Technology, Caste and Colonial Difference: Narratives of 'Material Production' in Thiruvithamkoor, 1850 – 1930

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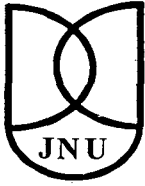in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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Certificate

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled "**Technology, Caste and Colonial Difference: Narratives on Material Production in Thiruvithamkoor, 1850 – 1930**" submitted by **Sunandan. K.N.** in partial fulfillment for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy of this University is an original work according to the best of our knowledge and may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Acknowledgement

One evening in summer 2001, I found a text in Suresh's room at M.G. University Hostel, which I started to read with interest. The author was one Feyerabend and the title 'Against Method'. That book changed my life and I confirmed my then vague idea to enter into research as a student. The book also gave me direction towards a research topic which I was in search of for months. My life changed many times after that and also my research topic, but still I feel, that moment was critical in my life. When I was working in a Government project at Kottayam the presence of friends from School of Social Sciences, especially – Raju, Ram Mohan, Suresh and Amruth – provided an academic atmosphere, which also was critical in my decision to enter academics. I joined in CSSP at JNU in summer 2003.

Amma, Achan, and Ushoppol, at home were always there backing me even in the times when they were worried and skeptic of the paths that I was treading. It is their unconditional love and support that helped me and gave me the confidence for this venture. My in-laws also were caring and loving.

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Not just this work, but the person as I am now as well, is the result of my life which is confluent with that of my partner Bindu. It is impossible to acknowledge her in words, because her support is an integral part of this dissertation. I am sure she will recognize that the passion, love, care, worries, humor and sorrows that we shared in our life is reflected in these pages. This work is dedicated to her.

26/07/05   Sunandan. K.N.

To Bindu who discovered the researcher in me....

Contents

Introduction

This study explores conceptions of material production during the second half of the 19th century and the early decades of 20th century, in the Princely State of Thiruvithamkoor[1]. It endeavors to analyze different narratives by colonial officers, missionaries, Hindu officers of Thiruvithamkoor State and those related to the community politics in Thiruvithamkoor.

Thiruvithamkoor had undergone significant transformations during the second half of the nineteenth century. The initiation of large scale public works, dissemination of general education institutions and attempts at legal reforms were some of the noted indicators of this change. By the end of the century, caste reform movements emerged and they intervened in political process of the country in a decisive manner.

Thiruvithamkoor, in this period, has special significance as a comparative exercise for several reasons. It was one of the few principalities that existed in South India, which was not brought under the direct British rule at any period of time. The country was expanded and organized as a powerful state in the period of Marthanda Varma (1729 – 58). He maintained a close relationship with the British and later on, during Rama Varma's period (1758 – 1798), a formal treaty was signed between Thiruvithamkoor and the British government in 1795 by which the latter provided military protection in return for a tribute called 'subsidy'. By another treaty in 1805, the British government sought more comprehensive control over Thiruvithamkoor. In

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[1] The pronunciation and spelling of the names of people and places have their own colonial history. Sometimes the way they are called or written also shows one's own political and theoretical stand point. As I believe that localization and 'vernacularization' are important in the present academic situation in India, I am using the spellings of the places and people as they are pronounced in Malayalam and the way Malayalikal speak English, except when they are used in quotes. Also the plurals of the Malayalam words are retained as they are. For example, instead of Malayalis, I am using Malayalikal.

addition to its military presence and a Resident as the British representative, the new treaty gave sweeping powers to the Resident. The Thiruvithamkoor government thus had to 'consult' and 'pay attention' to the 'advice' of the Resident in almost all matters, including revenue collection, administrative and legal reforms, or 'any other objects connected with the advancement of His Highness' interest, the happiness of his people, and the mutual welfare of both the States.'[2] Concerning the economy, the paramount power's dominance over the State was increasing throughout the 19th century.

But then, does that mean that British indirect rule in Thiruvithamkoor was not much different from that of the regions where there was direct rule? The analyses focused on political economy usually conclude that the British had the complete control over the economic affairs of Thiruvithamkoor.[3] I shall, in contrast, try to demonstrate here that, the colonial policies, while having a determining and dominant role, were also determined by the specific situations of Thiruvithamkoor.

Christian religion already had centuries of history in Thiruvithamkoor by the time when the first missionaries arrived in the early years of the 19th century.[4] The missionaries looked forward 'with hope, confidence and joy to the time when Thiruvithamkoor shall be wholly Christianized.'[5]. They attempted to influence policy decisions of the state either by direct petitioning or through various British authorities like the Resident of Thiruvithamkoor, the Government of Madras or the Government of India. Here I argue that the missionary activities in Thiruvithamkoor were different

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[2] Quoted in P. Shungoonny Menon, *A History of Travancore from the Earliest Times*, Higginbotham and Company, Madras, 1878 (hereafter Shungoonny Menon, *History of Travancore*), p. 234.

[3] For example Raviraman writes: 'When the dominant classes in the metropolis required specific types of raw material, the periphery was reconstituted to act as supplier. When new markets for manufactured goods were required, the periphery was opened to serve as an outlet for the same.' K. Raviraman, 'Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: Political Economy of Tea Plantations in South India, c. 1850-1950', PhD Thesis submitted at Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1997.

[4] According to the local legends among Syrian Christians, Apostle St. Thomas arrived in Keralam in AD 52 and converted Namboothiris and founded seven churches.

[5] Samuel Mateer, *The Land of charity, A Descriptive Account of Travancore and its People*, 1870, Reprinted Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1991 (hereafter Mateer, *Land of Charity*), p. 369.

from elsewhere, for instance, the Malabar district of Madras presidency where there was direct British rule.

Now the concept of 'narrative on Material production' requires some explanation. The concept of material production emerged along with the modern notion of a divide between the material and spiritual. The development of disciplines like Natural Science on one hand and political economy on the other reinforced the above divide by constructing the idea of objective knowledge of the material world and subjective world of human ideas.[6] Material production then became an object of study in the domain of 'material' differentiated from the cultural or spiritual domain. Historical studies also incorporated this dichotomy and therefore appeared as separate disciplines as 'economic history' and 'social history'.

In this dissertation, I argue that the notion of the divide is problematic and the processes explained as 'material production' is to be located in the wider domain of contemporary socio political process. Hence this work is an analysis of processes that are classified as material production, which is generally located at various types of production processes: handicraft production, cottage industry, factory industry etc.[7] At the same it is discussed within the socio-political conditions of Thiruvithamkoor: the Hindu State and its relation with the British Paramount Power, the caste community movements and the missionary activities in the country.

Beyond the Histories of Technology

Is this a historical analysis of *technology*, in a wider socio-political context? Both yes and no: yes because it deals with the same domain which in many historical works is defined as 'technology'; no because I consider that the category 'technology'

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[6] For a philosophical discussion on the emergence of human sciences in Europe, see Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Vintage Books, New York, 1970.

[7] Agriculture is one of the major activities in the domain 'material production'. But it is not included in this study because that process requires separate and different set parameters and method of study from the analysis of industrial production and related processes; and of course it is not included also because of 'practical reasons'.

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could only be associated historically with the shift from manufacture to factory production in the history of industrialization in the West. Leo Marx writes:

> Indeed historian and other scholars in the human sciences now tend to project the concept of technology backward in time to encompass the entire history of tools. Yet.... the concept only came into general use when at the end of the nineteenth century, the age old artifactual lexicon of the mechanical arts become inadequate.[8]

He also traces the genealogy of the concept 'technology'. From the middle of the 19th century onwards, a gap was appearing between the emerging factory production system and its representation in the older terms like manufacture, mechanical art, and useful art. The word technology was already in use, probably first used by Jacob Bigelow, in 1828 to refer for machine production. He in fact named the technical institution in Massachusetts as 'Massachusetts Institute of Technology'. But the term was not widely used, till the next century; for example Marx or Toynbee never used the term. Perhaps, Thorstein Veblen might have been the person who popularized the term around 1904; along with development of large industries, the term technology attained its present meaning. Leo Marx argues that the use of the term should be confirmed to certain specific historical forms of production.[9] In Thiruvithamkoor the factory form of production became predominant and prioritized by 1930s. My study is limited up to this period and to the area of handicraft production and manufacture.

Also this is not just a question of period and area of the study. It is also a question of distancing from the conceptualization of Technology as an independent system and universal in characteristic or as socially shaped but which has then become universal. Both of these conceptualizations are problematic. The first argument obviously gives no role for social factors in historical changes. In the second case, the argument that technology is socially shaped is convincing but they still universalize it by putting it into the domain of 'Technology' and 'Modernity'. For example, Thomas J. Misa in his introduction to the collected volume *Modernity and Technology* explains

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[8] Leo Marx, 'Technology: The emergence of a Hazardous concepts', in Arien Mack, ed., *Technology and the Rest of Culture*, The Ohio University Press, Columbus, 1997, p. 39.

[9] Ibid., pp. 23-46.

'the point of departure' of the volume as 'the impossibility of escaping this tangle of technology and modernity'. He adds:

> Modern society – whether aspiring East or industrialized West, wealthy North or resentfully poor South – is constituted, in varied ways, through technological systems and networks. ... We cannot responsibly escape this condition of modernity, and we need ways to confront it consciously.[10]

The essentialization of modernity and technology is one of the critical elements in the Western narratives of material production even which strongly criticize technological determinism and stand for a theory of social shaping of Technology. Through this universalizing discourse, what are socially shaped in different societies in different ways, are again homogenized as Technology or Modernity.

This is true not just for Western Historians, but for all those who accept technology as a category which can be used transcendently. Several writings on 'history of technology' in India also situate themselves in this universalistic paradigm.[11] As I am trying to distance myself form the above paradigm, throughout this dissertation technology as a category is not used to signify knowledge or artifacts; instead a more flexible and inclusive notion: 'material production' is taken as the central object of this study.

Technology, Race and Colonial Difference

The idea of separation between material and spiritual (or nature and culture) is one of the fundamental concepts that shaped colonial narratives on 'modern' and 'traditional' forms of production. This dissertation tries to analyze how the concept of separation determines the specific process of interaction between various agents and

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[10] Thomas J. Misa, 'The Compelling Tangle of Modernity and Technology', in Thomas J. Misa, Philip Brey and Andrews Feenberg, ed. *Modernity and Technology*, The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, Massachusetts, 2003. p. 4.

[11] David Arnold's gives a series of examples of historical works, which consider that the category of technology could be used at least from modern period onwards unconditionally. See the bibliographical essay in David Arnold, *Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000 (hereafter Arnold, *Science, Technology and Medicine*), pp. 217-34.

change in their notion of material production. It is argued here that the process of separation actually produced hybrids of material and spiritual. [12] Hence even while there was a notion of a separated domain, the objects in these domains were not 'purely' material or spiritual. Throughout the dissertation the term 'hybrid' and 'hybridization' is used in the sense Bruno Latour conceptualized it: an entanglement of nature and culture or human and nonhuman and the reality of quasi-objects and quasi-subjects.

The historical analyses of colonialism that is located within the above notion of separation furthermore described the idea of colonial difference: either as a claim of material advancement or as claim of racial superiority.

Michael Adas, analyzing a large collection of sources, has brought out a detailed comparative study about western dominance in India, China and Africa. Adas brings a distinction between the argument of technological advance and racial superiority. His point is that the colonialist always believed and made others believe in their supremacy in 'technology'. According to him, the notion of racial difference was still prominent, but even this was articulated with scientific explanations developed in

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[12] Latour explains that, the idea of 'modern' works through a double separation. The first separation is between two processes, what he calls work of translation and work of purification. The work of translation is the process of formation of hybrid networks. Through the social processes – material production, research in science and technology, governmental policies, political activism etc – human and nonhuman interacts and hybrids of nature and culture are formed. The more the intensity of these processes, the more human and nonhuman objects are translated into hybrids. Instead of accepting this hybrid as such what happens in modern is a second process: the work of purification. This is an attempt to separate the hybrids into two domains: nonhuman nature and human culture. So first, there is a separation between work of translation and work of purification and a second separation between human and nonhuman. The first separation helps to conceal the hybrids or to keep it in underground. Hence in 'modernity', every process and object is understood in the separate domains of nature and culture and hybrids are considered as non-existent. Bruno Latour, *We Have Been Never Modern*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1993. Homi Bhaba has used this category in a different sense. He is analyzing the hybridity of western and the other or the colonizer and the colonized. Homi K. Bhaba, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London, 1994. In this dissertation the term hybrid is used as Latour has attempted to conceive it.

Europe during this period.[13] For Adas, the 18th and 19th century colonialism is primarily anchored in the claims of technological superiority.[14]

Ann Stoler, in her close study of Foucault's texts, brings out the critical role of racial ideas in the formation of colonial discourses.[15] Critiquing Foucault's genealogy of racism, with Europe as an unproblematic entity, she states that 'the fixed and firm European bourgeois order of the 19th century was one that forged its changing and porous parameters around the bio-politics of race. Biopower may have been a uniquely bourgeois form of modern power, but it was also an inherently imperial one.' This also has been analyzed in detail, in a different context, by Partha Chatterjee by the concept of colonial difference. Chatterjee argues that 'the colonial difference is part of a common strategy for the deployment of the modern forms of disciplinary power'[16]. In colonial conception, the difference of the colonizer and colonized was marked by the difference of race. Further he pointed out that the colonial difference could be marked

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[13] Adas argues that the findings on racial differences in studies of history of 19th century colonialism are little exaggerated. He is not denying the existence of claims of racial superiority, but for him all forms of these claims rested on a basic question of material advantage of west. Though he tries distance from the merit of these claims, the overall feeling one would get from this work is that this claim is something 'factual' and 'objective'. Michael Adas, *Machine as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance*, Oxford University Press Delhi, 1990.

[14] Joyce Chaplin also argues in the similar manner but in a different context, in her study of early colonialism in North America. In the early stages of colonization especially that of North America, the idea of superiority was anchored on bodily differences and based on this, inquiries were directed towards developing a theory of racial difference. But in the later period – late 17th and 18th centuries – the concept of technological superiority has gained prominence. Chaplin's description shows a gradual movement from claims of similarity of the colonizer and colonized to differences, and from claims of racial superiority to scientific and technological advantage. Joyce E. Chaplin, *Subject Matter*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2001.

[15] Ann Stoler attempt is to 'interrogate the epistemic principles, the ways of knowing on which racism rely'. Ann Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and The Colonial Order of Things*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1995.

[16] Partha Chatterjee, The *Nation and Its Fragments: colonial and Post Colonial Histories*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1994, p. 18.

by many signs, but 'all of these signs, race was perhaps the most obvious mark of colonial difference'.[17] He adds:

> Indeed, the more the logic of a modern regime of power pushed the process of government in the direction of rationalization of administration and normalization of objects of its rule, the more insistently did the issue of race come up to emphasize the specially colonial character of British dominance in India.[18]

The above theorizations, differs in regards to the question of the foundation on which the scheme of colonial difference is formed: whether it is on racial superiority or on material advancement. I argue that both arguments are based on the modern concept of a divide between the material and spiritual and/or between subject and object. The colonial difference as domination was not advanced either through a separate axis of race or that of material advancement but in a field of new technologies of power. In this, different form of dominations – race, gender, caste, material advancement, civilizational progress – got entangled and these forces were acting simultaneously throughout the field of power. It became possible to express the claim of racial difference in terms of material advancement, and vice versa.

The domain of material production that emerged during the second half of the 19th century became one of the important sites of exercise of power in a new form. Along with the new forms of power, new forms of knowledge of material production also emerged. Most of the works specifically dealing with the history of 'technology' in India do not distinguish between different types of knowledge in different power relations or in even in different political-economic conditions.[19]

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[17] Ibid., p. 20.

[18] Ibid., p. 19.

[19] These works generally attempts to trace a continuous history of material production what they often call as history of technology. As example for the works which explain the history of 'technology' from ancient times see V.K. Thakur, K.K. Madanlal, eds., *Science Technology and Medicine in Indian History*, Janaki Prakashan, Patna, 2000. A.K.Bag, ed., *History of Technology in India*, Vol. I., 'From antiquity to c. 1200 A.D.', Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi, 1997. The works on the colonial period attempt to reveal various exploitative mechanism of the colonialism in specific areas of development of 'technology'. The textile industry, the Railways, irrigation works and ship building are

David Arnold, for example, tries to locate the introduction of 'technology' by the British Government in its imagination of the Raj as a technological empire. He also attempts to bring forward the reaction of natives to the new 'technologies', including that in the period of National Movement and Mahathma Gandhi. His work is significant for this study because it questions the dichotomy of 'modern' and 'primitive' and connects different conceptualizations with socio-political processes. Still its focus on the British practices, sidelining the native locations of production, allows it to thematically privilege the 'modern'. The intervention in the native system is important because it critically influenced the British policies and even the notion of the 'modern' was developed within this negotiation. As Arnold neglects this, he lands in the same domain, which accepts the boundary conditions of 'science and technology' set by the dominant discourses of 'modernity'. Of course, he criticizes the arguments of this dominant discourse, but still shares the objects of the discourse in his analysis. His analysis of technology in the period of colonialism, even while attempting to include the 'native voice', overlooks the 'non-material' aspects like caste or religious beliefs. This may be because he is taking for granted the notion 'technology'.[20]

Location of the Study

This dissertation is divided into two parts. The first part, which includes the first two chapters, is an analysis of the colonial and missionary narratives through which I expound on certain colonial conceptions about material production. Here I also consider, some narratives from British India to amplify how they drew upon resonances from the directly rule portion of the subcontinent. They reflect some instances of the conception of material production and the policies of the British Government, which also are moments of articulation of colonial difference.

some of the most searched areas. Dharampal, *Indian Science and Technology in 18th Century: Some Contemporary European Accounts*, Impex India, Delhi, 1971; Deepak Kumar and MacLeod, eds., *Technology and the Raj*, For a bibliographical essay on the works in the area of technology, see Arnold, *Science Technology and Medicine*, pp. 221-23.

[20] Arnold, *Science, Technology and Medicine*.

The first part also will serve as the background against which the central arguments of this dissertation are developed and compared to in the second part. The second part concentrates on the Hindu State of Thiruvithamkoor as the central object of the analysis. But the State or its Hindu characteristics are not considered as given or static. In the interaction with other agents it transforms and imparts change on other agencies. The writings on Thiruvithamkoor usually essentialize the Hinduness of the State in different ways.

The early histories of Thiruvithamkoor were written by Hindu officers of the State, which were actually modeled on European History writing tradition of that period. These are generally chronological descriptions of the rulers and their contributions. Geography, Geology, and Political Economy emerged as clear and bounded disciplines through these narratives. Moreover, through these writings a generalized notion of 'the Hindu' was constructed in which continuity with the Hindu religion in other places became a historical 'fact'.[21] The missionary writings also produced an essentialist Hindu nature of the State but in a negatives way. If the Hindu historians in Thiruvithamkoor attempted to relate the Hinduness with *Dharma*, charity and progress the missionaries considered it as pagan, primitive and despotic.[22]

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[21] Shungoonny Menon's work could be considered as the starting point of this genre. State Manuals also attempted to trace a continuous 'Hindu History' of Thiruvithamkoor. Padmanabha Menon moved into a more positivist domain by bringing clear distinction between myth and history; still he considered the Hindu character of the State as inherent. Rama Nath Aiyar's work also follows a similar characterization but the question of progress is more fore-grounded. P. Shungoonny Menon, *A History of Travancore form the Earliest Times*, Madras Higginbotham and Company, Madras, 1878; K.P. Padmanabha Menon, *History of Kerala*, 4 Vols., Asian Educational Service, 1983 (first published in 1924-37); V. Nagam Aiya, *Travancore State Manual*, 3 vols., Government Press, Trivandrum, 1906; Rama Nath Aiyar, *Progressive Travancore*, Indian State Series, A.R.V. Press, Trivandrum, 1923.

[22] The missionary narratives were often written as memoirs of the missionary work in Thiruvithamkoor. Here the general pattern was to focus on the despotic situation in the country due to the caste practice and the missionary attempt to fight against the 'spiritual poverty'. But they also gave prominence to the material life and its improvement. C.M. Augur, *Church History of Travancore*, Asian Educational Service, New Delhi, 1990 (first published 1903); I.H. Hacker, *A Hundred Years in Travancore*, H.R. Allenson, London, 1908; Samuel Mateer, *The Land of Charity: A Descriptive Account of Travancore and its People*, John Snow and Co., 1871; Mateer, *The Native Life in Travancore*, W.H. Allen,

The works after 1930s adopt a deeper division between social history and economic history; not that they were considered as unrelated. But these writings produced a disciplinary divide between sociological enquiries and economical analysis. In the works of E.M.S., the economic change throughout the period was debated as the question of feudalism and capitalism. All aspects of caste and religion were now clubbed into the feudal economic base which is to be surpassed or which had already overcome.[23]

The studies appeared in the last decades of the 20th century had become more complex but still the reminiscence of the divide of disciplines in the past, shadows these works also in different ways. The works on economic changes in Thiruvithamkoor in this period had included caste and gender as analytical categories but only having a subordinate position to the economic base.

Robin Jeffrey's work could be seen as a pioneering study, which attempted to cross the boundaries of this divide. His study of the Nair caste and its decline brought to foreground the question of power and attempted to move beyond rigid disciplinary boundaries. Still he did not consider the Hindu characteristic of the State as important or the analysis did not provide a relation between the modernization and the 'Hindu characteristics' of the State.[24]

Koji Kawashima's work is significant in this sense. He attempts to observe how the Hinduness of the State determined its policies especially towards the missionaries. His analysis questioned the essentialist notions of westernization or modernization. But he did not attempt to analyze what all constituted this Hinduness. The Brahminical dominance and its influence as a practice are not recognized in his analysis.

London, 1883; Arthur Parker, *Children of Height in India: Biographies of noted Indian Christians*, Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, 1917.

[23] E.M.S. Namboothirippad, *Keralam Malayalikalute Mathrubhoomi* (Keralam: The Motherland of Malayalikal), Currents Books, Thrissur, 1948, p. 232, pp. 260-61.

[24] Robin Jeffrey, *The Decline of Nair Dominance: Society and Politics in Travancore, 1847-1908*, Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1994; Jeffrey, 'Travancore: Status, Class and Growth of Radical Politics 1860-1940; The Temple Entry Movement', in Jeffrey, ed., *People Princes and Paramount Power: Society and Politics in Indian Princely States*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1978.

Kawashima located the Hindu nature in the rituals of the Rulers and he argues that these rituals functioned more than in a 'ritualistic' way. This is true, but he did not analyze as to how these rituals got their importance. They are significant only within a Brahminical caste practice. The State practices were fundamentally oriented within this Brahminical order.[25]

Brahminical dominance however was not stable or static. Brahminism was the general rule of the ordering of people (and things) which fundamentally constituted the caste practices. But it reconstituted itself in the process of interaction with the colonial government and missionaries on one hand and with the caste community reform movements on the other. Within the discourse the relation of various objects were mutually constitutive and determinative. The Brahminical discourse had a critical role in socio-political and economic transformations in Thiruvithamkoor, especially till the 1930s.

Most of the works in economic history of Thiruvithamkoor, are worked out within a rigid economic framework.[26] Ram Mohan had attempted for a more inclusive

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[25] Kawashima, Koji Kawashima, *Missionaries and a Hindu State: Travancore 1858-1936*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1998. What Nicholas Dirks argued in the case of the Princely State, Puthukkottai does not seem to be applicable in the case of Thiruvithamkoor. He observed that though it was difficult to ascertain whether the Brahmin or the King has precedence, caste was embedded in political context of Kingship. 'This meant among other things that the prevalent ideology had not to do at least primarily with purity and pollution, but rather with royal authority and honour and associated notions of power, dominance and order.' But in Thiruvithamkoor, the Brahminical notion of the purity and pollution determined the State practices in fundamental way and exactly because of that, these notions became the central point of struggle of the non-Brahmin communities against the brahminical domination. Nicholas B. Dirks, *The Hollow Crown: Ethno-history of an Indian Kingdom*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997, pp. 7-10.

[26] Thomas Isaac follows strict Marxist economic notions in his analysis of coir industry in Thiruvithamkoor. This modernist paradigm blinds him in observing the socio-political factors that worked in the formation of working class, with comparative importance. K.P. Kannan gives more nuanced picture of the proletarian struggle; still the basic categories are drawn from the modernist economic discipline. Raviraman includes categories of caste and gender in his study of tea plantations but for him the economic activity in the 'periphery' is completely controlled by the decision or whims and fancies of the dominant class in Metropolis. T.M. Thomas Isaac, Class Struggle and Industrial

analysis of the economic changes of Thiruvithamkoor, in this period. He looked into aspects of social changes and how the notion of development has disseminated through the social reform movements. But as his thesis is fundamentally based on the theory of Centre and Periphery and economic activity is considered as the base of all transformations, the domain of social is always subordinated to economic factors.[27]

This dissertation, in its attempt to analyze the conception of material production, does not pre-suppose a strict divide between the domains of economic activity and social processes. Hence it is simultaneously located at different sites: industrial production, caste and community politics, the State and Governmentalization process.

The first chapter of this dissertation is a general observation on the seminal shift in the colonial narratives on material production during the middle of the 19th century. It attempts to locate the discontinuity and the formation of a new discourse during this period. It also briefly analyzes as to how the process of separation and hybrid formations became the central theme of the new discourse.

The second chapter focuses on some sites of the governmentalization process and how colonial difference was articulated in these sites. The new sites of material production were important in disseminating the process of internalization of governmental rationality.[28] The analysis of these sites also attempts to understand the

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Structure: A study of Coir Weaving Industry in Kerala 1859-1980', PhD Thesis submitted at JNU, New Delhi, 1984; K.P. Kannan, 'Of Rural Proletarian Struggle: Mobilization and Organization of Rural Workers in Kerala, India', PhD Thesis submitted at Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands, 1986; K. Raviraman, 'Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: Political Economy of Tea Plantations in South India, c. 1850-1950', PhD Thesis submitted at Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1997.

[27] K.T. Ram Mohan, 'Material Process and Developmentalism: Study of Economic Changes in Tiruvitamkur 1800-1945', PhD thesis, submitted at Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1996.

[28] According to Foucault, the analysis of power should include various sites of its exercise other than state. But this doesn't mean that the State should be excluded from the explanations; only that, it should be understood in its various forms in specific historical processes rather than assuming as Bourgeois State or Socialist State. Looking into the various form of governments he formulated a

colonial practice as heterogeneous and multi-directional. These characteristics are viewed not as weakness of the colonial power but as its strength and which demand more complex understanding of colonialism.

The third chapter introduces the particular power relations that were generated by the interaction between the Thiruvithamkoor State, the British Paramountcy and the missionary interventions. It attempts to trace the specific conditionalities that emerged which limited several instances of colonial practice. The British Government, The Resident and the missionaries and their respective conceptions of the material production are central objects of the analysis of this chapter.

The fourth chapter explains how the Brahminical discourse of material production became stabilized in the policies of the Thiruvithamkoor Government. Here it is also argued that there were no inherent elements in 'modern' or in 'tradition' that made them mutually exclusive. The analysis also looks into the changes in the policies of the state on material production in its interaction with various communities in the late 19th and early 20th century.

In the last chapter, the intervention and participation of the non-Brahmin communities in the political process is scrutinized to outline the features of the governmentalization process initiated by this intervention. The central argument of this part is that the conception of material production of, both the State based on the Brahminical domination and the communities with their anti-Brahminical struggle got changed and transformed each other. The discussion of the chapter is positioned around the negotiation and re-positioning of various agents that took part in this process of governmentalization.

This study, in short, endeavors to explicate some issues related to three relations: colonial power and knowledge production, material production and

concept of governmental rationality which emerges in Europe in 18th century. He names this governmental rationality as 'governmentality'. The power is exercised not by repression or through the ideology but by the internalization of the governmental rationality. Michel Foucault, 'Governmentality', in Graham Burchell, Collin Gordon and Peter Miller ed. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1991.s

governmentalization process, and the governmentalization process and the Hindu State in Thiruvithamkoor. The analysis moves to different locations to focus different power relations and delineate a genealogy of material production. Thus it aspires to leave behind the 'modern' dichotomy of material and spiritual and arrive at a more complex filed of power relations.

Chapter 1

Colonial Narratives: Hybrids and Heterogeneities

1.1. Introduction

By the 1850s, new categories and procedures had become clearly visible in colonial narratives around technical schools, handicraft production centers and jail manufactories. Discussions around technical education also brought forward the critical question of an industrial policy which would be suitable to Indian conditions. During this period jail manufactories were introduced and machine production which was significant even in commercial terms were started in many jails throughout British India.[1] The first Railway lane was inaugurated in 1849 and discussions around the railway generated a wide range of imaginations regarding the changes it would produce.[2]

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[1] George Birdwood, observes that the competition from jail manufactories is equally disadvantageous as the mill products from England for the handicraft products in India. George Birdwood, *The Industrial Art of India*, Chapman and Hall Limited, Piccadilly, 1880, vol. II, p. 157 (hereafter Birdwood, *The Industrial Art*). Also in the dispatch of Secretary of State in December 1885, it is noted that jail manufactories, where steam engines are used, may 'compete injuriously with the private capitalist in the neighbourhood'. Proceedings of Home Department, Judicial, May 1886, No.53-54, National Archives of India.

[2] Marx had expected that the introduction of railway inevitably will pave the way for modern industry and further will 'dissolve the hereditary division of labour, upon which rest the Indian caste, those decisive impediments to Indian progress and Indian power.' Marx, 'The Future of British Rule in India', in Marx - Engels, *On Colonialism*, Progress Publishers Moscow, 1978 (Hereafter, Marx, *The future of British Rule in India*) pp. 84-85. But in 1919 Vincent Smith states that all these expectations were out of context. He writes: 'The Brahman who rides in the third-class carriage or drinks pipe-water does not think any better of his low-caste neighbour than when he traveled on foot and drank from a dirty well.' Quoted in Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, OUP, Delhi, 1994 (hereafter Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*), p. 17.

In short, a new discourse on material production was emerging which was discontinuous with earlier conceptualizations. The changes during this period were decisive, in a sense that a totally new form of governmental practice was emerging in which the new discourse of material production was a crucial element. I shall also try to demonstrate here that this discourse on material production was heterogeneous, multilayered and sometimes ambiguous.

In many historical studies of science and technology in connection with colonialism and empire, the empire is considered as an overarching one which prevents us from considering the fissures and contradictions within colonialism[3]. In other words colonialism becomes a monolithic and linear force having the capacity of turning every stone in its path and the colonized becomes powerless in asserting any agency. The material advancement then becomes a factual reality. But here, first I argue that by the middle of the 19th century onwards the colonial power was more exercised through the dissemination of a new discourse formed based on the rule of colonial difference,

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[3] Deepak Kumar has well explained the connection between the colonial policy of science and the economic interest of the Empire. Kumar analyzes how the colonial policy tried to put hindrances on the development of Scientific Institutions, and how the colonial Government blocked the entry of Indians to the few institutions developed. But he does not consider these institutions as such as a site where colonial power is produced and reinforced. Deepak Kumar, ed. *Science and the Empire: Essays in Indian context, 1700 – 1947*, Anamika Prakashan, Delhi, 1991. Zaheer Baber criticizes this and similar pioneering studies for neglecting 'the mutually constitutive interplay of structure and agency, colonial power and scientific knowledge' and for offering a mechanical interpretations. According to him 'what is required is to go beyond repeatedly stating the obvious to analyze the complexities of colonial rule and its consequence for the development of science and technology not just in the colonized societies, but in Britain too.' Baber's study incorporates the complexities of the relation between colonial power and its policy on science and technology. But in his discussion 'technology' is a concept which could be used for describing the production processes in ancient, medieval and modern period. But, as mentioned in the introduction, 'technology' is a particular network of knowledge and processes which appears only in 20th century industrial production. I am not using the term technology not simply because my focus is on the material production before this period; but for the reason that in each specific forms of production processes epistemic status of knowledge is different. Zaheer Baber, *The Science of Empire: Scientific Knowledge, Civilization, and Colonial Rule in India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1998 (hereafter Baber, *The Science of Empire*).

which reproduces the notion of colonial superiority. New institutions were developed and production of knowledge through these institutions reinforced the discourse of colonial difference. The notion of material advancement will be intelligible only within this discourse. This discourse is practiced by separation of objects into two domains: material and spiritual. Second, what I am trying to trace is not a continuous discourse, which forms in the early period in late 18th century and continues through the next centuries of colonialism, but a specific discourse on material production which is formed by the mid 19th century. When I am using the phrase 'colonial narratives' it should be repeatedly reminded that these narratives are not monolithic but only share minimum rules of the discourse which enable us to identify it as a colonial narrative.

So, what is important is to analyze the rules of formation of the discourse that enable heterogeneity, contradictions, ambiguities, temporariness, and flexibility to co-exist within it. As mentioned above, I propose that the rule which formed the discourse was based on colonial difference which was practiced through the process of separation and hybrid formation. The process of separation produces domains of material and spiritual and objects are classified within either of these domains. The process of separation was a necessary condition for articulating colonial dominance; at the same time the impossibility of complete success in this process of separation, demanded continuous exercise of power to maintain colonial dominance. The colonial difference is not viewed as a result of or an effect of imperialist 'ideology' but in reverse as a source which provided the possibility and justification for colonial rule. Here the attempt is not to produce a consistent and determinate theory of colonial policy, but to map out various forces and their interaction as specific moments in the history of colonialism. Hence this chapter attempts to analyze the narratives of colonial officers and missionaries around the material production roughly between the period of 1850 and 1920.

1.1.1. The Inevitability of Industrialization

This period – 1850s to 1920s – is important for many reasons. First, this is a period of interaction and dialogue which had important implication for both the colonial rule and native life. It is not to say that the earlier colonial narratives were not

influenced by the native voices; but the increase in the degree and intensity of interaction produced a different situation in which narratives become diversified, and flexible. This is important because, in this period, different possibilities, other than the concept of inevitability of industrial form of production, were still open and were actively considered both by the colonial government and native producers. The frequently asked question as to why India did not industrially develop, say as Japan, in late 19th and early 20th centuries, has many prejudices attached to it. One, it presupposes industrialization as inevitable; second, it is assumed that the lack of industrialization was solely depended on the colonial policies. But here it is attempted to show that there were many other possibilities which are partially closed by this question. For example the lack of industrialization may be a sign of the partial success of the resistance to the capitalist mod⁻ of production (I am not saying here that *it is*). We can see that the new discourse which was heterogeneous at this period becomes more and more homogeneous regarding the industrial policy in the second decade of 20th century, ironically when the national movement gained momentum and visibility. In short the selection of this period helps unsettle the theories of linear progress and reveal the ambiguities chances and turning points in history. Second

In the first part of this chapter the historical conditions of the discontinuity and a new discursive formation in early and mid 19th century is described. The main theme is the socio-political factors of this discontinuity and its corresponding shifts in colonial governmental practices. The second part analyzes the process of separation and hybrid formation by analyzing colonial and missionary narratives related to material production. The colonial difference was articulated through the process of separation. But what produced through the process of separation were hybrids of 'material' and 'spiritual'. Also I suggest that the hybrids are heterogeneous and pluralistic.

1.2. Discontinuity and the New Discourse

Through the accession of Oudh, a North Indian province, in 1856, the East India Company rule extended to almost all provinces over the Indian region and this has resulted in changing the status of the Company as rulers of the continent. As Marx

observed, '[i]t no longer attacked one part of India by the help of another part, but found itself placed at the head, and whole India at its feet. No longer conquering but *the conqueror*.'[4] By 1858 the first revolt against the Company rule was completely suppressed by the British army, which also became one of the factors that lead to the transformation of East India Company rule in India into direct rule of the British Crown in 1858.

Earlier, Charles Wood's educational dispatch of 1854 'finally settled the Anglicist-Orientalist controversy' in favor of the former and formulated the colonial education policy to be followed in India in unambiguous terms: 'the *diffusion* of the improved arts, science, philosophy and literature of Europe; in short of European knowledge.'[5] Also in the same year the Public Works Department was created, just one year after Marx's criticism of British Rule in India had been published in the New-York Daily Tribune. In that he wrote: 'The British in East India accepted from their predecessors the department of finance and of war, but they have neglected entirely that of public works'.[6]

This transformation has been explained by many writers including Marx, within the context of political economy, analyzing the complex cause-effect situations of world trade and various trade interests in England. Tracing the history of East India Company, the nature of its trade and exploitation in India and changing organizational structure of the Indian government, Marx observed this change as a crisis in expansion of capitalist production and exploitation of India which may have had a crucial impact on England's economic situation.[7] But for Marx this was only a necessary and even unavoidable stage in the development of Capitalism from which a break was possible

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[4] Marx, 'The Revolt in Indian Army', in Marx - Engels, *On Colonialism*, Progress Publishers Moscow, 1978, p. 130 (emphasis added).

[5] Quoted in Baber, *The Science of Empire*, pp. 205-206 (emphasis added).

[6] Marx, 'The British Rule in India', in Marx - Engels, *On Colonialism*, Progress Publishers Moscow, 1978 (hereafter, Marx, *The British Rule in India*), p. 37.

[7] Marx, 'The Government of India', in Marx - Engels, *On Colonialism*, Progress Publishers Moscow, 1978, pp. 61-69.

only through a proletarian revolution either in India or in England.[8] Problem of teleology in Marx's theorization is a much debated area but the focus here is elsewhere: on the implication of this view for the emerging discourse on material production. Marx' critique on capitalism raised totally new questions from a new paradigm, but it also shared some of the views of European writings on colonialism regarding the material advancement of Europe over the 'pagan East'.

Many historians of colonialism have later marked the changes in the second half of the 19th century as the result of earlier utilitarian philosophies of Bentham and Mill and the new scientific and technological inventions in Europe.[9] According to them the new technologies emerged in Europe are equally important to the colonies also. But when we analyze the practice of 'industry' in India in the second half of the 19th century, we would not fail to notice the difference between the production process in India and the corresponding process in Britain. In Britain factory industries had already replaced the manufactories, while in India in the same period, handicraft production was still dominant. In short, British rule had not, till then, attempted to reproduce the changes in Britain in its colonies. In the political domain also this could not be seen as a period of 'reformers'. If we go through the proclamation of the Queen in 1858 we could see that it was more an orthodox document than the reformatory programmes of 1830s and 40s.[10] Partha Chatterjee points out that in the era after the 1857 Revolt, debates on colonial policy was generally dominated by conservatism than utilitarianism as in the first half of the 19th century.[11]

So the change and the discontinuity resulted was not just grounded on the economical changes or simply the political attitude of the British Government. Actually this was a change in the form of *governing* resulted by the specific situation in

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[8] Marx, *The future Results of the British Rule in India*, p. 81-87.

[9] Baber finds continuity from Charles grants views on India 1792 to Charles Wood's educational dispatch in 1854 which passes through utilitarian philosophies of Bentham, James Mill and Macaulay. Baber, *The Science of Empire*, pp. 190-203.

[10] For an early analysis of the declaration of the Queen, see John Malcolm Ludlow, *Thoughts on the Policy of Crown Towards India*, James Ridgway, Piccadilly, 1927.

[11] Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, pp. 18-20.

India. Two important aspects can be regarded as the signs of this change. One is the new sites of power developed in this period which introduced new governmental practices. Second the governmental practices were now performed in a large scale, or following Foucault, one may say, at the level of population[12]. The early 19th century surveys had produced a notion of 'population' and this became the object of the governmental practice in the later half of the century. The knowledge about the objects and peoples of colony necessitates that they cannot be arranged side by side with the things and peoples in *metropolis*. They are not just different but below or less and so can be arranged only in a vertical series. Thus tropical weather, tropical diseases, or Hindu art were not just put at a distance in a horizontal scale but at a lower level of civilization. Also these were not just information about a colony. This knowledge was very much produced in the attempts of control and organization of the colonies and colonized.

This could be expressed as a new 'colonial order of things'[13] which had certain impacts in the colonial policies as well. The policies which were hitherto centered on

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[12] Foucault, in his widely discussed essay on Governmentality, explains the shift that happens in the governmental practices in Europe in early 18th century. In this period, he notes, due to different socio-political and economical factors, new forms of disciplinary institutions developed and now the model and target of the governmental practices shifted from the idea of family to the notion of population. The change that happens to state is called by Foucault as 'governmentalization of the state'. For further explanation see Foucault, 'Governmentality', Graham Burchell, Collin Gordon and Peter Miller eds. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1991 (hereafter, Foucault, *Governmentality*), pp. 87-104.

[13] Foucault in *The Order of Things*, observing the shifts in political economy in 19th century explains it as 'the constitution of totally new arrangement of knowledge' which is 'no longer constituted in the form of a table but in that of a series, a sequential connection, and of development'. He considers this as a moment of discontinuity, and a formative gesture of a new discourse. New defining rules were formed for classification and ordering by intervention not only in material production but also in moral principles, lifestyles and human movement. Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Vintage Books, New York, 1970 (hereafter Foucault, *The Order of Things*), p. 250-279. But Ann Stoler observes that the connection between this new arrangement of knowledge and colonialism is completely absent in Foucault. Here situating this discontinuity in the context of colonialism helps us overcome two shortcomings: limitedness of explanations based in political

trade of raw materials and products, had then been turned towards controlling and managing the *population* in such a way that 'Hindoo *learns*, compares, considers and *changes* his ideas'.[14]

Technologies of disciplinary power exercised through the colonial institutions, especially the scientific and technical institutions, have been the object of many historical studies of colonialism in last two decades.[15] The change in the nature of colonial government, its policies and formation of new institutions like PWD and technical schools and artifacts like railways point towards a process of governmentalization of the state. There are two aspects of this governmentalization. One is that, it acts at the level of population. The second, its focus is on the internalization of the government by the subjects it governs. But this does not happen by replacing the regime of discipline by a regime of government; but as Foucault reminds 'one has a triangle, sovereignty – discipline – government, which has its primary target the population and as its essential mechanism the apparatus of security.'[16]

The constitution of the Public Works Department in 1856 could be considered as a symbol of the discontinuity mentioned above and the formation of the new

economy followed by Marx; Eurocentrism in locating the conditions and factors that lead to this shift, followed by Foucault. Ann Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and The Colonial Order of Things*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1995 (hereafter Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*), p. 207.

[14] Edwin Arnold, the biographer of Dalhousie states this describing the impact of railway among Hindus. He writes that the travel in train to distant places becomes moral training for the pagan people. Quoted in Baber, *The Science of Empire*, p. 209 (emphasis added).

[15] Gyan Prakash, analyses the new institutions especially museums and other scientific institutions as a site of practice of government. His emphasis is on institutional practices where as mine is more focused on the interaction and inclusion of 'population'. Gyan Prakash, *Another reason, Science and Technology of modern India*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2000. David Arnold, gives general description on the changes in the field of 'technology' in 19th century in relation to the Colonial policies. His analysis tries to highlight the role of the natives in the process of colonial knowledge production. David Arnold, *Science Technology and Medicine in India*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000 (hereafter Arnold, *Science Technology and Medicine*).

[16] Foucault, *Governmentality*, p. 102.

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discourse. Col. Chesney, a colonial administrator in early 19th century, considered that Public Works is an 'an unavoidable evil, to be undertaken only when it could not be postponed any longer, and not, if possible, to be repeated'.[17] But by the mid-century, for Arthur Cotton of Royal Engineers who was in charge of construction of many irrigation projects, it became the most 'legitimate way of consolidating our (colonial) power'.[18] The consideration of 'legitimacy' points towards.the new direction to which the colonial policy was then turned. Kavita Philip notes this as a shift from 'East India Company's policy of religious neutrality and its attempt to govern through a non-interfering 'rule by custom', to 'the Crown's explicit desire to civilize, through direct, authoritative rule by law'.[19]

The work of the roads and canals introduced new form of managing and governing and new section of population was included in the governmental process as the wage labourers or beneficiaries of this work. It should be also noted these construction works were conditioned by these population. David Arnold notes that Arthur Cotton's decision to use earth and rubble rather than solid masonry, in the Godavari scheme was influenced by the existing knowledge and skills of the available 'old native engineers'.[20]

Railway was another site of the emergence of the new form of government. It is a fact that government's intention in developing the railway network was based more on its commercial interests than for increasing the travel facilities. But at the same time it was also expected that the changes it brings would be fundamental and would transform even the interior villages of India. Dalhousie noted that after the introduction of railways, 'every increase of facilities for trade has been attended.... with an increased demand for articles of European produce in the *most distant markets* of India.'[21] W.A. Rogers, an ICS officer in 1870 notes:

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[17] Quoted in Baber, *The Science of Empire*, p. 206.

[18] Quoted in Baber, *The Science of Empire*, p. 206.

[19] Kavita Philip, *Civilizing Nature*, Orient and Longman, 2003 (hereafter Philip, *Civilizing Nature*), p. 206.

[20] Arnold, *Science Technology and Medicine*, p. 117.

[21] Quoted in Baber, *The Science of Empire*, p. 209 (emphasis added).

They (railways) teach them that time is worth money, and induce them to *economise* that which they had been in the habit of slighting and wasting; they teach them that speed attained is time and therefore money, saved or made..... Above all they induce in them habits of *self-dependence*, causing them to act for themselves promptly and not lean on others.[22]

The new forms of governmental practices recognize and address the subjects, and take the responsibility of transforming them not by coercive methods but by prompting them to internalize the government and practice self governance. The following description of Arnold explains this change clearly:

Confidence in technology as the engine of socio-economic change increased after the Rebellion of 1857, an event that seemed to make more direct forms of intervention in Indian society dangerously impolitic. Queen Victoria's proclamation of November 1858 promised to stimulate the peaceful industry of India and to promote works of public utility and improvement in the hope that India's contentment would be the best guarantee of British security – to which the rebel Begum of Awadh duly retorted that the Queen seemed to anticipate no better employment for Hindostanees than making roads and digging canals.[23]

In short new forms of colonial governmental practices were emerged during this period and the colonial power was exercised through these practices. This was a new form of power, and the practice was discontinuous with the earlier practices. Institutions of material production – manufactory, technical educational institutions, prison manufactories etc – were important sites of this new discourse.

Once the discontinuity and the formation of a new discourse are mapped, the next step is to identify the criteria of this formation. The set of rules that became the criteria for this new ordering was that of separation and hybrid formation. This should not be misunderstood as the continuation of dichotomies like body and soul or the world outside and mind inside which have their own long histories in different cultures. Those dichotomies were the result of the enquiries into 'own world' which is divided

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[22] Quoted in Michael Adas, *Machine as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance*, Oxford University Press Delhi, 1990, p. 226 (emphasis added).

[23] Arnold, *Science Technology and Medicine*, pp. 121-22.

in many ways. But here the problem is to know an 'other' world in order to control and manipulate it. In the early period of colonization this 'other world' was totally in disjuncture, and was almost different and unknowable. So they were the lands to be penetrated, overpowered and controlled.[24] But by the time of our concern the question overpowering shifted to the question of 'government' and this produced a new order of things in a hierarchical series.

Objects were separated as 'material' and 'spiritual' which were conceptualized as separate domains. 'Art', 'industry' and 'manufacture' were brought into the realm of material as independent objects. But as noted above the hybridity of these objects is an important aspect for our analysis. The process of separation, the nature of hybrids formed in this process and how these hybrids were addressed negotiated and utilized in the governmental practices etc are the subjects discussed in the following part of this chapter.

1.3. Practice of Colonial Difference

The discussions on differences with other cultures and the West have a history as old as the colonialism itself. As discussed in the introductory chapter historical analyses of this difference locate it either on the notion of racial difference or on the technological advancement of the West.[25]

But when we go through the 19th century western writings, especially on subjects that deal with colonies, we would see that dominance articulated through the

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[24] Chaplin's work on English colonialism in America closely studies the early stage of colonialism in 16th and 17th centuries. She observes that in 16th century when the English colonizers arrived in America, the prominent feeling was that of fear and uncertainty about the unknown weather, people and geography. This fear had produced brutal violence against the native people. Joyce E. Chaplin, *Subject Matter*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2001

[25] Latour explains the notion of difference conceptualized by the West as follows: "They do not claim merely that they differ from others.... but that they differ radically, absolutely, to the extent that Westerners can be lined up on one side and all the cultures on the other, since latter all have in common the fact that they are precisely cultures among others. In Westerners' eyes the West, and the West alone, is not a culture, not merely a culture. Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1993 (hereafter Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*), p. 97.

notion of colonial difference was not based on any separate element either technology or race; in other words the justification of the dominance was based not in separate domains of material and spiritual. The claim of the colonial difference was based on a hybrid of material and spiritual expressed in multiple ways, some of which are analyzed in the following section. These hybrids could be made visible by analyzing the notions material progress and spiritual advancement in colonial narratives. We could see that they were not separate claims but an entangled notion of total superiority of the West over the East.

1.3.1. Hybrids as Difference

Charles Grant's views published in Parliamentary Papers in 1813 and James Mill's *History of British India* in 1817 have categorically asserted the overall inferiority of Indian civilizatic a including Indian methods and tools of production[26]. For them the superiority of European methods is very much related to the superiority of' Christian religion. Only Christian religion was able to produce a condition for the emergence of Science and Industry as in the West. So the claim of the material advancement itself became an unspoken claim of spiritual superiority. For, Edward Oakfield, the protagonist of William Arnold's novel *Oakfield; or fellowship in the East*, published in 1854, the steamship on which he is traveling up the Ganges itself is an authorization of English superiority. The picture of the English "silently making a servant of the Ganges" with steamship and "those Asiatics, with shout and screams worshipping the same river"[27] clearly brings out a dichotomy of material/spiritual in which European 'art and industry' as moving onto the field of secular, objective and universal knowledge.

In Marx' writings on India also the superiority of West was justified but for different reason. Here also the claim of superiority was based on a hybrid of material and civilizational advancement. Analyzing the impact of colonial rule in India, Marx observed that the bourgeois period in history in general 'has to create material basis of the new world'. The 'development of the productive powers of man and the

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[26] Quoted in Adas, *Machine as the Measure of Men.* pp. 166-74.

[27] Quoted in ibid., p. 173.

transformation of material production into a scientific domination of natural agencies' were the methods of this creation. But in colonies, where the bourgeois class had not 'naturally' emerged, the colonial intervention serves the purpose. He writes:

> When a great social revolution shall have mastered the results of bourgeois epoch, the market of the world and the modern powers of production, and subjected them to the common control of the most advanced people, then only human progress cease to resemble that hideous pagan idol, who would not drink the nectar but from the skulls of the slain.[28]

For Marx, the modern power of material production is related to the 'most advanced people' in the same way as pagan culture is related to the primitive people. Here two simultaneous processes are revealed. First, to relate the West to the material and the East to culture, one should bring separated domains of material and culture. But at the same time the comparison here does not imply that the West is materially advanced and the East is culturally advanced. For the West, material is the culture and that culture is superior to the East. The hybrid – 'the material-culture' – of the West was taken as a sign of the advancement of civilization from other cultures. Then it is not talking about a separated domain of material, but about a hybrid where the material and culture are closely entangled.

For example John Crawfurd, in 1860s, analyzing the British military power in India declares that 'the technology and military skill that had allowed the British to conquer and rule the hundreds of millions of Indians provided the most signal example of the superiority of the European races over the Asiatic'.[29] Here one could argue, as Adas does, that Crawford locate the British superiority in technological advancement. But if we look closer to these statements, we could see that, it is the hybrid of race and technology which was considered as superior to other cultures or races. Similarly when Benjamin Kidd says that 'the European achievement in the arts of life is a result of the intellect natural to the high races'[30], it is not simply a claim of racial superiority. The

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[28] Marx, *The Future Results of the British Rule in India*, p. 87.

[29] Quoted in Adas, *Machine as the Measure of Men*, p. 175.

[30] Quoted in ibid., p. 310.

claims of material advancement and racial superiority were always intertwined and inseparable.

Now we could see two mutually related processes. First, there is an attempt to produce separate domains of material and spiritual. Second, there is process of comparison of the objects in order to establish a claim of superiority. The objects in the separated domain are not considered as 'pure' objects but as hybrids. This means that both the domains of material and spiritual contain hybrids and the colonial narratives had not ignored these hybrids but addressed them as such.[31]

Kavita Philip's, otherwise convincingly argued analysis on the production of hybrids in colonial scientific modernity, always locates the process of hybrid formation at the level of practice. Analyzing missionary literature of 19th century she observes:

> The assumption that secular/scientific knowledge is primarily a category independent of religion takes for granted a separation where often little distinction exists in *practice*. It is precisely from that forbidden cross-over that science and religion can derive a *practical, modern efficacy*.
>
> At the level of their self-understanding and much of their rhetoric, scientists and missionaries did indeed, contradict much about each other. If we stop at noting the logical contradiction in their discourse, however, we miss seeing the intricate ways in which their material practices and, indirectly, their discourses of progress, often worked to facilitate rather than to impede on another.[32]

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[31] Latour distances the process of separation and hybridization at two levels. According to him modern 'constitution' produces and tries to suppress these hybrids at the lower level and tries to purify it at an upper level. But the suppression is not complete or successful. The hybrids cross over to the upper level from the lower level. One implication of this argument is that at the upper level separation is complete and a success and hybrids always come from lower. But as we can see from the above narratives that the hybrids are produced at the upper level itself and the 'constitution' is not reluctant to address this contradiction. This is because the process of separation itself was producing hybrids at the same level in a colonial situation and it was not possible to avoid addressing these hybrids. Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*.

[32] Philip, *Civilizing Nature*, pp. 204 - 05 (emphases added).

She correctly points towards hybridization but only at the level of practice which may imply that the separation at the level of discourse is real and complete. But, as we have seen, the result of separation at the level of discourse is not a purified element but another hybrid which is shown as distinct only by the imperative of the dominant discourse. The following example of Base Mission Society might show that the simultaneous separation and hybrid formation at the level of discourse are important in maintaining the discourse of colonial difference and the two processes are mutually dependent.

Basal Mission Society (BMS) which mostly included Swiss and German missionaries can be considered as an evangelical mission literally practicing what Weber later theorized as: the protestant ethics as the spirit of capitalism.[33] Annual report of BMS reviewing its industrial activities, explained three 'contiguous object of their industrial pursuits':

> ...[F]irst a philanthropic one, i.e. to provide employment and honorable means of subsistence to many Christians as well as probationers,.... Second a pedagogical object: to train our Native Christian to habits of regularity and steady, honest labour, and thereby to raise them both socially and morally. Third a civilizing object: to benefit the country at large by creating a class of Christian artisans, mechanics, tradesmen etc..[34]

The belief in the enmeshment of religion, honest labour and morality enables the mission to state that the country could be benefited by creating (or converting a lazy idle non-Christian into) a *class of Christian artisan*. Here the distinction between the objectives is as much important as their integration. The difference between Christian and Pagan can be articulated and established only through comparison of specific practices. Difference is exercised by invoking specific moments of practices in which objects of comparison are differentiated but juxtaposed. There is nothing

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[33] Weber, in his famous work on the relation between the protestant ethics and the emergence of capitalism in the Occident, has located the emergence of capitalism in its cultural specificities of Europe. Weber theorizes a correlation between religious practice and historical development of economic rationalities in specific geographical and temporal situations. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Routledge, London, 1976.

[34] Quoted in Philip, *Civilizing Nature*, pp. 215.

essential in Idleness and hard work that make it comparable; but by bringing it into the domain of religion, where an idle mind is devil's workhouse, they can be appraised and arranged in a hierarchy. In reverse the comparison of religions could not be worked out at an abstract level, but only at the level of life practices.

The missionary schools were the other sites of the above process where religious and scientific subjects were taught with equal importance and without conflict. The Nagerkovil School was started in 1818 by London Missionary Society with an objective of 'communication of religious and useful knowledge'. Scripture was a main part of the curriculum; besides that, subjects taught include Natural Philosophy, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Geography and History.[35] The secular knowledge was not antithetical to but a necessary ingredient in 'the civilizing mission'. Richard Temple, a colonial officer writes in 1880:

> It is now seen that the conversion of heathen, though steadily continuous, will be comparatively slow, and that Christian teaching must, with education as its handmaid, wend onwards a preserving way, through not only the thick masses of heathenism, but also the new and many-sided beliefs which advancing knowledge and civilization may be expected to produce.[36]

Here it is clear that science and religion were hand in hand and not enemies as many modern historians of science have tried to make us believe.[37] But that should not lead us into an idea that both were just one and the same by completely negating the process of separation. The idea of separation is the determining force behind the practice of colonial difference. Another example from the missionary narrative would prove the point further. Samuel Mateer was a missionary who worked in Thiruvithamkoor for long period. He looked in to the reasons of the violent

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[35] Quoted in K.T. Ram Mohan, 'Material Process and Developmentalism: Study of Economic Changes in Tiruvitamkur 1800-1945', PhD thesis, submitted at Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1996 (hereafter Ram Mohan, *Material Process*), p. 27.

[36] Quoted in Philip, *Civilizing Nature*, p. 210.

[37] Feyerabend explains this question in detail and produces historical materials to demonstrate that the fight between religion and science especially in 16th, 17th and 18th centuries is a fiction created by the positivist historians of science. Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method*, Verso, London, 1984.

disturbances in Thiruvithamkoor, during 1850s, which happened in the aftermath of conversions by protestant missionaries. He argued that the earlier conversions by Romanists, was peaceful because

> [t]here is less difference between the Romanists and Hindus than between Protestants and Hindus. The Romanists are by no means so well instructed, either in scriptural or *secular knowledge*, as our people are.[38]

So the superiority is not that of Christian religion as such, but a very particular type of scriptural and secular knowledge possessed by the protestant missionaries. Herewith exactly lays the justification of the notion of ever extending colonial difference. Even if you are converted, you are not the same as European Christian, because you don't have the same level of secular knowledge and even if you attain that knowledge that will be mixed with your past as a non-Christian and so again will remain as impure.

1.4. Heterogeneities and Ambiguities

It would be wrong to assume that the idea of separation and hybrid formation always led to the argument of colonial superiority. It can be in the other way round also. George Birdwood, who was an officer in Bombay medical mission, was asked by the Government of India 'to prepare a catalogue for the 1878 Paris exhibition on the 'Master Handicrafts of India'.[39] He conducted a detail survey of Indian handicraft production and submitted a two volume report in 1880. He was an admirer of Indian handicrafts and a strong critic of large industrialization in both India and Britain. His analysis also followed the idea of separation but here the hierarchies of the hybrids were overturned. He writes:

> The mythology of Puranas is not an essential element in Hindu art, which however, it has profoundly influenced......The monstrous shapes of the Puranic deities are unsuitable for the higher forms of artistic representation and this is possibly why sculpture and painting are unknown, as fine arts, in India. Where the Indian artist is left free from

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[38] Samuel Mateer, *The Land of Charity: A Descriptive Account of Travancore and its People*, Asian Educational Service, New Delhi, 1991, (hereafter Mateer, *The Land of Charity*) p. 275.

[39] Arnold, *Science Technology and Medicine*, p. 125.

the trammels of the Puranic mythology he has frequently shown an instinctive capacity for fine art[40].

The narrative clearly imposes 'the material' as the true and best domain of art. In India the art still remained as a hybrid because of the influence of religion. The presence of religion un-separated in the work of art in India is burden on Indian craftsmen. But there were moments when the artist of India had overcome the influence of religion and according to Birdwood it was at these moments they expressed the 'capacity for fine arts'.

Birdwood was most sympathetic to handicraft production and like romantics of the modern period in Europe, was suspicious of machine production. He distinguishes between the Western machinery production and Indian handicraft production as follows:

> Thus the very word manufacture has in Europe come at last to lose well nigh all traces of its etymological meaning, and is now generally used for the process of conversion of raw materials into articles suitable for the use of man by machinery. Work thus executed, in which the inventing and hand of a cunning workman have had no part, must be classified by itself, and under the most intricate and elaborate divisions. In India everything is hand wrought and everything, down to the cheapest toy or earthen vessel is therefore more or less a work of art.[41]

Unlike art, all the subjective elements, 'inventing, and cunning hands', have had no part in manufacture and this is the difference between East and West. For him the 'spirit of the fine arts is everywhere latent in India'. Still he believed that 'the Indian workman, from the humblest potter to the most cunning embroider in blue and purple and scarlet is not the less a true artist.'[42]

But was European manufacture a pure objective element as Birdwood assumed as and attempted to portray? He himself contradicts it by further noting that the British machine-made articles are not products of universal knowledge applicable anywhere in

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[40] Birdwood, *The Industrial art of India*, Vol. I, p. 125.

[41] Birdwood, *The Industrial art of India*, Vol. I, pp. 131-32.

[42] Ibid., p. 132.

the world. It is particular to 'European education and social condition' or European culture in general. As mentioned earlier, in his case the hierarchy is simply turned upside down. He regrets that the famous handicraftsmen of India who

> have polluted no rivers, deformed no pleasing prospects, nor poisoned any air, whose skill and individuality the training of countless generations has developed to the highest perfection.... are being everywhere gathered from their democratic village communities in hundreds and thousands to the colossal mills of Bombay to drudge in gangs at manufacturing piece goods in competition with Manchester, in production of which they are no more intellectually and morally concerned than the grinder of a barrel organ in the tunes it evolves.[43]

It also should be noted that his is not an argument that for East tradition is a better choice and for West modernization. He suggests that Europe also should resist the process of mechanization and give preference to handicrafts production so that

> Europe will learn to taste some of the measureless content happiness in life which is to still found to the pagan East, even as it was once found in pagan Greece and Rome.[44]

This could not be reduced to a usual orientalist narrative because in the latter the orient's glory lies in its past not in the present or in future. Here the order of hierarchy is reversed for the present and future. It recognizes natives as active living agents, still from a European point of view, and disturbs the assumed inevitable association between the degree of civilization and Western production practices. This could be viewed as an argument that even questions the very justification of the colonial rule: the colonial difference; but it keeps intact the rules of differentiation of the dominant discourse. The West is still modern and the East traditional; handicraft production is subjective and hence art, where as machine production is objective.

The heterogeneity appears in different forms of hybrids, not necessarily destabilizing the dominant discourse. Alfred Chatterton is a good example for those who opposed the large scale industrialization but with a perspective different from

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[43] Ibid., pp. 131-32.
[44] Ibid., p. 137.

Birdwood. Chatterton worked with the Madras Government till 1910. His activities were mainly focused on state-aided industrialization. But as the Madras Government withdrew from all such projects he was disillusioned. But the princely state of Mysore, under the Diwanship of Visvesvaraya, was anticipating a big leap in industrialization. Chatterton was invited to take charge as the Director of the newly constituted Industries Department. He took the charge in 1913, but his idea of industrialization differed from that of Visvesvaraya, who believed in large scale industries.[45]

His work on industrial education of India, published in 1912, assumes an important role for the handicraftsmen in the industrialization project. He observes:

> Large scale industrialisation will take its own time. Present problem is to regenerate indigenous industry – hand weaving, working on metals, tanning and leather manufacture, petty industries which supply the simple needs of the people.[46]

He is not an opponent of large industrialization on the theoretical basis but wants to postpone it because of the particular conditions in India. The present requirement is the improvement of the handicraft production. The situation in this area is not satisfactory and he does not favour the maintenance of the present system of production. He writes:

> Labour must be trained to work more efficiently – there must be less of brute force and more of skill, the primitive tools of artisan must be superseded by better implements; sub-division of labour must be introduced and from the crude simplicity of each family as a unit of productive effort strong combination must be evolved, either by co-operative working or by the concentration manufacture in small factories. That these can be done, there is not the least reason for the doubt.[47]

But he also believed that European technology was superior and that should be used in a controlled manner to improve the existing system. But he pointed out that the improvement should be practical and then only Indian artisans would agree to accept it.

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[45] For a detail discussion on the comparison and differences of policies of Visvesvaraya and Chatterton see Bjorn Hettne, *The Political Economy of Indirect Rule*, Curzon Press, London, 1978, pp. 263-69.

[46] Alfred Chatterton, *The Industrial Education of India*, The Hindu Office, Madras, 1912, p. 15.

[47] Ibid., p. 15.

He reminded that it is not because Indians were averse to modernization that they rejected many improvements but because 'they know their business and recognized that they were unsuitable innovations.'[48]

Chatterton established a connection between European civilization and its material advancement in opposition to the corresponding situations in India. But he had not considered the situation in India as unchangeable or to be changed in the same way as that of Britain. He believed that Indians were not generally able to apply principles of science or appreciate 'facts'. According to him, Indian critics of the British industrial policy 'whatever their theoretical attainments have failed to apply the principles of science in dealing with the situations in which they find themselves.'[49] He also adds that 'facts are stubborn things, but they are ignored altogether or count for very little when the Indian economist is endeavoring to work'up a political grievance out of the industrial inferiority in which the country is placed.' In short he believed that the Indian situation in that period was not suitable for large scale industries. If the British had not ventured for large scale industrialization it was good at least in the contemporary conditions. Hence, according to him, the criticism against the British industrial policy was simply 'politically motivated'.

The discourse of colonial difference included multiple voices and practices. But by the second decade of the 20th century these voices become more and more streamlined and homogenous. Chatterton left the Mysore Industries Department after 3 years in 1916 as his difference with Visvesvaraya became deeper. The situations developed during the First World War and the increasing competition from countries like USA and Japan compelled the British Government to rethink its earlier passive policy regarding industrialization in India.[50] Indian Industrial Commission was set up in 1916 and the major thrust was now shifted to large scale industries. The rise of the National Movement, while questioning the dominant discourse of colonial difference, brought forward two opposite plans of industrialization. Gandhian project of

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[48] Ibid., p. 22.

[49] Ibid., p. 250.

[50] Ram Mohan, *Material Process*, pp. 175-78.

indigenization of industry is a well discussed subject and I don't wish to add further on it. The other plan of course was that of modeled on 'developed' countries, which was later patronised by Nehru and others and which overtook the former after the independence of the country in 1947. But what happened, through the discussion for and against these two opposing projects, was that they became dichotomous choices, closing many other possibilities.

1.5. Concluding Remarks

The chapter has started by analyzing the formation of a new discourse on material production by middle of the 19th century. Further I proposed that this discourse was discontinuous and the discontinuity appeared as shifts in colonial policy, formation of new categories in narratives and as new methods of articulation of colonial difference. The analysis based on political economy failed to locate these shifts or even if recognized, reduced them as effect of economic changes in that period. Taking the theoretical propositions of Foucault, I suggested that this could be considered as the inaugurating moments of the governmentalization of the state and implementation of policies at the level of population.

The formative rule of the new discourse was based on idea of separation and formation of hybrids. Through a process of separation the universal was divided into two domains of material and spiritual. The result was not pure objects but hybrids. Here I deviated from Latour who conceptualize the process of hybridization and purification occurring at different levels. For him objects could be purified at least in discourse, to which I put forward some objections. I have produced some examples of process of separation and argued that the resultant objects of the process of separation were again hybrids. In a colonial situation separation and hybrid formation were not two separate processes.

The last section tried to demonstrate different voices within colonialism by the examples of Birdwood and Alfred Chatterton. It was pointed out that the discourse was not homogeneous and its heterogeneity was its strength not weakness. The analysis was concluded by briefly mentioning that by 1910s this heterogeneity was streamlined and

the inevitability thesis (the argument that the only practical choice is large scale industrialization) gained momentum in the later period of the 20th century.

As mentioned earlier the colonial difference was practiced (disseminated and internalized) through the new institutional sites emerged during the second half of the 19th century. This process of governmentalization is analyzed in the following chapter. The analysis is located mainly at three sites of material production: the native production centers, the technical institutions and jail manufactories.

Chapter 2
Sites of Governmentalization

2.1. Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, by 1850s the colonial policies become more organized and they were implemented at the level of population. If in the earlier period the colonial interactions were oriented mainly towards the 'upper caste' or newly educated middle class, now all groups have become its target. The questions of industrialization, or lack of it, should also be addressed from the ambivalence of colonial attempts to deal with the new group of subjects who could be the object of knowledge.

One of the aspects of the 'government of population'[1] was mammoth technical works like Railway network and canals. The deployment of these technologies had produced new forms of management of people and things. The transfer and diffusion of western technologies in Asia and Africa is a widely discussed area. Arnold points out that these debates generally 'became excessively one dimensional' with their stress on 'the dynamism of the West but ignoring the context in which the new technologies were employed.' He adds that this was a process of 'dialogue, rather than a simple process of diffusion or imposition.'[2] The question of the 'context' and 'dialogue' are

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[1] According to Foucault's notion of governmentality, government is an act of governing self and others and 'population' is the immediate target of this act. Through the institutional processes in 17th and 18th century, population became a knowable category, which is characterized by its own orders, regularities and differences. Foucault's earlier works had already delineated the genealogy of various institutions like clinics and prison. Now his theory on governmental rationality offered a further explanation of practice of these institutions as sites of 'governmentalization' of the State. Michel Foucault, 'Governmentality', in Graham Burchell, Collin Gordon and Peter Miller ed. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1991.

[2] David Arnold, *The Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000 (hereafter Arnold, *The Science, Technology and Medicine*), p. 92.

important. But the enquiry should not be limited to the question, what were rendered in these dialogues, but should be extended to other questions like what were the rationalities that made certain dialogues possible and how these rationalities themselves changed through these dialogues. The sites where production, technical education and moral education were institutionalized are selected for the following discussion in this context. It is argued here that these sites of material production were major realm where the processes of diffusion and internalization of the governmental rationality had taken place.

The first part analyzes the governmentalization process, which was a negotiation and interaction process in a field where various forces intersected. This is taken for discussion in the context of debates on 'native' and 'modern' methods of manufacture. The ideas at the European context like that of Marx and the concepts colonial officers developed in the context of interaction with the actual 'traditional' production centers are explained in this section.

The second part attempts to formulate an analysis of the emerging technical education institutions in the second half the 19th century. Here the focus is the discussion of disseminating technical skill, knowledge and taste and comparison of native and modern system of training, emerged around these institutions. It also critically looks into the concept of technical knowledge as universal and objective.

The final section notes how labour was conceived as a 'moral' activity, in addition to, being an economic one. Analyzing the prison manufactories and reformatories, it attempts to explain the hierarchies that are produced in the context of prison labour as a corrective mechanism.

The basic objective of the analysis of these sites is to observe different notions of material production; at the same time, it is also envisaged that this would help us understanding the complexities of the exercise of colonial power through the dissemination of concept of colonial difference. This process of dissemination, conceptualized as a process of governmentalization, center on the involvement of multiple agents including natives, in the production of particular forms of governmental rationalities.

2.2. Morals of Manufacture

The 19th century European accounts, of Indian manufacture, based on the notion of colonial difference, had produced a picture of stagnant production system that was primitive and barbarous. The concept of primitiveness is measured on basis of the 'wretched' or 'imperfect' machineries and tools and the barbarity of Caste system in India.

James Mill wondered at the 'fineness and delicacy of textures of Hindustan', which is produced in a loom 'coarse and ill fashioned.... little else than a few sticks or pieces of wood.'[3] Edward Baines also expressed this in almost similar words. For him, 'it cannot but seem astonishing, that in a department of industry, where the raw material has been so grossly neglected, where machinery is so rude, and where there is so little division of labour, the results should be fabrics of the most exquisite delicacy and beauty, unrivalled by the products of any other nation, even those best skilled in mechanic arts.'[4]

Through the expression of wonder and astonishment, a 'natural' connection between European machinery and fineness and beauty was established on one hand and on the other, disregard to the fine quality of Indian products, Indian machines were described as being primitive, coarse, and ill fashioned as well. This put forward a concept of progress in history, in which 'Europe' itself become the measure of this progressiveness. Here we should note that Indian products were not only superior in quality, but were also commercially viable because of which, in the world market, they were 'unrivalled by the products of any other nation, even those best skilled in mechanic arts.'[5] So the talk about primitiveness could produce a truth effect not in the discourse of political economy, but in relation to a discourse of colonial difference. The machines in its material form became modern or primitive depending on its location: West or East.

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[3] Quoted in Zaheer Baber, *The Science of Empire: Scientific Knowledge, Civilization, and Colonial Rule in India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1998 (hereafter Baber, *The Science of Empire*), p.60.

[4] Ibid., p. 60.

[5] Ibid., p. 60.

Marx assumes that a village system which was a 'domestic union of agriculture and manufacturing pursuits had existed in India since remotest times'. But this 'undignified, stagnate and vegetative life in the village system evoked unbounded forces of destruction and rendered murder itself a religious rite in Hindustan.'[6] This system has been challenged 'not so much through the brutal interference of British tax-gatherer and the British soldier, as to the working of English steam and English free trade.'[7] Here again machines were assumed as having not just a physical power but also a 'missionary power' and a moral responsibility. The interference of English steam by 'sweeping away both Hindu spinner and weaver, dissolved this semi-barbarian, semi-civilized communities, by blowing away their economical basis, and thus produced the greatest, and, to speak the truth, the only social revolution ever heard of in Asia.'[8]

These narratives, which were almost completely produced from secondary experience and addressing a European audience, differ much from the narratives of colonial officers who worked in the practical situation of 'governing' and within the complexities of reforming the method of production.

2.2.1. Presence of Native system

In narratives produced in British India from direct experience of production processes, simple dichotomies like East and West were not practical. Sometimes the arguments were shifted to such an extent, like that of Birdwood, who completely

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[6] Marx, 'The British Rule in India', in Marx - Engels, *On Colonialism*, Progress Publishers Moscow, 1978 (hereafter, Marx, *The British Rule in India*), p. 39.

[7] Ibid., pp. 40-41.

[8] Ibid., p. 40. Marx clearly states that the British has immersed Indians in to immeasurable degree of suffering and has thrown them 'into a sea of woes'. But that does not make Marx to condemn the process of destruction because 'whatever may be the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history'. He quotes Goethe:

> Should this torture then torment us
> Since it brings us greater pleasure?
> Were not through the rule of Timur
> Souls devoured without measure?

Ibid., pp. 40-41.

opposed the western form of industrial production. But in many other cases it was a question of relation between the nature of Indian artisan and the form of the new machine that has got prominence in the discussions. E.B. Havell, Principal of Calcutta School of Arts wrote a letter, in 1906, as a reply to an enquiry from Annie Beasant regarding the implementation of modernized machinery in handloom sector.[9] In the letter he stated that he had already consulted M/s Hattersley and Sons, the most successful manufacturer of handlooms in Europe, to produce a machine suitable for Indian conditions. He noted that what was needed in handloom industry was 'to have all the power of organization, technical skill, capital and experience'. He did not have full faith in Hattersley's looms, 'because the conditions are so various' but still he believed that by proper experimentation and improvement the machine could be made adaptable to Indian conditions. He planned for a model 'Indian weaving village' where this experiment could be conducted, by providing modern weaving apparatuses and proper technical and financial help. He also added that it would not cost even a 'tenth part of what 'Swadeshi' people are investing in power looms'.

Here, modernization is not considered as a forceful intervention from outside but as adaptation and internalization. The natives were not passive agents at the receiving end. Havell observed that Indian weavers 'are more than average intelligent and enterprise as they have themselves adopted several important improvements in their apparatus.' Also they would not be convinced until 'they see such an experiment thoroughly and practically carried out'.[10] A. Chatterton, superintendent of Industrial Development, Madras, also expressed similar opinion regarding the importing of machines. He questioned many of the arguments in the note prepared by Government of India on Handloom Weaving. The looms from England — Hattersley and Sons', Churchill's or Rafael Brothers' — recommended in the note are not perfect or better than the looms developed and which are in use in Madras. At the same time weavers

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[9] Proceedings of the Department Of Industries and Commerce, Industries, March 1907, No. 1-21, National Archives of India (NAI).

[10] Ibid.

were able to adapt with the introduction of improvement of their looms with fly shuttles and they were able to double their output.[11]

Chatterton's views are interesting in more than one sense. It moves away from Birdwood's earlier total criticism of Industrial mode of production. For Chatterton large scale industries in themselves were not evil but it 'will take its own time'. Meanwhile the responsibility of the government is to 'regenerate indigenous industries' 'which supply the simple needs of the people'.[12] He rejected the idea that the Indian artisan 'has remained entirely uninfluenced by the progress made during the last century.' He gave a detailed picture of the modernization of machinery that happened during this period in sugar mills, textile manufacture and oil extraction. 'They (Indian artisan) are conservative but they know their own business fairly well and many of the so called improvements which they have rejected were really unsuitable innovations.'[13]

Here we can observe that the notion of 'progress' and 'modern' are gradually becoming rigid but still it does not completely exclude the native ways of improvement. The 'illiterate artisan' and their 'simple needs' were still matter of concern and the artisans were not passive mass waiting for emancipation. He writes:

> We have found that the hand weavers of Salem like the hand-weavers of Madras object to working in a factory, and although their wages were good their attendance is unsatisfactory. This is mainly because the weavers prefer to work in their own home, assisted by their women and children and dislike being subjected to the discipline and regular hours of working which must necessarily prevail in the factory.[14]

[11] Letter No. 1604 P. from A. Chatterton to Board of Revenue, Madras, Proceedings of the Department of Commerce and Industry, GoI, 1907, No. 1-21, NAI.

[12] A. Chatterton, *Industrial Education of India*, The Hindu Office Publication, Madras, 1912 (hereafter Chatterton, *Industrial Education of India*).

[13] Ibid., p. 22.

[14] Ibid., p. 81. The quote reveals an important aspect of the relation between the factory form of production, and the disciplinary process inherent in it. Not only that the artisans recognized this but they resisted it too. It requires further analyses for creating detail map of this resistance and the possibility of identifying this as a resistance to colonialism. Here I wish to just mention that the enquiries into that type of resistances could not be captured using the ideas like 'National freedom

Chatterton recognized that the reluctance of the artisan to the factory form of production was not because of his ignorance but because of his care for his freedom which he thinks could not be exchanged for money. Hence the lack of factory industries could not be merely considered as an economic exploitative plan of colonialism: to export the raw material from colonies and import finished products from Britain. This might be also because of the partial success of the resistance of the Indian artisans. This is important because it gives us a hint about the reductionisms in the analyses based on political economy on industrial development or change from one form of production to other.

The voices of the native were heard and negotiated in many ways. A committee was formed in 1865 to consider the reforms of Weights and Measures and to suggest a standardized measure. The committee arrived at a conclusion that 'the system prepared by W.H. Bayley, though it may be not *scientifically* the most perfect, is *practically* the best in the present circumstances of Presidency'. The stress was not on a universal scientific system but on the most practical one for the prevailing conditions, 'causing least inconvenience to people'.[15] The committee justified the binary scale as 'the one which the people of this country are most familiar' and introduction and success of any new system 'depends very materially on the degree in which it adapts itself to the convenience, the usage and education of the people' W.T. Denison, an officer of Madras government, generally agreeing with the committee observed that the system proposed by the committee will be the 'simplest mode of getting over a difficulty without running too much counter to native ideas, fancies and prejudices.' The principle to be followed was that the 'name shall be general' and 'that the weight will be easily assimilated to the English standards.' The issue of standardizing the vessels for measures evoked a question, whether it should be accepted the 'struck' measure or the 'heaped' measure. Denison suggested that the only thing they could do was to 'establish measure as nearly approximating to those now in existence; to define the

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movement', 'trade union struggles' or 'peasant uprising' where the organized forms of resistance becomes the single criteria for recognition.

[15] Report of the Committee on Weight and Measures, Proceedings of the Home Department, Publication, October 1865, No. 61-63, NAI (emphasis added).

height and diameter of the cylinder which will contain the quantity and leave it to seller and buyer to fight it out the question of heaped or stricken measure.'[16]

These monologues of colonial officers show the new concern about the 'native ideas' 'fancies' in determining policies of the government. Still these voices are accommodated by translating it in such a way that it becomes intelligible within a discourse of progress and modernization. This in no way leads us to conclusions that undermine the coerciveness of colonialism. On the contrary, it reminds us of the veiled nature and efficiency of this discourse. It also points towards multiple forms of activities through which the governmental rationality is disseminated. Technical education was another site of this process which is analyzed in the following section.

2.3. Technical Education as Moral Training

It has already been discussed in the last chapter the concept of work and idleness that influenced the activities of Basel Mission Society. It should be noted that the institutionalized education as such was not a western invention. Baber shows that indigenous education system of *madrassas, pathashalas*, and *matas*, where Indian medical doctrines, mathematics and other scientific subjects like Indian astronomy were instructed, were still prominent even as late as 1822. Also the educational institutions which taught English language, literature and Western science started in early 19th century both by natives and westerners were higher educational institutions.[17] In short institutions of 'general education' were still very few; it was in the mid-century educational institutions exerted themselves at the level of 'population'.

The British had become the 'conqueror' by the time and through exercises like surveys it had created a population and a knowable subject.[18] The management of

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[16] Minutes of W.T. Denison, ibid.

[17] Baber, *The Science of Empire*, pp. 195-96.

[18] Foucault writes about the new form of government that emerged in 18th century in Europe: "The new government has now become an ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculation and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and its essential technical means apparatus of security." Foucault, 'Governmentality', Graham Burchell,

population or the government of population made it necessary the institutions of discipline. The emergence of technical education could be viewed as the result of the 'statistics of population which has its own regularities', not only 'its own rate of death and diseases', as Foucault notes, but its own caste hierarchies, rate of morality and degree of civilization. W.S. Blunt, a colonial administrator, explained that the new 'constructive imperialism' was maintained 'in part by concessions, in part by force, and in part by constant intervention of new scientific forces.'[19] Technical education was of course one of the main factor in the new scientific force.

Raina and Habib explain the question of technical schools in connection to the question of industrialization of India. It is a site of 'encounter' explained as follows:

> The encounter here between civilizations, European and Indian was reflected through a series of evaluative oppositions. These oppositions embodied civilizational, cultural and economic distinctions at the core of which resided the soteriological disjunctions: of Protestant work ethic versus spiritual east.[20]

Assertion of this hybridity is not accidental, we are told, because the authors were trying to show 'how the web of politics and culture wove into place modern scientific knowledge and technical education of artisan.' This is a good example of accounts which try to understand the hybrid nature of science or technology in its most complex manner but still at some point of their analysis they also assume a separation of material and moral aspects. The above article says:

> The discussion (in *the Dawn Society Magazine*) on technical education laid emphasis on the realization of an indigenous industrialization programme. An *additional item* on the agenda was the moral dimension of the debate.[21]

It is not clear here that whether the debate in *the Dawn magazine* or the authors who reproduce this debate makes the agenda of moral dimension of the debate an

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Collin Gordon and Peter Miller, eds. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1991 (hereafter, Foucault, *Governmentality*), p. 102.

[19] Quoted in Baber, *The Science of Empire*, p. 212.

[20] Dhruv Raina and S. Irfan Habib, *Domesticating Modern Science: A Social History of Science and Culture in Colonial India*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2004, pp. 92-93.

[21] Ibid., p. 108.

additional item. The moral dimension of the colonial project was not a different or additional agenda; it was embedded with the material reformation programmes. Anyhow, the above work is significant as it acknowledges 'the multilayered nature of culture and/or cognitive encounter' in a colonial situation. From this acknowledgement we can move further towards the multi-layered nature of the encounter by analyzing the debates happening at various locations regarding the policy of technical education.

The Queen of England while proclaiming her sovereignty over Indians, in 1858, declared that 'we hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territory by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all other subjects.'[22] John Ludlow, closely analyzing the declaration, considered this as a positive change of British policy towards India from the period of East India Company rule where the colonial officers were 'breed and trained up' with 'the feelings of imperious hatred'.[23] At the same time he reminded that Indian subjects need a different treatment from the British subjects:

> To fix an alien government in the affections of an orient people depend upon it, measures of broader, more *massive character* are needed; measures which so to speak, dint themselves into the daily life of mankind, or weld themselves indissolubly with it.[24]

Technical education became a site where the technologies of discipline and internalization of the same could be effectively practiced at a massive level; massive in both sense, as large scale and as for an ignorant lot. Missionaries from their experience understood this earlier than the Colonial government and started number of technical schools in their practicing areas. Though these were technical schools, the thrust was not as much for training in machines as for 'discipline' and 'hard work' and for imparting new moral among the 'pagans'. This does not mean that the technical schools started by officials and government were mainly concerned about the material improvement of the mass or only with commercial interests. S. Goodfellow, an engineer with the Colonial Government observed:

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[22] John Malcolm Ludlow, *Thoughts on the Policy of the Crown Towards India*, James Ridgway, Piccadilly, 1927, p. 2.

[23] Ibid., p. 7.

[24] Ibid., p. 186.

In prosecuting the study and in contemplating the structure of the universe, and in consequence resulting from them, they can scarcely fail of relieving themselves from a lad of prejudice and superstition; they will thus gradually, in proportion as their knowledge is spread, better men and better subjects and less likely ever to be made the tools of any ambitious man or fanatic.[25]

The education process was imagined as a material as well as a moral project. The objective of this project was to disseminate certain type of rationality through which the population could be brought to the purview of the 'practice of government'.

2.3.1. Madras School of Arts and Industry

The example of Madras School of Arts and Industry shows that relieving the 'pagan' from prejudices or the moral uplifting and the material advancement were not considered as contradictory processes but as complementary and correlating. The school was started by Dr. Alexander Hunter in 1850 'with the object of improving the taste of Native public and making them familiar with beauty of form and finish in the articles in daily use among them'.[26] In the following years Dr. Hunter enlarged his plan and 'added a department of industry to improve the manufacture of various articles of *domestic and daily use* largely made in the country but in the old primitive *fashion* and also by developing the natural resources of the presidency to create a local supply of the articles in general demand'.[27]

The hierarchical series created here are many and are working out at different intersecting levels. By improving the 'taste' of the native public and changing the 'primitive fashions', 'beauty of form' was sought to be familiarized among the natives. The stress on 'daily use' was important because only with continuous contact with attractive articles, mind could be trained in beauty. This training of the mind at the same time could not be de-linked from the economic interest of developing natural resources and supply of articles in general demand.

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[25] Quoted in Baber, *The Science of Empire*, p. 212.

[26] Report of the Committee constituted to enquire the working of Madras School of Arts and Industry, Proceedings of the Home Department, Education, August 1874, No. 43-46, NAI (hereafter Report on Madras Arts School).

[27] Ibid.

It is also clear that this was not the importing and imparting of a completely new method (of Europe) or a new knowledge system (of Science) but production of a different one by improving the existing ones. Of course this system of knowledge would not be as good as European Science but surely better than the present Native system. Management committee of the school – mostly Europeans – in a letter, in 1852, to the Government of Madras underlined one of the main advantages of the school as the 'improvement of the native manufacture by the application of science and spread of superior knowledge and skill.'[28] Government also recognized this and approving the suggestions of the committee observed:

> Whether the institution be regarded as a means of diffusing science and imparting a taste for the requirement amenities of life.... or of affording the scope for the exercise of their talents to the improvement of their conditions in life, or of developing the great resources of the country, mineral and vegetable and other valuable productions..... it deserve the patronage and pecuniary support of the state.[29]

Whether all the new minerals and vegetables 'discovered' were as new as claimed, is an important question. They were 'discovered' with the help of local potters and this necessarily means that they had some prior knowledge regarding the existence and utility of these materials. But by naming them as feldspar, baryta and selenite and the like, they were incorporated into the existing scientific knowledge and transformed as raw materials which could be supplied to England by commerce.[30]

Government took over the school in 1853. The issues of taste and beauty were yet to be settled. Chisholm, the Government architect and a member of the 1873

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[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Bernard Cohn writes: "It was the British who, in the 19th century, in an authoritative and effective fashion how the value and the meaning of the objects produced or found in India were determined.... Even when increasing number of Indians entered into the discussion, the terms of the discourse and the agenda were set by European purposes and intentions." Here he misses the point that the decisions of the British were not unilateral but produced within the compulsion of the situations in the colonies. The above argument also neglects the role of the colonized people who mediated in the process of 'naming the objects'. Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996, p. 77.

enquiry committee on School of Arts put up a dissent note in which he disputed the recommendation of the committee for importing a European expert for training the natives. His objections were multi-dimensional. Regarding the impartation of taste he argued:

> When I consider this vast sum of money instead of being lost for ever in a class of men totally unable to appreciate art even in its industrial forms, might have secured the Presidency the work of great masters and article of virtue of the highest excellence forming a source of gratification to millions and an item of material wealth, I can scarcely regret my presumption in venturing to differ from the views of my colleagues.[31]

Here we can indirectly see the importance given in imparting taste through technical training, by the majority of the committee. Chisholm continues that even if that was the case then,

> [t]he best way, in my opinion, of diffusing among the people of this country a taste for *Fine art* is to *tutor the public eye* by placing before it continuously objects worthy of admiration. The best way to give impetus to the industrial arts is to create in the public mind a desire for the possession of such articles.[32]

He also objected expending Government money for development of School of Arts for two reasons. First it would not help 'to secure the greatest spread of the knowledge' because prejudice of the natives preclude them from 'receiving instruction except for one class viz. *maistiries* (artisans)'. Education for just one section of the society would not go along with the policy of disseminating the knowledge throughout the population. Second, is the tendency 'to stifle indigenous art by foreign importation'[33]. Here the assumption of difference between the West and the East was invoked to make a case against the 'pollution of Indian art through the training in the practices of the West'. If the former was the eagerness for acting at the level of population, latter is an expression of uncertainty of this action because of the incompatibility of foreign and native.

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[31] Report on Madras Arts School.

[32] Ibid. (emphasis original).

[33] Ibid.

J.D. Sim, another member of the committee took a more utilitarian approach and recommended that the industrial department of the school may be developed but the artistic department should be abolished. He thought that 'the country is too poor yet and education still too little for high art'.[34] But for Robinson, yet another member of the committee, there exist, 'no combination of conditions, industrial, social or political which call more for earnest exertion on the part of the government in the diffusion of industrial education based on accurate scientific and artistic instruction than that exist in South India'.[35]

In a totally contrasting view, Hobart, also a committee member, argued that technical education is not a responsibility of government. For him '[t]he only legitimate object of education administered by the state at the cost of community at large is the cultivation and discipline of the mind.' People should not be taxed for 'the purpose of enabling the state to provide instruction in art and manufacture, which they are able, and which it is their business to learn for themselves.' He also feared that European methods followed in School of Art, would only ruin Native art, which was 'unprompted by any educational institution, but of rare and exquisite beauty'.[36]

The above narratives ranging from Birdwood's reversed notion of progress to Sim's completely utilitarian approach make the discourse of colonial difference multilayered and even scattered within the field of colonial governmental practices. Still they are part of the discourse, abide its rules of formation and exercise the difference in multiple domains and various forms. This reminds us about the necessity of locating colonial power not just in colonial state and its institutions but in practices of taste, behavior and morality; in short in 'daily life', as well.

Though technical education was considered as an attempt for imparting 'superior knowledge' which was intended to 'relieve the natives from their prejudices', it was also taken care not to disturb the existing caste hierarchies. The content and method of training or in other words the nature of the institutions varied with variation

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[34] Minutes by J.D. Sim, ibid.

[35] Minutes by Robinson, ibid.

[36] Minutes by Hobart, ibid.

of 'class' of the students. The technical schools mainly targeted artisans and the Engineering colleges the 'elite' classes of society. In both cases caste-wise analysis of performance of students was always a part of the statistics produced in annual reports of these institutions or in enquiry committee reports. For example, the quality of an engineer was measured not just in his marks in subjects but by considering his racial, regional and caste characteristics as well.

2.3.2. The universality and objectivity of Technical Knowledge

In 1877, Government of India made an enquiry regarding the availability of engineers for Public Work Department. The possibility of training more native engineers was also considered. It was suggested that Thomson Engineering College, Roorkee could be made exclusive for 'pure Asiatic blood'.[37] Opposing this suggestion, Principal of the college pointed out that 'under the present system they (Asiatic bloods) associated both in and outside the college walls with fellow students from whom they gain familiarity with the more energetic phases of *character of the race*'.[38] This was considered as an advantage for them as future engineers in public works department. Sir A. Clarke, an Engineer with PWD, participating in this discussion conducted a comparative analysis of 'efficiency' of an engineer with respect to his racial characteristics. According to him Indian Engineers were 'not found so useful, as a rule, as English Engineers. They want of self reliance and resource. Their treatment of their own countrymen is even complained of.' Hence to improve their usefulness, he also advocated that the present system 'which associates them with their European brethren' should continue.[39]

Also not all Indian Engineers were considered of having the same quality. Bengalis, formed the majority of Indian Engineers in PWD at that point of time. When posted out of their province, they were 'as much foreigner as Englishmen' and were 'frequently no more familiar with the ways and language of the people than English

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[37] Minutes by Sir A. Clarke on Engineer Establishment of PWD of India, Proceedings of the Education Department, Government of India, December 1877, No 12-15, NAI (emphasis added).

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

men'. As an added disadvantage they did not command 'the same respect or inspire so much confidence' among their own countrymen. But he noted that as new colleges were being established in places like Lahore and Punjab, it could be 'expected that a regular supply of more energetic races may be obtained'. He believed from his experience that 'the up-country people are more practical and manly and are of a stuff better suited in their own country for the duties of an Engineer than the Bengalis.'[40]

He also made a comparison between engineers from Coopers Hill, Thomson Engineering College and Stanley engineers from England. Stanley engineers stood first because they possessed a higher degree of professional and useful knowledge. Thomson graduates had the advantage of 'knowledge of language and the ways of the people' over the Coopers Hill and were better in practical purposes like in surveying and leveling. But Coopers Hill students had a higher general education and social status but had no practical knowledge.[41]

When analyzing the quality of an engineer all type of 'subjective elements were scrutinized. The fact that, through technical institutions it is not possible to impart technical knowledge *universally* is not a dilemma for a colonial officer but a problem to be addressed and solved. Also there is no compulsion to stick in an adamant belief in the universal characteristic of this knowledge.

A note submitted by Mac Donnell to Viceroy also reinforces the above point. Among the 'higher caste natives of India the obligation of caste still give sanction to the distinction between the employment deemed menial and those deemed honorable.' They have 'affluent circumstances and can derive advantages' from the English liberal education system. But for 'those who have to labour very hard for winning their bread it is useless.'[42] It would not be recommendable to impart general education for the people from these classes. Instead they should be provided with technical training

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[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Note on Technical Education submitted to viceroy by Mr. Mac Donnell, Proceedings of the Education Department, GoI, July 1886, No 27-29, NAI.

'which will fit men to their vocations in life, and will more over enable them to introduce improvements in industries and handicraft.'[43]

The Engineering colleges started in 1850s in India were an innovation in history of technical education. Up to then the engineers were trained as apprentices in 'workshops'. England adopted the system of Engineering colleges only as late as the end of 19th century.[44] Though the system was totally new it does not generate wider debates either on content or on method. These colleges were almost a combination of colleges of general education and workshops with apprentice system.

2.3.3. Native and Modern Systems of Technical Training

The establishment of engineering colleges was more or less hassle-free compared to the confusion and uncertainty in the case of technical schools. The reason may be many, out of which one could be the easiness and sometimes eagerness of the new 'elite' classes of the natives (of course 'higher' caste and middle class) in adapting with the educational system, which again keep the 'lower' class (artisan and 'lower' caste) mass at a distance. Thus, the engineering colleges were exclusive spaces of the 'upper' caste and class people. But to act at the level of population this was not sufficient and industrial schools were a good option in this regard.

The wide network of industrial education institutions spread throughout British India, by the end of the 19th century was a combination of different industrial training practices of East and West. And they incorporated and internalized the practices of caste difference or 'native prejudices'. In reverse it could also be said that the exercise of caste differences was partially stretched from its traditional feudal structure to a 'modern' institutional space as well.

The Industrial Education Conferences held in each British province in the initial years of the 20th century, when discussing the question of technical education required for industrialization of India, focused mainly on artisan class and on methods to improve the existing apprenticeship system. An expert committee was constituted

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[43] Ibid.

[44] Baber, The Science of Empire, p. 207.

which interviewed various eminent personnel with a prepared schedule of questions. The committee included, Principals of various technical institutes, industrialist, superintendents of jails in which jail manufactories were working, and other important people.

The questions in the schedule gave an impression that the committee has belief or strong doubt that the native system of apprenticeship was superior to the system of technical schools. At least it wanted to know in detail about the native system. The following were some of the questions asked:

1. Are there any special objections to or advantages in the native system?

2. What is the native system of keeping up a supply of artisans for native arts and trade?

3. Do you think that native system of apprenticeship is superior or inferior to the average industrial school in method? Can it be extended in practice? Can it be influenced by outside expert suggestions, advice or interference and how best?[45]

The answers varied according to the experience and personal biases of those who replied. Most of those who were in contact with 'actual' production processes commented that native system was superior but still need modification and improvement. Understandably, the Principals and other Education Department officers were in an opinion that the native system was primitive and low grade in moral and practical grounds. But what emerged through this and other discussions was a *class* identifiable as *artisan* which could be an object of scrutiny and target of specific policies.

Slater, principal of Sibpur Civil Engineering College, in his reply to the questionnaire, sought a clarification from the committee on what they mean by the word 'artisan'. President of the committee replied that 'artisan might be taken to mean all classes of men trained in Industrial Schools, not including high class technical colleges.'[46] Here the meaning of 'artisan' is moving towards an 'economic definition'

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[45] *Report on Industrial Education* – Part II, Education Department, Government of India, Calcutta, 1906.
[46] Ibid.

by attempting to exclude caste and other subjective attributes. But this was neither a simple move in language nor was accepted wholeheartedly by the subjects of this shift. For handicraftsmen this was a question of moving towards a different life. Chatterton writes:

> The first attempts to deal with industrial education were made by missionaries who started schools for the instruction of orphan boys in their charge....At first the main object of these schools was to break down the exclusiveness of the caste system; later to improve the hereditary methods of artisan; the admittedly small measures of success they have achieved is roughly proportional to the extend to which they have influenced the conservative mind of the Indian hand worker.[47]

But soon he observed that this was not a simple question of caste or conservatism. He noted that the greatest difficulty in imparting improvement 'will probably arise from the opposition of the artisans themselves, who care little about education and are adverse to abandoning the *free and improvident life* they have always led.'[48] Also according to him 'there is no reason why (artisans) should not strive to move forward to a goal more in harmony with (their) own tradition than is that presented by western civilization.'[49]

Material production was one of the domains where the encounter of 'civilizations' had taken place. In this encounter, from the colonial point of view, first step was to produce a knowable subject. The grand surveys could be seen as this first step. The technical schools and colleges were a second step through which these subjects were reconstituted to the field of governmental practice. The new forms of control emerged during this period opened up possibilities of new method of punishment in jails. In the next part concept of the question of labour as a form of punishment is discussed in connection with the practices of jail manufacturies and reformatory schools, where, as Foucault observed, factory, school and hospital are merged or co-exist.

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[47] A. Chatterton, Industrial education of India p. 4.

[48] Ibid., p. 24 (emphasis added).

[49] Ibid., p. 23.

2.4. Labour as punishment

Birdwood, when analyzing Indian handicraft production, observed that the products from the jail manufactories were ruining the life of 'native artist' through competition.[50] This indicates to the intensity of the production works that was going on in jails in that period. For Marx, labour was intrinsically connected to capital and to its economic function; also the labour as an economic activity is the most important aspect of the development of the society through various stages starting from primitive communism to socialism. Foucault had pointed out the limitations of this Marxist notion of labour and analyzed its role in controlling and dominating human bodies.[51] In this section I shall seek to demonstrate how in colonial situation the labour was extended outside the economic domain and integrated within it, the function of punishing and correcting.

Manufactories were an inherent part of jails from the very starting period of establishment of prison in its modern form in early 18th century. By the second half of the 19th century it had developed into a stage to include steam engines even before it was widely used in other production centers outside.[52] Though it was not openly discussed, it is sure that Government had much interest in exploiting almost free labour of the prisoners; Government had given orders to various departments that in their purchases they should give preference to the products from prisons.[53] Also Jail authorities were selecting particular trades in which profit was more.[54] But these economic activities also were implemented on its disciplinary function.

The nature and method of deploying the prisoners in labouring activity, was a central concern in the discussion of jail reforms. W.T. Denison, Governor General observed in 1864, that the increase in the number of prisoners was an evidence to the

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[50] Birdwood, *The Industrial Arts of India*, Vol. II, p. 157.

[51] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison*, Vintage Books, New York, 1995 (hereafter Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*), pp. 240-44.

[52] Dispatch from secretary of states, December 1885, Proceedings of the Home Department, Judicial, May 1886, No 53-54, NAI.

[53] Ibid.

[54] *Report of Industrial Education* – Part II, Education Department, Government of India, Calcutta, 1904.

effectiveness of methods of the new 'policing state'.[55] But this also necessitated new methods of labour activity. It was not just a problem of accommodation, but that of the '*machinery* by which the punishment, to which these prisoners have been sentenced can be carried out'. Denison's thrust was on the point that the confinement in itself does not constitute the punishment but it was the labour that makes the disciplinary and correcting function. For this, new prisons must be erected but it is not economical. This may lead to a situation where 'the Government will have to maintain a number of men in a state of idleness, loosing the value of their labour, as well as cost of maintaining them and failing altogether to carry out the object for which the men were incarcerated.'[56]

What he tries to argue was that the labouring was the important part of punishment than confinement. So he recommended that prisoners may be taken for outside labour which had already been found successful in England and Australia. He prepared a table to convert one day's severe punishment into subsequent hours of hard labour. He formulated methods to quantify the hardness of labour and other system of penalties for those who try to escape from the hard labour. He warded off the fear that it may dilute the required severity of the punishment:

> It may be objected to this system of carrying out sentences "rigorous imprisonment" that it does not sufficiently provide for the maintenance of proper discipline among the worst class of offenders; but the experience has shown that no such difficulty does in really exist, that by proper arrangement, not only is it possible to carry out to its fullest extent the punishment of hard labour awarded to the criminal, but to make this very labour a means of maintaining effective system of discipline among the prisoners.[57]

The discussion on the type of labour that should be employed brought into question the issue of class and caste distribution of the prisoners. T. Pycroft, another colonial officer noted that most of the convicts in Indian jails were from the lower

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[55] Minutes by W.T. Denison, Proceedings of the Home Department, Judicial – A, August 1865, No 64-66, NAI.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

classes of the agriculture population[58]. So the usual methods of handicraft practices within the jail yards or sheds were not very effective in Indian situation. Employing them in gangs in outside works would be more efficient and economical. Gadsden, superintendent of Central Jail, Coimbatore, also had the same opinion. In reply to the questions of the committee formed in Industrial Education Conference in 1901, he pointed out that comparatively few artisans came into jail and few prisoners followed the trade taught them in jail[59]. These discussions ultimately lead to a conclusion that the nature of the labour as such was not critical; labour in itself by its intrinsic characteristic provide the condition for reformation and punishment.

It is generally believed that most of the offences against property, of which prisoners are convicted, originate, in idleness and dislike of labour. The thief deems a life of rapine easier than one of the honest industry... No doubt that the primary object of the punishment is not the reformation of the offender, but prevention of the offence by the example made; but the two are not incompatible, and should as far as possible, go together.[60]

If we trace this feeling or desire (to procure the means of self indulgence in a more direct and ready manner than could be done by honest industry) a step further back, we shall find that it has it has its origin in idleness, in a disinclination to work.[61]

This argument has wider implications. First, if labour has an intrinsic nature of punishment, then a worker naturally becomes prisoner and manufactories or factories, become prison itself. This will have impact on the moral credibility of the argument of colonial difference where factories were symbols of modernity and civilization. This difficulty was overcome by the argument that labour becomes a punishment only when it was organized in a particular way. Second, when we analyze this in retrospective manner we can see that organizing the production of labour and the implementation of disciplinary system had complementary features stemming out form the same 'rationality of government', which rationalized the colonial difference and disciplinary

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[58] Minutes of T. Pycroft, Member of the Council, Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid.

[61] W.T. Denison, Ibid.

power of the state simultaneously. Labourer and prisoner were not one and the same but they were arranged contiguously and through this arrangement knowledge about their similarities and differences could be produced in an effective manner.

2.4.1. Crime and Technical Training

The adjacency of labour and crime becomes clearer in the discussion of reformatory schools. Through the discussion of labour related with reformation, the existing division between mental and physical labour was reinforced and the latter was arranged in a lower position. It was explained, in the earlier part of this chapter, that for artisan students, general education was considered as mere waste of time and technical education was considered most suitable for their moral and material improvement. Reformatory schools were categorized as a part of industrial schools and were some of the sites where normalization of power took place. Foucault assumes that the establishment of child reformatory schools was a key moment when the 'social enemy' was defined 'at once by irregularities, departure from the norm, anomaly and criminal deviation.'[62]

J. Connon, Chairman of the managing committee of David Sasson Industrial and Reformatory Institution, Bombay, in his report explained the situation that lead to the establishment of the institution. Dr. Buist, a medical officer with Bombay Government, noticed that every year around 200 to 300 boys were punished for juvenile delinquency, by the courts in Bombay. He decided to start an institution where 'they might not only fed but trained to some useful trade, which might enable them in after-life to earn their bread by honest industry and thus constitute them as useful members of society'.[63] Further the institution was expanded with two more 'depots', where 'criminal apprentices' were trained in various trades like turning in wood, smithy and molding in brass. In the institute language classes in Marathi and Gujarathi were conducted one day in a week, but just for enabling them to read.

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[62] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 299.

[63] Report on the David Sasson Industrial and Reformatory Institution, Proceeding of the Home Department, Judicial – A, October 1868, No 40-41(A), NAI.

First of all, one could see the difference of the assumption about general education and technical education. The basic objective of the institution was to convert the delinquent children to useful members of society. In the colonial narratives on education, the objective of general education itself is 'cultivation and discipline of mind'.[64] But the general education is not just sufficient for people of 'lower class', to convert themselves to 'useful' members of society. The concern is more about ordering of different people in different proper places than to help the poorer sections in 'winning their daily bread'; but both are complementary processes. Educational institutions intended to incorporate whole population, but with gradation and differentiation in type and method of this education, with respect to the class, the caste and the racial categories of the each individual.

The progress report of the Alipur reformatory was a book of 'penal accountancy' in which the balance sheets of moral progress of the boys were recorded and analyzed. The progress of moral was measured in terms of his 'labouring characteristics'. Phugoni Pass, a 13 year old boy, was showing good progress because 'he is willing to learn and will in another year make a good workman. His conduct at work for the year had been very good.' Giri Sheik, on the other hand, 'has been taught to line off timber out; this cannot with safety be entrusted to him. He is lazy in nature and of little use.'[65] These documents produced knowledge about individuals and their moral ranking according to their performance of labour. Labour as productive activity was not restrained within its direct economic function, but it extended to various technologies of power.

2.5 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter three sites of governmentalization were separately taken for analysis: manufacture, technical education and prison. In the first case, discussing the question of modernization of instruments of production, I have argued that the colonial policy stressed more on internalization of the process than any coercive mechanisms

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[64] Minutes of J.D. Sim, Proceedings of the Home Department, Education, August 1874, No 43-46, NAI.

[65] Progress Report of Alipur reformatory for the period ending 20th August 1877, Proceedings of the Home Department, Judicial, November 1877, No. 27-29, NAI.

for its economic benefits. Pointing that the native was an active presence in the colonial policy making it was argued that the strength of the colonial discourse was its capacity to incorporate multiple voices and agents into its fold. But immediately it was also noted the prominent presence of coercive mechanisms themselves shows that the above process of assimilation was never complete and colonialists were never confident in their own capacity.

In technical education, I was looking into the claims of universality of technical knowledge based on science and its practices at various educational institutions. I have brought forward some arguments to demonstrate how race, caste and class differentiations were incorporated into the technical knowledge. The colonial officials had no pretension that this knowledge was objective. In all institutions statistics were produced to analyze the relation between the subjective characteristics of the students and their proficiency which was generalized and assimilated into governmental policies.

In the last part, how notion of the labour transcended its economic characteristic in prison manufactories and reformatories was discussed. Through a dichotomy of idleness and hard work, labour became a moral agent which could transform a criminal to useful individual. Associating the physical labour with criminality the dichotomy of physical and mental labour was reinforced. The connection between the physical labour and the 'lower' caste/class people, naturally lead to connection between the latter and criminality.

Chapter 3

Colonial Policies and the Hindu State

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapters analyzed the narratives of colonial officers and missionaries largely produced within British India. It has been argued that a new discourse on material production was formed by the middle of the 19th century with its foundation on the concept of colonial difference and practiced through separation and hybrid formation. This discourse, which was discontinuous and heterogeneous, had resulted in the development of 'governmental' practices. This chapter tries to explain how the narratives on material production were constructed in the same period in Thiruvithamkoor where the rulers of this Princely State considered themselves as Hindu Kings.

Three important agents: the Madras government, the missionaries, and the Resident are considered here for the analysis of their respective conceptualization of material production developed in the process of their interaction with a Hindu state and its subjects. Rather than finding a common principle or a generalized colonial attitude, I shall attempt to explain the specificities of these negotiations in three separate sections. The attempt is to foreground the differences of interests of various agents and their mutual influences in the interactive processes.

The first part of the chapter attempts to explain how the Hindu state and the caste hierarchies were decisive factors in the construction of colonial ideas of material production. It is equally important to look into both the presences and absences of various factors in the policies of the British government and voices and silences in their narratives. The second part deals with the missionary practices and their attempts of reforms in the material processes. Here I argue that unlike their counterparts in the Malabar, missionaries had never attempted for introduction of factory industries but worked within the existing caste based production system. In the last part I am trying to

explain how the Brahmanised character of the Hindu State mediated the decisions making process of the Residents of Thiruvithamkoor. The reforms of the Residents were based on the British governmental practices. Analyzing some of these reform attempts, I shall try to show that these attempts generated a notion of modern government but the modernization process was structured within the Brahminical caste practices.

3.2. Colonial Policy Towards a Hindu State

By the treaty of 1805, Thiruvithamkoor was brought under the Madras Presidency and its decisions were 'almost' binding for the state. It is easy to put forward numerous examples to demonstrate the exploitative and coercive nature of the British policies over the state, but that gives only a partial pict..re of the situation. For example, it is important to note that all the advice of the Madras government could be implemented only after it was approved by the Thiruvithamkoor state. There were number of occasions when the state neglected, delayed or completely overruled the Madras governments 'suggestions' and 'advice'. This was true especially in the cases where there were chances of disturbing existing caste hierarchy and thus limiting the advantages of the 'upper' castes.[1]

Regarding the policies on commerce of Thiruvithamkoor State, Madras Government was keen and 'active' and it often intervened to maintain its interest and domination. But this had never gone to an extent, where the existing system of material production, with caste as the central organizing category, was disturbed or challenged.

, Of course, this has connection to changes in the policy of the Government of India after the '1857 revolt': not to intervene in the religious and spiritual matters of the country and to remain neutral in these matters.[2] But in the realm of 'material'

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[1] The British Government's suggestion to remove caste based discrimination for admission in schools, and government offices were neglected or overruled by the State throughout 19th century. Only after the emergence of caste community based politics and the consequent demands from the *Prajakal* themselves, rules were changed in this regard.

[2] See the analysis of Ludlow on the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. John Malcolm Ludlow, *Thoughts on the Policy of the Crown Towards India*, James Ridgway, Piccadilly, 1927.

(agriculture, industry, labour etc) this was not supposed to be followed. Even while abstaining from direct intervention in the domain of 'spiritual', the British Government was expecting that the western technology would provide great momentum for the social transformation of the cast-ridden society. This made them assume that railway is 'the most persuasive missionary at work that ever preached in the East'[3] or engineers as the 'true missionaries of progress and enlightenment'.[4]

But the Madras government was careful and tactful in its policies on Thiruvithamkoor, regarding reforms or changes even in the field of the 'material'. The British Government through an enactment in 1843 legally abolished slavery in British India. But Madras government, even after continuous complaints and petitions by the missionaries from Thiruvithamkoor, was not in a hurry to instruct the State for a legal reform in this regard.

In Thiruvithamkoor the Pulaya and the Paraya caste were mainly engaged in agricultural labour and considered as slaves[5] by the land owning castes like Brahmins, Nayars and Syrian Christians. The Government also had its own slaves known as 'Sircar slaves' who were hired out to cultivators. One of the main demands of the missionaries was abolishment of slavery and the practice of *Oozhiyam*.[6] The British Government, while agreeing in principle with the missionaries, was cautious about taking any hasty steps. It urged the Dewan through the Resident for a '*gradual emancipation*' of 'Sircar slaves' but was silent about the 'private' slaves. The Court of Directors also expressed their concern but again in a qualified manner: "The subject of predial slavery in Travancore and Cochin should receive the serious attention of

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[3] Edwin Arnold in Dalhousie's biography, Quoted in Michael Adas, *Machine as the Measure of Men*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1990, p. 226.

[4] S.J. Thomson, Quoted in Ibid., p. 227.

[5] The concept of slavery here was of course very different from the slavery in North America and other colonies where peoples from Africa were brought as slaves. We could see that the use of the word slave in this context itself was a result of the modern historiographical practices.

[6] The slave caste people were forced to engage in free labour for Sircar and for works in Temple and also in *Oottupura* where Brahmins were given free food at the expense of the state. This free labour was called *Oozhiyam* labour

Government with a view to effecting early emancipation *with the least possible injury to individual interests*."[7] The 'individual interests' mentioned here of course referred to the interest of the upper caste.

It took more than one decade for Thiruvithamkoor state to legally abolish all forms of slavery, but how far this was practically implemented was still doubtful. Even in 1859, this was an issue in the petitions of missionaries which points towards the gap between the enactment of law and its actual implementation.[8] The Pulayar and the Parayar continued to be agriculture labourers and their economic and social deprivation changed little throughout the century.

As discussed in the last chapter, in British India the discourse of material production was practiced in the domain of material, though the objects of the discourse were hybrids. Hence the institutions of the governmental practice had been developed in this domain which incorporated caste hierarchies by reconstituting them which in turn produced a new order of things. The 'upper' caste people found it necessary to be adaptive to this 'modernization' process and were flexible enough to reconstitute themselves in order to maintain their dominance in this new order of things.

But in Thiruvithamkoor we would see that the caste order, privileged by its rulers, becomes the field where the 'modernizing' forces exerted themselves. Caste as determinative category thus reordered and reconstituted the objects of modernization discourse which was initiated by colonialism.[9] In case of Thiruvithamkoor, even for the British, caste was not something to be prevailed over, but a different ordering system which should be addressed and taken care of. Sidney Low, a colonial officer, analyzing the prevailing social practices in Thiruvithamkoor observed:

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[7] Quoted in Koji Kawashima, *Missionaries and a Hindu State: Travancore 1858-1936*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1998 (hereafter Kawashima, *Missionaries*), p. 59 (emphasis added).

[8] Ibid., p. 60.

[9] For example traffic through the new 'public' roads was strictly controlled based on 'distance pollution' rule of the existing caste system. Appointment in government posts and admission to the educational institutions were also restricted based on caste hierarchy.

The caste provides everyman with his place, his career, his occupation, his circle of friends.... The caste organization is to the Hindu his club, his trade union, his benefit society, his philanthropic society.[10]

For a colonialist, caste could be made into the object of knowledge only by translating it to club, trade union or philanthropic society. At the same time, this was also a recognition of a different order which becomes the determinative factor in producing knowledge about the Hindu. In British India, the caste structure was an important subject of colonial discussion; as a despotic order, inhuman practice and a sign of primitiveness and paganism. Caste was the crucial element determining the primitiveness of India on which the 'progressiveness' of the Europe and justification of colonial rule were based and constructed. But in the case of Thiruvithamkoor the British Government always acted with restriction and at times with reverence for the existing order.

Even in the last decade of the 19th century, Madras Government's attitude had not changed much. In 1887, the LMS missionaries gave a memorial to the Madras Government, in which they complained that the Resident Hannyngton was not implementing the order of the British government, in Thiruvithamkoor. The complaint was regarding the access to the public roads for all caste and creeds. But the Madras Government reviewing the situation concluded that no further action was required. Thereafter in 1891, the missionaries complained to the Secretary of State in London. In response to the enquiry from London, Madras Government opined:

> More than this cannot be expected, and, as observed by Hannyngton, the petitioners in reality seek the abolition of religious prejudices which is so strong in Travancore and the neighbouring State of Cochin and which may be expected to prevail at all times... In these circumstances we cannot recommend any action in favour to the memorialist.[11]

The British capital in this period did not show any 'interest' in large scale industrialization of Thiruvithamkoor; one could argue that this was the general

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[10] Quoted in Nagam Aiya, *Travancore State Manual* (hereafter, Nagam Aiya, *Manual*), Travancore Government Press, Trivandrum, 1906, Vol.3, p. 247.

[11] Quoted in Kawashima, *Missionaries*, p. 72.

principle followed by them all over British India. But, after the First World War the situation was changing and more factory industries with foreign capital and technologies were being established. The Government of India set up the Indian Industrial Commission in 1916 and the commission submitted its report, in 1917, after a detailed survey. Subsequently many steps were followed as per the recommendation of the Commission. The survey had not included the Princely States and the Commission thought 'it should be possible to *adapt* many of our (the Commission's) conclusions to the *special conditions of each state.*'[12] In the special conditions in Thiruvithamkoor, the cottage industries still enjoyed a privilege over large scale industries. The new policy of the British government did not make any fundamental change in this privilege.

Of course there were a few factories in Thiruvithamkoor with foreign capital investment, but they were not much significant as compared to the 'traditional' manufacturing sector.[13] There are two reasons for this: one is that these factories and the new methods of production brought along with it, were located not in competition with existing production centers but in different fields which were new to the country. Plantation and Coir weaving were two areas in which factory industries were established and there were no traditional manufacturing activity in this area. Secondly, they represented only a very small part of the total manufacturing activity; even as late as 1931, only 7%of workers were under 'organized factories', the remaining 93% being in 'cottage industries'.[14]

While in British India the new discourse of material production reconstituted the category of caste (not by destroying but by assimilating it into the new institutional

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[12] Quoted in Ram Mohan, 'Material Process and Developmentalism: Study of Economic Changes in Tiruvitamkur 1800-1945', PhD thesis, submitted at Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1996 (hereafter Ram Mohan, *Material Process*), 1998, p. 177(emphasis added).

[13] In 1859 a coir weaving factory Darragh Smail & Co. was started by an Irish born American James Darragh. The machineries and weaving experts were brought from England. But this has not affected the traditional coir sector which was engaged only in manufacture of coir but not mats.

[14] Also within this 7% majority was in plantation sector. *Census of India 1931: Travancore*, Travancore Government Press, Trivandrum, 1932, Vol. XXVIII, p. 244.

forms of governmental practices), in Thiruvithamkoor caste was the organizing category or axis through which emerging discourse was situated and practiced. Caste order became the measure and the mode by which modernization of material production was imagined and experimented. In British India the institutions like technical schools or jail manufacturies, had internalized the caste hierarchy; even the principles by which the institutions were organized were influenced by the existing order of the caste. But caste in itself was never the organizing principle, because at least for the British Government, the new discourse was situated in the domain of material and the knowledge produced was objective.[15] But with regard to Thiruvithamkoor, negotiating with a different order and practice, colonial narratives produced different notion of labour and material production. The missionary narratives also were conditioned within this practice, which is explained in the following section.

3.3. Missionaries in a Hindu State

In this part I am trying to look into the protestant missionary practice in a Hindu State and argues that their discourse on material production was not universal or homogenous but constructed in specific way in negotiation with the caste practices existed in that country. As mentioned in the earlier chapter, in colonial narratives, work or labour was never 'secular' categories, but were conceptualized in relation to the racial and civilizational difference of the colonialists and colonized. In Thiruvithamkoor these narratives are further situated within the caste hierarchy and Hindu state. This could be made clearer, by comparing the protestant missionary work in Thiruvithamkoor and neighboring Malayalam speaking area of Malabar District under Madras Presidency.

Two important protestant missionary societies were active in Thiruvithamkoor in the 19th century: the London Missionary Society (LMS) and the Church Missionary Society (CMS); both consisted mostly of Anglican missionaries. Their description about the 'traditional' production system was not much different from that of the dominant colonial narratives discussed earlier: the handicraft production as primitive and the product as coarse and the handicraftsmen as lazy without any fixed working

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[15] See the discussions in the Chapter 2.

time. Samuel Mateer, the LMS missionary, describes the weavers of Thiruvithamkoor as follows:

> Weavers of Travancore rarely attempt the manufacture of any but coarsest and plainest descriptions of cotton cloth.... The thread used is English but the machinery and tools are of the most wretched and imperfect description.... The introduction of the English handloom would at once trouble the Indian manufacture of clothes from Indian handloom, and would be great boon to weavers themselves.[16]

The notion of colonial difference is clearly expressed in the above description. The native production was primitive and it could be improved only by the superior English machinery. But the reform he suggested did not in anyway imagine a change in the method of production: from handicraft to factory form of production. The introduction of the English loom was suggested only to improve the handicraft production not to change it into a system of factory production. This may improve the economic status of the weaver, but it would never produce any structural change in the caste hierarchy. Unlike the factory mode of production which presupposes 'independent' wage labourer and necessitates more fundamental restructuring of the division of labour, here the reform was aimed only at 'bettering' or 'improving' the economic condition of the weaver.

But at the same time it would be wrong to assume that the missionaries accepted or tried to protect the existing caste system. On the contrary, it was through the struggle against these caste oppressions, they exercised their proselytization work. By the middle of the century, especially in southern Thiruvithamkoor, the mass conversion of Channars and the 'new status' they attained had produced violent reactions from the 'upper' caste people. The government was also in alliance with the 'upper' caste in this issue. In this period the relation between missionaries and the state were almost antagonistic. But this situation changed drastically in 1860s when Thiruvithamkoor state itself began to initiate programmes of 'modernization'.[17]

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[16] Mateer, *Land of Charity*, p. 71.

[17] Kawashima, *Missionaries*, pp. 33-39.

The modernization or progress visualized and practiced by the state was not the same that was imagined in missionary narratives. It was thoroughly oriented by the caste order and guided by what they call Hindu religious principles (this is further discussed in the next chapter). But what we see in this period is that missionaries and government were in cooperation and the attitude of the former was that of compromise and adjustment to the prevailing situations in the country. In short, we could see the social reforms for which the missionaries stand has not produced fundamental changes in the realm of material production.[18] Even after complete abolition of slavery, the 'lower' caste people like Pulayar and Parayar, neither moved on massive scale from agriculture labour to other sectors as wage labourers nor their income from agriculture labour increased substantially.[19]

The difference between the missionary practice in Thiruvithamkoor and elsewhere will be clear when we compare the activities of LMS and CMS with Basel Missionary Society in Malabar district.[20] Basel Missionaries, with their headquarters in Basel, Switzerland arrived in Malabar Coast in 1834 and established their mission with Mangalore as its headquarters. By 1882 they set up their industrial mission 'with a mercantile branch office in Basel' and 'its funds were managed by a joint stock company, which paid the net profits back to the mission as a free contribution'.[21] The main industries under the mission were tail factories and weaving mills. Analyzing the connections between the religious work and what she call technological modernity, Kavita Philip has explained how BMS' industrial works created 'actual material

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[18] Even as late as 1931, the cottage factory industries remained as the major sector of production consisting 93% of the labourers. And in the cottage industry, the ordering of the labour was still based on caste system. See *Census of India 1931: Travancore*, Travancore Government Press, Trivandrum, 1932, Vol. XXVIII, p. 241.

[19] Around 85% of Parayar and Pulayar were working as agriculture labourers even in 1931. *Census of India 1931: Travancore*, Travancore Government Press, Trivandrum, 1932, Vol. XXVIII, p. 246.

[20] For a history of Basel Mission Industries in Malabar, see J. Raghaviah, 'Basel Mission Industries in Malabar and South Cananra 1834-1914', MPhil Dissertation submitted at Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1986 (hereafter Raghaviah, *Basel Mission*).

[21] Kavita Philip, *Civilizing Nature*, Orient and Longman, New Delhi, 1994 (hereafter Philip *Civilizing Nature*), pp. 213-14.

conditions.... that brought large numbers of previously agrarian or tribal people into a new system of production'.[22] The industrial work was not simply an economic activity. Raghaviah notes:

> The idea of pray and work gave way to the notion that praying is working and working is praying. As a consequence, economic activities of the mission were not a support of the mission, but as considered to be the mission itself.[23]

The aspirants for conversion were first sent to the factory work as probationers. Basel Missionary Frohnmeyer explained: "I consider it to be one of the grand advantages of these institutions that they can offer an opportunity to test the sincerity of probationers."[24]

The notion of work as a reforming activity was not specific to protestant missionaries, but in the case of BMS, its objective was not to create awareness about 'hard work', but to really produce it in factories. Missionary J Muller states:

> To understand the Basel Industrial Mission aright we must keep in mind the fact that we have to do not with industrial schools [which now 'belong to the past'], but with industrial establishments, that is with the factory system.

> [E]xperience has shown that with the keen competition of foreign countries the day of the individual workman is over, and only an industry with modern machinery and wholesale business is capable of holding its own against competition.[25]

Philip explains this as a transformation of people who are marked by their caste, 'into groups newly marked by their (working) class status'. She also notes that the mission work provided a 'well-trained labouring class in the colonies', which 'was essential for the functioning of the empire and 'which 'served an important purpose in the context of national political economy'.[26]

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[22] Ibid., p. 220.

[23] Raghaviah, *Basel Mission*, pp. 14-15.

[24] Ibid., p. 15.

[25] Quoted in Philip, *Civilizing Nature*, p. 220.

[26] Ibid., p. 219.

In Thiruvithamkoor, LMS or CMS had never attempted to start factory production or even industrial schools which will train a workforce for factories; their technical training centers were almost handicraft training centers and even that was not as important for the mission as the general education schools or seminaries for future mission agents. The notable production center under LMS was the pillow lace industry at Nagerkovil which was not at all an 'industry with modern machinery and wholesale business'. Other industrial training centers imparted training in weaving, carpentry, rearing of silkworms, book binding, printing etc.[27]

This compromise with the existing system was one of the reasons for their success in the early years of conversion. The BMS method of conversion gave privilege to the reform of the individual more than the number of people converted. Here individuals first had to prove their sincerity as 'probationers' in factories. But LMS and CMS conditions for conversion were simply based on change of belief of God not on occupation. This was one of the reason for their success in mass conversion. Kooiman notes:

> In fact most of the people could easily combine their old religion with Christianity and change of-religion often amounted to change of emphasis from one trend to another within a larger religious complex.[28]

The discourse of 'modernity' or 'progress' was not necessarily intertwined with gradual transformation to new forms of production. The missionary activities were one of the important factors that compelled the state to initiate egalitarian policies but that were limited and had not necessarily produced a corresponding change in material production. Mateer criticizing the government regulations on breast cloth of *Channar* women argues that such 'restriction too of so large proportion of the people to the *use of coarse materials* is obviously a suicidal policy in respect to the development of commerce and manufacture.'[29] His visualization for development of commerce and

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[27] Ram Mohan, *Material Process*, p. 28.

[28] Dick Kooiman, *Conversion and Social Equality in India: The London Missionary Society in South Travancore in 19th Century*, Manohar Publications, Delhi, 1989 (hereafter Kooiman, *Conversion*), p. 82.

[29] Mateer, *The Land of Charity*, p. 299.

manufacture was limited to the coarse material, which was produced, as he already observed, by 'wretched and imperfect' machinery. Even when a connection was established between social reform and manufacture, the reform of the manufacture was not a necessary ingredient in this demand for social change.

CMS which was active in the northern part of the country worked among Pulayar and Mala Arayar, and was careful not to challenge the dominance of the 'upper' caste Nayars or Syrian Christians who claimed Hindu 'upper' caste roots. The converts from Pulayar were not allowed to attend the same church of Syrian Christians and even educational institutions of the mission were formed on caste basis. There were Nayar Schools and Pulaya Industrial Schools. Here also the industrial schools were not given as importance as other general education schools. Noting the fact that 'towards the end of the century there were only .wenty people enrolled in the CMS Pulaya Industrial School', Philip observes that the social effect of CMS projects was limited by the long-term *pragmatic choices* they made.'[30]

The pragmatism opted by the CMS could be explained as an indirect acceptance of the caste practices. Their idea of work or labour was also limited within these *pragmatic choices*. Kawashima and Kooiman separately note in the case of CMS and LMS activities respectively that the 'upper' caste land lords were not always antagonistic to the conversion of Pulayar who were agricultural labourers in their land.[31] J. Knowles in 1885 pointed out that '[i]n several instances heathen masters are encouraging their labourers to become Christians as they say they are so much more trustworthy and industrious in consequence.'[32] A CMS missionary observes in 1883:

> The great majority of our converts have remained at the work in which they were engaged previously, and it is *most desirable* that they should do so. It is idleness and pride, not labour, which is dishonouring.[33]

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[30] Philip, *Civilizing Nature*, p. 224 (emphasis added).

[31] Kawashima, *Missionaries*, p. 156-58; Kooiman, *Conversion*, p. 80.

[32] Quoted in Kawashima, *Missionaries*, pp. 157-158.

[33] Quoted in Kawashima, *Missionaries*, p. 157 (emphasis added).

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This dichotomy of idleness and labour was produced within a western, Christian, modernist discourse. But this dichotomy was articulated, in missionary narratives on Thiruvithamkoor, within a different system of order (order of caste) and in negotiation with the practices of that order.

3.4. The Resident: Modern and Hinduized

The post of Resident in a Princely state was peculiar in nature. Historians have not analyzed this peculiarity and often considered him just as an extension of the British Government. It is not the concern here but it has some indirect effect on the attitude of different Residents in the subject being discussed.

The policies of Residents on material production were partially in continuation with the British government's policies towards Princely states and partially determined by the local situations. The policies are analyzed in order to compare the reform attempt or the 'modernization' attempts of the Residents and its affect on the caste based system of material production.

The first Resident of Thiruvithamkoor Col. C. Macaulay was appointed in 1800. His primary responsibility was to secure firm foundation for the dominance of the colonial government over the state and by the agreement in 1805 he almost accomplished this. Two major moves on his part were crucial to the future politics of Thiruvithamkoor: he put an end to Diwan Velu Thambi's attempt to challenge the British from within the state and the first foreign missionary was allowed to enter Thiruvithamkoor by the end of the decade.[34]

Shifting the emphasis, here I am discussing the policies of the two Residents: Col. J. Munro (1810-1819) and Lieut-General W. Cullen (1840-1860) who were in office for a substantial period. They become important not just because of their longer career in office but for the policies they initiated and issues developed in this period. The particular Residents are also 'known' for opposing reasons: Munro for 'zealous', 'active' and 'reform' oriented policies whereas Cullen for 'Hinduized' and 'compromising' attitudes and 'favoritism'.

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[34] Kawashima, *Missionaries*, p. 56.

Col Munro was appointed the Resident of Thiruvithamkoor in 1810. And, in that year the Raja Bala Rama Varma expired and there was confusion regarding the successor as there were no male nephews who would naturally ascend the throne as per *Marumakkathaya sampradaym*.[35] The British Government actively intervened in this issue and appointed Rani Gouri Lakshmi Bhai, as the ruler. She was in her adolescence at the time. Rani was not at all confident with the then Diwan Ummini Thambi and the only remaining option for her was to completely depend on the Resident for the protection of the country and herself.[36] In 1811 Ummini Thambi was removed from his post and was tried for sedition. Following this, Munro was appointed as Diwan. This was the only instance where a British officer was appointed simultaneously the Resident as well as the Diwan of Thiruvithamkoor. All these instances are important because they led to a situation where the Resident became the 'real' ruler with almost absolute powers, albeit without a throne.

Historians have varied opinion as to whether Munro was the founder of the 'modern' Thiruvithamkoor;[37] nevertheless, what is important here is to look into this discourse of 'modern' for explaining the objects it contains and the rules it observes. From the early observations of Munro, we could see that his objective was to establish

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[35] As per the procedure of *Marumakkathaya sampradaym,* the eldest son of the eldest sister shall succeed the throne on his uncle's death.

[36] For a detailed description of the situations of this period see, R.N. Yesudas, *Colonel John Munro in Travancore*, Kerala Historical Society, Trivandrum, 1977 (hereafter Yesudas, *Colonel Munro*).

[37] What is 'modern Thiruvithamkoor' is a confusing question and answers vary with the perspective of each historian. For Shungoonny Menon, Marthanda Varma was the founder of the modern Thiruvithamkoor in the sense that he organized the country with a centralized administrative structure and formulated some governing principles. P. Shungoonny Menon, *A History of Travancore from the Earliest Times*, Madras Higginbotham and Company, Madras, 1878. But for historians like R.N. Yesudas, Munro is the initiator of the modern Thiruvithamkoor because it was during his period a well defined organization machinery for finance, revenue and judiciary with written rules was established. I consider the introduction of political economy, general education and juridical practices as important factors of the discourse of 'modern', but more important here is to analyze the conditions and rules that determined this discourse in a specific way. R.N. Yesudas, *Colonel Munro in Travancore*, Kerala Historical Society, Trivandrum, 1977 (hereafter Yesudas, *Colonel Munro*).

a rule on a 'solid basis of order, justice, moderation and good government'.[38] In a letter to the chief secretary of Madras Government he writes:

> A severe and oppressive system of Government in Travancore had nearly destroyed the sources of its prosperity and imposed upon its habitants a character of immorality, idleness, deceit and turbulence which rendered them equally dangerous to their own Rajahs and to the British Power.... The reformation of these evils has been a primary object of my policy.[39]

From the analysis of other colonial narratives as in the previous chapter, we may remember that education and technical training were considered as a method to remove the idleness and immorality. In other words labouring was method of reform and correction. Technical education was thus an important field in the reforming process which was also considered as an active intervention in the caste based native training method.[40] But in Thiruvithamkoor technical education was introduced only in the last years of the 19th century. Munro's modernization was moving in a different direction. It neither called for a change in existing system of production nor produced modern worker or wage labourer.

His reforms were important for many other reasons. It was during this period the Hindu State of Travancore re-organized itself by internalizing the western governmental practices into a Brahminical order of caste practices, which enabled it to stabilize the order of caste in a new form.

The separation of revenue and judiciary was one of the major steps initiated by Munro in his reform project. The new juridical system was modeled on the British judicial system in India, but the formulated rules were not the same. Here the rules were different for different castes which drew its insights, according to the official historian of the state, from the 'institutes of Manu'.[41]

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[38] Quoted in ibid., p. 20.

[39] Quoted in ibid., pp. 20-21.

[40] See the discussion on the views of Chatterton on technical training in Chapter 2.

[41] Shungoonny Menon, *History of Travancore*, p. 302.

There was a principal court and five subordinate courts. In the principal court Diwan and two Brahmins and a Nayar had to be the judges and in the subordinate courts two Brahmins and a Nayar. Lieutenants Ward and Corner describe these reforms as follows:

> The ancient system was stripped off its abuses through the introduction of liberal and enlightened reforms, which resulted in gradual and silent reformation. It gave society a better form, government of more permanent security, and reduced a class of jarring, complicated and mercenary authorities into a compact and efficient regularity.[42]

As mentioned before this authority with 'compact and efficient regularity' emerged not by replacing the 'traditional' authorities (only Brahmins and Nayars could assume the post of a Judge), but by reforming and regularizing it. The rules of the country were constituted by 'the laws of sastras together with the established usage of the country'.[43] The only reform, which could be considered as a change in existing labour practice, was that regarding the *Oozhiyam* labour. The new rule allowed converted Christians to abstain from *Oozhiyam* labour on Sundays and for duties related to Hindu Temples. But even that too had very little impact on the system because the slaves converted would not constitute a considerable number in that period.

The stabilization and regularization of authority had long term impacts. In the existing system, the caste based hierarchy had produced a corresponding hierarchy and statuses for different types of labour. In this, the divide between the physical and non-physical labour[44] was fundamental. The separation between science and useful art, in European practices, which were introduced and familiarized through colonial discourses and new educational system, was easily absorbed into the above divide. In other words, science and useful art in Modern Thiruvithamkoor became indicators of a sense of 'modern' but within the order of caste. Hence Munro's reforms may be understood in this sense as one which paved way for the institutionalization of the division between physical labour and non-physical labour in various sites of

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[42] Quoted in Yesudas, *Colonel Munro*, p. 56.

[43] Ibid., p. 34.

[44] Physical labour includes all the works which require sustained bodily activity and muscle power and in non-physical labour I am including a range of activities from simple idleness to 'managing jobs'.

governmental practices. This normalized the Brahminical notions existing earlier on, and organized now through the governmental practices. In this, manual labour was considered as inferior and always to be done by 'others', which even continues in the 21st century Keralam.[45] The discourse emerged based on this separation can be considered as a 'Brahminical discourse of labour' because it reinstated the Brahminical rules of the caste order in its practices.

By the middle of the century, the government departments and institutions had almost completely filled with Brahmins and Nayars and the 'upper' caste discourse almost become official practice. More than half a century British domination and almost four decades of missionary work ironically produced a more stabilized and strong Hindu state and that too in a 'modern' form. It was in this atmosphere Lieutenant General W. Cullen began his twenty year long career as the Resident of Thiruvithamkoor.

Cullen along with the Diwan V. Krishna Rao, who was his protégé, took strong anti-missionary attitude, and this resulted in further strengthening the Hinduization of the state. Jeffrey mentions that during the period the state was 'staunchly Hindu and thoroughly conservative.'[46] According to Cullen, missionaries were trying to build 'an independent unconstitutional authority which might unsettle, if not altogether subvert, the existing political arrangement of the native state.'[47] In return Samuel Mateer, the LMS missionary, describes Cullen as follows:

> The British Resident, General Cullen, who had occupied this important post since 1840, though kind and courteous in manners, generous in his gifts, and *scientific* in his

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[45] It is very common among Malayali middle class people (invariably salaried government servants and small scale business class people) to complain that Malayali is not ready to do any physical labour inside Keralam, but once they are outside the state, will do any hard work. This may be true because the discourse, which produced this distinction and made the physical labour of a lower status, is still prominent among Malayalikal. But most of those who make this complaint themselves usually seek occupations which exclude physical labour to the effect that the physical labour has to be done by 'others'.

[46] Robin Jeffrey, *The Decline of Nayar Dominance*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1976, p. 37.

[47] Quoted in Kawashima, *Missionaries*, p. 58.

tastes, was completely under the influence of Brahmin favourites, *adopted their views*, and so find no necessity of mission labour, or Christian institution of the poor. He was thoroughly 'Hindooized' by an uninterrupted residence of nearly fifty years in India.[48]

Mateer stresses the contradiction: the scientific tastes and Brahminic views. For him they were antithetical and incommensurable. But in Thiruvithamkoor we could observe that the Brahminic view and the scientific taste are entangled to form a particular discourse, in which the former determines the rules of this discourse and dominate in its practice. The missionary programme of modernization assumed simple dichotomies as Mateer expresses this as a question of 'Christian and Hindu religions, caste and progress, rigid conservatism and liberal reform.'[49]

Cullen's period was crucial in the history of Thiruvithamkoor state for several reasons. His policies could not be attributed to the idiosyncrasies of the particular individual or his 'uninterrupted residence of nearly fifty years in India'. His actions are the signs of a Hinduized modern state, wherein even a colonial officer becomes part of this Hinduized governmental practices. One should genuinely doubt whether his actions became a precedent for some of the future Residents also. For example J.C. Hannyngton the Resident in 1880s writes:

> I am myself sorry that Hindus – and especially the educated Hindus – should hold views which appear to me absurd, but I should be sorry willingly to offend their prejudices, and I have no doubt that the Hindu exercises the same tolerance towards me in respect to many things which I do, which appear to him not merely absurd, but wicked.[50]

In theory this is purely a relativist approach but the practical meaning of this statement was that he was not ready to intervene in the Brahminical practices of the state. The Residents, being part of both the 'liberal' British government and Hindu state, mediated the stabilization and regularization of caste in governmental practices. It is also important that the notion of labour generated from this governmental practice

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[48] Mateer, *The Land of Charity*, p. 297.

[49] Ibid., p. 298.

[50] Quoted in Kawashima, *Missionaries*, p. 71.

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had a critical role in directing the discourse of material production in a particular way in many decades to come thereafter.

3.5. Concluding Remarks

To conclude this part, I wish to reiterate the important points. The British government always advocated for the modernization of the Government in Thiruvithamkoor, but in no way tried to intervene in the method or mode of this modernization. The interests of economic domination and exploitation of the British did not necessitate fundamental changes in the production activity. More importantly these interests were limited by the situation where the division of labour was based on caste, change of which will only produce adverse effect on 'the measures of security' and commercial activity of the Paramount Power.

The missionary activities in Thiruvithamkoor, and the discourse of modernization it produced was limited and almost excluded the idea of 'technological modernity' as in the case of BMS industrial mission in Malabar. Missionaries actively questioned the oppressive caste practices and argued for social reforms; this had never gone to such an extent, producing a totally different labour class or bringing about fundamental changes in the order of caste. But this compromising and limited influence helped the 'lower' caste people at least to enter into the political processes where they could raise their voice and protests. At the same time, the notion of progress produced in the missionary narratives became one of the tangential forces that initiated the reorganization of the caste ordering and stabilization of 'upper' caste dominance in a 'modernist' way so far as the governmental practices are concerned.

The role of the Residents was also significant in this process. While initiating modernization programmes they were also constrained by the local conditions towards which they became more and more lenient than averse. In some instances their actions and sometimes inactions, such as in the case of Cullen, directly helped strengthen the Brahminical dominance in the state machinery.

In short the colonial dominance and missionary practices initiated a discourse of progress rather than development, putting forward a concept of 'government of more permanent security,' and 'efficient regularity of authorities'. The strong order of caste

existed in Thiruvithamkoor had a determinative role in bringing the above authority under control and normalizing it through governmental practices. The concept of labour and production activity in general was also 'ordered' within this Brahminical practices in which the physical labour was juxtaposed in opposition to non-physical labour and also to a subordinate position in the order of respectability.

Chapter 4

The Hindu State of Modern Thiruvithamkoor

4.1. Introduction

Between the oriental ideal of the state as an organisation of righteousness for the perfection of humanity and the occidental ideal of the state as a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human wants and wishes, stand the Indian States (Native States) as the survival of the one and specimens of the other, no less than as diverse combination of both. The Indian States at are the rendezvous of the genius of the East and spirit of the West.[1]

Travancore is an object lesson of what a Hindu state when brought under the influence of enlightened and progressive ideas from the West can achieve without losing the distinctive character imprinted upon it.[2]

The above two quotes, as self reflections, describe in its maximum, the nature and character of Thiruvithamkoor State. Both are written by Brahmin Government officials of this Hindu State. But before going in for an overarching generalization of categories like Modern, Progress or Hindu State, we should look into the particular meanings of these categories delineated through distinct socio-political practices.

Adding the attribute 'modern' to some of the selected princely states – Thiruvithamkoor was one of such states – was a common practice especially in colonial narratives. This, while expressing a particular socio-political condition of the native state, was also a discursive usage, because it produced a 'natural' disjunction between modernity and Native States. The provincial British Governments were never qualified as modern [One could say modern Madras, but never (modern) Madras State]. In this discourse, connection between British government and modernity was

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[1] Rama Nath Aiyar, *Progressive Travancore*, Indian State Series, A.R.V. Press, Trivandrum, 1923 (hereafter Rama Nath Aiyar, *Progressive Travancore*, p. i.

[2] V.P. Madhava Rao, Quoted in A. Padmanabha Iyer, *Modern Travancore: A Handbook of Information*, A.R.V. Press and Sridhara Printing House, Trivandrum, 1941, p. 1.

assumed to be 'natural' and hence there was no need to add the adjective. The question is not concerning the 'actual reality' of this aspect, rather the discursive practice that produces the 'truth effect'.

The term 'Hindu', widely used in early History writings on Thiruvithamkoor should be analyzed in its generality and particularity. The 'Hindu' religious practices historically developed in this region were different from that in many of other places. The caste pollution rules, rituals and marriage practices were specific to the region.[3] The question whether these practices follow strictly any scriptural directions was irrelevant until modern history writing was introduced.[4] Before the appearance of modernization narratives, the way religion was internalized and authenticated was through its 'daily practices'. Its rationality was not dependent on scriptural authority. The modern history writing was introduced here by the middle of the century by Colonial officers and Missionaries. This was soon taken up by the Savarna officers in the Government.

Once scriptural authority became the measure of authenticity, Thiruvithamkoor historians also started anchoring history, law and conventions on the wider known Hindu Sastras and Puranas.[5] This mode of enquiry also led to a search for similarities

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[3] For a exhaustive enquiry into the religious, caste and cultural practices see P. Bhaskaranunny, *Pathombatham Noottantile Keralam* (Keralam of Nineteenth Century), Kerala Sahithya Academy, Thrissur, 1998.

[4] Lata Mani desribes the dilemma of 'court pundits' in Calcutta in giving lucid opinion based on *authentic scriptures* when British judges were demanding a clear cut answer to the question whether *sati* was sanctioned by the Hindu scriptures or not. She explains that the discussion followed in pro and against this question anyway constructed a notion of authentic Hindu scripture which was non existent up to that period. Lata Mani, *Contentious traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1998, pp 25 – 41.

[5] Shungoonny Menon, Nagam Ayya and Velu Pillai tried to find roots of the customs and rules followed by Thiruvithamkoor rulers in Upanishads and Sastras. Scriptural evidences were the basis for their writings modeled on European history writings. P. Shungoonny Menon. *A History of Travancore from the Earliest Times*, Madras Higginbotham and Company, Madras, 1878 (hereafter Shungoonny Menon, *History of Travancore*); V. Nagam Ayya, *Travancore State Manual*, Travancore Government Pres, Trivandrum, 1906 (hereafter Nagam Ayya, *Manual*); T.K. Velu Pillai, *Travancore State Manual* 1940, Travancore Government Press, Trivandrum, 1940 (hereafter, Velu Pillai, *Manual*).

and common roots, generating a generalized notion of Hindu practices. But the difference was also prominent. Rituals, large number of castes and caste practices which could not be mapped under the four divisions of Varna principle etc. were different from the practices of Hindus in many other parts of the sub-continent. Connection to the wider folds of Hindu religion in India was established by anchoring the religious practices on Hindu Sastras which were common to all Hindus. But unlike other Princely States or British India, Thiruvithamkoor was never conquered by Muslim or Christian rulers and it was considered to be a 'pure Hindu State'. This distinction was projected as a specific achievement of Thiruvithamkoor. It is not the Hindu rituals followed by the rulers of Thiruvithamkoor make it a Hindu state, but the Brahmanised policies followed in governmental practices.[6]

Here the term Brahmanisation also needs some explanations. By this, two aspects of the social process are stressed. One is the fact that the Brahmins as a caste enjoyed dominance and privileges in society. Second and more significant is that the concepts connected to this dominance were disseminated to other communities, the process which became more and more stabilized and internalized through governmental practices. Even the communities in strong opposition to the dominance of the Brahmins as a caste, internalized in some way the Brahminical notions of labour.[7]

This chapter broadly explains the process of negotiation with modernization and assimilation of discourses by the Thiruvithamkoor State in 19th and early 20th centuries. Here I am trying to argue that the Brahminical character of the State becomes decisive in producing a caste based hierarchy in the process of reconstitution of labour. It is not argued that the caste's influence on 'modern' institution is specific

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[6] Kawashima, while recognizing Thiruvithamkoor as Hindu state, tries to establish the point by the elaborate rituals followed by various Rajas. But the Rajas who diverted from many of rituals in the later period in their policies and decisions, still continued to be Brahminical. Koji Kawashima, *Missionaries and a Hindu State: Travancore 1858-1936*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1998 (hereafter Kawashima, *Missionaries*).

[7] This process is explained in the Chapter 5.

only to Thiruvithamkoor, but once it became the official policy, it is palpably clear that it becomes decisive for all in determining even what modern is.

I shall try to examine these categories and their connotations through an analysis of governmental practices and the emerging discourse of labour in Thiruvithamkoor in this period. The first section of this chapter focuses on the ruling Rajas and tries to analyze their interest in science and its consequences on the policies of the State concerning the existing division of labour based on caste. The second section tries to analyze the modernization programmes inaugurated in the period of Diwan T. Madhava Row and how the governmental activities unleashed in this period interacted with the dominant Brahminical discourse. The third section concentrates on the shifts and transformations taking place in the dominant discourse due to the governmentalization processes that emerged in the last decade of the century. The last section briefly analyses the industrial policy of the state during the period of governmentalization and attempts to compare this with the industrial policy of Mysore in the same period.

3.2. 'Modern' Rajas of Thiruvithamkoor

The Thiruvithamkoor Rajas were famous for their interest in Science and this was one of the major aspects for which the country was considered as 'modern'. But, what was the science practiced and supported by the Rajas? How did it affect their attitudes to social and religious practices? Did the study of science help them impart 'scientific rationality' and overcome 'prejudices'? These are wider questions which require more detail enquiries before arriving at any conclusions. For the present purpose, it will be more interesting to examine whether this scientific background of the Rajas had any effect on the Brahminic domination or in the domain of material production. Through the examples of Swathi Thirunal Rama Varma (1829 – 1847) and Uthram Thirunal Marthanda Varma (1847 – 1860), I will try to explain this question.

Swathi Thirunal ascended the throne in 1829 and became a well known Raja throughout the India for various reasons. He was mostly known for his contribution to music and culture and himself was a composer of both Karnatic and Hindustani

classical music. He had a good command over many Indian languages as well as in English. And, his interest in science was also commendable.[8]

He invited John Roberts, the principal of the Nagerkovil Seminary of the LMS, to start an English school in the state capital. Thus a school was first started at the initiative of Roberts, as a private school and in 1836 the government took over the school and was then onwards known as Raja's Free School. Roberts continued to be the Headmaster until he retired in 1855. Even after the government take over, Bible teaching was allowed in the school, which was the condition put forward by Roberts when the school was founded.

It was in this period Caldecott, the commercial agent of Thiruvithamkoor Government in Alappuzha suggested the idea of establishing an observatory at Thiruvananthapuram. This was soon sanctioned by the Raja and observatory was established in 1837, with Caldecott as its first director.[9] Mr. Brown the second director of the observatory described the Raja as celebrated ruler 'for his love of learning for his cultural mind' and for his 'great political power and a thorough knowledge of many languages.'[10] P. Shungoonny Menon adds a different dimension to this knowledge; he writes:

> His Highness equally qualified himself in political matters by his assiduous study of various English and Sanskrit works, and he acquired a thorough knowledge of the Institutes of Manu. His Highness made it a point to discuss important questions in Logic and Rhetoric, both in English and Sanskrit, and thus became capable of entering into the discussions of any subject without fear of being defeated by other learned men.[11]

When we analyze the policies of Thiruvithamkoor State in his period, It appears that the influence of the 'Institute of Manu' was more critical than the interest in science. For example, the 1829 proclamation on the issues of Christian converted Channars, was clearly prepared within the Brahminical notions of 'tradition' and

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[8] Shungoonny Menon, *History of Travancore*, p. 299.

[9] Brown's report on observatory of Trivandrum, Cover Files, Bundle No. 28, File No. 16086, 1857, Kerala State Archives.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Shungoonny Menon, *History of Travancore*, p. 302.

custom. The newly converted Channars were demanding that their women should be exempted from the dress code of Hindu Channars as they were no more Hindus. They also wanted to be exempted from the *Oozhiyam* duties, especially from the duties of temples and *Oottupura*. There were incidences of violence in southern part of the country, when 'upper' caste people strongly objected to the converted Channar women wearing jacket to cover their bosoms. The proclamation of Swathi Thirunal regarding this issue, while allowing converted Channar women to wear 'Kuppayam' (a particular type of Jacket) like Christian women, strongly denied permission to wear upper-cloth similar to that used by 'upper' caste women. The Christian Channars were already exempted from *Oozhiyam* duties on Sundays from the time of Col. Munro; the Government was not ready to give any further exemption. This proclamation added a further restriction on building places of worship, for which from then onwards a prior permission from government should be sought.

Syrian Christians and 'lower' caste Hindus were not allowed in many government departments and the new government schools also followed the same caste-based distancing. From all these, one may arrive at two conclusions. One is that the learning of science does not lead naturally to the removal of 'caste prejudices'; or in other words social reforms and English/Science education are not in one to one relation of cause and effect.[12] Many other factors were determinative in this process. Second, the Brahminical discourse did not have any inherent elements antithetical to

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[12] In the first and Second chapters we saw that the colonial narratives continuously expressed a claim that their 'superior knowledge' based on 'Science' could reform the pagan people and remove their caste 'prejudices'. This claim does not end with the colonial rule but continues even today. For example Meera Nanda argues that Modern Science (and only modern science) could be the 'source of the demystification of the Brahmanical Hindu understanding of nature as permeated with Brahman, the divine spirit.' She also claims: "Since Hinduism justifies untouchability and caste hierarchy as being in accordance with the order of the nature itself, the content and method of modern science have obvious attractions for the victims of the caste prejudices." From the historical experience of Thiruvithamkoor we could see that neither the study of science naturally led to the removal of caste prejudices nor the struggle against the caste oppression was based on the 'content and method' of modern science. Meera Nanda, *Breaking the Spell of Dharma and Other Essays.* Three Essays Press, New Delhi, 2002, p.36.

science in any fundamental way. Uthram Thirunal's example will show this point more clearly.

As a Prince, Uthram Thirunal was tutored under the Residency surgeon Dr. Brown. In usual cases the content of the education of Princes was the same as that of the general education imparted in missionary schools. But this prince was not content with that.

> From infancy, His Highness took a fancy to European styles and fashions and gradually in all his mode of living he became Europeanized. His dress, occupation, furniture, amusement etc. were all after the European style.[13]

He studied medicine under Dr. Brown and started practicing in prescribing medication, vaccination and minor surgeries. He started a dispensary in the Palace and gave treatments to the insiders of the palace, as well as the guests. His laboratory contained many instruments which were 'amusing' especially to the Brahmin visitors.[14]

But these experiences had little effect on his policies regarding caste practices. The question of dress code was still a major issue in south Thiruvithamkoor and the continuing hostility of 'upper' castes towards Channars culminated in major violence during the last years of 1850s. Also missionaries viewed this period as the time of most 'Brahmanised State'. Rev. E. Lewis in a letter to the resident accuses the government at this point: '[a]ll the Government officers being higher caste men, are in league with Sudras' and '[t]here is no government officer from the Diwan to the peon that inclined to aid' Channars.[15]

Of course, there were some changes in this situation during the last years of Uthram Thirunal, but this could be attributed more to the new Diwan T. Madhava Row, than to the Raja himself. It was noted that during his last years the Raja began to withdraw more and more. The same person who started vaccination and ran a

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[13] Ibid., p. 332.

[14] Shungoonny Menon, *History of Travancore*, p. 332.

[15] Quoted in R.N. Yesudas, *Peoples Revolt in Travancore: A Backward Class Movement for Social Freedom*, Kerala Historical Society, Trivandrum, p. 192.

dispensary in Palace objected to examination by doctors in his death bed and allowed only Brahmins to touch him.[16] He passed away in 1860.

3.3. Modernization and Hinduization: From 1860s to 1880s

I tried to demonstrate earlier that the reforms of Munro and Cullen, rather than destroying caste hierarchies, helped stabilize Brahminical dominance in governmental practices. Here I am going to explain the shifts and changes from the period when T. Madhava Row was appointed the Diwan in 1857. It is also interesting to note that in most history writings on Thiruvithamkoor, the reforms of the Government in the first half of the 19th century is usually credited to the Residents and from second half onwards Diwans and the Rajas were considered as the initiators of the reforms. This may be a pointer of the increased autonomy of the Government in the latter period or at least on the increasing importance of the State as the agency of reforms. Conversely, this may also be because of the fact that, by the end of the century many government officials themselves had started to write history of the country and they gave prominence to Rajas and Diwans than the Residents. But in either case, the identification of the state as Hindu becomes more evident and strong during the second half of the century.

Sir T. Madhava Row assumed the charge of Diwan in 1857 and his reforms are considered to have helped pave the way for modernizing Thiruvithamkoor in a substantial manner. It was in this period, that the government started investing in general education. From almost nothing, the expenditure on education rose to 1.4 percentage of gross expenditure of the government in 1864-65, and further to 2.1 percentage in 1869-70.[17] Both English and vernacular schools were opened at District and Talook levels. The curriculum of these schools was totally different from the earlier ones followed in traditional schools. But analyzing the subjects taught, Kawashima observes that 'two policies of state had considerable influence upon the curriculum. One was to reinforce the Hindu state; the other was to transform

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[16] Shungoonny Menon, *History of Travancore*, p. 342.

[17] Travancore Administrative reports of various years quoted in Kawashima, *Missionaries*, p. 90.

Travancore into a 'modern state'.[18] We could also add a point that the two were not opposing or contradictory. Ram Mohan also observes that the change due to the 'standardization' and 'institutionalization' of education in the 19th century, 'was not generated by basic change (at least initially) in the prevalent social order of caste and gender, integral to which was the earlier mode.'[19]

The education reforms of Madhava Row were critical in reinforcing the Brahminical domination in the state administration. He explains this as follows:

> So far as the Sircar was concerned, all important posts under it would be filled by educated men, and by educated men alone, as soon as they become available. Mere experience in an office had its value, but could not alone suffice for performing well the duties of Government in its several parts. An educated man of limited experience was more valuable than a man of lengthened experience but defective education.[20]

We should read this statement in the background of the fact that, in all the government schools people from Ezhava, Pulaya, Paraya and other 'lower' caste people were denied admission. Hence the 'educated man' simply means a Savarna man who will get the positions in Sircar. Later in the time of Memorials (which is explained in the next chapter) this pro-brahminical stand of the government was thoroughly exposed and criticized. Travancore Administrative Report in 1875 unambiguously stated the government's policy in this regard:

> If the state, in present circumstances, throw the schools open indiscriminately to all castes, the practical alternative offered to the high caste are either that they should forgo the advantage of state education or secure that advantage under serious violence to religious feelings. Both this alternatives are to be deprecated.[21]

The result of this policy was that, the 'upper' castes were able to move onto the new occupations in a smooth manner and continue the dominance in the emerging

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[18] Kawashima, *Missionaries*, pp. 96-97.

[19] K.T. Ram Mohan, 'Material Process and Developmentalism: Study of Economic Changes in Tiruvitamkur 1800-1945', PhD thesis, submitted at Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1996 (hereafter Ram Mohan, *Material Process*), p. 25.

[20] Quoted in Kawashima, *Missionaries*, p. 91.

[21] Quoted in ibid., p. 100.

institutions also. Within this policy, even the missionary schools became an opportunity for 'higher' caste people to maintain their dominance in government. Kooiman notes:

> The higher castes were thus in a much better positions to use the seminary as a preliminary to the better-paid government situation, where as the lower caste Christians had to be content with the missionary employment, reinforcing the conception of Christianity as "the religion of poor".[22]

The Public Works Department was set up in the year 1860. As earlier mentioned, slavery was already abolished in the year 1855, and it was expected that the demand for wage labourers required for the public works would create a new movement of labourers from agricultural sector. Around 1000 miles of road was built in Madhava Row's period and construction of many other public buildings and offices were also undertaken in this period. But the availability of labour became an issue for the implementation of these works. The abolishment of slavery had not severed the bond of agricultural labourers from their traditional relations of production; this was not just subordination to the *Janmikal* (Landlords), rather a relation to the land they worked and their particular dwelling places, rituals related to it etc. as well. Even as late as 1931, almost 85% of Pulaya and Paraya caste were continuing their 'traditional' job in agriculture.[23]

Barton, a European officer in charge of Railway construction in Thiruvithamkoor, had stated that the situation in 1865 was very difficult one. The labourers for the skilled works were imported from Madras province, and it was expected that for the non-skilled they could depend on the local people. But he draws attention to the difficulties he had to face: 'We had to make our own bricks, quarry the

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[22] His analysis reveals the complexity of the situation where religious or and caste interest are directly enmeshed with the power relations of the society. Dick Kooiman, *Conversion and social Equality in India: The London Missionary Society in South Travancore in the 19th Century*, Manohar Publications, Delhi, 1989, (hereafter Kooiman, *Conversion*), p. 102.

[23] *Census of India 1931: Travancore*, Travancore Government Press, Trivandrum, 1932, Vol. 28, p. 246.

stone, dive for the shells and burn lime, and even fell the timber required for our works.'[24]

The modernization programme thus brought a notion of progress which could not be explained in terms of any single category like westernization, modernization or sanskritization.[25] During the second half of the 19th century, in Thiruvithamkoor, all these processes were intermingled in many ways but one should not fail to observe that the order of caste, even while being rigorously questioned and criticized, continued to dominate in this social processes. A Historian in early 20th century describes the progress during Madhava Row's period:

> In fact every subject of the realm was provided within a couple of hours journey, with the advantage of Doctor, a Schoolmaster, a Judge, a Magistrate, a Registering officer and a Postmaster.[26]

From the present day vantage, one could say that this is a typical 'Foucauldian statement' on modern institutions, the only difference being that the factory is conspicuously absent in this array of institutions. The European notion of the divide between Science and Useful art/craft had emerged along with those institutions, which were accommodated into the brahminical notion of the divide between physical and non-physical labour. Science thus attained a dominant position in educational and medicinal practices. But until the end of the century, when population became the target of the governmental practices, the craft was not under serious consideration even though it had become a subject of casual reference. This shift, from governmental activities to governmentalization, is a later process described in the third section of this chapter.[27]

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[24] Quoted in Robin Jeffrey, *The Decline of Nair Dominance: Society and Politics in Travancore, 1847-1908*, Manohar Publications, Delhi, 1994, p. 72.

[25] Kawashima states that the reforms in Thiruvithamkoor initiated in 1860s and 70s were results of the demands from Madras Government. Further he assumes that 'the situation certainly promoted rapid westernization of Travancore'. Kawashima, *Missionaries*, p. 42.

[26] Rama Nath Aiyar, *Progressive Travancore*, p. 120.

[27] The governmental activity is actually a top to bottom directional process and the governmentalization started in a later period could be considered as a multidirectional processes. But even in the period of

The modernization programme was not in any way extended to the field of material production. The craft in which the Rajas and generally the government were interested in, was rather the 'things of amusement' than 'products for daily use'. In the 1851 London industrial exhibition, Thiruvithamkoor's only exhibit was an ivory throne.[28] In 1884, the school attached to the Huzur office, where training was given in carving ivory, was thoroughly remodeled and developed into an Arts and Industrial School. One may doubt that whether this is a counter-fact to the argument that the Government was not interested in craft. If one looks into the trades practiced here, it would be clear that this doubt is misplaced. The important trades in which training were given were lacquer work, kuftigari work (production of handicrafts in which silver is hammered to steel), and carving on wood, ivory and coconut shell: again production of things of amusement.

The difference of objectives will be clearer by comparing this with the Madras School of Arts and Industry where the objective was to impart training in production of 'articles in daily use' among natives. There one of the major trades selected for training was pottery. The drawing class in the Art department was designed to train people for engineering drawing and fine art drawing. The Madras School also attempted to produce articles on commercial basis. But the Thiruvithamkoor School never attempted commercial activity and its purposes as an industrial school was very limited. In short, the Science even as being a western product was easily assimilated into the educational process even while the institutionalization of the traditional crafts was yet to be a concern of the Government. The handicraft and handicraftsmen would come into the purview of the state policies only in the first decade of the next century.

governmental activity, the authority of the sovereign-government is doubled. The tradition of *swami bhakthi* (reverence to the lord, here the Raja) has a long history in Thiruvithamkoor, which was simultaneously an unconditional submission to the Raja and a belief that the Raja would protect his subjects. By the new mode of government the 'protectionist hands' of the king extended to the vicinities of subjects and produced concurrently firm belief in his authority and new expectations in subjects. The government thus became a 'genuine', 'authentic' and 'natural' authority which can be approached criticized and submitted to. In actual practice, all these aspects remained applicable only to the upper strata of the society till the end of the century.

[28] Nagam Ayya, *Manual*, vol. 2, p. 192.

3.4. Shifts towards Governmentalization: From 1890s to 1920s

1890s was a period of transformations in Thiruvithamkoor. A legislative assembly was constituted in 1888, it but had little power to legislation and acted as a body for making opinions and suggestions. This was a nominated body, but at the same time it was the first institution of this kind in an Indian State. The people were still the 'subjects' of the Raja and his authority was unquestionable. But the legitimacy of this authority then requires not only the hereditary right, but also the practice of good government – the notion which had its emergence in the middle of the century. What impact did this recognition produce in the nature of the government? Was its Brahminical nature questioned?

New identities were emerging through the categories formed through censuses and other governmental activities. Those were mainly based on caste communities, reconstituted by assimilating differences within communities and making the boundaries between communities more visible. These caste groups began to enter into the political process and the Government was brought to limelight under the continuous scrutiny of the new agents. The factors that produced this new agency were multiple: education, new economic opportunities, identities formed through earlier governmental practices etc., were some of them.

These developments point towards a multidirectional processes of governmentalization. Now the deployments of forces are not streamlined from government to its subjects. New agents seem to exert their desires, expectations and demands in this field and the field became crisscrossed by these forces. New facts, figures and histories were thus created in this process producing knowledge-bases for future action.

No doubt, the government also started to act on the basis of this new knowledge and the new areas came under the purview of these activities. Craft became one of the important object of reform. Unlike the 1851 London exhibition, articles of daily use were sent to the Madras Exhibition in 1890. In the census report of 1891 this is reported as follows:

The following extracts of the remarks of the judges for machinery, tools and implements in the recent exhibition are subjoined to show the excellence of Travancore workmanship in this class: "There were different kinds of manvetties, reaping knives, hedge knives, digging forks, hatchers, axe and cutlery exhibited. They were all locally made articles. Cutleries exhibited were particularly good...... A weaver's loom in good working order was exhibited and the exhibitors worked the loom before the public. The loom was handy and turned out work of higher order. It was a loom of improved kind over the ordinary country ones."[29]

The Travancore Manual of 1906 recognizes handicraft production as an important activity to be concerned with. But the importance is immediately connected to the magnanimity of the rulers and it is traced back to earlier periods. The Manual states:

> Though the indigenous industries were thus fostered and sustained, it was chiefly through the encouragement given by the ruling princess and chiefs....The Kings and nobles still continue to patronise to some extent the old and ingenious workmanship and their tastes have not been corrupted by the examples of the European goods imported....[30]

Earlier we have noted that the interest of the rulers were mainly in articles of amusement or curios. But in the above description rulers become promoters of all handicraft productions because the present requirement is to recognize the new groups, order them and make them the object of knowledge. The Manual continues:

> Though the western manufactures are pouring in and materially replacing the hand-made goods on account of their cheapness, yet taste for really good and superior workmanship still continues to influence the middle and upper classes. Indeed in respect of fine arts the patronage extended by the sovereigns has enabled Travancore to hold its own against rest of India. The occupants of the throne have as a rule been personage of great learning and culture, and not a few of them have themselves been votaries of arts they developed and patronised.[31]

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[29] V. Nagam Ayya, *The Travancore Census Report, 1891*, Travancore Government Press, Trivandrum, 1893, p. 471.

[30] Nagam Ayya, *Manual*, pp. 247-52.

[31] Ibid., p. 252.

Reversing the colonial notion of superior/inferior products, here foreign goods began to be considered as cheap not just in their price but in their quality also. Due to the patronage of the rulers, Thiruvithamkoor was able to maintain the appreciation for 'really good and superior workmanship'.

Once recognized, the next step was to subject the handicrafts to the policies of action. For the British government 'the economic backwardness' of the handicraftsmen were related to their 'primitive production methods'. But the reason attributed in *the Manual* is the competition form the 'cheap output of machine made foreign imports'.[32] The 1891 census observe that '[t]he universal complaint among the Patnuls and the Saliars (weaving castes) all over the land is that their bread is taken out of their mouth'. But the Manual, quoting Mr. Havell the principal of the School of Arts, Calcutta points out that even in England – the land of powerlooms – handlooms are not completely replaced by the powerlooms.

> If the handloom can compete with the powerloom in England where the cost of the skilled labour is many times greater than what it is in India and where the most perfect weaving machinery worked by steam and electricity is in use, what greater profit there must be for it in India where we have an unlimited supply of the skilled labour of hereditary weavers content with comparatively cheap wages.[33]

Here the expectation was to make 'the hereditary weavers, who were content with comparatively cheap wages', the base of this industry. Reform is required but which would not change the position of the weaver or his labour in the reconstituted order of hierarchies. Manual reminds of the need of reforms:

> But there is one thing which needs to be attended to by our weavers. They must study the market, cater for it and improve the finish of their work and design. It is equally necessary that the rulers and nobles and persons of culture and high degree should patronise the indigenous industries for no improvement is possible without their cooperation[34].

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[32] Ibid., p. 289.

[33] Ibid., p. 280.

[34] Ibid., p. 280.

The concern for reforms in the cottage industry never goes so far as to cause fundamental changes in the system of production; and the industrial policy in general had no ambition for introducing factory form of production. But new technical schools were started in order to reform the cottage industries. The Arts and Industrial School in Trivandrum was reconstituted and the subjects prescribed for the Madras Technical Examination were included in its curriculum. This comprised· civil and mechanical engineering, drawing, painting, book binding, and type founding, wood work and metal work, leather work, textile manufacture, glass and pottery making and geology.[35]

This was of course a departure from the traditional practices. Due to the governmentalization process – the interaction with the new forces emerged in the field – the Brahminical discourse had also undergone changes but maintained its dominance. The dominance was now articulated and exercised by new ways: through the preference for general education especially Science education over technical education; maintaining a higher status to Sircar jobs and jobs in 'service sector' and distancing 'lower' castes like Ezhavar, Pulayar and Parayar from the domain of Sircar job. This domination also had prompted the 'labour castes' to move into those domains which have higher statuses. But this was not easy or much successful in the existing division of labour based on caste. Nevertheless this became an objective in the political struggle of these communities and this created fear and anxiety among the 'upper' caste people.[36]

By 1920s we could see that the government had already recognized these anxieties and it wanted to stop or at least retard the pace of the movement of the 'lower' caste communities towards the secluded domain. But the existing socio-political condition was not favorable for any direct exclusion. The remaining possibility was to extend governmental activities to the traditional sector and to create a feeling of security in this sector. The discussions in the Sree Mulam Praja Sabha reflect some of these anxieties, fears and government reactions.

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[35] Ulloor S. Parameswhara Iyer, *Progress of Travancore under H.H. Sree Mulam Thirunal*, Department of Cultural Publications, Government of Kerala, 1998, p. 192.

[36] These aspect are analyzed in the next chapter, to some extent.

Sree Mulam Praja Sabha was constituted in 1904 'whose function was to place before the Government the wants and wishes of the people'.[37] Sabha had not any statutory power, which does not mean that the discussions had no influence on the policies of the government. The members were elected from various constituencies like *Janmi*, Planters, and Chamber of Commerce and also some seats were reserved for communal representation. Only tax paying people had voting rights and naturally 'upper' caste Hindus and Syrian Christians dominated in the Sabha. The budgetary discussions of each department were occasions for analyzing the general policies of the government and work of each department.

K.K. Thomas, a member from Kottayam, participating in the 1925 budgetary discussions of education department voices the concern that the children of the traditional craftsmen after general education are reluctant to do their traditional jobs:

> The artificial and exotic system of education imparted in our schools is throwing out an army of workers on the country who disdain to walk along the paths of production and distribution their forefathers trod. All of them, as a matter of necessity, seek employment on the hands of the state. This cannot, in the nature of things, be satisfied. The seeds of communal strife are sown in our schools and fostered and whetted by the disappointment of army of unemployed, half-educated people who impute all the ills that flesh in heir to, to partiality, communal biases or cupidity of the officers....[38]

As a member of *Janmi* class, his apprehension is two-fold. First, if the children of the workers are now not ready to 'tread' through the hereditary 'path of production and distribution' it would affect the existing division of labour. More over if they are seeking 'employment on the hands of the state', that would again disturb the existing structures, where the 'upper' castes have the dominance. G. Parameswara Pillai, another member from the 'upper' castes, raises the issue in similar way by stating that the 'education should do something more than add to the number of unemployed and

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[37] Velu Pillai, *Manual*, p. 42.

[38] Quoted in Travancore Legislative Committee proceedings 1925, Government Press, Trivandrum, 1926, Vol. 7, p. 56.

unemployable.'[39] C. Kerala Varma Koil Thamburan registers more fundamental objection to the existing educational system. He says:

> It (the present educational system) is a facsimile of that prevailing in British India and I do not know how far it has been successful there. But I am certain that, so far as our country is concerned it is not. A system which is entirely foreign to our taste, temperament and habits, has been thrust upon it. Our goal, social, political and moral lies one way and our present system of education carries us headlong another way.[40]

Thamburan's demand for a native system which would go along with the 'taste, temperament and habits' of the natives, was an argument which naturally leads to maintaining the traditional hierarchies. The discussions connected to education and employment was always dominated by these anxieties and the contradictions within this discourse developed further by the presence of communities from the 'lower' castes.

3.5. Industrial policy

In 1917, Thiruvithamkoor Government appointed S.G. Barker, a European officer, to conduct a detail survey of industries in the country. He submitted his report in 1918; and as per the recommendation of this report, a separate Industries Department was formed in 1919, and Barker was appointed as its first director. Barker was a supporter of modernization and he recommended that the activities of industries department should be 'directed towards propaganda and investigation work for the establishment of large industries.' According to him the existing cottage industries are important but should undergo thorough modernization. Barker's Report suggests:

> A change in taste has taken place since then consequent upon Indian's contact with the outside world but the method of Indian craftsmen have largely remained unaltered.... It is true that the Ancient Art of the state should be encouraged but it is equally true that the obvious function of a School of Art and Technology should be to keep in touch with modern condition and tendencies.[41]

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[39] Ibid., p. 49.

[40] Ibid., p. 149.

[41] Barker, *Report of the Industrial Survey of Travancore*, Government Press, Trivandrum, 1921, p. 64.

But the native government had other plans. A move towards a capitalist mode of production was not easy or recommendable as far as the government was concerned. The cottage industry must be the area of attention of the industries department and the reforms should be planned in such a way that the outward movement from traditional sectors could be slowed down. The industries department and its director came under severe criticism even from government officials for moving away from this objective. In his Presidential address to the 17th session of Assembly Diwan reviewed the work the department and pointed out that the four experts, trained in Europe at the expense of state exchequer, had not done any appreciable work for the cottage industries. He adds:

> The foregoing criticism applies to cottage industries in particular, but even in the industries of factory scale, the Director of Industries has not yet been in a position to place before the Government information on the strength of which a definite decision can be taken in respect of any of them.[42]

The concern for cottage industries was raised time and again. In the same Assembly session, Finance Secretary of the government unambiguously explained the policy of the government:

> It seems to Government that we shall be making a serious mistake if we expend our energies and resources for the development of the factory industries in Travancore. Our industrial efforts might with advantage be directed towards the development and creation of cottage industries.[43]

The reluctance for large industries could be explained in two ways. Since Thiruvithamkoor was not allowed to conduct direct negotiation with foreign capitalist for capital or technology and as the British Paramountcy over-determined all the economic affairs, the only option for the government was to remain independent of factory industries. From this point of view the interest in cottage industries was formed out of compulsion and helplessness. But this would be a partial view which neglects the other compulsions on the government from the existing caste order.

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[42] Travancore Legislative Council Proceedings – 1925, Government Press, Trivandrum, Vol. 7, p. 68.
[43] Ibid., p. 123.

One may see that the state and the 'upper' caste leaders were carefully keeping distance from the new forms of production because they feared that this would destabilize their interests and dominance. Government did not take any initiative to support even the local 'industrialists' to start factory industries, which was well under its purview. The shift in the policies of the State during 1930s also reinforces this argument. Once the communities, which supported the government in its policy for promoting cottage industries, became the rival of the Government, the State itself began to invest in factory industries especially in late 1930s and 1940s. The shift was possible also because of many other international, national and local politico-economic changes; even then the influence of the caste equations could not be neglected. The important point is that there was no natural affinity or dislike embedded in the Brahminical discourse towards the factory industries. The question was rather the maintenance of the power relation than permanent affinities or dislikes.

The example of the Mysore State will corroborate the case. Mysore, like Thiruvithamkoor, was a native state under British Paramountcy, and had Hindu rulers from 1888 onwards. But the industrial policy of the state was oriented in a different way especially during the period of Divan Visvesvaraya (1912 – 1918) who was a Brahmin. After assuming office Visvesvaraya's first attempt was to study the modern capitalist societies and for this he traveled in Europe, North America and Japan. He was convinced that modern education and capitalist industries were the backbone of western progress. Bjorn Hettne notes that though Visvesvaraya was not against light industries, 'he had a weakness for heavy industries.' He was attracted by the 'technical wonders' of the West and 'preferred quick results and large scale projects.'[44] His two dream projects were Mysore Iron Works and Krishnaraja Sagar Dam, both of which required large scale capital and foreign technology.

It is not that Visvesvaraya's policies were unopposed or he was able to implement it in a smooth manner. But his objective was clear and even after his Diwanship he continued to influence the government on pursuing his projects. The

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[44] Bjorn Hettne, *The Political Economy of Indirect Rule: Mysore 1881-1947*, Curzon Press, London, 1978, pp. 256-79.

Mysore Economic Conference, which was a semi official body constituted in 1911, also was an instrument for the Diwan to put forward his ideas of industrialization. As the members of the Conference included many leaders with different caste interest, his ideas often faced stiff resistance especially from non-Brahmin members. But in most cases Visvesvaraya succeeded in convincing the Conference, of the need of foreign capital and technology.[45]

Comparing the activities of Thiruvithamkoor Economic Development Board with the Mysore Economic Conference, which were similar bodies, one could notice the difference in attitude towards large scale industries and foreign capital.[46] The Thiruvithamkoor Board was constituted in 1921 after a strong demand from local industrialist (mainly owners of the coir and cashew nut industries) and merchants. The majority of the Board was non-official members nominated from the above section. But the caste combination of the Board was also important for the Government. As it found that Nayanmar were not adequately represented in the Board, the Diwan nominated P. Krishna Pillai to the Board. The responsibility of the Board was to advice the government on all matters of industry and to develop industrial resources of the state and scrutinize individual applications for new industries.

The Board at various instances strongly opposed the attempts of foreign capitals intervention in the industrial affairs of the state and in some cases it succeeded in blocking their entry. For example Brooke Bond Company's move to invest in tea estate and a modern tea processing factory was strongly objected by the Board and the Government finally had to drop the scheme. Second important factor was Board's interest in enhancing the production and distribution of local products. Especially the Board attempted to find market for the products from cottage industry. Here one might also note that the Board members were from dominant caste groups of the society and always trying to protect their interest in different ways. The state was also in support of these dominant interests. The Board was envisaged not just as an economic body; the nomination of a Nair member to balance caste equations underlines this. After 1930s in

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[45] Ibid., pp. 259-62.

[46] For a detail discussion of the activities of the Board see: Ram Mohan, *Material Process*, pp. 180-87.

the circumstances of the shift of the policies of the government, the Board was gradually neglected and finally 'dissolved without a whisper'.[47]

The above example shows that there was a clear preference for cottage industries over factory industries. As explained above this preference was not just a result of the prevailing economic conditions, but a recognition of power relation within the caste order of the period.

3.6. Concluding Remarks

The modernization and Hinduization of the State was the important aspect of the political process in 19th century Thiruvithamkoor. The institutions emerged in the modernization process were organized within the field of caste order. Schools, Court and Public Offices were the sites of the institutionalization of the caste difference and Brahminical domination. The Rajas who were interested in Science were also not outside this discourse. The preference for Science over the useful art was stemmed out of its high status given in the modernization programme but was adapted to the existing divide between physical and non-physical labour.

The governmental activities in the period of Divan Madhava Row further reinforced this discourse, but it also disseminated to new areas and domains. Communities were organized by these governmental activities and their intervention in the government commenced the governmentalization process. New objects like cottage industries, were incorporated into the discourse and this extended its boundaries further. New strategies were deployed and Cottage industry thus became the focal point of the industrial development. The Governmental policies were also adjusted to adapt with this strategies and this continued upto 1930s where the situation again underwent significant changes.

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[47] Ibid., p. 187.

Chapter 5

Community Politics and Industrial Policies

5.1. Introduction

Some aspects of governmentalization process have been analyzed in the last chapter where the changes and shifts in the industrial policy of Thiruvithamkoor State were traced in connection with the entry of new sections of population into the process of government. In this chapter I am trying to analyze how various communities engaged simultaneously with this Brahminical state and the modernizing discourse in their attempts to be repositioned in the new social order. Here my attempt is to explain how notions of 'progress' rather than 'development' became the central features of the above engagement and the resulting conceptualizations regarding material production.

The two sections discuss these questions with regard to two non-Brahmin communities, Ezhavar and Syrian Christians focusing on their notion of labour and material production. The analysis focuses on these communities relation to the Brahminical notions which dominate the State, and the shifts and modifications resulted due to their participation in the governmental practices.[1] The discussion of the Ezhava community is mainly based on the Journal *Vivekodayam* and that of Syrian Christians based on the News Paper *Nasrani Deepika*.

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[1] Dilip Menon anlysing the socio-political processes during the second half of the 20th century in Malabar, observes: "...the idea community represent an aspiration and not an achieved entity; it is always in the process of formation without reaching realization. While projections of community seek to be all inclusive, disparities within society entail considerable fluctuations in the constituency appealed to, and therefore a constant re-definition." He describes different types of community formations during the period. My analysis is limited to caste communities, but it also take the notion of community as `an aspiration and not an achieved entity'. Dilip Menon, *Caste, Nationalism, and Communism in South India, Malabar 1900-1948*, Cambridge University Press, 1994.

5.2. The industrious caste

The Travancore Census Report of 1891 states: 'the Elavas (Sic) are a most numerous and industrious class. They are an able-bodied hardworking race, corresponding to Tiyas of Malabar.'[2] Ezhavar were considered as caste a *similar* to the Thiyars of Malabar; but through later census and other socio-political process they became considered as *same* caste. Toddy tapping was considered to be their traditional job, though the number of Ezhavar engaged in this occupation was a minority. There were land owners, Vaidyas and astrologers, and the majority was engaged in cottage industry (mainly coir works) and agriculture labour. In the caste hierarchy they were considered as untouchables below Sudras and had to keep a particular feet away from the 'upper' castes including Nayanmar. The castes like Pulaya and Paraya who were below in the caste order were untouchable to Ezhavar in the same way as they were to 'upper' castes. They were not permitted to use the Public roads nearby temples, were also not admitted in many schools and government offices even during the early decades of 20th century.

The late 19th century witnessed many socio-political activities which could be generally mapped as the governmentalization processes: multiplying educational and medicinal institutions, increased Public works, formation of Legislative Council and Census Reports which gave the caste ordering more visibility and clarity. Combined with other social forces including missionary criticisms against caste practices, the oppressed caste people started to organize themselves and enter into the political process. At the same time this entry also forced the communities to submit to the minimum rules of the discourse which determined 'the political'. In Thiruvithamkoor one of the conditions was the acceptance of the authority and authenticity of the State even though it was Brahminical and oppressive. This was a different situation from British India, where the Government was Foreign and alien.

The first event of Ezhavar's entry into the political activity could be marked in the participation of Dr. Palpu in the Malayali Memorial in 1891. Dr. Palpu was the

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[2] Quoted in M.J. Koshy, *Genesis of Political Consciousness in Kerala*, Kerala Historical Series, Trivandrum, 1972 (hereafter Koshy, *Political Consciousness*), p. 190.

first person from a non-Brahmin Hindu background in Thiruvithamkoor to graduate in medicine. When he applied for a post, the Government objected because he was an Ezhavan. But the Mysore government was ready to accept him and he joined there as an Assistant Surgeon. He was still active in Thiruvithamkoor politics and joined with campaigners of the Malayali Memorial.[3]

The Malayali Memorial was a mass petition signed by 10038 people of Thiruvithamkoor which was submitted to the Maharaja by the leaders of the Memorial. The main contention of the Memorial was that the foreign Brahmins were given undue preference in all Sircar posts, especially the higher ones. Though talks in general terms, the main thrust in the Memorial was the negligence towards Malayali Sudras (Nayanmar). Other communities especially the Muslims, however, were treated with contempt in the Memorial.[4] The Memorial quoted data from census reports and administrative reports to prove its point and made a comparative analysis with Sudras of Malabar who were under direct British rule.

There are different opinions regarding the nature and caste character of the Memorial,[5] but the status it gave to the Sircar job is uncontestable. The progress of a

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[3] Koji Kawashima, *Missionaries and a Hindu State: Travancore 1858-1936*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1998, p. 34.

[4] For example the Memorial was completely silent about the Muslim representation and in the only instance when they are mentioned, it says that 'the Mohamedans are very low in the ladder of civilization'. Quoted in Koshy, *Political Consciousness*, p. 94.

[5] M.J. Koshy explains: 'it was this cry for the responsible government and greater participation of the people in it and the discontinuance of the import of Diwan and officers that culminated in the presentation of the Malayali Memorial.... Its origin is to be looked in for that legitimate ambition which dwells in every patriotic bosom to have a share in the administration of one's own country.' Koshy, *Political Consciousness*, p. 30. Jose, while criticizing the Memorial for its Savarna domination, states that 'the Memorial was given propaganda on an unprecedented scale than any political activity carried out until then. It was through the Malayali Memorial, the politics and the governance drifted, for the first time, out of Thiruvananthapuram.' Dalith Bandhu N.K. Jose, *Malayali Memorial* (hereafter Jose, *Malayali Memorial*), Hobby Publishers, Vykom, 1991, p. 13. In a totally different analysis, Vinod Chandran claims that 'the rhetoric of Memorial reverberates ethos of mutual self respect and sense of honour still prevailed in the inter-relationship between praja-communities.' According to him the accusation that it was a 'Nair memorial' is totally baseless. But

community is directly related here to their proportionate representation in Sircar job; but the Memorial is conspicuously silent regarding all other occupations. Educational opportunities are also linked to the potential employment with the Sircar. Thus even while contesting the Brahminic dominance, the Memorial represents a moment of internalization of a Brahminical discourse of labour. This discourse was disseminated to new cites which could be observed by a variety of castes who signed it.

In the list of signatories appended to the petition we find the names of several influential Nambudries, Nairs, Thiers, Syrian Christians, Native Christians and East Indians, Land Lords, Merchants and officials.[6]

In reply, the Government rejected the claims in the Memorial by pointing out that the divide between foreign and native Hindus – which was the fundamental thrust in the Memorial – was unacceptable. Still it was stated that government was ready for further discussions in this matter. But the entry of Ezhavar into the domain of political process was a subject of concern for the government. The government reply asserted that the Ezhavar were unnecessarily 'imported' into the Memorial and claimed that latter were content with their present occupations.

They are contented with their present occupations like agriculture, çôir works, toddy tapping etc. Among 3,87,176 Thiers, only two have passed the University examination. They are more negligent and traditional than their brethrens in Malabar, entering into Sircar jobs would be a hindrance to their social life.[7]

The Government also opined that Ezhavar's social position is such that they could be scarcely eligible for public offices where a certain amount of 'respect' is to be commanded. But Ezhavar were not at all satisfied with this argument. They submitted another memorandum in 1895, which became known as Ezhava Memorial. This Memorial also reinforced the higher respectability of public office and

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it should be remembered that majority of communities, who were even more neglected like Pulayar, Parayar and Muslims were totally absent in this praja-communities. K. Vinod Chandran, 'The Counter Narrative of Power and Identity in Colonial Kerala: A Reading of C.V. Raman Pillai's Historical Novels', PhD Thesis submitted to JNU, New Delhi, 2004.

[6] Report on *The Hindu* Daily, Quoted in Koshy, *Political Consciousness*, p. 32, footnote 25.

[7] Quoted in Jose, *Malayali Memorial*, p. 18.

demanded that the Ezhavar should be adequately represented in these offices in proportion with the strength of their community. It questioned the claim of the government that the Ezhavar, as a caste, were not interested in education. 'When Government has all along denied them the inducement and the full facilities to such education it is anything but charitable that it should accuse the community of being uneducated.'[8]

Since the progress of the community was associated with the participation in the government, the Memorial demanded for representation in educational institutions and in public offices. The 'industrious class', having entered into the discourse of progress, had to negotiate with the hierarchies of labour based on caste and the Ezhava Memorial was an initial step in this negotiation. The Memorial states:

> Public service, which it must be admitted, to the strongest incentive to education in this country, is entirely denied to them (Ezhavar) in Travancore and to this day the Government has not shown any encouragement worth to name to an educated Thiya whatever his qualification may be. Even low places, such as those of office peons, police constables, public work maistries, and hospital and jail warders are denied to them on the score of their caste, even though they posses more than the necessary qualifications.[9]

Here education is imagined as the preparation for a position in the government. In other words, the only occupation that was expected for an educated person was a government job. This reinforced the importance of non-physical labour that was disseminated through the Brahminical discourse. Further, the demand for *at least* the lower positions, pre-supposes that the higher posts would be occupied by 'upper' castes. This was an indirect submission to the extension of caste order into the public services. The negotiation with the Brahminical discourse of labour was not smooth for a community in which majority 'lived by agriculture, rope-making, toddy-drawing, weaving and other industries.'[10] We could observe the contradictions that have emerged in this negotiation in the pages of *Vivekodayam* Magazine, a

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[8] 'The Ezhava Memorial', Quoted in Koshy, *Political Consciousness*, p. 193.

[9] Ibid., p. 191.

[10] Ibid., p. 190.

mouthpiece of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP Yogam) in the early years of 20th century.

SNDP Yogam was formed in 1903 under the guidance of Sree Narayana Guru, the spiritual leader and reformer of the Ezhava community. Dr. Palpu and the famous Malayalam poet Kumaranasan were the other leaders behind the formation of SNDP Yogam. The situation had been changed from the time of the Ezhava Memorial, where other occupations were not a subject of discussion. Now, as the Yogam aspired to represent half a million Ezhavar, it would be difficult to focus on an issue such as a Sircar Job. At the same time negotiation with the discourse of progress always demanded certain reforms in the traditional practices. Thus, the immediate object of the reform became the occupation of toddy tapping.

Toddy tapping, considered as the traditional occupation of the community, was also one of the main reasons for which the community was marked as impure, negligent and untouchable. The interaction with the new Brahminical discourse and the attempts of Guru to construct a whole range of new religious practices produced a notion of inferiority for this job within the community. The famous saying of the Guru tells: 'Toddy is poison; do not tap it, sell it or drink it. The body of the toddy tapper will stink; also his dress, his house and whatever he touches.'[11] But for Yogam it was not easy to propose a sudden change from an occupation which was the only means practiced by thousands of poor labourers for their livelihood. Still the advice of the Guru had some impact, at least at the level of ideation which was reflected in the following censuses. The 1931 Census report says that the figure which shows a sharp decrease in the number of persons engaged in toddy tapping might not be correct. This is because many toddy tappers were reluctant to disclose their occupation which points towards the internalization of the notion of impurity of this job.

The Yogam started the publication of *Vivekodayam* in 1904. The magazine became a place for the discussion of various issues in education, industry, history and tradition of the Ezhava community. The articles published in the magazine usually

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[11] Quoted in *Nasrani Deepika*, June 24, 1921, St. Joseph Press, Mannanam (hereafter *Deepika*).

made connection between issues of education, Sircar job, religious practices and reforms etc., with the existing order of the caste.

There were two identifiable layers of the idea of progress that materialize through the discussions in the articles which are sometimes mutually supporting, and contradictory at other times. One was the Western idea of reform and progress and other was based on the reform of Hindu religion. The earlier gave the strength for the criticism of the Brahminical order, while the latter helped to get a more favorable position in the same order. There was no attempt to solve the contradictions that arose from the difference of the layers but now we would see for the first time the attempts of separation of domains into 'material' and 'spiritual'.

The Yogam supported the British rule because it provided the foundation for the criticism of the caste order. A 1908 issue of Vivekodayam reminds:

> If we are going to rule India by ourselves, we will go back all the 150 years of progress we have covered during the British rule. As long as the caste difference predominates, Indians do not deserve to rule the country without the help of an outsider.[12]

Also it recognizes that the idea of community itself was a result of the modernization process. In an article on the benefits of the British rule in India, the formation of identities from differentiated groups through the British governmental practice was discussed. It argues:

> The most important benefit of the British rule in India is the idea of Nation.... Our own community was in a divided condition, by political, educational and social differences. But this difficulty is over because now we feel that our community is one throughout the Nation.[13]

Throughout the discussion, the British rule or its reforming activities were no way considered to be connected to the Christian religion or Missionary work. The domain of the British government was thought of as material. In the domain of

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[12] Editorial, *Vivekodayam*, Thulam, 1083 M.E. (1908 A.D.), Book. 4, No. 7, p. 5.

[13] *Vivekodayam*, Mithunam - Karkkidakam, 1086 M.E. (1911 A.D.), Book. 6, No. 3&4, p. 77.

spiritual the guiding principle was the Sree Narayana Dharma, the reformist discourse of Sree Narayana guru which was contained within the Hindu Dharma Sastras.

The idea of separation made it possible to conceptualize the material production in the realm of political economy and as a result the progress is now related to material advancement. Yogam projected the industriousness of the community as the sign of its enthusiasm for progress. The improvement of the industries in which the members of the community were engaged became one of the major activities of the Yogam in this period.

In 1905 January, in connection with the annual conference of SNDP Yogam an Industrial Exhibition was organized, at Kollam, which was the first kind of it in Thiruvithamkoor. The exhibition was supposed to include various products arranged in nine groups as weaved materials, mats, works with natural fibers, painting works, pottery, machinery, food items and miscellaneous. This was exclusively for products produced by Ezhavar and prizes were offered for the best items in each category.

The issue of the *Vivekodayam* followed by the exhibition was a special issue for the reports of the exhibition. The Magazine reviewed the exhibition as a big success. The products exhibited were generally of superior quality. But it pointed out that the items included in the group machinery were not at all satisfactory for practical conditions. From the review it could be concluded that almost all the products, except the machineries which were not up to the mark, were from cottage industries. Also the idea of the exhibition was the improvement of the cottage sector industries. The factory industries never came to the purview of the agenda for material progress.

Inaugurating the Exhibition, Dr. Palpu said that while this is an industrial exhibition, it is also a 'Community Exhibition'. Quoting from the census report he says:

This community has become superior to other communities in its industriousness. This is because 50 out of 100 among them are real workers as per the census. But among Nairs, Christians, and Brahmins, this is 24, 26 and 15 respectively.[14]

He then disputes the claim that general education will reduce the enthusiasm for industry. This was important for him because the Savarna leaders were trying to establish that general education was leading the children of handicraftsmen towards unemployment. He tried to establish this by extending the material /spiritual divide into education. Accordingly the general education was required for moral uplift of the community and the industrial activity would provide the economic base for the former.

But this neat divide was not possible in the sociopolitical conditions of Thiruvithamkoor, where, for the State or in the governmental practices, such a divide was not imagined, practiced or aspired for. On one hand, Yogam had to put forward the claims for Sircar jobs because that occupation was considered as having higher status; on the other, it had to emphasize the superiority of the community as an industrious class. The editorial of an issue of Vivekodayam in 1907 cautions:

It should not be considered that the community will attain its final goal, once we have got sufficient share in government jobs. We are demanding it only because it is our lawful right as the Prajas of Thiruvithamkoor. But we should remember that even if we succeed in that, the welfare of our community will still depend more on the industrial progress, than the number of people in government jobs.[15] Another issue in 1908 again quoting the census states that 'the fact that we have never considered the physical labour as inferior is a virtue for our community.'[16]

But this could not be considered as the emergence of the notion of development. Economic activity was always considered as a supporting factor for the demand for more participation in government. As mentioned earlier, the progress of the community was always measured in correspondence to its degree of participation in the government.

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[14] *Vivekodayam*, Makaram 30, 1080 M.E. (1904 A.D.), Book 1, No. 5, p. 18.

[15] *Vivekodayam*, Vrischikam - Dhanu, 1083 M.E. (1907 A.D.), Book 4, No. 8&9, p. 5.

[16] *Vivekodayam*, Metam – Etavam, 1083 M.E. (1908 A.D.), Book 5, No. 1&2, p. 24.

In 1920s the issue of education, restriction on the public roads and temples and demand for Sircar job became more prevalent in the agendas of the Yogam sidelining the issues of industrial progress. The thrust for the educational progress, rather than industrial progress might be observed in the establishment of wide range of educational institutions by the SNDP Yogam.

It is interesting to note that the Savarna members of the Sree Mulam Praja Sabha were more concerned about the cottage industry in this period. The Ezhava members had sought the intervention of the government more in educational activities. Ample representation in education and government offices was always the most voiced demand by the representatives from the community in the Sabha. Kumaranasan, in one if his famous Praja Sabha speeches, established the relation between the economic contribution of the community and its demands for sufficient share in government:

> We are industrious. We live by hard work. The late Chief Secretary of the Government, Thanu Pillai has mentioned in one occasion that, Ezhava is the only class which does not contain any beggars... We are paying a larger share of land revenue. The income of the government from industries is also our contribution. Abkari (Excise) tax comes completely from our community.... These are sufficient reasons for reserving a certain percentage of vacancies for Ezhavar, which seems fit for the government, in all positions in public offices.[17]

When the Yogam became more and more involved in the process of 'government', its association with the dominant discourse also had strengthened. Now the aspirations developed were more for moving upwards within the caste order than demolishing the structures of that order. Commenting on the activities of Keraliya Nair Samajam an organization of Nair community, Vivekodayam remarks:

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[17] G. Priyadarsan, ed., *Kumaranasante Praja Sabha Prasamgangal* (Praja Sabha Speeches of Kumaranasan), N.B.S., Kottayam, 1982, pp. 21-26.

It is famous that the Nairs are our guides for all our community activities. No other community than ours is suitable for imitating their activities and experiencing its good results.[18]

Even Brahmins were not simply oppressors. The objective of the reform is clearly stated in the following words in an article titled 'The Caste Reform':

The remedy for this (the inhuman situation of 'lower' castes) is not to bring down the upper ones.... Our objective is not to bring down Brahmins and make them Chandalas, but to raise the Chandala into a higher position equal to that of Brahmin.[19]

The Yogam also shared a common position with the 'upper' caste on the subject of conversion by Christian missionaries. The conversion from Ezhava caste was always low, but the possibility of the conversion was a good instrument in bargain with the State. The Ezhava Memorial had expressed this by pointing out that converted Hindus are enjoying more freedom and economic prosperity:

The native Christian and Mohammedan converts are generally in much better position materially than the communities to which they belonged and whatever may the merits of the individual members of these communities, they cannot expect from Government the same consideration shown to converts.[20]

The question of conversion was not just a point of bargain with the State. The Yogam also shared the anxiety that its followers may move from its fold. Within the community Yogam tried to impart Hindu Religious spirit and more Brahmanised religious practice. The article titled as 'Our Religious Responsibility' in Vivekodayam, reminds the community members:

Now we know what our community is and we have started appreciating it. Now it is our responsibility to prevent conversion of our community members[21]

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[18] *Vivekodayam*, Kanni, 1083 M.E. (1907 A.D.), Book 4, No. 6, p. 5.

[19] Varanappalli S. Padmanabha Panikkar, 'The Caste Reform', *Vivekodayam*, Chingam - Kanni, 1088 M.E. (1912 A.D.), Book 9, No. 5&6, p. 156.

[20] Quoted in Koshy, *Political Consciousness*, p. 194.

[21] *Vivekodayam*, Makaram, 1084 M.E. (1909 A.D.), Book 5, No. 10, p. 5.

Parallel to this, the acceptance of the authority of the Raja and His government also continued as a consequence of its participation in the political process. In a reply to an article in *Mithavadi*, another journal in the same period, which questioned the over-dependence on Sircar on issues of religious and material world, *Vivekodayam* clarifies the Yogam's opinion in this regard:

> In Thiruvithamkoor, Maharaja is the judging authority in all matters, especially regarding the religious matters of the Hindus. His government could do everything in this respect and that is why Ezhavar make representations to the government.[22]

The increasing shift towards Brahmanism and the increasing participation in government were mutually constitutive and the Brahminical discourse of labour increasingly dominated further activities of the Yogam. The situation in Thiruvithamkoor was such that the communities reluctant to enter into the political process faced a complete exclusion. Their identity as community itself was formed and existed within the governmentalization process and the Yogam had to negotiate with the dominant discourses of the period in its political activity. Here the State is the authentic agent of progress and it was not possible to confine the activity of the government to the domain of material as in the case of the British Government.

The social reform movement of Ezhavar was started through the representational politics inaugurated by Dr. Palpu and later, the SNDP Yogam come to the forefront of the fight against caste oppressions. The participation of the hitherto excluded communities, like Ezhavar, in the political process perpetuated multiple ' levels of governmentalization processes. To participate in this, the communities had to accept, at a minimum level, the particular rules of the dominant discourse. Thus the, internalization of Brahminical concepts of labour within the Ezhava community took place through the Yogam's struggle for educational opportunities and reformation practices. This was true for other communities as well though in different ways. The following section explains the contours of the intervention of another non-Brahmin community – the Syrian Christians – in the governmentalization process and the transformation of their conceptualization f material production during this period.

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[22] *Vivekodayam*, Dhanu, 1084 M.E. (1909 A.D.), Book 5, No. 9.

5.3. The Christian Subjects of the Hindu State

The Portuguese arrived in Malabar Coast in the 15th century; it was almost unbelievable for them that a group considering themselves as Christians had already been in existence. According to the native Christians, their history starts with the Apostle St. Thomas who came to Keralam in AD 52 and converted two prominent Namboothiri families and established seven churches. There are material evidences at least from 4th century onwards that Christians were an important section of the society of Thiruvithamkoor.[23]

The Anglican missionaries arrived in the 19th century and they had objections against many practices of the native Syrian Christians, which they considered as a result of Brahminical influence. For Syrian Christians, these influences were not a sign of inferiority, but a matter of pride. The new converts were mainly from the 'lower' castes, and even after conversion they were treated the same as before by the Syrian Christians. But the conversions helped to increase the numerical strength of the community, even while within the community the 'lower' caste converts were still considered as being inferior.[24]

Nagam Aiya in his report of 1881 census of Thiruvithamkoor states:

It is a remarkable proof of religious tolerance of our native Government that in Travancore 20% of the population are Christians against 2% in Madras presidency. His Highness Maharaja has a larger number of Christian subjects in Travancore than Her Majesty the Queen Empress has in any part of her Indian dominion measuring 20 times its area.[25]

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[23] Thiruvithamkoor Manual of 1940 discusses the emergence of Christianity in a detail manner. See T.K. Velu Pillai, *Thiruvithamkoor State Manual-1940*, The Government of Travancore, Trivandrum, 1940, pp. 649-670.

[24] Throughout this section, I am considering The Syrian Christians as one group, though the difference within the group is important. But for our purpose the common interest of these various groups is the area of analysis rather than the differences.

[25] V. Nagam Aiya, *Report on Travancore census 1881*, Government Press, Trivandrum, 1884, p. 135.

Christians also considered themselves as sincere subjects of the Rajas of Thiruvithamkoor. By the late 19th century, Christian groups started participating in the political process and now the questions of their relation to the State became problematic and confused. No doubt, they were the most law obedient subjects, but the Brahminical domination in the Government was disturbing and oppressive for them also. Compared to the 'lower' castes their position was far better, in relation to the emerging institutions of the government and the governmental practices. There were no restrictions for them in schools, and they were considered for positions in some government departments. At the same time they were not allowed to join in the Revenue and Legal Departments. As the Devaswam[26] was under Revenue department the positions in this department was reserved exclusively for Savarna Hindus. The posts of judicial officers in legal department were also reserved for Brahmins and Nairs. Christians viewed these restrictions as the Brahminical influence on the Government, which they wanted to overcome. Still they did not consider the Hindu State in itself to be antithetical to their interests. Their attempt was limited to the removal of the influential Brahminical elements from the government.

But later on, in the 20th century once the community politics attained prevalence, the anti-Brahminical positions were taken over by the demand for adequate representation of the community. This gradual shift is reflected in their concept of labour and industrial activity. During the last decades of the 19th century, we see a continuous demand for large scale industrialization and modernization. By the 1920s the question of industry is either moved to the back-stage or it is discussed in connection with the cottage industry. In the following part this shift is mapped by looking into reports in *Nasrani Deepika*, a news paper published by the Syrian Christians from Mannanam, Kottayam.

In the last decades of the 19th century, reports in *Deepika* began to strongly hold anti-Brahminical position but extended equally strong support to the Raja. Programmes of the Raja, especially his tour programmes, were reported with good

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[26] Devaswam is the administrative body of Hindu temples, which was taken over by the government in Col. Munro's period.

coverage and the occasion of his birthday or day of ascendance to throne was celebrated with special features and reports.[27] The reports strongly criticized the Brahmin officers who were corrupt and those who were initiating oppressive measure against 'lower' caste people. The criticism of the government officers in Revenue department also carried another level of significance. These officers had the authority to assess the individual land and revenue tax within the wider rules fixed by the government. The Syrian Christians, many of them being *Janmikal*, took issues with those officers regarding the tax collection.

An 1888 report in *Deepika* questions a report in another news paper *Chinthamani* which supports the Brahmin officers, and warns:

> The Brahmins are, in general, a nuisance all over India, but nowhere is it as intense as in Malayalam. It has become difficult for the lower caste people to survive. Also it is reminded here that, unlike Chinthamani, Deepika does not fear these people (Namboothirimar).[28]

The criticism sometimes was extended to the Malayalam spoken by Namboothirimar for its intonation in Sanskrit. Under the title 'the Best Language Practice' it discusses the local variation of Malayalam and argues that the Malayalam spoken by the Syrian Christians and Nayanmar are the best because they interact with all sections of the society and their language was more communicable. It criticized some Syrian Christian reporters who write in Deepika, for their sanskritized language.[29]

In another report a staff reporter described the immoral activities of a Brahmin Government official satirically. It says:

> If we observe the behavior of Chengannur Tahasildar, Lakshmana Ayyar, who feels and makes it feel the sense of equality, even in matters of wife and children in which he does not consider any differentiation as one's own and other's, one would

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[27] Deepika, May 10 1898; Aug 16, 1899.

[28] Malayalam has been used in this period mostly for designating the region than the language. *Deepika*, March 1, 1888.

[29] Ibid.

wonder whether he is not the incarnation of Dharma itself which is so famous in Thiruvithamkoor.[30]

But in the matters related to the Raja, the tone and content of the reports were totally different. The report on the memorial submitted by the Madras Nasrani Samajam to the Raja of Thiruvithamkoor on the occasion of his visit to Madras, gives a clear picture of the attitude of the community towards the rulers of Thiruvithamkoor. The memorial says that the Christians were indebted to the present and earlier rulers of Thiruvithamkoor for the latter's contribution of money and educational facilities extended to them and also for the freedom for religious practices. It assured that they were not even a little behind of Hindu *Janmikal* in the matter of *Swami Bhakthi*. They recognize that 'the special restrictions passed over them in entering into some governme it departments are due to the peculiar situation of the country as a pure Hindu State.' Still they hoped that the situation would change and these restrictions would be removed in a near future.[31]

The mildness of the request and the belief that the Raja would always do the needful are noticeably clear in the memorial. One may consider this request as the community's demand for the sufficient representation in governmental positions similar to that of Nayanmar and Ezhavar. The Malayali Memorial and the Ezhava Memorial put forward an argument which almost stated that the representation in public offices was the only solution for the progress of the respective communities. But if we read the memorial of the Syrian Christians against the background of other discussions regarding government jobs, which appeared in *Deepika*, we would see the difference.

The report, on a weaving factory, established by one Keerangattu Narayanan Namboothiri, aggressively criticized the lack of entrepreneurship among Malayalikal. Most of the shares of the company were bought by foreign *Chettikal* and *Setumar*. The report accuses that the natives were ready to spend hundred or two hundred rupees to get a government job, with a salary of five rupees per month. It observed

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[30] Ibid.

[31] *Deepika*, April 1, 1888.

121

that lower posts in government were a 'disturbance' to oneself because it was insufficient to sustain a livelihood and the higher posts were a disturbance for public as the officers usually harass the common people. The most suitable and honorable way to earn money was industry. The report ends with a saying: 'the scholar, the elder and the seer wait at the gate of the rich.' [32]

The model suggested in *Deepika* for industrialization process was that of factory industries as in western countries. Within India Bombay and Mysore were considered as best examples. It is pointed out that, in England and Germany, below ten per cent of the educated people were looking for government jobs. At the same time, even for making negligible products like pins, thousands of people were required. They had number of machines to make this and they exported thousands and thousands of pins world-wide in a year. The report recommended people to start industries like Sugar mill, cotton mill and soap factories.[33] Another report lamented that in all other places except in Thiruvithamkoor one could see the examples of factory industries.[34]

The capitalist model of industrialization imagined here naturally makes the existing system, which is largely dependent on agriculture, as something primitive. The situation that more than fifty per cent of the people has to depend on agriculture for their livelihood was not at all progressive or recommendable. People still were hesitant to enter into industries and there was no motivation on the part of government. There were no industrial schools or sufficient technical schools.[35]

As noted above, the allure for the Government job came under sever criticism of the Paper. But at the same time, the leaders of the community started to demand more government jobs and entry into the Revenue department. One report justified this by saying that this was not just a question of jobs but the right of the Prajas for participating in government. The same report, questions the argument raised by a Nair

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[32] *Deepika*, July 1, 1888.

[33] *Deepika*, May 1, 1889.

[34] *Deepika*, July 1, 1889.

[35] *Deepika*, May 10, 1898.

in another News Paper that *Deepika* then retreated from its earlier position of criticizing the importance given to Sircar jobs. The Nair argued that they were now convinced that the over-importance given to the government positions would only increase the poverty. Nayanmar recognized this and they are no longer demanding for more shares in government. However, in the end he sympathetically points out that if Pulayar and Cherumar could be admitted to the public offices, Christians also could be permitted.[36]

Deepika replied that, now that the majority of the Government posts, especially the middle and lower level, are filled with Nayanmar, they are not demanding more shares. Unlike the children of Nayar *Janmikal*, who have been applying for even the lowest post, the well to do Christians are applying only for higher positions. The report seemed annoyed and furious regarding the comparison between Christians and Pulayanmar. It stated that Christians were never an 'ignorant or uncultured class like Pulayanmar'. So this comparison is 'unwarranted and shameless'. It claims that the Syrian Christians also have a history that could be traced back to the Parasu Rama story.[37]

By 1920s the political activity of the community acquired more prominence in the reports of the News Paper and correspondingly the importance given to the Raja was diminishing. Now in its reports the 'government' was more important than the Raja. Also the demand for industrialization gradually got dissolved and it separated into demand for general education and the improvement of cottage industries. A separate column is given for science in which subjects like chemical science, geology, medicine etc., are discussed. It believed that the attempts of science, to rename and reorder various things for making them 'useful commodities', were commendable. One report said that many hitherto unknown materials like precious stones, medicinal

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[36] *Deepika*, August 16, 1899.

[37] According to this story, Parasu Rama threw his axe from the top of Western Ghats to the Arabian Sea and the Sea was withdrawn. The land emerged was believed to be the present Keralam. He invited 64 families of Namboothirimar and placed them at 64 villages. Here it is claimed that Parasu Rama gave two villages to Syrian Christians also. *Deepika*, August 16, 1899.

plants and minerals laid unnoticed till the 'microscopic eye of the hardworking westerner' fell on it.[38]

The preference to the issues of cottage industry was also reflected in the Assembly speeches of the members from the community. Mamman Mappila notes that, being one of the important contributors to the economy of the State, the handicraftsmen should be the principal agent in any plan for the future industrialization of the country. As noted earlier, K.K. Thomas also argued for an educational system which would train people required for cottage industry than imparting general education to all sections of people.[39]

As a community the Syrian Christians were actively involved in the governmentalization process that started around the last decade of 19th century and continued through the early 20th century. In this process, the early demands for capitalist production and large industries gradually shifted towards the issue of participation in government. This, as in the case of Ezhavar, resulted in participation in a Brahminical discourse, even while strongly opposing the domination of Brahmins as a caste.

5.4 Concluding Remarks

This chapter examined the process of Governmentalization that started from the last decade of the 19th century and which continued till the third decade of the 20th century. The locus of the analysis was mainly two communities in Thiruvithamkoor – the Ezhava and the Syrian Christians, which opposed the Brahmin domination in the country.

The Ezhava community entered the political process with a demand of representation in government and the Ezhava Memorial was a significant step in this direction. By participation in the affairs of the government, the elements of the Brahminical discourse were disseminated among the community but in return it also

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[38] *Deepika*, February 11, 1916.

[39] See *Travancore Legislative Assembly Procedures - 1925*, Government Press, Trivandrum, 1926, Vol. 7, p. 56.

influenced this discourse which resulted in the inclusion of more objects within the discourse. The issue of the cottage industry became a shared domain of interest between the State and the community. The reform of this industry became one of the major projects of the SNDP Yogam in the early years of the 20th century.

But the increasing participation in government in the next decade and the internal reformation processes initiated by Sree Narayana Guru, made the community's Hindu roots stronger and more meaningful for the community members. This in turn has also strengthened its affinity towards Brahminical ideas and corresponding notions of hierarchies of labour. The high status given to the non-physical labour within these notions was generally reinforced and disseminated within the community.

The leaders of the Syrian Christians, in the last decade of the 19th century, were advocates of factory industries and capitalist system of production. This, on the one hand being an influence of the colonial practices, was also a result of their endeavor to oppose the Brahmin-dominated existing system of production.

Their participation in the political process as a community was inaugurated by their meager presence in Malayali Memorial. In the first and second decade of the 20th century their involvement in government increased in large scale and this produced major shift in their concepts regarding material production. The strong opposition to the importance given to the Sircar job gradually diminished and as a community they also started to demand a sufficient share in the Government. This produced corresponding changes in their attitude to industrial policy. In 1920s we see that their members in Sree Mulam Praja Sabha were advocating for cottage industries rather than large scale factory industries.

From above we could delineate some broad characteristics of the Governmentalization process. First of all it is a question of power and the exercise of it in various forms. It was a process by which the deployment of one directional forces of governing was transformed into a multi-directional process. It was also a process of internalization of governmental rationality; but not that the State produces a particular rationality through the exercise of its power and that *population*

internalizes this rationality. The rationality is developed within the process and all agents, by the participation in the activity, both internalize it and transform it.

The internalization of 'governmental rationality' is one of the important features of the modern political process in general. But this Foucauldian notion gives only a general outline to begin with. Here two points are important. Firstly, the Governmental rationality changes itself synchronically and diachronically in different geographic spaces. Secondly, the process of governmentalization takes place in specific conditions and the internalization process in itself determines the nature of the rationality. In other words, it is not that the population enters into the purview of the government and internalizes its rationality where the government and its rationality are pre-determined and fixed. They are mutually constitutive processes and determine each other.

Conclusion

This study started by questioning the notion of 'history of technology' as a universal method of enquiry for understanding material processes in the past. Technology as a category was first located in its historical specificities and it was argued that it could be used only to refer to specific production processes: the industrial form of production. It further argued that, instead of focusing on a universal category like 'technology', it would be better to locate the study at a more flexible notion – material production. This dissertation sought to situate the process of conception of material production by different agents at different domains. The main site of this analysis was located in the Princely State of Thiruvithamkoor.

As a first step for the analysis, the enquiry was turned towards the notion of material production in the colonial narratives. It was argued that the concept of material production emerged within a notion of a divide between the 'material' and 'spiritual'. Following Latour's theory of the modern, it was argued that the concept of this divide was fundamental to the self-understanding of the modern in the West.[1] But moving away from Latour's argument, it was also pointed out that this self understanding of the West was formulated in colonial condition where the West and the East came face to face. In short the self-understanding of the West was made possible within the historical conditions of colonialism.

The notion of material production was then related to colonial practices in the second half of the 19th century. During this period, it was argued, the exercise of colonial power shifted from a direct coercive form to the practice of governmentalization.[2] This was a process of the dissemination of the idea of colonial

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[1] Bruno Latour, *We Have Been Never Modern*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1993. See also the discussion in the introduction of this dissertation.

[2] The concept governmentalization is derived from Foucault's theory of governmentality. See also the discussion in the second chapter of this dissertation. Michel Foucault, 'Governmentality', in Graham Burchell, Collin Gordon and Peter Miller ed. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1991

difference or superiority through various institutions of material production. This was also a process in which governmental rationality was internalized by different agents who participated in the process. In short, the locations of material production became sites of the dissemination of the idea of colonial difference.

But, by foregrounding different instances of colonial practice, it was argued that the internalization of the governmental rationality was not a single-directional process. This rationality was not fixed or completely controlled by the colonial state. It emerged and repeatedly transformed in the process of negotiation and internalization by participating agents. From this it could be suggested that the concept of material production would vary with different historical situations.

To demonstrate this point further the analysis was shifted to Thiruvithamkoor State. Thiruvithamkoor as a site for this study was helpful for several reasons. It was a Princely State outside British India and the control of the Paramount Power was indirect. The rule of the Rajas was considered to be based on Hindu *Dharmasastras*. At the same time the rulers were famous for their 'progressiveness'.

It was argued that narratives on material production in Thiruvithamkoor were conditioned by Colonial 'interests', missionary interventions, the Brahminical dominance over the State and the intervention of caste communities. The British government and the missionaries, in the process of negotiation with the Hindu state and its caste order, however, did not try to fundamental unsettle the existing Brahminical order. The 'reforms' carried out by the Residents of Thiruvithamkoor were usually considered as a process of 'modernization' of the state and also as a digression from the existing Brahminical notions of governing. But looking into specific instances it was argued that 'modernization' actually had reconstituted and stabilized the brahminical dominance over the state. Also the so called 'reforms' of the 'progressive' minded Diwans expedited this process.

The new governmental practices – education, medical practices, census, public works etc – and the missionary interventions provided a condition for 'lower' caste people to participate in this process. Their intervention in the process brought forward new objects to the practice. The cottage industries, technical education and industrial

policy became domains of contestation and negotiation. This simultaneously produced changes in the conception of material production of the Hindu State and the communities who were participating in the process. This could be considered as a moment of internalization of governmental rationality, which in our context can be located at the Brahminical notion of labour and divide between physical and non-physical labour. The communities – like Ezhavar and Syrian Christians – strongly opposed the Brahmin domination in the Government; at the same time by their participation in the governmentalization process, they also appear to have internalized the dominant Brahminical notion of labour.

The industrial policy was also formed within this process of negotiation. The state had to recognize the presence of the new communities from the early years of 20th century. One of the reasons for the privilege given to the cottage industry was this recognition. But the communities in which majority of the people were engaged in cottage industry did not always accept this privilege. Participating in a Brahminical discourse, the non-physical labour became a preference for these communities also. In short, the question of industrial policy could not be limited to just economic reasoning; it was decided in a particular relation of power in which caste was a central organizing category.

From the above analysis we can arrive at some conclusions regarding historical enquiries on material and political practices. The social processes neither could be analyzed in separate domains of material and spiritual, nor could the enquiries be neatly classified into predetermined disciplines of economic or social history. Secondly, and more importantly, colonial power is not just an exercise of dominance through military, media or ideological practices. It is also a form of governing – of self and others – in which the internalization of the rationality is the central strategy for marinating the colonial domination.

If the above claims hold, then we require different forms of resistances, which would allow us to locate ourselves, outside the notion of linear progress and development. The new imperialist powers and the nation states ask you questions which have only yes or no answers: either you are for progress or you are an enemy of

it. Ironically, many anti-imperialist sections – including several types of Marxisms – repeat the same type of questions as if there were only two choices. The analysis in this study shows in a very limited way that the question itself is not historically valid. And in a world of more information, more knowledge and more power, one might also try an old maxim of Nietzsche: "I want, once and for all, *not* to know many things. Wisdom sets limits to knowledge too."[3]

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[3] Nietzsche, 'Twilight of Idols' in Walter Kaufman, edited and translated, The Portable *Nietzsche*, Penguin Books, Middlesex, 1978.

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136