



Contribution of Missionary Education in Colonial Andhra: Social Change among the Depressed Classes

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Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to assess the nature and growth of Missionary education in study of social change among the depressed classes in colonial Andhra. The missionary education played a crucial role in bringing social change among the downtrodden section in the 19th century. Though it was initiated in the need of proselytization, this was by no means confined to this purpose alone and took the general interests and needs of the society as well. Since the process of social change was always linked to the growth of education, the missionary education had created a new social consciousness among the downtrodden sections that led to uphold the spirit among them to fight against Brahmanism in the later period of Andhra region. Due to new social consciousness created by the British rule and the western education to some extent questioned social order of caste system and broke down the intellectuals' monopoly of Brahmins and non-Brahmin upper caste domination as well. This could be seen as identity struggles in the post-Independent Andhra.

Keywords: Missionary education, proselytization, depressed classes.

Introduction

The introduction of European ideas and knowledge system were mainly responsible for the emergence of modern ideas of dissent and social protest and socio-religious awakening in the 19th century in India. Whereas, some of the historians' opined that British rule had manifold blessings bestowed upon people of India by spread of western knowledge. Its consequences brought out manifold advantages towards Indian people, which were almost immeasurable. It gave access to the modern English literature which was one of the richest in the world. According to Aparna Basu¹ 'the primary purpose of introducing English had been educational. But the new language bringing with it a new world of ideas and leading to new political institutions developed a unity which had not recognized before and English as an emblem and medium of expression of that unity. Educated Indians were aware that as long as they had depended on their regional languages there had been little interchange of ideas among them and English had made discussion in a common language.

The Charter Act of 1813 inaugurated a new era in the history of missionary education in India². Several missionary societies sprang up in South India who did not continue to the propagation of the Gospel but also involved in educational activities. In the history of Christian missionaries education was one of the means of spreading proselytization, and therefore their educational activities were used as arms by the European colonial power³. Marx says that the social principles of Christianity among many other things in preaching of the naturalist of social division between the ruling and ruled and for the "later all they have to after is the pious wish that the former

may be charitable⁴." It was this concept that the missionaries were using and sowing the seeds of Christianity. No doubt the development of education and fostering of literacy among the Indian people was one of the most visible achievements of the missionaries, but that would not negate the proselytization Project at the heart of education.

Brief History of Missionary Education in Madras Presidency

According to J.A. Richey, "fortunately for the cause of education in Madras Presidency, missionaries' enterprise was particularly active in the presidency". Missionary influence in South India, in general, began and in Andhra⁵, where the first signs of missionaries activity began in 1597 when two Jesuit fathers and a Brother were at the court of Venkatarajulu in Chandragiri⁶ (in Chittoor Dist). The Father Moudnit was the first to convert. Later Punganur became the cradle of the Telugu Christians from where Christianity gradually spread to Venkatagiri, in Nellore district which became a big Christian settlement later, Krishnapuram, Hindupur (Anantapur district) and to China Balkapuram in Bellary district. All these settlements where meant only for the proselytization campaign by individual Christians. M.G Ranade argues that in the initial stages it appeared that poverty was the main reason for the people to embrace Christianity as the missionaries offered them some jobs and introduced new social phenomena like acquisition of vernaculars, social circulation of Christian literature, opening of schools, personal courage, condemnation of indigenous social evils and suffering⁷. With this content, the missionaries spread their faith efforts in the colonial Andhra region.

Earlier Evangelism was spearheaded by five societies: The London missionary society, the Church missionary society, Wesleyan mission, Society for the propagation of Gospel and the Free Church mission of Scotland who did pioneering work in the pre-colonial period. In fact, the Charter Act of 1813 opened a new door to missions' to campaign their educational activities. In most of the cases the educational activities of the Christian missionaries were addition to their evangelical programme. The first and foremost object of the missionaries was to convert the people to Christianity. There was a time in early missionary history when the home authorities of missions refused to support educational institutions; for they felt that the priest had no business to establish schools. But the practical experience of the early Christian missionaries soon convinced them that they had to start schools and medical facilities that could become an important means of proselytization in India. Furthermore, Rev. D. D. Allen, an eminent missionary of the American Board had given some of the reasons for the missionaries to educate the minds of the people. It was argued that with help of education the people would become capable of understanding and appreciating the facts and evidence, the doctrines and duties of the scriptures and that could increase the influence of missionaries on the society. The education was a main tool for the missionaries to proselytize the Christian faith.

In 1830, Alexadar Duff began a new approach to proselytization through education. It was the spread of Christianity through western education that was achieved by most of the English schools conducted by missionaries. In their schools, the Bible must be taught to those upper classes that were attracted due to their desire to study English for the worldly advantage it brought. The missionaries believed that once they were attracted to the teaching of the Bible they would embrace Christianity and would go to the people and convert them to the Gospel. This, however, never happened though there were, indeed, a few cases of conversion of students from upper classes. Nevertheless, the early converts to Christianities came mostly from the lowest castes of the Hindu society. Since the lower castes people were illiterates, the church started elementary schools almost in every village with the aim to make the Christian converts from these sections sufficiently literate so that they would be able to read the Bible and take interest in general affairs. Roman Catholic missions had been operating in South India since the 16th century, while Protestant missions had made a small beginning in the 19th century. Most of the Danish missionaries later followed these pioneers, substantially identified themselves with the English colonies in South India. The charter Act of 1833 had helped in opening up India to the missionary activity of other nations like the German and the American missions.

J. Richter rightly points out: "Modern missionary work in India has one end of the country to others." Ziegenbalg and his colleagues did considerable missionary and educational work. For instance, the first schools in the Madras Presidency were started in 1673, in Fort St. George for the education of the

children of the employees of the East India Company. Later on in 1715 another school, called St. Mary's charity school was started in Madras for thirty protestant children and in 1717 an Anglo-vernacular school was started in Cuddalore for Indian Christians (native children), which was probably the first school for Indians in which the company took some direct interest. More or less, this was the beginning of the great system of Anglo-vernacular education for the children of company employees and Christians under the patronage of the company and the missionaries in the presidency. These schools also aimed at teaching the former if they were interested in conversion. The imparting of education in the vernacular language was the norms, unlike the colonial government. That insisted as English literacy. Therefore educational schools with instructions in vernacular were opened for tribal and lower castes in India, for it was the vernacular language that helped the missionary work and the conversion of Indians⁸.

Emergence of Missionaries in Andhra

In early 1874, the Baptist missionary society has established its first station in Telugu country at Coconada (Kakinada) and slowly spread to places like Tuni (Godavari district) Gunnapudi, Akividu and several villages along the Krishna river basin⁹. The Serampore missionary society played a crucial role in spreading of Baptist ideology in the 19th century. The American Baptist mission started its work in Andhra under Rev. Samuel Day who was the founder of the American Baptist mission in the Telugu speaking districts of the Madras Presidency. From Srikakulam he began to tour the surrounding villages. Apart from that in 1837 he organised extensive tours between Vizagapatnam and Kodern. Rev. Samuel Day moved from Madras to Nellore in 1840, which was the permanent settlement of mission stations for the Telugu mission of the American Baptists. Another mission, the Baptist church at Kurnool, opened a new centre in 1875, by Rev. D. H. Drake. Rev. W. G. Boggs opened a church at Cumbham in the following year and at Narasarao pet, Bapatla, and Vinukonda, Podali, Donakonda and Sathenapalli in 1894 and at Gurazala in 1895. And the church mission society, founded by M. V. John Goldingheus who was collector of Machilipatnam district, invited Mr. Nobel to Machilipatnam. The mission work began in 1841 with R.T.Nobel and H.Eoxvi at Machilipatam where they began evangelical and educational work. Later, it was spread to Ellore and Bezawada in 1854. This was followed by Raghvapuram in 1870, Amalapuram in 1876. The Free Church mission and the American Baptist mission conducted their activities in Nellore District and in the districts of Cuddapah, Kurnool and Bellary the L. M. S. (Lutheran Missionary Society) was carrying its activities. In the Godavari district, missionary activity started in the first half of 19th century. Around 1840, the north German missionary society began its operation around Rajahmundry, which was continued by the American German Lutheran in 1851. A new mission was established at Samurllotah (Samarlakota in present East Godavari dist) by Rev. A. Long who came from America in 1858, but there was already a provincial school at Rajahmundry.

So, the missionaries opened a museum and a reading room instead of starting another school, which were frequented by local people. Missionary work was spread into the interior areas and Protestant mission at Palcole (Palakol, Godavari district) and Naraspure were started¹⁰.

As seen above, the missionaries' activities embraced the whole of the Andhra region education, which was their main interest even though they were running orphanages, medical centres and industrial establishment. Missionaries tried to seize control of education through which they could mould men's minds better at their most impressionable age. Even though with the establishment of Anglo-vernacular schools, through which they desired to, conduct the higher castes, the missionaries established several elementary schools in the colonial Andhra. All the missionary schools influenced to grasp or gain a status in society which was derived to them by castes Hindu down the ages and to win the favour of the government through the conscious motive of spreading intercession of the missionaries.

Missionaries and Proselytization

The church started an elementary school in every village with the aim to make the Christian sufficiently literate to be able to read the Bible and take interest in general affair. Certainly, the content of missionaries' education had different kinds of objectives. Nurallah.S and Naik.J.P argues that it must be remembered that education was never the main object of the missionaries. But they aimed at conversion and were obliged to take up educational work in order to meet the needs of the converted population and more especially to train up Indians assistants for their proselytizing activities and secondly the importance which early missions attached to study of modern Indian languages deserves special mention. They had to work among the lowest classes of society who could not understand any language, and prepared dictionaries, wrote books and grammar and translated the Bible into their language. It is worth noting that most of the earlier mission schools gave instruction through the mother tongues of the pupils and it never occurred to the Indians missionaries to say that "the dialect commonly spoken among the natives one so poor and rude that it will not be easy to translate any valuable work into them." Thirdly, one of the major steps taken by missionaries is that they did extremely valuable pioneer work in the field of education of women, which is a "dangerous" area in which the officials of this period refused to tread.

Apart from this, another important development of this period was that the relation between the company and the missionaries began to improve slowly and gradually, and consequently the relation between these two groups' workers improved considerably. The company not only recognized the utility of educational works of the missionaries, but also occasionally sanctioned grants-in-aid for their correlation of missionaries and company which was a significant feature in early 18th century.

Due to the 1854 the Grant-in-Aid system and Government Educational Policy there was a tremendous growth in increasing of number of Christian schools and colleges that created needs of the people. The Christian colleges were among the first to bring western ideas of education to India that led to changes in the minds of the the people in terms of cultural and social ideas. But after the report of the Indian education commission of 1882, the missionaries generally gave up plans for the report of extension and decided to concentrate on the efficient maintenance of a few institutions. The momentum behind their efforts had been heaped during 19th century that the differed for western education was increasingly satisfied by the efforts of Christian missionaries.

Apart from this, the missionaries brought out the underlying motives of colonial rulers in their educational programmes designed to serve their colonial requirements. According to J.A Richey (an educational officer in the government) said that fortunately for the course of education in Madras, missionaries' enterprise was particularly active in this presidency. The missionary embraced the whole of Andhra region, where missionaries influence was more or less the same with the rest of Andhra where noted Christian missionaries started their educational endeavours like Roman Catholic missionaries, Canadian Baptist missionaries, among which Roman catholic mission was far-flung throughout Andhra region where their efforts were completely reformative, so it was undertaken with the conscious motive of spreading Christianity. It is true that educational endeavours of the missionaries, even though religiously motivated, did spread establishment among caste sections of society by dispelling their superstitions and making them feel equal and self-respectable in society while content of education of the mission schools, somewhat, in genuinely of the Christian missionaries' schools¹¹. In Madras Presidency where missionaries have perhaps exerted a great influence on education than in any other part of India, the mission institutions numbered 3,778 at the end of 1901 and more than one quarter of the total number of private managed institutions was included in the public list of the provinces. The following table shows a comparison of the number of public institutions in the Madras Presidency of different grades and classes that were under mission and private management of great interest.

| Grade of Class Institutions | Missionary Management | Non-missionary Management |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Art colleges | 22 | 11 |
| Secondary schools for boys | 182 | 208 |
| Secondary schools for girls | 135 | 13 |
| Primary Schools for boys | 3016 | 13371 |
| Primary Schools for girls | 371 | 281 |

Source: Fourth Quinquennial Review (from 1887-98 to 1901-02)., Vol - I. P.41

The above table shows mission management, non-mission management and all strata schools in Madras presidency. In the fourth quinquennial from 1907-08 to 1901-02 the missionaries conducted numbers of mission-managed institutions was greater than non mission management institutions. At the same time, the Andhra missionaries maintained the same position, while to the growth of education, the missionaries contributed in no small measure. There was a greater increase in the aided mission schools than in the aided non-mission schools in the Madras presidency in the period of twenty years.

In Andhra during 1899-1900, out of the 22,075 primary schools for boys, missionary schools were about 2,353 schools with 78,330 pupils¹². As per the secondary, higher cum middle schools, Christian missionaries were running about 51 schools throughout the Andhra region¹³. Whereas collegiate education under Christian missionaries ran 3 colleges out of 10 colleges all of which were under the Christian mission including all kinds of Christian missionaries in Andhra. The American Baptist Missionary, Canadian Baptist Missionary, the London Mission Society, the Arcot Missionary Society and other south missions had networks of village schools in Andhra region.

The educated persons in the schools especially in protestant-missions schools in Andhra are as follows:¹⁴

| Year | No. of Educated Persons |
|------|-------------------------|
| 1870 | 138 |
| 1880 | 440 |
| 1890 | 1473 |
| 1900 | 3500 |
| 1905 | 5275 |

Thus, the missionary efforts were there in all the districts of Andhra and helped in the spreading of Education among the all the social sections. At the same time, women education in India was almost entirely due to the influence of Christian missionaries. For many years, girls' education was a notable factor of missionary education and the motives of the missionary system were to teach the Bible in schools to convert them. Right from the beginning, they established boarding caste schools. For instance, caste-girls schools were started at Vizagapatam, Vizanagaram, Jeyupore, Gunpore etc, by the London Mission Society and Catholic Missions¹⁵, in Bezwada in Kristna district and in Nellore district. Mostly all these Christian missionaries supported education for depressed class girls, because they were alienated from the educated societies and were oppressed from social evils¹⁶. Christian missionaries tried to eradicate the women from the tyranny of indigenous dogmas in society. In fact, all Christian missionaries contributed in many ways for the spread of female education and the rise of consciousness of women's education in Andhra. For instance, in 1921-22, the aided mission schools had only four schools where as government schools were six¹⁷. This clearly shows that the

mission's efforts were mainly responsible for higher education of girls in Andhra. In fact, the majority of the students were either Christians or lower castes and Anglo-Indian girls.

Emergence of Missionary Education in Andhra

At a very early date, the missionaries assumed an honourable and important position in the history of Indian education. There upon, they attempted to introduce a Christian content in education and the conversion of students receiving education reinforced this evangelizing efforts. Ramakrishna argues that they established number of missionary schools and colleges all over the country, where many pupils were introduced in the learning of education. By this the missionaries' activities embraced the whole of the country, as well as the Andhra region, where Christian missionaries took up the responsibility of ameliorating depressed classes from our indigenous social structure. It's with this Christian Missionaries commenced their operations in the early 19th century. However, the first and foremost thing we have to know about the missionaries' attempt in the progress of education here. A major question arose about the missionaries' education schools whether they would educate a class or the mass and who got the benefits from these educational services.

The missionaries by providing education, medical aid and social services only benefited their religion, in terms of conversions but gave respect to the low castes and also opened the eyes of caste Hindus about their long neglect of these castes. It was argued that conversion to Christianity provided following prospect of revolutionary transformations of society, encouraged religious status in glaring contrast to the degraded and poverty-stricken lives they would be leading under the fold of Hindu religion. After the conversions, people who were carefully educated as if they were Brahmins put to the way of leaving a trade or obtaining an appointment as employees. G. A. Oddie¹⁸ stated that one of the Church mission society missionary's first objectives was to convert high-castes through the settling up of several Anglo-Vernacular elementary schools in the countryside viz, the one established at Masulipatam (1843), Ellore (1855) and Bezawada (1857). He argues that these schools attracted a substantial proportion of Brahmins. For instance, by 1850, they had produced 23 high castes converts-16 Brahmins, 6 high caste non-Brahmins and one Muslim. The second object was that the missionaries believed that caste is the strongest obstacle to the spread of the Christian faith. The missionaries affirmed that the spread of Christianity would ultimately strengthen British position in India, since every converts, in his own interest and security would be loyal to the British. Mean while, the upper class desired to study English for the worldly advantage it brought and that thus would not mind joining mission school for the sake of learning English as well as the missionaries offered them some jobs. That was why the mission education was the cost of sine quonon for them where as the non-Brahmanical castes were slow. However, missionary schools were generally opened to both Hindus and

Christians that there was no question of accepting the Christianity.

Moreover, the Christian missionaries' content of education or that their motives were always completely secular. However, in colonial Andhra women's and inferior castes education was the measurable predicament whole of despised castes, aboriginal communities and women. According to Mungipudi Venkata Sarma in *Andhra Patrika*¹⁹, while complimenting the work of Christian missionaries in the upliftment of low castes, suggests various means for the improvement of these classes like i. stoppage of grants to schools which would not admit Panchamas, ii. free admission into municipal and taluka, iii. Permission for Panchamas to open stalls, and shops in markets and auction centres, iv. employment as labour in industries and v. training for leather, carpentry, pot making etc, all of which reforming them by the mean of education and hence, populating Panchams education. Hence, they adopted a new social reform helping the depressed classes. Thus, they pioneered the reforms of the 19th century in which the Christian missionaries tried to seize control of education and mould the minds of men and many of the so-called untouchables fell under the spell of their influence to gain status which thus lost in Indian society.

Furthermore, the missionaries gave to material advantage. It gave more significantly, feelings of self-respect and equality in the society. Moreover, Christian Missionaries' education has been treated at some length in the Andhra region. It is obvious as adaptations of needs of all the aboriginal tribe, inferior caste education. However, Since they belonged to different castes/tribes and social background the converted Christians had a difference in believing faith of Christianity from one another. During this period the setting up and staffing of elementary village schools rapidly developed. Dr Ferguson, in this connection, reported that "generally speaking, in those villages where the main of the Schools rest with the teacher and village community the best results are obtained. The work in schools were divided into the main departments of religion, secular teaching of music and industrial instructions, where as secular schools thought subjects like Arithmetic, Grammar, reading Bible etc. G. A. Oddie also said that this feature could be especially seen in the Masulipatam and Ellore district of Andhra which was also an extremely important factor in the spread of Christian faith. Indigenous schools scattered throughout the Andhra region that catered mainly for Brahmans and few non-Brahmans groups like Komati, Kamma, Kapu, etc.²⁰ While Mala and Madiga untouchable caste in particular, underprivileged of educational opportunities within this traditional Hindu system that stirred up by direct contract with Christian preaching and began to work for the missionaries for schools. As a result they established the new schools in Ellore district of Andhra. Perhaps all their attempts like prudence in training, teaching and preaching and developing a critical educational system were important underlying factors in the survival and continued growth of Christianity in Andhra.

Christian Missions had their own schools for the education and training of their boys and girls. The mission did not send their children to public schools since they aimed at giving religious instructions in these schools in tone and character, while government schools could necessarily impart only secular education. This mission schools were working as a valuable agency in raising the status of low castes pupils and to provide better living conditions and a suitable career for the converts²¹. They had to open some technical and vocational schools and also provide general education to them as all the converts could not be admitted into the existing schools. Furtherance came the spread of elementary education for the inferior castes and their implementation in the schools contributed towards the social amelioration of these class. As a result the impact of lower caste educational measures could be seen in the greater enlightenment in the second half of 19th century. During this period missionaries' maintained special encouragement to the education of the depressed castes and especially liberal times and by remitting fees, awarding scholarships, presenting books and slates.

Therefore, all these castes owe much of their education to missionary labour where as the government schools also maintained for this benefit, and the government afforded special encouragement under the Charter of 1893 which has been described as the magna charter of primary education. It resulted in depressed castes' education. Indeed, it acted as a catalyst. There were merely Christian missionaries who took an active role in all the education endeavors to educate them (all depressed class). Similarly, women's education prior to those schools was initiated by the Christian missionaries. The whole primary interest was conversion to Christianity along with Bible reading, basket making, knitting and other vocational courses which were taught. Zenana schools insisted that girls should be kept in schools till the time of their marriage and joining the husband. This had reforming effect on society in general while some of the girls' schools scattered in the various parts of Andhra by the various missionaries like the London Mission, Roman catholic Mission, Baptist Mission, Lutheran Mission, etc, which was much before the native could come forward to establish schools especially for girls and government also encouraged education for girls by Woods despatch of 1854. Even though their efforts were meagre the needs women's education by Christian Missionaries continued to play a vital role in this area throughout colonial period.

The native Christian community has been recruited very largely from the out castes races and inferior castes of Hindus and nothing can be more gratifying than to see what education has done for this despised section of the people. For instance, 1871 census reveals that a proportion of 2,987 per 100,000 of males between the age group of 15 to 40 years have advanced to the matriculation standard of the university while in the non-Brahminical Hindu castes the total proportion was merely 15 in 1,00,000. For the first few years of the existence of the university, the number of Christian passing was small. In 1863-

64 fifteen candidates of this class passed and in 1872-73, the number was 54 and the increase has been steady and progressive during the last decade²². In fact, that result could not be extremely gratifying to the labours in Christian mission, and showing also who may be done in the improvement of the status of inferior castes of Hindus. The advantage enjoyed by native Christians could be brought within their reach furtherance in regard to the spread of education amongst various religious castes, i.e. the distinctive feature of education among the hill tribes of the province in the part in it played by Christian missionaries. Indeed they were not found in large number in the agencies. But if they were, their educational efforts would be confined to these people. The organisation of schools and

official under government began complete and purely secular missionaries. However, apparently find hill tribe, to whom, the missionaries have been giving pecuniary aid, especially, in Madras presidency. 18% of total numbers of primary schools are managed by missionary agencies. Moreover, American Baptist mission started a school at Kavali in 1898 in connection with Kavali criminal settlement and imparting education to the criminal tribes²³.

The following table illustrates the various castes education among various castes and general average of male and female who were able to read and write in English.

| Cast, Tribe | Religion | Total Male Population | Learning | Literate | | Total Female | Learning | Literate | |
|---|-----------|-----------------------|----------|----------|---------|--------------|----------|----------|---------|
| | | | | Total | English | | | Total | English |
| Velama | Hindu | 190573 | 3061 | 824 | 292 | 191184 | 302 | 654 | 4 |
| | Christian | 3 | - | 7 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | - |
| Kamma | Hindu | 427364 | 11075 | 3339 | 366 | 423040 | 461 | 552 | - |
| | Christian | 215 | 24 | 35 | 3 | 204 | 8 | 10 | - |
| Kapu/Reddy | Hindu | 1225422 | 38380 | 86492 | 1291 | 1229112 | 1355 | 1324 | - |
| | Christian | 961 | 46 | 143 | 10 | 1072 | 15 | 38 | - |
| | Animistic | 67 | - | - | - | 70 | - | - | - |
| Mala | Hindu | 680854 | 2123 | 5409 | 80 | 680208 | 196 | 125 | 1 |
| | Musliman | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| | Christian | 733 | 29 | 73 | 4 | 687 | 26 | 20 | - |
| | Animistic | 5 | - | - | - | 6 | - | - | - |
| Komati | Hindu | 144233 | 17449 | 69154 | 549 | 143548 | 630 | 626 | 4 |
| | Jainism | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Kamasala | Hindu | 123899 | 7554 | 27545 | 172 | 124376 | 334 | 348 | 1 |
| | Christian | 17 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 20 | 2 | 1 | - |
| | Jainism | 4 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - |
| Madiga | Hindu | 341766 | 414 | 1151 | 4 | 335932 | 80 | 58 | - |
| | Christian | 310 | 11 | 6 | - | 299 | 7 | 8 | - |
| Yerukula | Hindu | 66838 | 339 | 1213 | 5 | 66718 | 16 | 61 | - |
| | Christian | 12 | 2 | 4 | - | 9 | 1 | 1 | - |
| Koya | Hindu | 26093 | 44 | 19 | - | 26662 | - | - | - |
| Kaji | Musliman | 21 | 1 | 4 | - | 13 | - | - | - |
| Golla | Hindu | 394252 | 2164 | 8267 | 297 | 392490 | 102 | 149 | - |
| | Christian | 13 | - | - | - | 14 | 2 | - | - |
| | Animistic | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Raju | Hindu | 35207 | 1343 | 5436 | 162 | 33127 | 85 | 162 | - |
| | Christian | 10 | - | 3 | - | 10 | - | - | - |
| Lambadi | Hindu | 20230 | 19 | 57 | - | - | 19802 | 352 | - |
| | Musliman | 16 | - | - | - | - | 16 | - | - |
| | Buddhism | 4 | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | - |
| Brahmin* (Entire Madras Presidency) | Hindu | 551951 | 90988 | 306097 | 24976 | 569159 | 7171 | 13849 | - |

Source: Census of India, 1891 Vol-XI. Table: C, British territory tables for feudatory Sates and a Caste Index. H.A. Stuwart, I.C.S., Fallow of the Royal statistical Society. Superintendent of Census operation, Government of Madras, 1893, Tables pp.26-64

Note: *Total Brahmans in Madras Presidency (not in Andhra region)

The above table professed to ascertain in regard to caste wise education, number of persons, males and female of each religion who were able to read and write in English. We can find that literacy was found chiefly among those sections of people whose social status like employment and occupation (agricultural) used and got the advantage in the education. These opulent castes were Brahmins, Komati, Kamma, Kapu and Reddy far reaching in literacy. Whereas the depressed castes like Mala, Madiga and aboriginal tribes like Yerukula, Lambadi caste people literacy rate was far below the minimum literacy rate. In terms of Lambadi community, no person was to be found in the literary throughout the modern presidency until the 1891 census. But native Christian communities were mostly advanced and in the social position. According to the table it is revealed that more or less all Christians are in some how good position in advancement in literacy among the Telugu communities.

Contribution of Missionaries and Social Change

The Missionaries' enterprise in the new education was confined to those who believed it to be an effective agent of modernizing the society. At the outset of missionaries' activities, the pioneering effort of missionaries was to educate people who were backward in social ladder with ultimate motives of conversions. This was because; the Christian missionaries believed that caste is the strongest obstacle to the spread of Christian faith²⁴. Hence, they adopted a new policy to change the way of life by establishing schools, bringing social reforms and helping the depressed class. With this view in mind, the Christian missionaries pioneered the reforms of 19th century in which around eighteen different mission societies like Roman Catholic, Canadian Baptist mission, American Evangelical Lutheran mission worked. They had identical aims: to do social services and convert the people into their respective denominations. It was argued that conversion to Christianity that provided attractive prospects of radical transformation of social, economic and religious status in evident contrast to the degraded Hindu social life. After conversions, untouchables were carefully educated as if they were Brahmins, put to the way of learning a trade or obtain appointment as clerks. Accordingly, Suseela²⁵ had rightly designated three things as the great contribution of missionaries: providing literacy to the illiterate masses of Andhra, women's education, patriotism, and the upliftment of the depressed classes and sowing the seeds of western knowledge, reflection as to what was good or bad in the indigenous traditions by higher class society. However there were no inter-caste marriages among the converted people belonging to the higher castes, and they followed their own customs, a Hindu converted to high caste to give up his thread to leave his daughter in marriage until they were fourteen years of age. Apart from that, the Christian missionaries began the campaign against the caste discrimination among the different castes like Brahmins, Vaisyas, (traders) Kamnia, Kapu, etc (agricultural castes) and out castes (untouchables). The missionaries also brought out the professional practices. There

was a little change and these classes began to assert their freedom and independence, hitherto more than even higher castes like Kamma, Reddis and many others converted into Christianity, but unfortunately among the converted, the caste discrimination continued²⁶. In fact, some of the missionaries allowed the caste among the converted Hindus, where as some missionaries like protestant missionary often did not allowed it.

I argue that the Christian missions had tried to work freely among untouchable and depressed classes, and they elevated them to gain equal status along with other upper caste/dominant caste in Hindu society²⁷. The work of social reformers and the socio-religious organizations, the contribution of the missionaries, intending equal treatment of all Christians in their churches and also before law, created a new and healthy atmosphere for their ameliorations. With these changes, "Christian became a caste by themselves with many privileges". As was observed by Fishman, "Brahmins are the Modern depressed class, the Christian are the new Brahmins"²⁸. In fact, missionaries had their due directly and indirectly in the amelioration of the down trodden classes.

Thus, a remarkable development that took place in the study of the growth of education in colonial Andhra during this period was that the improvement of education among non Brahmin castes and depressed classes. The Brahmins being top in the social ladder were the first to reap the benefits of colonial education and continued their domination after the introduction of English education.

Conclusion

Since the process of social change was always connected to the growth of education, this study emphasizes the contribution of the missionaries in developing education among the depressed classes in Andhra. This paper identified the following developments in the study of Missionary education in Andhra.

Firstly, the colonial state did not give much importance to the education of natives before 1813. Even after 1813, the interest shown by the state in this affair was minimal. In 1835 the Macaulay minute articulate the famous 'downward filtration theory', which articulated for educating a 'limited few' for spreading the education among natives. In fact till 1854 the role of state in spreading the education was very slow. This period was largely a period where the educational activities were taken by the Christian missionaries and other philanthropists.

Secondly, the limited action by the state towards education till middle of 19th century was adequately compensated by these missionaries and the private philanthropists. They were not only instrumental in spreading education but also encouraged social reforms and helped in creating a new consciousness in Andhra.

Thirdly a remarkable development that took place in the study of the growth of education in colonial Andhra during this period

was that the improvement of education among non-Brahmin castes and depressed classes, though the Brahmins being top in the social ladder were the first to reap the benefits of colonial education and even continued their domination after the introduction of English education.

Fourthly, however, Missionary education brought other non-Brahman upper castes into the orbit of colonial bureaucracy. This spread of education among the peasant castes like Kamma and Reddis, Kapus etc had a positive impact on society and politics, since these castes with their education became a strong force in the social political awakening that followed in the subsequent periods.

Fifthly, the missionaries encountered the problem of 'caste' in their process of proselytization and looked up 'caste as biggest obstacle for proselytization'. As a result one of the main aims of missionaries was to undermine 'caste' which was to be done through the spread of education. Though it could not be undermined, the missionary education massively benefited the depressed classes. It was only with the missionary education that these sections which were hitherto denied any access to knowledge for centuries were first exposed to systematic body of knowledge. This can be regarded as one of the most remarkable achievement of the missionary education in India in general and in Andhra in particular.

Sixthly, the number and strength of lower castes in the schools had started increasing from the late 19th century, the shift to English education helped them to take the opportunities thrown by the colonial state and this shift in the traditional profession helped improve their social status and these emerged educated class among the lower castes. Due to new social consciousness created by the British rule and the western education to some extent questioned social order of caste system and broke down the intellectuals' monopoly of Brahmins and non-Brahmin upper caste domination as well. This could be seen as identity struggles in the post-Independent Andhra.

Thus, the missionary education played a crucial role in bringing social change among the downtrodden section in the 19th century. Though it was initiated in the need of proselytization, this was by no means confined to this purpose alone and took the general interests and needs of the society as well. Since the process of social change was always linked to the growth of education, the missionary education had created a new social consciousness among the downtrodden sections that led to uphold the spirit among them to fight against Brahmanism in the later period of Andhra region.

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