

Augustine Kanjamala

Religion and Modernization of India

(A Case Study of Northern Orissa)

Satprakashan Sanchar Kendra. 452 001 M.P. India,
p.p.352, Rs.10.00 and £ 7.20

Prof. M. N. Srinivas in his study of the Coorgis of South India has proposed a model of social change in the Indian society under the title "sanskritization." Srinivas had defined it as the process by which a low Hindu caste, or tribal or other group changes its customs, ritual, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high "twice-born" caste. These changes are followed by an elevation to higher status in the caste hierarchy. Dr Kanjamala in the present work argues that Christinization of the adivasis in Northern Orissa is a legitimate alternative to "sanskritization." Christinization is defined as a socio-religious process by which a large number of people from backward castes or tribes first reject, at least in theory, their traditional supernatural system, ritual practices, way of life and ethic and, then, accept Jesus Christ and other supernatural beings, a symbol system (presented to them initially by western missionaries), a complex of rituals and sacraments, performed by specially trained leaders, a new ethic and way of life—western in certain cases—which, in turn, create a new sense of community or church. These changes, according to the author, have conferred a higher status on the adivasis.

The study is being conducted within the theoretical framework of Max Weber's sociology of religion. Through his analysis of the major religions of the world, Weber pointed out the existence of a close relationship between the religious ethics and the culture of a given society. Kanjamala accepts the Weberian view that religion contributes to the shaping of the society. He thus brings out very