UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A Comparative Analysis of the French and British Colonial Policies of Education in Mauritius 1735-1889

by

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A Thesis

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Abstract

This study attempts to interpret the educational changes that took place in the colony of Mauritius between 1735 and 1889, from a sociological perspective. The sociologist sees the school as a major institution of culture transmission. Its role is integrative. In the context of the colonial society, however, given the absence of political autonomy and the heterogeneity of the social groups a major concern of the social scientist is to discover who is sponsoring the school with what goals and for which section of the population. In order to answer these three questions about the educational system existing in the colony the author has been led to study the interactions between the stratificatory system, the polity and the economy and the educational system.

Her findings have shown that far from promoting social integration the educational system was influenced by the concerns for survival as a political dominant power faced by the administration. Moreover, when a local economically dominant group became a competing political power as well, it was allowed to control the educational system regardless of the fact that this resulted in stressing the cultural superiority of one group over the others. Such a development was tolerated because it resulted in a situation

of political stability that was necessary to ensure a smooth operation of the economic activities in the colony.

This interpretation was based on a theoretical model which assumed the existence of conflict in the colonial society. The insights of this research could help to understand the problems many developing countries face in the field of educational developments. Rather than view education solely as an agent of economic development it could also be seen as an instrument of social cultural and political domination.

PREFACE

The Island of Mauritius is situated in the south-west of the Indian Ocean, 500 miles to the east of the Malagasy Republic, 1,250 miles away from the closest point in South Africa and forms part of the archipelago which also comprises the Coco Islands, Seychelles and Rodrigues.

Even though the Island barely covers 720 square miles in total area, yet its population was estimated at 798,648 in 1969.[1] The heterogeneity of the population is marked by linguistic and ethnic differences and by the plurality of religious persuasions.

Before the Island was conquered by the British in 1810 and renamed Mauritius it was a French colony of settlement and was under French imperial rule since 1772. It remained a British crown Colony until 1968 when it became an independent state and joined the United Nations Organisation on its own right. The Island still forms part of the Commonwealth of Nations and has established friendly relations with most of the major powers.

The varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the people have in a way helped to generate a cosmopolitan attitude in them, and a desire to preserve the cultural links with the countries which have sent migrants to the colony in the past.

Communication with the rest of the world is assured by regular maritime services and, since a few years ago, by some of the major world air services, as well as by the national airlines of some of the new African states.[2]

The mainstay of the economy of the Island is sugar which accounted for 93% of the total Gross National Product in 1967.[3] Minor industries such as tea, tobacco, aloe, fisheries and tourists have been recently boosted. Light industries have been started to produce shoes, jewelry, textiles, soap and the purification of crude oil in the Island itself. These plans are sponsored by the Government Capital Development Programmes, with a view to diversifying the economy.[4]

The Government has experienced the shortage of technically trained people and relies heavily on the expertise of personnel sent out by various organisations for technical guidance.[5] The secondary educational institutions of the Island have continued to function along the model of the English Grammar School. One out of every five of the secondary school age children benefits from secondary education available at one of the 143 secondary schools existing in the Island, and all education alone consumed about 12.9% of the total budget expenditure in 1969.[6] The problem of education does not stem essentially from a lack of educational services. Instead it would seem to lie in the area of developing an

educational system that takes into consideration the economic, socio-cultural and political features of the colony.

Till 1968 the Island had no institution for higher education. All university training in the professional skills was carried out in metropolitan universities in Europe, England, India, and in other parts of the world. As education was the major avenue of social mobility, higher education was sought at all costs, in areas of specialisation that had the highest market value. Since state scholarships were scarce, private individuals spent their own resources and obtained such qualifications as they could afford. The attempt to organise and channel the demand for education into such fields as could benefit the country was therefore lacking.

Since independence a University has been established in the Island with the aim to upgrade technical and managerial skills.[7] For academic and higher level training, dependence upon universities is total. It is hoped that through scholarships made available by different world organisations which also provide opportunities for study in countries as different as Russia, Israel, India, Europe, Canada and the U.S.A.,[8] the beneficiaries will acquire the learning necessary to promote economic, social and political development. But in order to transform this experience into meaningful programmes in the Island, there must be a basic understanding of

the structures of the Mauritian society as well as the political goals of the people.

This study is a small contribution to the task of discovering the socio-economic and political bases of the colonial system of education as it persists in Mauritius and as it has existed over the preceding historical periods. It is hoped that even though the study offers no plan for reconstruction, yet its insights can be put to good use for any effective planning in the future.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Mauritius. Commerce, Industry and Tourism. A handbook prepared by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Printed by C. M. D'Unienville. The Mauritius Printing Co. Ltd. Port-Louis. 1970. p. 4.

[2]Mauritius. Commerce, Industry and Tourism. p. 29.

[3]Mauritius. Commerce, Industry and Tourism. p. 8.

[4]Mauritius. Commerce, Industry and Tourism. pp. 13-28.

[5]Mauritius. Commerce, Industry and Tourism. p. 21.

[6]Mauritius. Annual Report of 1967. London. H. M. S. O. 1970. pp. 63-75.

[7]Mauritius. Annual Report of 1967. p. 69.

[8]Mauritius. Annual Report on Education for 1968. Government Printer. Port-Louis. Mauritius. 1969. pp. 5-12.

British Encyclopaedia. Ed. 1972. (Mauritius. pp. 1130-1131.)

Mauritius. Commerce, Industry and Tourism. pp. 49-50.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My desire to explore the field of educational developments in the Island of Mauritius was motivated by the interest evinced by some members of the staff of the Department of Educational Foundations in comparative studies of education in an international context.

I am thankful in the first instance to Professor B. E. Walker who admitted me to the Graduate Studies Programme in the field of Comparative Education.

Dr. M. K. Bacchus has supervised my research and guided me in planning this work, persuading me to lay emphasis on the problems of development and modernisation that face a developing nation emerging from colonial rule. I express my gratitude for his help throughout my work.

For the understanding of the sociological processes at work in a colonial situation, I must address my thanks to Professor A. K. Davis, of the Department of Sociology.

My thanks go also to Professor R. S. Patterson, Chairman of the Department of Educational Foundations, who has encouraged me to complete this work.

I am also deeply indebted to the members of the Inter-Library Loan services at the Cameron Library, University of Alberta for their collaboration in tracing and providing me with documents and rare material I needed from this continent as well as from abroad.

I also extend my gratitude to Mr. P. Prithipaul and Mrs. V. Radhay, both of Mauritius, for sending me original materials which have enabled me to carry out this research.

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INTRODUCTION

This study is anattempt to trace the educational developments in the colonial society of the Island of Mauritius, between the years 1735 and 1889. It takes into account the background problems presented by the three main institutions of any human society namely the social stratification, the economy and the polity.

During the years covered by this study, the Island experienced both French and British colonial rule. The Island was a French colony between 1735 and 1810; the British took over the Island in 1810, and held on to it until 1968, when it became Independent and joined the U.N. in its own right as a free state. The historical nature of the colonial experience of the Island has prompted the author to make a comparative analysis of the French and British colonial educational policies. Sociological insights have been utilized to discuss the implications of these policies for the society at large, in terms of its economic, social and political development.

At this stage, it seems appropriate to explain the significance of the historical dates chosen for the start and the termination of this study. Actually French colonial domination of the Island started in 1715. But because the Island was uninhabited at the time of its discovery, the first years of its colonisation

between 1715 and 1735 were devoted to the tasks necessitated by occupation and settlement. No educational developments took place at the time. It was only after 1735, during the administration of Governor Mahe de Labourdonnais that the Island witnessed the establishment of a sound economic base, a military defence system and population growth through immigration. These developments set the colony posed for growth and development and education then became a subject of concern to both the administrators and to private citizens who wanted to reside in the colony on a permanent basis.

The Island continued under French rule until 1810, when it was seized by conquest by the British. During the years of French occupation however, the Island passed through five successive stages of administrative changes which were the result of changes in the political, social and economic policies taking place in the metropole. Moreover, it has been found that these changes were accompanied by new educational policies as well.

Consequently, the different chapters into which the study of the French period are divided have been based on these historical changes: the corresponding educational developments have been described in the subsections of each chapter.

The chapters are organised in the following manner

I. Early Colonisation and the Rule of the French East India Company. (1735-1767).

II.1 Ile de France under the Colonial Administration of the Ancien Régime. (1767-1790).

II.11 The Private Colleges Under the French Royal Colonial Administration.

III.1 The French Revolution and Its Impact on Ile de France. (1790-1796).

III.11 The National College and the Colonial Assembly in Ile de France.

IV.1 Ile de France Under the French Republic. (1796-1802).

IV.11 The Creation of the Ecole Centrale in Ile de France.

V.1 Ile de France Under Napoleonic Rule. (1803-1810).

V.11 The Lycee in Ile de France.

The underlying assumption in the study of the French colonial system of education is the generally accepted view that French colonial education was based on an assimilationist ideology. These successive administrative changes and accompanying educational developments should provide some basis to examine whether or not this assimilationist policy was in reality applied to Mauritius.

In comparison with the French rule, the British colonial administration of Mauritius lasted longer. (1810-1968). The British rule did not witness any such dramatic events as the outbreak of the French Revolution, nor the restoration of the central authority by the Consular government of Napoleon. Nevertheless it was found that the Parliament's decision to abolish slavery in the colony and to sanction the large scale labour immigration from India, thereby introducing a new ethnic group in the colonial society, did provoke serious social, economic and political changes. In addition, the British colonial administration also introduced the British parliamentary system of government in the colony, with the creation of a Government Council, consisting of both an Executive and a Legislative Council, the latter consisting mostly of members chosen by public elections.

The year 1889 is chosen as a terminal point in this study, because it coincides with the departure of Governor Pope Hennessy, who was responsible for holding public elections for the purpose of forming the Legislative Council. Besides introducing the franchise, even though on a restricted basis, he gave official sanction to the model of a pluralistic society for the colony, by appointing, to the Legislative Council, a member for each large ethnic group, even when the latter had failed to elect a representative at the polls. It was clear

that the administration took these measures to make sure that the colony became similar to most other sugar producing colonies in the British Empire. Naturally the administration had every reason to hold on to the Island.

The analysis of the British section of this study has been informed by the generally accepted belief that the British colonial policy aimed at providing the colonial population with the necessary guidance for eventual autonomy. In this context, this policy found an expression in the attempts made to modify the British model of education to suit local needs. The author took particular interest in discovering how such adaptations were effected in the educational system of the colony, especially within the process of its transformation from a bi-racial and bi-cultural to a multi-racial and multi-lingual colonial society.

The author's interest in the study originates largely from the fact she is originally from Mauritius. She was educated up to the high school level in a bilingual (French-English) school system. Actually, in the colony, most, if not all schools are bilingual. The fact that Mauritian society is multi-racial and multi-cultural has hardly affected the school system. Teachers even though they belong to many different ethnic groups, have to be fluent in both English and French, in addition to being academically competent before they are allowed to teach in all the schools. Moreover, in-

spite of the fact that the population is made up of about 65% Orientals, the curriculum still continues to reflect the primacy of French and English cultural values, while these two languages are consecrated as the official languages of the colony.

This preamble may give the impression that the author has undertaken this study mainly to analyse the historical process of educational developments. In fact she is concerned with determining under what conditions, and under what social, economic or political stresses educational changes take place and with what effect. This objective justifies the selection of a sociological frame of reference for the study.

The organisation of the remaining chapters dealing with the British period will therefore be divided in the following manner, in immediate succession to those dealing with the French section:

VI. 1 British Conquest and the Pacification of the Elite.

VI. 1 The Creation of the Royal College, in Mauritius.

VII. 1 The Abolition of Colour Bar and Slavery, and the Process of Anglicisation of the Institutions.

VII. 11 Racial Integration in the Royal College and the Missionary Primary Schools.

VIII. 1 Consolidation of British Rule in a Multi-racial Society.

VIII. 11 The Royal College and the Denominational Schools at Primary and Secondary Levels.

IX. Conclusion.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The framework adopted for this study assumes that some degree of congruence is to be expected between the educational system and the three major institutions basic to a human society, namely, the system of social stratification, the economy and the polity.[1] The attempt to dovetail the educational system to fit into the political, economic and social structures can be expected to be most effective in a colonial society where the educational system derives its sanctions and rewards from the political establishment.

The commonest definition of the colonial society presupposes the absence of political autonomy. An administrative structure is usually imposed on the colonised society: it derives its legitimacy from the power delegated to it by the metropole.[2] Its task consists in governing the colonial territory according to the hopes and expectations of the colonial power. Among other characteristics of the colonial society are the racial and cultural differences between the coloniser and the colonised, the absence of political development in terms of democratic institutions and national security, and, above all, the predominance of a passive, stagnant economy.[3]

This study will analyse the colonial society in the light of the writings of three main social scientists who have studied colonies.

One of the main writers who studied colonial societies was B. Malinowski who, in his book The Dynamics of Culture Change, makes the point that colonisation can become a meaningful agent of social change. By introducing in his analysis the concept of a "common factor" which stands for institutions in which both the coloniser and the colonised must collaborate, he envisages a form of development which becomes meaningful to the colonised society in terms of emotional integration and economic growth and political development.[4] Malinowski does think that there is room for conflict in the intial stage of the colonial process, yet he builds his hope on "eventual cooperation and compromise" based on enlightened administration and scientific planning.[5] The coloniser can thus become a persuasive agent in promoting change and development.

In his approach to the colonial question, Malinowski does not explain how colonisation originates, nor what characteristics help differentiate it from other social processes. How is colonisation different from beneficient social planning? Are there inherent processes of domination and subjection in it that make it difficult for the coloniser to identify with the colonial power? Moreover how do people at the different levels of the stratificatory system in the colony react to and benefit from the colonial

enterprise? These are questions that are not posed by Malinowski since he identifies colonialism with the humanitarian goals of development. Moreover his concern with the institutions which result from the cooperation of metropolitan agencies and local society would tend to make him assume that participation guarantees equal status to the participants without any implicit element of coercion. This can hardly apply when it comes to the understanding of societies, for instance, where colonial rule was initiated by conquest.

Malinowski's model tends to stress the tasks of the colonial society more than it enables a reader to understand how the colonised society proper adjusts to and accepts the power of the colonial ruler in its day to day experience.

Another approach to the study of the colony is provided by Maunier[6] who distinguishes between the three main motives that have characterised major historical colonial movements. He mentions the theological goals of colonisers, the political, cultural and economic objectives which have determined colonial activities.[7] Lands were occupied for settlement purposes, the economic exploitation of the new lands was carried out for the expansion and the enrichment of the metropolitan society.[8] Moreover the colonial society is defined as being dependent upon the metropole for its

political status and development. Maunier also describes the religious, legal and intellectual types of power that have been utilised at different times by colonial societies in order to bring about infiltration, penetration and expansion.[9]

This approach provides a wider perspective from which the colonial societies can be studied and understood. It is a fact that the type of colonial policies that have been adopted by different colonial powers have depended to a large extent on the ideology of each colonising nation. For instance the policies adopted by the French colonial powers in the settlement colonies were different from those adopted for the colonies of agricultural and economic exploitation alone. The social policies differed in Ile de France when the Island was a mere commercial outpost of the French East India Company (1722-1767) and when it became a Crown possession of the French King (1767-1790).[10]

Maunier deals with the theoretical issues involved in studying the colonial situation in the framework of three main processes: domination, partnership and emancipation.[11] Since he does not study any colonial society specifically over a historical period to see how the effects of colonisation actually make themselves felt among different groups, at different levels of the colonial society, his study can only provide broad, sketchy guidelines for

a comparative analysis, with the concomitant implication that there is no specific uniform manner in which colonial societies can achieve their emancipation. Since Maunier's approach describes essentially the motivations and the practices adopted by the colonising society, the role of the colonised society in adjusting to the colonial power is minimised.

Another author whose approach to the colonial situation has proved helpful in the present study has been the French anthropologist and sociologist G. Balandier.[12] He has worked in the context of African French colonies and he advocates the need to study the colonial society in a global context.[13] In the French African colony he distinguishes the socio-economic, the political and the spiritual levels, within the total network of dependency that constitute the very foundation of the relationship of the colonised society to the metropole.[14]

A major impact of colonisation is felt in the stratification system resulting from the uneven distribution of power that characterises the political structure of a colony. The small minority of administrators and officials who are sent out to wield power and to control the society reduce the mass of the colonised society to the inferior status of a subject population.[15] Social distance and segregation between the colonisers and the colonised

become necessary political instruments for the protection of the colonisers.[16] Degrees of assimilation are tolerated, but rarely are equality and total integration envisaged between coloniser and colonised. In many instances the higher prestige associated with the culture, religion and language of the colonisers displace the original cultures and traditions without, at the same time, providing an appropriate integration symbol to the colonised population.

In the economic field the goal of the colonising agency is essentially to promote the aggrandisement of the metropolitan nation. The colony becomes the provider of raw materials for the industrial network existing in the metropole and colony. Wealth rarely changes hands in the local society.[17] Instead protection is extended to existing structures that create inequalities. Economic development aiming at satisfying the needs of individuals in the society rarely takes place in such an environment.

Besides the broad divisions between the groups representing the colonising nation and those representing the colonised society proper, the author points to the elements of cultural heterogeneity which is reinforced by the colonial power. He mentions the competition and opposition that often exist between such different agencies as represent the colonial society, namely the administrators, the merchants and businessmen, and the

ministers of the faith.[19] These however provide for reciprocal behaviour patterns among the followers and proteges. And in cases where different groups of the colonial society are affected by their influence, more disparities and heterogeneity arise. The introduction of new ethnic groups in the colonial society to fill specific occupational roles often represent another serious challenge and problem in terms of the political, economic and social situation in the colony. Balandier does not minimise the role of local competition between different racial, cultural and religious groups for political ascendence or domination.[20]

Altogether this analysis provides a valuable perspective for the understanding of the development of a given colonial society over a well-defined historical period.[21] It enables a researcher to look for meaningful processes of change taking place at different social levels and in the different structures of the society.

Even though the present study is principally concerned with the educational developments that took place in the colonial society of Mauritius over the period of approximately two centuries (1735-1889), yet the endeavour to establish a link between the educational system and the political and economic and social structures that characterised the colony has proved invaluable in understanding and explaining the resultant types of development.

Attempts have been made to explain away the insufficiency of educational growth in the colonies as being due solely to the economic factor: shortage of funds, lack of resources, inappropriate instruments.[22] To this was added the argument that efforts to promote education were thwarted by resistance on the part of local traditions.[23] These notions have been found to be hardly adequate to explain the particular forms of development that actually took place in the colony of Mauritius. On the contrary the demand for education was never lacking; nor were private individuals hesitant to run schools. Instead of trying to explain the lack of educational developments in Mauritius in terms of the failure of the economic system to expand or diversify one could more profitably look at the political need which the colonial powers faced to control the colony and their desire to placate the economically dominant groups in the society to ensure the consolidation of their own political hegemony over the Island.

This approach reveals that the educational system in the colony was largely influenced by the social, economic and political constraints that existed in the society. Its content was determined either by the colonial government that was in power at different times or by such dominant groups in the society as were able to acquire a participatory role in the management of education.

There is a measure of convergence between the findings of this research and the insights reached by British sociologist of education Michael F. D. Young.[24] In his book Knowledge and Social Control he describes how dominant social or professional groups do utilise the school system to legitimise their position of superiority by means of the organisation and selection of knowledge, and in establishing the appropriate evaluative[25] channels, to set their class apart from the rest of society.

In the case of Mauritius, there were other dominant groups e.g. the French upper classes in the Island who in addition to the colonial rulers asserted their cultural superiority through the medium of the educational system.

It is hoped therefore that through the approach adopted in this study, a new field of research in the study of colonial educational systems has been indicated. It should lead to an attempt to investigate the development of educational systems not from the point of view of manpower needs generated by the diversification or expansion of the economy only, but also in terms of its effectiveness in ensuring a certain type of economic and political control which was typical of the colonial society at different times.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Firth, Raymond. Elements of Social Organisation. Watts and Co. Johnson's Court. Fleet Street. London. E. C. 4. 1951. pp. 41-43. Firth considers 4 essential constituents of the social existence of any community: social alignment, social control, social media and social standards.

Malinowski, B. The Dynamics of Culture Change. An Inquiry into Race Relations. Yale University Press. New Haven. 1965. p. 46. Malinowski lists the following as the main constituents of social organisation: economic organisation, the normative system, the organisation of force, i.e. the political constitution, and the mechanisms of education. He further qualifies his statement however, by adding that the agencies and mechanisms of education are only one aspect of the culture and knowledge that form the basis of the community life.

Both authors it seems would agree about the 4 main institutions that form part of the social organisation of a community.

[2]Ed Sills, D. L. The Dictionary of Social Sciences. The MacMillan Company and the Free Press. U.S.A. 1968. Vol. 3. "Colonialism".

The Economic Aspects by R. Emerson.

The Political Aspects by D. K. Fieldhouse. pp. 4-9.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Malinowski, B. The Dynamics of Culture Change. p. 42-43. pp. 65-66. Malinowski does not use these same words to express his ideas, yet they are implicit in his definition of the integrated culture. In his description of the process of 'procreation' for instance, he refers to the institution of marriage rules and kinship regulations which are determined under conditions of culture; not by physiological drives alone, but by those of economic cooperation, by social rank and spiritual compatibility. p. 43. The definition of the common factor and the adaptation that is required to make it work are described on pages 66-67.

[5]Malinowski, B. The Dynamics of Culture Change. p. 60; 74. pp. 151-162.

[6]Maunier, Rene. The Sociology of Colonies. An Introduction to the Study of Race Contact. Trans. by E. O. Lorimer. Routeledge and Kegan Paul. London. 1949. Vols. I and II.

[7]Maunier, Rene. The Sociology of Colonies. Vol. II. p. 5. pp. 21-25; 9-15.

[8]Maunier, Rene. The Sociology of Colonies. Vol. II. pp. 7-8. p. 15.

[9]Maunier, Rene. The Sociology of Colonies. p. 15.

[10]Vide Chapters I and II of the present study.

[11]Maunier, Rene. The Sociology of Colonies. Vol. II. pp. 25-53.

[12]Balandier, Georges. La Situation Coloniale: Approche Theorique. Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie. Vol. 11. No. 51. 1951. pp. 44-79.

[13]Balandier, Georges. Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie. pp. 61-62.

[14]Balandier, Georges. Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie. Vol. 11. No. 51. pp. 44-45; 64-65.

[15]Balandier, Georges. Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie. pp. 64-65. p. 66. Balandier refers to the works of yet another French author, R. Delavignette, who compares the dependency of the colonised upon the coloniser to the feudal bonds that characterised the medieval society.

[16]Balandier, Georges. Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie. pp. 65-66.

[17]Balandier, Georges. Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie. p. 53-55. Balandier discusses the imbalance that exists between the economic and the political development of the masses of colonies. The majority of colonial population lives in a master-worker relation-

ship insofar as the economic situation is concerned. The economy is controlled by a minority which also dominates by its access to political power.

[18]Balandier, Georges. Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie. pp. 65-66. p. 60.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Balandier, Georges. Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie. p. 67.

[21]Balandier, Georges. Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie. p. 79.

[22]Clignet, Remi and Forster, Phillip. The Fortunate Few. A Study of Secondary Schools and Students for the Ivory Coast. Northwestern University Press. U.S.A. 1966. p. 8.

[23]Forster, Phillip. Education and Social Change in Ghana. University of Chicago Press. pp. 59-64. p. 70.

[24]Young, Michael F. D. Knowledge and Social Control. Collier and MacMillan Publishers. 1971. pp. 24-26; 33-41.

Sources

The personal acquaintance of the author of this study with the contemporary educational system of the colony and with the existing social, political and economic structures has certainly helped in making this analysis possible. However she has placed substantial reliance on the historical accounts published in the form of books, articles in specialised journals, as well as other material available in official reports and microfilms.

Historical works relating to Mauritius are by no means abundant. Most of the published works are available only in the archives in the Island. The works of the Mauritian historian Auguste Toussaint have proved to be an invaluable source of material. His two books - A Bibliography of Mauritius (1502-1956) and Early Printing in the Mascarene Islands - serve as a precious source of material for any historical study of the early French colonial rule in the Island. In addition his book Port-Louis: Deux Siecles d'Histoire provides an intuitive understanding as well as a historical presentation of the French community in the Island of Mauritius during both the French and the British periods.

In A Short History of Mauritius A. Toussaint and P. J. Barnwell barely hint at an attempt to understand the experience of the other social groups in the colony. This book

provides the only historical account of the political development that took place in the colony in the later British period, during the two World Wars, as the policy of local government became more pronounced in the British colonies.

Another work that provides valuable information on the Mauritian society is Burton Benedict's Indians in a Plural Society. This is an anthropological study of the Indians in Mauritius, their immigration, settlement and assimilation in the colonial society. A more recent work it dates back to the 1960's: the author supports his insights by a lengthy field work in the colony and first-hand handling of many of the colonial records, available at the Archives of Mauritius and at the Colonial Office in London.

Since the thrust of the present study is rather to view all the groups in Mauritius as members of the same colonial society, and not as isolated, exclusive ethnic groups, the endeavour has been to work out a synthesis of these different approaches and perspectives. For this purpose we have tried to understand the social developments as much on the basis of a theoretical approach as on our experience and reading of facts and records.

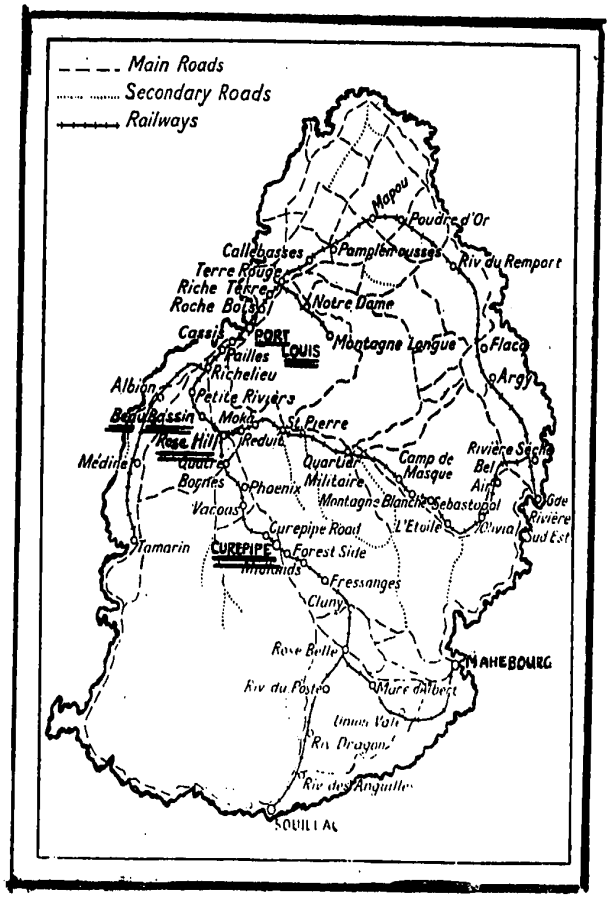
It is regrettable that no direct access to the resource materials available at the Archives of Mauritius was possible. But utilisation of such records as were available in the form of

articles in the literary magazine Revue Historique et Litteraire de l'Ile Maurice dating back to 1890 which described the educational system under French colonial times, and many early British Imperial Educational Conference papers and confidential reports of the Colonial Office available on microfilms have helped the author establish a pattern of development that suits the sociological framework which was adopted in this study.

Footnotes

The footnotes in this study have been provided at the end of each chapter and its subsection.

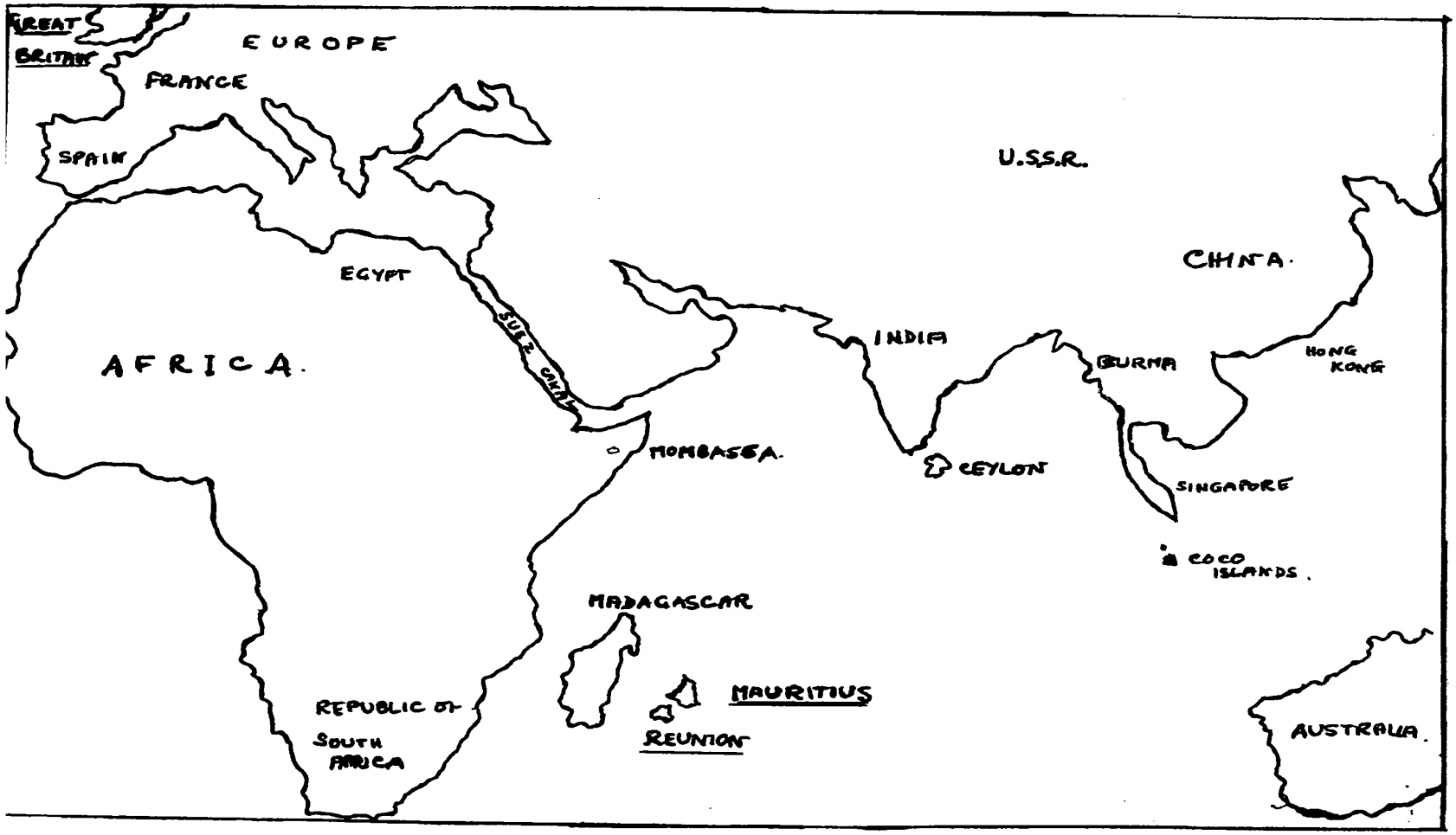
MAP OF MAURITIUS



The above map shows the capital Port-Louis and the towns of Curepipe, Beau-Bassin and Rose-Hill.

Source: Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius.

Mauritius in Relation to Africa and Eurasia



Chapter I

EARLY COLONIZATION AND THE RULE OF THE FRENCH EAST INDIA COMPANY

A study of the educational developments in a colonial situation such as existed in Mauritius calls for an examination of the historical background of the colony. The earliest record of formal institutionalised secondary education in Mauritius goes back to the years 1771-1774.[1] In order to explain this seemingly sudden appearance of secondary education and to understand its function in the society, one has to consider the nature of the colonial enterprise in the Island, the social and cultural background of the people, and the economic and political forces that characterised Mauritius in the early stages of colonial rule.

Early Discovery and Colonisation

Situated 500 miles away from the East Coast of Madagascar, in the Southern part of the Indian Ocean, the Island of Mauritius was known to have no human habitation, when it was first discovered by a Portuguese sailor, Don Pedro de Mascarenhas in 1507.[2] Probably because Portugal did not aim merely at increasing its territorial possessions at the time, the Island was not settled.

Next to claim the Island were the Dutch.[3] Having found that the Island had navigable shores and a hospitable climate, the Dutch

started a settlement in 1610.[4] Farmers were brought from Dutch possessions in South Africa and a defence post was set up on the Island, complete with fortifications and regiments of soldiers. The moderate climate of the Island soon made it a recuperating spot for the soldiers returning from the East. It was at this time that the Island received its name Mauritius, after the Dutch Prince Count Maurice of Nassau.[5]

The Dutch held on to the Island for approximately a century during which period they set up a sugar industry and started other agricultural enterprises.[6] They did not however secure for the Island a place in international commerce. Recurrent cyclones made communication with South Africa which was then the Dutch base in the Indian Ocean difficult. There were recurrent food shortages and slave rebellions and as a result of all these factors the Island was abandoned around 1700.[7]

Next to take possession of the Island were the French, who having occupied the neighbouring Island of Bourbon, 127 miles to the East, were only too pleased to see Mauritius with its deep navigable shores abandoned by the Dutch.[8] The officials of the French East India Company appropriated the Island in the French King's name in 1715, and called it the Ile de France.[9] This action was given official political sanction, and a Governor was appointed to represent the

King's authority over it, and to be responsible for its administration. A provincial council dependent upon that of Ile Bourbon was created.[10] Its members consisted mainly of the Company representatives, so that the Company had both political and economic control over the Island, the Governor's role being essentially committed to ensuring the success of the Company.

Immigration was encouraged by the company. A process of selection was used to enable such French citizens who had both necessary capital to invest in lands, as well as the skill to administer the large plantations that were planned for the agricultural exploitation of the colony to settle on the Island. Slaves were imported from Africa and Madagascar to till the virgin lands, and such craftsmen and artisans as were required to start the construction work planned by the Company were brought from France. In 1735, the Island had a population of 800 people approximately: of whom 135 were French, and the rest slaves.[11] This figure would not have included the soldiers, 2,000 or so of whom[12] were posted in the Island as well, and who remained with their regiments in special camps. The majority of the population however consisted of the slaves; but since these were described as the movable property of their masters upon whom they depended for work, food and clothing, in accordance with the Code Noir passed by the French Minister Colbert in 1637[13] to regulate

the slaves in the colonies, they did not come within the ambit of the local legislature.

Nevertheless, the Company appealed to the Clergy for help to ensure that the French citizens had every facility to maintain the official Catholic faith in the colony. A treaty was signed with the Order of Saint Lazare in Paris, and the Church representatives were enjoined to represent the official church as well to provide educational services for the children of the settlers.[14] The Company offered a building and part of the salary of the teachers: the parents were to bear the cost of the expenses of running the school through fees and by supplying food for both teachers and the scholars.[15]

Despite these efforts there is no proof that such a school materialised in the colony either at this time, i.e. around the 1730's, or later under the rule of the Company[16] inspite of new social and economic developments that took place during the subsequent years.

The Administration of Governor Mahé de Labourdonnais and the Eventual End of Company Rule in the Colony 1735-1767

The colony received new impetus for social and economic development under the administration of Governor Labourdonnais which lasted from 1735 to 1743. Labourdonnais felt that the develop-

ment of the colony could be accelerated if its administration could be separated from Ile Bourbon. He received the authority from Paris to set up a Superior Council in the Colony.[17] Thereafter he proceeded to build the harbour in the capital city with the hope of making it a reliable marine base for French ships operating in the Indian Ocean. He established a shipyard in which he built enough ships locally to form a convoy to succour the French when they were attacked by the British in 1746 in the Southern part of India.[18] In order to obtain the necessary manpower and skilled craftsmen for these projects, he imported labour from both France and India, besides training the slaves.[19]

In addition to providing this industrial base to the colony, Labourdonnais also encouraged agriculture. He aimed at both self sufficiency in local food production, and better commerce with the metropole and the neighbouring Island of Madagascar. In these times of slow communication and uncertain conditions, a commercial treaty with Madagascar ensured the settlers of a close and cheaper food supply than the metropole itself.[20] This was an important consideration especially when the population of the Island had increased under the new administration from the 800 in 1735 to 3,000 in the 1740's.[21] Labourdonnais offered personal loans to encourage French settlers from the neighbouring Island of Bourbon to migrate

to Ile de France.[22] Since runaway slaves were a constant source of danger to the settlers, he set up a police force to ensure the maintenance of law and order and employed the strategic device of recruiting a low class of constables, called 'chasseurs' from the freed-runaway slaves themselves. In times of war, he also fitted and trained local men to man his ships.[23]

These efforts at social and administrative reform did not win Labourdonnais the support of his superiors in the Company headquarters, and he was recalled. It was only after the intervention of the King that he was allowed to resume his office as Governor.[24]

The governors who succeeded Labourdonnais were persuaded to concentrate on internal administration, to ensure the expansion and improvement of the agricultural base of the colony.[25] Social reforms were not encouraged. Moreover, since the King repeatedly placed the Company under the obligation of supplying arms, food and money for the maintenance of the soldiers engaged in the Seven Years' War, the Company decided to cede the colony to the King, altogether. The colony ceased to be an outpost of the French East India Company in 1767.[26] The important point here is that the Company officials were least concerned with developing the colony toward self-sufficiency. They were not committed to any efforts to provide for social services from Company resources.

This was seen in the opposition to Labourdonnais. They wanted to run the colony like a commercial outpost, a settlement where they could buy cheap, and sell their imports at maximum profits. Since they also enjoyed the monopoly of trade, the planters could not explore alternative markets. Economic dependency upon the Company was complete.

The implication of this narrow outlook which the Company had for the colony was that the Island became as rigidly stratified as the metropole itself was at the time of the Ancien Regime. Economic disparities between the classes also coincided with social cleavages in the society: racial and colour discriminations were maintained by law. New development programmes would have affected the rigidity of the existing system of stratification: and the Company was not prepared to take such risks.

There is considerable evidence that the system of social stratification that prevailed in the colony at the time of the Company rule favoured the people who owned lands, and had the privilege of belonging to the higher social ranks that were in ascendence in France at the time. The French author Bernardin de Saint Pierre visited the colony shortly after the company ceded the Island to Royal rule, and he commented on the life style of the large plantation owners who were descended from the nobility in France.[27] He noted that they lived in virtual isolation in the colony and refused all intercourse with

the commercial sector of the capital seaport. Having come to the Island to make a fortune by the same means as their equals in France, they lived a patriarchal traditional life with their dependents and slaves on their plantations. They shipped their children back to France as soon as they were old enough to travel. They thus sought to reassimilate themselves in their social class in France. There is evidence too that some aspired to positions in traditionally high status positions in the military, the Church or the administration. Others came back to assist with the maintenance of the plantations which their families owned.[28]

Also engaged in plantation agriculture were many of the Company officials who bought lands on their own account for retirement purposes in the colonies. They were in some cases descended from the professional class of business magnates who controlled the Ministry of Marine and Commerce in the metropole.[29] Since in France the King often awarded them titles, and held their contribution to the economy in esteem, they exercised the same power and enjoyed the same prestige in the colonies as the aristocratic group itself. They also relied on the metropole for the education and training of their children who then became candidates for relatively high status jobs in the metropole. Both these classes of citizens were usually described as the "Grands Blancs' in the colonies.[30] Their life style

was characterised by extensive lands surrounding their residences, and virtual isolation from the rest of the colonial life. As an elite belonging to the highest economic class, they failed to champion the cause of schools or any social service in the colony during this time. Since their own mobility depended upon their relations in the metropole, they favoured education for their young in France proper.

A less affluent class of Frenchmen belonged to the number group of technicians, skilled craftsmen and lower level employees of the Company. These had neither the prestige nor the power of property that characterised the 'Grands Blancs'. They were known to be subservient to the socio-economic elite, upon whom they depended for both livelihood and continued residence in the colony.[31] In the metropole proper, they would have been members of the Tiers état: in the colony they had no political representation or aspirations. They could undoubtedly exercise their power over the slaves, and thus they enjoyed some sense of importance in the colonial life. Given the narrow occupational structure existing in the Island during the initial stages of colonisation, this social group too would seem to have shown no interest in education yet but during subsequent years it will be seen that they became the supporters of local schools.[32]

There was yet another class of Frenchmen in the colony who came originally as sailors or infantry men. When not engaged

in military action, these people were known to frequent the inns and cabarets. Their presence and inactivity was deplored by all the Governors, but probably because of their usefulness in times of war, they were not brought under punitive laws. They were allowed to reside in the poorer areas of the city settlement, where they mixed with the coloured people.[33] This part of the population had no representation in the administration of the colony: their needs were not looked after.

In addition to the stratification system that existed in the French sector of the population. one which was based on the criteria of rank, property ownership and status in the administrative structure there was another source of social inequality in the colony which was based on racial origin. The majority of the population in the French colonies consisted of slaves, and in the case of Mauritius, these came originally from different parts of French owned Africa, and Madagascar. Since slavery laws kept the slaves in perpetual bondage, thus denying them hopes of social mobility, the same ostracism was applied to such individual slaves who became emancipated. Emancipation in these early days of French colonisation was the result of personal rewards conferred upon individual slaves by a generous grateful master in return for some act of great kindness, or devotion. In many cases such slaves were known to

have benefitted from cash awards and thus they could live on independent means. There was however no hope of social mobility for these people since they were not assimilated either socially nor in the political institutions of the society.[34] Their numbers were few however, and in the census returns they were categorised simply as "Free Blacks".

Moreover, since in the condition of slavery they had lost their original native culture and language, they had adopted a local dialect of creole French and they were unable to aspire to, or to participate in any literate form of culture unless they could be educated in French schools.[35] The post-Revolutionary climate made it possible for the free coloured man to acquire equal legal status which guaranteed him opportunities for education, in the colonies: an illustrious success story, in this regard, is that of Toussaint Louverture who, by means of education, reached the highest position of political and military leadership in the history of Saint Domingue and Martinique.[36]

Yet another section of the population in French colonies was composed of people of mixed blood. In the census returns, these people were not classified separately: they were included among the 'Free Blacks'. But socially, if the skin colour of the person of mixed origin was white, he was held in higher esteem than the freed blacks. Moreover, since the persons of mixed blood were descendants of marriages between slave women and

Frenchmen or vice versa, these children were baptised in the church and given names that were identical to those of the Frenchmen. If the parent belonged to the higher socio-economic class and he cared for his child, he often provided for the mother and child financially. Hence the person of mixed blood who had all these advantages tended to aspire to such cultural refinements as the Frenchmen acquired either by education or by traditional upbringing.[37] But the coloured men could not obtain employment in the occupational structures where selection was based on such criteria as family, rank prestige, property holdings and education. They were excluded from the main stream of French culture. Instead many sought compensation in a life of gaiety, of licence and mirth.

Even though there were 587 persons of coloured free origin registered in the census returns of 1767 in Ile de France, yet it is not known what socio-economic background they came from nor what were their social aspirations.[38] But since they were a minority in a population consisting of 3,167 whites and 15,027 slaves, it is doubtful if the administration, or the white population itself tried to do anything to make their lot better in the colony. It can be assumed that they were seen as a threat by the dominant groups.

The different ethnic groups residing in the colony and the different social classes seemed to live in mutual isolation, largely

on account of each having its own specific socio-cultural orientation and an unequal economic status. Further, the administration by the officials of the Company was not strong enough, nor keen to bring these various groups together. Accordingly, it is not surprising that no school was set up in the colony during this entire period, inspite of the initial agreement with the Church that a school would be set up for the education of the young.[39]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Maquet, Pere A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. (Archives Coloniales). 8 February 1890. No. 34. L' Instructional Origine de notre Colonisation. p. 374.

Toussaint, A. Early Printing in the Mascarene Islands. (1767-1810). G. Durassue. Paris. 1951. p. 98.

Toussaint, A. Bibliography of Mauritius. (1502-1954). Esclapon Limited. Port-Louis. 1956. A. 46. p. 11.

[2]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. (1735-1935). La Typographie Moderne. Port-Louis. 1956. pp. 1-2.

Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles in the Land of the Aphanapteryx. Samspon, Low, Marston, Low and Searle. London. 1873. pp. 351-352.

[3]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 1-2; 2-12.

Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 351-352.

[4]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 3-4.

Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 351-352.

[5]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 2.

[6]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. Longman Green. 1949. pp. 9-44.

Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 7-12.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 13-16.

[10]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 14. Between 1722 and 1735, Ile de France was rule by the Superior Council of Ile Bourbon.

[11]Priestley, H. I. France Through the Old Régime. D. Appleton Century Company. London. 1939. pp. 212-213.

Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 354-355.

[12]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas. p. 215. The actual number of soldiers lodged in the colony in 1776 rose to 2,950. Some of these were sailors as well.

[13]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas. pp. 128-219.

Gastom Martin. L' Histoire de L' Esclavage dans les Colonies Francaises. Presses Universitaires de France. Paris. 1949. pp. 27-29.

[14]Macquet, Pere A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 8 February 1890. No. 34. pp. 373-374.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid. The first school in the colony was only started in 1771 by a priest, Abbe Challan. His school was run as a private institution, and it was not state supported.

[17]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 65.

Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. p. 355.

Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. pp. 50-53.

[18]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 29-39; 39-61.

[19]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 29; 33. Among the craftsmen imported from India were masons, smiths and carpenters. More cabinet makers, masons were carpenters, brick-makers and smiths were also trained locally from among the black slaves. (Toussaint. p. 33.)

[20]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 33.

Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. pp. 50-63.

Priestley, H. I. France Overseas. pp. 214-215.

[21]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. p. 359. The author quotes from the French Globe-Trotter, Abbe Raynal who visited most of the French colonies, and reported that there were approximately 3,163 whites, 587 free people, and 15,022 slaves in the colony at the time that it ceased to be a possession of the French East Indian Company in 1767. These figures would have been slightly less under Labourdonnais's own 11 years' rule. (1735-1746), but not very far off.

[22]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. pp. 50-63.

[23]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. pp. 52-53.

[24]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 40.

[25]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 41.

[26]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. p. 47.

[27]Bernardin de Saint Pierre, J. H. B. A Voyage to Isle de France. J. Cundee. Ivy Lane. London. 1800. pp. 105-110.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Zeller, G. Aspects de la Politique Francaise Sous L' Ancien Regime. Presses Universitaires de France. Paris. 1964. pp. 247-248.

[30]Gaston Martin. Histoire de L' Esclavage dans les Colonies Francaises. pp. 113-115.

[31]Gaston Martin. Histoire de L' Esclavage dans les Colonies Francaises. pp. 114-116. These Frenchmen from the lower socio-economic stratum were called the "petits-blans".

[32]Vide Chapter 2.2 of this study where the establishment of local private schools by a social group that did not have social connections in the metropole is discussed.

[33]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 80-81.

[34]Gaston Martin. Histoire de L' Esclavage dans les Colonies Francaises. p. 115. pp. 119-120.

[35]McCloy, S. T. The Negro in France. University of Kentucky Press. U. S. A. 1961. pp. 38-39. The author describes how schools were closed to all negroes in the colonies prior to the Revolution.

[36]Gaston Martin. Histoire des Colonies Francaises. pp. 225-235.

[37]Gaston Martin. Histoire de L' Esclavage dans les Colonies Francaises. pp. 114-115; 115-116.

[38]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas. p. 216.

[39]Revue Historique et Litteraire. 8 February 1890. No. 34. p. 373.

Chapter II.1

SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES IN THE COLONY UNDER THE FRENCH ROYAL RULE 1767 - 1790

Ile de France became a crown colony of the French King in 1767.[1] As such it enjoyed the status of a French province situated overseas. Legally the citizens of the colony were entitled to the same rights as the citizens of France.[2]

The Island was given the same type of political and administrative structure which characterised the French colonies of the Ancien Regime.[3] Supreme power rested in the person of the King, at court in France. When power was delegated locally, it was distributed between two administrators chosen from the immediate entourage of the King. The King appointed the Governor and the Intendant who between them controlled the colony. The Governor assumed command of the Troops, and the Intendant took control of the budget, taxes, and trade.[4]

A superior Council was set up in the colony and local members chosen from the wealthiest and more powerful ranks of society were appointed to assist the administrators in the task of government. In times of need the 6 members who were appointed to the Council acted as a Court of Appeal: final judgement always took place in the metropole where the laws were made.[5]

Executive powers were given to two more officials appointed abroad to deal with questions of land concessions and fortifications.[6]

Yet another body of local representatives was appointed by the Governor to form the Council of Communes: their duties were restricted to the maintenance of roads, bridges, as well as to supply a policing force to maintain law and order.[7] It was the tradition in most colonies for members of the aristocracy who were also trained in military skills, to be appointed to positions of Corporals and Generals: the appointment conferred prestige upon the individuals.[8]

This form of power distribution created a kind of partnership between the wealthy and the administrators in the colony. In many instances since there was cultural homogeneity between the economic elite and the administrators, frequent association at social gatherings cemented the ties between both groups. This further added to the prestige of the class of wealthy planters and businessmen, vis-a-vis the rest of the population, the so-called tiers - état. On the other hand it enabled the administration to obtain the same kind of loyalty and trust that bound the aristocratic elite in France to the King.

Hence, the colony was not only dependent upon the metropole: but in addition it was expected to contribute to the aggrandisement of the French Empire.

The major concern of the administration at the beginning of the royal rule was to give an impetus to the development of an agricultural base in the colony. The metropole had an economic interest in the colony: it expected the Island to produce as much coffee as possible for sale on the European market. In order to achieve this goal, the administration was provided with the skill and competence of an expert botanist in the person of Pierre Poivre.[9] He was also the Intendant in the colony so that he had great freedom of action in his plans to carry out agricultural experiments under the moderate climatic conditions which prevailed in the colony. Besides encouraging local planters to grow more coffee, he set up an experimental garden in the colony where he tried growing such spices as could be obtained in the Far East. His experiments proved successful, and shortly, by the time he left his office enough spices like nutmeg, cloves, cinnamon and pepper were grown locally as to displace the monopoly the Dutch had exercised over the sale of spices in the European market.[10] Besides encouraging the development of agriculture for commercial purposes, Poivre also used his administrative ability to endow the colony with various advantages. At his departure, there were more flour-mills, granaries and water conducts. Communication with the outside world was improved thanks to additions he had made to the

harbour to enable more ships to cast anchor at the same time. Besides he left behind a pharmacy, and a printing press which stimulated officials and intellectuals to publish reading materials locally. In trying to promote the interests of the metropole, he also set the infrastructure for economic development in the colony.[11]

Following the departure of Poivre, under the administration of successive Intendants and Governors, many improvements were made in the colony. Intense military plans were carried out, resulting in the construction of massive fortresses and forts. Civic buildings were raised with a view to impress the grandeur of the Empire upon the residents. The port had been declared a free trading center, hence ships from different parts of the Empire, America and India began to use the Island as an entrepot to exchange their goods for the exotic products of the East. Indigo grown locally found a market in the seaports of Persia and Western India; and local coffee and spices were sold in Europe.[12]

The flow of wealth attracted more settlers from both France and the different French colonial outposts.[13] And besides the French settlers who engaged in trade and land ownership, there were more and more slaves bought as well to till the lands and maintain the plantations. The following chart provides some information about the population growth in the colony under the

royal administration.[14] (Undoubtedly a small proportion of the population growth resulted from reproduction, but the majority came through immigration and slave trade.)

Year	Whites	Slaves	Free Coloured	Total
1767	3,163	15,027	587	18,777
1777	3,434	25,154	1,173	29,761
1787	4,372	33,832	2,235	49,439

Inspite of this population growth in all the social groups in the colony, there is little evidence that the administration implemented social policies that would lead to an equitable distribution of wealth, or improve the conditions under which the less affluent lived in the colony. Most of the constructions and repair works were done by slaves, hence the cost of labour was minimal. On the other hand since the commercial and agricultural activities encouraged only large scale investors to engage in trade or plantation ownership, the less affluent were excluded from the opportunities the more affluent enjoyed; it was harder for them to improve their economic status in the colony.

The administration did, on more than one occasion, make laws relative to better maintenance of roads, and sanitation in residential areas.[15] These works were carried out by the slaves

placed under the supervision of the members of the Communes, with tax money collected from the property owners. Since however, the demarcation of districts coincided with the stratification along the ethnic, colour and economic differences that existed in the colony, it can be assumed that the districts that did benefit from embellishment works belonged to the class of the wealthy French settlers themselves. In many cases too where roads, water conducts and granaries were built these were designed to serve the needs of the military units resident in the colony. Thus each social group was left to look after its interests depending upon the means at their disposal.[16] Such an arrangement favoured improvements in the higher socio-economic districts.

One instance of this lack of social concern for the community in the colony was the ineffective attempt made by the administration to set up Church buildings in the capital, to replace the ones set up earlier by Labourdonnais, which had been destroyed by a cyclone. Taxes were levied for that purpose on all property owners and businessmen in 1773.[17] These Church buildings were also designed to house two schools for the public. It was only by 1778, however that works were started on the Church,[18] and there has been no evidence that the schools projected ever materialised. The Church, it must be remembered, was engaged in different social and charitable works in the days of the Ancien Regime. In many cases

it provided medical care, education as well as shelter to the poor.

The administration was nevertheless concerned about the numerous people of "no known employment or trade" who frequented the inns and taverns in the capital. Among these were veteran soldiers no longer in service. But no effort was made to rehabilitate them nor to engage them in manual or construction works. Instead, laws were passed to limit the number of taverns that operated in the capital.[19]

The solution adopted by the administration to solve the problem of unemployed can be understood in terms of the stratification system that existed in the colony at the time. On one hand, it was more economical for both the administrators and the planters to employ slaves for their work than the free Frenchmen, who were entitled to wages. On the other, the poor Frenchman must have felt it was beneath his dignity to perform such manual works as were customarily reserved for the slaves. Hence rather than introduce legislation which would rehabilitate the poor French but could alienate the dominant economic elite, the administration preferred to inflict losses on the small innkeepers by closing down the taverns.

Despite these social problems however the colony continued to play a significant role in the political designs of the metropole. On two occasions between 1768 and 1786, Ile de France served as a base

for the military missions aimed at bringing the neighbouring larger Island of Madagascar under French domination.[20] The first mission led by Maudave in the early stages of royal rule proved a failure.[21] But when Beniowsky set out from France with the same goal in 1772, he had orders from the King authorising the Governor in Ile de France to provide him with men and arms. After the mission was delayed the Governor Souillac actually set out with a regiment in 1786 to help accomplish the task.[22] It should be noted that Madagascar served as a source of food and slaves to Ile de France.

Moreover, since hostilities between the British and the French were becoming more recurrent in India, Ile de France besides being responsible for supplying the French soldiers with food and money, also served as a convenient base from which French ships could take off for the East. Actually Ile de France became the seat of the naval operations of the French in the Indian Ocean, and British ships were intercepted as they rounded the Indian Ocean to reach South Africa and India.[23] Thus in 1779, when the British attacked French possessions in Southern India and Hyder Ali appealed for help, a convoy was sent from Ile de France and Governor Souillac led 6 attacks against the British from Port-Louis.[24]

There are few indications that this period of intense military and naval involvement benefitted the Island in terms of development of skilled labour or trained personnel. Instead it

would seem that all the technical skill came from the metropole. The colony mainly provided food, lodgings and such services as were necessary to equip the soldiers and ships.

Attempts however to maintain the trust and loyalty of the citizens were not lacking. Governor Souillac for instance who ruled the colony as if it were a provincial estate, instituted public holidays on the occasion of the anniversary of the patron Saint of the capital harbour, Saint Louis. On the occasion he feasted all the knights who belonged to the order at the expense of the treasury. Public rejoicings were declared for the masses.[25]

Gaiety and festivity were characteristics of the life style of the colony. The measure of conspicuous consumption shown by the administrators was imitated by those who belonged to their immediate entourage and who had the means to live in glamour. Wealthy colonials hosted soldiers and officials who visited the colony. Their hospitality became a source of renown to the colony.[26]

The stress that was inherent in this uneven distribution of wealth and privileges came to a head when the regime was brought to an abrupt end in 1790. Large numbers of the people followed the few ardent advocates of the French Revolution and staged a coup even before news arrived from the Revolutionary Council requiring the creation of a Colonial Assembly through public elections.[27]

In other words, inspite of the relative smallness of the Island and its distance from the metropole, there had been enough discontent in the country to engender the public uprising. Yet another manifestation of this monopolistic control of the government by the aristocracy and the elite will be shown in the discussion of the failure of educational institutions to function successfully in the colony during this time of glamour and fame.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Toussaint, A. Port Louis. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. (1735-1935). La Typographie Moderne. Port Louis. 1936. pp. 64.

[2]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas Through the Old Regime. Century Appleton Company. 1939. pp. 216-217.

Pike, N. Sub Tropical Rambles in the Land of the Aphanapteryx. Sampson, Low, Marston Low and Searle. London. 1873. pp. 359-362.

Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. Longmans Green. London. 1949. pp. 72-73.

[3]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas. pp. 216-217.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. p. 72.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid.

Chauleau, L. La Societé a La Martinique au XVII Siecle. (1635-1713). Caen. 1966. pp. 73-79.

[9]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 69-70; 113-115.

Priestley, H. I. France Overseas. p. 214.

Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. pp. 72-75.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. p. 80.

[13]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. p. 71.

[14]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas. p. 216.

[15]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 24-26; 28-30; 61-64; 64-69; 74-79. p. 76.

[16]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 80-81; 74-76. p. 84.

[17]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 76-77.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 67-68.

[20]Hanotaux, G. Histoire des Colonies Francaises. Tome VI. Librairie Plon. Paris. 1933. pp. 92-105.

[21]Hanotaux, G. Histoire des Colonies Francaises. pp. 363-370.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Toussaint, A. Histoire des Deux Siecles. pp. 95-103; 103-107.

Toussaint, A. Port Louis de L' Ile Maurice. Presses Universiataires de France. Paris. 1966. pp. 33-37.

[24]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 103-107.

[25]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 116-117.

[26]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. p. 118.

[27]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 118-127.

Chapter II.11

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATE COLLEGES AND THE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE ANCIEN REGIME

In line with the official policy of leaving to local initiative developments which were likely to benefit the residents of the colony, the administrators representing the King's power in Ile de France did not at first implement a national plan of education in the colony. There had been a vague suggestion of schools being started when taxes were levied for the construction of the Church in the capital in 1773.[1] But works on the Church itself did not get started until 1778, and as was pointed out before there is no evidence to show that schools were run in the buildings when they were completed in 1782.[2]

Late in 1789, towards the demise of the Monarchy in France the Governor D'Entrecasteaux made a recommendation for the establishment of a school in the colony.[3] He endowed two plots of land for the maintenance of the proposed school, and in accordance with the tradition set in France by the Ancien Regime, he placed the school under the supervision of the Order of Saint Lazare who were the representatives of the Official Church in the Colony.[4] Since royal administration came to an end in 1790, a few months after the outbreak of the Revolution in France, in 1789, it is possible that

lack of time became responsible for the failure of the school to materialise.

In order to understand the forces that may have led to this change of policy, initiated by D'Entrecasteaux, one should look into the different types of educational activities that were in existence in the colonial society at the time.

One significant phenomenon was the appearance of Private schools. The first such school to be established was run by a Priest called Abbe Challan.[5] He resided in the colony between 1771 and 1774.[6] There is little information available about the school. Such references as exist describe it as a 'College'. The use of this appellation would suggest that the school followed the tradition established in France by the Teaching Orders of the Jesuits and the Oratorian Christian Brothers.[7] Both these Orders provided the sons of the higher social classes in the metropolitan society with the necessary educational training for adulthood. The scholars of the Colleges of the Ancien Regime could aspire either to University education, a military career or religious life. Since the Colleges educated the children of the elite of the society, their progress was closely watched by the monarchs themselves.[8]

It is unlikely that the Abbe Challan School had the same educational aspirations as the metropolitan Colleges. If it

did, it surely did not last long enough to ensure the scholars the necessary foundation for eventual admission to a University. The school was unheard of after the departure of the Priest from the colony.[9] This school probably catered to poorer citizens.

The demand for education, in this sector of the society, did not die with the disappearance of the Challan school. There was sufficient motivation among the people to encourage another priest, named Abbe Quilan to set up another school. The new school was also called a College and it was located in the capital.[10]

Evidence shows that the school was threatened with closure soon after its opening.[11] The Governor Souillac who was in office at the time and who was known to be a patron of learning threatened to close the school.[12] It was only with the recommendation of the Head of the Catholic Church that the school was allowed to function.[13] A financial grant was also made available to the Principal to enable the school to operate. This school was known to have continued to operate till 1789, when royal administration came to an end in the colony.[14]

From this analysis it would seem that D' Entrecasteaux's school as planned in 1789 was likely to be a parallel institution to this school run by Quilan if the latter was still in existence. Even though the change in the official policy was introduced in the late

1789's, yet there has been sufficient reason to believe that till then, on the eve of the Revolution, the administration did not look upon the spread of education in the colony with favour. Moreover, if the sporadic existence of the private school had been the only indication of the amount of educational activities in the colony, then one could have said that the demand for education was low.

On the contrary however the records reveal that while these private schools were struggling to exist many other educational and intellectual activities were taking place in the colony. The fact was however, that most of them were restricted to the small circle of the administrators and their immediate entourage and this would indicate that the failure of the administration to implement a national policy of education for the colony which would also have benefitted the poor was based on its hesitation to disrupt the stratification system that existed at the time.

Intellectual activities in the colony were limited at first to the sector of the population consisting of administrators and officials coming from the metropole. At the very start of the royal colonial rule when Poivre was appointed Intendant, he was joined by writers, meteorologists, scientists, explorers and geographers who were keen on studying the Indian Ocean as well as climatic conditions of the different regions in the Mascarene Islands.[15] Moreover, the officials themselves were people who showed competence in many

fields. A military surgeon started a veterinarian school two lawyers ran a philosophical and literary newspaper, and the printing press left by Poivre was used both for official purposes such as for printing bulletins, almanacs and research pamphlets on local conditions for agriculture and methods for improving cattle breeding and rice and spice culture.[16] Abbe Challan, also a priest, published a dictionary of French and Malagasy, besides trying to run a school during his stay in the colony.[17]

In many cases the governors themselves were intellectually talented men who besides showing their competence in their administrative and military careers, sponsored local learned societies. Governor Desroches for instance was a founding member of the Academy of the Marine in Paris. He assembled many intellectuals around him in the colony for the informal study of science. Governor Souillac besides being the 'bon viveur' military leader and administrator was also responsible for sponsoring local intellectuals. He recommended the name of De Cossigny to the Academy of Sciences in Paris, a gesture which resulted in the appointment of the latter as a Correspondent of the Academy resident in the colony.[18] Another beneficiary of such sponsorship was B. de Sornay who had invented an instrument for the measurement of the longitudes. His discovery was published in a journal in London.[19]

These were cases of sponsorship conferred on local residents. The practice is not uncommon in elitist societies: Ralph Turner calls it a system of sponsored mobility.[20] What is significant in this practice however, is that it did not enable an individual from a needy class to aspire to education. It did not create channels of mobility from the lower classes. Instead, it conferred approval and rewards on individuals who had already sought education, and shown signs of competence as well as loyalty to the government.

In the case of Cossigny for instance,[21] the sponsorship was more or less, a reward for work already done. He was descendant from an aristocratic family settled in the colony in the early 1730's when the colony was ruled by the Company. He had been sent to France for his education, and after graduating from the University of Besancon, he had chosen a military career. He returned to Ile de France after serving his term in the East, at the time when Poivre was eagerly trying to boost the agricultural base of the colony. Cossigny joined him and became an ardent advocate of agriculture. He published many pamphlets to recommend better ways of growing indigo, sugar and other agricultural plants. Another local citizen who became an agricultural expert was Cere: he too was held in high esteem.[22]

Sponsorship of the educational achievements of competent individuals at the higher levels hardly helps to alleviate the charge made earlier in the essay that the administration of the Ancien Regime was unfavourable to the spread of education in the colony. This is further borne out by the failure of the administration to introduce the equivalent of primary or vocational schools which existed in France at the time.[23]

Besides the Colleges which provided education for the children of the elite, there were the Petites Ecoles in France which supplied the common people with the elementary literary skills and religious instruction. These were run by the Churches as well as by the Communes. No such school existed in the colony. The local Communes were only encouraged to maintain roads and bridges instead.[24]

While even the petites écoles for the masses were denied to the colonial society, there is evidence that when the members of the more affluent classes desired a school for girls. The Governor D'Entrecasteaux praised the initiative taken by the parents and authorised the creation of such a school.[25] Probably the parents were beginning to become more hesitant about sending their daughters to be educated in France, as it had been the custom in earlier times because of the chaos which prevailed in the metropole

prior to the outbreak of the Revolution. The education of girls was hardly seen as a cause for concern to the administration yet the school was given official approval.

Another reason that could have explained the hesitation felt by the administration to develop a national plan of education in the colony could be the fear of precipitating the assimilation of the free coloured people of the colonial society into the main stream of French culture. The presence of moneyed people of coloured origin trying to imitate the manners and customs of the French gentlemen had been a cause of concern to different administrators at different times.[26] Since the admission of the coloured in the occupational structures was not allowed by law, it is possible that there was a hesitation to precipitate their assimilation in the literate French culture. Denied of state supported schools, the members of this class of citizens would have had to rely on the services of individual Frenchmen if they aspired to education or else they had to fall back on an adulterated creole culture.

This analysis of the implications of the policy of educational control for the different social groups in the colonial society makes it clear that the administration was hesitant to disrupt the existing stratification system that existed at the time. The presence of differential educational opportunity among the

various groups enabled them to maintain their different cultural identity, as well as a different status in the socio-economic strata of the society. Each class, each racial group was kept apart: a unifying integrating institution was lacking. Instead the power of the dominant groups was reinforced by this kind of administration. The élite already shared all the material advantages which the administrators enjoyed in the colony. They were brought still closer by a cultural homogeneity which was reinforced by their educational background.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. (1735-1935). La Typographie Moderne. Port-Louis. 1936. p. 76.

[2]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. (1735-1935). La Typographie Moderne. Port-Louis. 1936. pp. 85-86.

[3]Duvivier, A. L' Instruction Publique à L' Ile de France. Revue Historique et Litteraire de L' Ile Maurice. 14 December 1890. No. 29. 4 eme Annee. pp. 372-373.

[4]Duvivier, A. L' Instruction Publique à L' Ile de France. Revue Historique et Litteraire de L' Ile Maurice. 14 December 1890. No. 29. 4 eme Annee. p. 370. pp. 372-373.

[5]Duvivier, A. L' Instruction Publique à L' Ile de France. Revue Historique et Litteraire de L' Ile Maurice. 14 December 1890. No. 29. 4 eme Annee. p. 372.

[6]Toussaint, A. Early Printing in the Mascarene Islands. G. Durrasue. Paris. 1951. p. 98.

[7]Bernard, H. C. The French Tradition in Education. Cambridge University Press. Reprinted 1970. Chapter V. pp. 145-182. Chapter VII. pp. 218-249.

Gontard, M. L' Enseignement Primaire en France. Societe d' edition. Des Belles Lettres de Paris. Introduction. pp. 3-49.

[8]Leon, A. Histoire de L' Enseignement en France. Presses Universitaires de France. Paris. 1967. pp. 30-48.

[9]Duvivier, A. L' Instruction Publique à L' Ile de France. Revue Historique et Litteraire. 14 December 1890. No. 29. p. 372.

[10]Duvivier, A. L' Instruction Publique à L' Ile de France. Revue Historique et Litteraire. 14 December 1890. No. 29. pp. 372-373.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 113-117.

[16]Toussaint, A. Early Printing. pp. 95-98.

Toussaint, A. Bibliography of Mauritius. Esclapon Limited. Port-Louis. 1956. pp. 9-15.

[17]Toussaint, A. Early Printing. p. 98.

Toussaint, A. Bibliography of Mauritius. p. 11.

[18]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 117-118.

[19]Toussaint, A. Early Printing. pp. 95-98.

[20]Turner, Ralph H. "Sponsored and Contest Mobility and the School System." The Sociology of Education: A Sourcebook. Ed. Robert R. Bell and Holger R. Stub. The Dorsey Press. Illinois. Revised Edition. 1968. pp. 219-234.

[21]Hanotaux, G. Histoire des Colonies Francaises. Tome VI. Librairie Plon. Paris. 1933. pp. 355-359.

[22]Toussaint, A. Early Printing. pp. 95-96.

Toussaint, A. Bibliography of Mauritius. p. 10.

Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 81; 115.

[23]Leon, A. Histoire de L' Enseignement en France. pp. 44-48.

[24]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas. Appleton Century Company. 1939. p. 215.

[25]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 14 December 1890. No. 29. p. 372.

[26]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 81-82.

Chapter III.1

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND ITS IMPACT ON ILE DE FRANCE

During the first stage of its rule, the Revolutionary government in Paris initiated through the National Assembly a series of social and political changes that provoked varied reactions in the colonies. The most important measure was granting equality of status to all free citizens irrespective of colour or racial origin. The practical implications of this were many. Titles of individual nobles and state dues were abolished, church lands were confiscated and seigneurial rights of the aristocracy in the metropole over lands came to an end. The monarchy was in fact replaced by an elected Assembly.[1]

Since the Assembly was eager to maintain the colonies in view of the economic gains they brought to the metropole they tried to implement these measures in the colonies overseas in such a way as to attain their political objectives of granting equality of status to all citizens and at the same time reduce the possibility of a radical rupture in the relationship between these colonies and the metropole.[2] The colonial governors who held office prior to the Revolution, for instance, were not displaced. Instead, in accordance with the political steps taken in the metropole, they were only advised

to hold elections and to elect members who were to form the Colonial Assembly, since the Superior Council consisting of nominated nobles was abolished. In addition representatives from the colonies were to sit in the National Assembly in Paris.[3]

Reactions to these proclamations were generally varied. In most of the Atlantic colonies and in Ile de France as well, opinions were divided into three camps. The absentee businessmen and planters who resided in the metropole but owned lands in the colony claimed the rights to represent the colonies in the General Assembly and chose to support the changes proposed by the members of the Revolutionary party.[4]

Another group consisting of the planters resident in the colonies was opposed to the trade restrictions imposed on the colonies by the Assembly. They wanted free trade so that they could sell their products to the highest bidders on the international market.[5] A third group consisted of the intellectuals who supported the Revolution, claimed full equality of status for all citizens, and demanded the abolition of slavery in the colonies.[6]

The Assembly did not choose to moderate the original programme of the Revolutionary government inspite of the fact that it had met with strong opposition from other colonial governments.

What happened in fact was that while the laws were formally proclaimed in all colonies, each colony was free to devise a modus operandi to settle the internal political problems. The slow rate of communication with the metropole and the distance separating it from the colonies became a main factor in determining how far the changes recommended by the General Assembly in Paris were actually carried out in each colony.[7]

In the case of Ile de France, probably because of its relative proximity to the metropole, the fervour of the French Revolution had already spread among the professionals and intellectuals.[8] It is a moot point whether the members of some of the literary and philosophical clubs that emerged towards the end of the Ancien Regime, did not in fact entertain revolutionary ideas. But after the outbreak of the Revolution many of them overtly showed their political attitudes by adopting such names as the Jacobins, the Chaumiere, the Sans Culottes, etc.[9] Probably their work was more or less kept secret during the rule of the administrators of the Ancien Regime.

Hence when a private ship sailed into the harbour of the capital flying a tricoloured flag of the Revolution, in January 1790, news of the changes that had swept through the metropole soon spread in the colony.[10] A popular uprising followed. Professional lawyers and

a notary and politically articulate businessman addressed public gatherings on the need for political changes that were in line with those taking place in the metropole. A mass gathering was held in a Church, deputees elected to approach the Governor to request the abolition of the Superior Council and its replacement by an Assembly.[11] The followers of this movement were many of the disgruntled soldiers and sailors who had not been paid yet: among them too were people of coloured origin who hoped to see their social ostracism end at last. Among the leaders of the movement were also some members of the Superior Council itself.[12]

The Governor however, relying on the support of the fleet and members of the National Guard who had pledged their allegiance to the royalty, as well as most of the members of the Council, bided his time on the ground that he had received no directives from the metropole proper. When finally the metropolitan delegates arrived with orders that the Council was to be abolished and replaced by an elected Assembly the Governor left the task of forming the government to the popularly elected deputies and asked to be replaced.[13]

When new elections were held in the colony, 51 members were elected to form the Assembly.[14] All free citizens had the right to vote but only Frenchmen were elected to office. In addition to

the leaders of the Revolution, members of the now defunct Superior Council got re-elected. Two members of the business class, resident in France accompanied the two elected members of the Assembly chosen to represent the colony in the General Assembly in Paris.[15]

Even though in the early phase of the Revolutionary movement there was a demonstration of Revolutionary fervour in the colony yet, once the Assembly was formed, very few of the extremely radical social or political changes advocated by the Revolutionary government of Paris were implemented in the Island. It could be that the leaders of the Revolution were in a minority and therefore they had to adjust to the demands of the majority who were reactionary and conservative. In addition if the leaders of the Revolution were not members of the social and economic elite their subservience to the leading planters and businessmen could be understood and hence their reluctance to press for too many changes that would upset the members of the local elite.

In theory the proclamations of the General Assembly of Paris were declared in the colony. Titles were abolished and secularity was maintained in the institutions.[16] The Assembly undertook to form a Municipality and to assume reponsibility of education on a national plan.[17] The members of the Municipality were elected, and they were asked to assume the responsibility of judiciary, administrative and social welfare duties. It was to provide housing and welfare for the

poor of all racial and colour groups in the colony. Another of its tasks was to form a police force to replace the traditional nobles who maintained law and order in the colony under the Ancien Regime.[18]

The Assembly however did not adopt any policy that affected the existing structure of the economy. There was no evidence of any land confiscation or redistribution in the Island. Nor were there efforts to find means of providing more employment for the people. It could be that the swiftness with which the changes were taking place left little time for much thought to be given to these matters. But the effect of the absence of any planning was felt in the colony.

As the Jacobins began to adopt extreme measures of social control in Paris, groups of 'sans-culottes' were formed locally as well.[19] Popular demonstrations were common, and a guillotine was set up in the main street of the capital. Since many of the disgruntled were essentially from the ranks of veteran soldiers and sailors, the mob anger was directed against members of the Navy who were suspected of placing more trust in their allegiance to the King, against the interest of the Island. The first victim was actually the Admiral of the Royal Fleet, and a similar fate attended another Admiral who was suspected of conspiring with the enemy. Violence was not used against the affluent residents of the colony but all the

furore among the dissatisfied was aimed at the heads of the two main sources of employment in the colony, the Army and Navy.[20]

The main point made here is that the sources of change in the Island were the political developments taking place in the metropole. Even if there was a minority group in the Island who favoured the changes which were introduced following the outbreak of the Revolution yet its failure to influence the power structure that existed in the colony made the implementation of the social and economic policies of the Revolution difficult. The weakness of the group was felt most in the abortive attempt to introduce a national plan of education.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Encyclopaedia Britannica. Vol. 9. Ed. 1972. p. 729.

Roussier, P. L' Application des Lois de la Révolution aux Colonies. Cahiers de la Revolution Francaise. Centre d' Etudes de la Revolution. Recueil Sirey. Paris. 1935. pp. 50-51; 162-163.

Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. La Typographie Moderne. Port-Louis. 1936. p. 146. According to Toussaint there were no members of the old nobility in Mauritius, hence no one enjoyed seugneurial rights over the lands. Nevertheless the laws regarding these abolitions were passed in the colony. Because of the lack of more first hand material the author cannot state decisively whether there were nobles who enjoyed such rights in the colony. But the fact that Governor Farquhar will invite members of the old nobility to declare themselves in 1810, would suggest that some such nobles did reside in the colony.

[2]Roussier, P. Cahiers de la Révolution. p. 50. In some cases, the local Assemblies were requested to inform the General Assembly in France how they would set up their colonial Assemblies, because the Assembly did not want to impose its wishes on the colonies in an authoritarian manner. The colonies were expected to advise the Assembly how their interests could best be served.

[3]Saintoyant, J. La Colonisation Francaise Pendant La Revolution. Tome I. La Renaissance du Livre. Paris. 1930. p. 72. pp. 117-118.

Roussier, P. Cahiers de la Revolution. Paris. 1935. p. 48. The Colonial Assemblies were to consist of an Executive body called the Directoire, a Legislative body and a Commissaire sent from France to represent the metropole. Moreover a fixed number of seats were reserved in the National General Assembly in Paris for each colony. Ile de France obtained two seats. (Saintoyant. p. 72.)

[4]Gaston-Martin. La Doctrine Coloniale de la France en 1789. Cahiers de la Révolution Francaise. Paris. 1935. pp. 31-36. The three interested parties were the absentee planters, the local landowners and the philosophers and their intellectual followers.

[5]Gaston Martin. La Doctrine Coloniale en France en 1789. Cahiers de la Revolution. pp. 31-36.

Priestley, H. I. France Overseas Through the Ancien Regime. Appleton Century Company. London. 1939. p. 319.

[6]Gaston Martin. La Doctrine Coloniale. Cahiers de la Revolution. pp. 31-36.

Priestley, H. I. France Overseas Through the Ancien Régime. p. 320. Among the champions of the cause of the liberation of the slaves was Robespierre himself. "From the moment "he cried," when you pronounce the word 'slavery' in one of your decrees, you will have pronounced your dishonour and the reversal of your Constitution.... Let the colonies perish, if you have them at that price." Ibid. p. 322.

[7]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas. p. 322. Saint-Domingue faced the impact of the French Revolution in May 1789: Ile de France only experienced the tremour of the Revolution in 1790.

[8]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 166-169.

[9]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 166-169. p. 123. The most extremist group according to Toussaint was the Chaumiere. It is not known whether the intellectuals formed part of this group, but certainly many of them joined the Revolutionary party in various capacities.

Hanotaux, G. Historie des Colonies Francaises. Librairie Plon. Paris. Societe de l' History Nationale. Tome Vl. p. 379.

[10]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 119-120. The private seaman who sailed into the capital seaport was Gabriel de Coriolis de Limaye.

[11]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 120-121.

Hanotaux, G. Histcire des Colonies Francaises. pp. 371-373.

[12]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. p. 123. The most frequently mentioned member of the Superior Council who joined the Revolutionary meeting in the Church is Viscount Ange d' Houdetot. Two other royal notaries were citizens Auffrey and Belin. There were most probably others who are not mentioned.

[13]Hanotaux, G. Histoire des Colonies Francaises. p. 373; p. 375.

Priestley, H. I. France Overseas Through the Old Regime. D. Appleton Century Company. London. 1936. pp. 216-223.

Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 121-127.

[14]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas Through the Old Regime. p. 219. There is some disparity about the actual number of representatives in the Assembly. Some authors mention 61 members of the Assembly and Priestley mentions 51. The exact figure makes little difference in this study.

[15]Hanotaux, G. Histoire des Colonies Francaises. p. 377.

Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 127. The delegates sent from Ile de France to Paris were businessmen Mm Collin and Codere. They were accompanied by Pierre Monneron and De Missy, as assistants.

[16]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 145-152.

Hanotaux, G. Histoire des Colonies Francaises. p. 377.

[17]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 161.

[18]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 145-152.

[19]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 162-169; 128-133.

[20]Hanotaux, G. Histoire des Colonies Francaises. pp. 382-383.

Chapter III. 11

THE NATIONAL COLLEGE AND THE COLONIAL ASSEMBLY RULE 1790 - 1796

When the Colonial Assembly met to take charge of the government of the colony in 1790, it proclaimed that it was the responsibility of the State to provide for both the moral and political education of the citizens.[1] Implicit in the proclamation was the hope that there would be a uniform type of education that would be made equally available to all citizens, no matter what class or socio-economic group they came from. It was also assumed that education would thereafter be secularised.

In its attempts to implement this programme however, the Assembly had to face two problems - the traditional cultural pattern that existed in the colonial society, and the different political ideologies of its members. It can also be assumed that since the members of the Revolutionary party who had an egalitarian orientation were still economically dependent on the local elite and did not have full control over the Assembly. Partly because of all these reasons, the Assembly failed to assume the entire responsibility of running a national school outright from its own funds or on its own initiative. Instead it appealed to private citizens to prepare a plan for a

National College, as well as an appropriate programme of studies which would be acceptable to the new government.[2] The Chairman of the Assembly was to cooperate with the Advocate General to inspect the school premises, and the Municipality was given the responsibility to supervise the administration and actual conduct of the school.[3]

The plan which met with the approval of the Assembly was presented by citizen Michelet, a gentleman who did not belong to any religious order. Even though he proposed to run a secular institution, his school plan was based on the model of the traditional colleges of the Ancien Regime. He offered to run a boarding school which would be maintained by the fees charged for admission and tuition. In order to permit children of different socio-economic classes to attend the College, a three-tiered fee schedule was adopted; prospective scholars were to be categorised as full-time boarders, semi-boarders and day scholars.[4] This stratification was hardly different from what existed in the days of Monarchic France and the fact that it was opposed to the egalitarian ideals of the Revolution did not strike the public. Probably the financial needs of the College and the existing social class differences in the society necessitated the maintenance of this obsolete custom. Nevertheless the Assembly stressed an egalitarian social and political objective by making sure that poor scholars would be accepted in the College on the

recommendation of the Municipality and the equivalent of fees was reimbursed by the Bureau of Social Welfare.[5]

The curriculum of the College contained all the basic academic subjects that were traditionally taught in such educational establishments in France but some modifications were introduced to accommodate the new political developments. Both modern and ancient history were taught alongside the laws of the New Constitution and the rights of men.[6] Besides classical subjects like Latin, Rhetoric Mythology, utilitarian subjects like Mathematics, Drawing, Hydrology and the Sciences were included in the College curriculum.[7] The staff consisted of five teachers, besides Michelet who was himself principal and teacher.[8]

There is some indication that the school ran both elementary and secondary classes in the same building. Subjects like Reading and Writing were also taught; even though such subjects were usually taught in elementary schools after the Revolution.[9] By refusing to set up separate elementary schools the Assembly would seem to have tried to force people of all the social classes to attend the same school. It was an indirect attempt to bring about a form of integration of social classes in the National College. The decision to allow for a blend of abstract academic subjects and vocational

utilitarian subjects in the curriculum could have been another indirect step in the same direction.

The success of the Michelet school was unchallenged during the first year of its existence. Its enrolment rose to 102, and students seemed to come from different social groups, even though the majority came from the lower socio-economic class. There were thirty-two scholars enrolled as full-time boarders: ten semi-boarders, sixty day scholars and twenty-five students of "drawing". Six scholars were admitted free of charge.[10] The full-time boarders were obviously children of parents who belonged to the higher socio-economic class, since they could afford to pay the highest fees. Moreover, it seems that Michelet made allowances in his schedule of classes and school regulations, to enable the scholars from this class to maintain such privileges as their rank in society entitled them to have. Private servants were allowed to accompany the full-time boarders. These servants were in constant attendance upon their charges who were never left alone, or allowed to come into contact with coloured servants whose presence was not considered appropriate on school premises.[11] Moreover special classes in subjects like Music, Dancing and Art which catered for the social and cultural aspirations of the leisured class, were taught at times when day scholars had left the school precincts.

Special fees were charged for these classes and the parents' approval was necessary to enable the child to participate in them. Moreover religious studies were taught, and mass held for those who wanted to participate.[12] Probably the members of the Assembly and the Principal were both aware of their dependence for financial support upon the economic elite because all these class privileges which were contradictory to the objectives of the Government of the French Revolution were restored in the National college. Nevertheless, the members of the Assembly presided over the prize giving ceremonies, and declared officially that they meant to keep a close watch over the 'moral and political education' of the students in the college.[13]

In course of the second year of its existence the National College with Michelet still as principal began to experience difficulties. It is hard to specify exactly what the direct causesof these difficulties really were. On the basis of such data as are available, it would seem some of these causes derived from personal sources, while others were political. In 1793, Michelet complained of financial difficulties.[14] He appealed to the Assembly for a grant to enable him to make the necessary additions to his school buildings, as well as to compensate for the losses he had incurred as a result of the small-pox epidemic which had led to a temporary closure of the school.[15]

During this same year, the enrolment in the school had really been reduced to 94: but of these, 43 were full-time boarders, 35 only day scholars and 16 semi-boarders.[16] The trend of enrolment would suggest that more children of the higher socio-economic background were admitted to the school than before, and if these brought a higher revenue to the school, since the fees of full-time boarders were twice as high as those of the day scholars, it is hard to imagine why Michelet complained to the Assembly. Could it be that there was some ulterior motive which is not mentioned in the available records? More data probably would supply an answer.

Moreover, the Assembly members did not blindly comply with Michelet's request for more money.[17] A commission was appointed to look into the matter. In the meantime a moderate sum of 800 livres was made available to him. When the Assembly met to discuss the recommendations of the Commission, it was clear that the members of the Executive and Legislative branches were divided in their opinions about supporting the Michelet school as generously as the Commission suggested.[18] The grant offered was substantially reduced.

At the same time some parental complaints were voiced regarding Michelet's ill treatment of some children. Michelet cleared himself of the charges. But when asked if he would continue his school

as a National institution, he declared he was unable to do so, since he had lost most of his full-time boarders. The school was unheard of after 1794, three years after its original foundation.[19]

Shortly afterwards, a colleague of Michelet, a gentleman called Moreau offered his services to the Assembly, planning to run the college on a day school basis.[20] His reason for this change from a boarding school to a day school was that the Island was facing food shortage because of an imminent blockade by English ships round the Island. His plan was accepted.

It now seems surprising that the Assembly so readily accepted the plan offered by Moreau regarding the transformation of the National College into a day school. This incident however remains ambiguous, especially when the events that succeeded shortly after are taken into account.

A few months after Moreau had set up his school, he appealed to the Assembly for help. He had been faced with applications for admission from parents of children from the coloured section of the population, and he failed to admit them.[21] He advised the Assembly that they should set up a separate school for the coloured instead.

At first, the members of the Assembly did not support Moreau's recommendation. It actually refused to authorise another

private individual who wanted to set up another college to do so. (The description of this incident would suggest that the school was meant for the children of the lowest social classes.)[22] Instead, the Assembly openly declared its adherence to the clause in the constitution that ensured equal status and equal rights to all free people in the colony, irrespective of skin colour and race. In practice however, it did not enforce this law. A committee was appointed to verify if the Moreau school could really not accommodate any more students. But by this time the Moreau school had ceased to exist (1795) a year after it had started.[23]

Since the Assembly probably did not want to abandon the responsibility conferred upon it by the metropolitan government in respect to the task of providing a national system of education and also because it was eager to control the spread of education among the poor French and the coloured it made another attempt to set up a National College. The title was conferred on another private College run by citizen Dubreuil.[24] The school had been active for some time and it had a total enrolment of fifty day scholars and twelve full-time boarders. The pattern of the enrolment suggests that the school was probably supported by a less affluent group since it had a majority of day scholars. But there is no evidence to show that it had any coloured person enrolled. Nevertheless, the Assembly

praised the school both for its academic programme and for the discipline and conduct of the scholars. The school was placed under the supervision of the Municipality.[25]

The official attempt made by the Assembly to run a national institution for education, in which different social classes and racial groups would be expected to follow an identical educational programme, would seem to have failed so far. The reasons for this failure could have been due to the fact that the Assembly did not fully endorse the programme of social integration which was suggested by the egalitarian social party of the Revolutionary Government of France. Moreover since the local members of the Revolutionary were a minority and economically dependent on the elite who were the landowners - they failed to exercise much power in the Assembly. This would explain why in the Michelet school so much compromise was made to allow for the continuation of the subcultural differences between the children of the higher socio-economic background and the poor.

The failure of the Moreau school can also be attributed to the inability of the Assembly to enforce a policy of racial integration in the colony. Formal allegiance to the directives issued by the metropole made the local Assembly declare that the coloured people were legally entitled to admission to the Moreau school. But

when it came to enforce the principle it seems that the members of the Assembly preferred to preserve the status quo rather than implement this change.

On the other hand the dominant economic elite could do without the National College altogether. Since many of the large plantation owners and businessmen who were known to maintain social distance from the poorer classes and the coloured population were represented in the Assembly, they managed to obtain the authorisation to set up the private schools. One such school was set up as early as 1791, simultaneously with a Michelet school.[26] It was run by a priest, citizen Bellon who, because he operated a traditional institution, won the support of the elite. There is no indication that the private school experienced any financial difficulties.

Another evidence that more private schools existed is the fact that, when the Moreau school floundered, the Assembly could easily have recourse to Dubreuil's school which was active at the time to make it the new National College. The pattern of enrolment in this school also revealed that it was supported by a less affluent group in the society. By taking this school under its control, the Assembly in effect tried to limit the expansion of education among the less affluent social groups in the society

since the conferral of the status of the National College on Dubreuil's schools no doubt meant that his pupils were now drawn from the higher socio-economic groups.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Cochin, A. Precis des Principales Operations du Gouvernement Révolutionnaire. Librairie Ancienne Honore Champion. Paris. 1936. pp. 127-128. Between 1793 and 1794, the Assembly in France had issued different decrees regarding the reorganisation of the schools and the creation of primary schools for the general public.

In the colony of Ile de France, it can be assumed that the Assembly was theoretically bound to assume responsibility of public education. Besides citizen Bellon a priest who wanted to start a private school in the colony reminded the Assembly of its responsibility in 1791. The Assembly undertook the responsibility of public education, as will be seen in course of this quotation:

> "In November 1791, citizen Bellon, a priest, in accordance with Art. 17 of the Section 7, dated 2 April 1791, relative to the mode of the provisional organisation of the colony, which decrees that the Directoire will be responsible for the administration and supervision of Public Instruction and the Moral and Political education of the people...." (Revue Historique de L' Ile Maurice. 11 January 1891. No. 32. p. 378.)

[2]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Litteraire. January 1891. No. 32. L' Instruction Publique à L' Ile de France. p. 378.

Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 14 December 1890. No. 29. pp. 337-343.

[3]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 11 January 1891. No. 32. p. 343; 379.

[4]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. pp. 337-343. The three categories of scholars were the 'Pensionnaires", the 'demi-Pensionnaires' and the 'externes'.

[5]Pirious, J. Jacques. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 14 December 1890. No. 29. The author mentions that 6 scholars will be admitted in the Michelet College, whose expenses will be borne by the Social Welfare Bureau.

[6]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 14 December 1890. No. 29. p. 338. Michelet promised the administration that he would devote "every Wednesday, of every week, between 4 and 5 p.m. to teaching the rights of men and of the new constitution."

[7]Ibid.

[8]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 14 December 1890. No. 29. p. 339. The teachers were the following:

Citizen Moreau: teacher of Mathematics, Drawing, also in charge of the curriculum;
Citizen Michelet: teacher of Grammar, Mythology and Arithmetic, also responsible for supervising the boarding school;
Citizen Margerin: teacher of Geography and Writing;
Citizen Debaize: teacher of Writing, Arithmetic and Hydrology;
Citizen Delporte: master of Music, and Dance.

From this list it is impossible to state who taught the other subjects in the College. It could be that the information about the actual conduct of the Michelet school is still lacking. Actually such details as are available are mere extracts of reports and descriptions, and the writers of the R.H.L. articles claimed this difficulty even though they were working with documents available in 1891, in the Archives of the Island itself. p. 338.

[9]Cahiers de la Révolution Francaise. Centre d' Etudes de la Revolution. No. 111. Recueil. Sirey. Universite de Paris. 1939. p. 64.

Gontard, M. L' Enseignement Primaire en France. (1789-1833). Societe de Belles Lettres. Paris. 1961. pp. 84-98.

[10]Revue Historique et Littéraire. 21 December 1890. No. 30. pp. 352-353.

[11]Revue Historique et Littéraire. 11 December 1890. No. 29. pp. 339-341.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Revue Historique et Littéraire. 11 January 1891. No. 32. pp. 399-400.

[14]Revue Historique et Littéraire. 25 January 1891. No. 34. p. 408; 409.

[15]Revue Historique et Littéraire. 11 January 1891. No. 32. p. 399.

[16]Revue Historique et Littéraire. 11 January 1891. No. 32. p. 400.

[17]Revue Historique et Littéraire. 21 December 1890. No. 30. pp. 350-351; 352-353.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Revue Historique et Littéraire. 25 January 1891. No. 34. p. 409.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid.

[22]Ibid. The Directoire refused an ex-teacher of the College National called citizen Caty, the authorisation to open a school in the ciety. No reasons are given for the refusal. Nor is there any description available to suggest that his school was meant for any particular social group residing in the colony. The author wonders whether the writers of these articles have simply left out some details that may have been unpleasant to think about, such as the colour and racial distinctions that were so hard to surmount in the colony. When citizen Caty is refused the use of the building he proposed to utilize for the purpose of setting up his school, the point is made that the building had originally been requested by a lady to open a school for girls. It is a fact that only the White-French population had traditionally been running schools for girls in the colony. If the administration was eager to expand education in the colony, it would surely have been more in its interest to support Caty's plan: instead it was set aside.

[23]Revue Historique et Littéraire. 25 January 1891. No. 34. p. 422.

[24]Revue Historique et Littéraire. 25 January 1891. No. 34. pp. 422-423.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Revue Historique et Littéraire. 8 February 1890. No. 34. p. 375.

Chapter IV.1

ILE DE FRANCE UNDER FRENCH REPUBLICAN RULE

The declaration of the Republic in France took place in 1792.[1] It was seen that most of the changes the Republic introduced in the metropole had not produced serious consequences in the colonies. The local Colonial Assemblies had been kept busy settling such internal problems which developed as a result of the new Constitution and the new laws introduced in the metropole.

In Ile de France, as shown in the earlier chapter, the struggle was more of a social and political nature, as the leaders of the Revolution tried to create better educational opportunities for the less privileged. Matters came to a head however, when delegates arrived in the colony from the Republican government in Paris with orders to declare the abolition of slavery in the colony and to announce the equal citizenship rights for the freed slaves.[2] There was no promise of financial compensation to the slave owners, nor any measures for the rehabilitation of the freed slaves (such as accompanied the British abolition of slavery later in 1835).[3] Instead, in colonies where the predominance of reactionary attitudes was feared, as was the case in Ile de France, a military escort was sent with the delegates, to help enforce the laws.

The fear of the economic and social consequences that the declaration of this new law might produce in the colony helped unite temporarily the leaders who showed different political ideologies in the Colonial Assembly.[4] The leading businessmen and planters as well as the sympathisers of the extremist Sans Culottisme and the Jacobins rallied behind the Governor and requested the delegates to leave the colony. They claimed that the declaration of the abolition of slavery would threaten to plunge the colony in a bloodbath such as had taken place in the Atlantic colonies, e.g. Saint Dominque, where the coloured and slaves had rebelled against the smaller white community. Moreover, it was feared the descent of the military escort would lead to a rebellion among the military forces in the colony as well.[5]

The delegates were therefore requested to depart: their military escort was not only refused entry in the colony but eventually sent to Batavia which had appealed to the Governor for military succour. Shortly after, the Governor asked the members of the Assembly to resign since it was found that they could not stop the mob violence in the colony: most of the extremist leaders of the Revolution were deported, and when a new Assembly was formed, it was reduced to a membership of 21, a sharp contrast to its original size of 51.[6]

The new Assembly ruled the colony in virtual independence from the metropole. When the Governor who was in office died in 1796 he was replaced by an ex-member of the Superior Council of the monarchic times, who had taken residence in the colony.[7]

Economically, besides its dependence upon agriculture and trade, the colony had to rely on acts of piracy in which many private ship owners indulged. The intensification of military activities in the Indian Ocean made piracy at sea, which was considered a sport among the aristocracy, quite profitable for the colony.[8]

Inspite of the political estrangement from the metropole, however, the rulers of the colony tried to maintain cultural links with the home country. In a way, the influx of émigrés from among the class of affluent citizens who escaped the turmoil of the metropole to seek retreat in the colony helped preserve an association with the metropole. This wave of immigration introduced new skills, trained talent and capital in the colony.

The new Assembly seemed to have taken advantage of these elements in maintaining its oligarchic rule in the colony for the brief period until Napoleon sent his representatives to the Island in 1802. Nowhere were the reactionary ideas of the new government better manifested than in the educational sector.

[1]Encyclopaedia Britannica. Vol. 9. Ed. 1972. p. 730.

Saintoyant, J. La Colonisation Francaise Pendant la Revolution. (1789-1799). La Rennaissance du Livre. Paris. 1930. p. 220. Actually the colonies were divided into 'departments' of the French Republic in the meeting of the Convention in 1792.

[2]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. (1735-1935). Typographie Moderne. Port-Louis. 1936. pp. 137-145.

Hanotaux, G. Histoires des Colonies Francaises. Librairie. Societe de L' Histoire Nationale. Librairie Plon. Paris. Tome VI. pp. 389-392.

[3]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 139-140.

[4]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. p. 162.

[5]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. p. 140.

[6]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. p. 143.

[7]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. p. 143-144.

[8]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 169-183.

Chapter IV. 11

THE CREATION OF THE ECOLE CENTRALE IN ILE DE FRANCE

When the new Assembly first met in the colony it adopted the same attitude to education which characterised the previous administration. While it assumed the responsibility of establishing a state controlled educational institution, it decided that instead of running a school outright with its own resources and personnel, it should give a grant to a private institution and call it a National College, and at the same time allow other private schools to exist alongside the National state supported college. While the National College was under some obligation to accommodate a few scholars from the lower socio-economic background, the private schools catered exclusively to the children of the local French elite. The Municipality was asked to present its candidates to the National College for admission but there is no record to show that children of the coloured population were admitted to the college.

The first institution that received support from the new Assembly was the Dubreuil College which had provided education in the colony under the previous administration.[1] The title of the College was changed from 'National College', to that of 'Colonial College'.[2] This new designation obviously suited the outlook of the new admini-

stration which saw its dependence upon the metropole as a source of pride.

The administration was prepared to advance generous loans to help maintain the school. It also offered the Principal the sum of 100,000 livres towards covering the recurrent expenses. It stipulated however, that the size of the school should be limited to an enrolment of 50: of whom only 10 were to be full-time boarders, and 40 day scholars.[3] This size was smaller than what had been characteristic of the National Colleges till that time. This decision could have been motivated by a desire to control the spread of education among the people probably in view of few employment opportunities.

In order to understand the implication of this new restriction on admission to the National College it is necessary to consider other developments that were taking place in the educational system and in society at large at the time. In course of the very year that the Colonial College was in operation the attention of the Assembly was drawn to another college which had been started by citizen Boyer, a retired businessman and which had an enrolment of approximately 35 scholars.[4] Its pattern of enrolment however revealed that the school was patronised by a more affluent section of the population. It had 20 full-time boarders, and 7 semi-scholars and 8 day scholars. By

contrast, the Colonial College had 40 day scholars, and only 7 full-time boarders. The Assembly shifted its interest to the private school run by Boyer, thus revealing its preference for a school in which the children of the elite were enrolled to carry the designation of Colonial College.[5]

And at approximately the same time a pressure group was being built up in the colony by parents who had customarily relied on the metropole for the education of their children but now demanded better educational facilities locally.[6] Their claim was that, as a result of the intensification of military activities in the Indian Ocean and the turmoil existing in the metropole they were finding it increasingly difficult to send their children abroad. They felt it was necessary for the administration to provide adequate educational services for their young, in the colony, and to employ competent teachers to impart such education as was appropriate to their rank.[7]

It was partly in reaction to this demand, that the administration began to support the Boyer School.[8] The school was inspected by the Municipality and Assembly members, offered loans for the improvement of its buildings, and encouraged to employ new teachers to expand its curriculum. The two subjects that were added to the existing academic curriculum consisted of Drawing which was considered both vocational and a leisure activity for some, and Painting. Thereafter the title of Colonial College was conferred on the school

and it became the beneficiary of still more substantial loans. A guarantee was made that the school would run for nine years at least to provide for continuity in the system of education.[9]

Inspite of this arrangement however, the Principal of the school was found guilty of embezzlement of the school funds in 1800, two years after the school became a National Institution. The administration appointed a Commission to take charge of the whole question of educational planning for the colony.[10]

It can be assumed that the need was being felt for educational institutions on a more permanent basis which would ensure a supply of new cadres for the administration in order to maintain its power in the colony. It needs to be mentioned that the possibility of the metropole supplying such personnel as it did in the past now became more doubtful. And as far as possible the administration wanted to make sure that the young of the elite could benefit from the education so that besides owning the plantations and businesses they could also assume office in the administration. The maintenance of political control rather than equality of educational opportunity was the primary concern. As far as the latter went a few poor scholars could always be sponsored by the offer of free scholarships.

This new approach to the educational planning found expression in the creation of the Ecole Centrale in the Island in 1800. When the Commission came up with its plan for a national education

system in 1799, it drew inspiration from the latest educational experiment that had been carried out in France.[11] The Republican government had based itself on the Plan Lakanal, (1794, Paris) and set up the Ecole Centrale to provide secondary education with a wide academic base for scholars who aspired to university education and professional training.[12] For the masses, primary education had been advised: but it was neither compulsory nor free. Moreover, the primary schools fulfilled a different function in the metropolitan society in that all school leavers were sent to work in the different institutions that were necessary to maintain a nation, such as the shipyards, work-houses, the army and the agricultural sector.[13] In Mauritius much of this work was done by the slaves who it was felt, did not require any formal education.

The Commission of Public Instruction in the Colony offered a modified version of this plan for the Island. The Ecole Centrale was set up as a National Institution for the elite. Primary schools, mostly to be run as private schools, were to be authorised for the rest of the population that desired to benefit from education.[14] No school however could be started in the colony without the formal authorisation from the Commission of Public Instruction.[15]

The Ecole Centrale was started in 1800, and was placed under the direct control of the Commission of Public Instruction. The school had a very bureaucratic administrative structure. Financial

matters were dealt with by special officials, the teaching and discipline aspects of the college were entrusted to the care and supervision of a separate professional body consisting of 12 knowledgeable individuals, while the staff proper was to consist of 4 teachers for the academic subjects.[16] A priest was appointed to act as principal, and more members of the Clergy were allowed to participate in the activities of the school. Unlike the Revolutionary government which had tried to free education from the control of the Clergy the new administration not only employed Priests as teachers but it also restored religious services and the Mass in the school. Classes in religious instruction were added to the curriculum.[17]

Other members of the staff were chosen from among the competent citizens of both Ile de France and the neighbouring Island of Bourbon. Resident immigrants were encouraged to join the staff as well.[18] A military surgeon for instance became teacher of biology in the school, a Parisian dramatist joined as the teacher of speech, painting and drawing and the principal of a school from a province of France, who had been sent from Paris to organise the education in the colony was employed on the staff. The curriculum of the college thereafter became widely based on both the classical subjects the sciences and modern languages. The subjects taught were grammar, mathematics, English, history and geography. Latin was

added later. Under the instigation of parents military training was no longer included in the curriculum.[19] There is little doubt that the authorities aspired to a gentlemanly type of education, not unlike what had existed under the Ancien Regime.

Because the Ecole Centrale enjoyed the fullhearted support of the members of the Assembly, it benefitted from the best resources in terms of teacher recruitment and other facilities that concerned the physical plant of the school itself. As the applications for admission grew the enrolment rose to 189 in 1803, with 75 full-time boarders alone, 30 semi-boarders and 84 day scholars. New members of staff were gradually added to the school.[20] A library was also added to the school. In addition there was greater diversification of the curriculum. New buildings were set up probably to house the subject areas which had increases in enrolment. It could also well be that, since the subjects which were taught in separate buildings were essentially painting and drawing, and hydrology,[21(a)] there was also some measure of discrimination involved. These subjects were considered vocational and of lower prestige but probably drew their clientele from those who could not do well in the academic subjects. More data about the actual reasons that precipitated these changes would help to interpret them better. Whatever were the reasons, however

it is still possible to see how closely the progress of the school was watched by the administration, and with what aims. When the demand diminished in the hydrology class, the subject was dropped completely and so was biology. Instead Latin was added, and more teachers were employed to teach Italian and English. Both suggest a trend towards strongly abstract, academic learning, characteristic of an elite society, determined to set its academically oriented youth apart from the rest of society.

Moreover, school functions were celebrated amidst pomp and glamour. Examinations were held in an auditorium. Members of the Assembly, and the Commission of Public Instruction as well as parents and illustrious personalities attended the prize giving celebrations. The best prize was awarded on the basis of good conduct and discipline.[21(b)] It was called the Prix de sagesse' and was awarded on top of and above academic achievement. Academic achievement was rewarded separately, in respect to the knowledge area in which the scholar had shown competence. These details show how deeply personal conduct and attitudinal matters were valued and sanctioned in the society which was trying to prepare an elite capable of shouldering responsibilities and assuming leadership in the future.

The pattern of admission to the college also showed that the administration was bent upon maintaining the elitist character of the school. Scholars from the neighbouring French possession in Africa, and the Eastern territories were encouraged to attend the school.[22] These were children of the administrators and officials who were finding it difficult to send their children to the motherland for education. The school also catered to children from the Dutch and Portuguese settlements in Mozambique and the Indonesian ports. Reliance on the fees these patrons paid to the college made the Ecole Centrale financially self-supporting. While the administration supported selected scholars from the lower socio-economic classes yet selection of students from this class depended upon the respectability, social origin, and sound conduct of their parents. These family background details were scrutinised by the members of the Municipality and the Commission of Public Instruction prior to the state supported scholars' admission to the school.[23]

While the Ecole Centrale became a subject of pride because of the key role it played in providing new cadres to the administration the members of the Government tried to make sure that the work of the school in the colony was not emulated by other schools. The creation of more secondary schools was restricted. The only other school which was supported by the State was a separate institution

set up for the coloured people.[24] In response to the demands of the coloured people to have a separate school set up for their children - since the latter were not admitted to the Ecole Centrale- the Assembly with the approval of the Commission of Public Instruction voted sufficient funds to enable them to establish a school.[25] The Commune provided money for the rent of the school building and the equivalent of the salary of four teachers, (1800).[26] But there was no ruling made regarding the competence of the teachers in the school, nor was there any attempt to duplicate the curriculum of the Ecole Centrale in the new school. Instead no questions were raised on these matters. It was obvious that the Assembly was hardly interested in the progress of the school.

On the other hand, there was a tendency for all the private schools which had been active in the colony to slowly disappear.[27] Many of the principals and teachers were absorbed in the Ecole Centrale itself in various capacities.[28] Indirectly the Assembly contributed to the failure of some of these schools by refusing financial help when the principals asked for it.[29]

For all other purposes such schools as were authorised in the colony were run at the primary level. The records reveal that there were five or six of these in existence.[30] They were located in the rural areas as well as in the capital. After some time the

Commission of Public Instruction imposed on all the schools the same timetable subjects class and examination schedules as existed in the Ecole Centrale.[31]

This survey reveals clearly that the dominant groups of the society that had seized power not only set up an educational institution that suited its socio-cultural and political goals but also manipulated the educational system in the colony in such a way as to legitimize its superiority. The stratified educational system placed the Ecole Centrale at the apex of the educational pyramid. While the externals like class schedules and examination times and dates were uniformly adopted, yet the content of the curriculum of the Ecole Centrale remained the monopoly of the elite that had access to it. Moreover, the competitive nature of the examinations further stratified even those candidates who attended the Ecole Centrale itself.

The same community also made provision for the social refinement of its members by setting up two girls' schools for its own people.[32] There was no mention of girls' schools for the rest of the population.

The elite kept itself quite apart from the local population. At the same time it was also temporarily cut off from the metropole, as a result of its defiance of the laws regarding the abolition of slavery in the colony. This double isolation forced it to promote

greater solidarity with those expatriate French settlers in the other colonies who belonged to the same ranks. The Ecole Centrale attracted scholars from other French and Dutch and Portuguese settlements: they were hardly subjected to the same rigid selection process as was used against local poor people. Nor was there any attempt on the part of the elite to promote the assimilation of the coloured into the mainstream of the French society. The school system thus helped maintain the socio-cultural and economic disparities between the different social groups resident in the colony.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Duvivier, A. L' Instruction Publique à L' Ile de France. Revue Historique et Litteraire de L' Ile Maurice. 25 January 1891. No. 34. pp. 422-423.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Duvivier, A. L' Instruction Publique à L' Ile de France. Revue Historique et Litteraire de L' Ile Maurice. 25 January 1891. No. 34. p. 422.

[4]Duvivier, A. L' Instruction Publique à L' Ile de France. Revue Historique et Litteraire de L' Ile Maurice. 25 January 1891. No. 34. p. 423.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 8 February 1891. No. 36. p. 429.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 8 February 1891. No. 36. p. 429.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Litteraire de L' Ile Maurice. 8 February 1891. No. 36. p. 430; 448.

[11]Leon, A. Histoire de L' Enseignement en France. Presses Universiataires de France. Paris. 1967. pp. 61-64.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 8 February 1891. No. 36. pp. 431-432. p. 447.

[15]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 8 February 1891. No. 36. p. 448.

[16]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 8 February 1891. No. 36. pp. 447-448. p. 456. The list includes the following: "a principal, 4 teachers and a surgeon".

[17]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 1 March 1891. No. 39. p. 471.

[18]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 22 February 1891. No. 38. p. 457.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 1 March 1891. No. 39. p. 471.

[21(a)]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 22 February 1891. No. 38. p. 457.

[21(b)]Ibid.

[22]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 22 February 1891. No. 38. p. 460.

[23]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 22 February 1891. No. 38. p. 456.

[24]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 1 March 1891. p. 469.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 1 March 1891. p. 458. The schools of Boyer and Dubreuil were among those which disappeared slowly due to lack of financial subsidies from the Directoire, or the Commission of Public Instruction.

[28]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 22 February 1891. No. 38. p. 458. Abbe Charlot closed his private school in Moka district and joined the staff of the Ecole Centrale.

[29]Ibid. The reference includes all these schools which were run by Abbe Charlot, Dubreuil, and Boyer.

[30]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 22 February 1891. No. 38. pp. 458-459. 1 March 1891. No. 39. pp. 468-469. p. 470. Among the primary schools mentioned are the following:

Pugin's school located in the district of Flacq;
Dreux's school located in Port-Louis;
Begaux's school located in Riviere du Rempart;
Boisset's school in Port-Louis;
Lacour's school in the district of Grand Port.

[31]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire de L' Ile Maurice. 1 March 1891. No. 39. p. 469. This standardisation of the timetable was typical of the centralisation of the educational system in France.

[32]Ibid. The two girl's schools in the colony were run by citizens Lauze and Dubreuil.

Chapter V.1

NAPOLEONIC RULE IN ILE DE FRANCE

The coup d'etat staged by Napoleon on the 18th Brumaire put an end to the attempts made by the Republican government in France to carry out the social and political reforms preached by the French Revolution. Napoleon established the consular triumvirate in Paris, and extended his model of government to all colonies.[1] A Captain-General was designated for each colony, whose task was to be assisted by an Intendant and a Justice Commissioner.[2] These officials represented the central authority in the colonies, but all major decisions were made in Paris.[3] This new political arrangement destroyed all semblances of autonomy that the Islands may have enjoyed during the rule of the Revolutionary Colonial Assemblies.

Napoleon made it explicit in his decrees and laws that the colonies were a political and territorial unit distinct from the metropole. The colonists were no longer entitled to the same rights and privileges as the citizens of France enjoyed.[4] He restored slavery in the colonies and reinstated the Code Noir thus reducing the slaves to a state of total dependency upon the masters.[5] This step was as much in the economic interest of the colonies, as it was a precautionary measure to limit the number of free coloured people. More restrictions on the coloured people were reflected in the laws passed

during this period e. g. the law to abolish the rights of coloured people to marry whites, or to seek refuge in the metropole. It seemed that it had been a common practice under monarchic times and later under the Revolution for coloured people to try to gain access to the metropole.[6] They were automatically given free status in the metropole where there was no legal support for slavery.

Napoleon also applied economic restriction against the colonies. They were subjected to heavy taxation when they sold their products on the metropolitan markets. Preferential tariffs were granted to ports in the colonies which had been officially recognised as the imperial depots. Ile de France was not among these depots.[7]

How far these laws were implemented in the colonies again depended upon the channels of communication that linked them to the metropole. Many of these laws were made gradually during Napoleonic rule. Partly on account of its viable naval base and partly because of its relative closeness to the metropole Ile de France attracted the attention of Napoleon shortly after he came to power. He had diplomatically sent an experienced scientist and draftsman to study the conditions of the Island as early as 1802.[8] He thereafter planned to use Ile de France as a military outpost and appointed a triumvirate consisting of the Captain-General, and Intendant and a Chief Judge to take office in the colony, in 1803.[9]

However, shortly after, in 1802, the official representatives of the Consular triumvirate who were appointed to govern in India with General Decaen as Captain-General, were forced to land in Ile de France, when they were intercepted by British ships.[10] Upon landing in the colony, the General met the Assembly which was still in office and forced it to hand over the government to him.[11] General Decaen won the approval of Napoleon for this action, and he became the Captain-General in the colony.[12]

It seems that there was already a faction of Bonapartists in the colony and Decaen was able to choose a Justice Commissioner locally, from among the lawyers. Thereafter the Napoleonic Code replaced the Laws and Constitution of the Revolution.[13] The General formed a strong police force in the Island and the Chief became responsible for the establishment of peace and order in the entire colony. The municipality was replaced by the Commune and its administrative role abolished.[14] Not unlike the Commune of the Ancien Regime, this new organisation was empowered to maintain roads and bridges, keep civil records and supervise the public works. These appointments did not enable the office holders to form a privileged class of citizens. All property holders were heavily taxed to finance the fortifications and constructions that the administration had planned for the colony with a view to making it the military outpost worthy of the Emperor.

The colony regained stability and protection during the early part of the new rule. Agriculture was restored and commerce encouraged.[15]

The new source of danger became the lurking English ships that toured the Indian Ocean[16] especially as relations between France and the other European countries tended to get worse. In times of need the adventurer pirates from Ile de France did not hesitate to chase the British ships[17] and the General did not take sanctions against them, probably because the goods they obtained in the raids served to ease the scarcity of goods from France proper. Blockades round the Island were not uncommon: actually the British attempted landing in the colony once before they planned the massive conquest in 1810.[18]

In times of peace however, the Island regained some of the glamour and prosperity that it had witnessed earlier. The General celebrated the victories of Napoleon in Europe by throwing banquets and balls. He patronised learned societies, became a champion of education[19] and actually introduced the latest Napoleonic reforms in education in the colony.[20] The immediate result of these measures however, will be discussed later.

In order to maintain peace and order in the colony, the General had introduced the strong police force which was placed

under the supervision of General Prefect. It was partly by such strict measures of control that the General was able to free the colony of the licentious, unemployed people who were known to plague the capital. There is no mention of an idle population during the administration of Decaen. Instead, intense fortification works were undertaken in different parts of the colony. Actually Decaen's rule witnessed the birth of a new township in the South-Western part of the Island where sheltered inlets and deep navigable waters offered more secrecy for the war preparations than the main central harbour of Port Louis could provide. But in order not to lose the support of the capital the General changed the name of Port Louis to that of Port Napoleon thus instilling pride in the colony. The new harbour was called "Le Port Imperial".[21]

Inspite of these improvements and developments it is hard to determine how far the local population was enthused with the administration of Decaen. Many planters were known to resent the tariffs and trade restrictions that Napoleonic laws enforced upon the colony. And the loss of political autonomy could hardly not have been regretted by the leading members of the community. Moreover, the coloured people who had again been relegated to an inferior status must have deplored the loss of such rights as the Revolution had promised them.[22]

The only explanation for the fact that no outbreak of discontent took place in the colony was that since Napoleon himself was busy with his military campaigns in Europe Decaen could afford to be more flexible in his administration of the colony. Since both military aid and commercial commodities were slowly forthcoming from France, he must have realised that he had to rely more heavily on the local residents for support in times of war and peace.[23] In this sense his efforts to mix socially with the local residents by giving frequent receptions balls and banquets must have been devices employed to win local support of the economic elite. Similarly his close association with the local intellectuals could have been an attempt to control them and a desire to reach a common understanding with them.

And insofar as the poor and coloured were concerned, besides being employed in the various construction projects many must have been enlisted in the troops as well. The coloured were free to join the army under Napoleonic rule in most of the colonies.[24]

Altogether Decaen's short rule did not provide the historians reason to believe that the population was very pleased with the authoritaian centralised form of government that Napoleonic rule had initiated. The military orientation of the new government would seem to have been in tune with the commercial and agricultural interests of the colonial population.

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Nevertheless, the social structure of the colony did not escape the changes brought about by the Napoleonic code. And as a result of the political and social reorganisation that accompanied these changes, the education system of the Island also changed, to be at least theoretically in accord with the pattern of Napoleonic educational reform.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Saintoyant, J. La Colonisation Francaise Pendant la Periode Napoleonienne. La Renaissance du Libre. Paris. 1931. pp. 90-97.

Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles in the Land of the Aphanapteryx. Sampson, Low, Marston, Low and Searle. London. 1873. p. 367.

Encyclopaedia Britannica. Vol. 16. Ed. 1972. (Napoleon, I. pp. 3-4).

[2]Ibid.

[3]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas Through the Old Regime. Appleton Century Company. London. 1939. pp. 345-346.

[4]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas. pp. 345-346.

Gaston-Martin. Histoire de L' Esclavage dans les Colonies Francaises. Presses Universitaires de France Paris. 1948. p. 240. pp. 246-247.

[5]Ibid.

[6]McCloy, S. T. The Negro in France. University of Kentucky Press. 1961. pp. 1-10; 12-42. Once in France negroes acquired a surname and took up minor jobs.

[7]Priestley, H. I. France Overseas. pp. 34-37.

[8]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. (1735-1935). Typographie Moderne. Port-Louis. 1936. p. 185.

[9]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. (1735-1935). Typographie Moderne. Port-Louis. 1936. pp. 186-187.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 189-192.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 202-207.

[16]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 207-211.

[17]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 211-222.

[18]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 223-225.

[19]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. Longmans Green. London. 1949. p. 111.

[20]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 208-209.

[20]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 201-202.

[21]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 193-196.

[22]Priestley, H. France Overseas. pp. 345-347.

[23]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 211-227.

[24]Saintoyant, J. La Colonisation Francaise Pendant la Periode Napoleonienne. pp. 151-250, 335-343. The author describes the events that took place in Saint-Domingue and Guyane both of which colonies were known to possess armies consisting of free coloured people, of whom Toussaint-Louverture was a famous example. See also,

Hayot, E. Les Gens de Couleur Libres Du Fort-Royal. Revue Francaise d' Histoire D' Outre-Mer. Tome 55-56. 1968-1969. Ed. G. P. Maisonneuve et Larose. Paris. This author shows that coloured people could also become teachers in the schools set up for the coloured and hold other low-ranking positions in the occupational structures.

[25]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 201-202.

Chapter V.11

THE LYCEE IN ILE DE FRANCE

1803 - 1810

Upon the arrival of General Decaen in the colony and his replacement of the existing laws and some of the institutions by Napoleonic codes and administration, the Commission of Public Instruction which had managed education in the colony till then resigned.[1] Education was thereafter placed under the central jurisdiction of the Colonial Prefect.[2] The new administration decided to replace the Ecole Centrale with the Lycee which was the new institution for secondary education in Napoleonic France.[3]

The Prefect recommended the names of officials to form a new Office of Central Administration (Bureau d'Administration Generale) to be responsible for education in the colony.[4] Consisting of five members, only two of whom had served on the Commission of Public Instruction earlier, this organisation became the sole agency responsible for "making rules relating to the curriculum, the discipline, the health, food of the scholars of the Lycee, the examinations and the distribution of prizes."[5]

The new institution established locally was called the Lycee of Ile de France and Reunion',[6] a title which clearly demonstrated that the illusions of autonomy and importance such as the Island had

enjoyed till then were no longer to be tolerated. Henceforth, the Island was like any other colonial possession of France, dependent upon the metropole.

With this centralised control of education, the educational institution inherited a bureaucratised structure with a hierarchic organisation. A principal called the 'Préviseur' was placed at the head of the establishment and instructed to take charge of the entire school. A vice-principal, called the Censeur, was responsible for the curriculum selection and organisation, while a manager controlled the finances of the school.[7] The school was planned as a boarding institution, and the administration sold two plots of government lands to finance its operation. The number of state supported scholars was raised to 24, double what it had been in the Ecole Centrale, under the previous administration.[8] After the school had run successfully the first year, new buildings were added to the existing site to provide the necessary facilities for the implementation of the educational philosophy of Napoleonic rule. A swimming pool and sports grounds were added and equestrian and military exercises were taught.[9]

In addition other changes were reflected in the curriculum. The new school maintained all the classical and scientific subjects that the Ecole Centrale had included in its curriculum. In addition,

however, the new administration introduced military training, and utilitarian subjects such as meteorology and hydrology, both being essential in the marine surroundings of the Island which was frequently inflicted by cyclones.[10] Military subjects were given first priority. Besides drills and exercises, fencing and horsemanship, strict discipline was observed in school dress and in conduct. The scholars were compelled to have a circular haircut, and to wear a uniform of dark blue vests and pants.[11] The Governor General himself decorated the best performers in the military skills, and students from the Lycee were encouraged to attend official celebrations of Napoleon's victories on government grounds.[12]

The teachers of the Lycee were carefully selected by the members of the Bureau of General Administration that had been entrusted the task of supervising education in the Lycee and in the colony. At first the teachers who had taught at the Ecole Centrale had been allowed to retain their posts, and new personnel was hired to teach the new subjects.[13]

The captain of the Troops was employed to teach the military exercises and sports. The pupils were made to demonstrate their competence on occasions of national celebrations.[14] The historian Saintoyant mentions that Persian and Arabic were also taught at the Lycee: no evidence has been found, however, to support this claim.[15]

The fame of the Lycee grew during this time. It attracted scholars from Ile de France as well as from other Dutch, Portuguese and French colonial outposts in Asia and Africa.[16] In 1806, the Governor General had additions made to the buildings of the Lycee to accommodate the growing number of scholars enrolled in the institution.[17]

Shortly after two teachers who had achieved some fame in the colony resigned their posts.[18] According to the available records the cause for their resignation is attributed to disagreements with the Administrative Bureau. In the case of one of the individuals who resigned, however, it is possible to assume that some political and ideological differences could well have been the cause of the disagreement. The teacher in question was Monsieur Lorquet who had originally been sent by the Republican government in France to organise the educational system in the colony under the preceding administration.[19] Instead he had been employed by the local government to teach at the Ecole Centrale.[20] Moreover, after his resignation from the Lycee, he was enjoined by the Administrative Bureau to start a primary school in a rural district.[21] And the other individual, Monsieur Gratiolet was authorised to give private tuition only in the capital in subjects like French grammar, reading and commerce.[22] Clearly, the subjects they were asked to teach did not seem to raise

any difficulties: nor did the administration see them posing a threat in the level at which they were enjoined to teach.

The Lycee was the only institution to provide secondary education in the colony. When it was opened even the existing private secondary schools closed down. The Boyer school was the last to close six years after its opening.[23] In future the Administration only authorised primary schools in the colony and in these too the curriculum was centrally determined by the members of "Bureau d'Administration Generale," as shown in the case of Lorquet's school.[24]

According to the historian J. Saintoyant, General Decaen set up two primary schools for the use of the people of coloured origin.[25] Unfortunately, it has not been possible to find any detailed data to support this claim. The only primary school that was authorised seemed to have been the one run by Lorquet: there was no mention of the fact that his school catered to the people of the coloured origin.

Instead, however, the General authorised the creation of two private schools in the capital for the education of girls. Both these schools were set up by private initiative and the General praised the parents who showed such concern.[26]

This brief survey would tend to show that General Decaen did not only establish strong control over education in the colony, but he also restricted such educational activities as had been started under the previous administrations. Private schools were discontinued. This attitude was in conformity with the rigid authoritarian administrative system he had initiated under the Napoleonic consular government.

In the context of the colony, the preferential treatment given to the community of Frenchmen was likely to produce more disparities between the different ethnic and colour groups. Since only Frenchmen could send their children to Lycee, it meant that they alone could henceforth aspire to higher education. None of the colonies had a University under Napoleonic rule. Instead the metropole alone had the monopoloy of imparting higher education in the different institutions that Napoleon set up.[27] It was customary for the French expatriates to send their children to the Lycee and thence to institutions of higher education in France so that they could hold positions in the occupational structures as were established to administer the colonies.[28]

It was much later the coloured people were allowed to participate in either secondary or higher education in the French colonies. Under Decaen's rule, especially in Ile de France there

was no provision for their assimilation into the mainstream of French intellectual culture. At this point the author would like to raise the question whether it was not this exclusion from the educational institutions that became responsible for the kind of total psychological and social dependence upon the white men that O. Mannoni found characteristic of the indigenous Malagasy population as described in his book "Prospero and Caliban".[29]

Culturally, the exclusion of the coloured population from both secondary and higher learning meant a reliance on the adulterated creole culture in the colony: it denied chances of identification with the culture of the higher social classes. The effects of such social deprivations could be worse in the colonial society since the people concerned had lost touch with their indigenous native culture on account of their experience of slavery during the historical period that they resided in the colony. They must have adopted the creole language for communication among themselves, and the creole language was not written. The symbol of culture and refinement was therefore French language and culture. And since French could only be learnt in the schools proper, opportunities to attend them played a key role in the process of acculturation. Seen in this perspective, the failure to start schools or to create equal opportunities for attending them could be interpreted

as measures of control used to maintain social, cultural and economic differences in an ethnically diverse community such as Ile de France and most colonies had.

This analysis reveals that the educational policy of General Decaen, based originally on the plan of Napoleonic educational reforms for the metropole, was geared essentially to the political and economic goals of the local administrators. When General Decaen assumed control of the Ecole Centrale in 1803 and replaced it with the Lycee, he did not make the institution either more egalitarian or academically superior. The curriculum changes he introduced suited the military goals he had in mind for the development of the military outpost in the colony. The bureaucracy he instituted undoubtedly made control and supervision easy from the Central Office, but there is no evidence that it improved the social conditions in the boarding school, or that it improved teacher and pupil relations.

It was a mere coincidence that the segregationist and selective policy of admission to the Lycee was in favour with the desires of elite in the colonial society. After all, since 1789 when the Revolution had promised equal status to all free citizens in the colonies, irrespective of colour and racial origin, the question of racial integration in the schools had remained unsolved in the colony. General Decaen's actionwas more regressive in this sense. It was the official policy of his

government that the coloured population was to be relegated to an inferior status. Strict state control of education at all levels provided no opportunity to anyone to set up a school based on different educational or social goals.

And by stratifying the educational system into the secondary level of education provided by the Lycée and the lower level of education provided by the primary schools, the administration paved the way for a social differentiation of the school leavers. Since the Lycée graduands were academically better endowed and culturally more suited for such occupational opportunities as were open to the school leavers, it was clear that the less educated ones were at a serious disadvantage. It could be that the narrow economic base of the colony made such strict selection necessary. But if the administration aimed at developing the colony for self-sufficiency, rather than following the plans dictated by the metropole, it might perhaps have found a better solution to the problem.

There is another characteristic of the Lycée as it was set up in the colony that must be discussed. The fact that the government set up a Lycée in the colony hardly meant that the same programme of studies and academic achievements were maintained in both the metropolitan and the colonial institutions. As shown in the case of the Lycee in Ile de France, the local administrators did implement

changes that suited the political goals of the times. Hence the stress on the military subjects in the Lycée in Ile de France, a practice which had no parallel in any metropolitan Lycée. It would be worth inquiring how the scholar of the colonial Lycée would have been assimilated academically in a metropolitan institution of higher learning during Napoleonic times. This question was probably hardly envisaged since Napoleon had restricted the privileges that the colonial citizen had traditionally expected from metropolitan France.

In this sense, this study reveals a deep hiatus between the reality and the claim made by various authors that the French colonial educational policy has been assimilationist.[30] Instead Napoleon restored the caste life division that existed between the races in the colony.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Duvivier, A. L' Instruction Publique à L' Ile de France. Revue Historique et Litteraire de L' Ile Maurice. (Archives Coloniales). 8 March 1891. No. 40. p. 484.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 8 March. No. 40. p. 484.

[5]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. The quotation in French runs as follows:

> "Le Bureau est chargé de faire tous les règlements necessaires sur tous les objets d' enseignement, sur la discipline, la santé, la nourriture des eleves du lycée, les examens, les distributions de prix et autres." (p. 493.)

[6]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. p. 493.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Litteraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. pp. 494-495.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. p. 495.

[11]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Litteraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. pp. 493-495.

[12]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Litteraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. p. 495.

[13]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. pp. 493-495.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Saintoyant, J. La Colonisation Francaise Pendant la Periode Napoleonienne. (1799-1815.) La Renaissance du Livre. Paris. 1931. pp. 389-390.

[17]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. p. 494. According to Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius, the enrolment rose to 300. (p. 113.)

[18]Ibid.

[19]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 8 March 1891. No. 40. p. 483.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. p. 494.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. p. 493.

[24]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. p. 494.

[25]Saintoyant, J. Colonisation Française. (1799-1815.) p. 390.

[26]Duvivier, A. Revue Historique et Littéraire. 15 March 1891. No. 41. p. 496.

[27]Léon, A. Histoire de L'Enseignement en France. Presses Universitaire en France. Paris. 1967. pp. 68-69.

Napoleon set up four types of secondary schools in France, and five different institutions of higher education; for the different types of professional training in Law, Theology, Medicine and the Arts and Sciences. Moreover according to author Debeauvais, (see footenote 28) the colonial schools were by no means considered as the equivalent of the metropolitan institutions.

[28]Debeauvais, M. Education in French Africa. James S. Colemen, Education and Political Development. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey. 1965. pp. 75-91.

[29]Mannoni, O. Prospero and Caliban. The Psychology of Colonisation. Frederick A. Praeger. New York. 1964. pp. 42-48.

[30]Clignet, Remi and Forster, P. The Fortunate Few: A Study of Secondary Schools and Students in the Ivory Coast. Northwestern University Press. pp. 5-10.

Chapter VI.1

BRITISH CONQUEST AND THE PACIFICATION OF THE ELITES

In 1810, Ile de France was conquered by the British forces and thereafter became a British Crown colony.[1] Its name was changed from Ile de France to the original Dutch name Mauritius.[2]

Unlike the French the British had no desire to make the Island a colony of settlement. Once the peace treaty was signed between the Commander of the Troops and General Decaen, the regiments which consisted of 10,000 soldiers were redistributed among the different military outposts of the British Empire. Only two regiments were left in the Island. General Decaen and all his forces were repatriated and all their arms captured.[3] The civilian population in the colony was persuaded to stay. As the British had done earlier in Canada, after the capture of Quebec, the residents of the colony were allowed to maintain their laws, religion and language.[4] The main concern of the administration seemed to lie in its attempts to win the loyalty of the citizens and to arrive at an agreeable cooperation in the domain of the economic exploitation of the colony's resources.

In theory the administrative structure that was set up after the British conquest was no less authoritarian and centralised

than it had been under General Decaen. Absolute power rested in the person of the Governor who fulfilled both the legislative and the executive functions in the Island.[5] He was accompanied by a Customs Officer who took charge of the budget, and the Commander of Troops who ensured the safety and defence of the colony. Both these offices were filled by Englishmen appointed in the metropole. A Chief Judge was appointed to head the Judiciary. It is interesting to note that a local lawyer of French descent, who had served in the Superior Council at one time was chosen to fill that position.[6] Such a step was no doubt prompted by two important considerations. First it brought under control of the central administration the legal system of the colony which was foreign to the British since it was derived from the Napoleonic code. Actually Decaen had followed the same procedure under his administration. Secondly the choice of a local professional to fill the position was calculated to add to the legitimacy of the new administration for such a practice would be expected to foster hopes of mobility into the administrative structure by the colonials.

Another example of such strategic foresight by the British was seen when the Governor requested these officials of French descent who held different positions in the occupational structure of the colony to remain in office.[7] Property rights were respected. Such nobles as had been deprived of their titles and state by both the

Revolutionary Government and Napoleonic rule were asked to present their credentials to the Governor who was willing to honour any previous commitments made to them.[8] Moreover the oath of allegiance to the new government was not strictly enforced during the first year of British rule. In the meantime such citizens as chose to leave the colony were free to do so. The law only became compulsory in 1811 when Governor Farquhar was sent to reorganise the administration of Reunion which had also fallen under British control temporarily and General Warde assumed the responsibility of governing Mauritius.[9]

While the Governor showed this extremely conciliatory spirit towards the civilian population, he nevertheless used extremely cruel sanctions against the Irish captives of war who had been forced by General Decaen to join in the fight against the British. Approximately 500 of them were executed in public and their uniforms according to one historical source were sent as gifts to Madagascar! This punitive action was no doubt meant as a warning to prospective rebels against future acts of treason or desertion in the colony.[10]

The British administration made no secret of the fact that it meant to establish a stronghold in the colony, partly because the Island occupied a strategic location in the Indian Ocean and also because of its economic resources. Thus when after the defeat of

Napoleon and the reinstallation of Louis XVIII in Paris in 1814 the British ceded the other small colonies they had conquered to the French but not Mauritius. Reunion, also called Ile Bourbon originally was restored to France.[11] Local supporters of Napoleon were punished.

The attempts made by the Governor to win the cooperation of the economic elite were evidenced in many ways. First of all, as sugar was the main and only product of the colony the Governor did not try to implement any changes in the plantation economy. Slavery was maintained. The Governor also tried to exercise some influence in London to persuade the metropolitan financial companies and merchants to trade with the Island and to buy its products.[12] Since the West Indian planters of British origin feared the competition from Mauritius it was natural that an intense mistrust of the French planters prevailed in London. The Governor went to the extent of allowing the local planters and businessmen to send petitions to the Parliament in London to ask for better trade conditions in the colonial port and to persuade the members of Parliament to lift any heavy tariffs imposed on Mauritian goods sold on the London market.[13]

The Governor was so keen on promoting free trade in the colony that he took upon himself to delay the application of the British Navigation Acts in the colony since the restrictions imposed by the law could have inflicted heavy losses on the commercial activities

that took place in the colonial port where ships from French colonial outposts had so far freely exchanged their goods.[14] Even though the laws were applied late in the year 1817, yet once in England Farquhar continued to plead the case for making the Island a free port. The privilege was actually granted in the 1820's.[15]

In the political sector, too, the Governor proved to be more flexible than his office and responsibilities would have suggested. No form of political organisation had been authorised immediately after the British Conquest. But when the Island was inflicted by repeated cyclones in the year 1816 and 1817 and frequent fires broke out in the capital the Governor consented to form a local Council of the Commune.[16] He took upon himself to appoint the members whom he selected from the leading French notables and some Englishmen who had joined the colony in the capacity of planters and businessmen. The Commune remained active for 6 years. It was disbanded by General Hall who replaced Governor Farquhar when the latter was visiting London on account of a polemical situation that developed between himself and the Councillors.[17] While the Commune lasted it must have endeared the Governor to the section of the population that had been given an opportunity to assume the task of conducting their own civic affairs.

In all these attempts to win the cooperation of the colony the Governor revealed a distinct pattern of behaviour which had been used by the British colonial rulers in India and other parts of the Empire. The administration seemed keen to win over an elite and thereby establish control over the land indirectly. In the case of Mauritius the strategy consisted essentially in winning over the dominant social and economic elite which already controlled the plantations and the trade. Besides extending a protectionist attitude to trade and agriculture the Governor also showed his personal appreciation of the cultural traditions of the French elite.

From the very outset of British rule the Catholic Church, which had played a secondary role under the previous administrations in the colony was offered state support and financial help. The number of Catholic priests increased and more Church buildings were erected.[18] Members of the British Colonial government who belonged to the Catholic faith were invited to the colony in order to establish better understanding between the leading citizens and the administration. When the Cathedral was inaugurated in Port Louis, for instance, Lord Moira, Governor General of India, was invited to lay the foundation stone.[19]

Moreover, Governor Farquhar was also known to show special appreciation of the intellectual climate that prevailed in the

Island. He praised the professionals and interested citizens who formed intellectual gatherings for philosophical and literary discussions. He also sponsored other groups for the study of subjects such as Agriculture and the Sciences.[20] In order to maintain the cultural tradition of the colonial society he restored the Lycee that had been set up by General Decaen and placed it under the patronage of the Prince Regent in England.[21] In this way he tried indirectly to restore monarchic loyalties in the colony, inspite of the cultural, linguistic differences that separated the rulers from the ruled. It would seem also that social gatherings and joint participation in such recreational activities like hunting, and hippic sports further helped bring these parties together.[22]

While the Governor tried so hard to persuade the French section of the population to cooperate with his rule he could hardly be said to have done as much for the poorer sections of the colonial society or for the people of coloured origin who had been relegated to an inferior social and political status under Decaen's rule. There are very few records of the social institutions which were established for the care or welfare of the poor other than such activities as were carried out by the English missionaries who had followed the British after the conquest. No special consideration was given either to the people of coloured population who since the Revolution had begun to

voice some concern about their legal status and wanted to have free access to free institutions since stratification by ethnic origin, occupation, and socio-economic background was rigid and well established in the colony and no attempt was made to change it.

On the other hand a matter which was close to the interest of the Governor was the possibility of using Mauritius as a base in order to gain a footing for the British in the neighbouring island of Madagascar.[23] Unlike the French who had utilised violence to conquer parts of the Malagasy mainland the British, under the leadership of Farquhar, tried to use persuasion. King Radama who had ousted several local chieftains from power was befriended by representatives of Farquhar and the Governor offered friendly help towards modernisation, construction of roads and bridges, and improvement of trade opportunities. A subsidy was paid to the King to encourage him to stop slave trade. Missionaries were sent to spread education among the masses. Actually the sons of the King himself were sent to England for their education.[24]

The Governor had many motives to see this plan materialise. Friendship with Madagascar would have meant gaining control of commercial outposts occupied by the French in the Island and an eventual displacement of French control from the Mascarene area altogether. Also, the planters of Mauritius were in dire need of

labour supply as to transform their plantations from the cultivation of cotton, indigo and spices to sugar. Traditionally, Madagascar had supplied Mauritius with cheap food for the slaves and large numbers of slaves as well. Probably after Parliament declared slave trade illegal in the British possessions in 1807[25] the Governor found it easier to persuade the Malagasy King to put an end to slave trade than induce the local Mauritian planters or slave traders to suspend their profitable trade.

If the involvement with Madagascar was seen as a possible source of help to the security and welfare of Mauritius and to supremacy over France it also provided an opportunity for a section of the depressed class of slaves in the colony to show their impatience with their condition. When a prisoner of King Radama was sent to be held in captivity in a Mauritian jail the local slaves planned his escape from the prison. Fearing a slave uprising the local French population armed themselves and tried to capture the slaves. When the Governor heard of the incident he not only had the captured Chief executed but he also reorganised the police force in the colony. He actually asked for the replacement of the Officer-in-Charge of the police force, who was an Englishman, because the latter had failed to carry out his tasks efficiently.[26]

These details show to some extent that Farquhar's policy of befriending the elite and protecting their interests was not necessarily shared by his own colleagues fully, nor did it meet with the consent of the entire population residing in the colony. If in his style of administration the Governor was trying to put the philosophy of indirect rule into practice - a goal he tried to achieve by reconciling himself to the elite - the same policy generated stresses and strains in other sectors of the society.

This situation was further illustrated by the educational system he set up during his administration.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. Typographie Moderne. Port-Louis. 1936. pp. 223-230.

[2]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. Typographie Moderne. Port-Louis. 1936. p. 234.

Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles in the Land of the Aphanapteryx. Sampson, Low, Marston, Low and Searle. London. 1873. pp. 371-377.

[3]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 223-230.

[4]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 228-229.

[5]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 372-376.

[6]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 234; 272.

[7]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. p. 372.

[8]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. p. 373.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. Longmans Green. London. 1949. p. 124.

[11]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 372-373.

[12]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 257-267.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 248-257.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Martin, Robert Montgomery Esq. History of the Colonies of the British Empire. Dawsons of Pall Mall. London. Reprinted 1967. pp. 504-505.

[19]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 237-238.

[20]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 271-272.

[21]Mauritius. Annual Report of Education. 1949. Government Printer. Port-Louis. 1950. p. 28.

[22]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 270-273.

[23]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. pp. 132-135.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. p. 132.

[26]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 289-290.

Chapter VI.11

THE CREATION OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE

Governor Farquhar's interest in the education of the colony was characterised by two important considerations. On one hand he wanted to maintain the traditional culture of the French both inside and outside the educational system;[1] on the other he wanted to utilize the educational channel to create an appropriate elite that would be socialized into accepting the legitimacy of the British Administration. Evidence shows that he used his administrative policies to achieve both these goals.

Soon after the restoration of civilian rule in the colony the new administration announced its desire to revive the educational institution which had been set up in the colony under the previous administration of General Decaen. The name of the Lycée, however, was changed from the Lycée of Reunion and Ile de France to that of Colonial Lycée.[2] When Governor Farquhar assumed office in 1813, he not only praised the achievements of the system of education in the colony, but he also announced that the Prince Regent in England had consented to confer his patronage on the Lycée which would henceforth be renamed The Royal College.[3]

In line with his policy of winning the support of the traditional elite in the colony he restricted the admission to the College

to the children of British residents in the colony and to the children of old French colonial families in the ratio of two-thirds French and one-third British.[4] State scholarships were offered to enable some of the scholars to attend the college, as had been the practice under the preceding French administration, provided they belonged to the above-mentioned categories.

Moreover, in order to maintain a sense of continuity with the past the teachers and administrators who had held office in the Lycee were encouraged to retain their positions in the capacity of teachers, Censeur and Préviseur.[5] There were no changes introduced in the admission pattern at the Royal College: no thought was given to the possibility of assimilating the children of the poor or the coloured in the educational system of the State supported College, with a view to provide an egalitarian foundation to the social organisation in the colony.

The Governor seized every opportunity to become directly involved in the actual running of the Royal College. Even though in principle the Committee of Public Instruction which had been appointed by Decaen's government was restored in the colony yet its duties regarding the Royal College were reduced to the minimum.[6] The Governor attended the prize-giving ceremonies personally and he recommended changes in the curricula to suit the humanist ideal

which he thought was appropriate for the education of a future elite in the colony. The military drills introduced by Captain Decaen were replaced by Moral and Religious education and traditional British sports and games were recommended.[7] Since English was already taught in the College, there was no need to impose the language of the new metropole on the Island. He tried however to make the College bicultural and bilingual, with great emphasis on literary and historical subjects.

His own son was admitted to the College and there are records available to show that he invited the scholars of the College to spend time with him on the grounds of his palatial residence where he personally joined them in intellectual discussions and sports, nature walks, and nature observation.[8]

Until 1817, and probably under the entire duration of Farquhar's rule, the Royal College continued to function as a French Lycee but slowly changes were made in the curricula to make it the equivalent of a British elitist school. For sometime such utilitarian subjects as Hydrology and Navigation which were characteristic of French colonial schools were retained. But by the time the Governor began to sponsor learned societies for the study of Agriculture and the Natural Sciences he also had a Chair of Botany and one of Chemistry created in the College.[9] In addition to boost the humanist

side of the College he planned to introduce Persian and Arabic, in addition to Greek and Latin.[10] The entire list of subjects taught in the College in reality remained as follows: English, Latin, Greek, Rhetoric, Botany, Chemistry, Mathematics, Geography, Literature, Navigation and other arts which are characteristic of the leisured class, i.e. Music, Painting and probably Dancing.[11]

The Governor set new forms of evaluation and rewards for the educational activities practised at the Royal College. In 1817 when he attended the prize-giving ceremony, besides praising the teachers and parents of the scholars and the academic efforts of the pupils, he started the practice of directly selecting the best performers for positions in the occupational structure that was being set up in the colony. The scholar who performed best in English was appointed to join the staff of the Royal College: three more scholars were selected for military training by the Commander of the Troops, and others were made clerks in the clerical sector of the administration.[12]

By making these appointments locally, the Governor was putting an end to the long established tradition by the French administration according to which appointments were made in the metropole. The Governor must have used this device to widen public support for his rule. Moreover, opportunities were thrown open to

local members of the elite to aspire to administrative positions on the basis of academic competition in addition to such factors as wealth, rank and heredity which already formed part of the elite's background.

Another important innovation introduced by the new Governor lay in the opportunity he created to enable a competent scholar from the highest grade of the Royal College to proceed to England for higher studies in a British University.[13] The scholars were supported from the Treasury of the Island so that it involved no personal expense, no matter how wealthy the parents were already. The criterion used for the selection was strictly based on academic performance. This procedure became a device for sponsoring budding professionals. When the candidates selected by the state returned to the colony after successfully completing their academic career and professional training, they were given high ranking positions in the administration: the scholars were bound to serve in the government sector upon their return. This practice also enabled the French elite of the colonial society to become partners with the administrators: their sense of prestige and power was reinforced.[14]

Academically, the Royal College became respected by the local population as the main channel of social mobility. Its

educational merit was not considered inferior to the schools existing in the metropole: the English Scholarship class was recognised as the equivalent of the pre-University Matriculation grade in the English system of education, even though the entire programme of work in the Royal College was based on the pattern of a French Lycee. In view of the political importance the College had acquired in the colony questions relating to the curricula and the conduct of the College were not raised. The community had lost control of the education given to their children. Decisions were made by the Governor himself in a paternalistic manner.

There is some evidence that the Governor tried to use the premises and facilities of the Royal College to promote a better understanding of his external policies as well. When he was involved in bringing Madagascar under British influence he had a Chair of Malagasy instituted in the College.[15] It is not clear whether he simply wanted to change the attitude of the scholars and the community of Mauritius towards the culture of the Malagasy people or whether he wanted to use the Royal College as a resource center to help teach the language to prospective employees who would be sent to Madagascar to work. His programme met with little success however since the subject was unheard of during the subsequent years. It could be that the existing prejudice against the slaves and

the Malagasy, as a racial group, dissuaded the Governor from pursuring his plans further. The Malagasy King's own sons were sent to England for their education, while scholars from other European colonial establishments such as Batavia, and Mozambique continued to obtain their education at the Royal College.[16]

While the Governor showed such concern and attention over the Royal College he failed to devote an equal measure of consideration to the question of using government funds for the education of the masses. There is some indication that he had one Government sponsored Primary School set up in the capital. The school was run by an African teacher trained in Scotland and who was specially employed for the task. But the school was placed under the Superintendence of the Anglican Civic Chaplain rather than the Committee of Public Instruction, as had been the practice till then.[17]

The bulk of the task of educating the masses, however, by introducing them to a form of English Primary school education, was carried out by Reverend LeBrun who was a representative of the London Missionary Society.[18] He ran 5 schools altogether in the colony and he taught the students reading, writing and some arithmetic. He wanted to teach his students some French as well but since he relied upon his Headquarters in London for the books he

invariably ended up with getting old scripture texts in English. The Missionary was known to utilize inducements like small jobs, to persuade students to attend his school.[19]

Among this section of the population consisting of poor freed slaves or slaves proper attached to the different city establishments a lower level of academic competence was required. Nevertheless, the socialising function of the school attendance was in itself a tremendous achievement. It was accepted that propagation of education through English missionaries enabled the school attendants to become familiarised with English language, English customs and manners.

And among the people themselves, since school attendance also meant gaining access to opportunities for employment in a non-manual, non-agricultural type of occupation, consisting of messenger tasks, attendance upon an official in an office, or as doorkeeper and 'peon', primary education also became a symbol of social mobility. In some instances, the primary school leavers also became employed in the missions themselves and the new respectability they achieved thereby made them a new reference group in the popular mind.[20]

During Farquhar's rule the works of the missionaries passed unnoticed by the dominant groups in the colonial society. Even the Catholic Church raised no objection to the fact that many slaves

and free people who were originally baptised and accepted as Roman Catholics were being converted. Later when it dawned on many that conversion also meant acceptance of English language, and a gradual transfer of loyalty to the British protests against the practice became common. Demands for participation in the management of education were articulated, specially during the period between 1840-1860, as will be shown in Chapter VII. ll later in this work.

Farquhar's rule witnessed no incidents of this type among the dominant group. Probably the Governor had showered so many favours on their class that there was little room for concern about the other classes in the society. And since the elite stood to gain by the proposition of the sponsorship extended to them they made good use of it, in order to protect their own interests and impress their superiority on the lower classes.

According to historian Toussaint, there were 5 schools, other than the Royal College existing in the colony at the time.[21] He mentions the case of 3 schools for girls, 2 for boys. Since the author does not specify what levels these schools reached academically, nor who sponsored them it is hard to verify his statements. It is not unlikely that he is referring to the same Missionary schools that have been described above. There are no data available either to

show that private schools were authorised in the colony under Farquhar's rule. The State maintained formal control of education over the entire colony.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Revue Historique et Littéraire de L'Ile Maurice. (Archives Coloniales). 16 April. 1890. No. 43. pp. 487-488. Extracts of the speech of Governor Farquhar delivered on the occasion of the Prize Giving celebrations of 1817 reveal the high hopes he entertained about the College:

> "...No other colony of any nation whatsoever, no other part of our hemisphere owns a similar institution. By reaching this mark in the progress of civilisation we have left behind us all the external possessions of the European republic. We rival even those who are born in the capitals, by taking possession and perfecting this valuable instrument of general education. If, in our homes, our children find themselves at the source of knowledge and sciences that is wanting in other colonies, then we have the means to perfect our intelligence, while others must roam over half the world to seek for them, or strive to compensate for it by means of a barren solitary study. Undoubtedly the education acquired by a person who is alone and helpless must be limited compared to the education which springs from the efforts and the abilities of many, from the communication of enlightenment, from the variety of sciences, from the influence of emulation and from the knowledge of the liberal arts, which is so essential to the formation of an educated man...." (Trans. by author.)

[2] Great Britain. Board of Education for Colonies. Special Reports on Educational Subjects. Mauritius. Vol. 13. 1901. U.K. p. 201.

Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles in the Land of the Aphanapteryx. Sampson Low, Marston, Low and Searle. London. 1873. pp. 451-453.

Toussaint, A. Port-Louis Deux Siècles d' Histoire. (1735-1935). La Typographie Moderne. Port Louis. Mauritius. 1936. p. 232.

[3]Board of Education Report. Mauritius. Vol. 13. 1901. p. 201.

[4]Board of Education Report. Mauritius. Vol. 13. 1901. pp. 201-202.

[5]Revue Historique et Litteraire. 8 April. 1890. No. 42. pp. 475-476.

Macquet, A. Revue Historique et Litteraire. 8 February. 1890. No. 34. pp. 376-377.

In both these articles the names of the teachers of the Royal College are mentioned and among them appear Messieurs Lorquet, Dabadie, Dubois, Bernard and Lagrave, all of whom had also taught at the Lycee. Moreover, Rev. Lagrave is called the "Censeur" the person in charge of the curriculum and Monsieur Coudray the Principal or "Previseur".

[6]Revue Historique et Litteraire. 1 April. 1890. No. 41. p. 467. Governor Farquhar wrote a letter to the Committee of Public Instruction to justify his deep interest in the running of the Royal College. Besides, in 1821, when he felt one of the teachers, Mons. Lorquet had to be asked to resign his post because he had written a poem on the occasion of Napoleon's death, he requested the Committee to advise the teacher of his decision. R.H.L. 23 February. 1890. No. . pp. 403-407.

[7]Macquet Pere, A. Revue Historique et Litteraire. 1 April. 1890. No. 41. pp. 465-466.

In an extract of a letter written by Governor Farquhar, the following points are mentioned:

> "I am anxious on this occasion to draw the attention of the Committee to such further means as may be practicable of inculcating at an early period of life, those principles of Religion and Moral conduct which are better learnt at that age, than they can be afterwards."

[8]Macquet Pere, A. Revue Historique et Litteraire. 8 February. 1890. No. 34. pp. 377.

[9]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 272.

[10]Revue Historique et Litteraire. 16 April. 1890. No. 43. p. 487. Extract from a speech delivered by Governor Farquhar on the occasion of the prize-giving ceremony of 1817:

> "It is my intention to approach Lord Moira, Marquis of Hastings, to ask him to provide us, through his protection and kind assistance, with teachers of Persian and Arabic."

[11]Macquet Pere, A. Revue Historique et Litteraire. 8 February. 1890. No. 34. p. 377.

[12]Revue Historique et Litteraire. 8 April. 1890. No. 42. pp. 476-480.

Revue Historique et Litteraire. 16 April. 1890. No. 43. pp. 488-492, p. 504.

[13]Revue Historique et Litteraire. 16 April. 1890. No. 43. p. 504. The two scholars who were chosen to go to England were Adolphe Bigot and Gustave Koenig. p. 504.

[14]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. p. 454.

[15]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. p. 452.

[16]Macquet Pere, A. Revue Historique et Litteraire. 8 February. 1890. No. 34. p. 377. The author mentions children of prestigious families from Batavia who sent their children to the Royal College.

Revue Historique et Litteraire. 8 April. 1890. No. 42. pp. 476-480. The list of prize winners in 1817 includes many scholars from Mozambique and Batavia who were recipient of the prizes.

[17]Board of Education Report. 1901. Vol. 13. pp. 207-208.

Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. Longmans Green. London. 1949. p. 134.

[18]Microfilm: Congregational Council for World Mission. "Correspondence from Mauritius". LeBrun and Sons. 1813-1848.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 271.

Chapter VII.1

THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY AND THE PROCESS OF ANGLICISATION OF MAURITIUS 1823-1849

During the period between 1823 and 1849 the British administration made a definite attempt to invest Mauritius with a constitution similar to that of other British colonial possessions.[1] The need was felt for an anglicisation of the colony.[2] Moreover, since the Parliament in London wasfaced with mounting public pressure against the continuation of slavery in the British colonies it adopted a resolution to follow a policy of progressive amelioration of the condition of slaves which was eventually to culminate in the total abolition of slavery.[3]

The application of these measures in Mauritius could not be effected without serious conflicts with the dominant French elite who, as a result of the sponsorship extended to them under Farquhar's administration, had gained enough representation in most of the social institutions to make the voiced heard. Nevertheless, under the command of the new Governor, Sir Lowry Cole, the adaministration tried to modernise different sectors of the political, social and economic institutions upon which the welfare of the colony rested.

A noticeable change in the constitution of the colony under the new administration was marked by the creation of a Council of Government, consisting of the Governor as head, and other official members in 1825.[4] The Governor chose the 3 state officials in charge of the Troops, the Treasury and the Judiciary respectively to form the Council.[5] This innovation strengthened the power of the Governor, even though it did not allow for more participation by the local people in the policy-making processes.

Among the first decisions taken by the Council was the passing of the 1824 Ordinance which forebade the immediate representatives of His Majesty "from directly or indirectly owning slaves or lands cultivated by slaves, or holding mortgages on such estates."[6] This policy resulted directly at weakening the position of the members of the French elite who had been encouraged, under Governor Farquhar's rule to retain their official positions. Since earlier selection processes had favoured people who gained ascendency by such ascriptive criteria as property holdings, social rank and family prestige in addition to educational merit people who were appointed to official positions invariably belonged to the class of property holders. And in the plantation economy of the Island they relied on slave labour.

As a result of the passing of this Ordinance, many of the officials who belonged to the French community must have been faced with the grim alternative of relinquishing their official professions or disowning their inheritance.

Partly because this group - the economic elite - could not be alienated altogether the administration adopted some measures favourable to them as well. In 1826 the main harbour of Port-Louis was declared a free port[7] and London declared itself the principal buyer of Mauritian sugar at the same price as that of West Indian sugar.[8] Both measures guaranteed increased wealth to the merchants and planters of the colony so that it would seem that the government wanted to encourage them to expand their economic operations without necessarily seeking to rule the colony at the same time. In earlier times administrative policies were directly shaped for and by those with vested economic interests in the colony - the planters and merchants had also been the partners of the administrators. The new administration sought to prevent those who controlled the economy from also having direct control of the administration of the colony.

In 1823 the Governor, Sir Lowry Cole was replaced by Governor Sir Charles Colville but the attempts at reducing the power of the whites in the administration continued.[9]

Another ordinance was adopted by the Council and resulted in a further weakening the position of eminence and exclusivity that the French elite had occupied in the colony. This was the Ordinance of 1829 which put an end to all practices of colour discrimination in the institutions[10] e. g. it had been a common practice since early French times for the births and deaths of the coloured people to be recorded in separate registers. The coloured were also discriminated against and barred from occupying official positions. Governor Farquhar who had tried to revive of monarchic values in the community had not interfered with this practice. But the new administration decided to do away with this official recognition of colour discrimination.[11] For instance, it declared the Royal College, which was the sole institution of secondary education in the colony, henceforth open to all citizens alike irrespective of racial or colour origin.[12]

Efforts to anglicise the colony also proceeded apace. All names of streets and public places were changed from French to English.[13] Communications were exchanged between the administrators and the Colonial Office to have the use of French replaced by that of English in offices and law courts.[14] But action in this area was not carried out since it was feared that implementation of the law would antagonise the established French interests. Another alternative would have been to set up more schools where the English language

would be properly taught. But the administration did not choose this line of action either, as will be shown later, for fear of raising public criticisms.[15]

Instead many measures were taken to introduce urban developments which tended to break down the physical segregation of ethnic and colour groups from one another.[16] Conditions in the capital city were improved in matters of sanitary facilities, water distribution and road repairs and maintenance. Till this time the maintenance of roads and buildings had depended upon the individuals residing in the specific area and their economic resources. Now the tendency was to assign civic responsibility to the total population and taxes were collected publicly and spent on the maintenance of civic buildings.[17]

The reaction of the dominant elite to these measures began to be voiced through the activities of a local organisation called the "Comite Colonial". This organisation had existed since the times of Governor Farquhar as a non-political, literary and philosophical society.[18] Under new leadership it now became a new organisation to articulate the resentment of the elite as it felt its power being eroded in the colony.[19] When the administration made known its desire to proceed with the measures aiming at the abolition of slavery members of the Comite Colonial sent a delegate, Mr. Adrien d'Epinay, to the Parliament in London to plead against the charges

levelled by members of the Anti-Slavery Society against the slave-owning class of planters in Mauritius.[20] Unable to stop the delegation from proceeding to England, the Governor, Sir Charles Colville, authorised the petition.

The resolution adopted by the Parliament after hearing the petition of the delegate would tend to show that cooperation between the French elite and the local government was desirable. The Governor was enjoined to modify the constitution of the Governing Council to include a Legislative Council, consisting of local planters and businessmen (1831).[21] It was decided that there would be an equal number of appointed members as there were officials in the Executive Branch. Among other rights won by the delegation was the freedom of the press in the colony,[22] the modification of the constitution of the Chamber of Commerce with a view to broadening the membership in order to include more local industrialists and to have the Chairman elected by the members themselves rather than be appointed by the Governor.[23]

It is likely that many of these favourable measures were adopted to ensure the support of the elite to the more serious question of the abolition of slavery altogether. When, in 1831,[24] Parliament declared the Act abolishing slavery in all colonies there were more demonstrations in the colony staged by the French section of the

population. Again the Comite Colonial sent its delegate, Mr. Adrien d'Epinay, who was also a member of the Council to plead for adequate compensation to the planters.[25] While the delegate was away Sir John Jeremy, who had been sent by Parliament to head the Judiciary and to make laws relative to the rehabilitation of the slaves was faced, on landing at Port-Louis, with an armed demonstration.[26] The leading members of the population requested the Governor to send Sir John Jeremy back to England, an action that was parallel to that when, in 1798, the members of the Colonial Assembly had greeted the delegates sent from Republican France on a similar mission. This time the French citizens had also formed a Volunteer Corps, supposedly to quell any uprising on the part of the slaves.[27]

After the return of Sir John Jeremy in London Parliament had the Governor of Mauritius - who had resigned - replaced.[28] Sir John Jeremy was requested to return to the Island and accomplish his mission. On this occasion he was accompanied by an escort of 500 armed soldiers. In the meantime the new Governor, Sir William Nicolay, disbanded the Volunteer Corps and declared membership to any military organisation to be punishable in future by death. Adrien d'Epinay, who was also a member of the Legislative Council was made to resign.[29]

The Governor seized the opportunity to proceed with the process of anglicisation which was carried further by the succeeding Governor, Sir William Gomm.[30] English was declared a sine qua non condition for employment while the free professions were open only to British citizens by birth or naturalisation. The English version of laws alone was acceptable in the law courts.[31]

When slavery was abolished in the colonyin 1835, according to the Act passed by Parliament, the slaves were to be maintained in apprenticeship until 1839 during which period they could learn to practise a trade.[32] The planters were given a compensation of approximately two million pounds.[33]

Many planters who belonged to the old French aristocratic families left the Colony during this time. Since many settled in France and they formed a society of Mauritians there, they maintained their solidarity with the local community in Mauritius and attempted to exercise in the metropole such pressure as circumstances allowed them by entertaining officials appointed to serve in the colony.[34]

Those who stayed soon found that the administration did not exert any more restrictions upon their activities specially in the economic field. After the abolition of slavery no regulations were passed that were detrimental to the interests of the economic community. Instead side by side with English

industrialists, businessmen and planters, local plantation-owners could reap large profits from their sales of sugar. When the freed slaves refused to work on the lands, the Government helped solve the problem of labour shortage by importing labourers from India on the terms of indentured labour contracts.[35] Between 1835 and 1846, 56,245 labourers were allowed to join the colony and the Island experienced sugar booms during those years.[36] Hence even though the rapport between the French elite and the administration as established by Farquhar was badly shaken yet there was no reason to believe that their power was altogether lost. They still formed part of an economic elite and as such their contribution to the Island's economic security was invaluable to the administration.

During those same years the members of the coloured population in the Island became increasingly desirous to have a share in the policy-making processes. The administration responded favourably to their requests by setting up a Municipality in the capital of Port-Louis.[37] Among the names suggested for a Mayor by the Governor was that of Monsieur Louis Léchelle, whose family name has traditionally been associated with these champions of the cause of the coloured people in the colony.[38]

The implication of this survey for the educational developments in the Island is twofold. On one hand it reveals that it was

due to their academic background, in addition to ethnic origin, family rank and wealth that the French elite could continue to occupy official positions in the higher ranks of the administration. When however the government tried to enable other social groups to have access to education and eventually to the official positions as well, it realized that because of the employment opportunities for such groups were restricted in Mauritius partly due to the narrow economic base of the colony deriving from sugar production and commerce and the entrenchment of the traditional inheritance rights of the same French minority, it could not relinquish its strict control over education. There were hardly likely to be enough jobs for the school leavers if access to secondary and post secondary education was allowed to increase at the rate that people wanted. Hence even though rights for political participation at both governmental and municipal levels were granted to the two competing social groups yet education continued to be subject to strict state control. A large increase among the educated people from the lower socio-economic classes would have posed many threats to the existing political and economic structure of the society which the ruling group did not want to change.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Toussaint, A. Port Louis. Deux Siecles d'Histoire. (1735-1935). La Typographie Moderne. Port Louis. Mauritius. 1936. pp. 276-280.

[2]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. Longmans Green. London. 1949. pp. 172-174.

Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d'Histoire. p. 340.

Toussaint, A. La Langue Française a L'Ile Maurice. Revue Francaise d'Outre Mer. Tome 56. 1969. pp. 400-409.

[3]British Encyclopaedia. Vol. 20. Ed. 1972. pp. 636-637.

Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles in the Land of the Aphanapteryx. Sampson Low, Marston, Low, and Searle. London. 1873. p. 376.

Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. pp. 298-299.

Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. 1949. pp. 141-142.

[4]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. pp. 279-280.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 376-377.

[7]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. p. 377.

[8]Ibid.

Toussaint, A. Port Louis de L'Ile Maurice. Presses Universitaires. de France. Paris. 1966. p. 73.

[9]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d'Histoire. p. 281.

[10]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 377-378.

[11]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 377-378.

Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. 1949. pp. 142-143.

[12]Great Britain. Imperial Education Conference Papers. Vol. III. Educational Systems of Chief Colonies not Possessing Responsible Government. Mauritius. 1915. p. 4.

[13]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. pp. 278-279. p. 282.

[14]Toussaint, A. La Langue Française a L'Ile Maurice. Revue Francaise d'Outre Mer. Tome 56. 1968. pp. 400-409.

[15]Vide Chapter 7.2 of this work.

[16]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. pp. 277-279. Different parts of the capital were referred to by the names of the ethnic groups that resided in them. e.g. la partie blanche, or ville blanche, (where the Whites resided), the Camp Yoloff, (where the blacks lived, and Camp Malabar where the Indian workers lived since French times). (Toussaint, A. p. 320.)

[17]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. pp. 277-279; 293-298. Among other achievements of the efforts at urbanisation were the restoration of water canals, reorganisation of the police and repairs of roads and houses. Many coloured people were accepted in the police. (Toussaint, A. pp. 287-297.)

[18]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. p. 280.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. p. 280. pp. 300-301.

Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. p. 149.

[21]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d'Histoire. p. 285. The members of this Council were all descendents of old French families settled in the colony.

[22]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. pp. 285-286; 300-301. Both the French and the coloured people set up independent newspapers for their respective ethnic groups: the French paper was called the Cerneen, and that of the coloured was the Balance.

Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. p. 150.

[23]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. p. 377.

[24]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. p. 301. British Encyclopaedia. Vol. 20. Ed. 1972. pp. 636-637.

[25]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. p. 302; 308.

[26]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. pp. 303-304; 306-307.

[27]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. p. 305.

[28]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. p. 308.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. p. 321.

[31]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 379-380.

Toussaint, A. La Langue Française a L'Ile Maurice. Revue Francaise d'Outre Mer. 1968. pp. 400-413.

Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. p. 321.

[32]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. p. 313. The exact figure of the amount paid to Mauritian planters was 2, 112, 632 - 10 - 11 3/4 d.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Bowen, Hon. Sir G. F. Thirty Years of Colonial Government. Vol. 1. Ed. S. Lane Poole. Longmans and Company. 1889. London. pp. 225-239.

Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. pp. 148-149.

[35]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. pp. 334-335.

Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. p. 380.

[36]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 469-470.

Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. pp. 334-335. During the years 1835, 1836, 1837 and 1838, the Island experienced unprecedented profits from the sale in larger amounts of sugar.

[37]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. pp. 171-172.

[38]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d'Histoire. pp. 327-332.

Chapter VII. 11

RACIAL INTEGRATION IN THE ROYAL COLLEGE AND THE MISSIONARY PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Changes took place at different levels of the educational system after the departure of Governor Farquhar from the colony in 1823. The new administration placed greater emphasis on reducing the monopolistic control which the French elite had acquired over different institutions of the colony, and above all it was committed to the gradual abolition of slavery in the plantation economy. These new policies were accompanied by a form of anglicisation which had to be carried out at different levels of the educational system as well as in other institutions.

Besides these government policies another significant source of change in the educational system existing in the colony arose from the kind of reaction which the dominant elite showed when it was faced with the new attitude of the government. In order to understand the implications of the educational developments that took place during these years for the society at large, both primary and secondary education will have to be discussed.

It will be remembered that when the government proceeded to legally abolish colour bar in the Island, its first step in that

direction was the opening of the Royal College to all residents, irrespective of racial origin or colour origin.[1] There is no evidence to show that this measure was accompanied by a reorganisation of the college from a boarding school to a day school, which had been a compromise adopted earlier in the case of the Moreau School in 1794 when the issue of admitting the children of the coloured population to the National College was last raised. Nor is there any evidence to show that the admission policy introduced by Governor Farquhar whereby a quota of two-thirds French and one-third English scholars had been set for the College was changed. Instead the administration seemed to have tried to utilize such funds as were already set aside for the state supported scholarships to admit new scholars, if they were in need of financial assistance.

It has not been possible for the author to discover how many children of the coloured population were actually admitted to the Royal College after this law was passed. It would be difficult to verify this detail even from the College registers, partly because the coloured people had names that were identical to those of the French, except if the French family belonged to the old aristocratic nobility, in which case the epithet 'de' would be attached to their surnames. Nevertheless there is evidence to show that the traditional patrons of the Royal College were displeased with the new government policy.

There were complaints that the College was deteriorating; student behaviour was found to be lacking in discipline and there was a considerable drop in the enrolment, presumably from 240 in the 1840's to 180.[2] This move resulted in financial difficulties for the College. The expenses exceeded the current expenditure and the Government was forced to offer an annual subsidy to enable the institution to continue its activities.[3] It is clear that the government was determined to carry out its policy of promoting the integration of the coloured people in the state supported College which was at the same time the sole institution for secondary education in the colony.

More changes took place in the educational system, after the abolition of slavery proper in 1835. An Ordinance was passed whereby previous restrictions on the opening of schools in the colony were swept aside.[4] This measure had two important implications for the colony. On one hand it left the elite, who were already displeased with the integration of the coloured people in the Royal College free to start such schools as they considered appropriate for their children. Moreover private enterprise in education was likely to prove more economical to the administration since it would not have to support the schools entirely from the resources of the Public Treasury.

Another consideration wasthe fact that Parliament had already voted a large sum of money for the rehabilitation of the slaves after they became free.[5] This sum had been entrusted to Lady Mico Charity Funds and the local administration had tomake it possible for them to set up schools in the colony without infringing on the laws which were in existence since the conquest and which set strong restrictions on the opening of schools. Besides many more Missionary groups were expected to join the colony inthe future.

The passing of this Ordinance was followed shortly afterwards by the appearance of private schools in the colony. Some of these private schools had such prestigious names as 'the Colonial Academy', 'the French and English Academy', and the 'Mauritius Academy'. These schools had a total enrolment of 450 scholars and a teaching staff of 38.[6] Both these figures would tend to indicate that the patrons of these schools lacked neither the means to support their schools nor the desire to maintain a certain standard on matters of efficiency. The patrons belonged to the higher socio-economic classes.

Moreover racial prejudice was overtly maintained in these schools. In one school the admission of one coloured child resulted in an enrolment drop of approximately 50%.[7] Besides this desire for segregation there was a desire to maintain a socio-cultural

identity in the school which was based on the French heritage. Some of the parents deplored the growing emphasis on the usage of English in the Royal College and they expressed the desire to see that their children would be taught in their mother tongue, that is, French, during the early stages in these private schools.

It was clear that the supporters of these private schools were showing the same kind of reaction as the aristocratic elite had manifested when the Colonial Assembly of the Revolution had tried to promote racial and social integration in the National College. In order to maintain a social distance from both the lower classes of the French population and the coloured people the members of the elite had set up private schools. There were two differences however between these private academies and the schools run earlier under French rule. First, while under the French regime the elite maintained their social distance from the lower socio-economic stratum of the French section of the colonial society under British rule the French seemed to have become more unified. Secondly the academies did not try to compete with the Royal College in matters of academic achievement because of the restrictions imposed by the Government.

The academies were called 'preparatory schools'.[8] This labelling reveals some ambiguity about these schools. Traditionally

the Royal College ran its own preparatory classes.[9] Since it was originally an elitist school admissions took place at an early age and the institution had to provide both elementary and secondary education. There is no evidence to show that the scholars of the private academies could join the Royal College at a later date in their school career. The data would tend to suggest that these schools were patterned on a different system altogether, probably the French one. More information on the actual management of these schools and their curricula would enlighten us on the question of their school career, in these private schools.

The administration provided indirect reinforcement to these schools by its policy of anglicisation in the Royal College. After 1840 English personnel were appointed to replace the original French staff members who left either through resignation or retirement. An English University graduate, Mr. Daes, was selected to the post of Principal of the Royal College.[10] Two more English masters were appointed to teach different subjects. These appointments gave rise to further criticisms of the neglect of French and French culture and the Roman Catholic faith in the Royal College.[11]

It has not been possible to substantiate this criticism on the basis of such data as were available for this study. The reaction of the administration to the development of the private schools however

would tend to indicate that there was concern felt about their activities. In 1839, the Governor revived the Committee of Public Instruction which had been inactive since the time of Farquhar.[12] The new administration replaced its original members with new appointments made by the Governor. It thus became possible for the administration to bring the educational system again under the supervision and control of the central power.

The new Committee of Education was designed to consist of members, among whom appeared "the Colonial Secretary, the Head of the Catholic Church, the Head of the Protestant Church, the Procureur General, and nine other members of whom each year, three shall be chosen by the Governor, and six shall be elected by the Assembly of notables named for the formation of the double list of assessors for the Assize Court; or by such elective Body as shall be substituted for the said Assembly."[13] The conditions as spelled out by the Proclamation of 1839 also stipulated that "the Committee may sit, five members being present."[14]

Clearly, the Committee was appointed to support the administration's position of the educational matters. It left no room for the participation of the professional teachers or parents, except if they already formed part of the Assembly or were Assessors for the Assize Courts. Besides since the quorum required for a meeting

was only five, it would seem that the Governor or any official could call meetings and with the help of other officials alone adopt resolutions and frame decisions for the schools. There was little room for consultation with the public.

Among the decisions taken by this Committee was the adoption of the Ordinance whereby opportunities for higher education through the Royal College were reduced. By an Ordinance of 1839, the importance of which is confirmed by the Director of Education in the colony in 1914 the two state sponsored scholarships for higher education in Britain were reduced to one.

In 1839, an important ordinance was passed. Among other things, "it determined the condition of the English scholarships, fixing the allowance to the scholars at 150 pounds a year. It regulated the number of scholars at the Royal College, whose expenses were to be paid for wholly or in part at the cost of the government, and it constituted the Education Committee under which all the schools of the Colony were placed."[15]

The author wonders whether the financial restrictions on the allowances which were granted to the scholars for University expenses were in any way connected with any limitations placed upon the actual programme of studies the scholars could pursue at the University. According to Nicholas Pike, who was the American

Consul in the colony between 1866 and 1873, the Royal College provided the colony with many trained doctors, lawyers and graduate teachers in the languages and sciences. Little attention was paid to technical subjects, he complained. On the other hand, historian Toussaint insists that the purpose of the English scholarship was to enable the local scholars to study English in an English University. He almost saw this policy as one dictated by a desire to anglicise the colony![16]

There may be some justification for both these impressions recorded about the English scholarships. During this particular historical period when moves for anglicising the colony were afoot, there may have been some control over the selection of the studies, at the University, that corresponded to the official policy. But no such limitation was mentioned by Governor Farquhar when he instituted the scholarship in the colony in 1814. His aim was to help the residents of the colony to seek professional training in a British University.

Obviously the Royal College bred the aspirations of a gentlemanly type of education appropriate to a leisured class. And so long as the administrative policy was oriented towards using the skills and talents of engineers and architects from the metropole for the tasks necessary for the development of the colony there was little need felt for diversification of the local school system.

Since the administration had more or less brought the entire secondary educational system under its control, by means of creation of the Education Committee, it now turned its attention to primary education. At first, as was mentioned in the chapter on Farquhar's educational planning, Reverend LeBrun, representative of the London Missionary Society, had been the sole patron of education for the masses in the colony.[17] After the abolition of slavery however, the Lady Mico Charity Funds Organisation entrusted him the task of organising schools for the freed slaves as well. Ten more schools were started under their auspices. Among others to join he colony were the following: the Seamen's Friend Society, (1852); the Mauritius Auxiliary Branch of the Foreign Bible Society, (1854); the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, (1835).[18] Most of these missionary societies ran evangelical schools among the depressed classes in the colony. Insofar as they were all based in England they taught the masses some English as well as other skills of literacy.

Even though the anglicising activity of these schools was favourable to the administration yet it is doubtful if the Government could have afforded to encourage such rising aspirations as the evangelical missions promoted. Nor could the Catholic Church, which originally claimed all the population of the Island be expected to be overjoyed

by this evangelical activity. It was not surprising that in 1840, there was pressure on the government to assume direct control of these missionary schools.[19]

There could have been other reasons too that led to the action by the Government. According to some sources the Parliament discontinued its allowances to the Lady Mico Charity Funds.[20] This measure must have left the local administration the responsibility of supporting the schools from its own resources.

When the Lady Mico Charity Schools were handed over to the local government in 1843 the Committee of Public Education conducted a survey of all primary schools in the colony at the request of the Secretary of State for the Colonies and it was found that there then existed 29 primary schools. Seven were supported by the Government, six belonged to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, ten had been founded by the Lady Mico Charity for the Education of the Children of Liberated Slaves, and five were carried on by the London Missionary Society, and one at private expense.[21]

After the Lady Mico Schools were handed over directly to the Government the other schools were allowed to continue their activities. But they were under the direct supervision of the Education Committee.

This survey would tend to show that the educational system remained strictly under the control of the government, inspite of the fact that in the local participation that had taken place in the administration at both levels of the Governing Council and Municipality. Moreover, unlike other colonies and dominions where the administration endeavoured to expand the educational base in Mauritius the case seemed to be rather one where the expansion of education was controlled. And control was maintained at the levels where education was likely to promote higher aspirations namely in the domain of higher and secondary education. It would seem that education was perceived as a possible avenue to power and thus the administration provided for it in small doses.

In this respect it can be said that the stratification system that existed in the schools proper, namely the maintenance of the secondary and elementary schools as two separate rungs of a social ladder, without opportunities for mobility between one and the other, contributed to the maintenance of stability in the colony. The division between the two levels of education reflected the trends which political developments took. The fact that this also coincided with the ethnic divisions between the whites and the coloured, would suggest that it defeated in reality the original desire of the administration to abolish colour bar and racial prejudice in the

The majority of places at the Royal College went to the members of the white population who were culturally and economically better endowed to take advantage of the educational facilities since they were surrounded even in their homes by books and other cultural amenities. They also formed part of the members of the Government Council so that they enjoyed social prestige and political dominance over the less affluent classes.

By contrast, those of the coloured population who were thereafter enabled to benefit from the Royal College formed a small minority. They were to obtain positions thereafter in the government source on the basis of their educational merit, since the Civil Service was the only field of employment where ascriptive factors played a less dominant role. And yet in terms of the political development, they could only participate in the running of the Municipal Organisation which occupied less prestige in the eyes of both the administrators and the local population.

Hence it can be said that, for reasons of political expediency, the administration was constrained to maintain strict control over education in the society. And the educational system was used as a tool to preserve economic and social disparities.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Great Britain. Imperial Education Conference Papers: V III. Educational Systems of Chief Colonies not Possessing Responsible Government. Mauritius. 1915. p. 4.

[2]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles in the Land of the Aphanapteryx. Sampson Low, Marston, Low, and Searle. London. 1873. p. 453.

Mauritius. Annual Report of the Department of Education. 1949. Government Printers. Port Louis. p. 28.

Education Conference Papers. 1915. p. 4.

There is some ambiguity between these three sources about the original source of these complaints about the Royal College during these years. Pike would attribute the complaint to the fact that a strict Austrian Rector had been appointed to office. In fact however, as shown in the Reports, the first English Principal between 1840 and 1857 was an Englishman, Mr. Daes. Mr. Redle the Austrian having come later. The 1949 Report reports the displeasure of the French population over the neglect of French only. But the original connection between the complaints as early as 1839 itself, before the anglicisation started and the admission of the coloured to the Royal College cannot be overlooked.

Pridham, C. "An Historical Political and Statistical Account of Mauritius and Its Dependencies." T. and W. Boone, 29 New Bond Street. London. 1849. p. 188.

[3]Education Conference Papers. 1914. p. 4. The actual subsidy was 1,500 livres. The French currency was still in use in the colony.

[4]Great Britain. Board of Education for Colonies. Special Reports on Educational Subjects. Mauritius. 1901. Vol. 13. p. 202, 208.

[5]Pridham, C. An Historical and Statistical Account of Mauritius. p. 190.

[6]Pridham, C. An Historical and Statistical Account of Mauritius. p. 188.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Education Conference Papers. 1914. p. 5.

[10]Ibid.

Mauritius. Annual Educational Report. Government Printer. Port-Louis. Mauritius. 1949. p. 28.

[11]Annual Educational Report. p. 28.

Pridham, C. An Historical and Statistical Account of Mauritius. p. 188.

[12]Pridham, C. An Historical and Statistical Account of Mauritius. p. 185. As shown in Chapter V.1 and 11 of this study, Governor Farquhar personally involved himself in supervising the Royal College. The Committee of Public Instruction simply left the task of authorising the opening of primary schools in the colony: because of the prevailing prejudices against the lower classes gaining access to education, the Committee was known to have restricted the opening of schools, rather than encouraging any.

[13]LeBrun and Sons. Congressional Council for World Mission. Correspondence from Mauritius. 1813-48. Microfilm.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Education Conference Papers. 1914. p. 4.

[16]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 453-545. In the Preface, the author explains the reasons for his stay in the colony. The U.S. government had a Consulate in the colony till 1911.

Toussaint, A. A Bibliography of Mauritius. Esclapon Limited. Port-Louis. Mauritius. pp. 655-658.

Toussaint, A. La Langue Francaise à L'Ile Maurice. Revue Francaise d'Outre Mer. Tome 56. p. 402.

[17]LeBrun. Microfilm.

[18]Beaton, P. Creoles and Coolies. Or Five Years in Mauritius. J. Nisbet. London. 1859. pp. 278-280.

[19]Education Conference Papers. 1914. pp. 4-5.

[20]Education Conference Papers. 1914. p. 4.

[21]Education Conference Papers. 1914. pp. 4-5.

Special Reports of Educational Subjects. Vol. 13. 1901. p. 208.

Chapter VIII.1

CONSOLIDATION OF BRITISH RULE IN A MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY

One of the major concerns of the British colonial administration in the period after the 1860's was to provide the emerging industries in the metropole with adequate raw materials and to secure overseas markets for the manufactured goods. It is possible to relate the social, economic and political policies adopted in the colony of Mauritius to this major economic concern in the metropole.

Mauritius had proved to be an Island with no mineral resources. But its strategic position in the Indian Ocean and its sugar plantations continued to provide reasons to justify the interest of the British in the colony. With a view to ensure the prosperity of the colony Britain had become the main buyer of the sugar that was produced locally. Since the 1850's Britain alone bought 56,941,900 pounds of sugar; in 1853 she bought 135,617,792 pounds, almost double the 1853 purchases and by 1860 the sales had reached 185,572,459 pounds, three times the 1853 figures.[1] These sales brought increasing revenues to the colony which experienced economic booms during the 1850's and 1860's.[2] These booms provided great inducements to encourage the planters to grow more sugarcane in the colony.

Next the administration tried to bring Mauritius into closer association with other parts of the British empire. The success of the sugar trade became the motivation of this new design. Since the capital harbour of the colony had been a free port shipping agencies based in England were encouraged to operate between other imperial colonial outposts and the colony proper. Thus in 1851 the General Screw Shipping Company linked the Island to India. In 1865 the Peninsular and Oriental Company established communication with Aden, in Africa, and in 1865 the Union Steamship Company linked Mauritius to the Cape of Good Hope.[3] All these countries also became buyers of Mauritian sugar. By 1857 Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and India were among the leading buyers of Mauritian sugar.[4]

After 1869, when the Suez Canal was opened and it threatened the strategic location of Mauritius on the sea route between the European ports and the East, an agreement was signed with France to enable French ships of the Messageries Maritimes to stop in Mauritius on their way to and from the Islands in the Mascarene area.[5] This move helped to pacify the concerns of the local French community who continued to maintain cultural links with Europe and France. It also ensured the colony a regular trade link with France. In fact France began to buy some

Mauritian sugar after 1853,[6] while the French elite in the Island continued to depend upon France for luxury goods, wines and other cultural amenities.

Another trade activity that was proving to be an additional source of revenue to the Island was the importation of the labour supply into the colony from India. Insofar as the cost of the transportation of these prospective labourers were paid partly by the administration and partly by the planters[7] the transaction in itself provided an impetus for the shipping lines to engage in the trade. An additional source of profit however that was likely to benefit both private traders and businessmen and the state through taxation and customs duties was the fact that the newcomers to the Island were members of a different ethnic group, with different food habits and dress style. According to historian Toussaint, there were approximately 32 British firms located in the Island whose sole concern was to provide transportation and foodstuffs and clothes to the new ethnic groups coming from India.[8]

In the past, the neighbouring Island of Madagascar had been the main supplier of cheap food and labour to the colony of Mauritius. But because the neighbouring Island had become more resentful of European infiltration under the rule of Queen Manjaka 1, Mauritius had to look elsewhere for both commodities.[9] It had been

customary for the Europeans in the Island to rely on imports from Europe for their staples while the other residents were sold cheaper native foods, like maize, manioc and rice. Since no effort was made to encourage local production of food, the Island relied on external commerce for all other staples.

Given the fact that population was growing by both immigration and natural increase, it can be assumed that commerce became a flourishing activity indeed. The intensity of the commercial activity can be further judged by the fact that even after the opening of the Suez Canal an average of approximately 600 ships contined to call in the capital seaport annually.[10] The increase of the population in the colony can be verified by the following chart which summarises the figures for the years that have been covered in the course of this study. Moreover the percentage of the total population represented by each ethnic group is also recorded.

Census Year	General Population	Indo-Mauritians	Chinese Population	Total Population
1846	64.5%	35.5%		179,462
1851	56.9%	43.1%		180,823
1861	37.4%	62.1%	.5%	310,050
1871	30.8%	68.4%	.8%	316,062
1881	29.8%	69.2%	1.0%	359,876
1891	30.1%	69.1%	.8%	370,588

Source - 1952 Census.[11]

The population growth as a result of the immigration of the new ethnic groups did not immediately prove to be instrumental in bringing about social and political changes in the colony. The large scale immigration of the Indians and Chinese had started under the conditions of the Indenture Labour System.[12] The Chinese proved less adaptable to the sugar plantations. Consequently reliance on the Indians became more pronounced in the colony. At first only the economic advantages the Indians brought to the colony were stressed. They provided cheap labour required minimal costs and ensured large returns. Two-thirds of the entire colony was covered by sugar plantations between 1850 and the 1880's.[13] The fact that the

return of the Indians back to India was guaranteed meant that they were provided with no social services. Food, clothing and shelter were all that were considered necessary for them. Objections from Indian officials, however, brought about governmental intervention to introduce laws to regulate the treatment meted out to the labourers by their local planters and employers.[14] In 1862 the Legislative Council appropriated a substantial fund from the Treasury to cover the costs of the return passage.[15] This had originally been the responsibility of the planters and they withheld part of the wages of the workers to ensure the expenses of their return passage. Government action also brought about the appointment of a Protector of the Immigrants.[16]

In the process of these new negotiations between the government officials and the planters, concessions were made to all the parties involved. The planters saw to it that the term of service of the labourers was extended first from 1 year to 3 years, then to 5 years and they consented to assume the responsibility of the payment of the return passage.[17] But strict laws restricted the physical mobility of the labourers and members of their family on the plantations.[18] The conscious desire to utilize the manpower to the optimum, irrespective of age and sex, made if difficult for the officials to ensure that the laws regarding social or medical

care could be implemented. And when the question arose to introduce educational services as well among the immigrants, there was strong opposition on the part of the employers.[19]

Nevertheless, it is possible that there was a secret hope among the officials that the presence of the Indians as a group in the colony could be used to advantage. Besides their economic profitability they could offset the dominance of the French planter class, and the prevalence of French culture and the Roman Catholic faith among the freed slaves and coloured. Clearly there was a fear that traditional loyalties between the French planter class and the Catholics could revive in the colony and pose a serious threat to the British minority administration.[20]

This new concern could have been the motive which justified the continued official sanction given to the immigration of the Indians to the colony. In many instances additional cash motivations were used to encourage entire families to migrate from India and in many cases entire villages were transplanted in the process.[21]

After the responsibility for the return of the Indians was shifted back to the shoulders of the planters themselves the question of the permanent stay of the Indians in the colony became a reality. Motivations were utilized to induce the labourers to stay and work on

the lands, and gradually many began to indulge in land ownership as well.[22] But they were only sold small plots of land on mortgage conditions that stretched for long periods of time, often from one generation to another. This measure ensured the dependency of the small landowner upon the large estate owner since he was required to have his sugar cane crushed at the master's mill.[23]

The government on the other hand did not interfere with the question of new immigrants. No sanctions were taken against the matter until late in the 1900's.[24] By the 1880's, already the Indians comprised two-thirds of the entire population in the colony.[25] In the meantime the administration did not air any fears about the changing demographic pattern of the colony. Actually of the ten governors who ruled the colony between the 1850's and 1883,[26] hardly more than two, Governor Gordon (1871-1874) and Governor Phraye (1874-1878) took an active role in improving the conditions under which the newcomers were made to live and work. Labour laws however minimally they favoured the Indians were slow to develop and slower to be implemented; they were introduced at wide intervals, some as far apart as 1842, 1847, 1867 and 1878.[27] The last one was only passed after a Royal Commission had been appointed to look into the treatment the planters inflicted upon the labourers, a condition which had shocked and scandalised many individual

citizens and visitors to the colony. Even then, the recommendations of the 1878 Commission were not enforced until 1922.[28]

Some explanation of the slow governmental action in settling the labour question could lie in the fact that the administration had tried to isolate the economic elite from direct involvement in state matters: a factor which must have required reciprocal action on the part of the administration. After the attempted separation of economic and political power by Governor Cole, the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Agriculture (1853), consisting of members of both the English and the French economic elite and of the plantocracy, supervised and controlled the economic activity of the colony.[29] Their aims were to maximize their profits and they did not always cooperate with the administration especially when they felt their interests threatened by the humanitarian programmes of some of the governors. Besides forming a pressure group locally the members of both Chambers also had connection in London, where they exercised pressure on members of the Parliament.[30]

The conflicting interests between the economic elite and the administration often affected the implementation of the projects the administration had planned for the colony. For instance in 1850 in concert with the Parliamentary plans to introduce railways in

most parts of the British Empire the local Governing Council of Mauritius initiated talks regarding the installation of railways in the colony. It informed the members of the Chamber of Agriculture of the plans approved by Parliament, whereby a private British firm would be appointed to start the constructions in the colony.[31] The members of the Chamber of Agriculture suggested new recommendations whereby the Government would undertake as its own responsibility and finance them with loans contracted over long-term repayment plans.[32] The records do not mention where the money was to be borrowed from but since the plan was prepared by a local resident and member of the Chamber itself, it is unlikely that foreign sources of capital were suggested. It would be more likely that local investors wanted to benefit from the projects as well. Deliberations on the question lasted over a period of 4 years and in the meantime representation was made to Parliament by a local Mauritian settled in London, whereby two lines of railways were suggested as well.[33] Finally an agreement was reached on the matter only after the Governing Council was made to expose its plans in the open in a public meeting explaining to the people all the advantages that would accrue to the colony if railways were introduced.[34] And in accordance with the demands of all three parties involved, the Parliament, the local Governing Council and the

members of the planter's class two lines of railways were decided upon for the colony. One line was already in use by 1862, and the other was started in 1863.[35] These provided for internal communication specially between the distant plantations and the capital where the main harbour lay.

The Government did not however, always meet with local support for its modernisation plans. Another area of concern in which the governing council had to counter a hostile public opinion was the modernisation of the capital city of the colony. Since 1849-1850, when the municipality had been instituted the responsibility of public works, care for the poor in terms of public health, housing and some forms of police protection was within the jurisdiction of the Mayor and his councillors.[36] But groups of influential citizens were always involved in polemical debates over the malfunctioning of the municipality and its officers.[37]

When plans were initiated by the Government to improve the sanitary conditions in the capital where the population had risen from 27,277 in 1830 to 63,015 in 1871[38] and proper sewage services were recommended by different engineers and technicians appointed from the metropole the leading citizens raised a public outcry as a sign of refusal to cooperate. Actually even though few innovations

such as the introduction of gas light (1865) and canals for water distribution were adopted, yet more expensive projects were dropped temporarily.[39]

It was only after the capital suffered heavy loss of life through repeated cyclones and serious epidemics that the administration undertook on its own accord to set up different official agencies to deal with the emergencies. A poor Law Commission was set up and a Local Board of Health built hospitals and introduced proper sanitary measures in the capital.[40]

A noticeable development in the meantime was the mass migration of different social groups from the capital to the interior of the Island.[41] First to desert the capital were the French residents. They retired to the high plateau in the interior, at Curepipe. This town developed gradually and was transformed into a stronghold of the wealthiest section of the French population. Other towns created in course of the migratory movement that started at the time were those of Beau-Bassin, Rose-Hill, and Quatre Bornes.[42] The twin towns of Beau-Bassin and Rose-Hill assembed the members of an elite section of the coloured population. The migration pattern was based on the ethnic origin of the people and their socio-economic background, both factors

being very dominant in the stratification system that divided the colonial society at the time.

A distinctive feature of the colonial society so far was the fact that little social integration was taking place at any level of public life whatsoever. Even though access to all institutions had been thrown open to all residents in the colony and political participation had been introducted at both the Central government level as well as at Municipal level yet the proliferations of social grouping on ethnic and socio-economic including occupational lines continued to take place.

The noticeable trends in this development were as follows. The Frenchmen who already belonged to the class of planters and businessmen and who in virtue of their educational background were also in the professions associated closely with the British themselves. In some instances, marriage bonds helped increase the solidarity that had already been established between both groups. They shared the same residential areas in the colony and they were partners in the Chambers of Commerce and in the Chamber of Agriculture as well as in the Government Council. These mutually shared economic social and political advantages gave both groups power and prestige in the colony vis-a-vis the rest of the population.

Next in the social hierarchy came the members of the coloured population who in virtue of their educational achievement and property holding had now joined the free professions and established themselves as a distinct class in the colony.[43] Even in cases where they were involved in political action at the Municipal level or served in the administration as high ranking Civil Servants, members of this group were socially unacceptable to the French elite. And they in turn isolated themselves from the lower socio-economic groups among the coloured population. Toussaint calls this new group of people the elite of the coloured population. Besides the prestige attached to their constituting a new socio-economic class these individuals were also probably of a skin colour whiter than that of the average person of the coloured population. They would be among those who moved from the capital to set up the town of Beau-Bassin and Rose-Hill.

The darker and poorer and also less educated coloured person was still considered a free slave or a descendant of the African or the Malagasy. They formed groups from among the masses,[44] and continued to be held in low esteem, except when they were compared to the Indians who had joined the colony, and who in virtue of their occupation on the lands, their different dress, language and food, were treated as aliens. There was little cognition of the fact that the

Indians too had an entirely different stratification system which expressed itself in language, skills and other cultural traits. For instance, there were Indians who had been in the colony since French times and had become property owners and others who worked as teachers and preachers in the Missionary organisations operating in the colony.[45] Among the Indians who worked on the plantations, the isolation from the rest of the population provided them an opportunity to maintain their traditional culture: hence original provincial and linguistic patterns, caste and religious practices, dress and food habits, were strictly maintained. Many built their temples and provided themselves with such amenities as they had been accustomed to in India.[46] They were not culturally and socially deprived in the sense that the slaves were under the French colonial rule nor even as the labourers who lived in the city and were forced into assimilating such patterns of the adulterated Creole culture.

Altogether the Island consisted of different groups of individuals, all disparate in terms of their access to political power, unevenly endowed in terms of economic advantages or socio-cultural facilities. And obviously those who belonged to the elite possessed all the advantages of colonial life.

In a way it was not surprising that when Governor Pope Hennessy assumed office in 1883 and met a group of young intellectual lawyers who wanted to see reforms introduced in the Council he fully endorsed their requests.[47] Self-rule had already been granted in some measure in Canada, South Africa and New Zealand, and so the thought was no longer so revolutionary as it had been when d'Epinay wanted to have the same privileges granted in 1831! Nevertheless, in aligning himself on the side of the young intellectuals the Governor attracted upon himself the opposition from all the older members of the elite some of whom had been in the Council for 12 years advising many of the past Governors in their tasks in running the colony. The new Governor was able however to see that public elections were held in the colony on a restricted franchise. Indeed besides literacy, independent means of livelihood or an annual income of 500 rupees were made the necessary criteria to enable anyone to vote.[48] Nevertheless a large number of the coloured and even some Indian members could exercise their right to vote. In the process Pople Hennessy divided the white population iself into two camps, one called the democrats and another the oligarchs. When the democrats won the elections he proceeded to nominate the official and non-official members in such a way as to make it virtually impossible for any single party to run the government on its own.

The new Council of 1886 consisted of 8 officials, 9 other members were appointed who could also be officials, and 10 elected members. The Governor made himself very unpopular when he appointed one member of the coloured population and another Indian property-owner from the capital to join the Council, although no one had stood at the polls to seek for the right to represent his respective group. The Governor had incensed the elite to such a point that a strong pressure group consisting of the old Council members and other Englishmen convinced the Parliament that the Governor had ill-managed the affairs of the colony. A body to inquire into the affairs of the colony was appointed. During the time of its activity the Governor was suspended from his duties.[49]

When the Governor was reinstated in office, none of his policies was repealed. The trend he had started whereby competent local members of the community were appointed to official positions was continued: and the Council of Government as formed by him continued to function along the same lines for the next 60 years.[50]

In attempting to provide a common meeting ground for the different ethnic and social groups in the political system the Governor had temporarily divided the elite French community into two political parties. They were soon able to reorganise themselves in the colony with larger public support because of the common religious bonds that

the elite had with the population of poorer Frenchmen and the coloured population. The organisation that enabled them to regroup themselves was the Union Catholique: this was at first a religious association. But soon it assumed a political and strong religious and cultural role. since it identified the Catholic faith with French culture and heritage.[51] This decision enabled the French dominant economic elite to gain new status as the leader of the entire Catholic community and leadership in this field made them also gain political power vis-a-vis the British administration.

The implications of this survey for the educational developments in the colony are many. What strikes the reader first of all is the fact that the desire for political control stood foremost in the minds of the administrators. To reach this goal, they hesitated to interfere with the plantation economy in the Island and thus left the French traditional landowners as the virtual masters of the Islands. The introduction of local government in the presence of the wide disparities between the different ethnic groups and the different social groups made the actual role of each respective group could play disproportionate. Hence social policies that would ensure equal opportunities or equitable social services were slow to develop.

Educational services were among these. It could hardly be expected that the new government could increase the number of

schools in the colony, if they were in turn likely to affect the political equilibrium that had been achieved during this historical period.

On the other hand political control was maintained by the administration in order to ensure the smooth operation of the economic structures existing in the colony. For this reason, to ensure the cooperation of the economic elite, few changes were introduced in the existing economic structures which were likely to diversify the productive activity and threaten the profits of the class of planters and businessmen. New aspirations for social mobility as were created by the access to education were absorbed in the Civil Service. New occupational structures were hardly envisaged for the colony which continued to be unevenly divided both in economic and political terms between interest groups and ethnic groups.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles in the Land of the Aphanapteryx. Sampson, Low, Marston, Low and Searle. London. 1873. p. 508.

Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. La Typographie Moderne. Port-Louis. 1936. pp. 337-353.

[2]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis de L' Ile Maurice. Presses Universitaire de France. Paris. 1966. pp. 96-97.

[3]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis de L' Ile Maurice.

Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 350-353.

[4]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. p. 508.

[5]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 367.

[6]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. p. 508.

[7]Benedict, Burton. Indians in a Plural Society. A Report on Mauritius. London. Her Majesty's Stationery Office. 1961. p. 22.

[8]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 89-91.

[9]Pike, N. Sub-Tropical Rambles. pp. 381-382. Queen Ranavalona Manjaka circa 1840-1860 expelled all Christian Missionaries, prohibited Christianity and discouragedEuropean settlers. She ordered all trade to cease.

[10]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. Longman Green. London. 1956. pp. 170-171.

[11]Herchenroder, M. Census 1952 of Mauritius and of Its Dependencies. Part I. Printed by H. F. Kelly, Acting Government Printer. Port-Louis. Mauritius. 1953. p. 8.

The caption 'general population' was used originally in the census to describe all the inhabitants of the colony, exclusive of the new ethnic groups made up of the Indians and Chinese. The term first

created great displeasure and a new attempt was made to describe the inhabitants by the original country from which their ancestors came. Thus Europeans, Americans and British were mentioned separately: while the term general population applied to the coloured population descendants of the freed slaves of original Malagasy and African origin. Toussaint, Port-Louis: Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 340. Another appellation used to describe this category of citizens was "Creole". The caption had originally been applied to the French settlers themselves: under British rule they were called Franco-Mauritians or French, while the term "creole" was passed down to the darker section of the population.

The author has no explanation for the unusual rise and fall in the Chinese population between 1871 and 1891. It is true that the Island suffered many death casualties during the epidemics and cyclones that visited the colony at the time, yet this would hardly account for any loss in the Chinese population. There has been no evidence that the Chinese were sent away either. On the contrary Chinese families have been known to introduce new members in the colony due to the "extended-family" system that characterises Chinese family life.

[12]Benedict, B. Indians in a Plural Society. pp. 22-23.

[13]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. p. 150.

[14]Benedict, B. Indians in a Plural Society. pp. 22-23.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid. The reference is to the vagrancy laws which were passed at this time supposedly to stop crime but in fact to force the old immigrants to re-engage. This law severely limited the physical mobility of the labourers. It made it impossible for many to visit friends or relatives, or even to seek a living independently in the colony.

[19]Benedict, B. Indians in a Plural Society. pp. 22-23.

[20]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. pp. 172-173. The authors comment on the fact that the French and French speaking Creole population had been reduced to a minority by the Indian immigrants. They also mention the failure of the Government to Anglicise the colony through the adopting of English. Nevertheless, besides the political conflicts which arose between the two administrations and the members of the economic elite also of French descent, talks or retorcession with France were not uncommon. Altogether, the feeling expressed by author Charles Pridham in 1846 had perhaps not completely died down: "In event of attack, no dependence can be placed on the loyalty and fidelity of the French population." (An Historical, Political and Statistical Account of Mauritius and Its Dependencies.) p. 273.

[21]Benedict, B. Indians in a Plural Society. pp. 17-18. There were at first few women among the immigrants. Fixed percentages of women were subsequently encouraged to join the colony. Later the Government offered subsidies to planters to encourage them to import married immigrants with their families: Gradually most of the immigrants were chosen from the same villages.

[22]Benedict, B. Indians in a Plural Society. pp. 24-25.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Benedict, B. Indians in a Plural Society. p. 17.

[25]Ibid.

[26]The governors who assumed office in the colony during this period, 1850's and 1889's are the following:

1. Sir George Anderson, (1849-1850).
2. Sir Macaulay Higginson, (1850-1857).
3. Sir William Stevenson, (1857-1863).
4. Sir Henry Barkley, (1863-1870).
5. Sir Arthur H. Gordon, (1871-1874).
6. Sir Arthur P. Phayre, (1874-1878).
7. Sir George Bowen, (1878-1883).
8. Sir John Pope Hennessy, (1883-1886).

[27]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. pp. 182-183.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 338.

[30]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 347. An example of Mauritian lawyers and professionals sending delegations to the British Parliament was shown in the case of D'Epinay when he went to plead for the creation of a Legislative Assembly in the colony in 1825. The same citizen had gone again in 1835 to plead for the planters in the event that slavery was abolished: and now again when the plans for railways were initiated, a local citizen Dr. Ulcoq who was in London at the time, presented Parliament with a plan for dual railway lines for the colony.

[31]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 346-349.

[32]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 348.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid.

[35]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 349.

[36]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 327-334. Many people jeered at the Municipality because it was so lacking in decision-making power. Besides the fact that it was controlled by a coloured elite must have caused some resentments as well among other sectors of the population.

[37]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 334.

[38]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 491.

[39]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. pp. 381-383. The main issue relating to urbanisation that was postponed because of the outcry raised by the leading citizens was the sewage plans. Actually the subject assumed such importance that it was a major issue of debate between the two parties that contested the elections in 1886. The conservatives were opposed to it: it is doubtful whether the opposition arose because of loss of property involved, as well as fears of further epidemics resulting from large scale

digging plans involved in the works, which was the overt explanation given to justify all opposition to the plans.

[40]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 357-364. Besides epidemics of cholera, severe cyclones swept through the Island simultaneously causing severe loss of life and buildings.

[41]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. p. 365. pp. 383-387.

[42]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. p. 386.

[43]Toussaint, A. Deux Siecles d' Histoire. pp. 340-341.

[44]Ibid.

Benedict, B. Indians in a Plural Society. p. 46. The poor dark creoles chose the trades of masons, capenters, smiths and mechanics among other occupations; they kept away from agriculture. Many engaged in the docks as loaders of ships.

[45]Benedict, B. Indians in a Plural Society. pp. 17-18.

[46]Benedict, B. Indians in a Plural Society. pp. 18-20.

[47]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. pp. 191-194.

[48]Ibid.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Ibid.

[51]Microfilm. Colonial Office. Records. C.O. 882/4.

Chapter VIII. 11

THE ROYAL COLLEGE AND THE DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS AT PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS

Since the colony of Mauritius had become a multi-racial and a multi-cultural society with different ethnic groups sharing the same polity and bound by the same economic structure, it has been found appropriate to utilize the framework of a pluralistic society in order to examine the implications of the educational policies for the colony.

An educational policy in such a framework should be expected to contribute to greater socio-economic and cultural integration among the different ethnic groups residing in the colony. Common political norms based on citizenship and equality of legal status for all would be included in the curriculum. This experiment had been tried, for instance, in the colony itself during the rule of the National Assembly of the French Revolution.

Besides equality of educational opportunity at all levels, one should also expect measures aiming at the cultural and emotional integration of the different ethnic groups based on a curriculum reflecting the religious, cultural and linguistic heritage of each community. An attempt in this direction had been tried by Governor Farquhar, when he had both French and English taught in the Royal

College. Moreover similar attempts were made recently in India in 1947 when, after Independence, the need to integrate the different provincial groups in the country was felt. The curricula in the schools included the history and culture of the different provinces.[1]

The educational policies adopted in the Island of Mauritius during this period can hardly be said to have had such long term goals. Instead, the political problems of the times, the economic limitations of the plantation economy continued to determine the structure of the educational plans. Minimal thoughts were devoted to the possibility of making use of the educational system to achieve national goals other than short term economic success. The desire of the dominant group - the local French elite - to become familiar with the culture, laws and traditions of the coloniser and to preserve its own, determined the curriculum content for the whole colony.

A noticeable feature of the educational system during this period, 1850-1889, was the fact that even though the administration had taken setps to allow local participation in the political system, gradually at first, it continued to exercise strict control over the supervision of education in the colony. Between 1831 and 1849, local individuals were appointed to the Council and elections were held for the position of the Mayor from a list of appointed members. Never-

theless, the Committee of Public Instruction, created in 1839, had all its members appointed by the Governor.[2] Among the appointed members were the government officials and the Heads of the Catholic and the Anglican Church: no community participation was allowed.

In 1857, the Governor replaced the Committee of Public Instruction with a new organisation styled as the Education Committee. A noticeable change of seemingly administrative nature was the creation, within the Committee itself, of two bodies called the 'College Committee' and the 'Schools Committee'. These took charge of the Royal College and the Primary schools, respectively.[3]

The Governor stipulated that the Rector of the Royal College and the Superintendent of the Schools were to be ex-officio members of the Committee and no business could be transacted in the meetings unless these two professionals were present.[4] (The post of Rector at the Royal College was occupied by an English University graduate, and they were selected from among an elite. In one case the Rector of the College returned to the Colony as Governor.)[5]

It has not been possible for the author to find out how the members of the Education Committee of 1857 were chosen nor what social groups they represented. But in the light of the kind of

decisions they took, and the insistence by the Governor to make sure that the Rector and the Superintendent of the Schools be present at meetings before any decisions were taken one would assume that the Committee consisted of non-official members chosen from among the elite class which had already been demanding more participation in the decision making processes in the administration of the colony. It could be that the Governor appointed members of the elite to the Committee in the same manner as they had been appointed to the Government Council since 1831.[6]

Among the first decisions taken by the 1857 Education Committee was the removal of the restriction imposed since 1839 on the English scholarships. Since 1839 only one candidate was enabled to proceed to England for higher studies;[7] the Ordinance of 1859 made it possible for two scholars to be selected by the Governor, on the basis of their academic competence. Besides the allowance which was awarded to the candidates was also increased to 200 pounds annually.[8]

The only restriction placed on higher studies was that the scholars who were sponsored by the State could only benefit from the scholarships for 4 years.[9] This would indicate that the scholarships could only enable the scholars to take a first Arts or Science or Law degree. These could be completed within four years at a University.

For specialisation in medical studies, the candidates would have had to rely on either family income or some form of sponsorship by kin or relatives. There never existed any private endowment or scholarship offered through philanthropic activities in the colony.

This condition seemed to favour the more affluent members of the community; it contributed to occupation differentiation between different socio-economic groups. A person from the lower-economic background, even if he proved to be educationally competent, could not aspire to any course of study e. g. medicine which in British Universities lasted more than four years. The more affluent could prolong their stay, and gain more competence in the fields demanding longer periods of study.

At the level of secondary education, changes were effected in admission policies and curricula selection, and these measures were subject to control by the Committee Members. The rules regarding the responsibilities of the Committee Members vis-a-vis the Royal College were well defined. According to the 1857 Education Ordinance, the members of the "College Committee" were empowered to act as the 'visitors' of the Royal College, and to cooperate generally with the Rector for promoting the welfare of the institution.[10] The Committee "had the power of appointing public examiners for the purpose of conducting the same. The law further provided for the

maintenance at public charge of a certain number of boarders, half-boarders and free-scholars to be selected by the Governor."[11]

It would seem from this that the members of the community had been given a substantial role in the conduct of the Royal College. Besides finance they could also influence the examination processes. The Governor instead began to assume the sole responsibility of administering to the needs of the poorer sectors of the community who were to be admitted to the College.

In 1860, however, due to disagreements between the Rector of the Royal College and the College Committee the whole Committee was replaced by an Educational Council. The new Council consisted of 22 members, which was a considerable increase from the 7 who formed the original Committee of Education.[12] Two standing committees were again appointed to take charge of the Royal College and the primary schools. The change however lay in the fact that the College Committee was empowered by the Governor to assume responsibility of all secondary schools in the colony: the Schools Committee had all government and denominational primary schools under its jurisdiction.[13] In other words the entire educational system in the colony was thereafter under the jurisdiction of the Committees. The implementation of suggested changes in education became more dependent upon the political pressure groups could manage to exercise on the Committees.

Two major outcomes followed from this reorganisation of the supervisory body responsible for education at the secondary level. Insofar as the Royal College itself was concerned, "the Committee Members became responsible for framing all laws and regulations for the institution, determining the curriculum and the textbooks to be used, the prizes to be awarded and the conditions of competition for such prizes, the superintending of all competitive examinations, and the determining finally of all questions affecting the dismissal or rustication of pupils of the College." It was clear the the Committee Members had succeeded in obtaining entire control of the finances, the admission and evaluation of the educational activities of the Royal College. The role of the Rector was reduced to the minimum - "with the exception of the power of dismissal or rustication of pupil, the Rector was entrusted with preserving the discipline of the College."[14]

Thereafter, it seemed that the Royal College was entirely under the control of the Education Council. The College was still seen as an elitist institution and its curriculum was determined by the cultural orientation of the elite class of planters, businessmen, professionals and journalists. It remained strictly academic, stressing both French and English at all levels. The problem facing the Council was still how to enable members of the lower social classes to gain access to this elite institution. The early stand

taken by the British namely that all citizens had a right to be admitted to the Royal College could hardly be reversed without creating more chaos and upheavals. A solution to this problem was found in the attempt to confer official sanction on the private schools that were in existence in the colony at the time. The existing private schools were called the "associated schools" and subjected to the control and supervision of the Education Council.[15] Actually there is some indication that the coloured population who had formed another pressure group in the society sought the authorisation to set up a private school for their community.[16]

This label "associated schools" applied to all private schools. There were four main ones operating in the colony at first. The Committee adopted a scheme in 1869 by which these schools were recognised and subjected to the same curriculum and examinations as the Royal College. It was an attempt made to ensure that all secondary schools followed a uniform curriculum. Another hope was that eventually if these schools proved successful they could be left to act as feeder schools to the Royal College and provide education at the lower levels of the College.[17]

By 1871 however, when the large scale migrations had taken place from the capital to the interior of the Island another development became apparent. The members of the elite who

had settled in the town of Curepipe had set up a separate racially segregationist school with the help of the French based Catholic Teaching Order of the Christian Brothers.[18] The school had an enrolment growth from 58 to 147 in 20 years while the Royal College had as many scholars as 328 enrolled in one year at the time. This evidence demonstrates how selective the school might have been with regard to its admission policy.[19]

Inspite of the small enrolment in this school the population of the same town signed a petition to the Secretary of State in 1888 asking that the English scholarship be declared open to all scholars irrespective of the school they attended.[20] It was clear that the elite wanted the same exclusive considerations that they had obtained for themselves in 1800 when they had created the magnificent Ecole Centrale in the colony.[21] Since their economic independence enabled them to provide their children the best educational facilities in an environment of isolation from the other social classes they now wanted to have transferred to their private institution the key function performed by the Royal College, i.e. enabling the scholar of the English Scholarship class to get his higher education in Britain at the expense of the State. The elite surely did not lack the means to get university education in the metropole: it was rather the prestige attached to the English scholar-

ship including the fact that it was followed by the eventual appointment of the candidate to an official position that became the new targets.

The Secretary of State however, sensitive to the cry for autonomy on the part of the elite found that granting the request would destroy the "raison d'etre" itself of the Royal College which was to socialise the children of the elite together with the coloured, and other ethnic groups eventually and denied this request.[22]

It was through the decision by the Secretary of State that the role of the Royal College was reasserted in the colony. It remained the sole state institution of secondary education, in theory open to all ethnic groups, and also occupying the highest status among all the other associated schools in virtue of the fact that it alone prepared scholars for the English Scholarship examination.

At first none of the "associated schools" was financed by the government. After 1886 however, when the New Government Council had been created in the colony and all the groups given some form of representation in the Council financial assistance was given to the managers of the schools who presented the best scholars to the examinations held at the Royal College.[23] This served as an encouragement to private citizens to set up schools. Other financial awards were also offered to individual scholars who performed well. There were no limitations set on qualifications of the school managers and

religous organisations were not excluded from establishing secondary schools. This was another compromise adopted by the administration since it enabled all the religious groups in the colony to run schools if they had the means and the motivation to do so. Actually after the year 1886 and up to the 1900's the best performing schools were those set up by the Catholic Missions some of which also chose their teachers from English members of their orders. The Loreto Convents for instance, which had been invited from Ireland to start schools in the colony, also started secondary schools for girls at about this time.[24]

It would seem from this analysis of the educational developments that took place in relation to the provision of secondary education in the colony that education was subjected to the same pressure as the administration itself was facing in its task of governing the colony.

The developments in the Royal College were parallel to and closely associated with the development in the political structure of the Island. The same group that tried to have a larger share in the decision-making processes in the actual government of the Island tried to gain control of the administration of the Royal College. This was to ensure that their children could benefit from the best educational facilities and develop competence in both English and French. If this was successful these criteria such as competence in English and French would have been imposed on all other secondary education institutions

in the colony. The other sectors of the population of the colony were accommodated in the College to the extent that they could assimilate the values and language of the dominant French in the society and compete with them in educational achievement. The development process favoured the established European groups in the colony and those who had already assimilated their traditions such as the coloured. It was the new ethnic groups who came more recently into the colony who were at a great disadvantage.

The administration however was not content to surrender its responsibilities entirely to the local dominant community. Two solutions were found to enable the administration to re-establish control over the situation. One was an internal reorganisation of the Royal College on the pattern of the English Grammar school and another was the transfer of all competitive examinations to English Boards of Examinations. The author has not been able to verify the exact dates when these practices were adopted in the colony. But since they were already established by 1901 it is likely that they were instituted shortly after this settlement had been reached between the Educational Council and such organisations as the Union Catholique and similar other local organisations that wanted to exert pressure over the main secondary educational institution in the colony.

For administration purposes the Royal College was divided into two sections - the lower section in the College, also called the School Division and the College Division. The former had a five year school programme organised into five classes. During this period the scholars were introduced to Latin, Greek and Science, and other subjects like Mathematics and the Natural Sciences. The study of French and English History and Language and Literature were compulsory.[25]

In the College division which had a four years programme area of specialisation were specified: one could choose to opt for the Classics or the Modern side. The curriculum consisted on the Modern side of English and French Language and Literature, Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry, with concentration on the 'pure' rather than the 'applied' knowledge. On the Classical side, the subjects consisted of French and English Literature, Greek and Latin Classical History and the basic Mathematics.[26]

With the exception of French which was imposed at all levels it would seem the curricula and the examinations were made to correspond to those characteristics of the grammar schools in England. The main examinations taken by the College and conducted in England were the Junior Cambridge taken at the end of the School division and the Senior Cambridge taken at the completion of the

College Division. These examinations were both run by the University of Cambridge Board of Examiners.[27]

Success at the secondary level enabled the scholar to prepare for the English scholarship examination which meant another two years of school attendance. Instead of allowing the candidate to proceed directly to a British University further examination restrictions were imposed. It was required that the candidates selected in the Island pass the London Matriculation examination if they wanted to choose the Classics as their area of specialisation. Further every candidate who went in for the Modern side had to take the Cambridge Local examination in certain specified subjects.[28] In addition to these educational requirements it was specified that the candidate should not be over 20 years of age preceding the 30th of June prior to the examination taking place in the month of December.[29]

It was clear that the Royal College itself had become another tool of social control in the Island. It eliminated many scholars at the different levels by means of the competitive examinations and it selected a few who could aspire to higher education. Since all the examinations took place in England the local population had little room for challenging the decisions or for effecting changes in any quick way. These measures resulted in a mystification of the educational system.

It was not only at the secondary level of the educational system that these major political and social issues were debated. A study of primary educational developments revealed the same trend. The dominant local ethnic group tried to impose its cultural values on the system and made sure that its own members benefited mostly from such facilities as existed. In an attempt to reach a settlement with the group which also controlled the economy the administration tried to play an arbiter's role and make sure that the other groups could also participate in the educational system in such a manner as to upset the dominance of the French ethnic groups in the society.

Since the 1850's primary education was provided jointly by the Government schools English missionaries and Catholic schools.[30] The point was made in the early part of the study that pressure was used to lessen English missionary activity among the freed slaves and the coloured population. The gradual erosion of the Catholic faith and loss of loyalty to traditional French values resulting from exposure to English values became of increasing concern to the French sector of the population.

With the arrival of the Indians however, a new element had been introduced in the colony. At first since the government was under no obligation to provide educational facilities for them no steps were taken in that direction. Instead it was the English

missionaries who devoted great time and energy in spreading the faith and education among them. Indian teachers were imported from India, local people were trained to act as teachers for the Indian children and attempts were made to run multi-lingual schools to conform to the linguistic patterns the different Indian labourers had brought with them to the colony.[31]

How far these activities met with the approval of the government can only be judged by the decisions taken by the Educational Council which aimed at curtailing the facilities the missionaries had to run these schools. Government subsidies originally offered to these missions were reduced.[32]

Besides a competing missionary activity had begun to develop in the Island. Since 1846 a French missionary belonging to the Order of Saint Esprit, known as Père Laval, had joined the Island. He ran evangelical schools for the lower white class and of the poor coloured and Indians. Another compatriot, Abbé Massuy, also called the "Apostle of the Whites", carried out similar evangelical activities among the white sections of the population.[33] It was likely that the administration feared that more religious and cultural cleavages would result in the society if these missionaries were left to carry out their actions uncontrolled.

By the Ordinance of 1857, all primary schools existing in the colony were placed under the supervision of the Education Council.[34] Further an attempt was made to introduce compulsory education in the colony. The matter was dropped because it was felt that 'the Indians had not been appraised of these conditions before they joined the colony'.[35] Besides other difficulties were envisaged which were connected with the education of the children of the Indians.

The records that are available do not mention any details about the members of the Education Committee who supported the view that higher education should be denied to the Indians because it was not part of the contractual obligations of the employers. Nor did they specify difficulties which were envisaged in the education of the Indian children. But it is clear that the rapid assimilation of the Indian children in the school system was not considered desirable. At the same time the work of the missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Indians was fully ignored.[36]

This attitude can be better understood in the light of the fact that child labour was maintained in the colony till 1907, when it was decided that only children older than 13 could be employed.[37] Moreover labour laws which restricted the physical mobility of the Indians in the Island were still appled. These affected children as

much as adults. It is obvious that the interests of the economic elite was at stake since compulsory education would have denied them the child labour which was available to them to work on the sugar states.

The Ordinance of 1857 also introduced the Grants-in-Aid system whereby the government offered financial help to individuals who wanted to set up schools for the education of the poor.[38] Yet it was unlikely that the schools were set up with a view to promoting better access to schools among all the ethnic groups. By their status in the occupational structure and because of laws connected with their status the new ethnic groups were at a strong disadvantage. Besides the law also offered help only to such groups who were able to provide for 50% of the total costs involved.[39] This aspect of the law placed the poorer labourers, lacking in local group solidarity and political motivation, at a further disadvantage.

Another consequence of encouraging voluntary agencies to develop primary education was the danger that the schools dominated by the cultural and religious norms of the dominant groups would "deculturize" the newly arrived immigrants - the Indians. Hence when missionary schools were gradually replaced by Government schools proper, which claimed to be secular, these became an alternative to the denominational Catholic schools. But in practice since the only teacher training available in the colony was that which

was provided by the Religious Orders in many cases the Chaplains and the Bishop directly awarded certification of competence to individuals[40] - the informal infiltration of religious biases in the teaching and the curriculum could hardly be controlled. The non-Christian Indians who were deeply entrenched in their own cultural and religious ideas, saw such practices detrimental to the continued existence of their cultural heritage, a factor which further diminished their motivation to use the schools. Some attempts were even made to have the Indian languages taught in the first year of the school. There are no details available to show who taught these languages nor which one of the many languages was taught. But in 1890 English and French were made compulsory at all levels.

By an amendment of the 1857 Ordinance passed in 1882, the Government offered subsidies to the denominational schools to persuade them to accept children of all social groups, irrespective of race or religion. But laws regarding the maintenance of religion in the curriculum remained vague. As Mr. Ermtage, the Director of Education in the colony, in 1914, commented:

> "Although it provided that an aided school should be open to all children without regard to religion or race, it contained no conscience clause providing that a child should receive no religious instruction objected to by his parents or guardians; nor did it make any provision with

> regard to the religious instruction of the pupils this being left entirely in the hands of the managers."[41]

The dominance of religion in the curriculum of schools did not diminish for a long time, but became more predominant. It was significant that in approximately the same year the Union Catholique which had become a dominant pressure group organisation had adopted as one of its resolutions:

> "The Congress expresses the wish that the instruction, primary as well as secondary, of the children of both sexes of the Catholic population of this Island be imparted in thoroughly Catholic schools; and for this end, it demands that all possible means be employed in order to obtain from Government complete freedom of education and an equitable assistance to the Catholic educational institutions."[42]

It was no coincidence therefore that by 1889 the Catholic Church alone benefited from 65% of the Government funds which were made available for education. The English missionaries were awarded only 11%. The implication was that the bias towards French was maintained in the colony at the primary level, as a result of the political role the French speaking groups of the economic elite played in the colony.

Since the consolidation of British rule rested on a peaceful settlement with the elite the administration did not try to

modify the trend except at the secondary level, where control was more strict and British influence strongest.

Since the primary education remained terminal up to this period expansion at this level posed no threat to the narrow economic structure existing in the colony. However as far as the social integration of the population was concerned these schools with their different religious and cultural biases were dysfunctional in the society and helped to perpetuate the social and ethnic cleavages in the country slowing down at the same time the changes which were open to the disadvantaged sections of the population for playing a more active role in the political decision making in the colony.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Hanson, J. and Brembeck, Cole S. Education and National Integration in India. Humayun Kabir. Education and the Development of Nations. Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc. U.S.A. 1966. pp. 241-248.

[2]Great Britain. Imperial Conference Papers. Systems of Chief Colonies not Possessing Responsible Government. Mauritius. 1914. p. 4.

[3]Great Britain. Board of Education for the Colonies. Special Reports on Educational Subjects. Mauritius. Vol. 13. 1901. p. 202.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. La Typographie Moderne. Port-Louis. 1936. p. 407. The reference is to Governor Sir Charles Bruce. He was Rector of the Royal College between 1868 and 1878; Governor between 1897 and 1903. Other individuals who served as Rector of the Royal College and later became famous men of science in England were: Besant, Meldrum and Guthrie. (Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. A Short History of Mauritius. Longmans Green. London. 1849. p. 123.)

[6]Toussaint, A. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 285.

[7]Mauritius. Annual Report of the Education Department. Government Printer. Port-Louis. 1949. p. 28.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Great Britain. Board of Education Report. 1901. pp. 202-203.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Board of Education Report. 1901. p. 203.

[15]Pridham, C. An Historical Political and Statistical Account of Mauritius and Its Dependencies. T. and W. Boone, 29 New Bond Street. London. 1849. p. 192.

[16]Annual Report of the Education Department. 1949. p. 5.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Annual Report of the Education Department. 1949. p. 29.

[19]Annual Report of the Education Department. 1949. p. 5.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Annual Report of the Education Department. 1949. p. 27.

[22]Annual Report of the Education Department. 1949. p. 29.

[23]Great Britain. Imperial Education Conference Papers. Educational Systems of Chief Colonies not Possessing Responsible Government. Mauritius. 1914. p. 5.

[24]Annual Report of the Education Department. 1949. p. 30. Among the Catholic Boys Secondary Schools were the following: Saint Joseph (founded 1877); Saint Esprit (founded 1854). For girls the Loreto Convent Secondary Schools were started since 1846.

[25]Great Britain. Board of Education Report for the Colonies. 1901. pp. 204-205.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Great Britain. Board of Education Report for the Colonies. 1901. p. 205.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Imperial Education Conference Papers. Mauritius. pp. 4-5.

[31]Great Britain. Board of Education Reports for the Colonies. 1901. p. 202.

Pascoe, C. F. 200 Years of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. 1700-1900. pp. 368-371. There was a hope that the uprooted Indians would lend themselves more easily to conversion than had been common in India proper. Schools were run in regi olan languages such as Tamil, Bengali.

Saunders, R. The Work of the SPG and the Rev. Denny. Unpublished with authorisation of author.

[32]Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 346.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Great Britain. Board of Education Report for the Colonies. 1901. p. 208.

[35]Great Britain. Imperial Conference Papers. Mauritius. 1914.

[36]Pascoe, C. F. 200 Years of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. pp. 370-373.

[37]Barnwell, P. J. and Toussaint, A. Port-Louis. Deux Siècles d' Histoire. p. 183. Actually the authors mention that the 1872 Commission Reports and Laws were not implemented until 1922.

[38]Great Britain. Board of Education Report for the Colonies. 1901. pp. 208-229.

[39]Great Britain. Imperial Education Conference Papers. 1914. p. 6.

[40]Great Britain. Imperial Education Conference Papers. 1914. p. 8.

[41]Great Britain. Imperial Education Conference Papers. 1914. p. 8.

[42]Microfilms. Colonial Office. Records. C.O. 882/4. Mauritius. Ecclesiastical Grants. 1889-1890.

Chapter IX

CONCLUSION

This study tried to identify the main factors which contributed to the educational changes which took place in the colony of Mauritius during both the French and the British administrations. It was hoped thereby to establish some of the differences between the colonial policies of the two Governments and to see how these were reflected in their respective educational policies for Mauritius.

The findings made in course of the study made it possible to state that during both regimes the educational system was closely geared to the policies of social control and economic exploitation used by the respective colonising powers. Further, as a result of the close association between the educational system and the socio-economic and political structures of the colony the educational system developed only to the extent that it served the goals of the administrators at particular times.

The theoretical framework used for this analysis rejects the Malinowskian model which assumes that colonial rule is usually in the interest of both the coloniser and the colonised, and can result in effective development of the colony. Instead the study supports the view presented by Balandier who perceived the colonial situation as one of constant domination either by the coloniser or by local groups in the colony itself. Instances of conflict can be

identified at the economic, social and political levels, indicating a need for change.[1] But in order to understand the direction which the change took it was necessary to use a historical approach in the study.

Because this study has covered different historical periods each with its own specific socio-economic and political problems it has been found necessary to sum up the findings of each period separately. The study shows that the schools did not transmit a single cultural pattern which was common to all the inhabitants of the colony. Instead each period provided different problems which guided the educational policies at the time.

Even though an agreement was signed with the Church to provide educational services in the colony yet no school materialised during the entire period that the colony was ruled by the Chartered French East India Company.

Towards the end of the administration by the government of the Ancien Regime in 1789, an enlightened administrator, D'Entrecasteaux, tried to persuade the Church to set up a school for the benefit of the colony but there was no sign that this school ever came to exist.

During both these periods it is clear that neither the demand for education nor the supply of qualified individuals to start

the schools in the colony was lacking. Instead it would seem that the local landed aristocracy did not need schools and were unwilling to cooperate with efforts to have schools started locally. The administration being eager to maintain the goodwill of the elite class did not run counter to their desires. Moreover, since the administrators themselves formed part of an elite class in the metropole where plans for the education of the poor and needy were meagre they were hardly likely to sponsor schools for the poor in the colony.

Besides the desire to protect mutual interests that characterised the solidarity between the administrators and the local colonial elite another question that may have militated against the opening of schools could have been the issue of assimilation of the coloured people. Members of the coloured population were known in most colonies to seek educational training both to acquire the French cultural tradition and in hopes of social advancement through appointment to minor jobs in local military institutions. Given the narrow economic and occupational base existing in the colony it is likely that there was a fear on the part of the administrators that schools would raise the occupational aspirations of the population beyond a level which could be satisfied within the existing economic and political structure of the Island. Consequently there was no official plan made to set up schools.

The outbreak of the French Revolution in the metropole signalled the creation in France of a National System of education for the abolition of social class differences. In the colonies the appeal of the message of the Revolution was heightened since the equality of legal and political status was promised to the coloured people.

In theory the colonies were ordered to follow the same social, political and economic changes as had taken place in the metropole but in practice each colony adapted its policies to the local situation. In Ile de France the Colonial Assembly decided to support an educational institution and call it the National College. It was aimed only at abolishing social differences among different sections of the French community. But the conservative members of the society were determined to maintain their social distance from the lower class French population and prevailed upon the Assembly to authorise the creation of private schools for their children.

The children of the coloured people were denied admission to the National College supported by the Assembly. On the other hand the Assembly did not try to set up a separate school to guarantee their education. Public pressure was opposed to the integration of the coloured into the mainstream of the society, even though the coloured people identified with French language, culture and shared the same religious beliefs as the French population in the colony.

Thus inspite of the political emancipation of the people the fact that they were excluded from the schools continued to militate against the mobility that would have transformed their legal and political freedom into a social reality.

The Colonial Assembly was purged of all its revolutionary leaders in 1796, and reconstituted along more conservative lines. This had followed the dismissal of the metropolitan delegates who had come to enforce laws relating to the abolition of slavery. The new government then tried to follow the same educational policy as was adopted in 1790. The National College was maintained and scholarships were offered to the poor but the new government did not enforce racial integration in the school. When it set up a model secondary school called the Ecole Centrale, based on latest educational reforms carried out in the metropole it established a separate institution for the coloured.

The elitist character of the Ecole Central was maintained and this was seen in the nature of its curriculum, the competence of the teachers employed and in the examination procedures. Admission rules too were rigid and aimed at excluding anyone who did not belong to the class of wealthy, prestigious families from the colony and other French possessions. None of the facilities of the Ecole Centrale was shared with other educational institutions existing in the colony.

Clearly the education system failed to provide for social integration of the population. Instead it perpetuated existing social divisions and efforts were concentrated on preparing new cadres for the colonial administration after the Revolution and wars had made access to the metropole more perilous for the inhabitants of the colony. Inspite of their temporary defiance of political decrees from the metropole however the ruling class did not sever cultural links with France. They continued to feel pride and joy in being a French colony.

The restoration of central authority under Napoleon saw the replacement of the Ecole Centrale by the Lycée of Ile de France and Reunion. While the Lycée was still run as an elite institution for the education of the future officials and new cadres for the colony there was a marked change as could be seen in the stress placed on military training and exercises. Ile de France was designed to become a military outpost in the Indian Ocean and the soldiers and sailors that would be needed were being trained at the Lycée.

Since Napoleon's regime also witnessed the restoration of slavery laws as they existed under the Ancien Régime and the coloured people were denied free access to France, the racial segregationist policy was reflected in the exclusion of the coloured from the Lycée. Instead they were allowed to set up primary schools which were terminal and were hardly an encouragement to those who were aspiring to high ranking jobs.

After reading this summary of the functions performed by the educational system during the French period, one cannot but conclude that during the early days of French colonisation there was minimal amount of assimilation through the educational system. Such assimilation of the French language and customs as took place among the colouredfree and the people of mixed blood resulted from their individual efforts. Some had also benefitted from sufficient income through the kindness of individual masters and were able to achieve the tastes of the cultured French community. The educational system in the colony therefore did not provide access to all. This denial of educational opportunities made many freed slaves aspire to escape to France where they could occupy a variety of posts in the broader occupational structure that existed in the metropole.[2]

On the other hand the educational system which existed locally in the colonies favoured the class of wealthy Frenchmen. They trained the children of the class of planters and businessmen who formed a local elite.[3] The schools thus perpetuated an ideology of the superiority of the white wealthy section of the colonial society.

The British Colonial Era

The British conquest in 1810 was accompanied by policies that aimed at making the transition from French domination to an acceptance of British rule as smooth as possible. Under the administration of Governor Farquhar which lasted for over a decade and few years, (1810-1823), the Island witnessed the creation of the Royal College.

The institution was originally planned to replace the French Lycee. It was meant to be a secondary school with the special task of socialising children of the colony into an acceptance of the British point of view and way of life. Rather however than impose the British cultural heritage exclusively on the school the Governor, out of his own appreciation of the French culture which was still held in esteem in Europe decided to maintain the use of French and French studies in the College at all levels. Admission rules however restricted the College only to children of old French colonial families belonging to an elite class and to children of the British residents.

In order to bring about closer association between the colony and metropole the Governor established the English scholarship through which the two best-performing scholars could be selected by him to proceed to England for higher studies. Besides he also selected

other candidates from the College to fill positions on the staff of the College as well as to occupy other posts in the administrative structures of the colony. Once the College was made to play such a crucial role in the colonial society it not only became an institution commanding great prestige and respect but also subject to close control by the authorities. The Governor presided over official functions and suggested curricular changes himself. He closely watched over the activities of the teaching staff and on one occasion when a teacher wrote an elegy on Napoleon's death, the Governor saw to it that he was relieved of his duties.[4]

While the Royal College was placed on such a high pedestal the Governor refused to authorise the establishment of other secondary schools in the colony. But English Missionaries were permitted to start evangelical primary schools. Such missionary schools as existed helped socialise the masses into an acceptance of English language and develop some familiarity with British cultural patterns. But for fear of upsetting the existing religious views in the colony which was officially all Catholic, the Governor saw to it that no effort was made for a mass conversion of the slaves to Protestantism.

The structure of the educational system set up by Governor Farquhar did not change substantially during the rest of the historical

period that has been discussed. There was no local development of tertiary education planned for the colony.[5] Instead the Royal College remained the sole state supported institution for secondary education. Because it led to state sponsored scholarships for higher education and eventual appointment of the successful candidates to high ranking official positions admission to the College was a valuable achievement in itself.

When the administration decided to implement its policy of abolishing colour discrimination and slavery in the colony the College was declared open to all citizens on the basis of merit, irrespective of social rank and skin colour. The administration was also keen on using the Royal College to introduce its programme of anglicisation in the College after 1839, whereupon it appointed English Masters to replace the French teachers.

The elite was displeased with both measures adopted by the Governor and showed its disapproval by setting up private schools in which the use of French was maintained. (1840-1850.) When the Government remained adamant in its desire to have the Royal College as the only state supported institution and one which provided admission to the coloured populationthe elite set up separate independent secondary schools as well between 1869 and 1880. They even sent a petition to the Parliament in London to seek permission

for their secondary school to prepare candidates for the English Scholarship examination which was conducted in England and led to admission in a British University.

Parliament refused to grant this request. But in other matters relating to education, many concessions were granted to the elite class of French settlers who had continued to enjoy many political, economic and social privileges in the colonial society. The scholars from the Associated Schools were subjected to the same examination procedures as the Royal College students: French was maintained at all levels of the College curriculum and thereafter imposed on all the inhabitants of the colony. These concessions helped to re-establish their sense of superiority vis-a-vis the rest of the population in the colony. They achieved these goals through adequate representation of members of their class in the Education Committee and in the official positions.

Since the coloured people were culturally oriented towards French 'mores', even though they benefitted more from British rule in terms of social and political mobility than was possible under French administration, yet they raised no objection to the fact that the educational system was bilingual and bicultural.

Actually this aspect of the educational system has remained unchanged till present times in the colony. The fact that new social and ethnic groups later joined the colony has made little change: the inevitability of learning French and English is not challenged by anyone. When soon after the 1880's all examining privileges were delegated to English University Examining Boards the measure helped perpetuate the belief in the permanent and unchangeable character of the College curriculum. Besides the bilingualism, the College came to inherit the same organisational pattern and curriculum as a British grammar school.

This analysis of the developments at the secondary level would be incomplete without a brief look at the manner in which the primary education was provided in the colony. After all in order to maintain stability in the colonial society it was necessary to limit the demand for secondary education as much as possible. The type of primary education that was provided helped the administration to achieve its goal.

Primary education was set up as a terminal type of education. Scholarships were only awarded after the year 1889 to enable few scholars from the primary schools to attend the Royal College. During most of the period covered by this study, primary education remained terminal and modelled on the pattern of evangelical schools.

Since the English missionaries had joined the colony in larger numbers after the abolition of slavery in the Island there had been some concern among different groups of the society about the anglicisation of the masses. By 1846, pressure was used to have the Government set up more secular primary schools in place of the English oriented Missionary schools. At approximately the same time French Roman Catholic Missionaries joined the colony to carry out evangelical activities among both the lower socio-economic classes among the French population. Gradually by 1880 there was a strong Catholic Organisation formed called the Union Catholique which insisted on running schools for the Catholic section of the population, and use French as the language for instruction. In 1889 the same group secured 65% of the funds made available for educational purposes through the Grants-in-Aid system. There was a clear desire shown to maintain a religious and cultural hegemony among the original population of the colony who identified with French traditional values and the Roman Catholic faith.[6]

The Governor Pope Hennessy wanted to see a more equitable distribution of tax-based money among the non-Catholic sections of the population.[7] The matter was taken to Parliament again. But in deference to the political and economic influence of the Catholic-French-oriented population, the request of the Union

Catholique was granted. The population of the Island consisted at the time of approximately 65% of people who did not belong to the Catholic faith, among whom were the Indians and followers of other Christian denominations.

Thereafter the Catholic schools outnumbered the Government run secular schools, and they catered to a smaller number of pupils.[8] The fact that religious studies were compulsory in the curriculum of the Catholic schools discouraged many non-Catholics from attending them.

Insofar as the overall plan for the development of the colony was concerned highly trained and adequate supply of the literacy skills was not required in the agricultural economy. Hence primary education was considered sufficient in most cases with the result that not too many people were given aspirations for roles beyond the ability of the country to meet such demands. Even when new ethnic groups who were introduced in the colony since they were required to fill fixed occupational roles upon which the economy of the colony depended few changes were made in the educational system to accommodate their needs. Besides rather than enable them to maintain their cultural traditions in the same manner as the French were allowed to do, the Indians were pressurised into accepting the culture of the dominant European and Creole elements in the society

with whom they came into contact with. The formal religious instruction in the schools even those that were run by Government were aimed at introducing Christianity to the Indians through the persuasion of teachers who acted as agents of evangelical activities. As a result some Indians changed their religious beliefs to Christianity.

It is clear that there was hardly a well designed education plan for the colony with a view to promote either the economic development of the colony, or even to unify the people and transmit to them a unified concept of nationhood. Instead educational decisions were prompted by immediate political issues as they arose, and threatened to disturb the political stability which was necessary for the economic prosperity of the colony.

As H. S. Scott points out in his paper on the "Educational Policy in the British Empire," (World Year Book, 1937), there was a latent element of economic exploitation mitigated by a sense of fair play underlying the colonial educational policy of the times. In fact educational planning for the colonies began to receive more attention in the period after 1900: Scott mentions the 1923 Conference held at the Colonial Office in London to advise the Secretary of State on "any matters of Native Education in the British colonies and Protectorates in Tropical Africa...."[9]

There is evidence that the ideas discussed at such meetings found their way in the educational policies in the colonies. Mauritius for instance had different Committees appointed to study its vocational education, plans for introducing agricultural subjects in the primary schools, and the Agricultural College itself was founded soon after in 1913.[10]

Up to the 1900's the British colonial policy of education in Mauritius was determined first by the desire to win over the economic elite by conferring legitimacy on their culture in incorporating it in the curriculum of the schools. Later instead of extending the same privilege to the new ethnic groups, who had arrived in the Island, to enable them to maintain their culture, the administration allowed the politically dominant group of the original settlers a large measure of control over the school system. Thus the institutionalisation of French in the school system retarded the social and political integration of the new ethnic groups.

This study attempted to examine the developments from the three theoretical frameworks mentioned earlier. According to Malinowski one would expect the educational system introduced by the colonizing power would be an important instrument of social change and since it was one of the institutions

in which cooperation between colonizer and colonized could be expected then the educational system introduced would be one that serves the genuine long term interest of the colonized society.

But the research findings put this theory in doubt since it would seem that the overiding interest of the colonizing power in introducing educational changes was to ensure their survival as the dominant political power. More valuable in explaining educational changes were the views of Maunier and Balandier. It would seem that the type of the colony which Mauritius became - it was a colony of settlement for the French and a colony of exploitation for the British - influenced the nature of the secondary education that developed. In addition the stratification system of the society - which the colonizing power wanted to preserve to ensure its own political beginning over the Island and to a large extent determined the type of secondary education and the groups to which it was made accessible.

A further development of this study could help to uncover whether the other ethnic groups also attempted to influence the educational system when they became politically articulare and economically independent.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Balandier, G. La Situation Coloniale: Approche Theorique. Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologies. Vol. 11. No. 51. pp. 63-66.

[2]McCloy, T. S. The Negro in France. University of Kentucky Press. 1961. pp. 12-40.

[3]Debeauvais, M. Education in Former French Africa. To be found in Coleman, J. Education and Political Development. Princeton, New Jersey. 1965. p. 80. This article rejects the assimilationist claim of the Colonial schools: he even goes to the extent of suggesting that when colonial schools were started for the natives, based on the same pattern as the French schools and colleges, the degrees were not at par with metropolitan standards. This subject may require further investigation. In general the colonial schools catered to the expatriate French community foremost.

[4]Macquet, Pere, A. Instruction a L' Origine de Notre Colonisation. Revue Historique et Litteraire de L' Ile Maurice. 22 February 1890. No. 36. pp. 403-449.

[5]Nichols, A. E. The Nichols Report on Secondary Education in Mauritius. 1948.

Lockwood, Dr. J. F. An Examination of the Possibility of Setting up a University in Mauritius. Sessional Paper 5. 1962. The first suggestion of the creation of a University in Mauritius was made by A. E. Nichols in his report. Nothing was done about it until 1962, when Dr. J. F. Lockwood was commissioned to investigate the possibility of starting a University in the colony. He rejected the plan because of prohibitive costs involved in the new enterprise. Professor Colin Leys however recommended the idea again in his report of 1964: the University of Mauritius was finally created in 1968, on the eve of the Independence of the colony.

Til then the only institutions for post secondary education were a Teachers' Training Collegewhich trained Primary School teachers, and an Agriculture College started in 1913 with strong emphasis on research on the sugar cane.

[6]Microfilms. Colonial Office. Great Britain. CO 882/4, 5.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Scott, H. S. Educational Policy in the British Colonial Empire. World Year Book of Education. 1937. London. Evans. pp. 411-415.

[10]Leys, Colin. The Development of a University College of Mauritius. Mauritius Legislative Assembly. Sessional Paper. No. 4. 1964. pp. 5-6. Most other report prepared by the Colonial Office during the post 1900 era concentrated on technical education, vocational schools and the introduction of agricultural subjects in the schools at primary level. The Royal College remained concentrated on abstract sciences and academic subjects.

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Unpublished Materials

Saunders, Rev. Ronald. The Work of SPG in Establishing Schools for the Emanicipated Slaves. (Unpublished Thesis for Teacher Training College.)

Letter by Sister O. Donaghue. Loretro Convent. Rose-Hill, Mauritius. This letter provided a brief survey of the educational developments in the early British colonial period. It summed up the educational aims of the Catholic Church in the colony.

Letter by Mrs. I. Pridmore. M. A. Archivist. The United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. London. Mrs. Pridmore kindly provided information regarding the books that contain materials relevant to the works of the organisation in Mauritius and other parts of the world. She also suggested that the permission of Rev. R. Saunders be sought for duplicating his thesis. Mrs. Pridmore also enabled the author of this work to locate the microfilms which deal with the works of Rev. Le Brun in the colony of Mauritius.