Education, Empowerment and Identity: Experience of Social and Religious Reform Movements in Malabar

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EDUCATION, EMPOWERMENT AND IDENTITY: EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS REFORM MOVEMENTS IN MALABAR

Vinodan. Navath

The paper discusses the role of social and religious reform movements in Malabar in creating structural changes in a traditionally stagnant society. It is to be noticed that both in Malabar and Travancore this was possible due to the joint effort of Christian Missionaries and social reformers through the process of education and empowerment. State played a minimal role in this endeavour. Educational growth and present identity of Malabar is closely associated with the efforts of reformers to reorient the society on the line of modernization and rationalisation. The movement posed a serious threat to the institutions like caste hierarchy, joint family and customary laws dominated the Kerala society. It is interesting to note that the social reformers of Malabar, though they were expertise in traditional knowledge acted as the preachers of new form of knowledge introduced by the westerners. The reorganization of family structure, flowering of new form of literature, higher level of social mobility etc. may be cited as a reflection of reform movement. But it is to be bear in mind that even after the continuous efforts of social reformers, there existed serious rift among the community members in terms of social and economic status. Only a minuscule minority got acquainted with new avenues opened by western form of education. Some of the movements were reactionary in nature. The present Free State which followed the British failed to keep the tempo created by the reform movements in the area of education and employment.

ROLE OF TAMIL NADU IN CARRYING OUT LEGISLATIVE REFORMS TO CURB CHILD MARRIAGE

Dr. M.S.Thangam

In India the prevailed custom of early marriage in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were seen as social evils. In Tamil Nadu the issue of child marriage and child widow-hood were the major concerns of the social reformers. The educated middle class women ventured to eradicate these practices. They addressed their views through the political and communal organizations and expanded their activities in an organized manner. It resulted in the passing of the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929, which came into operation in 1930.