English in the Colonial University and the Politics of Language: the Emergence of a Public Sphere in Western India (1830-1880)

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ABSTRACT

The introduction of English as 'high' language and the designs to re-shape the 'native vernaculars' under its influence through colonial educational policy altered the universe of communicative and cultural practices on the sub-continent. Colonial bilingualism also introduced hierachical and ideological divisions between the newly-educated and 'illiterate', 'English-knowing' and 'vernacular-speaking' sections of native society. On the basis of an analysis of the possibilities for a laicised literate order opened up through the severely elitist project of colonial education, the thesis proposes an argument about the structural links between these crucial cultural shifts and the strategies adopted by the colonial intelligentsia in western India to achieve a hegemonic position. The main argument of my thesis is set against a discussion of the relations between linguistic hierarchies, textual practices and power in pre-colonial western India.

My thesis is a study of the bilingual relation between English and Marathi and it traces the hierarchical relation between the English and vernacular spheres in the Bombay-Pune region between 1830-1880. The initiatives to establish the first native Marathi newspaper, the *Bombay Durpan*, a bilingual weekly, in 1832 signified the beginning of the intelligentsia's efforts to disseminate the new discourses among wider audiences and to establish a sphere of critical exchange through the vernacular. Later attempts, from the 1860s onwards, to aestheticise vernacular discourse by creating 'high' 'modern' literary forms were undoubtedly important in enhancing the intelligentsia's hegemonic claims, but they also corresponded with crucial shifts in their self-perception and their ideological orientation. The emergence of *Kesari* and the Maratha in early 1881 indicated that the bilingual relation that structured the colonial-modern public sphere had, by this time, yielded two separate, largely monolingual literate communities within native society. Concomitantly, by the early 1880s, the upper-caste intelligentsia had renounced even the minimal scope that had existed for them to act as agents for a more egalitarian cultural and social order. In analysing the conditions under which the colonial intelligentsia in western India were able to achieve a position of ideological influence, the thesis also aims to raise questions about the displacement of the meanings and spaces for hegemonic articulation within colonial modernity.

Contents

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Introduction

Much has changed in the study of colonialism since the history of the colonial period in India was plotted in terms of economic drain or the history of administrative change. From a pre-dominant emphasis on economic issues, there has been a visible shift towards a greater interest in the ideological, cultural and political dimensions of the colonial encounter. Previously, if questions about colonial power had been discussed, these had been mainly about documenting official measures and administrative shifts in the structures of the *Raj*. Such economic and statist approaches were common to both colonialist and nationalist historiography but these accounts had been unsuccessful in addressing questions of the complex nature of colonial power, especially about its cultural construction and modes of dissemination.

The first rumblings of discontent against a historiography that did not substantially admit the possibility of contestation came from Marxist historians who tried to critique the self-representation of nationalist historiography, but did so by mainly deriding its ideological nature as false consciousness. However, a historiography that aspired to address the enormous complexity of the colonial transformation needed a more refined theory of ideology, one that could outline frameworks to specify the structures and modes of contestation introduced through colonialism.

In this regard, the contributions of the 'subaltern school' to the task of theorising a history from below from a post-colonial perspective, but at a time when legacies of colonial categories still endured, have to be acknowledged. Though not held together by an ideological 'core', the work of this collective has, nevertheless, been able to re-define the project of writing histories of the colonial encounter as one that needed to trace the emergence of contesting narratives of modernity through the mutation of liberal discourses as colonial ideology. In doing so, this body of work has ably drawn upon post-structuralist and post-orientalist critiques of modernity and also introduced new levels of sophistication into the inquiry of the modes through which modern ideas spread outside the West and the profound implications of these processes.

We now accept that a history of the making of colonial power requires a theory of ideology that recognises that colonial domination operated through altering the structures and categories of discursive production. Attempts to analyse the making of colonial discourse have helped focus attention on how both the 'deep structures' and 'surface forms' of discursive production were altered by the introduction of new conceptual languages through colonialism. The

introduction of modern normative categories re-defined and displaced existing cultural and cognitive hierarchies and generated new indigenised forms of regarding and representing the social and natural world. However, these ideological and cognitive shifts were the result of processes that were historical and contingent and shaped through struggles between elite and non-elite groups, differentiated by disparate levels of cultural and linguistic capital. With the construction of colonial power being underwritten by such complex cultural, institutional and political shifts, it is but appropriate that much of the promise within the field of South Asian colonial studies in the last decade has emerged from the new avenues for dialogue between anthropologists, historians, political scientists, and literary scholars. Questions about the hegemonic nature of the colonial enterprise, the connections between the making of colonial power, its forms of knowledge and its technologies of rule, and the influence of modern norms through complex layers of dissemination and displacement via colonialist and nationalist discourses have been among the major issues dominating recent discussion in the field.

Thus today, colonial studies have advanced significantly beyond the general insights into the construction of identity and difference offered by the cultural imperialism argument. In this respect, two major methodological insights have been particularly productive. Firstly, the analytical necessity and benefits of treating colony and metropole as a shared field are now quite well-recognised. Similarly, the need to critically separate the study of the profound political impact of colonial rule and the structure of anti-colonial responses from their representation in nationalist narratives is also readily acknowledged. However, if we are to make the most of these lessons as well as take colonial difference seriously, much remains to be done. The diversity of ways through which the liberal imagination underwent vernacularisation outside Europe needs to be mapped in order to develop frameworks to examine the divergent trajectories of non-western modernities. Market economics, the universalistic categories of modern reasoning and modern cultural practices have travelled great distances to enduringly redefine not just ideas of society and self, but also possibilities and hierarchies of production, knowledge, communication and contestation in many parts of the world. If the field of colonial studies is to retain its political relevance, then what are needed are micro-historical studies that plot how the dissemination of modern discourses and cultural norms effectively structured the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion in different areas of the globe.

Some of the work within the writings of the 'subaltern school' has attempted to theorise the relations between colonial discourse and the structure of the emerging political world in South Asia. A powerful early stimulus to the debate was provided by Guha's thesis that colonial

power ruled through dominance without hegemony[1]. His arguments claiming that colonial ideology signified the limits of bourgeois social rationality are well-taken, as also his observations on the severely elitist nature of the efforts of the colonial state to cultivate an ideologically amenable intellectual elite within native society. Clearly, the Western bourgeoisie could not remake the colonies in the image of post-enlightenment Europe and yet, a view such as Guha's does not fully acknowledge the enduring ways in which the colonial intervention was able to alter discursive and political hierarchies in many parts of the world. Colonial intellectuals have been the subject of much ironical comment, much of it self-inflicted; but despite their politically subordinate and numerically marginal position, they were still able to acquire an influential position through their role in the re-inscription of cultural and political norms through colonialism. More recently, Partha Chatterjee's writings[2] have addressed questions about the position of the intelligentsia within the emerging public domain and the complexities of mediation given the disjunction between the public and the private within colonial modernity. Similarly, the discontinuities and difference between the political meanings underlying the mobilisational strategies of the nationalist elite-led freedom movement and their reception by subaltern participants have been among the important themes of Shahid Amin's work on Gandhi[3].

However, there have been few attempts to directly analyse questions surrounding the colonial intellgentsia's self-definitions, especially for the early period before anti-colonial thinking articulated its hegemonic claims as nationalistic discourse. The introduction of English as the 'high' language with reference to which the 'native vernaculars' were now to be re-shaped and the making of a bilingual educational policy signified the colonial administration's intentions to define arenas that would structure access and marginality vis-à-vis its ideological project. These measures altered the universe of communicative and cultural practices on the sub-continent but also introduced crucial hierachical and ideological divisions between the newly-educated and 'illiterate', 'English-knowing' and 'vernacular-speaking' sections of native society. The making of a bilingual relation between English and the native vernaculars was crucial both to the construction of colonial ideology and the emerging cultural and political hierarchies within colonial society. Print was crucial to the making of colonial literacy and to initiating a shift in the nature and substance of the relation between 'high' and 'low' languages in South Asia from previously existing ones. The coming of print was not simply a new communicative technology, it also signified a shift from the prevailing assumptions of the distribution of cultural and political power. Although the principles of publicity and the idea of

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[1] Ranajit Guha, Dominance without Hegemony : History and Power in Colonial India , Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1997.

[2] See especially the chapter on 'The Nationalist Elite' in Partha Chatterjee, The Nation and its Fragments, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1993.

[3] Shahid Amin, Event, Metaphor, Memory :Chauri-Chauri 1922-1992, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1995.

general access underlying the use of print were subject to the rule of colonial difference, yet the nominal possibility of a laicised literate order radically altered the means and modes of social contestation. Colonial bilingualism neither presumed nor was capable of conferring symmetric capabilities in English and the vernacular upon native intellectuals. Inevitably, the bilingual divide was a crucial factor that structured the range of options open to the new intelligentsia as they aspired to achieve a hegemonic position within their social world on the basis of their intellectual and cultural resources and their proximity to colonial authority. The thesis proposes an argument about the links between educational policy, colonial bilingualism and the strategies of the native intelligentsia in Western India to realise their hegemonic aspirations within the sphere of colonial literate politics.

Thus although educational policy in the Bombay Presidency, the entry of print and the making of modern expressive forms in Marathi through its associations with English are all important themes in my study, the thesis does not aim at tracing any one of these strands exhaustively. They figure in my thesis as elements in a larger analysis. I am interested in understanding the structural links between the cultural changes introduced through colonial rule and the options available the intelligentsia within the political domain.

My thesis is a study of the bilingual relation between English and Marathi and it traces the hierarchical relation between English and vernacular spheres in the Bombay-Pune region between 1830-1881. This span represents an important period in the emergence of a public sphere in colonial Western India. The initiatives to establish the first native Marathi newspaper, the *Bombay Durpan*, a bilingual weekly in 1832, signified the beginning of the intellgentsia's efforts to disseminate the new discourses among wider audiences and to establish a sphere of critical exchange through the vernacular. Most studies of colonial culture in India have focused exclusively on the making of a 'high' literary culture. However, colonial intellectuals first tried to explore their 'middling' position within the emerging social structure through their initiatives to establish a newspaper press. Later attempts, from the 1860s onwards, to aestheticise vernacular discourse by creating high 'modern' literary forms were undoubtedly important in enhancing the intelligentsia's hegemonic claims, but they also corresponded with crucial shifts in their self-perception and their ideological orientation. By the early 1880s, the upper-caste intellgentsia had renounced even the minimal scope that had existed for them to act as agents for a more egalitarian cultural and social order. In analysing the conditions under which the colonial intelligentsia in western India were able to achieve a position of ideological influence, the thesis also aims to raise questions about the displacement of the meanings and spaces for hegemonic articulation within colonial modernity.

Chapter One

Language and Power in Pre-colonial Western India.

Introduction:

Recent studies of the colonial period in South Asian history have sought to emphasise the cultural and discursive underpinnings through which colonial power altered notions of political space, subjectivities and collective identities on the subcontinent. Implicit in these analyses, though not always fully elaborated, is the idea that the colonial encounter displaced, appropriated and supplanted existing notions of political authority, self-identity and collective belonging. It is important to remind ourselves of this, although even commonsense would indicate that it would be hard to imagine a conception of a social world that did not presume some symbolic structure of self, collectivities and ideas of legitimacy through which members marked their degree of difference and similarity with other internal and external groups. Rank and authority could not operate without such demarcations of self, collectivity and appropriateness. It might appear a truism to assert that ideas of community and self are embedded in language. And yet, within the discourse of social science, our understanding of communities engendered in the first instance through acts of imagination is still quite recent. Despite being criticised by scholars of non-western nationalisms[1], Benedict Anderson's idea of imagined communities[2] has justifiably acquired a wide currency in studies of political imagination in different societies. Anderson's own use of the term was, of course, specific to the modern context of the emergence of nationalism and national communities. And yet, without undoing its historical specificity, one may maintain that the idea of a political community as an imaginary construct alerts us into thinking about how notions of exclusion and inclusion underlie definitions of communities and the making of hierarchy in pre-modern contexts. Alongside, work on the emergence of modern reading communities and audiences has also shown how special uses of language, especially those valorised as 'literary' and the production and circulation of texts have been the means of advancing ideas and practices of subjectivity and community[3]. Habermas's influential analysis[4] of the emergence of

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[1] See Partha Chatterjee, Nation and its Fragments, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1993.

[2] Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, Verso, London, 1991.

[3] To mention some important titles from the literature on modern book history : Lucien Febevre and Henri-Jean Martin, The Coming of the Book :The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800, London, New Left Books, 1976; Chartier Roger, The Order of Books, Cambridge, 1994; Roger Chartier, Cultural History Between Practices and Representations, Cambridge : Polity Press 1990 ; Robert Darnton, The Kiss of Lamourette : Reflections in Cultural History, New York : Norton, 1990 and The Business of the Enlightenment :a Publishing History of the 'Encyclopedie', 1775-1800, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Belknap Press, 1979.

[4] Jurgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere : An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society, (German original, 1962) 1989, Cambridge, Massachusetts : MIT Press.

the bourgeois liberal public sphere in the West has also shown us the connections between communicative practices, literary audiences and the political public within modernity. Although Habermas's project intended to explore these relations within the history of modern Europe, his work has highlighted the need to theorise the relations between norms of communicative rationality and the distribution of political power within contesting narratives of the making of modernity outside the West through colonialism. To apparently de-emphasise in this way the structural shifts underlying the difference between pre-modern notions of community and the making of modern audiences based on ideas of publicity might seem as an anachronistic reading of Habermas. And yet, recent important work on pre-modern South Asia[5] has tried to explore the insights that the different dimensions of the region's literary history could provide us in helping us uncover connections between forms of culture and polity and state-society[6] relations on the sub-continent prior to the colonial encounter.

Attempts such as these to explore links between the languages and sites for literary composition and boundaries demarcating 'cultivated' audiences and political community in pre-modern South Asia provide welcome correctives needed to rescue the pre-colonial past from narratives of nationalist consciousness[7]. The dominant interpretative paradigms within the scholarship on South Asian pre-colonial literary history have tended to view it as evidence of brahmanical dominance or treat its textual traditions as signs of the 'overwhelming' religious dimension of 'traditional' Indic civilisation. As against this, approaches that emphasise the communicative strategies within texts and attempt to reconstruct their ties with literary audiences and political communities could open vital, new possibilities to enrich our understanding of pre-colonial political formations. Here again, most attempts hitherto to theorise the nature of pre-modern state power in South Asia, out of a somewhat misplaced sense of allegiance to methods of Marxist historiography, have attended to questions of culture only peripherally, choosing instead to expend much academic labour on trying to settle questions such as whether the pre-colonial Indian past showed 'sufficient' signs to 'deserve' the category of feudalism[8]. Deviating from such attempts to plot the pre-colonial past of the subcontinent against categories derived from

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[5] I refer here mainly to the currently ongoing work as part of the Chicago project on pre-colonial literary cultures and history of South Asia. Some of this has been published in the special issue of Social Scientist, Vol. 23, Numbers 10-12, October-December, 1995 based on the papers presented in the workshop on 'Literary History, Region and Nation in South Asia' in December 1993. I am grateful to Prof. Sheldon Pollock for permission to cite from his draft paper for the project.

[6] The essentially fuzzy nature of pre-modern social identities would mean that the 'state-society' distinction can describe pre-modern/ pre-colonial political structures only imperfectly. My use of the terms here presumes this qualification. However, I retain them as useful short-hand in preference to 'indigenous' categories like *'raja'/ 'praja'* as the former are more amenable to my purposes here, namely, of analysing the relations between pre-colonial cultural and political contestation.

[7] for work that proposes an argument about the need to separate narratives of community from the self-representations of the nation state, see Prasenjit Duara, Rescuing History from the Nation : Questioning Narratives of Modern China, University of Chicago Press, 1995.

[8] see R.S. Sharma, 'How Feudal was India's Feudalism? originally published in Journal of Peasant Studies, Vol. 12/13, 1985 and Harbans Mukhia, 'Was there a Feudalism in Indian History?' from Journal of Peasant Studies Vol. 8, 1981, republished in ed. Herman Kulke, The State in India 1000-1700, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1995.

European history, Burton Stein's work[9] attempted to describe the nature of the state in South India as 'segmentary'. Although Stein's study identified the royal Siva cult as the ideological force that welded various segments of the Chola state into a unitary whole, his main intention was to assess the degree of economic integration and coercion displayed by the medieval South Indian state. This helped to place the question of state power within the context of the medieval social formation, but Stein's terminology remained conceptually resistant to raising questions about the relations between the structures of cultural production and the distribution and exercise of pre-colonial state power. Importantly, the study offers little by way of analyses of representations of political power and authority through language, literary texts or other symbolic means.

Relations between pre-modern cultural production and state power may not exhibit the kind of instrumentalist and direct links that obtain between modern forms of cultivation, knowledge and power. The coming of modernity marks a radical shift in the relation between language, the production of subjectivity and the nature of political power. And although the emergence of non-coercive modes of power as well as the demarcation of a distinct domain of 'culture' are processes characteristic of modernity, in more general ways, the links between textual practices and political power are a vital condition of the life of civilised societies. The processes through which languages get invested with authority to carry out various 'high' social functions such as worship, literary cultivation, the pursuit of knowledge, official and political communication, business or administrative record-keeping would be an important instance of how the domains of culture and power intersect prior to the emergence of modernity. The coding of 'high' and 'low' functions to form what we may term the linguistic economy of a society are crucial to the making and distribution of its moral and political norms. Such processes are crucial in establishing the norms of what constitutes the realm of the permissible and the legitimate between rulers and ruled, even as they serve to demarcate the 'political' from the strictly 'every-day', 'ordinary' life. Arguably the status of the word was not unchanging across spatial and temporal boundaries, and such an approach ought not to be seen as implying a pseudo-universalistic correspondence between the significance of the word as it figured within notions of polity, state formation and 'high' language as developed in the West and South Asia. Also, to regard language and textual production as a primary site through which to analyse pre-modern social contestation, may be to over-emphasise a domain that simply did not have the crucial relevance within the political structures prior to modernity. However, it would seem intellectually untenable to argue that the existence of other hypothetically irrecoverable, more relevant, non-textualised sites can be a sufficient reason not to explore whatever insights that the existing textualised realm may contain for an analysis of the nature of pre-modern political contestation[10]. For even while accepting the

[9] Burton Stein, 'The Segmentary State : Interim Reflections' in ed. Herman Kulke, The State in India 1000-1700, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1995.

[10] Sheldon Pollock too makes a similar point about objections to using pre-modern/pre-colonial textuality as a resource for mapping the connections between the distribution of cultural and political power. See his essay, 'Literary History, Indian History, World History' in the special issue of Social Scientist, Vol. 23, Numbers 10-12, October-December, 1995.

rationale for the importance of plotting oral histories, it has to be conceded that the very existence of the field and its aim in studying the *'residue'* of inscription testifies to the power of writing, and its intrinsic connections with demarcations of marginality. Moreover, the emergence of what have been termed[11] vernacular polities on the sub-continent from the end of the first millennium onwards saw an increasing tendency for the vernacular to be used, both as a medium of courtly eulogistic verse, as well as in more 'popular', non-courtly textual idioms such as *bhakti.* This would suggest that the realm of textuality and language were in fact, by this time anyway, quite evidently perceived as important sites of social contestation in South Asia.

Pollock has argued that the rise and decline of Sanskrit as the language of religious discourse and for the communication of public-political meanings, during the first millennium C.E. marks a fundamental and historic shift in the definition of political boundaries through the sub-continent. This period saw Sanskrit being displaced from its monopolistic status as the transregional cultivated 'high' language of inscriptional, sacral and literary texts that it had acquired. From about 900 C.E., quite incredibly almost, the local vernaculars emerged as the chosen language of political and literary expression both within court culture and outside. This perspective proposes a powerful argument to read linguistic/literary history in conjunction with the facts of political and dynastic history, so that we may glean something of the conditions underlying the making and circulation of literary texts from their rhetorical structures and strategies. For some time now, scholars writing about the making of modernity and its forms in South Asia have rightly felt the need to contextualise the analysis of the cultural transformation through colonial power and set it within a history of the subcontinent over the *longue duree.* We now recognise that one of the most important strategies through which colonial power was able to secure itself was through successfully altering the self-perception of intellectuals, as well as their understanding of their social world. Learning from Said, post-colonial historians and literary scholars have become aware how colonial ideology and policy were able to achieve this through appropriating and radically altering the norms of discourse and textuality, along with the networks of cultural patronage and dissemination. It is in trying to engage with these questions that my thesis proposes an argument about how colonial power was able to penetrate and reinscribe the existing political structure in western India mainly through the project of colonial literacy which effectively altered the discursive and linguistic means through which natives thought of themselves, described and assessed their world. The introduction of English via colonial rule saw it being invested with several 'high' functions; it was indeed the language of an alien government, but it also represented the cultural and intellectual repertoire against which the native languages, including the erstwhile 'cultivated' languages like Sanskrit and Persian would now be measured.

[11] Sheldon Pollock, 'India in the Vernacular Millennium : Literary Culture and Polity 1000 -1500' in Shmuel Eisenstadt et al eds., special issue on 'Collective Identities and Political Order', Daedalus, 127, 3, (in press).

Any attempt to understand the reinscription of the cultural and intellectual world on the subcontinent through colonial power and the entry of English, raises concomitant questions about representations of power and legitimation of authority through the making and dissemination of texts in the pre-colonial period. The standardisation of the regional languages and the production of standardised texts through print during the colonial period and under the influence of English impels us to inquire into the nature of the relation between the 'high' languages and vernacular forms during the pre-colonial period. My aim will be to ask what that story of pre-colonial textuality can tell us about relations of culture and polity in western India. In looking into the story of vernacular literarization in early medieval Deccan, my aim will be to focus on the relation between the 'high' languages of Sanskrit and the Persian and the emerging realm of vernacular textuality.

The literarization of the vernaculars in the early medieval period had two main dimensions. As Pollock argues these processes were overdetermined by what he describes as the phenomenon of the vernacularisation of the South Asian political world[12]. However, as we know, not all the emerging vernacular writing was of an official-political nature; the period was also marked by the growth of a body of devotional verse in the regional languages. I hope to offer a few observations on the nature of these processes of pre-modern vernacularisation, which saw the emergence of a body of Marathi devotional verse[13], followed by a political culture based in Marathi in the western Deccan, seen most clearly from the time of Shivaji in the latter half of the seventeenth century. The relation between religious and political power within pre-modernity was informed by a greater homology than what came to prevail later. Correspondingly, the links between the potential influence of devotional verse and the legitimation of political authority are quite directly evident. Shivaji's reign was characterised by revivalist strategies, especially his relationship with his guru, the saint-poet Ramdas[14]. Something of the same tendency is also seen in the patronage he extended to 'Maharashtrian' *brahmins* living in Kashi, one of whom, Gagabhatta was entrusted with devising an innovative coronation ceremony for the 'neo- hindu' ruler[15], and

[12] Pollock, 'The Sanskrit Cosmopolis, 300-1300 : Transculturation, Vernacularization and the Question of Ideology', in ed. Jan Houben, Ideology and Status of Sanskrit, 1996.

[13] It is important to remember that although Jnaneswar, Namdev, Tukaram and Eknath are names that we are most familiar as part of the Marathi canon, they were not and, in world of pre-standardised languages, could not have been exclusively 'Marathi poets'. Thus Namdev also figures in the *Gurugranthsahib* and is said to have composed in regional varieties of Punjabi and Hindi too. Also, the *mahanubhav* cult is said to have spread to the *Punjab* region in the 17 century, see Shankar Tulpule, Classical Marathi Literature from the beginning to AD 1818, Vol. IX of ed. Jan Gonda, A History of Indian Literature, Otto Harrasowitz, Wiesbaden, 1979, p.372.

[14] Unlike any of the Marathi *bhakta* poets preceding him, Ramdas saw himself not just as a religious teacher but harboured organisational ambitions, which were, no doubt, aided by the patronage he received from the royal court. He is said to have travelled extensively to preach his faith and was able to establish a network of *mathas* that had a presence in many parts of the Maratha country, especially in the Tanjore region, which he is known to have visited often. See G.S. Sardesai, A New History of the Marathas 1606-1707, Bombay 1946, p.269 and also Vinayak Lakshman Bhave, *Maharastra Saraswat*, Pune, 1954, pp.411-415.

[15] for an account of Shivaji's coronation and his attempts to claim a 'true' Kshatriya lineage through the special rituals devised by Gagabhat for the occasion see G.S. Sardesai, A New History of the Marathas 1606-1707, Bombay 1946, p.209.

was also put in charge of compiling the *Rajvyavaharkosh* a dictionary of administrative terms in a deliberately Sanskritsed Marathi idiom[16].

These tendencies towards vernacularisation were in evidence much earlier in Marathi writing, even through not as starkly visible as in the case of its southern neighbours like Kannada, Telugu and Tamil[17]. Here, I shall try to explore the political dimensions of the emergence of a textualised Marathi, especially what it might tell us about the nature of the social critique in *bhakti* verse and its links with the strategies for the legitimisation of kingly power. Considering that this body of devotional verse represents an important corpus of non-elite, 'popular' textual production, the question I seek to raise is about the ways it influenced the cultural politics of medieval Deccan. But even while we acknowledge the distinct elements of social criticism in the *bhakti* texts, especially in their challenging of hierarchical principles, we would undoubtedly be guilty of a naive historicism in applying categories derived from the European Reformation to this body of South Asian vernacular devotional texts. In order to develop a set of terms that would capture the nature of the difference between these processes of vernacularization and their counterpart in European history, we need to ask questions about the nature and extent of their impact, especially whether these tendencies did amount to a substantial shift in the distribution of cultural and political power during the medieval period. We would need to determine whether these processes of vernacularisation lead to a redistribution of the sites of textual production and networks of dissemination and the extent to which the literarization of the vernaculars signified a re-formulation of aesthetic and cognitive norms. Such an analysis of the differentiation of the medieval South Asian literary world would be particularly important in the case of Marathi, where unlike the case of its linguistic neighbours like Kannada and Telugu, the emergence of a courtly tradition of Marathi poetry was most strongly visible only after the rise of Peshwa power during the eighteenth century, many years after Marathi was first used for devotional composition. As there exists little direct evidence for us to reconstruct pre-modern networks of literary audiences our insights into the boundaries between pre-modern elite and 'subaltern' textual communities, would have to be derived from the communicative strategies adopted within texts themselves[18].

However, for the later pre-colonial period of Peshwa rule, there is some direct data to trace the circulation and exchange of manuscripts among Peshwa *sardars* that might help us build a preliminary picture of their manuscript collections, their intercourse with *puranic* and religious texts through a combination of reading and listening, as well as their familiarity with existing discourses on treatises on statecraft and other subjects of a less directly political nature.

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[16] see Madhav Deshpande, Sociolinguistic Attitudes in India, Ann Arbor, Karoma Publications, 1979, p.79.

[17] Pollock, 'India in the Vernacular Millennium : Literary Culture and Polity 1000-1500' in eds. Shmuel Eisenstadt et al, special issue on 'Collective Identities and Political Order', Daedalus, 127, 3, (in press).

[18] For work on poetic/devotional idioms of *bhakti*, See Guy Deleury, The Cult of Vithoba, Poona, 1950; ed. Jayant Lele, Tradition and Modernity in Bhakti Movements, E.J. Brill Leiden, 1981; R.S. McGregor, Devotional Literature in South Asia : Proceedings of a Conference held in Wolfson College, Cambridge, 1992; Charlotte Vaudeville, Myths, Saints and Legends in Medieval India, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1996.

However, this information would need to be supplemented by an understanding of the structures of patronage and existing networks for the dissemination of various oral-performative genres like *lavani*, *povadas*, *kirtans*, *harikathas,* that were more prone to travelling across boundaries of elite and popular cultural practice.

Beginnings of Marathi Textuality :

The first textual evidence in Marathi date to the last decades of the 13 C.E. to the time of the Yadav kings who ruled the western Deccan until 1294 C. E. when their capital Deogiri, was conquered and renamed Daulatabad by the Tughlaqs. These evidences are both in the form of royal epigraphs and inscriptions, and also of compositions of the *mahanubhav* and the *varkari* sects. These sects emerged during this time and were founded by Chakradhar and Jnaneswar respectively. A generally understood, standard form of the vernacular was an impossibility prior to print and as such, territorial boundaries for linguistic areas could only be fuzzy. The territorial spread of pre-colonial forms of Marathi peaked during the Peshwa period, with it establishing 'enclaves' as far as the Tanjore region in Southern Deccan. But even so, it seems to have been possible by Chakradhar's time to identify a 'core' Marathi speaking area[19].

The origins of Marathi textuality lie amidst the intellectual ferment and political turmoil that marked the last few decades of Yadav rule. The credit for the invention of the cursive *modi* script[20], which incidentally continued to be used in hand-written Marathi documents like private letters long after printed texts became common currency, even until the early decades of this century, apparently belongs to a prominent minister at the Yadav court, Hemadri. Hemadri is known to have been a Sanskrit scholar, with his name appearing as Hemadpandit in the inscription on the foundation stone on the temple to Vithoba, which was also the deity worshipped by the *varkari* sect, in Pandharpur[21]. With evidence for such links between the ruling classes, the emergence of new devotional orders, and vernacular literacy, it seems clear that the domains of textuality and the making of political authority seemed to be connected in significant ways. Hemadri, was also known to have composed many learned, exegetical treatises, including the *Chaturvarga Chintamani,* which was a text that attempted to establish an orthodox code of vows, charities and pilgrimages, in keeping with the prescriptions of the *Dharmasastras.* It was such ideas that formed the main target of the unorthodox teachings of both Chakradhar and Jnaneswar. But as

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[19] Chakradhar's writings are said to contain a minute record of his journeys giving details of the approximate boundaries of the Marathi-speaking areas. The limits demarcated here are said to correspond quite closely with the spots where Marathi inscriptions have been found. see M.G. Panse's essay, 'Regional Individuality of Marathi' in ed. V.K. Bava, Aspects of Deccan History, report of seminar held in Hyderabad, 1975, pp.139-140 quoted in Stewart Gordon, Maratha, Marauders and State Formation, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1994, pp.192-193.

[20] See G.S. Sardesai, 'Early Beginnings' in A New History of the Marathas, 1606 -1707, Bombay 1946, p.23 and V.K. Bhave, *Maharashtra Sarasvat*, Pune, 1954, pp.48-49. Bhave's account tells us that Hemadri is said to have been a versatile mind, responsible for introducing many innovations in, among other things, building techniques and agriculture. He is supposed to have popularised a style of building without the use of limestone building techniques, and also the cultivation of *bajra* in the Deccan.

[21] V.K. Bhave, *Maharashtra Sarasvat*, Pune, 1954, p.48.

suggested above, the available evidence shows that the Yadav kings were keen to establish themselves as royal patrons of the Vithoba deity, indicating that the relations between the ruling elite and the emerging *varkari* sect were more complex than being marked by simple antagonism. Also this would support the argument that the work of vernacularisation was not fundamentally a 'subaltern' process, but actually represented attempts of political elites to re-articulate their authority in localised idioms[22].

Inevitably then, the rise of vernacular textuality was mediated by the 'high' textual traditions of Sanskrit, a pattern that was to be repeated during the second phase of vernacularisation under colonial rule, when the vernacular forms were redefined under the influence of the new 'high' language, English. The emergence of a regionalised polity between 900-1500 C.E. marked a shift in the boundaries, even if not in the actual nature of pre-modern political power. The intelligibility of the new medieval vernacular literacy, mediated as it was by the norms of Sanskrit textuality, was likely to largely correspond with the limits of the existing literate audience[23]. To simply read the processes of medieval vernacularization as a symbolic rebellion against a Sanskritic brahmanical order would be to ignore important dimensions of it - the ample evidence available in the form of epigraphs, inscriptions and vernacular texts authorised by the court, in addition to the royal patronage extended to unorthodox, local idioms of worship. The tendency to view medieval devotional verse as the primary corpus marking the beginnings of vernacular textuality is a direct legacy of the late nineteenth-century nationalist reconstruction of pre-colonial vernacular literary histories. Given the great power that history as a mode of knowing the past came to exercise upon the emerging nationalist consciousness, both English-educated and vernacular intellectuals of the colonial period from the latter half of the nineteenth-century, were inclined to view the medieval corpus of devotional writings on the basis of trajectory of the European Reformation and its laicization of religious knowledge through translations of Christian texts from Latin to the vernaculars. Despite the presence in *bhakti* poetry of elements that clearly challenge exclusive claims to scriptural interpretation and religious practice, the nationalist reading of these medieval metaphysical poets to fit into categories derived from European history seemed to be impelled by more immediate and contemporary political concerns. Writing under the twin pressures of a Eurocentric historicism and the demands of constructing a nationalist ideology, Ranade narrativizes the works of 'Saints and Prophets of Maharashtra' as part of his historical account, The Rise of Maratha Power, in this way:

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[22] Pollock, 'Literary History, Indian History, World History' in Social Scientist, Vol. 23, Nos. 10-12, October-December, 1995, p.131.

[23] It is worth asking to what extent these makers of medieval metaphysical verse Jnaneswar, Namdev, Eknath and Tukaram might have been familiar with Sanskrit reading and recitation.

> The struggle between claims of the classical Sanskrit and the vernaculars of which we hear so much these days is thus an old conflict, the issues in which were decided in favour of the vernaculars or living languages long ago and whatever scholars and antiquarians may urge to the contrary, there can only be one answer to the question - the answer which was given by the saints and prophets when they laid Sanskrit aside as useless for their work, and spent all their energies in the cultivation and growth of their mother tongue. It may safely be said that the growth of the modern vernaculars in India is solely the result of the labours of these saints and the provinces, which showed the most decided tendencies in the way of reform, also showed the most healthy development of their vernacular literature.[24]

The second phase of vernacularisation in the nineteenth century did not necessarily signify the rise of 'organic' intellectuals intent on reaching a popular audience; the choice of language for the making of 'literary' texts could well be determined by the desire of ruling elites to recreate the 'high' discourses in local idioms. The discourse of the colonial intelligentsia aimed to appropriate the *bhakti* poets into the modernised canon of Marathi writing as *icons* from the pre-colonial literary past of 'indigenous' tendencies towards a 'popular' literate culture. These discursive moves, advanced through the powerful paradigm of an emergent historical consciousness no doubt helped to deflect attention from the emerging disparities of the contemporary situation by reconstructing pre-colonial social structures in ways that nostalgically depicted them as part of a 'more harmonious' past.

And yet, in emphasising how the scope of vernacular cultural production extended beyond the emergence of new idioms of devotional expression, Pollock's argument appears to close the possibility of actually contextualising the political significance of *bhakti* verse and theorising the nature of its attempts to oppose the authority of the high scriptural traditions and the religious establishment. Unlike the vernacular texts of the European Reformation, this body of South Asian medieval devotional texts did not enunciate any explicit intention of challenging existing political structures or authority. Instead, this writing strongly expostulates against social hierarchy, especially that practised under the sanction of institutionalised, dominant religious beliefs. But in doing so, not only does *bhakti* seek to defy Sanskrit's monopoly in interpreting and ordering the world, but it also articulates ideas of the equality of all *bhaktas* in a limited way[25]. Also these texts clearly raise the possibility of a laicized religious faith through their use and defence of the vernacular for devotional practice[26]. In Maharashtra, the main period of such devotional verse

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[24] M.G. Ranade, The Rise of Maratha Power, Bombay, Punalekar and Co., 1900, p.161.

[25] See Kumkum Sangari, 'Mirabai and the Spiritual Economy of Bhakti', Economic and Political Weekly, July 7 &14, 1990.

[26] To quote just one instance of how the choice of the vernacular as the medium of composition was often thematised in the work of these poets, Eknath defends his rendering of the *Bhagavat Purana* into the 'lowly prakrit' in the following

extended from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century, with Ramdas being the last in the line of the saint-preachers who used Marathi as one among the several languages they composed in. These saint-preachers came from an array of ordinary, non-elite backgrounds. Namdev(1270-1350) born into a *shimpi* (tailor's) family, celebrated his devotion to Vitthala of Pandharpur. Other contemporaries of Jnaneswar who are said to have lived between 1250-1350 included, among others, Visoba Khecara, a staunch *saivite bhakta*; Gora, a potter; Narahari, a goldsmith; Chokhamela, an untouchable; Joga, a *teli* (oilman); Kanhuputra, a dancing girl[27]. Indeed the textual tradition of *bhakti*, as well as the entire shift towards vernacularization owed much to the new intellectual forces like the *sufi* influence that entered the Deccan with the Turkish rulers[28].

The second phase of Marathi compositions in the *bhakti* idiom dates to the 16 and 17th centuries. The most well-known among them was Eknath (approx. 1533-1599), who is said to have composed his *Bhagavata* in Paithan and Benares between 1570-1573, in addition to his *Bhavartha-Ramayana*, and the shorter *bharudas*[29]. Similarly, *Tukaram (*circa 1598-1649*)* came from a low-caste family from Dehu near Pune. It might be misleading to interpret this devotional writing as an upsurge of 'popular religiosity from below', especially as we know little of the structures of patronage extended to the performance and dissemination of these texts from powerful royal or mercantile quarters. It seems clear that the impact of this new devotional writing was at least important enough for powerful nobles to offer donations for the building of temples to the new deities like Vithoba, worshipped by even the earliest dissenting sects like the *mahanubhav.* Moreover, the evidence in Maharashtra suggests that the emergence of these new idioms were perceived to be a political threat by those in authority. The example once again involves the high-profile Yadav minister, Hemadri, and his contemporary, Chakradhar, the founder of the *mahanubhava* sect. The two had serious ideological differences leading to their destinies being violently intertwined in death, with Hemadri being apparently responsible for

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way : ' In the richness of the regional language, things in the world get different names, but the names of Rama and Krishna do not change ... with such blessings have I described the *Bhagavatpurana* in Prakrit in all its true, pure and intended meaning. Learned people may enjoy the various works in Sanskrit / A cow may be dark or brown, and yet the milk has no better taste.', see Madhav Deshpande, Sociolinguistic Attitudes in India, Ann Arbor, 1979, p.74.

[27] For more details see A.N Deshpande, *Prachin Marathi Vangmayacha Itihaas,* Vol. 2, Poona 1966, p. 115 and L.R. Pangarkar, *Marathi Vangmayacha Itihaas*, Vol. 1, Nasik and Poona 1932, p.623.

[28] G.S Sardesai notes that there is greater lexical influence of Persian and Arabic in the work of Eknath than is discernible in the idiom of the *Jnaneshwari*, composed about two centuries earlier. See his A New History of the Marathas, 1606 -1707, Bombay, 1946, p.33.

It has to be noted that the presence of linguistic influence may not be a sufficient indication of deep intellectual or cultural influence. Scholars have argued that despite factors like the emergence of such 'mixed' devotional idioms as seen in the *bhakti* compositions, the signs of a composite culture emerging at elite levels, especially under the Mughal kings and the fuzzy nature of pre-modern identities, there remained deep lines of division and difference demarcating the lives of 'Hindus' and 'Muslims' in pre-colonial South Asia. While accepting these arguments, I would maintain that the relation between the processes of cultural and political vernacularisation and the entry of Muslim influence needs to be acknowledged. In this respect I would accept the general view that the coming of the Islamic ruler lineages represented an important relativising force that precipitated the need for ruling elites, custodians of religious authority and 'ordinary' people to re-articulate their world-views in new ways.

[29] The *bharuda* was a shorter verse form which included much realistic detail. Hindus, Turks and *mahars* figured as major characters in Eknath's *bharudas* which contained vital insights into the social structures and inter-action of his time. See Tupule, Classical Marathi Literature, p.357.

Chakradhar's death, by having him killed in the year 1272. Neither Hemadri nor Yadav rule survived long after and historians have argued that the emergence and the influence of Chakradhar's teachings might have had some bearing on the fall of the Yadavs[30]. Like the practitioners of *bhakti* verse in other places on the sub-continent, the Marathi saints self-consciously and repeatedly sung of their commitment to the vernacular, claiming its equality with the classical idiom of Sanskrit. There is sufficient evidence to show that such assertions were regarded and punished as acts of transgression by those who saw themselves as custodians of religious orthodoxy rather than those in political authority[31]. Clearly, the political import of the *bhakti* critique was not homologous with the effects of the translation of Christian texts from Latin into the vernaculars for the former did not result in altering either the structure of religious or political institutions, as the pressures towards laicization of faith from the time of Luther onwards did in the case of medieval Europe. The fact that many of the saint-preachers came from humble, artisanal backgrounds is not a sufficient reason to conclude that medieval vernacularization led to any widening of the overall literate base. But the appeal of the genre and its potential hold over the 'popular' mind was clearly sufficiently compelling to elicit the interest and patronage of the political elite. The dissemination of these compositions through oral performance and recitation, thus not only influenced and shaped the 'popular' imagination, but also simultaneously opened up possibilities for forging ideological and cultural links between elite and non-elite discourses.

Stewart Gordon has argued[32] that the Maratha political-military elite that emerged through the medieval period was able to create a space for itself by foregrounding signs of their links with the dress and life-style of rural communities, rather than through attempts to symbolically identify themselves with the courts of the Deccani Sultanates. As Maratha power consolidated itself in the Deccan, it clearly needed ways of accommodating itself to local cultural practices and belief-systems. The 'culmination' of the *bhakti* trajectory in Shivaji's relation with his ascetic-preacher-guru, Ramdas, provides us with a fertile ground for mapping the links within the pre-colonial social formation between the domains of cultural practice, politics and religious power, especially the relations between the modes for consolidating authority through the appropriation of dissenting idioms. For it may be argued that Ramdas's evident engagement with the making of state policy and his proposals to consolidate the political realm through a network of *mathas* that would

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[30] G.V. Sardesai, A New History of the Marathas, 1606 -1707, p.23.

[31] One of the most frequently mentioned episodes of the opposition these *sant kavis* faced from *brahmins* is the story of Tukaram's confrontation with the learned *brahmin*, Rameshwarbhat of Vagholi. Legend has it that irked by the *sudra* poet's great popularity, Rameshwarbhat had orders issued by the local administration for Tukaram to leave the village. Thus tormented, Tuka is said to have flung the entire *pothi* containing his *abhangs* into the Indrayani river, but these are said to have miraculously resurfaced on the thirteenth day. See V.K. Bhave, *Maharashtra Sarasvat*, Pune, 1954, p. 373. Similarly, Eknath is also said to have been persecuted by the *brahmins* of his home-town Paithan, a prosperous trading centre and an important place of pilgrimage.

[32] Stewart Gordon in 'Zones of Military Entrpreneurship 1500-1700', in Marathas, Marauders and State Formation, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1994, p.193.

disseminate and propagate the ideals of his *sampradaya*[33] marked the end of one phase of literary history, of which the emergence of the metaphysical verse of the *bhakti* poets formed a prominent feature. After Shivaji and Ramdas, the Maratha polity was soon to enter a new expansive phase. The rise of the Peshwas to power saw the emergence of new literary genres as well as a reconfiguration of the relations between the high languages of Sanskrit, Persian and the textualised varieties of Marathi. Shivaji's attempt to establish a deliberately Sanskritised idiom of the vernacular for administrative purposes has been alluded to, and yet as Maratha power expanded, it needed to rethink the articulation of the languages designated as appropriate to the business of the state, and their relation with the literarised forms of the vernacular.

Literate and Literary Practices in the Peshwa Period :

After Shivaji, under the Peshwas in the eighteenth century, Maratha power made substantial inroads into areas that had been under Mughal dominion. This period also saw the emergence of Pune as a capital city. These political shifts were accompanied by wider changes in the economic activity in the region. As Stewart Gordon has argued[34], the displacement of Mughal influence over parts of Central and western India saw a shift in the revenue and credit flows which moved away from northern financial centres like Agra towards Pune, and even Bombay. The increased scale of military activity under the Peshwa period required an expanded resource base beyond what land revenue and predatory raids could mobilise. Thus, as Sumit Guha's work has shown, the evidence for the period 1740-1820 suggests that the Maratha *sardars* and the Peshwas, realising the political benefits from an increase in trading activity began to offer favourable incentives for merchants and craftsmen to set up *peths* in the areas under their dominion. These increases in commodity-circulation and credit-flows, opened up new reciprocal ties between village and urban centres[35].

This re-structuring of economic ties in the midst of political expansion obviously had implications for the cultural sphere as well. Despite the association of Ramdas with the royal court, Shivaji's reign was not marked by significant patronage for vernacular 'literary' composition. We do have some verse compositions with an explicitly public-political function like the *prasastis*, that sing Shivaji's praises as a dutiful, righteous 'hindu' king, as well as some historical ballads or *bakhars* dating back to this period[36]. It has been speculated that Shivaji patronised the compilation of an influential critical edition of the *Mahabharata*, in Sanskrit compiled by a Maharastian *brahmin*,

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[33] The Ramdas *sampradaya* apparently established an extensive network of about 1800 *mathas* where the *guru's* preachings were taught along with other texts. Towards the end of his life, *Ramdasswami* as he was known, lived in a house, gifted to him by Shivaji, within the royal fort of Sajjangad. Ramdas is said to have died here. See V.K. Bhave, *Maharashtra Sarasvat*, Pune, 1954, pp.412- 429.

[34] Stewart Gordon in 'The Slow Conquest : Administrative Integration of Malwa into the Marathi Empire', in Marathas, Marauders and State Formation, 1994, p.61.

[35] Sumit Guha, 'Potentates, Traders and Peasants : Western India c.1700-1870', Occasional Papers on History and Society, Second Series Number LVIII, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Teen Murti House , New Delhi.

[36] Sardesai, p.29.

Nilakantha Caturdhara living in Varanasi in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.[37] But by and large, it seems royal patronage was extended mainly to the composition of treatises on 'non-aesthetic' subjects like statecraft, administration and ethics. Take for example Gagabhata's *Kayastha Vyavhardeepika* or his *Rajvyavaharkosh*, or a little later the *Ajnapatra*[38] commissioned during the time of Sambhaji II. However, with the rise of Peshwa power, some clear shifts are visible.

For one, with the expansion of Maratha power to parts of central and north India that had been previously under Mughal influence, Shivaji's strategy of foregrounding his claims to sovereignty through the cultivation of a sanskritized vernacular vocabulary could no longer be kept up. As the ruling class of a successor state that gained control over significant areas formerly under the Mughal empire, the Maratha political elite could not dispense with the use of Persian for purposes of administration and official correspondence. As Muzaffar Alam has shown[39], the period of Mughal rule had seen the assiduous cultivation of Persian as a supra-regional language used for maintaining records at village-level throughout the empire, even in places far away from the imperial capital of Delhi. With *brahmins* and other literate castes readily taking to the study of Persian texts to make the most of these employment opportunities, firstly, in the Sultanate and then in the Mughal bureaucracy, a knowledge of Persian had become an important skill in the repertoire of both the cultivated classes and the political elite throughout central India and in many parts of the Deccan. A Persianised Hindustani was the medium of conversation between Madhavrao and the *vakil* representing the English when Malet called on the latter for the first time in March 1786 after being appointed Resident to the Peshwa's Court[40]. However, for correspondence over matters deemed to be of 'lesser' official significance, or for purposes of internal communication amongst members of the Peshwa household, it seems that a less persianised, vernacular idiom that was closer to *puneri* Marathi was in use.[41] Infact by the end

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[37] Sheldon Pollock, draft entitled, 'The Death of Sanskrit in Four Movements', (in ms.).

[38] Bhave, *Maharashtra Sarasvat*, p.785.

[39] Muzaffar Alam, 'The Pursuit of Persian Language in Mughal Politics', (in press).

[40] See account of the Malet-Madhavrao *darbar* quoted from D.B. Parasnis, *Itihaas Sangraha* in Bhave *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, pp. 274-75. Also, Thomas Broughton, who had spent considerable time as a Major in the Company Army in Bengal and also known as the author of a set of letters he wrote from a Mahratta camp, had the following observations about Hindustanee being the language characterising army-life throughout the subcontinent, '...the general facility of both Hindus and Muslims with Oordoo or Hindoostanee, the language of the court and which is now so universally adopted that there is not probably a town of any celebrity or general resort, from Delhi to Cape Comorin, where it is not understood even if it be not the common language of the place. With this language few of our Hindoo *sipahees* are conversant when they quit their native villages. In the course of a long service they doubtless acquire more of it, but through out their lives, they generally acquire more of it.', 'Preface' to Selections from the Popular Poetry of the Hindoos, translated and arranged by Thomas Broughton, London, 1814.

The Bombay Regulations of 1827 passed under Elphinstone's Governorship, changed the language to be used in the courts from Persian to Marathi and Gujarati, until the conduct of court business, especially at the higher levels of the judiciary was eventually made over to English.

[41] There is some evidence of letters from elders or guardians within the Peshwa household containing advice on matters pertaining to education and training of younger members, or the letters written on behalf of the women in the Peshwa family. These adhere to the conventions of the appropriate, formal style, but their language indicates the use of less persianised idiom closer to spoken Marathi. See V.K. Bhave, Chapters on '*Shikshanpadhati*' and '*Granthsangraha va Granthvaachan*' in *Peshwekalin Maharastra*.

of the eighteenth century this variety of Marathi had gained considerable currency as the language of semi-official communication as letters in the *puneri* idiom were being exchanged through a vast area extending from Banaras to Tanjore, including those addressed to Tipu Sultan and the Rajputs.[42]

There is some evidence that helps us reconstruct an idea of the reading habits and modes of circulation for manuscripts and *pothis* among the political elite of the Peshwa period. These are mostly in the nature of letters exchanged between the various members of this ruling elite seeking a loan of certain *pothis*, or acknowledgements for the receipt of some previously-made request. Some of the peshwas and their *sardars* seemed to have taken an interest in building up 'personal' collections through commissioning copies of manuscripts. It seems that the copying and collection of manuscript-books began to be encouraged during the time of Shivaji's grandson Shahumaharaj (1682-1749)[43]. Soon after, Bajirao I shifted the capital to Pune and ruled as Peshwa during the years 1720-1740. Significantly, along with the signs of an emerging interest among the political elite to patronise the collection and production of vernacular and Sanskrit manuscripts, the Peshwa period also saw the emergence of a significant differentiation in the range of vernacular textualised forms.

Interestingly, one of the families that gained prominence through their initiatives to establish a new *peth* on the family property in the Pune district, the Jadhavs[44], were also known to have been actively interested in the procurement and collection of manuscripts. When Bajirao I wished to acquire parts of the Ramayana, the person he asked was Piloji Jadhav, who was apparently able to supply the requested manuscripts[45]. Then again, when Bajirao's mother, Radhabai, wished to have some manuscripts to be read out to her, Pilaji's brother, Sambhaji Jadhav was the person she addressed her request to, who, once again, obliged quite promptly.[46] Frequently, manuscripts could not be despatched in their entirety, both when lent for reading, or when being sent out to the scribal workshop to be copied[47]. In his reply to Radhabai, Sambhaji Jadhav acknowledged receipt of the sections of the book (*adiparv pustak*) that were being returned with her letter, adding that he would be soon sending out the following sections, which then ought to be returned only after they had been *listened to* at leisure. Thus it seems that these exchanges

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[42] Deshpande, Sociolinguistic Attitudes, p.81.

[43] Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p. 77. Some of the dramas composed in the Tanjore region during this period are also dedicated to Shahu Maharaj. See Bhave, *Maharashtra Sarasvat*, pp.787-8.

[44] see Sumit Guha 'Potentates, Traders and Peasants : Western India c.1700 -1870', p.4.

[45] Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, pp.78 -83 quoted from G.S. Sardesai, Selections from the Peshwe Daftar, Vol. 9, p.36 and Vol. 18.

[46] Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p.83 quoted from G.S. Sardesai, Selections from the Peshwe Daftar, Vol. 18

[47] A copy of the *Padmapurana* had been commissioned at Nanasaheb's behest, and a scribe (*lekhak*) called Amanapant had been employed to do the job. Some confusion seems to have arisen about the exact size of the complete text, whereupon Nanasaheb instructed his librarian, Anataji Narayan to inform him of how many pages of the text were with Amanapant, waiting to be copied. See Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p.79.

were more attempts to share scarce resources, rather than indicating intentions to procure manuscripts for the building of extensive private collections. This is also borne out by instances when even requests from the Peshwa had to be turned down, as it was not possible to locate the manuscript asked for since it was already on loan to another place[48]. Neither was it unusual for requests for loans of *pothis* to be made by *sardars* out on a military campaign, surely indicating that the practice of performative reading was attributed with edifying/recreational significance among the peshwa political elite. Often *brahmins*, *shastris*, *puraniks* and even *bhikshuks* travelled with the camp, as it was common for evenings and the intervals between fighting to be devoted to the conduct of regular court business such as the settlement of judicial cases or simply to the recitation and listening of *purans* and *kirtans*. Thus it seems, that parts of the *Ganeshpurana* were being exchanged between the two parts of the Maratha camp headed by Gopalrao Patwardhan of Miraj and Naro Shankar Rajbahadur respectively.[49] We learn from the same set of communications that the dramas of the Tanjore school also had a following among the Peshwa elite- especially the plays of *Jagannathkavi* that depicted the love life of the gods Vishnu and Shankar[50].

The Peshwa was also known to place orders for the purchase of manuscript-books. In 1754, Peshwa Raghunathrao, who maintained a collection in both his residences at Anandavalli and Trimbakeshwar, advanced Rs 147 to Shankaru, an ink-maker, for the copying of eighteen Sanskrit books[51], followed by another Rs 50 for an additional eleven[52] in the same year. He is known to have asked for another 20 titles[53] later, besides paying Rs 400 for a copy of the *Yogavasistha*[54]. The Peshwa might have had a significant collection of books and manuscripts, but the frequent requests going out from his officials for loans would suggest that even when the desire to maintain a private collection was meant as a sign of cultural privilege, it was not fuelled by any wish for it to be an impressive or exhaustive representation of the 'total store' of knowledge. Although there appears to have been a caretaker entrusted with the care of the

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[48] When Nanasaheb Peshwa wrote to one of his *sardars*, Naro Shankar stationed at Nasik asking for a copy of the *Brahmavairvat Purana* , the latter replied saying that he had not been able to procure a copy, and had only been able to come up with two sections, one of which had been borrowed by a *brahmin* in Trimbakeshwar. See Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p.79.

[49] With the two camps at some distance from each other, we have a letter from Naro Shankar requesting for the second half of the *Ganeshpurana* upon returning the first half, promising that it would be duly returned after its oral performance, see Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra* , p.85.

[50] Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p.81 quoted from G.S. Sardesai, Selections from the Peshwe Daftar, Vol. 45.

[51] *Madanparijaat*, *Vijnaneshwar*, *Gita*, *Shankarbhasya*, *Sahastrachandividhan*, *Gayamahatmya*, *Shudrakalamkaar*, *Adhyatmaramayana*, *Tatvanusandhan*, and others. see Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p. 81 quoted from G.S. Sardesai, Selections from the Peshwe Daftar, Vol. 22, p.94.

[52] *Vrataark*, *Margasheershmahatmya*, *Shraddhamayukh*, *Brahmottarkhand*, *Ayodhyakand* etc. see Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p. 82 quoted from G.S. Sardesai, Selections from the Peshwe Daftar, Vol. 21, p.97.

[53] *Matsyapurana*, *Kavyaprakashtika*, *Manasollas*, *Eeshavasyabhasya*, *Hatpradeepika*, *Chandogyaupanishad*, *Ratnavali*, etc. see Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p.82 quoted from G.S. Sardesai, Selections from the Peshwe Daftar, Vol. 22, p.97.

[54] Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p.82.

Peshwa's book collection, yet until 1750 atleast, there are few signs that the library was valorised as a specialised store-house of knowledge, as it formed a part of the general *jaamdarkhana*, or treasury[55]. Further, native eye-witness accounts of the sack of Jhansi by British troops during the Great Rebellion tell of how the royal library, which had apparently housed an extensive, well-maintained collection of manuscripts, copied from 'originals' produced in the surrounding regions was ransacked and destroyed[56]. This would suggest that the acquisition and collection of manuscripts was an activity quite widely patronised by powerful families in the Maratha empire under the Peshwas. However, though the general scarcity of books led these late medieval collections to be prized, it seems quite plausible that most of them must have actually been of quite a modest size, and would probably have not compared well with libraries of manuscripts and books built up by aristocratic and merchant-princely families in post-Renaissance Europe[57].

Although it was likely that some individuals among ruling families like Raghunathrao in the Peshwa clan were adept at reading even Sanskrit texts on their own[58], and many others to be well-versed with vernacular texts, yet it is imperative to recognise the significantly different meanings that reading would have had in a pre-print, scribal culture from our own understanding of the experience as a silent, individualised activity. Pre-colonial 'readers' would have mostly acquired their familiarity with these texts through listening to them being read out[59], or depending on the type of text, through the guidance of a *pandit* or p*uranik*, who was meant to elaborate on its rhetorical, semantic, or moral significance. Writing and composition, whether of letters, records or other kinds of business communication were prized skills requiring a knowledge of set, formalised conventions, and were regarded as the work of specially trained scribes. Committing the text to memory was seen as an integral part of reading, thus reading aloud was the norm even when people might have read alone. And in most cases, the rare instance of an individual attempting to read by oneself, was likely to be occasioned by the unavailability of a *puranik* or

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[55] Nanaji Antaji was the caretaker in 1750, from whom Nanasaheb Peshwa requested a complete copy of Vaman's commentary on the *Gita* which was apparently available in the *jamdaarkhana* to be sent out to him. See letter quoted in V.K. Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p.79.

[56] The account is from Vishnubhat Bhat Godse's *'Jhansi Vaman'*, in *Majhe Pravas athva San 1857chya Bandachi Hakikat'*, probably written in 1884-85. Vishnubhat Godse hailed from a poor *puranik* family from Konkan had set out northwards to seek a living through gathering alms. He found himself in Jhansi at the time of the siege. See *Majhe Pravaas*, *Pratibha Pratisthan*, Bombay ,1992, p.95.

[57] see Henri Lefebevre, and Henri-Jean Martin, The Coming of the Book : The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800, London, New Left Books,1976.

[58] Raghnunathrao is said to have an extensive collection of Sanskrit texts at both his palaces in *Trimbakeshwar* and *Anandvalli* and was known to have spent a great deal of time with his books. see Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p.81.

[59] For many examples see Bhave's Chapters on *'Shikshanpadhati'* and *'Granthsangraha va Granthvaachan'* in *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, pp. 45-86. The *puraniks* in the employ of the royal household often hailed from distant places. Their services were secured through careful and detailed correspondence. For the details of the correspondence to fetch a certain well-known *puranik*, Rajshri Bapubhat Jambhekar who lived in Sawantwadi to recite the *puranas* at the Gangapur residence of Madhavrao Peshwa's mother, Gopikabai, see letters taken from G.S. Sardesai, Selections from the Peshwe Daftar, Vol. 32 quoted in Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p.84.

other literate attendant[60]. The acquisition and possession of literate skills prior to the coming print was evidently a predominantly context-based matter and, as such, tended to be subject to many delicate gradations and much variation that would be incommensurable with our own assumptions of standardised literate practices.

There are clear indications of the interest of the Maratha political elite in the cultivation of literacy. Similarly, the availability of detailed and meticulously maintained records by the Marathas would reinforce the suggestion that the importance of writing had grown in many areas of life by the late medieval period. Also, the dominance of *brahmin* families among the political elite as well as in professions such as banking and trade under peshwa rule would have made the importance of literate skills quite obvious to upwardly mobile Maratha families, like the above-mentioned Jadhavs. But still, the practice of reading and writing remained confined to relatively small numbers within political elites, trading circles or among brahmanical groups. More importantly, we have to acknowledge that the primary mode of circulation of literary and learned texts, even in elite circles remained characterised by oral methods of transmission, with writing reserved exclusively for specialist functions.

The political and economic expansion of Maratha power during the Peshwa period influenced literary composition in other ways too. The period also saw the emergence of new genres and the 'classicisation' of some existing modes of vernacular expression. The earlier textual modes continued to inspire new efforts but in ways that showed a perceptible shifts in aims and inspiration. The work of Sridhar(1689-1729) and Mahipati(1715-1790) showed the showed the influence of *bhakti* verse tradition, especially in the emphasis on giving expression to 'popular' religious sensibilities. Both men were *kirtankaars;* Sridhar's best-known compositions include his *Harivijay*, *Ramvijay* and *Pandavapratap*, whereas Mahipati was best-known for the verse biographies of the *sant kavis* that he composed. But there were also discernible differences, seen both in the nascent attempts, such as Mahipati's, to use the vernacular to 'document' the biographical/social, as well also in the evidence of increased patronage from the Maratha political elite towards forms of 'popular' religious recitation and performance. Sridhar was thus among the more fortunate of the *kirtankaars*, who did not have to lead the life of an itinerant performer. He lived a relatively settled life mostly in Pandharpur and Baramati, no doubt helped by the grant of *inam* land that his family had secured from Bajirao I[61]. Composed at a time when Maratha power was expanding, Sridhar's compositions emphasised the heroic, quite unlike the celebration of the spiritual that had pervaded the devotional idioms of *bhakti*. Moropant (1729-1794) lived at the height of Peshwa glory and his work marks the attempts to produce a 'high' cultivated idiom in the

[60] see advice by Raghunathrao advising one of his trusted servants in Malwa in a letter dated 22-2-1756, asking him to persist with his reading of the puranas regularly even if a *puranik* was not at hand to help. The letter is quoted in Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, pp.82 -83 from G.S. Sardesai, Selections from the Peshwe Daftar, Vol. 16.

[61] See Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, pp. 89-90.

vernacular. Significantly, he too enjoyed steady patronage from the powerful family of Babuji Naik from Baramati, into which the Peshwa's daughter had married. Living in the Naik household as the family *puranik*, the learned Moropant who was well versed in both *vedanta* and *alankaarshastra*, produced a voluminous output, much of which was in a highly stylised and Sanskritic diction that was intended to evoke sentiments of high drama and pathos[62]. His *Aryabharata* was an elaborate reworking of the well-known Mahabharata epic in a new metre called the *aryagati*, devised by Moropant himself. Besides numerous versions of the *Ramayana* that he composed, his *Kekavali* (Cries of the Peacock) is also well-known.

Thus although themes drawn from religious texts and the epics remained an important part of literary production, the Peshwa period also saw the emergence of new varieties of eulogistic, heroic and erotic performative verse forms. The *povada* was a form of the heroic ballad meant to commemorate through, recitation and performance, the exploits of Maratha warriors and their leaders on the battlefield. It could be traced to earlier times, but it gained a new impetus in the work of *shair* poets of the eighteenth century, the best known of among them being Ramjoshi(1762-1812), Prabhakar(c.1755-1843), Anant Phandi(1774-1819), Parshuram (1754-1844), Honaji Bala and Saganbhau. Another form that shared the commemorative function of the *povada* were the prose narratives or *bakhars* like the *Sabhasadi bakhar*, based on the life of Shivaji and composed in 1697, the *Panipatchi bakhar*, or the *Bhausahebanchi kaifyat* both accounts of the famous Maratha defeat at Panipat in 1761. The *bakhars* were either intended as a report of famous Maratha military expeditions or meant to provide a genealogical account of well-known Maratha heroes. Many of these poets, especially those attached to the elite courts and households, lead lives that, by modern standards would count as colourful and bohemian. The *shair kavis* were often also prolific practitioners of the *lavani* and the *tamasha,* the performative art-forms that combined music, song and narrative, and which are mainly noted for their depiction of amorous themes, but often also contained a sharp commentary on social relations. Not only did the variety of vernacular cultural-performative forms mentioned here span a multiplicity of themes, ranging from the religious to the profane and erotic and from the heroic to the tragic, but they were also remarkable for the diverse following that they had among different sections of pre-colonial 'Maratha' society and were enjoyed by elite and non-elite, rural and urban audiences.

Thus there were clear signs to indicate an expansion of the realm of literary practices during the Peshwa period, seen both through the diversity of literary styles and also the increased patronage from the political and economic elite available to practitioners of various performative forms. However, it is important to note that the emergence of the new literary genres did not see the accompanying rise of alternative critical standards, especially through the vernacular. Some of

[62] Bhave, *Peshwekalin Maharastra*, p.91.

the *shair kavis* and *puraniks* were men of learning, who also enjoyed prestigious and close links with the Peshwa and the other Maratha courts. But with the domain of cognitive or cultivated practices clearly still subject to particularistic social norms and oral modes of transmission, it was highly unlikely for these artists/*kavis*/scholars to have exercised any kind of a general regulatory influence within the pre-colonial political sphere. It would be important to form an evaluative account of the nature of influence these men of learning/cultivation had on the affairs of the court. But in doing so, one would have to acknowledge that, despite the substantial use of vernacular varieties for purposes of official communication and administrative record-keeping, the processes of pre-colonial vernacularisation in South Asia did not lead to a development of critical discourses in the areas of aesthetics or socio-political ethics in these languages. This, in effect, left the normative status of Sanskrit and its 'high' aesthetic and philosophical discourses largely unchallenged and unpermeated by alternate or 'subaltern' cultural and social meanings or practices.

Colonialism, Comparative Philology and Re-making the Politics of Language :

Thus the story of the literarization of Marathi from its beginnings in the late thirteenth century to the end of the Peshwa period suggest several trends, indicating a slowly expanding audience for vernacular texts, the emergence of secular tendencies within vernacular expression, a personalised, individuated authorial voice and an increasing interpenetration between elite and non-elite literary idioms. We also have some evidence of attempts to compile definitive texts through comparing and collating different existing versions, as well as efforts to build up libraries and book collections, both by men in power and 'private' individuals. Clearly, the above changes paralleled some of the shifts in literate and cultural practices that were crucial to the rise of modernity in the West. The rise of 'Maharastrian' *brahmin* families among the military/political elite as well as in the commercial and banking professions during the Peshwa period might also be interpreted as signs of emerging tendencies towards a more centralised organisation of the resource base and power structure. Such observations are borne out by studies of the nature of state-society relations during the Peshwa period that have shown evidence for the emergence of a limited but definite sphere of economic activity independent of the state in eighteenth-century Deccan[63]. Also, Fukuzawa's work[64] has shown the limited, but decisive influence the pre-colonial Maratha state was able to exert in the regulation of social rank, especially in the case of claims to a higher caste status and the prescription of social practices according to caste status, as well as in the extraction of forced labour within bounds of propriety (*'shisthapramanen'*, as the officials

[63] see Sumit Guha, 'Potentates, Traders and Peasants : Western India c. 1750-1870' and Stewart Gordon, 'Burhanpore : Entrepot and Hinterland 1650-1750' in Marathas, Marauders and State Formation, 1994.

[64] H.K. Fukazawa, The Medieval Deccan : Peasants, Social Systems and States, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1991.

records put it). These trends might seem to corroborate the argument in the work of some historians like Chris Bayly[65] who have tried to argue that the social structure towards the end of the eighteenth century contained signs of an emerging proto-modernity on the sub-continent.

I shall not be concerned here with taking issue directly with the validity or the implications of such a view, except to reiterate the essentially valid point made by Sumit Guha[66] that, at least, the records for eighteenth century Deccan show little evidence for the emergence of a western-type early modern, absolutist state capable of a spectacular and sustained display of its monopoly to exercise coercion. Instead, in the remaining part of this chapter, I will try to approach the question of the nature of the shift in state-society relations brought about by the coming of colonial rule from a different angle, namely the perspective of culture and language. In making some remarks on the structure of the relation between pre-colonial political authority and the division between the high and low forms of discourse, my approach will be to point to the divergences in the underlying assumptions about language and the management of power prevailing in eighteenth century South Asia and pre-/early modern Europe. Any attempt to discuss the 'difference' between the West and South Asia have to grapple with the complicated legacy of such representations within colonial discourse. As post-colonial theory has made us aware, the construction of difference between the modern West and the rest of the world fundamentally constituted the processes through which colonial ideology worked. One of the major tasks before post-colonial studies is to devise comparative frameworks that can recover the divergent cultural logics of non-western societies from their essentialised assimilation into eurocentric narrative frameworks.

Difference and Trajectories of Vernacularisation :

One obvious difference between the trajectories of vernacularisation as these processes unfolded in western Europe and South Asia is the relation of the vernaculars in each of these contexts to the 'high' languages in their respective contexts, namely, Latin and Sanskrit. A very important and foundational element in the process of vernacularisation in the West was the production of vernacular versions of the Christian scriptures[67]; whereas, the corpus of scriptural texts did not get translated out of Sanskrit and rendered into the South Asian vernacular idioms quite in the same way as was the case in Europe. It seems worth speculating whether the translation of Christian scriptures into the vernaculars actually is an early example of the tendency towards

[65] Chris Bayly, Empire and Information 1780-1870, Cambridge University Press, 1996; also his Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars : North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770-1870, first pub. 1983, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1992.

[66] Sumit Guha , 'An Indian Penal Regime : Maharashtra in the Eighteenth Century', Past and Present, No. 147, May 1995, p.125.

[67] My aim here is not to over-generalise the west European case. It needs to be noted that the above was more true of the countries where the Reformation was a strong influence. Thus Italian, for example, saw the vernacularisation of poetry and imaginative writing, but sermons and religious treatises continued to be composed in Latin. Also, Latin continued to serve the 'high' intellectual function until as late as the time of Newton and Hobbes in the seventeenth century. I thank Dr. David Taylor and Dr. Francesca Orisini for these clarifications.

linguistic objectification within the genealogy of modern western knowledge, or was an outcome of the religious homogeneity that characterised Europe from the early modern period. However, deliberations on this question are beyond the scope of this discussion, though it has been noted that the processes accompanying the rise of early modern Europe from medieval Christendom having been characterised by 'an overdetermination of literary vernacularization with religious vernacularisation'[68].

And yet, paradoxically, the decomposition of the realm of the Holy Roman Empire into contesting breakaway faiths led to a consolidation of the ideological influence and the power of institutionalised religion. The disintegration of medieval Christianity into contesting faiths and regionalised polities created a potent space for the articulation of a secular word view, but nevertheless the period also concurrently saw the emergence of structures of centralised authority within Europe. This transpired through the displacement of Latin's monopolistic claims as a sacral language and the medium of cultivated exchange and the simultaneous appropriation of the range of its 'high' functions by the European vernaculars. The homology between the range of functions that had constituted the 'high' domain of Latin and now deemed 'permissible' through western vernaculars was crucial to the emergence of the absolutist structures of control in early modern Europe, as also to the emergence of the discourses of modernity.

On the other hand, the processes of vernacularisation on the sub-continent show a divergent trajectory. Long after the disintegration of the Sanskrit cosmopolis and the supersession of Sanskrit from its public-political status, it was still able to retain its aura of exclusivity by maintaining its status as the language of ritual worship as well as the appropriate medium of 'high' intellectual discourse both in not only the Hindu tradition but significantly also in the later traditions of the dissenting systems of Buddhist and Jain thought. Thus, the status of Sanskrit as the language of philosophical discourse, higher learning and intellectual cultivation remained effectively unchallenged despite the processes of vernacularization in South Asia. The subversive potential of the South Asian vernaculars was thus inherently constrained by their inability to displace the over-arching, normative influence of Sanskrit. The literarization of the vernaculars on the sub-continent did not see their simultaneous deployment to re-formulate definitions of the aesthetic, ideas of cultivation and notions of collectivity, or indeed happened with the European vernaculars during the Renaissance. In the absence of an alternative conception of the aesthetic or the political community, the emerging traditions of vernacular textuality in South Asia, including the corpus of bhakti verse, remained subject to the critical norms within the Sanskritic discourses on *kavya, sahitya or shastra.* As a result, the sphere of Sanskrit discourse was able to respond to the tendencies towards laicization within *bhakti* and other varieties of vernacular textualisation in an incredibly disdainful way of simply refusing to take serious note of what were, without doubt, fundamental and irrevocable cultural and political shifts. The traditions of Sanskrit learning tried

[68] Pollock, 'India in the Vernacular Millennium : Literature, Culture and Polity 1000-1500', Daedalus , 127, 3, (in press).

to, and effectively did, preserve their dominance by maintaining a lofty distance from the emerging vernacular forms. Sanskrit's claims to a status that, by far, transcended whatever potential or pretensions the vernacular forms might harbour, were simply asserted through a highly aestheticised refusal to engage with the latter. The high discourses of Sanskrit asserted their power by a supreme act of snobbery where they categorically refused to even acknowledge the presence of the hierarchically 'inferior' vernacular literary idioms[69]. Scholars working on modern and pre-colonial India have remarked the absence within classical Indian thought of tendencies promising the emergence of a self-reflexive social rationality, analogous to those which formed part of western modernity. The appropriation of the high cognitive functions by the western vernaculars from Latin were crucial both to the definition of collective identities, as well as to the emergence of the discourses of modern social rationality in the West. If this was so, then we need to think of the ways in which the significant disparity between the status of the traditions of 'high' intellectual discourse and the vernacular textual traditions in pre-colonial South Asia may have influenced forms of social rationality and the structure of political authority that prevailed there.

Although the South Asian vernaculars derived their textual forms from the processes that saw the decomposition of the Sanskrit cosmopolis, significantly, this relation between vernacular literarization and the Sanskrit intellectual traditions remained largely undiscussed within either the 'high' or the 'low' textual traditions. The vernacular, pre-colonial literary forms, especially devotional verse, abound with allusions to the asymmetrical relations in the status that these non-elite idioms could claim in comparison with Sanskrit. The evident discrepancy in the normative status and prestige between the realm of high aesthetic and religious discourse and subaltern cultural forms allowed the ideological universe of pre-colonial South Asia to be characterised by a remarkable degree of divergence and discontinuity. Thus, however much historians may have been justified in discerning signs of an incipient modernity within the economic and political processes in eighteenth-century South Asia, it would be far more difficult to extend that argument into the sphere of cultural production. The pre-colonial South Asian cultural universe remained characterised by a low degree of integration between elite intellectual discourse and cultural forms and the realm of 'ordinary', 'popular' religious practice and textual idioms which, as I have argued, would be antithetical to one of the most important characteristics of modern culture. The close articulation of functions between the classical and the vernaculars in Europe, whereby the latter developed their literarized and critical discursive forms via 'direct' inputs through translation from Greek and Latin texts, also arguably contributed to what Pollock has described as the widespread concern of modern European culture and linguistics with 'origins, purity of descent

[69]There were of course exceptions of poets who composed in both Sanskrit and the vernacular idioms like Vidyapati, or those who like the seventeenth-century poet, Jagannatha at the Mughal court who drew upon vernacular poetry and attempted to use Sanskrit in ways that reflected the new literary sensibility. But such instances would not alter the general point I seek to make here about the reluctance of the 'high' Sanskritic tradition to engage with or reflect upon the discursive capabilities of the vernacular idioms.

and the exclusion of mixture'[70]. The concern with pure origins can be seen to have been a legacy of the rhetorical strategies through which the western vernaculars played out their close rivalry with Latin, and formed a constitutive feature of the emerging vernacular discourses within the culture of early European modernity. A related point of contrast between the structural characteristics of the emerging vernacular discourses in early modern Europe and medieval South Asia is said to be the greater degree of instrumentalisation of western vernacular literary culture. This again can be seen as emerging out of the zealous articulation of possibilities between the classical and vernacular cultures in Europe. This led the western vernacular literatures to be endowed with a 'greater' potential to produce a homogenised culture that could 'yield' a more centralised polity than could be generated through the South Asian vernacular idioms, placed as they were in a perpetually disadvantageous position vis-à-vis Sanskrit.

Colonialism, Modernity, Linguistic Hierarchy :

This situation of structural discontinuity between the world of high discourse and the intellectual and cultural possibilities imaginable within the vernacular realm in pre-modern India, altered only with the colonial encounter. Colonial rule brought in a structure of authority based on very different cultural premises, and the challenging political situation created by the colonial encounter obviously required radically innovative ideological strategies. We have learnt much from the work of Edward Said and Bernard Cohn about how colonial power was able to meet this challenge mainly through manoeuvrings in the sphere of discursive production and language. The making of colonial ideology foregrounded issues of language, communication and authority in an unprecedented way. Colonial power could not rule without English, but the ground had to be cleared before the circumstances for its introduction could be created, and it could seek to displace Sanskrit and Persian from their high status and establish its own relation with the vernacular idioms. It is important to recognise the structural differences in the nature of the links English sought with the vernaculars from the relation the latter had had with Sanskrit or Persian. The radical asymmetries underlying the conceptual and political frameworks on either side of the colonial encounter made the task of establishing a common ideological space between the new rulers and their subjects one of the utmost importance. Such a project of immediate intellectual and cultural transfer between the two sides envisaged a direct relation between English and the native vernaculars. Cohn's impressive contribution[71] to the study of colonial ideology has shown how one of the most crucial factors in the making of colonial ideology was the ability of the colonial imagination to secure its interests through its command of language. Thus although colonial power did not arrive with a pre-meditated approach to 'tackle' native intellectual and cultural systems, yet there exist important continuities between early orientalist and missionary

[70]Pollock, 'India in the Vernacular Millennium : Literature, Culture and Polity 1000-1500', Daedalus , 127, 3.

[71] Bernard Cohn, 'The Command of Languages and the Language of Command' in Subaltern Studies in Indian History, Vol. IV, Delhi , OUP, 1994.

efforts to study the native classical and 'vulgar' tongues, the discipline of comparative philology and colonial policy on education and language. Taken together these represented a radical conceptual shift in the figuring of relation between the 'high' languages and the vernaculars from previously existing conceptions. The processes through which the European vernaculars had acquired their modernised forms via 'direct' inputs through translations of literary and religious texts in Greek and Latin formed a crucial element in the ability of the eighteenth century western imagination to conceive of a 'solution' to the complex questions underlying the making of colonial ideology. The discussion above has shown that the memory of inter-cultural links imagined as 'direct linguistic transfer' formed a constitutive aspect of the self-representation of modern Europe and its vernacular discourses. Not surprisingly, the colonial imagination was able to draw upon these experiences as a fertile resource through which it was able to convert the huge philosophical and cultural discontinuities between eighteenth-century Europe and South Asia into a 'mere' linguistic problem. This could be pragmatically addressed and ironed out through the potent techniques of discursive appropriation and translation so that English could become the new normative 'classical' language against which the 'native vernaculars' would be modernised.

Colonial policy was thus able to envisage a way to insert English as a high language into the South Asian cultural world, through which it could eventually hope to radically reinscribe the forms of vernaculars textuality and speech. But at least initially, the avowed objective did not include a desire for English to supplant Sanskrit and Persian completely, especially as much of the valuable information regarding native legal, political, social, religious codes, necessary to colonial officials was contained in texts in these two languages. The British set about trying to recover these codes through a study of these classical texts with the help of native *pandits*, *shastris* or *munshis* as interpreters. Presumably, the underlying logic was that a knowledge of the languages was sufficient to gain access to these codes, which once recovered could be fixed and preserved for all time, perhaps even in English. The latter possibility promised to make both their reading and reproduction by colonial authorities much easier, but additionally it also dispensed with what were considered as highly 'unreliable', 'corrupt', native intermediaries, both in the form of existing texts and their native interpreters. Rendering these 'high' native texts open to public access simultaneously objectified their contents into a clearly fixed, hierarchically ordered, easy-to-use body of knowledge[72], that also diminished the room for the numerous interpretations and accretions that they might have acquired through their currency previously through predominantly oral modes of transmission. The pre-occupation with purity of descent within western cognitive frameworks came together with the modern tendency towards objectification to produce the discursive strategies that saw post-enlightenment rationality transmute itself into the dominant forms of colonial reason.

[72] for a detailed discussion on the relation between processes of objectification, translation and the making of colonial discourse see Cohn's essay, 'The Command of Languages and the Language of Command' cited above and also Johannes Fabian, Time and the Work of Anthropology, Harwood Academic Publishers, Amsterdam, 1991.

The over-riding concern with fixity of meaning and purity of origin that had characterised the colonial engagement with the classical languages and texts, marked their approach to the 'vulgar' tongues as well. However, the concern with the 'native' classical and the vernacular languages was not born out of identical motives. If the interest in the South Asian 'high' languages had been impelled by the desire to open up the indigenous judicial and moral codes to the normative gaze of western reason, it was only through refashioning the vernaculars that colonialism could hope to effect its ideological goals. The question was one of cultivating a language that would directly serve as the medium of intercourse between the Government and its subjects, that is between the small set of Europeans who were to rule over the inhabitants of a vast and diversely stratified social world. Of course on account of the expansionist ambitions of colonial power, the British had to carry out these plans in an amazingly polyglot social setting, which committed them to the simultaneous cultivation of several regional languages. This only reinforced the cognitive predilection that the European mind had for asking questions about the unfamiliar in terms of origins and descent. The study of these languages, following the characteristic tendency within modern western rationality towards objectification, aimed at producing a formal description of the morphological, syntactical, lexical and phonological aspects of the spoken forms of each of the languages under consideration. But this was not all; invariably orientalist and missionary scholars tended to preface such taxonomical analyses with further speculations intended to produce 'definite' knowledge about the origins, territorial spread and estimated number of users for each of these vernaculars, in addition to also trying to delineate the relation of these languages with other 'important' Indian vernaculars and classical tongues. The following remarks by Reverend Stevenson, one of the earliest modern scholars of Marathi are only typical of the assumptions and the methods of the colonial linguistic project :

> The assertion that no language can be thoroughly understood till it has been compared with others, belonging to the same family, is nowhere more true than in relation to the vernacular languages of India. [73]

The emerging fields of philology, geography and ethnology, relying on the techniques of objectification, enumeration, measurement and classification thus aimed to create a cognitive order that was, ostensibly, a systematic, empirical reconstruction of native ways, but which, more importantly, also established an authoritative discourse on cultures western modernity took as its Other. Philology and ethnology thus had comparable concerns, as another article by Stevenson around the same time made explicit:

[73] Rev. Stevenson, 'Observations on the Grammatical Structure of Vernacular Languages of India', Journal of the Bombay Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. III, 1851, p.71.

> Philology and ethnology... though seemingly independent are yet intimately connected, and throw mutual light on one another...It is usually found that difference of language characterise difference of race.[74]

Undoubtedly, a crucial tenet of the western colonial imagination was its firm self-perception as the teleological agent of a universal history. However, the emergence of such a historical consciousness presumed a magisterial knowledge of the Other, and it was this need that the comparative frameworks of ethnology and philology helped fulfil. Colonial power aimed to establish itself not through the mere annexation of new territories, but through authoring an ostensibly exhaustive survey that identified the limits and contents of these unfamiliar cultural spaces, before their insertion into the globalising narratives of Eurocentric historiography. The application of these cognitive technologies through philology sought to impose a semblance of order on, what seemed to the colonial mind as a proliferation of 'peculiar' languages and dialects on the sub-continent, all seemingly related to each other, but in unknown ways. In attempting to describe and classify the linguistic diversity on the sub-continent, philology aimed to control this apparently perplexing scenario through positing the theory of original languages that sought to map the inter-relations and genealogies of the vernacular forms. Thus the discourse of philology effectively displaced and rewrote what had been, an essentially discontinuous, and largely unarticulated, relation between Sanskrit and the vernaculars. Although the colonial suspicion of 'impurity' and 'mixture' colluded with the brahmanical background of most native informants in producing this new discourse, the links between classical and the vernacular were re-articulated according to European categories. Thus Halhed's introduction to his Bengali Grammar tried to expunge all words from Persian and Hindustani, so as to fix the 'direct' descent of the vernacular from Sanskrit in this categorical way:

> The following work presents the Bengal language *merely as derived from its parent Shanscrit* (sic).[75]

But the genealogical connections between the discursive moves to map current linguistic practices through the philological procedures of classification and comparison and the invention of a supra-local, temporalized historical narrative soon became apparent. There were three main groups of British orientalistists working at the Fort William, Fort St.George and Bombay establishments. Each group was engaged in mapping the diversity of linguistic practices in their respective regions through a theory of kinship that sought to establish comparisons between 'samples' of spoken forms. However, it soon became clear that the hope of capturing the diverse spoken varieties into a comprehensive, taxonomical philological grid spanning the sub-continent and that showed that all these practices derived from an unique 'originary', past language was going to be elusive. Following the same procedures and overall rationale, the work of each of

[74] Rev. Stevenson, Journal of the Bombay Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. IV, 1852, p.117.

[75] Nathaniel Halhed, A Grammar of the Bengali Language, Hoogly, 1778, reprint 1969, p.xxi.

these groups had produced arguments that posited at least three separate language families, each going further back to an elusive point of origin in a temporalised past. Thus Rev Stevenson, writing in the same article quoted above had the following observations to make :

> 1. The languages spoken North of the Krishna all have a strong family resemblance, and all draw largely from the Sanskrit, which is the prevailing element in their composition.
>
> 2. That the languages to the South of the Krishna also have a strong family likeness, while the prevailing element is *not Sanskrit.*[76]

Stevenson's comments echoed the 'discovery' of the Fort St. George group, who from the early part of the nineteenth century had been arguing that the Dravidian languages were not descended from Sanskrit[77]. Not surprisingly, such attempts to recover the story of linguistic displacement and accretion through philology into a linear narrative constructed upon the opposition between a serialised image of the past, defined as the 'other' of a 'continuos present' yielded more complexities than it clarified. Delving into the recesses of an indefinite past, philologists now encountered traces of a 'more primitive' class of languages apparently even 'more ancient' than the Northern and Southern linguistic groups. Thus confronted with a disjuncture between the 'Aryan' and the 'Dravidian' linguistic families, Rev. Stevenson advanced the idea of an underlying 'aboriginal' layer from which all the vernaculars derived the non-sanskritic part of their lexicon[78]. Such an explanatory scheme was perhaps never more than an hypothesis. But, nevertheless, it was able to produce an influential and 'progressive' account of the story of linguistic contestation and change, which naturalised both the role of writing in the making of pre-colonial hierarchies, along with its own attempts to reinscribe the relations between social and textual order and authority.

Philology, Colonial Policy, Hegemony :

These theories did not just stay on the level of 'pure' discourse. They clearly had direct pragmatic implications as was borne out by an article that appeared in the next volume of the same journal in which Rev. Stevenson had been publishing his philological pieces. The article was by Sir Erskine Perry[79], the President of the Board of Education[80]. Perry was a great enthusiast for the

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[76] Stevenson, 'Observations on the Grammatical Structure of Vernacular Languages of India', Journal of the Bombay Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. III, 1851, p.72.

[77] for an account of the 'differences' between these various groups of Orientalist scholars, see Tom Trautmann, Aryans and British India, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1995.

[78] Stevenson, Vol. III, 1851, p.71-72.

[79] As Chapter three will show, Erskine Perry played an important role in the restructuring education policy in Western India. He was the President of Board of Education between 1848 and 1852, when a series of crucial moves that indicated a shift away from the educational policy followed since the take-over in 1818 were made. Until Perry's time, the emphasis was on instruction through the vernacular, but from the late 1840s policy showed a marked tendency favouring instruction through English.

introduction of English. Perry admitted that his connection with the Board of Education had led him to consider means to develop a common medium of intercourse between the British and their Indian fellow subjects, who at present, 'were immured in so many distinct and peculiar language groups'[81]. Conceding that the 'true object' of the investigation of orientalist disciplines for which the Asiatic society had been established, 'was *identical* with that of politics'[82], the article went on to propose that the introduction of English, the 'language of the new governing authority' to replace Persian, the erstwhile language of official business, was essential if the 'interests of 140 millions of mankind' were to be justly realised[83]. The course of colonial policy, especially in the field of education, showed how the mapping of 'native dialects' was a necessary preliminary to their 'rebirth' as the vehicles of a colonial modernity under the normative authority of English.

The possibilities of exercising control over the present through the philological exercise of mapping the linguistic past did not remain invisible to colonial-educated intellectuals. Philology evidently cleared the ground for the redefinition of linguistic identities. It did this most obviously through setting-up the normative mechanisms through which the vernaculars were to acquire their modern forms. But even more importantly, through its theories of linguistic kinship and its valorisation of claims of purity and noble descent, philological discourse also opened up possibilities for the emerging intelligentsia to develop a trans-regional, hegemonic discourse in which their claims to cultivation and moral superiority in the present were derived from their 'proven' record as custodians of 'correct' linguistic and moral practice in the past. Once the norms of standard vernacular usage had been put in place through the first few decades of colonial rule, university-educated colonial intellectuals were aided in their task of extending the temporal and spatial scope of their dominance by the 'insights' of comparative philology. Drawing upon the philological beliefs about the essential inter-relatedness of the Indian vernaculars, and their common descent from the 'purity' of 'ancient' Sanskrit, English-educated intellectuals from different parts of the sub-continent were able to see themselves as part of a trans-regional kinship by the later decades of the nineteenth century. An important part of this elite self-image was their shared status as the custodians of 'correct' cultural practices. Thus in giving the Wilson philological lectures in 1877, claiming descent from the noble *brahmin*s of the 'ancient *aryavarta'*, to Bhandarkar[84] was clearly a way of enlarging the cultural capital the colonial intelligentsia had

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[80] Erskine Perry, 'On the Geographical Distribution of the Principal Languages of India, and the Feasibility of Introducing English as a Lingua Franca', Journal of the Bombay Royal Asiatic Society, January 1853.

[81] E. Perry, Journal of the Bombay Royal Asiatic Society, January 1853, p.309.

[82] E. Perry, Journal of the Bombay Royal Asiatic Society, p.289.

[83] E. Perry, pp.314-317.

[84] Bhandarkar (1837-1925)was born in Ratnagiri. He studied at the English school there before coming to study at Elphinstone College, Bombay. He became a member of the clandestine anti-caste sabha, the Paramhansa Mandali in 1853 while studying at Elphinstone College. Graduating with a Major in Sanskrit, along with Ranade in 1864, Bhandarkar served as the Headmaster of the Ratnagiri School. He also played an important role in the Prarthana Samaj. In 1882, he was appointed as professor of Sanskrit at Deccan College and this was hailed by the native press as a major triumph for the intelligentsia's campaign for senior appointments in government establishments. He became the vice-chancellor of Bombay University in 1894, the first Indian to be appointed to such an office.

established through claiming dominance over the regional vernacular spheres. And yet, demarcating the boundaries of 'cultivated' elite in the present, was also a way of simultaneously asserting control over the claims of collective memory, which could now be inscribed as 'historical truth':

> ...We have the clearest possible evidence that Sanskrit was the vernacular of holy or respectable *Brahmins* of Aryavarta or North India, and who could speak the language without the study of grammar. ... Who is it that speaks good or correct Marathi? Of course brahmins of culture. The language of the other classes is not correct Marathi. The word *'sistha'* may be translated by 'a man of culture or education', and this education or culture has since remote times been almost confined to brahmins. Thus the dialects of the inscriptions of Asoka and Pali were the vernaculars of the non-Brahmanic classes; but a greater importance must evidently have been attached to them in the times of Asoka than is now assigned to the Marathi of the non-Brahmanic classes, since they are used in the inscriptions. They are, however, not recognised as independent languages by our grammarians who treated them as we treat the Marathi of the lower classes; but they were in use and bore the same relation to Sanskrit that low Marathi does to high Marathi....[85]

Such connections between notions of nobility of descent, Aryan 'racial' purity and moral superiority were not isolated instances. They had been an intrinsic part of European attempts to produce a discourse of extensive affinity and difference that simultaneously maintained hierarchical boundaries between the 'primitive' and 'advanced' levels of civilisation. In its strongest form, the racial theory of civilisation could be turned against the comparative frameworks of philology and the study of Sanskrit[86]. However, the categories to plot identity and difference as displacement from a point of 'unitary' 'pure' origin through temporalised narratives that 'fixed' cultural practices as 'belonging' to geographical spaces that may be contiguous but were clearly delimited, first emerged through the discursive fields of ethnography and philology. With their scope to authorise powerful narratives of the protracted advance of ascendant elites through a serialised past, it was not surprising that orientalist ethnography and philology were strategically appropriated by the emerging nationalist imagination to claim such pasts that would help 'historically' substantiate claims it wished to make in the present.

Philology and Narratives of Subalternity :

But if the extensive horizons of western philology and ethnology could be harnessed to re-inforce the hegemonic claims of an emerging nationalist consciousness, the universal compass of these

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[85] R.G. Bhandarkar, Relations between Sanskrit, Pali, the Prakrits and the Modern Vernaculars, Bombay, 1914, p.296.

[86] for an account of the tensions between philology and race science in mid-nineteenth century, see Tom Trautmann, Aryans and British India, University of California, Berkeley, 1995.

discourses could, as well, be appropriated to produce spatially extended, temporalised narratives of the humiliation and injustice suffered by subordinated groups at the hands of economic and political elites. However, analogous aspirations to seek a bold, universal idiom for the articulation of marginality were also discernible within the making of colonial modernity, though such attempts could evidently not speak through the abstract social concepts of 'labour' or 'class'. I refer here to Phule's[87] writings that sought to dramatically amplify the grievances of marginalised groups -the lower caste communities - beyond their immediate, local significance. In seeking to establish correspondences and links between marginalised low-caste communities in the present and their 'original' displacement by the invading Aryans, on the one hand, and the saga of American slaves, on the other, Phule was clearly drawing on the 'historical insights' that philological discourse, which he had encountered through his contact with the Scottish missionaries at Pune[88]. We see this most clearly in his important text published in 1873, Slavery, with the subtitle, 'in this civilised British Government under the cloak of Brahmanism'. He dedicated the book to 'the Good People of the United States, as a token of admiration for their sublime disinterested and self-sacrificing devotion in the cause of Negro Slavery; and with an earnest desire that my countrymen may take their noble example as their guide in the emancipation of their Sudra brethren from the trammels of *brahmin* thraldom'[89]. In trying to trace Aryan ascendancy to the control that *brahmins* had over the textual record in the making of 'pernicious legends and laws' through which they had deluded and subjugated the 'ignorant masses'. By treating the philological premise that the Indo-Aryan family of languages supplanted and appropriated an earlier family of 'aboriginal' languages as an established fact, Phule attempted to insert lower-caste subordination into a global discourse of marginality that asserted an equivalence between the subjugation of non-literate, labouring communities in different times and places by groups who controlled the power of inscription. In establishing a correspondence

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[87] Phule(1827-1890)born into the *phulmali* community. He went to the school managed by the Scottish Mission in Pune, where he learnt English and became familiar with Western rationalist ideas, especially the writings of Thomas Paine, as well as the emerging discourse of philology. Phule remains a unique figure among colonial intellectuals, with his bold initiatives in establishing a school for girls as well as schools for lower-caste boys in Pune in 1852-53. He helped establish the Satyashodak Samaj in 1873. It is very likely that in the 1840s and 1850s Phule had close links with some upper-caste intellectuals like Gopal Hari Deshmukh, Bhavalkar and Ramchandra Balkrishna who were important members of the anti-caste Paramhansa Mandali. Bhavalkar also taught in the lower-caste schools that Phule opened in Pune as did another of his *brahmin* friends, Sadashiv Govande. But the upper-caste intelligentsia's reluctance to substantively address the question of caste hierarchy eventually led to a bitter parting of ways. Phule's writings represent a powerful counter-discourse that contests the emerging dominant upper-caste view of the political possibilities within colonial modernity. Phule published frequently in the missionary paper, *Satyadeepika*. For the published collected works of Phule, see eds. Y.D. Phadke, Dhanajay Keer and S.G. Malshe, *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, *Maharastra Rajya Sahitya ani Sanskriti Mandal*, fifth edition, Bombay, 1991. For a further discussion on Phule see Chapters two and five.

[88] Phule Jyotirao, 'Preface to Slavery' in *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya* , pp.117-128.

[89] Thus ran the English side of the bilingual dedication that Phule inscribed on the opening pages of the 1873 edition of *Gulamgiri*. The opposite page carried a corresponding Marathi version. Interestingly, the main text was entirely in Marathi, but Phule prefaced it with a long introduction in English which acknowledged his debt to recent ethnological researches, especially the work of Dr. Pritchard, that had 'proved' that the Aryans were not the 'original' inhabitants of Hindoostan. In *Gulamagiri*, Phule interprets the mythological account of the incarnations of Vishnu as an allegory of brahmanical attempts to establish their dominance through their 'subjugation of the aborigines', the 'original inhabitants' of the land. See Phule, *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, Bombay, 1991, pp. 109-192. For a discussion of Phule's negotiation of the bilingual relation between English and Marathi that critically structured colonial politics, see Chapter two, pp.72-75.

between the sufferings of the lower castes at hands of *brahmins*, especially during the Peshwa period, and the condition of slaves in America, Phule's interest was to create a narrative that was closer to historical truth and hence belonged to a 'higher' order of rationality than the myths and legends that unjustly legitimised brahmanical dominance. Phule thus sought to ally his narrative with the emerging inter-national idioms of representing subalternity based on notions of human dignity and entitlement.

It is interesting to note that in portraying an image of lower-caste selves condemned to a degrading, sub-human existence, Phule was also, significantly, ignoring indigenous traditions of dissent in the *bhakti* compositions. His refusal to engage with the work of the vernacular devotional verse of the medieval period could have been the outcome of several factors. Despite the presence of subversive elements within *bhakti* directed against a dominant, ritualistic religious order, its devotional compositions remained intimately tied with the tenets of Hindu religious beliefs and practice. As someone who had internalised the rationalistic critique of religion and was familiar with the writings of Tom Paine, Phule saw greater potential for a radical challenge in the language of rights, than was conceivable through the pre-modern idioms of *bhakti.* Being interested in the need to articulate a discourse that thematised displacement and marginality and also suggested possibilities of a radical break from the past, Phule was less likely to be attracted by the language of *bhakti.* Instead, the *bhakti* texts held a strong ideological fascination for the upper-caste colonial intelligentsia intent on appropriating the forms of pre-colonial vernacular textuality into suitably aestheticised, linear narratives under the category of 'literary history'. On the other hand, Phule was convinced that neither in their role as custodians of traditional learning or as the recipients of the new knowledges, *brahmins* had ever shown a proclivity to share their knowledge with their fellow-beings. It was this persistent brahmanical tendency to maintain their 'knowledge as a personal gift, not to be soiled by contact with the ignorant vulgar'[90] that led Phule to believe that the 'wondrous changes brought about in the western world, purely by the agency of popular knowledge' would never come to India through the Government's policy of using the taxes collected from the labouring *ryots* to give 'a superior education to the superior classes[91].

Conclusion :

I have tried to outline here the nature of some of the major cultural and political shifts that occurred on account of colonial rule, especially through its interventions to re-order the structure of linguistic functions, textual hierarchies, the content and distribution of literate skills. Colonialism accomplished these vast changes mainly through the combined influences of the discipline of philology and the more pragmatic agency of education policy. My study is about colonialism and culture, but is also concerned with the making of modernity in India. I choose to examine the

[90] Phule's Preface to 'Slavery' in Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya, Bombay, 1991, p.127.

[91] Phule 'Preface to Slavery', p.126.

construction of modernity through trying to understand what colonialism does to culture, especially language, for two main reasons. Firstly, because notions of translatability of cultures and language were crucial to the founding of colonial empires, and this has not received adequate attention in the scholarly literature on colonialism as yet. Secondly, the importance of focusing on language seems perfectly obvious, given that language is elementary to all forms of cultural practice and activity. One of the primary questions about the nature of the colonial impact has to do with the development of modernity in non-western societies, and the extent to which the 'transfer' of modern discourses overlaps with the ambitions of colonial rule. Some historians have argued that traces of such processes that we may call 'modern' are discernible in the pre-colonial polity and economy, especially in the northern parts of the sub-continent. If one does not agree with this view, the question then is one of establishing the structure of cultural processes prior to the period of colonial rule and of trying to delineate in what ways the changes that occurred with colonialism were unprecedented. My discussion in this chapter has tried to briefly establish a framework for arguing that the coming of colonialism made for decisive shifts in the structure of cultural production as well as in the boundaries and norms for articulating possibilities of contestation and containment.

Chapter Two

Colonial Education and Problems of the Laicisation of Knowledge : Re-making Cultural Hierarchies and Modes of Contestation.

Introduction :

This chapter seeks to present an argument about the unique place of the education project within the transformative impact of colonialism, through an analysis of the experience in Western India. It is a commonplace in any discussion of the changes introduced through the colonial encounter to speak of the ideological role of colonial education. And yet, it would be useful to think carefully about the extent and the nature of the changes effected by education policy, especially given the extremely ambitious and exhaustive nature of the proposals. On its own admission, education policy represented nothing less than a desire to re-structure native ways of thinking, especially the way colonial subjects would receive and interact with the new state power. It intended to do this by not only redefining existing cultural and political norms and introducing new ones, but also by simultaneously investing in itself almost a monopolistic authority to regulate such matters. In effect, the education project represented a set of proposals to bring about enduring discursive and institutional shifts that would alter the norms and modes of both cultural and political contestation on the sub-continent.

Usually, two main radical consequences are attributed to colonial education. The Indian 'vernaculars' are recognised to have attained their modern forms as a result of education policy. Simultaneously, the introduction of the idea of general literacy into a social world where access to literate skills had been previously premised on social and ritual status is also commonly ascribed to colonial designs to educate native subjects. But that said, little attempt is then made to either link up these two sets of changes, or to examine what their combined implications for the emerging social structure might have been. The existing scholarship does not address the central tension characterising the education project, in that it was the main channel through which modern liberal ideas were introduced in to the subcontinent, while also *simultaneously* being the primary instrument of colonial ideological domination. Consequently, arguments on the question tend to stress one or the other above aspects. The most common form of this occurs in nationalist accounts of the emergence of the modern intelligentsia, where the transition from colonised subjects to modern, liberal individuals capable now of resisting colonial

domination is left entirely unexplained. Some historians[1] and, more recently, political scientists[2] working on the colonial period have addressed the complex questions posed by the transfer of liberal ideology through colonial rule. But, few attempts[3] have been made to extend these insights into explicating the tensions underlying the operation of the education project. Little effort has been made to look closely at the processes through which education policy actually worked - how for example, given the inherent tensions and complexity of its objectives, it was able to hold together and how it addressed its purposes in initiating the radical shifts that it obviously did. For example, it is interesting to ask how the evident tensions between liberal, universalistic principles and the elitist designs of colonial ideology were worked into education policy - or even simply, in what ways, or even whether colonial education policy at all enunciated the principles of universal access. Given its place in the colonial project, clearly, there was little space within education policy for an overt and unequivocal enunciation of the idea of universal access to literacy. The question that then needs to be addressed is how, through what means and to what extent colonial education was able to open up possibilities of a distribution of laicised knowledge. It is important to bear in mind that the agenda of ideological domination was not clearly separable from the 'liberalising' designs of the education project, and therefore, there would be little justification for regarding the linguistic shifts resulting from education policy as discontinuous from its overall ideological mission and influence. There were obvious political constraints on the unequivocal articulation of universalistic principles within the official discourse of colonial policy. As such, the enunciation of modern principles of cultural distribution and intellectual exchange had to occur within colonial modernity in more oblique ways. The conceptual and technical abilities of education policy to re-structure the pattern of linguistic exchanges was crucial to its capacity to suggest the possibility of a generally-diffused laicized knowledge. I use the term laicisation in my discussion here to denote the conditions within modern political structures whereby the distribution of knowledge and power are premised, not on ideas of exclusivity, but rather on ideas of general circulation. As such, processes of laicisation necessarily have intimate connections with shifts in linguistic practices, leading to what we may term, the vernacularisation of dominant ideologies.

Colonial authority in India was keen to foreground English as the paramount symbol of the political order it wished to establish. But officials were quick to realise the limits of their political influence if colonial power was to be express itself solely through English. The importance of the language question had become apparent even before the British had gained formal political

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[1]Ranajit Guha, A Rule of Property for Bengal : An Essay on the Idea of a Permanent Settlement, Mouton and Co. & Ecole Practique des Hautes Etudes, Paris, 1963 ; Ranajit Guha, 'Dominance without Hegemony and its Historiography', Subaltern Studies in Indian History, Vol. VI, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1989; Dipesh Chakrabarty, Re-thinking Working Class History, Princeton University Press, 1989.

[2]Partha Chatterjee, Nation and its Fragments , Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1993.

[3]One of them being Krishna Kumar's excellent study of the politics of Indian education. See Krishna Kumar, The Political Agenda of Education : A Study of Colonialist and Nationalist Ideas, Sage, New Delhi, 1991.

command of the different parts of the sub-continent. Bernard Cohn's seminal essay[4] has pointed out how the cultivation of native languages and the foundation of colonial rule went hand in hand, and further, even more crucially, how this interest irrevocably transformed the forms in which these languages were spoken, read, written and studied. Although we now recognise the link between the construction of colonial authority, ideology and the refashioning of the vernaculars, little attention has been either paid to the shaping of the new forms of these vernaculars in relation with the new 'high' language of English, or to the elaboration of the 'reformed' vernaculars through the education project. In the colonial context, the standardisation of the regional vernaculars, and the reproduction of the new, fixed linguistic forms was primarily legitimated through a centralised education system. It was such considerations as these that determined the nature and extent of the official patronage for the preparation and publication of texts in the emerging standard forms of the vernaculars. Not only was the making of the new bilingual relation crucial to the construction of colonial power and its ideological elaboration, but the importance of the vernaculars in the emerging world of colonial politics resulted in crucial shifts in the hierarchies and sites of cultural production on the sub-continent. The remaking of language, the extension of colonial ideology and the definition of new hierarchical equations within native society were inter-related objectives built into the design of the education project. Surely the new intellectual elite would have partly acquired their notions of modern universalistic principles through readings in western history. But, it was not so much through direct instruction in the classroom or formulation within policy statements that colonial education was able to advance the possibilities of a laicised knowledge. Rather, it was through its conceptual and technical abilities to imagine and institute a relation between English and the native vernaculars, albeit for the making of colonial ideology, that the education project was instrumental in opening up a space for principles of general access within the emerging colonial-modern political imagination. Thus in aiming to transplant the outcome of social and historical processes which had formed part of the rise of modernity in the West, the education project was charged with several 'surrogate' functions. Included among these was the responsibility of, paradoxically, trying to stimulate through bureaucratic intervention, many effects like linguistic standardisation that had been produced in the West as corollaries to the emergence of large-scale markets and centralised polities.

Colonial Education, Extending Modernity and the Possibility of a Public Sphere :

The redefinition of linguistic identities and political norms ascribed to colonial education had far-reaching implications that profoundly reshaped the political imagination and nature of collectivities within the South Asian social world. And yet, the existing histories of modern Indian

[4] Bernard Cohn, 'The Command of Language and Language of Command' in Subaltern Studies Vol. IV, Delhi, 1985.

education[5] have concentrated mainly on tracing the chronology of various educational institutions and, at most, outlining the contributions of modern education to the emergence of a nationalist consciousness. More recently scholars trained in the discipline of English[6] have taken more critical note of connections between the redefinition of indigenous identities, the project of colonial literacy and its ideological underpinnings. But if as is rightly claimed, colonial education was instrumental in introducing enduring discursive and institutional shifts into native society, then it is important to frame questions about the ways and means in which it was able to alter modes and norms of cultural and political interaction. Unfortunately, neither body of writing mentioned above has been particularly keen to explicate the links between the education project and the patterns of social hierarchy and subordination emerging through the colonial period. The conventional view within nationalist historiography was to regard colonial education as providing the 'steel frame' that held the British *raj* together. Such a view would seem to hint at the institutional role that education played in the general design of colonial administration. However, it fails to illuminate the specific processes through which education policy was able to secure its agenda of cultural elaboration and its reproduction through institutional manoeuvres. Within the complex, radical shifts that colonial rule introduced, including a transformation of the judicial, administrative, commercial and religious codes on the sub-continent, that the unique role of the education project in legitimising and instituting colonial power would merit particular attention. Meant as it was to rationalise the fact of colonial power, colonial education worked at a different level from the other institutional shifts undertaken. Education was entrusted with the complex task of forging ideological links through which the rationale for colonial rule would be internalised by native subjects.

The ideological role of colonial education has attracted the attention of left-minded sociologists commenting upon the 'collaborationist' nature of the colonial/modern Indian intelligentsia. But also, more recently it has figured in the work of post-colonial theorists seeking to uncover the discursive strategies through which colonial power exercised its domination. However, the conceptualisation of the education project leaves unaddressed the most crucial, if, complicated question as to how colonial education could simultaneously be the instrument of native empowerment even while it successfully secured the internalisation of adverse judgements against native cultural norms. The coding of this dialectical agenda of ideological domination and political empowerment into the education project deserves greater attention. Despite the definite

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[5] S. Nurullah, and J.P. Naik, A History of Education in India During the British Period, Bombay 1951; Boman Behram, Educational Controversies of India : the Cultural Conquest of India under Imperialism, Bombay, Taraporewala, 1946; Bruce McCully, English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism, New York, 1940 ; Aparna Basu, The Growth of Education and Political Development in India ,1898-1920, Oxford University Press, 1974.

[6] Gauri Vishwanathan, Masks of Conquest, Faber and Faber, London, 1994; Rajeshwari Sunder Rajan, The Lie of the Land : Literary Studies in India, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1992; Svati Joshi, Re-thinking English : Essays in Literature, Language, History, New Delhi, Trianka, 1991; Gayatri Spivak, In Other Worlds, Routledge, London, 1988; Gayatri Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture, London, Macmillan 1988.

connection made between colonial education and domination, we need a less general understanding of the effects and scope of colonial education in refiguring native social structures. On the one hand, colonial education helped introduce modern social and political categories on the sub-continent. But to make this possible, colonial discourse had been simultaneously engaged in redefining indigenous categories pertaining to notions of self and the social, including the modes of 'having' native knowledges and languages[7]. These shifts were then reproduced and institutionalised through the system of colonial education that aimed at establishing a standardised cultural order throughout the subcontinent. By introducing major shifts in existing cultural and political codes and remaking the linguistic hierarchy and vernacular forms, colonial education was able to alter not only the universe of ideas and the criteria for a social 'commonsense' but also the structure of cultural exchange and social communication.

Krishna Kumar's work on colonial education[8] has been one of the exceptional instances of an attempt to examine the structural changes introduced through colonial education. He rightly argues that the agenda of control within the education project was far more sophisticated and enduring to be understood in purely functionalist terms as being intended to produce subordinate clerks for the colonial bureaucracy. He shows us how it represented a project to elaborate bourgeois principles of social order, economic distribution and political entitlement in keeping with the requirements of the rule of colonial difference. Above all, he points out[9] that, in its attempts to selectively re-order native social structures, education policy was clearly unconcerned with the possible repercussions of its own elitist orientation and its role in instituting a severely hierarchical and divided social order.

Colonial Ideology, Bilingualism and General Access :

Sudipta Kaviraj's writings have been among the few attempts to analyse the political divisions that colonial discourse effected within native society. He has rightly argued[10] that colonial power operated mainly through adopting distinct modes of address towards different strata of colonial

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[7] The appropriation of indigenous languages and knowledges into frameworks of western rationality and the subsequent introduction of English were chronologically related within the discursive transformation that colonial power aimed at. However, these shifts did not follow a uniform, 'fixed' pattern throughout the sub-continent. Whereas in Bengal, the orientalist phase preceded the official education initiatives by a few decades, the establishment of British power at relatively later date in Western India meant that the orientalist and education projects overlapped to a significant extent in the Bombay Presidency. My thesis suggests that the different trajectories of education policy in the Bengal and Bombay Presidencies, especially with respect to the issue of whether English or the vernacular would serve as the medium of instruction, affected the make-up of the colonial intelligentsia in the two regions, as well as the emerging political structure. I deal with these questions of bilingualism, colonial education and political hierarchy mainly in Chapters three and five.

[8] Krishna Kumar, The Political Agenda of Education : A Study of Colonialist and Nationalist Ideas, Sage, New Delhi, 1991.

[9] See especially Chapter on 'Colonial Education as an Educational Ideal' in Krishna Kumar, The Political Agenda of Education : A Study of Colonialist and Nationalist Ideas.

[10] Sudipta Kaviraj, 'On the Construction of Colonial Power : State, Discourse, Hegemony', in eds., Engels and Marks, Contesting Colonial Hegemony, British Academic Press, London 1994.

society, and that in trying to re-order the native understanding of the social world, colonial discourse effectively ruptured the existing social 'commonsense' into two incommensurable fractions. The social and political divisions resulting out of the operation of colonial discourse were further accentuated by concurrent processes of linguistic redefintion that formed a crucial part of the colonial encounter. Colonial education was an exercise in discursive engineering intended to bridge the seemingly irreconcilable gap between disparate and incommensurable conceptual orders. The proposals of colonial education were impelled by a powerful internal logic, yet to be successful, its manoeuvres had to undergo translation across complex cultural and linguistic divides if they had to be internalised by the intended addressees. Unavoidably then, one of the most crucial levels of mediation that colonial ideology involved centred around the question of language, and quite patently, the gap between English and the vernaculars most graphically symbolised the incommensurable divide between the colonial state and its native subjects. The question then was one of deciding which would be the most appropriate language for this all-important communication of colonial ideology.

Undoubtedly, English would be the most convenient choice from the official point of view, but could hardly assure a wide reach for these crucial 'lessons'. On the other hand, it would seem that encoding them through the vernaculars would ensure a more successful ideological extension. But if the extension of liberal ideology and the making of a 'commonsense' of colonial modernity was so crucially contingent upon the language question, it would be important to look into how educational policy regarded and addressed the critical language divide. If the elitist scope of educational discourse was to be also subject to the colonial bilingual divide, then clearly the reception of the discourses of modernity hinged critically on access to English and the new, officially recognised forms of the vernaculars. Colonial bilingualism, especially with its potential to acquire institutional significance through the education project thus could mean that liberal ideas would be received and 'read' differently according to the degree of access persons or communities had to instruction through English or the vernacular. Thus, political modernity rewrote not just the lives of those with access to colonial schools and an English education; importantly the majority encountered the meaning of political modernity rather as a condition where they were denied the opportunity to acquire any knowledge of its cultural or historical associations. Therefore, the project of colonial education involved complex processes of ideological transfer that could best be described as several levels of the vernacularization of liberal discourses and ideology. Assuredly, the vernacularization of liberal discourses would proceed and be administered through the colonial classroom. Thus the dissemination of modern ideas and the restructuring of the vernacular languages were concomitant processes within the education project, and any attempt to analyse either will have inevitably to take on board the implications of the other too.

The previous chapter has discussed in some detail the structure of the distribution of literate and learned skills prevailing in western India prior to the coming of colonial rule. Access to literate skills during the pre-colonial period was governed by particularistic norms based either on social rank or occupation. As against this, it is generally assumed that one of the major 'break-throughs' of the colonial period was the introduction of ideas of universal access. I shall now attempt to bring out the specific ways the discourse on education was able to suggest ideas of general access to literacy. In doing this, the objective will be to just not show how, especially in the colonial context, the grand, superior assertions of bourgeois universalism were under-written by serious constraints that belied its anti-exclusivist claims. Instead, my concern is more with the story of the making of a colonial modernity, and my attempt is to examine the spaces within colonial discourse for an enunciation of the paradigmatic modern principles of equal and universal access. Given that the education project was the principal means through which colonial rule tried to reconstitute native perceptions of self and society, it would be worthwhile to examine if and in what ways colonial education policy allowed the articulation of egalitarian norms. Or to put it another way, the question that we also need to ask is how was education policy able to accommodate its deeply divisive and hierarchical design with its egalitarian claims. Or even more interestingly, perhaps, we need to know how the discourse of education succeeded in conveying notions of egalitarianism to its native audiences, despite its own clearly divisive and hierachical objectives and effects.

I will seek to open up these questions through an examination of policy statements in Western India. My attempt will be to show that governed as colonial policy was by constraints of political prudence and financial considerations, it could not afford to be overt in its critique of pre-colonial arrangements for preservation of knowledge within native society. Nor could the colonial administration afford to unequivocally foreground the universalistic tenets of bourgeois ideology through its discourse on native education. On the whole, education policy statements are characterised by a striking reluctance to elaborate upon the idea of universal and general entitlement[11] as part of the overall plan to school a small sub-set of the native population into an 'abridged' version of liberalism. Indeed there is ample evidence to bear out Kumar's assertion[12] that colonial education policy intended to use its resources mainly to author an elitist discourse that would accommodate the principles of bourgeois universalism to the agenda of ideological control premised on modern principles. Thus Elphinstone's Minute on Education dated March 1824, which is rightly regarded as one the most significant documents in defining the course of education policy in the Bombay Presidency, makes only a token gesture about the need to encourage the 'lower order of natives to avail themselves of the means of instruction' as part of

[11] For evident reasons, it would be problematic to apply the term 'rights' for the potential space available within colonial discourse for the enunciation of possibilities of empowerment according to universalistic principles, and so the deliberate use of the weaker term, 'entitlement' here.

[12] Krishna Kumar, The Political Agenda of Education, pp. 30-37.

its general plan to introduce measures to improve the state of the native schools'[13]. As the education project was undertaken as a hegemonic exercise, it was unlikely that the commitment of actual resources towards this end would be guided by an eagerness to extend the scope of liberal temper in native society, but rather, be impelled by political calculations of potential benefits or risks. Thus the following statement in Elphinstone's Minute is not an exceptional instance of candidness about the exclusive social designs of the education project, nor are opinions expressed here particularly uncommon within colonial policy :

> It is observed that the missionaries find the lowest castes the best pupils; but we must be careful how we offer any special encouragement to men of that description; they are not only the most despised, but among the least numerous of the great division of society; and it is to be feared that if our system of education first took root among them, it would never spread further, and in that case might find ourselves at the head of a new class superior to the rest in useful knowledge but hated and despised by the castes to who these new attainments would always induce us to prefer them. Such a state of things would be desirable if we were contented to rest our favour on our army or on detachment of a part of our population, but inconsistent with every attempt to found it on a more extended basis.[14]

Both, policy statements[15] and the general historical record[16] contain several instances of how the colonial government gave into from the higher castes to discourage, and even rule against attendance of school by lower caste students on several occasions. This is not to simply draw

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[13] The language of colonial education policy, was always careful to disclaim any aggressively transformative intentions. Early documents always argued for the need to *alter* and *improve* the *existing* arrangements in the native schools. But it also showed that colonial policy was alert to the need to take account of regional circumstances. The colonial administration had to set up arrangements for native education in the span of a few years after the British take-over in 1818 affected the course of education policy in the Bombay Presidency. The seemingly tentative attitude in Elphinstone's plan for Bombay was surely linked to the realisation that education policy in western India could not afford an aggressively Anglicist stance like the Bengal situation seemed to allow. At the very beginning of the above-mentioned Minute, Elphinstone acknowledges that the ideological initiatives in Western India would benefit by following the example of Education Society of Bengal, but would do well to remember that 'the number of Europeans here is so small and our connections with the natives so recent, that much greater exertions are requisite on this side of India than on the other.' Mountstuart Elphinstone, 'Minute on Education' dated March 1824, in ed. G. W. Forrest, Selections from the Minutes and Other Official Writings of the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, London 1884, pp. 80-81.

My thesis will argue that this emphasis on vernacular education in the early colonial period in western India is strikingly different from the story in Bengal where the debate is cast mainly in terms of the 'Orientalist' or the 'Anglicist' 'options'.

[14] Extract Minute by the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay dated 13 December 1823 in ed. Aparna Basu, Indian Education in Parliamentary Papers, Part I, Indian Institute of Education, Bombay, 1952, p. 211.

[15] see Extract Minute by the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay dated 13 December 1823 in ed. Aparna Basu, Indian Education in Parliamentary Papers, Part I, Bombay, 1952, pp..205-206.

[16] We learn from Dadoba Pandurang's autobiographical account, how around 1828, Dadajee Dhackjee, one of the wealthy native patrons of the Bombay Education Society had been able to prevail upon the British Government to pass orders prohibiting lower caste students from attending the Society School. Because of this pressure, *koli*, *bhandari*, *kunbi* and *marathe* boys were temporarily, but immediately struck off the rolls. See D.P. Pandurang, *Atmacharitra*, pp.45-47.

attention to either the 'duplicity' or 'illiberalism' underlying education policy. But we need to ask ourselves how did it transpire, that despite such examples, the colonial government was petitioned on many occasions by Phule and other low-caste leaders, for redressal against the upper-caste designs to monopolise opportunities through which the 'benevolent' British government had intended to promote the welfare 'all' its subjects. Later parts of the chapter will take up the specific question about the conditions under which a low-caste counter-discourse emerged within the colonial public domain. But more generally, the 'liberalising' stimulus to native society came not so much from an actual articulation of egalitarian, non-hierarchical principles of social organisation within the educational discourse. Rather, it was realised only indirectly through the altered modes and regulation of cultural production and relations of bilingual literacy presumed by colonialism. Through this redefinition, the colonial government was able to wrest complete authority to sanction and regulate the substantive content and the distribution of appropriate literate skills, and even to arbitrate upon what in fact did and did not constitute 'knowledge'. This centralisation of authority to regulate upon cultural matters and the distribution of literacy carried potentially radical conceptual possibilities. Educational discourse was able to suggest possibilities of equal access not through any purposive commitments towards such principles either in its financial outlays or actual pedagogic practices, but more by inaugurating a minimal discursive space between the colonial administration and native elites to oversee the collaborative arrangements necessary to the elaboration of colonial ideology. This discursive space was founded in the guise of the Native Education Societies, set up in each of the three presidencies. Despite being mindful of regional differences, these societies were uniformly charged with the task of establishing the basic organisational infrastructure for schooling of native subjects. They were to be entrusted with the responsibility of setting up schools that would be managed according to standardised principles, as well as of the preparation of appropriate reading material and books to be used in these 'reformed' native schools .

The Bombay Native School Book and School Society[17], as it came to be called after it entered its mature phase under Elphinstone's stewardship from 1823 onwards, had a clear two-fold structure that reflected the official view of the native world. It was presided over by the Governor with four European officials as vice-presidents. Besides them, there were an equal

[17]The initiative towards native education first began through an organisation called the Bombay Education Society set up in 1816. This was a Christian organisation to provide education for destitute children, especially the offspring of Englishmen, and any natives who wished to take advantage of the school. This Society made its first efforts to introduce the teaching of the native languages in 1820, but found that the main obstacle to be the great 'deficiency of school books'. In 1821 the Native School and School Book Committee was formed as a branch of the Bombay Education Society with Mounstuart Elphinstone as its President, and provisions for a joint fund of subscriptions from both Europeans and wealthy or interested natives. The Society was restructured in January 1827, when, in view of the more 'exalted' scope of its operations, it began to be called by the more general name of Bombay Native Education Society. As the scale of its operations expanded, this Society was reconstituted first into the Board of Education and later in the early 1850s into the Department of Public Instruction. This summary is drawn from ed. R.V. Parulekar, Selections from the Educational Records (Bombay) (1815-1840), Part II, Bombay, 1955.

number of Europeans and native members in the managing committee comprising of a total of twenty-four members[18]. Significantly, the native section of the Bombay Committee gave 'equal' community-wise representation to the Parsees, Hindus and Muslims[19]. These Education Societies were the first arenas of their kind to be set up in the colonial world and they were crucial to the ideological mediation between the colonial administration and native society. As such, the Native Education Society also performed a more indirect and perhaps unintended, purpose in that it demonstrated in a concrete way to the natives how the modalities of colonial power worked , and also, how it was to be approached. The members of the Society were of course nominated by the administration, but in adopting operational procedures based on principles of voluntary association, these Societies proved to be a valuable, first-hand lesson in the way colonial power legitimated and reproduced itself. As such, the Education Society could usefully be regarded as a crucial dialogic arena that aimed at enacting and also instituting an abbreviated version of the modalities of a quasi-civil society type of political order in the colonial context. Moreover, as the education society was intended as something of a mediating body through which the colonial government intended to channel its interaction with the rest of native society, its operational procedures would be taken as models for the fora that the new intelligentsia would subsequently establish to articulate native interests. The rest of the argument in this section tries to show how the Bombay Native School Book and School Society tried to mirror the operational principles of liberal politics in its attempts to negotiate with native interest and involve native elites and literate personnel in its agenda. As such, the institution of the Native Education Society was the first, albeit limited, and for a long time to come, the only discursive forum in the colonial context for the negotiation of responsibility and interests between a sovereign, modern governmental apparatus and native 'private' initiative.

As noted above, Mountstuart Elphinstone played a major part in defining the direction that education policy was to take in the Bombay Presidency. His assessment of the necessity of native 'improvement' through education was based on his familiarity with the circumstances in Western India acquired through his leading role in the military campaign that led to the Peshwa's defeat in 1818. He realised that the colonial plans for education needed, at the very

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[18]The ideological initiatives of the education project were to be mediated through a small number of influential natives. These objectives were re-iterated in 1845 when the Education Society was dissolved to form the Board of Education. An official document issued then described the special nature of its ideological mission as follows : 'The main principle on which the Board seek to diffuse the benefits of national education, is to endeavour to obtain the co-operation of influential Natives in the efforts made by Government to improve the moral condition of the people.' , Rules and Regulations of the Educational Establishments under the Board of Education, 1845' in ed. J.A. Richey, Selections from Educational Records 1840-59, Part II, Calcutta, 1921, p. 159.

[19] The composition of the Education Society reflected the colonial view of the South Asian social structure. Historians of the later colonial period have spoken of how the colonial administration's attempts to map the indigenous social structure through categories derived from liberal principles resulted in the thickening of boundaries between major religious groupings. Such perceptions acquired institutional significance and were powerfully reproduced through policy measures, especially in the field of education. This would reinforce my argument here about how the Native Education Society served as a mediating ground through which relations between the colonial state and native society were structured.

least, to contend with the memories of state patronage to *brahmins* and brahmanical learning under the Peshwas through the annual ceremonial awards of the *Dakshina*[20]. Also, considering that British rule was attempting to replace a *brahmin* government, he felt it would be unwise to allow missionaries the same measure of liberty within the field of native education as they had been allowed in Bengal. As such the government needed to put in place a well co-ordinated and prudent plan to provide the necessary ideological re-orientations. Elphinstone's Minute of 1823 can be read as the earliest full statement of multiple and complex intentions that the colonial imagination tried to bring together within the education project aimed at forging a 'commonsense' that would ideologically unite the new rulers with at least a section of the native population :

> ...the dangers to which we are exposed from the sensitive character of the religion of the natives, and the slippery foundations of our government, owing to the total separation between us and our subjects, require the adoption of some measures to counteract them; and the only one is, to remove their prejudice, and to communicate our own principles and opinions by the diffusion of a rational education. [21]

Once the overall imperative for these operations to redefine the structure of the native social world was admitted, the next set of considerations were about the steps through which the intended results could best be secured, with minimal expense to the government :

It is probably, some considerations like these that have induced the Legislature to render it imperative on the Indian Government to spend a portion of its revenue in the promotion of education ... It may be urged that expense, however well applied, ought not to fall on the government; that those who are to benefit by education ought to pay for it themselves ...[22]

Clearly, the construction of colonial discourse and a scheme for 'native education' represented an ideological project of unprecedented dimensions. It was crucial to involve native interests in the construction of colonial ideology. It was not enough for the colonial imagination to merely evoke native interest; that curiosity would be most effective if it could also induce a willingness to invest to procure the 'benefits'. Colonial officials admitted that the '*first and greatest difficulty*

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[20] The *Dakshina* was established by the Peshwas as part of their policy to encourage brahmanical learning. The *Dakshina* were the annual ceremonial awards made during the auspicious month of *shravan* as donations and gifts to various categories of *brahmins* : the *shastris* and *vydicks* were apparently honoured at the Peshwa's Court, after being examined on their learning; the lower brahmanical orders of the *bhats* and *bhikshuks*, many of whom travelled considerable distances, had to queue outside a large ceremonial *pandal*, erected outside the famous *Parvati* temple outside the capital city, to receive their donations. At the time of the take-over, the total donations made through the *Dakshina* apparently amounted to about five lakh rupees. For an account of estimates of the *Dakshina* expenditure during the Peshwa period, see V. K. Bhave, Peshwekalin Maharashtra, Indian Council of Historical Research, Delhi, 1976 .

[21] Extract Minute by the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay dated 13 December 1823 in ed. A. Basu, Indian Education in Parliamentary Papers, Bombay, 1952, p.209.

[22] Elphinstone's Minute of December 13 1823 in ed. A. Basu, Indian Education in Parliamentary Papers, Bombay, 1952, p.209.

(was) to create that demand for knowledge [23]. The discourse on native education cleared a space for itself through audaciously casting its intended addressees as 'wanting' and 'inferior', who could only be redeemed through its own intervention. Adopting a strategy that was to be internalised by native reformist discourse, educational policy, spoke of the *'want of preparation among those for whose benefit it (was) intended'* [24]. In representing itself as answering native demand for a knowledge that could also claim for itself the status of superior moral truths, the discourse of colonial education clearly showed the similarities it shared with the logic of capitalistic rationality and missionary Christian rhetoric. Naturally then, the cognitive value thus being offered through colonial education could be procured through native investments to fund the proposals outlined by the new government. Thus it was only expedient that the colonial government refrained from assuming direct financial responsibility towards native education. Instead, colonial ideology was able to strategically represent the administration as simultaneously authoring but also authorising the underlying discourse on native education, but then only participating as one among many actors to co-ordinate efforts to create the 'common' arena of the Education Society:

> If it be admitted that the assistance of Government is necessary, the next question is, how best can it be afforded, and there are two which present themselves for consideration. The Government may take the education of the natives entirely on itself, or it may increase the means and stimulate the exertions of the Society already formed for the purpose. The best result will probably be produced by a combination of these two modes of proceeding . Many of the measures necessary for the diffusion of education must depend on the spontaneous zeal of individuals, and could not be effected by any resolutions of the government. The promotion of those measures, therefore, should be committed to the Society; but there are others which require an organised system and a greater degree of regularity and permanence than can be expected from any plan, the success of which is to depend upon personal character. This last branch therefore must be undertaken by the Government.[26]

It was evident from these early efforts to institute a space for a system of colonial education aimed at the *diffusion of* knowledge among natives would also involve shifts in the underlying principles of social organisation. However, although colonial officials were unanimous in their views on the basic need for such a project, there were differences in perception about the actual method to be adopted, especially about the extent and the nature of the responsibility

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[23]Elphinstone Minute in ed. A. Basu, Indian Education in Parliamentary Papers, p.209.

[24] Elphinstone's Minute of 1823 in ed. A. Basu, p.209.

[25]Elphinstone Minute, p.209.

[26] ibid., p.197.

that the colonial administration ought to take upon itself. In the Bombay Presidency, this debate over the issue of the government's involvement was cast as the conflict between the 'conservative' and the 'enlightened' positions represented by Francis Warden and the Governor Mountstuart Elphinstone respectively. Francis Warden argued from a more orthodox *laissez-faire* position that maintained that government initiatives towards education ought to be minimal and should mainly proceed through regulating the rules of 'open' competition for official positions open to natives. Conceding that

> Of the necessity that exists for the diffusion of an improved system of education among natives, no difference of opinion can well exist, but the best means of doing so involves a difficult and delicate problem.[27]

Warden argued that to bring about the necessary ideological links between the colonial government and its subject population, the former only needed to stimulate the 'market' for native labour schooled in the English language and European knowledge. All that policy required to do was to create the conditions for a surplus supply of such skills by 'exciting the zeal of individuals'

> by holding out a preference to official employment to those who may qualify themselves by a particular course of study, rather than be too forward in incurring the greater portion of the expense in diffusing education.[28]

The extensive scope to use local skills in subordinate bureaucratic positions would help cultivate the necessary links between the colonial state and native society and this would also alter the prevailing custom of hereditary employment.[29] Warden had little patience with Elphinstone's argument for the elaboration of a discursive arena between the administration and native society[30]. On the other hand, Elphinstone's views, which eventually prevailed, emphasised the need for an extensive plan to extend the ideological project through the use of the vernaculars. However, this did not imply an actual concern or a plan for the universal spread of literacy. Rather both Elphinstone and his successor John Malcolm realised that it would be difficult to realise the ideological objectives of the education project without also developing the means for creating a standardised cultural order within native society. And this could not be conceivable without use of the local languages. Thus Elphinstone's Minute of 1823

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[27] 'Minute by Francis Warden, Esq., Member of Council at Bombay' dated December 29 1823 in ed. A. Basu, Indian Education in Parliamentary Papers, p.212.

[28] 'Minute by Francis Warden' dated December 29 1823 in ed. A. Basu, Indian Education in Parliamentary Papers, p.212.

[29] 'Minute by Francis Warden' in ed. A. Basu, p.213.

[30] The Minute by Francis Warden quoted here shows his strong opposition to the plan of encouraging composition of 'useful' reading material in the vernaculars at government expense as part of the project of native improvement. He also had reservations about letting natives learn printing techniques. Ironically, such a view that advocated that the colonial administration should take on only a minimal responsibility towards native education and the dissemination of colonial ideology constituted the more reactionary position within the official debate.

contained a series of exhaustive of proposals that serve to impressively enunciate the full scope of the appropriative intentions underlying the colonial project :

> The following are the principal measures required for the diffusion of knowledge among the natives: 1st to improve the mode of teaching at the native schools, and to increase the number of schools; 2nd, to supply them with school books; 3rd, to hold out some encouragement to the lower orders of natives; 4th, to establish schools for teaching the European sciences and improvements in the higher branches of education; 5th to provide for the preparation and publication of books of moral and physical science in native languages; 6th, to establish schools for the purpose of teaching English to those disposed to pursue it as a classical language, and as a means of acquiring a knowledge of European discoveries; 7th, to hold forth encouragement to the natives in the pursuit of those last branches of knowledge.[31]

Elphinstone's Minute was a masterful statement that demonstrated the ability of the colonial administration to translate its deliberate vision into a internally consistent and comprehensive set of pragmatic measures systematically geared to achieving the desired outcome. It already contained clear hints of the hierarchical asymmetries in the relations between English and the vernacular being established through these measures. Nevertheless, the document only formalised what had been already in been implicitly recognised through the practice of the Bombay Education Society until then, as is evident from the following extract from their report for 1821:

> In imparting to the Natives useful knowledge to any extent, and with the hope of any good and permanent effect, it is evident the language of the country must be the chief and proper vehicle...it is impossible to look with any hopes of success, to imparting knowledge generally and usefully in a language which must remain to the greater portion a foreign one.[32]

Although the 'minimalist' position advocated by Warden was superseded by the argument for greater state intervention, the differences between these two perspectives were not finally resolved at this point, and were to re-emerge soon. For, once the idea of education through the use of the vernaculars had been admitted[33], the debate tended to increasingly centre around

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[31] Elphinstone Minute in ed. A. Basu, p.197.

[32] Extract from Sixth Annual Report of the Bombay Education Society for 1821, pp.20-26 in ed. R.V. Parulekar, Selections from the Educational Records (Bombay) (1815-1840), Part II, Bombay, 1955, p.27.

[33] For details of the divergence in the early directions followed by educational policy in the Bengal and Bombay Presidencies see Parulekar's essay, 'The Medium of Instruction' in ed. J.P. Naik, The Educational Writings of R. V. Parulekar, Asia Publishing House, Bombay 1957, pp.1-40.

questions and difficulties of translation involved in the preparation of instructional material in the vernacular. Clearly, the relation thus being established between English and the regional languages of the sub-continent through these initiatives to create a colonial literate constituency had crucial implications for the emerging political hierarchy within native society. The extent of official patronage to vernacular education was critical as it effectively determined the extent to which the new learning would be *'diffused'* within the native population. Furthermore, the ability of colonial power to apparently extend its ideological domain infinitely through a set of measures that contained implicit tendencies towards a laicised, vernacular literacy, seemed to hold out advantages to both the government and the emerging native intelligentsia. These interests were not identical, but nevertheless they created a common discursive ground for the negotiation of hegemonic possibilities. This apparent possibility within the new regime to open up a minimal discursive space between rulers and ruled, contained a strong imaginative stimulus towards suggesting liberal, universalistic norms for the distribution of cultural and political opportunity. The next chapter, which discusses the emerging structure of bilingual literacy, will try to draw out the implications of a liberalism that remained predicated upon official support towards translation and the foundation of a sphere of vernacular literacy. However, given the ideological imperatives underlying colonial education, the emphasis within early policy statements on the extension of education through the use of the vernaculars could not remain unaltered. I shall briefly try to outline this shift away from developing vernacular literacy and the official translation project, after the establishment of the University in 1857 later in this chapter, before taking up the theme more fully in the next one.

Given its ideological designs, an important measure of the success of Elphinstone's scheme would be the extent of native support that his proposals were able to able to elicit. And here, Elphinstone's record is indeed impressive, for he was able to secure the collaboration of 'representatives' drawn from native elites, including handsome financial commitments for a series of subscriptions towards the education project. The terms upon which these funds were committed testify not only to the force of colonial ideology but also provide a good indication of the native interests in the project :

These differences were also the subject of comment in the contemporary press. For a comparative account of the initiatives to translate and print schoolbooks in the vernacular in the Bengal and Bombay Presidencies see report in the January 26 1837 issue of the missionary paper, Friend of India published from Serampore and quoted in Parulekar, 'The Medium of Instruction' in The Educational Writings of R. V. Parulekar, p.8. A similar point was made by Colonel Sykes is also quoted by Parulekar, 'The vernacular school books in use in Bombay are objects of praise by the Bengal Government. They consist of translations into Maratha, Gujarathi and Canarese, of treatises on algebra, geometry, trigonometry, grammar, history, natural philosophy, general knowledge and moral instruction.', Col. Sykes, Statistics of Educational Institutions of the East India Company in India , 1844, p.73.

> Your Society will be pleased to bear in mind, what the Natives have desired us particularly to express, that by the study of the English language, they do not contemplate the supercession of the Vernacular dialects of the country, in the promotion of Native Education; but that they regard it merely as a help to the diffusion of the European Arts and Sciences among them, by means of translations by those who have acquired a thorough acquaintance with it; and as a branch of classical education to be esteemed and cultivated in this country as the classical languages of Greece and Rome are in the universities of Europe.[34]

The emphasis on the translation of modern discourses shows how the project of colonial education tended to converge upon considerations of language. I would like to conclude this section with some reflections upon why language was such a critical factor within the discursive arenas created through colonial literacy, and ultimately within the emerging structure of colonial-modern identities. This would also be a good point at which to make some observations on the usefulness of the concept of the public sphere in an analysis of the formation of colonial modernity.

Language and the Colonial Public Sphere :

The concepts of 'civil society' and 'public sphere', as derived from the history of the modern West, subsume several large and overlapping social processes, such as the formation of the intimate sphere of the bourgeois nuclear family, the extended networks of literacy through the formation of vernacular reading publics and the creation of large-scale, impersonal collaborative social structures through the growth of the market. We would need to exercise due care in presuming any of these processes to be part of a modernity engendered primarily through discursive shifts instituted through education policy. In showing that the colonial state undertook responsibility of its native subjects even before Western states launched mass education initiatives directed towards their own populations, Gauri Vishwanathan's work[35] has sensitised us to the variable chronology of events leading up to the emergence of modern education systems in nineteenth century Britain and colonial India. Such a 'premature' intervention by the colonial state into the field of native education also serves as an index of the burden borne by

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[34] Letter dated 1-12-1827 from the Committee representing the Native Community to the secretary to the Bombay Native Education Society excerpted in 'Extract from the Fourth report for 1827 of the Bombay Native Education Society, pp. 39-47 in R.V. Parulekar, Selections from the Educational Records (Bombay) (1815-1840), Bombay, 1955, p.109.

It would be interesting to compare this with Raja Rammohan's famous letter of 1823 to the Calcutta Government petitioning the British rulers against their decision to support traditional 'Oriental' learning at the Calcutta Sanskrit College and asking them to instead introduce the teaching of European science. In Bombay although the official policy did contain moves to 'preserve' traditional native scholarship at the Poona Sanskrit College, it is worth noting how little that aspect enters into the early discourse of education policy as it was shaped in the provincial capital of Bombay, perhaps on account of the unique cosmopolitan and mercantilist character of the island city.

[35] Gauri Vishwanathan, Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India, Faber and Faber, London, 1993.

the education project in the making of colonial modernity. Given the general ambition to govern native society through a selective conferment of modernity, it was not enough for colonial policy to simply cull an appropriate sub-set of discourses from the 'full' repertoire of modernity; rather these also had to be disseminated as a hegemonic programme of 'useful' learning among the natives. But any hopes of colonial discourse acquiring hegemonic influence would depend on its ability to render itself more generally accessible and this immediately brought up the question of its translation into the vernacular.

This necessarily pre-supposed the availability of a standardised, normalised form of the vernacular through which this ambitious programme of dissemination could occur. But that would serve as a useful reminder that included among the complex functions that the Native Education Society was entrusted with, was the task of also simultaneously producing a normalised standardised version of the vernacular, through which the reach of the official discourses could be extended to wider audiences. The availability of print and the evident ability of the colonial imagination to conceive of a standardised educational programme throughout the sub-continent lent an air of feasibility to the colonial ambitions of producing a potentially uniform commonsense within native society. Thus, the task of producing extended networks of literate subjects integral to the scheme of liberal modern rationality was, within the story of colonial modernity, displaced and subsumed into the official schemes to monopolise cultural authority under a standardised educational project. This discursive space soon also became the site for a native reformist discourse that tried to appropriate and naturalise the affective and disciplinary 'benefits' associated with the bourgeois intimate sphere as 'improvements' to the indigenous social world. In this way, the emerging public discourses were predominantly concerned with deliberating upon the superiority of western 'useful' learning and the need to develop the native languages to suitably vernacularise this learning so as to ultimately effect a 'general improvement' of native society.

But there were serious limits to the possibilities of the ideological extension of liberal discourses through colonial education for 'native benefit' in this way. For, the rule of colonial difference allowed little room for the replication of the growth of large-scale vernacular reading publics that had formed a crucial element of the emergence of modernity in the West. The deployment of liberal ideology within the design of colonial governance fundamentally precluded any earnest application of market principles towards the expansion of the native economy. With the basic conditions for the emergence of what Benedict Anderson has termed 'print capitalism'[36] not available, colonial education was being entrusted with performing more than one 'surrogate' function in having to re-create the effects of the extended, impersonal, communicative networks

[36] Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, Verso, London, 1991.

that developed alongside the growth of the market in the West[37]. Colonial education was intended to rationalise liberal ideas about private property, but we have to bear in mind that it had to do this *in the absence* of concomitant processes of individuation and modern economic principles of extended impersonal collaboration. As such, there is room to argue that the changes engineered through colonial education policy could be better 'read' through the Habermasian concept of the public sphere, rather than described through the idea of civil society.

This would be backed by the existing evidence that what impressed colonial intellectuals most deeply about their contact with western modernity were the communicative possibilities that they felt had opened up between native society and the West, but also, more specifically the scope for the publicity of the exercise of political power under the new regime. Native elites participated with interest in the inauguration of a collaborative discursive arena of the Native Education Society in Bombay because they were motivated by the anticipation of definite political advantages. These were not necessarily merely in the nature of immediate, pragmatic advantages that proximity with the new rulers would bring. My discussion of early native assessments of British rule will bring out that colonial intellectuals sought to secure cognitive benefit but also aspired to learn the ways of political modernity. The commitment of native resources into colonial education was borne out of the recognition that the cognitive and communicative networks intrinsic to colonial power represented a serious challenge to the indigenous social order that could not be ignored[38]. Consequently, issues of language and the possession of the new literacy were critical to this intelligentsia as they sought to master the norms and methods of the new political arena. Not surprisingly, questions of language and literacy became crucial sites over which the colonial intelligentsia sought to negotiate their position in the emerging political structure.

English as the New 'High' Language of Colonial Modernity :

[37] Kumar's analysis rightly suggests that the ideological agenda of colonial education was linked to the problems of transferring bourgeois ideas of private property and economic order into the colonial situation and 'overcoming' the 'deficiencies' of indigenous culture. However, I would argue that to read this telescoping of functions into the education project as a 'mask' for the drain of the indigenous economy by the metropolitan bourgeoisie, as Gauri Vishwanathan's work tends to, is to elide over the complex contradictions underlying the making of colonial modernity. See Krishna Kumar, The Political Agenda of Education, pp.14-15.

[38] Chapter four deals with the coming of print and the making of a modern vernacular discourse in Marathi. There, I qualify the point being made here by pointing out that wealthy, Marathi-speaking, hindu *seths* were much more forthcoming in their support of the new schools and the Education Society than they were to invest in Marathi printing presses. Interestingly, the extensive involvement of the Parsi community in the China trade, as well their investment in colonial trading companies created a market for the circulation of information related to the movement of goods on the world market and served as a strong inducement for native investment in the first newspapers in Gujrati. In comparison, the participation of the *seths* from Marathi-speaking communities in the colonial trade was insignificant and the emergence of the Marathi newspaper press had to await the rise of the first generation of colonial-educated intellectuals.

The introduction of English represented much more than the intention to produce a subordinate bureaucracy. Similarly, English thus was more than simply being the new political 'high' language that sought to displace Persian as the language of official business and record-keeping. What marked the coming of English apart from the other languages previously introduced into the subcontinent was the nature of the relation of authority that English was able to assume vis-à-vis the regional tongues. This was no doubt allied to its political status, especially as the new state was capable of arrogating to itself the exclusive authority to legitimate cultural production in ways that pre-colonial regimes were not equipped to do. But the status of English as the official symbol of colonial authority derived not only from its political superiority; its position vis-à-vis the local languages was defined as much through its standing as the language of the authoritative discourses of modernity. In fact the making of colonial power and its self-representation through the authoritative discourses of colonial modernity was predicated largely upon its conceptual and technical resources to imagine and institute a relation of dependence between English and the local languages. The entry of English brought about a radical re-assessment of the situation and the capacities of the vernaculars which would now be evaluated not so much in comparison with the 'indigenous' high languages of Persian and Sanskrit, but rather through their competence to extend the discursive frameworks represented by English. The absence of the resources within native languages to articulate the concepts and thought processes germane to modernity sufficed to precipitate a judgmental discourse about their 'underdeveloped' and 'primitive' condition. If the indigenous languages had to retain their cultural legitimacy, then they would have to demonstrate the potential to emerge out of their 'backwardness'.

Thus fundamental to the establishment of colonial power was its design and capability to redefine the structure of authority implicit in the sphere of cognitive and linguistic practices on the subcontinent. The discursive domain represented by English constituted the apex of the colonial public sphere, and this was clearly reflected in the structure of command within the Native Education Society as well. However, the influence of the circulation of discursive practices through English depended on their extension through immediate translation into the regional vernaculars. Such a relation of immediate proximity between the new 'high' language of English and the native vernaculars was in marked contrast to the nature of the relations of subordination and dependence between the pre-colonial 'high' languages of Sanskrit and Persian and the pre-print forms of the local languages. The linguistic hierarchy set up through the political exigencies of colonial rule clearly hinged upon the developing bilingual relation between the 'high' language of English and the 'low' languages, namely, the regional vernaculars as they strained to acquire their standard, normalised forms.

It was crucial that the bilingual relation between the language of colonial power and modernity, namely, English, and the languages of the subject populations, the regional vernaculars, was

set up and played out through the field of colonial education. This also meant that the nature of the discursive exchange and distribution between English and the vernaculars would be primarily structured through the financial and political considerations that would determine the official allocations to the education project. This aspect of the distribution of financial support to the two linguistic sectors within colonial education was to be a crucial dimension of the bilingual dynamic that lay at the core of colonial modernity. Thus the emerging linguistic economy did not represent some abstract, two-fold division between English and the vernacular spheres; for the process of standardisation set up a further structure of cultural and political privilege and corresponding marginality within each case of vernacular standardisation. The distance of the various pre-colonial linguistic forms from the particular one that approximated most closely to what gained currency as the standard version determined their proximity to the emerging literate networks as well as to the locus of symbolic power being instituted. Moreover as these processes of linguistic normalisation were channelled through the education project, which also regulated access to all opportunities of advancement under the new regime, knowledge of these new linguistic and literate skills virtually defined the line between inclusion and exclusion in the emerging arena of colonial-modern cultural and political articulation. Any argument about the liberalising or egalitarian influence of the education project would have to consider the asymmetrical and hierarchical relation that it established between the English and the vernacular spheres and its role in structuring the crucial divisions between marginality and mobility within the native social world.

Extending the Colonial Public Sphere : Laicisation and the Possibility of a Caste Alliance in Pre-1857 Western India.

Petitions and Regulating Access :

I have argued that the notion of universal literacy was not explicitly foregrounded as a part of the discourse of colonial education policy. But, nevertheless, premised as the education project was on social principles that transcended boundaries of particular religious traditions, the new proposals contained covert but potent possibilities to suggest notions of a 'common' discursive ground outside of local, specific affiliation. As pointed out in Chapter one, there exists some evidence for the emergence of secular tendencies within the social and cultural processes in pre-colonial western India. But this notwithstanding, traditions of cultural reproduction on the sub-continent had still retained strong links with notions of religious practice and particular devotional communities. The radical impulse of colonial education was most strongly conveyed through the possibility that it opened up for a cognitive space where cultural production was no longer situated within fluid but particularistic boundaries. While we need to learn much more about pre-modern ways of mapping perceptions of self and others, yet, it can be maintained that notions of universal equality grounded in the idea of individual rights radically challenged pre-

modern conceptions of community. It was mainly to the extent that the education project echoed such ideas of a common, non-particularistic system of knowledge and cultural reproduction that transcended religious boundaries that it suggested radical social possibilities to native intellectuals and the 'general' body of colonial subjects that it targeted as the object of its discourse. It was in this secondary sense that colonial education invoked the figure of an 'all', rather than directly being the site either for the substantive advocacy or the practice of principles of egalitarianism or inclusiveness.

Processes underlying the formation of modern collectivities are characterised by the dual logics of the agglomeration of individual selves and processes of 'othering'. But the telescoping of liberal principles to constitute the pedagogic rationale of colonial ideology allowed only a marginal scope for the emergence of individuated selves. In analysing the effects of modern ideas on the subcontinent, scholars have therefore argued[39] that the displacement of liberalism as colonial ideology resulted in the appropriation of the modern idiom of universal and equal rights not by individuals, but rather by communities. In principle, colonial discourse and its pedagogic elaboration through educational policy aimed to produce individual subjects through the ideology of improvement. But the distribution of its benefits was intended to reach not *all individuals*, but rather at best, representatives drawn from *all communities* that were taken to constitute native society. Thus, the limited scope for the transfer of modern egalitarian possibilities through colonialism was over-written by tendencies towards the reification and redefintion of group boundaries within the native social world. Not only did the levelling of social rank and hierarchy remain a remote possibility within colonial modernity; instead the pattern of negotiation of the opportunities for mobility through colonial education by native elites accentuated the highly asymmetric appropriation of the new political vocabularies centred around ideas of equal rights and distribution. Consider, for example, the address by native princes and chiefs to the outgoing Governor Elphinstone, at the Education Society meeting in November 1827 while handing over the native subscription[40] for the establishment of the two prestigious English professorships in Bombay. It spoke admiringly of the government's intentions to *extend* learning among *all classes of natives :*

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[39] Sudipta Kaviraj, 'Religion and Modernity in India', paper presented in conference on Identity, Modernity, Politics, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, 14-15 September 1994; Rajeev Bhargava, 'The Right to Culture', Social Scientist, Vol. 18, No. 10, October 1990.

[40] By the end of the 1827, the subscription for the establishment of Elphinstone Professorships had yielded Rs. 2,29,656 in Bombay currency. These contributions had come from many places outside Bombay city, including some donations being made from Bengal. See Fourth Report of Bombay Native Education Society for 1827, Bombay, 1828, p.35. A detailed list of donors is attached in an Appendix to that Report.

> But having beheld with admiration for so long a period the affable and encouraging manners, the freedom from prejudice, the consideration at all times evinced for the interests and welfare of the people of this country ....the constant endeavours to extend amongst them the inestimable advantages of intellectual and moral improvements, the commanding abilities applied to ensure permanent amelioration in conditions of all classes and to promote their prosperity on the soundest principles.[41]

The vernacular discourse of the newly educated elite would soon contain ostensibly similar references to universal categories like *sarv lok,* but it would be inappropriate to read these as instances of an unequivocal enunciation of principles of egalitarian and universal access. For clearly it is difficult to identify much evidence within either the cultural or the social record of early colonial society, that allowed for a positing of a non-hierarchical social order. In making efforts to extend the reach of the new discourses through the vernacular press, especially through the publication of newspapers and 'useful' journals, the new colonial-educated intellectuals indeed showed their interest in spreading the new knowledges and enlarging the audience for the new ideas. I discuss these attempts by colonial intellectuals to stretch the narrow demographic limits of the official education project through the vernacular press and the problems of creating a colonial culture in vernacular print publicity more fully in Chapter four. But the space opened through the education project was an important site not only for the redefintion of indigenous collective identities under colonial rule but also for structuring possibilities of contestation vis-à-vis the state as well among rival claimants within native society as well. As such, there were attempts by native groups not directly represented within the structure of the Native Education Society to stake claims to new opportunities, using the new communicative rationality and legitimative vocabularies. The rest of this chapter will analyse some such attempts by non-elite groups, as a way of examining the emerging structure of contestation within public arena of colonial politics.

Native attempts to respond to official educational policy took three major forms : petitions to the colonial government by educated/literate persons seeking that their compositions be patronised through being prescribed on the curriculum in government schools or simply be purchased by the Education Department for circulation in reading rooms throughout the Presidency, petitions from politically aware, relatively homogeneous groups seeking the government's sanction to set up an aided school in the locality, or petitions from contending groups for a share in the funds allocated to specific institutions or for certain specified purposes. Initially these petitions were addressed to the Education Society and later to the Board of Education which effectively became the centralised authority through which the admissibility of claims to the new

[41] Fourth Report of the Bombay Native Education Society for 1827, Bombay, 1828, p.33.

arrangements were determined. The Board's Regulations of 1845 specified that new schools would be established through petitions from inhabitants of towns or school districts, whose population was estimated at not less than 2,000 provided that the following conditions were met :

> First : The petitioners must agree to provide and keep in repair a school house, and the building for which being neither a temple, chowree or any other place of public resort) must , be sufficiently spacious ...
>
> Second : The petitioners must agree to furnish the school house with a small wooden table, two plain chairs, and a plain box with a padlock for the preservation of the school books.
>
> Third : The petitioners must also agree that each boy would pay one anna monthly.[42]

With the bureaucratic arrangements for the education project effectively being the main civil interface with colonial power outside of the courts, the alacrity and anxiety shown by various native groups in demanding access to the new schools is hardly surprising. With perhaps the exception of the recently displaced ruling classes, wherever persons with sufficient English could be found, petitions asking for a government-patronised school in the area that would teach the new 'useful' learning were quite common.[43] The benefit of a standardised education in the vernacular through state initiative certainly represented a novel political situation. Clearly, the design of educational policy had succeeded in creating a market for the new knowledges, and it was thus by acquiring the 'consent' of native communities in affirming that cycle of demand that colonial power was able to put in place its centralised network to systematically regulate claims by native groups to access the new idioms of cultural propriety and political legitimacy.

Vernacular Literacy and Contestation over the *Dakshina:*

Official efforts towards disseminating the new knowledges through the education project operated in the ways outlined above. These tendencies towards centralisation reinforced the

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[42]On the other hand, English schools could be established, in *zillah* towns, but if funds at the disposal of the Board permitted and 'sufficient zeal exists amongst the inhabitants to defray a portion of the expenses. If inhabitants of any *zillah* town wished to have an English school, then they had to 'subscribe a sum of not under Rs. 500 for the purchase or erection of a school-house', upon which, subject to the report of its Superintendent, 'the Board will advance a sum of money equal to that subscribed and will proceed to establish a school upon the terms and conditions to be laid down by the Board.' See 'Rules and Regulations of the Educational Establishments under the Board of Education, 1845' in ed. J.A. Richey, Selections from Educational Records 1840-59, Calcutta, 1921, pp.161-163.

[43] Especially in the early years of the Education Society's existence, the nature of the requests in such petitions could vary quite widely, and the official response, too, was far from standardised. These petitions were mostly forwarded through the Collectors. Sometimes the plea was for a schoolmaster who could teach in a particular language, ranging from Persian to Portuguese, common to the group making the request. At other times, the government could decide, at the Collector's recommendation, to take over a local school.

radical potential of other ideas prevalent within current official discourse to alter the nature of communicative networks as well as the location of learned/literate communities within native society. The creation of a bilingual structure for the dissemination of the new learning created a distinct possibility for the vernacularization of the new discourses. It was in the possibility of giving vernacular textuality a new orientation and in making the vernaculars enunciate discourses of modernity that early colonial intellectuals in Western India had glimpsed the potential for the making of a laicised knowledge. It was quite evident that access and marginality from the sites where the new vernacular discourses were to be produced would determine questions of status and privilege within the new political order. This accentuated the political significance of the emerging vernacular sphere in complex ways, even as it paradoxically highlighted its inescapable vulnerability on account of its destiny to 'grow' in the shadow of English. Either way, it seemed, the vernacular sphere ran the risk of political ignominy : on the one hand, the colonial intelligentsia was forced to confront the subordination of the vernacular sphere at the hands of English, but on the other hand, severance from the English sphere could now only lead to historical marginality and intellectual impoverishment. And yet, the emerging vernacular sphere owed its very existence to the inherent elitist limits of the scope of the English sphere. With the vernacular sphere thus assuming a critical importance as the overdetermined site for the possibilities of laicisation in the world of colonial literate politics, it was hardly surprising that the field of vernacular education and textuality became the nexus of irreconcilable, contesting claims from voices representing diverse interests within native society.

It is in this context that I propose to examine what was the most significant event among all the attempts from the Marathi-speaking moffussil areas to negotiate the centralised cultural authority vested in the Education Department. I refer to the prolonged debate over the distribution of the *Dakshina* and contestation by various groups from Pune in staking their claims to patronage from it. The story of the *Dakshina* fund almost formulaically reflects the trajectory of the official designs through the education project. It mirrors the crucial shifts in cultural patronage that colonial policy sought to effect and the altered structure of contestation that emerged. The record of the *Dakshina* under British rule[44] poignantly captures the ironies of the simultaneous laicisation and subalternisation of the vernacular sphere occurring under the

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[44] for details on the significance of the *Dakshina* fund see fn. 20 above. Elphinstone's 'Report on the Territories conquered from the Peshwa' declared the British intention to continue supporting the handing out of the annual *Dakshina* awards, as a mark of their 'respect for traditional native learning'. But the size of the fund was reduced from five lakh rupees in the Peshwa period to Rs. 50,000. and was now, instead to be used to formalise the study of the 'useful' branches of native learning at the newly-established Poona Sanskrit College. In the years after the take-over, the administration of the fund was the responsibility of the Office of the Deccan Commissioner, a little later it was handed over to the Poona Collector and in 1834 the college was entrusted to the Agent for the Sardars in the Deccan. See 'Minute on the Dukshina' by W. J. Hunter and Major Thomas Candy dated 30 Th. April 1850, in ed. Richey, Selections form Educational Records 1840-59, Calcutta 1921, pp.166-169.

Finally when official policy towards vernacular production underwent a major shift with the establishment of the University of Bombay in the late 1850s, the *Dakshina* was turned into monthly stipends for deserving students seeking a college education in English.

influence of English. Elphinstone was quick to realise the significance of the *Dakshina* in the cultural politics of the region, and declared at the time of the take-over in his Report that the British intended to continue the practice of giving out the *Dakshina* to learned *brahmins*, as its abolition would be greatly resented[45]. But the fund was now to be used to promoting proficiency in the more useful branches of native learning like law and mathematics by supporting a certain number of professors appointed to teach these subjects at the Pune Sanskrit College, established in 1821. But like similar institutions set up in the other Presidencies, soon the Poona Sanskrit College became the site for engineering shifts in the definitions and modes of holding native knowledge, and eventually paving the ground for the introduction of the rationale of colonial educational policy and modern discourses through English[46]. This restructuring of the policy over the *Dakshina* was aimed at creating a discursive and institutional space for the cognitive and linguistic hierarchies suitable for the exercise and maintenance of colonial power.

These attempts to redefine the content and forms of learning and languages of cultivation prevailing in the native world opened up gaps for the articulation of diverse claims from sections of the old intelligentsia as well as from the newly-schooled elite to secure a portion of the official grants meant for the patronage of native vernacular production. Importantly, it also poignantly brings out implications of the extension of the project of colonial literacy, which in principle at least, had represented an unprecedented opportunity for a less hierarchical distribution of knowledge. But, the extension of modernity into the hinterland, conceived thus as a pedagogic project, had deeply undemocratic implications, especially in its attempts to institute a cognitive structure governed through a centralised administrative apparatus, which could at best respond to local or marginal claims with a profound monologic bureaucratic indifference.

With few external avenues like trade and finance to establish their influence with the colonial government, the emerging new intelligentsia in Pune, unlike their counterparts in Bombay, depended almost directly on the British government for their position within local society. In a situation where norms of mediation and 'representative' government governed political practice only in principle, the rule of colonial difference ostensibly allowed for this kind of a direct link between modern intellectuals and state power. By the 1840s, there were signs that the colonial government's was preparing to withdraw its support to traditional brahmanical scholarship. This

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[45] Elphinstone, 'Report on the Territories Conquered from the Peshwa', in Selections from the Minutes and Official Writings of the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone', London , 1884, p.335.

[46] 'The object of the Pune College were stated by Mr. Chaplin, who as Commissioner of the Deccan had an hand in the inception of the college to be 'the encouragement and improvement of the useful parts of the Hindoo learning and also to introduce, as far as possible, the means of communicating to our new subjects such branches of European knowledge as they may be able and willing to receive...' quoted in 'Extract from Major Candy's Report of the Poona Sanskrit College' in ed. Richey, Selections form Educational Records 1840-59, p.155

Students and professors at the Pune Sanskrit College were employees of the government on monthly stipends and salaries. Attempts were made to standardise instruction through the adoption of bureaucratic procedures such as prescribed courses of study, regular time-tables and examinations.

group of colonial-modern intellectuals responded with a series of manouevres that demonstrated the contradictory ways in which the tension between mediation and collaboration characterising modern political processes was dislodged in the colonial context. These steps brought to the fore the confrontation between the custodians of the old learning, implicitly based on the hierarchies of *jati,* and the emerging community of colonial educated intellectuals who, for reasons that were both related to, but also sharply discontinuous with the earlier cultural order, constituted a severely elitist minority. However, significantly, numerical marginality did not possess an instrumental political significance within the pre-colonial political order in the same way it did for the new colonial intelligentsia who had to base their claims to legitimacy upon bourgeois principles of being the bearers of 'generally useful' skills that could potentially promote 'general enlightenment' of 'all classes'. Thus there were severe limitations upon the potential of this bunch of officially selected 'trainees' at the Pune English school to persuasively project themselves as agents of a generally disseminated cognitive order. As such, their advocacy of a more egalitarian culture to be established through vernacular production represented more of a programmatic imaginary.

This complicated the meanings of hegemonic negotiation in contradictory ways. Paradoxically, they could assert their claims to be mediating spokesmen between the colonial government and their 'unreformed' compatriots from a position that was at once politically privileged but also marked by social marginality. In advancing these claims for a political order based on principles of representative legitimacy, within the larger social structure, this cluster of colonial intellectuals had necessarily to rely on the support of 'lesser' groups in the social hierarchy. But curiously, their minority status also seemed to hold out definite advantages. For in becoming aware of their privileged position as intermediaries in the new political order, they also glimpsed the opportunity to gain an almost monopolistic hold over the avenues of access to proximity with state power. This lent their discourse an aggressively assertive tone, quite at variance with their actual numerical strength or their actual political influence over state policy. The last chapter will take up in a little more detail the complex links between the tone of militancy and intolerance in the emerging vernacular public discourse and the political subordination of vernacular intellectuals within the structure of colonial power . But here my argument will show how the official moves in the late 1840s to make over the *Dakshina* as a fund exclusively to finance the production of 'useful' vernacular texts created a poignantly short-lived opening for what can be termed a critical caste alliance between the English school elite and the lower caste constituency comprising mainly of the *mahar* and *mang* communities under Phule's leadership in Pune.

When the Pune Sanskrit College was established, it had been decided to divide what now constituted the *Dakshina* fund, the reduced total monies of Rs 50000, into two parts : Rs. 20000 would go to support the Sanskrit College and the larger remainder would be distributed

in the old customary fashion to men of classical Hindu learning. However, gradually, from the 1820s onwards, grants from this latter sum were curtailed on various counts, chief among the reasons given was the inadmissibility of the hereditary principle[47]. Upon first being established, the Poona Sanskrit College included a total of ten *vydicks* and *shastris* with eight assistant teachers and 100 stipendary students[48]. In 1824 an English class was attached to the College. The period 1834-36 saw the removal of the native Head of the Coilege as Principal, the important appointment of Major Candy to the position of the College Superintendent, the dismissal of the *vydicks* from their positions as Professors. A native Professor in Marathi was also appointed as it was thought most inappropriate that students of the college 'left it with a contempt for their mother tongue and without the ability to write even a common letter in it with propriety'[49]. This marked a significant step in the colonial government's intentions of patronising a system of laicized learning.

The 1849 controversy centred around the issue of the supercession of patronage for the study of traditional, *brahmanical* texts on account of the preference to the propagation of modern 'useful' learning through the vernacular. Despite the official line since 1835 that no new candidates were to be admitted for the pursuit of traditional studies, fearing resentment, the Government had continued to entertain individual petitions from sections of the traditional *literati* for meagre grants from the *Dakshina* monies. In 1849, word got around to the English-educated group [50] who met regularly at the Native General Library in Pune that the government

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[47] The existing Committee of *shastris* meant to examine applicants was dissolved in 1836 and the management of the fund was transferred to the Agent of Sardars in the Deccan. In 1837, it was announced that no new candidates would be admitted into the list of *Dakshina* awards, and also that Major Candy's pay would be defrayed out of the *Dakshina* fund monies. These measures provoked a series of petitions from the *brahmin* community who protested that 'the non-admission of candidates utterly changed the whole face of the *Dakshina* and the whole *brahmin* community was thrown into consternation as if deprived of a great and accustomed indulgence which continue to be shown to them from the beginning of Peshwa power and which best calculated to benefit the Hindoos and bless the government', quoted from 'Petition from *brahmin* inhabitants of Poona and the adjacent towns', January 1849, No. 1687 in Proceedings of the General Department for 1849.

[48] In its early years the College was headed by Raghuacharya, who was also the Professor of *Nyaya* was appointed as Principal. The staff comprised of five Professors of the *shastras* employed at Rs. 60 each and three Professors of the *Vedas* at a combined expense of Rs. 125 per month, ten assistants, each employed at a salary of Rs. 20 per month, and 86 students whose stipends amounted to a monthly bill of Rs. 430.

[49] Captain Candy's 'Report on the Poona Sanskrit College', in ed. Richey, Selections from Educational Records 1840-59, p.158.

[50] Gopal Hari Deshmukh (1823-1890) alias *Lokhitawadi*, was employed as the Second Clerk in Office of the Agent for the Sardars in the Deccan, through which the *Dakshina* was administered. He apparently carried the news of the government's plans on this sum of Rs. 3000 to his reformist friends, where the above-mentioned petition was then discussed and planned. See ed. Bhavani Shankar Sridhar Pandit, *Raosaheb Keshav Shivram Bhavalkar yanche Atmavritta*, Nagpur, 1961, p. 103.

Gopal Hari Deshmukh was born into a *deshasth brahmin* family. His father had served under Bajirao II, for which he had secured some land grants. *Lokahitawadi,* as he was called, studied at the Pune English school. He became well-known for his trenchant critique of brahmanical practices in *Shatpatre* published as a series of letters in the Bombay weekly, *Prabhakar* from 1848 onwards. He was associated with the setting up of the Native General Library and the Pune branch of the Paramhansa Mandali. He also edited the Pune *Dnyanprakash*. Later in his career, he held many important positions including those of the Assistant Inam commissioner and Member of the Law Council. He grew increasingly sympathetic towards the Arya Samaj in his later life.

was deliberating over what to do to with a sum of Rs 3000, that had accumulated through some lapsed grants. Despite his contact with English and modern ideas and personal ties with some upper-caste individuals with reformist inclinations, it seems unlikely that Phule was a regular member of these informal, minuscule 'public' meetings of high-caste men at the Native Library in mid-nineteenth century Poona.[51]

The entry of the students of the Pune English School into the fray of rival claims for grants marked the real turning point in the contestation over access to the *Dakshina*. This is evident both from the political vocabulary and the tone of the petitions that the students of the English school addressed to the British government. Arguing that the situation had changed substantially since when the British government had first taken over the disbursement of the *Dakshina*, the petition of the English students claimed that Sanskrit scholars could no longer claim a monopoly to official patronage :

> The *Dakshina* is an educational fund and the rules on which the premiums were to be given were made some years ago when there were few or no English students to compete for the *Dakshina* premiums .... Hence the premiums were directed to be given to the students of Sangscrit(sic) alone; these circumstances have long been changed and there are many *brahmins* who will write vernacular books on the most useful subjects such as the natives most urgently want and who are acquainted with European sciences although they do not know Sangscrit (sic). Your petitioners are willing to offer their services as translators and authors and the least expensive way to encourage them will be to allot some of the present premiums to your petitioners which they do not doubt your Lordship-in-Council will prefer to these premiums being granted as sinecure. [52]

Despite their common brahmanical background, the 'colonial' *Brahmin*s clearly sought to distance themselves from the old system of learning. They argued that their lack of training in Sanskrit could not be any longer held as a mark of intellectual disadvantage. Showing their shrewd grasp over the changed political idioms, the petitioners argued that it was indefensible for students of a 'dead' language to secure a monopolistic, life-long access to an educational

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[51] Bhavalkar's account speaks of Phule's presence in the meeting on the day before the crucial *sabha* called at Vishrambaagwada, where the English school petitioners were to be questioned by the traditional intellectual establishment of the city. But Phule was not one of the signatories to the petition. Bhavalkar's account also tells of how on the Sunday that the eight petitioners had to appear before the *sabha*, the group proceeded from Gopal Hari Deshmukh's house and they were met by Phule and his followers near the *Dnyanprakash* press. They escorted the petitioners upto the Library rooms in Budhawarwada, but waited outside until a police escort was arranged for them by Superintendent Turquand to go upto . Tulshibaag, where the *sabha* was scheduled to be held. But as before, Phule' and his band waited outside the entrance while the eight upper-caste petitioners proceeded to defend themselves. See ed. Bhavani Shankar Sridhar Pandit, Raosaheb Keshav Shivram Bhavalkar yanche Atmavritta, pp.106-108.

[52] 'Petition signed by Students of the Poonah English School', dated 8 November 1849, Bombay Government files in No. 1418, Proceedings of the General Department for 1849.

fund meant for the public promotion of useful and liberal learning. They therefore urged the government to adopt a single set of uniform conditions for all awardees of the *Dakshina,* rather than entertaining contradictory criteria in making the grants.[53] To continue to support Sanskrit learning would be directly antithetical to the government's proclaimed objectives of a establishing a system of 'national' education through the English schools:

> If encouragement of learning be the object then your petitioners respectfully suggest that the condition of producing Marathee original works or translations into it should be *simultaneous* with the exclusion of the *vydicks*, who being mere reciters of the *Veds* shall immediately be silenced and shall have no ground to complain of the injustice of government. On the contrary, granting of the *Dakshina* premiums as sinecure life grants to Sangscrit(sic) scholars alone on the present occasion will not only give unnecessary offence to all brahmins, *vydicks* and others included, but shall also give a final blow to the cause of national improvement and the interests of the English schools.[54]

The above petition set in motion a flurry of counter-claims from contending groups of *bhats*, *shastris* and *vydicks* from the city of Poona and the outlying areas as far as South Konkan, Nasik, Wai, Satara, Maholee, 'Telinga', the Carnatic[55], each trying to voice their collective discontent at the imminent changes. There were also unsuccessful, local attempts in Pune to pressurise the signatories of the above petition to withdraw their names. But clearly this small group of colonial intellectuals had gained a sharp understanding of their own significance in the new literate arrangements. But also, this fledgling intelligentsia had gained their political acumen without simultaneously internalising a 'full' understanding or acceptance of the norms of a liberal communicative rationality. This is clearly borne out through a subsequent petition where this minuscule group were untroubled by the irony of projecting themselves in the emerging public domain as the agents of a 'general enlightenment':

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[53] Their plea was that the Governor should 'direct the agent for sardars to ...prescribe the **same** conditions to the students who are taught at a large public expense with the object of making a means to promote true and useful learning and moral and liberal ideas as those that shall be prescribed to your petitioners'. They expressed their regret that a single institution only should be favoured by government and the students of a dead language rewarded with sinecure premiums for life while others should be excluded although 'they were willing to tender their useful services'. See petition of the English students of Poona dated 22 October 1849, Bombay Government files, No. 1412 in Proceedings of the General Department for 1849.

[54] Petition of the English students of Poona dated 22 October 1849, Bombay Government files, No. 1412 in Proceedings of the General Department for 1849.

[55] Petition from the *vydick brahmins* and the surrounding areas from Poona dated 23 Feb. 1850 No. 145 received in the Persian Department; an English translation of this exists in the Proceedings for the General Department for 1850. Once the new policies concerning the *Dakshina* were announced, another petition of protest, dated 25 June 1850 with 3000 signatures in Modi was submitted by another group of *brahmins*, describing themselves as *vydicks* of Poona, but signed by a Vishnubhatt on their behalf. (The large number of signatories would suggest that they may not have been 'real' *vydick* scholars but 'ordinary' *bhats* trying to voice their grievance.) It stated that these *brahmins* had been paid till 1839 and done nothing subsequently to meet with the disapproval of the government. Claiming that they enjoyed greater respect from the people, they also complained shrewdly that their grants were probably stopped because they were in greater numbers than the *shastris*.

> Should the distribution of the *Dakshina* be made upon a proper system it is capable of being turned to the *greatest advantage of the public at large and disseminate new knowledge and true science among all classes of the Hindoo nation.* [56](emphasis added)

Thus although, these English educated *brahmins* had had to rely on support from Phule and his caste-fellows to weather the controversy that their petition generated in Pune society of the time[57], they also simultaneously realised that their position and political importance did not completely depend upon their local influence. Instead they derived it from their identification with the social and ideological orientation of English-educated groups elsewhere in Presidency, produced through the network of colonial schools

I have used the contestation over the *Dakshina* funds as a significant instance that illustrates the mutation of the liberal paradigm of modern governance based on principles of publicity and general inclusiveness within the colonial context. Significantly, the decisive Minute on the *Dakshina* showed that the Government had been more than mindful of the compromise formula suggested by the English school students in a third letter dated 11 November 1849:

> Your Petitioners understand that three classes of Brahmins have come forward to claim shares in the *Dakshina* , viz. students of English, students of the *Shastras* and Sanskrit, and students of the *Veds*, and they respectfully suggest that a distribution to all these three classes in equal portions of thousand rupees each under condition of translating and composing useful works in vernacular languages will be a good measure and justice to all classes in the event of the Government not being disposed to carry out the plan proposed in the first petition of the English students dated 22 September last. [58]

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[56] 'Petition from the English students of Poonah' dated 8 November 1849, Bombay Government files, No. 1418 in, Proceedings of the General Department for the year 1849.

[57] Bhavalkar was himself involved in drawing up the above petition from the students and teachers of the English school at Poona. Tragically, this very moving account of the efforts to organise this petition and the subsequent furore it raised within Pune society survives only in an incomplete form. The text ends abruptly at the point where Bhavalkar begins to recount the speech he made to defend his actions at the public meeting called by the traditional *brahmins* at Vishrambaagwada. The petitioners from the English school feared that they would be ex-communicated at this *sabha* . Phule and some of his friends are said to have been present at the meetings to plan the strategy for the confrontation at the sabha. Some were willing to face upto the possibility of being out-casted, but most felt that it would be wrong for only a few to be subject to such a harsh punishment. Phule is apparently offered to assume responsibility for having organised the petition to save the others the ignominy of excommunication. On being questioned in the *sabha,* we barely read that Bhavalkar named Phule as being responsible for the radical petition, at which point the narrative is cut off, literally in mid sentence ! See also fn. 51.

[58] A third Petition dated 11th November 1849 suggested the following compromise:' Your Petitioners understand that three classes of *brahmins* have come forward to claim shares in the *Dakshina*, viz. students of English, students of the *Shastras* and Sanskrit, and students of the *Vedas*, and they respectfully suggest that a distribution to all these three classes in equal portions of thousand rupees each under condition of translating and composing useful works in vernacular languages will be a good measure and justice to all classes in the event of the Government not being disposed to carry out the plan proposed in the first petition of the English students dated 22 September last.' 'Petition

The vexed circumstances under which possibilities of laicization unfolded within the making of colonial modernity in Western India resulted in an intense contestation over the meagre official patronage to the production and preparation of vernacular texts. Curiously enough, this round of re-structuring saw a further, drastic reduction in the total allocations of the *Dakshina,* for now the total disbursements would amount to less than Rs 6000 in all per year. But the criteria for its grants had effectively tilted towards patronage for the making of printed texts in the vernacular. Rs. 1500 was to be divided into eleven separate shares of different denominations[59] to be given away as prizes to Marathi writers and translators. Significantly, it is at this juncture that we momentarily glimpse an uncharacteristically explicit articulation of the principle of universal access within the official discourse of educational policy:

> These shares or prizes are to be open for competition to **all** (emphasis in original text) classes and castes of Natives of India, and shall be given as rewards for the composition of original useful works in Marathee, or for translation into it of useful works from other languages.[60]

Further, these rules on being approved were to be publicised in the Government Gazette and in the Native and local papers. [61] Despite the cursory assurance that another Rs. 1500 would be 'distributed in the usual way', the Minute went on to lay out the new plans to '*most widely benefit the Country*' by applying this sum to the *improvement and extension of native education and literature*[62]. The Poona Sanskrit College and the present Government English School were to be amalgamated and a Professor of the Vernacular Language for the cultivation of the Marathi language was to be appointed. This Chair would be held by a native with a competent knowledge of English, Sanskrit and Marathi. The remainder of the balance would be divided between various measures[63] aimed at 'producing great benefits to the general body of the Marathi people'[64].

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of the students of the Pune English School', dated 11 November 1849, Bombay Government files, No 1418 in the Proceedings of the General Department for the year 1849.

[59]Two prizes of Rs 200 for which a candidate had to 'produce a work of not less than 150 octavo pages in some useful subject of Science or general literature of correct style and composition.' Four shares of Rs 150 each could go to a similarly appropriate work of 100 octavo pages. To obtain a third class prize of Rs 100 of which there were to be five awards, a similar work of 75 octavo pages needed to be submitted for examination by the Committee. See 'Minute on the Dukshina' by W.J. Hunter and Major Candy dated 30 Th. April 1850, Selections form Educational Records, p.166.

[60] 'Minute on the Dukshina' by W.J. Hunter and Major T Candy dated 30 Th. April 1850, in Selections form Educational Records, p.166. A similar phrase emphasising the tendency towards laicisation is repeated once again towards the end of the Minute. We are told that the translation exhibitions to be held Poona College were also to 'be opened to all natives of India'.

[61] ibid., p.167.

[62] ibid. p.168.

[63] The measures included the endowment within the reformed Pune College of 'four Translation Exhibitions of 40 rupees a month each, to be held by young men possessing a competent knowledge of English and Marathi and a rudimental knowledge of Sanskrit' who had to be employed part-time in teaching at the College and use the rest of their time in translating under the direction of the Head of the College, Major Candy. All this would take an estimated Rs. 1920 per annum. The remainder of Rs 774 was to be constituted in to a General Fund for the Encouragement of Native

The disputation between rival 'traditional' and new 'colonial' *brahmin* groups seeking patronage from the *Dakshina* created a marginal space for the emergence of a lower-caste voice in the arena of colonial public discourse and cultural contestation. But the possibility of this critical, reform-minded caste alliance between the uppercaste, English-educated intelligentsia and the uneducated, lower-caste constituency under the leadership of 'organic' intellectuals like Phule was at the very moment of its inception, immediately subject to the inherent limits of laicisation conceived as part of the colonial pedagogic project. Thus the new *brahmin*s could make their claims as agents of a laicised vernacular knowledge only with the help of the lower-caste constituency under Phule's leadership. And yet the tragic irony of the implicit tendencies towards laicisation within colonial modernity was amply evident within a few years, when the same *Dakshina* Prize committee that had then been set up through 'outside' support from Phule and his associates[65] to regulate vernacular production would not admit his manuscripts on aesthetic and literary grounds. With the marginalisation of the lower caste voice from the primary arena of colonial publicity, the possibility that the dissemination of the principles of the new literate order might have led to the making of an inclusive discourse that reflected disparate interests, had also receded. Chapter four will take up questions about the figuring of the caste divide in the responses from different sections of native society to the processes and cultural logics implicit in the introduction of print, especially with a view to looking at the problems of creating a colonial 'popular' culture in vernacular print. The argument here shows that there was little hope that the emerging arena of public discourse and contestation would allow for the articulation or accommodation of lower caste interests. Phule's next step would suggest that he had read these signs quite clearly in the experience over the changes in the *Dakshina* in 1849-50. And therefore, I shall conclude this discussion on the links between the structural shifts introduced by the education project, the possibility of laicisation and the emerging structure of political contestation with a consideration of these attempts by Phule to form a separate association that meant to provide the all-important literate skills to students from lower caste communities like the *mahars* and the *mangs*. The Society for the Promotion for the Education of the *Mahars* and the *Mangs* was established in Pune in 1852, quite close on the heels of the dispute over *Dakshina* discussed above. With great difficulty, the Society was able to secure some support from the *Dakshina* fund for the three schools it established and maintained for at least a few years[66]. These efforts attracted both publicity[67] and local opposition[68], and although

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Literature and Education which was to be variously used to encourage the composition and printing of vernacular texts as also to reward meritorious vernacular school masters. See ibid., pp.168-169.

[64] ibid. p.169.

[65] see fn. 51 and 58 above.

[66] see fn. 78 below.

[67] see fns. 70, 77 and 79 below.

[68] see fn. 79 below.

the government feted Phule for his contribution[69], in the long run there was little help forthcoming either from official policy or the upper-caste intelligentsia.

Low-caste Associations and Negotiation of the Colonial Public Domain:

The discussion till now has sketched how the ideological project of education, especially the need to extend its reach through the vernacular, indirectly opened up a space for the negotiation of colonial power. However, as we have seen, the discursive arena thus inaugurated between the predominantly upper-caste intelligentsia and the colonial government, although premised on liberal principles, was structurally biased against the articulation of interests of the subaltern communities. With due allowance for colonial difference, these processes echo what we have learnt from the work of Pierre Bourdieu about education, linguistic standardisation and the reproduction of social hierarchy in modern western societies[70]. Of course, his insights analytically supplement the body of work on the development of the modern university and the emergence of mass education during the later nineteenth century in England, which has documented how systems of modern education were put in place by bourgeois governments, as a response to the growing assertiveness of the lower-class demands for political rights[71]. The modern university represented the institutionalisation of the bourgeois ideals of communicative rationality and general enlightenment; but it may also be viewed as the precipitated image of the strong pedagogic assumptions generally underlying the political discourses of modernity, but particularly also the exercise of representative government. Such conservative designs of containment through the intersecting ideologies of individual improvement and general enlightenment were built into the project of colonial education in even more complex ways. The fact that official initiatives towards 'mass' education were in evidence in colonial India before comparable efforts at home in England is a telling, critical index of the pedagogic rationale underlying the political frameworks of modernity.

The political discourses of modernity emphasise the normative significance of networks of consensual rationality. Crucial to the communicative structure of modern societies and the

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[69] The colonial government presented Phule was with a set expensive shawls, the traditional symbol of intellectual honour, in a public ceremony in Pune on 20 November 1852. This ceremony was widely reported by the Marathi missionary papers.

[70] Pierre Bourdieu, Language and Symbolic Power, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1991.

[71] See Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, Reproduction in Education, Society, Culture, Sage, London, 1990; Andy Green, Education and State Formation in England, France and United States of America, Macmillan, London, 1990; Brian Simon, Studies in the History of Education 1780-1870, Lawrence and Wishart, London 1960; eds., Fritz Ringer, Detlef Muller, Brian Simon, The Rise of the Modern Education System : Structural Change and Social Reproduction, 1870-1920, Cambridge University Press, 1987. For an account of the role of the discipline of English Literature in university education in nineteenth century England, see Terry Eagleton, Literary Theory : An Introduction, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1983 and Chris Baldick, The Social Mission of English Criticism :1848-1932, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1983.

relations of modern power and knowledge are the processes of mediation between intellectuals and the lay public. But, as the previous section has shown, neither the making of consent nor the elaboration of hegemonic mediation were pre-requisites to the founding of the relations between colonial-educated intellectuals and the government or the establishment of the structure of cultural and political privilege and marginality within colonial politics. The 'liberalising' stimulus from colonial discourse came not from any explicit commitment educational policy showed to its purported task of general enlightenment of the colonised population, but through the efforts to elaborate the spaces that it needed to create to carry on its task of governance. On the one hand, the new political regime sought to delegitimise communicative norms based in the indigenous pre-print cultural order, but alongside, the arena of colonial literacy and publicity made few provisions for voicing the claims to literacy from sections who had been excluded from pre-colonial literate communities. The dynamics underlying these processes are nowhere as clearly brought out in colonial India as in mid-nineteenth century Pune.

The Society for the Promotion of Education of the *Mahars* and the *Mangs*, est. Pune 1852 :

Although colonial public discourse revealed few signs of accommodating lower-caste interests, it was evident that definitions of collective identities as well as the modes of representing marginality were simultaneously being restructured through the political logic of modernity. Soon after the landmark episode that saw the *Dakshina* being set aside for purposes of 'general enlightenment' through the encouragement of vernacular literature, Phule decided to organise lower-caste interests through the formation of an association that would take up the important cause of education for boys and girls in the *mahar* and *mang* communities. Principles of voluntary association were, of course, a critical element in the making of large-scale, collaborative networks within the story of western modernity. Phule's attempts to secure official patronage for the cause of lower caste education through the use of associational principles would reinforce my point that these ideas entered the colonial public sphere as part of the official pedagogic programme. Chapter five will analyse the difficulties faced by the upper-caste, English educated intelligentsia, as they attempted from the 1860s onwards to form a regional network of political associations - *sarvajanik sabhas,* but here I shall only emphasise the need to note the mutation in the meaning of voluntary associations within the colonial context. In the West associational principles had enabled the creation of communicative, social and economic ties beyond particularistic bounds of community. But under colonial conditions these ideas of voluntary associations came to be used as a way of safeguarding community interests and foregrounding claims made on the basis of particular identities.

The details of Phule's initiatives are well known in the writings on the political history of nineteenth-century Maharashtra[72]. His efforts show his understanding of the politics of language of literacy under the new regime. Phule's first step was to start schools for girls in 1851[73], the first such native initiative in Pune. By 1852 he had also been able to organise three schools for lower-caste boys in Pune, which was probably unprecedented at the time anywhere on the sub-continent. There were 237 pupils on the rolls in the three girls' schools out of which the average attendance was just a little less than 200[74] as against 270 boys on the rolls in the three lower-caste schools in 1857 out of which 213 presented themselves for the annual examination[75]. These figures are not the best index of the impact these schools would have had on the public imagination. To get a sense of that it is important to remember the visibility of these schools was greatly enhanced through the conduct of their annual examinations as ceremonial public occasions, which were meant to demonstrate the government's 'benevolent concerns' as also display the students' learning[76]. Phule's own association with both these projects that he initiated lasted for about ten years[77]. But they were remarkable for not only did they indicate the emergence of non-*brahmin* agency in the sphere of public action, but they also represented an uneasy but unprecedented alliance between *brahmin* and non-*brahmin* agents within that sphere. These schools faced serious difficulties and opposition[78], but it was also significant that the

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[72]For a detailed account that places Phule's background, career and writings in the context of nineteenth century colonial politics of western India, see Rosalind O'Hanlon, Caste, Conflict and Ideology : Mahatama Jyotirao Phule and Low-caste Protest in Nineteenth Western India, Cambridge, 1995.

[73] The first schools to admit girls in Bombay and Pune were started by missionaries. The first native schools for girls in Bombay had been organised through the vernacular *sabhas*, the *Marathi* and the *Gujrati Dnyanprasarak Mandalis*. The Bombay Marathi female schools had the financial support of Jagannath Shankarseth. These schools for girls started by Phule had greater political significance, because not only were they a lower-caste initiative, but they also represented an instance of concrete efforts to challenge the exclusivity of *jati* practice.

[74] 'Report of the Second Annual Examination of the Native Female Schools in Poona' held on 12 Feb. 1853, Bombay 1853, reprinted in eds., D. Keer, S. G. Malshe and Y. D. Phadke, *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, *Maharastra Rajya Sahitya ani Sanskriti Mandal*, Bombay, 1991, p.619.

[75] Appendix No 1 and Memoranda to the 'Report Public Examination of the Poonah Mahar and Mang Schools held on 2 Feb. 1858', Bombay 1858 in Bombay Presidency General Department Vol.No.38 of 1858, reprinted in *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, pp.639- 640 and pp.647-651.

[76] It seems the government was inclined to view Phule's efforts towards female education more favourably than his contribution to starting the schools for lower-caste boys. Further, there seems to have been a move to keep the public annual examinations for the girls' schools separate from that for the lower-caste boys' schools. The public examination of Native Girls' School as well as the ceremony for the award of the pair of shawls to Phule took place amidst much fanfare in the quadrangle of Poona College, a hallowed site for the staging of colonial politics in the city. On the other hand, the public examination of the lower-caste students seems to have been a far less spectacular affair, being held at a somewhat peripheral location at Babajee Munajee's Coach Factory near the Civil Hospital. See *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, pp.617-18 and 635 .

[77] In his testimony to the Hunter Commission Phule writes that he worked in the school for *mahar* and *mang* boys for nearly nine or ten years after it was started. He is less specific about his association with the girls' school ; we only learn that he and his wife worked there for 'many years'. We also learn that both those schools still existed at the time when Phule was recording his testimony. The girls schools had been taken over by the Educational Department and that the school for *mahar* and *mang* boys still survived, 'but not in a satisfactory condition'. See 'Memorial addressed to the Education Commission' recorded by Jyotirao Phule in Poona on 19th October 1882 in Education Commission, Bombay, Vol. II, Calcutta 1884, reprinted in *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, p.233.

[78] The missionary paper, *Dnyanodaya* of 15 September 1853 carried an extensive report on the public meeting held on the occasion of the annual examination of the school's students. Phule's speech referred to the difficulties he had to face.

schools were run through joint efforts from disparate sections of colonial society[79]. The adoption of western principles of voluntary association in the organising of both initiatives no doubt was meant to facilitate dealings with the colonial government. But equally, the organisational form also allowed, though only in minor ways, the coming together of individuals from different backgrounds on the basis of their shared concerns. The Managing Committee of the Female Schools at Poona was granted Rs 75 per month from the *Dakshina* fund, and the rest of the money had to be raised through private subscriptions[80]. Interestingly, the boys' school run by Society for the Promotion of the Education of the *Mahars* and the *Mangs* received a much smaller grant[81], despite clear signs that donations and subscriptions from native quarters would be far more difficult to secure in this latter case. The managing bodies of both these schools had the support of a few common patrons, including prominent *brahmin* intellectuals and colonial officials. These efforts to create a subaltern literate community provide a way of examining how the caste divide figured in the arenas of colonial cultural politics. This discussion also prepares the ground for raising questions about the nature of the hegemonic moves on the part of this colonial intelligentsia, which eventually led to emergence of a nationalist consciousness by the 1880s.

Marginality, Translation and Subaltern Literacy :

In conclusion, I propose to highlight some features of Phule's writings to show its divergence , especially in its perceptions about the politics of colonial literacy from uppercaste vernacular

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His own father disapproved strongly and asked both his son and his wife to leave home. There was criticism from within the *mali* caste as well. People were unwilling to lend them the necessary space to house the school. Also the school lacked the funds for a new building. Moreover, *mahar* and *mang* families were themselves quite reluctant to send their boys to the school. At that point, Sadashiv Govande helped with funds and Ranba Mahar and Lahuji bin Ragh Raut Mang explained the benefits of education to their communities. See report in *Dnyanodaya* of 15 September 1853 quoted in *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, p.611.

[79] Moro Vitthal Walwekar, the secretary of the Society, published the above-mentioned letter in the *Dnyanodaya* of 15 September 1853, describing the reasons why the Society was formed : 'Having realised that to educate the *mahar* and *mang* communities constituted the foremost benefit to the nation/region(*desh*), it had been Jyotirao's endeavour for some time now to work towards this end. But it is by far preferable that such work be carried out as joint effort between more dedicated persons rather than by just one conscientious person. Therefore both he and his friends thought there ought to be a *mandali* for such a project and they all gathered to form this sabha... Ignorance is the great affliction of this nation (*desh*). Any one hoping to find a remedy is confronted by the obstacles of *jati* (*jatibhed*) and language (*bhashabhed*) differences that no one dares remove.' translated from original Marathi quotation excerpted in *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, p.612.

[80] The 'Abstract Account for Receipts and Disbursements from 1 March 1852 to 28 February for the Poona Native Female School Fund' shows that Rs. 900 of the expenses for this period came from grants from the *Dakshina* Prize Committee, as against Rs. 1072 came from private subscriptions. The audited statement of accounts was signed by Krishnashastri Chiplunkar and Kero Laxman Chattre. See *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, p.632.

[81] We learn from the above mentioned *Dnyanodaya* report of 1853 that the lower-caste schools were drawing a monthly grant of Rs 25 from the *Dakshina* Prize Committee. This continued until the public examination in February 1858, soon after which the Society petitioned for an increase in the grant as the support through private donations and subscriptions had been diminishing. The Society's letter dated 23 February asked the *Dakshina* Committee to cover the entire monthly cost of Rs 109-3- 1/4 for running these schools. But the Department of Public Instruction replied that the grant would be increased to Rs 50 per month and any further increase would be subject to a personal visit made by the President, Mr. Howard. See letter dated 3 June 1858, No 1265 in Bombay Presidency General Department, Vol.24 of 1858, reprinted in *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, p. 637.

discourse. Aware as he was of the critical importance of literate skills in the emerging political order, Phule's writings constantly reiterated the importance of education to any lower-caste self-assertion. Another key theme throughout his work was the crucial role of colonial education in determining the emerging structure of domination within native society. Education forms the main theme of at least four of his important texts : his earliest available composition, a play entitled *Tritiya Ratna*, written in 1855, the *povada* entitled, *Vidyakhaatatil Brahman Pantoji*, published originally in the *Satyadeepika* of June 1869 and, his important composition, *Gulamgiri* (Slavery) published in 1873. The last-named of these contains an English preface and a whole chapter in the main Marathi text that dwell on the subject of education. Phule's remarkable deposition in an English statement to the Education Commission in 1882 again shows his intense preoccupation with the significance of education within modern politics.

On first impression the major difference between Phule's writings and upper-caste discourse may appear to be the fact that, unlike the latter, the former do not contain an extended commentary on the benefits of the dissemination of the new knowledge. Neither do the divisive effects of the regime of bilingual literacy figure as an explicit theme, as indeed they do in the vernacular writings of many upper-caste early intellectuals[82]. And yet it would be naive to simply see this as a lacuna in Phule's grasp of the nature of colonial politics. This apparent 'lack' needs to be related to Phule's very strong sense of his own political position and purpose. At one level Phule's work is, as it inevitably would have needed to be, acutely informed by an awareness of the way the politics of language worked in the colonial world, although it could be said that his later work shows an increasing acknowledgement of this reality. Even a general reflection upon Phule's writing reveals the remarkable deliberateness of his strategic use of language. Clearly realising the significance of publicity within the modes of colonial politics, Phule made it a point to attach English translations of his title-pages and dedications, whereas the main text except for these first few pages would be entirely in Marathi. This became his regular practice, especially after he published his *Chatrapati Shivaji Raje Bhosle yanche Povada* in 1869 from Bombay. Phule's clever strategy to straddle the linguistic divide that characterised colonial politics is brought out best by his major text, *Gulamgiri* . The title-page was boldly translated into English as 'Slavery - in this civilised British Government under the cloak of Brahmanism exposed by Jotirao Govindrao Fule'. But to emphasise his political intentions, he attached an English preface meant to elaborate his main theme, the suppression of lower castes at the hands of the brahmanical order from 'ancient times' to 'the present' [83]. This English preface was meant to bring the book

[82] For an analysis of the discussion of the bilingual divide between English and Marathi in early native vernacular discourse, see Chapter three, esp. pp.115-117.

[83] As O'Hanlon's study has shown us, Phule's narrativisation of the past was an early and skilful appropriation of orientalist historiography, that was intended to consolidate the articulation of a lower-caste collective public identity within the arena of nineteenth-century colonial politics. O'Hanlon's work very rightly stresses Phule's great rhetorical dexterity as being crucial to his political project. For an argument about Phule's strategic engagement with philological discourse in his attempt to create a counter-discourse that would foreground lower caste interests see Chapter one, pp.37-39.

directly to the notice of the government, especially since the administrative machinery and apparatuses of publicity had come to be dominated by the upper-castes by this time[84]. This showed Phule's shrewd grasp of the dynamics of representation in the colonial public sphere, as well as his keen awareness of the linguistic divide that fundamentally characterised colonial politics. Phule's primary concern was with representing the every-day circumstances and the marginalisation of illiterate, lower-caste, labouring and rural communities to the colonial government. Thus in apparently reducing the bilingual hierarchy within the colonial power structure to something like a cryptic formula, Phule's work is profoundly suggestive of the nature of the emerging linguistic and political divisions within native society at the time.

My argument here anticipates the discussion in Chapter four of the asymmetrical nature and the changing structure of the bilingual relation between English and the vernacular within the colonial public sphere. The analysis of Phule's awareness of the linguistic politics of his time here is meant to perspectivise the apparent 'lack' of discussion on the importance of translation and the accumulation of knowledge for the enrichment of the vernacular in his writings. Despite his constant emphasis on the provision for primary education for the masses, Phule's writings do not disparage the upper-caste led translation project[85] nor the pursuit of higher learning. The schools he helped start had to rely on the vernacular texts[86] prepared by the *brahmins* affiliated to the Bombay Education Society. In developing his trenchant critique of brahmanical dominance through the monopolisation of intellectual, ritual and political power, Phule was not underestimating the necessity of learning but was quite rightly attacking the elitist orientation of colonial education as well as what he, not unjustifiably, saw as its great tendency to preserve upper-caste privileges. Speaking urgently on behalf of large numbers who remained unprovided for in the allocations for colonial literacy, Phule's concerns were bound to differ from the responses of upper-caste intellectuals who possessed the advantage of belonging to communities with previously strong literate backgrounds. Given these historical and political constraints, Phule's discourse had to remain aloof from the translation project and also from the

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[84] Phule also included excerpts from this Preface in his testimony to the Hunter Commission, which was entirely in English. His remarks in the statement he submitted to the Education Commission show that his use of English in the Preface to *Gulamgiri* had been a deliberate political strategy : 'I wrote some years ago a Marathi pamphlet exposing the religious practices of the *brahmin*s and incidentally among other matters, adverted therein to the present system of education, which by providing ampler funds for higher education tended to educate *brahmin*s and the higher classes only, and to leave the masses wallowing in ignorance and poverty. I summarised the views expressed in the book in an English preface attached thereto, portions of which I reproduce here so far as they relate to the present inquiry.', 'Memorial Addressed to the Education Commission, a statement for the information of the Education Commission dated 19 October 1882, by Joteerao Govindrao Phooley, Merchant and Cultivator and Municipal Commissioner, Peth Joona Ganj, Poona', reprinted in *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, pp.233-234.

[85] By the time Phule recorded his testimony to the Hunter Commission in 1882, he was greatly disillusioned with upper-caste reformist project, and he bitterly resented the brahmanical dominance in the colonial bureaucracy. And yet, he remained firm in his conviction that the extension of colonial education would solve the question of the subordination of lower-caste communities.

[86] But some basic reading and counting skills in English were introduced to the brighter students at the girls' schools. See 'Report of the Second Annual Examination of the Native Female Schools in Poona' held on 12 Feb. 1853, Bombay 1853, reprinted in *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, p.625.

sites of production for a vernacular discourse of modernity. However, the shaping of a bilingual literacy was fundamental to the making of colonial public sphere and here it is crucial to note that Phule's initiatives to provide education to lower-caste children nevertheless left these communities excluded from the sites of translation and the making of vernacular discourse. Despite their blend of incisive analysis and rhetorical vigour and despite being closer to the everyday lives of ordinary people, Phule's writings were bound to remain something of a marginal feat within the structural limits of the colonial-liberal public sphere. The poignancy of the situation whereby Phule's initiatives on behalf of subaltern sections could have only a circumscribed presence within the arena of colonial politics was quite apparent when in 1855, the very *Dakshina* Prize Committee that had been set up through support from Phule and his associates, refused to admit his play, *Tritiya Ratna*[87] into the 'open' competition meant to encourage the composition of modern vernacular texts. It is with a great sense of tragic irony that one notes that it is neither within policy documents nor in the upper-caste discourse, but in Phule's writings that we have one of the most unequivocal and clear-sighted instances of the enunciation of the idea of universal access. Testifying before the Hunter Commission in 1882, and opposing the government move to cut down spending on primary education, ostensibly as a way of curbing the over-crowding of the bureaucratic professions, Phule's response struck a remarkably forthright and balanced note :

> Although the number of students presenting for the Entrance Examination is not at all large when the diffusion of knowledge in the country is taken into consideration, it looks large when the requirements of Government are concerned. *Were the education universal and within easy reach of all,* the number would have been larger still, and it should be so, and I hope it shall be so hereafter.[88]

This chapter has analysed the nature of the 'liberalising' influence of the education project, the paradoxes of the possibilities for the making of a laicised knowledge under colonial rule and the simultaneous subalternisation of the vernacular sphere under the influence of English. The next chapter will proceed to look more closely at the asymmetries underlying the bilingual relation between English and Marathi, and the political implications of the underlying divisions within colonial society.

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[87] See *Gulamgiri*, Pune 1873, reprinted in *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, p. 182. Much of Phule's important work including his ballad on Shivaji was first published by the missionary paper, *Satyadeepika* or privately through the help of friends. See also pp.81-82 above.

[88] Memorial addressed to the Education Commission reprinted in *Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, p.243.

Chapter three

Colonial Education and the Cultivation of English and Marathi : Hierarchies of Language and the Emerging Political Structure.

Introduction :

The previous chapter discussed how the attempt to introduce ideas and forms of modern liberalism through the project of colonial education in western India came to rest upon considerations about language and translation. My plea was for a more precise delineation of the connections between the structure of colonial power, the design of the education project and the shifts it introduced in the nature of communicative practices and notions of language and identity. Said's thesis on Orientalism[1] has taught us much about the connections between the making of colonial power and the 'othering' of non-western cultures through the self-representations of the post-enlightenment West. Similarly, in trying to map the connections between modern knowledge, power and the colonisation of non-western cultures, Bernard Cohn's essay[2] showed the crucial role of processes of objectification to the undoing of the internal coherence of 'primitive' ways of life and cultural practice, and their subordination under the normative gaze of modern epistemic frameworks. Homi Bhabha's writings[3] have productively invoked post-structuralist perspectives, especially the notions of difference, discontinuity and displacement, in trying to carry forward the task of conceptualising the relations between modern modes of inscription, the production of subjectivity and forms of colonial power. In her study on the cultural politics underlying the making of colonial discourse, Tejaswini Niranjana[4] has argued that the project of translation represented one of the main sites through which colonialism acquired its discursive power, which it did mainly through the subordination of native texts eurocentric narratives of cultural history.

With these complex intersections between the colonial project and the politics of language, it is not surprising that scholarship on the impact of colonial rule in India has been especially concerned with the implications and consequences of the entry of English. In Bhabha's

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[1] Edward Said, Orientalism, New York, Pantheon, 1978.

[2] Bernard Cohn, 'Command of Language and the Language of Command' in ed. Ranajit Guha, Subaltern Studies Vol. IV: Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1994.

[3] Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture, London, Routledge, 1994.

[4] Tejaswini Niranjana, Siting Translation : History, Post-structuralism and the Colonial Context, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1992.

writings[5] we have one of the earliest suggestions of how, to think of colonial power, is to try and map the meanings the English book acquired through its use of the printed word, for those who did not possess the skills to decipher its contents. And yet, it would seem that the fact that colonialism worked through altering discursive and linguistic norms and practices has prevented scholars from attending to the institutional dimensions of these discursive interventions. Colonialism's ambitions to delegitimise indigenous cultural norms and supersede them through the introduction of the political idioms of modernity were secured through its manoeuvres in the linguistic field. But it was precisely through perpetrating radical and irrevocable shifts in native linguistic practices, colonial power was able to bring about enduring institutional changes too. The last chapter discussed how the making of the bilingual relation through the education project intended to transform both conceptual institutional structures within native society. In this chapter, I hope to show how the hierarchical bilingual relation instituted through the education project influenced the emerging relations between the English-educated and the vernacular sections of the colonial intelligentsia. These are themes which shall will be discussed more fully in the last chapter, but here I shall show that the entry of English and the asymmetries underlying the design of a modern vernacular discourse under colonial influence resulted in hierarchical differences within the emerging social structure.

Said's work describes the manoeuvres within western post-enlightenment thought to harness difference through the production of a discourse that represents the identity of non-western cultures via the logic of 'Othering'. Bhabha's work, on the other hand, has emphasised the *mutability* of liberal structures, and their potential to produce difference through translation into the languages of the native. Such a perspective opens up ways of investigating how the immense discursive shifts engendered through orientalist readings of native texts acquired a durability and institutional significance through their reproduction as colonial-liberal discourse[6]. Thus the idea of translation was fundamental to the colonial encounter, and did not just account for the means through which the West appropriated the authority to generate a judgmental discourse on native cultural traditions. The ability of colonial power to reproduce and disseminate the authority of western norms and notions of culture, communicative

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[5] Homi Bhabha, 'Signs Taken for Wonders : Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree outside Delhi, May 1817', The Location of Culture, London, Routledge, 1994, pp.102-122.; first published in Critical Inquiry, sp. issue on 'Race, Writing and Difference', Chicago, 1985.

[6] As mentioned in Chapter two, fn. 1, questions of displacement of liberal discourse as colonial ideology have been addressed by some scholars of the Subaltern studies collective. In addition to the works cited there, see also Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'The Difference/Deferral of (a) Colonial Modernity - Public Debate on Domesticity in British Bengal', History Workshop Journal, No. 36, September 1993; Gyan Prakash 'Writing Post-Orientalist Histories of the Third World : Perspectives from Indian Historiography', Comparative Studies in Society and History, No. 32, 1990; Partha Chatterjee, The Nation and its Fragments, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1993. For a more general sampling of issues that have gained prominence in the study of the nineteenth century in South Asia since Said's Orientalism, see eds. Carol Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer, Orientalism and the Post-Colonial Predicament : Perspectives on a South Asian World, Philadelphia, University of Penn. Press, 1993.

exchange and cognition impels us to think of translation as absolutely *endemic* to the construction of colonial discourse, and thus by implication, also to the very processes that underlie the creation of the colonial intelligentsia. Fundamental to the construction of colonial power was the conceptual and technical ability of the bourgeois imagination to posit a relation between the culture of the western enlightenment and non-western ways of life as a brusque and direct connection between the respective languages, which were thus ostensibly 'in exchange' despite their significant conceptual and cultural dissimilarities. Coded into these processes of translation and cultural redefintion is the central tension underlying the journey of modern ideas to non-western societies as signifiers of western cultural imperialism.

The nature of the linguistic transfer and exchange implicit in the colonial moment needs to be understood carefully. On the one hand, native languages were placed in relation of direct subordination vis-à-vis English because of which those who were familiar with both languages could immediately claim a position of intellectual and political advantage. However it would be misleading to believe that the expressive and cognitive capacities conferred through the construction of colonial bilingualism were symmetrically distributed across the two languages. Colonial bilingualism vested a fortunate few who could claim skills in both English and the vernacular with the power to mediate, allowing them to function like gate-keepers between two very differently structured cultural worlds now placed in what we may term a relation of difficult counter-poise. Despite connections of apparent homology between English and the vernacular strata, the relation remained built upon fundamental asymmetries. These were linked to the inherent contradiction between the modern, 'populist' criteria upon which English sought to legitimate its claims as a language of elevated significance and discourse, and the circumscribed range of an English-knowing, colonial audience. A knowledge of English introduced colonial intellectuals to a horizon of enriched intellectual, cultural and political choices, but alongside, it also placed them at odds with their social world. Colonial bilingualism thus created a peculiarly mixed linguistic world, where if the political import of modern discourses was to mean anything at all, it was not enough for native intellectuals to know English, but to write in the vernacular. The bilingual character that colonial power had to assume led to a concentration of the privilege to define and regulate the nature of the discursive traffic between the western metropolis and the non-western peripheries in the hands of a small class of intellectuals exclusively endowed with the crucial skills of translation and mediation. The paradox between the *illegitimacy* of privilege and the *elitist concentration* of the means to legitimise power through channels of general dissemination constitutes a crucial tension within the political discourses of modernity. This tension was displaced into the colonial context primarily as the asymmetries characterising the possibilities and limits of translation between English and the regional vernaculars.

Notions of linguistic transfer were thus crucial to both the construction and the distribution of the rationale of colonial power and informed the very processes through which native dialects underwent standardisation to 'grow' into their modern forms. Sudipta Kaviraj's essay[7] valuably points out the connection between India's political modernity and the linguistic re-inscription of the native world under colonialism. However, there remains a lot that needs to be done to examine the ways in which colonial rule was able to restructure the linguistic economy of the sub-continent through the literate arrangements it instituted. We are by now, through the work of scholars within the discipline of English literature[8], quite well acquainted with the ways English came to represent both a language and a system of knowledge which was inserted through the education project as a norm against which native cultural and social practices were now to be measured and then reformed. But it is as important to recognise that the entry of English was also intended to effect a radical reorganisation in the relations of dependence and subordination between the languages of cultivation and 'high' discourse and the vernacular dialects. The entry of English, especially through its dissemination via the colonial education system, altered the definitions and composition of cognitive skills, but also simultaneously re-invented the basis on which the vernaculars were considered as 'lesser' languages. The initial years of colonial rule in western India saw a stress within official policy there on instruction through the vernacular to an extent that did not characterise the education project in other parts of the sub-continent, especially Bengal. Consequently, somewhat uniquely perhaps, within the first few decades of colonial rule, western India had already seen the emergence of a native discourse that aspired to critically reflect on the cultural and political possibilities of the colonial world. Considering that the ideological project within colonialism was premised on its ability to peremptorily imagine a bilingual relation whereby all the native vernaculars were summarily subordinated to English, the discussion here will look into the implications of the creation of a colonial intelligentsia endowed with a two-tiered, bilingual literate capacity.

This chapter will elaborate the links between colonial bilingualism and the emerging social structure. My aim is to broadly sketch the shifts in the internal structure of colonial bilingual relation as they were altered through the course of education policy until about 1882[9], by

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[7] Sudipta Kaviraj, 'The Imaginary Institution of India' in eds. P Chatterjee and G. Pandey, Subaltern Studies Vol. VII, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1992.

[8] Gauri Vishwanath, Masks of Conquest, London, Faber and Faber, 1991 and Tejaswini Niranjana, Siting Translation : History, Post-structuralism and the Colonial Context, Berkeley, 1992.

[9] 1882 was the year that the Hunter Commission carried out its review of the state of education through out the sub-continent and submitted its region-wise Report on Education in India. This exercise was important as from then on, government policy sought to encourage private investment in the field of higher education, which, until then, had been under strict government monopoly. By 1882, there was ample evidence that the colonial intelligentsia had reached the historical limits of its 'progressive' phase. If any further evidence of the growing orthodoxy in the intelligentsia's outlook was needed, it was to be seen in the vehement opposition from the Sarvajanik Sabha, the most influential 'liberal' political association of the time in western India, against the government's announcement in 1885 to allot a small number of annual scholarships to deserving students from the lower castes. See Chapter five for my argument

when the main contours of the structure of privilege and marginality of the colonial modern world in western India had already been institutionalised. Firstly I shall look at the ways in which the bilingual hierarchy was internalised by colonial intellectuals through the pedagogic experience of the colonial classroom. The metaphor of the European Renaissance figured prominently both within official and native discourse to describe the shifts in linguistic hierarchy resulting from the entry of English. I shall briefly look at the variations in the way the metaphor was played out within policy documents and the discourse of colonial intellectuals. The emerging native discourse displayed a major pre-occupation with the importance of translation and the 'accumulation' of knowledge through the vernacular and here I shall examine the attempts of upper-caste intellectuals to negotiate the colonial linguistic divide. I shall point out how the asymmetries within the cognitive and linguistic hierarchy being posited through policy acquired concrete significance through the unequal budgetary allocations to between vernacular (Marathi) schools and English schools. The emergence of higher education in English as the ultimate expression of the elitism of the education project was instrumental in firmly fixing both the vernaculars and the provincial intelligentsia into a secondary position despite their more 'popular' status. The implications of the bilingual divide at the heart of colonial politics had never been lost upon native intellectuals, and when the moves to reduce the already parsimonious levels of expenditure allocated to vernacular education were initiated, it was clear to them that at stake here was the crucial question of social mobility. I will show how by the latter half of the nineteenth century the subaltern position of the vernaculars within the education system had been clearly established, as had the comparable social status of the Marathi school-educated intelligentsia vis-à-vis the university/English-educated colonial elite. I shall also briefly offer some preliminary observations on themes that will be discussed in detail in Chapter five, namely, the consequences of such divisions between the two sections of the colonial intelligentsia for vernacular composition in Marathi as well as for the possibilities of mobilisation of a broad-based anti-colonial alliance. My discussion here will prepare a perspective for my argument in the following chapter on the possibilities through colonial literacy for a 'popular' vernacular print culture in Marathi.

The following discussion applies the term 'project' to denote several proposals that formed part of the activity of colonial administration, especially in the fields of education and translation. On a more general level, I have also described colonial intervention as a project. It would be appropriate to clarify that I have done this advisedly, not to imply that the design of official manoeuvres that formed part of the colonial encounter proceeded from some pre-planned blue-print, but to describe the complex intentionality and pragmatic rationality

about the increasing intellectual and social orthodoxy as the intelligentsia 'advanced' towards the articulation of a nationalist position.

underlying the vision and construction of colonial power. I use the term because it helps indicate the remarkable deliberateness and coherence with which colonial authority was able to identify, emend and implement measures on several fronts necessary for the achievement of its ends. Also my use of the term should not be understood as implying that the operations in all these fields represented 'projects' on an identical scale.

Bilingualism, Translation and Colonial Literacy :

Education policy in western India assumed that the ideological barriers to the maintenance of colonial rule could be overcome through the dissemination of colonial ideology through the use of the vernaculars[10]. Consequently, from 1822 onwards the Bombay Native Education Society proceeded with its attempts to initiate and establish a modern school culture through an emphais on instruction in the vernacular. Thus education policy had to maintain an uneasy stance between its espousal of modern, western learning and this inescapable compulsion to disseminate the knowledge through the vernacular. Accordingly, while the Society schools were meant 'primarily for the conveyance of knowledge in the languages of the country'[11], the new imperial 'high' language, English hoped to exercise a disdainful superiority over the native vernaculars. But in contrast to the relations that existed between Sanskrit and Persian, the erstwhile 'high' languages on the sub-continent, and pre-colonial vernacular traditions, the new 'high' language was now expected to inform vernacular textuality in ways that would allow it to recreate the latter in its own image. Already by 1824, the move to introduce the study of English in a *separate* school had been made, where 'English might be taught classically, where instruction might also be given in that language on History, Geography and the popular branches of science'[12]. Also from the very beginning, it was clear that the cultivation of the vernaculars entered the purview of education policy only so that they could serve as a *prelude to English education*. The ground for the policy manoeuvres in the 1850s which eventually formalised the dominance of English in the education system was already being paved through the Government order of 1824 which ruled:

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[10] For a discussion of the crucial emphasis within official policy on education through the vernaculars in the Bombay Presidency, see Chapter two.

[11] 'Resolutions passed at a general meeting of the subscribers of the Education Society on Thursday 10 Th. August 1820- Native School and School Book Committee' in Sixth Annual Report of the Bombay Education Society 1821, pp.33-35, in ed. R.V. Parulekar, Selections from the Educational Records (Bombay) (1815-1840), Part II ,Bombay, 1955, p. 30.

[12] Letter No 362 dated 10 - 3-1824 from the Secretary to the Government to the Committee of the Bombay Native School Book And School Society in 'Extract from the Bombay Secretarlat Records', G.D. Vol. 8(63) of 1824, in ed. R.V. Parulekar, Selections from the Educational Records (Bombay) (1815-1840), Bombay, 1955, p.61.

> That a Mahratta, a Guzerattee and an English School should be established at the Presidency but scholars not be admitted into the latter till after they have received instruction in one of the others.[13]

If colonial rule aimed at fashioning a radically novel bilingual literate culture through its educational policy, then evidently, a large part of the Education Society's work would, in the first instance, consist of translation, to provide reading materials in the vernacular schools. But, given the urgency of the ideological task, the pedagogic efforts could not await the preparation of texts; these processes had to be inaugurated immediately and simultaneously. Often the colonial pedagogical mission could not proceed from prepared texts, and even when these may have been available, translation formed the core part of the circular teaching method, as students were drilled to acquire new type of skills simultaneously both in English and the vernacular :

> The first class of the Mahrattas consisted of 12 boys...They read short polysyllable lessons in English from Murray's Spelling and Reading Exercises, and translated them into their own tongue. They also translated short pieces of Mahratta into English, and had gone through an abbreviated course in English grammar.[14]

Clearly, colonial instruction would have to proceed through what Jervis went on to describe as 'tuition by double translation'. Significant amounts of time in the colonial classroom were spent on the teaching of the two languages: English and the regional vernacular, for, literate skills in neither language could be presumed, at least in the form required in the colonial schools. But even after the students had been familiarised with the basic elements of the two languages, much of the further instruction too proceeded through constant use of translation between them. This reinforcement was crucial, as the institution of this bilingual relation was fundamental to the aims of the education project, and the entire exercise was as much intended to advance the notion that a sufficient degree of transferability existed between English and the vernaculars. The theories proposed by philological scholarship notwithstanding, these laborious endeavours in the colonial classroom showed that there was little evidence on the ground to back up claims that the South Asian vernaculars and modern European languages were related through bonds of primeval affinity. Rather, these efforts to establish links between English and the native languages through the bureaucratic

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[13] Letter No 362 dated 10 - 3-1824 from the Secretary to the Government to the Committee of the Bombay Native School Book And School Society in 'Extracts from the Bombay Secretariat Records General Department Vol. 8 (63) in Selections from Educational Records(Bombay) (1815-1840), p.59.

[14] Report dated 6-6-1826 from George Jervis, secretary of the Bombay Native School book and School Society to James Farish, Secretary to Government, 'Extracts from the Bombay Secretariat Records, Educational Department Volume 2 of 1826 in Selections from Educational Records(Bombay 1815-1840), p.90.

manoeuvres of the education project highlighted the radical unfamiliarity and discontinuities underlying the colonial pedagogic situation.

Such attempts to forcibly sustain and reinforce the links between English and the vernacular through successive rounds of translation and re-translation was not surprising considering the aims of the education project to comprehensively reconstitute native common-sense. Thus if an English education was meant to advance the skills the students had acquired through reading vernacular materials, prepared of course mainly through translations from English 'originals', then the only 'proof' that they could be expected to offer of their English learning was through their ability to 'successfully' translate their lessons into their vernacular! Such viva voce and, where possible, written translations formed a critical and an important part of the class tests and the public examinations that students were subject to. Given the almost gargantuan scale of the ambitions of the education project to simultaneously and hastily refurbish the means and definitions of learning, it was not surprising that students who made it to the English schools were frequently under-prepared to adapt to instruction through English. The shift from learning circumscribed within particularistic religious traditions to a system of education, theoretically premised upon principles of laicised learning, couched in unfamiliar languages was, inevitably, riddled with complex contradictions. This was borne out, for example, by Balshastri Jambhekar's Report as Assistant Professor at the Elphinstone Institute. His remarks on the teaching methods in use there in 1838, notes the lamentable situation arising out of the severe shortage of vernacular books and the cruel constraints of the situation under which master and pupils struggled to internalise lessons meant to be learnt in unfamiliar languages through the process of translation:

> To show the difficulty that is now experienced by the different classes, for want of books with translations, I beg leave to state...that most of my time, and the time of my assistants is employed in explaining to boys of different sects, and in each class, the meaning of what they read, in their own languages. A passage is first read by one of the Hindoos and explained to them in Mahratha; then it is similarly explained to the Parsis in Goozeratee, and lastly to the Mohammeddans in Hindoostanee, till everyone in the class has understood it. This is found necessary not only in the lower class, but even in the highest class....[15]

Translation also formed a crucial part of the pedagogic method adopted in the Normal School, where native trainee teachers were taught, as we learn from Bhavalkar's autobiographical account of his experience in the early 1840s. On every Wednesday, he recounts, part of their lessons was an assignment to write out in the Marathi *modi* script a translated account of

[15] Report by Balshastri Jambhekar dated 21 August 1838 on the Junior School, Elphinstone College, 'Extract from the Bombay Secretariat Records : General Department Volume 444 of 1838' in ed. Parulekar, Selections from Educational Records(Bombay 1815-1840), p.236.

Hume's History of England, and on Saturdays they had to carry out the same exercise in the Marathi *balbodh* script. Moreover, as there were only abridged accounts of the history of Hindustan and of England available in Marathi, we are told that the students had to also transcribe the detailed, oral account given in class by Balshastri, with the aid of the few English books that formed part of the school's collections. Translation, thus, was not just confined to the learning of languages; it formed the core of the instructional method adopted for other subjects as well.

Considering the radical scale of the ambitions that the colonial class-room was invested with, it was not surprising that there was constant slippage between what was sought to be taught, the language through which that had to be done and the learning skills sought to be inculcated. At best, it remained only vaguely clear if the texts used for study were meant to train the student towards a better grasp of the language, or advance his skills of reading and composition, or aid his comprehension of the subject. Translation thus was burdened with multiple cognitive functions : it was meant as a somewhat hapless substitute for a substantive elucidation of ideas and concepts even as it was meant to drill students in habits of writing and reading. Translation was used pretty much like a hold-all pedagogic tool to reduce the learning of the several unfamiliar skills and competencies to a circular pattern of activity that would eventually deliver the desired results through constant re-inforcement .

These official attempts to yoke together English and the vernacular in ways which sought to actually wipe away marks of continuity between the emerging standardised forms of the latter with their pre-colonial pasts must have rendered the experience of learning both the imperial and the native languages equally alien and unfamiliar. For it must be remembered that, even the reading of a standardised form of the vernacular, leave alone its adoption as general curricular practice, had not formed part of pre-colonial modes of instruction. Thus in its use of the printed word and its deployment of standardised reading and orthographic practices, the colonial classroom signified a radical alteration of conceptions of learning, language and literacy.

But despite all these attempts to link the teaching of English and the vernacular through the colonial schools, the competencies that the new intelligentsia was acquiring were in no way symmetrically distributed between the two languages. If anything, the scale of the deficiencies in the training of the average student of the colonial schools were directly proportional to the gigantic scope of the ambitions of the education project. Mr. Green, who was much respected for his work as the Headmaster of the English School at Surat and as the Educational

Inspector of the Surat Sub-division, had some telling observations[16] to make on the education that a student ended up with after the average four to six years spent at school. Such a student could be expected to possess a good general knowledge of geography, a considerable amount of history, in addition to having gone through a course of popular physics and mathematics up to quadratic equations and six books of Euclid. Besides, he would be able to, for the most part, understand an easy English book as well as having been taught the best books in his vernacular language; if he were a Hindu, then he would also have acquired the rudiments of Sanskrit. But Mr. Green goes on to observe that although this might seem like a lot, the student despite, or perhaps, *on account* of his training, unfortunately, remained lacking in the basic linguistic means through which to pursue his education any further or in which he could hope to attempt any level of self-expression :

> We are compelled, however, to remember that after all these years of study, the pupil for any purposes of future self-education, *is really without a language*. His vernacular tongue with which he is tolerably well-acquainted, contains almost nothing worth his reading, and English is so difficult, to an Asiatic mind that he is still unable to study in it without resistance and unlikely to acquire the habit of reading for general information.(emphasis added)

Neither were the students themselves left with any illusions that their training had endowed them with symmetrical capacities to carry out the range of cognitive functions through either or both the languages in an identical or comparable fashion. Surely, they could not have remained oblivious of the hierarchical difference between the supposed intellectual capacities of English and the vernaculars that was sought to be established through the system of colonial education. The early vernacular intelligentsia in western India were quick to catch onto the critical possibilities and the importance of a vernacular discourse within the colonial public domain. I shall try to show later in the thesis, how almost from the very outset, native vernacular discourse displayed considerable concern with the meanings and the implications of the asymmetrical divisions resulting from the hierarchical differences underlying the colonial bilingual relation. But these signs of a social self-reflexivity within vernacular discourse also testified to the existence of communicative channels between the colonial administration and native intellectuals. These channels were undoubtedly founded on severely asymmetric terms, but were, nevertheless, characterised by hegemonic potential.

Both the preceding discussion here and other work seeking to analyse the making of colonial discourse have emphasised how forms of cultural transmission were crucial to the making of the discursive and ideological links between eighteenth century Europe and the colonies.

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[16]Mr. Green had been a much-respected Headmaster of the Surat English High School before being appointed the Superintendent for the Second Division which included the Surat, Kaira, Ahmedabad and Broach Collectorates. The remarks quoted above were offered by Mr. Green when he was Acting Principal at the Elphinstone Institute Bombay in 1849 and are found in the Report of the Board of Education for 1849, Bombay, 1851, p.4-5.

Pivotal to these processes was the capacity of western, post-enlightenment discourse to represent its political intentions as 'merely' cultural manoeuvres. The cultural and political shifts that metropolitan power wished to secure in the colonies were frequently represented through invoking the analogy of the European Renaissance and the Reformation. It would be useful to examine at some length how accounts of these important periods in the history of early modern Europe came to be displaced, firstly, within colonial ideology and consequently, within its negotiation through native discourse.

English and Laicization in the Vernaculars : a Colonial 'Renaissance'? :

Chapter two has shown that, despite its constant disavowals, colonial authority was quite self-aware of the radical nature of its intervention. Given the unprecedentedness and the complexity of the discursive and institutional shifts that colonial power sought to introduce, colonial discourse needed a means to articulate its ideological designs, which aimed at harnessing indigenous cultures to the narratives of European history in ways that sanctioned western intervention. Thus colonial ideology sought to represent non-western cultures through a powerful dynamic that both fixed their position and difference within normative structures derived from a eurocentric modernity. Colonial ideology required a discursive trope to embody its aspirations to reform the native to measure up to the norms of the modern West, through the internalisation of a truncated liberalism. And its is thus that the image of the European Renaissance and Reformation provided the metropolitan imagination with a resonant metaphor that suggestively and powerfully articulated the ideological ambitions of the colonial encounter. The Renaissance analogy entered the discourse of colonial education not simply as a motif meant to foreground western superiority, but because it had deep resonances with its objectives, as it aspired to secure its political ends through reconstituting the distribution of learning and language on the sub-continent. The deployment of the analogy of the Renaissance served several ideological functions. It allowed the radically disruptive designs of capitalistic, colonial power to be represented as the benevolent conferment of modern knowledges on non-western peoples. Even as it helped construct a continuous narrative that extended from the origin of western civilisation to its present world-historical phase, it helped sanction the current interventions of the metropolitan bourgeoisie to remake other societies in its own image.

The trope of the Renaissance entered metropolitan discourse in the aftermath of colonial expansion. Rather, the memory of the emergence of modern literatures in the European vernaculars served as an important imaginative stimulus in conceiving of possible 'solutions' to the problems posed by the incommensurable ideological divides separating the two sides brought together by the colonial encounter. In doing this, colonial ideology could rapidly 'reduce' and relocate the profound discontinuities between eighteenth-century Europe and

South Asia as a problem located 'merely' at the linguistic level, which could, in turn, be 'successfully' managed through techniques of discursive appropriation and translation. The introduction of English through the use of print presented a powerful means for the colonial imagination to conceive and discharge the radical ideological strategies that the imperial moment called for. Educational policy thus sought to displace the existing languages of learning on the sub-continent, and place native vernaculars into 'direct' contact with the 'superior' body of western texts available in English. Print presented the colonial ruling class with unique possibilities to alter and regulate the structure of cultural production within the native world. Simultaneously, it allowed them to represent the colonial enterprise as an attempt to 'extend' the significance of the European Renaissance into the rest of the world through a 'universal' reproduction of the effects of the processes of the laicisation of learning and modern vernacularization.

However, this put English in a somewhat paradoxical position. It was expected to establish itself through delegitimising the existing classical literary traditions languages, besides having to simultaneously demonstrate its power to stimulate tendencies towards 'general enlightenment' through engendering a body of modern, 'useful' texts in the vernaculars. Thus English was to be the arch-signifier of the high discourses of modernity in the colonial world, but alongside it was also to be the pragmatic inspiration for the possibility of a generally-diffused, laicized knowledge within native society. As the vehicle of a secularised, rationalised world-view, it had to measure up to the task of challenging the prevailing 'high' languages of Sanskrit and Persian, but would have to proceed with circumspection as it could never hope to replace Sanskrit and Persian as the language or worship. As the 'high' language representing an imperial, modern authority, English had to maintain its elevated position as the instrument of a vastly superior race of rulers, even as it aspired to win over the allegiance of its colonised population through impressing itself closely on their hearts and minds. The ultimate irony of course was that English had to play out this complex combination of roles through the stringent budgetary allocations of the education policy of a parsimonious colonial state. And yet, paradoxically enough, this was the first time that the South Asian vernaculars were being elevated to position where they were at least, in principle, admitted to be potential vehicles of learned discourse and as such, these cultural shifts necessitated by the requirements of colonial ideology carried a profoundly transformative significance. To acquire a position of pre-eminence in the colonial context English had to supplant the prestige languages of Sanskrit and Persian. And yet, if the regional vernaculars were to develop 'enlarged' lexical and syntactic capabilities, to compare with the 'achievements' of English, surely at least part of the inspiration had to come from their 'own' classical antecedents in Sanskrit and Persian. The relevance of the erstwhile high languages could not be easily dismissed; in fact it was likely that they would emerge with renewed, if significantly altered value.

The expectations from English, on both the official and the native side, were complex and not without internal contradictions. These tensions are evident within colonial discourse as it tried to place multivalent emphases on its own invocation of the events of the European Renaissance and the Reformation. The use of the metaphor of the Renaissance within educational discourse was subject both to regional and temporal variation but it was nevertheless evoked within the whole range of positions from anglicism to arguments advocating the use of the vernaculars. In Bengal, the Orientalist lobby were the strongest advocates of the arguments that colonial discourse should project itself through the vernaculars. Colonial discourse would be more effective if it could overwrite the vernaculars, so that native speech would truly reflect western rationality. Therefore the Orientalists advocated the use of

> the forms of speech which they (natives) already understand and use. These must be applied to the purpose, either by direct translations, or which is preferable, by the representation of European facts, opinions, and sentiments in an original native garb. [17]

And yet if western learning was to be made appealing to the native mind, then as a practical necessity, the study of English would need to be introduced *alongside* the study of Sanskrit and Arabic. However, in trying to abruptly supplant the pre-colonial, pre-modern 'high' languages, and without the support of attendant processes of a developed secularised world view and a rationalistic approach to the natural world, English could foreground its position as an instrument for engendering a laicised knowledge only in partial fashion. To begin with anyway, English could hope to carry out its mission through gradually insinuating itself into the world-view of traditional native intellectuals:

> In the history of all philosophical and religious reformation, it will be found that the most effective agents have been those who had been educated in the errors they reformed .... Bacon was deep in the fallacies of the Schools. Luther had preached the doctrines of the church of Rome and an able *Pundit* or *Maulvi* who should add English to Sanskrit and Arabic, who should be led to expose the absurdities and errors of his own systems and advocate the adoption of European knowledge and principles, would work a greater revolution in the minds of his unlettered countrymen .... [18]

But plans to accommodate English alongside the patronage given to classical Sanskrit and Persian studies through colleges that employed *pandits* and *maulvis* met with native resistance. Interestingly, it was not the move to introduce English that was opposed; what

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[17] Letter from Horace Wilson from Fort William, quoted in Willoughby's letter dated 27 May 1850 to Secretary to the Bombay Government , Appendix XI, Report of Department of Public Instruction for 1848-50, Bombay, 1850, p.183.

[18] Horace Wilson quoted in Willoughby's Minute dated 12 January, 1850 to Secretary to the Bombay Government , Appendix XI, Report of Department of Public Instruction for 1848-50, Bombay, 1850 pp.183-184.

was questioned was the rationality of the colonial government's attempts to divide its allocations *between* traditional learning and education through English. This argument is best exemplified by Rammohan Roy's often-quoted letter of 1823[19], where he strongly denounced the government's plans to patronise Sanskrit learning, on account of what he considered its entirely moribund, speculative character and elitist bias. In comparing traditional native scholarship in Sanskrit to the theology of the European school-men, his response showed a simultaneous deflection and partial internalisation of the allusions to the Renaissance found in the self-representation of educational policy. Making an implicit connection between English as being the language of modern rationality and science, he urged the government to instead promote a liberal scientific education through English.

In Bombay too, the native patrons of the new education made a similar plea to the administration to make available 'the European Arts and Sciences to the Natives'. But interestingly, they placed a different stress upon the expectations they envisaged for English from those in Roy's letter. They did not emphasise English as the language of scientific rationality as much as their hope that English would invigorate the cause of native education, through enabling the general diffusion of the new learning through the vernacular dialects:

> ...by the study of the English language ...(the natives) do not contemplate the supercession of the vernacular dialects of the country in the promotion of native education; but they regard it merely as a help to the diffusion of the European Arts and Sciences among them, by means of translations by those who have acquired a thorough acquaintance with it; and as a branch of classical education to be esteemed and cultivated in this country as the classical languages of Greece and Rome are in the Universities of Europe.[20]

The status of English as the new 'high' language of learning was being apparently being readily conceded. Yet the deliberate insinuation underlying the comparison being made here between the position of English in the colonial situation and that of the classical languages of Greek and Latin in west European universities is worth noting. The comparison clearly intended to suggest that native elites did not see English as displacing the vernaculars; rather they hoped that the diffusion of western knowledge through translation would eventually place English in a position of elevated marginality, on par with the circumscribed status of prestige languages within western universities.

With tendencies towards laicisation being more overtly played out within the course of education policy in western India, unsurprisingly, references to the European Renaissance

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[19] Rammohan Roy's letter addressed to Lord Amherst, dated 11 December 1823, quoted in ed. J.A. Richey, Selections from Educational Records, Part II, Calcutta, 1921, pp. 98-101.

[20] Letter dated 1-12-1827 from the Committee representing the Native Community to the Secretary, Bombay Native Education Society, 'Extract from the Fourth Report of the Bombay Native Education Society for 1827 pp. 39-47 in Selections from Educational Records(Bombay 1815-1840), p.109.

figured prominently in the debate in Bombay around 1848. The new President of the Board of Education, Sir Erskine Perry, held strong Anglicist views and his efforts aimed to gradually reverse the policy that had hitherto been followed of encouraging instruction through the vernaculars. The differences over these policy shifts were largely played out through the acrimonious exchanges between Erskine Perry and George Jervis who, as translator of numerous school-books on mathematics and as the initiator of the Vernacular Engineering Class in Bombay, nurtured a strong belief in the greater efficacy of instruction imparted through the vernaculars. The argument in favour of an anglicist turn within policy was as much a result of the deep, underlying paradoxes in projecting colonial education as a plan to re-enact the outcomes of the European Renaissance. Not surprisingly, this brought to the fore the acute practical difficulties in the preparation and publication of vernacular school-books. As little could be done to dispose off these immediate obstacles, the debate came to rest upon general considerations of the place of English, and the importance official policy ought to give to the 'cultivation' of the vernaculars. Jervis's position was comparable to that of the Orientalist lobby in Bengal. He argued that English could only remain an elite language and the Anglicist view that it would soon become generally familiar to the colonial population was no more than a fond hope. Ironically, the most fervent advocates of instruction through the vernacular were also the most enthusiastic proponents of the theory that saw colonial rule as the legitimate, historical re-enactment of the European Renaissance. To Jervis it seemed clear that to proceed with trying to make English the medium of ideological contact, the colonial government would be neglecting

> the benefit of three hundred years' experience in Europe and we are retrograded to the days, in which the Latin was the sole language of literature; and when in consequence, knowledge both temporal and spiritual, was confined to a few Monks, a few Divines, a few Men of Letters. Until such an exclusive agency was put an end to - until the modern tongues of Europe were emancipated - the PEOPLE could never learn, or know for themselves. On the abrogation of the exclusive use of the Latin language, on the inauguration of the language of the People, the acquirement of knowledge was made accessible to all...*all* men could be taught, *all* men could be teachers, and how wonderful has been the advancement, in morality and literature, by such a change in Europe.[21]

We have here perhaps the most lucid exposition of the connections between the processes of laicisation of learning witnessed in early modern Europe and the expansion of bourgeois rationality as colonial ideology. Jervis's argument clearly foregrounded the firm belief that western imperialistic ambitions *need not* be impeded by the alienness of English. Instead,

[21] George Jervis, Minute of 24 February 1847 in Report of the Department of Public Instruction 1848-50, Bombay, 1850, p.48.

colonial authority could hope to transcend the limits of its influence through its capacity to use the language as the stimulus to promote a general diffusion of western knowledge through the vernacular. Within the colonial context, the 'liberal' argument to promote the vernaculars through state-backed initiatives as the general vehicles of learned discourses, paradoxically, also pointed to the designs to maximise the assimilation of colonial ideology by the largest possible numbers. Perry's response was reminiscent of Francis Warden's position discussed in Chapter two, namely, that the colonial administration was not obliged to supervise a project of general education for the natives. Instead, the ideological interests of colonial rule could as well be secured through measures that used English to stimulate the 'thirst of knowledge', apparently much like Latin did for Europe. Among the measures Perry had in mind to promote the 'demand' for enlightenment, was the move to make English obligatory for seeking employment in the colonial offices. The teaching of English through print would, in course of time, lead to the rise of an adequately large reading public, and it ought to be left to native 'men of genius' to come forward to 'address their fellow-men through their mother tongues'[22]. On the other hand, Jervis felt that it was precisely because conditions were not 'suitable' for the emergence of such native 'private' initiative, that it was imperative for the colonial state to take upon itself the responsibility to produce appropriate reading material through translation in the vernaculars.

Thus translation assumed a critical significance within official policy and consequently also within native discourse as it attempted to negotiate the influence of colonial ideology. The pedagogic transfer of western knowledge via the vernaculars needed to be backed by an officially sponsored translation project to endow the native vernaculars with 'appropriate' literature that could be used as reading material in the colonial schools. I shall conclude this section with a brief discussion on the shifts in the official patronage to translation into Marathi, especially the important changes that occurred around the time of the establishment of the University of Bombay in 1857.

Shifts in Official Patronage to the Translation Project :

The preparation of reading material and books in Marathi had begun in Bombay through the efforts of the *shastri mandali* under the auspices of the Bombay Education Society from 1821 onwards. These early efforts were undertaken to rectify a 'total' absence of 'appropriate' reading material in the vernacular. The initial publications represented a diverse range of subjects, but were all meant for the use of students enrolled either in the engineering and medical class in Bombay, or in the vernacular schools in the capital and in the outlying areas of the Presidency. The depository list of books stocked by the Bombay Native Education

[22] Minute by the President of the Board of Education, Sir Erskine Perry, dated 14 April 1847, in Report of the Department of Public Instruction 1848-50, Bombay, 1850, pp.59-61.

Society in 1839 had 86 titles in Marathi and Gujrati[23]. It included works on practical geometry, algebra, logarithms, trigonometry, primers, a treatise on the management of schools, geography, astronomy, the history of England, natural philosophy and chemistry. Also among the titles were an atlas containing nine maps, Marathi-English dictionaries and anthologies of stories and tracts considered exemplary reading material for beginners and young readers. Alongside, from 1829 onwards, the Poona Sanskrit College also began contributing to the effort of preparing 'useful' Marathi books, and in fact, became for the next few years, the major official venue of production of a modern literature in Marathi. The measures to reorganise Pune College in the 1840s aimed at demoting the importance of the study of traditional Sanskrit texts. Simultaneously, Major Candy was given charge of the supervisory arrangements to establish and regulate a standardised vernacular usage appropriate to the new 'reformed' Marathi that needed to be fashioned. An important part of Candy's task was to correct and revise the vernacular readers prepared by the native staff at Bombay and Pune. One of the outcomes of the reorganisation of Pune College was the creation of the Vernacular Department with positions of Exhibition Translators who were to be appointed exclusively to help expedite the task of preparing a body of 'useful' Marathi texts in print. Remarkably, within a span of a few decades after the efforts to produce a standardised Marathi script, by the late 1840s and the early 1850s, vernacular intellectuals were engaged in rendering important texts and ideas of political economy into Marathi[24]. These important translations showed that these vernacular intellectuals were fully aware that that such attempts to transplant the discourses of modernity into the native world would inevitably involve a complex task involving conceptual and linguistic translation. Consider the following remarks by Krishnashastri Chiplunkar[25] in the

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[23] for prices of some of these titles see Chapter four, fn. 41.

[24] These treatises on political economy produced in Marathi were not 'strict' translations in the modern sense; rather I shall to prefer to call them attempts to vernacularise the discourse of political economy. Four different Marathi intellectuals attempted to do this. They were Krishnashastri Chiplunkar, Gopal Hari Deshmukh, Hari Keshavji and Vishwanath Narayan Mandlik. These treatises are republished in ed. D.K. Bedekar, *Char Marathi Bhashetele Arthashastragnya*, 1969, Pune, *Gokhale Arthashastra Samstha Press*, 1969.

[25] Krishnashastri Chiplunkar (1824-1876), was born in *chitpavan brahmin* family in Nasik. He began studying the *vedas* from a very young age, and soon joined the Pune Sanskrit College, where he studied under the well-known and scholar, Moreshastri. When the Pune College was re-organised in the 1840s, to include a Vernacular Department, Krishnashastri was appointed Professor of Marathi. While at the Pune College, he composed many Marathi prose texts including a version of Mill's political economy, the Arabian nights and a biography of Socrates. He contributed to the first Marathi weekly from Pune, *Dnyanprakash* , and edited the anti-missionary paper from Pune, *Vicharlehari* started in 1852, and the *Shalapatrak* published by the Education Department. Krishnashastri soon developed a reputation as a scholar, well-read in English and Sanskrit and much interested in the making of modern Marathi. Known as a forthright and intelligent conversationalist, he was much respected in various social circles in the city. Krishnashastri was probably associated with the *Dakshina* Prize Committee when Phule's manuscript was rejected in 1855, but nevertheless, he supported Phule's initiatives in starting schools for lower-caste communities. Krishnashastri was also involved in the activities of the Sarvajanik Sabha. Once the Translation Department was moved out of the Pune College, Krishnashastri became the Reporter on the Vernacular Press. His son, Vishnushastri edited the well-known literary periodical *Nibandhmala* , but the latter's ideological vision was, in many respects, much narrower than his father's. For a biographical account on Krishnashastri Chiplunkar see Appendix Two, *'Krishnashastri Chiplunkar Yanche charitra'* in ed. Bhavani Shankar Sridhar Pandit, *Raosaheb Keshav Shivram Bhavalkar yanche atmavritta*, Nagpur, 1961, pp. 118-127.

preface to his translation of Mill's work. It was called *Arthshastraparibhasha* and was published in 1855 in Pune :

> The following text has been formulated on the basis of work of the renowned English writer, Mill. There are numerous thoughts in the original work that the present author has decided to leave out of the present work as they apply only to Europe and would not be easily comprehensible here, neither would they be very useful. Similarly, the original text draws examples pertaining to England to illustrate some of its principles; they have been changed to refer to situations here so as to be easily accessible to Marathi readers and other alterations of the same order have been made.[26]

What is indeed remarkable about Krishnashastri's preface is its underlying tone of assurance in deploying the vernacular to critically mediate between the two historical contexts conjoined through the colonial encounter. But at the same time, these attempts to re-organise Pune College were also meant to establish the norms for what would now constitute acceptable and 'cultivated' usages of Marathi in matters of grammar, syntax, idiom and style. Evidence indicates that Major Candy's rulings of what constituted 'correct' linguistic practice in Marathi often aimed to cast vernacular idiomatic and syntax in the mould of the English norms. The modern form of the native vernaculars were thus inscribed through multiple levels of translation from English, a point that is well brought out by the title of an important study on the making of modern Marathi style, which is quite pertinently called *Marathi Gadyacha Ingreji Avataar*[27], or 'The English reincarnation of Marathi prose' . The Translation section of the Vernacular Department in the Poona College aimed to consolidate the work done in Bombay by enlarging and 'correcting' the early series produced by the *shastri mandali* to now form a graded, 'complete' series for each subject prescribed on the vernacular school curriculum. Vernacular materials were to be prepared to provide a complete reading course in Marathi, geography, morals, mathematics, natural philosophy, political economy and history[28]. Similar materials to be used in the Gujrati schools and a further set, if possible, for the Canarese schools were also to be produced in the Vernacular Department of the Poona College.

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[26]translated from Marathi, Krishnashastri Chiplunkar, *Prastavana* to *'Arthshastraparibhasha'* in *Char Marathi Bhashetele Arthashastragnya*, p.265. Appointed as Assistant Professor of Vernacular Literature at Deccan College, Krishnashastri Chiplunkar was an commanding figure in the history of the Pune College for many years. This text on political economy prepared by Krishnashastri was used in the higher vernacular classes both in Poona and Bombay, until the establishment of the university brought the attempt to teach these 'advanced' subjects in the vernacular to an abrupt end.

[27] Datta Vaman Potdar, *Marathi Gadyacha Ingreji Avataar*, Pune, Venus Prakashan, 1922.

[28]For the details on the procedure for revision under Candy's supervision , see the 'Annual Report of the Poona College for the year 1854' in the Report of Public Instruction for Bombay Presidency, 1854-55, pp.12-15.

Candy's appointment to supervise the production of Marathi texts at the Pune College was severely criticised in the vernacular press, especially Bhau Mahajan's *Prabhakar*. Candy responded to these attacks through the missionary paper, *Dnyanodaya*. Bhau Mahajan challenged Candy to a public contest over his Marathi and translation skills, but it seems that the latter declined the offer. See 'The Late Govind Kunte alias Bhau Mahajan, a Sketch by Keshav Bhavalkar' in ed. G.G. Jambhekar, Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 3, pp.45-52.

Given the general rationale underlying the patronage towards vernacular production, it was not surprising that Poona College and especially the Vernacular Department and Translation Section underwent further re-organisation with the establishment of the University of Bombay in 1857. With the emergence of a centre of higher learning in the Presidency capital, the internal arrangements of Poona College had now to be modelled more closely along the lines of the example of Elphinstone College in Bombay. The functioning of the Vernacular Department at Poona had to be aligned with the shifts in the overall considerations of education policy. For, with the extension of the project of colonial education into a system of higher education, the position of the vernaculars would now need to be renegotiated, especially as there was little enthusiasm within the official view for any consideration of measures that would allow the native languages to develop as the medium of higher instruction. Soon after the emergence of Bombay University, the Office of the Marathi Translator was detached from Poona College and in 1862-63, the Translators Office was moved out of Poona to Sion Fort in Bombay as an autonomous unit[29]. The official expectations from the Translator's Office had changed rapidly : no longer was its primary objective one of producing educational material, instead it was meant to serve more bureaucratic functions, including the translation of samples extracted from vernacular publications for purposes of official surveillance[30].

Alongside these shifts in the structure of official patronage to translation and the production of books in Marathi, there were also clear signs of changes in the type of subjects and titles chosen for translation, as being fit for dissemination of a 'laicised' learning among a colonial vernacular reading public. As Maya Pandit's useful study[31] on the translation culture in nineteenth century Maharashtra points out, the financial assistance from the *Dakshina* Fund in the form of prizes for worthy translations of educational materials into Marathi was withdrawn during the 1850s. Instead, these prizes were now to be offered for original, 'literary' compositions of novels, lyric poetry, dramas and translations, and adaptations of such works in Marathi, so as to 'create a taste for reading among the masses' that would supplant the great delight they took in 'mere myths'[32]. Correspondingly, the translation department was separated from the Poona College establishment and the translation exhibitioners were

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[29] Report of the Department of Public Instruction for 1862-63, Bombay 1863, pp.175-177.

[30] By 1864, the Translation Office had developed into the Office of the Reporter on the Vernacular Press. Interestingly, Krishnashastri Chiplunkar who had been the Professor in the Vernacular Department at Poona College ended his career in colonial service as the Chief Official Reporter on the Vernacular Press.

[31] Maya Pandit, 'Translation Culture and the Colonial Discourse in Nineteenth Century Maharashtra', in eds. Milind Malshe, Madhav Apte, P.N. Paranjape, Explorations in Applied Linguistics , Pune, 1995.

[32] Department of Public Instruction, Vol. VI, 1856 and Department of Public Instruction, Vol. 15, 1862- 63, quoted in Maya Pandit, 'Translation Culture and the Colonial Discourse in Nineteenth Century Maharashtra', Explorations in Applied Linguistics, p. 174.

absorbed in other departments of the colonial bureaucracy. At one level this seemed to indicate the government's intention to divert its patronage to promote a wider purpose than just the preparation of school-books, which would be used by only a small section of the population. However, this withdrawal of official assistance for the translation of vernacular educational material accompanied other policy moves aimed at conclusively fixing the place of the vernaculars as fit only for an elementary, and basically inferior, preparatory training to 'higher' education in English. From now on, education policy measures showed little substantial commitment or interest in patronising the extension of modern knowledge through the vernaculars. Evidently, the ideological objectives of the official patronage to the vernaculars had been realised. Although vernacular production was still to be subject to a strict oversight through the Office of the Marathi Translator, once the task of establishing standardised linguistic practice had been accomplished under close colonial supervision, colonial policy seemed to have lost interest in sponsoring the composition of vernacular texts. Such moves to gradually relinquish direct control over the apparatus of ideological and cultural reproduction in favour of 'private' initiatives once the initial tasks of forging a normative structure under the monopolistic authority of the colonial state had been put in place, were part of a larger pattern evident within educational policy. A similar logic underlay the move within educational policy after 1880 to devise measures to hand over the responsibility of starting more schools to native 'private' operators. The administration's lack of interest in the cultivation of the vernacular sphere was borne out by the decision in the 1860s to effectively exclude the study of the vernacular languages from the colonial university only after a few it had been established. Its pre-dominant interest in the vernacular sphere now was to keep as strict a vigil as its resources permitted, and from 1864 onwards, one of the chief functions of the Vernacular Translators Office was the compilation of weekly summaries of the contents of all the vernacular newspapers and periodicals published in different parts of the Presidency.

From this point onwards, the vernacular sphere was left to develop outside of official patronage. But with the overall spread of literate skills being insufficient to make vernacular publishing a commercially viable, self-sustaining proposition, the vernacular sphere was left with no option but to allow itself to be shaped by the minimal official patronage that was still available. This was almost entirely directed towards the creation of a 'modern' imaginative writing in Marathi. The laicization and general diffusion of learning in the West had, in the long run, resulted in the increasing specialisation of modern knowledges and also a growing differentiation between rational and imaginative discourses within modernity. However this disjunction between the analytic and the aesthetic aspects of modern thought took on a very different form within the trajectory of the processes of laicisation of culture in the colonial context.

The last chapter will take up these themes of the politics of the aestheticisation of vernacular discourse and the increasing tendencies towards political intolerance within the sphere of vernacular writing from the 1860s onwards. The writing of the generation of vernacular intellectuals who reached maturity after 1857 reveals a different set of emphases than those evident in the writing of the early colonial vernacular intellectuals like Balshastri Jambhekar, Bhau Mahajan, Krishnashastri Chiplunkar, the young Lokahitawadi. To anticipate my argument of the Chapter five briefly, compared to vernacular discourse before the emergence of the university, the post-1860s vernacular Marathi intelligentsia showed a markedly weaker interest in the discourses of modern scientific rationality and liberal political ideology, especially in the importance they placed on efforts to appropriate these into the vernacular. In fact the writing of the period usually termed the 'Marathi Renaissance' of the 1870s shows little interest or recollection of the work of the early colonial intellectuals. Significantly, this later body of writing which aimed at defining the criteria of modern literary taste with respect to Marathi was marked by two important characteristics : firstly, it was mainly the work of men whose formal training did not extend to a college education and secondly, its self-consciously 'literary' style which owed much to Sanskrit and English showed few signs of engagement with the discourses of modern scientific or political rationality, which had indeed formed the mainstay of vernacular discourse before the establishment of the University. However, paradoxically, it was at this point that vernacular discourse was most keenly 'awakening' to its potential to construct a discourse which contested the power of the colonial state. These temporal, linguistic and ideological divisions within the colonial intelligentsia had important political implications, especially with regard to the conditions and possibilities for constructing a hegemonic alliance of anti-colonial interests. Chapter five will take up these questions more fully. In order to enunciate a representative anti-colonial discourse, the intelligentsia had to proceed through a series of manoeuvres and choices that enabled them to speak on behalf of an alliance of dominant interests. Obviously, this was not a static process that saw the intelligentsia advancing along a pre-decided path. Rather it required colonial intellectuals to collectively 'read' the horizon of possibilities which had to be negotiated through optimal choices made at key points in the process whereby they eventually were able to represent their interests as a class as being identical with those of anti-colonial nationalist ideology. But in order to do that, it would be useful as a first step here, to dwell on how early vernacular native discourse perceived the crucial bilingual divide within educational policy and the colonial social world.

Translation and the 'Diffusion of Knowledge' : the Emergence of a Native Vernacular Discourse:

In this section I will take up some early native representations of this bilingual relation that was so crucial to the division and distribution of power within colonial society. My attempt will be to

show how the responses of many early colonial intellectuals were frequently woven around perceptions of the new relations of asymmetrical but 'direct' proximity that were being established between English and the vernacular. Many of these responses concerned the perceived disparities in the 'accumulated' intellectual wealth of English and the state of the native vernaculars. It could be said that the preoccupations of early vernacular discourse with the need to 'improve' native society through 'developing' the vernaculars was simply an artless internalisation of colonial ideology. However, this concern with the remaking of native languages was part of the interest in the remaking collective identities through standardised forms of language, processes within which colonial intellectuals also simultaneously saw possibilities of asserting their own claims to cultural and political precedence. Instead, an approach that seeks to analyse the key concerns of native vernacular discourse would help ground the cultural imperialism argument in ways that would also simultaneously allow us to theorise meanings of agency, mediation and hegemonic influence within colonial modernity. The intelligentsia's representations of the emerging divisions within native society would also be crucial to attempts to trace the subsequent trajectory of their efforts to articulate a counter-hegemonic discourse contesting the authority of the colonial state. Such a sociological analysis that foregrounds the specificities of the cultural and political transformation brought about as a result of colonial literacy would also help redress the purely textual emphases of many studies of colonial culture using methods of discourse-analysis.

The discourse of early colonial intellectuals reveals much earnest discussion of the possibilities opened up through the proposals of the new literate order for 'extending' the expressive capabilities of the vernaculars and the 'general' diffusion of useful knowledge within native society. Early native intellectuals associated with the Native Education Society in Bombay were particularly impressed with the need to appropriate the discourses of secular, 'useful' learning into the vernacular, which would for our purposes here be, Marathi. Take for example the introductory remarks to *Bal Mitra*, the work of Kashinath Chatre, considered to be among the ablest Marathi translators to have worked with the Native Education Society in Bombay in its early years. *Bal Mitra* was one of the first readers published in 1828 for the use of students in the new Marathi schools. It was a translation of the English version of Children's Friend. Chatre saw his project as one of articulating what he saw as the differences between the modern European vernaculars and Marathi :

> The *Bal Mitra* was originally a composition in French, and from which it came into English and now the Marathi is based upon that. If one thinks of the French and the English languages, one realises that they have been undergoing improvement for centuries. There exist books in them on every topic, and in them there are words to express almost every thought occurring to the mind; they are known to all the great intellectuals and therefore Marathi can hardly have the same lucidity that is possible in these languages. A language in which no one has composed grammars or dictionaries until now, in which no great scholars have taken interest, whose vocabulary is limited and its spoken style is not matured either.[33]

The great learning of the new rulers, the wealth and variety of books available in their language and the facility of print apparently made a deep impression on the imagination of native intellectuals, and these figure persistently as themes in their writing. It is principally on these counts that any claims about the legitimacy of colonial rule, and its radical difference with previous regimes is acknowledged. To view these impressions as merely naive or obsequious would echo the stereotypical colonial representations of the native character. It would also be to reductively misread the nature of the impact of the new discourses on native intellectuals, for often these laudatory comments about the cognitive sophistication of the new regime were accompanied by carefully articulated arguments for the need to use the colonial encounter as an opportunity to derive the maximum benefit from these ideas for native society[34]. Notice for example the views expressed in the *Bombay Durpan*, the first native Marathi newspaper to be established in 1832, published from Bombay. The efforts of the government's Education Society were praised, but the editorial comments simultaneously drew attention to the openings for the intellectual enrichment of native society and the opportunities negotiation of political power under the new regime:

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[33] translated from Marathi, Sadashiv Kashinath Chatre, *'Prastavana'*, *Bal Mitra* ,Pt. 1, Bombay Education Society, 1828. n. p.

[34] It is interesting to note the terms used to describe the like-minded 'we', who identified themselves as the self-conscious elite who had benefited from the new 'useful' learning. The terms used in the first newspaper in Marathi, the bilingual paper, *Bombay Durpan* (1832-1840) to identify its community of readers vary between *'lok'*, *'hya deshatele lok'*(people of this *desh*), *ettedeshiye lok, etheel lok* (people living here). Also, the paper shows a deliberate attempt to adhere to its policy of religious neutrality. Even while discussing the missionary campaign against Hindu beliefs and practice, the vernacular parts of the *Durpan* adopted a determinedly neutral editorial tone. For a further discussion of the impartial editorial policy of the *Durpan*, see Chapter four, pp.146-148.

> Under a government which patronises literary improvements and encourages the diffusion of useful learning among its subjects, the cultivation of the mind is prosecuted with more ardour and with greater success than under a ruling power that is despotic. The result of such pursuits is to improve the literature of the country and to add to the stock of knowledge possessed by the people. The discoveries of one generation lead to others by the succeeding one, thus the arts and sciences flourish, and civilisation then advances with rapid strides. But it does not so much depend upon the ruling power as with the people themselves to improve their intellectual condition.[35]

The *Durpan* was critically aware of the importance of the cultivation of the vernaculars, to its vision of maximising the benefits accruing from the education project to native society. The value of extending the circulation of the new knowledge within native society through augmenting the range of reading material available in Marathi formed a crucial part of the *Durpan*'s agenda[36], besides also informing much of the other work undertaken by its editor, Balshastri Jambhekar[37]. The significance of Balshastri's initiative as editor of the *Durpan* extends far beyond the simple fact that it was the first native newspaper in Marathi as the *Bombay Durpan* truly represents a unique, historic moment in the story of the cultural impact of colonial intervention. By publishing the paper as a bilingual venture using both Marathi and English, Balshastri was clearly signalling his awareness of the importance and the centrality of the bilingual relation to the colonial world. Although the first, the *Durpan* was not the only newspaper of the colonial period to be published from western India using both English and Marathi. But it clearly differed from all the subsequent bilingual English-Marathi papers, in the unique structure of the bilingual relation it proposed[38]. It chose a format where each page would be divided into two vertical halves, seeking to reproduce the exact equivalent of every reported item both in English and Marathi. In choosing a format where each page would be divided into two symmetrical columns of English and Marathi, the *Durpan* was virtually trying to fearlessly posit a equality between the status of English and the vernacular. Of

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[35] *Bombay Durpan*, March 2, 1832, in ed. G.G. Jambhekar, Memoirs of Balsahstri Jambhekar, Vol. 2, Poona, 1950, p.30.

[36] See for example the Prospectus/*Prastavana* and the opening article that explained the value and purpose of the periodical press in the opening issue of January 6 1832 in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, pp.1-5.

[37] In his short life-span of thirty-six years, Balshastri (1810-1846) accomplished a phenomenal amount. He was appointed Assistant Professor of Mathematics upon the establishment of the College Division of the Elphinstone Institution in 1834. The Board of Education was created in 1840 and Jambhekar was the Educational Inspector of the Southern Division. As Educational Inspector he had to tour the province to help establish a regional network of schools. He also taught at the Normal School attached to the Elphinstone College, besides being responsible for the preparation of teaching materials through translation in a wide range of subjects including astronomy, geography, history, grammar and mathematics. See Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 1. For a discussion of his position as an early, 'progressive' vernacular intellectual, as well as his role in the controversy over Shripat Sheshadri's conversion to Christianity, see Chapter four, pp.142-144

[38] For an argument on the changing structure of the bilingual relation as seen in the native press initiatives after 1860s, see Chapter four 169-170 and Chapter five, pp.162-170.

course, in stating its aim as being to try and encourage a pursuit of *vilayati vidya* (English literature) among natives, the paper did implicitly acknowledge the superiority of western knowledge. And yet in introducing itself to its untested audience, the tone of the Prospectus displays no sign of nervousness or awe, instead it is amazingly brisk and business-like in outlining the goals set by its editors:

> Though the publication is undertaken, chiefly, with the object of promoting amongst the Natives the study of European literature, and the diffusion of European knowledge, and consequently with the intention of being conducted in the English language; the sphere of its usefulness will not be limited to such only as are conversant with that language, but will be extended to all who are acquainted with Murratee, as it is proposed to have two coloumns in each page, one English and the other Murattee. Communications received in the former will be accurately translated into the latter and vice-versa; and the originals and translations published in opposite columns. [39]

Further, in declaring, on more than one occasion, that it would not allow itself to be disfigured either by 'personal', petty differences or by servility towards the new rulers [40], the *Durpan* gave ample evidence that the new political principles had been internalised in ways that allowed the emerging intelligentsia to take up critical positions[41] vis-à-vis both native society and the colonial government. The *Durpan* did not hesitate to censure the government about the arrogance of colonial officials[42], nor did it hesitate to take issue with Anglo-Indian paper,

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[39] *Prastavana* , *Bombay Durpan* quoted in Memoirs and Writings of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 2, p. 2.

[40] In its opening issue of January 6 1832, the *Durpan*, declared, 'Personality shall not disfigure, nor servility stain the pages of the *Durpan*, which the conductors actuated by honest intentions, will steadily temperately, and firmly endeavour to render deserving of the good will and support of every lover of truth and virtue.' See Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 2, p. 4.

Similarly, commenting on the subject of the influence of a free and impartial public press, the *Durpan* observed ' Of the various workings and effects of a public press, there is none perhaps more valuable, or more extensively beneficial, than the check which an independent and impartial publication never fails to exercise on the abuse of power, or the misconduct of persons vested with authority. This salutary effect however, can be only produced by scanning the measures of public men, condemning what is improper in their conduct and making known such of their acts as are of a beneficial character. And the conductor of public journal must not shrink from this important part of his duty, either from dread of the anger of any party, or tenderness for the feelings of the individual of whom it may be necessary to speak.', *Durpan*, October 26 1832 in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 2, p.64

[41] An important instance of the early critique of colonial rule were the series of eight, long letter that Dadoba Pandurang's younger brother, Bhaskar Pandurang Tarkhadkar, wrote under the pen name of 'A Hindoo' in the Bombay Gazette, between 30 July 1841 and 27 November 1841. The articles criticised the work of British historians like James Mill, the highly discriminatory attitude of the British administration, the cunning through which the native princes were deprived of their kingdoms, the absolutist nature of Company rule, the ruinous economic drain systematically effected through colonial policy, the great miserliness of education policy . see J.V. Naik, 'An Early Appraisal of the British Colonial Policy', Journal of the University of Bombay, Vols. XLIV &XLV, Nos. 81-82, 1975-76, pp.243-270. and also see, English and Native Rule in India, 1868.

[42] See reader's letter in response to a report on rude behaviour on the part of the Government Secretary, proposing to petition the English Parliament to insert a clause outlawing arrogant conduct by those in high office, *Bombay Durpan* Files, Bombay Archives, June 15 1832, Vol. 1, p.150; 'Misbehaviour of the Police Establishment of the Central Division' in *Bombay Durpan*, May 10 1833; Report on 'Native Gentlemen Equally Entitled to the Same Civility as Europeans' in *Bombay Durpan*, April 25, 1834 in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 2, pp.104-106.

the Bombay Gazette when it criticised the Society's schools for not including religious instruction, and instead allowing the study of 'absurd (native) fables' through the class books[43]. Similarly, the *Durpan* castigated the Bombay Government through its bilingual columns over its decision in 1832 to limit the expenditure on native education to a fixed annual sum instead of the practice followed until then of simply paying for the total annual costs of the Society's work[44].

The cogency, coherence and the consistency of the Marathi columns in the *Durpan* attest to the determination and capabilities of its editorial team[45], with Balshastri being its most important member. What is truly impressive about the paper's achievement is the total absence of even a hint of complaint regarding the 'underdeveloped' state of the vernacular. This marks an important contrast with the work of Vishnushastri Chiplunkar as editor of the *Nibandhmala*, which I shall discuss in the last chapter. Although, the *Nibandhmala*[46] differed from the *Durpan* in the type of material it published, yet it is interesting to note that issue after issue of the latter published expostulations describing the difficulties of sustaining a vernacular journal and the difficulties faced by native editors and publishers, with frequent comments on the greater advance made by print culture in the West. Clearly, it was part of Balshastri's heroic project not to admit the asymmetry between the status English and the vernacular[47]. The *Durpan* had ingeniously tried to disregard the hierarchical difference in the political status of English and the vernacular, and with it, also the underlying asymmetry in the distribution of power between the alien government and native society. Given his constant emphasis on augmenting the available stock of texts in the vernacular, it could not be that Balshastri actually believed that there existed an audience with symmetrical literate capacities in English and Marathi. In fact, it would be no exaggeration to say that Balshastri's entire professional

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[43] 'Reply to a letter in the Bombay Gazette by a "Friend" on Native Education Society, *Bombay Durpan*, September 4, 1835, in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 2, p.120-121.

[44] *Bombay Durpan* , November 9 1832, in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 2, p.38. The article concludes with the following sharply-worded observations on the measures adopted to economise on native education: 'We cannot conclude these observations without expressing our surprise and regret that this society which represents so imposing an appearance and partakes of a national character, (translated into Marathi as *svadeshiya hithartha guna dakhavite*), should, as it has done since its institution, not upon its own resources, but upon persons of Education whom misfortune or indiscretion might have induced to enlist in the army, and come out to this Country. Such a system is surely unworthy of an Institution supported by public liberality... this system ought to be abandoned, and an able Master engaged at once, on a salary which will be an adequate remuneration for the services of a properly trained person...Such a change, we are persuaded, would conduce greatly to the respectability of the Society and the efficiency of the Institution.

[45] The other two editors of the *Durpan*, Janardhan Vasudev and Raghunath Harischandrajee were both *prabhus*. For information about Raghunath Harischandrajee see, Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, appendix 2, p.385. For more details, see Chapter four, fn. 68.

[46] see Chapter five, pp.195-202.

[47] The available records suggest that the *Durpan* could not sustain itself as a bilingual publication beyond 1834. The later issues seem to have been entirely in English. However, it would misleading to construe this, or the ultimate closure of the *Durpan* in 1840 as evidence of the editors' incompetence; the main problems faced by the colonial native press were structural constraints of an ideological and financial nature.

life was impelled by the need to work for the 'cultivation' of the vernacular in order to create the framework for a modern, useful and critical discourse in Marathi. Besides his pioneering work in setting up the bilingual *Durpan* and sustaining it over eight years, he started the first periodical monthly in Marathi, *Digdarshan*[48]. The *prastavana* to the first issue of the *Digdarshan* [49] stated its belief that knowledge was power, and that learning (*vidya*) was essential to everyone. It professed not to address scholars alone, but wished to introduce the subjects of 'useful' learning (*vyvaharopyogi shastre va vidya*) like geography, history, physics, chemistry, along with relevant maps and illustrations, as well as literary subjects to a more general audience. That Balshastri's next venture after the closure of the *Durpan* was a Marathi journal of this kind brings out his commitment to the importance of enlarging the repertoire and the linguistic market for the vernacular. It also shows him to be critically attuned to the social implications of the changing linguistic economy and the dangers of allowing Marathi to be subordinated by the English sphere. On more than one occasion, the *Durpan* had reiterated the need for native intellectuals to be well-versed in both English and the vernacular, especially on account of the increasing tendency to regard a knowledge of English as sufficient qualification for higher bureaucratic positions.[50] Opposing the move to romanize all the Indian alphabets, the *Durpan* was quite forthright in outlining the disastrous social and political implications this would have :

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[48] Plans to start a 'useful' periodical had been announced in January 1839. The *Digdarshan* saw itself as journal devoted to detailed articles, either, in the form of translations from other sources or original compositions for a general audience on various subjects such as geography, history, chemistry, and general knowledge. The first issue came out in May 1840, and it probably survived till March 1845, with a long gap between October 1842 and January 1844. It included lithographed maps and illustrations and was priced at Rs. 6 per year or Rs. 5 if paid for in advance. The journal is estimated to have had a circulation of 300 copies, out of which, probably a third were accounted for through government and missionaries subscriptions. See Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 3, pp.85-86.

[49] see Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 2, p.191.

[50] The following comment occurs in a piece entitled 'Qualifications necessary for superior offices' in the *Durpan* of March 17 1838 : 'For let us candidly examine what advantage a person possessing no other qualifications than an acquaintance with English can have over a European properly educated at Aylesbury (Haileybury?). The latter is decidedly more competent to do all in which the knowledge of the English language is requisite; whereas the former having but imperfect acquaintances with the languages of the country cannot prove more efficient than he in the examination of records, documents or witnesses that he may have occasion to institute, in the course of his duty. Such a native is inferior to a European in general information and intelligence, while at the same time he is deficient in the qualifications of local knowledge, and proficiency in the native language, which alone can make him more useful than a foreigner.', Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 2, p.136.

> If translations are to be written in the Roman character, we see very little good from their being used as a medium of imparting knowledge to the natives of India. In the event, therefore, of the new plan being adopted, the principal object of the School-Book societies here and elsewhere which is to educate the mass of the population by means of easy translations, must be entirely abandoned...That is every hope of spreading useful information by means of translations, must be given up. And all this for what? For the convenience of a handful of Europeans, who find it troublesome to get into their heads, the fifty simple characters of the *devnagiri*, but who nevertheless are supposed to have enough patience to go through the conjugations of two thousand and two hundred verbs of the Sanskrit language.[51]

Rather, realising the need and the importance of creating a sufficiently large literate audience in Marathi, he had hoped to sustain the *Durpan* through conflating the two separate parts of his audience derived from official circles and the small segment of colonial modern, native intellectuals into an ideal, imaginary, colonial public joined together through its homogenous, bilingual capacities. I have discussed the *Durpan* at some length here as it helps us appreciate the keen social self-reflexivity shown by the emerging native discourse. Also the these early initiatives would also help mark the shifts in the structure of bilingualism after the 1850s when official policy tried to formalise the hierarchical distinction between English and the vernacular within the education system. The next chapter will elaborate on some of the themes and questions raised here, especially the possibilities for a critical, 'popular' discourse through vernacular print, and also what we can learn of the intelligentsia's quest for hegemony through the pattern of native press initiatives.

But I would like to conclude this section by showing that Balshastri Jambhekar was clearly not exceptional in his concern with the political importance of developing the conditions to sustain a vernacular critical discourse. Similar considerations about the possibilities of a widely disseminated critical discourse also underlay the formation of the vernacular wing of the Students Literary and Scientific Society, the *Upyukt Marathi Dnyanprasarak Mandali.* In an introductory address to its inaugural meeting on September 1 1848, which was later published in the *Sabha's* Marathi journal with the hope of circulating these discourses to an enlarged audience, the President, Dadoba Pandurang described their aims to be as follows:

> The Sabha's main intentions are to undertake and enable through this body compositions in the mother-tongue (*svabhasha*) on subjects of a classical and useful nature, and thus enable the spread of useful knowledge within our land(*svadesh*)[52].

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[51] *Bombay Durpan*, 5th February, 1836, quoted in The Oriental Christian Spectator of March 1836, in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix II, p. 616.

[52] translated from Marathi, Dadoba Pandurang, *'Prastavana'* in *Marathi Dnyanprasarak*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1850.

Lastly, I shall draw on a remarkable article that appeared in the same Marathi journal, *Marathi Dnyanaprasarak* in 1852, less than three years after it had first commenced publication. Translated, its title meant, 'Reflections on educating natives through the local languages alone and the benefits of giving them the same education(*vidya*) through both English and the local language'[53]. The main arguments of the article underlined the point made in Chapter two and here about the centrality of the language question within the debate on colonial education. Also, importantly, the article was an indication of the extent to which the linguistic field had been altered under the influence of a centralised education policy since the days of the *Durpan*. The article points out that the greatest merit of western 'useful' (*upyogi*) learning was its difference from the particularistic traditions of Hindu or Muslim learning. British rule was commended for replacing the taste for ancient tales from the *puranas* (*prachin puranik kathas)* with knowledge about the efforts of men(*purush)* who worked for the general (*sarvlok)*[54] welfare. Evidently, the vernacular press was regarded as a valuable medium for critical social reflection, for despite its initial claim that the diversity of opinions over the question of the medium of instruction had actually detracted from the efforts to spread education, the article went onto elaborate a detailed argument of the advantages of education through the vernacular. It argued that the larger demographic coverage this would enable would enhance the interest people would show towards matters of local administration. The articles showed a close familiarity with the correspondence between the governments in Bengal and Bombay and the Court of Directors over the details of the somewhat different policies being pursued in the two presidencies, and in fact goes on to argue against the unfavourably low allocations for education of the population in Bombay in comparison to the case of Bengal[55]. But, the other great obstacle in the cause of vernacular education was the asymmetries in the linguistic capacities of the vernacular and English, because of which knowledge of English was essential if the essence (*rasa)* and the significance (*mahatva*) of the complex texts in that language to be fully appreciated[56]. The article maintains that the indispensability of English for the spread of education in *'Hindustaan'* was a foregone conclusion, and there was nothing wrong in acknowledging this, as there were many examples in history of a people learning a language that they were convinced would benefit them[57]. The importance of English in the present situation was also clear from the fact that it

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[53] *Ettedeshiya lokans keval svabhashechachdvara vidya shikavili asta labh konkonte, va teech jar English va svabhasa ya dohanchyadware shikavila tar konkonche yacha vichar'* *Marathi Dnyanprasarak*, Vol. 3, No. 9, December 1852.

[54] It is interesting to note that the collective subject that the discourse of the above *Dnyanprasarak* article alternately represented as *'hindulok'* and the more neutral, inclusive, *ettedeshiye lok*. For more on the complex tensions within the articulation of the collective subject within early native vernacular discourse, see fn. 34 above.

[55] see table on p. 106 below.

[56] *Marathi Dnyanprasarak*, Vol. 3, No. 9, December 1852, p. 269.

[57] *Marathi Dnyanprasarak*, Vol. 3, No. 9, p.267.

was the channel for communicating with the highest levels of the judiciary, in addition to its being the language of business and the highest bureaucratic circles[58].

Having thus established the significance of English, the article then discussed the poor condition of the Marathi schools. Already it would seem, the vernaculars were regarded as 'inappropriate' vehicles for the dissemination of 'useful' knowledge, and it seemed clear that vernacular education was strategically being under-developed through official measures to become the cheap, low-quality option for instruction on a 'popular' scale[59]. The effects of government measures to reduce spending on the preparation of vernacular texts through translation and training of teachers had already been accepted as inevitable, and any possibility of change could only be envisaged as part of a hypothetical and indefinite 'more suitable' future. The disjunction between the English and the Marathi spheres was also evident. On the one hand, the *pantojis* of the primary Marathi schools had no standard books to teach from, nor were they left with time to read in English, and on the other, those who studied English hardly had the time or the support to attempt translations into the vernaculars[60]. The article speaks of the dismal rewards for native translators, and interestingly, this was seen to jeopardise the translation project, especially as the translations undertaken by colonial officials were neither popular nor effective[61]. Making the connection between the institution of modern discourses in the colonial context and translation explicit, the article argued that reform was necessarily a bilingual project, for it was not right to think that English would destroy either the local languages or people's cultural pride *(svadeshabhiman),* although it was true that students who had only English were likely to become shallow braggarts[62]. But significantly, the article shows the hierarchical difference between the cognitive and political status of English and Marathi was clearly accepted as 'commonsense' by now, as was indeed the dependence of the Marathi sphere, despite its growing disjunction from the English sphere. The article admitted that both English and the vernaculars were vital as a means of communication between rulers(*rajyakarte)* and the ruled (praja)[63], describing English and the vernacular as the brick and mortar needed to build the 'reformed house' [64]. However, it increasingly veered towards accepting the view that a higher English education was most necessary for the elite and the influential middle classes

[58] ibid., p.274.

[59] ibid., pp. 274 -279.

[60] ibid., p.279.

[61] ibid., p. 287. Major Candy's work is especially criticised, saying that his translations are neither popular nor were they appreciated by scholars. The article observes that Europeans often fail to understand the character of the native languages, leading them to write and speak them like English.

[62] ibid., p.289.

[63] ibid., p. 305.

[64] ibid., p. 306.

(*madhyam pratiche va varishta lok).* Acknowledging the ideal of general education, however, the article accepted that given the very real constraints upon the funds available for education, it might be an inescapable decision to invest that on the instruction of influential groups within native society[65]. Clearly, the article pointed to the fact that native vernacular discourse had not only shown itself to be critically aware of the full range of implications of the colonial programme for a bilingual literacy, but also had been forced, by the mid-1850s, to accept the limits of its own scope to either change the directions of official policy or enlarge the size of the literate community through its own operations. Further, I would suggest that upper-caste colonial intellectuals had begun to regard a two tiered education system, where general instruction would proceed in the vernacular and only the higher classes would have access to a 'full' English education as potentially advantageous to preserving the exclusivity of their position as political mediators. Having thus accepted the status-quo and its own subordination, the forthcoming years would only see vernacular discourse take a diminishing interest with egalitarian ideals and the general spread of education, until the point where the writings of the 'vernacular renaissance' of the 1870s display some of the most conservative social and political positions. But that is to anticipate the discussion in Chapter five. The last section in this chapter will try to show how the bilingual divide between English and the vernacular was instituted as social hierarchy through the establishment of the University and the emergence of English as the sole language of a higher education.

The Emergence of Bombay University : Instituting Colonial Bilingualism as Social Hierarchy :

The discussion so far has tried to bring out some aspects of the difficulties in the efforts to develop the vernacular in the corresponding image of English. As we have seen from the case of the *Durpan*, the impossibility of positing a relation of apparent equivalence between English and Marathi had become apparent quite early on. In this section, I shall try to establish how the bilingual divide acquired the dimensions of a concrete reality within the colonial social world, especially on account of the shift in financial allocations within education policy during the mid 1850s. I shall do this through a brief analysis of the scale of differences in the official outlays on instruction through English and Marathi. A preliminary glance at the relevant figures shows that a significant discrepancy existed between allocations for English and those for Marathi even in the early decades of the education project, when official policy was ostensibly engaged in an effort to encourage instruction through the vernacular. The evident inequality between the comparative figures made to these two tiers within the education system thus belies any claims of the colonial bilingual relation to have been of a non-

[65] The remarks that follow this pronouncement are quite revealing, namely that it ought to be recognised that by *madhyam and varistha lok,* are meant not *brahmins* alone, for their importance as such was greatly reduced now, but those who had gained in social prominence, either through their affluence, government support, or through their intelligence. ibid., p.314-319.

hierachical or symmetrical nature. These differences in budgetary allocations assume greater significance, considering that even in the early years of colonial rule, the number of students in the English schools was less than ten per cent of the total number of students enrolled in all the colonial schools in the Presidency. Between 1826-1842, the number of government English schools that had been established in the Presidency were four, as against the 201 vernacular schools with 761 and 9702 students respectively[66]. By 1848, there were 7 government English schools in the Presidency. At this time, whereas the number of vernacular schools, had come down to 166, the number of vernacular students had remained almost unchanged with 9708 students on the rolls[67], clearly indicating that the colonial government was already attempting to reduce the number of vernacular schools and did not mind accommodating the same numbers in fewer schools. If we compare this with developments in Bengal for a similar period, through the figures mentioned in the 1845 Report of the Bombay Board[68], we gather:

	Bengal Presidency	**Bombay Presidency**
Population *	37 millions	10 1/2 millions
Total Receiving Govt. Ed.	5,570	10,616
Receiving English Ed.	3,953	761
Funds applicable to Ed.	Rs. 4,77,593	Rs. 1,68,226

(* We are told that these figures were taken from a table in the last edition of the Encyclopaedia Brittanica's Article on Hindustan.)

These figures, if reliable, show that the early emphasis on vernacular education had allowed policy in Bombay to be more broad-based than had been the case in Bengal. But there is evidently a marked imbalance in the numbers of students in the English and the vernacular sectors in Bombay and this consequently raised serious questions about the extreme nature of the elitist position of English in this region. Clearly, with such a huge difference between the capacity of the English schools and the students enrolled in the vernacular schools in Bombay, it was inevitable that for a substantial percentage of these students, colonial education offered only the prospect of an elementary training in the vernacular, with perhaps just a bare sprinkling of the skills to read in English. These students, it would seem, had virtually no chance of making it to a liberal, higher education in English.

As we have seen, under Erskine Perry's Presidentship of the Board of Education, proposals were mooted, ostensibly to tackle this internal asymmetry between vernacular and English education. But the changes being suggested actually aimed to make education policy in

[66] Report of the Board of Education for 1845, Bombay, p.11.

[67] Report of the Board of Education for 1847-48, Bombay, 1850, p.35.

[68] Report of the Bombay Board for 1845, Bombay, p.146.

Bombay even more elitist by increasing the scope for instruction through English. It was Perry's firm belief that the 'information of the modern times, can be only conveyed to the natives, at the present, through the medium of English', and the task of improving the vernaculars ought to be left to the upper classes of natives[69]. Arguing against his proposals, George Jervis, the staunch ideologue for vernacular education pointed out how the existing situation was already imbalanced in favour of instruction through English. The official figures for the year 1846-47, show that, even before Perry's proposals, whereas a sum of Rs 45,419 -5-4 was spent on 8225 students in the vernacular schools, the sum expended in teaching English at the same time was Rs 1,02,769-0-8, although the number learning English, at 1395, was significantly less than those enrolled in vernacular schools[70]. Almost a decade later, despite much talk of starting more English schools, the proportion between students studying English and those studying through the vernaculars had, in fact, grown more skewed. The following table summarises the comparison between these two sectors of the colonial education system in the Bombay Presidency in 1855-56:

	Total no. of English schools			**Total no. of Vernacular schools**		
no. of schools	17			322		
no. of pupils	2,851			22, 950		
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
amount of fees paid	21,487	4	0	10,822	3	10
total cost of education	1,14,320	6	4	75,990	13	5
average cost per pupil per annum	40	1	7	3	4	11

The evidence indicated that as a 'full' training in English emerged as the acme of the progression of rewards offered within the system of colonial education, the divide between the 'high' language and the vernacular was actually assuming serious social dimensions. With a college or university education in English established as the conspicuous realisation of intellectual aspiration and opportunity possible within colonial society, the intellectual hierarchy posited by colonialism between English and the vernaculars was actually acquiring a substantial institutional basis.

But although education policy in the 1850s showed signs of shifting some the emphases of its early statements, in real terms, these changes hardly represented a radical deviation from the

[69] 'Minute by the President of the Board, Erskine Perry dated 14 April 1847', Report of the Board of Education 1848-50, Bombay, 1850, p. 59.

[70] Minute by Colonel G Jervis dated 9 May 1848, Report of the Board of Education 1848-50, Bombay, 1850 p. 81.

basic assumptions of the project of colonial literacy. The hierarchical bias in favour of English had been clear from the very onset of colonial education. As a great instance of an instrumental bourgeois rationality, colonial policy had consistently demonstrated its great capacity for calculated ambivalence, meant to give itself maximum room for manoeuvre at all points. Thus, the changes of the 1850s were only accentuation of the assumptions that had always been implicit even in earlier policy documents. For example, the list of rules for educational establishments under the Board of Education formulated in 1845, even before the Perry-Jervis controversy of 1848, had put the matter quite bluntly:

> ...5. The educational establishments under the control of the Board are divided into mainly two classes, somewhat but not wholly, corresponding to the primary and superior schools of Europe.
>
> 6. The first class is intended to meet the wants of the great bulk of the population, who have but little time to devote to school instruction, and the information there conveyed is consequently of an elementary character, and is conveyed in the vernacular tongues .
>
> 7. In the second class the English language(except at Sanskrit College) and the superior branches of education are taught.[71]

But now, the internal asymmetry in the relation between English and the vernaculars was also being candidly figured within the very structure of the education system. By 1858, the basic structure of the education system was visible in its 'mature' form. At the very bottom of the scale were the village vernacular schools. From here the student was expected to proceed to the second-grade anglo-vernacular school, of which it was proposed to have one for every *taluka*. The superior anglo-vernacular school at the *zillah* place came next in the hierarchy. The handful of English 'high' schools were to be located in the bigger towns, where it was proposed to supply at least one European master for each school. These were to form the top layer of the pyramid of the school structure. As against this, it was decided to keep the number of colleges at two in 1858; needless to mention, these colleges represented the very top rung of colonial education and taught entirely through English.

The emergence of English as the sole language of higher learning meant the relegation of the vernacular as fit only for primary education. Thus part of the colonial student's training taught him to understand that, in his situation, the aspiration to intellectual merit also involved something of a summary transcendence, if not an outright disavowal, of his vernacular literacy. The fixing of the place of vernaculars within the intellectual hierarchy in this way was bound to have a major impact on the larger social structure, especially as it effectively meant the funnelling of a select few for a 'full' liberal training through English. It also meant an

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[71] 'Rules and Regulations of the Educational Establishments under the Board of Education, 1845', ed. Richey, Selections from Educational Records, p.159.

effective subalternisation of the vernacular intelligentsia within the colonial intellectual hierarchy.The study of the vernacular was no longer to be given even a secondary emphasis in the way that it had hitherto within the education system and it was now all but excluded within higher education[72]. This met with opposition from many of the English-educated elite, but this failed to affect the official ruling on the matter. The hierarchisation of the education system inevitably affected the level to which a vernacular school training equipped students for a college education which was to be exclusively in English. More importantly, it also substantively influenced the nature and the language through which the intelligentsia could hope to imagine and articulate the nature and limits of the new communities emerging on account of the changes introduced through colonial rule. Now only the best graduates could be expected to have sufficient English to attempt translations into the vernaculars. But their command and fluency within the vernacular was not such that they would choose the latter as their primary medium of expression. Consequently it is not surprising to find the official reports on Vernacular Literature from the late 1860s onwards regretfully noting that graduates hardly figured in the lists of vernacular authors which were almost entirely composed of pre-university or even barely-schooled men[73].

Significantly, these changes to upgrade colonial education into a 'full' system of higher education were accompanied by two other tendencies that were to increasingly characterise education policy from then on. After 1858, policy was not interested in allowing an unhindered expansion in the numbers enrolled in schools. Until now, petitions for a vernacular school were acceded to provided they came from a locality of at least two thousand inhabitants who were willing to provide and maintain appropriate premises[74] and also to undertake to ensure the payment of the fee of one anna per month by each student. But now policy, under pressure from the Government of India at Calcutta, began to take a stand an intention that, in principle, it now wished to distribute its grants mostly to support existing schools that satisfactorily imparted a non-religious education. This step was mainly to check the expense to the administration of the earlier 'liberal' policy, which it was feared, would have 'witnessed the foundation of new schools, probably in increasing numbers, until every village, had been supplied with its own vernacular public school'[75]. Subsequently funds were released for opening more schools, the majority of which, of necessity, especially at the elementary level

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[72] for a good account of the changes introduced in educational policy in Bombay in 1850 onwards, see R. V. Parulekar's essay, 'Medium of Instruction' in ed. J.V. Naik, The Educational Writings of Shri R.V. Parulekar, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1957.

[73]M.G. Ranade, 'Remarks on the Marathi Catalogue', from the Catalogue of Native Publications in the Bombay Presidency upto 31 December 1864, in The Miscellaneous Writings of the Late Hon. Mr. Justice Ranade, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1992.

[74]for details of conditions that petitions for permission for a vernacular school had to undertake to fulfil, see Chapter two, p.59.

[75] See 'Annual Report by Director of Public Instruction, E. I. Howard' in Report of the Department of Public Instruction 1856-57, Bombay, pp. 9-11. Howard's Report notes that this check on further expansion of the school system had its origin in a currently ongoing correspondence between the Bombay Government and Government of India.

had to be in the vernacular. But my more general point is that, from the mid-1850s onwards and especially after 1857, coinciding with the establishment of the Universities, educational policy had effectively turned the corner from its earlier, more 'radical' phase. Funds that had been used in accordance with the theoretical claim of promoting the general dissemination of modern, useful and scientific knowledge were now taken up to make graduate courses taught by European professors available at the University. Arguing that a wide-spread modern education among the colonial population could be politically dangerous, Lord Ellenborough, the President of the Board of Control, advised that education policy needed to be more carefully elitist :

> Education and civilisation may descend from the higher to the inferior classes, and so communicated may import new vigour to the community, but they will never ascend from the lower classes to those above them; they can only if imparted solely to the lower classes lead to the general convulsion, of which foreigners would be the first victims. If we desire to diffuse education, let us endeavour to give it to the highest first ....by founding colleges to which the higher classes alone shall be admitted[76].

The increasing attention to higher education certainly did not mean that the deficiencies within the programme of colonial literacy, some of which have been alluded to in the preceding discussion, had been addressed or removed. Instead they were now simply regarded as being too large and fundamental to be ameliorated within the considerations and paradigms underlying policy. Official statements either tried to gloss over these difficulties as far as possible, or took them as inevitably endemic to the colonial situation or at worst simply represented them as arising from the recalcitrance of native students. Secondly, interestingly, alongside the shifts mentioned above, the college curriculum developed a marked literary and classical orientation that included the re-introduction of the study of Sanskrit as a classical literature in place of the earlier emphasis of cultivating learning through the vernacular. But the significant difference in the content of the Sanskrit courses prescribed now from those prescribed previously as part of the Sanskrit studies in Poona College was that the present syllabi largely ignored the systems of philosophical and ethical thought available through Sanskrit; the students' knowledge of Sanskrit now was instead predominantly built around a 'literary' curriculum. However, the English literary component and the study of European History were to be given maximum prominence on the liberal arts college curriculum. As against this, prior to the changes of the mid 1850s, the students at the Elphinstone Institute and the Poona College had had the opportunity to balance their readings on English literature and European history with a study of texts on science and mathematics in the vernacular. It must be remembered that these changes that weakened even the limited extent of emphasis

[76] Letter from Lord Ellenborough, president of the Board of Control to the Chairman of Court of Directors dated 28 April 1858 in Report of the Department of Public Instruction 1857-58, Bombay, p.12.

possible within colonial education on the cultivation of a rational, critical temper occurred alongside the increasing discontinuities between the 'high' and the 'low' linguistic spheres created through colonial bilingualism. All this made for a marked shift towards conservatism evident in the ideological stances taken by the intelligentsia in the post-1857 period, as well as a growing gap between the orientation of the English-educated and the vernacular sections of the intelligentsia. Undoubtedly, vernacular and English-educated intellectuals after 1857 showed differences in the basis of their conservatism on account of the differences in intellectual training and the opportunities for advancement available to each of these sections. But curiously, they also shared some common elements like their growing mutual distrust of each other, as also the prominent tendency on the part of both to process the articulation of the pre-colonial past through Sanskritic ideology .

This chapter has tried to indicate how the changing structure of the bilingual divide within colonial education assumed crucial political dimensions. It is part of my argument that the inevitable shift after 1857 from instruction in the vernaculars in western India provides a very interesting contrast to the historical development of the *mentalite* of the Bengali bhadralok. Educational policy in Bengal had worked almost exclusively through an emphasis on instruction through English and therefore the development of university education through English did not require a shift from earlier policy. In the Bombay Presidency, on the other hand, the more broad-based thrust of initial policy was one of the reasons that made for the discursive space that allowed the emergence of a figure like Phule as a champion of the lower-caste interests. But the inevitable betrayal of even this oblique stress on general literacy through the encouragement of vernacular instruction, had two important consequences for the making of the modern political temper in western India. Firstly, it meant that the structural limits of the subaltern assertion within the colonial public arena were quickly reached, as the upper-castes could consolidate their hold over scarce educational opportunities at a much faster pace than was possible for those communities who barely had a background of any previous access to formal education. But in the long run, the uneasy balance between vernacular and English education in western India also severely affected the levels of preparation and intellectual training of the upper-caste intelligentsia on the whole. Thus at one level, the making of a modern political temper in the Bombay Presidency showed some early potential for an egalitarian culture to emerge, but on the other hand the educated elite remained severely divided on account of the imbalances within their linguistic repertoires. Chapter five will try to bring out the post 1857 developments outlined here more fully, especially the nature of relations of hierarchy and dependence between the English-educated and Marathi vernacular intellectuals. But before that, the next chapter will seek to take up some important questions about the complexities of trying to establish a 'indigenous' culture of print in Marathi under colonial circumstances.

Chapter Four

Colonial Power, Print and the Re-making of the Literate Sphere.

Colonial power, print and publicity :

It could be argued that print was indispensable for the making of colonial ideology and governance. Homi Bhabha's early essay[1] was one of the first writings to draw attention to the significance of the English book in enhancing the operations of colonial power, even more so perhaps amongst those within native society who were left without the means to comprehend its contents. Education policy was formulated as a comprehensive set of proposals aimed at producing an altered common-sense among a small set of natives. But education to the colonial imagination[2] clearly presupposed a system of learning centred around print and individuated reading practices. In that sense, education policy was something of a rubric for introducing a whole set of inter-related assumptions and practices about knowledge, cultivation, textuality, literature and identity that were crucial to the elaboration and maintenance of colonial power. It is worth asking how much of the processes of objectification and discursive control through the study of languages that were crucial to the making of colonial power might have been possible without print. My argument here is not in favour of technological determinism. Rather, we need to focus on how the coming of print was instrumental in introducing a radical shift about assumptions regarding language, literacy and the 'literary' in South Asia. Also print was crucial to altering the structure of the political world, for in introducing the principle of publicity, the new medium was also able to alter the universe of ideas, the structure of cognitive representations and their exchange. We now have available a very interesting and detailed literature on the rise of print in the West, and its

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[1] Homi Bhabha, 'Signs taken for wonders : Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree outside Delhi, May 1817', reprinted in Location of Culture, Routledge, London, 1994.

[2] Integral to the experience of the emergence of modernity in the West had been the discovery of unique strategies of social and cognitive control. As many scholars in the field of colonial studies have pointed out the processes of 'Othering', objectification, enumeration and the discursive operations of philology and ethnography formed some of the key elements of the epistemological and ideological repertoire through which the West was able to assert its ascendancy over non-western societies. It is this discursive configuration that I refer to here through the term 'colonial imagination'.

Although the colonial context does not enter into Foucault's impressive analysis of modern power, his emphasis on the role of intellectuals and the human sciences in the dissemination and the institutionalisation of modern power holds important insights for an understanding of colonial ideology as the displacement of liberalism as pedagogy. For an analysis of the relations between modern knowledge and power see Z. Bauman, Legislators and Interpreters : Modernity, Post-modernity and Intellectuals, Cambridge Polity Press, 1989; Michel Foucault, Language, Counter-Memory and Practice : Selected Essays and Interviews, Cornell University Press, New York, 1977; Michel Foucault, The Order of Things : An Archaeology of the Human Sciences, Tavistock Publications, London, 1970.

significance for the making of new knowledges, *mentalities*, cultural networks and the transformation of political structures[3]. As a student of colonial modernity, I would argue that this literature has made us keenly aware of the great promise of power contained in the possibility of accumulation of knowledge on an encyclopaedic scale and its simultaneous organisation into internally coherent, contiguous but discrete segments. Here it would be useful to specifically discuss some of the complex ways in which the intellectual norms and possibilities represented by print informed the design of colonial power.

Cohn's impressive study of the objectification and codification of native knowledges and languages implicitly shows how cultural and normative practices built upon print were among the main prerequisites underlying the colonial gaze. And yet, it would seem that the connections between the cultural and political rationale implicit in the use of print and its introduction in the context of colonial rule remain to be theorised. This chapter will try to elucidate some of the paradoxes and shifts underlying the introduction of print in the colonial situation. I shall begin by drawing upon one of the earliest instances of the establishment of a literary society along western lines in Bombay. As a discursive space meant for learned conversation premised on reading and print, the Bombay Literary Society was set up in 1804, more than a decade before the British formally assumed control over western India. It was primarily meant for cultivated gentlemen among the colonial establishment in the city, who, in the view of James Mackintosh, the Society's first President were

> detachments from the main body of civilised men sent out to levy contributions of knowledge, as well as to gain victories over barbarism.

In his inaugural address he further assured his audience that the idea of establishing such a society had occurred to him even before he left England. He added that he saw himself in India as 'a representative of Europe's curiosity', and also that similar sentiments would inform all plans for the society's inquiries. The Society's activity was structured according to principles of voluntary, impersonal association and followed modes of learned conversation that were premised on the advantages of circulation and reading habits enabled through print. Such ideas about an abstract, non-particularised public realm that would also serve as a discursive space for the definition of collective norms had already been implicit in the attempts by orientalist scholars to produce an 'objective' body of authoritative texts that would contain norms pertaining to various native cultural and social practices. As Cohn has argued[4], one of the aims of the orientalist project to produce texts that sought to recover and unequivocally and permanently fix the meanings of the religious, social, political and linguistic codes of native

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[3] see Chapter one, fn.3.

[4] Bernard Cohn, 'The command of languages and the language of command' in Subaltern Studies in History, Vol. IV. See also Bernard Cohn, 'The Census, Social Structure, and Objectification in South Asia', in An Anthropologist amongst Historians and other Essays, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1987.

life had been to make them available to the public domain for general consultation. And yet, ironically, in the colonial context, at the outset at least, the 'public' for these early printed texts mainly denoted a very limited and exclusive circle of officials and other persons within the colonial establishment, and perhaps a somewhat larger, curious audience back home. Thus the coming of print created its own cognitive domains, defined here either, as a function of the intellectual appetites of a far-away, metropolitan audience, or as directly contributing to the interests of the ruling authority in the colony. James Mackintosh's inaugural address exemplifies the tensions underlying the creation of a colonial public realm based on the norms of printed textuality. Firstly, it was with some difficulty that ideas of publicity and the notion of a modern republic of letters could be reconciled with the size and the nature of the audience for texts produced through the presence of the colonial establishment :

> ...the smallest society brought together by the love of knowledge is respectable in the eye of the reason; and the feeble efforts of infant literature in barren and inhospitable regions are in some respects more interesting than the most elaborate works and the most successful exertions of the human mind.[5]

In principle, of course, anyone who could read could have access to this republic of printed texts. But in practice, admission was contingent upon certain qualifications, of which possession of 'good sense' was one of the primary requirements.[6] In this way , print was instrumental in creating a space for a literate sphere that was clearly distinct from that pre-supposed by the pre-colonial world of cultivated or learned exchange on the sub-continent. This new sphere was too small and exclusive to supplant the existing structure of native literate and learned practices. But yet, the coming of print and colonial discourses denoted several crucial shifts in the definition and structure of literate and cultivated norms and practices, especially in ideas of what constituted the cognitive domain as well as the ways of holding knowledge and being an intellectual.

Advocating the pursuit of subjects which so far had been the domain of inquiries by the colonial government Mackintosh urged the Society to undertake the collection and classification of information on all aspects of native life. The enhanced possibilities of accumulation and dissemination of information that print enabled led to the rise of expert knowledges, the 'advance' evidently impelled by the prospects for greater control through processes of observation, discursive mapping, representation and publicity. He acknowledged that the society's project represented, in that part of the world in any case, an unprecedented cognitive experiment, but, anticipated with evident enthusiasm the possible pragmatic benefits that the publication of statistical information thus compiled could yield:

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[5]James Mackintosh, Inaugural Address delivered to the Literary Society of Bombay, at Parel, Bombay in 1804 in Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay, ed. Mandlik, London, 1817, pp. xi-xxvi.

[6] James Mackintosh, 'Inaugural Address delivered to the Literary Society of Bombay', at Parel, Bombay in 1804.

> ...tables of political arithmetic have not yet been made public in any tropical country ...I shall mention only an example of their value that they must lead to a decisive solution of the problems with respect to the influence of polygamy on population, and the supposed origin of that practice in the disproportional number of the sexes. But in a country where every part of the system of the manners and institutions differs from Europe, *it is impossible to foresee the extent and variety of the new results which an accurate survey might* present to us.[7]

James Mackintosh felt that such knowledge ought not to be the exclusive preserve of government, not because he wished to advocate any absolute right to the pursuit of knowledge, but because he was certain of the possibility of a perfectly 'reasonable' agreement between the ends of government and those of science. Information that was confined to government and put out of reach from the public domain was lost for ever; instead the existence of a public domain helped maintain the best interests of the government by also making available important and valuable information. Mackintosh was evidently untroubled that such direct complicity between the society's intellectual efforts and governmental ends would undermine the principle of publicity :

> ...this knowledge is a control on subordinate agents for government as well as a control on government for their subjects. And as it is one of those which have not the slightest tendency to produce tumult or convulsion. On the contrary nothing more clearly evinces the necessity of that firm protecting power by which alone order can be secured. The security of the governed cannot exist without the security of the governors [8] .

This very early discourse on the founding of a modern literate sphere in western India serves as a good indication of the structure of the ideological relations that colonial power wished to establish vis-à-vis native society. As Chapter two has shown, upon taking over power from the Peshwas, the British were quick to draw up comprehensive proposals to selectively extend the colonial literate sphere to carefully-chosen social groups within native society as part of the design to cultivate a new intelligentsia. By trying to introduce similar steps throughout the sub-continent, the new rulers aimed to produce a standardised moral code suitable for a civil order within the world of colonial, secular politics. The introduction of print was an obvious corollary to this large ambition of revamping native common-sense that colonial education was entrusted with. A single organisation, the Native School and School Book Society was set up to take charge of the different aspects of the new literate arrangements in Bombay. As an inseparable part of the proposals of the project of colonial literacy, print was crucial to the

[7] James Mackintosh, 'Inaugural Address', 1804.

[8] Ibid.

structuring of the colonial world and to the elaboration of colonial ideology in other ways as well. Gauri Vishwanathan has shown in her study that the project of native education[9] did not proceed from a ready, 'home-made' model that was replicated in the colony with a few modifications. Indeed, as she points out, the British Parliament decided to commit state funds for the education of its colonial Indian subjects even prior to formalising similar steps aimed at its home population. While this point is important as part of the argument that it is no longer possible to pretend that the histories of modernity in metropole and colony can be written independently of each other, the point about chronological priority is not in itself of ultimate historical significance. For at one level, the question to ask really is what enabled the colonial state to arrive upon the radically innovative idea of the education project as ideological strategy, though it did not have previous experience on similar lines. The rest of this chapter will seek to elaborate on how the introduction of print and new assumptions about language, reading and learned practices were crucial to the definition of relations between colonial government and the new intelligentsia, and through them, with the rest of native society.

The management of power through an internalised regime of control, as Foucault's work has taught us, had become an important part of the repertoire of the western state at least from the early modern period onwards. The colonial imagination clearly inherited these ideological strategies and saw the potential for their systematic application in establishing control over other dissimilar social worlds. Control was to be exerted not through force, but primarily through assuming authority over the norms of discursive production and dissemination, which by directly altering the forms of language and social communication, would clear the space for new definitions of collective and self identity. Scholars working on the rise of print culture in the West have pointed our attention to the important part played by the shift in reading practices produced by print and the ensuing laicisation of culture to the formation of modern subjectivity and collective identities. And it is no accident that one of the most important concerns of the earliest plans on how to administer the newly acquired territories from the Peshwas, in ways that minimised native resistance and instead cultivated the compliance of crucial groups, was the emphasis on *reading*. Initially, colonial policy was somewhat wary of introducing English and western literature, but the overall ideological advantage that colonial policy expected to secure through regulating literate practices through the introduction of print is brought out quite clearly from the following extract from Elphinstone's 'Report on the Territories Conquered from the Peshwas' of 1818 :

[9] Gauri Viswanathan, Masks of Conquests : Literary Study and British Rule in India, Faber and Faber, London, 1989.

> I do not perceive anything that we can do to improve the morals of the people except by improving their education. There are already schools in small towns, and in many villages; but reading is confined to *brahmins, banyans*, and such of the agricultural classes that have to do accounts. I am not sure that our establishing free schools would alter this state of things, and it might create a suspicion of some concealed design on our part. It would be more practicable and *more useful to give a direction to the reading of those who do learn, of which the press so easily affords the means....*Books are scarce, and the common ones probably ill-chosen; but there exist in the Hindu languages many tales and fables that would be generally read, and that would circulate sound morals. There must be religious books tending more directly to the same end. If many of these are *printed and distributed gratuitously, the effect would without doubt, be great and beneficial.* It would however be indispensable that they should be purely Hindu. We might silently omit all precepts of questionable morality, but the slightest infusion of religious controversy would secure the failure of the design.[10](emphasis added)

Similarly, reading was also to have an important place in the pedagogic practice of missionary schools. Learning to read was seen as much more than simply acquiring a cognitive or linguistic skill; it was as much a process through which people could be *improved* to become better human beings. Standardised reading practices within the colonial curriculum were an ideological instrument, advocated especially for their potential to help influence self-perceptions, especially vis-à-vis the structure of political and moral authority. These objectives are quite apparent from the early records for the first English schools established in Bombay meant to provide Christian instruction to interested natives. Getting 'young tender minds' to read parables containing 'simple, moral truths' of Christian belief, was considered the most suitable method of instruction, more efficacious than others like direct preaching. The acquisition of information was not the only form of mental training that these reading lessons were meant to impart. Students had to do these reading lessons standing up; equally, they were a sufficiently significant part of the classroom activity to be described at some length in the Second Annual Report of the Education Society in 1817:

[10] Mounstuart Elphinstone, 'Report on the territories conquered from the peshwas', in ed. G. W. Forrest, Selections from the Minutes and the Other Official Writings of the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, London, 1884.

the benefits to be expected from these(reading lessons) ... are many and important. Regarded merely as reading lessons, their recommendations are not inconsiderable, since from the diversified nature of their subjects, they add greatly to the learner's stock of words, and introduce a pleasing variety into his lessons...The chief excellence however of these tracts is that they inculcate the purest principles of morality in the way of example, which is precisely the way that is most likely to engage and influence the minds of children. These affecting narratives propose examples of the use of and application of right principles and situations similar to those in which the greater part of the children may themselves be hereafter placed in. They have the advantage moreover of being written with great feeling; and moral instruction never makes so lasting an impression nor is ever so cordially received, as when laying aside the formal didactic method, it condescends to address itself to the heart and affections.[11]

There were other political possibilities opened up by the dissemination of 'appropriate' materials through print. The class-room represented a highly visible site of ideological manoeuvring, and as such could be expected to arouse hostility and resistance. However, the use of print could allow a more general circulation of colonial discourse outside the class-room in ways that promised a convenient degree of discursive impersonality. The impersonal but extensive reach of the printed word was not only an efficacious mode of communication, but had the hardly inestimable advantage of being relatively much cheaper as well. As plans were being drawn up to decide how the *Dakshina* funds ought now to be used, apart from the patronage given to support 'useful' branches of learning, the production of new printed materials seemed to hold out definite ideological promise:

...the circulation of a few well-chosen books, such as I believe are already being printed at Calcutta, would have a better and more extensive effect than a regular college, and would cost much less to the government.[12]

Print thus provided an effective means to remedy the lack of 'appropriate' books and reading material for the colonial school system. The introduction of English and the opening of English schools evoked definite interest from some sections of native communities, especially on account of the employment opportunities the new skills gave access to. But if that interest was to be taken advantage of, provisions had to be made to provide the new schools with appropriate reading material. Print afforded the means to conceive of a relatively rapid way of rectifying this lack and simultaneously securing a radical shift from the prevailing learned and pedagogic discourses :

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[11] Extract from the Second Annual Report of the Bombay Education Society for 1817, pp. 17-24, quoted in ed. Parulekar, Selections from the Educational Records of the Bombay Government (1815-1840), Part II, Bombay, 1955, p. 5 .

[12] Mounstuart Elphinstone, 'Report on the Territories Conquered from the Peshwas' ed. G. W. Forrest, Selections from the Minutes and the Other Official Writings of the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, p. 335.

> A few tracts should be framed in a popular way on general history, natural history, geography and astronomy and considering the great commercial pursuits of many native inhabitants of this Presidency, an elementary treatise on navigation and a description of the countries connected with this port would be highly useful and could not fail to interest them.[13]

The report of the Native Education Society for 1821 complained that interest in English was confined mostly to the island of Bombay. The education project would need to be systematically extended into the mofussil areas if the provincial population was to be brought within the ambit of the new literate and discursive practices. However, the question of the extension of education brought up the further question of the use of the native languages. Evidently, the education project could not hope to achieve its pandemic ambitions and yet confine itself to English. What would be needed were

> plain and useful school tracts in the languages of the country ...one of the first objects towards improving the education of the natives, must be the preparing and publishing some *unexceptionable school tracts in the native languages.* These languages will for the most part be the Mahratta and Guzeratee...

The extension of colonial ideology thus entailed the selection of certain languages as being most suited to the task of performing the new cognitive and political functions. Clearly, the availability of print was decisive as it gave the new regime the means for establishing an admittedly flawed, but potent 'direct' discursive connection between the new 'high' realm of *'Ingrezi vidya'* and the 'low' realm of the native vernaculars. Colonial power aspired to rule not through force but through sustaining degrees of ideological affiliations between itself and various strata of native society. But in trying to elaborate an ideological project through cultivating small sections within native elites, colonialism introduced fundamental discursive and institutional ruptures within indigenous social and political structures. These ideological discontinuities were also under-written by a series of starkly asymmetrical demographic relations, firstly between the new rulers and the size of the subject population, but even more crucially between the new indigenous elites and their 'unreformed' compatriots on whose behalf they soon claimed to mediate with the colonial government. To maintain itself, colonial power needed some means to outwardly bridge these divides, so that the new government could, however imperfectly, suture itself to the several layers of the indigenous social fabric. Thanks to the potential of print for the relatively easy reproduction and dissemination of ideas, the project of transmission of colonial discourses into the vernaculars appeared as distinctly feasible possibility. Quite plainly, or so at least it seemed to colonial administrators, the task of printing and circulating books containing the 'vast riches' of European literature and science in simplified forms for native audiences, would be an effective strategy to span the many

[13] Extract from the 'Fifth Annual Report', 1820, pp. 10-12' in ed. Parulekar, Selections from the Educational Records of the Bombay Government, (1815-1840), Bombay, 1955, p.22.

aspects of cultural, intellectual and political difference between the two sides of the colonial encounter. The Report of the Native School Book and School Society for 1824-25 clearly points to this logic as having been one of the fundamental assumptions of colonial ideology:

> The extreme dissimilarity of ideas prevalent in Asia and Europe, or rather the greater abundance of ideas which European civilisation has created, renders the conveying a knowledge of European literature ,science and morality, in the native languages, a task of the utmost difficulty. At the same time, the various meanings which belong to many English words, incapacitate a native though it(sic) possesses a very considerable acquaintance with the language, from translating any English work written in a style in the least elevated above the familiar style of conversation ...If however, any Gentlemen conversant with the manners and modes of thinking of the natives should take the trouble of composing original treatises on European literature, science and morality in a style suited to their comprehension, which requisite alone would render them easy to be translated, such works should be of the greatest value.... But the obstacle (the slowness of printing) to the speedy and extensive circulation of books, which is indispensable for promoting the objects of this institution, has also been obviated by Government having with its wonted liberality presented to the Society four Lithographic presses and by two fonts of types...,besides ordering Printing Presses and types(English and *balbodh*) from England for its use...the natives evince an admirable capacity for acquiring the requisite knowledge and for applying it with all the exactness that can be wished.[14]

Thus colonial power sought to manage the cultural and political difference between western society and the South Asian social world as a problem that could be resolved through establishing discursive correspondences, especially through the strategic use of translation into the native languages[15]. The construction of colonial ideology and the design of its hegemonic possibilities was decisively plotted as a pragmatic scheme that involved definite steps aimed at the transfer of the discourses of western rationalism into native languages.

The magnitude of change signified by the project of colonial literacy, especially through the introduction of print was apparent to both the colonial authorities in charge of the initiatives and, most certainly, to native intellectuals who first came in contact with the forms of the new literate order. One instance of the deep impression made by the circulation of knowledge through printed texts is the somewhat unexpected inclusion of a discussion on the phenomenon of printing and its origins at the end of an early lithographed text-book geography

[14] 'Extract from the Second Report (1824-25) of the Bombay Native School and School Society, pp. 11-15 in Report of Native School and School Book Society, in ed. Parulekar, Selections from the Educational Records of the Bombay Government, (1815-1840), pp. 73-74.

[15] A similar argument is made by Bernard Cohn in his essay 'The Command of Languages and the Language of Command' though not specifically with respect to the importance of print to the making of colonial ideology.

and astronomy, issued in the *devnagari* script in both Marathi and Gujrati[16]. The Marathi edition came out in 1832 from the press of the Department of Public Instruction set up in Poona, while the Gujrati version was lithographed in 1833 for the Bombay Native Education Society by R. Prera[17]. The final chapter tells the story of print from its invention onwards, and is cast like the preceding ones, in the form of a dialogue between a teacher and pupil. The simultaneity and the speed of communication that printing makes for is seen as something quite clearly unprecedented :

> I have another question about the printed books that I have seen in so many of the schools of this city and which are also being simultaneously printed in many other languages. This age is unrivalled (*uttam*) in its ability to enable the spread of knowledge through these means, and this (*desh*) certainly did not have anything of the kind before. Therefore, I shall be much obliged if you could tell me more about the invention(*yukti*) of printing. [18]

An account of the development of printing in Holland in the fifteenth century follows. The lesson ends with an acknowledgement of the new cognitive possibilities enabled through print and a somewhat sly reference to the state of European knowledge before the invention of the press, for it was only with 'the discovery of the knowledge (of printing), books have been able to spread everywhere, ending the era of darkness'.

Thus, through print, colonial power was able to reduce quite quickly the incommensurable metaphysical, cultural and ideological disparities within the colonial encounter and instead, pose these question simply as a hierarchical relation between the 'achievements' of English and the vernaculars. Described thus, it was then entirely conceivable to rectify the 'deficiencies' of the latter through rapid transfusions in the from of extensive translations from English. The previous chapter has discussed at some length the great interest shown by the early colonial intellectuals towards translation and the standardisation of the vernaculars. In fact, early native intellectuals first became conscious of the political possibilities under colonial rule in terms of the hegemonic influence that the standardised forms of the vernaculars could potentially command.

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[16] The four sections are devoted to the fundamentals of geography, an account of Hindustan's past, a brief description of the constituents of Europe, Africa and America and a concluding descriptive section on Astronomy. The last section starts with a series of chapters meant to describe the solar system(*surya mala).* But the sequence of the themes in the concluding chapters is interesting :chapter 13 discusses the qualities of the Divine Creator; followed by an account of magnets in chapter fourteen, with the last chapter devoted to a descriptive account of the emergence of the art of printing. Evidently, the story of the press was perceived as an important aspect of the accumulation and dissemination of modern 'useful' knowledge. See, Dialogues on Geography and Astronomy, translated into Marathee language for the Bombay Education Society, lithographed at the press of the Department of Public Instruction, Poona, 1832.

[17] Dialogues on Geography and Astronomy, translated into Gujrati for the Bombay Education Society, lithographed by R. Prera, 1833.

[18]translated from Marathi, '*Chaapnyache Yuktichi Utpatti*' in Dialogues on Geography and Astronomy, translated into Marathee language for the Bombay Education Society, lithographed at the press of the Department of Public Instruction, Poona, 1832.

But equally, it also soon began to be evident that in cultivating small groups of native intellectuals to serve as its ideological links with native society, colonial power was creating an arena of interests and influence quite distinct from its ties with native commercial networks established to realise the objectives of colonial trade. This hiatus between the emerging intelligentsia and native bourgeois interests created under colonial influence had important consequences for the story of vernacular publishing, especially in its early phases. The following sections will elaborate on this. Except for the Parsis in western India, the emerging colonial bourgeoisie, in marked contrast to the case of the rise of modern print culture in the West, was uninterested in the new literate order. With native bourgeois groups clearly disinclined to invest in publishing ventures or in developing the commercial potential of an enlarged audience for printed materials, both the size of the new literate native audiences and the output of vernacular books remained totally dependent upon the directives of colonial policy, especially throughout the formative period when the vernaculars were acquiring their standardised forms. In principle, of course, the entry of print and more specifically, native initiatives to establish a newspaper and periodical press were meant to extend the size of the audience for the new discourses beyond the limited scope the 'schooled public' of the colonial classrooms. And yet in a real sense, with few possibilities for acquiring the new linguistic and cognitive skills outside of the government or missionary schools, the audience for the new textual forms remained largely confined to the recipients of colonial education. Benedict Anderson's thesis of the importance of the stimulus of the logic of print capitalism to the growth of modern vernacular cultures would need to be applied to the colonial situation with due consideration of a situation where print was introduced as part of a modern capitalistic order, but under circumstances that did not allow for the development of the indigenous market. If possibilities for the extension of native literate communities under the programme of colonial literacy were subject to such structural constraints, that also placed serious limits upon the meanings that the principle of publicity could assume within colonial society. The situation was clearly biased in favour of groups that had a prior access to literate skills. Further, given the circumstances under which the native vernaculars were undergoing standardisation, it was highly likely that the earliest groups to have the opportunity for expression in the new arenas would acquire an abiding influence upon the form and orientation of the new public discourses. Eventually, the proximity of various groups from the linguistic variety closest to the new standardised vernacular forms would be a decisive factor in the structure of opportunities for mobility within colonial society.

If the native languages were now to be primarily oriented for use through print, then the forms that could become current as 'commonly' intelligible become current as standardised written practice were nowhere available; they had to be devised. In the West, print had precipitated the standardisation of scripts and helped fix linguistic norms like spelling and grammatical

usage through the compilation of dictionaries and grammars in the second half of the eighteenth century. Attempts to create a standardised, mass education system had followed, but only after a gap of at least half a century or more. In sharp contrast, the entry of print into the colonial context saw the inauguration of urgent official efforts to produce standardised codes and fix the scripts for the native languages, through which the existing indigenous textual traditions, current mainly through oral modes of transmission could be rapidly transformed. One of the arguments that has been made about the shift in western literate practices through print is that the new mode of textual transmission created its own audiences, rather than simply addressing pre-existing ones. If anything, this was even more radically true of the colonial context for the introduction of print was accompanied by bureaucratic efforts to develop generally-understood codes for the vernaculars. Ironically, such efforts preceded the actual dissemination and acceptance of these forms among reading communities, for these had yet to be created. Efforts to print vernacular texts had to begin with the cutting of types, which in turn, pre-supposed the fixing and standardisation of scripts.

Perhaps not surprisingly, it was the Christian missionaries who possessed the zeal and the resources to venture upon what promised to be a most arduous endeavour. I hope to demonstrate in the following sections of the chapter that the presence of missionaries among the initial actors shaping the languages in the new public sphere influenced both its substantive concerns and the directions of subsequent discussion. Official initiatives at printing and translating vernacular texts quickly subsumed and overtook the early missionary efforts, but despite certain differences, both missionary and official schemes towards native literacy shared many significant cultural and ontological premises. The internal differences between missionary and official efforts often led them to target different sections of native society as the potential constituencies for drawing students into their respective schools. With the new literate skills being absolutely critical for negotiating the world of colonial politics, this could bring to the fore long-standing tensions and intensify the emerging patterns of contestation within native society. The emergence of Phule as an important political figure in nineteenth century western India is an outstanding example. Phule first encountered ideas of human equality and rights through his contact with the Scottish missionaries active in Pune and some of the surrounding areas. But before coming to that, we need to take into account the early developments in the story of the coming of print to western India.

The Beginnings of Print and the Making of New Languages :

Print first came to the West Coast, especially to the areas around Goa and Salsette, through the Portuguese missionaries around the mid-16 century. There are surviving specimens of their attempts to compose and publish vernacular works, as part of their proselytising

mission[19]. Among these was the Puranna da vinda e vida do christo, (*purana* of the advent and life of Christ), which became popularly known as the *Christapurana*. These texts uniformly made use of the Roman type, although some attempts had been made to print books in the 'language and the alphabet of the land.'[20] Around 1806 there were some attempts to produce Marathi books like the *Balbodh Muktavali* with the help of Danish missionaries in Tanjore at the initiative of the Maratha king, Sarfoji[21].

English printing in western India under British influence goes back to the last decades of the eighteenth century, with the earliest known specimen being an English calendar printed in 1780 'by Custom Cursetjee in the Buzzer' [22]. The Bombay Courier press was, in all probability, the first important press in Bombay and enjoyed a monopoly over printing jobs and advertisements for the Bombay government until the early years of the nineteenth century. Both the earliest English newspapers from Bombay, the Bombay Courier and the Bombay Gazette, that began publication around 1790-1 were apparently published from the Bombay Courier press[23]. The English types used at this point are said to have been brought in from England.

Gujrati was the first among the different languages spoken on the island to appear in print. This occurred in an advertisement in Gujrati characters in the Bombay Courier of 29 January 1797[24]. The credit for cutting these types belonged to Jeejeebhai Chapghar, who had been employed at the Courier Press[25]. Soon after, Jeejeebhai also apparently cast the types for Malayalam characters for the printing of Robert Drummond's Grammar of the Malabar Language, published from Bombay in 1799. The first instance of Marathi print from Bombay

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[19] S.G. Tulpule, 'Christian Marathi Literature' in Classical Marathi Literature from the Beginning to AD 1818, Vol. IX of A History of Indian Literature, ed. Jan Gonda, Otto Harrasowitz, Wiesbaden, 1979.

[20] S.G. Tulpule ,Classical Marathi Literature from the Beginning to AD 1818, p.380.

[21] Separate attempts at printing Marathi occurred in Thanjavur. Sarofji Raje, the adopted crown prince of Thanjavur, who grew up under the influence of the Danish missionary Reverend Schwartz had Aesop's fables translated from English by Sakkhan Pandit in 1806. Sarofji is said to have been a great scholar, a patron of learning and an avid collector of palm leaf manuscripts and inscriptions on copper. He established a printing press from where this translation was issued as *Balbodh Muktavali* in 1806. see G.B. Sardar, *Aravachin Marathi Gadyachi Purvapeethika 1800-1874*, Modern Book Depot, Pune, 1938, p.7.

[22] see George Buist, The Bombay Times and Journal of Commerce, Vol. VI, No 1172, Tuesday Dec. 4, 1855, quoted in A.P. Priyolkar, The Printing Press in India, Bombay, *Marathi Samshodhan Mandal*, 1958, pp. 70-71. George Buist, the Editor of the Bombay Times notes in his piece that this calendar was priced at two rupees and had thirty-four pages. Not surprisingly, the first press in Bombay catered to the market provided by the 'scores of Englishmen' living in Bombay.. Priyolkar points out that Buist's claims that Curstejee's press was the *first in India,* is not true.

[23] The Bombay City Gazetteer Vol. III, p. 140 places the beginning of the Bombay Courier at 1790 and that of the Bombay Gazette to 1791; but it is Priyolkar's contention that it is actually vice-versa, Priyolkar, The Printing Press in India, Bombay, 1958, p. 72.

[24] This advertisement was apparently printed in the *mahajana* script that was in use mainly for ordinary, day-today and business communication. In having an unbroken line joining the letters at the top, the *mahajana* script resembled the *modi* script, which in the Deccan had come to be used for non-classical Marathi texts. This script did not survive for long in Gujrati print, after this advertisement in the Bombay Courier of June 22 1797, but continued to be used in lithographed writings. see Priyolkar, The Printing Press in India, p.74.

[25]B.B. Patel, *Parsi Prakash*, Vol. 1, Bombay 1888 quoted in Priyolkar, p.73.

appears in an advertisement in the Bombay Courier of 17 July 1802. It used the *modi* script, the oldest of the Marathi scripts[26], which, as discussed in Chapter one, dates back to the beginnings of textualisation of Marathi in the late thirteenth century.

However, simultaneously attempts had been made to print Marathi at Serampore . With the conquest of Vasai in 1803, the compilation of a grammar and the translation of the Christian scripture into Marathi appeared on the Fort William agenda[27]. Dr. Carey was put in charge of teaching it and the first Marathi class at Fort William was set up in 1804, in collaboration with Vaijnath Sharma, a Sanskrit scholar and Marathi *pandit* who had been under the patronage of Venirampant, a *vakil* at Calcutta for one of the Maratha sardars, Nagpurkar Bhosle[28]. With Vaijnath Sharma's help, a *Marathi-Ingrezi Kosh* (1810), apparently containing approximately 10000 entries, was issued from Serampore as was Carey's Marathi translation of *Panchtantra* and the *Hitopadesh*[29]. These were soon followed by the Gospel of St. Matthew and a grammar of Marathi with 'dialogues on familiar subjects', compiled mainly in English, was published using the *devnagari* script for Marathi words, unlike the earlier printed specimens from Bombay. Evidence suggests that these efforts of the Serampore missionaries were not received very favourably in Bombay[30] mostly because, as can be imagined, there was a significant variation between Vaijnath Sharma's Marathi and the idiom prevailing in Bombay. They were followed by the *Simhasanbattishi* (1814) and *Raghuji Bhoslyanchi vaunshavali*(1816) from the Serampore press, but these were now printed in the *modi* script.[31]

Impelled by the poor reception of the Serampore edition of the Marathi translation of the scriptures and also spurred by inter-missionary rivalry, the American Mission Press in Bombay launched plans to publish the Bible in the vernacular. By 1817, they had managed to issue a scripture tract of sixteen octavo pages and the Gospel of St. Mathew in Marathi[32]. By 1819,

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[26] The *balbodh* script which was closer to the *devnagari*, had been used for classical purposes. However, this distribution of uses between the two Marathi scripts was not absolute, for classical Marathi manuscripts produced in the Tanjore province used the *modi script*. see Priyolkar, p.74.

[27] Letter by William Carey dated 7th September 1803 quoted in E. Carey, Memoirs of William Carey, London, p.564.

[28] Vaijnath Sharma worked at the Fort William College for several years and many Europeans are said to have studied under him. See G.B. Sardar, *Arvachin Marathi Gadyache Purvapeethika*, pp.4-5. Vaijnath Sharma was said to have been selected for the office, amid many competitors, 'for his superior attainments in Oriental philology'. See History of the Serampur Mission , Vol. 2, p.445.

[29] The title-page of the Marathi-English *kosh* published in 1810 mentions Carey as the Professor of Marathi and Bengalee and Vaijnath Sharma, as 'the Chief Maratha Pundit in the college of Fort William'. The English introduction speaks of the importance of the regional vernaculars to European scholars and their derivation from Sanskrit. see D.V. Potdar, *Marathi Gadyacha Ingrezi Avataar*, Venus Prakashan, Pune, 1957, p.12. The title-page of *Simhasanbattishi* published from Serampore in 1814 bears the remark, *'Vaijnathsharmane kriyate'*, see Potdar, pp.12-13.

[30] 'The Mahratta grammar by the Rev. Carey is in very few hands here, and in fact only a small proportion of that nation can read the *balbodh* or *nagree* character in which its parts are illustrated', Robert Drummond Illustrations of the Grammatical parts of the Guzerathee, Mahratta and English Languages, printed at the Courier Press, Bombay, 1808.

[31] see Sardar, p.6.

[32] William Hazen, A Century In India : the American Marathi Mission 1813-1913, Ahmadnagar, 1913, pp.8-10.

they had begun to print Marathi books to be used in their schools in Bombay[33]. These developments sent out signals to the Bombay Government that they could not afford to postpone plans towards an official initiative on the preparation of books much longer and in 1821, the Native School an d School Book Committee was formed as a branch of the Bombay Education Society[34]. Plans were made for the printing of a translation of Aesop's fables in 'Guzerathee and Maratha' and the preparation of large wooden characters of the alphabet, as well as for publishing elementary grammars, common arithmetical tables and a selection of passages from 'native books suitable for general acceptance'[35]. Initial efforts at publication sought to pair *'Guzerattee'* and *'Mahratta'* through the use of the *devnagari* script for both languages, no doubt with a view to economise on labour and costs[36]. The first official publications in the two languages came out in 1822 and included a set of large letters to be displayed in the classroom; a collection of some short sentences, and a selection of fables in Gujrati and Marathi, all prepared by the School and School Book Society[37]. Soon the *Panchopakhyan* followed in 1822 and, in effect, was the first book entirely in Marathi printed in Bombay[38]. *Vidurniti* was published in 1823. *Simhasan-battisi* then became the third book to be printed by the Society in 1824. Lacking its own press, the Society issued these books from the Courier Press in a *balbodh* font imported from England. Interestingly, evidence suggests that these books produced by the Education Society were differentially priced for English and native buyers[39]. The use of print and the facility for the relatively speedy production of translations had lent a deceptive appearance of equivalence to the relation between English and the native vernaculars that belied the deep to underlying asymmetries between them. But the fact that the books were sold at different prices to native and white/ English customers

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[33] William Hazen, A Century In India : the American Marathi Mission 1813-1913, 1913, p. 8.

[34] In 1827, the name of this new body was changed to the Bombay Native Education Society. See ed. Parulekar, Selections from the Educational Records of the Bombay Government, (1815-1840), Bombay, 1955, pp.45-102.

[35] Seventh Annual Report for 1822 of Bombay Education Society pp.24-27, ed. Parulekar, Selections from the Educational Records of the Bombay Government, (1815-1840), p.34.

[36] In a letter dated 4-10-1823 to James Henderson, Secretary of the Government, George Jervis declared' 'I am directed also to advert respectfully to the impossibility of making at this early period, any calculation of the expense for translating or composing original works for the Society ... The Society deem it a greater object to obtain a larger supply of Mahratta types and a new font of Guzerathee; the latter to be executed, like the new *balbodh* (*devnagari*) ; drawings of the letters might be sent home. They might afterwards be disposed to native presses, as there the works could be most commercially printed. The attached report of the Special Committee went on to add : '... the works that have already been issued... (are) attended with exorbitant expense, and with many imperfections difficult to be removed in attempts to form printing types for characters that belong particularly to a free, open, writing hand.' Letter from Jervis, Secretary of the Society to James Henderson, Secretary to the Bombay Government, dated 4-10-1823, Bombay Secretariat Records, G.D. Vol. 8(63), pp. 91-96, in ed. Parulekar Selections from the Educational Records of the Bombay Government, (1815-1840), Bombay, 1955, pp. 48- 51.

[37] The Seventh Annual Report of the Bombay Education Society' pp. 24-27 in Selections from the Educational Records (Bombay) (1815-1840), p.34.

[38] Copies of this unique specimen were distributed to various sardars by Mountstuart Elphinstone with a request that it be perused with care. See G.S. Sardesai, Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Vol. 42, Bombay 1934, p.52 quoted in Priyolkar, p.89.

[39] An advertisement in the Bombay Courier dated October 4 1823 states : 'We have for sale a number of copies of Marathi books, *Pachopakhyana* and *Vidurniti.* The price of the former is Rs. 8 for Europeans and Rs. 3 for natives and that of the *Vidurniti* Rs. 6 for Europeans and Rs. 2 for natives.', quoted in Priyolkar, p.90.

clearly showed that neither were the audiences for two languages within colonial society homogenous nor were they characterised by equivalent material or cultural resources. I shall take up this question of the hierarchical divisions within the emerging colonial reading publics more fully later on in this chapter.

The use of differential pricing showed that the task of attracting buyers and creating readers was by no means easy. Neither were the prices of these early publications books particularly conducive to promoting the spread of the reading habit and enhancing the circulation of the new printed forms of the vernacular. For example, in 1829, a 'Maratha Grammar and Dictionary for the use of natives' cost Rs. 40; the more extensive and prestigious Maratha-English Grammar and Dictionary compiled by Captain Molesworth was priced at Rs 90; a copy of the Idiomatical Exercises in Maratha and English priced at Rs 12; a Maratha translation of Morrison's Book-keeping, Marcet's Conversations on Natural Philosophy translated by Hari Keshavji[40] and Berquin's Children's Friend were priced at Rs. 12 each [41].

There were other problems too. From the beginning, one of the main problems faced by the colonial project to produce vernacular books was what was routinely described in official reports even as late as the end of the nineteenth century, as 'the lack of original compositions'. Instructions to prospective authors circulated as part of an advertisement for the offer of generous rewards[42] meant to encourage native writers hinted at the several dimensions of the problems faced by the official project to engender a culture of vernacular print. In theory, print aimed at creating a community of readers and writers through promoting the circulation of a

[40] Hari Keshavji (1804-1858), was from the *pathare* community. Keshavji completed his primary education in the Robert Money missionary school. He worked as the Head Clerk at the Engineering School established by Jervis in Bombay, followed by a stint as Head Clerk in the Thana Adawalat Court between 1829-34. He had also studied Sanskrit. Between 1831-1851 he translated and wrote school books for the Bombay Education Society. Among his translations were *Vidyeche Uddesh, Laabh ani Santosh* (in Gujrati from Lord Brougham's Treatise on the Object, Advantages and Pleasures of Knowledge), *Siddhpadarthvigyan Vishayak Samvaad* (from Marcet's Conversations on Natural Philosophy), *RasayanSamvaad* (from Conversations on Chemistry), *Yatrik Kraman* (from Pilgrim's Progress), *Deshvyavaharvyavastha* (from Mrs. Marcet's Conversations on Mill). His talents as a prose-writer and translator did not get the recognition they merited probably on account of his caste status. Although he was a member of the Student's Literary and Scientific Society, he became intensely pre-occupied with *Vedanta* towards the end of his life. for a biographical account on Keshavji see D. V. Potdar, *Marathi Gadyacha Ingrezi Avataar*, Pune, 1957, pp.42-46.

[41] See 'Appendix 3 :Depository List of the Bombay Native Education Society's Works', Fourth Report of the Bombay Native Education Society for 1827, Bombay 1828. However the prices for these books as quoted in the Depository List attached with the Report for 1839 are much lower. The primers and the elementary reading books were the cheapest ranging from between one anna and Rs 3 - 8 annas. But the Marathi dictionary 'for the use of natives' was priced at Rs 18, the translation of Conversations on Chemistry at Rs 16, the Atlas cost Rs 1 - 8 annas; *Murathee Bukhur*, a translation of Duff's History of the Marathas cost Rs. 6. A reader in geography in the form of dialogues in Marathi was available for Rs 4 whereas an account of History of the Athenians or the Assyrians and the Babylonians or of the Medes and the Persians could be bought for Rs 0 - 4 annas each. *Bal Mitra* cost Rs. 3 and 8 annas, *Pudarth Vigyan* or Conversations on Natural Philosophy was priced at Rs. 6, Idiomatical Exercises in Murathee and English and Morrsion's Book-Keeping cost Rs. 2 and 12 annas and Rs. 3 and eight annas respectively. See 'Twelfth Report of the Elphinstone College and the School of the Native Education Society', pp. 76-81 in, Selections from the Educational Records (Bombay) (1815-1840), pp.193-199.

[42] The offer was announced in a trilingual circular dated 8 April 1825 issued by George Jervis in Gujrati, Marathi and English. The prize money offered for the translation or composition of text/school books in *balbodh* was between Rs. 100-Rs. 400 and a reward between Rs. 2000-Rs. 5000 was offered for especially meritorious works. See text of circular in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 2, Pune, 1950, pp.599-602.

'generally accessible' language. And yet, as the above-mentioned circular had to admit, the task of creating such a modern readership in the vernacular involved several complex problems :

> In translating English works it is necessary particularly to point out that in almost all cases they must undergo partial alterations to adapt them to the habits and manners of the natives.
>
> In the native languages specified for works, the commonly accepted vernacular dialects (*deshbhasha*) must be used to their *fullest extent*, (emphasis in original) to the exclusion of an unnecessary display of any learned tongue : where however, these dialects are deficient in the means of expression, words must be supplied from their cognate languages; Sanskrit for Maratha and Goojaratee, simple Persian for Hindoostanee. The adoption of words from English must necessarily be admitted in cases, where neither the current nor cognate language furnishes them by directly or by composition.[43]

The decision to fix the scripts for Gujrati and Marathi print came in 1826, and typically for the colonial situation, was the result of an official decree. No doubt, official convenience in the use of these scripts for the making of vernacular books had been the paramount consideration. An official order passed in 1826, declared that *balbodh* or the *devnagari* would from then on be the standard script used for Marathi print. It was to be mainly implemented through conferring official recognition on the ability to read and write *balbodh*; knowledge of *balbodh* was to be made a basic pre-qualification for trainee school teachers being recruited for the government schools being established in Bombay and the outlying areas. From then on, the Native Education Society decided on 'adopting *balbodh* for all their printed books; and also in the written or current hand for letter writing and general business, respectively used in *Maharastra* ...'[44]. However, it was impossible to resolve the matter so swiftly and the 1833 edition of Bodhvachane is known to have to used both *balbodh* and *modi* types face-to-face for each page; also, education records show that both the *balbodh* and *modi* scripts continued to be taught in the schools, with translation exercises to and from English being set for both scripts.

The preceding discussion has already suggested that the conditions under which modern cultural practices were established in the colonial context favoured communities with prior literate backgrounds. Colonial literacy aimed at producing a new intellectual order, but it was not surprising that the colonial intelligentsia was mainly drawn from communities with prior background of literate skills during the pre-colonial period. The involvement of Christian missionaries in the processes of vernacular standardisation and printing influenced the

[43] ibid., p.602.

[44] Third Report of the Bombay Native Education Society, pp.15-19, Selections from the Educational Records (Bombay) (1815-1840), p.85.

trajectory of the emerging public discourses. Similarly the upper-caste background of colonial intellectuals had critical implications for the emerging character of the colonial public sphere. The following section will try to elaborate upon some of the complexities of creating a sphere of modern cultural practices in Marathi.

Of *Pandits*, *Shastris* and the Making of Early Marathi Print Culture in Bombay :

In western India, it was mainly *brahmin*s and some sub-*brahmin* groups[45] like the *prabhus* and *shenvis* who were among the first to perceive the benefits of the new literate order and respond to the opportunities it created. The *prabhus*[46] and the *shenvis*[47], had traditionally

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[45] A letter from Jervis, Secretary of the Education Society to James Farish, Secretary to the Government, dated 6 June 1826 gives us the distribution of the 50 Marathas enrolled in the four classes of the English School on its opening in July 1824 : The first(highest) class contains 12 boys : of whom 2 are *brahmins*, 5 *shenvees* and 5 *purbhoos*. The second class consisted of 16 boys : 2 *brahmins*, 2 *shenvis*, 10 *purbhoos* and 2 *shimpis*. One *brahmin*, 3 *shenvis* , 9 *purbhoos*, 2 *shimpis* and one goldsmith made up class three whereas class four had 4 *brahmin* boys and 2 *shenvis*. 'Extracts from the Bombay Secretariat Records E.D. Vol. 2 of 1826, p.330 in Selections from the Educational Records (Bombay) (1815-1840), p.90.

The *shimpis* (tailors) were a well-off community in Bombay. Evidence suggests that this prosperity dated atleast to the time when the British assumed control of the island from the Portuguese in the early eighteenth century. See P.M. Malabari, Bombay in the Making 1661-1726, London 1910, pp.493-4.

There is also evidence that the some enterprising persons from the *shimpi* community had begun to publish a weekly newspaper, *Shimpihitechu* to voice the interests of the community. The Telegraph and Courier of the 20 August 1855 carried the following report, 'We were shown ...the first number of the *Shimpihitechu*... The tailor caste of western India are determined to assert their title to an important place in the community. ...These tailors speak as men, and speak with a sobriety and dignity upon matters of permanent interest. We do not remember that any Hindoo has (previously to this) set up an organ of its own. If the other castes are to be stimulated by this example to establish each one its own particular organ, the number of native papers in Bombay will soon be legion.' Quoted in R.K. Lele, *Marathi Vruttpatrancha Itihaas*, Pune, 1964. p.130.

[46] Malabari refers to the excellent *parbhu* calligraphists who were generally appointed for copying out important records, like for example the Minute Book of the Court of Judicature in Bombay in 1726-27. See Malabari, Bombay in the Making, London 1910, p.435. The Portuguese had also employed *prabhu* scribes but their harsh proselytising policies had driven the community into nearby Salsette and other mainland areas. But with the handing over of the island to the British, they returned in large numbers. *Prabhus* were also employed in influential positions at the courts of the Maratha *sardars*. The community prospered during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, owning property with a reputation for good living. See Bombay City Gazetteer, Vol. I, p.241.

As a community with literate skills, the *prabhus* showed evident concern with recording their own the past, both in the pre-colonial period and in the nineteenth century. Their position as rent collectors and administrative agents under the Portuguese made them unpopular with *brahmin* groups in the region. This antagonism came to a head after the conquest of Vasai by the Marathas when around the mid-eighteenth century local *brahmins* tried to invoke the judicial powers of the Peshwa's *Nyayadish* at Pune to curb the ritual status of the *prabhus*. Around this time the *prabhus* tried to adopt 'pucca' brahmanical practices to enhance their caste status by proscribing widow-remarriage within the community. The skirmishes over rank and ritual privileges continued well into the late Peshwa period. This summary is drawn from V. D. Rao, 'The *Pathare Prabhus* : Origin and History ', Journal of the University Of Bombay, New series, No. 38, 1969, pp.236-259.

[47] The *shenvis* were a sub-*jati* of the *gaud saraswat brahmins*. The *shenvis* occupied important positions in the courts of the Maratha *sardars*, especially Shinde and Holkar. There were attempts during the reign of Bajirao II to establish that the shenvis were not *'pucca' satkarmi brahmin*s. The *shenvis* occupied important positions as linguistic mediators, translators and agents, first with the Portuguese, and then later *with* the British during the latter's negotiations with the Marathas. The *gaud saraswat brahmins* figure as the largest sub-group of *brahmin*s in Bombay in the census of 1780, a position they maintained till 1923 when the last census according to caste was taken. They keenly took to English education and sought employment as clerks in the various commercial houses. Two of the first four graduates of Bombay University were from this community, as were the well-known trio of Chandavarkar, Telang and Bhandarkar. Also, the *shenvis* were among the successful speculators to profit from the cotton boom in Bombay in the 1860s. After the late 1860s, the *shenvi* leadership, quite typically for the time, was concerned with trying to gain greater visibility for the community through associational activity and writings that tried to consolidate its caste identity and status. This summary is drawn from N.K. Wagle, 'The History and Social Organisation of the *Gaud Saraswat Brahmins* on the West Coast of India', Journal of Indian History , Vol. 48, Part 1, April 1970, pp.296-333.

trained as scribes and had successfully sought employment as *karkoons*, both in different parts of the Peshwa kingdom as well as in the many trading offices that had been established in Bombay with the entry of the British. Possession of uncommon literate skills had also enabled the *prabhus* to be closely associated with the pre-modern processes of book production[48]. The *prabhu* communities had a long standing rivalry with *brahmin* castes over status, and there is evidence to show instances of the precolonial state intervening to delimit *prabhu* claims to *kshatriya* status, and prescribing *shudra* practices and customs instead as appropriate for them[49]. However, with the possibility for such restrictions removed under British rule, the *prabhus* were quick to use their literate training to acquire an advantageous position in the emerging world of colonial politics.

But within this overall trend of upper-caste dominance, many interesting patterns that showed the diversity of responses to the opportunities created through colonial rule can be observed. A detailed sociological analysis of this kind could be important in many respects. The creation of a modern hegemonic order within colonial society involved the negotiation of complex social and ideological disjunctures. The above approach could help pose appropriate questions about the difficulties of creating a standardised cultural order from 'above', through the agency and design of an alien, colonial state. It could also open up ways of theorising the political choices available to the new intelligentsia as they attempted to negotiate the fraught ideological ground upon which they had to advance a discourse with hegemonic possibilities. Later sections here and the next chapter will elaborate some of the connections between the new literate order and the emerging political structure, but before doing that, it would be useful to analyse the responses of different castes to the possibilities within colonial literacy for the laicization and publicity of knowledge.

Some of the early government initiatives to produce and publish grammars and elementary reading material in Marathi have already been discussed. Expectedly, it was difficult to proceed on such a project without enlisting the services of native intellectuals. By the early 1820s, the Education Society in Bombay had a small group of *pandits*, *shastris* and *munshis* in its employ to assist in the preparation of the first vernacular grammars, and other books through translations into Marathi and Gujrati. We know the identity of the Marathi *shastrimandali* from the names of the contributors to the first Marathi *shabdakosh* brought out by the Society in 1824. We may note here that although sub-brahmin castes like *prabhus* were keen to study English, often these students would leave school as soon as they had acquired a sufficient training to secure clerical employment in some official administrative position or one of the

[48]Dadoba Pandurang recollects knowing a prosperous *patane prabhu*, Raghunath Valjeechya Bhai in Bombay who was a great lover of books. Raghunath Bhai maintained a workshop with one or two copyists on a regular basis. The manuscripts would then be preserved in elaborately decorated bound covers. See D.P. Pandurang, *Atmacharitra va Charitra*, ed. A. P. Priyolkar, *Shrisamarth Sadan*, Bombay 1947, p.64.

[49] see footnote 46 above.

several business houses in the city. It was therefore not surprising to find any *prabhus* or other sub-brahmin castes in the Education Society's *shastrimandali*. Besides the two Englishmen, Captain Molesworth and Major Candy, the group included Ramshastri Janvekar[50], Bapushastri Shukla[51], Gangadharshastri Phadke[52], Balshastri Dhagve[53] and Jagannathashastri[54]. Parshuramshastri Godbole seems to have joined in 1829[55]. Significantly, none of these Marathi *pandits,* except perhaps for the Native Secretary, Kashinath Chatre[56], had lived in Bombay prior to their employment in the Society. *Brahmins* had counted among the most mobile groups within pre-colonial society and a willingness to travel to secure patronage from those in power had come to constitute a 'historical' fact of the *brahmin* character. Similarly then, each of these early *brahmin* scholars who worked with Education Society had travelled to the new capital specifically through their contact with colonial officials, or with the hope of seeking remunerative positions with official or missionary establishments. Very often, the shift to Bombay was made through the mediation of those already in colonial employment[57]. These *brahmin*s had come from Konkan and Vasai, and some from the Pune region. All these men went on to contribute substantially to putting in place and extending the

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[50] Janvekar was appointed the Inspector of Marathi schools in and around Bombay in 1830, at a salary of Rs. 60 per month. See Appendix 2 in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Poona, 1950, p.382. Janvekar had prepared a summarised version of a Marathi grammar at the Society which though unpublished, continued to be used in manuscript form in the main Society School in Bombay, see Dadoba Pandurang, *Atmacharitra* , p.36. Later Janvekar was associated with the Poona Sanskrit College at the time of the Shripat Sheshadri conversion controversy in 1843, from where he helped enlist support for Balsahstri Jambhekar. See correspondence between Ramchandrashastri Janvekar and Balshastri in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 2, pp.495-548.

[51] Bapushastri Shukla too, came to Bombay to join the Society. We are told that he hailed from Naigaon of *prant Ashtagar* and had been the *mamledaar* of *Haveli taluka,* see Dadoba Pandurang, *Atmacharitra*, p. 35.

[52] Gangadharshastri Phadke of Pune, was among the earliest to join the Society, and had probably come into contact with the British during his visits to Bombay as a well-known *puranik* and *gavai (*vocalist). Jagannath Shankarseth was a patron to Gangadharshastri's musical talents. Phadke is said to have lived in Bombay between 1820-1825 as a *pandit* engaged by the British for his skills as a learned grammarian, See Bhavalkar, 'Life and Character of Prof. Balshastree Jambhekar' from the autobiography of the late Keshav Shivram Bhavalkar' in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 3, p.20.

[53] An obituary that appeared in the *Bombay Durpan* on 22 June 1832 notes that Balshastri Dhagve had come to Bombay in 1824 to work with the Education Society, before which he had been attached to the Pune Engineering College. For the obituary that appeared in the *Durpan* upon Dhagve's death see Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 2, p.43. Dhagve was apparently one of the few traditionally-educated *shastris* who were not contemptuous of 'non-classical' poetry in *prakrit* or the regional languages. See D.P. Pandurang, *Atmacharitra*, p.52.

[54] Jagannathshastri was Jervis's chief pandit, and had accompanied him to Bombay where he joined the *shastrimandali*. He is said to have hailed from the same place as Bapushastri Shukla. See Dadoba Pandurang, *Atmacharitra*, p.35.

[55] Parshurampant Tatya Godbole had been invited to join the Society on account of his reputation as scholar of Marathi poetry from Pune where he had worked as a *karkun* with a *konkansth* moneylender. After leaving Bombay, Parshurampant worked with the Vernacular Department of the Pune Sanskrit College, where he compiled and helped publish the first official edition of pre-colonial Marathi poetry, *Navneet* in 1854. See D.P. Potdar *Marathi Gadyyacha Ingrezi Avataar*, p.53.

[56] Sadashiv Kashinath Chatre (1788-1830), a *konkanasth brahmin* born in Walkeshwar, Bombay started his career with the British as a 'writer' in the Engineering Office and was then persuaded by Colonel Jervis to become the Native Secretary of the Education Society in 1823. Kashinath Chatre had learnt his English before the days of government schools. Although he retired before teaching and bureaucratic arrangements were formalised, Chatre played a key role in bringing together persons soon to make a mark as the first generation of leading Marathi intellectuals of the new mould. D.V. Potdar, *Marathi Gadyyacha Ingrezi Avataar*, p.28 and also D.P.Pandurang, *Atmacharitra*, pp.60-61.

[57] Ramshastri Janvekar was Balshastri Jambhekar's brother-in-law. Balshastri's father, Gangadharshastri was apparently a frequent visitor at Sadashiv Chatre's house in Bombay. It was because of these links that Balshastri was sent to live at Chatre's house while he studied English and the new *Ingrezi vidya*. see Dadoba Pandurang, *Atmacharitra*, p.61.

bureaucratic infra-structure of the Education Department throughout the Bombay Presidency, often being appointed to important administrative positions themselves[58].

However, interestingly enough, despite having worked closely and even supervised the production of the first books through the Education Department, none of these men, except perhaps for Kashinath Chattre[59], from among the first *shastrimandali* actually seemed to have entertained the idea of becoming print-entrepreneurs themselves, although such initiatives were already in evidence within the Gujrati community in Bombay at the time. Instead what emerges is that these learned *brahmins* of the *shastrimandali* seem to have responded to the task of extending the new literate practices in a typically traditional fashion. Take for example Kashinath Chatre, one of the most influential native members of the Education Society[60] and praised greatly for his early contribution as a member of the *shastrimandali* to the creation of a remarkable and lucid Marathi prose style[61]. Throughout his career and even afterwards, he played a key role in bringing together persons who were soon to make a mark as the major intellectuals in the new mould in Marathi. His house was known to be something of a hostel for bright -*brahmin*- boys from families known to him, so that they could study in Bombay[62]. Chatre was a personal guardian and tutor to both Balshastri Jambhekar and Bhau Mahajan, as they completed their education at the Elphinstone School in Bombay in the 1820s, and who, among other things, started and edited the first newspapers and periodicals in Marathi[63]. This showed that were evident tensions between particularistic, *brahmanical* assumptions about the ordering of opportunities of intellectual exchange and the theoretically open principles of general access within modernity. Clearly it was beyond the ken and interest of colonial rule to

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[58] Balshastri Jambhekar, who had been encouraged to come to Bombay by Chatre, went on to play a very important role in the establishment of the Education Department and the Elphinstone College School. For details of Balshastri's career and his contributions to the laying the foundations of western education in the Bombay Presidency see Chapter three.

[59] Kashinath Chatre's died before he could carry out his plans to establish a printing press after retirement. But, unlike the background of the other *shastris*, Chatre's family had probably lived in Bombay for some time. This factor may have been the exceptional influence upon his outlook, leading him to be more open to the idea of becoming a modern press-man. See Dadoba Pandurang, Atmacharitra p.70.

[60] It is not clear when and under what circumstances the Chatre family had moved to Bombay, especially as the description of '*konkanasth brahman*' does not figure as a category in a survey of castes resident in Bombay in 1780 and quoted in Edwardes, The Rise of Bombay : A Retrospect, p.210-11. Sadashiv Chatre earned a monthly salary of Rs 100 as the Society's Native Secretary, with an additional allowance of Rs 75 as the superintendent of Marathi Schools in the Southern region. He retired on a pension in 1829. See D.V. Potdar, Marathi Gadyyacha Ingrezi Avataar, pp.28-29.

[61] 'Sadashiv Kashinath Chatre was the first to compose the first Marathi book with correct and pleasing syntax, and therefore could be considered a exemplary stylist and pioneer of Marathi prose.' See Dadoba Pandurang's, 'Introduction' to Marathibhasche Vyakaran, quoted in D.P. Potdar, p.29. Kashninath Chatre had apparently acquired a subtle command over English because of his translations, Bal Mitra and Isapniti were much acclaimed and used in the Marathi schools for many years. See Dadoba Pandurang, Atmacharitra, p. 60.

[62] Apparently Balshastri would recount with gratitude how Bapu Chatre had introduced him to 'advanced' texts such as Johnson's Rambler. Bhau Mahajan, the other great figure of the early phase of Marathi journalism is also said to have lived with Chatre and both young men gained from sharing the private lessons that Bapu Chatre arranged for his son, Vireshwar Chatre, who also went onto become an editor-publisher. See D.P. Pandurang, Atmacharitra, p.61.

[63] For an account of Jambhekar's pioneering role as the editor of the first Marathi weekly, Durpan see Chapter three. For details of Bhau Mahajan's important contributions to the vernacular press, see pp. 149-152 below.

resolve these contradictions, and these remained to affect the trajectory of the intelligentsia's efforts to articulate an anti-colonial hegemonic position. Further examples can be adduced to draw out this point. Dadoba Pandurang recounts the amused indulgence with which his teacher Bapudev Shukla at the Society School patiently listened to the *shenvi*, *prabhu* and *sonars* students read in class, often making patronising remarks about the attempts of 'unlearned', 'meat-eating' castes to imitate the chaste diction and pronunciation of *brahmins*[64]. Similarly, we learn that apparently Gangadharshastri, one of the contributors to the first Marathi-English *Shabdakosh*, had some reservations about Dadoba Pandurang's Marathi Grammar, on the count that as a *vaishya,* the latter had little moral right to undertake a scholarly work. Clearly, these amounted to more than mere individual perceptions, and indicated the estimate that *brahmins* as a category would have more generally had had of the intellectual capacities of the 'lesser' castes. Further, it seems that the same learned Gangadharshastri had little curiosity for any of the new knowledges, and his scholarship was mostly confined to the study of grammar[65].

As against this, the *prabhus* showed a greater inclination towards the professions associated with the modern book and print trade. As writers working in the English offices, and being less likely than the superior castes to harbour a distaste for physical labour, the *prabhus*[66] speedily took to learning the higher professional skills introduced through print. *Prabhus* figured prominently among the early native editors of newspapers in Bombay. We learn from the title page of one of the earliest English books produced at Bombay in 1803, An account of the introduction of the cowpox into India that its printer came from the Prabhu community[67]. Of the three editors of the first Marathi weekly, the *Durpan*, Janardhan Vasudevji and Raghunathji Harischandrajee were both *prabhus*[68]. Soon after the *Durpan* closed down in 1840, it is interesting to note that Janardhan Vasudevji and his brother Vinayak Vasudevji

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[64] Dadoba Pandurang, *Atmacharitra*, p.36-37.

[65] Gangadharshastri apparently had little patience with the theory of gravity, and was often troubled by mischievous questions from students when he came into substitute for Balshastri. Often he would respond with intolerance and anger. See Bhavalkar, 'Life and Character of Prof. Balshastree Jambhekar from the autobiography of the late Keshav Shivram Bhavalkar' in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 3, Pune, 1950, p.20 .

[66] See fn.46 above.

[67] This book is in the SOAS Archive. The title page does not also bears the information that it was printed at No 7, Forbes Street, by Moroba Damoterjee Prabhoo , though the press is not mentioned.

[68] Raghunath Harischandrajee and Janardhan Vasudevji, who assisted Jambhekar in editing the first Marathi paper, *Durpan* were both from the *prabhus*. Besides his work for the *Durpan*, Harischandrajee spent more than thirty years in the important position of the Head Accountant of the Grand Arsenal. He is said to have been a perfect master of English and Sanskrit besides of the 'dialects common to this part of India'. See Obituary in The Bombay Observer and Deccan Weekly Reporter, December 10 1853 quoted in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 2, pp.384-38. Janardhan Vasudevji (1804 -1894) was the Chief Translator in the Persian Department before going on to become the first native to be appointed a judge to the Bombay High Court in 1864. See Dadoba Pandurang, *Atmacharita* , p.50.

Balaji Sundarji was another Prabhoo who was a good student, but left the school to join the Assistant Commissioner's office as 'Head Prabhoo' in 1831, and who later complied and published the Krishna-Arjun dialogue as the *Gitabhavchandrika* from Ganpat Krishnaji's Press. See Potdar, *Marathi Gadyyacha Ingrezi Avataar*, pp.12-13.

went onto work as editors of the Gujrati newspaper, *Mumbaino Samaachar.* As one of the earliest groups to be associated with British rule, it was not surprising that the initiative for the first social organisation with a reformist agenda came from a *pathare prabhu*[69].

This brings me to the all-important considerations about the financial patronage and support available for early native print initiatives in Marathi, and here it is interesting to compare the story of Marathi print with the case of Gujrati. We have already noted that Gujrati was the first vernacular to appear in print in Bombay. Also, Gujrati had its first native-owned press and its earliest newspaper before Marathi. As is well known, the Parsis of the West Coast had prospered through their extensive commercial and financial ties with the British and had emerged as major insurance agents, financiers and ship-builders through their involvement with the colonial trade. In stark contrast, with the decline of many 'Maharastrian' banker and trader families on account of the defeat of the Peshwa, the same could hardly be said for the Marathi community in Bombay. There seem to have been only two important Marathi *seths*, Jagannath Shankarseth, a *sonar*,[70] and Dadaji Dhackjee, a *prabhu*[71], with major, direct dealings and influence with the British . Significantly, both of them were among the listed patrons of the Education Society, and members of its Managing Committee as well.

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[69] Ramchandra Balakrishna Jaykar (1820-1866) formed the Paramhansa Mandali, the first association formed with the intention of opposing *jati* distinctions or idol worship. The Sabha came into existence sometime after 1846 and it had the support of other major *brahmin* and sub-*brahmin* intellectuals like Bhau Mahajan and Dadoba Pandurang. Its cabalistic existence was attributed to pressure from *sanatanis,* on the one hand, and from missionary propaganda, on the other. Its members were mainly students of the Elphinstone Institute, but by the 1850s, the Sabha also had active branches outside Bombay. The Sabha did not survive after it was the exposed through a vicious lampoon in the local press in the late 1850s.

Ramachandra Balkrishna's career, saw him moving, not atypically, from serving in the Education Department to a more lucrative position in the Customs Department. He was also the Manager of the Elphinstone Financial Association for some years before his death in 1866. As a reformer, Ramchandra Balkrishna enjoyed the respect of Phule, whose povada on *Raja Shivaji*, published in 1869 was dedicated to him. For more information see A. P. Priyolkar, *Paramhansa Sabha va Tiche Adhyaksha Ramchandra Balkrishna* Bombay, 1966 and J. V. Naik, 'Early Anti-caste Movement in western India: The Paramhansa Sabha', Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay, Vols. 49, 50 and 51, 1974-76 (New Series), pp.136-61.

[70] Babulshet Ganbaseth of Ghodbandar, the ancestor of Jagannath Shankarseth of the *sonar* caste, was one among the many traders who had moved to Bombay in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, attracted to the island by the trading opportunities under the Company's Government, see Edwardes, Rise of Bombay : A Retrospect , Bombay, 1902, p.163.

As a financier and trader, Shankarseth, was the most powerful 'Marathi' *seth* of his time, enjoying great influence with the British. He had used his access to the Bombay Government to secure a favourable decision for the *sonars* in their caste dispute with the Pune *brahmins* in 1824. He petitioned against Erskine Perry's decisions in 1848 that aimed to give a more Anglicist direction to education policy. He was a supporter of the 'progressive' party in favour of the Christian convert, Shripat Sheshadri's re-admission into *hindu samaj*. He was a leading member of the first important political organisation in western India, the Bombay Association, established in 1851. Jagannath Shankarseth used his contacts with various important European retired officials and entrepreneurs in England to organise publicity for the activity and demands of Bombay Associations in the British Parliament and press. But despite his high-profile standing, there is no evidence to suggest that Jagannath Shankarseth ever thought of investing in the vernacular press.

[71] Dadaji Dhackjee might have been a descendant of Dhackjee, a *prabhu* from Bassein who was part of the attempt to proscribe the practice of widow-remarriage among *prabhus,* as a mark of their 'advanced' social position. The wealthy Dhackjee was one of the prosperous *prabhu* traders who moved to Bombay around the mid eighteenth century. See Edwardes, Rise of Bombay:A Retrospect, p.163. Dadaji Dhackjee was also an important patron of the Bombay Native Education Society who combined his influence with British administration with an orthodox social outlook. See D.P. Pandurang, *Atmacharitra*, p.45-47. For Dadajee Dhackjee's role as the leader of the 'orthodox' party that organised the campaign to excommunicate Balshastri and his associates on account of their stance in the Shripat Sheshadri conversion case, see Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 2, p.575.

Shankarseth took an active interest in the affairs of the Native Education Society, donating money for the opening of the first Marathi schools for girls, besides also protesting against the government moves in 1847-48 to shift the emphasis in favour of education through English rather than through the vernacular[72]. But, crucially, neither of them did anything to promote vernacular print. Evidence suggests that Balshastri Jambhekar, the editor of *Durpan*, knew Jagannath Shankarseth well, and even had the latter's support during the campaign against him for his role in the Shripat Sheshadri conversion case[73]. On the other hand, Dadaji Dhackjee too was keenly aware of the importance of visibility in the emerging public domain and had, in fact, played an important part in organising the conservative campaign[74] against Jambhekar's plea that Shripat, an under-age convert to Christianity, be allowed to re-convert to his *brahmin jati* after due *prayaschita.* And yet, significantly, neither as *seths* nor in their capacity as prominent public personalities, did either of them seem to have been impressed with the commercial potential of a project for the publication or distribution of printed material in Marathi or any other languages in the area. For despite being aware of the *Durpan's* serious financial difficulties, as he surely must have been, Jagannath Shankarseth did hardly anything to save the paper from closing down[75].

As against this, the substantial Parsi trading community in Bombay was more receptive to the idea of the publication and circulation of information about the various aspects of the colonial trade and its prospects. With a flourishing trading community, and with much of that wealth generated through close links with the colonial trade, the Parsis seemed have been more pre-disposed to seeing the advantages and commercial possibilities of an independent press initiative. Undoubtedly, the Parsi community was better-favoured with the financial means and the entrepreneurial skills for this as well. Thus Fardunji Marzban[76] from Surat, who was

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[72]'Minute by Jagannath Shankarseth, dated 1 May 1847 concurred in by Framji Cowasji and Mohammed Ibrahim Mukba' in Report of the Board of Education for the year 1847-48, Bombay, American Mission Press, 1850, pp.60-63.

[73] Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 2, p.555. See also fn. 97.

[74] see fn. 71.

[75] Keshav Bhavalkar recalls in his autobiographical account that the paper closed down on account of financial difficulties arising out of a libel case. The announcement in the last issue of the *Durpan* dated June 26 1840, however, only mentioned its plans to amalgamate with another native paper the United Service Gazette. See Bhavalkar in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 3,p.17 and 'The Last Farewell' in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 2, p.142.

[76] This native pioneer of print in western India was born in a priestly family in 1787. He came to Bombay when he was about eighteen, much against the wishes of his family. A propitious order for some supplies to the colonial army fetched Fardunji some profits that he decided to invest the profit in preparing the steel matrices to cast types for Gujrati. After its initial success, Fardunji's press came out with many tracts, school books and even a brochure for the government on the advantages of vaccination. Fardunji also taught himself English so as to better understand the new journalistic medium. Soon he went onto become the founder-editor of the first native weekly in western India, *Mumbaino Samachar*.

Fardunji developed active connections with the China trade, even owning a ship, *Hindustan*. He apparently trained many of the subsequent, early native journalist-editors and printers, including Ganpat Krishnaji, the first prominent native publisher-printer for Marathi. Fardunji counted among his intimate acquaintances many important missionaries in Bombay, including Dr Taylor and John Wilson. He saw himself as a religious reformer, but soon found himself in the midst of controversy as he issued the Parsi scriptures in printed form through the Gujrati types. This led to fierce discussion in the Parsi press, the earliest instance in western India of a religious controversy disseminated through

traditionally trained in Persian, Sanskrit, Hindustani and Gujrati, and in the Parsi scriptures, but evidently combined that with a keen entrepreneurial mind, became the first Gujrati publisher and the first native editor of a newspaper in western India. He apparently began life in Bombay as caretaker of a Mullah Feroz's *kitabkhana*, then went on to acquire his own book-binding business. By 1812, he had invested in producing a set of Gujrati fonts, with much of the labour for shaping and polishing these types apparently coming from the women of his household. The first books thus printed are said to have 'sold in numbers.' In 1814 he printed the first Hindu *panchang* in Gujrati, sold at two rupees a copy, and which came out six years before the first Bengali calendar was printed in Calcutta. In 1815 he brought out a Gujrati translation of the *Dabestan*, a history of the sacred literature of the Parsis, priced at fifteen rupees a copy. 1818, the year of the Peshwa defeat in the Deccan saw him bring out the *Khordeh Avesta*, the Parsi scriptures in Gujrati, printed along with an exegesis. Needless to say, this was the first book of its kind in both Gujrati and in western India, his attempts to publish vernacular versions of the sacred texts, earned him many opponents, but publicity and controversy no doubt fed off each other. He bought his own press and issued the prospectus of the *Mumbaino Samachar* - which he went on to edit - on 10 June 1822. The paper started as a weekly priced at Rs 2 per month. Within a few days of the issue of the prospectus, it had apparently attracted a 'hundred and fifty subscribers comprising of 67 Parsis, 14 Europeans, 8 Hindus and 6 Mohammeddans'[77]. Fardunji edited the *Samachar* until 1832, when, forced by his enemies to leave Bombay, he handed over charge of the paper along with detailed policy guide-lines[78]. It is thus interesting to note that the beginning of print entrepreneurship in Gujrati did not have to wait for an educated readership to emerge from the colonial schools, as was the case for Marathi.

The following parts of this chapter will show how the possibility of independent press initiatives in Marathi remained subordinated to the production of instructional material and school books, and it was not until Bhau Mahajan's initiatives in the 1840s[79] that we have evidence of a small, but autonomous reading public in Marathi. Whereas the first initiatives to produce printed Marathi remained confined to the official efforts of the Education Society, the Gujrati press got off the ground before the emergence of the first generation of Gujrati intellectuals from the

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the new public medium. It became difficult for Fardunji Marzban to continue living in Bombay, who was ultimately forced to settle in Goa. This biographical account of Fardunji's life is taken from Marzban Mancherji Marzban, Leaves from the Life of Khan Bahadur Muncherji Cowasji Murzban with an Introduction Containing the Life Sketch of Fardunji Marzban, Bombay, F.B. Marzban Printing Press, 1915.

[77]See Leaves from the Life of Khan Bahadur Muncherji Cowasji Murzban with an Introduction Containing the Life Sketch of Fardunji Marzban, Bombay, 1915.

[78]As editor, Fardunji was greatly exercised by political and ethical matters. In the first issue, he deliberated over the merits of British rule in India, and the advantages of the press as a public medium of communication that linked the sovereign, parliament and subjects. The guide-lines that he published for his successor in the issue of 13 August 1832 pertained to matters of appropriate tone and language and on policy with regard to religious controversies and the publication of correspondence. See Leaves from the life of Khan Bahadur Muncherji Cowasji Murzban with an introduction containing the life sketch of Fardunji Marzban.

[79]for details of Bhau Mahajan's life and career, see fn.116 below.

colonial schools. There had been some mention of the idea of a newspaper in Marathi as a possible channel of communication between the British and the Maratha notables and *sardars* who had been dislodged from power in the Deccan. But the suggestion was apparently given up as risky, as it was thought it might be used to publicise the great discontentment prevailing amongst the disbanded Maratha soldiery[80]. The *Bombay Durpan* is taken to be the first Marathi newspaper, although there are some references to earlier attempts around 1828 to start a weekly Marathi paper from Bombay[81]. Interestingly, the money to start the *Durpan* might, in fact, have come from Parsi *seths*[82]. In this context I shall like to now move on to discussing the nature of the possibilities for creating a 'popular', laicised audience for Marathi print, as a means of then advancing questions of the links between the emerging cultural and political spheres within colonial modernity.

Other patterns of the division of labour within the professions related to print can also be traced, most of them to do with the existing brahmanical pre-conceptions about the value and nature of intellectual labour. Despite the deep impression that print evidently made on the minds of early colonial intellectuals, many high-caste students could not overcome their repugnance at the idea of 'lowly' physical labour. We learn from the personal memoirs of one of the students at the time, that even after being strongly rebuked by their teacher, Balshastri Jambhekar, many *brahmin* students still refused to work the press on the school premises[83]. It was not surprising to find that the staff employed on the first lithographic machines sent out from England in 1824 came from very different caste-backgrounds from those who studied at the Society's schools and who were soon to become proponents of reform.[84] Similarly, the two men who were to become well-known in the story of Marathi print as having introduced the most important technical innovators did not come from upper-caste backgrounds. Both Ganpat Krishnaji[85] and later Javaji Dadaji[86], who worked hard to improve the quality and design

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[80] R.D. Choksey, Mountstuart Elphinstone :The Indian Years 1796-1827, Bombay, 1970, p.313.

[81] The only available references, to this paper that was apparently called the *Mumbai Vartman* are in advertisements in the Bombay Gazette of 9th July 1828 and the Bombay Courier of 5th July 1828 to announce the forthcoming venture. See R.K.Lele, *Marathi Vruttpatrancha Itihaas*, p.55.

[82] Dadoba Pandurang mentions that some wealthy natives decided to invest in an English-Marathi newspaper and appointed Balshastri as the editor. See D.P. Pandurang, *Atmacharitra*, 194, p.187. The first issues were printed by a Cowasji at the Messenger Press, before being entrusted to Shreekrishna Jagannathjee at the Courier Press. See Lele, *Marathi Vruttpatrancha Itihaas*,1964,p.59.

[83] As teacher of the Normal School, Balshastri wished to have his students to work at the lithograph press to help compile copies of class exercises for use by other students. Bhavalkar who studied at the Normal School in Bombay around 1840 recollects that the otherwise patient Balshastri Jambhekar lost his temper when the upper-caste students adamantly refused to 'demean' themselves by operating the school press. see Bhavalkar,' Life and character of Prof. Balshastri Jambhekar' in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, 1950, Vol.3, Appendix 3, p.7.

[84] The names of pressmen employed under the supervision of Mr. Macdowall, the lithographist are given as Maddoo Bappoo, Abia Nammajee, Rama Ragu, Shaik Ally, all clearly being non-brahmanical names. The salaries of the European superintendent was fixed at Rs 350 p.m., the (native) head pressmen was to get Rs. 12 p.m. for working on a large press and Rs 8 for the small press. The pressman for both were to get Rs.6p.m. The Bombay Secretariat Records, G.D. Vol. 14/70 of 1824, pp. 57-59, quoted in A. P. Priyolkar, The Printing Press in India, 1958, pp.92-93.

[85] There is not much definite biographical information about Ganpat Krishnaji available. We know he was a *koli bhandaris*, but and it is estimated that he was born in about 1800. He constructed a wooden press on his own initiative from observing the machines at the American Mission press, where he must have been an apprentice. He

of print production in Bombay and ended their careers as successful printer-publishers, did not see themselves as part of the self-professedly reformist elite. There was thus a definite tendency for the different kinds of skills demanded by the new communicative arrangements to be distributed according to social background, with the result that the intellectual/literary, and technical/entrepreneurial capabilities, required for the making of vernacular print culture were often drawn from different social quarters. This, as I hope to show, led to an unfortunate polarisation between ideas of the 'popular' and the 'critical' within native efforts to widen the audience for Marathi print.

The Possibilities of a 'Popular' Audience for Marathi Print :

Given the nature of pre-colonial norms of intellectual exchange and modes of social contestation, it was unlikely that upper-caste groups would rapidly turn into agents of a generally-diffused, laicised knowledge. As against this, lower-caste individuals might have been expected to be less distrustful of non-exclusive principles of social distribution and perhaps more predisposed to taking up initiatives that would allow for the creation of an egalitarian, literate culture. But as I shall try to show there were structural constraints upon the possibility for men like Ganpat Krishnaji and Javaji Dadaji, successful print-entrepreneurs in their own right, to become initiators of alternate, non-official attempts to widen the base of the vernacular reading public. The main one, of course, was that as printer-publishers, they remained dependent on *brahmins* and other upper-caste groups to compose the texts that could be taken up for publication. With the monopoly of colonial policy to regulate literate and learned practices within the native world, any efforts to break the clearly elitist bias of the official education initiatives would be caught up in something of a vicious circle. Paradoxically, the project of colonial literacy theoretically legitimated itself on principles of general, open access; but was ultimately interested in reproducing a highly controlled and stratified system of admission to social opportunities. In trying to create a dent in the severely elitist provisions of colonial education, vernacular publishers faced with a difficult task for almost the entire period

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devised his own methods of preparing ink and also the carved types out of stone. Soon he was able to get an iron press constructed locally and printed a Hindu almanac. Determinedly, he set up his own foundry and prepared a complete set of Marathi fonts around 1846- the first Marathi types to be indigenously manufactured. Ganpat Krishnaji died in 1860 , though his press seems to have been active till 1900. See Govind Narayan Madgaonkar, *Mumbaiche Varnan*, first pub. 1863, 3rd ed. Varda Books, Pune, 1992, pp.225-226.

[86]Little is known of Javaji Dadaji's early life. It is thought that we was born around 1830. His family lived in the Umerkhadi area in Bombay, where the Scottish missionaries were active. Javaji's father was an ordinary *sipahi* and their caste is identified as Maratha. Javaji learnt his trade from Thomas Graham, the well- known printer at the American Mission Press but took his inspiration from Ganpat Krishnaji. He worked in a number of presses in the city before setting up the Nirnayasagar Press in 1864 with a loan from a local *marwadi*. His decision to diversify into the manufacture and selling of Marathi types gave him a virtual monopoly in the trade.The types cut at Javaji's factory were known for their fine quality which helped reduce the quantity of paper required. Barely educated but wealthy, we are told, Javaji did much to assist his fellow caste-men. Upon his death in 1892, all the major papers of the day, from the *Kesari*, *Subodh Patrika* and the *Dinbandhu* carried obituaries acknowledging his contribution. Significantly, the *Kesari* report of 1 April 1892 mentioned that a gathering of printers and publishers from various castes like *lokhande*, *potdar*, sohni, *gurjar*, *parab*, *oak* had decided to commemorate Javaji's work by establishing a library named after him. This summary is taken from V.K. Dev, *Javaji Daadaji Yanche Charitra*, Bombay, 1897.

of the nineteenth century, and this is well borne out by the career of the first native commercial printer-publisher in Marathi, Ganpat Krishnaji.

Ganpat Krishnaji is important for the story of Marathi print since his were the earliest attempts to test the market potential for Marathi texts outside of the official publications intended primarily for pedagogic use. Ganpat Krishnaji came from a non-elite caste background but became acquainted with print as he worked as a technical apprentice in the American Mission Press. But we may conjecture that he, like Javaji Dadaji later, had little formal schooling and whatever familiarity he may have had with English and modern ideas of literacy had been imbibed through his association with the missionaries. His first job with the stone types he had cut and the printed on the iron press he had managed to construct was an almanac that came out around 1835[87]. After that, he was assisted with printing jobs, especially by Dr. John Wilson of the Scottish Mission. As the only independent Marathi publisher until Bhau Mahajan established his press in about 1843, Ganpat Krishnaji's establishment was the printing outlet for any Marathi material that fell beyond the scope or capacity of the presses owned by the Education Society or the American Mission. Thus when the Education Society refused to sponsor the publication of Dadoba Pandurang's *Marathi Bhasheche Vyakaran*, he had it published from Ganpat Krishnaji's press in 1836[88]. The first Marathi periodical brought out by Balshastri *Digdarshan*, from 1840 onwards first began to be issued from Ganpat Krishnaji's press, as did the early numbers of Bhau Mahajan's important weekly paper, *Prabhakar*, established in October 1841[89].

But as an independent entrepreneur, Ganpat Krishnaji's publishing efforts could not remain confined to the literary and journalistic endeavours of the reformed, English-educated elite. As a devout, 'unreformed' hindu, he also aspired to publish materials relating to his religion. Besides his admirable technical ingenuity, Ganpat Krishnaji's major contribution lay in his pioneering efforts to publish compositions that would be familiar to a Marathi-knowing, unschooled, 'neo-hindu' audience[90]. His first choice, in this respect, was to bring out in 1839,

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[87] Madgaonkar, Govind Narayan, *Mumbaiche Varnan*, first pub.1863, 3rd ed. Varda Books, Pune, 1992, p.225.

[88] Dadoba's applications to the Education Society soliciting patronage for his Marathi Grammar were turned down and eventually, he had it printed at his own expense from Ganpat Krishnaji's press in December 1936, see Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 2, Poona , 1950, p.413.

[89] The issue dated 21 November 1841 carried a notice stating that anyone wishing to send in contributions ought to send these to the *Prabhakar* at the Ganpat Krishnaji press. But within a few months of commencing publication, the *Prabhakar* had its own press. See Lele, *Marathi Vruttpatrancha Itihaas*, pp.72-75.

[90] The 1850s saw the launching of a series of native Marathi publications that sought to 'defend' hindu beliefs, often by showing the inconsistencies within Christian theology and by quoting arguments from radical rationalist thinkers like Paine and Voltaire. Morobhat Dandekar's *Updeshchandrika* , started in 1844 in the aftermath of the Sheshadri affair, had been one such short-lived venture of the 1840s that had had the support of Jambhekar and Bhau Mahajan. The 'liberal' weekly from Pune, *Dnyanprakash* also occasionally advised potential converts to read western authors like Newman and Carlyle to get a true perspective on the Christian religion. The *Vartmandeepika* which came out from 1853 onwards, and was known for its balanced reporting, was published from the Krishnaji press. Thus there were discernible continuities between 'liberal' and 'indigenist' arguments, with the dividing line not always distinguishable.

a printed version of the well-known dialogue between Arjun and Krishna that was published with a simplified prose exegesis entitled *Bhavachandrika-Shrikrishnaarjun Samwaad*[91]. This was followed by the publication of the second Marathi periodical, *Dnyanchandrodaya* from the Krishnaji Press[92]. This periodical differed from the reformist publications like the *Digdarshan* and the *Prabhakar*. Unlike the latter, the *Dnayanchandrodaya* aimed at bringing out printed versions of traditional, pre-colonial Marathi poetic texts. Ganpat Krishnaji's interest in the venture exceeded that of merely printing it; evidence suggests that he also played a part in managing its circulation and subscriptions[93]. Priced at eight annas per issue, the journal published the *Krishnalilamrut* as well as a collated version of the Gita that contained both Sanskrit and Prakrit *shlokas* along with *abhangs* from the *Dnyaneshwari* and compositions from Moropant, Tulsidas, Mukteshwar for the corresponding original verses. Although the journal did not last long, the idea of making available the traditional textual traditions through print acquired a following, although initially perhaps, mostly with the new intellectuals linked with the colonial establishment[94]. In publishing vernacular texts outside the strict realm of the colonial curriculum, Ganpat Krishnaji was trying to explore the commercial possibilities of the new communicative medium. His choice of texts tried to broaden the range of vernacular texts available for dissemination though print, even as it tried to draw upon the pre-colonial cultural resources, which could potentially widen the audience for vernacular print by attracting readers outside the colonial schools. That Krishnaji's efforts signified important directions for the development of Marathi print was apparent when the official Vernacular Department at Poona College soon followed suit by publishing an anthology of poetic works from the pre-colonial period, *Navneet* prepared by Parshuram Tatya Godbole in 1854[95]. This anthology underwent

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But increasingly through the 1850s, as the discursive gap between the vernacular and English spheres widened, 'popular' 'defenders' of the Hindu faith tended to be men like Visbhnubuwa Brahmachari, the itinerant preacher, who had little knowledge of English, but was able to draw huge crowds through his pugnacious rhetorical style. Vishnubuwa's discourses were reported in the press too, often criticised by 'reformist' papers like Bhau Mahajan's *Prabhakar*, but praised in publications like the *Saddharmadeepika* , started in Bombay in 1854, and probably printed at the Krishnaji Press, with the explicit aim of combating missionary discourse. See Lele, *Marathi Vruttpatrancha itihaas*, p.119-125. For more information on Morobhat Dandekar's *Updeshchandika* see Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 3, Poona , 1950, pp.92-95.

[91] It was published by Balaji Sundarji *Parbhu* with the assistance of one Ramchandrashastri Mundle, see D.V.Potdar, *Marathi gadyacha Ingreji Avataar*, p.12.

[92] Dadoba Pandurang mentions Pavaskar as the much-loved, nimble-minded teacher at the Education Society's school in Bombay, whose efforts made the Marathi students of the government school much better-trained in mathematics than their counterparts in the English school. Pavaskar's name also figures as the publisher printer for the *Prabhakar* between 1842-1855. See Dadoba Pandurang, *Atmacharitra*, pp.37-38.

[93] Information printed with the title in the inaugural issue, quoted in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 3, Poona, 1950, p. 43.

[94] Letter dated 13 August 1841 from the *Jyotishguru* Elect of Pune College, Narasimha Joshi to Parshurampant Godbole in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 2, Pune, 1950, p.460-461. Writing from Bombay where he was being trained prior to taking up his position at the Pune College, Narasimha Joshi alludes to the recently started *Dnyanchandrodaya* which had been publishing the Sanskrit *shlokas* of the *Gita* along with the Vaman's *prakrit shlokas* Moropant's *aryas*, Tulsidas's *dohas*, Mukteshwar's *ovis* and Dnyaneshwar's *abhangs*.

[95] D.V.Potdar, *Marathi Gadyache Ingreji Avataar*, p.54.

changes in the subsequent editions and represented the beginning of efforts to establish a canon of pre-colonial poetic traditions in to he 'literary past ' of modern Marathi.

However, Ganpat Krishnaji's pioneering efforts to publish sacred and 'popular', pre-colonial poetic texts exemplified many trends that were to characterise the emerging sphere of vernacular production. As Ranade's Report on Vernacular literature, first compiled in 1864, was to note, the efforts to develop the vernacular sphere came mainly from men who had not had the benefits of a full English-education and from school drop-outs[96]. The transfer of pre-colonial textual idioms into forms associated with modern modes of publicity and standards of general circulation among lay audiences involved complex shifts and required the negotiation of seemingly irreconcilable ideological positions. It was a tragic paradox of colonial modernity that those who played a crucial shaping role in defining these processes were often not among the highly-trained or best-read minds of their period. This was because although the standardisation of the vernaculars had been crucial to the elaboration of colonial ideology, the official interest in the emerging vernacular sphere was subject to obvious limits. Given the secondary status of the vernacular sphere within the emerging cultural hierarchy under colonial rule, it was unlikely that the administration would be particularly interested in ensuring that these crucial discursive redefinitions occurred through the collective deliberation that such processes merited. Instead these processes were likely to come about more or less serendipitously at the margins of the emerging public sphere. Early colonial intellectuals like Balshastri Jambhekar and Bhau Mahajan were keenly aware of importance of the need to broaden the base of vernacular literate public. But although their work showed their deepest regard for their mother tongue and they were also resentful of official attempts to lay down the norms for Marathi style; however as critical rationalists, it was unlikely that their efforts to broaden the field of vernacular discourse would include initiatives to incorporate precolonial vernacular textual traditions. Ironically, it was also improbable that the task of forging links between pre-modern vernacular textual traditions and the new discursive possibilities in the vernacular would be taken up by a subaltern intellectual like Phule. For, in wishing to create a modern counter-discourse of lower-caste interests, Phule's writings sought to emphasise the *complete* alienation of non-brahmin castes from the precolonial textual corpus. Thus within the structure of colonial modernity, efforts to enlarge the range of vernacular discourse by drawing upon elements from the pre-colonial past, as well the efforts to address a wider audience beyond the small circle of reformed opinion were, inevitably, at odds with the aspirations to establish a rationalist, critical discourse, based on principles of equal exchange.

Thus, with the possibilities for publicity open to both reformist and 'unreformed' segments, it was inevitable that the vision of progressive, 'high', colonial intellectuals like Balshastri and

[96]M.G. Ranade, 'A Note on the Growth of Marathi Literature, Royal Asiatic Society Bulletin, 20,1902, pp.78-105.

Bhau Mahajan would diverge from the directions taken by a publisher-printer from a non-elite, unschooled background like Ganapat Krishnaji to reach a 'popular' audience. This divergence was most clearly evident in the range of responses evoked within the early colonial public sphere by the perceived threat of missionary discourse. Early vernacular, reformist intellectuals like Balshastri and Bhau Mahajan were aware of the need to counter the missionary critique, but they also believed that this had to be balanced with the important objective of creating a rational, self-reflexive discourse through the vernacular. Their position is best exemplified by their stand in the controversy over the re-conversion of the minor convert, Shripat Sheshadri[97]. Both Balshastri and Bhau Mahajan clearly realised that alongside these debates resulting from the missionary critique of native cultural and religious practice, the new arenas for public contestation like the press and colonial courts had also created a space for the redefintion of older rivalries between native communities like *brahmins, sonars*[98] and the *prabhus*. The keenness with which *prabhus* responded to the possibilities for mobility through colonial literacy and publicity was also borne out by their participation in the *sabhas*[99] held to discuss the value of traditional disciplines *like vedanta, nyaya, vyakaran and mimansa* which were attended by traditionally trained *shastris* of the Pune Sanskrit College as well as those exposed to western knowledge. The public coverage that such gatherings received through newspaper reports only served to highlight the complex, often irreconcilable tensions between pre-modern social structures and cultural practices and modern, western political values underlying the colonial public sphere. Similar tensions, though on a much large scale, were evoked by the publicity that accompanied the Shripat Sheshadri case and which polarised opinion within the hindu community. The impact was further accentuated by the numerical predominance of Hindus within native society, which gave them a public presence quite unlike their previous status within pre-colonial political structures.

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[97]Missionary activity was one of principal challenges that the early colonial intelligentsia had to contend with. One of the first major early controversies that exposed the vulnerability of the colonial intelligentsia was the Shripat Sheshadri conversion episode of 1843-44. Shripat's conversion had been 'revoked' by the colonial court through an order passed on November 8 1843 ruling that the consent of a minor would not be deemed acceptable. The point of contention was whether or not Shripat ought to be re-admitted back to his high-caste status. Balshastri passionately argued that re-admitting Shripat's after due *prayaschita* would be the optimal strategy if hindu *samaj* was to accommodate the threat posed by missionary critique without internal splits. Clearly, Balshastri realised the threat to brahmanical hegemony from missionary critique and colonial law. In a move that significantly provided a foretaste of the more pronounced accommodation of 'orthodox' opinion by the colonial intelligentsia in the latter half of the nineteenth century, he strove very hard to canvass for support among the traditional network of *shastris* and other prominent persons in hindu theological hierarchy from places as far as Vashi. The attempt to preserve brahmanical claims to moral and intellectual leadership were implicit in the early intelligentsia's vision of a sphere of rational exchange between 'all' points of view, even as they sought to reform native society under the colonial influence. For details of the Sheshadri controversy, see Murray Mitchell, A Memoir to the Reverend Robert Nesbit, London, 1858, pp.215-240. For details of Balshastri's efforts to mobilise support for his case in Poona, Benares and in the native press and the campaign against the 'progressive' *brahmins*, see Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol.3, Poona, 1950.

[98] For an interesting discussion of how early colonial courts tried to arbitrate between conflicting claims over rank and ritual privilege between rival *jati* groups in the Bombay Province see Narendra Wagle, 'A dispute between the *pancal devajana sonars* and the *brahmins* of Pune regarding social rank and ritual privileges : a case-study of the British administration of *jati* laws in Maharashtra, 1822-25', in Images of Maharastra : a Regional Profile of India, ed. N.K. Wagle, Curzon Press, London, 1980.

[99] The *Durpan of* 20 January 1832 alludes to one such *sabha* held at Raghunathjee's house earlier that month. See *Durpan* files, Vol. 1 held in the Bombay State Government Archives.

The controversy in the Shripat Sheshadri conversion case centred around the status of Shripat, a *brahmin* boy, whose conversion to Christianity at the Scottish mission in Bombay had been dismissed as invalid by the Bombay High Court on account of his having been below the age of legal consent. Progressive, English-educated Marathi intellectuals like Balshastri and Bhau Mahajan were of the opinion that if hindu *samaj* was to effectively contend with the threat posed by missionary propaganda and critique, it ought to be willing to re-admit the boy to *brahmin* status, after due *prayaschita*. Balshastri spent much time trying to organise public support for his arguments, from the *shastris* at the Pune College as well as from *pandits* from far off places like Nasik, Kolhapur and even Benares[100]. Much of this correspondence was publicised and commented upon in the Marathi native papers of the time, though always not as favourably as in the *Prabhakar*, managed by Bhau Mahajan. Opinion was polarised between the reformed *brahmin*s like Balshastri and Bhau Mahajan and their associates in the Pune college on the one hand, and the anti-reformist lobby consisting of 'lower' *brahmin* orders like the *bhats*, *puraniks*, and the sub-*brahmin* castes like the *prabhus* and the *shenvis* on the other[101]. Dadaji Dhackjee, the *prabhu seth*, played a prominent role in organising the anti-reformist campaign to excommunicate Balshastri and Bhau Mahajan for their unorthodox arguments. In the subsequent years, Dadaji's Dhackjee's support for revivalist discourse became even more explicit when he played host to Vishnubuwa Brahmachari, the 'unreformed', itinerant *brahmin* preacher who held a public contest with missionaries in front of huge crowds on Chowpatty beach in Bombay during 1857-8[102]. Faced with the challenge from the 'orthodox' quarter, in a move that anticipated similar steps taken by many prominent colonial intellectuals later, Balshastri, eventually succumbed to public pressure and undertook *prayaschita*[103] .

If intellectuals like Bhau Mahajan and Balshastri argued for the need to develop a vernacular discourse based on rational principles of social and intellectual exchange, the elitist dimensions of colonial literacy placed obvious constraints that prevented such perspectives from becoming the 'popular' commonsense within native society. Further, this 'high' intellectual position was also handicapped in its attempts to create links with the 'unreformed' majority by its own lack of sympathy towards pre-colonial textual forms. As against this, the 'less critical',

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[100] Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Poona , 1950, pp. 486-579.

[101]The discussion in the native press noted a 'schism' among the *brahmin*s of Bombay and deep divisions between the '*brahmin* party' (*brahman tat)* and the '*purbhoo* party' (*prabhu tat*), see reports from *Prabhakar* and *Dnyansindhu* quoted in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 2, pp.549-59 and pp.556-7.

[102]Dhackjee had financed the building of an ostentatious, richly decorated temple at Thakurdwar, which became the venue for many revivalist meetings intended to 'defend' the Hindu faith. Vishnubuwa Brahmachari, the itinerant, revivalist speaker who held a series of well-attended public debates with the missionaries on the sea-shore in Bombay in 1856-57, was in fact hosted at Dhackjee's *wada* during his stay in Bombay. See 'Preface' to George Bowen, Discussions by the Seaside, Bombay Tract and Book Society, 1857 .He is also said to have held similar lectures at the houses of other prominent *prabhu* 'gentlemen'.

[103]Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 2, Poona , 1950, pp.572-577.

'indigenist' arguments against the missionary and colonial critique of native society had more in common with 'popular' opinion of the larger 'unschooled public'. Given his keenness to print traditional 'popular' hindu religious texts, it is not hard to imagine that a vernacular publisher like Ganpat Krishnaji would be keen to promote the dissemination of anti-missionary discourse. And here once again, the story of Marathi publishing reveals signs of the emerging fault-lines between 'high' and 'low' varieties of anti-missionary discourse. It has been noted above that until Bhau Mahajan established his press in 1842, the *Digdarshan* and the *Prabhakar* had been published from Ganpat Krishnaji Press. However, with the establishment of Bhau Mahajan's press, the latter seems to have emerged as the choice for publications with pro-reform sympathies[104]. Not only did the *Digdarshan* and the *Prabhakar* switch to the Prabhakar press, but another journal, Morobhat Dandekar's[105] *Updesh-chandrika*,[106] which was mainly intended to counter missionary propaganda, also commenced publication from there in 1844. On the other hand, the Ganpat Krishnaji Press gradually emerged as the preferred site for the publication of an increasingly revivalist discourse. The *Prabhakar* had opposed missionary attacks on native religious and cultural practices, but had been equally forthright in its critique of 'indigenist' arguments that sought to defend the hindu faith against attacks by 'foreigners'. Consequently, a new cheap weekly, the *Vartmandeepika* [107], priced at Rs. 5 per annum as against the *Prabhakar* 's annual subscription of Rs. 12, was started from the Ganpat Krishnaji Press in 1853 with the intention of simultaneously taking on the opinions of the reformed,

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[104]Bhavalkar tells us that Jambhekar had written in the *Updeshchandrika*, see Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 3, p.16. Also, the *Durpan* of 13 April 1832 had reported the publication of Morobhat's response to Wilson's An Exposure of the Hindu Religion in favourable terms. Aware as he was of the importance of the printed word in the emerging political world, especially in the aftermath of the Sripat Sheshadri controversy, Jambhekar might have actually been instrumental in helping organise the publication of the *Updeshchandrika* from 1844 from the *Prabhakar* press as necessary to a 'progressive' front against missionary propaganda. For more information on Morobhat Dandekar's *Updeshchandika* see Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 3, 1950, pp.92-95. See also fn.97 above.

[105]Morobhat Dandekar was Jambhekar's senior by about 15-20 years. This self-styled defendant of Hindu religion was a *shakta* who came to Bombay from Nagpur. Apparently he knew no English and relied for his knowledge of Christian texts on missionary translations into Marathi and on explanations he received from his associates. See Baba Padmanji's reference to Morobhat Dandekar in his autobiographical account, *Arunodaya*, Bombay, 1888, p.125.

[106]The *Updesh-chandrika* , a monthly publication was priced at four annas per issue to render it generally accessible. The opening salutation of its Introduction addressed its readers as *'majhe deshche lok,* one of the earliest instances in Marathi of the direct identification of the audience as one's 'compatriots'. The terms used in the native press to refer to the audience had been hitherto been more tentative, varying between *'ettedeshiye lok'*,(the people living here), *'nativelok'* or *'ya deshant rahanare lok'* (the people living in this region). But the task of speaking in defence of one's collective identity through the press precipitated the need to define one's public and drew attention to the implicit overlap between the boundaries of the emerging modern 'patriotic' and the 'religious' community.

The introduction emphasised that missionary propaganda (*sanchar)* had been particularly effective on account of its use of the printed medium and that any attempted defence of the *hindudharma* would have to overcome the handicap of not having the facility of a regular publication. Morobhat Dandekar's introduction corresponds in many respects to Baba Padmanji's critique of Hinduism. Both identified the main 'weakness' of the *hindu* faith to be its lack of a commonly understood 'core' of relgious belifes amongs its followers. If missionary propaganda was to be countered, what was required was a clear articulation of the central features of the *hindudharma*. This was a evidently a task of ideological consolidation; Morobhat Dandekar's Introduction underlined the point that the journal would not publish letters from missionaries, and that the present venture had the support of many learned persons. See 'Introduction' to the *Updeshchandrika* reproduced in Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Vol. 3, Appendix 3, p.96.

[107]The annual subscription to the *Vartmandeepika* was fixed at Rs. 5, less than half of what *Prabhakar,* whom it intended to counter, charged at Rs 12 per annum.

English-educated elite as well as countering the missionary critique[108]. As a print-entrepreneur, Ganpat Krishnaji was guided by the commercial logic of the publishing trade and his Press continued to publish materials representing various ideological positions, including texts with reformist views. However, that would not negate the central point I seek to make here, that without the corresponding intellectual skills to imagine and sustain an alternative discourse with a popular appeal, vernacular publishers like Ganpat Krishnaji remained dependent upon the orthodox or reformist segments of the upper-caste discourse .

Clearly, the situation of the colonial intellectual elite was characterised by complex contradictions. On the one hand, their proximity and direct links with colonial power put them in a greatly privileged position and yet, as a subordinated, numerically marginal elite, they found their position to be simultaneously constrained in many respects. Further, the coming of colonial rule and its implicit political values also represented a shift from particularised forms of public discussion and social contestation to modes of public discourse and political legitimacy based on universalistic norms. The intelligentsia were meant to be agents of this transformation, but unfortunately, they could not escape being subject to the internal contradictions of the constitutive processes of colonial modernity. As the primary instrument of publicity and political communication between the colonial state and the native social world, the press became an obvious site for some of these contradictions to be played out, and one where the intelligentsia tried to negotiate its position of influence within the native social world. But to consider examples of the latter we would need to take up the story of the initiatives by the colonial intelligentsia to found a sphere of critical discussion though the vernacular newspaper press. The next section will therefore try to analyse the shifts in the pattern of the native initiatives in the Marathi newspaper press in Bombay and Pune, with a view of exploring what it shows us about the intelligentsia's responses to the vexed problem of negotiating a hegemonic position within the colonial world.

Re-inventing the Public Terrain : the Early Marathi Press and Establishing a Critical Vernacular Sphere:

I propose now to look closely at the story of the native initiatives to establish a sphere of public exchange in the Bombay-Pune region through the newspaper press. The press represents the most suitable site to analyse the structure of exchanges and meanings of publicity of power that print helped establish in the colonial context. Unlike in the West, in colonial India, vernacular press initiatives emerged simultaneously with the official attempts to institute bourgeois, liberal discourses into a programme of 'general' education. The native press significantly preceded attempts of the intelligentsia to engender a modern 'literary' discourse in

[108]It is not entirely clear who the editors of the *Vartmandeepika* were. From the conflicting references available, Keshavshastri Gadgil and Laxmanshastri Halbe emerge as the likely candidates.

the vernacular. These initiatives to sustain a native press have a stronger and prior claim to be considered as a key and sensitive domain through which to monitor the main shifts within the self-perception and the ideological orientations of the intelligentsia, as they 'progressed' on their path to advancing their claims as spokesmen of a hegemonic, nationalistic identity. It was through the press that the colonial-modern intelligentsia had to first face questions about the identity, size and location of their audience and their relation to what, in principle, was a potentially infinite, literate community, but which in actual terms was only a small, exclusive, internally-stratified, subordinated elite.

The negotiation of the language divide was crucial to the intelligentsia's position as political intermediaries, and therefore, would be an important marker of the maturity of their hegemonic aspirations. In this analysis of the native press initiatives in the Bombay-Pune region, my attempt will be to highlight the intelligentsia's attempts to handle the divisions implicit in the colonial bilingual relation in ways that would advance their own hegemonic position within colonial society. It has been argued generally that 1857 marked a crucial point in the relations between the colonial state and native society. The discussion in previous chapters has shown how this was true of colonial educational policy which saw crucial shifts around 1857, with major implications for the nature and the extent of the bilingual divide at the heart of colonial politics. The concluding section of this chapter will briefly analyse how the bilingual divide figured in the major press initiatives both prior to and after 1857.

The last chapter has already discussed the first native newspaper venture in Marathi, Bombay *Durpan* at some length and analysed some of the political implications of its bilingual structure. In choosing a symmetrically bilingual structure, the paper showed its concern that the benefits of the new discourses ought not to remain restricted to only those who knew English, and therefore undertook to publish the equivalent Marathi version for those who had no English. But in trying to adopt such a structure, Balshastri was also trying mitigate the political differences between English and Marathi as also playing down the lack of homology between the interests, size and identity of the reading communities in English and the vernacular. Realising that English represented the language of access to the discourses of modern rationality in addition to being the language of government, Balshastri knew that the use of English was indispensable to any attempt to negotiate colonial power. But equally, a native paper had to be a bridge between the government and its native subjects, and hence, the vernacular could not be ignored either. Although meant as a channel of 'native improvement', the inclusion of English columns in the paper were also a way of widening its readership to include perhaps a small number of subscribers from official circles. But evidently, the relation between English and Marathi and the symmetrical relation that Balshastri had sought to posit was not sustainable and the paper could not always keep up its bilingual design, especially in its latter years before folding up eventually in 1842.

However, the *Durpan* was noteworthy not only for the structure of the bilingual relation it proposed but also remarkable for its attempts to assume a critical stance vis-à-vis both native society and the colonial government[109]. Its aspiration to create a space for a modern rationalist discourse about native society is clearly exemplified by an editorial column that appeared in its issue of May 4 1832. Explaining the paper's ambition not to identify itself with any of the opinions expressed in its columns, the editor spoke of the paper's wish to follow a policy that transcended particularistic loyalties :

> ... we do not consider it our duty to obtrude our opinions on any religious question whatever, whether relating to Hindu, or any other creed, which our correspondents may choose to discuss, and both sides of which are given in our paper. We do not think our opinions on the particular subject alluded to will throw any light on the question and we are anxious to avoid the imputation of prejudice or partiality which we might incur if we were to side with either party [110].

I have quoted at length here mainly to indicate the seriousness with which an early vernacular intellectual like Balshastri sought to apply the new critical perspectives through a symmetrically bilingual, rationalist discourse. The importance of such efforts to establish a liberal discursive sphere of impartial exchange becomes apparent when we note that not long after, by the late 1840s, there were discernible signs of change in the aims of the native press. Whereas, the *Durpan* had shown a preference for identifying the community of readers that it wished to address through religiously neutral terms such as *'ettedeshiye lok'*, increasingly non-particularistic identities such as *'hindu lok'* are used interchangeably with more general terms to denote the native 'public'. Moreover, the paradoxical asymmetry in using English to represent native view points to the colonial government was poignantly brought out when the *Durpan* of 13 July, 1832 published a public letter by the *ryots* of Pune in its bilingual columns for 'original correspondence'. The letter intended convey the dissatisfaction of a large number of peasants with the recently completed revenue assessment to the government, which was likely to only benefit 'a small minority of wealthy cultivators'. The use of the first person plural in the 'high' language of English in a letter ostensibly written by ordinary, uneducated peasants struck a somewhat incongruous note :

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[109] See also Chapter three for further details on the critical position that the *Durpan* took vis-à-vis the English papers and the colonial administration.

[110] 4 May 1832, *Durpan* files, Vol. 1, p.110.

> After compliments, we the *ryots* of Poona, beg to acquaint you that the Governor Saheb having appointed Major Robertson in to the situation of the Collector of Poona, we are very happy; for he is well acquainted with the inhabitants of the city, and his conduct has always been just and good towards us...[111].

This showed that although English was the 'high' language of colonial politics, it was hardly an appropriate medium to address a native audience. It is significant that the next series of subsequent native newspaper ventures for 'Marathi' audiences after the *Durpan* were monolingual rather than being bilingual publications. These included major initiatives like the *Prabhakar*, *Dhumketu* and the *Dnyanprakash*. This suggested that the bilingual relation that Balshastri had sought to propose was not borne out by the reality on the ground. This had become apparent even by the time the *Durpan* ceased publication, announcing its plans to amalgamate with another native paper, the United Service Gazette. Upon the Durpan's closure, the proprietors of the Gazette decided to simultaneously bring out a separate Marathi weekly, the *Mumbai Akhbar*, rather than persist with the idea of a bilingual venture. The *Mumbai Akhbar* announced in its inaugural issue that it would not be able to keep up the bilingual policy of carrying equivalent contents in English and Marathi followed by the *Durpan*. Explaining that 'certain constraints had made the Durpan's bilingual structure difficult to sustain, the introduction went on to elaborate its own strategy to straddle the bilingual divide :

> *... because it (the Durpan) carried insufficient news about Maharashtra readers, it was unable to fulfil their aspirations,* and therefore this announcement of its closure henceforth. However, all those issues concerning the welfare of this land that need to be communicated to the government and the officials will be announced through a new English newspaper, the 'United Service Gazette'. Since the *Durpan*, many natives have developed a taste for reading newspapers, and it is the wish of many that there ought to be a paper in Marathi that publicises all that is new and important all around the world. And for that purpose it has been decided to publish a paper in the Marathi language not *containing any English print* that will come out each Saturday.[112]

Requesting the support of all those who had patronised the *Durpan*, the editors of the *Mumbai Akhbar*, the first paper to be entirely in Marathi, re-iterated their intention to observe the principle of neutrality and faithfulness to factuality in reporting all matters that would be generally useful and also promised to publish matters concerning the welfare of peasants.

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[111]13 July 1832, *Durpan* files, Vol. 1, p.178. An editorial comment explained that the above letter, 'purporting to be from the ryots of Pune' had arrived without the necessary signatures, because of which the editors had initially hesitated to publish it. But then they decided to do so believing that the writers had not attached their signatures only because they had not realised the importance of such a step. The decision to publish the letter was justified with the explanation that the editors could vouch for its contents from their personal knowledge of the state of affairs around Pune.

[112]translated from Marathi, Prospectus of the *Marathi Akhbar*, published in the first issue of 4July 1840, quoted in R. K. Lele, *Marathi Vruttpatranche Itihaas* , pp.71-2.

These would count as the earliest instances we have of the Marathi intelligentsia making a public mention of their representative role. This was crucial step, for to speak on behalf of the peasants and others who were not conversant with the new 'high' public language, was also to implicitly admit the reality of the bilingual divide underlying the colonial political structure. Among the 'lessons' that the intelligentsia was internalising was the realisation that their unique utility lay in their ability to straddle the two ends of the political hierarchy, which otherwise, possessed no means of communicating with the other. In fact the ideological incommensurability at either extreme of the colonial political structure was perhaps most completely signified by the complete lack of access to the other's language. Somewhat paradoxically, as the intelligentsia learnt to recognise the dual nature of their ideological task and admitted the political asymmetry of the colonial linguistic divide, they simultaneously also became increasingly aware of the representative possibilities of their own position. The intelligentsia could do little to reduce the severity of the political divide introduced by colonial bilingualism, but they could try and span it, although somewhat awkwardly, through addressing the native community in the vernacular and adopting English for the parallel representation of subaltern interests to the *Ingrezi* government :

> Matters that would result in the welfare of the poor and the needy brought to the attention of the government would be rendered into English and publicised through the English paper...the paper will contain news from China, Bengal, Madras and Delhi among other places too.[113]

The *Mumbai Akbhar* proved to be the first of a series of native newspapers that emerged in the Bombay-Pune region. A report in the missionary weekly, *Dnyanodaya* of 1 January 1845 mentioned that at that time there were four or five Marathi newspapers, and six Gujrati newspapers in the Presidency[114]. The 1850s saw the first Marathi newspapers from the outlying towns and cities like Kolhapur, Jamkhandi, Satara and Ahmadnagar[115]. Of the papers started in 1840s and 1850s, the most remarkable were those edited by Bhau Mahajan[116] from Bombay, the *Prabhakar* and the *Dhumketu*. These were established in 1841

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[113]translated from the Prospectus of the *Marathi Akhbar* quoted in R. K. Lele, *Marathi Vruttpatrancha Itihaas*, p.71.

[114] Quoted in R. K. Lele, *Marathi Vruttpatranche Itihaas*, p.82.

[115] Lele, *Marathi Vruttpatrancha Itihaas*, pp. 131-133.

[116]Bhau Mahajan alias Govind Vitthal Kunte (1815-1890) who had the reputation of being a fearless and independent intellectual was Balshastri's classmates and associate. Bhau resolutely stayed away from government service. Also, unlike Balshastri, Bhau stubbornly refused to undertake the *prayaschita* demanded in the *shastric* sentence passed against them. At Elphinstone, Bhau was known as an avid and receptive student who paid little heed to the disciplinary regime of examinations and restrictive classroom practices. He turned down an invitation to participate in the official project to prepare Marathi schoolbooks through translations under Major Candy's superintendence. He became the first full-time professional editor and journalist in Marathi, and having established his own independent Prabhakar Press in 1842, he successfully edited two weeklies and a periodical, *Dnyansindhu* until he left Bombay in 1862. He was widely respected as a learned scholar of both English and Sanskrit who possessed a lucid and critical Marathi style. Bhau Mahajan's balanced and unorthodox editorial style was an impressive achievement, but added to that was also the fact that with an annual subscription of four rupees, the *Dhumketu* also enjoyed the credit of having been the least expensive Marathi weekly until then. That hardly anything is known of his life after

and 1853 respectively and continued until Bhau finally left Bombay in 1862. It is not easy to establish reliable circulation figures for any of these papers. A reference in a contemporary newspaper had estimated the Durpan's readership after a year of its existence, to consist of 250 subscribers, at least some of whom were from places away from Bombay[117]. But despite its very limited circulation, the vernacular press was emerging as an important means for the dissemination of information that helped strengthen the ideological bonds between colonial intellectuals who shared similar training and interests. We know that the *Prabhakar* had subscribers in the provincial town of Junnar[118], and it was also read in Belgaum[119]. Further, the fact that Gopal Hari Deshmukh from Pune chose to publish his important *Shatapatre*(a hundred letters) in the *Prabhakar*, from 1848 onwards, instead of the more sedate, *Dnyanprakash* in his own city, shows that the Bombay paper had established a considerable reputation for itself.

Like Balshastri Jambhekar's, Bhau Mahajan's contribution to the vernacular press was many-sided. He showed remarkable qualities of enterprise as the manager and publisher of the *Prabhakar*, and the *Dhumketu*. But more importantly, not only did these papers constantly reiterate the need for channels that would allow the free public exchange of 'all' points of view, but they also showed their own commitment to sustaining a discourse of social rationality through the vernacular press. Aiming to establish a vernacular arena where a notion of the 'common good' according to principles of modern social rationality[120] and the publicity of power could be articulated, the two papers did not refrain from sharply criticising either the colonial government[121]. Nor did they spare revivalist voices like that of Vishnubuwa Brahmachari[122], that had already begun to make their presence felt in the colonial public sphere in Bombay. But more importantly, the editor always tried to ensure that the criticism being offered was always on a reasonable basis. Thus although the *Prabhakar* often criticised the activities of the

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he left Bombay in 1860 to live in Nagpur is indicative of the changed political temper after 1857, for it would be otherwise hard to explain how someone who had led such an active public life should leave very little trace of the last twenty-eight years of their existence!

[117] Oriental Christian Spectator, March 1833 quoted in Appendix 2, Memoirs of Balshastri Jambhekar, Volume 3, Pune, 1950, p.586.

[118] ed. Bhavani Shankar Sridhar Pandit, *Raosaheb Keshav Shivram Bhavalkar Yanche Atmavritta*, Nagpur, 1961, p.76.

[119] Padmanji, Baba, *Arunodaya*, Bombay, 1888, pp.159-160.

[120] the *Prabhakar* of 5 July 1852 carried a report that was sharply critical of the hypocrisy of *shastris* who tried to assert exclusive access to Sanskrit texts. Arguing that there was no reason to prohibit the teaching of Sanskrit texts to castes such as *prabhu*, *sonar* and *kasars*, the report went on to note how it was quite common for many *shastris* and *vydicks* in Bombay to visit persons from the above-mentioned communities in their homes and teach them the *vedas*. Asserting that these *shastris* were not averse to teaching the *vedas*, *shastras* and *puranas* to Englishmen, the report asked how it could be wrong to allow those who were related by ties of greater proximity like locality (*desh*) and religion (*dharma*) to learn Sanskrit. Translated from excerpt quoted in R.K. Lele, p.78.

[121] We have an excerpt from a report that appeared in the *Prabhakar* (date not mentioned) quoted in R.K. Lele which was bitterly critical of the economic drain on account of British rule. The report went on to point out that this dismal state of affairs was further aggravated by the high incidence of corruption among British officials. See R.K. Lele, p.77.

[122] The *Dhumketu* was sharply critical of both Vishnubuwa Brahmachari and missionary propaganda. See Lele, p.77.

Christian missionaries, yet these differences did not prevent the paper from allowing a prominent native convert like Baba Padmanji[123] from publicising his opinions through its pages. Similarly, as part of their engagement to critically reflect upon the changes introduced through colonial rule, the columns of Bhau Mahajan's papers provide us with some of the most telling and incisive commentary of the implications of the bilingual divide in colonial society[124] .

In the meantime, by the late 1840s and early 1850s, the price of the Marathi papers had fallen significantly since the time of the *Durpan*. The *Durpan* had been available to subscribers at Rs. 24 per year or at the rate of Rs. 6 per quarter[125]. The *Mumbai Akhbar* had been priced at Rs. 5 per quarter and a discounted price of Rs. 4 if paid for in advance[126]. Besides his contribution to the making of rationalist vernacular discourse, Bhau Mahajan was the first editor of the Marathi press who was able to bring down prices to an accessible range. He priced the *Prabhakar* at Rs. 12 a year, whereas the *Dhumketu* sold at an incredible annual cost of Rs. 4[127]. The *Dnyanprakash* published from Pune was priced at Rs. 10 per year with a half-yearly rate of Rs. 6[128]. But even so, with the spread of the new standardised Marathi idiom being severely limited by the sparse and under-funded, network of colonial schools[129], it was hardly uncommon to hear of short-lived, new ventures or pleas for increased patronage from native vernacular editors[130]. Thus despite the attempts to establish a sphere of critical opinion through the Marathi press at the time, the vernacular sphere could hardly hope to exist independently of its English counterpart. With Elphinstone College School and Pune College being the two main centres of English instruction upto the mid 1850s, a sizeable native readership in English was hardly a strong enough possibility to render the idea of a native newspaper in English a viable proposition.

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[123] Baba Padmanji, who converted to Christianity speaks very warmly of Bhau Mahajan in his autobiography, *Arunodaya*. Bhau was of the opinion that much could be learned from Christianity to improve the social conditions of human existence and also that Padmanji was able to publish an account of his reasons for adopting the Christian faith through a letter in the *Prabhakar*, see *Arunodaya*, p.88.

[124] see extracts from reports that appeared in *Prabhakar* of 12 December 1841 and of 8 May 1842, quoted in R.K. Lele, pp.77-78.

[125] Lele, p.59.

[126] Lele, p.71.

[127] Lele, p.121.

[128] Lele, p. 95.

[129] For an estimate of the numbers enrolled in the English and vernacular schools between 1826 and 1842, see Chapter three.

[130]The *Digdarshan* of November 1840 carried an announcement for a forthcoming weekly to be called the *Vartmanpadavi* which hoped to sell at a price low enough to make itself more generally accessible. But the advertisement also admitted that the weekly would only begin publication if it attracted an adequate number of subscribers in advance. See Lele p.61.

Vireshwar Chatre, son of Sadashiv Kashinath Chatre, was the publisher-editor of several not very successful Marathi weeklies started in Bombay and Pune in the 1840s like the *Dnyansindhu*, *Mitrodaya*, *Arunodaya*, *Dnyanbodhak* . Each of these lasted for a few years. See Lele pp. 84-87. The *Dnaynodaya* of 15 April 1853 mentions a paper, called the *Shukrodaya* that ceased publication after only three issues. See Lele p. 119.

But that also meant that native communities had to resort to the Anglo-Indian papers for the communication of information they wished to bring to the notice of the colonial government, or other natives who were unlikely to follow the Marathi papers. Surely that was why plans for the second and one of the longest surviving Marathi newspapers from Pune, the *Dnyanprakash*, were announced in the English Telegraph and Courier of 6 January 1849 :

> Krishnaji Trimbuck Ranade inhabitant of Poona intends to *publish a Newspaper in the Marathi Language* with a view of affording useful information on every topic of local interest. It will be open for free discussion on subjects of general utility, scientific investigation and the speculations connected with the antiquities, statistics, curiosities, history and geography of the country and of the Deccan especially... the patronage and support of all interested in the diffusion of knowledge and Welfare of the People is earnestly solicited[131].

However, the way the *Dnyanprakash* introduced itself to its Marathi audience diverged significantly from the tone and substance of the English announcement quoted above. Unlike the clipped tones of the brief English statement, the Marathi version of the paper's self-introduction was a more detailed elaboration of the paper's objectives. It pointed out that the inadequate channels for the communication of news among natives often resulted in poor dissemination of news even within the country (*desh*) . On the other hand, the English press enjoyed the advantages of various facilities like the post and the telegraph set up by the *Ingrez lok*, and were able to circulate both local and overseas information far more efficiently. This clearly admitted the discrepancy in the status of the vernacular and English spheres, because of which the vernacular papers had to depend on their 'superior' English counterparts for information. The *Dnyanprakash* hoped to alleviate this situation somewhat and it promised to translate and publish all useful items from the English press:

> but also, as people who find it strange (that) the English rule here, and therefore unless the former are familiarised with ways (*riti*) of the (English) nation(*desh*), there will be no way to work out ways to ensure the welfare of the peasants (*ryot*). ... As such, after deliberately considering all these benefits, the general public (*sarv lok*), sowkars, sardars and gentlemen (*grahasth lok*) ought to patronise the paper and unstintingly help in the above cause.[132]

Clearly the intelligentsia recognised the press to be an important arena to create ideological bonds between disparate social interests. In attempting to do so, like many other ventures of this period, it was often difficult to manage the *Dnyanprakash* as a self-sustaining, financial proposition. But yet it lasted till 1950, clearly indicating that it fulfilled definite ideological and

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[131] Prospectus' signed by Krishnaji Trimbuck Ranade, issued in Bombay Telegraph and Courier of 6 January 1849, quoted in Lele p.91.

[132] translated from Marathi, *'Prastavana'*, *Dnyanprakash* , 1st February, 1849, quoted in Lele p.91.

political functions. In surviving for such an impressive length of time, the *Dnyanprakash* shared certain characteristics of the next generation of very influential native papers started in Bombay in the 1860s[133]. Like the *Indu Prakash*[134] and the Native Opinion[135] which were started from Bombay in the 1860s and the *Subodh Patrika*[136] established in 1873, the *Dnyanaprakash* from Pune, also survived well into the next century. But more crucially, it is worth noting that, unlike the previous generation of native newspapers of the 1840s, the three major weeklies that appeared through the 1860s and the 1870s were all bilingual ventures. The structure of the bilingual relation proposed in this set of papers differed significantly from the bilingualism of the *Durpan*, as indeed did the way they were managed. The next chapter will elaborate on the nature of this shift and how it was related to underlying changes within native society arising out of the divisive effects of educational policy through the 1850s. But here I shall only note that the fact that the *Dnyanprakash*, which had started as a Marathi paper from Pune in 1849, also resorted to the bilingual mode from 1863 onwards[137] would reinforce my point that this shift signified an important juncture in the intelligentsia's self-perception and aspirations after 1857. However, this would raise questions about whether these shifts also saw accompanying changes in the ideological orientations of the intelligentsia as they 'progressed' on their task of representing a potentially hegemonic, anti-colonial position, especially in their ambitions to articulate a critical public discourse vis-à-vis native society. These are some of the questions that the last chapter will take up.

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[133] For a further discussion on the politics of bilingualism as seen in the post 1860s native press initiatives, see Chapter five.

[134] The first issue of the *Induprakash* came out on 2 January 1862 and it continued to be published till 1924. It remained a weekly till 1902, from which it time it appeared as a daily. It was published as a bilingual weekly from the very start. Among the various prominent 'Marathi' intellectuals who contributed their editorial and managerial skills to the paper were Gopal Hari Deshmukh, Sakharam Gadgil, Bhandarkar, Mahadev Ranade, Vishnushastri Pandit, Keshavshastri Gadgil and Halbe. The *InduPrakash* was one of the most consistently pro-reform native papers in Bombay. It was mainly through this paper that Vishnushastri Pandit sustained his campaign to win acceptance for widow remarriage.

[135] The first issue of Native Opinion came out on 4 January 1864. The paper was the brain-child of Narayan Mandlik, one of the first graduates of Bombay University who went on to become one of the most influential public figures of the time. Mandlik had apparently personally invested in the Native Opinion and played a major role in deciding its general editorial policy until 1870, when he sold the paper and the press. Mandlik also wrote for the paper regularly, especially its English pages. The paper ran up substantial losses, but nevertheless had sufficient funds to employ an editorial staff on a regular salary who were responsible for its day-today management. For a biographical account of Mandlik and his role in the Native Opinion, see Hawalder, *Raosaheb Mandlik Yanche Charitra*, Bombay, 1927.

The Native Opinion was published as an English paper for the first two years but from 1st July 1866, it switched to being a bilingual publication, using both English and Marathi. The paper survived until 1908. To begin with, its annual subscription was Rs. 15 but this had to be brought down to Rs. 12 to try and make up for some of the losses that it had incurred.

[136] The *Subodh Patrika* was formally managed through the Bombay Theistic Association, a body closely linked to the Prarthana Samaj. The Samaj was established in 1868, but the paper emerged much later on 4 May 1873. It first appeared in the form of separate Gujrati and Marathi editions. Priced at a highly subsidised annual rate of 12 annas per year, the paper evidently had recourse to financial support from the Samaj funds. However under the editorship of Palekar, the *Patrika* assumed its bilingual form that included both English and Marathi columns. For some time around the close of the nineteenth century, free copies of the *Patrika* were distributed among the mill-workers in Bombay, ostensibly in an attempt to establish a following for the paper among 'subaltern' audiences. See Lele, p.168.

[137] Lele, p.96.

Chapter Five

Bilingualism, hegemony and the 'swing to orthodoxy': the shaping of the political sphere (1860 - 1881)

Introduction :

The trajectory of changes that colonial rule introduced has mostly been described in terms of an 'initial' phase of *social reform* followed by the period when the momentum to organise an anti-colonial resistance led to the 'more mature' phase of *political reform.* Such a description is part of the gloss that nationalist discourse aspires to place upon its own 'pre-history'. Granting that the distinction between the early and later phases of anti-colonial consciousness needs to be preserved, the evidence within native discourse suggests that colonial impact was far more complex than implied by a neatly serialised, binary division such as the above. Early colonial intellectuals evidently did not see themselves as proto-nationalists, but that is not to say that their engagement with the structures of colonial power was not informed by political concerns. The suggestion that political awareness about colonial rule surfaced only with the emergence of nationalism proper is evidently a strategic pre-supposition of nationalist discourse and it would need to be problematised within any attempt to critically reconstruct the story of the intelligentsia's attempts to articulate a potentially hegemonic, nationalist position.

To put it schematically then, the colonial encounter induced native intellectuals to critical introspection over : 1) the provisions within the new arrangements for the legitimation of power through the principles of publicity and a definitively-established set of standardised laws. 2) the link between the expansion of western knowledge from the early modern period through the growth of large-scale vernacular reading audiences and the contemporary political pre-eminence of the West 3) the missionary critique of the iniquities of the native social order and its 'pagan' religious practices. Admittedly, during the first few decades, colonial power was mainly engaged in re-inscribing the native world to 'align' it with its own principles of social rationality. This phase was characterised by comparatively less acrimony between the administration and the native intelligentsia, as the latter had not yet begun to make concerted demands for a greater share in the administrative structure. However, it is obvious from the areas outlined above that the questions that concerned early native intellectuals indicated a discernible engagement with the political dynamic of the colonial encounter and its inherent possibilities. It would also be important to look closely at the pre-history of the emergence of nationalist consciousness, as the so-called 'transition' is marked by a crucial ideological shift within the temper of colonial politics, frequently described as the 'swing towards orthodoxy' in the second half of the nineteenth century. The reasons as to why

the period where 'political' reform gained precedence over 'social' reform simultaneously saw an ostensibly 'mature' intelligentsia adopting more conservative stances need to be probed. And if, this indeed was a necessary prelude to an incipient nationalism, the question would be then why did the consolidation of the intelligentsia's claims to political maturity in their contest with colonial authority require a shift towards more conservative and less egalitarian social positions. This shift towards an espousal of greater social orthodoxy that coincided with the intelligentsia attempts to claim a more representative position needs to be related to the internal divisions within the intelligentsia and also their place within the colonial social world.

My aim has been to show how the project of colonial education and native press initiatives profoundly altered the forms of cultural and political contestation and the structure of state-society relations in western India[1]. The Rebellion of 1857 precipitated major changes in the attitude of the colonial regime towards native society[2]. The period after 1857 saw the extension of the education project into a system of higher learning for educating the higher classes. This inevitably affected the position of the intelligentsia, especially the range of options available to them as attempted to secure a position of ideological influence within the structure of relations between the colonial state and native society. My thesis has shown the structural influence the project of colonial education had on the making of India's modernity, with the linguistic divide emerging as a crucial marker of difference within the emerging political structure. Implicit in the new discursive arrangements proposed through colonial literacy and the processes of enumeration were criteria determining exclusion and mobility. Within this scenario, the colonial schools represented the crucial cultural capital that enabled colonial intellectuals to manoeuvre for a position with potentially hegemonic significance.

In using the education project to establish 'favourable' ideological links with native society, colonial policy showed its desire to encapsulate the discourses of western modernity into a pedagogic prototype. If the deployment of liberal principles in the colonial context thus represented a dislodged and asymmetrical version of the metropolitan 'original', the rule of colonial difference would arguably

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[1]The terminology of state-society relations is used here especially to stress the difference through which modern governmental structures were created within the colonial situation and their peculiarly alien status vis-à-vis native society. Clearly, colonial rule did not *replicate* the relation between the centralised modern state and its subjects as it evolved in the West. Therefore, the colonial situation requires us to admit possibilities of rethinking the grounds for hegemonic articulation within the political discourses of modernity. My discussion on the making of political associations in colonial western India will touch on how vernacular discourse attempted to redefine the analogous, pre-colonial terms for rulers(*raja)* and ruled (*praja)* to describe the new political arrangements being established through colonial rule.

[2] It is generally assumed that the intelligentsia quite happily colluded with official discourse on the events of 1857, and did little to mark their disapproval of the administration's brutal repression of the insurgency. While recognising the events of 1857 showed the general lack of identification between colonial intellectuals and the rebels, it is important for the colonial historian to be sensitive to the regional differences in the patterns of and response to the colonial project on the subcontinent. For references to an editorial by Bhavalkar in the *Dnyanprakash* published from Pune about the rebel leader Tatya Tope, see editor's introduction, '*Raosaheb Keshav Shivram Bhavalkar yancha Alp Parichay*' in ed. Bhavani Shankar Sridhar Pandit, *Raosaheb Keshav Shivram Bhavalkar Yanche Atmavritta*, Nagpur, 1961 p.2.

also apply to the emerging space for hegemonic articulation within the colonial world. In conceiving of the 'extension' of modern principles into native society as a pedagogic project, colonial power was interested not so much in finding ways to *mediating* the complex contradictions created by its own arrival on the subcontinent. Notwithstanding the high rhetoric of colonial ideology, its aims ultimately rested on shrewd, pragmatic calculations to strategically *prevail* over the ideological and social disjunctures it had introduced by monopolising the authority to lay down regulatory norms. The creation of a modern political order under colonial conditions contained restricted possibilities to engender a hegemonic discourse, which in turn affected the range of political options open to the colonial intelligentsia. Their position was paradoxically overdetermined by their proximity to structures of power and their minority status and subordination. These circumstances make it difficult to describe their position as potentially hegemonic, especially when measured against the 'standards' of western modernity, without due allowance being made for considerations of colonial difference. And yet the nature of the manoeuvres that I have outlined through my discussion on the possibilities for laicisation and also those evident in the story of the native press initiatives would show that neither the paradigms of dominance[3] nor of collaboration[4] would adequately describe the complexity of the position of colonial intellectuals and their political efforts. Thus in speaking of the efforts of the colonial intelligentsia to secure a position of ideological influence, I necessarily use the terms 'hegemony'/'hegemonic' not in the strict Gramscian sense. Rather, I use them to describe the nature of the ambitions of a group who, admittedly did not enjoy political dominance but who could use their closeness to colonial authority to bring themselves to achieve a hegemonic position within their social world.

In proposing such a connection the structure of the literate arrangements proposed by colonial power and the emerging pattern of political articulation in western India, my thesis admits the general usefulness of the Habermasian idea[5] of the links between the definition of aesthetic norms and cultivated audiences through the bourgeois literary sphere and the liberal political sphere. And yet, the valorisation of liberal principles as colonial rationality would patently and profoundly challenge what we understand by a hegemonic ruling culture, especially as grounded in modern principles of social and communicative rationality. As the preceding chapters have shown, the

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[3] I refer here mainly to Ranajit Guha's thesis that colonialism in South Asia ruled through dominance without hegemony. In making his passionate, polemical response against the implications of the Cambridge school historians who sought to explain the colonial project as a collaborationist enterprise, Guha was, of course, quite rightly, seeking to preserve the central charge of illegitimacy of the colonial enterprise. But surely one of the most tragic dimensions of the colonial encounter was the fact that western imperial power could effectively and irrevocably reconstitute political hierarchies across many dissimilar social worlds, even while remaining aloof from what may have previously been their fundamental internal dynamic. The abiding ways in which colonial rule re-inscribed the political structures and norms on the sub-continent requires us to re-examine our ways of posing questions about colonial hegemony and the apparent capacity of modern political structures to outlast their colonial imposition. See Ranajit Guha, 'Dominance without Hegemony and its Historiography', Subaltern Studies in Indian History, Vol. VI, OUP, Delhi, 1989.

[4] Anil Seal, The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and collaboration in Later Nineteenth Century, Cambridge University Press, 1968; John Gallagher, Locality, Province and Nation : Essays in Indian Politics 1870-1940, Cambridge University Press, 1973.

processes underlying the formation of the colonial public sphere were premised primarily on the ability of colonial power to devise ways of introducing permanent discursive and institutional shifts affecting the lives of whole populations in the territories it controlled, even while it engaged in establishing ideological links with very small groups within these societies. The construction of colonial power came about through its appropriation of the authority to alter the universe of ideas and social 'commonsense' on the sub-continent without needing 'consent'[6]. The durability of liberal ideology in the colonial situation owed more to the efficacy of the modern western imagination to institute mechanisms that monopolised the power to establish norms of cultural and political legitimacy, rather than to the 'innate' rationality of liberal political reasoning or its consensual communicative strategies. Foucault's work[7] has taught us much about the complex contradictions between the principles of modern political rationality and their institutional effects in the West. If anything, the colonial context bears out the ability of modern political discourses to establish themselves outside their originary contexts in the West mainly through radical bureaucratic intervention. The colonial situation thus amply exemplifies the disjunction between bourgeois liberal principles and the ideological apparatuses that these have helped engender. The critical question for interrogating Habermas' view of the bourgeois public sphere from the perspective of post-colonial theory would be the apparent ability of the political logic of modernity to accommodate, create and also survive in contexts inimical to the fundamental principles of liberal communicative reasoning.

In discussing the crucial role of education in creating India's modernity, my aim is to also make some general points about the relations between the structures of modern power and knowledge. Assumptions of communicative rationality are crucial to the relations underlying the modern structures of knowledge and power. The enlargement of communicative networks reflecting the growth of the market lent the power to regulate the production and distribution of social communication an added great political significance. With political authority within modernity no longer legitimated through ideas of divine sanction or privilege, ruling elites were now to derive their status from the general circulation of the discursive frameworks of self-reflexive social rationality. The superior claims of knowledge built on abstract reasoning entered the political discourse of modernity, even in the West, as the normative potential of the new cognitive discourses to beneficially affect the lives of large audiences through their general circulation and dissemination. Discourses of individual improvement were important not only in constituting the forms of modern

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[5] see Jurgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere : An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society, (German original, 1962), M.I.T. Press,1989.

[6] If colonialism was an encounter between incom**********he full sense of the term, may have been secondary to the making of modernity in the colonial context.

[7] Michel Foucault, The Order of Things : An Archaeology of the Human Sciences, Tavistock Publications, London, 1970.

subjectivity, but they were also crucial to the rationality of capitalist development, and modern political structures. The promise of benefits to modern subjects through the universalistic logic of liberalism was based on the implicit structure of differentiation within modernity between its economic, political and cognitive-communicative domains. The western bourgeoisie's claims to social leadership were premised upon the tension between their ambition to regulate the production and distribution of modern knowledges and the implicit desire to control subjectivity through the ideology of improvement.

The dialectic between control and improvement formed a distinguishing characteristic of liberal ideology, as was the bourgeois tendency to forsake its early advocacy of principles of non-hierarchical access, as they 'advanced' in their quest for greater social and political influence. But the denouement of the logic of bourgeois ideology would have to be theorised *differently* within the related but disjunctive contexts of western and colonial modernity. The turn to a position of greater social and political orthodoxy as bourgeois hegemony tended towards a nationalistic articulation is clearly not peculiar to the colonial context. However, within western modernity, the emergence of egalitarian discourses in the last decades of the eighteenth century had been preceded by social and ideological shifts over at least the previous two hundred years that had seen the extension of market principles and established a relatively secularised structure of political authority. These conditions were mostly remarkable within colonial modernity by their absence and the primary stimulus for the creation of a discursive space that would harbour a secularised, 'common-sense' was administered through the education project. It would therefore be useful to see the ideological shift in the orientation of the colonial intelligentsia usually described as the 'swing towards orthodoxy' in the latter half of the nineteenth century in conjunction with the structure of changes introduced through education policy. Colonial intellectuals were entrusted with the responsibility for creating a communicative structure appropriate to a laicised cognitive order, but they had to carry out this task from a severely circumscribed position. But before long they realised that the elitist nature of the project of colonial literacy conferred upon them certain political skills and advantages. Their most prized cultural asset lay in their unique abilities to straddle the linguistic divide characterising colonial politics. As they became increasingly confident of the uniqueness of their position in negotiating the colonial linguistic divide, their discourse, gradually but clearly, showed traces of forsaking even the minimal support it had shown previously to the principles of equal and universal access.

Colonial Intellectuals, Hegemony and Orthodoxy :

The 'turn to orthodoxy' from the 1860s onwards issued from tensions within the attempts to produce a laicized structure of literacy under colonial influence. A key element of this ideological shift was the intellgentsia's increasing reluctance to admit a commitment to ideas of egalitarianism, especially in their critique of the structures of native society. The several difficulties encountered in the

creation of 'popular' literature in vernacular print under colonial rule and how these were compounded by the absence of ancillary social and economic processes that might have sustained a secularised temper have already been discussed in Chapter four. This chapter will seek to establish links between the internal divisions and discontinuities within the elitist project of colonial literacy, the intellgentsia's diminishing interest in egalitarian possibilities, and the emergence of a strong revivalist strain within native discourse from the mid-1860s onwards. I shall try to show how the divisions underlying colonial bilingualism affected the trajectory of the emerging bilingual reading publics, further complicating the fissured ideological ground available to the colonial intelligentsia and influenced its dominant political orientations. The first section will argue that the evidence shows that the structure of the bilingual relation had altered quite substantially from how it had been represented in the first bilingual English-Marathi paper, *Bombay Durpan*, discussed in Chapter three. The press was not the only site where the intellgentsia's efforts to negotiate the linguistic divide became evident; the discontinuity between the English and vernacular spheres also affected their attempts from the 1860s onwards to develop a regional network of political associations. The intelligentsia deployed the logic of voluntary associations, first to forge internal links between themselves, and then from the late 1860s onwards, to create a network of provincial *sabhas* intended to influence the course of colonial policy. The formation of the Sarvajanik Sabha in Pune in 1871 is considered one of the most important antecedents to the emergence of nationalist consciousness in the Bombay-Pune region. It also indicated the shift of the political centre away from the capital to Pune, the 'vernacular capital' by the 1870s, indicating the importance of the vernacular sphere within a political structure based on quasi-representative principles. Here I base my discussion mainly on writings in a hitherto little-known, monthly Marathi journal published by the Sabha called the *Pune Sarvajanik Sabheche Masik Pustak*[8], which was evidently started with the intention of reaching larger native audiences than its quarterly English counterpart could hope to. The publication of the English and the Marathi versions of the Sabha's journal as distinct editions clearly foreshadows the logic that the launching of Tilak's *Kesari* and *Maratha* was to demonstrate more clearly - namely, the existence by around 1881, of two distinct, almost separate, reading publics in English and in the vernacular, neither of which could, of course, be ignored. The last section will take up some of Vishnushastri Chiplunkar's[9] writings from the 1870s, which are

[8] I have not so far come across references to the existence of a Marathi journal of the Sarvajanik Sabha in any of the writings on the political history of nineteenth century Maharastra. The only journal alluded to in the existing literature is the Quarterly Journal of the Pune Sarvajanik Sabha, published from 1877 onwards, about six years after the Sabha was first formed in 1871. Given its location in Pune, and its evident intentions to mobilise support on an enlarged scale, it would seem curious to assume that the Sabha had not thought of publishing a Marathi journal. The Marathi journal was started in September 1881, see announcement entitled *'jahiraat'*, dated September 1 1881, signed by the secretaries of the Sabha, back cover of the *Pune Sarvajanik Sabhache Marathi Pustak*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 1881.

[9] Vishnushastri Chiplunkar, son of Krishnashastri Chiplunkar, was born in Pune 20 May 1850. He died young on 17 March 1882. His most important contribution to the making of modern Marathi discourse lay in his work as editor and writer for the important literary journal, *Nibandhmala* that he published from Pune between 1874-1881.

He was known not to have been a very good student, completing his B.A. with some difficulty with English Sanskrit and History in 1872 from Deccan College, Pune. In 1874 he joined the Pune High School. However, he did not get along with the Headmaster Moreshwar Kunte. Before starting the *Nibandhmala*, Vishnushastri had contributed to the

generally considered to mark the coming of age of Marathi prose, and therefore were also crucial to ideological consolidation within the vernacular (Marathi) sphere. Here I shall be looking at some of the important essays in Chiplunkar's *Nibandhmala*, as an important indicator of the vernacular intelligentsia's perception of the relation between English and Marathi at a crucial point within the development of the anti-colonial consciousness. My aim in discussing Chiplunkar's work will also be to briefly locate the political equations underlying the ideological orientation of the 'mature' vernacular intelligentsia in the 1870s. There were evident ideological continuities between the literary politics of *Nibandhmala* and the next landmark in the intersecting stories of the native press and the intelligentsia's negotiation of the bilingual divide in the Bombay-Pune region, namely, the simultaneous launching of the *Kesari* and the *Maratha*, jointly by Tilak and Agarkar in January 1881. Not the least of these links was the fact that these three men had been classmates and were, by then, close associates in these and other related projects. *Kesari*, was the first Marathi paper to reach anything like a mass audience[10], and it clearly echoed the ideological stances of the *Nibandhmala*. This was particularly evident in two major way. Both the *Kesari* and *Nibandhmala* showed clearly that they realised the particular advantages of articulation through the press, given the difficulties within colonial modernity in forging mediatory links 'on the ground' through a network of *sabhas* and political associations. That was one of the important reasons that both publications kept up a virulent anti-lower-caste discourse. I shall conclude the chapter with some remarks on what the launching of the *Kesari* and the *Maratha* shows us about the divisions within the public domain of colonial politics in western India at the point that is also generally considered the historical moment that saw the emergence of nationalism proper.

Colonial Bilingualism and Questions of Hegemony : the Post-1857 Native Press :

It was clear that once the moves to establish an arena through which colonial power could articulate itself publicly had been initiated, they would be vulnerable both to negotiation by native elites, and also to the incremental logic of their own operation. In a little over a decade, the officially sponsored attempts to involve a handful of native *pandits* and *shastris* in a collaborative project to

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Dnyanprakash and the *Shalapatrak*, edited by his father Krishnashastri Chiplunkar for the Education Department. In 1877, he had established the Chitrashala press to bring out cheap chromolithographs of historical and mythological pictures. In 1879 he started the *Kitabkhana* or New Book Depot. The Aryabhushan Press opened in October 1880, from where the *Kesari* and the *Maratha* were published, and he was also a founding member of the Deccan Education Society, established around the same time. This summary is taken from details in the obituary that appeared in the *Maratha*, see 'The late Vishnushastri Chiplunkar : In Memoriam', *Maratha*, March 19, 1882.

[10]In less than two years after it began, the *Kesari* claimed its output per issue to be 3500. These figures were submitted by the editors and cannot be assumed to provide reliable estimates of a paper's readership. Nevertheless, the aggressive brand of journalism that *Kesari* adopted gave it an edge over its rivals and it seems likely that very soon after its launch, it enjoyed a larger reach than that any Marathi newspaper had managed until the time. In 1906-7, the years before the textile strike of 1908, the *Kesari* is said to have reached a circulation of 22,000 and the corresponding figure for *Maratha* was put at 11,000, see, 'The Labour Movement and Development of Freedom Struggle' in Reisner, I.M., and Goldberg N.M., Tilak and the Struggle for Indian Freedom, People's Publishing House, Bombay 1966, p.435. see also fn. 103 below for observations on comparative figures for other newspapers.

create a relation between English and standardised Marathi had already led to the first native initiatives to found vernacular newspapers that aimed to enlarge the influence of the new cultural and political discourses. Such efforts to widen the demographic spread of modern discourses were repeatedly described within native/ vernacular and official/English discourse as *'dnyanprasar'* and 'social reform' respectively. Questions of the size of the audiences for the new discourses were a crucial concern with the early colonial vernacular intelligentsia. However, as I have argued in Chapter three, the asymmetries underlying the colonial bilingual relation linguistic were reproduced through its institutionalisation in the education system, thus accentuating how language and education signified political difference and status within colonial society.

With language being such a crucial site in the construction of state-society relations within colonial politics, the relation between the English sphere and the vernacular 'public' would also be crucial to the efforts of the intelligentsia to contest the legitimacy of colonial rule and the directions of anti-colonial movement. The main advantage that the vernacular sphere enjoyed over the other-wise dominant English sphere, was its numerical strength, on which count it figured as an important consideration within the ideological calculations of the colonial state, and subsequently those of the colonial intelligentsia. Such calculations deriving from the logic of enumeration were crucial to the making of a counter-hegemonic, anti-colonial discourse. The intelligentsia's perceptions of the bilingual relation, especially in the period preceding the emergence of a self-conscious nationalist voice in the early 1880s, and their response towards the underlying social divisions were an important signifier within their ideological negotiation of colonial authority. An analysis of the intelligentsia's efforts to negotiate the linguistic divide before and after the establishment of the university in 1857 would be a means to analyse the trajectory of their attempts to acquire a hegemonic position. Prior to 1857, the need to extend the influence of colonial ideology and the new legitmative discourses and achieve a wider circulation for them had impelled education policy to undertake initiatives for the translation and preparation of reading material in the vernacular. The creation of a vernacular sphere was thus the direct outcome of the ideological needs of colonial power and the withdrawal of official patronage to vernacular production from the late 1850s onwards signified at the realisation of these objectives. Not surprisingly then, an important outcome of the growth of the colonial educational structure upwards into the university saw the reversal of a previous tendency towards a commitment to the general spread of literacy through the vernacular. As the previous chapter has shown, the efforts to sustain a critical, socially self-reflexive, quasi-autonomous discursive realm and to maximise the benefits of the modern principles of the publicity of power through the creation of a vernacular press showed the political importance that early native intellectuals perceived in principles of rational and equal social exchange.

Dissemination vs. Representation : Colonial Intellectuals and Vernacular Production

The advancement of the intelligentsia' representative claims was based on their purported capacity to authoritatively represent collective opinions, identity and pasts of native communities. The question we need to ask is why the colonial liberal intelligentsia had to forsake their earlier commitment to egalitarian social principles as they moved towards their historic ambition of articulating a hegemonic, anti-colonial discourse. Their growing awareness of the range of options capable of yielding a position of hegemonic influence heightened their consciousness of the vernacular sphere within colonial politics. Vernacular discourse showed increasing signs of disquiet and intolerance as it approached its more 'mature' guise during the later half of the nineteenth century. To attribute signs of anxiety to later vernacular discourse as it developed its 'mature' modern literary voice as compared to the less elaborate, early modern style would seem both paradoxical and opposed to the commonsense within nationalist historiography, where it is usual for this period to be fulsomely described as the 'renaissance' of vernacular literatures.

Despite being inevitably aware of their numerical marginality and the asymmetry between the English and the vernacular spheres, the first generation of colonial-educated intellectuals like Balshastri and Bhau Mahajan were able to concede the need for Marathi to 'learn' from English, with far less antagonism as compared to the tone of vernacular writing after 1857. Troubled by the loss of sovereignty, and its own 'immaturity', early native discourse nevertheless showed greater self-assurance in assessing the relative positions of the vernacular and English spheres. This was on account of two inter-related reasons. Firstly, the subordination of the vernacular sphere had not acquired the fixity of an irrevocable social hierarchy. The small 'public' of 'reformed individuals' from the colonial schools had not yet become separated into distinct, internally-hierarchised English and vernacular segments, as was to happen once the linguistic divide was firmly embedded into the education system by the time the university was established in 1857. In other words, the intelligentsia had not yet been made aware of internal fissures within their own small numbers might affect their position as champions of reform of the rest of their fellow-men and women. Secondly, the pre-1857 intelligentsia seemed less perturbed by the political consequences of their own isolation than their counterparts in later decades who advanced their claims as representative spokesmen of native opinion. When early colonial intellectuals spoke of *'dnyanprasar',* they did speak from a position of assumed leadership within native society. They could not have been unaware that they were writing for a small-sized literate vernacular public of around a couple of hundred people at most[11] or their obvious material dependence on the colonial government. But,

[11] In 1840, the total number of students in the Presidency enrolled in the vernacular schools, was put at over 10,000 by the 1850s, but that figure included the three major language areas of Marathi Gujrati and Kannada. But the number of persons who made it a habit to read the weekly papers, or those who actually subscribed to one or more of the papers would have been only a small percentage of this figure. For estimates of the circulation of the *Durpan* and Balshastri's periodical, *Digdarshan*, see Chapter four, p.149 and Chapter three, fn. 48. Complaints about the lack of readers and paying subscribers remained common in the press right through till the end of the century.

An article entitled 'Censorship of the Vernacular Press' in the Quarterly Journal of the Pune Sarvajanik Sabha, Vol. 1, July 1878, had the following observations to offer on the extremely limited influence exercised by the vernacular press even in the later part of the nineteenth century, 'The reading portion of the people form, it may safely be said, an infinitesimal

their isolated position was not yet further complicated, as it was soon to be, by the need to actively 'back up' the legitimacy of their leadership claims through asserting the *representativeness* of their discourse. Take for instance the case of the Durpan. Its avowed objectives included the nurturing of the native mind through the dissemination of useful information and western knowledges intended to promote the habits of impartial, independent thought as well as the circulation of reports on significant developments in different parts of the world. Yet significantly, the Durpan Prospectus did not emphasise its role as an intermediary seeking to *represent* the general opinions of native society to colonial government. The paper's linguistic policy was keen not to foreground the linguistic divide and the fact that the two 'publics' that it hoped to address through English and Marathi, were in fact non-identical and largely discrete. Clearly, Jambhekar was trying to underplay the paper's own status as an intermediary between the asymmetric political divisions within colonial society, for to admit that would also imply acknowledging the subordination of the native, vernacular sphere under the influence of English.

To put it sharply, early native discourse saw its primary function as being one of *dissemination*, which gradually changed as the intelligentsia became more aware of how their crucial but scarce literate skills paradoxically enhanced their potential to claim a representative status for their discourse about native opinions. Being less concerned with foregrounding its own *representative* status, early anti-colonial thinking was less likely to be guided by instrumentalist considerations of political advantage in its advocacy of the need to develop vernacular discourse. The early arguments for the 'cultivation' of the vernaculars were advanced with far greater 'disinterestedness' as they were not informed by calculations of the importance of the vernacular sphere for the intellgentsia's own political survival. The shift in the intelligentsia's ideological orientation was related to altered conceptions about their own political function from being one where they saw themselves as the agents of disseminating the new learning to that of being representative spokesmen for native society to the colonial government. They gradually realised the political potential of their role as intermediaries, especially through their unique capabilities in articulating new types of bonds between largely disparate and inimical interests within native society. This self-consciousness about the possibility for them to assume the representative function between the administration and native society was evident in their discourse by the mid-century. A good example of this is the introduction offered in the first issue the Dnyanprakash, the important weekly which emerged from Pune in 1849. Explaining the rationale underlying its publication, the Dnyanprakash said :

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part of the ignorant and unenlightened masses, and of this reading portion, an infinitesimal part possess any taste for newspaper reading.'

> Newspapers are not only the way to create bonds, but of conveying opinions among each other, of communicating information to the government, of uniting people for a common project (*udyog*)...[12]

But even while foregrounding its intermediary, representative role, the *Dnyanprakash* was simultaneously acknowledging its dependence on the English spheres by admitting it would need to gather most of its news from the English papers. In doing so, the intelligentsia was conceding its awareness of the contingency and derivativeness of its vernacular discourse in ways that either the *Durpan* or the *Prabhakar* had not been willing to do. That is, having advanced on their path to achieve an ideologically influential position within colonial politics by foregrounding their capabilities to represent the combined interests of disparate groups as well as those not equipped to speak for themselves, it seemed that the intelligentsia could now afford to admit the subordination of the vernacular sphere. Significantly, the *prastavana (*introduction*)* also emphasised another aspect that was to become more sharply evident through the coming decades. This was the intelligentsia's growing awareness of the relative weakness of other sites like associations or the market for strengthening 'ground-level' links between disparate groups into extensive impersonal social networks, because of which the press was likely to assume a heightened significance as an arena for forging social alliances. This is point that will be taken up again in the discussion on Tilak's political project through the *Kesari* and the *Maratha*. Clearly, by the 1850s, the press was not being viewed primarily as an instrument of *dnyanprasar*, but as a vital instrument in accommodating heterogeneous interests and articulating their aspirations to the government. It is important to note that the intellgentsia's active consideration of alliances that could achieve a hegemonic influence showed a strong correlation with a withdrawal of its earlier emphasis on widening the discursive scope of the new *vidya.*

By the time vernacular discourse became pre-occupied with developing a modern, literary aesthetic, clearly, the grounds for the arguments for the cultivation of a modern Marathi had altered from the nature of the concerns emphasised within early native discourse. An important emphasis in the earlier arguments had been the need to develop a vocabulary in the vernacular that would help the extension of a modern rationalist critical discourse vis-à-vis native society. The emphasis instead after the 1860s was on defining the norms for a 'high' vernacular literary canon of Marathi writing and its past. These attempts to articulate a collective self-identity of the Marathi people were part of the vernacular intellgentsia's ambitions to *exclusively* assert its right to speak on behalf of the modern Marathi literate community. These efforts to define a relatively homogenous literary/cultural identity through the vernacular were part of the larger ambition of asserting their own representative claims over the numerically significant, non-English educated 'public'. Implicit in these attempts to foster a high 'literary' discourse were the vernacular intellgentsia's ambitions to

[12] translated from Marathi, '*Prastavana*', *Dnyanprakash* , 1st February, 1849, quoted in Lele, *Marathi Vruttpatrancha Itihaas*, p.91.

'harness' it to validate their own claims of voicing a representative position. Thus it is only by thematising the politics of colonial bilingualism and the intellgentsia's attempts to span the linguistic divide as part of the attempt to articulate a counter-hegemonic, anti-colonial position that the question of the increasing orthodoxy after 1857 can be analytically posed. In the remaining part of this section, I shall look briefly at the trajectory of the native press after 1857, to see what it tells us about the intelligentsia's attempts to negotiate the divisions created by colonial bilingualism. In doing this my attempt will be to suggest links between the nature of colonial reading publics, the intellgentsia's altered position after the events of 1857 and the repudiation of the progressive elements that had previously formed part of their discourse.

The Making of an Anti-Colonial Alliance after 1857 :

Quite justifiably, 1857 is considered a watershed in the making of state-society relations in colonial India. The provocations for the Rebellion of 1857 were complex and regionally diverse but at one level, the events of 1857 could be seen as a political convulsion against the social and economic changes precipitated through the intervention of metropolitan bourgeois commercial interests. After the events of 1857, the colonial regime decisively shed some of its earlier 'liberalism', adopting a more stringent and increasingly centralised pattern in its policy on all fronts, including the areas of revenue, education and the press. The years after 1857 also saw a big increase in the entry of metropolitan capital for investment in various fields, and with Bombay emerging as a leading commercial city, a significant proportion of this was directed towards the Presidency capital[13]. However, as Chandavarkar's study has shown, by this time, there were also signs that a small section of the native *seths* in Bombay were responding to the constraints they were subject to, as part of the patterns of the colonial export trade, by diversifying into manufacturing, especially the spinning of raw cotton.[14] Clearly the interests of this emerging lobby of indigenous entrepreneurs

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[13] The mid-nineteenth century saw a rapid rise in the commercial traffic passing through Bombay. This was partly due to some of the foreign trade from Calcutta now being diverted to Bombay. The boom in the cotton market in the early 1860s also contributed to this increase in major way. With cotton being paid for in bullion, the period saw speculative activity in the city reach a frenetic pace, leading to proposals for ambitious urban development schemes such as those financed by the Backbay Reclamation Company. The period also saw the entry of foreign companies to develop transport and communication networks. For an analytical account of the economic activity in the period, see the introductory chapters of 'Raj Chandavarkar, The Origins of Industrial Capitalism in India : Business Strategies and the Working Classes in Bombay 1900-1940, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994. See also S.D. Mehta, The Cotton Mills of India : 1854-1954, Bombay, 1954; M.D. Morris, The Emergence of an Industrial Labour Force in India : A Study of the Bombay Cotton Mills, 1854- 1947, University of Berkeley Press, 1965; Chaudhuri K.N. and Dewey, Clive J. eds. Economy and Society : Essays in Indian Economic and Social History, Oxford University Press, 1979.

[14] The first cotton mill in Bombay was established in 1854 as a joint stock company, with equipment imported from Manchester. The Bombay Spinning and Weaving Company was floated by Cowasjee Davar, Maneckjee Petit and James London. The shareholder's agreement of the Bombay Spinning an Weaving Company, dated July 7 1854 was in Gujrati and was signed by more than fifty leading traders, most of them Parsis. More than half of the one hundred shares were taken up Gujrati merchants, two Englishmen purchased thirteen shares and Ramchandra Gopal, a Maharashtrian trader bought up three shares. The second cotton mill , the Oriental Spinning and Weaving Company was floated in 1854 by a group comprising of some of the leading Parsi, Jewish and *bania* magnates of the city. The mill commenced operations in 1858. By 1865, there were ten cotton mills in the city, with most of them not just spinning units but also producing yarn for handloom weavers and cloth. Also, the Paper Manufacturing Company had been established in Bombay by Sorabjee Framjee. This summary is drawn from 'Raj Chandavarkar, The Origins of Industrial

conflicted with the designs of colonial policy that aimed to safeguard the interests of metropolitan capital.

Such shifts in the economic sphere coincided with changes in the sphere of ideological elaboration arising out of the establishment of the University of Bombay. Amidst these changes the defeat of the native rebel forces signalled the end of hopes for a resistance to colonial power under an alliance relying largely on pre-colonial modes of political organisation and leadership. The intelligentsia's response to the Rebellion had been mainly one of silence or overt denunciation[15]. But even when there had been sympathy for the Rebellion, there was little identification between the largely urban, colonial intellectual elites and the participants in the Rebellion and their methods. The redefinition of the rural-urban divide under colonial rule had, by then, significantly weakened the ideological links that had previously existed between town and country, between urban and provincial pre-colonial intellectuals. Given these changes, the situation was ripe for a re-structuring of the relations between the colonial state and the native intelligentsia. The fact that the colonial intelligentsia shared little common ground with the rebels of 1857 brought to the fore questions about the aspirations that the colonial intelligentsia harboured of articulating a hegemonic position.

There had been some attempts in 1853 to organise a 'popular' political forum led by the formerly powerful *sardar* families of the Deccan[16]. Similar attempts to bring the wealthy *seths* and colonial-educated intellectuals of the provincial capital together in a common forum had been initiated through the establishment of the Bombay Association in August 1852. Though the Association had been active in organising petitions to the British Parliament, the alliance was fraught with tensions, and the intelligentsia had to be content with a subordinate position[17]. But with the reconfiguration of the relations between the administration and native society after 1857, and with the investment of native capital in industrial production, conditions were emerging for an increasing rapprochement between indigenous entrepreneurial interests and the aspirations of the colonial bureaucratic intelligentsia. When attempts were made to revive the Bombay Association in 1860, the Executive Committee was still dominated by *sethia* elements. But it was nevertheless becoming clear that the intelligentsia's influence as intermediaries, especially through their position in the legal bureaucracy, could no longer be easily dismissed.

Capitalism in India : Business Strategies and the Working Classes in Bombay 1900-1940, Cambridge, 1994 and S.D. Mehta, The Cotton Mills of India : 1854-1954, Bombay, 1954.

[15]see fn. 2 above. Also, by the 1850s, many English papers in Bombay had native proprietors, mostly from the Parsi community. The Bombay Times was one such paper, but its editor was a Scotsman who was forced to resign on account of pressure from native shareholders over his writings on the events of 1857. Dinshaw Wacha, Shells from the Sands of Bombay : My Recollection and Reminiscences 1860-75, Bombay 1920, p.198.

[16]N.R. Phatak, *Nyayamurti Ranade yanche charitra*, Bombay, 1924, p.185.

[17] See Christine Dobbin, Urban Leadership in Western India : Politics and Communities in Bombay City 1840-1885, Oxford University Press, 1972, pp. 79-86.

Also, the collapse of the cotton market in middle of 1865 had seen a steep increase in food prices and rent, leading to rising discontent in all but the higher ranks of government servants. In the hope of containing the rising discontentment, the Government announced reforms through which the existing body in charge of the city's administration, the Bench of Justices, was re-organised into the new Municipal Corporation. The intelligentsia was able to use this opportunity to mount a public campaign through the press to publicise its arguments for political reform and a more equitable tax structure. Having demonstrated their clout through their familiarity with colonial administrative and legal structures, the intelligentsia was in a position to assert a greater influence on political fora. By the late 1860s, the Managing Committee of the Bombay Association included a significant number of law graduates like V.N. Mandlik, B.M. Wagle and other university-educated figures like Ranade and Bhandarkar[18]. This 'elite' sub-section of the colonial intelligentsia consisted of lawyers, pleaders and other natives who had over the last two or three decades worked their way into senior bureaucratic positions. It was this budding class of professionals who enjoyed a privileged financial stability on account of their position in the colonial bureaucracy and had an interest in capitalising on the opportunities in the stock market boom of the early 1860s[19], that was increasingly open to the idea of regarding the emerging class of native capitalist entrepreneurs as potential allies in the ideological struggle to contest the legitimacy of colonial power. As the events of 1857 had showed, this contestation of colonial authority had to be structured by the means afforded within colonial liberalism. But unavoidably, given the absence of provisions for representative structures within the colonial state, this challenge would need to be symbolically staged through the available public arenas like the press.

Native Press Initiatives after 1857 :

The press became an important site for this set of graduates and lawyers to demonstrate their key position within the native social world. As noted at the conclusion of the previous chapter, all the three major weeklies that appeared in the 1860s and the 1870s, *Indu Prakash*, Native Opinion and *Subodh Patrika*, unlike the previous generation of native newspapers that emerged in the 1840s, were bilingual. However, the structure of the bilingual relation proposed in this group of papers started by the small circle of well-placed, university-educated, bureaucratic professionals differed significantly from the bilingualism of the *Durpan*. All the three newspapers, the *Indu Prakash*,

[18] Proceedings of the First Annual General Meeting of the Bombay Association, 1869, p.8; Minutes of Proceedings of the Third Annual General Meeting of the Bombay Association, 5th October 1871, p. 10 cited in Dobbin, Urban Leadership in Western India : Politics and Communities in Bombay City 1840-1885, p.89.

[19] A good example of the profile of interests of this generation of colonial intellectuals is Bhau Daji Lad, (1822-74) born in Saraswat Brahmin family, who went to Elphinstone College and later to Grant Medical College. Bhau Daji was one of the city's first medical graduates and built up an influential practice. He played a prominent part in the setting up of the Bombay Association and had close links with Jagannath Shankarseth, its President. Bhau Daji was keenly interested in music and theatre and patronised troupes visiting the city. He was also associated with the Paper Manufacturing Company established in Bombay in 1854. Having invested heavily in the cotton boom of the 1860s, Bhau Daji suffered serious financial setbacks when the market collapse in 1865. See Dobbin, Urban Leadership in Western India : Politics and Communities in Bombay City 1840-1885, pp.79 and 131 and A.P. Priyolkar, *Bhau Daji Lad : Vyakti, Kaal, Kartutva, Mumbai Marathi Granth Sanghralaya,* 1971.

Native Opinion and *Subodh Patrika*, used both Marathi and English, but in a way that was quite different from what the *Durpan* had attempted to do. The *Dnyanprakash*, which had started as a Marathi paper from Pune in 1849, switiched to the bilingual mode from 1863 onwards and survived well into the next century[20].

Their bilingual policy was indeed a strategic admission of their hope of reaching a diverse readership, but in not seeking to symmetrically render all published items equivalently in English and Marathi, the papers implicitly admitted the existence of two virtually discrete audiences, to whom non-identical sets of messages needed to be directed, and who needed to be addressed in different languages. Thus the layout of these papers clearly acknowledged that the colonial linguistic divide had assumed the proportions of an irrevocable ideological divide between the English and vernacular spheres. With the early files for these important papers difficult to come by, our analysis of the pattern underlying the choice of language for reports appearing in these bilingual papers would have to be based upon available records. It was usual for these papers to publish the main news of local events and important announcements of government appointments in Marathi. The Marathi articles were mostly meant to show the intelligentsia's familiarity with the state of affairs in the provinces and articulate their views on measures to improve the condition of the subaltern sections. Thus the important Marathi articles to appear in the *Subodh Patrika* between 1879-80 included pieces on '*Hindustantil shetkarkaryatil halli nikrusthavastha va tee sudharnaechi upay*' (the depressed condition of Indian agriculture and ways to improve it)[21]; '*Lokanche agyan*' (the ignorance of the people)[22]; '*Ingrez lok*' (which discussed the important qualities of the British character, including their enterprise and drive)[23]; '*Deshi karkhanyas uttejana denyache avashyakta*' (the need to encourage native industries)[24]. However, important policy measures and government decisions, important court cases and appointments of natives to positions of high rank, opinions expressed in the Anglo-Indian press, especially about the native papers, were all reviewed in English. As against this, important events, especially to do with the 'cultivated' sections of the native 'Marathi' community like the meeting of the *Marathi Granthotejak Sabha* (Meeting for the Promotion of Marathi Publications)[25] or the first annual prize distribution function of the *Pune Stree Vakrutatvatejak Mandal* (The Association for Promoting Elocution among Marathi Women)[26] or the Governor's reception attended by two hundred and fifty *native grahasthas*

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[20] R.K. Lele, p.96.

[21] *Subodh Patrika*, Vol.7, 8 June, 1879.

[22] *Subodh Patrika*, Vol.7, 22 June,1879.

[23] *Subodh Patrika*, Vol.7, 3 August, 1879.

[24] *Subodh Patrika*, Vol. 7, 6th July, 1879.

[25] *Subodh Patrika*, Vol. 8, 22 February, 1880

[26] *Subodh Patrika*, Vol. 8, 29 June, 1880.

(gentlemen) were reported in Marathi[27]. But a lecture delivered by Keshab Chundra in London was reported in English[28], as was the report on the *Gujrati Dnyanprasarak Mandali*[29]: Similarly, Shivnath Shastri's discourse on the hindu religion at the Bombay Prarthana Samaj was reported in the Marathi pages, but his lecture on moral education at Elphinstone College found mention in the English section[30]. The deliberately simultaneous and selective use of language in the public domain by these would show that the intelligentsia had developed an awareness of their unique position to play a mediating role through their critical ability to manipulate the linguistic divide within colonial society.

However in trying to do this through the newspaper press, their underlying strategy was not so much to aim for a wider audience for the radical discourses of modernity and much less to seek alliances with popular bases of discontent towards colonial rule. Instead they preferred to assiduously employ their privileged educational training to effectively publicise their own *particular* assessment of colonial power, as a way of securing their political influence. As the Native Opinion put it:

> The task of the native newspapers and political associations is identical to the role of the Opposition in the House of Commons in Parliament in England. That task is of critically examining government policy to suggest improvements, by removing those parts that will not be to the benefit of the people, and also by ensuring the speedy implementation.
>
> These associations ought to carefully study the particular issues, gather diverse relevant information on the nation as well as on what are the possible and desireable improvements, and this will surely earn it considerable political influence.[31]

Several examples may be drawn upon to show that the main thrust of the intelligentsia's discourse from the 1860s onwards was one that sought to consolidate its own claims to speak with the colonial government on behalf of the 'entire' native community. I shall illustrate this by referring to just one instance, a long essay on 'English and Native Rule in India'[32] that was serialised in the Native Opinion during the first half of 1868 and was presumably the work of Vishwanath Mandlik,

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[27] Subodh Patrika, Vol.8, 6 July, 1880.

[28] Subodh Patrika, Vol.8, 20 July, 1880.

[29] Subodh Patrika, Vol. 8, 8 February, 1880.

[30] Subodh Patrika, Vol.8., 14 October, 1880.

[31] The above excerpt is retranslated into English from a Marathi translation of the item that originally appeared in English in the Native Opinion. See Native Opinion, April 3, 1870 quoted in Marathi in G.R.Havalder, *Raosaheb Vishwanath Narayan Mandlik Yanche Charitra*, Bombay 1927.

[32] English and Native Rule in India, printed and published by Ramchandra Udaa at Native Opinion Press, Bombay, 1868.

the well-known Bombay lawyer, who also edited the paper[33]. It was published as a response to the recent proposal by the Viceroy to initiate an official inquiry to test his opinion that the 'masses' tended to be more prosperous and far happier in British territory than they were under states ruled by Native Rulers[34]. The piece was a detailed, soberly-worded polemical exposition on the relative merits and defects of the situation in the territories administered by native princes and those under British rule. One of Mandlik's main purposes in setting up this comparison was to initiate a critical discussion of the nature and effects of colonial government and to invoke the possibility of self-rule. A criticism of the claims of colonial power was in itself not new to the native press, nor was the earlier criticism lacking in self-assurance. But it is interesting to compare the anti-colonial sentiment of the 1840s[35], with the thrust of these arguments advanced in the post-1857 period. What was new, as this piece showed, was the intelligentsia's willingness to now temper and 'adjust' their critique of colonial power in ways that could advance their own potential to displace it, on the basis of their claims to have a more intimate knowledge of 'native opinion' as well as the forms of modern governance. It was therefore that these bilingual papers constantly emphasised their intention to work alongside the colonial administration, reiterating that their criticism was meant to acquaint the government with the views of the native community so as to minimise possibilities of misunderstanding. Quite unlike the critique of colonial rule in the early native press, given the intellgentsia's attempt to now question the legitimacy of the colonial state on the basis of their claims to represent native opinion, it was noteworthy that all these papers appeared from the provincial capital of Bombay, even as they publicised their claims to be 'widely circulated in Bombay and the Mofussil'[36].

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[33] Vishwanath Narayan Mandlik(1833-1889) was born in a *chitpavan brahmin* family in Ratnagiri. He studied Sanskrit at home before going on to the village Marathi school and the Ratnagiri English school. Mandlik came to Bombay in 1848 and was recognised as bright student through his time at the Elphinstone Institute. Mandlik was active in the Students Literary and Scientific Society. He held various positions in the bureaucracy of the Education Department before passing the High Court Pleader's examination in 1863. He was the Government Pleader between 1874-1884, the Chairman of the Municipal Corporation in 1879 and the Dean of Arts in the University of Bombay in 1889. As a well-established, legal professional and government bureaucrat of his time, Mandlik was an advocate of administrative reform that would allow the intelligentsia a greater influence in political affairs. Thus although Mandlik's views conflicted with those of the *sethia* lobby in the Bombay Association, yet his own stance on many social and political issues of the time tended to be quite conservative. He opposed the Khoti Settlement Bill of 1879 which aimed to hand over rights to tenants in the Konkan. Similarly, he had strong reservations about Malabari's Bill on the issue of the age of consent for marriage. In arguing against the use of legislation to regulate social conduct, Mandlik anticipated the orthodox position that Tilak was to take later.

[34] English and Native Rule in India, p. 3.

[35] Bhaskar Pandurang Tarkhadkar wrote a series of eight, long letter under the pen name of 'A Hindoo' in the Bombay Gazette, between 30 July 1841 and 27 November 1841. For more details of Tarkhadkar's letters and the critical tone of the early vernacular papers see Chapter three pp. 110-114 and Chapter four pp.162-168.

[36] The full text of an advertisement for the Native Opinion read : 'NATIVE OPINION, AN ANGLO-MARATHI JOURNAL. Published every Sunday Morning and WIDELY CIRCULATED IN BOMBAY AND THE MOFUSSIL, Terms of subscription: Annual subscription in advance....Rs 15. This advertisement appeared on the back-cover of the above-mentioned important booklet published by the Native Opinion Press in Bombay in 1868 entitled 'English and Native Rule'.

But despite such proclamations, reading audiences were still quite small and certainly not large enough to represent a sufficiently lucrative commercial possibility to attract capitalistic investment. As the previous chapter has noted, this generation of important post-1857 newspaper initiatives enjoyed a degree of longevity that had not characterised native ventures till then[37]. By the 1860s, the colonial intelligentsia had acquired a relative financial autonomy that allowed it to collaboratively invest in a series of important publishing ventures to sustain its quest for influence within the discursive arenas of colonial politics[38]. The available evidence suggests that these were not commercially viable ventures, and could not maintain themselves upon the revenue from circulation[39]. In fact, both the *InduPrakash* and the Native Opinion changed hands several times on account of their losses; but importantly, they were able to continue publication without any significant interruptions, besides being able to employ editorial personnel on a quasi-regular, contractual basis[40]. These papers were run by men of relatively independent means who were persuaded of the political significance of their efforts and this surely figured as one of the main reasons that kept these ventures going despite inadequate revenue from sales or advertising. This in itself would not negate Habermas' general point about the inter-connections between the literate and political spheres. But it is evident that not only was the colonial intelligentsia, despite the severely elitist limits of the colonial reading audiences, able to assert a representative status but they could do so even as they were able to obviate the need to cultivate a readership before they advanced claims to be in tune with 'popular' aspirations. This would strongly challenge Habermas's thesis that the exercise of modern political power intrinsically rests on rational and consensual communicative norms. Seemingly, the colonial public sphere could produce a relatively homogeneous discourse with potentially hegemonic dimensions, not through the processes of accommodation, as much as through the virtual absence of counter-discourses of other marginal voices from within native society.

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[37] See Chapter four, p.152.

[38] Responding to a question as to why it had been difficult to sustain a native public discourse, Mandlik wrote to Col. Jacob in 1859 that this was largely because those who harboured such aspirations, namely, the class of colonial intellectuals lacked the means to back their plans, whereas those who possessed the means had no interest in such matters. Paraphrased from a quotation of Mandlik's letter dated 9-1-1859 quoted by Havalder, *Raosaheb Mandlik yanche Charitra*, p.193.

[39] To begin with, each weekly edition of the Native Opinion was produced as a batch of 500 copies. Mandlik's biographer states, presumably on the basis of a study of Mandlik's private papers, that the total monthly cost for producing the Native Opinion was recorded to be Rs. 695. The break-up of the expenditure was stated to be as follows : the monthly salary expenses for the editor/manager, clerk and caretaker being Rs 200, Rs. 15 and Rs. 8 respectively, with printing costs amounting to Rs 474. See Havalder, *Raosaheb Mandlik Yanche Charitra*, p.195.

[40] In an entry in his personal diary dated 24 December 1863, Mandlik emphasised the need to bring out a standard native paper. He added that the financial cost could not be a deterrent in this important task, arguing that in order to administer India well, the wise and benevolent British Government needed information that only the natives could supply. To carry out this politically critical task of bridging the gap between the rulers and their subjects through the communication of 'independent' and considered opinion of the natives to the government, the Native Opinion was even prepared to incur financial losses. Evidently, such 'independently' expressed public views were not synonymous with representative opinion. For as Havalder argues, the Native Opinion's position was safeguarded mainly because its editors were men of independent means and the paper did not have to depend on revenue earned from readers, See Havalder, *Raosaheb Mandlik Yanche Charitra*, pp.195-196.

Interestingly, despite occasional differences, the three main bilingual papers started from Bombay, by and large, advanced a set of internally consistent ideological strategies. The similarity in the background of the figures involved with each of these initiatives has already been noted. In a politically uncertain situation where the colonial state often relied on judicial amendments to secure its position, as semi-independent professionals, lawyers were in a particularly advantageous position to wield great public influence through their understanding of the intricacies of colonial-modern bureaucratic power. In particular, lawyers and other subsidiary legal bureaucrats were closely associated with such efforts to articulate and publicise a body of anti-colonial opinion in the 1860s onwards. It was not simply coincidental that Ranade, Mandlik, Tilak, Agarkar, G V Joshi all had varying degrees of training and experience in the legal profession, besides making critical editorial and entrepreneurial contributions as press-men. One of the self-proclaimed objectives of the Native Opinion was to use its pages to publicise the decisions and judgements of the Bombay High Court to its provincial readers. This gave the paper an increased circulation among the *vakils* of subordinate courts in the mofussil areas, especially after the passing of the Copyright Act had made it difficult for local papers to carry translations of reports first carried in the Bombay papers[41]. The predominance of moffussil *vakils* among the leadership of the local-level political *sabhas* that soon emerged showed that these efforts to reinforce links between the elite and the provincial members of the legal bureaucracy had clearly paid off.

Given the limitations of the severely circumscribed political space available to the colonial intelligentsia, their preferred strategy for consolidating an anti-colonial, public 'opinion' was emerging as one where they viewed this fundamentally ideological issue as a predominantly textualist exercise, which could ostensibly be 'studiously' settled through the presentation of irrefutable, learned argument arrived at through meticulous research[42]. Much of the important writing in the native press during this period, including the above-mentioned serialised commentary on 'English Rule and Native Opinion' subscribed to this approach. Whether or not this was inevitable within the formative circumstances of colonial modernity, this approach clearly had a fertile potential to re-inforce the other elitist, anti-popular tendencies that informed the intelligentsia's discourse after 1857.

As many scholars have noted[43] such moves to insinuate a predominantly upper-caste cultural bias into the agenda for the 'reform' of native society according to modern principles alienated major

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[41] Havalder, *Raosaheb Mandlik Yanche Charitra* , p.200.

[42] Native Opinion 3 April 1870, quoted in Havalder, p.211.

[43] Practices like *sati*, prohibition of widow remarriage and seclusion of women were mainly customary to upper-caste groups who used them as signs to mark their 'superior' status and exclusivity. The social practices of lower-caste groups diverged significantly from such 'norms'. However, both before and during the nineteenth century, it was not uncommon for such practices to be adopted by up-wardly mobile groups attempting to claim a higher social rank. For an account of how such caste-specific practices received renewed significance through the publicity they received the

sections who did not identify with the hierarchical practices of brahmanical hinduism. At one level, the foregrounding of upper-caste norms within the reformist programme was meant to help colonial intellectuals secure their position vis-à-vis the traditional intellectual elite. In the absence of prior secularisation and on account of the limited scope for widening the social base for learned practices, print also helped re-inforce the authority of traditional brahmanical texts by making them available for a more general circulation. The normative influence of Sanskrit was also renewed through the need to draw upon its linguistic resources in the attempt to develop standardised forms of the vernaculars and expand their lexical repertoires. As agents of the processes through which the texts of 'high' hinduism were renewed and fixed through print, colonial intellectuals were simultaneously able to contest the exclusive claims of the traditional elite to interpret the *shastric* and religious texts.

Analogous processes of transfer between the 'high' language of Christian scriptural authority, Latin, and the European vernaculars had formed part of the emergence of modernity in the West too. But unlike the western experience, for reasons analysed at length in Chapter four, the coming of print in the colonial context did not lead to the creation of large-scale, relatively homogenised, modern reading publics. Rather, despite the importance of the vernaculars for colonial ideology and the radical cultural and political displacement resulting from the colonial encounter, these processes did not lead to a substantial shift in the distribution of literate skills within society. Textual production according to the new norms continued to remain largely in the hands of traditionally literate, upper-caste groups. In fact it was through their control over the channels through which cultural and textual practices were being redefined that these upper-caste groups were able to re-negotiate their pre-eminence within the emerging public domain. Recognising simultaneously that the new literate practices commanded very limited audiences within native society and that their control over the new processes of textual production signified precious cultural capital, the colonial intelligentsia aspired to rationalise the reform project almost exclusively on the supposed authority of 'ancient' texts. But if traditional hindu texts were to provide the point of arbitration, it was inevitable that before long, a consensus emerged that the reform agenda would not fundamentally challenge the principles of hierarchical difference within traditional society, *jati*, It was in this way that the traditionalist textualist strategy of the upper-caste reformist elite only served to further contain the possibilities of a laicised cultural order. Thus by the late 1850s upper-caste native discourse showed an increasing wariness towards ideas of general access[44] and an unwillingness to critique the fundamental of the indigenous hierarchical social order.

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agenda of the upper-caste reformist discourse see Rosalind O'Hanlon, A Comparison Between Men and Women : Tarabai Shinde and the Critique of Gender Relations in Colonial India, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1994 and also Lata Mani, 'Contentious Traditions : the Debate on Sati in Colonial India' in Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid eds., Recasting Women : Essays in Colonial History, Rutgers University Press, New Jersey, 1990.

[44]see Chapter three, pp.104-105.

Having renounced even their nominal support to principles of general access, after 1857, the intelligentsia was free to foreground secondary and less radical issues like widow re-marriage, the issue of the appropriate education for girls, the age of consent and other similar questions which were crucial to the re-articulation of patriarchal power, without disturbing the fundamentally hierachical nature of the social structure. This reluctance to challenge the principles underlying *jati* characterises the 'reform'-oriented discussion in all the post-1860 weekly papers mentioned here. It was not coincidental that those who owned or wrote for the press and those involved in the several, formally staged, protracted public debates with 'orthodox' *shastris* should all come from a small but apparently highly-visible elite. Thus despite the small size of reading audiences, by virtue of their almost exclusive control over the channels for making and distributing the new discourses, a small homogenous elite could effectively achieve a hegemonic influence for their opinions. It was thus that the absence of voices from diverse social strata within the colonial public sphere, the elitism of the colonial intelligentsia and the excessively textualist and increasingly conservative biases of their discourse came to reinforce each other.

Advancing Hegemonic Claims and Disclaiming Difference :

But even as the native press initiatives after 1857 tried to strategically circumvent the political consequences of colonial bilingualism, native discourse simultaneously showed signs of an increasing reluctance to discuss the bilingual divide in a forthright matter. The intellgentsia's growing self-consciousness was accompanied by a discernible shift from their earlier willingness to candidly analyse the irreconcilable splits within the native literate community to a tendency in later writing to gloss over these ruptures. An increasing awareness of the conditions under which they could assume a representative position apparently led colonial intellectuals to disavow the political significance of the linguistic divide or even the hierarchical asymmetry between educated and uneducated segments. I shall illustrate this shift through a reference to writings of Moreshwar Kunte[45]. Kunte is an interesting intellectual figure of the post-1857 period, who deserves more

[45] Moreshwar Kunte (1835-1888) was born in a poor family at Mahuli near Satara. He and M.G. Ranade were fellow-students in the Kolhapur English High School from where he matriculated in 1859. He completed his BA from Bombay University in 1864. He was appointed as the Headmaster to the Karachi High School, where he studied Sindhi. In 1867 he returned to Kolhapur, as the Headmaster of the Rajaram High School. While in Kolhapur, he studied Sanskrit, especially *alankaarshastra* and music. He was the first Indian to be appointed as the Headmaster at the Pune High School , serving in that position for a total of sixteen years. During this period he also did brief stints as Professor of Sanskrit besides officiating as the Acting Principal of Elphinstone College and the Ahmedabad College. Kunte was known to have been something of an entrepreneur too, establishing a unit for making lead pencils, and he also served on the Pune Municipality.

His ballad on *Raja Shivaji*, was his first Marathi composition, which he wrote for the competition sponsored by the *Dakshina* Prize Committee, and for this he won the second prize of Rs. 100. His poem *Dnyan Hech Mukhya Sukh* (On Knowledge being the Foremost Joy) was published in the *Dnyanprasarak* in 1862. He wrote another ballad *Rajaram* in 1871 and a philosophical poem *Man* (Mind) in 1872. His English poems included The Rishi and The Famished Village, the latter based on the experience of the famine of 1876-77. He also published his treatise on The Reform Question in 1871, but his main contribution to the emerging nationalist discourse was his The Vicissitudes of Aryan Civilisation in India, Oriental Press, Bombay, 1880. Not surprisingly, the *Kesari* paid rich tributes to Kunte's scholarship when he died in October 1888. This summary is taken from the Introduction to *Raja Shivaji* , ed. Dr. S.S. Bhonsle, *Sahitya Seva Prakashan*, Aurangabad, 1992, pp.5-54.

attention than he has hitherto received. His ballad, *Raja Shivaji,* won a prize from the *Dakshina* Committee, almost at the same time a play composed by Phule was turned down by the Committee[46]. Kunte published the first part of the poem in 1852 with the explicit intention of contributing to the paltry store of published literature in the vernacular, but significantly, prefaced it with an account in English that analysed the state of vernacular writing.[47] In this preface Kunte offered an extremely perspicacious and detailed description of the cultural and linguistic ruptures created through colonial education and its implications for vernacular production, especially the possibilities of laicisation. In presenting his literary efforts before the 'public' he found himself compelled to reflect upon the divisions in the (literary) 'taste of his countrymen'. He clearly saw that these contemporary ruptures did not correspond with the previous traditional divisions along lines of *jati* :

> The inhabitants of Maharasthra, including Brahmans, shudras and others may be divided into three classes in reference to their taste (1) The Shastris and those whom they guide. This class is large[48]. (2) The educated, that is those who know English.[49] (3) The uneducated; *especially those who are indifferent to the Shastris or the educated.*

These boldly-offered schematic remarks led him to consider the possibilities of contact and conflict between the norms informing pre-colonial and the current literary practises. In doing so, he makes some very telling observations on the displacement of the old norms through the entry of English under colonial rule and the implications of the new cultural norms and practices for vernacular writing :

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[46]The manuscript of Phule's play, *Trittiya Ratna* had been rejected by the *Dakshina* Committee in 1855. Similarly, the high literary journals like *Vividhdnyanvistaar* pointedly ignored Phule's work, claiming it did not conform to current literary and linguistic norms. Much of Phule's important work, including his ballad on Shivaji was first published by the missionary paper, *Satyadeepika* or privately through the help of friends.

[47] Moreshwar Kunte, Preface to Part one, *Raja Shivaji*, ed. Dr. Bhosle, *Sahitya Seva Prakashan*, Aurangabad, 1992, pp.1-15.

[48] Elaborating on the characteristics of this category of intellectuals, Kunte says,' Our *shastris* have doubtless exercised important influence on the literary taste of our countrymen; nor is their education contemptible. There is in Sanskrit a complete system of formal logic in the sense attached to this expression in Europe.... There is enough of excellent Sanskrit literature to enable our *Shastris* to be acute critics. But their taste is affected. Instead of waiting to see how one large general argument or sentiment is developed; and how general arguments and remarks are brought to bear on the evolution of a particular feeling, they expect something artistic in every couplet; and they look for excellence and interest in the elementary subordinate ideas rather than in the combined effect. They also draw a broad line of demarcation between the *Puranas* and poems. The former are the Ramayana and the Mahabharata which are supposed to be above human imitation, the latter are by Kirata and Magha and others.... (but) it is too late to attempt to write a poem on the model of Kirata or Naishada.', See Preface to Part 1 of *Raja Shivaji*, pp.2-3.

[49] About the English-educated, Kunte observes, ' Next to the *Shastris* in numerical strength but far superior to them in intelligence and in such power as intelligence imparts, come our educated country-men. Their taste is improved; their understanding is enlarged; their judgement is generally correct and formed after consideration; and their minds are free from prejudices.', Preface to Part 1 of *Raja Shivaji*, p.3.

> Accustomed to read English, thoroughly sensible of what English poetry is, and competent by their education to enter into the feelings of English authors... But such is not the case with Marathi; though it be their vernacular. Here they find raw materials, uncouth expressions and a versification to which, perhaps, their ears are not accustomed. A *shastri* does not consider a poetical line to be tolerable, till it is considerably stuffed with Sanskrit words; for pure Marathi grates upon his ears. Here there are two facts- *the fact that the educated do not find Marathi tolerable, and the fact of the Shastris looking down upon it. Nothing is common to these two classes except that they do not labour at Marathi and cultivate it ; but that they look at it from a Sanskrit or an English point of view.*[50](emphasis added)

However, the task of critical analysis was not identical with the task of advancing political possibilities, and what could be emphasised as part of the former could jeopardise the representative claims that the colonial intelligentsia aimed to make. Thus interestingly, writing a few years later about the strategies that the intelligentsia could adopt to manoeuvre its way across the cultural and social divides, Kunte was clearly unwilling admit the disruptive the effects of colonial education. His remarks in Part II of his English treatise of 1871, entitled the 'Reform Question' form a striking contrast to the prefatory essay of 1852 discussed above. The later piece seeks to assess the benefits of British rule and also deliberate upon ways to strengthen representative contact between the British rulers and native society, so as to minimise the political liabilities of a 'foreign government ruling over a dependency'. In a striking similarity to Mandlik's long essay in the Native Opinion discussed above, Kunte acknowledges the intellgentsia's strength to be its their ability to claim a greater proximity to the 'native people', compared to the British government[51]. Clearly the prospect of consolidating their own position to contest the legitimacy of colonial rule placed evident limits the intelligentsia's willingness to publicise the internal divisions within native society. Kunte's otherwise astute analysis of the political changes introduced through colonial rule is marked by a questionable disclaimer of the political advantages accruing to those who had the access to colonial education. Crucially, it was only in English that such a disavowal asserting a dubious, transcendental equality between those who had access to English and those who did not, between the uneducated 'many' and their educated spokesmen could be made. Thus in 1871 Kunte could claim :

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[50] Preface to Part 1 of *Raja Shivaji*, p.4.

[51] Kunte, Reform Question II, Bombay, 1871, pp.18-39.

> The class of educated has come into existence. I am not willing to make any distinction between the educated and the uneducated, so far as political questions are concerned; and a distinction is not tenable, for, an examination, based more on the strength of mind than on the amount of knowledge crammed, will not fail to discover that the uneducated in some cases really know more than many educated gentlemen. Whether educated or uneducated - the terms being used according to the flippant usage of the present time - there are many natives throughout India who strive for the good of the country, and the purity of whose conduct and the nobility of whose aspirations are ill-rewarded by the nation which does not understand them and by rulers who cannot condescend to appreciate them.[52]

The post-1860 press reported on a range of themes that had not been altogether absent from the discourse of earlier intellectuals. However, the discourse of both university-educated, professional intellectuals comprising the English sphere, as well as the class of vernacular intellectuals, gave the impression that the intelligentsia were no longer seriously persuaded by the ideas of egalitarianism and open access. I shall illustrate this through references to the writings in the *Nibandhmala*, edited and published by Vishnushastri Chiplunkar and considered the very epitome of the Marathi literary 'renaissance' of the 1870s. The *Nibandhmala* acquired a reputation for its efforts to define and publicise the criteria of literary taste and modern prose style in Marathi. But alongside such considerations of norms of 'high' literary taste and cultivation, a characteristic element in its discursive production was its virulent attack on attempts by subaltern groups to mark their presence in the sphere of literate production. The most vehement instance of this intolerance was provoked by the publication of Phule's *Gulamgiri* and the Annual Report of the *Satyashodak Samaj* for 1872-73, which led the *Nibandhmala*[53] to review them in a most immoderate and abusive fashion[54]. Evidently the need for ideological consolidation within the vernacular sphere impelled a shift away from the previous emphases on the production of a socially 'useful', critical discourse, based on a theoretical acceptance of consensual norms of communication towards a concern instead with the creation of a predominantly 'literary' discourse in Marathi. The aestheticization of vernacular discourse is signalled by the emergence of the literary journal, *Vividhdnyanvistaar*[55] in 1867 and the

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[52] Moreshwar Kunte, Reform Question No II, Bombay, 1871, p.11.

[53] see Review of *Gulamgiri* and the *Satyashodak Samajache Report* in the *Nibandhmala* , No. 44, August 1877.

[54] see also pp.221-223.

[55] *Vividhdnyanvistaar* was the first privately-owned, self-consciously native literary journal, proclaiming to be a 'monthly magazine of Marathi literature for ladies and gentlemen', below which ran the Marathi equivalent, '*Kulastriya va grhastha yankarita*'. It was started by R.B. Gunjikar in 1867 from Pune, the same year that the government-owned *Marathi Dnyanprasarak* ceased publication. It was published until 1937.

The first issue carried an introductory editorial which was clearly suggestive of the hegemonic aspirations underlying such an attempt to sustain a modern, 'cultivated', 'literary' discourse, 'We are glad to be able to prove what a great need there is among our people, especially women, for a monthly journal such as this. But our pleasure is equalled by our regret that in a vast and densely-populated province such as Bombay, there does not exist a single journal geared towards the welfare and recreation, of approximately 70,000 students who benefit each year from the 17 lakes spent out of the joint funds from government and ryots'. Similarly, expressing gratitude for the support shown by readers, the editorial in

above-mentioned monthly, Vishnushastri Chiplunkar's *Nibandhmala* in 1876, both from Pune. These journals sought to self-consciously create and address a 'literary' audience in Marathi, thus putting the project of articulating a collective identity for the 'Marathi' people and their past on the agenda. But even more significantly this exercise of ideological consolidation through a self-consciously articulated 'literary' discourse in the vernacular was underwritten by a hardening stance towards marginal attempts by socially and intellectually 'inferior' castes to voice their interests in the public domain. Thus implicitly, the literarization of vernacular discourse had a dual agenda : of defining a distinct, homogeneous identity that would symbolically represent the 'Marathi' public. But the aestheticisation of vernacular discourse was also intended to signal its own exclusivity. Although questions of translation and the small size of the reading public were still discussed, these considerations no longer marked a concern to widen the social base of the vernacular literate public.

The logic of an aestheticized, exclusive vernacular discourse could apparently quite comfortably coexist with the renunciation of even the nominal possibility for the emergence of an egalitarian, laicised literate culture. In demonstrating its ability to sustain this disjunction between the aesthetic and the political liberal, vernacular discourse had evidently come of age! That the upper-caste intelligentsia had given up any substantial commitment it might have had towards laicisation was borne out in the concerted campaign launched through the native press[56] in anticipation of the Education Commission's sittings in 1882, as well as in the depositions[57] made before it. The upper-caste intelligentsia unanimously disapproved of the government's plans to curtail the funds allotted

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the first issue of the second year reiterated the journal's intentions to be useful to both women and men. Because of which it undertook to articles on three types of subjects : firstly, relating to education including translation of many excellent books, literary criticism, lectures on grammar, patriotic lessons(*deshgyan*) for students; secondly, essays on worldly and practical (*vyavahaarik*) subjects, including information on hygiene and thirdly, entertainment which include imaginative stories (*chamatkarik goshta*) and poems. Translated from W.L. Kulkarni, *Vividhdnyanvistaar : Itihaas ani Vangmayavichaar'*, Popular Prakashan, 1976, p.3.

[56] For a summary of opinions expressed in the *Dnyanprakash*, *Kesari*, *Maratha*, Native Opinion, the leading Gujrati weekly, *Rost Goftar*, see weekly Native Newspaper Reports filed between February-July 1882. In an article entitled 'Primary Education and Indigenous Schools', the Quarterly Journal of the Pune Sarvajanik Sabha argued in favour of the greater claims of the middle classes to higher education saying, ' It is the middle, or rather the hereditary literate and mercantile about (sic) 10% of the whole population which appreciate the present system of instruction, and in the work of Indian regeneration, the real work belongs to this class of society. They alone can furnish the teachers who will undertake the work of popular education. India's present circumstances require that their class agencies should be allowed to operate freely in all directions, and it becomes as much the duty of government to help the middle classes obtain higher education as to assists the lower to secure primary instruction.', Quarterly Journal of the Pune Sarvajanik Sabha, July 1882, quoted in Native Newspaper Report for week ending 21 October 1882.

[57] Many of the established, upper-caste figures asked to testify before the Commission were candid enough to admit that primary education had hitherto not been placed upon a sound basis, and also that it had not spread evenly among all communities. Some admitted that the state of primary education needed to be improved, but fewer were willing to admit that lower-caste students had to face discrimination by upper-caste teachers and students in the government schools. But all of them were unanimously opposed to any measures that might affect the access of upper-caste students or government allotments to higher education. See Vol. II, 'Evidence taken before the Bombay Provincial Commission and Memorials Addressed' of the Report of the Bombay Provincial Committee of the Education Commission, printed at the Government Press, Calcutta, 1884.

to higher education for the purpose of extending primary education[58]. Thus by 1885, the ostensibly 'moderate', Sarvajanik Sabha[59] joined the public protest[60] by the upper-caste intelligentsia and the press objecting against the Bombay Government's decision to reserve a quota of free studentships intended for students from lower-caste backgrounds.

This section has tried to point to some of the tensions between attempts to articulate a homogeneous collective identity through the press and through the creation of vernacular literary discourse, on the one hand, and the espousal of ideas of social inclusiveness, on the other. There were analogous problems discernible in the intellgentsia's efforts to create a regional network of political associations from the 1860s onwards as part of its attempts to achieve a position of hegemonic influence, which the following section will explore. My analysis of these initiatives to establish colonial associations along modern, voluntary principles, will highlight the specific difficulties and contradictions faced by such a project within the colonial situation, especially as it sought to inscribe itself upon the logic presumed by *jati* structures. Here I shall also try to suggest some of the tensions and similarities between the intelligentsia's efforts to further their ideological influence through the formation of such associational network and their initiatives to use the press towards similar ends.

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[58] Reviewing the report of the Education Commission, the opinions expressed in the *Maratha* of 18 November 1883 were fairly representative of the intelligentsia's position on the subject of education at that point. The paper noted, that it had been glad to find that 'the Commission has not committed the blunder of over-estimating the importance of primary education at the expense of collegiate education. ... We are induced to think that the spread of elementary education on any extensive scale is hopeless, unless great encouragement be given to Collegiate education.... We must have a great number of Collegiate Institutions in order that the enlightened students turned out by them, from year to year, may carry the light of the education to the remotest and most secluded regions of popular ignorance.

[59] The Sarvajanik Sabha came into existence on 2nd April 1870, the Hindu New year day through an assembly called to organise an investigation into the alleged mismanagement of funds of the *Parvati* temple in Pune. The meeting comprised of representatives elected through securing a specified minimum number of signatures from residents in and around Pune. In this way, almost 6000 signatures had been obtained, allowing the Sabha to claim that 'The formation of the Sabha on an elective basis clearly shows that the principle is almost ingrained in the Indian mind and is not a plant of foreign growth.' The Sabha's first President was Chief of Aundh and its secretary, G.V. Joshi also fondly known as *'sarvajanik kaka'* . The Sabha intended to act as a 'mediating body (between the government and the people), which may afford to the latter facilities for knowing the real intentions and objects of Government, as also adequate means of securing rights by making timely representations to Government of the real circumstances in which they were placed..'. Ranade played a crucial part in the work of the Sabha especially after his transfer to Pune in 1872. The Sabha split in 1895 when Ranade and Gokhale quit, after which it came under Tilak's leadership.

[60] see Correspondence on the subject of the New Free Studentship Rules from the Sarvajanik Sabha, dated 29 Oct. 1885, forwarding a copy of the Resolution passed by the General Committee on 6th October 1885 and also the letter from the Secretary of the Sabha, dated 25 November 1885 to Mr. Lee-Warner, to the Acting Director of Public Instruction, published as 'Proceedings of the Sabha' in the Quarterly Journal of the Pune Sarvajanik Sabha, Vol. 8, No. 4, 1885, pp.30-42. The Sabha argued that the recent decision to reserve a quota of the government free-studentships and reduced-fee studentships was 'impolite and unfair' for 'singling out *brahmins*, and setting them against other classes, as representing opposite interests.' The second letter argued, 'There is however, a further and a higher consideration of principle involved. The Government schools are open to all classes alike under the noble policy that has hitherto been followed. This privilege implies that all the advantages of free and reduced-fee studentships shall be equally open to poor boys from all classes, without distinction of caste, race and creed. This is the cornerstone of the British system of government in all its branches, and the educational department cannot take on itself to lay down any rules by which particular castes or creeds shall be favoured or discouraged.' Instead of the policy of reservation, the Sabha demanded that the free studentships should be in proportion to the number of paying scholars.

Colonial Bilingualism and Political Associations :

The principle of voluntary association has been a crucial organisational principle within liberalism. Voluntary associations that brought together individuals on the basis of mutually shared interests had formed the basis for the enlarged impersonal collaborative networks that characterise modern bourgeois society. Such bodies intended to deliberately organise individuals on the basis of a limited, but clearly identifiable set of interests, had also been crucial in sustaining the division of modern life into separable domains denoting different spheres of activity such as the economic, intellectual, political or aesthetic. It has been persuasively argued[61] that the disjunction of human life into separable, specialised domains, and the simultaneous emergence of expert knowledges based on norms of abstract reasoning are crucial to the making of the space for the intelligentsia's hegemonic position within modernity.

However, inevitably, the place of associations within the ontology of the colonial world was at some variance with their role within the rise of western modernity. As Chapter two has shown[62], modern principles of voluntary association were first invoked in the colonial world as part of the organisational design of the official, ideological project of education. The Bombay Education Society first employed these principles to bring together natives and officials as part of a collaborative forum for ideological purposes, and soon other native associations that adopted similar organisational procedures followed. Thus within the colonial context, liberal associational principles, ostensibly founded on abstract notions of equality, became the basis to formalise a sphere of ideological collaboration between representatives of native elites and the colonial government. The colonial context saw the displacement of the means through which liberal discourses would be recast as pedagogic procedures to produce 'individuals' through the institutional arrangements of the education project. Such an extension of associational principles to legitimise the expansion of bourgeois capitalist rationality through the colonial encounter also helped to introduce the modern disjunction between the domains of the economic/material and the ideological/intellectual as a structuring principle of colonial society. Such processes of differentiation reinforced the series of binary assumptions within colonial discourse that aimed to cast native society as the inferior, less civilised Other of colonial power. Various policy initiatives were able to implement these hierarchical assumptions, whereby the complex contradictions within capitalistic modernity were 'successfully' transferred to the colonial context as the profoundly asymmetric and powerful polarities between western vs. native, enlightened vs. primitive, orthodox vs. reformist, English vs. vernacular. Alongside, the task of the colonial intelligentsia was also being laid out as their hegemonic influence would depend on the efficacy with which they would be able to mediate between these disparate linguistic, geographical and ideological divides instituted through colonial rule.

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[61] see Zygmunt Bauman, Legislators and Interpreters : Modernity Post-modernity and Intellectuals, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1989.

[62] see Chapter two p. 46 and pp. 70-72.

Associations and Consolidating Links between Upper-caste Intellectuals :

It is against this background that I shall explore the intellgentsia's efforts to deploy the principles of voluntary association. Voluntary associations, firstly, helped the colonial intelligentsia to consolidate internal bonds amongst themselves. In doing this they were able to set up a powerful discursive dynamic that identified large sections of their compatriots as their unreformed Other, before going on to offer themselves as most qualified to applying the appropriate solutions in the form of various social and ideological initiatives. I shall trace these processes through a reference to the Students' Literary and Scientific Society, the first important association of native intellectuals to be established in Bombay in 1848. At a later stage, the intelligentsia was able to exploit the organisational possibilities of voluntary associations to create an extended provincial network of *sabhas* that would link them with their 'schooled' allies, especially the *vakils*, teachers and newspaper editors in the mofussil areas, as well as with the other native professional and trading classes tied to the colonial economy or state[63]. Attempts to form such a political network had already achieved results in the form of the Sarvajanik Sabha established in Pune by 1870[64]. The emergence of the Sabha was a concrete manifestation of the region-wide political alliance between the colonial-schooled 'public', a fact which had been until then been implicit in the readership networks of the native newspapers.

The Students' Literary and Scientific Society, established in 1848 as an extra-curricular forum between past and present students and the faculty of Elphinstone College figures prominently in accounts of the emergence of the liberal imagination in western India[65]. The Bombay Association, established in 1850 was intended as a forum to bring together representatives of the indigenous entrepreneurial class and colonial intellectuals. The transformative impact of colonialism operated mainly through its ability to recast its political ambitions as a pedagogic intention to administer modern civilised ways to 'primitive' peoples. The use of associational principles served to strengthen the internal links between this new, largely homogeneous intellectual elite and to demarcate the arenas of ideological influence and access to the structures of colonial power, which implication, also defined the boundaries between 'reformed' colonial intellectuals and large

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[63] There were eleven *vakils*, five *seths*, five schoolmasters and two newspaper managers among the forty names in the list of those who are said to have attended the Second Annual General Sabha of the Thane Zillah Association, held at the Government English School, Thana on 20 February 1870. See Proceedings and the Report of the Managing Committee of the Thana Zillah Association in G.B. Joshi, *Gelya Tees Varshapurveeche Lok va Tyanchya Samjuti athva Majhe Pravasachi Hakikati (Rojanishi)*, Baroda, 1896, pp.188-193.

[64] Similarly *vakils*, *sardars*, traders, money-lenders and school-masters figure prominently in the list of 139 members and officers of the Sarvajanik Sabha. The 'representative reach' of the *sabha* was emphasised as these members and officers were selected 'by different portions of the Poona Community by different *mooktiyarpatras*, ...numbering to about 17000'. Rule No. 3 explained the procedure, whereby all those who were able to obtain the signatures of at least 50 adult men from any caste or community would be eligible as members of the Association. See The Constitution of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha and its Rules, Poona, 1871. pp. 9-10.

[65] Christine Dobbin, Urban Leadership in Western India : Politics and Communities in Bombay City 1840-1885, 1972; Jim Masselos, Towards Nationalism : Group Affiliations and the Politics of Public Associations in Nineteenth Century Western India, Bombay 1974 ; Ravinder Kumar, Western India in the Nineteenth Century, London, 1968.

'unreformed' sections of native society. Further, the formation of colonial associations helped this new, 'improved' intellectual elite to articulate the lessons they had internalised through their contact with colonial discourse into a powerful pedagogic vision aimed at reforming the social practices of the rest of their 'uninitiated' fellow-country-men. The predominantly textualist approach adopted by the intelligentsia to the intensely political questions emerging out of the dissemination of modern ideas showed that the pedagogic emphases within colonial discourse had been duly internalised by native intellectuals. My aim here will be to show that the deployment of associational principles in the colonial situation, rather than enlarging the social distribution of the new political principles, actually helped reinforce the divisive and exclusionary pressures generated through the introduction of colonial education.

The Students' Literary and Scientific Society formulated its objectives, duly stated under its Rules, as follows :

> The objects of this Society are two-fold; first, the improvement of individual members in English Literature and Science, and secondly, the dissemination of knowledge, amongst the natives of this county by the establishment of Schools, especially **GIRLS SCHOOLS**, and by the publication of periodicals in the vernacular languages of the Presidency. (emphasis in original text)[66]

The objectives of the Students' Literary Society clearly presumed a pragmatic and utilitarian orientation to the social world. But, given the formative circumstances of colonial modernity, such attitudes could only be publicly professed in ways that disavowed the political intent of the radical implications of this agenda. The Rules thus went on to clearly state that the Society's activities would categorically exclude 'all subjects of a religious and political character'[67].

By 1856, the Society had acquired a total membership of 190, including 38 who resided outside the island of Bombay. But the presence of these members from the provincial areas did not alter the essential nature of the Society's constituency, since even so, the overwhelming majority comprised those who had had a direct connection with Elphinstone College. The remaining members were individuals linked to the mercantile offices on the island or to the colonial provincial bureaucracy[68]. Thus although the numbers on its membership list were limited, through its discussions and publications, the Society intended to articulate a powerful normative discourse that would prescribe directions of change for the rest of native society. Through its proximity with the administration and

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[66] 'Rules and Regulations of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society' reprinted in The Report for the Session of 1862-63, Bombay, 1863, pp.50- 55.

[67] 'Rules and Regulations of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society' reprinted in The Report for the Session of 1862-63, Bombay, 1863, p.54.

[68] 'List of Members, Resident and Non-Resident on 10 Th. June 1856' in The Report of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society for 1856, Bombay, 1856, pp. v-xi.

keeping in mind 'the present state of science and literature and the immediate requirements of the people of this country'[69], the Society was also entrusted with the responsibility of 'voluntarily' supplementing official efforts to produce an appropriate corpus of printed literature in English and the vernaculars that would help accomplish the colonial pedagogic mission. The English Society had two subsidiary vernacular branches, the Marathi Dnanprasarak Sabha and the Gujarati Buddhivardhak Sabha within which committees were appointed to solicit and examine contributions in the vernaculars. These tasks were to be carried out under the strict and exclusive supervision of the Society Members[70]. Although in principle contributions from 'all quarters' were to be welcomed, these would have to be ratified by a sub-committee appointed to 'examine the language of each paper before it (was) finally sanctioned for printing'[71]. Thus it would seem from the Society's Proceedings for 1852 that the basic discursive and institutional structures through which colonial power sought to secure itself within native society through the active participation and mediating influence of the colonial intelligentsia were quite clearly already in place :

> It may naturally be supposed that we look forward with great interest, and with no small anxiety, to the result of this first attempt to supply the people of western India with a series of papers designed and *composed by individuals sprung from among themselves, who with correct ideas regarding the character of their tastes, and the state of their knowledge, combine a degree of interest and sympathy which Europeans cannot pretend to entertain.* [72]

The formalisation of the association between official discourse and colonial intellectuals endowed this small bunch of natives with a tremendous sense of moral superiority vis-à-vis the rest of their fellow-native brethren. To them the Society represented an arena befitting their own aspirations to assume the role of the harbingers of a 'colonial enlightenment'. The strong pedagogic aspect within the elevated self-perception of these native intellectuals is aptly exemplified by the following report of the Society's activities :

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[69] The Third Report of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society and of its vernacular branches, Bombay Gazette Press, Bombay, 1852, p.18.

[70] On 18 August 1851, the Society adopted resolutions to form two vernacular committees, to be called the Marathi and the Gujrati Book Committees respectively that would prepare a series of papers similar to those contained in Chambers' Information for the People. Two Europeans, Professor Paton and Prof. Reid, were requested to become members to guide the committees, 'as the present state of science and literature and the immediate requirements of the people of this country, may seem to demand'. See Third Report of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society and of its Vernacular Branches, Bombay Gazette Press, Bombay, 1852, p.18.

[71] Third Report of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society and of its Vernacular Branches, Bombay, 1852, p.18.

[72] The Third Report of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society, 1852, p.19.

> We have now located all the schools in clean airy apartments ; supplied them with school furniture, with pictures, with maps, and with school books compiled expressly or the purpose; placed them under the instruction of intelligent and enthusiastic teachers; and appointed superintendents from among our own body to visit and examine them : and what have been the results? Disheartening beyond measure as far as the Hindu portion of the community is concerned . *The great majority of the indolent Marathas for whose benefit the greatest exertions have been made still allow their children to figure in those vulgar exhibitions that are so constantly to be witnessed in the island, of a few wretched urchins huddled together in a dismal room... squatting around a puntojee, himself half-naked and stupid and gabbering away mysterious paragraphs in barbarous marathi neither they not the teacher, who professes to be able to enlighten them can explain two consecutive sentences.*[73]

Despite the constraints governing the transfer of liberal norms through colonialism, such ideas of voluntary association between persons of equal status were evidently opposed to the organisational principles of native society, especially those enunciated in the practice of *jati*. This clash between social rationalities was played out over many sites, but the emerging arena of associational politics was one of the most important to the production of a hegemonic public discourse and the processes that led to the vernacularization of liberal principles. Colonial associations derived their importance from the fact they exerted a structural influence in determining the modes through which colonial power could be approached and contested as well how native elites would now relate with their social world. It is crucial to note that, theoretically, print and principles of voluntary association signified different potentials to extend the social scope of the new cultural and political discourses. The reach of print could have, in principle, extended to wider, non-schooled, pre-literate audiences. On the other hand, the story of associational politics clearly showed that there was an almost complete identity between the colonial literate 'public' and the membership of 'liberal' associations. This enhanced the definite sense of purpose and political potential that the members perceived in the Society's activity from early on :

[73] The Third Report of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society, 1852, p.21.

> These discussions, in addition to the obvious advantage which they afford students, in the way of mutual improvement, by inviting them to consider and to argue questions of immediate interest, and of great practical importance, have also the useful effect of bringing and keeping together the former and the present students of the college We are convinced that many of our band - some of them gentlemen holding important public posts - who never would have joined us had we instead of entering the arena of actual life, and oiling our limbs to struggle with obstinate facts, held formal meetings to discuss some obscure point in the international law of Europe or to consider the comparative merits of two or three dead men in ancient times*[74].

However, the intellgentsia's increasing self-consciousness of their political worth went hand in hand with a tendency for them to adopt a more conservative outlook. This is borne out by the ideological orientation of the positions taken within the early associational fora like the Students' Literary and Scientific Society. Whereas, the early vernacular publications like the *Durpan* and the *Prabhakar* had shown a definite inclination to publicly criticise the rationale of *jati* [75], in marked contrast, within the arena of associational politics, colonial intellectuals were far more reluctant to take on board the critique of traditional social hierarchies society. This was because the formal, closed arena of associational politics heightened their awareness of their own elite and elevated position from the very outset. The greater homogeneity of such voluntary organisations allowed the emerging intelligentsia to discern the political potential within the discursive move to designate the rest of native society as its unreformed Other far more immediately than the avenues of publicity through the native-owned press allowed. Thus from the very beginning, the Society preferred to engage with secondary issues that had more to do with the redefinition of the patriarchal structures of native society like the establishment of schools for (uppercaste) girls, rather than with challenging the fundamental hierarchies of *jati*. Challenging the basis of *jati* was never an issue for the Students' Literary Society, and significantly, the only organisation interested in the praxis of challenging caste barriers was the Paramhansa Mandali, which despite having branches in Bombay and some outlying areas, kept itself outside the public realm by deliberately working in a cabalistic way[76]. Interestingly, its membership overlapped significantly with that of Students' Literary and Scientific Society and its vernacular branches. Thus the critique of *jati* could enter the public domain in a limited way in the pre-1857 vernacular press, but clearly did not form part of the

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[74] The following are some of the observations made in the Third Annual Report of the Society : * At this point, the following remark appears in a footnote : 'At the commencement of this Society in June 1848, many predicted that, as in former societies of a similar kind, our time would be wasted in such idle discussions as whether 'Brutus was justified in killing Caesar?' a subject which excited keen debate in the old society on the ruins of which the present society was founded', quoted from The Third Report of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society, Bombay, 1852, p.17.

[75] See Chapter four, pp.149-154,esp. fn.120.

[76] For a detailed account of the Paramhansa Mandali and its branches outside Bombay, see J. V. Naik, 'Early Anti-caste Movement in Western India: The Paramhansa Sabha', Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay, Vol. 49, 50 and 51, 1974-76 (New Series), pp. 136-61.

mainstream native public discourse, and certainly never entered the upper-caste initiatives in the arena of associational politics in a concrete way[77].

The preceding sections have argued that the ideological shift in the second half of the nineteenth century can only be explained as an emerging trajectory out of a series of political choices made by the intelligentsia from among the horizon of communicative and ideological possibilities. The 'closure' of the intelligentsia's critique of hierachical social principles arose out their preferred strategy to view their reformist initiatives predominantly as a discursive and textualist project, which in turn seriously restricted the scope for widening the social basis for potential audiences for these discourses. Clearly, the ideological trajectory evident through the efforts of the Student's Literary and Scientific Society that I have tried to trace here reinforces my general argument about the links between the homogeneity in caste backgrounds of the new literate agents, the increasing textualisation of the reform project and the intellgentsia's repudiation of even a nominal endorsement of ideas of open access and general entitlement. I now go on to analyse the intellgentsia's efforts to establish a regional network of political associations. In doing this, the discussion will mainly emphasise two aspects. Intended as channels for the communication of native opinion to the colonial government, the purpose of political associations overlapped with the rationale underlying the newspaper press, especially the native initiatives of the 1860s. Firstly, the discussion will try to assess the intellgentsia's efforts in both these arenas as part of their quest to achieve a hegemonic position. The second point of focus will be to analyse how the efforts to create a regional associational network were affected by the linguistic division between English and the vernacular segments within the colonial public sphere.

Emergence of Political Associations:

Efforts to organise enlarged, ground-level networks of 'representative' opinion began from the mid-1860s onwards. Prominent figures like Ranade and Vishnushastri Pandit, who were also well-known for their contributions to the native press at this time, attempted to mobilise region-wide support over the issue of widow re-marriage through personal correspondence, visits, hand-bill campaigns and lectures directed at groups gathered in the local native library or schools in the provincial areas[78]. They were followed by the work of G.B. Joshi[79], who travelled through districts around Bombay, especially Thana, in the late 1860s, in the attempt to form a network of provincial

[77] The Pramhansa Mandali was disbanded when in 1867, some Bombay papers carried letters threatening to publicise its membership. Notably, the issue of caste distinctions entered into the public domain only after the formation of the Prarathana Samaj in 1868, whose principles included a belief in the transcendental equality and brotherhood of all mankind.

[78] N.R. Phatak, *Nyayamurti Ranade yanche Charitra*, Bombay, 1924, pp. 140-145.

[79] Govind Baba Joshi (1826-1906) was a Pleader from Vasai . He founded the Vasai Association in 1862, and the Thane Zillah Association in 1867. He maintained a journal as he travelled from village to village trying to explain the importance of such a network and establishing local sabhas wherever possible. This diary was published in 1896 as *Gelya Tees Varshapurveeche Lok va Tyanchya Samjuti athva Majhe Pravasachi Hakikati (Rojanishi)* , which would literally translate as 'A description of the views of people thirty years ago, or a daily account of my travels'.

sabhas as the organisational basis upon which the intelligentsia could hope to advance a 'representative public opinion'. Importantly, the pedagogic paradigm, with its implicit codes of hierarchy, remained the dominant metaphor within these efforts to produce extensive, collaborative political networks beyond the limited scope represented by the 'schooled' public. Moreover, these organisational efforts had to span complex ideological and linguistic divides and my discussion here will try to bring out the nature of the intelligentsia's response and hegemonic strategies in this context. I will show that these efforts to organise provincial networks that could, at least, presume the acquiescence of those whose opinion they sought to represent, did little to radically challenge the valorised accent that had been placed upon textuality as part of the intelligentsia's initiatives to gain a hegemonic position within the colonial world.

I shall draw my material mainly from two pieces that seek to explain the need for such organisational networks and their advantages to the 'uninitiated'. Significantly, both are in the form of a dialogue between the educated spokesmen for liberal ideas and the virtues of representative government and the ordinary, 'unreformed *lok'*. The first occurs in a semi-autobiographical account by G B Joshi, based on a diary he maintained as he travelled tirelessly through the province hoping to organise a ground level political network through associational principles. The second is an article published anonymously, but possibly the work of G. V. Joshi[80], the secretary of Pune Sarvajanik Sabha. Entitled '*Navin adhikar ani tyanchya sambandhane kalpilela samvad'* the article appeared in the important vernacular journal published by the Sabha from Pune from 1881, the *Sarvajanik Sabheche Masik Pustaka* (the monthly journal of the Sarvajanik Sabha)[81]. It provides telling insights into the mobilising strategies adopted by the intelligentsia in the face of the proposals for meagre opportunities for local self-government made by the colonial government in the late 1870s and early 1880s. Although the second piece was written almost a decade after the first, I shall examine them in combination as I believe the two pieces can be viewed together as a powerful projection of the intelligentsia's self-perception and interests, when the moves to establish a rudimentary structure for native representation in the colonial administration seemed imminent. They are also a telling account of the ironic meanings that the logic of liberal representation assumed within colonial modernity, especially its claims to enable an egalitarian distribution of political power. Both articles clearly show that the initiatives to create such networks emerged out of the urban intelligentsia's interest in acquiring the requisite information to demonstrate their 'knowledge' of provincial conditions, as the basis to enhance their own claims for a greater share of

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[80] Ganesh Vasudev Joshi (1828-1880) was born in a poor family in Satara. Not having gone to College, he had only a working knowledge of English. But he had passed the Pleaders Examination and was well-versed in the working of colonial law and administration. This knowledge was crucial in his role in establishing the Pune Sarvajanik Sabha in 1870. Joshi was particularly active during the famines of 1876-77 in sending out the Sabha's agents to collect information from the drought-hit districts, which was then publicised through the Sabha's journals. Joshi represented the Sabha at the Delhi Darbar in 1877. In 1879, G.V. Joshi decided to defend Vasudev Balwant Phadke for his part in the *bhil* insurrection of 1878.

[81] see fn. 8 above.

senior appointments for natives in the administration. In return, the intelligentsia offered to explain various laws to the 'unlettered rural folk', thereby helping the *ryots* acquire a better understanding of the unfamiliar and alien political regime. However, in seeking to create such a provincial network of *'sarvajanik sabhas'*, the vernacular intelligentsia was quick to realise the difficulties of applying the logic of voluntary associations in the colonial context. With the basic 'pre-conditions' for the building of such associations not available to them, colonial intellectuals were left with no option but to enact their quest for a hegemonic position as displaced, symbolic staging of the difficulties through their writing.

The first dialogue takes place, interestingly, between an 'ordinary' but 'aware' villager (*gramasth*) and an old-fashioned village elder, (*gramsisth*), with the former trying to impress on the latter the urgent need for *sabhas* among the 'respectable' residents of the village, especially since there was growing evidence that even the lower orders, including the 'unlettered' and the 'ignorant' were beginning to show signs of adopting such modern organisational modes[82]. The imaginary dialogue was cast in the form of a *nibandh*, written especially to be read out as Joshi moved from house to house to explain the nature and purpose of such *sabhas*. Given the radical disjuncture between the logic of *jati* samaj and liberal politics that colonial intellectuals were trying to bridge, efforts to create larger associational networks, it would seem, could proceed only from such deliberately composed explanations. The piece was evidently intended to act as a pre-formulated response to anticipated questions. Indeed, the curious conflation we have here in the implication that having ready 'answers' to such objections was somehow tantamount to reconciling the underlying political asymmetries, would be in keeping with my argument about the textualist approach to the intellgentsia's goal of securing a hegemonic position. The *nibandh* told its audience that the *sabhas* were needed to arrest the material, political and technological decline of the province, and that their efficiency derived from their ability to express the considered opinion of the collectivity[83].

The second article which is within the context of the need to enlist support for the limited measures of self-government in municipalities and local committees, valorises the influence of the public opinion/ popular will, explaining that the old master-servant relation between *raja* and *praja* is reversed within modernity[84]. Power now rested with the collectivity; both *satta* and *shakti* derived from *jamav* (unity)[85]. But with such unity nowhere being pre-given in colonial society, it had to be

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[82] *'Sabhyans vinanti* 'G.B.Joshi, Gelya Tees Varshapurveeche Lok va Tyanchya Samjuti athva Majhe Pravasachi Hakikati (Rojanishi) ,Baroda,1896, p15.

[83] *'Sabha sthapan honyachi avashyakta'* G.B. Joshi, Gelya Tees Varshapurveeche Lok va Tyanchya Samjuti athva Majhe Pravasachi Hakikati (Rojanishi) ,Baroda ,1896, pp. 4-7.

[84] *Baithak dusra-raja mhanje kaay va tyancha adhikaar. Hallincha raja va praja hyanchya samjuteet pharak-uttam rajyapadhathi konti,* in *'Navin adhikar ani svatantrasmabandhe samvad'* Pune Sarvajanik Sabheche Masik Pustak, Vol. 2, No. 10, August 1883, pp. 21-46.

[85] *Baithak dusra* - in *'Navin adhikar ani svatantrasmabandhe samvad'* Pune Sarvajanik Sabheche Masik Pustak, Vol. 2, No. 10, August 1883, p. 42

forged through strong leadership. The question of appropriate leadership is thus all important, and is the foremost to be considered by the first dialogue. Discussions in the *sabha*, the audience is told, would range from matters related to general administrative issues (*sarkari rivajsambandhi mahiti*), to local, village-related concerns (*gramstithi sambandhi vichar*), from ways of securing the advancement of knowledge/ education (*vidyavruddhi vichar*) and to considerations of social customs and practice (*lokriti vichar*)[86]. Given the range of matters that were bound to come up before the *sabha*, the leader (*sabhapati)* would need to be doubly equipped : as a scholar trained to resolve conflicts about *dharma* according to the authority of the *shastras,* and also qualified in matters pertaining to the present political situation and modes of administration[87]. But realising that it would be rare to find a person who could combine expertise in all these domains, the *nibandh* suggests that it might be best to divide the functions between two separate 'executives', the *dharmashastradarshak* who would be well-read in the *Vedas* and *dharmashastras,* and the *vyavahaardarshak,* who would need to have a good grasp of official procedures in addition to being knowledgeable about commercial matters[88]. Clearly, one of the aims of these *sabhas* was to establish a hegemonic structure that effectively combined the authority of 'traditional' brahmanical discourses authority with a command over modern modes of economic and bureaucratic power.

Posed in this way, the objective hardly seemed to be one of extending the sabha's influence by making it more inclusive; rather the emphasis seemed to be on *conserving* control over access to political power. Thus although, in theory, it was hoped that the local 'representative' sabha would be a be a collective forum, open to anyone who wished to come, in effect, in the interests of discipline and order, we are told, the sabha would proceed with 'atleast five or six representative from each (important) castes' like the *prabhus, vanis, gaud saraswat brahmins*[89]. Those who were likely to be unruly, disruptive or ill-equipped to speak would be kept out. Order and decorum would be maintained by following the system of nomination and by prescribing set rules to govern the functioning of the *sabha* from start to finish. A concluding remark notes, almost parenthetically, that 'people from these and other *jatis* as well should gather to make a *sabha*'[90]. Modernity's displacement as pedagogy, is quite apparent here, because of which colonial associations could never mirror society in microcosm, but as Phule was only too keenly aware[91], remained as conglomerates of educated individuals.

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[86] '*Sabhet konkonte vishay nighanyache'* in G.B. Joshi, Gelya Tees Varshapurveeche Lok, Baroda, 1896, p. 8.

[87] '*Sabhyas vinanti - dusara divas*' in G.B. Joshi, Gelya Tees Varshapurveeche Lok, Baroda, 1896, p.21.

[88] '*Sabhapateenche sadharan gun'* in G.B. Joshi, Gelya Tees Varshapurveeche Lok ,1896, p.26.

[89] G.B. Joshi, Gelya Tees Varshapurveeche Lok, pp.7-13.

[90] G.B. Joshi, Gelya Tees Varshapurveeche lok , p.13.

[91] Phule was severely critical of the representative claims of reformist organisations such as the Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj or political associations like the Pune Sarvajanik Sabha and the Congress. Phule persistently drew attention to the fact these organisations were made up of upper-caste lawyers and clerks, and that it was impossible for farmers, labourers, and other underpriveleged groups from the *kunbi, mali, dhangar, koli, bhil* communities to either be present at meetings, or have their interests represented through petitions forwarded through such *sabhas*. See

Within the colonial situation, various institutions of civil society, in fact were first established as 'extensions' of the apparatuses of the colonial state. The second dialogue gives us further insights into the nature of the emerging political equations through which the intelligentsia could hope to bring themselves into an ideologically influential position. The urban intelligentsia revealed its complicity with official colonial discourse, especially when in the course of approaching their 'unreformed' Other in the rural audiences, it tended to unmitigatedly endorse the government's claims to have a paternalistic and benevolent interest in the political education of natives[92]. We learn both from this dialogue and other reports, that a large part of the activities of the Sarvajanik Sabha, proceeded with the active approval and support of the official machinery[93]. That would reinforce the argument made above as to how colonial associations did not open out possibilities for a more even distribution of power, but instead led to the consolidation of the structures of authority and collaboration that had already been put into place through about six decades of colonial rule.

Significantly, the ideologues for representative government were urban intellectuals (*Pune va Mumbai shahratun vidvan lok),* who appear on the scene almost miraculously like some divine apparitions and stay for just long enough to 'explain' the new measures being proposed by the government to the 'ordinary' people(*ryots/lok)* [94]. In seeking popular 'consent' for the government measures, these intellectuals hoped to advance their own positions as mediators between 'rural folk'(*ryots/ lok)* who, on account of their 'ignorance', 'backwardness', 'lack of public-spiritedness' and 'unenterprising nature', needed to be represented through the voice of the educated, schooled minority. Clearly, despite the complex internal, asymmetrical divisions characterising native society, the intelligentsia's position to carry out the function of ideological mediation between town and country, the peasantry and the bureaucracy, agrarian and urban interests, remained unique, and virtually uncontested within the colonial public sphere. The dialogue also shows the links in the 'ideological chain' extending between the provincial capital, Bombay to the village : it is the provincial intellectual, Rambhau, recognised in the village as hailing from 'nearby' Pune, who initiates the discussion on the provisions or popular sovereignty within modern political arrangements with a handful of people, until it is time for the urban intelligentsia to descend there, at

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Shetkaryachya Asud (1873) *Sarvajanik Satyadharma Pustak* (1891) in *Mahatama Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, Bombay 1991, p.306 and 492-493 respectively.

[92] In his effort to explain the benefits of representative government Raghunathrao, one of the city-bred intellectuals says, 'it is best if the entire body of subjects (*praja*) select a few intelligent individuals from among them to make laws and rule accordingly. The English have long since realised that the welfare of the peasants cannot be secured under any other system of government, and have ruled accordingly in their own country for about four or five hundred years now. He added that it had been the intention of the most benevolent and wise British government to provide such an administrative system for the natives too.', translated from G.B. Joshi, *Gelya Tees Varshapurveeche Lok*, p. 42.

[93] See the accounts on the efforts of the sabha's agents to collect information on the various districts in *'Sabhene kelelya kamachi report'* in *Pune Sarvajanik Sabheche Masik Pustak*, Vol. no. 2, Nos. 6-7, February-March 1882, pp.73-80 and in Vol. 2, No. 10, June 1883, pp.178-182.

[94] *'Navin adhikar ani svatantrasmabandhe samvad',' Pune Sarvajanik Sabheche Masik Pustak*, Vol. 2, No. 10, August 1883, p. 31.

a crucial juncture of the discussion, accompanied by the full array of local government officials. The actual elaboration of the government's proposals for limited native representation at the level of local government is left to the 'high', English-educated intellectuals from Bombay, who also go on to explain how the imminent measures are modelled on the same principles of rule of law and government through deliberative consultations as those followed in the British House of Commons.

The colonial intelligentsia had successfully, even if awkwardly, negotiated the complex disjunctions between secular/religious, pre-colonial/modern moral and political codes by apparently accommodating both the indigenous and modern normative structures within their discourse, thereby also rendering traditional scholars unnecessary to their hegemonic enterprise. The *Vedas* or the other *Dharmashastras* were no longer invoked as possible reference points to settle disputes over 'traditional' matters. Also *dnyanprasar* was no longer on the agenda by this time; instead it is what is perceived as the overwhelming fatalism or apathy (*daiyvavaad)* of the 'ordinary' native, especially the peasants, that is one of the main objects of the reformist discourse. The peasant needed to be galvanised out of his abject apathy through a new philosophy that emphasised action and enterprise. Not surprisingly then, the only 'traditional' text that seems to be important now within the intelligentsia's discourse is the *Gita* - its exhortation to immediate and unceasing action is thought to have some potential in arousing an unresponsive, indebted, depressed peasantry![95]

However, even within this 'controlled' staging of the intelligentsia's mediating function, there are signs that its position was far from secure. Faced with the inevitable question as to why the full parliamentary system of government was not practised in India, the response of the intelligentsia is the classic liberal-gradualist one of the majority being as yet 'unprepared' to be given full political status[96]. Until such time the right to vote and the eligibility criteria for candidates for the small number of municipality seats to be opened to native representatives would be restricted to university graduates, *vakils* who could produce a certificate of their status from the High Court, medical and engineering professionals, jurors, assessors, and those paying an annual tax or drawing a government pension of or above Rs. 20. Similarly in the case of *taluka* committees these rights would be given to those paying an annual tax of Rs.38, local *patils* and police personnel[97]. Given the adoption of such obviously exclusive criteria for defining the 'political' public, it is not

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[95] *'Navin adhikar ani svatantrasmabandhe samvad',* Pune Sarvajanik Sabheche Masik Pustak, Vol. 2, No. 10, August 1883, p. 42. Interestingly, Tilak too was especially interested in the Gita, on which he wrote a detailed commentary Srimad Gita Bhagvadgita Rahasya. Unlike for their predecessors like Vishnushastri Pandit, Ranade, Bhandarkar, Mandlik, the full array of traditional texts did not seem to hold a strong ideological significance for the next generation of colonial intellectuals like Vishnushastri Chiplunkar, Tilak and even less so for Agarkar. Evidently, the possibilities of secular, bureaucratic power promised through the contest with the state stood to gain little through theological ratification.

[96] *'Navin adhikar'* Pune Sarvajanik Sabheche Masik Pustak, Vol. 2, No. 10, August 1883, p.67.

[97] *'Navin adhikar''* Pune Sarvajanik Sabheche Masik Pustak, Vol. 2, No. 10, August 1883, pp.54-57. Women could also vote if they fulfilled the above conditions, but they could not hold the office of commissioners.

surprising to note the simultaneous description of the government's main duty as being one of authoritatively maintaining law and order so as to ensure the security of life and property, and correspondingly, the binding duty of the people as being that to recognising the legitimacy of the ruling power at all times.[98]

By the 1880s, the ideological collaboration embarked upon by the colonial state with the native intelligentsia had yielded an influential region-wide network of interests that identified with the logic of the colonial-modern political and economic structure. As ideologues for this alliance of interests, the intelligentsia were thus the chief proponents of a discourse that had effectively internalised and also sustained a disjunction between the material and the ideological aspects of the colonial enterprise. The creation of an apparently separable ideological realm thus provided the space to establish within the colonial context the other disjunctions characteristic to the discourses of modernity - namely the separation of the aesthetic, the political and the moral into separable cognitive domains. The next section discusses the emergence of self-consciously, 'high' literary discourse Marathi mainly through a reference to the writings of Vishnushastri Chiplunkar. Although that discourse tried to project itself as 'apolitical', liberal and reasonable, my analysis will try to bring out the political advantages that the intelligentsia sought to derive from their espousal of an aestheticised form of Marathi that demonstrated the ability of the vernacular to take on the 'high' literary function.

The linguistic divide within colonial society was perhaps the most radical manifestation of the capacity of the colonial power to secure itself through its capacity to construct irreversible differences. The possession of English was indispensable for securing a position of control within colonial-modern politics, but clearly, a command of English was not a sufficient condition if this was to ***translate*** into a position of political advantage and hegemonic influence. This paradox was not lost even upon those who had to reconcile themselves to living without the means to acquire English. On realising that 'ordinary folk' would not be granted the right to vote as part of the government's current proposals, one of the peasants in the above-mentioned dialogue fervently reminds the city-bred *ingrezi vidvan* of the acute responsibilities that their knowledge of English entrusted them. With great poignancy, the urban, English-educated intellectual is told, 'in the present times, you people are (like) our eyes[99]. The Sarvajanik Sabha's decision to start a *monthly* journal in Marathi in 1881, ten years after the Sabha first emerged, and three years after it had been publishing its *quarterly* English journal, points to the intelligentsia's realisation of the potential reach and significance of the vernacular reading public[100].

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[98] *'Navin adhikar'*, p.27 and also p.77.

[99] *'Navin adhikar'* , p.70.

[100] see announcement entitled *'Jahiraat'*, dated September 1 1881, signed by the secretaries of the Sabha back cover of the *Pune Sarvajanik Sabhache Marathi Pustak*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 1881.

In being forced to acknowledge 'the great number of persons in this region who do not know English'[101], it was clear the intelligentsia realised that by this stage there was precious little that they could do to make a concrete difference to the extent of the linguistic divide, but neither could it be ignored. Neither the extension of the social base of the literate public through education or translation into the vernaculars, nor a political resolution of conflicting interests through consensus and accommodation seemed concrete, realisable options any longer. The only hopes of building a consolidated public opinion would need to rely on 'symbolic' and strategic efforts through the press, for it was less likely to be constrained by irreconcilable, 'ground-level', differences that were bound to affect networks interests the formation of associational networks. The power of discourse was, if anywhere, evident in the colonial context, especially through its capacities to mask, rather than reconcile underlying differences between antagonistic political constituencies. This awareness of the political potential of 'inflated' publicity was crucial especially to Tilak's political project through the launching of the *Kesari* and the *Maratha* in 1881. It is this realisation that, undoubtedly, led the editors of the *Kesari* and Maratha to claim significant increases in readership every few months[102]. Clearly aware of the politics of publicity and despite the difficulties of establishing reliable estimates for colonial reading public, nevertheless these remained among the earliest papers in western India to achieve anything like a mass impact[103]. But even before this, the political possibilities of an assertively claimed, dominant collective identity, 'symbolically' foregrounded through the press, had been clear to Vishnushastri Chiplunkar and it was no coincidence that both Tilak and Chiplunkar were closely associated in forming the Deccan Education Society and the Aryabhushan Press[104].

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[101] *'Jahiraat'*, dated 1 September, 1881, back cover of the *Pune Sarvajanik Sabhache Marathi Pustak*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October, 1881.

[102] See fn.10 above.

[103] It is not easy to estimate the actual circulation of these native papers. Being keenly aware of the significance of enumeration in colonial politics, it seems native editors were wont to over-estimate the figures they submitted. This tendency is seen especially evident in the case of the *Kesari* as well as the *Dinbandhu*. Given the dismal percentage of literates among the non-brahmin population, it seems especially difficult to take the *Dinbandhu*'s claim of having a weekly circulation of 925 at face value. Similarly, despite the *Kesari's* popularity, it is hard to imagine that its subscribers could rise by between 25-80 % every few weeks, especially given the severely elitist scope of the education policy.

On first making its appearance in these lists for the week ending in 5 February 1881, the *Kesari's* output per issue is given as 200 copies, until the report for the week ending 7 January 1882, where the figure is up to 1500. The report for the week ending 10 June 1882 sees the next jump in claimed readership to 2800. By the week ending 30 September 1882, the *Kesari* was claiming its weekly output to be 3500. During the same period, the average figure for other weekly publications in Marathi was between 175-400, with the *Dnyanchakshu* published from Pune, consistently claiming an output of 1000 copies per issue. By the week ending 21 December 1881, the non-*brahmin* weekly newspaper *Dinbandhu* was consistently claiming that its production per issue was 925, whereas at the beginning of the year in the report for the week ending 8 January 1881, the figure was put at 300. The Bombay Anglo-Marathi weekly, *Induprakash* was the other paper to consistently give its estimate per issue at over 1000. The figures for the other bilingual weeklies from Bombay, Native Opinion and *Subodh Patrika* during a comparable period fluctuated between 400-600 and 600-1600 respectively. By 16 January 1886, *Kesari's* output per issue was claimed to be 4800.

[104] Writing in the annual review at the end of the *Nibandhmala*'s sixth year of publication, Vishnushastri Chiplunkar discusses these developments as the main achievements of the past year. The New English School was the first privately-managed High School in the Bombay Presidency and was claimed to have 400 students at the end of its first year. Eight out of the twelve students sent up for the Matriculation Examination were successful, with one of them being awarded the Jagannath Shankarseth scholarship. The setting up of the Deccan Education Society had disproved the

There is a clear line of continuity from Chiplunkar's efforts to develop an apparently 'apolitical', liberal, literary discourse in the vernacular through his influential journal, *Nibandhmala* and the emergence of Tilak as an important early nationalist voice. The next section seeks to uncover the politics underlying the journal Chiplunkar founded and edited, the *Nibandhmala*. I shall be concerned especially with the political 'underside' of Chiplunkar's concern with developing a modern 'high' literary- critical discourse in Marathi. His manipulation of the aesthetic-political divide through what I shall call the aestheticsation of political exclusion within colonial society provided a crucial stepping stone for the emergence of Tilak as an important political figure, and generally for the emergence of a nationalistic vernacular discourse in western India by around the 1880s. I hope thus to bring together my overall argument about the links between the 'vernacular renaissance' and the ideological shift towards conservatism, as anti-colonial thinking approached the emergence of nationalism proper.

Aestheticization and Intolerance in the Vernacular Sphere : Ideological Consolidation through Chiplunkar's *Nibandhmala* :

The internalisation of the liberal differentiation between the domains of the aesthetic and the political evident in the intellgentsia's attempts in the 1870s to lay down the norms for a 'high' modern, literary style for Marathi were crucial to their quest for ideological influence. Chiplunkar's influential journal, *Nibandhmala* has been recognised since its time(1874-1881) as an important part of the 'Marathi literary renaissance' and was crucial to the making of a vernacular, anti-colonial early nationalist identity. In this section, I shall be concerned with the nature of the ideological consolidation within the vernacular sphere through the writings in the *Mala*, as it was familiarly identified among its circle of readers. I shall also consider the relation posited with English through its pages. The main question I shall ask is how is that, given the evident asymmetry in the position of the English and the vernacular spheres, especially in terms of access to the range of bureaucratic and professional opportunities that the two languages allowed, the *Nibandhmala* 's discourse showed few signs of explicit antagonism towards the English-educated section of the intelligentsia. Chiplunkar openly declared his admiration for English, and detailed discussions of its great literary 'wealth' were common in the *Nibandhmala.* Further, despite his differences with more liberal leaders like Ranade, who hoped to promote the reformist agenda through constitutional means[105], there is little overt criticism of the English-educated university elite in the journal's pages.

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idea that a private school managed by natives could not be self-sustaining. Similarly, Chiplunkar noted that until now, the printing business, like other trades had been in the hands of uneducated(*avidvaan*) and uncultivated (*adaani*) persons, because of which the true impact of the press. But the Aryabhushan press intended to change that. The *Maratha* would compare with any renowned English paper or journal and therefore it would prove useful to all those who were posted in far-off places on account of government jobs an d those who did not have the means to find out the news of the world. The *Kesari* on the other hand would be useful mainly to ordinary (*saamanya*) people who are not in contact with English or those who lived in the rural districts. See Annual Review for 1880 in *Nibandhmala*, No. 76, December 1880 reprinted in *Nibandhmala*, a commemorative volume, Chitrashala Press, Pune, 1917, pp. 328-330.

[105]Vishnushastri had little patience with attempts to advance the reform agenda through political associations. Similarly, the activities of the Sarvajanik Sabha came in for derisive comment too in the *Nibandhmala*, especially its efforts to petition

Most importantly, Chiplunkar's fervent enthusiasm for English Literature did not extend to an endorsement of liberal, modern ideas of consensual or critical rationality, as is indicated by the frequent and extreme hostility that the *Mala* directed towards those it considered its 'lesser' Others, the lower-castes. What especially provoked the *Mala's* ire were the efforts by these 'subaltern' communities to seek education and organise themselves under the banner of the *Satyashodak Samaj*. Thus for all its attempts to project itself as an 'apolitical' journal, intending to create a literary-critical readership in Marathi, the *Nibandhmala* clearly had a discernible underlying political agenda. This provides important insights into the ideological orientation of the vernacular sphere, at the moment of its so-called 'literary awakening', especially as the intelligentsia advanced on its historic mission of articulating a nationalistic position.

Although the most important, the *Nibandhmala* was not the first journal of the time to take up the task of defining a Marathi literary audience. The *Pune Shalapatrak*, edited and managed first by Krishnashastri Chiplunkar, and then by Vishnushastri himself for the Education Department and also the more 'moderate' *Vividhdnyanvistar* that started publication in 1867 had been forerunners to the *Nibandhmala's* objectives of providing an exemplary, instructive discussion to help create a 'literary' audience for Marathi. But by all counts, the *Mala* was able to create a niche for itself[106] and from Vishnushastri's reputation as having definitively moulded the style of modern Marathi, it is apparent that the *Nibandhmala* 's brand of literary politics struck a chord with its audience, and filled an important ideological gap within the vernacular sphere. What gave the journal its distinctive character and appeal was Vishnushastri's assertive flair in combining a liberal, expansive tone of discussion vis-à-vis literary matters, with a trenchant, exclusivist, upper-caste claim to define the collective identity and the boundaries of the vernacular sphere. A major factor in the *Nibandhmala's* appeal lay in its knack of apparently maintaining a bold and audacious public posture in the face of evident internal dissonance within the vernacular sphere. The *Nibandhmala's* discourse kept up a militant posture against both the colonial state and the missionaries. But the *Nibandhmala's* position was far from enjoying a general acceptance within the articulate sections of the native community, and often even met with opposition from the upper-caste intelligentsia[107]. Almost paradoxically, the *Nibandhmala's* assertive style stemmed from a deeply fraught position. Indeed, there were many signs that upper-caste attempts to assert their dominance in articulating a

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the colonial government for concessions. Vishnushastri's criticism of the parochialism that prevailed at the Sabha's meetings was undoubtedly not groundless. But in denouncing the Sabha's leaders through the *Nibandhmala's*, Vishnushastri clearly showed his lack of appreciation of modern methods of political organisation, preferring to believe that the key to an enlightened public opinion was an improved literary taste. See account of the *Nibandhmala's* satirical report on the *Sarvajanik Sabha's* Petition for Representative Government in 1874 in N.R. Phatak, *Nyayamurti Ranade Yanche Charitra*, Bombay, 1924, pp.216-217.

[106] The report in the annual review at the end of the second year speaks of the circulation having doubled in the course of the *Mala's* second year. Similarly, the summary in issue No. 36 also speaks of its increased circulation. See *Nibandhmala*, a commemorative volume, Chitrashala Press, Pune, 1917, pp.309-311.

[107] Chiplunkar's abrasive style and anti-reform views had brought him into disagreement with many other intellectuals of his time, including Moreshwar Kunte and even Agarkar.See also fns. 9 and 105 above.

representative 'Marathi' identity were not backed by an underlying social consensus. For example, even the *Nibandhmala* had to admit the chaos that prevailed at the annual meeting of the *Pune Vakrotejak Sabha*, in 1878 that was intended to promote skills of public-speaking within the Marathi community[108]. Similarly, we also learn from other sources that efforts to hold the first ever gathering of Marathi writers, *Marathi Granthkar Sabha* in 1878, were even by the organisers' own admission, far from successful[109]. Chiplunkar's own writings in the *Nibandhmala*, repeatedly alluded to the serious difficulties encountered in producing a regular supply of standard articles to sustain a journal like his that sought to rely on 'original' composition in the vernacular. All this testifies to the vulnerability of such attempts to articulate an elevated literary discourse in Marathi. The confident tone and self-assured style of Chiplunkar's prose is in complete contrast to what one might expect to find against this background of internal contestation and discord surrounding the attempts to define a homogeneous vernacular literary public. This apparent paradox makes sense when seen against the major disjunction underlying the *Nibandhmala's* cultural politics, namely the coexistence of an ambience of 'progressive' commitment to the cause of original composition in Marathi and vernacular literary taste with an aggressively anti-lower caste discourse side by side within its pages.

This was especially evident from the attack that Chiplunkar launched on Phule, through the pages on *Nibandhmala* under the pretext of reviewing the recently published Report of the Satyashodak Samaj[110]. The occasion seemed to have brought out the most intemperate side of the particular brand of the sarcastic, bitter humour that the *Nibandhmala* had adopted as its trademark. The review simply turned out to be an excuse to berate the basic thrust of Phule's politics. In taking an anti-low-caste position publicly, the *Mala* was presumably speaking on behalf of its readership, and for their 'benefit', thus clearly betraying its own political interest and position. The main provocation seemed to stem from the attempts by lower-caste communities to organise themselves to petition the colonial state on their right to education and public access. Clearly, the upper-caste intelligentsia saw this as likely to undermine their attempts to secure their hegemonic position vis-à-vis the colonial state and native social world. Not surprisingly, the establishment of the Satyashodak Samaj in Pune in 1873, was seen to pose an immediate threat to the position of the vernacular

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[108] full account published in Issue No. 21 and briefly mentioned in the year end summary for 1878 published in Issue no. 24, p.307.

[109] Review article *'Marathi Granthotejan'* in *Vividhdnyanvistaar*, Vol. 10, No. 3, March 1878 in anticipation of the Marathi *Granthkaaranche Sammelan* that took place in Pune on May 11, 1878. For full text of the articles see Appendix in W.L.Kulkarni, , *Vividhdnyanvistaar : Itihaas ani Vangmayavichaar*, 1976, pp. 138-163.

The second conference in 1885 did not fare much better. Phule refused Ranade's invitation to take part in the second *Granthkaar Sabha,* on account of fundamental differences between the literary and political vision of the Satyashodak Samaj and *sabhas* that wished to preserve upper-caste privileges. See Phule's letter in *Dnyanodaya* of 11 June 1885, reprinted in *Mahatama Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, Bombay, 1991, p.344.

[110] Review titled , *'Marathi Pustake: Satyashodak Samajacha Report' Nibandhmala*, No. 44, August 1877, pp. 1-19. For the text of the Report see *'Pune Satyashodak Samajaacha Report'* for 24 Sept. 1873-24 September 1875 reprinted in *Mahatama Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, Bombay, 1991, pp.193-203.

intelligentsia that had tried to carve out for itself a precariously balanced, 'secondary' space in between the 'high' university-educated, intellectuals and the 'ordinary masses'. Chiplunkar's aggressive criticism was aimed at the whole range of Phule's activities, from the publication of his anti-Brahmanical *Brahmanche Kasab*[111] and *Gulamgiri* [112], and his articles published in the missionary paper, *Satyadeepika* from Pune, to the organisational efforts of the Satyashodak Samaj. The disparaging comments against *Gulamagiri* were made under a thin veneer of aestheticism. The Report is criticised for not conforming to the norms of current literary discourse and was ridiculed for what Chiplunkar considered the inaccuracies of its fantastic coinages and historical imagination, and also for its apparent grammatical deficiencies[113]. But the review did not stop there, but went on to criticise in very coarse language, the attempts by lower caste groups to take advantage of the education offered in missionary schools. These were seen as a conciliatory position towards the colonial administration and the missionaries, which in Chiplunkar's view amounted to a subversion of the upper-caste intelligentsia's attempts to extend a homogenous character to the vernacular sphere[114]. Phule's allegations about the exclusivist and oppressive aspects of brahmanism were only answered with a derisive chauvinism, that at best admits with patronising arrogance that the question of brahmanical privilege will be reviewed gradually and at the appropriate time[115]. Chiplunkar's hostility towards the Satyashodak Samaj was couched in language that was far from decorous and made no pretence of respecting the norms of liberal communicative reasoning :

> Under the present conditions, (it needs to be considered) how wise and really courageous it is for fools like Jyotiba to shamelessly bark away at *brahmins*, and to vie for crumbs that may be thrown at them according to the convenience of those in power; similarly it is worth thinking about how becoming it is in the present political situation(*deshstithi*), to establish sabhas in order to trade abuse amongst ourselves.[116]

Interestingly, Chiplunkar remained unimpressed with upper-caste attempts to re-negotiate their dominance through the religious sphere, especially the initiatives by figures like Dayanand Saraswati to publicise a reformed hindu faith and practice. Thus, whereas the leaders of the Sarvajanik Sabha, including Ranade, were keen to welcome the hindu leader to Pune and organise a ceremonial procession in his honour, the *Mala*'s reports[117] on the Arya Samaj and its leader' visit

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[111] Jyoti Phule, 'Priestcraft Exposed or *Brahmanache Kasab'*, Bombay, 1869 reprinted in *Mahatama Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, pp. 81-107.

[112] Jyoti Phule, 'Slavery or *Gulamgiri'*, Pune 1873. reprinted in *Mahatama Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, pp. 109-192.

[113] see Review titled , 'M*arathi Pustake: Satyashodak Samajacha Report' Nibandhmala*, No. 44, August 1877, pp. 5-8.

[114] *Nibandhmala*, No. 44, August 1877, p.14.

[115] Review of *Dinbandhu* in *Nibandhmala*, No. 48, December 1877, p.25.

[116] translated from Marathi, see Review, *Nibandhmala*, No. 44, August 1877, p.14.

[117] See the critical account of Dayanand Saraswati's visit to Pune in 1876 in a piece entitled *'Pratikhandan' Nibandhmala* No 36, December 1876, pp.1-29.

to Pune were consistently unfavourable. Vishnushastri's own attempts to foreground upper-caste hegemonic claims mainly through a dominance asserted in the literary sphere and his evident lack of sympathy for such claims to be based on any form of religious authority, showed that processes of Weberian disenchantment formed a significant element within the political imagination of the provincial, lower-middle class intelligentsia by the late 1870s. That was hardly unexpected, when one considers that by this time, as Phule realised very well, the basis for the articulation of brahmanical hegemony was no longer the exclusive authority to interpret religious texts, but rather the upper-caste dominance within the secular structures of the educational institutions and colonial bureaucracy. As his English preface to *Gulamgiri* put it :

> Though the *brahmin* of the old Peshwa times is not quite the same as the *brahmin* of the present day, though the march of western ideas and civilisation is undoubtedly telling on his superstitions and bigotry, he has not as yet abandoned his time -cherishes notions of superiority or dishonesty of his ways.... Perhaps the most glaring tendency of the Government system of high class education has been the virtual monopoly of all the higher offices under them by the *brahmins*. If the welfare of the *ryot* is at heart, if it is the duty of the government to check a host of abuses, it behoves them to narrow this monopoly, day by day so as to allow a sprinkling of other castes to get into public service[118].

It was this apparent renewal of brahmanical privilege through the colonial period that allowed Chiplunkar to boast thus:

> Mr. Phule is thus notified - that if he is indeed concerned about the uplift of his caste-brothers, then it is little use for him to be composing books like the 'Gulamgiri' to abuse those who are his superiors in every way. However unjust or wicked *brahmins* may be, one fact is incontestable : that they retain possession of the keys to the storehouse of knowledge. And there simply are no avenues for the other jatis to have access to education/knowledge (*dnyan*) without their help.[119]

In stark contrast, any suggestion of such contemptuous bravado is kept out from the *Nibandhmala's* attempts to elaborate a high-literary critical discourse in Marathi. In its literary discourse, the *Mala's* tone was unfailingly decorous and expansive; the cordiality, no doubt, occasioned by the homogeneity of the social position of the *Nibandhmala's* readership and their interests. It was the *Nibandhmala's* practice to publish an annual review where the editor also gave his assessment of the journal's work during the preceding months. The tone adopted in such pieces unvaryingly showed a modest and respectful attitude it readers. Often, the *Mala* would go to great lengths to explain its difficulties to its subscribers, humbly asking for their forbearance on account of the numerous obstacles within the situation of colonial modernity that hampered a journal aspiring to

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[118] See Jyotirao Phule, 'Slavery or *Gulamgiri*', Pune 1873. reprinted in *Mahatama Phule Samagra Vangmaya*, pp. 125-127.

[119] translated from Marathi, Chiplunkar's editorial comments on the *Dnyanodaya* and the *Dinbandhu* in *Nibandhmala* No 48, December 1877, p.24.

be a standard, 'original', 'literary' publication from keeping to its regular schedule. Just one example will suffice to illustrate my point :

> ... we humbly request our readers that the reasons for the irregularity of our journal are none other than those discussed above. Our chief intention being to serve our readers' interests, we ask them to bear with us if the work takes somewhat longer. They ought to remember that we do not as yet possess the skills to reel out five or six pages at a sitting like (Samuel) Johnson, nor are the printing presses here efficient enough for books to be produced within a few days of the type being set.[120]

Seemingly, then our *malakaar,* as Chiplunkar was often referred to by his contemporaries, had perfected the strategy of adjusting his tone and manner of address, given the intellectual and social domain he sought to address. Evidently a cultivated, liberal tone of elevated deliberation was to be reserved exclusively for a discussion of 'high' literary matters amongst a like-minded audience. But as we have seen, this like-minded, apparently cultivated audience was perfectly capable of relinquishing all norms of etiquette and tolerance in speaking of its 'inferiors', especially when they were seen to transgress upon the former's 'rightful' privileges. Also significantly, despite his overriding need to consolidate a strong collective, anti-colonial identity through the vernacular, the *Nibandhmala*, never sought to play down his unstinting admiration for the English language and its literature. Besides his somewhat immoderate and highly aestheticist reverence towards English is seen in his famous comparison of English *vidya* to the milk of a tigress[121], Chiplunkar's writings were liberally annotated with quotations and references from the works of famous English authors and poets. On both counts, a contrast with Balshastri Jambhekar's position as an early vernacular intellectual, discussed in Chapter three[122], springs to mind. As we have seen, Balshastri's pre-occupation with the critical, rather than the literary discourses of English, enabled his engagement with the possibilities of modernity to be far less aestheticised than is in evidence in the vernacular writing of Vishnushastri Chiplunkar. The *Nibandhmala* published three influential essays on '*Ingrezi bhasha*'[123], giving detailed accounts of English literary history, focusing especially on the emergence of a learned yet commonly-understood language in modern prose through periodicals and literary/critical journals like the Spectator, Rambler, Edinburgh Review and Westminister Review. These articles also tried to summarise for the Marathi reader an account of the emergence of the modern historical imagination, as seen through the work of English historians. Vishnushastri was thus enthusiastically open to the literary possibilities that a familiarity with English allowed access to, even while he and other vernacular intellectuals at the time showed discernible signs of

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[120] translated from Marathi, Annual Review for 1877, *Nibandhmala* , No. 48, December 1877 reprinted in *Nibandhmala*, a commemorative volume, Chitrashala Press, Pune, 1917, p.315.

[121] '*Amchya Deshachi Stithi*', *Nibandhmala*, No 78, reprinted in *Nibandmaleteel Teen Nibandh*, ed. Dr. Nirmalkumar Phadkule, Pune 1975, p.107.

[122] Chapter three, pp. 98-100.

[123] These were serialised in *Nibandhmala* , Nos. 28, 29 & 32, April, May and August 1876.

rejecting many of the political premises central to liberalism. Chiplunkar was able to develop a sophisticated understanding of the cognitive incommensurability that could underlie languages and which the colonial discourse on translation had sought to obscure by ignoring the distance between languages through time and space. But again, in contrast to Jambhekar, Chiplunkar did not seem to mind admitting that the vernacular could never possess the range of expressive idioms developed through English, especially the specialised prose styles spanning the domains of science, technology and modern political thought. Interestingly, Chiplunkar argued that this gap ought to be treated as a simple and obvious difference and not to be invested with implicit judgements about the vernacular's 'primitive' or 'deficient' state.[124] In thus asserting the relative autonomy of the vernacular, Chiplunkar was quite correctly reflecting his awareness of how, by this time, the colonial linguistic divide had actually widened to the extent that English and vernacular intellectuals seemed to inhabit distinct worlds of cognitive, social and political opportunities. But also, in thus renouncing the hope of adopting the vocabularies of science into the vernacular, the intelligentsia was also conceding that the apprehension of modernity on the subcontinent would have a predominantly literary bias. Thus importantly, the transfer of the discourses of modern rationality into the South Asian world through colonialism saw the displacement of their political impact onto to the realm of cultural and linguistic redefintion. Besides this, the other great constitutive influence upon the trajectory of the vernacularization of the liberal imagination on the sub-continent was the appropriation of modern cultural and political norms through the making of an anti-colonial discourse. Under these twin pressures, the modern Indian imagination emerged as a paradoxical blend of a hyper-aestheticised consciousness, that was simultaneously profoundly subversive towards the structures of modern bureaucratic and state power.

The *Nibandhmala* served as a prelude to a series of important cultural and political initiatives, in which both Chiplunkar and Tilak were closely associated, namely, the formation of the 'autonomous' Deccan Education Society, the launching of the Aryabhushan Press, the New English School and the book-depot, as well as the *Kesari* and the *Maratha* in Pune by early 1881[125]. Chiplunkar did not live to see all these efforts flourish, but he remained closely involved with them until his premature death in 1882[126]. And yet despite all his bold and energetic efforts to articulate an assertive, anti-colonial literary style for Marathi through absorbing the inspiration English had to offer, Chiplunkar could not ignore the evident discrepancy between the ambience of heightened militancy that his discourse emphasised and the signs of political subjugation and subordination of the vernacular sphere that he saw around him. In the essay referred to above, where he spoke of the great promise of heroic empowerment 'implicit' in the English language, Chiplunkar claimed that anyone

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[124] *'Bhashaantar'*, *Nibandhmala* , No. 12, pp.29- 31.

[125] The last issue of *Nibandhmala*, which probably appeared only in early 1881, gave details of the plans for each of these steps. See *Nibandhmala*, No. 72, December 1880 and also fn.9 above.

[126] Annual Review for 1879 *Nibandhmala* No.60, December 1879 reprinted in *Nibandhmala*, a commemorative volume, Chitrashala Press, Pune, 1917, p.319.

reared on English books could never be weak as they would imbibe qualities like enthusiasm, courage, righteousness and independence through their reading. But in reality, there appeared to little evidence of the above qualities; instead servility and subordination seemed to be the rule. Time and again, he was forced to admit the contrast between the ideal picture of valiant intellectuals who could challenge the colonial state merely through the power of their discourse and the subservient and petty ways of colonial intellectuals[127].

This is not surprising, when one considers the actual circumstances of those who made up the readership of the vernacular press and periodicals. The journal mainly relied on semi-literate, poorly-educated readers drawn from among those who manned the subordinate positions in the provincial bureaucracy or were employed in the severely under-funded vernacular schools. Priced as the *Mala* was at 4 annas per issue, or at Rs. 2 per year if paid for in advance[128], despite its aspirations to create a 'high' literary discourse, the journal's target audience was typical comprised of lower middle-class, vernacular readers. This was the stratum over which the 'high' college and university-educated intelligentsia could hope to exercise little direct influence, on account of the latter's minimal capacities to contribute to a public vernacular discourse. It was this provincial, lower-class, semi-literate audience that had little English, which the vernacular intelligentsia aspired to cultivate as their particular sphere of influence. But clearly, given the prevailing linguistic and political hierarchy, they could not hope to do this independently of the English-educated, 'high' intelligentsia. That is how vernacular literary discourse, even at the high point of its own so-called 'renaissance', showed little explicit hostility towards the English sphere, despite its evident subordination under the influence of the latter.

But, as we have seen it was not as easy for vernacular intellectuals to maintain a harmonious facade vis-à-vis their relations with English sphere within the realm of political discourse. The previous section has already discussed how the political asymmetries between English and vernacular spheres could not avoid being mentioned even within an idealised representation of the intelligentsia's hegemonic quest through the pages of the vernacular journal of the Sarvajanik Sabha. An explicit mention of the linguistic divide could not be kept out of any discursive endeavours intended to have a general appeal. But, in speaking to a relatively homogeneous, autonomous, 'literary' audience, the vernacular intelligentsia could choose to overlook its own asymmetrical situation vis-à-vis the English sphere. Through these manoeuvres, the vernacular intelligentsia hoped to carve out its own sphere of influence within the larger quest to contest the authority of the colonial state. It sought to do this by helping to form a vernacular, discursive network through the Marathi-speaking areas that simultaneously valorised upper-caste opinion and

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[127]'*Amchya Deshachi Stithi*', *Nibandhmala*, No 78, reprinted in *Nibandmaleteel Teen Nibandh*, ed. Dr. Nirmalkumar Phadkule, Pune 1975, p.107.

[128]See subscription details on back cover, *Nibandhmala*, No. 32, August 1876.

also reinforced its enormous local clout acquired through the dominant upper-caste presence in the provincial bureaucracy.

The above discussion has noted the continuity between the cultural politics of the *Nibandhmala* and Tilak's ideological vision. I cannot examine the emergence of Tilak as a political leader in any detail here, as that is a large subject that would need to be analysed separately. But yet, Tilak's first steps as a public figure were his launching of the *Kesari* and the *Maratha* in 1881 and this would provide an appropriate point to conclude the story of the intellgentsia's attempts to acquire a hegemonic position through their ability to mediate between the colonial linguistic divide that I have been tracing here. It is important to note that Tilak spent his early political career as a journalist and editor, rather than as a full-time activist engaged in micro-level organisation and political mobilisation. The simultaneous launching of the two papers revealed that the intelligentsia could not afford to ignore the public-political significance of either English or the vernacular, especially as anti-colonial thinking entered its overtly hegemonic, nationalist phase. But it also showed that, by this time, the bilingual relation upon which the very existence of the colonial-modern public sphere was premised, had yielded two separate, largely monolingual literate communities within the native social world. Although Tilak himself wrote in both English and Marathi, and colonial intellectuals even after the 1880s did possess literate skills in both languages, the making of modern political culture in western India showed a much sharper split between intellectual production in English and the vernacular, than was perhaps the case in Bengal. I use the term 'monolingual' not in an absolute sense here, but to denote the substantial discontinuities between English and Marathi audiences. The fact that the *Maratha* continued to be published, despite running up substantial losses and having to be subsidised through the revenue brought in by the *Kesari's* substantially larger circulation, showed that neither of these largely monolingual audiences could be ignored. Clearly, these reading publics were culturally and politically related, inter-dependent and overlapped to some degree. But evidently, as the success of Tilak's venture showed, they were also sufficiently discontinuous to exist discretely.

I can only note here that Tilak's emergence as a public figure is generally acknowledged to have marked a turning point in the history of the Marathi press, besides also marking the emergence of an early nationalistic discourse in western India. Tilak's career and writings reveal the strains of chauvinism, social conservatism and political militancy in countering colonial power that I have identified as part of the public style first developed by Vishnushastri Chiplunkar. Tilak's brand of leadership also shared traits evident in Chiplunkar's writings, namely its strategic use of abrasive assertiveness in challenging those in authority and a deliberate defiance of rational norms, especially while discussing social 'inferiors'. To both of them goes the credit of forging a political style of 'symbolic militancy', that frequently bordered on the insolent and which sought to derive its effectiveness mostly from an aggressive posture that conveyed an impression of absolute

intolerance towards any alternative or oppositional point of view within the public domain. The success of Tilak's early career as a journalist demonstrated the intellgentsia's realisation of the decisive importance of the 'symbolic' manipulation of the avenues for publicity within modern politics. Tilak's importance lay in his insight that, despite the internal divisions and the small size of the colonial reading 'publics', the avenues for publicity through the press had the potential to circumvent the severe difficulties in forging ground-level ties between disparate interests, because of which associational networks within the colonial world would never reflect society in microcosm. Such pragmatic calculations contrasted with the more 'liberal' ambitions of the first generation of Marathi press-men of the 1830s and 1840s. Evidently, the aspirations of these early colonial intellectuals to construct a sphere of rational and equal exchange between different and opposing points through the vernacular press had not withstood the 'transition' to the emergence of nationalism proper.

Conclusion :

As I have shown through my thesis, colonial intellectuals negotiated the structures of liberal politics from a position where they had only 'imperfectly' internalised the norms of modern communicative rationality, and in circumstances that did not allow their representative claims to be premised upon evidence of their ability to enunciate an inclusive discourse. Neither paradigms of domination without hegemony nor of collaboration describe the complexity of the colonial intellgentsia's ideological manouevres. Provisionally, I would suggest that the room for hegemonic articulation within colonial modernity derived from what may be termed a condition of negative possibility. The dominant discourses in the colonial public sphere did owe their influence so much to their accommodative potential as much as to the exclusivity of the criteria determining access to the arenas of cultural and political debate. As a result, groups that could have been a countervailing presence remained ill-equipped to decisively influence the realm of literate politics.

Glossary

arya	a Marathi/Sanskrit term meaning noble, learned, cultivated, especially used to denote descent from the Indo-European tribes who invaded the sub-continent about two millennia BC.
bakhar	a term used for the extensive corpus of Marathi accounts of important episodes in Maratha history, the earliest *bakhars* deal with Shivaji's life, but most of them narrate later events and were composed between 1700-1820.
bhadralok	the Bengali term meaning 'cultivated elite' used by the Bengali intellectual elite of the colonial period to describe themselves.
bhakti	a term common to many languages on the sub-continent meaning 'devotion'.
bhat	a *brahmin* priest; also denotes a lower order among *brahmins*.
bhikshuk	a *brahmin* who lives by gathering alms.
chitpavan	a sub-caste of brahmins from the Konkan region; the caste of the Peshwas, the powerful rulers whose capital was Pune, and whom the British defeated in 1818 to gain control of Western India and large parts of the Deccan.
dharmashastras	the hindu texts containing prescriptions of an individual's duty, corresponding to his caste status and social position.
harikathas	mythological narratives, stories of the hindu divinities usually recited by a *kathakaar* (story-teller) to audiences in temples or other public gatherings.
hindu buddhi vardhak sabha	the society for the cultivation of the hindu mind.
inam	reward, usually in the form of a land grant given in recognition of political services .
jati	an endogamous caste or sub-caste.
karkun/karkoon	scribe, clerk or copyist.
kavi	poet, composer of verses.
kavya	poetic composition, the classical tradition of Sanskrit poetry.
khot	revenue officers in the Konkan who were granted hereditary collection rights.
kirtan	oral narratives with religious themes, often drawn from the stories of the Hindu epics, performed by trained *kirtankaars*, often accompanied by music, in front of audiences in temples or private households.

kshatriya	the second of the four *varnas* or divisions of *jati samaj* or the Hindu social order, whose members in theory are meant to be rulers and warriors.
lok	collectivity, people.
lokahitawadi	one who speaks for the general good, honorific of Gopal Hari Deshmukh.
mahar	a caste of 'untouchables'.
mali	the caste of gardeners and vegetable cultivators.
mandali	group, association.
mang	a caste of 'untouchables'.
matha	hindu religious institutions established by disciples of well-known preachers (*swamis*) or religious philosophers (*acharyas*) for the propagation of their views and interpretations.
maulvi	a priest/scholar learned in Arabic, Islamic scriptures and law.
mofussil	a term for the rural hinterland of any large city, here used with respect to Bombay.
munshi	accountant.
panchang	almanac.
pandit	a brahmin learned in the traditional hindu texts.
pantoji	village school teacher, often used with a disparaging connotation.
patil	hereditary head of a village.
peshwa	the term for the *chitpavan brahmin* chief ministers who served the Maratha kings after Shivaji, and who from the early eighteenth century exercised power in their own right besides also moving their capital to Pune.
peth	market-place or market town, usually established through official sanction and dealing in specialised categories of commodities.
pothi	manuscript-books or a collection of manuscripts preserved by being loosely tied together.
povada	a Marathi ballad form.
prabhu	a group of sub-brahmin castes who were often employed as professional scribes.
praja	a collective noun denoting political subjects.
prasastis	eulogistic verses, either in Sanskrit or the regional textual idioms, composed or inscribed in honour of a king or other important political patron.
prastavana	introduction.

prayaschita	ceremonial repentance involving ritual punishment and/or fines.
puranas	the corpus of sacred hindu mythological narratives, supposedly eighteen in number, often drawing from stories in the hindu epics, and usually accorded a lower status than the shastric and *vedic* texts.
puranik	one who is trained to narrate and explain the *puranas* through recitation, usually a brahmin.
raja	king, ruler.
ryot	peasant.
sabha	meeting, organisation, society.
saivite	worshippers of Shiva.
sampradaya	sect, tradition, a community united by certain distinct religious beliefs or practices.
sardar	a title denoting political importance that was granted to aristocratic chiefs.
sarkar	government, administration, often used to denote the British government.
sarvajanik	collective, pertaining to everyone or all, the title of the early nationalist association established in Pune.
satyashodhak	seeker of truth, the title of the society started by Phule and his colleagues.
seth/sethia	merchant, banker, important trader, a person who commanded respect and influence on account of his wealth
shabdakosh	dictionary, glossary
shastri	one learned in the *shastras* or the hindu religious texts.
shastrimandali	the group of *shastris* employed by the Education Society.
shenvi	a sub-caste of the *gaud saraswat brahmins.*
shetkari	farmer.
shimpi	the caste of tailors.
shudra	the fourth and the lowest of the four *varna* divisions of jati samaj or Hindu social order, which provides, in theory, the servants and labourers for the other higher *varnas.*
sonar	the caste of goldsmiths.
taluka	an administrative sub-division, smaller than a district.
upyukt dnyanprasarak sabha/mandali	the society for the advancement of useful knowledge.

vakil	pleader, lawyer, legal representative.
veda	the religious texts that are supposed to be among the most ancient of Hindu writing, in theory four in number, supposedly uttered by Brahma and fit to be studied only by *brahmins* and the 'twice-born' castes.
vidvan	scholar, learned gentleman .
vidya	knowledge, education.
vidyakhata	Education Department.
vydick	a brahmin trained in the *vedas*.
zilla	an administrative sub-division, district.

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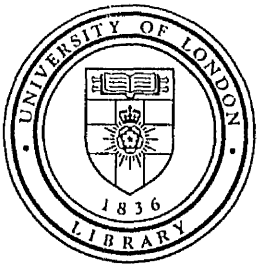

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