Missionary pedagogy and christianisation of the heathens: The educational institutions introduced by the Basel Mission in Mangalore[1]

Parinitha Shetty

Department of English
Mangalore University

The Basel Evangelical Missionary Society came to India in 1834 and established its first school two years later. Through the formation of a carefully structured and disciplined pedagogic community at its mission school, the Basel Mission hoped to insert its version of Protestant Christianity into a society that already possessed its own well-entrenched religious traditions. In the years to follow, the Basel Mission Schools increased in number and diversified in structure and curriculum. This article studies how this resulted in unforeseen socio-religious restructurings of the local people, even as it re-contoured the Christianity brought by the missionaries.

When it is considered that there are 800,000,000 of souls upon the earth, who know nothing of Christ, it will be evident to the mind of every single-hearted Christian, that it is the bounden duty of the church to send abroad a much larger number of missionaries. What has been done hitherto is just enough to

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show that more is to be done, and that without delay, if the Protestant church shall not stand convicted at the great day of Christ of having disobeyed the command of her Lord, slighted her divine commission, and neglected her great duty.[2]

The Establishment of the Basel Mission

This sense of evangelical urgency expressed in the Basel Mission Report of 1843 seems to have been exceptionally acute in eighteenth-century Europe, which saw an efflorescence of missionary activity, especially in the latter half of the century. In Germany, the origin of the first missionary society goes back to this period. In 1780, a small group of Swiss and German Pietists founded the 'German Society for the Promotion of Christianity' in Basel. At first, their objective was to publish what they considered 'good' Christian Literature. From 1800, they started publishing translations of the reports of the work of English missionary societies of that period. Under the influence of the British missionary reports, the committee, in 1815, founded a missionary society of its own in Basel, and a year later, in 1816, it opened a college to train missionaries.[3] At first these missionaries worked overseas for other missionary organisations. Many of them worked for the English Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS).[4] But soon the mission's committee in Basel decided to have an organisation of its own.

In 1821, when the first two missionaries of the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society were sent to the Caucuses region in Russia, 'They were instructed to reconnoiter those countries, to distribute the Bible, and to select a favourable spot for the establishment of a free Christian colony, a Persian-Tartar college and a typographic Press'.[5] This was to be the procedural template for the establishment of a mission station of the Basel Mission wherever it went, although the number and range of missionary institutions was to proliferate in later years, depending on the needs that arose in the local context of missionary activity. In the late 1820s, the Basel Mission set up stations in West Africa, and in 1834 it came to India and set up its first mission station in the coastal city of Mangalore.[6] The mission gradually spread its activities across Karnataka, Kerala and parts of Tamilnadu: southwest India was to become the most important missionary outpost of the Basel Mission, with the highest concentration of European missionaries.[7]

[2] BMR 1843, pp. 6–7. BMR is the abbreviated form of the Basel Mission Report.

[3] BMR 1843, p. 12.

[4] Many of the missionaries trained in the college joined the CMS. The BMR of 1843, pp. 19–20, reports that 175 missionaries had left the Institution since its inception in 1816. Of these, 60 joined the Basel Evangelical Mission Society, while 52 joined the CMS.

[5] BMR 1843, p. 24.

[6] Jenkins, *A Short History of the Basel Mission*, pp. 3–9.

[7] In 1859, the Basel Mission had two missionaries working in China, 20 in Africa, and 48 in India. BMR 1859, pp. 5–7.

The Difficulties of Instituting a New Pedagogic Practice

In 1836, two years after their arrival in Mangalore, the Basel missionaries established the first school.[8] In the *Magazin fur die neueste Geschichte der evangelischen Missions und Bibel Gesellschaften, Jahrgang 1836*, the event is reported as follows:

> We have made a start with a seminary, which has 10–12 young, native boys. It is a clear sign of God that we should turn our gaze on the town and the province of Bijapur, which has 600, 000 souls, who have heard nothing about Christ up to now. From the school a new group of missionaries could be born who could start a missionary station in Dharwad, Bijapur.[9]

On the one hand, the problem for the Basel Missionaries was how to insert a particular version of Protestant Christianity into a society with its own well-entrenched religious traditions. On the other hand, they had to be constantly alert to the danger of being *recognised* as proselytisers of the Catholic faith, a version of Christianity that was familiar to the region, and repeatedly assert and display their difference from the Catholics. One tested and proven method of resolving these problems was through the formation of a pedagogic community, which would be schooled into the Christianity of the missionaries. Since the first students of these schools were most often orphaned and destitute children, the missionaries hoped to form, organise and discipline an indigenous Protestant community within an institutional space that was outside the 'contaminating' influence of local socio-religious traditions. At the same time, the pedagogy that was offered here catered and responded to newly emerging institutional needs and opportunities for social mobility, brought about by colonialism. This initial attempt at forming a pedagogic community, founded and dedicated to 'the service of the Lord', was to take different shapes, experiment with different disciplinary strategies, and result in unforeseen socio-religious restructurings of the local people in the years to follow.

If conversion as an act of adopting a new religion is given a recognisable shape, visibility and legitimacy through the sacralised rituals and practices of community and personal life by which that adopted religion authenticates and proclaims membership within its fold, then the Basel Mission schools resulted in very few conversions. However, if conversion is understood as a process or movement that is never complete, as a break in community and epistemology that never resolves

[8] The Tranquebar Mission, the first Protestant Mission to India, was the earliest to establish schools in south India based on a European model. English was taught in these schools. As early as 1717, these schools were set up in Madras and the provinces. See Peterson, 'Tanjore, Tranquebar, and Halle', p. 96.

[9] All translations from the German *Magazin fur die neueste Geschichte der evangelischen Missions und Bibel Gesellschaften* have been done by Tobias Haas and Veena Maben. Henceforth, this German publication of the Basel Mission will be referred to as *Magazin.*

itself within the belief structures sanctioned by a theology or reiterated by the religious practices of a community of believers, then the schools of the Basel Mission did bring about many conversions.[10]

Here, I will attempt a historical study of the schools set up by the Basel missionaries in the first 25 years after their arrival in Mangalore. I am not interested in giving a factual account of these schools or their numbers, location, enrolments, etc. I would like to explore the methods by which, and the intentions with which, they inserted themselves into the existing organisation of people and social institutions and practices, and the consequences this had on both the schools and the societies after their arrival. I am especially interested in answering two questions: first, how did specific pedagogic agendas and the organisation of a community of teachers and students radically realign spatial and temporal demarcations and understandings of what was spatially accessible and inaccessible outside these schools? Second, how did the pedagogic strategies and the educational institutions of the Basel Mission (the means of constituting and defining new forms of community) intersect, undermine, re-form and collude with existing forms of community in the region, based as it was on class, caste and caste-based occupations?

For the Basel Mission, there were two main, stated intentions in establishing schools. One was the conversion of heathens into Christianity, and the other and more important one was training some of the new converts into becoming future catechists and teachers, and schooling them into becoming 'true Christians'.[11] The latter intention led to the formation of the first 'Christian Seminary' in Mangalore. The *Magazin, Jahrgang 1838*, states the instructions given to the missionaries by the mission committee on the establishment of schools:

> Above all, the instructions of our committee were to build an *erziehungs haus*[12] for Hindu boys, who should be educated under the blessing of God to become catechists and teachers of their fellow citizens. Hindu boys, who are considered to be eligible for admission in this institution, receive free food, accommodation and clothing and are under the continuous supervision of a Christian brother and receive the required lesson which will make them fit for teaching, and to serve as catechists after a number of years. It is high time such an institution was started because we cannot expect much from the heathen youth.[13]

[10] Refer Gauri Vishwanathan, pp. 75–117.

[11] The BMR of 1858, pp. 40–44, states the educational aim of the Parochial school as follows:

The principal object of these schools has been to render our children familiar with the word of God, in the hope, that quickened by the divine Spirit, it may live in their hearts, and houses, and work out the changes for which it has been given.

[12] In English, Erziehungs would translate as training, education or rearing. According to Paul Jenkins, '*Erziehung* is etymologically like the English 'bring up' (*zieh* is to pull), and can well be used for the corrective training of youthful criminals nowadays. But basically in the BM context it is a boarding school where the inmates learn, if you like, a Christian life-style.'

[13] *Magazin,Jahrgang,* 1838, p. 389.

Within missionary circles in India, there had been a long debate on the relative efficacy of missionary schools versus itinerant preaching in the spreading Christianity among the heathens.[14] Schools were the earliest institutions to be set up by the missionaries of different denominations and nationalities who came to India. The simultaneity and, in some instances, the intersection of the colonial and missionary enterprise in India gave the missionary schools a certain legitimacy and acceptability. During the early years of its rule, the exigencies of governing the tenuously administered regions had made the East India Company wary of tampering with the religious beliefs of its subjects, and hence refrain from and, for a long time, disallow any kind of evangelical activity within its territories. In the early part of the nineteenth century, Christian evangelicists lobbied strongly in the British Parliament for the evangelisation of the British colonies in India. By this time the East India Company had greatly consolidated its powers in India. These factors led to a change in its religious policy in India and according to the charter of 1833, Christian missionaries could enter British territories in India without the need of licenses.[15] However, the Company policy was to maintain a neutral stand with regard to missionary activities as long as it did not imperil their rule, though individual officers were very often sympathetic to the evangelical enterprise and supported the missionaries actively, both in their official and personal capacities.

The Basel Mission was the first Protestant Mission to come to Mangalore. The Basel Mission Reports tell us that relations between the missionaries and the colonial officers were extremely cordial, and that many of the District Collectors helped the missionaries in their evangelical enterprise. Thus, when the missionaries first came to Mangalore, the then British Sub-Collector, Findley Anderson, gave them a warm welcome. In 1840, the Balmatta Hill was presented to the missionaries by the then District Collector H.M. Blair, in order to establish their missionary settlement. In 1844, when Kaundinya, one of the first three Brahmin converts of the Basel Mission from this region, converted to Christianity, it was Blair again who provided official protection to the missionaries when a large angry crowd of people attacked their Mission House. In his capacity as magistrate of Canara, he helped the converts and the missionaries fight the legal battle against Kaundinya's family, which tried to reclaim him to its community. Blair's aid to the missionaries in violation of the Company policy of deliberate non- interference in such matters earned for him the displeasure of the London Office, and he was abruptly transferred to a remote part of British India.[16]

[14] Antony Copley, *Religions in Conflict*, p. 14, noted that:

> In the mid-century, however, the great debate lay between itinerating, the dramatic and direct confrontation with Indian religions, by word of mouth, in the bazaar, the mela, the village, and the slow, more indirect, but less erratic, reliance on education, above all of India's new anglicized elite in secondary education.

[15] Nicholas, *Castes of Mind*, pp. 24–28.

[16] Gauri Vishwanathan, p. 92.

Maintaining cordial relationships with the local British officials was important for the German missionaries; antagonizing them meant the forfeiture of the critical economic and political patronage that was so important at the early stage of the mission's stay in India. Sometimes, administrative patronage was sought when individual missionaries wanted to participate in, or start a project, that could not be funded by the home board. The ambitious project of collating, transcribing and making lithographic prints of 'Canarese manuscripts' was funded by J. Casamajor, a retired English judge of Madras, living in Kaity.[17] The work was executed by Moegling and Weigle, two of the early university educated missionaries of the Basel Mission. This enterprise resulted in the *Bibliotheca Carnataca*, a collection of ancient Kannada texts. In 1853, when Moegling converted a group of Holeyas[18] and started a mission station at Almanda in Coorg, he asked permission to dissociate himself from the Basel Mission, and his work was carried out with the help of donations from his mainly British patrons in India. A major part of the financial resources for running the mission institutions in India came from British residents of the region. The first BMR lists the donors and the donations given by them to the mission, and follows it up with the following statement, 'The contributions amounting, as will be seen from the above list, to a very considerable sum, have enabled our Society to carry their operations in this country, much farther than the resources derived from Germany would have permitted them to do'.[19] The Protestant colonial government in India, according to the mission, had the great responsibility of civilising and evangelising its heathen subjects, since God had entrusted it with the governance of the Indian people. Appealing to its British readers and patrons for funds, the second BMR gives the rationale of the British presence in India as follows:

> For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required. God has exalted you above many nations, and entrusted you with the Government of India. To the lord of Lords you owe all your prosperity and all your glory. He has by his name and word raised your own nation from superstitions as miserable, and from bondage as cruel, as that is, under which we see the millions of this vast land groaning, and from which there is no deliverance, but by the Gospel of Jesus our Saviour. Recommending you to his grace and protection, we remain, Christian Friends.[20]

The Basel Missionaries were also in contact with British missionary organisations in India like the Church Missionary Society and the Basel Mission seminary

[17] Refer Shrinivas Havanur, *Dr. Moegling The Harbinger of Modern Kannada Literature.*

[18] In the *Mysore and Coorg Gazetteer, Vol III,* 1878, pp. 212–13, the Holeyas are grouped under the category of Outcastes, 'Wandering and wild tribes'.

[19] BMR, 1841, p. 16.

[20] BMR, 1842, pp. 23–24.

established in 1815 'for the education of overseas evangelists',[21] had supplied it with its early batches of trained missionaries.

Though the colonial government was opposed to active missionary proselytism, fearing that it would jeopardise its rule, its conflation of Christianity with civilisational progress made missionary schools attractive as adjuncts to the colonial enterprise. For its pupils, the missionary school provided training in the skills and knowledge required for them to fit into the lower-rung positions offered to Indians within colonial administrative institutions. For those of its students who participated in the indigenous reform movements of the nineteenth century, it was the mission school that initiated them into a process of critical self-reflexivity regarding their socio-religious practices. They also provided the templates for the establishing and running of the institutions that emerged from these indigenous socio-religious reform movements. For the missionaries themselves, instituting a new pedagogic practice and the attempts to bring about an epistemological shift through these schools was a project fraught with contradictions and conflicts. As institutional sites, these schools became the locus of varied and conflicting aspirations that resulted in unforeseen changes in their structure and aims.

Spreading the Christian Influence

From the beginning, the Basel Missionaries depended on both itinerant preaching and missionary schools for the spread of Christianity. They did not see them as disparate activities, even though there were disagreements among the missionaries themselves, and between the home board and the overseas missionaries, regarding the time, money and personnel to be expended on each of these methods of proselytism. In 1869, three and a half decades after the Basel Missionaries came to India, when the committee formulated a set of rules regarding the functioning of the mission schools, the following instructions were given to the missionaries running these schools:

> There is complete agreement between the brothers in East India and the committee, regarding the desire and the knowledge to uplift and to take a step towards the possible improvement of the school system and to do so step by step and to report that as long as the teaching staff and the means are available, a further expansion can be achieved. In this regard, it goes without saying that the work of the school system must not be done at the cost of direct mission work, i.e., it must not be given more importance than the sermons for the

[21] Miller, *Missionary Zeal and Institutional Control,* p. 14.

[22] *Erlass der Kommittee der evangelischen Missionsgessellschaft in Antwort auf die Vorlagen der General Konferenz der Ost indischen Missionare im Februar 1869. Dritter Theil. Berathung uber das SchulwesenI,* p. 1. This quote has been translated by Veena Maben.

heathens and the work in the congregation, instead, the different branches of mission work must be conducted in the right relationship with each other.[22]

In practice, this debate was never resolved in favour of any one side during the early years of the mission's establishment in India. The schools were locations for not only Christianising heathens, but also their children who, according to the missionaries, were far from satisfactorily converted to Christianity. The school also evacuated a space where the missionaries could have continuous and sustained access to the adults of the local community whose children attended these schools. However, the dearth of German missionaries and the mistrust shown by the missionaries towards indigenous teachers made the running of these schools difficult. The mission reports of these years mention the establishment of many schools which functioned for a short time, and then closed down because of a lack of 'Christian teachers'. It was only when government grants were made available to the mission schools, and the students trained there returned to teach in those schools that the Basel Mission could take its schools more seriously. One instance of the increasing importance given to schools is the establishment of a teachers' training institute in 1858. .

In the Canarese and English schools,[23] the intention was not so much to train future missionaries as to familiarise an important and malleable group of heathen children with European knowledge and the Christian religion, with the hope that at least some of them would convert to Christianity. At a more subtle level, these schools trained their students in the ideals and practices of the 'Christian community life', which was later to manifest itself in the setting up of community service institutions like hospitals and orphanages. A connection was also established in these schools between Christian beliefs and European sciences.

i) Both were understood to have a rational basis, and as being explicable in rational terms.
ii) Both were also shown to significantly contribute to the shaping of an enlightened 'modernity' concomitant with economic, cultural, intellectual and moral progress and reform.
iii) The Mission Schools deployed a specifically Protestant Christian ethic of work through and from an institutional site of seeming religious neutrality, hence, eliding the religious provenance of this work ethic. This was the site of institutional regulations that structured the allocation of time for

[23] Here again I have retained the names that the Basel missionaries used to denote those schools whose educational programme was not explicitly meant to Christianise their students. They were differentiated on the basis of the medium of instruction in the school. Although the nomenclature of these schools varied over the years, the medium of instruction remained as the criteria for identifying and distinguishing between these two kinds of schools.

various activities, the demarcation of institutional space, the schools' disciplinary regime of work and leisure and its criteria of academic evaluation.

While contouring the Protestant version of the quotidian life of good works, the school regimen fitted seamlessly into the emerging institutions of 'Western modernity' that were supposedly outside the realm of Western religion. Thus, a specifically Christian disciplinary regime was naturalised within the familiarity of the commonsensical.

End of an Experimental Phase

The early schools of the Basel Mission were established on an experimental basis. They were being constantly restructured and reclassified on the basis of the availability of teachers, students and space for classrooms. The missionaries' mastery of the local languages, their familiarity with local customs and the demarcations between communities of people also brought about changes in the constitution of these schools. The re-formation of these schools is also indicative of a wide variety of conflicting local perceptions and attitudes towards these schools, and the different local needs for the education provided in these schools. By the 1850s, the categorisation and institutional organisation of the mission schools seems to have achieved a certain amount of stability. The 1852 BMR contains the report of Inspector Josenhans, who visited India that year. Josenhans' report speaks of the existence of three kinds of schools.[24] The first and most important group of schools was the Parochial schools. The following description of this school is given in the report:

> We have three kinds of schools. The first of which we deem most important, and to which we pay the greatest attention, are our Parochial Schools, which are partly merely elementary schools, partly Boarding Institutions for the education of Christian children, as well as such others of heathen origin, who have been given over to the Mission by their parents or friends.[25]

The second kind of schools were the

> Elementary Schools for the heathen. We have a good many of these schools at each of our stations .... Some of them, in which the Missionaries or Catechists teach for an hour or more during the day, are in a very good state. I have seen several heathen schools, the pupils in which displayed an amount of knowledge of Biblical history and other branches, as would have been creditable to the children of many a village school at home.[26]

[24] BMR, 1852, p. 14.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 14.
[26] *Ibid*., p. 16.

The medium of instruction in these schools was Kannada, and these schools were also referred to as the Canarese schools. The third group of schools were

> ... those higher Educational Institutions, called English Schools. Of these we have at present *two*—one at Mangalore the other at Calicut. In connexion with the former, there is a Boarding School for Indo-Briton boys. These schools, in which, besides the English language, most of the higher educational branches of study are attended to, have been hitherto numerously attended, and seemed altogether in a promising state.[27]

Since most of the students in this school came from the upper castes, mainly Brahmins, and the upper class, the missionary policy of teaching the Bible to the students and disallowing the segregation of students on the basis of caste within the classroom was put under the severest test. In addition to these three kinds of schools, the report mentions yet another set of institutions, 'Those Institutions, which have been established at Mangalore for the general benefit of our rising congregations, these are, the Catechist Institution and the Industrial School, which have been in existence for several years past'.[28]

The Parochial School and its Offshoots

From the missionary point of view, the Parochial schools and the Catechist and Industrial Institution were the most important, since they were directly connected to their endeavour to establish and sustain an indigenous convert community. The Parochial school and the Catechist Institution were split into two separate institutions only in 1847. The mission reports give detailed accounts of the number and kinds of students in the Parochial schools, their progress in imbibing the Christian values, and their curriculum and syllabi. That these schools were being constantly re-formed and restructured in an attempt to increase their pedagogic efficacy and give them a satisfactory institutional shape was reflected in the different names used to designate their functions at different times, in the restructuring of classes, the introduction of new texts into the syllabus, and the changing organisation of the school day and academic year.[29]

[27] *Ibid*.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

[29] BMR 1841, p. 13, describes the 'topics of instruction' in this school as follows:

> reading, writing and casting accounts, and the history of the Old Testament, in the lower classes. Exposition of the Gospels and the Book of Revelation, History of the Old and New Testaments, Church history, geography, arithmetic, and singing, in the upper classes. The 1st class, consisting of 5 boys, are instructed in English and translate Beynon's Cannarese Pilgrim's Progress into English, and Marshman's History of India into Cannarese. A class of eleven youths receive Catechetical instruction, and it is hoped that they may be received into the church in the course of this year.

The first Parochial school, from which the Catechist Institution was later formed, was started by Hebich, one of the first three Basel missionaries to come to India. Its intention was to train indigenous missionaries and teachers. It was opened in a small building in Nireshwallaya in Mangalore, and performed the dual function of housing orphaned and destitute children and giving them an education in the Bible and Christianity. In 1843 this boarding house was shifted to Balmatta, where land was donated to the missionaries by Blair, the District Collector of Mangalore. The Parochial school was separated from the Catechist Institution in 1847, and the latter began to function as a seminary training future catechists over a span of four years. The first teachers of the Catechist Institution consisted of Moegling and a *Canarese dubashi*. The first batch of nine students joined the Catechist Institution in 1847, and successfully completed their training in 1851 to become teachers and catechists. Kaundinya, the first Brahmin convert to the Basel Mission, a former student of their English School, who returned to India after completing his theological training in Basel, began to assist Moegling in instructing the students in the Catechist Institution in 1852. In 1863 the Catechist Institution was upgraded into a theological seminary, providing theological training and supplying workers for the different Basel Mission stations in India.[30] This was a major milestone in the history of the Basel Mission's educational institutions. The school, which the mission considered the most important, and which had been constituted for the purpose of establishing, enlarging and sustaining an indigenous convert community, had achieved a relatively stable and, from the missionary point of view, an improved institutional form. An increasing number of students from the indigenous congregations were attending this institution. The BMR of 1860 states that, 'The Schools established at Tellicherry and Mangalore with a view to supply the Mission with Catechists and Christian Schoolmasters, are gradually drawing a large number of youths from our congregations'.[31] For the Basel Mission, these 'Catechists' would not only increase the fold, but also school the 'native' Christians into a Christian way of life that accorded with the Protestantism of the Basel Mission. The 'Christian Schoolmasters' would also increase the fold without the necessity of conversion by Christianising the unconverted heathens through a Christian pedagogy.

The boys who studied in the Parochial schools[32] were also trained in giving sermons and in itinerant preaching. Once or twice a year, during the school holidays, the missionary teachers would take these students along with them on their

[30] Salins, 'The Institutions on Balmatta, Mangalore', p. 121.

[31] BMR, 1860, p. 17.

[32] This was the nomenclature used by the missionaries in the 1850s. They were started with the intention of preparing future catechists and teachers, and to educate the children of converts. The education given here was intended to fit the students into the new professions established by the missionaries, and fulfil the religious expectations they placed on the convert community. Over the years, these schools took on different names and branched out into adjunct institutions.

itinerating expeditions. Not only were the boys exposed to 'bazaar preaching', but the missionaries also hoped that this group of students would provide visual proof of the disciplined and Godly Christian community to the heathen spectators. Depending on the individual missionary heading these expeditions, the nature and experience of these expeditions would be varied. Thus, in 1844, when Moegling, one of the first few Basel missionaries to come to India, led one of these expeditions with five of the older boys for a period of three months, it took the shape of a trip through 'the greater part of the Canarese country'.[33] Moegling and his group of students met many religious heads, and had long conversations with them during this trip. As Moegling writes,

> In most places I was well received by the natives high and low. At Sravana Beligula, the renowned Jain establishment, where we staid [sic] three days, I spent several hours every day in friendly and interesting conversation with the chief guru, and on the last day was with my companions invited to a dinner, which one of the principal people of the Mattha served to us in person.[34]

These trips provided the students with makeshift groups of curious listeners, who were sometimes hostile, to whom they preached the word of God. They were also occasions for testing and strengthening the students' ability to answer questions directed to them from their listeners, who belonged to different religious traditions. In addition to this, the boys would listen to the sermons preached by their teachers and memorise them. Thus, the Parochial schools were engaged in disciplining and training 'Hindu' boys into forming a community of the Christian elect. According to Ulrike Sill, who has researched the educational institutions set up by the Basel Mission on the Gold coast, Africa, education was considered essential to the Christianising of heathens into membership of the Christian community. She writes,

> Indirectly schooling also came into play with regard to the recognition of full membership of the congregation among adults. Only persons who were able to read were to be confirmed and thus acknowledged as adult members of the congregation, responsible for themselves and admitted to Holy Communion.[35]

Disciplinary Regimes of the Parochial School

In the beginning, the Parochial school consisted of orphaned and destitute children. Later, it also included the children of new converts. In its early phase, this was a

[33] BMR, 1844, p. 5.

[34] *Ibid*., p. 5.

[35] From an unpublished chapter of Ulrike Sill's dissertation, 'Encounters in Quest of Christian Womanhood—The Basel Mission in Pre- and Early Colonial Ghana', p. 96.

boarding school, and enabled the missionaries to house the orphans, separate the children of the converts from their 'far from satisfactorily converted' parents, wield complete pedagogic control over their students, and create a space that would be rid of all heathen influences, where the organisation of time and space through the disciplinary regime of the school timetable would school the children into a Christian way of life. The *Magazin, Jhargang 1839,* states,

> Because the adults will not be able to receive the word of God so well, it is the heart of the child which is more open to the impact of the Godly truth and if the base can be built amongst the youth, then the idol worship among the older ones will sink into the grave. For this very reason our missionaries have taken it as the most important task to concentrate on the youth, and for this they have set up schools in Mangalore since some time, in which the spiritual development of the children can take place and at the same time they can be filled with Christian truths.[36]

The formation of the Parochial school is described thus:

> The Lord let them (the missionaries) find a big house in the bazaar which was for rent, and suited for all their needs. Which was central and big enough to have their meetings. And now in this house they installed a school for the children of the poor *Shudras* and they employed a fit schoolteacher who though a heathen was desirous to learn about Christ. In order to open up a way towards a Christian community for the souls who want to be saved, amongst their heathen listeners, they found the opportunity to have accommodation in this building in which every evening our brothers would preach the salvation through Christ and we could consider this as the first small community that is rich in hope in a heathen land.[37]

In the above description, the multiple functions of the building in which the school is housed, and the multiple meanings that accrue to that space as a result of this, coalesce with each other to structure an itinerary of quotidian practices of the 'Christian life', and enable the constituting of a community out of the 'Shudra children', 'the heathen teacher with an interest in the Christian religion', and the European missionaries. However, in practice, the formation of such a community was fraught with tension and conflict. The caste practices and religious beliefs of these children could not be easily erased and fit into a newly structured set of practices, regulated through the spatial and temporal arrangements of the boarding school. The *Magazin, Jahrgang 1839*, gives a detailed account of these tensions.

[36] *Magazin, Jahrgang* 1839, p. 423.
[37] *Ibid*., 1837, p. 406.

> You can hardly have a complete understanding of the difficulties we had to overcome during the starting of this institute. The majority of the boys joined at a time when the house was not ready for them. Hence the common living room of the mission house was arranged as a dormitory for them. Even the lessons were held by Br. Loesch in a room, which was adjacent to his in the mission house. The wife of Abraham (the wife of the first convert from Mangalore to the Basel Mission) prepared the food. There were a lot of difficulties here. The boys complained about this woman because she was not clean and was always scolding them and mishandling them. The woman complained that the boys used abusive words and subjected her to all kinds of sufferings. One can imagine how difficult it must be to control such a bunch of wild boys. They had sufficient cause for fights and unrest of all kinds, as right from the beginning they had been strangers of different backgrounds and different ages.[38]

Later in the year there were complaints from the guardians of the children who were half European that their children were being dressed and treated like the 'natives'. Introducing a uniformity of dress was one way in which the missionaries tried to do away with an indigenous cultural coding and sanctioning of caste differences and hierarchies. The Basel Mission had strict regulations regarding the kinds of ornaments and clothes that the converts could or could not wear. Not only was this an attempt to erase from the converts' bodies all signs of their relinquished religion, but was also an attempt to stylise the convert body into a new set of meanings and morals. Though this homogenised the bodies of the converts within the community of Christians redeemed from heathenism, tacit rules like the interdict against marriages between Europeans and converts maintained a racial segregation of bodies within this Christian community.[39] This was the basis for the hierarchies within mission institutions and communities, where 'Native Christians' could only hope to hold subordinate positions. It also threatened to undermine the missionary message regarding the universality of the Christian religion. The uniformity of dress, daily routine and teaching, could not discipline these children into discarding their differences, and they often proved intractable to this disciplining. There are several references in the mission reports to their inability

[38] *Ibid*., 1839, p. 426.

[39] There are also instances of European missionaries in India adopting indigenous practices and customs. See, for example, the case of the seventeenth-century Italian Jesuit missionary Roberto de Nobili, who established a Jesuit Mission in Madurai in the first half of the seventeenth century. He wore the sacred thread and adopted many caste markers of the local Brahmin community. An instance of an attempt at enhancing status by lower-caste Shanar converts of Travancore (they inscribed their bodies with the signs of a higher caste), and the resulting furore, can be seen from the breast cloth controversy of the mid- nineteenth century. The upper-caste Nairs saw the infringement of the codes of dress and ornament as an infringement of caste hierarchies. See Kawashima, *Missionaries and a Hindu State,* pp. 60–67, and Udaya Kumar, *Self, body and inner sense*.

or disinclination to be schooled into a new ideal of Christian egalitarianism, which tendency was further aggravated by the support extended to them by their relatives. To give an example from the *Magazin, Jahrgang 1839*,

> As the boys had to be together in greater numbers, we had their heads completely shaved, which was the only way of maintaining them and keeping their heads clean. This was repulsive to many of the boys who had a bunch of hair at the centre of their heads which they plaited according to the custom of their fathers. In the first few days of March 1838, some of the relatives of the boys who were half European complained that the boys were dressed and treated like the natives which they could not tolerate. 'What', said one of them 'should my children be dressed like natives, the grandmother of my sons was a European!' We explained to them that as long as the boys were with us they had no say about them and their treatment as per our contract. They had the option of taking the children back. They agreed to this and sent people in order to take the boys away immediately. One of them, a dear boy, was very sad about this. It is impossible to create a difference between our boys and to dress or treat one group as natives and the other as Europeans. Hence, in this case when we came across this kind of lack of understanding on the part of the people it was better to release the boys immediately.[40]

This recalcitrance on the part of the students to abide by the mission's rules regarding uniformity of dress and appearance can be partly explained by the fact that the egalitarianism offered by the new religion was only a seeming egalitarianism fractured by racial inequalities. Also, this egalitarianism was imposed through disciplinary regimes that could function successfully because of the existence of hierarchies of power. Along with the intractable student, the heathen teacher was seen to undermine the educational enterprise of the missionaries. The absence of 'native' Christian teachers was seen as one of the major drawbacks to the formation of the new Christian community. Forced into using the services of the heathen teacher in the early days of their stay in India, the missionaries felt the need to keep them under constant surveillance, lest they sabotage the work of the missionaries in schooling these children.

From the point of view of the missionaries, a heathen teacher would undermine the very basis of this pedagogic community: the schooling of heathens into Christianity. Within this hierarchically structured community, the teacher was not only the chief purveyor of the ideals of the Christian way of life and the Christian religion, but also a figure of authority through whose bodily markers and bodily gestures the new religion could be corporeally signified. To hand over this position

[40] *Magazin, Jahrgang* 1839*,* p. 426.

to a heathen teacher, heathen both in faith and appearance, would, as the missionaries put it, 'destroy what [we have] built'.

The most 'promising' of the children who attended these schools were to become catechists[41] or teachers in the mission schools. In 1847, the Catechist Institution was established to provide specialised training to future catechists and teachers. This restructuring and segmentation of the Parochial school in 1847 indicates that the educational institutions of the mission were reaching a more stable form, and were being more effectively organised to meet the needs that arose out of the missionary context.[42]

Training for a Vocation in the Industrial Institution

The Industrial Institution, established in 1850, functioned as an adjunct to the Parochial school and the Catechist Institution. Students who had no 'capacity' for school learning were trained here to fit into the new professions that sustained the convert communities. The Protestant conception of work as a sign of the godly life, whose diligent performance was an indication of the soul's election for salvation, was very different from the Indian understanding of work, according to which one's social status, caste and inherited occupation were inextricably interlinked. The Pietist understanding of vocational training, put into practice in the school established in Halle by the German Pietist Herman Francke in the eighteenth century, seems to have had an influence on the Basel Mission's understanding of the training its students underwent in useful work. In her essay on early south Indian responses to Western science, introduced through the schools of the Tranquebar Mission, Indira Viswanathan Peterson establishes the connections between the pedagogic theory and practice instituted in the school at Halle, the Pietist stress on a useful life, European Enlightenment beliefs regarding knowledge and the world, and the nature of the education given in the schools established by the Tranquebar mission in the late eighteenth century in both Madras and the provinces. She writes:

> The Halle complex included a printing press, a bookshop, and a pharmacy, at which students were apprenticed, and which were working concerns that helped

[41] Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines,* p. 108, describes catechists as a 'category from the early church revived in an imperial setting for a new subordinate class of clergy'.

[42] The Catechist Institution, prior to 1847 a part of the Parochial school, was called by different names at different periods. Here, I will list out some of these names in their chronological order as they appear in the *The Magazin fur die neueste Geschichte der evangelischen Missions und Bibel Gesellschaften* and the *Basel Mission Reports*: 1838—Erziehungs Haus; 1840—Catechist Seminary; 1841—The Institution for the Education of Native Boys; 1842—Boarding School; 1844—Seminary; 1847—Boarding School and Preparandi;1848—Boarding school and Catechist School; 1849—Boys Boarding School and Preparandi School; 1850—Boys Boarding School and Preparandi; 1851—Church Schools and Preparandi; 1852—Parochial Schools and Catechist Seminary; 1853—church schools,

> support the schools. However, Francke's principle of 'utility' transcended mere vocational training. Practical training was intended not simply to enable students to secure a livelihood but to serve as a direct way of knowing God through working with real-life objects for real-life purposes, and for the good of one's fellow men.[43]

The imposition of a new set of meanings regarding the concept of work, the introduction of new means of acquiring work skills, and the attempt to disassociate both from caste was not always acceptable to the converts. Thus, the BMR of 1852 reports,

> Our workshops, in the establishment of which our Society had no other object in view than to afford opportunities to the converts of maintaining themselves by the labour of their hands, and if possible to advance the moral and physical condition of tradespeople belonging to our congregations, have hitherto had a very unequal fate.[44]

Though this particular report does not elaborate further on how the converts failed to make use of the opportunities provided by the workshops, a reading of the other reports allows us to infer the reasons for the 'unequal fate' of the workshops. Often, the converts found it difficult to fit into the disciplinary regime demanded of the mission workplace, which the missionaries interpreted as laziness. The converts also refused to be trained in occupations that would have been considered polluting by their relinquished caste. Adult converts who had been born into a particular caste-based occupation and been apprenticed into it in childhood found it difficult to learn a new skill, and were also disinclined to do so. The missionaries viewed this as a disinclination to work on the part of the converts. Missionary J.F. Metz writes in the BMR of 1849,

> We met with many difficulties in setting the boys to learn trades, and it took a long time to make them understand that these trades were calculated to supply them in an honest and honourable way with their daily bread. During the first year they considered the work as a kind of pastime, but when the charm of novelty was gone and they saw that they must work in good earnest, some of them cried now and then. The parents, too, were foolish enough to think it a shame that their boys should be employed in such a way. But we hope that,

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Preparandi; 1854—Preparandi, Parochial schools; from 1854 up to 1860, these two names were retained. By 1846 the seminary consisted of four classes. In 1850, an industrial school was also established as an adjunct to these two institutions.

[43] Peterson, 'Tanjore, Tranquebar, and Halle', pp. 97–98.

[44] BMR, 1852, p. 18.

after sometime, all will be convinced of the value of an independence secured by the knowledge of useful trades.[45]

One's capacity for a particular kind of work was seen as depending on one's 'capacity' for learning, which could be evaluated and fostered through schools. Thus, the best students from the Parochial schools were sent to the Catechist Institution. Those who showed no predilection towards school learning were taken in as servants. The middling ones were employed in the industrial establishments of the mission. Students were evaluated on the basis of weekly tests.

Thus, the Catechist Institution as well as the other schools of the Basel Mission were devising a new criterion of evaluation and a new mode of grading students on the basis of 'capacities', rather than castes or inherited professions. This method of disciplining students could be effectively deployed through the missionary schools. This hierarchy of 'capacities' also mandated the hierarchies that existed within the convert communities, as well as the new hierarchies that were emerging outside these communities. Since school learning and training in skills were accessible to everyone, it did away with the inherited, and to some extent irrevocable, hierarchies of a caste-based society. Hence, for the first time '*Shudra* children' and girls had access to some kind of social and professional mobility made possible through education, which had earlier been denied to them. Most importantly, the aura that surrounded the skills of literacy, and the belief that these skills were the prerogative of certain superior castes, specifically their male members, was challenged. Within the convert communities the education of girls and their training in certain professions like teaching and nursing was not seen as an anomaly. The entry of women and members of the lower castes into new workplaces like the colonial administrative offices and schools and hospitals questioned the legitimacy of such demarcations within spaces like temples and homes, which were seen as maintaining and perpetuating the traditions of religion, caste and gender discrimination. Their empowering location and functions within these institutions unsettled and weakened the perceptual grids of caste and gender, through which they had been constituted and circumscribed in debilitating ways.

The School Regimen and the Contouring of Time and Space

The disciplinary strategies of the school system within which the missionaries had been educated were being transplanted into a new context.[46] Many of the problems faced by the missionaries in the early phase of the establishment of

[45] BMR. 1849, p. 13.

[46] A description of the school that Moegling attended is given in the essay *Moegling's Schooldays in Oehringen* by Albrecht Frenz. Moegling was an influential early teacher of the Mission school.

schools arose from this. In August 1838, when Moegling took over as headmaster of the Parochial school, he structured the school day in the following way:

> From August 1838, Br. Moegling took charge as director of the Institute and the Institute School has started an orderly and regular routine. In the morning at daybreak the boys are woken up, they dress themselves, wash and bathe themselves. At -6 O'clock- School bell is rung. At 9 O'clock they receive their breakfast, which consists of a bowl of rice soup and curry (a kind of meat sauce). After the breakfast, I [Moegling] conduct the morning service with the institute boys during which I and the Catechists and the servants with their wives and also a few people here and there from the town attend. First the boys sing a few verses in English or Canarese. Then, I read a lesson from the Old Testament and I Catechise about it and finish with a prayer for which I now and then also call Abraham or Aaron (Catechists). After the service at 10 O'clock I take some exercise with the boys in the open or perform gymnastics with them under the shade of the mango trees till 11 0clock, followed by two hours of school lessons.
>
> At 1 O'clock we have lunch. Here, except for grace before and after the meal, which is said by the boys in turns, everything is done according to the way of the natives. The children sit on the ground. Each one gets a plate of boiled dry rice and a small bowl of meat or fish curry. And then they enjoy the meal; some of them take a second helping of rice. All eat with their hands like the natives. I have also eaten in this way along with them now and then. It goes quite well; their food is tasty. After the meal we play together until 3 O'clock when there is a bell that calls them to school. At 7 O'clock they eat the same food as in the afternoon. After 8 O'clock I conduct the evening service as in the morning. I read a lesson from the New Testament and it is discussed. After the evening service at 9 O'clock the children go to bed. They sleep, except for the ill, all in one room on the floor. They have a woollen blanket under them and a sheet to cover them. The supervisor sleeps in front of their door and the room on the opposite side is my study and bedroom so that the boys are under supervision even at night.[47]

The BMR of 1843 again gives the timetable of the Parochial school, now called the seminary:

> The morning prayers are held by Br. Moegling soon after six. The sections of Scripture read and explained at these times in the course of the last year are, the Epistles of John; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and part of the Psalms. From seven till nine the boys have English lessons, given by the English schoolmaster

[47] *Magazin*, *Jahrgang,* 1839, pp. 426–27.

> Mr. Ball, a well disposed young man. A few of the older boys, who have expressed a desire to learn Greek, are instructed in the elements of this language by Br. Weigle, from seven to eight O'clock. It is of course only intended to enable them to read the New Testament in the original and we shall be glad if we succeed thus far.
> Nine is the breakfast hour; after breakfast the boys disperse, either to play or do their tasks. School commences again at eleven, when the first and second classes are instructed by Br. Moegling in church history, universal history, and English, and the third and fourth classes by the Canarese schoolmaster Mangeshya, in Old or New Testament history, writing by dictation, reading and writing. At one O'clock the bell rings for dinner. At three O'clock the school again begins when Br. Weigle teaches Canarese Grammar, Geography and Arithmetic; also a singing lesson is occasionally added. Mangeshya teaches at the same time the two lower classes. His lessons are Canarese Orthography, reading portions of the Scripture or Tracts and Canarese arithmetic. After five the boys again have play time till seven, when supper is served. Before eight, the bell rings once more for evening prayers. These are conducted by Br. Weigle, who is reading Psalms. All the stated services of the Mangalore Congregation are attended by the boys, who walk down to the church in company of the schoolmaster, or one of ourselves.[48]

A comparison of the two timetables provides us with interesting insights into the ways in which the parochial school curriculum and the school day were restructured over the course of five years. Both timetables show that the daily lives of the students were organised within the spatio-temporal structures of the school routine and the school complex. This enabled the constant surveillance of the students by the teachers, and the timetabling of their day into fixed hours of leisure, studies and prayers. These activities are not seen as being distinct, but seep into each other and together form a regimen of the Christian life. The church to which the students walk in the evenings to attend the service is part of the spatial continuum of the school, just as the study of mathematics continues into the study of the Bible. The care of the body through physical exercises, gymnastics and nutritious meals continues into the care of the soul through prayers, the reading of the Bible, and attending the church service. The school disciplines the bodies of its students, places them within a hierarchy of 'capacities' by educating them into specific knowledges and skills, timetables their bodies' temporal existence and maps these bodies' spatial boundaries, thus inscribing the markers of Christianity on the materiality of their bodies.[49]

[48] BMR, 1843, pp. 38–39.
[49] See Butler, *Foucault and the Paradox of Bodily Inscriptions*.

However, it was not only the students' bodies that were being recontoured. That the otherness of their students' quotidian practices of being seeped into their teachers' lives can be seen from Moegling's statement, 'All eat with their hands like the natives. I have also eaten in this way along with them now and then. It goes quite well; their food is tasty.' The timetable of 1843 reveals that a greater range of subjects were being taught in a graded manner, and that the students were now divided into four classes.[50] The availability of more teachers, both European and indigenous, allowed the school curriculum to be patterned in a more detailed and systematic manner. The pedagogy of the school was organised within a curricular framework, and the learning process was patterned through graded and cumulative procedures of teaching and testing. Specialist teachers were appointed to teach the different subjects. The establishment of the printing press allowed the school to print its own textbooks, which catered to its specific pedagogic needs. The timetable of 1843 also reveals a new emphasis on the teaching of English and Kannada. Greek was being taught to those students who were interested in learning this language. The inability to use German textbooks and take recourse to a familiar pedagogic method was one of the initial problems faced by the missionaries. In the absence of local institutional models through which they could fulfil their pedagogic aims, coupled with their unfamiliarity with the local languages and inadequate mastery of the English language, the missionaries found the setting up of schools very difficult. They could not take recourse either to the textbooks or the pedagogic strategies of the German schools where they had been educated.[51] Hence, the learning of these new languages was considered important for both the missionaries and their students. The Kannada and Greek languages were taught mainly to enable a translation of the Bible from its early linguistic context into the local linguistic cultures. It was important for the students to learn the English language in order to fit into the new institutional spaces and avail of the new opportunities for social mobility created by the arrival of the British colonial government in the region. The English language was a sign of the mission school's links to the colonial educational enterprise, and the capacity of such an educational programme to invest its successful students with power and prestige. The teaching of English also made sure that the missionary educational system was not alienated from the colonial educational system. Such alienation would have led to the forfeiture of government patronage to mission schools.

[50] It was Paul Jenkins who brought to my notice the fact that the Basel Mission schools in India might have followed the nineteenth-century German model of grading classes, that is, a student works his/her way up to class 1, which is the highest class. A careful reading the mission reports confirmed this.

[51] The *Magazin, Jahrgang* 1840, p. 70, states, 'Even then a good method is desirable for us and its lack felt all the more when we cannot make use of German texts for some of the different branches of lessons and can only slowly prepare suitable teaching methods'.

These schools not only served as locations for the missionaries to experiment with the pedagogic methods and disciplinary regimes that they brought with them from Europe, they also constituted a new notion of spatial access which was very often synonymous with access to social privilege, status and benefit. The disciplinary regimes established in all three kinds of schools continued in the Industrial Institution and industrial establishments of the mission. The BMR of 1854 states that the printing press and other Basel Mission industries 'afford employment to a goodly number of Christians and enquirers, and train them to habits of industry and regular activity'.[52] Since most of the converts of the Basel Mission in Mangalore belonged to the caste of Billavas, whose occupation was mainly toddy tapping, discipline of this kind not only schooled them into a new way of life, but also gave them a new respectability.[53] Attendance at the Parochial schools was compulsory for all children of the new converts between the ages of six and 14. Hence, girls started going to schools for the first time, although, as the BMR of 1843 states, 'The object of the school is to render the girls "good Christian wives and mothers"'.[54]

The Basel Mission appropriated the colonial discourse of the civilising mission to legitimate and understand its own presence in India. The protection of Indian women from the barbarities of Hindu patriarchy was seen as one of the main responsibilities of the mission. The mission understood the oppressions of Hindu patriarchy as they had been constituted within the reform debates of the nineteenth century. Thus, the practice of sati, which had been central to the early nineteenth-century debates on the women's question, was seen by the Basel Mission as having been abolished under the influence of Christian missions in India. The BMR of 1843 reports on this success as follows:

> The whole of India has felt the influence of missions, in the extinction of suttees, and the abolition of infanticide. Had missions effected nothing more, they would be entitled to the sympathy of every feeling heart; but they have effected more, and will effect still greater changes. They endeavour to diminish the deplorable misery of the female sex, which in those countries is exposed to oppression and degradation, without one of the consolations of humanity or religion; they desire to raise woman to the dignity assigned to her by God, and to effect their purpose, they undertake to educate her, and to train her up under

[52] BMR, 1854, pp. 24–25.

[53] BMR, 1850, p. 9, states:

These industrial efforts have caused us much trouble, anxiety and exertion; but if it be the will of God that we succeed in rendering our native church a body of laborious and thriving people (and has not godliness the promise also of this life?) respected by those who are without, and respecting themselves, the sight of this light shining from among our church, into the surrounding darkness, will amply reward us for all our labour.

[54] BMR, 1843, p. 34.

> the influence of the regenerating power of the Gospel. Female schools and seminaries have been established in a hundred places; thousands of poor children, found on the roads in seasons of famine, or snatched from the jaws of crocodiles, the teeth of tigers, or the horrors of starvation, have been received into these asylums. These benevolent institutions are gradually spreading over the country. It is to be deplored that the richer and more respectable classes cannot be prevailed upon to grant to their daughters the benefits of education. The rules of caste have yet to give way to the spirit of Christianity.[55]

The presence of matrilineal communities and the absence of sati in the region of its settlement did not allow the Basel Mission to use the cognitive grids of the reform debate to make the local practices of patriarchy intelligible. Its educational agenda for girls was not so much rescuing them from the excesses of Hindu patriarchy as instilling in them 'the spirit of Christianity'. Christianisation was a means by which to gender these girls into a specific ideal of femininity, which was as much German as it was Christian. According to Ulrike Sill, the emergence of a 'gender-character (*Geschlechtscharakter)* in German-speaking discourse as an essentialised definition first of what "woman" was and later also of what "man" was, can be situated in the context of the advent of modernism in late eighteenth century Germany'. She writes,

> Under its [modernity's] auspices the concept of femininity which gained most recognition, also in the missionary movement, for which the Basel Mission is a case in point, was that of the emerging middle-class. It saw the woman's true vocation as a companionate spouse to her husband, as a devoted mother to and an able educatrix of her children and as the person responsible for and in charge of the household. This space was increasingly conceptualized as domesticity, characterised as the private as opposed to the public sphere, and thus became a sphere for informal interaction.[56]

Later in the century, the educated women from the convert community started entering the professions of teaching and nursing. These professions base themselves on and naturalise a gendered division of labour, relegating to the woman the domestic skills of nurture, nursing, and the socialisation of the young. Sewing and knitting was taught to the girls in the schools, but in all other respects the syllabus taught in these schools was the same as that taught in the boys' schools.

Since the context of this education was predominantly Christian evangelical, the marker of a student's scholarly ability was inextricably bound with the student's

[55] *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9.

[56] Sill, 'Encounters in Quest of Christian Womanhood', p. 11.

'capacity' to be Christianised. Very often students were removed from the Catechist Institution because they were not sufficiently Christianised. This Christian inflection of 'capacity', which in greater or lesser degree was part of all missionary schools, made them suspect in the eyes of the parents of non-Christian children who attended the English and Canarese schools. Though the missionaries were attempting to constitute a model of the egalitarian Christian community within and through their schools, for the people who did not belong to the convert community the Parochial schools and the Catechist Institution would have been associated with the lower-caste status of their students.

Learning the Kanarese Language and Teaching 'Hindu Texts'

Although all traces of 'heathenism' in the form of 'heathen' teachers or 'Hindu texts' had to be kept away from the Parochial school and the Catechist Institution, Moegling, one of the most influential early teachers of this school who was largely responsible for giving the Catechist Institution its formative shape, introduced the poems of Purandara Dasa and portions of *Jaimini Bharatha* into the syllabus of the Catechist Institution. The 1850 BMR reports that the Preparandi (another name for the Catechist Institution) students are given 'explanations of the first six books of Jaimini's Bharatha and of Canarese proverbs'.[57] The 1851 BMR reports that 11 books of *Jaimini Bharatha*, from seven to 17, were read and explained to the students.[58] The introduction of these texts into the syllabus of the Institution was intended to serve many purposes. It was hoped that these texts would familiarise the students with the best usage of the native languages as well as with the colloquialisms of the language, which would be of use to them in translating Christian religious texts into indigenous languages, and also in their preaching.[59] Missionary teachers like Moegling and Weigle also considered these texts to possess cultural value. Hence, introducing these texts into the school would familiarise the students with a cultural past that had much of value in it. This is best stated in an essay titled *On Kanarese Language*, written by Weigle. Referring to four texts, namely the *Mahabharata of Narana, Ramayana of Narsappa, Bhagavata Purana of Nityaman,* and *Lakshmipathi's Jaimini Bharata,* Weigle writes, 'The four works contain a rich variety of old Kanarese linguistic forms and also represent an encyclopedia of Indian mythology. Thus they are of real interest for the student of Kanarese and Indian Culture.'[60]

[57] BMR, 1850, p. 8.

[58] BMR, 1851, p. 10.

[59] The 1851 BMR, p. 11, states, 'A full knowledge and free use of the native language appears to us indispensable to the efficiency of native evangelists, and yet scarcely attainable, unless the medium of instruction in the catechist school, be the language of the country'.

[60] Weigle, *On Kanarese Language*, p. 27.

The Kannada translation of the *Panchatantra* receives special praise from him not only for its 'intrinsic value but also because of the special merit of the Kanarese translation which is written in exquisite prose, and is not that modern'.[61] The songs, fairy tales or *Ajji Kathes*, and proverbs, which he terms the oral literature of the Kanarese people,[62] he considers important as 'valuable aids for arriving at an understanding of the real Kanarese language and way of thinking'.[63] Weigle concludes his essay thus:

> If however, the present essay makes just one reader or at the most a few aware of the fact that the Kanarese people, though scarcely known in Europe, have attained, in their language and literature, a high standard, which is indeed not to be scoffed, at; if, moreover, this essay leaves behind the impression that this language and literature deserves to be better known, and that the true and highest interests of this people should be promoted with fervent zeal, then the author will not have written in vain.[64]

It was the missionaries' responsibility to both retrieve for the 'natives' their forgotten cultural texts and bring them closer to the truths of Christianity. Very often, the two could not be reconciled with each other. Thus, the songs of Purandara Dasa were taught with a specific purpose. On the one hand they were supposed to make the 'native Christian' students aware of the imperfections of their relinquished religion while on the other, they were to also make them aware of how close the 'enlightened Hindoo mind' had come to realising the truths of Christianity. To quote the BMR of 1854,

> In ancient Canarese seventy-five of those short poems, which teach the worthlessness of all worldly pursuits and the necessity of exclusive devotion to *one* God, have been read and explained. These poems, which are highly esteemed by the educated Natives, are not only classical in their style, but also highly interesting, because they show so clearly, how near an approach to truth the

[61] *Ibid.*, p. 30.

[62] Writing on the interconnections between print, folklore and nationalism in the Madras Presidency of the late nineteenth century, Stuart Blackburn (*Print, Folklore, and Nationalism in Colonial South India,* p. 149) states that folklore revivals in Europe, especially Germany, in the late eighteenth century had been linked to an emerging nationalism. According to him, 'In the late eighteenth century, the poet Johann Gottfried Von Herder developed his theory of the "folk" and especially folk poetry, which he claimed was a repository of national memory and an expression of the national soul.' The attempts at collecting and printing folk tales and proverbs by University trained missionaries like Moegling and Weigle could be understand to be similar to the Grimm brothers' attempts to collect German fairy tales which were, according to them, an expression of a 'pure and ancient Germanic culture' (*ibid.*, p. 149 and, more generally, pp. 143–77).

[63] Weigle, *On Kanarese Language,* p. 32.

[64] *Ibid*., p. 34.

> enlightened Hindoo mind is capable of, and yet at the same time what an immense gulf separates even the finest sentiments of heathenism from the truth as it is in Jesus.[65]

This contradiction was also inherent in the cultural encounters of missionaries like Moegling and Weigle. According to Oddie, the use of indigenous terms and religious beliefs in order to explain and preach Christianity was a missionary strategy, aimed at making Christianity more familiar to the Indians. Most missionaries also saw 'Christianity as the fulfilment of all that was best in Hinduism'. As a missionary strategy and theory, it eased the introduction of a new religion, namely Christianity, by using the language and concepts of a religion that was familiar to the indigenous people.[66] Moegling's personal interest in these texts had a non-evangelical dimension and intensity to it, and was looked upon with disapprobation by the home committee. He, along with Weigle, collated and published many old Kannada texts, and translated some of them into German. This could, and has been, understood as a missionary/colonial strategy of wielding power thorough constituting knowledges. However, the exercise of power is never that simple or linear. In the process of retrieving their lost texts for the 'natives' and constituting a canon for them, there is always the possibility of the missionary/scholar going astray from his own scholarly/religious certitudes, with which he had embarked on the enterprise. This would hybridise both him and his scholarship. Even if this did not happen, the missionary scholar could not control the ways in which the 'natives' appropriated these texts. Texts are never vessels of immutable meanings, but sites where meanings are contested, confronted and re-created.

Conversion and the English School

The first English and Canarese schools, named the Anglo Vernacular school,[67] were set up by the Basel Mission in 1838.[68] This was the first school in Mangalore

[65] BMR, 1854, p. 22.

[66] Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism,* pp. 303–4.

[67] These were the first schools on the Western model to be established in Mangalore. Samuel Miley's 'Canara Past and Present', 1884, states that prior to the arrival of the Basel missionaries, instruction in the Portuguese and Latin languages was imparted to the people of Canara by a Goanese cleric well-known as 'Mestre Gabriel', who had established a school in one of the rooms of the Parochial house attached to the Roman Catholic Cathedral. The first Provincial School was established in 1867, and the Jesuits opened St. Aloysius' College in 1881.

[68] The *Magazin, Jahrgang* 1840, p. 74, gives a detailed description of this school:

> Br Loesch took over the English school from Br. Layer, in which he taught for 5 hours every day and had approximately 40 students who were eager to learn. The subjects of the lesson were reading and explanation of passages of the New Testament which portray the life of our Lord, History of the Old Testament, English grammar, reading and writing exercises, translation from Hindustani to English and Vice-versa, Geography, Math and writing.

where the medium of instruction was English. According to the Basel Mission Report, the English School of the Basel Mission was established on the request of the English residents of the town, who felt the lack of 'good Christian instruction for their youth'.[69] It was built with the help of the generous donations given by English patrons. Although this school was open to all children of the region, a look at the 1850 census of students of the English school tells us that a majority of the boys who attended this school were Brahmins. Although the overt segregation of schools into Parochial, English and Canarese was done on the basis of the medium of instruction and the pedagogic intention of the school, a covert distinction, based on the caste composition of the students of these schools, also existed. The BMR of 1850 states that the English School was attended by 157 scholars of all classes, while the Canarese School attached to the English school had 33 students. Tables 1 through 4 provide details on their internal composition.

Table 1
List of Scholars on the Basis of Caste English School

Upper Division (4 classes) attending school from 6 to 10 AM		
Protestants	–	4
Roman Catholics	–	3
Mussulmans	–	8
Brahmins	–	44
Other castes	–	7
Total	–	66

Table 2
English School

Lower division (5 classes) attending school from 11 to 5 PM		
Protestants	–	9
Roman Catholics	–	12
Mussulmans	–	4
Brahmins	–	54
Other castes	–	12
Total	–	91

[69] The *Magazin, Jahrgang* 1838, p. 390, states that,

> Another need of this station consists in the setting up of an English school house which will also function as a building where the English service shall be held. Since the number of English families who have settled in Mangalore is quite big, and since they have no other means for their own Christian growth as well as the Christian instruction of their youth other than to take refuge in the services of the missionaries, our beloved brothers cannot escape from this good work, since they have upto now accepted strong support of these English friends for the purpose of their mission work amongst the heathens. Hebich writes in his letter of 10th October that the foundation of both these two buildings has been laid. And this will not cost our missionary treasury anything because our English friends have promised to supply us with the required amount of money.

Table 3
Total of English Scholars

Protestants	–	13
Roman Catholics	–	15
Mussulmans	–	12
Brahmins	–	98
Other castes	–	19
Total	–	157

Table 4
Total of Canarese Scholars

Protestants	–	0
Roman Catholics	–	1
Mussulmans	–	6
Brahmins	–	15
Other castes	–	11
Total	–	33

Sources: BMR, 1850, pp. 9–10.

Disruptions caused by the infringement of caste rules and fears of conversion were highest in the English school because of the predominance of Brahmin students, and there are several references in the Basel Mission Reports to the exodus of upper-caste students from this school. The main intention of the Brahmins behind sending their children to these schools was the hope of their getting a government post, and their numbers kept fluctuating.[70] The removal of the British regiment from Mangalore meant that the soldiers removed their children from the school, leading to a drastic fall in enrolment.[71] Due to the missionary insistence on admitting boys of all castes, Brahmin families were forced to make difficult choices. The Brahmins knew that access to government positions required knowledge of English,[72] which they felt could be best learnt at the English School.[73]

[70] The 1835 English Education Act of William Bentick, following upon Macaulay's Minute of the same year, made the study of English literature compulsory in the schools that received grants in aid from the British government and made English the official language of the colonial government, thus necessitating knowledge of English for a government post.

[71] In 1842, the number of students in the English school had been 80, which was reduced to 68 with the removal of the 46th regiment from Mangalore. BMR, 1842, pp. 19–20.

[72] According to Smiley's History, pp. 27–28, government posts, which were much sought after by the local people, were occupied by people from Malabar and east Indians (inhabitants of Madras Presidency, or more specifically Madras) before the Basel Mission established its schools and began teaching the English language. Gradually the Christians of the region learnt English from the east Indians and started taking over these positions. Among the Hindus, it was the Brahmins who had a strong footing in these professions in the beginning; later, the Sarswaths took over these jobs.

[73] There were other means of learning English outside the school setting, though the English taught here was considered inferior in comparison to the English taught at the Basel Mission School.

However, they were suspicious of and disturbed by what they considered the blatantly Christian orientation of the texts and methods of teaching. They felt compelled to let their children undergo what they considered a Christian education in order to reap the benefits of jobs offered by a Christian colonial government, even as they retained a strong suspicion of and aversion towards the Christian religion. The school witnessed a mass exodus of different segments of students whenever it instituted practices that seemed to threaten their religion and caste purity in the case of Brahmins and other upper castes, or seemed to threaten their community identity in the case of lower castes like the Billawas.[74] The parents in these cases felt that their children were constantly under the threat of being insidiously and covertly lured into the Christian fold.[75] They considered the conversion of three Brahmin students from the English school in 1844 proof that their fears were not completely unfounded.[76]

If we list the number of Brahmin conversions to the Mission in the first 25 years of its existence, however, we realise that these conversions were the exceptions, rather than the rule. The first Brahmin convert of the Basel Mission, Anandrao Kaundinya, was a student of the English school who was trained in Basel, and

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In the 1846 BMR, p. 13, Rev. G.F. Sutter writes: 'I have observed lately among some Brahmins an increasing desire, that their sons should learn English, but they rather choose to employ as masters natives, who happen to know a little English, than to avail themselves of a Missionary institution, of which they are so much afraid'. Smiley (pp. 27–28) writes that before the establishment of the Basel Mission School, Christians from Mangalore who aspired to clerical positions in the colonial administrative offices and judiciary learnt English from 'Malabar and Madras East Indians', who monopolised these government posts because of their knowledge of English.

[74] Regarding the English School, Moegling writes in the *Magazin, Jahrgang* 1839, p. 423:

> The English School is not progressing very well. We have not more than 16–20 students from the town. The boys from the upper castes did not want to have lessons in the same room as the boys of the lower castes. But since we did not heed their wish to be taught in another room at a different hour, they became stubborn and did not want to come back; however they soon came back and requested us only that they should be seated separately from the boys of the lower castes. But we refused to agree to this too and the result was that they finally had to be in the same company.

[75] The BMR of 1844, p. 24, states that after the conversion of the three Brahmin boys,

> the attendance at the school at once fell to seven. After some days however, the first shock having passed the Roman Catholic boys and some of the Mussulmans and low caste Hindus returned. Still the school has not yet recovered its strength, the attendance on an average being only from 15 to 20; yet we are not discouraged, but hope that the Lord will continue to use this institution for the spread of his knowledge.

[76] The BMR of 1844, p. 9, gives the following reason for the conversion of the three boys:

> The names of the three young men were Anandrao, a Sarasvata Brahman, Bhagavant Rao and Mukundrao of another class of Concan Brahmans. The two latter had for several years attended our English School, where the reading of the Bible and other instructions received from the Brethren superintending the School, had convinced them of the folly of their own idolatrous religion, and the truth of the Gospel.

returned to teach in the Catechist Institution. Anandrao Kaundinya was to be later ordained as the first native priest in Mangalore. The intersection of missionary education and the personal inclination and situation of the convert, which leads to this conversion, is explored in all its complexity in a corpus of missionary texts, which includes a tract titled *Eerarru Patrike* or *Twelve Letters* written by Herrmann Moegling, the missionary mainly responsible for Kaundinya's conversion, and who was also Kaundinya's teacher.[77] It included the letters exchanged between various participants and spectators to this conversion, published in the BMR of 1844, and Kaundinya's autobiographical address on the occasion of his ordination. The tract uses the familiar missionary trope of 'a sudden epiphanic experience' to describe the conversion of Kaundinya. However, it was the result of a long and complex process, located largely within the mission school, of both reconstituting the prospective convert's understanding of the self and giving shape to his own subjective spiritual longings.[78]

In the course of its existence, this school signified multiple and conflicting meanings to the various groups of people whose lives it affected. For the missionaries, the English as well as Canarese schools were places where the evangelical enterprise could be carried out most successfully through a combination of 'religious' and 'modern' education; however, for the communities that sent their children to these schools, it denoted the possibility of fulfilling certain material aspirations. By accommodating students from all castes and religions within the single spatial enclosure of the classroom, the English and Canarese schools redefined the rules of spatial accessibility and inaccessibility in radically new ways.[79] The schools allowed the missionaries to sculpt a space that not only did away with caste regulations governing the prerogatives of privileged access into and privileged functions within spatial enclosures, but also allowed them to form a learning

[77] This conversion and the text that narrates it are analysed in greater detail in my essay 'Conversion, Contestation and Community: Missionaries' Dialogues'.

[78] Other reasons for conversion, especially those not connected to the pedagogic institutions of the Basel Mission, are also given in the BMRs. One such explanation of the motive for conversion is given in the 14th BMR: 'A late visitation of the Cholera has been instrumental in directing the attention of many towards Christianity, chiefly because some of our Christians attended upon sick heathen, who had been forsaken by their own people, and even slept in their houses' (BMR, 1854, p. 26). A new and humane understanding of community was one of the greatest appeals of Christianity.

[79] The repercussion of this was the withdrawal of students whenever the parents felt that the school was trying to infringe upon existing caste rules in a drastic manner. Speaking of the schools in Mangalore, Josenhan's Report, which appeared in the BMR of 1852, pp. 16–17, states,

> On account of a determination on the part of the Missionaries to insist on the maintenance of perfect equality of castes in the school, the Brahmin boys left 'en-masse'; some influential natives at Mangalore even came to the resolution of setting up an Opposition School; and soon after the Mahommedan pupils also left the school, because they would not agree to reading the Bible as a class Book.

community to which they had intimate and a/effective access. Kaundinya's conversion added another dimension to the understanding of this institutional constitution of space. Not only was it a space where caste divisions were not maintained and reaffirmed, it was, more dangerously, also a space where such divisions could be undermined and transgressed.[80]

As mentioned earlier, the missionaries felt that they had to evacuate a space that was uncontaminated by the practices and beliefs of both the Catholic and heathen religions in order to bring into existence a community of native Christians, schooled in the true practices and beliefs of Christianity, and to Christianise those heathens who refused to be converted. Schools provided an ideal institutional space for fulfilling this purpose. However, in the schools established for the heathen children, the missionaries had to negotiate and wrestle with the beliefs of their students and the suspicions of their parents, while at the same time familiarising their students with Christian values and gaining their acceptance for these. The Canarese and English schools created a space where the missionaries could have access to heathen children without their parents' supervision or intervention. By catering to the need for a new kind of education, the missionaries aimed to establish contacts and links with the parents and adults of the community. Such contacts were of long duration and could be continually renewed, thus doing away with one of the major drawbacks of contacts established through itinerant preaching, namely its transience. Within the institutional set-up of schools, new and more efficacious relationships could be established between the missionaries and the local people. The missionaries also hoped that the schools would provide a space where children of different castes and their parents could come into contact with them, without both sides being governed or restricted by caste norms and rituals of interaction, or notions of purity and impurity. Successfully trained students from these schools were recruited as teachers and workers and catechists, thus providing a 'native workforce' that augmented the meagre contingent of European missionaries. The affective bonds that often developed between certain missionaries and some of their exceptional students led to conversions, which resulted in a small group of remarkable Indian Christians who gave new and creative shape to both these institutions and the relationships being forged within and through them.[81]

[80] The fourth BMR reports the effect of Kaundinya's conversion on the schools in Kerala:

> When the strange reports circulated through the country, that several Brahmin youths at Mangalore had been suddenly converted, by means of a very fine powder blown into their ears, or by a magical fumigation, they produced some commotion, which for some time considerably reduced the number of scholars, especially in the new schools (BMR, 1844, p. 41).

[81] Copley gives biographical sketches of several such converts in his *Religions in Conflict.*

Natural Theology

On their part, the missionaries hoped that through their avowed intention of providing a new kind of education, they could also create a need for a new religion. Although within missionary proselytism the superiority of the Christian religion over the heathen one was shown to be based on its rationality, in the schools an excessive emphasis on the teaching of science was seen to undermine lessons in religion. When a new teacher named Richter arrived in Mangalore in December 1855 with new scientific models from Europe, the missionaries were not too pleased. The BMR of 1856 reports this event in the following way:

> In December Mr. Richter arrived with divers specimens of the wonders that constitute the boast of modern Civilization. The electric telegraph, models of steam engines and of mills and photographic apparatus etc., have proved a great attraction to young and old. But we fear that the contemplation of nature has but rarely led to nature's God, and that those material agents, which many would uphold to be the great Missionaries of the day, are very powerless in grappling with the moral or immoral powers that have for ages chained this country. Great concentration on the one thing needful will undoubtedly be required in the teachers, to counterbalance the distracting effects of the many things taught, and the various objects presented by modern education.[82]

For the philosophical rationalism of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, commitment to a rationalist epistemology did not mean the denial of the existence of God. As John Cottingham puts it '... some of the most famous rationalist philosophers placed God at the very centre of their systems of thought'.[83] Nor did the 'scientific revolution' of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, which stressed induction and empiricism as the means of knowing the truths of nature, disturb or undermine religion. From a religious point of view, the enlightenment belief in the possibility of a progressive increase in human knowledge meant the progressive knowledge of the order and perfection of God's creation. In an essay on the spread of 'European science' through the Tranquebar missionaries trained at the Halle educational institute, Indira Viswanathan Peterson writes about the south Indian responses to this science in the eighteenth century, and the ways in which it impinged on the religious and creative enterprises of the Tamil poet Vedanayakam Sastri and his patron, the king of Tanjore, Serfoji II. The Halle Institute was established by the German Pietist theologian and educationist Hermann Francke in the German city Halle-on-the-Saale at the end of the seventeenth century, and was

[82] BMR, 1856, p. 12.
[83] Cottingham, *Rationalism*, p. 2.

later to influence the Basel Mission educational institutions.[84] Viswanthan writes that science was central to the school curriculum and that 'At the center of the Halle institutions' science curriculum was the *Kunst-und Naturalienkammer* (Cabinet of Natural History and Arts), a room dedicated to the systematic investigation of objects from nature and culture through collection, observation, classification, and the use of instruments'.[85] The room consisted of 'twelve display cabinets, each devoted to a particular kind of exhibit or field of study'.[86] Such collections, she writes, were popular throughout seventeenth-century Europe. She goes on to say that

> The design of the *Kunstkammer* as a representation of the whole world within a single room, combined with its encyclopedic scope and emphasis on classification, was an attempt to image the completeness and order of God's creation. Theoretical works often cited Noah's ark as the model for the *Kunstkammer,* and at least one famous British collection was actually named 'The Ark'.[87]

Viswanthan writes that not only was the Halle *kunstkammer* central to the school curriculum, but unlike private *kunstkammers*, it was also accessible to the public and to all the students of the institute, the institute having initially been established for the education of orphaned poor children. The empirical studies conducted in the Halle *kunstkammer* was linked to the vocational training given to students in the pharmacy, press and bookshop run by the poor students. Though the *kunstkammer* model of science was not part of the Basel Mission schools, individual missionaries like Pfleiderer, Stolz and Hunziker did write books in Kannada, classifying the flora and fauna of the region, on the Linnaean model.[88] The technological developments brought about by science also played an important

[84] According to Paul Jenkins, the comparison with Halle, while important, is bound to be a bit complicated and tentative. These are the reasons he gives for saying so:

> I think Halle employed theologians with an academic training, i.e. people who would be regarded as, by training and by the appointments they would have had, had they stayed at home, true members of the bourgeoisie. The Basel missionaries mostly did not have an education which was recognised in society at large—or: recognition of their training came only slowly, decade by decade in the 19th century. And between the Halle Mission in the 18th century and the Baslers of the 19th century the world CHANGED—industrial revolution really gets going in two or three regions of Europe, and the French revolution has 'mixed the cards' in a truly radical way (personal communication, 14 Jan. 2008).

[85] Peterson, 'Tanjore, Tranquebar, and Halle', p. 98.

[86] *Ibid*., p. 99.

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

[88] From an unpublished paper by Paul Jenkins, 'The Basel Mission's Kannada publications in the field of science from the 1840s to 1914: A provisional statistic and some thoughts on broader contexts', The paper lists the following three books: J. Hunziker's *Nature's Self-Printing, a series of useful and ornamental plants of the South Indian flora....taken from fresh specimens in facsimile colours*,

role in the industrial schools and establishments of the Basel Mission. Commenting on this, Paul Jenkins writes,

> In Karnataka and Kerala, however, The Basel Missionaries (and their brethren in the Basel Mission Trading Company/the Basel Mission Industries) seem to have positioned themselves on the cutting edge of modernization soon after 1850—indeed, in applying new technologies and new forms of the organisation of labour they were marching in step with their relatives at home who were going through the same experience at the same time. I think it may be appropriate to talk about a cusp, when all this came together, a short period when the Basel missionaries' hunger for practical innovation in the framework of the farming and craftwork they knew met elements in the modernizing world which spoke directly to their concerns. And this encounter gave the Basel Mission much of the orientation of its later industrial work in India.[89]

However, the above response of the missionaries to the 'distracting effects' and 'attraction' of the technological inventions of science on the students indicates that the missionaries, while considering science to be allied with 'modern civilization', also considered it a serious threat to the religious and moral well-being of India, which, according to them, was in need of moral edification more than modern education. According to Paul Jenkins, the mission's response to Richter's models is related to its attitude towards technological innovations and the inventions of science. Since most Basel Missionaries came from village/peasant backgrounds, their attitude to technology, according to him, was essentially practical. For them, the use to which a technology could be put, and the ways in which it could help create gains from the immediate local physical environment were the most important. Jenkins states that for the Basel Mission, which was against conspicuous consumption, Richter's models would have stood for 'consumer technology'. It found a more acceptable form of science in the technological innovations in tile-making, which it introduced into the tile factories it had established in Mangalore, than in Richter's models.

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botanautographed and published by J. Hunziker, Basel Mission Press, 1862; C. Stolz, *Sahasraarda Vrukshandigala Vamane/Five Hundred Indian Plants, their Use in Medicine and the Arts* (235 pp., 1881, no illustrations), a translation of the Linnaean system of plant classification into Kannada (pp. i–lvi), followed by detailed descriptions in Kannada of individual plants and their uses (pp. 1–230); I. Pfleiderer, trans. Rau, M. Gopal, *Hindudeshada Sasya Shaastravu* (106 pp., 1919), almost certainly an adapted or translated version of Pfleiderer's *Glimpses into the Life of Indian Plants*, 206 pp., a richly illustrated production, including c.8 colour plates, Mangalore 1908 (a third edition was published in Mangalore in 1916).

[89] Jenkins, *A Short History of the Basel Mission*, p. 13.

Missionary Education and Social Mobility

The communities that had established themselves as superior in the caste hierarchy were also the first to avail of the new opportunities made possible by the colonial institutions and missionary education. From Kaundinya's autobiography, we come to know that both his father and father-in-law were part of the colonial judiciary. His father was a pleader in the court, and his father-in-law was a *munshi*. Their bilingualism and caste had made it easy for Saraswath Brahmins to seek and attain upward mobility through entering the new professions made available to Indians by the colonial government. This gave them greater access to the contact zones where Indians interacted with Europeans.[90] Entry into these contact zones necessitated training in the role of functionaries in these new spaces. This education led to a cultural hybridisation, whose unacceptable representative was the upper-caste convert and whose more acceptable representative was the educated, westernised upper-caste reformer. It was these upper-caste converts who were seen as the most promising, and were sent to be educated in the missionary college in Basel. Kaundinya represents the mission's attempts to shape and control the processes of religious and cultural hybridisation resulting from the missionary and colonial encounter in India. This can be seen from a passage in the yearly report of the Home Committee, read by Rev. J. Josenhans at the 44th anniversary of the mission, and which was carried in the 20th BMR.

> Still the demand for trained and good men to assist the European Missionaries in their work of preaching and teaching, will for many years far exceed the supply from our *preparandi* and catechist classes, youths of superior promise will from time to time be received into the Mission College at Basel, (as the three lads from the Tellicherry School, now on board the Windsor Castle), there to go through a regular course of study extending over five or six years, when they are ordained with their European Brethren and return to their native country as Missionaries, still familiar with the language, climate and habits of their homes, yet spiritually and intellectually we hope in possession of the freedom of European Christianity. Br. H.A. Kaundinya at Mangalore has been the first of this race of German-Indian Missionaries.[91]

[90] In an essay on the early Kannada novels, Shivarama Padikkal writes that the early reformist novels of Dakshina Kannada were written by the Saraswath Brahmins. Explaining this phenomenon, he mentions (p. 35):

> As elsewhere in India, in this region too the Saraswaths were the first to receive English education and seize the opportunities opened up by that education. They were originally *Karniks* during Keladi period and were traders in 19th century. Their high social backgrounds and literacy had placed them in a position of advantage to best utilize the opportunities opened up by English education. Moreover, being a migrant community, the Saraswaths were adept at adapting to new circumstances.

[91] BMR, 1860, p. 17.

Bearing an uncanny resemblance to Macaulay's statement on the formation of a new breed of Anglicised Indians through the agency of English education, Josenhans' report reveals a missionary strategy for creating the most effective evangelists.

Canarese Schools

The third kind of school was the Canarese school, and this had the largest number of students. The Anglo Vernacular School constituted both the English school and the Canarese school. In the beginning, the missionaries thought of appointing a Brahmin headmaster to this school in the hope of attracting the Brahmin boys. However, they gave up this idea, and missionary Loesch was the first headmaster of the Anglo Vernacular school. Following the establishment of this school, many other Canarese schools were established by the Basel Mission in Mangalore. Girls who did not belong to the convert community began attending the Canarese school for girls, established in 1856, for the first time. Hence, these schools are of historical importance as the first schools for girls in Mangalore. The BMR of 1856 lists 10 girls in its Canarese school. This number rose to 24 by 1860. Reporting on the establishment of the school, the BMR of 1841 states that 'it was attended by upwards of 40 boys of different castes, who read without reluctance both Canarese Gospels and tracts and receive daily instruction from the Missionary in Geography and the history of the Bible'.[92] In the beginning, heathen teachers were appointed to teach in these schools. The BMR of 1855 states that 'the former masters of three of these Schools have been replaced by young men, trained at our Canarese and English Schools; an arrangement which promises to be very beneficial'.[93] The missionary insistence on ignoring the divisions of caste within the classroom led to fluctuations in the number of students in this school as well. The early teachers of the mission schools came from these schools, and some of them converted to Christianity.[94]

Inspector Josenhans' Report published in the BMR of 1852 has the following on the Canarese Schools:

> Yet the result of my inspection of these heathen schools has been to impress me more strongly than ever with the conviction, that in order to become not only starting points for direct Missionary labour, but really fruitful in themselves, and satisfactory to the mind of the casual observer, as well as to the Superintendents and Teachers, they must be thoroughly remodelled.[95]

[92] BMR, 1841, p. 14.

[93] BMR, 1855, p. 19.

[94] BMR, 1844, p. 25, reports that at Kadike station, a Brahmin youth who had studied in one of the Mangalore Canarese schools for three years and who, in the previous year, had been employed as master of the Kadike School, had been baptised on 6 Jan. 1844.

[95] BMR, 1852, p. 16.

British Patronage of Mission Schools

The Bible was taught in all the schools. The school day began with a prayer and ended with a prayer, thus bracketing off the school hours within a Christian sense of orderliness and regulation. In these schools, a new epistemology converged with a new religion. The schools attempted to bring them together as a seamless whole. The establishment of British colonial rule in Mangalore before the arrival of the Basel Missionaries played an important role in the establishment of the mission schools. Despite belonging to differing nationalities and differing Protestant denominations, the British officials warmly received the German missionaries and actively encouraged their evangelical attempts, attempts that, as officers of the colonial government, would be forbidden to them.[96]

In his book *Imperial Fault lines,* Cox explores the problems that confronted the missionaries running these schools. Writing on the educational institutions set up by American and English missionaries in north India, mainly Punjab, Cox notes that the providing of government grants led to conflicts between the missionaries and their home boards, and between the colonial government and the missionaries. According to him,

> Missionary administrators spent many tedious hours mediating between officials of the Department of Public Instruction, who insisted upon accountability for its grants and efficiency in school administration, and the home mission boards who insisted on accountability in spiritual as well as financial matters.[97]

In the case of the Basel Mission, the support given by local British officials to the evangelical activities of the first Protestant missionaries in this region made the educational enterprises of the missionaries easier, and enabled them to retain the integrity of their missionary enterprise in the schools. The Wood's Educational Dispatch of 1854 forbade the teaching of the Bible in government schools, and mandated an exclusively secular education in these schools. However, grants in aid were extended to missionary schools, and the colonial government did not insist on a strictly secular education in these schools. In fact, colonial officials sympathetic to the missionary cause actively aided them. Very often, grants in aid, supplemented by a nominal fee demanded of the students, went a long way in helping the missionaries face the expenses of their management. The mission

[96] The BMR of 1857, p. 9, reports of the English school,

> The school was visited by Lord Harris on the 28th November. He devoted some time to the examination of the pupils, and concluded by exhorting them not merely to acquire knowledge in order to qualify themselves for Government Offices, (the one thing needful in the estimation of most of these youths!)—but seek after truth because it is its own reward, far more precious than silver, gold and rubies.

[97] Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines,* p. 195.

report of 1857 states that grants in aid had been applied for and given. Such aid was given to missionary schools without insisting on the withdrawal of Christian books from the syllabus. However, that some conflicts did arise because of differences between the British and missionary educational policies can be seen from this extract from the BMR of 1857.

> The new impulse, given to education by the late measures of Government, has stimulated us to new exertions. We have established new schools, and strengthened and enlarged our older institutions. Grants in aid have been applied for and obtained. The preparation of suitable school books has been much at our heart, and has occupied part of our time. We have even, upon the wish of our Committee, considered the advisability of further diminishing the number of available labourers, by giving up one of them to the service of Government, for the purpose of helping on the cause of Education in these provinces. Some conscientious friends have taken exception at this step, seeing that the Bible is still not taught in Government schools, and that the differences of the objects pursued by their Educational Department, and by us as Missionaries remains palpable enough. To these and other objections we do not shut our eyes. They influence us to move cautiously in these matters, and to consider even whilst advancing the possible necessity of a retreat. But whilst we honour the different views of our friends, we would ask them to bear with us, if from early associations we feel somewhat prepossessed in favour of Government Education, and are inclined to make allowances for their difficulties. We confess that we earnestly deprecate a premature and indiscriminate withdrawal of zealous Christians from a cause so essential to the emancipation of India from its ancient thraldom. May the Lord also in this momentous question make our way plain before us![98]

Grants in aid seem to have been given to the English and Canarese schools without jeopardising the evangelical agenda of the missionaries.[99] The mission press was used to publish the textbooks used in the government schools established in other regions.[100] The mission report of 1853 reports on Br. Hoch's visit to Bombay

[98] BMR, 1857, p. 4.

[99] BMR, 1859, p. 30:

> In the beginning of May 1858 the new building raised for the English School, was occupied, each Class now has a separate hall. Of late the plan of lessons has been more closely accommodated to that laid down by the Director of Public Instruction, and Canarese generally introduced into the lower classes as the medium of instruction. In all classes Bible teaching, however, occupies a prominent position. The school is opened with prayer and reading of the Word of God, and closed with prayer.

[100] The BMR of 1860, p. 24, states that '46600 copies of a great variety of books and tracts have issued from the press during the year, 10,200 copies of which have been published for the Educational department of the Government'.

'for a few weeks, hoping to derive much insight into the duties of his calling, from a visit to the various educational Institutions in that city'.[101] In BMR 1851, it is stated that the printing press has printed a school book in Canarese to be used in the Canarese schools of the Bombay Presidency, and prepared under the order of the Bombay Board of Education. It also states that a second volume is now in press.[102] The report of 1857 warmly praises Findlay Anderson for his help in establishing the English School.[103] Though the schools were training their students to fit into the convert communities, these students could have fitted easily into the world of 'colonial modernity' introduced by the British. The 1858 BMR states that 'In September a training class for twelve pupils was opened in connection with the above (the Canarese and English schools), to supply teachers for Government schools, which it is the intention to establish in different parts of the province'.[104] The British actively patronised the products of the mission industries. Thus, khaki-coloured cloth produced by the weaving establishment of the Basel mission became the official cloth for the uniforms of soldiers of the British army in India.[105]

Conclusions

The Industrial establishments of the Basel Mission formed a continuum with the schools in the disciplining of bodies to fit into 'modern' institutions like the factory, the school, the government office, etc. The missionaries, who had themselves enjoyed the benefits of social mobility through education, would have seen similar possibilities in the education of the *shudra* converts. In his book *Missionary Zeal*,

[101] BMR, 1853, p. 7.

[102] BMR, 1851, p. 12.

[103] The BMR of 1857, p. 11, acknowledges the services of Collector Anderson to the English school thus,

> The English School owes to him (Findlay Anderson) a special debt of gratitude. A great part of its library, as well as the chemical, mechanical and geographical apparatus are his gifts, and will keep up within the room, where he often visited, examined and encouraged the youths of Mangalore, the remembrance of the name of Findlay Anderson.

[104] BMR, 1858, p. 41.

[105] In his book on the economic activities of the Moravian and Basel Mission Trading Company, titled *Profit for the Lord*, Danker (p. 88) gives the story of how Khaki came to the attention of the British. He writes that the inventor of Khaki dye was the master weaver John Haller, who had been sent to India by the Basel Mission in 1851. He prepared the dye from the bark of the semicarpus tree and called the new dye by the name Khaki, the Kannada word for dusty. Danker goes on write,

> It was an instantaneous success. The police chief of Mangalore was so enthusiastic that he clothed his entire police force in this color. And on a visit to the Basel Mission weaving establishment at Balmatta, Lord Roberts of Kandahar, then Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's forces, was so impressed with the practicality of this cloth that, it is said, he emphatically recommended its introduction into the British Army, which followed.

Miller writes that most nineteenth-century European evangelical missions maintained a class distinction between the missionaries who worked in the field and the members of the mission committee. It was believed that this made the missionaries more 'amenable to hierarchical discipline'.[106] He writes that this was true of the Basel Mission as well, and that most of the missionaries came from agrarian and craft origins, and from the villages and towns of south Germany. According to Miller, in addition to their religious zeal, applicants to the mission also aspired for class mobility through the formal education offered to them once they were selected by the mission. As early as the seventeenth century, the Wuerttemberg area, from which the missionaries came, had encouraged public education with the promise of social advancement. However, Miller writes that in actual practice, this education was not available to all, and the social advancement it offered was also illusory. Citing the example of the clergy, he writes that there were simply not enough vacancies for educated young people of modest social origins in the Church. In addition, a discriminatory law was passed in 1749 prohibiting members from this class from entering the clergy. Miller writes, 'The rhetoric of advancement and the relative openness of the educational system encouraged aspiration, but the reality of class exclusiveness in the church hierarchy worked in many cases to frustrate those hopes.'[107] It is in this context, according to Miller, that the Basel Mission opened up the possibility of higher education, clerical positions, and the resulting social mobility for that class that was otherwise denied these possibilities.[108]

i) One of the most important functions of these schools was to alienate their students from the naturalised hierarchies of their world outside the classroom.
ii) The mission schools gave a new institutional shape to education, which radically redefined the criteria of eligibility for learning.
iii) By making school education compulsory for the children of converts, and by granting admission to all who were interested in attending their schools, they not only smudged beyond repair the existing mappings of caste, class and gender hierarchies, but also brought into existence students who would confront the missionaries with their own racism. The BMR of 1857 narrates the incident of one such confrontation between a catechist from Udupi and the missionaries.[109] Though the report does not

[106] Miller, *Missionary Zeal and Institutional Control,* p. 47.
[107] *Ibid*., p. 56.
[108] See *ibid.*, pp. 35–60.
[109] BMR, 1857, pp. 12–13, reports:,

> He [Br. Deggler, who was in charge of the Mulki Station] has been deeply tried of late by a strange excitement, which unexpectedly arose within the Church. A discontented young Catechist, who threw up his appointment at Udapi and retired amongst his relatives at Mulki,

give the reasons behind the particular catechist's discontent, it reassures its readers through a foot-note that the situation has come back to normal, 'They have humbled themselves and are happy. (31 March 1857)'.[110] But the problem was to recur the next year. In 1837, they started a school for Brahmin boys with a Brahmin teacher. In 1855 they opened a school for Brahmin girls.[111] The wives of missionaries Lehner and Greiner were the first teachers in this school.

iv) Print technology also arrived in the region as an adjunct to missionary education. Print technology and Western education are mutually supportive of and dependent on each other. Pioneering Basel Mission activities like the setting up of a printing press (1849) and book shop (1855), and the printing of the first newspaper in Kannada (1857) removed the aura that had earlier surrounded the written text, and the activity of reading and writing. The accessibility of the translated and printed Bible to all literate believers led to a radical effacing of distinctions between the sacred and the profane text, and, in the Indian context, to a radical questioning of the distinctions between superior and inferior castes.

v) A new class of educated people was coming into existence, which not only had access to a common corpus of texts, but could also insert itself through its novelistic, journalistic, propagandist writing into the spaces where public opinions were being formed, and public issues debated.

Thus, the educational enterprise of the Basel Mission changed the contours of the society within which it existed in irreversible ways, even as it was forced to adapt to and negotiate with the heathenness of that society.

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