1. Introduction

In the second half of the nineteenth century, modern and western education became a crucial matter not only for the Brahmins or literary classes who already occupied high status in the colonial administration, but also for the Kshatriyas, especially princes and royals [Allen and Dwivedi 1998; Price 1996]. It may be argued that they wished to maintain, through such education, their authority as 'proper rulers' both from the point of view of their people and from that of the colonial power. But what is a 'proper ruler'? What did it mean to be a king or a Kshatriya ruler in colonial times? The topic, which will be discussed here, concerns the nature and form of modern education introduced among Indian rulers, royals, and their caste members, the Urs, in the princely state of Mysore from the end of the nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Focusing on the role of the Maharaja's
English tutor and then on some conflicts among his caste members, the Urs, in private boarding schools, the purposes and failures of the introduction of modern education will be examined.

It has already been recognized that the awareness of Kshatriyahood was stimulated among Kshatriyas during the colonial period. Army recruitment by the British was one of the more important ways in which the colonial power could ingeniously take advantage of the Indian’s self-consciousness in order to facilitate their dominance in the colonial world [Killingray and Omissi 1999]. It was manly and martial Kshatriyahood that was brought to the fore by these situations. Ashis Nandy argues that this kind of Kshatriyahood corresponded to modern ‘hyper-masculinity’ and formed the core of Indian nationalism in its attempts to compete with colonial hegemony [Nandy 1983: 52]. Can we then argue that what the Mysorian rulers and royals expected of the modern education was also a revival of martial Kshatriyahood? Here it may be useful to distinguish another kind of Kshatriyahood from the manly one.

In the 1920’s, the Urs, the Mysore ruling caste, started calling themselves ‘Urs Gentlemen’ in order to secure their privileged position in the state and society of Mysore. Their status was thereafter described as that of a ‘native aristocracy’. Looking back on the education among their community in the early twentieth century, one of the royals wrote in the early 1950’s as follows: ‘we cannot simply boast that our ancestors were fighters, warriors and a martial race. We should, in addition, cultivate the nobler instincts of the human race’ [Urs 1953: 27]. It was not enough for them to be warriors and a martial race. What they wished to gain was a more cultured and aristocratic Kshatriyahood. The introduction of modern education was therefore one of the crucial strategies that enabled them to acquire such nobility. However, the process of becoming a gentleman is not an easy task. We can examine this by using the reports of the Maharaja’s private tutor, Mr. S. M. Fraser.

Why was it necessary for the Urs to be gentlemen? One of the keys to answer this question seems to lie in the emergence of the so-called ‘court society in imperial space’ [Rudolf, Rudolf and Kanota 2001: 413–418], where the Indian royals were expected to share noble manners and morals. This court society in imperial space was constructed
by the colonial power in order to establish their territorial and cultural
hegemony in India in the late nineteenth century [op.cit.: 414]. Re-
garded as backward and un-cultured by the Kshatriyas in the North, the rulers and royals in Mysore had to acquire the cultural codes of
court society appropriate for their ranks and titles within a single order
created by the imperial monarchy [Cohn 1983; Cannadine 2001].

Recent researches on modern education under colonial rule point
out that colonial hegemony desired and created a new social class
[Srivastava 1998; Sen 2003]. We shall see how the royals in Mysore tried to create a new caste identity as a gentleman class with the help of modern education. The target of modern education was extended beyond the Mysore-based royal families to rural Urs caste members. In the early twentieth century, Urs royals, including those who dwelled in rural areas, tried to organise themselves into a single caste group in a more modern sense with the aim of uplifting themselves as whole. The boarding schools were supposed to serve this objective. Their aim was to educate the Urs rural youths and let them contribute to the development and modernisation of village life as a gentry class. In spite of these noble objectives, a number of conflicts arose between the school authorities and students.

The following section explains the nature of the Mysore State under indirect rule and the history of caste formation of the Urs. In Section 3, we examine what was expected of the Mysorian royals as ‘proper rulers’ by the colonial power and whether there was any conflict between this type of new education and local customs. Through the process of learning aristocratic customs and sports, the young Maharaja was gradually deracinated from the local culture and language, Kannada. The royals did not react directly against the modern education given to their princes, but at the same time, they tried to maintain their own customs. Although they eagerly introduced modern and western education, the royals were ambivalent in their attitude towards it. In Section 4, we will see the significance of modern education in the private boarding schools where the students of the Urs caste, not only from the rich and higher status families but also from the poor and lower status rural families could benefit from the financial support offered by the palace.
2. The princely state of Mysore and the Urs caste

The princely state of Mysore, in the southern half of the present day state of Karnataka in South India, was of considerable importance as the second largest princely state in British India. Mysore’s prominence derived not simply from the size of her territories but from her wealth, being easily one of the most profitable states during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and hence able to afford the payment of huge amounts of tribute to the British. Mysore’s wealth derived not only from the gold fields for which the state was famous. It was also the offshoot of successful modernisation, seen for example in the introduction of hydroelectric power and the establishment of new industries and banks under the leadership of several competent Diwans (especially the two best known: M. Vishveshvarayya and Mirza Ismail). Furthermore, Mysore was the first princely state to establish a representative assembly and even permitted the functioning of the Indian National Congress in its territory. Mysore was thus often described as a ‘model state’ in British India both by the colonial rulers and by politicians of the freedom movement [Shama Rao 1936; Manor 1975; Hettne 1977].

The Mysore Rajas, Wodeyars (ødeyaru), who had been ruling the Mysore area from the fall of Vijayanagara until Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan seized power in the eighteenth century, were reinstalled by the British after the fourth Anglo-Mysore War against Tippu. The British divided Tippu’s vast territory into several parts and gave one part to the Wodeyars. This Hindu Maharaja rule was ‘restored’ purely with the assistance of the British and was regarded by some as a ‘puppet’ regime. It is certainly the case that Mysore, being a child of imperialism, was never hostile to British rule. However, if we simply regard Hindu rule in Mysore as a colonial construction and their rulers and rulers’ kin as collaborators who facilitated British rule in India, there is a danger that we might overlook the significance of the new socio-cultural practices of local people in the colonial era, which still continue to determine Indian society and social practices up to the present day.

The Urs caste, to which the Mysore Maharaja belonged, was not a single and homogeneous social group. It had a complicated internal
structure and historical process of its own. The historical formation of this caste is discussed below.

The Maharaja family of Mysore — the Wodeyars — belonged to the Kshatriya caste,\(^7\) Urs (arasu, means king or ruler in Kannada). The Urs caste is a very small community of several thousands (8,591 in 1984) which resides mainly in Mysore city and the surrounding districts in the southern part of Karnataka State [Nanjammanni 1986]. Although they follow different religions and Hindu sects — Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Jainism, Veera shaivism (Lingayat) etc. — this is not a barrier to inter-marriage. Originally the Urs caste was the group of chiefdoms ruling the southern part of Mysore State, mainly Mysore, Mandya and Chamarajanagara districts in the present state of Karnataka. The Urs are divided into three sub-castes: Urs Proper, Kumar or Bahadur, and Bada Urs (meaning poor Urs). These sub-castes are each considered endogamous groups. The Urs Proper sub-caste includes several exogamous groups called manetana (clan in Kannada), divided theoretically into thirteen upper clans and eighteen lower clans. Only the upper thirteen clans can have marriage relationships with the Wodeyars, who stand at the top of this inner-caste hierarchy. Kumars or Bahadurs are descendants of the Maharaja’s illegitimate marriages, by which there are at present two families who trace their ancestry to Krishnaraja Wodeyar III’s (1799–1868) illegitimate grandsons. Urs Proper and Bada Urs — most of whom are Veera Shaiva followers — do not normally have matrimonial relationships with each other. Recently, however, the Bada Urs, having acquired certain wealth and social status in the late twentieth century, are trying to marry their daughters to Urs Proper in order to legitimate their caste identity.

The Urs themselves still use the category of thirteen and eighteen clans to explain their own caste formation, although only a few families have survived from amongst those clans. This category was determined in the late seventeenth century by Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar (1673–1704) who expanded the Mysore territory and established a more centralised political regime. He organised local chiefs, who had their own land free from royal interference, into a single caste category of Urs in order to resist the devolution of central power. According to the historical literature, Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar made enquiries in 1690 about his own Urs kin’s behaviour, and designated those who
had relations with Gaudas (the dominant agriculturist caste in southern Karnataka) or other lower castes as belonging to those castes and classified only those who had ‘pure relations’ in the top thirteen clans. Those who had ‘less pure relations’ were classified within a further eighteen clans. He decided that each group of the thirteen and eighteen clans should be endogamous but allowed women belonging to the eighteen clans to become the concubines of those in the thirteen clans [Ota 2000: 130]. Although Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar devised this method of re-purification of the Urs, the actual origin of the Urs caste was very diverse and strongly indigenous, mainly arising from local agricultural castes.

It seems that during the regime of Hyder Ali and Tippu in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the Urs were scattered and family hierarchies became less determinable. The formation of the Urs caste, which still determines their idea of rank and status in the present day, was thus reinvented during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There were two historical moments which gave shape to the modern Urs caste formation. The first of these was in 1799, when the Maharaja of Mysore, Krishnaraja Wodeyar III, and his court were moved from the former capital of Srirangapatna to Mysore, the original capital of the Wodeyar Dynasty until 1610. The Maharaja gathered his relatives, then called Rajapindus, at the Mysore Palace and accommodated them in the fort, giving them palace stipends and Inam lands (tax free lands) at the same time. The second occasion was in 1918, when Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV (1894–1940) ordered a survey of the Urs members in rural areas. This stimulated the building of caste identity among the Urs and the formation of caste associations. The introduction of modern education then became one of the most crucial strategies to uplift their community as a whole.

3. Educating the young Maharaja

Educational issues were important for the young Maharaja in Mysore for a variety of reasons. To begin with, the selection of a prince’s tutor in a princely state was a crucial issue with the potential to strengthen or weaken the ties between the royals and the British Residents, whose advice and authorisation were obligatory. Among the Mysore Mahara-
Chamarajendra Wodeyar X (1868–1894) was the first Maharaja to receive a modern western education instead of the traditional ‘zenana education’ [Sen 2003]. He was considered a progressive Maharaja and one who was keen to encourage marriage alliances between members of his family and Rajputs in the North. After his sudden death in Calcutta, the royal family (with the Resident’s approval) appointed S. M. Fraser, an officer of the Bombay Civil Service, as the tutor and guardian of his successor, the ten-year old Maharaja of Mysore, Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV. Fraser took charge of the Maharaja in 1896 and remodelled the Royal School so as to suit the requirements of his education. As part of the Maharaja’s education, Fraser arranged for him and a few of his peers, carefully selected from among the royals and other respectable families, to make a number of tours within as well as outside the state. During the tours, or when staying in Ooty hill station during the hot season, Fraser continued to give daily classes. The Englishman also acted as an adviser in the Maharaja’s social life, especially in Ooty, where high-ranking officers from Madras and Bombay and rajas and nawabs from different states came together, and usually invited one another to parties in their respective palaces and shared in ostensibly ‘royal’ pursuits, such as hunting.

Fraser reported that it was not easy to select the companions necessary to provide competition in work and sports for the Maharaja and his young brother or ‘Yuvaraja’. In 1897, the Maharaja’s class contained eight pupils, and the Yuvaraja’s six. In the Maharaja’s class, there were three Urs boys, but Fraser wrote of the difficulties experienced owing to the absence in Mysore State of any young boys of wealth and position sufficient to share in the Maharaja’s training, and of the problems encountered in recruiting more boys to fill the place of those who would at some time or other have to leave the class to join schools to prepare them for the regular public examinations [OIOC R/2 temp. 8/64]. The final examination results in 1897 list three Urs who were the Maharaja’s companions: three Brahmins and two Muslims. One of the latter was Mirza Ismail, who was to become Diwan of Mysore from 1926 to 1940 and contribute much to the development of the state.

What was expected from the Maharaja as a result of this education? Fraser’s report to the British Resident gives us some ideas about the
objectives involved in the making of a proper Indian ruler in the colonial era. The Maharaja’s daily routine\textsuperscript{8} shows that considerable time was set aside for sport. Every day, from Monday to Sunday, one and a half hours in the morning and one and a half hours in the evening were made available for several kinds of sports: polo, tennis, horse riding, cricket, etc.\textsuperscript{9} The importance of sport, especially cricket, amongst the Indian princes has been examined by Satadru Sen [Sen 2003]. Sen suggests that learning how to play English sports was not only undertaken so as to immerse Indian princes in a culture of English nostalgia, but to impart abstract Victorian values such as ‘character’, which can be described as a comprehensive ethic of physical and emotional self-control, and the public school code, for example, the willingness to accept bad umpiring decisions (or political decisions for that matter) without complaint [Sen 2003]. Skills in certain sports, especially tennis and horse riding, were important tools necessary to enable the young princes to take part in the ‘court society in imperial space’ [Rudolph, Rudolph and Kanota 2002], for example, in Ooty, which had a court society of its own on a smaller scale.

The subjects taught in the Maharaja’s class in the year 1900 to 1901, when he was sixteen years old, were History (Indian History, English History and Ancient History) and Political Economy for eight hours, English for three hours, Science for seven hours, Mathematics for six hours, Kannada for six hours, Urdu for three hours and Drawing for one hour per week. The history taught to the young Maharaja, with the exception of R. C. Dutt’s Ancient India, was all derived from books written in English by British authors.\textsuperscript{10} Indian princes at that time were thus obliged to learn their own history through colonial writings. In this respect, the princes shared a great deal in common with other Indian elites. Inevitably they had to establish their own identity or self-consciousness within the image created for them by ‘the imperial gaze’ [Said 1993; Burton 1998].

The language education offered to the young prince is of considerable interest. Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV used to make his public speeches in three languages: English, Urdu (Hindustani) and Kannada. But from his handwriting and private letters sent to his uncle, M. Kantharaj Urs, it seems likely that he was more familiar with English than Kannada, his native language. In the results of the
final examination in 1897, he held second rank in English but the last rank in Kannada. This weakness in the native language was shared by some of his fellow students. Fraser reports that only a few boys could speak Kannada to an educated standard, although it was their own language. Fraser decided to discontinue Sanskrit classes after July 1897, considering that ‘they would not have sufficient time in which to undertake the proper study of this most difficult language’. He expresses his regret with this decision ‘on account of the sentimental value, which no doubt attaches to the cultivation of Sanskrit by the Ruler of an ancient Hindu State’ [OIOC R/2 temp. 8/64]. Compared with the time of Krishnaraja Wodeyar III (1799–1868), who was known as a well versed Sanskritist and completed several works on Sanskrit literature, the knowledge required for rulers had certainly changed. Sanskrit now held only ‘sentimental’ value.

In addition to these subjects of general education, the Maharaja had two hours a day set aside for the study of so-called ‘special subjects’. These were subjects which could be called ‘the art of modern kingcraft’, and included the study of the basic elements of state administration, legislation, the system of taxation and so forth. Fraser explained that the main purpose of these special subjects was to correct and corroborate the abstract work of study with examples from the machinery of the state in practice [OIOC R/2 temp. 8/64]. For example, when the Maharaja was learning about matters of land revenue, an Assistant Commissioner of Mysore Division came with his records and explained them; when he was studying the survey system, the District Surveyor was summoned to measure an area of land nearby with a chain and cross-staff, and the Maharaja and his companions worked out the results. Afterwards the surveyor showed how a field was classed by digging pits to discover the depth and quality of the soil. It is said that these special subjects greatly attracted the Maharaja’s interest.

Beside the general education, another important component in the new education of Indian princes was the tour. In the year 1900 to 1901, the Maharaja of Mysore was on tour for 26 days to provincial places and for 44 days to Burma. After he became the ruling Maharaja in 1902, he spent more of his time on tour, for instance, 141 days in the year 1929 to 1930. Exposing the Maharaja to his subjects and dominion and vice versa was a crucial part of the new education in-
Moral education was also an important part of the Maharaja’s education in order to make him a ‘proper ruler’. But Fraser’s Victorian idea of morality often came into collision with local social practices, especially those which the zenana itself wished to maintain. Thus, Fraser sent a letter to M. Kantharaja, maternal uncle and husband of the elder sister of the Maharaja on 6th June 1898, which read as follows:

‘I wish to write a few words on the subject of His Highness — “A Nation Dramas”. Before we went to Ooty in March, the regularity with which he attended performances in the Palace attracted my attention to the play on Saturday last, [and] suggests that the present is a suitable opportunity to express my opinion. Speaking generally, I think that the less a young boy sees of the stage the better — as theatrical performances have an exciting effect on the mind which often lasts for a long time, and is not favourable to an undivided attention to work. This is the case even when the performance is intended for children and the play is of the most harmless character, and the effect produced is not merely exciting, but of distinctly undesirable kind when young boys witness dramas written for adults. What is harmless to the latter is poison to growing boys. A moment’s reflection will recall to you scenes both in Saturday’s play and in others recently acted before His Highness, the moral of which is not good for a boy just turned fourteen. I may mention that no English boy would be allowed to go to the theatre at all during term time and I do not think it is good for His Highness to be kept till 2 A.M. and in holidays, the only play a boy would be taken to see, would be a pantomime or some drama, specially adapted for the young. Her Highness, I feel sure, will appreciate the point of view from which I regard this matter. I hope to be favoured with an interview before long’ [Urs 1953: 335–6].

According to an elder Urs (born in 1920’s), Upper class Urs used to enjoy this kind of play, and later cinemas, held by the palace almost every week. When the Maharaja came to see these amusements, he sat behind the curtain (paraddā) made of bamboo. Urs women of high status also sat behind the paraddā and enjoyed watching theatrical plays, music concerts and cinema. Fraser considered this custom equally un-
desirable and even immoral. The difficulty was that Fraser considered the issue entirely from his point of view as a teacher and failed to understand the ritual significance of the Maharaja's presence on such occasions. Sharing space and time with the Maharaja was important for other members of the court and aristocracy, and receiving his blessing in an audience at the end of the play was also important for the performers themselves. Participating in such functions was considered a normal part of kingly practice in traditional Mysorian society. The concerts and plays themselves, furthermore, were not exhibitions in the style of modern British performing arts but were rather social events in which as much attention was paid to, for example, the seating arrangements as what was happening on the stage. The Maharaja was always seated in a slightly elevated but concealed position and the proximity of others to him was in accordance to their rank. The importance lay simply in his presence. For the Maharaja's subjects, it mattered little whether he was a boy or not; and the event was not regarded as having anything at all to do with his education, or even entertainment.

It seems that there was no strong reaction among the royals against the modern and western education of the young Maharaja, though there were certainly several points of discordance between the English tutor and the royals. But we should not conclude that the Mysorian royals blindly followed the English tutor's way of teaching. It was known that for one reason or another, they struggled to keep their traditional customs, such as the Maharaja's presence in the cultural performances in the palace, even after complaints by the English tutor. The education of the young Maharaja, instructed by the English tutor, could certainly bestow on him what the royals wished him to have. The ability to speak English and play western sports especially were key qualifications for entering 'the imperial court society'. However, the process of acquiring such abilities, morals and 'characters' was not a simple affair, as we have seen. It seems that the Maharaja in colonial times had to learn how to adjust himself both to 'the imperial court society' and to the local court society, which were sometimes contradictory.
4. The creation of a gentleman class and its dilemmas

There were two historical moments which preceded the unification of Urs caste members, as mentioned earlier, in the early nineteenth century and the late 1910's. The second moment was in 1918, when Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV ordered a survey to be conducted on the Urs caste members living in villages. A party of three Urs royals was sent to a number of villages in Mysore State and in the Coimbatore and Salem districts in Madras Presidency. They made enquiries, collected statistics and submitted a report to the Maharaja about the economic and social condition of Urs caste members [Urs 1953: 23]. This survey showed that there was a total of 112 villages in which members of the Urs caste were to be found living inside and outside the state, and that most of the Urs living in villages were poor agriculturists struggling to survive. In order to uplift their community, the Maharaja and upper Urs admitted the sons and daughters of these rural Urs to two boarding schools in Mysore city and sanctioned scholarships to pre-primary school children in villages who could not yet be admitted there.

Following on from the 1918 survey, by the initiative of some enthusiastic elderly Urs, the first caste association, entitled the ‘Urs Sangha’, was formed. The inaugural meeting was held in 1920 in the house of M. Kantharaj Urs, then Diwan and maternal uncle of the Maharaja. In this meeting, many insisted that this body should be constituted of elected delegates from Urs families of every village, so that it might grow into a truly representative Urs Sangha. This idea was never realised [Urs 1953: 28]. Instead, the Urs Committee, formed under palace management in 1916, seemed to have become a more authoritative body, determining very largely the social and economic life of the community. This committee, presided over by the Huzur Secretary (the superior palace officer — non-Urs in most cases), consisted of several Urs from distinguished families of Urs Proper. They discussed questions such as grants and the transfer of stipends, the grant of loans for agricultural and other purposes, adoption in the community, grants of presents and honours for marriages and other functions [KSA/MPD PAR year 1928–29: 3]. They also discussed the reform of their social and cultural customs, and abolished certain rituals, for example the
Kasi mantra during the marriage ritual, which seemed to them unnecessary and wasteful.\textsuperscript{13}

In the late 1910's, the palace stipend was further extended to the Urs living in villages, called 'Village Urs', thereby expanding the class of gentlemen. Most of the Village Urs were newly found caste members after the 1918 survey and were Bada Urs, a lower sub-caste of Urs. Now, the palace stipend was divided into two categories, one was the stipend for 'Town Urs', who had been receiving the palace stipend since the nineteenth century and consisted of Urs Proper residing in Mysore City, and the other category was the stipend for Village Urs. Since there were few Urs who could claim a direct blood relationship with the Maharaja family, and who received substantial stipends equivalent to a higher officer's salary, about Rs. 500 per month, the bulk of stipends was made up of small allotments as low as Rs. 10 per month in the case of Town Urs, going down to Rs. 2 or even less in the case of Village Urs.

The connection between the Urs caste, educational policy, and the strategic social thinking of the Maharaja's palace is clearly seen in the following description of the principles of Urs education, as outlined in a speech given by the Maharaja at the Chamarajendra Urs Boarding School in 1911:

'...Do not forget in your zeal for your school the great importance of cultivating games and athletics, if you wish to become healthy, active and strong-minded men... I would ask you boys, to remember that true religion and morality do not consist in merely listening to religious and moral instructions. Try to carry out the lessons which are taught you here, by being honourable, truthful, modest and high-minded and by doing some good to your fellowmen; and always remember that the race from which you have sprung demands high standard of life and conduct. Our community is a small one, but it can nevertheless make its influence largely felt on public life, if only its members will be true to the highest ideals.'\textsuperscript{14}

The predecessor of the Chamarajendra Urs Boarding School was the Royal School established within the palace by the former Maharaja, and renamed following his death in commemoration. The original purpose of the Royal School was to provide lower primary education
to little Maharajas and royals, Urs boys from distinguished families, and Brahmins and Muslim boys from respectable families in the city. When the Royal School was replaced with a scheme of private education for the Maharaja in 1892, the Chamarajendra Urs Students’ Home was opened in Nazarbad, outside the Mysore Fort and dedicated exclusively to the education of Urs. The students, studying higher education, could also stay in the Students’ Home and go to high schools or colleges in Mysore city. The Urs Students’ Home was renamed the Chamarajendra Urs Boarding School sometime in the late nineteenth century. After the Government Lower Secondary Examination was started in 1895, the Urs Boarding School established five forms leading up to this examination. In 1913, the Vani Vilas Girls’ School was established under the order of the Maharaja and given a dormitory building in 1915.

Although the Chamarajendra Urs Boarding School had only thirty students in three forms in 1892, by the 1930’s there were more than 130 boarders in eight forms (see Table 1 and Table 2). The increasing number of boarders was due to the fact that the Village Urs could now

<table>
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<th>Total</th>
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Table 2  Number of students in the Vani Vilasa Girls’ School [derived from KSA/MPD UBS files]

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<th>Total</th>
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<td>8</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933–34</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934–35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935–36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937–38</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939–40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940–41</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>73 (25)</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Number of non-Urs student)

Table 3  Higher education of students from the Chamarajendra Urs Boarding School [KSA/MPD PAR year 1931–32: 15]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduate Study</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Course</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

afford to send their children to this boarding school, having received scholarships from the palace. It was a great opportunity, especially for the Urs from rural areas (see Table 3). However, life in the school was not always easy for the young Urs. Reproduced below are two serious cases illustrative of the difficulties they encountered.

Case 1:

In February 1919, the school authority decided to introduce *ragi* at breakfast time on every Saturday in order to give variety to school meals. Certain students were discontented with this decision, and mis-
behaved by doing such things as throwing *ragi* at the walls in the dining hall. The authorities took this incident seriously and made a decision to dismiss nine students from the school and reduced two students from boarders to day boarders (who were not provided with accommodation) [KSA/MPD UBS file no. 1906–1918].

*Ragi* is a kind of dark-coloured millet, which is widely consumed in rural areas in southern Karnataka even today. It is grown on land that is too poor or dry for the cultivation of rice. The way of cooking *ragi* is generally to knead it with hot water, steam it and make it into balls, called *ragi* balls. The *ragi* ball is highly glutinous so it must be swallowed without chewing. This is the proper way to eat *ragi*. In urban areas, people occasionally use *ragi* as weaning food for babies, or as a breakfast snack, especially amongst the middle class, who have recently been adopting a more health conscious diet. *Ragi* is hardly ever eaten for lunch or dinner. The area around Mysore and Mandya districts where most of Urs caste live, is the richest area for rice production owing to its modern irrigation system and the abundant water resources from dams constructed in the early twentieth century on the Kaveri river. But even in the rural areas where people cultivate rice, it is *ragi* that is mainly consumed rather than rice, which is more costly and is exported to the cities. Therefore white *akki* (rice) and black *ragi* are the very metaphors of city and village. Considering this, the reason why the boarders of Urs Boarding School, most of whom were from rural areas, misbehaved seemed to be more complex than the straightforward conclusion drawn by the school authorities that this was simply a sign of the loose morality of inferior students. The school authorities probably introduced *ragi* to reduce costs. But the boarders may have misinterpreted the decision and felt disregarded or discriminated against by the fact that they had to eat *ragi* even after they came to the city—the denizen of rice eaters. It might be not unreasonable to assume from their behaviour that they had strong feelings of inferiority about their origins.

**Case 2:**

In September 1926, 27 students were dismissed from the school for having misbehaved in defiance of the school authorities (the precise offence is unclear) and instigated others to do the same. The students
made statements about this incident at the request of the authorities. Due to the fact that some of them never apologised, the school authorities concluded that they were instigated by outsiders. After they were dismissed from the hostel, some of the students stayed in the electric and rice shops in Chamaraja Road, both of which were run by Urs. While the authorities continued to investigate this incident by hearing students' opinions, in January of the following year, they determined that four students were the main instigators and rejected their request for readmission. The remaining students, who apologised, were readmitted and their scholarships were restored [KSA/MPD UBS files no. 1906–18]. As a result, 27 students sent a petition letter to the Maharaja immediately following the incident:

H. H. Sir Sree Krishnarajendra Wodeyar Bahadur the Maharaja of Mysore,

... We were surprised to see the notice stating that the Hostel would be closed on the 6th September 1926. ... As our request was not complied with, we implicitly obeyed the order in leaving the Hostel at 9 O'clock in the night having no meal that night. We starved and perambulated in the street finding no shelter that night. Nothing about our scholarship was mentioned either in the notice or in the communications we received from the secretary as well as from the president. We have enclosed all the copies of the communication for your gracious Highness’s personal perusal. On the 9th September 1926, to our greatest surprise, we were served with memos stating we are deprived of our scholarships. ... As our ill-luck would have it, we lost the protection from the beloved institution for the simple reason of bringing our grievances to the notice of the authorities. Being unable to support ourselves and having none to give us a helping hand in the city, we all the 27 students are destined to put an end to our educational career once for all. We most humbly and loyally pray your highness' sympathy to lift us from the deepest distress we are put into.

13th September 1926.

We beg to remain,
Your Highness,
Your Highness' most loyal subjects,
(Signatures of 27 students)

[KSA/MPD UBS files no. 1906–18].
It is not clear what really happened from the minutes of the school committee and the students’ petition. The exclusion of nearly one-fourth of the student body and the subsequent appeal to the Maharaja’s authority nevertheless marks this as an extraordinary upheaval, yet one not untypical in the history of the school.

It is apparent that there was an obvious difference between ‘the haves’ and ‘the have nots’ in the Urs Boarding School. Day-scholars were Town Urs who came to the school in their own cars with a driver and whose families had sufficient wealth to afford private tutors for their children after school. On the other hand, the boarders from the villages were Bada Urs (poor Urs) and they had to leave the school if the authorities increased the hostel fee or stopped their scholarship from the palace. Among the Urs Boarding School committee members, British officer T. Denhain, who had been president of the committee, regarded this economic inequality as an important matter. He was often offended by the fact that even the students from well-to-do families would receive palace scholarships and that no effort of any sort was made to allow for or correct the difference between them and the poorer students. Other members of the committee were not so interested in the matter [KSA/MPD UBS files no. 1906–18]. It seems that they were very much concerned about the uplift of their community as a whole in the eyes of others, but little concerned to correct the inequalities within it. For the Urs, this difference between Urs Proper (or Town Urs) and Bada Urs (or Village Urs) was fundamentally a social and cultural difference rather than simply economic. This perception of social and cultural difference is clearly demonstrated by the very efforts made in more recent times by wealthier Bada Urs to raise their status by establishing marriage relationships with Urs Proper.

Despite these inequalities, the idea of the community of ‘Urs gentlemen’ established after 1920 made the existence of Bada Urs a crucial rather than merely a peripheral issue. The Urs, who occupied important positions such as the village head, were closer to the conception of a gentry class in its original connotation. But the tendency of Bada Urs youth was to aim for better paid appointments as officers or clerks in the city following their graduation, rather than return to the village. The Yuvaraja, the younger brother of the Maharaja, attempted to encourage the Bada Urs boys by talking about the importance of scout-
ing activities in the village area by students from Urs Boarding School who instructed villagers in hygiene, cleanliness, sanitation, co-operation and thrift:

"There is great scope for very useful work which will incidentally show how the problem of unemployment could be tackled. Social work will also check the tendency of Ursu young men with landed interests leaving their lands to seek petty clerkships in government offices. "Back to the land" is a slogan well worth repeating, as being more in keeping with the tradition of the Ursu community and the dignity of their young men unable to obtain an opening for their energy in the services or professions" [KSA/MPD UBS files no. 1920].

What was expected of Bada Urs youths who studied in the school was the restoration to the villages and rural areas of a new moral way of life, which the youths learnt through their activities in the school, such as playing western sports or scouting. The contradictory desire of the Bada Urs youths to become clerks and to continue residing in the city, along with the inability of the schools to erode class distinctions amongst the Urs, amounted to a failure of the boarding school and scholarships project as it was conceived after 1920.

5. Conclusion

The rulers, royals and their caste members in Mysore were willing to introduce and accept modern western education. They learnt the cultural habits and social conduct expected of a 'native aristocracy'. Simultaneously, they tried to organise themselves into a single ruling class of gentlemen in the state, with the assistance of financial aid from the palace. Nonetheless, despite their best efforts, they could not diminish their internal class distinctions. Thus while education gave the lower class of Urs a chance to uplift themselves in society, at the same time the school was the place where they most often had to face and endure the internal distinctions of the Urs caste. Having examined the colonial situation in Mysore, we may conclude that the introduction and acceptance of western education was not a simple process of imitation. It was a process entangled with local culture and social elements
of the royals and their caste members.

**Acknowledgement**

I would like to thank Dr J. V. Gayathri and other members of staff in the Karnataka State Archives, Mysore Palace Division for their help and friendship during my research in Mysore; Dr Jan Brouwer, Dr Vasundhara Filliozat, Prof. Pierre-Sylvain Filliozat and Mrs Tara Niranjana Urs for their warm support; Professors Masakazu Tanaka and Akio Tanabe and other members of the writing-up seminars in Kyoto University for their thoughtful comments on an earlier version of this paper. The research was made possible by grants from the Kyoto University Foundation (1999), the Toyota Foundation (2000) and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (1999–2003).

**Notes**

1) This new education was given exclusively in English. This was desirable not only for the colonial ruling power, as demonstrated by Macaulay’s notorious Minute on Indian Education, but was also welcomed by Indian elites themselves [cf. Macaulay 1979 (1835)].

2) It seems that army recruitment documents were often circulated in the Urs Boarding School. Urs youths were quite attracted to being referred to as a ‘martial race’, but they were not willing to join the army, with some exceptions [cf. KSA/MPD UBS file no. 1918].

3) The term ‘aristocracy’ applied to zamindars became ubiquitous. Price has demonstrated that the winners of succession disputes in colonial courts became transformed from embodiments of monarchical cosmology, which consisted of vertically orientated chains of authority, into members of ‘families’ which constituted a horizontally defined, new social class — the ‘native aristocracy’ [Price 1996: 41].

4) The Mysore royals had great difficulty when they planned to arrange marriage alliances with the Rajputs in the North, realising that Rajputs in the North did not consider Mysore royals as proper Kshatriyas and as suitable suitors for their daughters — despite the fact that the Mysore rulers had the honour of second highest status in the ranks of aristocracy in British India [OIOC R/2 temp. 30/278].

5) This new social class might be considered as a kind of ‘civil society’. Dirks argues that colonialism in India produced new forms of civil society represented as traditional forms, chief among which being caste itself [Dirks 1989: 43, also Dirks 1987].

6) In the 1930’s onwards, many new caste associations and caste conferences were formed. These bodies promoted a variety of practical schemes, especially the establishment of hostels for students from their caste members [Carroll 1978; Bayly, S. 1999: 264]. The Urs boarding schools were ahead of these movements...
on the pan-India scale, simply because of their financial privileges.

7) Interestingly, Urs, though sometimes classified as Kshatriyas, claim to be ‘Brahmakshatriya’ in the varna hierarchy and follow a diet of strict vegetarianism. This might be seen as contradictory to their effort to be more Kshatriya, but I think that they used several kinds of strategies in order to legitimise themselves, one of which was this kind of sanskritisation.

8) The Maharaja’s Daily Routine in 1900–1901 [derived from OIOC R/2 temp. 8/64]

- 7:00 – 8:30 Sports, etc.
- 9:30 – 10:30 Music lesson (Piano and violin)
- 11:00 – 14:00 Lessons
- 14:00 – 14:45 Lunch
- 14:45 – 16:45 Lessons
- 17:00 – 18:30 Sports, etc.
- 18:30 – 19:30 Evening preparation with an assistant tutor
- 19:30 – 21:00 Dinner in the Maharani’s quarters
- 21:00 – 21:30 Reading the English daily paper with an assistant tutor

9) Programme of Morning and Afternoon Games etc. Dec. 1900 to Dec. 1901 [OIOC R/2 temp. 8/64]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday Morning</th>
<th>Maharaja Drill</th>
<th>Yuvaraja Rackets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Polo</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday Morning</td>
<td>Riding school</td>
<td>Riding school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Driving</td>
<td>Football + Gymnastics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. Morning</td>
<td>Rackets</td>
<td>Oil Bath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Polo</td>
<td>Drill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu. Morning</td>
<td>Riding</td>
<td>Riding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday Morning</td>
<td>Rackets</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Polo</td>
<td>Football + Gymnastics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat. Morning</td>
<td>Oil Bath</td>
<td>Rackets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Driving</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Morning</td>
<td>Out Riding</td>
<td>Out Riding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10) The following books were used in the Maharaja’s class in the year 1900 to 1901: *General Sketch of European History* by E. A. Freeman, *History of England* by Arnold Forster, Rulers for India Series (*Clive, Warren Hastings, Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan, and Marquis of Wellesley*), *Ancient India* by R. C. Dutt (Epochs of Indian History Series) [OIOC R/2 temp. 8/64].

11) The Maharaja’s special subjects were as follows [OIOC R/2 temp. 8/64]:

2. International Law and Indian Political Law.
4. History of Land Revenue in Mysore, with notes on the Survey System.
5. The Mysore Land Revenue Code.
8. Inam Settlement in Mysore.
10. Famine Relief.
11. Excise.
12. Sayer.
13. Mohotarfa or Assessed Taxes.
15. Letters to an Indian Raja.

12) Dirks suggests that its importance lay in ‘exposing the young Maharaja to wider vistas and perspectives so he would not become engulfed in the narrow and Byzantine preoccupations of court life’ [Dirks 1987: 390].

13) The Kasi mantra involved the costuming of the groom in pilgrimage clothes with an umbrella and the performance of a ritual play in which the groom declares he is unable to find himself a suitable bride and is therefore going on a pilgrimage to Kasi (Benares) to become a sannyasi. The bride’s father then appears and declares that his daughter has come to know the groom and desperately seeks his hand in marriage. The groom then accepts this immediate temporal duty as more pressing than his spiritual quest and consents to remain within this world in order to marry.

14) Speech by Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV on the occasion of the School Day in 1911. B.K. Urs adds, in a commentary: ‘We cannot simply boast that our ancestors were fighters, warriors and a martial race. We should, in addition, cultivate the nobler instincts of the human race’ [Urs 1953: 27].

15) One informant, who studied at the Vani Vilasa Girls’ School in 1930’s and 40’s, said that it was possible to keep the parada custom without showing her face in public, since she had been sent to the school in her father’s car directly from her house in the fort. But those who could afford such conveniences were of course not many. Private tuition became the issue in the boarding school committee. They considered that the gap in the examination results in schools between the upper Urs and the Bada Urs was due to such private tuition [KSA/MPD UBS file no. 1919].

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