman Christian College, Lahore. Christian colleges
inspired Indian religious leaders to establish colleges on missionary principles. The leaders of the Arya Samaj established the D.A.V. College Lahore, in 1886 on similar principles.  

Many educational institutions like Forman Christian College in Lahore 1864. Gordon College in Rawalpindi. Marry College in Sialkot. Edwardes College in Peshawar (now, all are in Pakistan). The Baring High School and Baring Union Christian College in Batala, the Alexander High School in Amritsar, the United Christian School outside Jalandhar in Suranussi, and the Christian Medical College in Ludhiana were established by the Christian missionaries in Punjab. Mohindra College was established at Patiala and Panjab University opened in 1882.

All these educational institutions exercised considerable influence over several generations of students and provided leadership for the Christian church and community. The expansion of private Indian education enterprise helped place some Presbyterian school in momentary jeopardy and made the Presbyterians aware of just how vulnerable their school were. It did not take into account the considerable influences upon educational policy which the Presbyterians enjoyed. Charles Forman had been asked to serve on virtually every committee on education formed by the Government. During his long career in Punjab, he was on the early education committees of 1863 and 1865, the Text book committee, and the committee which organized the Punjab University College. He testified before the Hunter commission in 1882 as did Rev. Golaknath, Rev. K Chatterjee and Mrs. Chatterjee (The only Indian women in the U.P. or Punjab to do so).

Charles Forman was a Fellow of Panjab University and a member of the

110 Forman who established the Forman Christian College in Lahore in 1864.
educational conferences of the 1880s and 1890s sponsored, on the recommendation of the Hunter Commission, by the Punjab Government to solicit advice on educational policy and procedures. His successor in Lahore, J.C.R. Ewing, not only served on the Text book Committee and attended several educational conferences, but also was a member of the Punjab University syndicate and in 1910 rose to the office of Vice-Chancellor of Panjab University. Ewing’s colleagues at Forman Christian College H.D. Griswold, H.C. Velte, J.H. Orbison, D.J. Fleming and S.K. Datta – also served on important educational bodies. Griswold served for some time as Dean of the Oriental Faculty of the University.111

The most famous of these converts were Sadhu Sunder Singh and Raja Harnam Singh of Kapurthala. A far greater number of the graduates of mission school, however, became involved in social and religious reforms within their own communities as members of such bodies as the Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj, the Singh Sabhas and Chief Khalsa Diwan, Anjuman-I-Himayat-I-Islam and the Mohammadan Educational conference. These bodies became spokesmen of their respective communities in the religious controversies, competition for influence and communal conflict which have played an important role in the history of Punjab since the late nineteenth century.112

Role of Presbyterian mission/Church in Punjab

During the mid-nineteenth century the American Baptist mission and American Presbyterian mission started medical relief work. Prominent among them were Rev. John Newton of the American who launched this service in Punjab. The medical work of missionaries was one of the most commendable aspects of their activity. It spread sound scientific principles about causes and

111 Government of Punjab, Education Proceeding, February 1881, No. 10, March, 1881, No. 15, July 1887, and also see Webster, John C.B. op. cit., pp. 177-178.
112 Webster, John C.B., op.cit., pp. 177-180.
remedies of diseases. Missionaries of the Presbyterian church in the United States maintained leper asylums at Sabathu and Ambala in Punjab.\textsuperscript{113}

The United Presbyterian church of North America had a well equipped asylum at Baba Laikhan in Punjab. In 1937, there were 24 hospitals and 11 dispensaries in Punjab but due to financial and human power constraints the number of medical institutions in Punjab was reduced.\textsuperscript{114} Missionaries were first to organize orphanages for girls and boys. Their activities in the sphere marked the beginning of organized social work in India. After the famine of 1837 American Presbyterians saved hundreds of orphans and established orphanages for their care at various places in India specially at Ludhiana and Gurdaspur in Punjab, and Sialkot and Gujranwala in Pakistan.\textsuperscript{115}

Missionaries of the Presbyterian Church developed industrial and agriculture schools in various parts of India and various vocation and agriculture course were offered like carpentry, agricultural, book binding, printing, weaving, home science, cookery, sewing, art and music. The United Presbyterians developed the boys industrial Home at Gujranwalla in the Punjab.\textsuperscript{116} Through these industrial school, American protestant mission helped in the development of local industries, such as soap, making, lace making, basket making, cloth weaving and other home operations.

American Presbyterian mission also started agricultural education in Punjab. The most notable institution of this type was developed at Moga in Punjab mission of the American Presbyterian Church. The plans for beginning a rural training school at Moga, were made in 1905 by the Rev. Harrison Carter, who being influenced by the poverty of the mass movement converts

\begin{footnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{113} Economic and Political Weekly. Vol. XXXIV. No. 9, Feb. 27, 1999.
\item\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
\item\textsuperscript{115} Pathak, S.M., \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 66-67.
\item\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., p. 166.
\end{footnotes}
in the area, drafted the “Moga-Plan” for their betterment, through the establishment of village schools and a training school imparting agricultural education. In 1908 the school was started at Ferozepur under the principalship of the Rev. Carter. Three years later, the school was moved to Moga village where a farm of ten acre was bought. Two small hostels and a residence for the missionary were constructed.  

The school at Moga provided a model for government training school in Punjab, and also inspired several other missions to develop similar institutions. In 1928 the Royal Commission on Agriculture, in its report to the government of India commented.

“The new scheme for training village teacher which has been worked out by the American Presbyterian Mission at Moga has been adopted and extended by the Punjab Education Department and now prevails in every training institution for village teachers in the Provinces……. This system of teaching at Moga is a example of the valuable pioneering and experimental work accomplished by missions, to which education in India, owes so great a debt”.

Christian Women Missionaries’ Contribution in Punjab

Besides the activities of YWCA, Christian Women Missionaries contributed to other spheres also. very notable contribution in the medical field was made by women missionaries from America and Britain. Two English women Dr. Edith Brown and Greenfield, established the North-India School of medicine for Christian women at Ludhiana in 1894, in which

American missions also participated. A memorial hospital, attached to this school, was built in 1899. The church of England Zenana Missionary society established the St. Catherine's Hospital for women at Amritsar in 1884.119

American Presbyterians built nearly half a dozen hospitals for women and children. At Ambala in Punjab, Jessica Carleton established the "Philadelphia Hospital for women" in 1898, and in 1902, the Denny Hospital for women and children was opened at Hoshiarpur in Punjab. At Ferozepur also a hospital for women and children was built. They also built two hospitals for women and children one at Jhelum in 1890 and the other at Sialkot in 1887120.

The medical education of Indian women assumed new importance in the educational policy of American Protestant mission. The want of woman doctors was the cause of thousands of premature deaths of Indian women. In 1869, Miss Clara A. Swain, arrived as a representative of the women's Foreign Missionary Society of the America Methodist Church. She started teaching medicine to sixteen orphan girls and three women at Bareilly and also established three medical schools. The North India school of Medicine for Christian mission contributed a great deal to the cause of medical education for women. In 1887, Sir Charles U Aitchison one of the Lieutenant Governors of Punjab acknowledged the contribution made by mission in this field in the following words.121

"It is to the example set by missionary ladies in mission hospitals and in house to house visitation, that the present demand for medical aid and the medical training for the women of India is mainly due."

120 Pathak, S.M., op.cit., pp. 190-191. (Both in Pakistan)
121 Ibid., pp. 153-154.
Christian Missionaries: Socio-Economic Change in Punjab

With development of Western education in India, particularly in Punjab, and arrival of educated and qualified missionaries for the mission schools and colleges and advanced medical facilities helped to reform the social and economic aspects particularly of the downtrodden people of the society. The credit for introducing the modern system of education in India goes to the Christian missionaries. St. Francis Xavier, the Jesuit missionary from Portugal, was great pioneer in education. The Danish missionaries who appeared on the scene in the eighteenth century evinced a keen interest in education.

Many common people came under their influence and changed their religion and caste especially in the plain areas like Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Lahore and Gurdaspur in Punjab. Punjab became the centre of activities of the missionaries, that is why, many Christians settled in this area. They worked only in those areas where the common and dalit people were neglected and discriminated against by the high caste society. They were harassed by the high caste due to their lower caste and were not allowed to enter the temples and worship place. The social circumstances and economic needs of the downtrodden people of the society compelled them to change their religion and caste to raise their social status.

Role of Christianity in Punjab:

The main character of Christianity in Punjab was the formalized presence of various missions which helped to bring awareness to lives of dalits. Another fact of Christianity here was the resultant great influx of Dalit groups. This influx was to significantly influence the vision of the Church’s mission. The second important feature was the writing and work of outstanding individuals in Punjab and elsewhere in northern India which also contributed to conceptualization of the mission and its people.
The role of Christian missionaries in Punjab has been remarkable. They did a lot of work for the development of the Punjabi grammar and dictionary. They contributed significantly to the development of the Punjabi prose. They also established printing press at Ludhiana and Allahabad, from where they published books and tracts in Punjabi, Urdu and Hindi. Some of them translated the religious literature in English and put Sikhism on the world map. Virtually all the hospitals, schools and college in Punjab were initially opened and run by them. They were responsible for starting Punjabi printing press and newspapers. Mashal Press at Kharar and Punjabi Religious Book Society of Lahore and Jallandhar have contributed a great deal in printing out Punjabi literature. Most effective translation of 'The Bible' was made by American Presbyterians into the languages spoken in Punjab and Northwestern Provinces. Improving upon the translation of William Carey John Newton made the most effective translation of the New Testament into Punjabi. He was also the author of a Punjabi grammar and co-author with Levi Janvier of a Punjabi dictionary. They also started a new weekly newspaper Urdu "Nur Afjhan" (The Light). The literary labour of missionaries helped in the development of the Indian press and the growth of many Indian languages.

The missionaries tackled some of the minor and undeveloped languages and gave them shape and form by compiling grammars and dictionaries for them. They even labored at the dialects of the primitive hills and forest tribes and reduced them to writing. The desire of the Christians missionaries to translate the Bible into every possible language thus resulted in the development of many Indian languages. Looking at the social scene in

123 Pathak, S.M., op.cit., p. 50
India, the missionaries found that the caste system was innately opposed to the spirit of Christianity and a great hindrance to the spread of the gospel in India. They spared no pains in condemning the system in their preaching and writing. As the Rev. John C. Lowrie wrote.  

"Here is one great difficulty preventing the conversion of people to Christianity. To receive the Sacrament of Lord’s Supper in company with other communicants would be violation of caste, unless the officiating minister and all the communicants knew the same caste ..... Nor is it less a hindrance to all improvements in the temporal affairs of the people. It is a heavy weight crushing down the spirit of enterprise.”

In many cases, missionaries provided their converts with residence and employment in the mission compound to protect them from caste persecutions. In Northern India, Methodists and Presbyterians founded Christian villages and colonies for their converts. The methodists brought a large area of land near Muradabad where they founded a Christian village, while the united Presbyterians had similar colonies at Sialkot and Gujranwal in Punjab.  

In many regions (in Punjab) depressed classes were found more receptive to the Gospel and majority of untouchable castes like Majhbi Sikhs accepted Christianity in Punjab their young men were educated by missionaries and employed as teachers and preachers.

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125 Pathak, S.M., op.cit, p. 52,  
126 Ibid., p. 53.
Regarding the missionaries, Barakat Ullah expressed this \(^{127}\) "The Missionaries were the *mai bap* of their people, helping them in all matters, whenever and whatever their help was required. If a money lender threatened Christians, they went to the missionary who was ready to help the poor against the rich; if a Zamindar gave less to his Christian hands than was their due, the missionary’s help was requisitioned; if the police maltreated Christian villagers, the missionary used his influence and the police were made to let the Christians alone."

Dorasiswamy also expressed views of S.K. Datta in his study that “the missionary movement was partly responsible for developing the better and higher aspects of the nationalist spirit. The message of unity, of care for the oppressed and sick, the provision of means of education, responsibility to the depressed castes, the quality of man are the result of Christian teaching”. \(^{128}\)

The religious movements of the nineteenth century like the Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, Arya Samaj and the Rama Krishna Mission, were indirectly inspired by missionary work and western ideas. These were designed to pressurise the essential principles of Hinduism and at the same time to remove excesses which were opposed not only to the spirit of Hinduism, but also to ideals spread by Christianity and western culture.

They removed the evils of child marriage, caste system, intemperance and extravagance among their Christian converts. They focussed the attention of the educated people of the Indian society on the evils of widow celibacy, caste system and child marriage and helped the progressive forces in Indian


society which were fighting against these evils. Although Christians played a pioneering role in social and educational field, their role in the national movement, especially individuals in freedom struggle is discussed in Chapter 5.

VII

Punjab: Geographic Location and other Communities

At the outset it may be mentioned that we are concerned with the Punjab of the present days. Punjab extended roughly from 28°-50 to 33°N and 73°-80° 78°-70°E. The state is situated in the north western corner of the Indian union. (See Map -I) It takes its name from the five rivers – Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum. Geographically, Punjab fell into roughly four natural divisions – the Indo-Gangetic Plains, the Himalayan Area, the Sub-Himalayan Area and the North-West Dry Area. The new Punjab state, coming into existence after the historic partition of India, now has only the Beas and Sutlej as its two principal rivers. The third river viz. the Ravi forms the boundary between the Punjab state and Pakistan.

On the north, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Tibet, on the south west Rajasthan, topographically, the state was divided into three regions—the Himalayan tract, the sub-mountains strip and the alluvial plains.

Randhawa, M.S. (1959), Farmers of India, see in Indian Council of Agriculture Research, Vol. I. New Delhi, p. 25.

The figure below or against the name of the State refers to the year of its formation after 1955 (when the administrative map of India was reorganised on linguistic basis).

MAP-1 highlighting the State of Punjab
Randhawa has categorized these regions as:\(^{131}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Sub-Region</th>
<th>Areas Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Himalayan</td>
<td>0. Inner Himalayan</td>
<td>Lahul &amp; Spiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0. Mid Himalayan</td>
<td>Kullu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0. Outer Himalayan</td>
<td>Kangra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sub-montane</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pathankot Tehsil, Naraingarh and some part of Hoshiarpur Tehsil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Plains</td>
<td>1. Malwa</td>
<td>Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Patiala, Bhatinda, Sangrur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Majha</td>
<td>Amritsar, Gurdaspur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Doaba</td>
<td>Jalandhar, Kapurthala, Hoshiarpur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Today Punjab State with 50362 square kilometers is the largest and prosperous state of India. The boundaries of Punjab changed from time to time due to invasion of Central Asia and division into parts. Historically, it was called the gateway to India. Except the Europeans, all the foreigners and invaders have come to India through Punjab. Their main routes were the passes of the north-west frontier among ranges of Sulaiman and Kirthar mountains.

Among the outsiders, the Aryans were the first to enter Punjab. Often a corridor of conquest, a pathway to the rich plains and imperial cities of the gangetic plain. Punjab experienced repeated waves of conquerors, and migrants. The original Hindu and Buddhist culture of the Punjab faced Islam and gradually gave way before it. By the mid-nineteenth century Muslim

Punjabis accounted for half of the population. After that Muslims established their rule in Punjab and on India. The Muslims were finished by the Sikhs in the second half of the 18th century. The famous Maharaja Ranjit Singh ruled up to 1839 and after ten years after his death, Punjab became part of the British Empire. So historically, Punjab tasted different experience of civilizations, races and rulers.

Punjab is land of saints, sufis and peers. It is the birth place of Sikhism and also considered the original place of Hinduism in India. The holy books like Vedas were written here. The major religions of the Punjab are Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam Christianity. The Sikhs, who today constitute more than 50 percent of the state’s population follows the percepts of Guru Nanak, found Sikhism. They are distinguished by the turban, long hair and beard, Sikhs are enterprising farmers and businessmen. Their progressive attitude has made Punjab the agricultural nucleus of India. No wonder that the green revolution and the white revolution have been a big success in the state. At the same time, it is also has flourishing small scale industries.

Economically, Punjab is one of the most affluent states in India. It has the highest per capita income. It is predominantly an agrarian state. About 84.64 per cent of its total area is under cultivation which is the highest percentage in the country. It has a developed canal irrigation network fed by snow based rivers.

Beneath their industrious application to work lie the characteristic Punjabi vitality and high spirits, evident in the joyful songs and folk dances, such as the Bhangra, the Kikli and the Giddha. The vigorous Bhangra dance accompanied with the rhythm of the drum, is performed by men at harvests and on festival occasions.

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132 Jones, Kenneth W., *op.cit.*, P. 1
Punjab had a population of 16.13 million in 1951 which rose to 20.30 in 1961. The density of population was 341 in 1951 and 431 in 1961, against the all India average of 312 per cent square mile in 1951 and 384 per square mile in 1961. It varied from region to region.

During the decade 1961-71, the population of the state rose by 21.7 percent. From 1971-91, the population of the state also increased. At this rate of growth, the population of the Punjab has crossed the 15 million mark. Covering 1.6 per cent of the area of the country, the Punjab has about 2.5 percent of the entire country's population. The growth rate is higher in the urban than in the rural areas. As much as 23.73 per cent of the population lives in towns of the state. The remaining 76.27 per cent of the rural population dwells in villages.

Regarding the literacy rate in Punjab, the literacy percentage of Punjab is 69.95 percent. There is not a wide difference between the literacy rate of men and women as well as of urban and rural population. While 75.63 percent of the males are literate, women are 63.65 percent literate. Urban population is found to be more literate, than the rural area.

There are six universities in the state, some exclusively for particular field: one to agriculture and animal husbandry, one related with medical and another one deals with technical education; Religious composition of Punjab's population in percentage during different censal periods after the independence.

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Table No. 1.2

Religious Composition of Punjab's Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>61.23</td>
<td>61.67</td>
<td>37.54</td>
<td>36.90</td>
<td>34.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs</td>
<td>34.42</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>60.22</td>
<td>60.24</td>
<td>62.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Christian community of Punjab, with which this study is concerned, is a minority both in respect of Indian and Punjabi population. The community constitute only 2.60 percent of the total Indian population and becomes the third largest minority. The Christian community which may be termed as a microscopic minority with respect to total Indian population has greater concentration in some of south Indian states.

But the present Christian community in Punjab is the result of the mass movement and missionary efforts in the 19 century. A large number of churches in Great Britain and United States sent missionaries to Punjab. This led to the growth in size and affluence of the Christian Community.
### Table No. 1.3

**District Level Christians between 1971 – 1991**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>1971%</th>
<th>1981%</th>
<th>1991%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Amritsar</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ludhiana</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Jalandhar</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Patiala</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Gurdaspur</td>
<td>6.49</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>6.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Faridkot</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Sangrur</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Bathinda</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Rupnagar</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Kapurthala</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Ferozepur</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 1881, there were a little over four thousand Indian Christians in Punjab. In reorganized Punjab, Christian community constituted about 2% of the total population of the state. In district Gurdaspur percentage of Christian population is highest amongst all districts of Punjab. In the sub divisional block of Dhariwal (District Gurdaspur) Christians constitute more than 20% of the total population. In Kahnuwan, Dera Baba Nanak, Qadian, Batala and Fatehgarh Churian in district Gurdaspur and Verka, Ajnala, Raja Sanshi Valtona, Majitha in district Amritsar. Both districts have considerable Christian population. According to John C.B. Wester it made its impact primarily through evangelism, education, and such acts of benevolence as medical and relief work. The 1911 census reported 1,63,994 Indian Christian in Punjab, forty times more than the reported population in 1881. A decade
later, it had almost doubled to (3,15.031). These gains were due to Dalits conversions. He also stated that the mass conversions had a great impact upon both Christianity and Punjab in general. The Christian community was changed from a tiny, urban, literate and progressive community into a much larger, but over whelmingly, rural, illiterate, backward and stigmatized community. The movements forced the mission to alter their priorities from the urban elites to the rural menials and it put a permanent Dalit stamp upon the church.”135

Region-wise population

The Protestants, Christians in the state are in the majority and Catholics number is very less. The Catholics believed in Trinity, i.e. ‘Father, Son and Holy spirit’, united one Godhead. As the followers of the Jesus Christ they owe their allegiance to the Holy Church, founded by Jesus Christ and entrusted to Peter, the first vicar (The Pope). His Holiness the Pope, who resides in the Vatican City, is the ‘Supreme religious head of the Catholics. The Protestants adhere to refined doctrines.

Today, in the present Punjab state, the different Christian missions and Christian religious groups are functioning in the Malwa, Mahja and Doaba regions i.e. Salvation Army, Syrian Church and its branches like Orthodox Syrian, Mar Thoma and Jacobites etc. Christ Church of North India (CNI), Cylon Pentecostal Mission, Roman Catholic, Methodist, the Evangelical Church of India, Seventh day Adventists, Church of God, Union Church, Baptist Church and number of other independent groups and Churches which are evangelical in their nature and programs.

Table No. 1.4
District wise Christian population in 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Name of District</th>
<th>Total (Christian Population in 1991) RURAL</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Gurdaspur</td>
<td>120470</td>
<td>107174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Amritsar</td>
<td>42528</td>
<td>34531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Kapurthala</td>
<td>1794</td>
<td>1496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Jallandhar</td>
<td>14842</td>
<td>9130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td>10085</td>
<td>9147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Rup Nagar</td>
<td>1803</td>
<td>686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Ludhiana</td>
<td>7334</td>
<td>836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Ferozepur</td>
<td>18602</td>
<td>11900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Faridkot</td>
<td>3145</td>
<td>1104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Sangrur</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Bathinda</td>
<td>1059</td>
<td>711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Patiala</td>
<td>2756</td>
<td>1789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>226153</td>
<td>178865</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The contribution of Christian missionary Churches and various institutions in shaping the Indian life in modern time have, indeed, been very impressive. They established various types of educational, medical and social institution to serve the humanity. They elevated the neglected classes to high social position and also made them conscious of their dignity. From time to time, missionaries’ stimulated many religious and social reforms in the Hindu society. They even encouraged others to work for social reform. They have helped in the elevation of the status of women by taking the lead in female education. But only few educated Christians who were socially influenced by the missionaries, took the benefit and controlled the institutions like schools and hospitals run by the missionaries.
We can conclude that there has been the general belief of the Christian Churches that St. Thomas, one of the Lord’s twelve disciples, preached in India. History certifies that Christianity in India is as old as Christianity in Israel. From time to time many missionaries came to India to preach the ‘Word of God’ and many people became their followers. They converted many people among the dalit and lower classes to raise their status. Today, many traditions from the time of St. Thomas are celebrated in India by Indian Christians.

Christians believe that there is only one standard and that it is set by God. Then it followed that for Christian all human behaviour within society, be acceptable to God and Godly people must conform to that single God – given standards. In plural society, people however differ in their perprospective and no one person believes are inherently preferable any other. It followed that in open society must maintained a pluralist behaviour standard. Christians in India actually adjusted to this reality in the societal framework. These societal pressure becomes stronger in post-colonial India, where Christians did not hanker after any special status under the constitutional provisions.