Expansion and establishment of educational institutions by the Christian Missionaries in Tripura

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Abstract

The creation of the independent state of Tripura brought with it expectations for the state's social, economic, and educational advancement. Almost sixty years of sacrifices and protracted efforts later, the people of Tripura realized they should have their own state. North-eastern India was greatly impacted by Christian missions. This effect combined with western (British) colonization to generate a synergy that completely changed the geography of the Northeast. The study also looks at the consequences of Hindu colonization in Northeast India, which happened before western colonization and Christian missions. This Hindu religious and cultural influence, or "Sanskritization," caused immense suffering to several indigenous communities, especially those in the Tripura plains. Tripura is the name of a small, hilly state in northeastern India. Before it was merged with India, it was a sovereign state. The rulers of Tripura believed that in order to modernize their realm, modern education was necessary. The first step toward modern education was taken in 1957 when a school was established. From then on, the path towards contemporary education started, and before Tripura became its own state in 1972, its educational system had advanced to a commendable level. In this essay, the development of education from 1962—the year that modern education in Tripura started—to 2018 is examined historically.

Keywords: - Christian Missions, Education, Historical Investigation, Northeast India, Tripura, Colonization.

I. INTRODUCTION

The foundation of society is thought to be education. It was established for the benefit of the general public by the government or by a private initiative. In the instance of the Christian missionaries in the Indian state of Tripura, they saw that education was necessary to move the

country of India toward modernity. They made the decision to combat the nation's illiteracy and ignorance. Simultaneously, they recognized that the success of the endeavour hinged entirely on the complete collaboration and engagement of the nation's populace. This article aims to examine the impact of Christian missionary education and societal transformation in Tripura State, India, following its independence[1]. But first, I'll go back and examine the political, social, and religious landscape of the nation prior to its independence in order to understand how Christian missionaries contributed to social transformation via teaching[2].

1.1 Background of Christian Missionaries in Tripura

In the state of Tripura in northeast India, Christianity is one of the important religions. As per the 2011 Indian Census, there are 159,882 Christians in Tripura, which represents 4.35% of the total population. The majority of Christians in the state are found in the indigenous settlements of Tripuri, Lushai, Kuki, Darlong, Halam, and so on. Thirteen percent of the people are Christians among the state's Scheduled Tribes. In Tripura, Christianity has been practiced for many years. When Fr. Ignatius Gomes, a Jesuit priest, first visited the Christians of Mariamnagar in Agartala in 1683, he made the first mention of them. In 1843, the pastor of Chittagong, Fr. P. Barbe, travelled to Tripura[3]. Fr. Louis Augustine Verite and Fr. Beboit Adolphe Mercier, pioneer missionaries from Holy Cross, performed mass for the Christians living in Mariamnagar Village during their journey to Agartala in 1856. But it wasn't until 1937 that priests moved into Mariamnagar permanently.

In December 1938, the Tripura Baptist Christian Union was founded in Lakshmilunga, a village six miles from Agartala, under the leadership of Rev. M.J. Eade. When Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya, the king of Tripura Kingdom at the time, officially granted property to the missionaries from the New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society (NZBMS), the Baptist Mission Compound was established in 1938 in Arundhutinagar, Agartala.

1.2 Purpose and policies of Christian Missionaries in expansion and establishing institution in Tripura.

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[1] Priyam Goswami, Assam in the Nineteenth Century: Industrialization and Colonial Penetration (Guwahati: Spectrum Publications, 1999), 19.
[2] Frederick Downs, The Mighty Works of God (Gauhati: Christian Literature Center, 1969), 11.
[3] Debbarma, Sukhendu (1996) Origin and Growth of Christianity in Tripura: With Special Reference to the New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society, 1938-1988, Indus Publishing, New Delhi. ISBN 81-7387-038-1.

Christian missionaries had a significant impact on northeastern India. This effect combined with western (British) colonization to generate a synergy that completely changed the geography of the Northeast. The social and political facets of that transformation are the main topics of this dissertation. The Bible's translation into regional tongues and an incredibly effective educational initiative that each mission and denomination started from the ground up served as the main catalysts. Societies throughout the Northeast saw a reawakening and revitalization as a result. The tribal societies underwent the biggest transformation. It sparked a national identity movement that is still going strong today.

Throughout India's colonial era, numerous educational revolutions and experiments were conducted. The Missionaries were one of the major contributors. The missionaries made significant financial investments to establish their establishments in India. But conversion rather than widespread education was their primary goal[4]. To convert people to Christianity was their aim. They went through the educational procedure to do this. They thought that education would improve people's comprehension of Christian scriptures and help them appreciate the truths. One of the first Protestant missionaries to come in India was the Danish missionary. The southern Indian province of Madras is where this action was posted. Indian languages were taught as a medium of instruction in missionary schools in accordance with the Company's established schools. Not only were European and Ango Indian children attending the missionary schools, but converted Indian youngsters as well. In actuality, missionaries were the first to produce books in Indian languages. This subject continues to be essential to Indian education policy. Similar criticisms were leveled about India's New Education Policy when it was implemented[5]. The fact that there is still no solution to the issue of the educational media demonstrates how deeply embedded it is in our system.

1.3   Role of Government on the expansion and establishment of various educational institutions in Tripura

The term "higher education" encompasses any programs that continue after high school. Under the 1998 World Conference on Higher Education's adopted World Declaration on Higher Education, "all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level,

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[4] Borok Baptist Convention, Rangchak Mukumu, 2010.
[5] Jain, Sandhya (2010). Evangelical intrusions: [Tripura, a case study]. New Delhi: Rupa & Co.

provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent state authorities" was defined as higher education. The field of higher education in India has expanded greatly in recent decades. It's also true that India's university system has several administrative and organizational flaws. Higher education in Tripura did not begin until 1947, with the founding of Maharaja Bir Bikram College. Table 1[6]. Tripura's educational system dates back to the time when the state was ruled by princes[7]. The former princely state of Tripura joined the Indian Union on October 15, 1949, and on January 21, 1972, it attained full statehood.

Table 1 The number of institutions of higher learning in Tripura.

No. of Institutions	1972	1978	1998	2019-20
University (Govt.)	-	-	1 Tripura (Uni). (state)	2 MBB Uni (state) Tripura Uni (central)
University (Private)	-	-	-	1 ICFAI Uni
National Level Institute	-	-	-	1 NIT, agartala
Indian Institute of Information Tech. (IIIT)	-	-	-	01
General Degree Colleges (Govt).	03	03	14	22
General Degree Colleges (Private)	03	03	-	02
Engineering Colleges (Govt.& Private)	01	01	01	02
Polytechnic Institutes	01	01	01	06
Medical Colleagues	-	-	-	02
Professional colleges: Arts & Craft, Music, Law, Nursing, B.P. Ed (Govt.& Private)	02	03	05	15
B.Ed. College (Govt.& Private)	01	01	01	06
Pharmacy College	-	-	01	02
Agricultural College	-	-	-	01
Veterinary College	-	-	01	01
Fishery College	-	-	01	01
Paramedical College	-	-	-	01
Total				

(Source: Economic Review of Tripura 2019-20).

1.4 Number of institutions established by the missionary's year wise up to 2018

The nation's highest child rights organisation has projected that over 13,000 Christian-run schools in India could be saving more than Rs. 2,500 crore annually by refusing to admit pupils from the economically weaker segment (EWS), as required by the Right to Education Act.

The estimate is being used by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) to support its argument for including minority institutions in the Act's purview, which requires all unaided schools to admit EWS pupils starting in elementary school.

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[6] Government of India: All India Survey on Higher Education 2017-18, MHRD, New Delhi.
[7] Government of Tripura: Economic Review of Tripura 2019-20, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Agartala.

According to a study obtained by this newspaper from the NCPCR, the average cost per student for regular course enrolment in private unaided institutions was Rs 18,267, according to data from the Household Social Consumption on Education in India for the 2017–18 academic year.

According to a study on minority education, there are 12,904 Christian minority schools in India that serve 54, 86,884 pupils. This implies that the schools receive revenue from the students in excess of Rs 10,022.89 crore[8].

Social change is defined as a shift in the proportion of the population attributing a particular attitude or pattern of action. Reformers and missionaries see change as transformation, freedom, and deliverance. That's why in order to improve our society, education ought to be an instrument for advancement and general reform.

1.5 Tripura State, India's Social-Religious and Political Situation Prior to Independence

According to B.R. Purkait as cited by P.C. Gine,

> *The entire Society was gripped by a powerful conservation. People's morals were lost. Women's standing and privileges were taken away[9]. The progressiveness and vibrancy of the entire society vanished. The caste system was firmly established in antiquated traditions and prejudices. A social rut was the unavoidable outcome.*

The prevalent customs in India at that era included the caste system, sati, infanticide, pardha pratha, child marriage, gender dichotomy, etc. Nonetheless, reformers and missionaries opposed social faults and created schools in an effort to effect change, believing that this would be the only way to combat social evils in the Indian state of Tripura. On the other hand, the fall of the Mughal Empire left the political landscape of the Indian state of Tripura extremely insecure.

According to B.R. Purkait as cited by PC. Gine,

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[8] Naik, J., & Nurullah, S. (1974). Indigenous Education in India at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century. In A Student's History of Education in India (1800–1973) (6th ed., pp. 1–32). Madras: Macmillan India Limited.
[9] Francis Jenkins, Report on the North-East Frontier of India (Delhi: Spectrum Publications, 1995), 13.

> *Following the demise of the Mughal Empire, the nation lacked a single, consolidated political power. Due to this, small-time independent monarchs with no taste in culture or education rose to power in the provinces.*

Envious of one another, the autonomous leaders in the provinces refrained from intervening to save one another against the incursion of external rulers[10]. The British East Tripura State of India Company took advantage of this to establish their dominance over the area by taking advantage of internal tensions among the native rulers.

1.6 Learning and Colonialism

Lord Macaulay comments;

> *Regardless of the intrinsic worth of our literature or the unique circumstances of this nation, there is every reason to believe that the English language is the most beneficial foreign tongue for our original subjects.*

They stopped publishing any native literature in Arabic and Sanskrit and denied the existence of oriental languages, law, culture, and religion[11]. In addition, they demanded that all universities offering courses in vernacular be shut down and threatened to step down as Chairman of the Committee on Education should the government not accept their proposal.

William Bentinck as a result also commanded that no more funds be given to any Oriental institutes or local literature be printed. Thus, funds were made available for the purpose of using the English language to promote science and English literature[12]. Considering Macaulays's educational strategy. This is a policy designed to create a class of people, according to Purkait. Indian by ancestry and complexion, but English by opinion, taste, morality, and intelligence.

To put it simply, education is the process of holistic growth. Ironically, rather than aiming for holistic development, Lord Macaulay brought education to the people of Tripura State, India, but his main goal was to appoint clerks and other bureaucrats to support the British

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[10] O. M. Rao, Among the Churches of the Hills and Valleys of North East India (Delhi: ISPCK, 2005), 178.
[11] Lalrimawia, Mizoram-History and Cultural Identity (1990-2000) (Guwahati: United Publishers, 1995), 113.
[12] Singha, K. (1390 Bangabda) Rajmala, Agartala: Bornomala Samskaran.

administration. The system is less practical and more theoretical. What hurts even more is that, despite India's independence for many years, the outdated system still exists. The entire fabric of Indian society is shaped by the ideology and nature of the colonial power. As a result, a large number of post-colonial academics today contest colonialism's powers. In India, the colonial power increased its territory on the pretext of modernizing and civilizing the country. The same boat carried colonizers and missionaries to the Indian state of Tripura[13]. Anything that did not align with their beliefs and customs was disapproved. They reaffirmed the dominance of English education and European culture as the reliable arbiters of Christian tradition.

In the same vein Christian missionaries in spite of the excellent intention and work, they failed to comprehend and accept those with faith and cultural ethos of the Indians in many regard[14]. The message of repentance from sin and putting a break to one's past life functioned as the primary theology of the missionaries. They give significant stress on renouncing ones habit and behaviour. In order to ensure that those who had converted were free of influence from the non-converts, they forced the converts dwell in the newly found settlement frequently named Christian compounds or village[15]. Even to this day, in many NEI villages, the villages maintained to preserve the distinction in spite of the fact that everyone has accepted Christianity.

1.7 Impact of the establishment of various educational institutions by the missionaries in Tripura

In the study of missions, the first line, "the Impact of Missions," can come across as a bit of a cliché. There was a big influence everywhere missionaries went and set up shop. But each place or circumstance is different, thus each case needs to be thoroughly examined and assessed. In practically every sphere of civilization, including the spiritual, societies and cultures saw significant transformations. It had to be since the Bible describes the transformation that takes place when the gospel is preached using the striking imagery of light piercing the darkness of the world.

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[13] Lalsangkima Pachuau, "The Socio-Political Realities of Tribal Christians in Northeast India," in In Search of Identity and Tribal Theology: A Tribute to Dr. Renthy Keitzar, ed. Wati Longchar (Jorhat: Tribal Study Center, 2001), 34.

[14] Alexander Mackenzie, History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 7.

[15] T. K. Oomen, "Culture Change among the Tribes of Northeast India," in Christianity and Change in Northeast India, eds. T. B. Subba, Joseph Puykunnel Shaji, and J. P. Purakal (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Co., 2009), 12.

In mission history, colonisation and colonialism are also common topics, despite their frequent unpopularity. It is typically viewed unfavourably as a sinister period of history that became involved in missionary endeavours. It's possible that some missionaries and authors avoid talking about it and instead steer the debate towards more socially acceptable and even politically right subjects. Colonisation did not, however, always have negative outcomes. This dissertation will highlight a few of the narrative's unexpectedly favourable elements.

The indigenous peoples' identities and distinctive characteristics were shaped by the social and political revolutions that it sparked, in conjunction with western colonization. It should come as no surprise that it also led to significant social unrest in the area, some of which is still going on today. The fact that neither missionaries nor administrative authorities knew the long-term effects of their decisions and actions is an intriguing aspect. They just took action based on the situation and their immediate needs. The British government's sole goal was to safeguard its colonial interests; the missionaries' only goal was to propagate the gospel. But together, their acts created a singular force that altered the course of history and the future of the Northeast's many ethnic populations.

1.8 Social Changes in India

The following are the modifications that Indian Christians and Christian missionaries brought about in society.

Christian educational institutions: When India gained its independence, it inherited an educational system that was not only quantitatively tiny and dispersed but also based on caste, gender, and regional differences. One in three children attended primary school, and just 14% of the population was literate. The formal education system in the nation has evolved since the 1950s. The clearly stated goals of Christian educational establishments in post-independence.

a) To participate more actively in the social change process;
b) To extend a special hand to the underprivileged and impoverished;
c) To extend a special hand to the underprivileged and impoverished;
d) To instil a message of unity and affection in humanity's conscience and;
e) To engage in and contribute to the educational initiatives aimed at improving the nation.

Even though India gained its independence in 1947, her true liberation from poverty, ignorance, starvation, nepotism, regionalism, and religious extremism is still demanded by her patriotic spirit. Thus, in addition to combating superstitions and the caste system, Christian missionaries also inspired the locals to resist these evil forces through educational initiatives[16]. Its goal is to change society without causing any discrimination.

1.9 Political History

Even though Tripura was a princely state, she started to lose control over her own land in the 18th century. Following their 1722 conquest by the Mughals, the Tripuran monarchs were forced to cede most of their plain holdings, called "Chakla Roshnabad," and pay tribute to retain what little remained. This led to the gradual demotion of Tripura, a once-mighty monarchy spanning a vast expanse of land, to the rank of a minor province under the Mughal Empire. The basic feudatory strategy of the Mughal rule and the British position towards Tripura were different in some respects[17]. After Nawab Mirzafar and Mirkasim bequeathed Chakla Roshnabad to the English East India Company in 1765 A.D., the Dewani, which was bestowed to the Company by Mughal Emperor Shah Alam, confined and controlled the area.

It's worth noting that upon their arrival in Tripura, the British found a novel system of administration and governance. Both the plains and the hills contributed to the total area of the state. A Zamindar subservient to the Nawab of Bengal ruled the plains known as "Chakla Roshnabad," in contrast to the independent king on the hill.

As a result, the hills served to divide Tripura during the colonial period. The writer is an assistant professor at Rabindrasadan Girls' College in Karimganj, Assam, India, specializing in history. Send me an email at: ———— "Chakla Roshnabad" and "Hill Tipperah" were the British terms used to describe this area in Tripura, India, after 1920. The Traverse Survey conducted by the Survey Department determined that Chakla Roshnabad encompasses an area of 533.77 square miles. The Zamindari of Chakla Roshnabad encompassed a large chunk of the Tipperah (Comilla), Noakhali, and Sylhet districts in the then-Colonial Bengal.

Tripura was a princely state till it became a part of India on October 15, 1949. But when India was partitioned in 1947, the hilly regions of Tripura were the only parts that remained after the

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[16] Sangkima, Essays on the History of the Mizos (Delhi: Spectrum Publications, 2004), 28.
[17] P. T. Philip, the Growth of Baptist Churches in Nagaland (Guwahati: Christian Literature Centre, 1983), 67.

Zamindari of Chakla Roshnabad was captured by what was then East Pakistan[18]. The two years between India's independence and partition (15 August 1947) and Tripura's incorporation into the Indian Union (15 October 1949) were referred to as the "Period of Regency."

II. EDUCATION'S DEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPMENT UNDER ROYAL ADMINISTRATION

When the modernization tsunami swept through Bengal in the 19th century, Tripura was also hit by its current[19]. The monarchs of Tripura aspired to modernize their state, but it was Maharaja Birchandra Manikya who took the lead. By establishing Tripura's first public school in 1862, he sparked the modernization of the old city. Hence, it was established that Tripura lacked a "modern educational system" before 1862. Based on Sri Kailashchandra Singh's "Rajmala" (Singh, 1390 Bangabda), it is evident that the educated Bengali officials were crucial in running the state's government throughout the 18th century, as the Tripuran rulers were almost completely uneducated. When Maharaja Rajdhar Manikya became a member of the royal family, this occurred. In their palaces, the royal members were taught by Bengali private instructors. Nonetheless, the Tripuran kings were entirely dependent on the knowledge and abilities of individuals with education, particularly Bengali people with an English education, in order to manage their zamindari at Chakla Roshnabad and communicate with the colonial overlords of Bengal.

However, prior to 1862, there was no indication that the field of education would advance. As a result, the state's literacy rate was likewise quite low. There were around 108 boys in Tripura receiving education at the two schools that were open during the 1874–75 school year, according to the Bengal Administration Report and the "Tripura District Gazetteers." Two more schools were opened the next year, and out of the 179 boys enrolled, only half attended regularly. There were roughly twenty-five schools in Tripura in 1979, and by the end of 1981, there were thirty-one[20]. However, the next year, there were only 27 schools left because of administrative incompetence and a lack of infrastructure. "With the exception of the schools at the subdivisions, all the rest are mere Pathshalas" According to the Report on the

[18] Julian Jacobs, Hill Peoples of Northeast India: The Nagas (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 151.
[19] Alexander Mackenzie, Memorandum on the North-East Frontier of Bengal (Guwahati: Spectrum Publications, 2003), 37.
[20] A. Bendangyabang, History of Christianity in Nagaland, Social Change (Bangalore: Shalom Ministry Publication, 2004), 64.

Administration of Bengal 1985–86 (1987), the educational system in the state was quite strict. Up to 1989–1990, educational mismanagement continued[21].

However, in 1948–1902, measures were taken to improve educational institutions, resulting in an increase in the number of schools from 16 to 19. In 1985–1986, Bengal had only 50,703 primary schools (Report on the Administration of Bengal 1985–86, 1987). Table 2 shows the state's educational system by subdivision for the academic year 1995–2010. The depicts the deteriorating condition of education in Tripura in the last part of the nineteenth century[22]. Additionally, it demonstrates the rise in the state's literacy rate.

Table 2 Tripura's educational report for the state (1994–10).

Sub-Division	Number of schools	Students			Race of students									Average daily attendance of students	
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Tripura	Kukis	Bengali Muslims	Christian's	Thakuns	Manipuris	Others	Boys	Girls
Sadar	10	0	10	449	0	449	595	58	7	2	21	54	24	324.96	0
Sonamura	9	0	9	179	0	179	196	49	96	0	19	69	91	394.9	0
Bilonia	5	0	5	139	0	139	139	2	9	98	29	97	61	14.96	0
Kailashahar	18	0	18	187	0	187	189	9	87	96	26	14	21	29.97	0
Total	42	0	42	954	0	954	1119	118	199	196	95	234	197	764.79	0

Source: (Government of Tripura, 2004).

Another intriguing information about women's education in Tripura is also shown in Table 3. During that time, there was no sign of any female students[23]. Therefore, it can be assumed that Tripura's rulers did not value women's education.

Table 3 The 1968 Census's Educational Declaration.

Total population	1,32,695	
No. of the Tribes	Population	Education Tribes
Chakma	4,891	19
Tripura	84,595	108
Kuki	9,789	09
Halam	1,249	-
Lushai	138	-
Mog	1,249	198
Total	1,01,911	334

Source: (Choudhury, Re- Print, 1995).

Table 4 People in Tripura with formal education (based on the 1963 Census).

	Total Educated	Bengali Educated	English Educated
Educated Tribal	4986	3540	369

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[21] Reang, Lincoln. (2016). Kau Bru, In G.N. Devy and Sukhendu Debbarma (Eds). People's Linguistic Survey of India, Volume Twenty-Eight, Part Two, The Languages of Tripura, Orient Blackswan, and P. 98.
[22] Reang, Lincoln. (2021). History of The Reang (Bru). EBH Publishers (India), Guwahati, P. 9
[23] The Imperial Gazetter of India Vol. XIII (1908) Oxford: Published under the authority of His Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council.

Source: (Choudhury, Re- Print, 1995).

As educated Bengali immigrants began to flood into Tripura, the percentage of the population that could read and write rose. However, according to the 1963 census, male literacy rates rose substantially, while female literacy rates were practically flat[24]. Table 4 shows that one reason the female literacy rate was so low during that time was because Tripura provided easy economic opportunities to people who were moving from Bengal. Most of the people who settled in Tripura—working-class people, farmers, and government employees—came for the job. They didn't plan to stay, so they left their families behind[25].

Table 5 The number of persons in Tripura who received multilingual education in 1955, categorized by religion.

	Total population			How many persons received their education in a language other than English														
				Bengali			Hindi			Oriya			English			Others		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Hindu	91589	19789	111378	95678	92148	187826	5964	6478	12442	21965	28492	50457	3696	3489	7185	2196	2965	5161
Muslims	51959	21659	73618	98456	2549	101005	8947	9568	18515	1791	29391	31182	4976	6489	11465	796	219	1015
Buddhist	5489	5416	10905	2196	3896	6092	968	21968	22936	259	7496	7775	2549	6479	9028	24960	6890	31850
Christians	599	56	655	2496	1489	3985	98	5489	5587	2890	2549	5439	689	2649	3338	29689	4968	34657
Animist	58	259	317	67	5489	5556	9726	648	10374	8493	389	8882	2688	5968	8657	5967	3979	9946
Total	149694	47179	196873	198893	105571	304464	25703	44151	69854	35398	68317	103715	14599	25074	39673	63608	19021	82629

Source: (Choudhury, Re- Print, 1995).

Conversely, educated Bengalis who emigrated to Tripura from Britain did so mostly in quest of decent employment. Furthermore, due to the changing political climate of Colonial India caused by the repressive administrative policies, political misconduct, communal unrest, Table 5, the freedom fight, and the British government's actions, the Bengali populace relocated to the highland princely state of Tripura. We find a very substantial decadal variance in Tripura's population between 1945 and 1954 when we look at the different census reports. Sixth Table.

Table 6 Tripura's population as reported by several censuses.

Year	Population	Decadal Variation	% decadal Variation
1945	1,89,689	--	--
1946	4,29,249	59,649	36.695
1948	5,64,978	98,689	97.549
1950	8,96,597	48,549	64.896
1952	9,54,978	97,648	64.597
1954	6,98,649	95,978	29.596

[24] Das Manoshi and Chakraborty Sriparna. (2009). Socio-Economic Status of Reang. In Tripura: An Empirical Study, In Gautam Kumar Bera (Ed.). Tribal Development in Tripura. EBH Publishers, Guwahati, P.67.
[25] Biswa Rajan, Purkait. Milestone in Modern Indian Education. Kolkata: New Central Book Agency Ltd, 2002.

(Sources: Paul, 1964)

There were 154 schools in the years 1948–1951, of which only 12 were designed specifically for girls[26]. Therefore, while the number of literate men in Tripura increased throughout that time, the number of literate women did not increase in the same proportion Table 7.

Table 7 Tripura's educational record from 1948 to 1975.

Division	Number of schools			No. of Students			A.V. daily attendance of	
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
Sadar	51	2	53	2089	179	2268	149.95	54.69
Kailashahar	17	4	21	289	175	464	1905.54	46.37
Sonamura	13	5	18	88	154	242	29.296	49.39
Belonia	8	9	17	291	129	420	24.596	16.68
Udaipur	17	2	19	241	189	430	12.496	58.67
Sabroom	11	1	12	9289	148	9437	46.54	21.36
Dhrmanagar	21	9	30	148	111	259	22.51	49.65
Khowai	9	2	11	929	12	941	416.36	74.25
Total	147	34	181	13364	1097	14461	2607.288	371.06

(Sources: Govt. of Tripura, 2004)

The State Act 2 of 1943 brought compulsory elementary education to Agartala, marking a bold move by the royal administration from 1945 to 1974[27]. Later, it was decided to extend the program's reach to the Howrah valley and the connected territories of the Sub-divisional town. But Tripura lacked any facilities for providing higher education within her borders before joining the Indian Union. Table 8 shows the total number of elementary schools between 1948 and 1963. Table 8. Tripura's Primary School Enrolments, 1945– 1971.

Table 8 Tripura's primary school enrolment between 1945 and 1971.

Year	Number of schools	Number of students
1945-49	139	4,219
1950-52	129	4,648
1955-59	139	6,796
1960-65	111	6,369
1968-71	129	9,648

Sources: (Menon, 1975)

III.   EDUCATIONAL   DEVELOPMENT   AND   GROWTH   FOLLOWING TRIPURA'S ENTRY INTO THE INDIAN UNION

Following its admission to the Indian Union on October 15, 1949, Tripura saw a notable advancement in the sphere of education. From Table 9 above. It is clear that in 1943, the overall literacy rate in Tripura was 7.9%. That being said, the percentage of people who were literate

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[26] Chandra, Gine Pratap. The System of Elementary Education of the Sera mpore Mission. Jorhat: ETC, 2001.
[27] Dharmaraj, Jacob S. Colonialism and Christian Mission: Post-Colonial Reflection. Delhi: ISPCK, 1999.

rose from 15.5% in 1951 to 30.9 percent in 1971[28]. Table 8 below provides a detailed representation of Tripura's rate of literacy growth (from 1949 to 1971).

Table 9 Literacy in Tripura between 1949-1971.

Year	Total % of literates	M	F
1949	2.96	4.9	0.89
1952	9.21	5.8	2.89
1961	4.9	4.96	4.89
1971	2.98	5.9	8.96

(Source: Debvema, re-print 1989)

Table 10 Tripura's Literacy Rate from 1951 to 1971.

Year	Total population	Total % of literates			% of literacy
		M	F	Total	
1951	2,96,979	49540	24981	74521	6.35
1961	2,64,974	16492	21968	38460	5.89
1971	9,28,219	249113	54964	304077	30.8

Sources: (Directorate of statistics and evaluation, 1981).

The data in Table 10 clearly show that the number of educated persons was higher in 1961. There were a total of 231,188 literate people; 1,85,060 were male and 56,128 were female, making up 20.2% of the total. In the 1951 Census, 155 out of 1,000 persons could read and write; in 1961, that number jumped to 202[29]. There were 296 men for every 1000 girls in terms of the literate sex ratio. The number of people in the area who were successful in passing academic, vocational, and technical tests from 1960 to 1961 is detailed in Table 11.

Table 11 The number of people who passed the 1960–1961 academic, vocational, and technical exams.

Educations	M	F	Total
Graduation or a test that is Comparable	849	396	179
Higher secondary	264	978	90
B.A. & B.Sc	892	849	39
P.G and U.G. Teachers Training Diploma Courses	126	264	94
Inter Arts-science	429	692	89
Diploma courses in Indian Music	239	293	-

Source: (Menon, 1975)

The literacy rate in Tripura started to rise as the years went by, and by 1971, 30.9% of the population was literate. Table 12 illustrates that in 1971, both Tripura's rural and urban areas attained a good level of literacy. This table also showed an intriguing fact: over the period, there was a notable growth in the number of rural literate people.

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[28] Fernando, L. Christianity in India after 1947, an Introduction to Christian Studies. Pondicherry: Mission Press, 2001.
[29] Thomas, P. Christians and Christianity in India from Apostolic Times to the Present Day. London: George Allen & Uni Ltd., 1954.

Table 12 Tripura 1971 district-wise literacy growth rates.

District		Participates		Growth rate of educated and literate population, 1961–71
		Male	Female	
West Tripura	Rural	39.69	96.49	98.89
	Urban	19.59	16.96	
	Total	59.28	113.45	
South Tripura	Rural	59.69	49.59	14.595
	Urban	29.69	49.65	
	Total	89.38	99.24	
North Tripura	Rural	29.69	28.96	159.58
	Urban	14.59	59.69	
	Total	44.28	88.65	

Sources: (Bhattacharyya, 1975)

In Tripura's educational landscape, a number of private schools started to appear alongside government-aided schools and colleges[30]. These private schools in Tripura were established by the educated East Pakistani teachers who were internally displaced, with assistance from the Education Department and the Administration's Relief and Rehabilitation Department.

IV.   CONCLUSION

Even though missionaries settled for a long time, we can assume that their attempts at religious conversion were ineffective. But the advent of Christian missionaries signalled the beginning of a critical phase in the development of a new educational strategy. Their commitment to a well-rounded education and emphasis on mother tongue as the medium of instruction was commendable. Concurrently, Christian missionaries played a crucial role in educating the Indian populous through the dissemination of both formal and informal education, as well as the facilitation of personal growth and development. Along with learning to read and write, the aboriginal Indians also picked up other life skills. The people they came into contact with underwent social and economic transformation as a result of their farming, weaving, building houses, and other activities.

Because of this, the vision of contemporary Tripura—which the state's rulers had imagined— came to pass with the aid of education, and notable strides in the field of education were made prior to Tripura's official statehood in 1972. Tripura is a small hilly state, so naturally many wonder how it managed to make such remarkable growth. The explanation is the huge influx of immigrants, especially Bengalis, who came to Tripura in the early 20th century.

Tripura's educational system has been impacted by modern, educated Bengali immigrants. In comparison to the amount of immigrants that rose between 1962 and 2018, it is clear that

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[30] Debvarma, T.S. (Re-print 1997) Census Bibarani of Tripura, 1340 T.E. (Bengali), Agartala: Tribal Research Institute, Government of Tripura.

Tripura's literacy growth rates throughout that time were not particularly spectacular. It was brought about by the illiteracy of both the agriculturalist immigrants from Bengal and the local tribal population. But it's obvious that Tripura's literacy rate increased and eventually surpassed India's in the last three census years of this study. This growth rate can be attributed to the political unrest that followed India's partition and continued until the Bangladesh Liberation War. As a result, there was a massive influx of migrants from all social classes during this time.

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