

**Role of Christian Missionaries and their Impact on
Indigenous Cultures of India**

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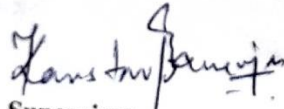
DECLARATION

This is to certify that the dissertation titled **Role of Christian Missionaries and their Impact on Indigenous Cultures of India** submitted by me under the supervision of Dr. Kaustav Banerjee in partial fulfilment for the award of the Degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my original work and has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.



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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


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Chapter-1

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

In 16th century, Christian missionaries came to India and they spread across. They have started humanitarian work among the people of India. The main objectives of missionaries were to improve social and spiritual life of people in India. In order to liberate and emancipate people they began Missionary movement across India. Therefore, the role of Christian mission in India becomes the concern of academic writing. There are much writings on the on the role of Christian missionary. Prior studies have shed positive light on Missionaries' Role. As anything thing could not be completely positive or negative that is why missionary role in India could not be positive at all. Therefore, this is important to examine the role of Christian missionary and its impact on Indigenous culture of India and research would examine the role of the Christian missionaries beyond prior claims.

Christian Mission and Indigenous Cultures

Christian Missionaries are an individual or group of people who spread Christianity. This group of people is known as “Evangelist.”¹ The evangelist converts people into Christianity. Christian mission starts with the expansion of colonialism. Missionaries with the obligation of “Civilizing Responsibility” or “White Man’ Burden” initiated the Missionary movement across the world. They were overwhelmed the ideo of European Renaissance and Reform movement. They

¹ Who spread Christianity through preaching of Jesus.

overwhelmed with the philosophy of renaissance and reformation such as equality, liberty and emancipation. They thought these ideas as new paradigm to Human Civilization and will lead humanity to climax. Therefore this idea must be disseminate to each person and they urged to homogenize entire world with these ideas. In this context refined and new flavors of Christian religion emerged under the upheaval of reformation. In 1534, “Jesuit Mission”² founded in order to spread Christianity across the world. Then Missionaries committed to spread Christianity the world and proselytize all Pagans into Christianity. Then evangelists were sent to across the geographical boundaries. The evangelist involves themselves into humanitarian work such social and economic development, medical care, education and orphanage etc. In this scenario Christian Missionaries starts in full fledged and organized manner. And then missionaries were sent on Mission.

Indigenous cultures are the set of custom, manner, folkways and ceremonies of particular society. Containing the traits of society indigenous culture it flows generation to generation. Indigenous culture is the medium to know our past and behave accordingly. It is the medium of socialization to native people. Indigenous cultures are distinctive in nature also reflects in sui-generic form. Indigenous contains the norms and value of any social setting which regulate the human behavior. Also, regulate people’s behavior according to customary law. Indigenous cultures of any society interpret the peoples, customs and folkways. Indigenous cultures have own interpretation and justification of these traits. In modern and capitalist society the role of indigenous culture becomes important. The phenomenon such as globalization, modernization and civilization mission intended to homogenize different societies and cultures of different pockets of world. In these process indigenous traits: customs, folkways and peoples are submerging and traits are withering away. Even, contemporary phenomenon like post-modernization, post-structuralism justified, there can be multiple realities and it must be respected and preserved. The grant and Meta narratives are not the ultimate reality in fact vernacular and parochial view are the reality of indigenous peoples. Therefore, indigenous pope and culture become more important and it must be respected and preserved.

In this context indigenous cultures of Indian sub-continent become important. Indigenous cultures of India contains memory and glory of ancient past which flow in custom, ceremony,

² Society of Jesus, which committed to spread Christianity across world.

folk and dance. Also, it contains the social realities of native communities of India. Indian sub continent have been land of multiple communities and ethnic group. These communities and group posses different folkways and interpreted according to their context. In India there are different indigenous people, who live in Jungle and plane fallow distinct way of life. However, from some hundreds years, these communities come into contact of outer world. And due to outer world contact indigenous nature of communities altering or completely changed. Indigenous system of India of India was comprehensive and life-oriented which comprised with norms, values and ideas of indigenous society. Indigenous system is distinctive independent in nature. Indigenous cultural traits reflect today in Tribal dance, Folk Music and ceremonies of India societies.

Beginning of Christian Missions in India

Christian mission in India escorted Vasco Da Gama who arrived in Calicut in Malabar in 1498. In 1509 Goa was made a Bishopric which covered the area in the East and in 1534 Goa have was occupied by the Portuguese. In 1542, Francis Xavier came to Goa and established the College of St. Paul and because of it Goa becomes the hub of missionary training. This centre became the gateway to missionary entry into eastern part of the country which became possible through Goa. Francis Xavier directed the King that ignited the process known as *Inquisition* of Goa. The King of Goa established 'Inquisition of Goa'. By the second half the seventeenth century Portuguese powers decayed and their interest in mission also declined in south India. "The establishment of the Inquisition in Goa (1561) and the auto da fe (first instance 1563) was against the conscience of both Hindus and Muslims alike"³ it led to the establishment of the Protestant mission to evangelize India by all means and force. Some ordinary protestant missions had been established in the coastal of areas of south India by 1660. The big boost came with the foundation of Church Missionary Society by the Angelical church in 1799 and "sect fallowed in their wake." Of the foundation and establishment missionary work mushrooming on the Indian sub continent. In 1803, the Baptist mission was established in Serampore near Calcutta by William Carey. Christian mission achieved small success in Bengal then India was opened for full fledged missionary activity by the 1813. The reform movement in Bengal was catalysis to missionary activity supported by the Hindu intellectual. Ii is significant, the Raja of Travancore were

³ K. M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance*, 1953, p. 281.

threaten with disposition when he tried to prevent conversion of some depressed classes.⁴ K. M. Panikkar has described about the missionary tactics and approached how they persuade local kings or people for the relaxation. If they got convinced it is good otherwise they threatened them with dire consequences. After threaten by the missionaries Travancore rulers had allowed missionary activity in full fledged manner. “The Action of other ruling princess and there were number of important state where no missionary activity of any kind including school was permitted up to 1947.”⁵

The British Government of India had pretended to be indifferent to Christian mission particularly after the revolt of 1857. As it has been argued that there were close relation between British Government and Christian Missionaries. They had to pretended difference because of vested interest of both agencies. They covertly co-operate each others. K. M. Kapadia has stated the how the British Government and missionary co-operated each other:

“Legislation protected the right of converts to their share in Hindu joints families, and high court decision enables convert to blackmail their wives to fallow them into the fold of their new religion. The government also encouraged the missionaries to work among the backward tribes.”⁶

Another design of British to promote Christianization in India was the Macaulay Model of Education system in India. Macaulay designed the model of Education which would tam Indians accordingly. His idea was to convert Indians internally and let them similar from outside.

“It was devout the devout hope of Macaulay and of many others, that diffuse of new learning among the higher classes would see dissolution of Hinduism and widespread acceptance of Christianity. The Missionary were of the same view, and they entered the education field with enthusiasm, providing school and college in many part of India where education in the Christian bible was compulsory for Hindu student. The middle class accepted western education with avidity and willingly studied Christian scripture,

⁴ Sitaram Goel, Pseudo-Secularism: Christian Mission and Hindu Resistance, 1998, p. 34

⁵ K.M Panikkar, op. cit. pp. 290-91.

⁶ K.M. Pannikar, op. cit. p. 291.

but neither the dissolution of Hindu society so hopefully predicted nor the conversion of the intellectuals so devoutly hoped for showed sign of internalization. On the other hand Hinduism assimilated the new learning, and the effect was soon visible all over India in a revival of a universalistic region based on the Vedanta.⁷ The grand design on which they on which they had spend so much money and energy has failed”⁸

The rise of Indian nationalism also had an adverse effect on missionary future. The great leader of Indian National Movement such as Lokmanya Tilak, Sri Aurobindo and Lala Lajpat Rai were adherent of resurgent of Hinduism. “The Christian leader in India themselves began to feel that to obvious a separation from their countrymen could not benefit them. Christianity began to show interest in Indian culture.”⁹

Significance of the Study

The Christian missionaries are active in India from the sixteen and seventeenth century in order to spread evangelism. There are many studies on missionary education in India. Scholars have different views on missionary activities India. Marxist schools have their own view on missionary education. They views as Christian missionaries liberate depressed class people in India. And subaltern school has been claimed that missionary education emancipated people form marginalized section. Thus all perspective viewed missionary education in positive way. Therefore it is needed to study missionary activity in different perspective. Missionary activity in colonial India and democratic India has been shown positive light. Therefore this study is intended to assess the role of Christian missionary in independent and different perspective. The role of Christian mission and its impact on indigenious culture of India would be examined under nationalist perspective. This perspective would incorporate different view into the body of knowledge. This study will add new dimension in modern social sciences theme such as Marginalization, Subversion, Exclusion and Discrimination. Also, finding out the root cause of this phenomenon during colonial India shall be a focus area of this study.

Research Questions

⁷ Ibid. p. 242.

⁸ Ibid, p. 249.

⁹ Ibid. p. 295.

The main concern of this study is to find out the role of Christian missionaries among indigenous culture cultures of India. For this, the fallowing research question would be examine in this particular research,

What is the impact of Christian Missionaries on Indigenous Culture of India?

How does Missionary education marginalize indigenous system of education in India?

How do Christian missionary' humanitarian activities subvert indigenous people of India?

How does Missionaries' reform movement undermine social and cultural fabric of India?

Did Christian mission adversely affect indigenous culture of India?

What was the intention of Christian Mission in India?

Methodology

As Robert Erick Frykenberg and C.B. Webster has written historiography of Christianity India. This research would be follow the same historical method to bring out the history of Christian missionary activities in India. The colonial writing also would be taken into account. Besides this, other secondary literature on this topic would be considered. For the techniques, textual analysis of secondary sources would be taken into account.

Scheme of Chapterization

This research work would comprise three core chapter fallowed by conclusion. Each chapter would cover a particular theme. According to the research topic "Role of Christian Missionaries and their Impact on the Indigenous Cultures of India" chapterization would go in fallowing way.

According to topic first chapter would be as "Christian Missionaries and Marginalization of System of Education in India." This would be assessing the role of Christian missionaries into indigenous education system of India. This chapter would take the perspective of Christian missionary and assess into indigenous education model of India. In this chapter would be discern what is the perspective of indigenous modes of education. What were the priorities of indigenous

education system of India? What as the pedagogy of indigenous education and how does it disseminate its knowledge. What is the ultimate goal of education indigenous education system of India? What is the ideas of indigenous education and how what is the way to achieve it. Then how does Missionary Education and Indigenous Education contacted to each other and what is the result. First chapter would examine the role of the Christian missionaries among the indigenous education system of India. Christian missionaries as civilizing mission embarked mission into Indian subcontinent. Missionary education in started in India from the seventeenth century. There was first missionary school embarked in Tamilnadu. British East India Company Charter (1813) became the basis of missionary education. From the inaction of missionary company charter missionary education full fledge implemented across India. Earlier missionary education imparted in vernacular medium later English adopted as medium. There was a tussle between the orientalist and the anglicized regarding medium of instruction of missionary education. Bengal presidency was the centre for education. Fort William and Serampore College were the major missionary education centres. This was the main centre of missionary's activities in colonial Bengal. Missionary William Carey and Alexander Duff expand missionary education in colonial India. Ecclesiastical Department and Minister of Education was provisioned under in Company Charter Act. Missionaries felt great challenge with the indigenous practice and rituals in order to disseminate missionary education. The Indigenous practices such as idolatry and worship and prayer of multiple God. Therefore, it has been seen onslaught on indigenous polytheistic way of life.¹⁰ Classical texts and its derivate word become the challenge to missionaries. They felt difficulties to decipher this word because it had multiple connotations in vernacular. As missionary one hand imparting education and converting people another hand become problematic. Because of this missionary had to face great resistance and rejection in United Province of Agra and Oudh. Although, missionary education sole purpose was religious conversion. Therefore schools and collage were affiliated with Churches. Missionaries considered Indigenous education system of India is under superstition and dogma. Therefore, they intended to transform indigenous education with the modern scientific ration education. However indigenous model of education was based on ground of Spirituality and orientated towards quest of the life.

¹⁰ J.M. Farquhar, Modern Religious Movement in India. 1915.

Second chapter would be taking into consideration of Contact between “Christian Missionaries, Folkways and Indigenous People in India.” This chapter would discern the custom, manner, folkways and ceremonies of Indigenous people. It will find that how they interpret their way of life in particular milieu. What was the historical background of indigenous of India? How does Missionaries and native treated to each other. How do Christian missionaries approached to indigenous people despite outsider. What are the world view, concern and goal of indigenous people in life? What was the result of contact of Missionary and Indigenous people? Christian missionary’ activities into indigenous people is matter of empowerment and liberation from superstition and dogmatic activities. Indigenous people of India are very close to nature and their activities revolve around nature. In colonial period they were more close to nature and dependent upon it for livelihood. Missionary intervention was into territory of indigenous people created anomic state. In this stage indigenous people have to face crisis because old model of tribal society altering due to tribal intervention. In order to spread Christianity and gospel they targeted indigenous practices and rituals. The social and cultural basis for tribal life is their folkways but missionary onslaught intended to wither these practices. The main objective of missionaries is conversion that could not be possible without criticizing and denouncing others practices. As indigenous people usually indulge in Superstitious, Magic and spirits that is why missionaries utilize it in the name of shaman and healer. Through these means people missionaries approached to indigenous people and indirectly tried to evangelize. In colonial India, missionary activity among indigenous people changed their social, economic and cultural system. Their sui-generic nature withering away and missionary made away from their own indigenous customs, rituals, ceremonies (Folkways). This circumstance was idea for convince and persuade indigenous people for faith change.

Third chapter would be on “Missionaries, Myth and its impact on Indigenous Cultures of India.” This chapter would discern the rituals, ceremony and traits of social fabric from Indigenous society India. Also, would examine the ontological, epistemological and existential aspect of these rituals, ceremony and other traits and what the role of these traits in the society of India. How the people of India interpreted it in their milieu. In what way, Missionaries views those cultural traits and then what was their interpretation and invention in contemporary social setting. Eventually, how does missionaries and adherent of indigenous culture contacted and what was the result of that contact. Christian missionaries worked not only education, welfare, and healing

field but also they touched Sati practices and Dravidian identity in order to fulfill their vested interest. They made conscious people that that your low social and economic status is because of your practices and beliefs. They enlighten people from colonial Bengal that Sati is a social evil which is cause of social and moral degradation. They mobilize that; you must come forth and abolish the evils and devils in order to social and economic empowerment. For this they fabricated the figure of sati and horrified people with constructed notion. Missionaries intended to prove that Indian indigenous practices are cruel and inhuman it coerces widow to immolate. Empirically, Sati practices were not belong to Bengal even it case of central India. In the name of sati they run propaganda in order to evangelize and proselytize. They applied Aryans and Dravidian notion to divide indigenous people in the name of culture and heritage. They delinked south India culture and practice from pan-Indian narratives. They portrayed different roots of south Indian cultures and they must assert for it. Missionaries claimed that, North Indian Brahmins and Aryans the people who contaminated south India cultures and submerged into grant India narratives. The Myth of Thomas Saints also backed to missionary to run their agenda of evangelism and proselytism. Through the myth of Saint Thomas, they portrayed the influence of early Christianity in south India. Missionaries portrayed that south India culture flourished in the influence of Christianity. Missionaries tried to establish that, south India people does not part of grant narratives of India. The main objective of the missionaries was to mode away south Indian people from Indian grand narratives. Therefore, they can indoctrinate people and consequently convert them.

These are the short introduction about what is to be discussed in next part of this research. After the discussing core issue of this topic at the end basis of facts and arguments concluding remark would be given.

Chapter-2

Missionary Education and Marginalization of Indigenous System of Education in India

The Onset of Missionary Influence in India

In the 15th and the 16th century, the discoveries of new sea routes enabled the Europeans to travel to far off places all over the world. In order to expand their empire, they travelled to countries in Asia and Africa and tried to establish their supremacy. Those event and activities were known as the 'Age of Discovery and Expansion'. Accompanying their compatriots were Christian missionaries who began to travel worldwide for evangelization and proselytism. Among them, the Portuguese, the French, the Dutch and the British missionaries started to venture in the territory of vanquished countries. There were various branches of missionaries from European countries: Protestant, Catholic, Lutheran and Baptist. All of these started their mission in the age of discovery and expansion. The major objectives of missionaries were proselytizing the natives by means of education, health services and welfare activities. Jesuit or Society of Jesus was a major school of thought of Christian missionaries. The Jesuit congregation was working in the field of Catholicism.

In this chapter, the role of the Christian missionaries in promoting missionary education and its impact on indigenous education systems will be discussed. What was the indigenous model of education in India before missionary education? How was missionary education conducted among the indigenous people? And what was its impact after its expansion in India? We will be trying to provide answers to these three questions in this particular chapter. How did the colonial

state employ the English education as a tool of propagating Christian ethos and values through the curriculum of Christian missionary schools? Were missionary education and colonial policies motivated with conversion policies? What kind of education and knowledge was produced by the Christian missionary schools? These are the precise objective of this chapter.

Christian missionaries have been active in India since the fifteenth century. These missionaries have been converting people by holding out promises of betterment of their social and spiritual life. They act in an indirect way through welfare and philanthropic activities. In colonial India there were three main agencies of education: the Christian missionaries, the British Indian government and individual Indians. These agencies had their own respective goals of education and the main debate and issues revolved around Government versus private, indigenous versus western and imperial versus nationalist.

History of Modern Education in India

The history of modern education in India begins with the Charter Act- 1813. Through this act the British East India Company was compelled to accept responsibility of education in India. Under this Act the Board of Control permitted the Missionaries to open school in India. The clause (43) related to investment in education in India was proposed before the parliament in Calcutta and passed after some modification.¹¹ Clause 43 of the Charter Act-1813 states,

“It shall be lawful for the Governor General-in-Council to direct that out of any surplus which may remain of the rents, revenues, and profits arising from the said territorial acquisition, after framing the expenses of the military, civil and commercial establishment and paying the interest of the debt, in manner hereinafter provided, a sum of not less than one lakh of rupees in each year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India and for introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the science among the inhabitants of the British territories in India.”

¹¹ Suresh C. Ghosh, History of Education in India, 2007.

This clause was a milestone in the field of development of education in India under the British East India Company. Even some allocation of this charter could not be implemented by 1820. Even though a commission was set up to look into the matter earlier despite Company showed reluctance to accept educational affairs. The early missionaries, who entered into India before the enactment of the Charter Act of 1813, had started their educational propagation among the lower classes. These missionaries had started spreading education by adopting vernacular as a medium of learning and chiefly worked in the sector of elementary education. Even they moved their attention from elementary to secondary and higher education after the enactment of the Charter Act-1813. They also changed their medium of instruction from native languages to the English language. Since the Christian missionaries wanted to propagate Christian religion on the soil of India, they adopted modern system of education to reach this goal.¹²

After the Charter Act-1813, different agencies started working separately in the field of education. The joint effort of these agencies, Missionary education department, private enterprise and Government enterprises could not do something concrete for the betterment of education. This could not be possible due to tussle on the issue of medium of instruction. The process of implementation of modern education in India made ground for the formation of groups called the Orientalists and the Anglicists. Orientalists favored the provision of education in the medium of classical languages i.e. in Sanskrit entitled to Hindus and in Persian entitled Muslims. The other was Anglicists who batted for providing higher education through the medium of the English language.¹³ This tussle between two groups put immense pressure on the agencies which were working for the development of education. The missionaries, on the other hand, had a completely different logic to support the introduction of English education in India. The intention was to get access to indigenous society through education that would facilitate propagation of new doctrine and, in turn, help them to convert the masses to Christianity.

Even in the beginning, the East India Company was mostly interested in expanding their commercial hold. They established political power during the 17th century and by the 19th century expanded it over a large part of the Indian subcontinent. However, the primary concern

¹² Purkait, Biswa Ranjan, Milestones in Modern Indian Education, 2002.

¹³ Dr. C.P.S. Chauhan, Modern Indian Education: Policies, Progress and Problem, 2004.

of the company was trade and commerce and not religious activities. Even though the company did not combine commerce and Christianity during its initial days as its religious interest was secondary, yet they were not reluctant to proselytizing activities (Firth, 2005). Moreover, it could not work independently of the influence of missionaries. Earlier, the Company could not assert their commitment to trade and commerce and had to follow the directions and guidelines of the British Crown. ‘It was their earnest desire by all possible means to spread Christianity among the people of Indians and allowed missionary to embark on their ship’ (Naik and Syed, 1974). In 1698, British parliament discussed a special missionary clause under the company’s charter. This clause instructed the company to maintain a “Minister of Religion” at the factories. After the 18th century, the Company put some restrictions on missionaries, taking into consideration political and economic advantage.¹⁴

The British official, through their education policy, promoted the spread of the English language and attempted to weaken the importance of the native languages. They also promoted an anglicized cultural tradition to dominate people, which were based on “Single Way of Life” (Monotheistic). In the course of this process, they undermined the Indian tradition, custom and practices. They sought to create such an atmosphere where masses become so self-critical that they begin to criticize their own way of life. They tried to demonize the whole grand narrative of India, such as theology, rituals, educational curriculum and lifestyle. They prescribed the western and occidental way of life as alternative to that.¹⁵

In the course of development of educational institutions by the company, some important institutions were established. The prominent among them were the Calcutta, Madras (1781) by Warren Hastings, Benares Sanskrit College (1791) by Jonathan Duncan and Asiatic Society (1784) by the William Jones. These were the major institutions established by the Company. Some Jesuit mission colleges that were started to promote catholic education were: St. Joseph’ College, founded at Nagapatnam in 1844 and changed to Tiruchirapalli in 1882; St Xavier’s College, Calcutta in 1862; St Xavier’s College, Bombay in 1869; St Aloysius College,

¹⁴ Mr Pynhunlang NM Shullai, Colonialism, Christianity and Mission Activities in India: A Postcolonial Perspectives, 2017, p. 5.

¹⁵ Gauri Viswanathan , Masks of Conquest, 1989 p. 74.

Mangalore in 1880 and St Joseph college Darjeeling in 1888.¹⁶ These were the institutions based on missionaries' system of education.

These Colonial educational institutions were opened in the name of imparting modern and secular education; whereas it has been observed that the Colonialists propagated Christianity and the English language simultaneously, ignoring the Indian literature and indigenous languages. They eulogized the English language and Christianity in every aspect of social life. They also promoted partiality among the people in order to spread English education and created an elite class on the basis of learning the English language. This process has resulted in the "English Stratification" of Indian society. On the other hand, the colonialist also endeavored for the survival of the English language promoting secular education in the English education system. That provided legitimacy to what they were doing in the name of English education. Colonial institution has also been endorsed by the process of secularization.¹⁷

The Minutes of Macaulay has brought another shift in the history of education in India. Governor General Lord William Bentinck decided to make a policy document on education. He announced on the 7th March, 1835, relying on the Macaulay' Minutes that "the objective of the state to aid education would be promote the study of European literature and science, thus the financial assistance would be allocate to the spread of English education".¹⁸ This legislation insists the decline of the traditional education system. Finally, the tussle between the Anglicists and the Orientalists disappeared with the favored decision of government. The resolution passed by the Governor General Bentinck in 1835 comprised some strict rules and regulation regarding English education. The major purpose of the British government was to promote European literature and sciences among the indigenous people of India. Therefore, the entire government fund was to be used only for English education. The Oriental institution was to be abolished. Nothing would be paid on printing books in the oriental languages. All government funds were be utilized to impart the corpus of European literature and sciences among the natives of India through the medium of English.¹⁹

¹⁶ An Account of the Mutinies in Oudh and the Siege of the Lucknow Residency, Richard Bentley, 1858, pp. 89-90,

¹⁷ Gauri, Viswanathan, Op. cit. pp. 108-109

¹⁸ J.P. Banerjee, Education in India, Past, Present and Future, 2010, p.73.

¹⁹ Purkait Ranjan Biswas, Op. cit. p. 43.

Macaulay wanted to tame Indians through English education. His policy was to make Indians ignorant of their own knowledge systems. They could not speak anything about their own philosophy and epistemology due to the handicap imposed through the English language. Indian would be wordless on their own land they would not utter a single word on their glorious history. Because the majority of Indians would not respond in English. This had been envisaged by Lord Macaulay in order to establish English supremacy. “He believed that education from the upper classes would filter down to the masses, so through English education, he wanted to create a class of persons Indian in blood and color, but English in the testes, in opinion, in moral and in intellect.”²⁰

Harding’s resolution was the other factor responsible for discontinuing the indigenous education system of India. According to this resolution ‘in any case priority would be given to those members who have been educated in the centre of English education in the appointment for public employment.’²¹ These resolutions decreased the importance of regional languages and schools. Macaulay and Harding’s reformation became decisive landmark in the domain modern education in India. In 1844, the Bengal government determined to open 101 regional language schools in villages which would be under the supervision of collector. By 1844, this move was effective to some extent in Bhagalpur in Bihar and in Cuttack in Orissa. But, turnout was very low in these colleges due to the presence of missionary schools, because they had registered large number of students.²² Through those resolutions, British played a ‘double game’; on the one hand, they debarred people from government jobs by laying down the parameter of English education and on the other hand they promoted missionary schools. This factor was the major reason behind low enrollment in the indigenous institution.

“On the other side North Western Province was separated from Bengal in 1842, where new educational policy was required for the new province. Under new educational policy it was clearly mentioned the medium of instruction should be mother tongue and the main objective of the policy was education of the masses. James Thompson was

²⁰ Ibid., p. 42.

²¹ Dr. C. P. S. Chahan, Op. cit. p. 26.

²² Suresh C. Ghosh, Op. cit., p. 327.

being appointed as Lieutenant Governor of the new province in the year 1843. That region achieves the massive development in the field of education under his command, in number also and in necessary materials for the educational development purpose also. He gave more important to elementary education and because of his efforts made for development of elementary education that he is still regarded as Father of Elementary Education in India.’²³

After Macaulay, the history of education in India revolved around Sir Charles Wood. He became the president of the “Board of Control” in 1854 after the enactment of Company’ Charter Act of 1853. When the government needed a substantial and stable education policy, he made recommendations to create a Director of Public Instruction, provision for adequate aid for education and development of elementary education in India. He further dealt with the issue of “Medium of Instruction”. He was in favor of English as medium of instruction, but also gave approval to regional languages. At the primary level, local language was permitted to be used as “Medium of Instruction” and modern Indian languages became medium of disseminating at the secondary level.²⁴

Salient features of the pre-Colonial Education System in India

Education is considered to be the best remedy to end all structural and basic inequalities among the people. It was the vision of the indigenous education system of India in the pre-British era. The records pertaining to the 17th and the 18th century indigenous education system give very rough idea in this regard. These were educational institutions: Gurukul, Pathsala, Madarsa, Maktab and Vihar as learning centers. Hindi, Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit and Prakrit were the dominant languages. Persian was the official language, and was used in the court. The Hindus went to Pathsala and Gurkuls, the Muslims to Madarsa and the Baudhs affiliated to Vihar for learning. Those educational institutions were run through the contribution of the Zamindars and local rich people. In the absence of printing press, memory and oral tradition become the basis for transforming knowledge and information. The manuscript was the only medium to document

²³ Amita, Gupta. Early Childhood, Education, Postcolonial Theory and Teaching. Practices in India, 2006.

²⁴ Purkait Biswa Ranjan. Op. cit. pp. 50-52

knowledge and events. State had no role in school educational affairs.²⁵ Only King patronized people famous for their learning. There were some elementary schools run by zamindars and local elites. Those schools used to teach basic literacy and arithmetic to meet day-to-day life events and queries.

Before introducing their own formal education, British conducted an education survey in different presidencies. A survey conducted by the British East India Company displayed the nature of indigenous education in Early British period. British government conducted surveys in Bombay, Madras, Bihar and Bengal to assess the contemporary status of indigenous education in early modern India. The survey was conducted between 1820 and 1830 in the Bombay presidency and between 1823 and 1826 in the Madras presidency. A minor survey was also conducted in the Bengal presidency and its report was published by W. Adam, a former Baptist Missionary and findings were published in 1853 entitled as “A Report on the State of Education in Bengal”. The report of the survey made public by the Collector in 1826 revealed: there were 12498 school imparting education to 188650 students under Madras presidency. In Bombay, there were 1750 schools providing education to 35143 pupils in 1829, out of which the government controlled only 25 schools with the total enrollment of 1315 students. The rest of the schools were situated in rural areas in which the total enrollment was 33828. Finally in the Bihar and Bengal there were 100000 “Village Schools” by 1835 AD.²⁶ The report of the educational survey displayed the rich condition of village education even under the British government in India. However, the intervention of private enterprise in education section changed the condition. To spread Christianity through the missionaries was the main factor that led to the dismantling of the indigenous education system in India. These missionary enterprises started to alter the nature and structure of the indigenous education system by the end of the eighteenth century. The missionaries provided secular and scientific education that attracted the landlords and other well-off classes toward missionary education. These landlords and elites were the major financial basis of indigenous education.

The main characteristics of Hindu school teaching and imparting indigenous skills and knowledge were: the single teacher/guru, local language or Sanskrit language as the medium of

²⁵ B.D. Basu, History of Education in India, 1989.

²⁶ Dr. C. P. S. Chahan, Op. cit.

instruction and based on the financial support of kings, nobles or parents of students.²⁷ Often teachers were drawn from the priests of the local temples. There were quite flexible rules for admission in the school and courses and curriculum. It was based on practical life, children used to learn skills essential for life in the open atmosphere and they put into practice the whole life what they had learnt. Indigenous education was imparted in the premises of temple, houses of teachers or common sheds in the locality of region. The teacher generally belonged to the Brahmin community and imparted education to pupils depending on their own socio-economic background and importance of such education and training in their future life. The major activities of the education were memorizing ‘sacred’ and religious texts. On completion of it, task was provided by the teacher to assess children’ ability, accomplishment and their cognitive potential. In this process children acquired Quality, Merits and virtue and values which were known as the cultural capital. These acquired and ingrained capitals were used by children, in their later life for their survival and earning name and fame in the society. These were the peculiar structure and vision of the indigenous education.

A masterwork on the Indigenous Education System of India by Dharmapal,²⁸ broadly narrated the Indigenous education and knowledge system of India. He has given factual as well as theoretical details of indigenous education system during early modern India. British strategically worked for strengthening their hold on the Indians by undermining the indigenous education system. British did not focus on individuals to serve their ends. On the other hand, they concentrated on dismantling ancient Indian texts, thereby serving their vested interests. And missionaries persuaded people against following the tenets of their social and spiritual life as directed by their ancient texts. They attempted to propagate their own interpretation of ancient texts. Then they tried to Christianize people who were submissive to such conversion. Partha Chatterjee has similar observations in his “Politics of Governed”:

“When Europeans went overseas to found their empires, they were of course scarcely concerned about whether they were violating the sovereignty of the conquered countries. In many cases, they would declare blatantly that in those uncivilized parts of the world,

²⁷ P.M. Sarangapani, *Indigenous Education in British India: A Profile*, 1990.

²⁸ Dharampal, *The Beautiful Tree: Indigenous Education in Eighteenth Century*, 1983.

there was no international law; the only law that prevailed here was the law of force and conquest” (Chatterjee, 2009: 93).

There is a myth prevailing about the indigenous education system, that there was no place for the ‘Shudra’ in the indigenous education system and that they were debarred from schools and higher learning institution. Dharampal argued that there was sufficient numbers of lower castes in the school system. He presents some data form Madras presidency and we quote, “the number of boy and girl receiving education at their home was equally pertinent. In comparison to those who being educated in school in Madras, this number is 4.73 times. Though it is true that half of these tutored were from amongst the Brahmins and the Vysees, still those from the Shudras form 28.7% of this number and from the other castes 13 present” (Dharampal, 1983)²⁹. The colonial document on the indigenous education did not talk about indigenous mode of learning. It only focuses on oriental science, for example, Law, Logic, Philosophy, Medicine, Astronomy and Astrology but there were no talks on the Indian modes of learning such as Dance, Music and Folks. W. Adam’ report³⁰, broadly emphasized on the indigenous education system in India. Adam has underlined various issues in the indigenous system of education in India. He pointed out the inadequate composition of students and teachers in school from different sections. Dharampal has replied that teachers belongs the castes of Kayashth, Brahmins, Sadgop and Aguri. And some other caste comprises this group such as Chandals and six others. This was also part of the characteristics of indigenous education, which is hardly documented in modern social sciences literature. Early Missionaries have also given the account of schools in pre-colonial periods. Abbe J. A. Dubois said in 1820 that there was not a single village where one or more schools were not found. These schools were owned by the villagers and teaching and learning and writing were going on smoothly.³¹

The Missionary Forage into Indigenous Education of India

The indigenous education system was withering away, having been subjected to the onslaught of missionary education and colonial education policies. The Portuguese were the first to introduce Missionary education in India; they started school in their arrangement in Goa, Daman & Diu,

²⁹ Dharampal, Op. cit. pp. 41-42

³⁰ Adam’s Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar, 1868.

³¹ Abbe, Dubois, Hindu Manner, Customs and Ceremonies, 1815.

Cochin and Hooghly in 1543.³² Jesuits opened other colleges in Goa to provide for the training of priests. Later, they expanded the scope of the Jesuit institution and opened it for other students.³³ In this order French missionaries too began elementary school at Mahe, Yanam, Pondicherry and Chandernagore.³⁴ Besides these developments, Clause (43) of Charter Act 1813, Macaulay' Minutes and Charles Wood's Despatch played major role in replacing indigenous education system of India.

Christian missionaries were working for the betterment of individuals and their social life. For this, they started working in the field of Education, Medicine and Welfare activities. By these means, they started proselytizing people. The primary motives of missionaries were to westernize Indians in every manner. To accomplish these tasks missionaries began to advance policy of British government and in return British government used missionaries as "civilizing ally" (Furuquhar, 1920). Around 1840, education policies and missionaries' goal were working cooperatively to "civilize the barbaric natives." The main objective of missionaries was to use Schools as an instrument of preaching Christianity. They started abusing worship of idols and tried to establish knowledge of one true God as Jesus Christ.³⁵ The Bible was introduced in government institutions and schools and colleges. Those schools were run through the government aid and were guided by the clergymen on the basis of Christian doctrine. The evils and abusive portraits of native religion were displayed in very lurid color while the divine nature of Christianity had been showcased in a very pleasant manner. Schools pupils were attracted by the 'salvation' in Christian theology. Abusing of Hindu Gods and Goddess were the central theme of public preaching and propaganda of missionary. Civil and Military officer under British India Company helped to preach missionary doctrine openly in Temple and Mosque. And diatribe against other religion also accompanied the police officer of the Company. Farquhar describes the impact of "new education policy" in the following words:

"The new educational policy of the Government created during these years the modern class of India. These are men who think and speak English habitually, who are proud of

³² T.N., Sequeira, *The Education of India: History and Problems*, Oxford University Press, London, 1939, p. 26.

³³ J. Velinkar., *Jesuit Educational Style in Sixteenth Century Goa*, *Itidica*. Vol. 21, No 1. March 1984, pp 17-27.

³⁴ T.N. Saquria, *Op. cit.* pp.27.

³⁵ *Calcutta Journal*, March 11, 1822.

their citizenship in the British Empire, who are devoted to English literature and whose intellectual life is almost entirely formed by the thought of the West. Large numbers of them enter government services, while the rest practice law, medicine or teaching, or take to journalism or business. We must also note that the powerful excitement which has sufficed to create the religious movements we have to deal with, is almost confined to those who have had an English education”³⁶

Farquhar had reacted to the Macaulay’s model of education; and Missionary based English education, which transformed the Indian minds. The impact of Macaulay’s education policy during twentieth century was very high. It was reflected from Indian university graduates during general conversation. The mindset of the Indian graduates in the light of western and missionary education was such that: on asking about ideals of Mahabharata, he will quickly reply knowledge of Shakespeare, ask him of Religious Philosophy you will know that “he is an theist from a generation” and he will not show only religious ignorance but also little philosophical knowledge same as an average English man. And on asking about Indian Music he will talk about modern instruments of music and will show his arrogance too. Asking about Indian dress and Jewelry, he will tell you that “they are uncivilized and barbaric.” He does not know Indian art, this new for him such as it is exist. He does not know how to translate “a letter written in his own mother tongue.” He has become a stranger a in his own land.³⁷

These people used to be described by the term coconut like people, because same like coconut “they are brown on the outer surface but white inside.” Hence, it could be said that British education system in India was the architect and applied with the purpose to produce ‘Coconut like Indians’. Premium missionaries of Bengal, Benares and Punjab also designed their syllabus to achieve this object. Lord Macaulay wanted to “create a class of person who may be Indian in blood and color, but English in their tastes, in opinion, in moral and in intellect.” There were many prominent missionaries, who were involved in preparing favorable ground for evangelism. Some prominent ones were William Carey (1767-1837), William Hodge Mill (1792-1853) and John Muir (1810-1882) who were pioneer missionaries and main strategist in the field evangelism. Alexander Duff (1806-1876) and William Miller (1838-1923) were some other

³⁶ Farquhar, J.N., Modern Religious Movement in India. 1915.

³⁷ Anand K., Coomarswamy. Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art. 2011.

prominent missionaries. They claimed to be experts in the Sanskrit language and had translated some Christian theological works in Sanskrit and vice-versa. William Carey was a Baptist Missionary who laid the foundation of Serampore College in 1818. Later, he renamed it as 'Christian Benares' and the syllabus of the curriculum was changed accordingly. Carey was interested in Indian languages because he thought that Sanskrit language was the central force in stabilizing and uniting people and it had an unorganized dialect which could not be deciphered by an evangelist. He wanted to oppose Brahmanical hegemony, which had great hold on Sanskrit language.³⁸ His intention was openly aggressive and he wanted to set counter discourse against Hindu literature through the Gospel. According to him this task would be complete only when an evangelist would be known of both of religion. Although they were very ethnocentric in nature, they still attempted to read and rewrite Indian Vedic literature, just because of their commitment to Evangelism.

But missionaries could not become experts in the Sanskrit language, because of its diverse roots. It was very different from the European languages. Missionaries faced the challenge of deciphering the various usage of a single word. There were 64 words for 'water' in ordinary conversation.³⁹ The words in the Hindu philosophical corpus were operating seven different meanings at the same time. This was a formidable challenge for the Christian missionaries and its evangelism. Fortunately, the diverse and complex nature of India became advantageous. A single text could be interpreted at lower, high philosophical levels and many intermediate levels in between too. It was very easy for a clever person to convince a layman by using and uttering only the lowest possible meanings of a word.

Carey himself made his "state of mind" clear in the following words,

"To gain the ear of those who are thus deceived it is necessary for them to believe (wrongly) that the speaker has a superior knowledge of the subject. In these circumstances knowledge of Sanskrit is valuable. As the person is thus misled, perhaps

³⁸ Richard Fox Young, *Resistant Hinduism: Sanskrit Sources on Anti-Christian Apologetics in Early Nineteenth-Century India*, 1981, p.33

³⁹ Dr. V.V. Bedekar, V.Y.Sardesa, *How British Reined India*, p. 15

a Brahmin, deem this the most important part of knowledge. If the advocate of truth be deficient therein, he labors against the hill, resumption is altogether against him.”⁴⁰

Bishop’s college Calcutta established under the supervision of William Hodge Mill by the Society for Propagation of Gospel (London). He had been designated as the principle of the college. In order to spread Christianity in India he and H.H. Wilson translate all evangelical tracts in Sanskrit language. Mills also reacted to Indian corpus that Hinduism consisted of “Sublime precepts of spiritual abstraction” overlaid with “Monstrous and demoralizing legends” and this view was endorsed by some Indians who suffered from the Max Muller theory about India. They criticized the traditional Hinduism and accepted and popularized these notions. John Muir landed to Calcutta approximately 1827-1828. He was an ardent evangelist. He also claimed to be a Sanskrit scholar. He served in the East India Company in various capacities in the North-West Frontier Province. He had also worked in the prestigious Benares College. The chief aim of Muir was the manipulation of Indian philosophy to undermine and distort the Darshans (six different school of Indian Philosophy). He had attempted to force Pandits to give up their traditional way of teaching (Fox, Richard). In other parts of India, Sanskrit scholars (missionaries) from different presidencies ventured into educational activities to directly and indirectly spread Christianity in India. Alexander Duff was the founder of Scottish church college in Calcutta. He thought that ‘he was laying a mine which would eventually explode and blow Hinduism in pieces.’⁴¹ William Miller was the Free Church Mission Society of Scotland. He changed his approach from direct evangelism to ‘Preparatio Evangelica’ “to prepare the minds to receptive Christian principle’. Wherein the education would be imparted in Christian format to demonize Hinduism which would expand ‘Christ to India.’⁴² The objective of the earliest missionary was:

“First, education of Christians themselves in a Christian atmosphere so that they could be good members of their church and occupy important positions in secular society; secondly, to render service to Indian youth at large; thirdly, to build evangelical bridges

⁴⁰ William Carey, *On Encouraging the Cultivation of Sanskrit among the Natives of India*, 1822.

⁴¹ Newbiggin, Leslie, 'The Secular - Apostolic Dilemma' in T A Mathias (ed.), *Not without a Compass*, 1977.

⁴² A. Mathew, *Christian Missions. Education and Nationalism: From Dominance to Compromise*, 1988, pp.55-56

towards the country's intelligentsia and thus pave the way for an acceptance of the faith”⁴³

There were encouragement and motivation in England for proselytizing activities in India. They envisaged that the East India Company and the Christian missionaries through their activities will Christianize Indian subcontinent. For this project they provided every means and relaxation in rules and regulation. One senior official in the East India Company once said in the House of Commons: “Providence has entrusted in the extensive empire of Hinduism in England in order that the Banner of Christ should wave triumphant from one end of India to other. Everyone must exert all his strength that there may be dilatoriness on any account in continuing the grand work of all Indians making Christians.” The Company had additional revenue to pay for the Missionary infrastructure (Churches, Schools and hospitals) from England. Since the enactment of Company act 1813, there was a Bishop in every presidency; Calcutta bishop was the senior most among them.⁴⁴

Indians were enthusiastic towards education for social and economic development, but the missionaries tried to inculcate Christian moral and ethics into Indians. Some schools under the Christian mission were found indulged in the process of religious conversion. People were found to be murmuring about Christian mission and their pedagogy which was loaded with Christian ethos. Some people were also caught talking about the threats and consequences of Baptist mission schools. “In the spring of 1891 at Ramsay College, Almora, one Brahmin student converted and headmaster Edward Oakley has an open rebellion on this hand”.⁴⁵ Another student publicly embraced Christianity; this led the turn of the school for some time. Conversion process was witnessed in hostels at Allahabad in North-Western Province. Students of Oxford and Cambridge hostels were found disturbed because of these activities. This also led to hostel halt and boys managed to spy on the hall to reinstall lectures and self-study.⁴⁶ Consequently, teachers and college staff had to come forward to say that the conversion process had adversely affected the school atmosphere. Wilson has described the milieu of the period in the following word:

⁴³ Thophane A Mathsia, *Christian Education in India of Today*, 1971, p. 204.

⁴⁴ Brian Gardner, *The East India Company-A History*, 1971, p. 251.

⁴⁵ Bellenait, J.A. Hayden. *Education, Religion and knowledge in India. c. 1880-1995*. p. 372.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

“One man, educated at a Mission school, stood outside the schools serving as recruiter: ‘why do you not send your daughter to this school? Are you afraid of the Christian teaching that is giving here? Do you think your daughter will become a Christian?’⁴⁷

Christian missionary education was a tactical tool of the British government in order to tame the Indian people. Religion was the cardinal force behind the missionary education. Proselytizing into Christianity was the chief task of the missionary schools therefore most people distanced themselves from the missionary schools during the initial phases. Once, the Bishop of Lahore spoke on ‘The Reasonableness of Divine Incarnation’ and tried to draw similarity between Jesus and Krishna. One can imagine the differences of the time and the space between Jesus and Krishna! They manipulated theological debate under the curricula of missionary education. Through the above-mentioned comparison, missionaries tried to show the early influence of Christianity on Hinduism. Missionaries initiated this kind of debate because they wanted to establish the perception that Christian traits are found in Hinduism. Hemchandra Raychaudhuri contested this notion which missionaries wanted to impose. Having the expertise of Gita, Bible and other religious canon, he refuted the claims of missionaries. He gave references of devotional cults of the early Indo-Greek tradition. In this regard, he also gave the reference of Ashoka’s Rock Edict No. 13. The devotional ideas have been portrayed in edicts and represented in the second century B.C. scenario. Raychaudhuri also cited *Ghosunda* and *Bisanagar* inscription which depicted the Krishna’ divinity instead Christian traits or Jesus’ divinity. This has also depicted the divinity of Lord Krishna, which proves indigenesness of India.⁴⁸ Therefore, the divinity of Lord Krishna had its indigenous origin in India and did not belong to the mythical narratives of Christendom.

Missionary education was not considered sacrosanct in India at all. Students and guardians were very reluctant to missionary education. This is because of others versus outs nation pertaining to education and its pedagogy. Indians did accept the Christian education and its morality in very obvious manner. The students of missionary schools utilized Christian ‘Logic’, ‘Reason’ in

⁴⁷ R. S. Wilson. *The Indirect Effects of Christian Missions in India*, 1928, pp. 143-4.

⁴⁸ H.C. Raichadhory, *Material for the Study of the Early History of the Vaishnava Sect*, 1926.

Indian mode as well. “Some students also complained that when most of the students accepted Christian morality, missionaries still wanted to convert them” (Bellenoit, 2007). Other students applied Indian mode of thinking to debunk missionary education model. One student designated ‘Chief Justice’ after profound ‘Multiplicity of God’. He argued with an Evangelist that overall there is not such difference between us; “you are converted when you find God in Christ. We Hindu are converted when we founded God in ourselves”⁴⁹ At the Gorakhpur CMS school students made the situation more complicated by offering prayers to “Rama, Krishna and Jesus and claimed they all are different manifestations of the same God.” Girls also replied in school that the notion of repentance is not new in India. Rather, it is already practiced through the performing rituals of Kali. Another student of St. Stephens expressed his obligation to his teacher by making the point that “thanking for the lesson of the Bible he claimed that it help him return to the Vedas, where he found exactly the same teaching”.⁵⁰

The purpose of the missionary education was to transform the Indian education system from the “superstitious state to the ‘modern’ and ‘rational’ stage.” By propagating modern science, they thought it would facilitate the establishment Christian superiority. The whole curriculum of education was predominated by the western science and technology. Some used science and Christianity as synonyms. Indian tales and stories were undermined and rejected as being full of superstition. Western ‘logic’ and ‘reason’ became the parameter to determine the Indian way of life and convention. The ‘Proof of Superiority’ has been propagated through Christianity and modern science. This kind of approach undermined indigenous way of life of India. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee contested western science and Christian hegemony. He did not accept the symmetry of western science and Christianity. He argued that “the worship of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, the chief figure in Hinduism, was more in tune with science and natural science and that nature followed the same principle as that in Hinduism, of Creation, Preservation and Destruction.” Therefore, Hindu *padhati* (way of life) and worship pattern is more logical and scientific. “An omnipotent, all-loving and merciful Deity was therefore contrary to science and to nature: Nature, with the rule of the jungle, created by God and inherently endowed with logic and reason, was certainly not compassion.”(Chatterjee, 1986). The other examples of the shallowness of the Christian hegemony and superiority are common people who had embraced

⁴⁹ W.E.S. Holland. The Goal of India. London 1917. pp. 209-10.

⁵⁰ F. F. Monk, 'Evangelistic Work in Indian Mission Colleges', The East and the West, 1915, p. 78

Christianity and who later criticized and debunked the idea of superiority. Nemeniah Goreh, who had converted into Christianity earlier, first they applied western rationalism to debunk Hinduism and Brahmanical hegemony. Later he confessed that the “Christianity could not be supported and propagated by reason and logic. Most Gospel tenets, such as vicarious redemption for sin, were themselves illogical and baffling.”⁵¹ The major purpose of missionary education was to convert indigenous people into Christianity. Therefore, most of the schools and colleges were affiliated to the Churches and missionary institutions.⁵²

B. N seal also contested the hegemony of western science and Christian symmetry. He shed light on the western education network engaged mostly in origin of reason, logic and superiority. He argued that whatever Indians learned from “western scientific canon was only practical rather than a theoretical application”.⁵³ Indians encountered the Eurocentric and Christian centric superiority of Christianity. Missionary education used human relation rather that pedagogical factor to influence the students. Epistemology, metaphysics and logic were used in long term under the curriculum to prove Christian superiority, withering away after a time period. These processes, intended to establish superiority of Christianity, adversely affected the pedagogical and curricular aspect of education and this approach marginalized indigenous pedagogy and content of education (Bellenoit, 2007). Christian life and theology became an important aspect of missionary education. Missionaries also admitted that “their faith is based on ‘Irrational’ and ‘Illogical’ premise.” Missionary education and its conversion policies were not sacrosanct in the views of Indians as well as Europeans. William Holland stated that “the history of educational mission has shown that no syllabus, however perfect, can be counted on to compass the conversion of India’s students.”⁵⁴ Mission school’s curriculum and exam pattern were Bible centric. Schools spent a large amount of time preparing students for a Bible lesson. Later this convention was given up because of rising consciousness in people. Jay Narayan College in Benaras omitted Bible lesson from examination pattern.⁵⁵

The adverse impact of Missionary activity on indigenous Education in India

⁵¹ N. Goresh, A later to the Brahmos from a converted of Benares. (Allahabad) 1838. p.37

⁵² Chauhan, op. cit. pp. 11

⁵³ Seal, Brajendranath, The Positive Science of the Ancient Hindus. London 1915. pp. 78-80

⁵⁴ W.E.S. Holland, ‘Mission Hostel in India’, The east and the West, 1908, p. 276.

⁵⁵ Proceedings of CMS. 1912-13, p. 130.

“The spiritual motive dominates life in India. Indian philosophy has its interest in the haunts of men and not in supra-lunar solitudes. It takes its origin in life, and enters back into life after passing through the schools. The great works of Indian philosophy do not have that ex cathedra character which is so prominent a feature of the latter criticisms and commentaries. The Gita and the Upanishads are not remote from popular belief. They are the great literature of the country, and at the same time vehicles of great systems of thought. The Puranas contain the truth dressed up in myths and stories, to suit the weak understanding of the majority. The hard task of interesting the multitude in metaphysics is achieved in India” (Radhakrishnan, 1999: 25)

As we have discussed earlier, the indigenous system of knowledge began to decay when British and missionaries arrived in India. One of the major reasons was the kingdoms cause of the indigenous education system. They lost their kingdom under the supremacy of the British rule and the indigenous system of education in India was marginalized under the weight of the Missionary school and colleges.⁵⁶ Moreover, Christian missionaries entered into plains, hills and forests, and started school all across. Indigenous education coded with the very culture, ethos and values of Indian civilization started losing ground from Indian soil.⁵⁷ In 1648, in order to promote Portugal’s hold over Goa, Konkani was banned by Vice-regal Decree in June and parish teacher and school master were directed to teach only in colonial languages. So by this period it became common to use colonial languages and there was little use of mother tongues.⁵⁸

The teachers of the indigenous schools were very idealistic and the schools were established on the public financial support. The schools were endowed with rent free land and monetary assistance. However, in the British era, these privileges were drastically curtailed. Dharmapal had shown the data of land expended in the name of public institution (schools, temple and police) was sometime 35 percent and later increased by 50 percent of total land. In this regard Collector of Bellary District said that "There is no doubt that in former times especially under the Hindu Government very large grants both in money and in land were issued for the sake of learning." When the British started controlling education and promoting modern education, that

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ K Sujatha, Education of India’s Scheduled Tribes: A Study of Community Schools in the district of Vishakapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, 2000.

⁵⁸ Heredia C Rudolf, Education and Mission: School as Tools of Evangelism, 1995, p. 3.

land grant was curtailed. The old schools supported by the local elites were stopped. Adam's report underlined that, in a village named Nattore Thane, where there were only 2 or 3 schools, had once possessed 10 or 11 schools. (Ram Swarup, 2000).

By the early phase of twenty Christian missionary had established infrastructure for the evangelism and proselytizing. Since the official activation (Charter Act-1813) missionaries worked at large scale. At the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the twentieth there was sufficient presence of missionary schools. There was most of the school in rural and urban center was running under the Baptist mission. According to the estimated 70 percent school was running under Christian missionaries in North-Western Province.⁵⁹ What was the situation of Vernacular school against 70 percent of missionary school? One can imagine the contemporary status of Indigenous schools.

Most critiques came from those sections that supported indigenous education because they thought children and youth must be educated under their own culture as it contained indigenous languages and cultural symbols. The adherent of indigenous education argued that modern education not only changed the content and pedagogy of education, but also that indigenous community is eliminated from any participation in designing the courses.⁶⁰ Moreover, modern education was biased in favour of urban regions, neglecting rural needs. The youth of the indigenous communities were alienated from their own base. The modern education system made education a commodity by making it the gateway to employment, which changed the nature of education and it became more and more text book centric where there was little or no place for 'experience based education' which was the hallmark of indigenous mode of education.⁶¹

At this juncture the, structural transformation from the old model to the new model brought about some novel reforms in education. People reacted to this change as a matter of concern. Indigenous Vedantic philosophy and its practices were adhered to by Swami Vivekananda for personality development. Rabindranath Tagore also reacted on these changes and argued that

⁵⁹ General Report on Public Instruction in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, 1912.

⁶⁰ P.M. Sarangapani, Op. cit.

⁶¹ Ibid.

modern education system alienated youth from their own culture. He has stressed upon indigenous education system with emphasis on Arts and Crafts.⁶²

Subject to the onslaught of Christian missionaries, local Pathshalas were replaced by the parish schools throughout the colonial territory and Churches replaced the temple as the centre of learning. Christian missionary schools were maintained at the coast of the village community which paid school master for teaching the song of gaunkars.⁶³ After the Macaulay's minute of 1835, English replaced Persian as the official and court language in 1837. Creation of a new class and the consequent class biases were inevitable. As has already been argued, English as a medium of instruction destroyed the old indigenous model of education and the new western model of education was beyond the reach and grasp of the masses.⁶⁴ What aggravated the things further were the resolution of Lord Harding, that directed that English would be preferred as qualification for any government services and the Wood's Dispatch of 1854, which directed the government to not favor any Indian languages.⁶⁵

The new western system of education dismantled the old indigenous education system and pushed back the vernacular literacy. New model was also unable to meet the needs of industrial and egalitarian society. The importance was given to liberal in spite of technical education wherein purpose was high but impact was null. Lord Curzon himself admitted it:

The plant of technical education in India, subsisted mainly on platitudes in vice-regal and gubernatorial speeches."." In sum "the low rate of literacy neglect of mass education as well as of technical and vocational education. And the methods of teaching were all handicaps in the path of development."''⁶⁶

Moreover, higher education was very elite wherein only some set of people participated. On the contrary, indigenous system of education was accessible and affordable by the masses. There was no hierarchy such as higher and elementary and categories like vocational, professional and technical. People used to go to Pathshala and Gurukul to learn about the miseries and troubles of day-to-day life. The Guru, Master and teacher solved their problems through the teachings of

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ De Souza, op. cit. p. 95.

⁶⁴ Heredia, C Rudolf, Education and Mission: school as Agent of Evangelism. p. 3.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Aparna Basu, Essay in the History of Education in India, 1982, p. 21.

Vedas, Puranas and Upanishad etc. (Dharmapal, 1982). Therefore, missionary schools were started to impart western science and knowledge and prepare an intellectual elite who would tame Indians by means of the western value system. As Partha Chatterjee accepted that British East India Company and missionary like Bengali language become the language of bureaucracy influence the Bengali elite. (Partha Chatterjee, 1993)

Missionaries were very tactical in promoting Christianity at the pan India level. They linked Christian education with economic activity and employment. Through it they tried to prove that there is no question of religion in missionary education. In these circumstances people went for missionary education and became English in Manner, Moral and Intellect. It opened up an economic opportunity not out of any religious preference. Due to subversion of domestic cottage industries, there were not enough means of livelihood. For the survival and subsistence, people had to join modern schools. "The concept of citizenship underlying under the vision of the educated man in colonial India is examined in its ideological roots."⁶⁷

The indigenous model of education was very peculiar in nature. Paolino Da Bartolomeo, an Austrian missionary who spent fourteenth year (1776-1789) in India recalled that whatever Megasthenes wrote in his account: the approaches, methods and practices of learning and teachings introduced before Christ; he still found those ones in practice. He said, "No people, perhaps, on earth have adhered as much to their ancient usage and customs as the Indians." (Ram, Swarup, 2000). Alexander Walker, Brigadier-General in East India Company, who served between 1780 and 1810, has admired the indigenous system of education saying that Hindus gave more importance to their own mode of instruction than others. They can sacrifice all the privileges and prestige in return for good education for their children. He also found that the love of learning was not exclusive attributes of Brahmins but it was possessed by all Hindus. He further added that the spirit of inquiry and liberty has also been influenced by the Soodros, who had large participation in the body of population. And they had sufficient possession in the major property and authority.

Indigenous education severed the need of local people in every aspect of life such as economic, cultural and religious. But under the missionary system, education was cut off from all these

⁶⁷ Krishna Kumar, op. cit. p. 16.

cardinal needs. One government report says regarding this, "If a boy learns arithmetic in our schools, he is of little use for the shop, because he finds there a different system of accounts, and the meanest Banya can cast up the intricacies of the grain-trade accounts by a mental process far more rapidly than if he had taken honors in Mathematics at the Calcutta University."⁶⁸ Under the indigenous system of education, elementary education was taught in local languages. But the British Government introduced Urdu language as medium of instruction across the North Indian schools. This model of education excluded all Hindu artisan class, agricultural class and priestly class and is documented in the testimony of Brahma Samaj. This excluded folks from learning religious texts where were enthusiastic towards this. But Urdu could not enable them in this regard.

Under the indigenous system, Hindu school often closed on *Poornima* of every month and on the occasion of Hindu festivals. Under the missionary education, Sunday become the new Holiday of every week. In this process, indigenous calendar went outdated and the memories associated with History, religious order and convention also got extinct. This situation caused to come into being, as Macaulay had dreamt, a class of people Indian in blood, but English in taste, manner and intellect, a class of barbarian but European, and Missionaries tried to "eliminate everything Indian in general and Hindu in particular."

The missionary education has been established on the basis of "Civilizing Responsibility" or "White man' Burden". They adopted European method and pedagogy and taken ethnocentric view in India in order to disseminated education among heathen people. Missionary practice and manner as part of curriculum inserted on indigenous education system and implemented firmly. This approach does not shoot under the India cultural and social climate. As a result native and vernacular modes of teaching and approach could not sustain in the influence of missionary education. Steadily, indigenous masses conceiving indigenous modes as outdated mode. In this circumstance, missionary schools flourished and its pedagogy adopted by the local people immensely. The most consequent impact of the missionary education is indigenous education mode and vernacular languages. Missionary education impacted on human mind because people behaving and acting as Missionary, Evangelism and Anglicism have envisaged.

⁶⁸ Ram Swarup, On Hindism, 2000, In *Education System Pre-British Day*.

We have seen that Christian missionaries, who came to the Indian subcontinent with the purpose of conversion of pagans through the missionary education, undermined the indigenous system of education in order to establish Christendom. For this, missionaries promoted missionary education, literature and western science. Once Mahatma Gandhi once address at Royal Institute of International Affairs in London on 20 October, 1931 that literacy has declined in India in last 50 to 100 year.⁶⁹ They did not recognize the agony of indigenous people in their quest to establish European supremacy. Alexander Duff openly declared to undermine indigenous education system to serve their interest. Many vernacular languages could not survive this onslaught. Indigenous pedagogy was undermined that led to their extinction. There was a beautiful indigenous system of education in pre-colonial India. This could not survive under the influence of European Expansion and Missionaries Proselytization, which led to the alienation of people from their own techniques, methods and ways of learning and teaching. Consequently, in this process, the indigenous system of education in India became the victim.

⁶⁹ Dharampal, Op. cit. p. 3.

Chapter-3

Christian Missionaries and Marginalization the Folkways of Indigenous People in India

Background

The indigenous people all over the world have been affected in different ways by the Christian missionary activities. The indigenous way of life of these people has been undermined wiped or out in this process. The 'Primitive and Barbaric', distinct and derogation of indigenous people were used in colonial and oriental discourse. This stereotype was taken by the Christian missionaries and they conceived that the indigenous are uncivilized and savage people. They needed to be civilized and emancipated in order to improve their social and spiritual life. As missionaries believed that emancipation comes through gospel, having this kind of notion, Christian missionaries ventured into the heartland of indigenous people. The main objective of these missionaries was to convert people into Christianity by means of education, health-care and other biblical activities. Indigenous people are inseparable part of a society and an important part of our ecological sphere. Therefore, it is very important to assess the impact of missionary activities on indigenous people's folkways and the rest of culture matrix. The de-indigenization of these people has become a matter of concern for the indigenous culture of India. In the modern age, indigenous people's identity and culture are on the verge of being destroyed. Due to missionary activities, conflict among indigenous people in the name of converted and non-converted people has been widened (Sahay, 1973). L. P. Vidyarthi said that 1/6th of the

population of Indian Christians are Indian tribes. And these tribes had been converted in last hundred and fifty year.⁷⁰

This chapter would examine the Role of the Christian Missionaries' activities among the indigenous people of India. 'What was the indigenous culture of Indians before missionaries? Modes of missionary activities: education, healing method and social and cultural empowerment method, will be covered. How the Missionaries activities influenced the traditional indigenous way of life? What was the impact of the Christian missionaries on the indigenous custom, folk dance, modes of healing and festival and social & cultural structures? Have these missionary activities influenced or changed Indigenous way of life of these people? How have the missionaries converted indigenous people into Christianity under the welfare and philanthropic activities? These vital questions will be addressed in this chapter.

Historical Background of the Indigenous People

The term 'indigenous' is a recent discovery at the international level. It has been used in India since long back. The social worker, missionaries and political activists were using the term "Adivasi" in Indian language for the Indigenous. The category of Tribe began to be used to indicate Indigenous people with the turn of twentieth century. The term aboriginals and autochthonous were being used by academician and officials in their writings and report.⁷¹ The term is used only as symbol of identification and differentiation to denote group of people in physical feature, language, social organization, religion and customs. Even Ghurye talks about Tribes as Backward Hindu. He termed them as aborigines. He has written, "When the history of internal movements of peoples is not known, it is utterly un-scientific to regard some tribe or the other as the original owner of the soil. It is possible to contend that even if the tribes are not aborigines of the exact area they now occupy, they are the autochthonous of India and to that extent they may be called the aborigines."⁷² SC Dube has also traced the origin and trajectory of Indigenous peoples of India:

"It is difficult to speak of 'original' inhabitants, for tribal traditions themselves make repeated mention of migration of their ancestors. There is considerable evidence to

⁷⁰ L.P Vidyarthi, Tribal Culture of India, 1977.

⁷¹ Virginius Xaxa, Tribe as Indigenous People of India, 1999, p. 3.

⁷² G. S. Ghurye, The Scheduled Tribes, 1959.

suggest that several groups were pushed out of the areas where they were first settled and had to seek shelter elsewhere. And there are several groups, now absorbed in Hindu society, which can make an equally tenable claim to being original or, at any rate very old inhabitants".⁷³

In this context, some scholars have criticized the colonial narratives of representation through the revisionist approach. They argued that earlier ethnographers and colonial administrators had mistakenly thought that “tribes” were static entities; it leads many of the revisionist critics to conclude that distinct tribes never existed, and that the claims of indigenous people for autonomy must have no theoretical legitimacy or historical validity.⁷⁴ The narratives of traveler, surveyor and official of company presented as ‘representation of people and place’ are more ambiguous. Colonialist narrated natives and aboriginals in vague manner. They discern the social reality through the observation among the indigenous community. But the social reality of these masses reflects in the oral tradition.⁷⁵ The revisionist scholars focused on the world, marginalized communities and their demised traditional livelihood, customary practices. In addition they revisited colonial documents and modes of treatment with indigenous community. As colonial ethnographer and official classified indigenous communities into “Tribe” for administrative expediency. Indigenous people termed as Tribal in colonial India and later this term scheduled under constitution of India to represent indigenous peoples of India.

As some anthropologists have defined the tribal society as part of the larger indigenous system of India, they describe the trajectory of indigenous people in their writings. They possessed characteristics like *jati*. David Mandelbaum has said:

“The shift of the tribal people into jati society has been going on for many centuries and it is still an ongoing, indeed an accelerating, process. More than thirty million people counted as tribes in 1961 census of India. Many of them are taking on jati practices and are becoming into integrated into local hierarchies in way followed by other tribes man long before them. Those way from another process of recurrent changed into jati society, not by internal regrouping as in religious movements, but by the gradual

⁷³ S.C Dube, Tribal Heritage of India, 1977, p. 2.

⁷⁴ Vinita Damodaran, Colonial construction of Tribes: The Case of Chotanagpur. 2006. p.2

⁷⁵ Ibid.

transfer of individual and groups from a tribal kind of social system into local caste system. Once a tribal group become jati, its members are likely to enter the usual mobility drives as do members of sectarian and other jati.”⁷⁶

Indigenous people were bestowed with abundance and enjoyed tuneful living condition before the colonial period. As Mandelbaum has observed, some of the populous tribe established the kingdom but most of them had only precarious support and the rules often made use of specially imported form of caste society. Nevertheless, tribes have frequently been in nominal control of rajas, few have acted the part of faithful, steadfast and subservient subjects.⁷⁷

He has taken different tribal group of different region such Bhotia from Uttar Pradesh region, Santal from Jamshedpur, Bhumij from Bengal, and Kotas from Neelgiri region, Konds from Orissa into account. In light of technological development, he has defined the direction of changes of that indigenous community from ancient to modern era. David Mandelbaum has stated that tribes are indigenous people of India and with the technological changes they are merging into other social group.

“In the long view of human change, the developments tribes to jati began in India several millennia ago when technological innovation, especially that of plough agriculture, made possible social-cultural invention of civilization. The Indian version of civilization developed caste organization. Improved technology opened the possibility for civilization development, but civilization and civilized person did not overwhelm all tribal society.”⁷⁸

James Tod was a British officer at East India Company. He worked for a long period in Rajputana and Bhilwada of Rajasthan. He has given interesting fact about the indigenous inhabitants of region. While discussing the Khota Bhils of Kotah, Tod tells that they maintained significant social ties with the Rajputs. In the explanation in a footnote, he wrote:

⁷⁶ David G. Mandelbaum, *Society in India*, 1970, p. 573.

⁷⁷ David, G Mandelbaum, p. 578.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* p. 618.

“Rajputs in early days used to intermarry and eat with Bhils, who were regarded, not as a menial tribe, but as lords of the soil (Russell, Tribes and Castes Central Provinces, ii. 281)”.⁷⁹

Writing elsewhere, Tod creates further ambiguity regarding the line dividing aboriginal tribes of Rajasthan and the Hindu Rajputs. In describing the *Mina* tribe, he explained:

“While Mina is that applied to the mixed, of which they reckon *barah pal*, or twelve communities, descended from Rajput blood, as Chauhan, Tuar, Jadon, Parihar, Kachhwaha, Solanki, Sankhla, Guhilot, etc., and these are subdivided into no less than five thousand two hundred distinct clans...” (Tod, 1920 p. 1333).

The difficulty in spotting the actual distinction comes out clearly in the two sentences that describe the inhabitants of the Jaipur region. In the chapter entitled, “Annals of Amber or Jaipur”, Lt-Col. Tod classified the inhabitants of the region in the following terms:

“The following are the principal *tribes*, and the order in which they follow may be considered as indicative of their relative numbers. 1. Minas, 2. Rajputs, 3. Brahmans, 4. Baniyas, 5. Jats, 6. Dhakar, or Kirar (qu. Kirata?), 7. Gujars” (p. 1429).

However, it's interesting to note that in a footnote on the same page, he comes up with the following explanation:

“The present order, in numbers, of the *castes* is—Brahmans, Jats, Minas, (Jharaars, Baniyas or Mahajans, Gujars, Rajputs, Malls. Dhakar Rajputs are found in the Central Ganges-Jumna Duab, and in Rohilkhand (Elliot, Supplementary Glossary, 263).”

The italicized⁸⁰ interchangeable use of ‘caste’ and ‘tribe’ for the same group of people leaves a lot to be conjectured about the distinction between the aboriginal tribes and the Hindu order in Rajasthan which Tod described. Much ambiguity is also reflected in festivals and practices of the tribes and the Rajputs of the region. Thus, whether Indian tribes and other Hindu people lived separately as watertight compartments can still not be ascertained with any conviction.

⁷⁹ James Tod, Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, 1920, (first published in 1829), Vol. III, p. 1521.

⁸⁰ Emphasis mine.

Having old and vibrant proclaimed cultural identity from 18th century, Mundas and Oraongs have challenged the British forces of British education, idea of ‘rule of law’ and Christianity. Contemporary anthropology under colonial state portrayed them as “belligerent” or “beastly” which denote that possessing animal like insecure emotion and intellect and Colonialist abuse tribal culture and indigenous modes of habitats. Their peculiar way of life stereotyped and ridiculed in order to conduct colonial ethnography.⁸¹

The Mundas and Oraons believed that Chotanagpur is primitive land which belongs to them since ancient time when they had to migrate from one place to another place. The tribal society follows the fundamental principal of democracy. Most of the name of tribes derived from Sanskrit sources as Oraon derived from repetition of “O! Ram” when lord Ram left the forest abode after the inhabiting 14th years.⁸² This link also shows the tribal indigenous nature and ancient past. Therefore they classified under Hindu religion in 1871 census report. Tribal life closely connected with nature as forest, maintains and rivers and the ‘mutual cooperation’ was the cardinal of indigenous way of life. The tribal chief used to collect *Chanda* (contribution) for the services of community. The tribal history came to change from medieval period. The medieval upheaval shaped tribal society “ethnic mosaic” to “ethnic hierarchy”⁸³ and the medieval set up under the Mughal rule aboriginals have to contest with local ruler and Zamindar. And then under the colonial rule they were treated as alien and their cultured were hampered because of prejudice (savage and barbaric). The exploitation of tribals and derogatory construction of them went hand in hand.⁸⁴

From about the early nineteenth century European administrators and ethnographers ventured into the tribal territory and contacted with the indigenous people and culture of India. The ethnographers and administrators experienced very different kind of knowledge about the tribal unlike their prejudices. They found that the tribal was courageous, honest, daring, careful and brilliant - attracted colonialist prime item for army⁸⁵. Having empirically experienced this virtue empirically colonialist and ethnographer did not change their mind set. They could not go

⁸¹ Joseph, Bara, Alien Construct and Tribal Contestation in Colonial Chhotanagpur: The Medium of Christianity, 2010, p. 3.

⁸² Ibid. p. 4.

⁸³ Sumit, Guha. Environment and Ethnicity India, 1999.

⁸⁴ Joseph, Bara, Op. cit. p. 3.

⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 4.

beyond ingrained prejudices and stereotypes despite empirically observing the social reality. This kinds of approaches shoes the highly prejudice mindset of colonialist toward indigenous people of India. In fact they undermined and dismantle the indigenous way of life the natives in order to serve their vested interest. When tribal resisted against the authoritarianism and exploitation of colonial government, the colonial state took advantage and showed the tribes as “barbarous and backward”. This circumstance was conducive for ethnographic project and it enables them to be stick on the prior notion of the tribal groups.

At this juncture people from the outside entered into the tribal territory due to employment opportunity. They monopolized British enterprise and expanded bureaucracy by providing services. The demographic composition was changing and the scenario was ideal to define the tribals accordingly. And this time was also ideal to nickname the tribal by the favored and proposed names.⁸⁶ Simultaneously tension was escalating between tribal and colonial state and it culminated in Revolt of the 1831-2. After this great upheaval, tribal have to flee from their habitats. In this chaos some of them become homeless and they had to live miserable life. This situation has given an opportunity to colonialist to tame them accordingly. They had no means for subsistence and residence. Utilize this circumstance colonialist planned to rehabilitate them culturally. British agency provides them every possible help. For the short span of time they were able to win the confidence of the people. At this juncture colonialist invite to “colonial social worked” (Christian Missionaries) to educate and civilize the tribes.⁸⁷ As usual, colonist believed that tribal are Uncivilized, Barbaric and Uneducated. Earlier Christian missionaries took advantage the misery and agony the tribes. Missionaries presented a benevolent face and assured them to heal the all agonies. They tried to fulfill contemporary needs and necessities of them. They were resolving problem and fulfilling the requirement using the power of colonial state. Indirectly, welfare works of missionaries done by the colonial state. Thus missionaries conceived as benevolent for a short period of time by tribes. At the time, there was various tension and disputes between tribes and local Zamindar. Missionaries capitalized the situation and become interlocutor between tribes and Zamindars. They resolved some disputes of the tribals and they advocated the tribal concern. Steadily, missionaries have won the confidence of tribes. Having been persecuted by British tyranny they saw new hope in missionaries. Missionaries made

⁸⁶ F. A. Grignard, *The Oraong and Munda*, 1909, p. 7.

⁸⁷ Joseph, Bara, *Seeds of Mistrust*, 2005.

possible to win back their lost land from landlords. In return, they embraced Christianity and converted.⁸⁸ This speaks volumes of the missionaries and their evangelism. We have clearly seen that colonial state tacitly invited missionaries in the prior made fertile ground for evangelism. In the next section, role of the missionaries and indigenous culture will be discussed broadly.

Christian Missionaries and Colonial State

There were close relations between colonial state and Christian missionary. When British established British East India Company under the 'Treaty of 1614' and this was provisioned that enacted charter act will be periodically overview. But the Charter act was being renewed in 1793 and 1813 respectively and debate held in British Parliament between evangelicals and non-evangelical for and against of evangelism in India. The group who favored evangelism in India tried to convince to the House of Common to reconcile that "the Court of Directors should be empowered to send out schoolmasters and persons for the religious and moral improvement of the native inhabitants of the British Dominions in India"⁸⁹ Later Claudius Buchanan, a pioneer Anglican in India and British citizen demanded for Ecclesiastical establishment to convey the Christian principle for the Indian British and fulfill the measure purpose to "Civilize the Natives of India" and Buchman expressed about the importance of the Ecclesiastical Department that nothing more than important to 'expand and consolidate our dominion' as ecclesiastical establishment. Buchman believed that Church must be established to guide administration and civil institution in order to realize a flourishing empire.⁹⁰ The demand of the Buchman initiated on 22 March in the British Parliament to enact it through resolution. In 1698 British parliament added a missionary clause under the company' act, "This clause directed the company to maintain 'Ministers of Religion' at their factories in India."⁹¹ It has been argued that colonial state became successful in expanding its empire across the globe because of Christian Missionaries. These all instances confirm that there was no remarkable difference between Colonial State and Christian Missionaries.

⁸⁸ Joseph Bara, Colonialism, Christianity and the Tribes of Chhota Nagpur in East India, 1845-90.

⁸⁹ Henry Whitehead, Indian Problems in Religion, Education, Politics, 1924, p. 94.

⁹⁰ Claudius Buchanan, Memoir of the Expediency of an Ecclesiastical Establishment for British India.

⁹¹ Pynhunlang & NM Shullai, Colonialism, Christianity and Mission Activities in India: A Postcolonial Perspectives, 2017, p. 5.

Christianity among the Oraon of Chotanagpur

The Oraon tribes were inhabited in northern and western part of the Chotanagpur plateau. They were following their Sarna religion as indigenous religion of the locality. Thus they were known as 'Sarna Oraons' in this region. They had their own way of an indigenous administrative system called *parha*. The Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Missionaries was the first which appeared on this plateau. In 1844, father Grossner of Berlin had sent four missionary for the evangelism in India. When they were staying in Calcutta and prepping for evangelism then commissioner of Chotanagpur wrote to British government and foreign Society of Calcutta to send them to plateau of Chotanagpur for evangelism. Then missionaries arrived in Ranchi by 1845. In the early four years, they could not succeed enough. In 1850 they got success to evangelism and proselytized four Uraons and four Munda in 1851. After it, missionaries started full-fledged evangelism in that region. It has been observed proselytism had brought many material benefits than spiritual among the aboriginals. The Christian missionaries were getting recognition from the aboriginals. After the missionary work Christian and no-Christian bifurcation have been seen. One of the reputed missionaries and evangelist such as Father Constant Lievens came there during the 1880 and he escalated the proselytism in the region. Father Lievens became popular in that tribal heartland because of his benevolent nature. In this scenario, he has started welfare activities under the patronage of British Government. He was intended to fulfill basic necessity of the aboriginals. And he was very strict to helping people on the basis of religion. When any 'pagan' had approached him to any kind of help, he frankly said that he would help only the Christians. As a result, pagan motivated to give his approval for proselytizing and also committed to stop any kind of worship and sacrifices. Native people started stop working on Sunday and started working on the instruction of Lievens (Sahay, 1976). Seeing the charismatic personality of father Lievens many tribal people joined missionary camp and later they converted into Christianity.⁹² He worked in different districts of the plateau. After father Lievens left, the rate of conversion declined in the region.

Missionaries applied various methods to convert people along with charitable activities and Evangelism. When missionaries started to use the power of Government (British Government), people became attracted toward missionary activities. People were talking that Missionaries have

⁹² K.N. Sahay, Impact of Christianity on the Oraon of the Chainpur belt in Chotanagpur, 1968.

some power like the company. They started thinking that company is missionary and missionary is company. Due to this notion, the missionary attracted Sarna Oraons towards church and other evangelical activities. Because of the Government patronage to missionaries, Father Lievens was so effective and popular among the native of the region. The people of the region rated Missionary as 'Semi-Government'. Actually the missionaries were enjoying the power of Government and they can do anything in the name of government. Once a police inspector harassed to a native converts and he has been transferred another place. Then the local official and police have fears of missionaries and one could not dare to tamper any converted native. They realize the power of missionaries. One aboriginal absorbed as "The white British officer and white missionaries both come from England (Europe). Both is Europeans having the same prestige and power to help them in their stress".⁹³ Missionaries were winning the confidence of people through power and prestige of companies. This powerful and prestigious stature of Missionaries attracted people and thus advantages they utilizing to convert people into Christianity. Identification of missionaries with British government helped them in the field of evangelism and proselytism.

Most of Sarna Oraons involved in Witchcraft and Superstition thing and they were puzzled because of it. Evangelist promised them to emancipate them and provide relief from these animistic spirits. Father Lievens becomes the main Shamans of the people through the charismatic power. He healed all agonies of the aboriginal by controlling the souls and spirits through the Gospel. This reformation motivated natives to believe in Gospel. Hence, they convinced that the only way to free from all superstition is acceptance of Christianity.⁹⁴ To influence tribes, missionaries made relation with Local landlords with the pressure of Government and started demonizing practices of Sarna religion. They portrayed that Local Lords and Kings also recognized the miracles of missionaries. Landlords and local kings also denounced the practices and rituals of Indigenous religion such as Idolatry and rituals under the pressure of British government. This disguised activity insisted people to think about the nobility of Christianity and demean of tribal 'pagans'. This created conducive atmosphere to for Sarna Oroan to embrace Christianity.

⁹³ K.N. Sahay, *Under the Shadow of The Cross: a study of the nature and process of the Christianization among the Oraon of Central India*. 1973. p. 55.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 56.

In the early phase of evangelism, four Oraons visited to church and met with the Missionary to talk about Christianity. They said that “we have listened enough about Lord Jesus during the teaching of Gospel and now we want to see the Jesus directly”. They were persuaded that “it is not possible to see Jesus by the ordinary sight”. On this condition they embraced Christianity together with their family. The missionaries were spreading inferiority among the illiterate native people about the Sarna religion. And they were persuading them that Sarna religion is incompetent and this could not prepare people for salvation. They openly undermined religions of aboriginal and their indigenous way of life. The inferiority of indigenous religion insisted them to think negative about their religion. And this propaganda forced them to feel alienated from their own beliefs and practices. Finally, they had no way to free themselves from this inferiority except conversion. All these tactics of propaganda enabled the missionary to motivate the people toward accepting the gospel. Besides these modes and method, missionaries were using welfare activities to motivate people for Gospel. They opened dispensary, schools, welfare centre for the aboriginal in order to contact and persuade people for conversion. One of the inhabitants of Bukma (village of Oraons) narrated that missionaries approached him and said “Become Christian and you will get rid of the forced labor”. On this assurance some people from the Bukma village (a village in Chotanagpur) converted and they started persuading other villagers to become Christian.⁹⁵ Missionary education and schools were also working for evangelism in school. Missionary school provided free education to non-Christian students and all facilities in the convent schools. Students had to attend religious classes; as a result, the children wished to be converted to Christianity. They were baptized despite strong opposition from their parents. It is found that teaching of gospel in schools attracted children toward Christianity. In missionary school classes, teachers also insisted the non-Christian students to embrace Christianity. Thus, welfare activities in the field of education and medicine became the medium of missionaries in winning the confidence of aboriginals and led the proselytizing activity in the region (Sahay, 1973).

According to Sahay, indigenous modes of treatment and cure could not survive in the influence of Christianity and miracle cults. To cure bad spirits and superstition they did not apply indigenous Sarna medicine, herbs and indigenous mode instead they used Cross and symbol of

⁹⁵ K. N. Sahay, Op. cit. p. 46.

Jesus Christ. Even Sarna Oraons have their own way to neutralize the effect of *Niksari*⁹⁶ but they applied cross cure of it because the indigenous modes of curing were replaced by the Gospel. The interpretation of dream was done through Indigenous spirits, deities and ghosts. But this mode is no more in existence because St. Mary and Jesus became all mighty. Ghosts and witches tamed by the shamans used to catch and control the witches and ghosts through intuitive knowledge. But under the influence of Christianity indigenous modes and methods were replaced.⁹⁷

Oraons were following the Sarna religion and this was based on Animism, Spirits and Naturism. Thus, the Oroans worship was based on the indigenous gods, goddess spirits and ghosts. To perform their practices and rituals they offered Chicken, pigs, bullock fowl and goat to deities and spirits. Through these practices they were seeking blessing for wellness for family and village community. The rituals and practices were performed by the priest of village. This was the peculiar belief system and indigenous religion of Oroan. But when Christian missionaries entered the tribal heartland, the indigenous model of religion was declining away. There were some festival of Oraons like “*Sarhul, Jatia, Kharihani Puja, Karma Kadleta Dhanbuni, Bangari, Hariari Parava and Khunt Pooja* has been abandon by the by the new set of festival having Christian and biblical importance like *Janam Parav* (Christmas), *Pasca or Jin Uthan Parav* (Easter), *Swaragarohan, Pentecost, New Year Day, Mritak Atmon ke Parav, Christ deh Parav* and few procession like *Bili Yatra* (Light procession), *Dharam yatra, Cross-Sena* (Cross-bridge) and *Joti Sena* (Light brigade)”⁹⁸ replace old one. Autonomy day was secular kind of festival observed by the Lutheran church.

Bangari was traditional Sarna festival, celebrated before the commencement of transplantation of paddy crops. One who wanted to first begin paddy plantation, he had to call a *Baiga*, near village. He performed the rituals of the beginning transplantation. He offered some rice-beverage to mother earth and prayed for sufficient rain mass production of paddy. He sows five plants and then normal plantation takes place. After the missionary intervention some modification has been observed in these practices. In 1912-14, a senior person of the lineage used to seed five plants,

⁹⁶ A superstitious being, it was the matter of fear among Oraon.

⁹⁷ K. N. Sahay, Op. cit. p. 165.

⁹⁸ K.N. Sahay, Op. cit. p. 166.

instead of *Baiga* from other village. Further, it began with chanting some *Mantra*. Then, it was followed by women of the family. After a time period these practices withered away because of Christian supremacy.

Missionaries influenced the indigenous greeting practices, Sarna Oraons used to salute to his elder in a very peculiar manner. They used to bring their right hand up to forehead just saying *Gorlagi* (Touch your feet). In return, elders responded by keeping together both hands in *Namaste Mudra* (Prayer Posture). But Missionaries popularized hand shaking posture instead of prior indigenous modes. Whenever a person meets with another (irrespective of elder or younger) they just hand shake and uttered some biblical salute like *Jay Yisu* and *Jay Jesus*.⁹⁹ This Christian doctrine-based practices were popularized by the Christian missionaries in order to convert aboriginals into Christianity. Missionaries promoted Sunday as the day of Jesus and therefore they prohibited work on Sunday. People were instructed to go to Church on this day and not to engage in any kind of work. The Sunday in the name of Jesus was heavily observed by the Christian and non-Christian both. This adversely affected labor and working class, because they could not earn money for subsistence and livelihood. In this circumstance, they got marginalized from the mainstream.

As we have seen Christian missionaries activities adversely affected Oroans. Missionary activity among Sarna Oraon led a kind of segregation because indigenous community divided Christian and non-Christian community. Village also bifurcated on the basis of beliefs and practices like Sarna traditional village and modern Christian village. Joint family split into different group because of holding different religious belief. Overall, Christianity and its conversion process altered the social cohesion among the Oraons. Due to these changes tribal organization emerged as 'Caste-like group' in the regions of the plateau. Before the conversion, Sarna village had independent village unit, religious authority and sacred place for worship. But after conversion village authority was no longer and it has observed that emergence of hierarchical religious authority in priest and on sacred place.¹⁰⁰

Kara dance was the best medium of entertainment of the traditional folk dance of Oraons. In this people after finishing the work of day gathered and young boys and girls of the village used to

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

enjoy the gathering by the performing *Akhra* dance. Dance was the medium of relaxation from the tension and stress of day. It was held on till the late hours of night and then boys and girls goes to their own dormitory. Missionary changed the nature of dance and allowed free mixing of Christian boy and girl in the *Akhra* dance this move encouraged moral and ethical degradation. Later this led physical and moral corruption. After the controversy converts started boycott non-Christians *Akhra* dance. As a result the folk dance was stopped by the *Catholic Sabha*. This dance was only allowed on the occasion of Christmas, ester etc (Sahay, 1993: 392-393). *Akhra* was closely associated with youth dormitory. As soon as *Akhra* was decline the existence of youth dormitory decayed.

Christian missionaries influenced on the indigenous culture of Oraons. It influenced the lifestyle, institutions, traditional festival and entertainment means. Uraons were the homogenous group but it is the Christian missionary who brought heterogeneity in the culture tribal.¹⁰¹ Before the conversion Uraons were similar and socially equal after the conversion Sarna Uraons Make significant distinction among them. They were divided on the basis of Christian and non-Christian. The superiority and inferiority feeling emerged among the Oroans on the basis of creeds. Tribal dormitory (Youth-Houses) were stopped and festival were modified in Christian framework. Prejudices and stereotyping were originated between converts and no convert because of the belief and practices.

Niyogi Committee Report on the Christian Missionary Activities

Christian Missionaries were more active in the tribal belt of northern India such as Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and (Sahay, 1973). They were proselytizing aboriginals and backward people immensely in early phase of twentieth century. Hence, during the 1950s, there was a strong anti-conversion sentiment among the people. There was coercive and force conversion going on overtly. After gauging this kind of sentiment MP Government took step to address this issue. In 1954, a committee constituted under the supervision of B.S. Niyogi retired chief justice of Nagpur High Court. And this committee would investigate coercive and forced conversion of Aborigines and backward peoples. The statement of government of Madhya Pradesh on the on this step:

¹⁰¹ K.N. Sahay, Op. cit. p. 480.

“Representations have been made to government from time to time Christian missionary either force forcibly or through fraud and temptation of monetary and other gain convert illiterate aboriginals and other backward people thereby offending the feeling of non- Christian. It has further been represented that mission are utilizing directly or indirectly for purpose of extra religious objective. The Christian missionaries have repudiated this allegation and have asserted on the other hand that their activities are confined solely to religious propaganda and toward social, medical and educational work. The missionaries have further alleged that they are being harassed by non-Christian people and local official. As agitation has been growing on either side, the state government considered it desirable in the public interest to have a through inquiry mode into the whole question through a partial committee.”¹⁰²

After two years in 1956 the committee published a report entitled, ‘Report of the Christian Missionaries Activities Inquiry Committee’. In two year this committee has rigorously worked covering 11000 peoples, 76 location, interviewing of hundreds people and receiving written record on paper of 375 peoples. The company contacted both Christian and non-Christian in this matter.¹⁰³ These all different kinds of records make thousand page committee reports.

This committee report has raised serious concern of mass conversion of backward peoples and Natives. This mass conversion was done by the International Missionary Council and Foreign Missionary Organization. They were using money as allurements to attract poor people in order to proselytizing. Missionaries were converting people through the education, medical and Biblical preaching. Missionaries were distributing free gift and books to minor in primary and secondary school under philanthropy and welfare activity. Missionary school conducts extracurricular activities such as political and religious preaching to influence minor. The committee absorbed that ongoing proselytization would weaken the social fabric and national integration. The Christian missionaries were working for revival of Christendom on the soil of India. For this they want to establish western supremacy through the spread of western art, culture and literature. Missionaries schools, hospitals and orphanage was become the centre of the proselytization. People of the lower strata such as Harijans, Adivasis and Backward classes were most vulnerable

¹⁰² Report of the Christian Missionary Inquiry Committee Madhya Pradesh, 1956, Volume I, Appendix II.

¹⁰³ Chad M. Bauman, Postcolonial Anxiety and Anti-Conversion sentiment in the Report of the “Christian Missionary Activities Inquiry Committee”, 2008, p. 189.

category for proselytization.¹⁰⁴ Further, Commission report reveals of the tactic used by missionary to spread gospel and converting peoples. They used to allure people to add some Christian names in spite of original Indian name, to marry with Christian girls and praying for the patient person in the name of Jesus. They used to go at the home of new-born baby to bless him in the name of Jesus, interfering in the matter of domestic violence, stealing of baby and abduction of women for labor work at remote area for using them in propagating Christian faith among the aboriginals. (Report of Niyogi Committee 1, 3)

Based on the findings of the inquiry, the committee suggested a number of recommended to Madhya Pradesh government. Report said to take adequate legal action against missionary and missionary school must be restricted according to law of the land. There must be registration of all religious bodies which are involved in proselytism. And state must provide a license to the all these entity. State machinery must monitor the propaganda literature of the missionaries. The gravity of situation could be analyzed by the recommendation of the Christian Missionaries Activities Inquiry Committee. This report had become eye-opener at the time and exposed the Christian missionary's propaganda. In this order Sitaram Goel has argued that "Christian missionaries had bought all available copies (of the original) and destroyed them" (Goel, 1998: vii). This was the great set back to missionary because this report had revealed the hidden agenda of Christian missionary behind philanthropy and welfare activities. They were being exposed before the people and report also adversely affected to the Missionary agenda.¹⁰⁵

Missionaries Healing Experiment among the Bhil Tribes

In November 1880, Reverend Charles Thompson arrived at Kherwara, a hilly town in the region of Mewar in the state of Rajasthan. He came to established first Anglican Mission in this region for evangelize to Bhils- an aboriginal of this region. He has come to this region as a doctor and but was not a qualified doctor. He believed that Jesus is only path to heal any misery and agony of the people. He has taken some basic training of medicine and on the basis of it, he believes that he is good enough to win the confidence of Bhils and convert them through it. Evangelicals propagates that 'Paganism is sick in both Body and Mind and required an overhauling under the true God' (Hardiman, 2008). It has been claimed that Jesus had been the 'ideal medical

¹⁰⁴ Niyogi Committee Report, 1956

¹⁰⁵ Sitaram Goel Vindicated By Time the Niyogi Committee Report on Christian Missionaries Actives, 1998.

missionary'. He was the father of the medical mission and he has given message to all humanity to follow his path. It has also been claimed that the disease disability has been covered in New Testament existed in the Heathen lands in that period. And these disease and inability could be healed by the Churches of the Heathen land. In order to heal these diseases, best Christian doctors were needed.¹⁰⁶

During the 1870s the Christian missionaries came up with a decision to expand evangelism among the aboriginals of these hills. 'Rosa' was the wife of Montie Randall, a British officer of Mewar Bhil Crops (MBC). The couple comes to Kherwara in 1877 and they intended to build infrastructure for missionary work in hilly tracts of Mewar. First of all, Rosa informed the Calcutta bishop about the situation of the evangelical mission that she has two orphans and whom she is bringing as Christian. He approached to Bishop that there is an immediate need of a 'Bhil orphanage' for the missionary work, Bhils might be converted through it. Bishop agreed to her and supported orphanage for Bhils. Rosa had also written a letter to his father in England who was a bishop of Exeter in England. He decided to donate 1000 Euros form his own to the mission work. Then he wrote a letter to a missionary in India. That letter reveals much information pertaining to missionary activities in India. He writes that Bhil as aboriginal tribes who have been bring in the hills by the Aryans thousand years before the Christ. There is around three million Bhils, but no systematic attempt made to evangelize them till the date. Kherwar is healthy land and conquered by the 'British troops' for more than thirty years. But here is no church for the people and people of this heathendom living in ignorant. Further, he stated that planning to provide fund to clergymen and hope to Christianity will be rooted among the Bhils as it is among Gonds, Santal and other primitive recess of India. He sums up his message saying it "May God send this home to some heart, whom he will touch with Christ-like compassion for sheep for away in the wilderness that have no shepherd!"¹⁰⁷ After the message of apostle missionaries went into in action mode and started planning to evangelize to aboriginals of the region. They planned to evangelize people through Christian medicine and healing modes.

T. H. Hendley, a junior missionary doctor comes on the mission in the region. He prepared a document about this region and specifically Bhils. On the basis of his observation he has

¹⁰⁶ David Hardiman, *Missionaries and their Medicine*, 2008, p. 10.

¹⁰⁷ E. H. Bikerseteh, *The Mission to the Bheels*, 1880. pp. 537-8.

published 'An Account of Mewar Bhils' which describes about the peoples of India as well. The Asiatic society of London founded in 1863 and its purpose was to propagate that savage are different from 'European Civilized'. They were intended to prove it by the anthropology and ethnology through measuring and comparing both races. In this regard Hendley conducted some survey on Bhils and Non-Bhil community and compared both. Even missionaries and British ethnologist accounts have portrayed in stereotypically as poor, uncivilized a practicing shifting agriculture. While Hendley accounts portrayed different social reality unlike European ethnocentric view. The Bhil used to live southernmost of the Aravali Mountains. The region was a kind of valley between the hills. He narrates that Bhil made a stone wall over the whole region. They had developed technique to store rain water. They had created temporary field under the hilly area. They used to plant rice, maize and other crops. When rain comes they utilize it through ploughed his field and seed the different crops. The Bhils kept different cattle such as cow, goat and Bhil women took care of these cattle. And Bhil men hunt animals for food and catches fish. Thus, contemporary Bhil have endowed agricultural system and mean of livelihood.¹⁰⁸

Bhils used to earn money by selling their domestic products in adjoining village and town. They used to sell grass, woods, honey, ghee and other forest products and in return arrow, ornament and other necessities they could not produced themselves. Men and women enjoyed liquor and men used to consume more liquor than women. This liquor was produce through Mahua flower and that is why Mahua tree was very significant among them. This was community convention to plant a Mahua tree by each member of the family. ¹⁰⁹

In his account Hendely found that 'The Bhils are a healthy race'. He said of the Bhil insanity was unknown as it is considered common among the savage races. The cases of mania was found among the people, only two three cases were found in old ages. He quotes arguments of Kingsley Davis¹¹⁰, who has suggested that any evidence of epidemic disease was not there before colonial periods. After the outbreak epidemics people have developed indigenious method of resistance and cure. But the missionaries have exaggerated bad health condition of the valley. In the missionary documents, it is mentioned that everybody in this valley suffering with fever and

¹⁰⁸ T.H. Hendley, An Account of Maiwar Bhils, 1875.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Kingsley Devis, The Population of India and Pakistan, 1951, p. 42.

'huge spleen' affected most of people.¹¹¹ Hendely referred that they used to follow their own form of inoculation to heal any disease. The inoculation process of the Bhils was exclusive rather than missionaries. To treat smallpox, "They dipped a grain of dust into the pustule of a smallpox patient and then inserted thus into the skin of a healthy person with the help of a needle. While doing so they invoked the smallpox goddess".¹¹² The causes of smallpox in India associated with Goddess (*Mata*) and Bhil postulate that the reason of smallpox is that the body of the patient gets possessed by goddess and therefore it feels like fever. During the infection of cholera and other chronic disease of this region, Missionaries tried to propagate their inoculation technique. And they held a vaccination drive in the valley but Bhils did not take the Vaccine. On this, the missionaries propagated that Bhils are the only community that remains to be vaccinated. Hendley concluded about the health of Bhils that there was no evidence of any venereal disease among Bhils, is an evidence of sexual restraints of them.

Bhils have a range of ways to curing disease and disorder of their people. They applied indigenous techniques of herbs, roots and tree produces. If any diseases persisted beyond two or three days they used to apply these remedies. There are historical evidence of it that Bhils were skilled and had expertise of herbs and tree produces.¹¹³ Hendely discussed about a common remedy was "The remedy for everything is the actual is the actual cautery, few adults, few children and even animals are without scars." The fire (*Agni*) was considered great healing agent of any disease or disorder. Bhils used marks on the pit of stomach by uppermost part the Arrow to and believe that it is cure of cholera.

In 1877 Oxford Missionary Conference was held in London. And Bishop McDougal presented the statistics of missionary work. He expressed his concern that Anglican has ignored the medical missionary and focusing only ecclesiastical activity. Thompson was the man, who was sent on the Mission by the Christian Missionaries Society in the Mewar region. Earlier he had targeted upper-class Hindus and Muslims but he could not succeed but he saw large number of converts coming from Marginalized and deprived section.¹¹⁴ They were aboriginals and weaker section people and then missionaries focused their attention towards this group. Missionaries

¹¹¹ Hardiman, Op. cit. p. 34.

¹¹² T.H. Hendely, General Medical history of Rajputana, 1900. p. 148.

¹¹³ O.P. Bodding, Studies in Santal Medicine and Connected Folklore, 1925.

¹¹⁴ Hardiman, op. cit. p. 20.

considered them Aboriginals but as Dravidian origins who believe in Animism and spirits unlike Aryan. Missionaries thought that because of their primitive belief and practices, they would accept Christianity easily when they would come into contact of Gospel. Having these kinds of prejudices and consideration, Thompson started medical missionary work among Bhils. They were intended to challenge Heathen system of belief. As John Lowe (1886:148) argued that,

“In India, China, Africa, and Madagascar and in almost every heathen land, crude systems of medicine are intimately associated with the religions of the people, and the treatment of disease, such as it is, is monopolized by the priests or by others under their control”.

As above mentioned, Reverend Charles Thompson has come to tribal heartland in 1880. Under pressure of all guideline of Bishops and conferences he started medical mission among the Bhil. During the very early phase of the mission, Thompson found some people who were ready to entertain him but they have shown reluctance towards gospel and Christian faith. Therefore, he could not baptize and he reasoned out that they were the part of the grand narrative called Hinduism, although some of them realized its hierarchical model when they started visiting church. In this regard, he refers to the perception of the Bhil about the caste system that they were free from caste prejudices and the Christianity. Missionaries could not convert people till 1889, earlier they had baptized only one Bhil. By the 1889 they had expanded missionaries activities in Kherwara region and, therefore people were coming overtly to their churches and wished to be baptized. Even there were fears of the social boycott and because of it people could not express it confidently. A person named Sukha Damor (around 50 to 55 year) with his four children (5-10 years) embraced the Christianity and became first converts.¹¹⁵ He was a *Bhagat* (Devotee in Bhil community) and wore a bead necklace and it was the symbol of being Bhagat. He narrated that people from his community warned him that if he converts into Christianity, he will be disowned by the member of his community. Later Thompson baptized many other villages and he was not satisfied because he could not convert sufficient numbers despite creating so heavy infrastructure in the field of medicine and school education.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. p. 68.

Missionaries also trained school teachers for basic treatment in missionary schools. It was difficult to select suitable people for this task. Thompson trained young Bhils at the Kherwada boarding school for the mission. This tactic benefited doubly because missionaries can attract people through education and medicine both. By the 1899, Thompson trained seven Bhil masters, who were working in the missionary schools.¹¹⁶ Other schools were running under the upper caste people. These schools were curing the disease and disorder of the students along with teaching and preaching gospel.

After the medical and dispensary service, Thompson adopted other mode to evangelize people. He started to motivate children toward the missionary schools. He approached to poor people for sending their children in school and motivated them to learn gospel. Children of Bhil and Bhagat both were studying together in single schools. They were not uncomfortable with the gospel and Christianity; they just wanted to enjoy the advantage and facilities of missionary school. As a result, after a period of time they became ready to be converted. After this success Thompson went on the neighboring village to motivate more people and to teach them the gospel. Therefore, primary education becomes the medium of spread of the gospel among the untouchables and aboriginals.

Late nineteenth century Missionaries started to carry out medical work to legitimize their religious conversion (Hardiman, 2008). Missionary used to depict disease as consequence of sin that could be healed only by conversion and by embracing Christian moral and value. In the missionary medicine, religion was the infact in the background of medicine. They justified Christian way of life in during the conversation with inmates. During the 1920, most of the Adivasis refused to go to missionary centre for treatment even when they were suffering serious illness for the fear that there they will not treat them, instead they will preach them.

As we have seen missionaries tried to convert the tribals through missionary medicine and in this process, indigenous modes of healing have been undermined. David Arnold¹¹⁷ has raised the question on their missionary superiority. Because of it, they did address or consider the sentiments and emotion of the tribal people. Even they completely rejected it. They refused to

¹¹⁶ Hardiman, op. cit.

¹¹⁷ David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemics disease in Nineteenth Century in India*, 1993.

any modification when the missionaries conducted smallpox vaccination drive among the aboriginal. They were passionate to conduct vaccination regardless of its adverse impact of it on the aboriginals.

Adverse Impact of Christian Missionary on Indigenous People

Christian missionary's conversion policy takes away indigenous peoples from their own indigenous way of life and did not provide any alternative for it. Steadily, they became alien from their own their own customs and manners. Later missionaries tempted them with every possible means. At the time they lost their own manner of livelihood and life style. So, they were left with no alternative except conversion into Christianity.

Because of religious conversion the tribal community divided into tribal and non-tribal and they got separated from each other culturally, socially and mentally and sense of separated identity emerged. Moreover, segmentation emerged among tribal society because of church leadership. Aboriginal tribal community turned segmented under the influence of church. Because of the conversion, there is Christian and non-Christian community emerged within original tribal community. Now, the Christian tribes have been deprived from rights and privileges which they had before. Other side they could not become the member of tribal community. There was a situation of dilemma before the tribes. Due to religious conversion minority and majority group emerged within tribal community among tribal population. And this led sense of dislike and inferiority to minority community. These prejudices and dislikes translated into conflict among the tribes. Because of Christian tribes and non-Christian tribes, minority tribes had to leave their original habitats. As converted Munda and Oraon have to leave their own community and have to survive through pulling rickshaw and daily wages labor, it has also been found that Christian missionaries inspired people for better social and economic life but they were unable to provide adequate means for it. This has become the reason for frustration, anxiety and clashes among tribes. This also led criminal and sinful activities among tribes.

One of adverse impacts of Christian mission also reflects into the colonial state policies. As Christian missionaries were committed toward "Civilizing Responsibility" or White Man's Burden" and in this way indigenous people have been persecuted and exploited. As it is known that there were close relations between Christian missionary and the colonial state, missionaries'

approach would have been to influence the colonial state. That is why Imperial ruler could not understand the way of living of the indigenous people. As a result, they followed orientalist's and missionaries' understanding of indigenous people as barbaric, primitive, illiterate and uncivilized. Because of this prejudice and their abnormal and unstructured lifestyle, the imperial ruler took many harsh decisions against them. In this context some indigenous people from different parts of the country have been persecuted and exploited. According to the rule, some Nomadic, Bauria and Bazigar communities of Punjab region were put under the category of 'criminal tribes'. These tribes told that their present worse situation is because of their nomadic life in past. They revealed that they were not nomadic and banzaras but it was the Mughal rule that pushed them into Jungle. They have been pressurized to become Nomadic and survive through hunting for about three centuries.¹¹⁸

The nomadic and natural inhabitants, the aboriginal community were underestimated by colonial rulers and administrators. They perceived them as uncivilized, uncultured and termed them "Savage and Barbarian". They were being treated according to tough and strict regulations. Although they were wandering and nomadic due to their livelihood because they were very poor and could fulfill their daily basis needs. Due to not having adequate means of production they were considered as thieves and dacoits. After being enacted, CTA (Criminal Tribes Act) in Punjab region disabled the free movement of Aborigines. Criminal tribes have to settle separately at the periphery of rural and urban premises. The Bauria have carried a '*Chitha*' as identity card attached in their neck. There was non-bailable crime after violating this rule. And one could be arrested if they were found without identity card.¹¹⁹

David Arnold has discussed the British tactics and method used by the colonial administrator to rating and defining aborigines into criminal tribes. If any communities and groups were found suspected and threat for colonial state, they were dubbed as Criminal Tribes in the area. "Wondering group, nomadic petty traders and pastoralists, gipsy types, hill and forest-dwelling tribes, in short against a wide variety of marginal who did not conform to colonial pattern of settled agriculture and wage labor".¹²⁰ This is clear that colonial administrator some prejudice against the Indian aboriginal community. That is why they enforced such harsh and draconian

¹¹⁸ Birendra pal Singh, Ex-Criminal Tribes of Punjab, 2008, p. 7.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ David Arnold, Crime and Crime Control in Madras, 1858-1947.

rule against them. Because of this pre-notion they could not have any method and criterion to identify and categorize the indigenous community. Anand Yang has questioned the Imperial method and criterion in order to classified crime and criminality:

“Official descriptions of criminal tribes were also static and ignored the historical dimension. Banjaras, for example, were treated as a criminal tribe without any comprehension of their past. But as recent re- search indicates, most Banjaras were not involved in illegal activities, and those that were, did as a result of nineteenth century developments which made their regular means of livelihood redundant”.¹²¹

Colonial mindset and their commitment to the oriental and missionaries narratives reflected into the policies and administrator. They were prejudiced that Indians are uncivilized, Barbaric and savage of the oriental region as reflected in Max Muller’s and Risely’s concepts. Therefore, they were trying to term Indians as barbaric. And their classification method and tactics were not based on serious consideration. These types of some instances were found in Madras presidency during the British rule. Radhakrishnan shed light on the administrative Prejudices in the context of koravas the nomadic labor. "Since the koravas were an itinerant community, the administrators found it difficult to shake off some of the prejudices they carried with them regarding European gypsies, and they seem to have simply superimposed some of these on the Indian counterparts. Moreover, the bulk of their own prejudices were shared by the high caste landlord sections."¹²² They have been prejudiced toward mercantile community.

Thus, we have broadly discussed about the Christian missionary activities among the indigenous people of India. Missionary activities in different modes and among the different tribal people adversely affected. Missionary activity did not respect the way of living and folkways of indigenous people and imposed upon them Christian customs and practices. In this manner, indigenous peoples forgot or were drawn away from their customary practices. Missionary activity undermined indigenous way of living that inarguably marginalized the indigenous people of India.

¹²¹ Anand Yang, Dangerous Caste and tribes: The Criminal Tribe Act the Magahiya Doms of Northeast India, p. 116.

¹²² Radhakrishna Meena, Dishonored by history: ‘Criminal Tribes’ and British Colonial policy, p. 12

Chapter- 4

Missionary, Myth and its Impact on Indigenous Cultures of India

Background

In colonial India, a number of movements took place for the betterment of people. These movements were intended for removal of old and irrelevant customs and practices and adoption of new ones. In this context the role of Christian missionaries becomes very important in initiating and leading social reform movements in order to abolish those practices. With the expansion of colonialism in the non-European countries, Christian missionaries also ventured into the territory of that country. The main objective of missionaries was to ‘civilize’ people of heathen land. To this end, missionaries came to India and worked in the field of Education, health care, and welfare activities. Besides these activities, missionaries also campaigned against the inbuilt evils and ill practices existing in social and cultural structure. They propagated that these evils and ill practices were the cause of ignorance of people. Therefore, Missionaries identified some evils and made people aware of them and then campaigned for eradication for those evils and practices. Missionaries’ agenda was emancipation and liberation of people from the ignorance caused by these practices. This they essayed to achieve through the gospel. As a result, missionaries initiated various movements and campaigns in order to liberate the masses of the heathen land. These movements were supported and propagated by the liberals and educated people of India. The objective of this chapter is to identify the role of the Christian missionaries in social reform movement in colonial Bengal, specifically abolition of some ill practices. They intended to provide an alternative identity to the South Indian people which evolved later turned into self-respect movement or Dravidian movement. This chapter would elaborate upon

Missionaries as agents of Social change in colonial India and discuss how they propelled people for emancipation and liberation from myths, evils, dogma and ill practices which were inbuilt in social and spiritual life.

Missionaries and Dravidian Identity Quest in Colonial Madras

This section would deal with what was the role of missionaries in constructing distinct racial identity for the people from south India? How they portrayed the Saint Thomas in development of early Christianity in south India? How they linked early Christianity with indigenous rituals, practices and literature in south India. How this identity quest influenced social and cultural sphere of India. Later this identity quest led to the Dravidian movement.

European Identity Quest of 19th Century Applied into Indian sub Continent

In nineteenth century Europe, huge religious congregation has been challenged by the very idea of Enlightenment. The Europeans wished to claim their glorious history by looking back to their past. Colonial and evangelist engaged themselves into linguistic and ethnic study and churned out their imaginary histories and indigenous Races. In order to secure their heritage and rejuvenate their glory they constructed “Aryan Race” hypothesis. They asserted nobility and superiority of Europeans through Aryan race and linked their ancestry with the Aryans. In light of these new concepts, German Nationalism, Race Sciences, and anti-Semitism etc. emerged. Also, it has been argued these European innovation and inventions become the seeds for future Holocaust and World War-II. In this progression, Europe academic study of Language (philology) thrust the invention of new identities in European continent such as Aryan, Indo-Aryan, and Caucasian. In this climate, German Indologist Max Muller proposed “Aryan Category” as Linguistic group and linked it with Northern Indian races.¹²³ In parallel, Christian missionaries and evangelist worked in south India they churned out Dravidian (Racial) identity as distinct racial identity for people of India. Evangelists linked Tamil culture with early Christianity and portrayed independent existence of South Indian cultures. On the other hand William Jones through his philological discovery claimed superiority of European races. He established origin of all races under biblical framework. The European Indologist asserted superiority of Aryan Race as the Harbingers of all the human beings and civilization of world.

¹²³ Thomas R, Trautman, Aryan and British India, 2004.

They glorified European history by linking Aryan being from European ancestry. They celebrated concept of Aryan and asserted Aryans are the superior and pure race blessed by Jesus. While the north Indian Aryan were portrayed as Mix Breed originating from European Aryans but being mixed and contaminated by inferior natives and later found involved in Idolatry, polytheism and racial impurity.¹²⁴ Subsequently, the Colonial Administrator transferred this linguist group into Aryan Races by applying Races Science.

Herbert Hope Risley was a colonial administrator working under the Royal Anthropological Institute. He adopted Max Muller theory of race and developed the “Nasal Index”. He applied race science among Indian communities and tried to find traits of race in Indian people. He lived in India for almost four decades and conducted huge surveys in India applying Nasal Index. He had worked to prove differences between Aryan and non- Aryan communities. Subsequently, on the basis of Race Sciences, he established differences among traditional Indian communities. For applying race sciences, they interpreted *jati* into racial category. They not only divided caste into Aryans and non-Aryans but also proposed that non-Aryans withered form Hindu religion. Caste was demonstrated as “non-Aryan community and its member has been excluded and marginalized in India society. The colonial proposition of hierarchical view was seen to collude to transform caste into racial categories.¹²⁵

In colonial India, Missionaries and colonial administrators had adopted the propositions of William Jones, Max Muller and Risley. They validated their own construction of Indians into inferior racial category. Other Missionaries like Robert Caldwell separated north India from south India by imposing concocted “Dravidian Identity”. British Indologist has described Indian history and culture concocted in some manner. They applied Eurocentric approach to develop India history, ethnography and Indology. On the basis of Indology, British created discourse of Aryans migration and argued that they had come from Europe into the Indian subcontinent. They became the source of civilization and from that source, Indians developed their civilization.

Missionary and Identity Quest in South India

¹²⁴ Thomas R. Trautman, Language and Nation: The Dravidian Proof in Colonial Madras. 2006.

¹²⁵ Nicholas Dirk, Caste of Mind, 2001.

Now we would examine the role of Christian missionary activities in south India. The Role of the missionaries would be examined around “Dravidian Race” and “Early Christianity. The major Indian Classics” and what was the role of St. Thomas in construction of Dravidian Christianity and Dravidian movement. What was the Role of missionary in interpretation of indigenous Tamil rituals *Thirukural (Kural)* and *Saiva Siddhanta*? Regarding Dravidian Movement, it is important to assess the role of Christian missionaries’ significance in southern part of India. Christian missionaries were the pioneer in bringing modern ideas into India and south India particularly in order to expand their missionary activities. They brought dispensaries printing press and missionary school in order civilize people. Besides the missionary school and printing press, it has been argued that most consequential missionary contribution would be noted in the southern part in the origin of Dravidian idea.¹²⁶

There was consensus before the missionary activity that South Indian languages (Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada) had originated from the Sanskrit. One of the company officers, Francis Whyte Ellis, who was working on the grammar of India, demonstrated in 1816 that Dravidian (South Indian) languages are interrelated and had not originated from the Sanskrit.¹²⁷ Robert Coldwell (1814-1891) was the evangelist from the Society for the propagation of the gospel. After the forty year of Francis Whyte in 1856¹²⁸ he brought the idea of ‘Dravidian race’ in his “*Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South-Indian Family of Languages*. These missionaries studied the grammar of Tamil and Telugu languages and tried to establish that these languages belonged to the different ‘family of language’ but not to any other Indian classical languages. In this process, a British administrator invented the term ‘Tamulian’ to denote the non-Aryan indigenous people of India. Not just classical language debate and historical dispute of heritage appropriated Dravidian identity quest there was some other factor of it:

“The ideological origins of Dravidian nationalism can be traced not only to the historical tensions that existed between Sanskrit and local vernacular cultures in South

¹²⁶ Eliza Kent, *Converting Women: Gender and Protestant Christianity in Colonial South India*, 2004, p. 141.

¹²⁷ Thomas R. Trautman, *Languages and Nations: The Dravidian Proof in Colonial Madras*, 2006.

¹²⁸ Will Sweetman, *The Dravidian idea in Missionary Account of South India Religion*, 2017, p. 3.

India but more importantly to the modern reconfigured articulation of these tensions inspired by Missionary Orientalism”.¹²⁹

It was Bishop Robert Caldwell who mixed linguistic theory of Francis Whyte Ills with the racial theory. And he proposed a different identity for the local people as they are the only indigenous people of this land before the Aryan invasion. He made them aware that Dravidians were cheated by the Brahmins - as loyalist of Aryans. He warned Dravidian they would not be not free from the Aryans exploitation and suppression in their religion, until and unless you did not remove all Aryans’ rituals and practices. Thus he invoked them to give up the Sanskrit language and its traits totally.¹³⁰ As soon as you people abandon all practices and ceremonies foisted by Aryans, you will be able to liberate and emancipate. The liberation and emancipation comes through the preaching of Gospel. He transferred linguistic idea into ethnicity (racial concept). These missionary constructed identities subsequently translated into Dravidian movement and Dravidian nationalism.

In 1801, Henry Thomas Colebrooke, an Orientalist claimed that all Indian languages originated from the Sanskrit. This was the landmark claim on the basis of genealogy of languages. But after the fiftieth year in 1826, Frazz Bopp a German Linguist substantiated the claim of the of the Francis White and Alexander D. Campbell¹³¹ that south India languages family does not belong to Sanskrit language. Ellis was in the Fort St. George College in Madras and he was influential person of the college. He used to train the new officer who come to India from England. Trautman called this college as “Madras school of Orientalism”¹³² as centre of producing colonial knowledge. There were also a disagreement between Madras and Calcutta missionaries on India vernaculars and Sanskrit language. Because of William Carey a missionary scholar at Calcutta College of Fort William argued that “Sanskrit unified all India languages”. But all the debates and doubts has been end after the milestone work of Campwell Ills. He come up with books *Grammar of the Teloogoo Language* (1816) and claimed that south Indian languages are not originated from Sanskrit. And this claim provides ground to intervene in socio-political

¹²⁹ Ravindiran Vaitheespara, *Caste, Hybridity and the Construction of Cultural Identity in Colonial India: Maraimalai Adigal and the Intellectual Genealogy of Dravidian Nationalism, 1800–1950*, 2002.

¹³⁰ Thomas R. Trautmann, *Op. cit.*

¹³¹ He was a Collector of Madras.

¹³² Thomas R. Trautmann, *Op. cit.*

sphere of south India. In this order Ellis claimed that Tamil is affiliated to different family of languages such as Hebrew and Arabic.

A major shift came into ongoing linguistic and identity quest in 1840, when Reverend John Stevenson from Scottish Missionary Society and a colonial scholar Brian Houghton Hodgson proposed a category of “aboriginal” languages. In this classification they argued that Dravidian family language that allegedly predated by the arrival of Sanskrit from outside India. In this progression Hodgson was promoting concept “Tamulian” a racial construct and denoted Tamils as indigenous of India and are primitive and uncivilized in comparison to foreign Aryans and many of them were spread across the India before the Aryan invasion.¹³³ By these quest and construction they tried to establish different cultural discourse for south India people.

Bishop Robert Caldwell was one of the pioneer missionaries in Madras region. He laid the theological foundation for the Dravidian separation from Hinduism backed by ecclesiastical authority. He has play major role to dividing India on the basis of language, religion and framed Indic religion into Biblical framework. The idea of Tamil disconnection with Hindu rituals made ground to the proselytizing.¹³⁴ Missionary scholars propagated new and charming local ‘Ethnic Identity’ in order to differentiate peoples from Hindu culture. They made feel them that Tamil religion had deep ethnic root to be “Civilized” religion and this civic sense found in only Monotheistic religion. That was clear indication towards Christianity. Missionaries were intended to prove that early Tamil literature and cultures developed influence of Christianity. Literary and historical scholars has endeavor to produced that partial-Christianity had already existed contemporary Tamil literature. This concocts myth underpinned that St. Thomas has propagated Christianity in south India. This concocts idea has spread across India and provide cushion to proliferate catholic churches. One of Christian scholars (summer, 2000) has observed the role Caldwell in the following words:

“South Indian political culture of non-Brahmanism drew its inspiration from Dravidian ideology: this ideology posited a distinct linguistic and racial identity for south Indians. Non-Brahmin agitators pitted Dravidian culture, which most often championed the Tamil language, against Hindu, Aryan or Sanskrit cultures from the North. Champions

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Peter Pels, *From text to Bodies: Brian Houghton Hodgson and the Emergence of Ethnology in India*, 1999, p. 83.

of Dravidianism and non-Brahmanism drew upon the cultural and linguistic resources provided by missionaries such as Robert Caldwell and G.U. Pope.”¹³⁵

Missionary Onslaught on Indigenous Practices of South India

Caldwell cleverly used Dravidian identity first he used Dravidian to divide them from the pan-Indian Hindu population and secondly he postulated that Dravidian are inferior to Aryans because Aryan race trace their origins in Europe. On the other hand, Dravidians derived their cultural capital and higher civic value from Aryans. He argued that “but they did not achieve parity with Aryans, because the gifts of the Aryans were 'more than counterbalanced by the fossilizing caste rules, the impractical pantheistic philosophy, and the cumbersome routine of inane ceremonies, which were introduced amongst them by the guides of their new social state”¹³⁶ He tried to establish that Dravidian are inferior but it is possible to civilize them and the Brahmins Aryan in the name of civilizing by putting them under pan-Indian social model. Caldwell suggested a way-out for them to reject the Sanskrit hangover and rediscover their original ethos through biblical means. Their traits of social and cultural life resembles with Christianity which sounds as sacrosanct and conceived as actual Tamil religion. But, traits that do not fit into the Christian framework should be abandoned. As for the instance, he stated that Tamils did not possess native word for idol and the particular word derived from Sanskrit must be replaced:

“Tamil can readily dispense with the greater part or the whole of its Sanskrit, and by dispensing with it, rise to a purer and more refined style...Of the entire number of words which are contained in this formula there is only one which could not be expressed with faultless propriety . . . in equivalent of pure Dravidian origin: that word is 'graven image' or 'idol'. Both word and thing are foreign to primitive Tamil usages and habits of thought; and were introduced into Tamil country by Brahmins, (along) with the Puranic system of religion and worship of idols”.¹³⁷

The missionaries went on to invent new Christian identity. In the process, two kinds of literature became popular, first could be taken as non-sectarian, humanism and universal in nature is

¹³⁵ Abbas Summer, *Dravidian India*, 2000.

¹³⁶ Brook & Schmid, *National Work: Asian Elites and National Identity*, 2000, p.57.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.* p. 58.

absorbed in *Kural* and missionaries linked it to post-Sangam age. And second one was *Saiva Siddhanta* collection of scripture which represent indigenous monotheistic religion different from Hinduism. They accepted two steps to popularize among these Tamil native scripture: segregated Brahmins and non- Brahmins to use *Kural*.

Under the colonial state, missionaries attempted to construct ethnic religious identity for Tamils in order to separate south India from the rest of India. They tried to trace Christian root in this Tamil region. If missionaries found Tamil and non-Sanskrit framework then they will apply same process with the Sanskrit literature to fulfill their interest. Tamil literary tradition consists of three main elements: (1) *Thirukural*, classical Tamil scripture and incorporate ethical literature and belongs to *smriti* tradition, second one is (2) *Saiva Siddhanta* is Vedanta offshoot of Shiva Philosophy. It was one of the unique phenomena in Tamil devotional cult and resembles more to Hinduism. That is why missionaries tried to undermine it in order to preach Christianity, and(3) a large body of classical spiritual literature.

George Uglow Pope (1820-1908) was another famous Missionary and Indologist who also constructed myths in order to spread Christianity. He was major person to promoting that, Tamil classical literature separated from Sanskrit and Hindu theology and he made its connection with Christianity. He translated Tamil *Thirukural* which was simply called *Kurul* and contained the ethics and norms of society. This religious literature and scriptures was the main force which belonged to Tamils by the pan-Indian narrative of indigenous religion, literature and classical languages. Any mission of proselytizing and faith conversion would be possible when cardinal base of this integration would be weakened. Thus missionaries were inquisitive to find out the major force which integrated Tamil region people to the rest of India. They realized that indigenous cultures are the major cause to integrate people at pan India level. That is why they started colonial Indology to translate native literature, religious text and *smriti*.¹³⁸ The missionaries constructed theory to demean the existing cultures and way of life local Tamil people. They demonstrate existing *Kural* and *Sivasiddhanta* and other Tamil rituals and cultures are different from the Aryans and similar to Christianity. This was the technique of missionaries to divert people toward Christianity. In short, these two main practices were indigenous in nature which originated from Veda and nurtured by the Tamil philosophers from the ancient period.

¹³⁸ Peter, Pels, Op. cit.

Ironically, Dravidian Christianity hijacked both foundational concepts and designated with Christianity influence. To establish this nation they erased pre-Christian date of Kural and add more recent date.¹³⁹ In this manner, they de-linked Tamil culture and literature with pan-India cultural matrix.

M. S. Purnalingam Pillai, Tamil writer has described broadly literary history and culture in his book *A Primer of Tamil literature* (1904). He takes missionaries' thesis as the premises in order to form Tamil literary history regarding Aryan and Dravidian debate. *Kural* and *Saiva Siddhanta* was the Major theme of his writing. He has find *Kurla* and *Saiva Siddhanta* were ancient practices of Tamils from 100 CE period of the (Buddhist and Jain of India history) very long before from the Influence of Aryan and Sanskrit. Pillai has timeline the history of Tamil literature; he located it under the Sangam period from 100 CE to 600 CE. This region inhabited by the three ethnic communities Tamil, Aryans, Buddhists and Jains. Buddhists and Jains migrated from Northern India, "lived peaceably with their neighbors" unlike Aryans. He stressed that they never attacked others religion.¹⁴⁰

The Myth of Saint Thomas

As missionaries have tried to prove that, most of indigenous rituals and practices from south India had links with Christianity. To provide basis to these premises, grand myth has been created around St. Thomas to justify that early south Indian indigenous culture developed in south under the influence of Christianity. Particularly, grand myth has been created of St. Thomas that, he had come India in 52 CE and Tamil classics developed under his influence. Tamil Classics were not part of pan-Indian Hindu tradition, it had own distinct existence. They propagate separate existence of classical literature in order to establish Dravidian Christianity. And, later Dravidian movement and Christian evangelism came together to undermined indigenous culture. Also, it has claimed that Tamil spirituality penetrated by the ulterior Aryan influence and which adulterate Dravidian Christianity earlier it was same like Christianity. M. Dievanayagam, a Christian convert has submitted a PhD thesis on St Thomas in 1970 at Madras University. Later he published a book *Was Thiruvalluvar a Christian* (1970) on this issue. His thesis was propagated and promoted by the Christian circle. He prefunded idea around St.

¹³⁹ Peter, Pels, Op. cit.

¹⁴⁰ M. S. Purnalingam Pillai, *A Primer of Tamil Literature*, 1904.

Thomas that he came to India around 52 CE and he preceded emergence of Sanskrit as a means to disseminate Christianity to North India. But, later Sanskrit was assigned to astute Brahmins. Veda was written later than the incarnation of Jesus. Saivism, Vaishnavism and all spiritual development are shown to be under the influence of Thomas Christianity. Brahmins, Sanskrit and Vedas are the unholy collection of evils and must be abolish to clean Tamil society.¹⁴¹ These types of narratives built by the Christian missionaries and later endorsed by the Christian converted.

We have seen that missionaries concocted of myth of St Thomas to established early influence of Christianity in India. They propagated him as Martyr and motivation of the later Christian mission India. The myth of St. Thomas has rejected by the Scholars. Belgian Scholar Koenraad Elst has reacted on the myth of Saint Thomas:

“Catholic universities in Europe, the myth of the apostle Thomas going to India is no longer taught as history, but in India it is still considered useful. Even many vocal ‘secularists’ who attack the Hindus for relying on myth in the Ayodhya affair, off-hand profess their belief in the Thomas myth. The important point is that Thomas can be upheld as a martyr and the Brahmins decried as fanatics.”¹⁴²

Thus, it is clear that missionary and evangelicals concocted St. Thomas to disguise indigenous people. Also, through the tale of Thomas displayed the early traits of Christianity in south India. Therefore, Christianity and evangelical could underpin the spread in the Tamil region.

As Portuguese missionaries came to India in the 16th century, they could not precede missionary work without local Martyr and they constructed the myth of Saint Thomas and claimed that he was the Martyr of early Christianity in India. They did not give account of how they recovered it after 1500 years. Marco Polo did not mention about St. Thomas any account in his travelogue, when he came to India at the end of fifteenth century.¹⁴³

As it has been seen, legends of St. Thomas could not be substantiated with theories and facts. Therefore, tale of St. Thomas was concocted in order to undermine indigenous culture of India.

¹⁴¹ M. Dievanayagam, Was Thiruvalluvar a Christian, 1970.

¹⁴² Ishwar Sharan, The Myth of Saint Thomas and the Mylapore Shiva Temple. 1991.

¹⁴³ Anannt Priolkak, The Goa Inquisition, 1961.

Adverse Impact on Indigenous Cultures of India

Now, all instances show that missionaries have been inspiring people in the name superiority and inferiority of races. Two main factors were responsible in the evaluation of Dravidian nationalism, first was display of different genealogy of south Indian languages and coining of the term Dravidian separation of Brahmin and non-Brahmins and the second was the Dravidian was the second sole feature to developing the Dravidian ideology. As Christian Missionaries consistently believed in “Racial Theories”, they smartly concocted the concept of anti-Brahmanism by classifying Brahmins as “Aryans & Outsiders” in order to dismantle social cohesion. Evangelists have taken imaginary history and racial myth as tools in order to divide and rule of the people of India subcontinent. On the basis of the racial myth they invented a race called ‘Dravidian’. This is become very important to research how the Ethno-linguistic scholarship constructed fabricated Dravidian identity. Because of this racial and ethnic sentiment resulted into Tamil Sinhalese and Buddhist tension and conflict from time to time.

Although, in classical Tamil literature the word ‘Dravidian’ does not exist. There was a conspiracy of Christian missionary to divide the native people by Caldwell’s coining of the term, “Dravidian”. Whereas the British Government redeemed the Aryan-Dravidian theory to “Divide and Rule” the nation then Church used it to vanquish the languages and ruin the indigenous culture in order to make Christendom in India. In order to complete capture a nation or a state, the Church appropriate three tactics. First, “conquer the indigenous language” second, “destroy the indigenous culture” and third, “capture political power”. Actually, Christianity is political concept rather than region religion. That is why it revolves around empire. The major business of the missionaries was to grasp the indigenous languages, assimilating indigenous literature to discern the custom, folkways and practices in order to ruin it slowly, and concoct an environ for the political foundation to vanquish and capture power.

As above it has been discussed that Missionaries aspired with race sciences transformed linguistic group into racial construct. In the same manner they make taxonomical division of traditional India communities. They designated Indian community into dark-skin and light skin. Missionaries popularized that European only civilized people and blessed by Jesus and they are the Harbinger for the all civilization. To propagate missionary agenda they delinked Tamil India

culture form pan-Indian cultural matrix. Racial stereotyping of Indian people originated hierarchy, prejudice and segmentation among Indian people.

Missionaries and the Question of Sati in Colonial Bengal

As it has been found that in order to liberate and emancipate people missionary concocted Dravidian identity theory backed by the Myth of Saint Thomas. And this myth dismantles social and cultural fabric of south India. Colonial Bengal also had been witness of intense reform movement against evils and ill social practices. Therefore, it is important to assess the popular Reform movement of 19th century backed by the Baptist and Evangelist. This section would deal with the role of Christian Missionaries treatment with Sati as social practices in colonial Bengal, why missionaries chose Sati question in Bengal and what was the status of sati across India? Missionaries considered Sati as social evils and it must be abolished in order to improve social and spiritual life of people. Taking this premise into consideration missionary they supposed that people of India are uncivilized, Barbaric and ignorant because they are involved in such practices. Therefore, they must be civilized, liberated and emancipated by the preaching of Gospel. Which virtue has enlightened Europeans and are causes such endowed civilization which certainly would awaken pagans. In this manner they urged to British Government to assist them and provide all possible mans in order to civilize pagans. Common Indian mind thinks that Sati ingrained ills of Indian society which has been abolished by Evangelists and Baptists. Keeping this premise this role of missionaries would be examined.

Missionaries Survey on Sati and the Quest for Reform

The major centre of the missionaries in Bengal was Serampore, sixty miles away from Calcutta situated on the right bank of Hughli. It was the major centre of missionaries and evangelism. The Eminent missionaries such as William Carey (1761-1834) was the oldest of others and fist arrived in India, William ward (1769-1823) was the second of Serampore missionary camp and

Joshua Marshman (1768-1837)¹⁴⁴ was important and third Serampore missionary, were inhabited there. It was the major centre for planning missionary and evangelism.

As it has been seen, missionaries were involved in field of education, philanthropy and healthcare sector. In parallel, they also addressed the social and spiritual affairs. In 1803, Missionary William Carey planned to collect data on the sati. For this he discussed to his colleagues at Fort William College and Serampore on this topic. And he deputed ten people to collect the data within the periphery of 30 miles of Calcutta division. They were instructed to gather 12 month old data of those women who had immolated themselves. Their 'age' and 'number of children' left behind was the major attributes in the collection. One of the missionaries, Claudius Buchman demonstrated in the survey report that 275 cases registered in 1803, and 115 cases recorded in 1804 within 6 month. Revealing these figure Buchman said that "no account have been taken of burning form the west part of Calcutta and not beyond the periphery". He supposed that the actual number of burning might be more than recorded one.¹⁴⁵ William Ward also demonstrated the figure of 438 widows who have been burnt on the pier of their husband around the thirty mile periphery of the Calcutta Division. It was the precise area of city where Baptist inhabited and preached the gospel (Mani: 1998: 154-46). Carey stated that data is not sufficient according to supposition and made aware to government. It was the first instance presented by the missionaries and become the first record of government document. Missionaries applied the collected record to rest of India and assumed that thousand of women brunt every year and government take it into account. Buchman mention it into his memoir that "it is calculated by the late learned by Mr. William Chamber that the widow perished by the self-devotion in northern province of Hindustan alone, are not less than ten thousand annually".¹⁴⁶

William Ward stated much instances of sati was "Voluntarily" by the native people and some of them claimed to be eye-witness of the happening. He further described that the instances taken by the informant that number of children collected from the 8-10 year age group who has been left behind and he stated that on the basis of enquiry from the Serampore printing press. He argued that practices were more frequent than his supposition and these events were seen or heard by authentic sources. On the basis of primary account of evil practices on the soil of India

¹⁴⁴ Meenakhi Jain, *Sati: Evangelical, Baptist Missionaries, and the Changing Colonial Discourse*, 2016.

¹⁴⁵ Claudius Christian Research in Asia, Buchman, 1949, pp. 21-22s

¹⁴⁶ Claudius Buchman, *Memoir of the Expediency of an Ecclesiastical Establishment for British India*, 1805, p. 61.

missionaries exaggerated that savagery and ill practices were happening. William Ward has written around eight volumes of history from 1811 to 1822 in order to document events and issues in India under the evangelical publication. One of the missionary communicates to Rev. Robert Robinson of Cambridge of the ongoing situation of Sati with a letter,

“My very learned friend, Mr. William Chambers, has computed that about 50,000 widow are, brunt in these provinces annually with their husbands!...in 1803 an enquiry committee was set by on foot by Dr. Carey, and an actual enumeration, it was found, that in small district round Calcutta, 275 burning took place within six month, it was therefore estimate in all Bengal province no fewer than 10,000 person were thus consigned to death the course of year.”¹⁴⁷

Even they were involved in exaggerating the survey data and some scholars questioned on authenticity of data. The demonstrated figure of immolation by missionary does not fit and overlapped with the whole population of the division (Mani: 1998: 122). Missionaries circulated and popularized data in every possible means. The data collected by the Buchman and widely circulated by in Christian Research in Asia and later the approximate data presented before the Court of Director in 1813 on sati supplied by the Serampore missionary. And Buchman concluded on the basis of assumption, 10,000 immolation take place per year. (Oddie, 2006: 158) The data appeared overestimated and showed differences with the whole population. But, there was no any other parallel survey (neither government nor independent agency) which could contradict to the missionary account.

In 1813 publicity was given to missionary data in British Parliament when William Wilberforce narrated these data in his speech during Company Charter renovation. He presented written document of instances in his speech. Also, some gruesome record of sati displayed by evangelist Joshua Marshman. He has described ill picture of sati. The debate was in the favor of missionaries and missionaries felt to publicize those data. At this juncture Missionary Register (a kind of publication of Church Missionary Society) was started in London in January 1813. And

¹⁴⁷ C.B. Lewis, The Life of John Thomas, 1873, p. 141

the “Missionary Papers” circulated as witness of sati was sent back in India. In June 1813, missionary register came up with a stanza about sati taking as its source Ward’s history:

“Let every Christian Women who read the following statement, pity the watched thousands of her sex who scarified every year in India to a cruel superstition, and god for her own light and privilege, and pray and labor earnestly for the salvation of these miserable fellow subject”¹⁴⁸

These instances show that missionaries were passionate to reform India and to eradicate all social evils. Indeed, they were trying to get full license for evangelism by the British Parliament. That is why they were popularized and manipulating the ills, myths and superstition from Indian society. Subsequently, they exaggerated the other Stanza from Ward’s account on the ongoing hot debate on sati as a Title: “Instance of the Cruelty of Hindu Superstition”¹⁴⁹ Some other pieces like this inserted into the register about Hindu rituals and custom in order to demonstrate ill practices in public domain. The main intention was to raise funds for the missionary work through consistent “expose” of Hindu practices and rituals and convince British audience the necessity and indispensability of evangelism.¹⁵⁰ Missionary’s main focus was made aware to British women about the sati issues. About fifty present subscriber of Baptist missionary were women by the 1880 and subsequently increase till seventy percent by the 1825. Due to this propaganda number female in Church Missionary Society have been increased. Sati was the first “political” issue wherein British women were concerned and involved directly to support the luckless sisters in India.¹⁵¹

British Government Survey on Sati

After the sensation of Sati Issue government decide to conduct survey on Sati. According to government figure, 8134 cases were registered of widow immolation between 1815 and 1828 of fourteen years under the Bengal presidency. Most cases (60 percent) were from Calcutta division. In other divisions recorded data was such: in Benaras 1153, Dacca 710, Patna 689, Murshidabad 260 and Bareli 203. The official enumeration of the case of sati was commenced

¹⁴⁸ The Missionary Register for the Year 1813, Vol. 1, pp. 215-218.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, pp. 268-69.

¹⁵⁰ Meenakhi Jain, Op. cit. p. 185.

¹⁵¹ Andre Major, Contested Sacrifices, Sati Sovereignty and Social Reform in Colonial India, 2012, p. 66.

by the British Government from 1815 and continuously till 1828. This enumeration was held in three presidencies: Bengal, Bombay and Madras. The data on the issue of sati was the matter of concern and drew attention of people. Of ten year, from 1815 to 1824, 6632 case were collected in three presidencies. Wherein 5997 (around 90 percent) happened in Bengal region, even Bengal does not show any major rituals and rites. Government data has shown differences with missionary data. This certainly raised the question on the on the authenticity and reliability on nature of data. Also, reflect the intention of missionaries, who deliberately came to the Indian Territory to civilize people. In the Madras and Bombay presidencies in the range of 1850 to 1820, the average number of Sati practices was found less than fifty. In Madras only it was less than average and in other periphery region was null. Cuddapah Judge reported that four cases of Sati have been known since the 1816 and there was no clue of sati in neighboring Cuddapah. The judge South Malabar has reported that there were no such cases of sati and people used to bring widows at the site of funeral but did not pressurize them or force them to perform Sati. In the Bombay presidency cases of sati practices were rarer than Madras presidency. Only one case has been recorded in Ahmadabad under Bombay presidency. Southern Concan region was full absent of self-immolation, two cases has taken place at the region which was conquered from Peshwa.¹⁵² The average all India colonial territory was for below than recorded one in Bengal Presidency. The ration of those women who immolated themselves of Bengal and rest of India was high different. If one case was recorded out of 150 registered case in Calcutta division the ration for whole Bengal presidency was around 1:400. And if consider whole India then it produce between 1:800 and 1:1000.¹⁵³ These figure and trend high range of gap in ration Bengal presidencies and rest of India raise concern on Missionary activities.

Christopher Bayly has noted on the government figures form recorded data “how limited the number of sati were” he focused on the figure recorded between 1817 and 1827 wherein 4323 instances were recorded among the population of 160 million in whole territory of British India. He argued that self-Immolation was restricted in Bengal presidency specifically in the area of Calcutta. He refers the data of Madras and Bengal presidency which under fifty. The concern of sati has reflected “a more general movement of Anglo-India opinion rather than its significance or statistical significance” sati has been observed as “irrefutable justification for the continued

¹⁵² Calcutta Review, XCII.

¹⁵³ Jorg Fisch, *Immolating Women*, 2005, p. 242.

British Presence in India”. He said the issue of raised in order to expel to those official who has voiced against implementation of British education and defamation of Indigenous culture.¹⁵⁴

British government were obsessed with the documentation of sati cases across India at any rate. This act was the result of the missionary evangelism and British Crown pressure on the government. In this matter Missionaries has pressurized on the British Crown that EIC (East India Company) does not addressing our concern in order to expand evangelism. Here are savagery going on the India territory and we need resources and relaxation to go there and civilize them preaching of Jesus. On the consistent complain British Crow instructed to EIC to address the missionaries concern. In this order British Parliament directed to appoint a minister of religion under the company regulation. In this manner Bayly has argued on the British obsession on sati “was boundless”. He further denounced that thousands of pages of parliamentary paper wasted in documentation of 4000 immolations and whereas dying of million people under starvation and feminine was referred “only incidentally- sometime only because it intended indirectly to increase the number of widows performing the ‘horrific act’”.¹⁵⁵

Meenakshi Jain has argued that earlier British East India Company did not allow Missionaries to their territory. They warned them if they will come to India for evangelism they will be sent back by next ship. Colonialists were concerned about commerce not Christianity. They wanted to expand their trade without intervening religious and cultural affairs of people. They smoothly perform their commerce and trade under the British East India Company. Thus they know missionaries will interfere into the very nature of religious and cultural life of people in order to expand evangelism. And these missionary activities would create chaos into existing social system. As a result expansion of Christianity will prevent the expansion of commerce of Company. Therefore Christianity and commerce could not go simultaneously.¹⁵⁶ It was the earlier stand of company on missionaries. As above discussed, then after the interference of British Parliament they ‘Minister of Region’ and Ecclesiastical department come to existence. Then missionaries started manipulate EIC and later British Government.

¹⁵⁴ C. A. Bayly, Rammohan Roy and Advent of Constitutional liberalism in India, 2010, p. 22

¹⁵⁵ C. A. Bayly, From Ritual to Ceremony: Death Rituals and Society in Hindu North India since 1600, 2001, p. 153.

¹⁵⁶ Meenakshi Jain, Op. cit.

The census survey across the all over country held from 1872 and this survey provided relatively reliance data of population. Johan Herbert Harington was Judge and civil servant of substantial experience and a dedicated officer. He estimated the Hindu population under the Bengal presidency to be approximately 50 million. He showed annual death at 30 per thousand annually, according to which 1.5 million people died annually. He supposed that every six death of a wife and resulted in a widow. In this order 250,000 are widows; therefore 1 out of 430 would have immolated her and an average according to government estimate, in the range year 1815 to 1828. In the year 1818, rate of sati was most frequent, it had been found one out of 298. According the figure 2.3 per thousand of all incident wives resulted as widow and 0.6 per thousand of all cases wives death. In comparison widow immolation was statistically null and nothing.¹⁵⁷

Sati and Indigenous Practices in Bengal

Christian missionaries in order to substantiate practices of sati, associated it with social and religion practices. They concocted the myth of *Kulin* Brahmins polygamy and linked it with sati practices of sati. Missionaries propagated this idea self immolation was practices because of *Kulin* Polygamy. Claudius Buchman has given instances of more than Hundred Wives of Kulin Brahmins (Buchman, 1805:71). However, according to geographic distribution of sati in Bengal division did not substantiate existence of *kulin* marriages. It has been found that incident of sati was higher in west part of Bengal (Calcutta division) rather than east Bengal (Dacca division) while *Kulin* polygamy Marriage practices was dominant in East than West Bengal.¹⁵⁸ Presence of Dayabhaga Law School in Bengal also linked with frequency of sati. It is find that Dayabhaga law school seen as reformed school for widow to access their deceased husband property. Widows, who remained to immolation become property lees and could not got share in his husband property. Therefore, they have to approach Dayabhaga to secure her share from husband's property. But it has found in Bihar and Bengal both Hindu and Muslim women have posses sufficient property as married women. Ann in the cases, they inherited her husband' property. There was not such as missionary exaggerated widow condition in colonial India.

¹⁵⁷ Meenakshi Jain, Op. cit. p. 189.

¹⁵⁸ Amitabh Mukhpadhay, Sati as Social institution, 1957, p. 108.

There were cases where widows could secure property without the prior approval of their deceased husband.¹⁵⁹

Reform Movements as Reaction to Missionary Activities

During the eighteenth century, Social Reform Movements, Colonial Expansion and Christian Missionary activities were going simultaneously. Christian missionaries influenced the Indian people and mobilize them in the name of reform. Some eminent Indians came to ally with Christian missionaries. The Brahma Samaj and its members had shown some inclination towards Christian missionaries that included Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the founder and one of the eminent figures of Brahma Samaj. The nature of the Brahma Samaj was theistic. All the reformers and educationist were highly influenced by missionary education and its norms and value. Therefore, they strongly condemned and opposed the idolatry. Ram Mohan Roy and his colleagues influenced by the Christian missionaries started to attack idolatry. Keshub Chandra Sen and Debendranath Tagore were other prominent members of the Brahma Samaj, who were influenced by the Vedanta and its philosophical side. They tried to malign it using Christian doctrine. This kind of approach of the Brahma Samaj was criticized by other reformists. The people who were affiliated with Bhakti movement raised questions on the activities of the Brahma Samaj. They alleged that the Brahma Samaj was involved in religious activity rather than social reform.¹⁶⁰

Another wave of Brahma Samaj tried to spread and expansion it beyond Calcutta. For this Keshub travelled to all parts of India as ‘Missionary Tour’. According to Colet “what is still more indicative of the spread of Brahmaism, application for religious help and instruction have been sent to Brahma Samaj of India from various parts of the country, both by individual and by bodies of men, who were thirsting after better than Hinduism that could give them”.¹⁶¹

Finally, during a few anniversary festivals, a large body of Brahma Samaj had gone out, threading the street and lanes of the native quarter of Calcutta, singing the missionary hymn to win their Hindu countrymen to the service of ‘One True God’. All who receive English

¹⁵⁹ Jon E. Wilson, *Anxiety of distance: Codification in Early Colonial Bengal*, 2010, pp. 4-5.

¹⁶⁰ Sophia Dobson Collet, *An Historical Sketch of the Brahma Samaj*, 1873.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

Education lost their faith in idolatry, some of them embraced orthodox Christianity and others got oriented towards cynicism. A small instance of the Christian obsession of Brahma Samaj people needed to be discussed here: the proportion of Hindu women in Brahma Samaj was limited and the opportunity was barred at various levels. But the opportunity for other women was open and progress was visible. In 1865, a small “Brahmika Samaj” was established for Calcutta ladies, to which Keshub Chandra Sen ministered it until it was merged with his own institution.¹⁶² Due to these supports and assistance, the missionary got motivated and they expanded their empire in India. Ram Mohan Roy was one of the liberals who heartily welcomed the Europeans and assisted them in every way possible. Mavra Farooq¹⁶³ has mentioned this fact in the following word:

“Duff was assisted by Hindu reformer Ram Mohan Roy, who gave access to him to the high classes of Calcutta society. Duff’s school provided a religious-based education, but he actively engaged both the Hindu and atheist intellectuals. He also followed the Roy’s suggestion; Duff chose to give instruction in English, which had the effect of integrating students from different Indian linguistic backgrounds”

We can only mention that, while entirely opposed to any orthodox Christian theology. Brahmic teaching frequently manifested a practical acquaintance with some of the key phases of Christian life, both spiritual and ethical, and that among educated members of the Brahma Samaj a sincere reverence was generally felt for Christ as one of the greatest beings of religious life. Collet has made some concluding remarks in this regard,

“But enough has been given to show that with whatever shortcoming, and under what limitation, here is the true church of God, which is living and growing, and is doing a real most sacred job for him in a country which the west has, as yet failed to Christianize.”¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Ibid. p. 28.

¹⁶³ M. Farooq, The Aims and Objectives of Missionary Education in the Colonial Era in India.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 35.

During the colonial period Oriental scholars started producing a sense of inferiority complex in the minds of the Indian people through their writings on Indian history and culture. The politics of oriental writing in India was aimed at creating an academic and intellectual atmosphere in the name of superiority, which would create a sense of inferiority in the Indians psyche. The institutions like the Asiatic Society institutionalized ‘false and fabricated body of knowledge’ by means of production of literature on a variety of themes. They tried to justify the false and fabricated image of the India society and culture created by the Orientals. There was a large amount of writings on Indian religious and spiritual corpus. They severely criticized ancient texts of India. They tried to establish that the Vedic, the post-Vedic and the ancient periods were extremely oppressive and discriminatory, wherein there was no place for Dalits and women and that they could not lead a dignified life under that social system. These political agenda and propaganda were spread in the colonial era. Hence, these false and fabricated narratives became the reference point for some of the self-declared intellectuals. These narratives motivated the contemporary liberal Indian intellectuals. And these intellectual stood against the Indian tradition and culture in the guise of social reformers like Ram Mohan Roy, Debendranath Tagore, Keshub Chandra Sen and others. Max Muller’s theory about India was also pretty responsible for forming a false and fabricated narrative of Indian society. Therefore, Christian missionaries and colonialists were heartily welcomed on the Indian soil by these Indians.

Those campaign and movement made aware of people of Sati practices. The missionary campaign about ill practices and savagery largely depicted the data on sati practices. In this milieu, it was obvious to influence common masses. People came forth to voice against ongoing sati practices and collaborated with evangelical movement. At this juncture, social reform movement was at peak. And English education also colored people’s mind. This circumstance was conducive for mobilizing people for reform and abolition of sati. In this climate, Indian intellectuals like Ram Mohan Roy joined movement and started to mobilize people to participate in the reform movement. He was strong opponent of self-immolation and passionate to abolish sati. In this context, he has presented his views in 1818 “*Conference between an Advocate for, and an Opponent of, the Practices of Burning of Widow Alive*” consecutively in 1820 there were in 1820 “*Second Conference*” happened. He has argued that sati has no religious backup and it must be abolished at all. He has signed a petition to abolish Sati and this petition named as: “a great number of most respectable in habitants of Calcutta”. Majumdar has raised question on

Ram Mohan Roy, “petition was authored by Roy himself”.¹⁶⁵ Ram Mohan Roy made possible to bring people against sati through his active support. For this he has mobilized mostly people from Brahmins caste. Further he came up with weekly newspaper publication named *Sambada Kaumudi* in 1821 and in 1822 he published an article as “Modern Encroachment on the Ancient Right of Female According to the Hindu Law of Inheritance”. Through these campaign and awareness derives he has mobilized people against Sati. In respond to Orthodox Opponent he brings *Sahamaran Vishaya* in Bengali version. An English historian Percival spear noted that “Ram Mohan Roy accepted Jesus as one of the religious Master”¹⁶⁶

As we have seen missionaries intended to prove that, there was savagery and ill practices prevalent in the name of sati specifically in colonial Bengal. As it has been found, were much differences between Missionaries survey and government survey on Sati cases. It is showed that missionaries were disguising in the name of sati.

Sati: A Rare Occurrence

There is a genuine question that, why are missionaries were collecting data (private data) despite having government data. These instances and facts raise questions on missionaries’ intention, were the missionaries genuinely committed for reform or they were campaigning for evangelism? From colonial India, there are some accounts which raise question on missionary’s reform movement in the name of Sati. Despite being Missionary-evangelical virtual campaign there was different narrative on Sati practices which questioned whole idea of sati in Bengal.

French missionary Abbe Dubois has given account which does not reflect such kinds of incidents in India. He wrote: “the country abound with widow especially among the Brahmins. Among this caste shorn-heads are to be seen everywhere.”¹⁶⁷ Sir John Malcolm (1769-1833), who has been worked as colonial administer, has closely absorbed contemporary event and practices. He has argued that in central India including Malwa, sati was prevalent in this region. He interpreted that sati practice was dominance when Rajputs posses the power and in Maratha rule it was rare. He elaborate that in the range of whole central India sati practices has been seen not more than

¹⁶⁵J. K. Majumdar, Ram Mohan Ray and Progressive movement in India: Selection from Record (1775-1845) 1941, p. 115-117.

¹⁶⁶ Jain, op. cit. 210.

¹⁶⁷ Abbe Dubois, Hindu Manner, Custom and Ceremony, 1906, p. 354.

three or four only. Some foreigner traveler accounts details did not substantiate the missionary claims in Bengal. One of the Frenchman, Anquetil Duperon confessed,

“I was not present at this barbaric if religious ceremony... I added that line to be free of the thousand and one questions I was asked on the country’ custom in this I failed to tell the truth.”¹⁶⁸

The contemporary foreign travelers and visitors’ accounts did not mention that social problem that has been largely campaigned against by the missionaries and evangelicals. So, those travelers and British administrators accounts revealed that sati was not a pervasive practice as missionary-evangelicals exaggerated it. Fransisco Pelsaert contemporary of Mughal Empire Jahangir noted “there were hundreds or even thousands who did not do it.”¹⁶⁹

William John Kaye was British officer in EIC, returned England in 1845. In 1858, he succeeded James Stuart Mill and joins the Political and Secret Department at Indian office as a Secretary. He confessed,

“But for all this, it can hardly be said that widow-burning was ever a national custom. At no time has the practice been so frequent as to constitute more than an exception to the general rule of self-preservation. Still, even in this exceptional state, it was something very horrible and deplorable in Christian eyes, and something to be suppressed, if suppression were possible, by a Christian government established in a heathen land. ... I have said that this practice of Suttee has never been anything more than an exceptional abomination. It never has been universal throughout India — never in any locality has it been general.”¹⁷⁰

Bishop Heber, who has served as second Bishop in Calcutta, once he travelling Calcutta to united province of Agra, he has given some details about sati of this province. He has written that, sati is not common in this region (Agra Division). He elaborate that “Sati is not common

¹⁶⁸ Vincent Rose, *The French India*, 1990, p. 124.

¹⁶⁹ Pelsaert Francisco, *Jahangir’s India*, 2001, p. 79.

¹⁷⁰ John W Kaye, *The Administration of the East India Company*, 1966 (first published in 1853).

anywhere except Bengal and some part of Behar”.¹⁷¹ The Bishop observation confirmed that Sati only prevalent in Bengal only not any other region. But Malcolm has already proved that, Sati was only prevalent in Central India specifically Rajasthan Region. This contradiction also demonstrates the proposition that, Sati presence in Bengal was just missionary-evangelical constructed Myth in order to proselytize people.

The whole colonial and missionary discourse on Sati is Bengal centric even Rajasthan was the much prone area of Sati practices. In spite of sati practices mass *Jauhar* had been witness at *Chittor* in 1303, 1335, 1368 and at Jaisalmer in 1299. There was huge number of women who jumped into fire when their Husbands were died in battle field. However, today Rajasthan retains its association with sati. The abundance of sati sites in the Sekhavati region doesn't match with the rest of country.

It is important that the particular region where sati was so-called to have to most frequent in colonial period, i.e. West Bengal, no instances appeared to have been reported for the generation. Whereas sati temple and *chattri* (mausoleum) are present in Rajasthan and rest part of India, not many (or one) appears to have been created for the thousand who are suppose to have to have immolation themselves in Colonial Bengal. This lends belief to the speculation that occurrence of widow immolation in Bengal were exaggerated by evangelical and missionaries firstly, to gain right to conversion, and later, to justify their presence and British rule in India. The empowerment of the deprived status of Hindu women was held to be a critical component of the civilizing mission of White man.

Thus, it could be inferred that Sati was never a normal practice in the Indian society. In fact, when evaluated against the criteria of Durkheimian classification of social facts as “normal” and “pathological”, it could be said to belong to the latter type.¹⁷² Therefore, Sati as a pathological fact does not reflect the social reality of the Indian society. A clearer understanding of what Sati meant to the people of India in the nineteenth century could be had from one of Swami Vivekananda's statements that came up in response to a question while he was delivering a lecture in the United States of America,

¹⁷¹ Herber Reginald, *Narratives of a Journey Through the Upper Province of India from Calcutta to Bombay*, 1993, p. 325.

¹⁷² Emile Durkheim, *Rules of Sociological Method*, 1895.

“Vivekananda denied that people burned widows. It was true, however, that widows had burned themselves. In few cases where it has happened, they has been urged to not to do so by holy man, who where always opposed to suicide. Where the devoted widows insisted, stating that they desired to accompany their husbands in the transformation that had take place, they were obliged to submit themselves to the fiery tests.”¹⁷³

He further emphasized his statement by saying, “No, the people do not burn women in India; nor have they ever burned witches.”

¹⁷³ Lecture delivered in By Swami Vivekananda in Detroit, USA, 1894.

Chapter-5

Conclusion

I have examined the role of the Christian missionaries and their impact on Indigenous cultures in India. Missionaries came as an agent of social change and propelled the indigenous people for betterment of their social and spiritual life. Missionary's activities and their zeal of civilize people influenced on social, political, cultural, educational system of India. Missionaries came in India with assumption: native Indians are uncivilized, ignorant and barbaric. As a civilized and superior being they ought to civilize and liberate to "heathens" people from agony and ignorance. Missionaries were enlightened with the philosophical idea of renaissance and reformation movement occurred in Europe. Renaissance and reformation movement set a paradigm of liberation, freedom, emancipation, individualism, equality, liberty and fraternity. These ideas attracted Europeans immensely. In contemporary scenario they were enthusiast and passionate to disseminate those noble thought to every person of world. Over the time period of time these initiatives and campaigns turned into missionary movement across the continental. From the fourteenth and fifteenth century onward these those movement and campaign were spreading out of the Europe. Christian missionaries had taken responsibility to spreads these ideas and thoughts. As colonialism spread into the territory of non-European country in some way missionaries also ventured to heathen land to disseminate noble ideal and civilize pagans with the teaching of gospel.

It has been discussed the role of missionaries under the indigenous culture i.e. indigenous education, indigenous people and indigenous practice and rituals. Missionaries taken all those traits as means to civilize, liberate and emancipate people. They argued there are problem in existing social, educational, cultural and belief system of Heathens. In this context, they discern the problems within the system and magnified and exaggerate these issues and appropriate it to indigenous cultures of India. On the basis of it they mobilize people to abolish and eradicate those practices. In parallel, they warned them by the demonizing Indigenous cultures of India. Thus missionaries initiated derive in order to abolish and eradicate inbuilt problem in society.

Even, they were working in the field of welfare however religion was in centre missionary activity. Therefore it is sounds illogical that if someone wants to improve the social economic status of people. In this process, how does religion and individual's faith matter?

Education is such means which liberate and emancipate peoples from the agonies. Missionaries ventured into India territory to heathens in order to civilize and ignite people. Missionaries came with the premise that heathen are uncivilized and ignorant therefore they must to civilize them. Having this kind of premise missionaries come to India sub continent. They started disseminate education through the missionary education. In order to establish missionary school missionary did not consider existing indigenous schools. In this process, the prior schools could not sustain in the influence of missionary schools. The curriculum of missionary education contains modern and lofty ideas which could not address the vernaculars requirements. As native people are comfortable communicate and express in their dialect and manner but missionary education disseminated into English and sophisticate manner. Which has produced modern and sophisticated peoples? It made English speaking and sophisticate class within India society. An English based stratification emerged in Indian society. As missionaries were prejudice about practices and rituals therefore thought such practices were not relevant. That is why they could not understand indigenous ethos of education. As a result, missionary education was unable to incorporate peoples from each section of society. As it has seen, due to English education an elite and sophisticated class emerged. Vernacular languages are the ethos of the any civilization but missionary education marginalized India vernacular. As we have seen Konkani were replaced by Portuguese and Persian removed from court proceedings. Missionary education curriculum and pedagogy was not conducive for native people because native people were habitual and comfortable in their own indigenous mode. Consequently, indigenous pedagogy and practices marginalized from education system.

Religious conversion was the most sensitive issue of missionary education. It is my finding that missionary education was oriented with conversion policy. Therefore missionary schools intended convert peoples through the educational means. If they want to civilize and enlighten people through education then why was changing faith of people in guise of education? In missionary school indigenous religion and customs were bashed covertly. Teaching of gospel

was the part of missionary school. In the influence of missionary education the people's pedagogy excluded and vernaculars were submerged into missionary education. In this anomic circumstance, missionary approached them and converted into Christianity.

Missionaries worked among the indigenous people through medical care, welfare activity. Indigenous people's life style and practices is sui-generic in nature. Missionaries ventured into the soil of indigenous people for civilize and improve their social and spiritual life. It is my finding that missionary activity among the indigenous people of India could not improve their social and economic status even conversion policy made away them from their own native culture. Missionaries imposed their own healing modes in order to persuade them for gospel. In the influence of missionary heading modes indigenous modes of practices withered. Indigenous people were self-sufficient but in the influence of missionary activities they had lost their self sufficient attributes. It is found that chief concern of missionary activities was religious conversion. Missionary tactics was to taming peoples through the welfare and philanthropic activities. In this process they got dependent on those philanthropic and welfare activities. Over the period of time their own indigenous practices became alien and they habituated with Christian custom and manner. As a result, indigenous practices abandoned and people become dependent of missionary. In this scenario missionaries approached them for faith change. Missionary-dependent people had no way to except embrace Christianity. Through these process and strategy missionary changed faith of ordinary people. Thus Missionary activities among indigenous people intended to religious conversion. In this process they did not respect indigenous folkway and life patten and imposed Christian prone practices and customs. In order proselytization they disregarded indigenous people's folkways.

As it is seen Christian missionaries were involved in reform movement in order to eradicate social evils from different parts of India. And they have been worked for Dravidian identity in south India. It has been found that their role in south Indian identity quest was intended to fulfill their vested interest. Missionaries pick the sati issue in colonial Bengal as social evil, which has been practicing in colonial Bengal and wished it must be abolish as social evils. But the empirical reality did not match with as missionaries claimed. Thus, Missionary movement and campaign for reform has seen propaganda in order to expand Christian mission. They were tried to provide identical alternate to south Indian people in order to emancipation. For this, they

applied racial theory to realize north India people as separate category. Moreover, they delinked south India culture from pan-Indian culture. They portrayed linked between ancient Tamil literatures with early Christianity. As we know later missionary's racial construct refuted by scientific research. In the name of St. Thomas they deceived indigenous people. Later, it has been found that legend of St. Thomas was just a myth. In the name of racial construct and of St Thomas they demonized indigenous practices and belief. They categorically bashed indigenous practices and imposed the Christian customs and manner. In the name of sati they also disguise people in colonial Bengal and linked sati with *Kulin* Brahmin Marriage. Overall, in the name of reform and identity quest they run a hidden agenda of Jesuit mission. Robert Caldwell crated propaganda of Aryan-Dravidian theory because he could succeed in converting people into Christianity. Their commitment of civilize and emancipate people doesn't sustained. The Christian mission activities were oriented and motivated conversion policy because all missionary activities and initiatives come to end at conversion and proselytization. If today Aryan Dravidian theory have been proven wrong who would appropriate the damages of racial and ethnic clash in Tamilnadu which have been erupted in the name of Aryan-Dravidian theory?

Missionaries' Prejudices

As missionary assumed heathens of India are uncivilized and ignorant therefore they must be civilize. At that time they were looking whole world through their own glass of Christianity. In nineteenth century "Jesuit Mission" Society of Jesus was formed and claimed the authority of Jesus as Supreme Being. Therefore pagans (non-Christian) must be taught gospel and convert into Christianity. They also proposed to establish supremacy of Europeans as superior being. Having this premises that Pagans are uncivilized and inferior, they embarks their mission. This kind of premise (uncivilized and inferior) about any culture or people shows the prejudiced and racially superior views. And these prejudice that "This particular community is inferior and uncivilized" could not be justify under modern "politically correct climate." This kind of mentality would be termed according modern social science discourse as racial and sectarian. According to modern academic discourse these kind of prejudice could not be justify.

Disguised Role of the Missionary

In order to expand the mission they did recognize the people's way of life, their own interpretation of social reality. Their ethnocentric views harmed to indigenous peoples. The approach of missionaries during Christian mission was Eurocentric and Monotheistic. Being ethnocentric they did not include others perspective and view in missionary policy. Consequently, vernacular practices got marginalized and people have to believe that only missionary' preaching are the ultimate reality. In this circumstance they were excluded and alienated form their own custom and practices. This also made away them form own family members and community which is resulted into individual crisis and disintegration of community. In short, missionaries did not respected indigenous cultures and individual agency of indigenous peoples.

In the entire Christian mission and missionaries disguise themselves in the name of education, healthcare and reform. It is in this research that ultimate agenda of Christian mission was conversion. Any single missionary activity did not seen for genuine interest of people. Religion and preaching of gospel was the central theme of Christian Mission. As welfare activity nothing to do with religion it must be focused on the complexity of the problems. But why christen mission centric to religion rather welfare. In the name of welfare they covertly run agenda of mission. Therefore, they disguised real intension in the name of welfare activities.

It is find Christian mission seen as process of subversion of indigenous people. Missionaries applied tactics to deviate peoples from their own indigenous cultures in order to attract people toward their culture. Indigenous people were living in harmonious way following their rituals and customs. They disintegrated their indigenous life-style and imposed Christian model of way of life.

Some Genuine Questions on Christian Mission

The Christian missionary has been working across the world from fifteenth century. And they have claimed to betterment social and economic status of depressed of people. Missionaries have been worked specifically in third world countries such as Africa, Asia and Latin America. They have been worked among the indigenous people of these countries. But the current status of these countries is not good enough. Sociologist and economist have categories these countries as under developed add periphery of development. And indigenous people of these countries have been

put under vulnerable country. And social and economic social status of these people is not good enough. If missionaries have claimed to developed and emancipate of these indigenous people. Then effect of development activities impact must be tangible. And impact of missionaries in five hundred year must be in positive direction.

Let us take other schools of thought perspective on Christian missionary activities. As it has been argued that Christian missionaries empowered indigenous people, there might be manifest impact of missionary as enriched the indigenous culture and benefited indigenous people slightly. The latent impact of missionary is reflected that they have subverted indigenous people and culture as well. In other word, latent impact was the cultural degradation. The People might have been able earn concrete amount of money but its latent impact reflected as they have lost their own indigenous means of livelihood. As it has been find that converted Munda and Oroan has been find involved menial work in Ranchi city. Besides this, it has find that, there were separate churches in south India of Christians and hierarchy seen within converted people. So, what is the advantage of Conversion?

They were not empowering people as benevolent even they are doing so in return of Bible and gospel. They are disguising indigenous people in the name humanitarian work. This approach of missionaries is questionable. Threw was give and take (exchange) relationship between missionaries and indigenous people. One hand they were empowering peoples other hand they were imposing Christianity.

One who is expert in European philology how he can determine that Indian Tamil has no link with Indian Classics? These all are instances raise question on missionary's claims and intension.

As we know, in this particular period India has witness great economic decline and this adversely affected to lower and depressed class peoples. Even missionaries are working in this period and claimed to empower depressed class people. If Indian economy drastically declined in this particular period, a genuine question would be upon ongoing Christian mission in that period.

The process of conversion and subversion which was began in colonial India. It is consistently going on in the name of "Project Joshua."¹⁷⁴ This shows that, in modern age missionaries

¹⁷⁴ Project Joshua is a modern invention of the Evangelical mission of Christianity that seeks to Christianize the whole of India, although it looks to disguise itself as a mission seeking welfare of the masses.

obsessed with ethnocentrism and could not recognizing others ceremonies and folkways till now. How this ethnocentric approach of Christian missionaries, could be justify?

Contribution of this Research to the Body of Knowledge

To liberate, enlighten and emancipate those people who are backward and deprived. It is benign and sublime thought in the modern, capitalist and complex societies. But what is the role of faith and belief change in the social and economic uplift process. This does not sound logical under the modern social science debate. Wherein such ideas are prevalent: there could be multiple realities (post-modernism) and each one must be addressed and respected and nothing is sacrosanct (post-structuralism). In light of these circumstances when we examine the role of Christian missionary it is missionaries disregarded all these traits and impose their own thought and proclaimed that it only true and sacrosanct and your indigenous cultures are irrelevant and inadequate in order to liberation and emancipation of souls. This approach of missionaries has been to undermine indigenous cultures and subvert indigenous people.

Many previous researches have portrayed the role of the Christian Missionaries on Indian soil as the agent of progress. But, it must not be forgotten that the prime motive of their intervention in the Indian cultural fabric was not like that of a benefactor. Rather it was centered upon a belief of superiority in terms of both race and theological doctrines. The theoretical basis of their approach could be linked to what Edward Taylor (1871) attempted to show in his *Primitive Culture* where he looked quite convinced of the fact that western civilization was the only prototype of what civilization actually means. All other “lower races” can attain that status only by imitating the west. The missionaries probably held similar views with respect to India’s indigenous religious beliefs and practices. They initiated a process of subversion that had many heads; the major areas in which they forayed have been discussed in the preceding chapters. Although the contribution of the missionaries has been considered positive in quite a number of research concerning the field, their secret designs and divisive politics has often been overlooked. It could probably be a consequence of euro centrism that is a serious error to commit. As has been argued heretofore, the missionaries actually sowed the seeds of conflict and animosities between various groups, an example of which is the creation of English-educated elite by undermining indigenous system of education in India that could verily be considered to be one of the major dimensions of marginalization of a large section of Indian population. It is a

matter of common experience that social exclusion on the basis of one's proficiency in English is not unknown even in current times. Thus, any study of social exclusion and marginalization in Indian society seems incomplete without taking into account the role of the Christian missionaries who came to India on a purportedly civilizing mission.

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