

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF MAHARASHTRA IN 19TH CENTURY

Unit Structure

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1.0 OBJECTIVES :

After the study of this unit, the student will be able to:

1. Understand the Social Conditions of Maharashtra in 19 th Century
2. Know the Economic Conditions of Maharashtra in 19 th Century

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In dealing with the social conditions of Maharashtra we will concentrate on the Hindu population in general. There were Muslim settlements and they were confined to those regions once ruled by Muslim rulers such as Khandesh, Daulatabad, Ahmednagar, Janjira and the port-towns on the West-Coast. The population of Maharashtra at the end of the Maratha rule would be a matter of conjuncture because of lack of reliable data.

During the time of the Maratha Empire agriculture was the main occupation of the majority of the people in Maharashtra. Some of them had taken to the life of a military career. These soldiers who were employed in

the Maratha army did not dissociate themselves with their agricultural activities. During the period of Shivaji's Swarajya the soldiers were farmers first and soldiers afterwards. Shivaji used to arrange the programme of military campaigns - the mulkhgiri - to suit the needs of the agriculturists; the soldiers commenced their campaigns on Dasara Day (usually in the month of October) and returned to their village homes by holi (April-May) This practice was continued in the subsequent periods also.

1.2 SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF MAHARASHTRA IN THE 19 TH CENTURY

1.2.1 Population of Maharashtra

W. H. Sykes, Statistical Reporter to the Government of Bombay estimated the total Population of Khandesh, Pune, Ahmednagar and Dharwar around 27 lakhs in 1828. This gives us a general idea of the population figures. If we ignore the non-Marathi-speaking areas and include the areas like, Nasik, sholapur, Kolhapur and the Kokan, we can safely arrive at a figure of between 35 to 40 lakhs. It may not exceed fifty lakhs even if we include the princely states covered by the Marathi- speaking regions. This is of course a tentative estimate of the population a hundred and fifty years ago. The religion wise figures are more difficult to arrive at. The areas ruled by Muslims did not have Muslim majorities; so the population of Muslims scattered throughout Maharashtra in 1818 may not be more than three to four lakhs on the conservative estimate.

1.2.2 Religion

The Hindu Society was tradition-bound. It had become more conservative as we approach the end of the Maratha period. It was spiritually and intellectually exhausted. The people reposed implicit faith in the wisdom of the religious literature especially the Puranas as only an insignificant number was reading the scriptures or the 'Shastra'. Their ignorance about the world affairs was monumental. The teachings of the saint philosophers had driven the idea of 'Fate' deep into the soul of the people. They'd found solace in the rituals and listening to the religious discourses, the 'Kirtans' and the devotional songs, the 'Abhangas'. The scholar gentry was complacent in reciting the Sanskrit verses and formulae, mantras, at ceremonial functions, patronized by the Peshwa and Maratha nobles. Those who lived in Pune, the seat of the Central Government of Marathas, came in contact with the foreigners, diplomats, soldiers and the Pindaris. The Guards or Gardis or Gardi' belonged to non-Marathi- speaking people who came to Pune for services.

The society of the time is described by G. S. Sardesai as follows:-

“ The religious outlook of the society and especially of the upper classes of that time was directed to pursuits of a superstitious nature, making caste restrictions rigid, enjoying various practices as the only means of happiness and salvation, and introducing thousands of minute rules and

practices entirely antagonistic to the material interests of a progressive community. The Bhakti cult or the Bhagavata religion had the same effect, especially among the uneducated masses.”

The Society was enslaved by superstition and insisted on duties appropriate to the castes. The upper classes or higher castes demanded that the lower classes, the untouchables must serve the high caste people. The forced labour demanded by the higher castes and the degradation of the Mahar, Mang and other low castes is adequately described by N. G. Bharve in his research paper ‘Peshwekalin Dalit Samaj ’ published in the journal of B. I.

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1.2.3 The Casteism - (Social Structures)

The traditional caste-ridden society manifested its ugly features during the declining period of the Maratha rule. The outcastes like Taral, Ramoshi, Chambhar, Mahar, Mang, Berad were treated very harshly. If the members of these castes committed any crime, a heavy fine was imposed on them and inhuman punishment was awarded to them. They were treated as unfit for the protection of law. Most of these outcastes were treated as criminal castes. The inequality of the castes was the main feature of the social structure. All were not equal before the law. Even among the high-castes there were many sub-divisions. It was generally believed that the Hindu Society was a graded society. Some of the Vedic Pundits would declare that there were only two self-exclusive groups of Hindus, Brahmins and Shudras. There were no Kshatriyas or Warriors by birth and the merchants were treated as among the Shudra caste only. The Brahmins however had the privilege to follow any trade or profession. They were appointed to civil and military offices and many a Brahmin was engaged in the gold and jewellery trade. Some of them were rich money-lenders who lent money to the sardars and the Peshwas.

1.2.4 Rural Society

The rural society was a well-integrated and compact society. Elphinstone and Metcalf praised the self-sufficiency of these Village Republics. The caste and the-family were treated as important units. The individual person had no independent position; he was a member of a particular family and castes and was bound by the caste-regulations.

The rural society established interrelation by the time honoured method of the cultivators receiving services and goods from occupational castes in the scheme of social scale. Besides the upper castes that is the Brahmins and the ruling elites, the others had to render public service. Their work was given remuneration by the voluntary payment of goods at the harvest time by the farmers. The recipients of such goods were known as ‘Balutedars’. They were twelve in a number depending upon the size of the village and its population. The important Balutedars were:-

Carpenters, blacksmiths, shoe makers, Maharas; Guravs, Potters, barbers, gold-smits, fishermen etc. (more about this in the next lesson). They were treated as men eligible for the benefit proper to that 'Baluta' or 'social service' which the occupational-castes were supposed to render. Among the untouchables, village servants-the Mahars had two important functions.

They were used as private labourers and village servants doing government duties. They had to discharge duties as watchmen for the village and they were forced to work on the fields of certain mirasdars or men of high station. The Mahars had acquitted themselves with high credit in the military service risking their lives in daring adventures. They were however not sufficiently rewarded. In the battle of Kharda in 1795, Sidnak Mahar was commanding a battalion against the Nizam. The English Company recruited them as sepoys in their army.

1.2.5 Position of Women

The position of women during the first decades of the nineteenth century was deplorable in general. Barring a few high-castes women and family members of ruling classes the rest of the womenfolk had to live in an undignified way. The widows of soldiers, the prostitutes, the

'devadasis' or women thrown at the mercy of the society in the name of God, the dancers, musicians and women who entertained men in public are frequently mentioned in the folk literature of the time. This creates an impression that the country had reached the lowest depth of moral decay. It is sufficient to point out that "women convicted of adultery were employed as prostitutes to raise a body of female slaves for the use of the state".

1.2.6 Crime and Punishment .

The conventional law based on, the Manusmriti and the Yajnyawalkya Smriti was implemented with all severity. The Brahmanas were let off with light punishment but the severities of the punishment progressively increased as the law was applied to the criminals lower down the social scale. The uncertainties of fortunes and weakness of the political authority rendered the life of women insecure and sale of women slaves was practiced at some places. The treatment of the prisoners was most cruel. In Kolaba dark underground dungeons were used for prisoners. In other places dark cells in some forts were used. The punishments were barbarous such as cruel mutilations, throwing down the prisoners bound hands and feet from the high spurs of the Sahyadri or simply blowing him out from the mouth of the guns. The deterrent punishments might have kept down the number of revolts and risings. However the terrors of the punishments in Hell for violating religious practices tormented the minds of the general mass of the people more than the known punishments for crimes. Nevertheless, bribery and graft in many forms in the public life relieved the horrors to a great extent. Bribery appeared to be no crime.

1.2.7 Cultural Condition.

The strength of the government and the caste-system lay in keeping the people poor and ignorant. There was no first rate literature and no new development of Hinduism. It was a declining period of arts. There were no saint-philosophers like Eknath, Tukaram or Ramdas. There were no independent compositions. The only names that figure as written in the 18th century are those of Mahipati and Moropant, and some Lyristis like Ram Joshi. We do not come across any creative talent. The economic dissatisfaction was widespread. The small middle class, the merchants and money lenders were at the mercy of unworthy rulers and pillage bandits. The conditions could be summed as full of 'Ladhai (wars)' 'Pundai' (depredations) and 'Bandai' (revolts).

The Maratha Polity during the previous century before the British conquest had gradually absorbed some of the cultural trends which prevailed in North India. Peshwas' territory was in Maharashtra but he supervised and controlled the 'Sardars or Chiefs' who ruled in the North. The Shindes and Holkars had come under the influence of some of the cultural trends in modern Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Mahadji Shinde had introduced the fun and frolic of "Rang Panchami" the festival of colours during the Phalgun month. Peshwa Nana Saheb had also inspired some of the artists to develop performing arts, the painting of portraits of the Peshwa, Mahadji Shinde, Nana Phadnis and other chiefs. But the buildings and structures were demolished by the mercenaries during the time of war and the plunder and pillage of the Pindaris. The temples and palaces that have survived the attacks are witnesses to the grandeur of the Maratha period.

The Marathi language was slowly being developed as a state language and the Modi script had been accepted as the script for important documents. Although the Marathi language of the 18th century was influenced by the Urdu and Persian language which was the court language of the Mughals, it continued to use more and more Sanskrit words in official documents. The conquest of the Maratha territory by the English did not change the cultural pattern. However the introduction of western ideas and institutions had influenced the important cities of Maharashtra namely Pune, Nasik, Nagpur, Kolhapur and the city of Bombay. The work of the Jesuit missionaries on the west coast in the 18th century had influenced the minds of the educated people of Maharashtra and slowly the western culture and civilization was influencing the Maratha society.

Check your progress:-

Q 1. What were the social and cultural condition of the Maharashtra in 19th Century?

1.3 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF MAHARASHTRA IN THE 19 TH CENTURY

1.3.1 Agrarian Economy :

The economy of Maharashtra like most of the other regions in India was mainly based on agriculture. The methods of cultivation were with the use of the same primitive ploughs drawn by bullocks. The techniques of irrigation, seed storage and marketing were the traditional life- irrigation, insufficient stocks and distress sale of seeds during bad seasons. Large tracts of land in Satara, Pune, Ahmednagar, Sholapur and the Konkan were treated as uncultivable waste lands. Lack of agricultural policy and the destruction of standing crops either by the marauding Pindaris in Khandesh or the marching of enemy armies during the Anglo-Maratha wars or the wars of succession had ruined the agricultural economy of the Deccan. The severe famine in northern Deccan in 1802 -03 and its visitation in other parts in the subsequent period had added to the misery of the people. The political instability following the second Anglo-Maratha war had unsettled agricultural activities.

The acceptance of subsidiary alliance made with the Company by the Peshwa, aggravated the sufferings of the agriculturists. In his anxiety to raise funds for his state army under Captain Ford, the Peshwa resorted to farming out of the land revenue; the highest bidder got the right to collect the money from the farmers. In Ahmednagar, Bajirao II's desperate effort to collect the maximum possible land-revenue made it necessary for the farmers to bring fallow land under cultivation. The pressure on the jagirdar however created great tension in the domain of the Peshwa.

The jagirdars vigorously resisted the Peshwa's policy of grabbing their patrimony. Most of the Jagirdars were the holders of 'surinjams' (tenures with political privileges and power) holding lands worth Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,000. The Peshwa's policy entailed attacks on the rights of the 'deshmukhs'; 'deshpandes' and the 'inamdars' to a great extent.

The bad agricultural policies of the Peshwa were resented but the condition of agriculture before the British Rule in Maharashtra was not relatively much miserable with all sorts of adverse forces influencing it. It had latent vitality as was witnessed in the valleys of Sahyadri, the country south of Ahmednagar and the areas controlled by Patwardhans in the Southern part of Maharashtra. They were well-populated and richly cultivated.

1.3.2 The Prices of food-grain

Elphinstone gives the following description of Maharashtra when he was passing through Chhattisgarh to the boundaries of Maharashtra.

“The country seems still an abundant one, Ghee, owing to the number of cattle, sells at the rate of 7 or 8 seers for a rupee, rice at 60, wheat flour at 80 and at Rypore and Dhundha they say a man live poorly for half a pice but very comfortable for a pice”. This was the description of the country in which he was travelling in the first decade of the 19th century.

The fall of Peshwa Bajirao II brought about a steep fall in the prices of grain even when the harvests were poor. The reason for that phenomenon was the natural consequence of diminished demand. The merchants had hoarded the grain expecting better prices but as there was no effective demand, the prices began to fall. This worsened the condition of the cultivators of the land. The farmers faced a grim prospect of uneconomic returns and heavy land-taxes. They had to sell their land or borrow money to pay the new masters. The rural community was under the shadow of a great calamity as famine was threatening the eastern parts of Godavari and the whole of Khandesh.

The condition in the towns was worse than the rural regions. The disturbed conditions and the greedy officials like the Kotwals in the capital city had created panic in the towns. The conditions in the cities which were the seat of political power like Kolhapur, Sangli, Miraj or Janjira, Sawantwadi and other smaller towns were not free from the interference from the officials in the sale and purchase of goods. The merchants of the towns like Paithan, Pune, Thane or Kalyan had links with the rural areas and the disturbed conditions made business difficult. The transportation and movements of goods were impeded because of geographical conditions. The middlemen also created many problems. The raids on the rich areas made by the Pindaris especially in northern Maharashtra made the life in the cities and towns miserable.

Check your progress

1. Write short note on Economic condition in Maharashtra in 19th Century

1.4 SUMMARY

After the defeat of Mughal Emperor and the Nawab of Bengal and Oudh in 1764 and the Sultan of Mysore in 1799; Britishers defeated Maratha ruler with subsidiary alliance in 1818. Later on Peshwa, Bhosle and Holkar revolted against British rule except Shinde and Gaikwad. At the same time Maharashtra's Economic Condition was backward. Peshwas collected high revenue after subsidiary alliance. Social condition of Hindu and Muslim became miserable, because of casteism it was divided into number of units. People were poor and ignorant villages were self sufficient.

1.5 QUESTIONS :

1. Evaluate the socio-cultural conditions in Maharashtra in 19th Century
2. Trace the economic conditions in Maharashtra in 19th Century

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ADMINISTRATION AND JUDICIARY

Unit Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Administration
 - 2.2.1 Land Tenures
 - 2.2.2 Revenue settlement and administration
 - 2.2.3 Revenue collection during last days of Peshwaship
- 2.3 Transition under the British Rule
- 2.4 Judiciary
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 Questions
- 2.7 Additional Readings

2.0 OBJECTIVES :

After the study of this unit, the student will be able to:

- 1) Understand Land Tenures.
- 2) Observe revenue settlement and administration.
- 3) Trace the transition under the British Rule.
- 4) Provide the students with a brief insight of law and administration of British East India Co. in Maharashtra.

2.1 INTRODUCTION :

After the fall of Marathas, the East India co. gained a lot of territory. They became powerful and gradually became active in administrative affairs of the Maharashtra (i.e. in Bombay Presidency). They introduced several changes from time to time. Several Governors were also responsible for tackling these issues. Lord Cornwallis the first Governor General laid the foundation of administration and judiciary in India in (1786-93). The new influence of modern ideas and the spirit of liberalism made them work out plans for better administration of justice and also provide better means of the transport and communication. The non-government Western Christian Missionaries of America and Scotland worked for the social welfare of downtrodden and unprivileged people.

Basically Englishmen were traders, later on they became rulers. They were imbued with the modern ideas of humanism, Liberalism and scientific outlook. They were allowed to continue the old land tenures for some

time. The Marathas were following the system of Malik Amber in revenue settlement. Land was classified and measured and tax was fixed periodically. Revenue was collected by village headman Patil, Patel, Kulkarni, Deshmukh, Deshpande etc.

Britishers followed the Rayatwari system in Maharashtra. Land- tax was high and ryat had to incur debts which ruined the peasantry.

According to term 'Whiteman's Burden' Lord Elphinstone took interest in giving education to native people. Christian Missionaries had already started the work of learning regional languages and Sanskrit.

Charter Act of 1813, and Bombay Native Education Society gave boost to education in Bombay and Maharashtra.

There were two groups of learning. One was the oriental learning and other was western learning. The Charter Act. of 1853 and 'Wood 's Despatch provided for the expansion of education in India.

Because of Western Education many public spirited men like Jagannath Shankar Sheth, Jamsheji Jeegibhoy, Jambhekar, Lokahitavadi started journalism for awakening of mass people.

2.2 ADMINISTRATION

2.2.1 LAND TENURES

The collapse of the Maratha Power was a sad event in the life of the people of Maharashtra. They had experienced the vicissitudes of political fortunes. The disaster of the Panipat (1761) was still fresh in the memory of the old generation. The new generation however had not forgotten the good old days of expansion of Maratha Power. Their armies were marching throughout India. The army of the Peshwa was defeated and the people were silenced for sometime.

The East India Company in their hour of victory did not perpetrate any atrocities on the people. That was the practice of the victors of the Medieval Age. These Englishmen though basically traders, merchants and soldiers of the Company were imbued with the modern ideas of humanism, Liberalism and Scientific outlook. They championed the ideas of 'Free Trade', 'Western Learning' and the 'Whiteman's Burden'. They were obsessed with the belief that the people of the East are unfit for self rule, their religion is mere superstition and they lack spirit of nationalism as understood in the West.

The Company was fortunate to have at that time a band of brilliant men in their service. They carried out their duty with a sense of mission but could not rise above their low objective of colonial exploitation and denied rights and privileges which their own people demanded in their home country. We shall now attempt to describe their efforts to fashion the Indian people according to the ideals envisaged by them during the transition under their Rule.

We shall study the first two topics in this unit namely (1) Land Tenures

and Revenue Settlement and (2) Education and the Press. Before describing the new influence and transition under the new rulers it would be instructive to give a brief account of the pattern generally followed by the Marathas upto the end of their rule.

Main features of the Maratha system of Land Tenures

There were two systems of Land Tenures and Revenue Settlement followed by the Marathas, the one was for their home territory and the other for other lands. They termed the former as 'Swarajya' and the latter as 'Samrajya'. We are not concerned with territories outside Maharashtra. Prof R.V.Oturkarhas provided us with useful information on this subject.

- (1) The Todarmal system modified by Malik Amber for Nizamshahi of Ahmednagar in the 17th century was adopted with slight changes to meet the needs of time.
- (2) The emphasis was on safeguarding the interest of the cultivator as he was regarded as the backbone of the national economy.
- (3) Land - Tenures were divided into two broad categories i.e. (a) 'Thal' land and (b) 'Watans'. The land cultivated by original settlers was known as 'Thal' land and the tax free land granted by the king in recognition of the services to the State was known as 'Watan'. This was prized land tenure as it was hereditary and carried many benefits and high status.
- (4) Miras and Upari – Lands was another classification for the purpose of revenue collection. Land assigned by the State to the Original settlers was known as 'Miras' whereas land assigned to new settlers for cultivation was known as 'Upari' land. Usually the new settlers were given fallow, unused or waste land for cultivation. They would lose their lease-hold if they could not make satisfactory payment to the state. They were regarded as tenants at will whereas the Mirasdars were treated with respect as they had the responsibility to pay the revenue for the whole village or villages under their charge.
- (5) The Jagir system was discouraged by Chhatrapati Shivaji but during the reign of Chhatrapati Shahu this system became popular. In fact it became an instrument of territorial expansion as the Jagirdars were allowed to collect 'Chauth' and 'Sardeshmukhi' on behalf of the king in territories outside Maharashtra. In Maharashtra itself the Jagirdars had civil as well as political responsibility.

2.2.2 REVENUE SETTLEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

As already mentioned above the Marathas followed the time-honoured Malik Amber System of revenue settlement. Land was classified and measured and the land tax was fixed periodically. The Maratha government was more concerned with more yields from the fields and extensive cultivation. It helped the cultivators during bad seasons by remission of taxes and offering "tagai" or loans to tide over difficulties.

The administration of revenue was handled competently by the village

headman and the accountant known as Patil or Patel and Kulkarni respectively. The district level officers were 'Deshmukh' and 'Deshpande' who in turn were under the control of the 'Sarsubah' equivalent, to a provincial governor. The financial transactions were supervised by the finance minister or 'Phadnis'.

The farmers in their villages also had to pay in kind for the services rendered to them by the village social servants called 'Balutedars' and 'Alutedars'. This was an integral part of the village economy.

2.2.3 REVENUE COLLECTION DURING LAST DAYS OF PESHWASHIP :

Bajirao II the last Peshwa was in dire need of the funds to raise an army to fight the company's forces. He resorted to farming of land-taxes. It meant he offered the commission to collect taxes to private agents who would make the highest bid. No doubt huge amounts were collected but it ruined most of the farmers in Maharashtra.

2.3 TRANSITION UNDER THE BRITISH RULE :

The final victory of the East India company was a foregone conclusion as the Maratha Chiefs at Nagpur, Baroda, Indore and Gwalior had already accepted the subsidiary alliance with the company. The problems of peace were mainly that private treasures of the Peshwa had to be discovered and seized to prevent him from further mischief. The Company's officers were anxious to undertake that activity as they would be rewarded with a portion of the hidden wealth either from the Peshwa or his protégés. Captain Robertson and Colonel Protter found gold 'Mohars' and cash worth several millions. The temptation was too great. Briggs and Rind two junior officers had a scuffle over the discovery of Peshwa's fabulous wealth.

Professor R.D. Choksey has described the sorry state to convey idea that the new rulers had to discipline themselves before they could establish their authority over the defeated enemy.

2.3.1 Work of reconstruction

The gains of the military victory had to be prudently consolidated. The new rulers could not allow their preconceived ideas and prejudices about the fallen enemy to colour their vision of strong and stable government in an alien country. They experienced many handicaps. They came from a distant land, they did not know the language of the people. They represented a trading company but they had to tackle the problems of an agrarian economy. Mountstuart Elphinstone who was a Company commissioner of the Bombay Deccan led a team of his dedicated officer to act with vigour and firmness. He exercised considerable restraint and avoided repressive measures. He devoted much of his time as a Governor of Bombay from 1819 to 1827 to Land Revenue settlement. Education and Law and Administration.

We shall now discuss Land Revenue settlement and Education in this lesson and Law and Administration along with other two topics of this unit in the next lesson.

2.3.2 Land Revenue Settlement

The new rulers had to give priority to the settlement of land tenures and revenue collections as the people of Maharashtra as in other part of India mainly depended on agriculture.

The success in this regard would determine the measures that could be contemplated in accordance with current ideas about humanism, liberalism and modern science. Some of the guiding principles for the programme of reconstruction were as follows:-

- (1) The old land tenures would be allowed to continue for sometime.
- (2) The model of Permanent settlement of revenue was not to be adopted. The Madras Model of Ryatwari adopted by Thomas Munro was to be followed with changes needed in the particular condition of Maharashtra.
- (3) The Company's Government believed that the English officials were competent and not corrupt whereas the Indian revenue officials of the old regime were clever only in misappropriating the Government collections. Hence, their salaries should be kept low and they should be vigilantly watched.
- (4) The Western ideas of land tenure and right to the property should be applied in determining the ownership of land.
- (5) While assessing the land-revenue the rent of lands not sown by the farmer was to be deducted as lands which were not actually ploughed. The loss of crop of one year was to be regarded as compensated to the 'ryat' by the advantage of another year. In case of general stress and pressure a general relief was to be granted to the 'ryat'.

2.3.3 Administration of the revenue matters

The regime made vigorous attempts to centralise resources. The officers looked at the farmers with mistrust and suspicion. Hence while fixing the rate of land-tax there was over assessment which created tension among the cultivators and unrest everywhere. It was not because of malice or ill-feeling towards the people but it was the result of misunderstanding the complex system of land - tenures and assessment in Maharashtra during the previous regime of the Marathas. The English officers got confused with the system of identical rights in land. For property became simple and homogenous and land was regarded as a factor of production. The land revenue system of the Marathas applied the squeeze on the Mirasdars and the jagirdars that is the upper strata of the land holders whereas the Ryatwari system of fixing the rate sapped the energy of the ryat and in many cases they had to incur debts.

Remission of land taxes during bad seasons was a time honoured system. The English authorities however were obsessed with the idea that the Indian employees in the Revenue department need not be paid more; they must be supervised more. Thus their recommendations of granting remissions were treated with distrust. In 1824 when there was a famine, the Deccan Commissioner instructed the collectors as under.

“ If the crop of one of his (ryats) field is only indifferent and the other field for want of rain has been left fallow, remission shall be given in full for the latter. But should the crop of one field have been good and the other adjoining field have been left waste for the foraging of cattle or in consequence of mere neglect or contumacy, he should be made to pay for it as far as his ability will permit.

2.3.4 Inam Commission

The Company's tax-collectors gained more confidence with the passage of time. The depression period from 1820 to 1850 passed off without any major peasant rebellions. The trading Company was obviously more concerned with cash-crops and therefore wanted more land for cultivation of sugar cane, cotton and such other crops. The Watanders therefore preferred to pay money in lieu of service to the Government. The Revenue Department had to be paid out of the revenue from hereditary watans. The Government therefore instituted an enquiry of the titles of the "Inamdars" in the 1850s. Many Inamdars were dispossessed of their lands for want of written evidence.

2.3.5 Evaluation of the Company's Ryatwari System

Transition from freedom to colonial rule of British people was bound to be painful. The nature also was not favourable both to the new rulers and their subjects in Maharashtra. There was a bad season in 1818- 1819 and drought in 1820-1821. The periods of depression was followed a cholera epidemic. The ryat was completely exasperated. R.D.Choksey writes "Remissions were yearly in demand. The assessment was anything but a success".

The ignorance of the hereditary rights and the over enthusiasm to bring more land under cultivation created a sense of insecurity. The hereditary revenue collectors knew the ryat as they lived among them.

The white saheb wanted more collection of revenue. The Company's demand for cash crops favoured the rise of money lenders and lawyers as land litigation was to be a routine affair which ruined the peasantry.

2.3.6 Check your Progress:-

Q. 1. Write in brief 'Land tenures and revenue settlement' new transition under the British rule.

2.4 JUDICIARY :

2.4.1 The British law system in England :

The Englishmen had unwritten constitution but the decisions of the courts and the Common Law had given them a highly developed legal system. There was well organized machinery for enforcement of laws and a body of professional lawyers to help the courts to interpret the laws. There were settled legal procedures and the people know where to file their cases in the first instance and where to appeal.

The system of laws and the legal procedures followed in Maharashtra as in other parts of India were rudimentary.

2.4.2 The Hindu law system prevailing in Maharashtra

The Hindu Law books based on Manu-smriti provided for unequal justice but the Panchayat system had drawn the attention of Mountstuart Elphinstone. The inequality of justice in the Hindu Community was based on caste- considerations but the prevalent laws in England were equally bad and as severe as the criminal law of the Muslim rulers. Sir Spenser Walpol has criticized the whole system. He points out that members of Parliament could make any offence a capital felony. A man stealing forty shillings could be awarded death penalty.

2.4.3 Code Elphinstone

Mountstuart Elphinstone when he was a commissioner for Deccan had come across many difficulties in the administration of the revenue system and administration. When he became the Governor in 1819 he wanted to establish “Rule of Law”, the proud legacy of Englishman, in the foreign land under his charge that is Maharashtra. He wanted to check the power of money and high birth. He appointed a senior officer Mr. Borradiale to prepare a catalogue of decisions given by the (learned men) in Hindu Law in cases referred to them by the courts and the statements of the witnesses regarding the customs as well as the caste records in the books. Mr. Borradiale was to be advised by the ‘Sadar Adalat’ (Court of Appeal in civil and criminal cases as organized by Lord Cornwallis) in the compilation of the records.

Elphinstone directed the committee set up for this purpose with Mr. Steele as its secretary to scrutinize not the question of the doctrine contained in a particular law-book but to ascertain and concentrate attention on the degree of esteem in which it was held by the common people. He wanted a concise digest of these matters.

The Committee in association with the Sadar Adalat compiled as Code of Regulations in 1827. It came to be known as Code Elphinstone and became the Law. It was published on January 1, 1827 and contained 26 Regulations as follows.

Preliminary = 1; Civil Justice Regulations = 9 Criminal Justice

Regulations = 5; Revenue Board Regulations = 6; Military Regulations = 1; Miscellaneous Regulations = 1; Total = 26.

This code remained, in operation from 1827 to 1835 and thereafter it was modified to suit the changing circumstances.

2.4.4 Administration of Law and Justice

As already referred to above Lord Cornwallis had, set up a machinery to enforce law and order in Bengal during his tenure as Governor-General. According to the old practice revenue collectors of districts were empowered to preside over civil and revenue courts. They were allowed to exercise magisterial functions including administration of criminal justice. Under the influence of Cornwallis Code the collectors were relieved of judicial duties and the civil courts were, placed under District Judge. City courts and District Courts were established each presided over by an English Judge to deal with civil and revenue matters.

2.4.5 Comments :

In the initial period that is from 1818 to 1828 the attention of the rulers was more on the maintenance of peace and order in the large Presidency of Bombay. Besides Maharashtra it covered parts of Gujarat and Karnatak. The systems and practices that were followed in the Botany island and the port of Surat, the two big centers of trade and commerce of the Company were kept as models especially for urban areas like Pune. In the rural areas they were more concerned with litigations and problems concerning revenue collections. The troops of the Company were kept in readiness to meet any contingency. The new laws, law courts and the general administration were all geared up to maintain peace and order.

Check your progress:-

Q.1 Write in Brief New influence and Transition in law and administration under the British Rule.

2.5 SUMMARY

After the end of Maratha power, the new rulers started their new administrative policy in land revenue matters and also set the pace for the modernization of Maharashtra. The British domination led to the enactment of the common Law and codified judicial system within their territory. The British system changed the native law which were not equal to all.

2.6 QUESTIONS

- 1 Give an account of Land tenures and land revenue Settlement during the British rule.
2. Assess the important role played by western education and press on the eve of the British rule.
3. State the important role played by western education and press

2.7 ADDITIONAL READINGS

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TRIBAL AND PEASANT UPRISINGS

Unit Structure

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

After the study of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Study the historical background of tribal uprisings in Maharashtra.
- Understand the Ramoshis, Bhills and Kolis uprisings in Maharashtra.
- Study the peasants unrest in Maharashtra.

- Understand the contribution of various social reformers towards the peasants movement in Maharashtra.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As soon as the British took over Western India, Indian tribes revolted against them. In the Maharashtra the hills tribes offered heroic resistance to British rule. The tribal uprising was the resistance against the Zamindar, moneylenders and the British rule. There are many factors that led to the tribes to revolts against the British rule.

In Maharashtra, the agrarian discontent against the British rule was due to the exploitative agrarian policy of the British rule. The heavy land tax fixed by the land settlement, fall in agricultural produce, growing poverty of the agricultural masses and their indebtedness added to the miseries of the peasants. The British neglected the agricultural industry and their alliance with the moneylenders created serious unrest in the minds of the peasants. The British company uprooted the peasant and the tribal of western Maharashtra who had opposed vigorously their exploitative economic policies and tried to throw them out of the country.

3.2 TRIBAL UPRISINGS

Indian tribes revolted against the Britishers, as soon as the British established their control over Western India. In Maharashtra the hilly tribes offered stiff resistance to the British rule. Ramoshis, Bhils, Kolis and many other tribal people revolted against the rule of East India Company. The tribal uprising was the resistance against the Zamindar, moneylenders and the British rule. There are many factors that led to the tribes to revolts against the British rule.

Causes of the revolts

- 1) The tribes were not happy with the growing influence of the British in their own area of influence. From many years they had been living peacefully with the nature. The Mughals and the Deccan kingdoms hardly interfere in their day to day life. However the British desire of exploiting the natural resources made them rebel and stand against the government.
- 2) Most of the tribes like Ramoshis and Kolis attacked moneylenders. Their chief aim was to teach lesson to the moneylenders who used to cheat poor ignorant tribal. The moneylenders had protection of the British government. So naturally they got evolved against the British rule.
- 3) The British wished to create a monopoly over forest. Unlike Indian ruler, the British could not understand the attachment of the tribes to their original inhabitation. They lived in hilly regions and forests. They lived in harmony with the nature. They didn't like the British attitude of exploitation of natural wealth for the sake of their material development. The tightening of British control over their forest

zones, creation of reserved forests and attempt to monopolize forest wealth made the tribes rebellious.

- 4) The British disrupted the traditional economic set up. They deprived the tribal people of their traditional economic set up and hence the tribal were forced to serve as menial labours and miners. They were instigated against British by the hostile personalities like Vasudev Phadke, Trimbak Dengle and Umaji Naik.

The revolt normally began when the tribes felt oppressed and had no other way but fight. The tribes organized themselves for an armed resistance. These tribal people though no match for the modern military might of the British rule, their struggle against the colonial power, provided inspiration to the other people.

3.2.1 THE RISING OF THE RAMOSIS AT POONA(1826-29)

Ramoshis also known as Berad, was a nomadic tribe of hunter gatherers found in a large scale in western Maharashtra. They served as a fighting force in the Maratha army, well known for their bravery. In the early nineteenth century the commercial British national forest policy and the conflict it created over forest use forced them to start struggle against British rule. The Ramosis served in the Maratha police administration in the lower ranks. After the final defeat of the Marathas in 1818, the British administration of the Bombay Province found it difficult to restore order in the region immediately. The new administration was unable to absorb the Ramosis in the police administration. Consequently, a vast body of unemployed but armed men, including the Ramosis, were thrown upon the former territories of the Peshwa. They were prepared to join anyone who would provide them suitable employment, and even to help in the attempt to overthrow the British power.

In 1825, the economic distress resulting from scarcity, and reduction in the number of soldiers in the local Poona garrison, adversely affected the Ramosis. Hence, under the leadership of Umaji Naik and his associate, Bapu Trimbakji Sawant, they rose in revolt and resorted to outlawry. From 1826 to 1829, they committed many excesses in the hills around the fort of Torna. They proved to be so turbulent that the Government was forced to pardon many of their crimes and placated them by granting lands as well as by recruiting them as hill police. However, their risings were quelled by the British garrison. Nevertheless, the Ramosis continued to cause trouble to the authorities by attacking their oppressors like money-lenders. Check your progress:-

Q.1. Trace the causes of Rising of the Ramosis at Poona ?

3.2.2 THE RISING OF THE BHILS

The Bhils were primitive and predatory peoples. Their settlements were scattered in the Western Ghats and in the Country at its base. Their stronghold was in Khandesh. They controlled the mountain passes between the north and the Deccan. In open country-side, they lived quietly as cultivators, and proprietors of the soil. However, in the hilly region, they subsisted on the plunder of the rich land-holders in the neighborhood. They had suffered exploitation and depredations at the hands of the Marathas and others and from the famine of 1802-04.

All these exciting causes rendered the conditions of Khandesh where the Bhils were in the majority, highly anarchical. Thus driven by wars and pestilence, against which they had no protection the Bhils, refractory by temperament entrenched themselves in the mountains under the leadership of their chiefs, the occupation of the Province of Khandesh by the British in 1818, naturally increased their restlessness. The Satpuras were the nest of these disaffected Bhils in the North, and Satmala and Ajanta in the South. Here, different organised gangs of the Bhils were led by thirty two leaders.

In 1817, an insurrection of the Bhils broke out in Khandesh, presumably stirred by Trimbakji after his escape from the fort of Thana. When the British (Elphinstone) put pressure upon Peshwa Baji Rao II to secure the seizure and arrest of Trimbakji, the Bhils turned anti-British and rose in revolt against them. Their explosion presented a tempestuous scene of a tremendous popular upsurge, and according to S.B. Chaudhary "this stirred the country to its depth." The Government of Bombay used severe military action against them and simultaneously used judicious conciliatory measures to stop the eruption of the Bhils.

In the following year the Bhils broke out in a general insurrection on all sides and ravaged the neighbouring plains. The British had to employ several detachments to suppress them. The trouble continued until 1831 in spite of vigorous military measures of the Government. Gradually the dual measures of coercion, anti-conciliation, at which the British were the past-masters, succeeded in quelling the disturbances of the Bhils and converting them into peaceful cultivators. Although a section of the Bhils once again broke out in revolt in Malwa in 1846, the rising was suppressed. The two and a half decades of struggle with the British cost them very dearly. Not only many of their leaders were killed or captured but a large number of them were killed and their settlements were destroyed their new conquerors.

Check your progress:-

1. Assess the Role of Bhils in Khandesh against Britishers?

3.2.3 THE RISING OF THE KOLIS (1828-30, 1839 AND 1844-48)

The Kolis were neighbours of the Bhils, and lived in the country both above and below the Sahyadri in the Thana District, they were scattered over the whole area from the borders of Kutch to the Western Ghats. They were by nature a turbulent people. The British had the first taste of the Koli intransigence in 1824 when Kolis of Gujarat raised a formidable insurrection, burning and plundering villages right upto Baroda. Only the use of force strong enough to quell the activities of the desperadoes could check their excesses.

The Kolis revolted again in 1828 because most of them had been thrown out of employment by the dismantling of forts by the British, thereby depriving them of their livelihood. Inspired by successful insurrection of the Ramosis of Satara, the Kolis under the leadership of Ramji Bhungeria, (a Koli officer of the Government who had resigned in protest against a government order stopping his levy of rupees fifty) raised the standard of revolt in 1828. A large body of troops had to be sent against them, and detachments had to be posted at Konkan and Sahyadri to prevent them from escaping from the combing operations of the British troops.

The Kolis proved to be a thorn in the flesh of the British Government. They posed a serious menace when in 1839 bands of Kolis plundered a large number of villages in the Sahyadri. They were joined by other turbulent elements of the hills. Both R.C. Majumdar and S.B. Chaudhary point out that in these risings, the Kolis were led by three Brahmins (Bhau Khare, Chimnaji Jadhav and Nanan Dharbhare) who seemed to have harboured some political motives. To quote Majumdar, they “felt strong enough to work for the restoration of the Peshwa, as the strength of the Poona garrison had lately been reduced. The rebels assumed the charge of the Government in the name of the Peshwa. But the British acted swiftly and their prompt action averted a crisis. The British forces attacked the Kolis dispersed their bands captured and arrested fifty four of whom were tried and punished with varying terms of imprisonment; some were hanged, including a Brahmin, byname Ramchandra Ganesh Gore.

The Kolis were not the ones to give in easily; they broke into revolt again in 1844. Their leaders this time were Raghu Bangria and Bapu Bangria. Starting from their headquarters in the country side to the north- west of Poona, they carried on their looting and plunder in the districts of Nasik and Ahmadnagar. Next year the Koli disturbances spread as far as Purandhar and Satara. The situation appeared to be desperate, until a strong military force brought the situation under control. Bapu Bangria was caught but Raghu Bangria eluded the vigilance of the police. He had tremendous influence over the minds of the people and “lived on blackmail levied from Poona and Thana Villages”. Finally he was arrested on 2 nd January, 1848 and hanged. By 1850, the Koli rebellion had been crushed.

It is significant to note that during the Koli rebellion of May 1845, Umaji, the leader of the Ramosi uprising of 1825, had also joined the Kolis at Purandhar lawless activities. Further, in 1873, Honya, an influential Koli, raised a well-trained band of followers in the north west of Poona, and

began a series of attacks on the moneylenders “who habitually cheat and oppress the hill- tribes and at intervals drive them into crime.” Though Honya was caught in 1875, the spirit of insurrection was spread from the Kolis to the peace-loving Kunbis of the plains. Between May and July, 1875 over a dozen assaults were committed on money- lenders by the insurrectionists. The authorities had to summon troops to restore order.

Again, during the revolt of Phadke in 1879. the peace around Poona was disturbed by two gangs: one of the Kolis and the other of the Ramosis. No fewer than fifty nine robberies were committed by the gangs. It took a lot of hard work for the police and the troops to effectively curb the violent activities of these two gangs.

3.2.4 Revolt of Gadkari

Gadkari used to garrison the Maratha forts and enjoyed land grants for their service. After the third Anglo Maratha war, their services were dispensed and they were required to pay revenues for the lands they held. The British took away some other customary privilege of the Gadkaris. These activities spread discontent among the soldiers and common people against the British. This led to the rising of Gadkaries. The local military commanders also joined them. Gadkari rising became a general popular revolt against the British. The fire of rebellion spread neighboring states also. The rebels captured the forts of Panhala and Pavangad. The Bombay government took extensive steps to suppress the revolt. After the intensive military campaign, the British finally succeeded in suppressing the risings of the Gadkaries.

3.2.5 Gond uprising

Maratha power was the last regime which was defeated by the British. Bhosale of Nagpur was one of the important center of Maratha might. However after the end of their rule, British were free to introduce their administrative system in the Nagpur region. Within three years of their assuming charge of Chandrapur, the British had to face a trouble in the area. A large part of Chandrapur district was covered with thick forest populated mainly by Gonds. Several Zamindars also were related to the Raj Gond families of Chandrapur. A number of Raj Gond had helped Appasaheb Bhosale in his struggle against the British.

Taking advantage of the revolt of 1857 the Gond Zamindar of Adapalli and Ghot revolted against the British. They gathered a considerable force of Gonds and brought Rajgad Pargana under his control. British sent army to suppress the Gond rebellion. Baburao Gond attacked the English camp in the Aheri province and looted it. English army did find it difficult to suppress the Gond revolt. However treachery played the trick. Baburao Gond was captured and hanged to death. The rising of Chadrapur was spontaneous. Though Gond did not become successful, their heroic efforts inspired the others.

Check your progress:-

Q.1 Why did Ramosis, Bhils and Kolis revolted against British ?

3.3 PEASANT UNREST

Maharashtra was essentially an agrarian society in the nineteenth century. Except Bombay and Poona, remaining areas in the region were predominately agricultural and an overwhelming number of the people were peasants. According to R.D.Chosksey, out of the total population of the Maratha territories conquered by the British in 1818 (40,00,000), the Marathas constituted around seventy percent, and the remainder consisted of Brahmins, Muslims, Rajputs and others. Outside the city of Bombay, the Brahmins and Muslims were usually in Poona, Satara and Dharwar. While most of the Marathas were “ryots” or peasants, the Brahmins centered in urban areas pursued professions; and they constituted the intelligentsia Hindu community.

During the regime of the Peshwas, the economic condition of the peasants, though not good, was tolerable. Few owned the land; majority of the ryots were tenants and paid rents for the lands cultivated by them. Still others in rural Maharashtra were landless farmers and were hired by the cultivators as labourers. A small number of the poor persons in the rural areas worked as domestic servants. Slavery also existed in the Deccan. Many of the Deshmukhs, Deshpandes, Patils and other richer individual landlords engaged the services of landless villagers against money payment. The wages paid to a rural labourer were meagre, and showed little tendency to increase beyond a bare subsistence rate. This remained the trend even after the British conquest of Maharashtra, at least until 1850.

From about 1850, a steady rise occurred in the rate of money wages, owing mainly to the increased demand for labour in railroad construction, road building and other public works as well as in agricultural operations.

On the taking control of Maharashtra’s administration, the British introduced the “Rayatwari System” of land revenue. Under this system, the land settlement was by the Government with individual occupants who were themselves landholders and not tenants. This was more or less the system followed by the Peshwas, until Bajirao II’s regime. The Rayatwari System of land revenue administration under Mr. Elphinstone in his capacity as the Commissioner of the Deccan, gave wide discretionary powers to the revenue officials. But within a few years it was found that the system was not satisfactory. Scarcity of rainfall ruined crops in many a regions and low prices of grains worsened the conditions of the peasants and reduced the revenues of the state. Moreover, increasing burden on land, increasing land revenue, competition with foreign goods - all resulted in the mounting indebtedness of a very acute type, which chiefly affected the agriculturists. But overzealous revenue officials tried to collect the full amount of the assessment, thus causing acute misery to farmers.

In 1827, the government introduced changes in the mode of land assessment, which in theory, appeared to be an improvement over the earlier method of revenue collection. But soon it also showed several defects, and after experience of a few years, a modified system was introduced. With the introduction of the new system in 1836, collection of land revenue showed a marked improvement because under the new system rates of land revenue were lower than the earlier system. As a result of this reduction of land revenue, farmers brought more land under cultivation, and with the outbreak of the American Civil War (1861-65), there was an increase in demand for Indian cotton in England. Consequently, Khandesh reaped a good harvest. A period of prosperity spanned the period 1850 to 1866 ending the earlier economic depression; but the prosperity was only temporary.

The Government of Bombay Presidency wrongly took the entire credit for the rosy economic picture. It lost sight of the many deep rooted causes of the past economic distress and failed to understand that the present prosperity was only a temporary relief and the economic disease of earlier years could recur at any time. Consequently, no sooner had the American Civil War ended and American cotton recaptured the market than the temporary economic bright summer turned into a dim winter of depression. The peasant who was already groaning under the burden of past debts, now became desperate. The sowcar lorded the village economy and the ryat was his serf remarks Choksey.

Meanwhile, population in Maharashtra was growing rapidly. According to an estimate, between 1832 and 1872 population of the Deccan alone increased by about 20 lakhs. The surplus population, until

1850, found livelihood by bringing new lands under cultivation and in the later years, construction activities and public works projects increased the demand for labour. But the fluctuations in the economy and the steady growth in the price of food grains during the period 1850-65, prevented the labour from deriving much real advantage from the increased money wages. Moreover, the failure of the Government to develop any industrial activity, its deliberate encouragement to import of machine-made goods from England and neglect of local cottage industries - the main financial support of peasants during years of scarcity, crippled the rural economy. Even migration to cities like Bombay in search of employment did not reduce the pressure of population on land.

The plight of the peasants was made more unbearable by greedy money-lenders. Although the Regulations of 1827 had provided important measures to check the abuses of money-lending, the curse of the Deccan peasant - indebtedness continued; far from becoming less, it increased considerably. British legislation relating to the right to property also placed poor peasants increasingly under the control of money-lenders. For example, by giving land an exchange value, the law made it easier for the peasant to mortgage it and for the money-lender to confiscate it in the event of the former's failure to redeem the mortgage. Earlier, a farmer abandoned his land only due to some calamity like famine, or war; under the new laws,

he could be ousted from his land by the moneylender. Even the Civil Procedure Code of 1859 and the Limitation Act of the same year strengthened the moneylender's hand against the hopeless peasants.

Consequently, by 1875, peasants of Maharashtra were reduced to a wretched debt-ridden and poverty stricken class; their condition had become miserable. The fervent pleas of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha and the Bombay Association to rescue the peasantry from their pitiable plight did not have much effect and the Government of Bombay, in fact, suspected the Sarvajanik Sabha of instigating the Ryots to withhold payment of land revenues.

Check your progress:-

Q. 1 Give an account of Peasant Unrest in Maharashtra

3.3.1 THE DECCAN RIOTS

In 1867, the season commenced in rural Maharashtra; prices of agricultural produce fell rapidly and in 1870 the burden of debt was severely felt by poor farmers. Their failure to pay interests on loans brought the debtors to the courts of law. The result was that the mass of the people again became "quasi-slaves having to surrender all their produce to the sowkar, and receiving from him only enough grain to live on, as well as small sums of money which served to increase their debts". Moreover fall in agricultural prices forced the cultivators to reduce cultivation, and while retaining the best lands, others they sold to or mortgaged with the moneylenders. According to R. C. Majumdar, "Marwaris carried on a lucrative business by lending them money at a high rate of interest... " The Commission appointed by the Government of India to inquire into the Deccan Riots estimated that about one-third of the occupants of Government land were burdened with debts which averaged eighteen times their annual assessment : Some unscrupulous sowkars or money lenders even went to the extent of inducing and compelling the "debts-peasants", mostly Kunbis, "to compromise the honour of their females to get relief from the crushing debts".

Under these unbearable circumstances and outrages, the usually patient peasant lost their patience. At the end of 1874, their pent up feelings against the oppressive money-lenders burst into flame and their hatred against them exploded into violence in the village of Kardeh in Sirur Taluka of the Poona Collectorate. The moneylenders of the village were also subjected to social and economic boycott; they were forced to flee the village, the riots spread rapidly to other areas of Poona Collectorate. Police acted fast and arrested 951 persons from 33 villages.

The characteristic features of the Deccan Riots were, to quote Majumdar, "wholesale plunder of property and murderous assaults upon money-lenders, but generally speaking, there were no serious crimes of murder. In almost every case the object of the rioters was to obtain and destroy the bonds, decrees etc. in the possession of their creditors, personal violence against them being used only when they refused to handover these

documents. The victims were almost exclusively the Marwari sowkar and Gujar sowkars, though in rare cases even Brahman sowkars were molested.”

The uprisings of the Bhils, the Kolis and the Ramosis in the first half of the nineteenth century and again in the 1870s, in which they carried on a series of attacks on the money-lenders, may also be treated as a part of the peasant’s revenge against their exploiters and oppressors.

Anxious to prevent such violent activities and show of lawlessness, the Government appointed a Commission to report on the riots and the causes the outbreaks of Poona, Satara, Ahmednagar and Sholapur. The Deccan Riots gave the authorities an opportunity to take stock of the economic situation in Bombay Presidency. With the acceptance of the Commission’s Report, Act of 1879, indifference of the Government towards the problems of the peasants was overcome. This is clear from the fact that in the subsequent famines in Maharashtra not only private organization like Poona Sarvajanik Sabha but also the Government agencies took an active part by natural calamities. Moreover, by taking direct action to the Government and other concerned parties that their patience should not be taken as their acquiescence of injustices heaped on them. After the last quarter of the nineteenth century, political organizations began increasingly to take cognizance of peasants, grievances and involve them in national politics.

According to Lokmitra, a Gujarati weekly published from Bombay, “the Deccan decoities were perpetrated by indignant ryots than by professional robbers. The Deccan ryots were impoverished and felt the land assessment as a heavy burden. They were dissatisfied with this state of things and the new forest law added to their dissatisfaction. They took to committing decoities, and some professional robbers joined them.”

3.3.2 Mahatma Jotirao Phule and Peasants Movement

Mahatma Jotirao Phule was a symbol of revolt against all oppressed classes in the India. He had dedicated his entire life in the service of the neglected and exploited classes. Jotirao decided to create an awakening among the farmers. To study the problem of farmers, he traveled on foot through many villages and went place to place. He held meetings of the farmers to create an awakening among them. He explained to them the ideas how to improve agricultural production. Through his writing, he brought to the notice of the general public, the miserable condition in which the farmers lived.

He shed light on the exploitation at the farmers by revenue department police official and irrigation authorities like Talathi, Kulkarni and Mamledar. In the year 1885 the moneylender and landlords near Junnar were found to be harassing the farmers with high rate of interest. The farmers filed a petition with about five thousand signature and sent it to the government. Jotirao went to the Junnar and actively participated in the movement. He explained the misery of the farmers to the government. At the end the moneylenders and landlords decided to reduce the rates of interest. The farmers again went to work.

Jotirao also exposed the exploitative nature of Brahmanism which led to the exploitation of peasants. He wrote a book entitled 'cultivators whipcord' in which he narrated the sorrows of the cultivators. He came to conclusion that the intellect, moral progress and wealth, vanished due to the lack of education. So he urged the peasants to take education. The book was written with a view to discuss some of these reasons behind the problems of the peasant. According to Jotirao, all white European officials are absorbed in indulgence in pleasure and all government departments have a majority of Brahmin officials. These people had nothing to do with the problems of the peasants.

Jotirao established 'Satyashodhak Samaj' to free the exploited elements in the societies like peasants, shudratishadras and women. Satyashodhak Samaj started weekly journal 'Deenbandhu'. Krishnrao Bhalekar became the editor in chief of Deenbandhu. The problems of the peasants were highlighted in Deenbandhu. Jotirao Phule made demand to the government regarding establishment of hostels for the children of peasants. He also made appeal to government to fix a reasonable assessment of land and to free farmers from ignorance and superstition. He addressed the sorrows of the peasants to the Duke of Canaught when he visited Pune in 1888.

3.3.3 Vitthal Ramji Shinde and Peasants' Problem

Vitthal Ramji Shinde, one of the great social reformers of Maharashtra was born in a peasant family. His family suffered miseries at the hands of moneylenders. The peasant movement at 1920 in western Maharashtra was a child of the Non Brahmin Movement of Satyashodhak Movement.

In 1928 to avert the calamity of Small Holding bill, Shinde came forward to assume the leadership of the causes of the peasants in the critical moment. This bill created great unrest among the farmers. When the peasants were properly roused in the Bombay presidency, 'peasants' conference' was held at Ray Market in Pune with V. R. Shinde as the president. Shinde criticized the Indian ministers of the government, He pointed out that, the corrupt officers, clerks and the moneylenders had deprived the peasants of his land.

3.3.4 Contribution of Sane Guruji

Pandurang Sadashiv Sane, popularly known as Sane Guruji played important role in peasant movement. Though teacher by profession, he was a devoted follower of Gandhiji. He had dedicated his entire life in the service of Maharashtra. In 1939 the Khandesh region was devastated due to the heavy rainfall. He toured the region and demanded the tax exemption on land. He took great effort to make Faizpur session of congress successful.

3.3.5 Senapati Bapat and Mulshi Satyagrah

In 1921, Senapati Bapat launched the Mulshi Satyagrah to save the lands of cultivators from submersion under the Mulshi dam. He demanded the loss of the peasants should be combated with money. At last in 1923, all the demands of the peasants were agreed upon.

3.3.6 The Faizpur Session and the peasants

Faizpur was a rural area in Khandesh. It was for the first time that Indian National Congress held its session at rural area. A large number of peasants participated in the session. The session passed a large number of resolutions of the welfare of the peasants. The session demanded the deferment of the recovery of loans from farmers. It also demanded an adequate minimum wages to the landless labours. The president of the session Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru asked the workers and peasants to participate in the activities of the congress.

3.3.7 Peasant and Workers Party

Peasant and Workers Party, better known as 'Shetkari Kamgar Paksh' were basically founded as a Marxist political party in 1949 in Maharashtra. Keshavrao Jedhe, Shankarrao More, Bhausaheb Raut, Krantisinh Nana Patil, Datta Deshmukh and Tulshidas Jadhav were associated with this party. The party had achieved good success in the election at 1952 and 1957. It put check over the government regarding the problem of the peasants. However most of its members joined Congress party at instigation of Yashwantrao Chavan. PWP played very important role in uniting the landless labourers and distributing the land to cultivate it along with Republican Party of India. RPI and PWP raised their issues in legislative assembly and parliament and contributed in the peasant's movement of Maharashtra. Check your progress :

- 1) Explain the contribution of various leaders in peasant movement in Maharashtra

3.4 SUMMARY

From the above discussion it is clear that tribals and peasants gave stiff resistance to the unjust and inhuman policies of the British government and moneylenders. Though they failed to overthrow the British rule but they inspired the other fellow citizens and prepared them to unite and opposed the British policies. The freedom fighters and the leaders of Indian National Movement appreciated the efforts of Ramoshis, Bhills, and Kolis however rather than doing the same mistakes they changed the strategies to overthrow the mighty British Empire. Peasants in Maharashtra, due to their consciousness, which was created due to peasant movement by various leaders participated the Indian National movement to overthrow the British rule and to teach lesson to landlords and moneylenders. Due to their support and participation in Indian freedom struggle, India got independence in 1947.

3.5 QUESTIONS

1. Trace the tribal uprisings in the Maharashtra.
2. Describe the tribal uprisings in Maharashtra with special reference to Ramoshis and Bhills.
3. Discuss the factors led to the peasant's unrest in Maharashtra.
4. Evaluate the role of various leaders of Maharashtra in the peasant's movement.

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MAHATMA JOTIRAO PHULE: SATYASHODHAK SAMAJ AND UNIVERSAL HUMANISM

Unit Structure

4.0 Objectives

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Mahatma Jotirao Phule

4.3 The Satya Shodhak Samaj

4.4 Universal Humanism of Mahatma Phule

4.5 Summary

4.6 Questions

4.7 Additional Reading

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After the study of this unit, the student will be able to:

1. Understand Mahatma Jotirao Phule's work.
2. Know the aims and objectives of Satyashodhak Samaj.
3. Realise the concept of Phule's Universal Humanism.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Phule was the pioneer of upliftment of the downtrodden. Gopalbaba, V. R. Shinde and Shahu Maharaj worked against caste- system. They wanted to eradicate inequalities, superstitions, illiteracy from Society. Through they were attached to different organizations, they achieved their goal to some extent.

4.2 MAHATMA JYOTIRAO PHULE (1827-1890)

Mahatma Phule occupies a unique position among the social reformers of Maharashtra. Born in 1827 in a gardener (mali) caste, he suffered from social and economic disadvantages. While as a student in the Scottish Mission's High School, he came in contact with Christian missionaries and the ideas of Thomas Paine contained in his book, 'Rights of Man'. After completing his secondary education in 1847 Jyotiba decided not to join government service but to pursue an independent career. In 1848 he was

brought face to face with the problem of inequalities of the caste system and the abuses of the predominant Brahmin Caste. He was invited to the wedding of one of his Brahmin friends but was prevented by the relatives of the bridegroom from joining the wedding procession because he belonged to the lower mali caste. After this incident, Jotibarao made up his mind to defy the caste system and serve for the upliftment of the 'sudras' and women, who had been deprived of all their rights as human beings under this system. He was convinced that unless these sections of people were educated, their upliftment was not possible. Hence, with the help of some Brahmin friends he opened the first non-Christian girls' school in Poona in 1848, inspite of the opposition and 'vicious campaign against him by upper castes. He also began educating his wife, Savitribai so that she could also participate in his social work. In 1851, he established the first school for the children of untouchable and in the next year, he set up the 'Society for the Teaching of Knowledge to Mahars, Mangs and other People'.

Phule believed that the caste system introduced distinction between low and high, and must, therefore, be abandoned. He was of the firm opinion that divisions among people should be based on their qualities, not on birth. Curiously, the Marathas who were considered as Sudras by the Brahmins, regard the untouchables (ati-shudras) as inferior to them. But for Phule, who was imbued with the ideas of enlightenment and liberalism, distinctions based on Caste, was a social evil. Hence, he boldly attacked the stranglehold of the Brahmins on the Maharashtrian society and castigated them for preventing others from having access to all avenues of knowledge and influence. Denouncing the Brahmins in general as 'Cheats and hypocrites' he called upon the non-Brahmin masses to resist their tyranny.

Phule charged Brahmins of misinterpreting Hindu scriptures to suit their own community and of fabricating falsehoods to dupe the minds of the ignorant and to fasten firmly on them the chains of bondage and slavery. He went to the extent of arguing that the Sudras were the sons of the soil and the Brahmins came from outside and usurped everything that was possessed by the Sudras. His books 'Sarvajanik Satyadharma Pustak' and 'Gulamgiri' were biting indictments of the Brahmin community. He denounced all Brahmin scriptures and their teaching which had condemned the Shudras as the slaves of Brahmins. He declared that all those including foreigners, who treated him as equal, were his brothers.

4.3 THE SATYA SHODHAK SAMAJ

Until the Indian "Revolt" against the British in 1857, Jyotirao Phule was in favour of the British social legislation and hoped for a quicker social change. But after 1857 the British adopted the policy of cautious social neutrality and did little in the direction of social reform by legislation. Most social reformers cared little for the poor peasants and artisans. This made him think in terms of establishing an association that would articulate the grievances of the neglected section of the Maharashtrians, create awareness among them and induce them to fight for justice and equality. By 1873, the idea of establishing an independent organisation

to work for the emancipation of the “Shudras” from what he called, “slavery” of the Brahmins and to destroy religious and social bondage of the lower castes, crystalised in his mind.

Mahatma Jotirao Phule:
Satyashodhak Samaj
and Universal
Humanism

Accordingly, on 24th September, 1873, Phule and his associates established the “Satya Shodhak Samaj” (Society of Seekers of Truth). The main objectives of the Samaj were to liberate the Sudras and Ati- sudras from social and religious bondage and to prevent their exploitation by the Brahmins. All members of the Samaj were required to treat all human beings as “children of God and worship the Creator without the help of any mediator”. Membership of the Samaj was open to all irrespective of caste and creed. However, every member had to take a pledge to loyalty to the British Empire. A “Satya-shodhaka” was to be a seeker of truth whose reference was the human person and concern for truth, and not the traditional values, Phule refused to regard the Vedas to be sacrosanct. He opposed the custom of worshipping before idols (idolatry) and denounced the Chaturvarnya (The four varnas).

In social and religious matters, Phule wanted both men and women to be given equal rights; he regarded it a sin to discriminate between human beings on the basis of sex. He stressed the unity of all human beings and envisaged a society based on liberty, equality and fraternity. He was opposed to religious, bigotry and aggressive nationalism because both destroy the unity of humankind and therefore inimical to progress.

Early in 1874 Phule started a branch of the Samaj in Bombay and three years later a weekly journal, ‘Din Bandhu’, was founded to spread its message. Narayan Meghaji Lokhande, a close associate of Phule and an active trade union leader, became the editor of the paper. He used its columns to air the grievances of mill workers and to suggest measures to alleviate them.

Phule used his position as a nominated member of the Poona Municipality to help the famine-stricken areas of Maharashtra (1877). The ‘Victoria Orphanage’ was founded under the auspices of the Satyashodhak Samaj. Through the pages of ‘Din Bandhu’ the leaders of the Satyashodhak Samaj articulated the grievances of the peasants and workers. In fact, Jyotirao and his colleagues like Lokhande were the pioneers in organising peasants and workers and attempting to redress their grievances.

The ideology of the Satyashodhak Samaj was virtually anti- Brahmanical. Brahmin orthodoxy reacted strongly against it. They found an effective “knight errant” in the fiery journalist, Vishnushastri Chiplunkar, and his journal, ‘Nibandhmala’. He derisively described Phule as “a Shudra Religious Teacher, Shudra Founder of a Religion, a Shudra world Teacher, merely banking at Brahmins of all his writings”. However, Phule’s, movement remained outside the formal domain of politics. Its potential was not realised until the 1880s when Phule mounted strong attacks against leaders of the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Sarvajanik Sabha and the Indian National Congress for their failure to take concrete measures to improve the lot of the masses. He felt that these organisations were

dominated by the Brahmins and therefore were not truly representative in character. However, he was equally fearless in his criticism, of the Government. For instance, he protested vigorously against Lytton's restrictions on the Indian Vernacular Press and disapproved of the proposed public reception to the Viceroy by the Poona Municipality.

The, anti-Brahminism of the Satyashodhak Samaj was directed, not against individual Brahmins but against the system that permitted Brahmin preponderance in socio-religious matters. Phule's personal relations with Brahmin reformers and with Justice Ranade in particular, remained good. He participated in their activities. Moreover, so radical was he in his championship of justice and Brahmins but also to the 'Sahannavakuli Marathas' – the 'Marathas belonging to the ninety-six aristocratic families, the Maratha aristocracy. He accused them of exploiting the kunbi peasant. According to Mathew Lederle, "Jyotirao Phule worked equally for the Sudra and Ati-Shudra revealed a surprising broadness of vision at a time when caste distinctions prevailed not only between Brahmins and non-Brahmins, but with not less rigidity between the Maratha Sudras and the untouchable Atisudras. The forces of the caste system were so strong that Phule's ideal of equality for all failed to prevail even in the Satyashodhak Samaj". "If human being are all creatures of the same Divine Being, why should one caste deem itself superior to others ?" Asked Phule.

As a social and religious organisation, the Satyashodhak Samaj, according to Gail Omvedt, "bears comparison with other, more famous samajas: the Brahmo Samaj and Prarthana Samaj, with which it shares a secular and rationalistic approach, and the Arya Samaj with which it shared a mass basis". But it was non-elite in character and was limited to Marathi-speaking areas. Its radicalism resulted in a general hostility of the elite, including most of the educated non-Brahmin elite.

Unlike his contemporary reformers - Jambhekar Dadoba Pandurang, Lokhitavadi, Bhandarkar, Ranade, Vishnushastri Pandit and Agarkar, Jyotirao Phule was no intellectual; nor were his writings and theories as profound as theirs. But his work was the anguished cry of the suppressed classes trying to emancipate from bondage of centuries and from the tyranny of upper castes. His main work was to rouse the exploited and suppressed masses and lead them in an organised resistance to the unreasonable claims of the Brahmins. By emphasising individual dignity and equality in social and religious matters, he attempted to bring solidarity to the Hindu social organisation which was fragmented into groups of caste. Herein lies his greatness.

Ironically, when he died on 28th November 1890; this great champion of the low castes and downtrodden, was a much misunderstood man; he was accused of fermenting hatred between the Brahmins and non-brahmins. But no attempt was made to consider his scathing criticism of the prevailing society in a broad perspective. Even later generations were slow to understand and appreciate the significance of his steady and courageous advocacy of social equality and individual dignity. Nevertheless, recent studies of his work have convinced many scholars that Mahatma

Jyotirao Govindrao Phule (Jyotiba Phule) was a pioneer in many fields. He stands out among his contemporaries' as one who never wavered in his quest for truth and justice. Mahatma Jyotirao Phule was the first Indian to proclaim in modern India the dawn of the new age for the common man, the Indian woman. Jyotirao was the first Indian to start a school for the untouchables and a girl's school in Maharashtra. According to Dhananjay Keer, Phule believed in honesty working for his livelihood. He was almost the first public man in modern India to devote his time to serving the masses. By his emphasis on Truth, Equality and Humanism, this great son of Maharashtra carved out for himself, in the company of modern India's great thinkers and reformers, a permanent place. Check your progress :

- 1) Discuss the aims and objectives of Satyashodhak Samaj.
- 2) Describe the work of Satyashodhak Samaj in the social reform movement of Maharashtra.

4.4 UNIVERSAL HUMANISM OF MAHATMA PHULE

Mahatma Phule was not interested in developing theories. He wanted to explain the work undertaken by him. In his famous book "Sarvajanik Satyadharma Pustak' (Book of Universal True Religion) he analyses the meaning of truth and explains the basis of 'inference' to arrive at truth. He ridicules the whimsical ideas put forward by "Mahabharata" before ignorant masses. He wanted only rational explanation.

Phule maintains that 'religion is the relation between God the Creator and man his creature.' Everything comes from God for man to make use of. But since not all mankind has kept the fear of the Creator and a feeling of brotherhood embracing all men, truth has steadily declined and dissatisfaction and sorrow spread. The disregard of truth led to the disorder and hence truth should be restored so that order can be re-established.

Phule Criticised the theory of 'Vama-Dharma' that the religious duties are made identical with duties of one's profession. He opined that social reform is possible only when we understand religion properly. He was 'interested in religion not for the sake of doctrine but for the interest of the downtrodden masses.

His ideas about God were inspired by the influence of Christianity and his monotheism resembled that of the Prarthana Samaj.

He advocated liberty for all men as well as women. He wanted to remove the impediments of evil customs which enslaved man and degraded woman. He wanted the downtrodden to be educated. He said there should be schools for shudras in every village. Education would liberate them from social enslavement.

Check your progress :-

- 1) Explain the concept of Phule's Universal Humanism.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The Maharashtra society had a cultural tradition of anti-Brahmin feeling and lower castes attempt to free themselves from Brahmin ritual dominance. The economic and educational changes intensified the trend tremendously. Phule encouraged non-Brahmins to improve their educational standard through the medium of Satya Shodhak Samaj and called for an end to Brahmin employment by Government until the non-Brahmins equaled them in their share of provincial administration. Sumit Sarkar says that the anti-Brahmin to sin was first sounded in Maharashtra by Jyotiba Phule with his Gulamgiri and his organisation, the Satya Shodhak Samaj, which proclaimed the need to save the lower castes from the hypocritical Brahmins and their opportunistic scriptures.

4.6 QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the aims and objectives of Satyashodhak Samaj.
2. Describe the work of Satyashodhak Samaj in the social reform movement of Maharashtra.
3. Explain the concept of Phule's Universal Humanism.

4.7 ADDITIONAL READING

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THE PRARTHANA SAMAJ

Unit Structure

5.0 Objectives

5.1 Introduction

5.2 The Prarthana Samaj

5.2.1 Aims and objectives of the Prarthana Samaj

5.2.2 Functions of the Prarthana Samaj

5.2.3 Members of Prarthana Samaj

5.2.4 M.G. Ranade (1842-1901) and R. G. Bhandarkar (1837-1925)

5.2.5 Decline of the Prarthana Samaj

5.2.6 Significance of the Prarthana Samaj

5.3 Summary

5.4 Questions

5.5 Additional Reading

5.0 OBJECTIVES:

After the study of this unit, the student will be able to:

1. Know the contribution of Dadoba Pandurang and the Paramahansa sabha
2. Understand the principles and functions of Parthana Samaj.
3. Examine the important role of the Prarthana Samaj in the social reform movement in Maharashtra.
4. Evaluate the work of Prarthana Samaj.

5.1 INTRODUCTION:

The Western Learning, propaganda of the Christian missionaries and rationalism had made the educated Indians look at their religion and society as others see it especially in comparison with ideas of the Western people on religion and social structure in India. Like their Bengali counterparts and English educated people of Maharashtra began to express dissent against idolatry and protest against caste- system. They started a movement of reform based on monotheism and humanism.

5.2 THE PARAMAHANSA SABHA

The educated men who advocated change were afraid to call themselves 'reformers'. That word meant a person who broke the caste regulations, drank liquor, ate meat and live a free life. Dadoba Pandurang and his friends therefore had to work with caution and in secrecy.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his Brahmo Samaj had done pioneering work in the social reform movements in India. The object of the Brahmo Samaj was to liberate individual from the shackles of irrational religious practices and outdated social customs. The evil practices in the name of religion such as "sati" and untouchability had ridiculed by foreigners. The Theory of "karma" and polytheism had strangled initiative of the individual and created confusion in the mind of the common Hindu. The followers of Brahmo-Samaj wanted for reaching social reforms. They criticised caste-system but concentrated more on the status of women in the Hindu Society. Abolition of the practice of "Sati" was vigorously advocated by those reformers. They believed in constitutional measure to bring about change in the Hindu Society.

However after the death of Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1833 the Brahmo-Samaj split into factions. The younger members of the Sabha reorganised themselves under the, leadership of Keshav Chandra Sen and advocated not only far reaching social reform but also application of the test of reason to the fundamental articles of religious beliefs. Influenced by the Western and Christian thought, Keshav Chandra Sen and his followers mounted attacks on the caste system and all the evils arising out of it. They worked tirelessly for the complete reform of the Hindu family emphasizing that this reform was vital for the moral and religious regeneration of India. The activities of Sen and his friends received enthusiastic response in Bengal though their progressive views estranged them from Devendra Tagore, a prominent leader of the Samaj. Nevertheless, their missionary zeal and devotion to the gospel of reform was appreciated by the educated circles not only in Bengal but also in Bombay and Madras Presidencies. Consequently, the Brahmo Samaj movement gradually spread outside Bengal though it failed to take roots anywhere except in Maharashtra.

K. C. Sen visited Bombay in 1864, but he attracted little attention. According to Christine Dobbin "... it was not until his second visit in 1867 that he received a really enthusiastic reception". Members of the earlier (now defunct) Paramahansa Sabha such as R.G. Bhandarkar, were greatly impressed by K. C. Sen's socio-religious views. Reformers in Bombay, until Sen's visit, were of the view that social reform was impossible without religious reform; after his visit, they came under the influence of his thought. Likewise, Mary Carpenter, an English social reformer, who was also visiting Bombay at the time, influenced their thinking. The outcome was the founding of the Prarthana samaj in 1867.

Mathew Lederle and James Masselos point out that the catalyst in the establishment of the Prarthana Samaj was not K. C. Sen but Dr. Atmaram

Pandurang a brother of Dadoba Pandurang, and Mary Carpenter. According to Masselos, through Sen the ideas of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and of the Brahmo samaj had gained a great currency in Western India, but his

programme was viewed with suspicion as a smoke-screen under which the foreign religion might be spread.

The intellectuals favoured a form of Deism, shorn of the accretions of orthodox Hinduism and encompassing the Code of moral inherent in Christianity. It was felt that this could not be achieved through the Brahmo Samaj. To do so involved alienation from the mainstream of Hinduism, and meant discrimination, antagonism and the loss of any possible influence upon the people of the Presidency. In fact, as Lederle writes, it was the Monotheistic Association of Dr. Atmaram Pandurang which became known as the Prarthana Samaj or Prayer Society. This religious minded medical practitioner and his association longed for a form of religion which would satisfy their hearts and minds, yet would not require their breaking away from the Hindu religion, remarks Lederle.

The Prarthana Samaj was founded by Dr. Atmaram Pandurang in 1867 in Mumbai. The Prarthana Samaj means prayer society, naturally, the people of Maharashtra never wanted to establish a branch of the Brahmo Samaj because it had the influence of Christian religion. They wanted to concentrate their attention on the reforms of their social life.

5.2.1 Aims and objectives of the Prarthana Samaj :

The Prarthana Samaj believed that God is one and without any form, one has to worship him with spirituality. The Prarthana Samaj accepted and abided by the following principles:

1. I shall daily meditate on God.
2. I shall make efforts to do good and avoid evil.
3. I shall pray to God that I may repeat if through the fault of my disposition I have committed a bad deed.
4. God, give me strength deserve these promises.

The Prarthana Samajists did not upset the intense feelings of people towards gods like Vithoba who was the representation of the true God Vishnu. This signified the flexibility in the principles of Prarthana Samaj. It was a practical Samaj which declared all customs and traditions meaning less but continued with the rational and undamaging tradition to avoid any discontent of people.

5.2.2 Functions of the Prarthana Samaj :

As a matter of fact the Prarthana Samaj involved in the social work as foundation of night schools for imparting instructions to young and needy people, establishing organizations for social work and social reforms and creating social awareness. Among such organizations depressed class

mission was very important organisation which worked towards the removal of untouchability. The Prarthana Samaj worked hard and tried to solve the problem of orphan children, who were wandering in the cities like Mumbai and Pune by founding Asylums and Orphanages at holy or religious centres like Pandharpur, Dehu and Alandi. This Samaj fought for solving problems of women by discouraging the people for committing child marriage and isolating women from the mainstream in society. It supported for widow re-marriage and female education by instituting several institutions at various cities. The Prarthana Samaj wanted to concentrate on the religious reforms it thought that it would initiate the social reforms and improve the life of women and untouchables in society. It undertook religious activities like the Sunday services, Sunday schools, foundation of the young Thiests union and the postal mission that sent the Subodh Patrika, the mouth piece of the samaj to people through post.

5.2.3 Members of Prarthana Samaj :

There were several educated people, who became leaders of this samaj. Among them, M. G. Ranade, R. G. Bhandarkar, G. K. Gokhale, Talang and N. G. Chandavarkar were prominent members of this samaj. They were directly or indirectly involved in the activities the samaj. As the Mumbai paper, 'Hindu Reformer' claimed that the religion of Prarthana Samaj was destined to be the religion of the whole world due to the hard work and functions of the members of this samaj. In 1869, M. M. Kunte claimed that the three divisions of the Marathi society as English educated, Sanskrit educated and uneducated masses had attracted toward this society. Among them justice Ranade, although was a government employee, wrote extensively to create awakening and renaissance in society. M. G. Ranade was born in 1842 of Nifad of Nashik District, became a professor at the Elphinstone College, Mumbai, worked as translator to the Mumbai Government initially and then was appointed as a High Court Judge at Mumbai. He was a nationalist, educationist economist and a social reformer which led him to establish a Social Conference and discuss all problems related to women. In order to prepare a group of educated people to be yoked in the social reforms he associated with G. K. Gokhale who established the Deccan Education Society. It founded a school in the city of Pune, which grew naturally in Fergusson college, one of the leading educational institutions, then. He also helped found another organization, which came to be known as the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha in 1870, which prepared a report on the economic conditions in Maharashtra, when a parliamentary committee was formed to enquire about the economic problems in India in 1871.

In addition to this, the Prarthana Samaj leaders like R. G. Bhandarkar dedicated to spread a right view on religion, reforms and right conduct. It appointed various committees to pay attention towards the education of workers. The leaders of the Prarthana Samaj were English educated and quite practical to give us religious foundation to the social reforms to attract the common people to the cause of social reforms. About the leaders of Prarthana Samaj, P. C. Mazoomdar says that the people of Maharashtra were not like Bengalis who were easily brought under any

influence but if the Maharastrains came under it any how they were extra ordinarily great and sustained their enthusiasm for along time. It meant the leaders of the Prarthana Samaj did a commendable work for the society. G. K. Bhandarkar says that this samaj began its meetings with prayer and readings from the Theodore Parker and such other rational writers. It generated the most important literature of the samaj and it also became the philosophy of the samaj, which was published in the Subodha Patrika, the weekly periodical of the samaj.

5.2.4 M.G. Ranade (1842-1901) and R. G. Bhandarkar (1837-1925)

Mahadev Govind Ranade and Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar were the moving spirit behind the activities of the Prarthana Samaj. They elaborated on the philosophical basis of the Samaj and clarified its religious beliefs. Ranade, in his essay, “A Thiest’s Confession of Faith”, attempted to give the Samaj something more than a theology. He, alongwith Bhandarkar, based the Samaj’s philosophy upon the teachings of the Bhakti saints of Maharashtra such as Tukaram :

At the same time, he gave a great message which was in the form of a severe but timely warning to the excessive zeal of some Indian reformers. According to him, what India required was a comprehensive reform, not a mere revival or a revolutionary change but a thorough remolding of the entire life of the nation. He was convinced that the old moulds had outlived their usefulness and therefore needed replacement. However, he spoke of changes not as an innovation but as “a return to and restoration of the days of our past history”. Ranade stressed that a reformer should not sever his connections with society and sit on a high pedestal, but attempt at comprehensive change, comprising all aspects of an individual’s activities.

It is interesting to note that members of the Prarthana Samaj, though English-educated and high-caste individuals, conducted their meetings and services in Marathi and not in English or Sanskrit. To quote Dobbin :

“.... it was natural of Marathi-speakers to turn to the great Marathi saints, particularly Tukaram, whose verses often best expressed the type of personal devotion sought by Samaj members”. Ranade later explained that this devotion to the Bhakti saints was a means of showing to the people of Western India that the Prarthana Samai was not merely a movement of the English-educated in the urban areas, but deep-rooted in the country’s’ past, and unconnected to any particular religious or caste group.

N.G.Chandavarkar, a later day President of the samaj, found in the monotheism of the Samaj and their stress on the brotherhood of man, the fundamental principle of one God and one humanity as the foundation of all modern progress. He wrote in 1909 -

“Those who founded this institution (Prarthana Samaj) felt that until we realised the oneness of men, until we expanded our ideas of Brotherhood so as to feel that we are all creatures of the same God. India must be what she has been, low in the scale of nations, divided against herself, and without the ability to hold her own. with the more enlightened races of the world ”.

Check your progress :

Q.1. Evaluate the contribution of M. G. Ranade and R. G. Bhandarkar in the activities of Prarthana Samaj.

5.2.5 Decline of the Prarthana Samaj

For a decade or so the Prarthana Samaj flourished and attracted significantly large number of Hindus and non-Hindus to it. In 1868, the Bombay paper, 'Hindu Reformer', claimed that the religion of Prarthana Samaj was destined to be the religion of the whole world. And though the day is still very far distant from us when such a glorious result would be consummated, that it will come cannot admit of a doubt.

“Despite such exaggerated hopes, the Samaj remained a preserve of English-educated Brahmins of the region. Apart from Dr. Atmaram Pandurang, all the leading personalities of the samaj were either Chitpavan or Saraswat Brahmins. Its newspaper, the 'Subodh Patrika', occasionally reflected this Brahminical predominance claiming that “ the Brahmins have always been the intellectual aristocracy of India, who had lost their supremacy politically, but socially and intellectually they still retain their superiority to their fellow country men”. The paper advised social reformers to attend more to the material conditions of non- Brahmins than to their education.

Therefore, the Sabha was never a popular movement. By 1872, it was reported to have had 68 members and about 150-200 sympathisers. Its practical programme was not much. R. G. Bhandarkar was forced to admit that after six years of its existence, it had accomplished little. Attempts of Ranade, Bhandarkar and other leaders to appeal to a wide audience in the region did not produce results. Despite their efforts at evolving a synthesis of ideas and their desire for popular contact many of the English educated members of the Samaj felt divorced from their fellow-men in Western India. As pointed out by M. M. Kunte in 1869, the Marathi society had separated into three main divisions i.e. the English- educated, the Shastris with their traditional sanskrit-based learning, and the mass of uneducated men and women.

The strains between these three strata were considerable; these became apparent during the late sixties in a bitter and acrimonious debate over social reform and widow remarriage, in particular. While many upper class and influential Brahmins and Maratha Sardars opposed changes in the society, the lay Brahmins and Maratha followed their priests. The Western educated argued that Hindu widows and child marriage as a social reform, did not represent social change but rather a return to what might be termed as “true orthodoxy”.

Check your progress :

Q.1. Explain the principles and functions of Prarthana Samaj.

5.2.6 Significance of the Prarthana Samaj

On the whole the Samaj failed to achieve any marked popular impact and remained very much a gathering of elite. However, it did exercise, especially during the life-time of M.G.Ranade and R.G.Bhandarkar, considerable influence. It was mainly due to its members that a new social consciousness, extending to all fields of human activity, began to take root within the Hindu society in Maharashtra. The widow remarriage movement continued under the auspices of the Sabha and remarriages were affected from time to time. As a token of its zeal for reform the Samaj took over a foundling home in 1881 and an orphanage in the same year at Pandarpur. It established a maternity home and a home for homeless. It did laudable social and educational work among women since 1882 and provided for scientific instruction of groups of women associates.

The Samaj set up branches in Poona, Ahmedabad, Surat, Karachi, and elsewhere. Its members called social and religious abuses by their proper names, and helped to purify to some extent, Hinduism and strengthen its self-respect. Their religious universalism was a response to the challenge of a widening world and the onslaught of Christian missionaries. This universalism to quote Lederle. "Refused to be bound by fetters of orthodoxy; it was based on man, his reason and conscience".

Leaders of the Prarthana Samaj recognised the need for activity of a more practical kind. In 1872, it established a Theistic Society under the Presidency of R.G.Bhandarkar. It was dedicated to "the spread of right views on religion, supplemented by practical reform and right conduct". The Association appointed several committees to look after specific social objectives such as the spread of education among workers and artisans. Although the aims and

programmes of the Prarthana Samaj and the Theistic Association were more ambitious than their performance, their members genuinely dedicated themselves to practical, though gradual, reform. They sought in earnest to provide a religious foundation for the social reform. In 1887, Ranade founded the Indian Social Conference. The members of the Prarthana Samaj like Bhandarkar and Chandavarkar played a leading part in the activities of the Conference.

Check your progress :

Q.1. Explain the significance of Parthana Samaj.

Q. 2. Examine the important role of the Prarthana Samaj in the social reform movement in Maharashtra ?

5.3 SUMMARY

The western learning gave birth to the Indian Renaissance. During this period great changes took place in the socio-cultural, religious and political field in India.

Indian thinkers began to look at the evils and weaknesses in Indian Society. They realised that the backwardness of Indian society was mainly due to the evil customs practices, religious and social convictions etc.

5.4 QUESTIONS

1. Explain the principles and functions of Parthana Samaj.
2. Examine the important role of the Prarthana Samaj in the social reform movement in Maharashtra ?
3. Evaluate the contribution of M. G. Ranade and R. G. Bhandarkar in the activities of Prarthana Samaj.
4. Stress the important role played by the Prarthana Samaj in eradicating social evils.

5.5 ADDITIONAL READING:

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CONTRIBUTIONS OF THINKERS OF MAHARASHTRA TO ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

Unit Structure

6.0 Objectives

6.1 Introduction

6.2 Contributions of thinkers of Maharashtra to Economic Nationalism

6.2.1 Dadabhai Naoroji

6.2.2 M. G. Ranade and Economic Nationalism

6.2.3 Ganesh Vyankatesh Joshi

6.3 Summary

6.4 Questions

6.5 Additional Reading

6.0 OBJECTIVES :

After the study of this unit, the student will be able to:

- 1) Acquaint with the promotion of economic nationalism.
 - 2) Understand the important role played by Dadabhai Naoroji.
 - 3) Know important work done by M.G. Ranade.
 - 4) Grasp the economic nationalism of G.V. Josh.
-

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Jambhekar who is regarded as a pioneer of Renaissance in Maharashtra. Another reformer Tarkhadkar represented a secular approach and was one of the sponsors of reforming the traditional Hindu religion. Deshmukh alias Lokahitawadi did not confine his liberal thought to merely one or two fields but applied it to all walks of life. These reformers were not received with open arms by the society which was drilled and disciplined to preserve its social and spiritual values over centuries. Moreover, the traditional Maratha society had the privilege of witnessing the rise of the Maratha political influence throughout India. The people of Maharashtra whether in the cities like Bombay or Pune would hardly admit of any change inspired by their British conquerers.

The second half of the nineteenth century was dominated by the activities of another three leaders of liberal thought. They were Dadabhai Naoroji, Mahadev Govind Ranade and Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Their ideas and activities were to influence not only Bombay and Maharashtra but the whole country in general. In this connection Dr. K. Mukerji observes that Maharashtra never had a general renaissance in the sense that Bengal had

one after 1815. Prof. J.V. Naik's rejoinder that the predecessors of Ranade-Agarkar had done a substantial rethinking in response to the socio-economic life in the colonial situation and thus the work of Ranade-Agarkar had influenced the main stream of Maharashtrian thought deserves consideration. Although most of these enlightened reformers were confined to cities, their influence on the people of Maharashtra was profound which will be clear from the activities of the institutions and organisation that they established. We shall now discuss the achievements of Dadabhai Naoroji, Mahadev Govind Ranade and Gopal Krishna Gokhale in the following pages.

6.2 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THINKERS OF MAHARASHTRA TO ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

6.2.1 DADABHAI NAOROJI (1825-1917) :

The manifold achievements of Dadabhai Naoroji the Grand old Man of Indian History cannot be justly compressed in a few pages. The story of his long life reflects the several memorable epochs in the history of political life of India. His 'simple but heroic life devoutly dedicated to the service of humanity, cannot be properly represented by fixing attention only on fleeting activities of his college days. It is therefore necessary to enumerate the important events of his life after discussing his contribution to the Students Literary and Scientific Society.

Students Literary and Scientific Society

Dadabhai was born in Bombay in a poor Parsi priest family on September 4, 1825. He was educated in a free school conducted by the 'Native Education Society'. The school had two branches English and Vernacular. The society was conducted under Government auspices. He received his college education in the Elphinstone Institution. The Elphinstone College and the school conducted by the Native Education Society were combined to form Elphinstone Institution. He received the Clare scholarship in 1840 and in 1842 he was admitted to the newly opened class of Normal Scholars.

Dadabhai was very active during his college days. In 1848 some of the members of the Native Literary Society assembled in the hall of the Elphinstone Institution and formed a new society. It was named as 'Students Literary and Scientific Society'. Dadabhai was appointed as Treasurer of the Society and, Professor Patton its President. From that time onwards Dadabhai devoted himself to the work of education and social reform.

The Rules of the Society

The aim of the Society was to develop the interest in literary and scientific knowledge. In keeping with this aim one of the rules of the Society provided that two members should be nominated by the Secretary of the society to read papers on literary scientific or social subjects, The meeting of the Society was held twice a month. The Society was keen on activating the members to do independent thinking on these matters of public interest. The Students and teachers should shoulder the responsibility of educating the people and therefore an in depth study of the current issues was also intended. The Society however did not encourage entanglement of the political matters and religious questions.

The society maintained a strict discipline and therefore wished to weed out useless members or those who only accepted the membership as a sort of ornament. Those who failed to read a paper in the first instance were fined a rupee. The fine for second failure was two rupees and if the member failed to read his paper on the subject offered by him the third time he was expelled.

The questions that were made the subjects of the papers were discussed in the meetings of the Society. It was not to be merely an academic discussion to be confined within the four walls of the class room but the conclusions were to be exposed to the full view of the public through the columns of journals conducted by two vernacular branches of the society. One was the 'Gujarati Dnyan Prasarak Mandali' and the other was a 'Marathi Dnyan Prasarak Mandali'. The Gujarati journal was edited by Dadabhai Naoroji which published the debates.

The work undertaken by the 'Dnyan Prasarak Mandali under the guidance and direction of Dadabhai Naoroji was of far-reaching importance. In 1849, a paper on female education was read by Behramji Kharshetji Gandbi. The discussion on this much-debated issue led to a practical operation. The students began to visit several Parsi and Hindu parents to allow them to sit on their verandahs and to teach their girls. In a few days after the decision about the propagation of education among the girls the students could get the consent of parents. In the seven schools they could register 44 Parsi girls and 24 Hindu girls. The move to educate women attracted the attention of some leaders of Bombay. Jagannath Shankar Sheth gave a cottage to be used as school-house. This inspired others to give concrete assistance for female education. Khershedji Nasanwanji Cama gave a substantial donation to the Society. This enabled the Society to maintain schools for girls both Hindu and Parsi.

The social reform successfully undertaken by the Society encouraged some Parsi reformers to remove some pernicious customs from the Parsi society. In 1851 Naoroji Furdoomji the 'Tribunal of the people' was persuaded to found the 'Rahnumae Mazdaysnam Sabha' or 'Guides on the Mazdayasnan Path'. Naoroji Furdoomji was appointed President and Dadabhai Secretary. Some of the reformers were zealous to reform the old Zoroastrian faith according to the Western ideas. The Rahnumane Sabha achieved its goal

of restoring the ancient religion to its pristine purity.

Dadabhai lived to witness the diamond Jubilee of the Society and the Dnyan Prakash Mandali. The Society had also undertaken the work of translating books into Marathi and Gujarati. The work of the Society was also getting wider publicity as Elphinstonians of the first generation were interested in journalism. Among the Marathi speaking alumni journalism had become a favourite tool to propose social and religious reforms. Dadabhai also felt an urgent need of an independent journal for the cause of reform. Dadabhai and Kharshedji Cama decided to start a fortnightly journal 'Rast Goftar' (Truth

Teller). Cama agreed to provide the necessary funds and Dadabhai agreed to run it without remuneration. The new journal was issued on November 15, 1851. This was incidently the sixth journal in Gujarati but the only one with an independent ideology. The journal was started in the wake of Muslim- Parsi riot which broke out on October 7, 1851. Within two months the journal with progressive views found favour with the readers and in January 1852 the fortnightly was converted into a weekly. Dadabhai was fully supported by the Society boys and his connection with the journal continued even after he left India in 1855 and made England his home.

The Students Society had a wider acceptance and its activities were assuming larger dimensions under the able leadership of Dadabhai. On September 2, 1852 a meeting was held in Elphinstone College to perpetuate the memory of Framji Cowasji Benaji, the great philanthropist and patron of education. It was decided at the meeting that the fund collected for helping the zoroastrians in Iran was to be now utilised for the formation of a museum in connection with the Students Literary and Scientific Society and named the Framaji Cowasji Institute. Here was a professor setting a great ideal before his students. Several students of the Elphinstone College joined in the work of collecting funds for a noble cause. R.P. Masani remarks, "It is a teacher's office to lead as well as to teach and by the spark of his personal example to set the heart of his pupils on fire. Dadabhai fulfilled that mission, not only in regard to his college pupils but also in regard to his disciples through-out his life.

Important Events In his life

It would not be out of place if some important events in the life of the 'Grand Old Man' of Indian history are mentioned here in the context of his all-out efforts for building a new India and from such discussion regional history cannot be separated. He was appointed Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in 1852. He was the first Indian to hold, such a high position in any prominent colleges in the country. He left India in 1855 to settle in England. He joined the Cams Company and after a few years he started his own trading company. During the first decade he tried to educate the British public opinion on the Civil Service Examination. He stressed the Importance of Sanskrit and the Arabic the two classical languages and the London Indian Society was able to force the British Government to give up the proposal of reducing the marks

gained by the Indian candidates in one of these languages as optional subjects.

In February 1866 John Crawford, President of the Ethnological Society of London read a paper in which he sought to prove that the Asians as a race were inferior in intellect compared to the Europeans. In the following month Dadabhai gave a fitting rejoinder to Crawford's thesis. Dadabhai's spirited defense of the Asiatic contribution to literature and science silenced arrogant European ethnologists.

Dadabhai's achievements in the political field are many. He became the first Member of the British Parliament. He worked as a Diwan of Baroda. He worked for the establishment of the Indian National Congress of which he was elected President thrice in his career. His greatest contribution to the intellectual field was his book 'Poverty and Un-British Rule in India' published in 1901. In 1876 when he was a Municipal Councilor of Bombay. He read a paper on the subject of the poverty of India before the Bombay branch of East India Association.

Dadabhai's achievements are put in a nutshell by Lokmanya Tilak when the efforts of Tilak were frustrated by Moderates in the Congress to be elected President at the Calcutta Congress in 1906. He writes, "Why do we respect Dadabhai so much? We do not consider that late Mr. Mandalik, Bhau Daji or Mr. Naoroji Fardumji were in any way inferior in their contribution to the national welfare to Dadabhai. Even if we point out that he was the first Indian to be elected the Member of British Parliament, subsequently Bhavnagari also achieved that distinction. These events do not explain why Dadabhai enjoys a unique place in the hearts of Indian people. The explanation is so obvious. His greatness does not lie in the number of institutions he started, or a number of lectures he delivered on different subjects or his work in this capacity or that. His greatness rests on his 'theory of drain' that he propounded not merely by guess-work but by indefatigable industry to collect the statistics and prove, his thesis. In the mildest of psychopants eulogising the blessings of the British rule after the fall of the Peshwa regime, here was a man brave enough to prove to the British masters that they were responsible for the poverty and the miserable conditions of the Indian people. He thrust on the attention of the people of India that the outward appearance of the British Rule may be attractive but it acts as a disease to destroy the national interest of India.

The 'drain theory' that he developed created a consciousness among the educated Indians, throughout the country that self-rule has no substitute. Although he spent most of his life in England he never missed any opportunity to uphold the national honour. He had the good fortune to enjoy a long life. His political hopes of a better deal from the British rulers at the outbreak of World War I were very high. Gopal Krishna Gokhale was another leader who laid implicit faith in the benevolence of the British rulers. Dadabhai did not live long enough to see the constitutional changes after World War I.

Check your progress:-

Q. 1 Write in brief the rules of Student Literary and Scientific Society.

6.2.2 M. G. RANADE AND ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

M. G. Ranade however excelled in many other fields also. His book 'The Rise of Maratha Power' which he wrote to awaken self-esteem of the people of Maharashtra (once a proud nation now living under awe of the British power). He had also applied his mind to the economic hardships the common man was undergoing during the British regime.

Ranade was an independent thinker. He had closely watched the deteriorating condition of the people. Bhaskar Tarkhadkar, Bhau Mahajan and others had focussed the attention of the educated elite on the 'drain of the wealth' of India. His work at the small princely state of Akkalkot as an 'Karbhari' (administrator) and his association with Vishnushastri Pundit and Ganesh Vasudev Joshi (Sarvajanik Kaka) had given him an insight into the financial aspect of reform. His mind was fully equipped to interpret the British policy of 'Free Trade' when it was profitable for the English traders and 'protectionist' policy when the Indian textiles threatened to capture European markets. His writings and speeches were looked with suspicion by the Rulers. He could not get a full-fledged post of a judge for 23 years and remained in subordinate position.

Welby Commission and Ranade

Dadabhai Naoroji, Wedderburn and Caine wanted Justice Ranade to present India's case before the Indian Expenditure Commission under the chairmanship of Lord Welby. Ranade was not spared by the Bombay Government. He therefore entrusted the work to G.K. Gokhale. He persuaded Ganesh Vyankatesh Joshi to do the groundwork under his own direction. He thus promoted nascent economic nationalism.

6.2.3 GANESH VYANKATESH JOSHI (1851-1911)

G. V. Joshi was an eminent economist, a liberal thinker and a nationalist to the core. He never allowed his passions to cloud his vision about the true nature of the British Rule in India. Though born in a family which served the last Peshwa with great devotion, he never allowed his vision to be clouded by passions at hostility towards the new rulers.

He was born at Miraj a small princely state in 1851. His father worked as a treasurer (Potnis) in that princely state. His grandfather was a diplomat at the court of Peshwa Bajirao II and had participated in the last battle of the Peshwa against the army of the East India Company. However, his father did not hesitate to allow him to receive English education.

Ganesh Joshi was a brilliant student. He stood first in the subject of Logic of the B.A. examination. After graduation he sought Government Service in the Education Department in 1873. Like most of his contemporaries he started social activities while in Government Service. He served at Nasik, Ratnagiri,

Bombay, Poona, Sholapur and Satara. He was a competent teacher and his fame spread over the whole of the Bombay Presidency. He used to contribute articles on various subjects to the 'Times of India' and his articles were read by the educated elite and the government officials with great interest. He wrote under the pen name 'J'.

He was modest and God-fearing man. He led a simple life. He was a devout worshiper of 'Ganapati'. He was a highly disciplined man. He did not spare any labour to understand any academic or practical problem. He filled his mind with full information on the subject under study and in a short time he was recognised as an expert statistician.

His Social, political and economic studies

This erudite scholar worked quietly and was always engrossed in deep study of the social and economic problems. He was a liberal thinker and advocated a comprehensive social reform not a mere revival. He spoke with conviction. He contributed to several periodical and magazines of that time like the 'Maratha', 'Sarvajanik Sabha', quarterly and 'Indian Review' besides the 'Times of India'. He advocated free education for all. His systematic study of economic problems and his ability to express his views emphatically supported by statistical proof drew the attention of the leaders of the Indian National Congress. Besides Justice Ranade, Surendra Nath Bannerjee, Sayani and RC. Dutt used to consult him on political and economic matters.

Welby Commission

Ganesh Joshi was not satisfied with making such statements as India is a poor nation. He painstakingly compiled data from the Reports published by the Indian Government and compared them with the published statistics of corresponding economic matters from other countries and proved that India had become a poor country. Dadabhai Naoroji later on published his thesis on the 'Drain Theory' but Joshi had already done it on the basis of statistical study.

Justice Ranade asked Ganesh Joshi to collect the relevant statistical information and assist G.K. Gokhale in putting forward a case for India when he was to testify before the Welby Commission. Gokhale accomplished his job with distinction. It cannot be denied that the groundwork for that was ably prepared by Joshi. Ranade's guidance was also a great factor in making the exercise a great success.

Ganesh Joshi enjoyed the confidence of the political leaders as well as the Government officers. He was nominated to the Bombay Legislative Council. He received great recognition from the people when he presided over the Provincial Conference held at Dhulia in 1908. He retired from Government Service in 1907. He died in 1911. In the following year his son published his collected articles and speeches in a book form.

6.4 ,SUMMARY :

Thus Dadabhai's 'The Drain theory' created a consciousness among the educated Indians. M.G. Ranade's Guidance Ganesh Joshi as an expert statistician promoted nascent economic nationalism.

6.5 QUESTIONS :

1. Describe the work of Dadabhai Navroji in the promotion of economic nationalism.
2. In what way did Justice Ranade endeavour to improve the economic condition of the country?
3. Evaluate the work of Ganesh Vyankatesh Joshi to promote economic welfare of the country.

6.6 ADDITIONAL READING:

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MODERATES, EXTREMISTS AND REVOLUTIONARIES IN MAHARASHTRA

Unit Structure :

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 The Moderate Phase
- 7.3 The Extremist Phase
- 7.4 Revolutionaries in Maharashtra
- 7.5 Summary
- 7.6 Questions
- 7.7 Additional Reading

7.0 OBJECTIVES

After the study of this unit, the student will be able to :

- To grasp the programmes and policies of the Moderates.
- To understand the contribution of Gopal Krishna Gokhale.
- To explain the programmes of Extremists.
- To understand B.G. Tilak and Extremist Politics.
- To comprehend the work of revolutionary nationalist.
- To know the Contribution of Savarkar as Revolutionaries.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

After the foundation of Indian national Congress, there arose different forms and factions in the Indian nationalism in Maharashtra. They were as moderates, extremists, revolutionaries and Gandhi age. The first three forms were represented by Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar respectively whereas due to the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, his period came to be known as Gandhi age. Although, the Congress leaders had different approaches towards the national movement, all they aimed the achievement of independence based on the unity of people, which was evolved due to common customs, civil institutions and historical traditions.

The memory that their ancestors had wielded political authority over most part of the country was still fresh in the minds of the people of Maharashtra. Their forefathers had fought for the 'Hindvi Swarajya'. This

motivated leaders like G. K. Gokhale and B. G. Tilak to lead the nation towards self government. Their goal was the same but their methods differed. Gokhale wanted to pursue constitutional methods. Tilak while remaining within the constitutional framework wanted to expose the defects in the system of Government and defy oppressive measures. His activities inspired revolutionary nationalism among young leaders. We shall now discuss the efforts of these men with different political views to attain the goal of Swarajya.

7.2 THE MODERATE PHASE

Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Dadabhai Naoroji, Phirozshah Mehta and Mahadev Govind Ranade were the leaders of this Congress. These leaders believed in the British liberal traditions, their rule of law and sense of judiciary. The moderates wanted reforms first with the help of British as freedom of speech, association and press, reforms in the executive and legislative councils at the centre and in the provinces. The moderates wanted the British stop exploiting Indians and destructing Indian crafts and cottage industries. They should stop investing in Indian Railways, plantations mines and factories. The British should help the rising Indian capitalists in building Indian industries by way of loans, aid and subsidies wherever required. The moderates demanded a reduction in heavy taxes, land revenue and free the peasants from the debts of money lenders by giving them loans at reasonable interest. To help the Indian peasantry, the British should establish land banks and advance loan for irrigation. The British should reduce the military expenditure taking place on its maintenance in India. The moderates wanted that the British should reform and reorganize the civil services, raise the age criteria from 19 to 21 years and hold examinations simultaneously in India and England.

They believed in the sense of justice and traditions of liberalism of the British. They, therefore, undertook petition and appeals to get sanctioned their demands. They also undertook public meetings and writing extensively in Indian now's papers, journals and pamphlets. Although, the moderates put forth various demands and adopted all legal and constitutional strategies to get them passed, they could not succeed in getting them passed. Leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai and other Extremist Congress members were very critical about strategies and programme the moderates. Although the moderates could not reach to the masses, they could keep alive the Indian national movement for a long period.

Check your progress :

- 1) Explain the activities of Moderate Congress.

GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE (1866-1915)

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was born in Kokanastha Brahman family. He was born in Chiplun in Ratnagiri District in 1866. He was educated at Kolhapur, Pune and Bombay. He had also the privilege of studying at the Elphinstone College like Ranade and Dadabhai Naoroji. He was appointed

Professor at the age of twenty in the Fergusan College, Pune. He was elected life member of the Deccan Education Society on June 7, 1886. He was welcomed to the Fergusan College by Lokmanya Tilak and the great social reformer Agarkar.

Moderates, Extremists
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The cordial relations between Agarkar and Gokhale were strengthened with the passage of time but Tilak's social and political views were too strong for Gokhale, the disciple of Ranade to accept. Tilak and Gokhale clashed in the Deccan Society over the policy matters and Tilak resigned his life membership of the society in 1890. The hostility between Gokhale and Tilak was to cloud their political and social vision and create impediments in the progress towards their identical goal with different approaches.

Gokhale regarded Ranade as his Guru (Preceptor) and always sought his advice on many important matters political, social and economic. The Manifesto of the Deccan Sabha which Ranade had drafted moulded Gokhale's liberalism and moderation in public life.

Extended view of Liberalism

He had spelled out his ideas of constitutional means for achieving any political goal. In one of his speeches he said that all means, are constitutional except three. They are :-

- (a) Rebellion against the established authority.
- (b) Lending support to foreign invasion and
- (c) Committing atrocities on the people.

Moderates

The first Congress President, W.C.Bannerjee had made a special plea for, 'Consolidation of National Unity. The second President Dadabhai Naoroji in December 1886 in session at Calcutta set the pattern of moderation and restraint. "What is it for which we are now met?" he asked. "Is this Congress a nursery for sedition and rebellion against the British Government?(Cries of 'No! No!') Is it another stone in the foundation of the stability of the government? (Cries of 'Yes! Yes!')

.... Let us speak out like men and proclaim that we are loyal to the backbone". This will give us an outline of the policies and programme followed by the Congress till the partition of Bengal. As this concerns the national history in general we shall restrict our attention to Maharashtra and see what the 'Prince of Indian Liberalism' Gopal Krishna Gokhale, said and did to promote nationalism in Maharashtra.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale and the Moderates

Ranade, Gokhale's guru, Dadabhai Naoroji and Phirozeshah Mehta were very much impressed by the English Liberal tradition. Gokhale had established close contacts with these stalwarts of the nineteenth century. He was also in personal contact with English liberals and had imbibed the

humanism and liberalism from the writings of Edmund Burke and John Stuart Mill. Gokhale was inspired for social and public life by the examples of Lokmanya Tilak and Gopal Ganesh Agarkar. He was associated with Mahadev Govind Ranade during his professorship at the Ferguson College, Pune.

Gokhale like other liberals believed in agitating for piecemeal reforms. He wanted reform in the administration, representative Legislature, separation of the executive and judicial function. The programme of the moderates who led the Congress was primarily conceived in the interest of the upper and middle classes.

The moderates desired gradual reforms of the councils, Indian Civil services, local bodies and the Defense forces. They reposed their faith in constitutional method. Gokhale laid great stress on representing the grievances of the people to the government. He thought that if the British rulers were convinced of the justice of their demand, the British had the sense of justice and fair play to grant them their legitimate demands. He conceived his role as a mediator between the people and the government. Gokhale like Ranade had somehow or other uncritically placed his faith in the British justice. These moderates believed that the British rule was for the good of the Indian people. It was a Divine Providence that the British were sent to India at the right time. Indian people should be grateful for the blessings of peace and stability of their government. They wished to forget the bad dream of 1857 and wanted to focus the attention of the people on the English literature, the systems of education and justice; the improvements in transport and communications and the rule of law which they regarded as blessings of the British Rule.

The test of their legitimate belief in the political wisdom of the rulers came when the Indian Councils Act of 1892 was passed. The moderates had entertained high hopes about the reform and expansion of the supreme and existing Provincial legislative Councils. The first session of the Indian National Congress had passed a resolution containing such aspiration as admission of a considerable proportion of elected members and the granting of right to the members to interpolate the executive in regard to all branches of the administration. They were sadly let down by the British Rulers when the Indian Councils Act of 1892 was published. There were too many limitations on the power and functions of the councils. The constitutional methods of Prayers and Petition did not bear any fruit. The people's faith in the sense of justice of the Englishman received a great jolt.

A group of young men began to look inwards and explore the glories of ancient India. The Hindu revivalist movements began. Gokhale however was firm in his belief in the good intentions of the British. His Attitude towards the Politics

Gokhale made critical analysis of the political situation in India. He criticized British policy of maintaining a ratio of 1 : 2 between British

forces and Indian forces. Gokhale entered the Bombay Legislative Council. During his tenure he worked hard to solve the problem of famine, land revenue and agricultural discontent. He also acted as a member of Pune Municipal Corporation. He introduced a practice of printing the rule which were passed in meeting. He reached the peak of his career when he was elected to the Imperial Legislative Council in 1881. His entrance in the council opened a new chapter in his life. His budgetary analysis earned great praise even from opponents. He took pride in the service of the common people. He always pointed out that the expenditure on welfare schemes would make people to resist the famines.

Gokhale And The Indian Expenditure Commission

A Royal Commission to inquire into the India expenditure was appointed on May 24, 1895 under the chairmanship of Lord Welby. The commission began its enquiries about financial administration in 1896. In that year monsoon failed in the Deccan which resulted in a serious famine. The Deccan Sabha was founded by Ranade during that year to undertake the relief and other social work and render social service as the Sarvajanik Sabha had done before.

The Welby commission consisted of all seasoned statesman and there were Wedderburn and Caine with Dadabhai Naoroji to present the Indian point of view. The witnesses were to be called from India to give evidence before the commission and as Ranade could not be released by the Bombay Government, Gokhale was chosen in his place to go to England with Wachha. This was a great breakthrough for Gokhale. Wachha held Gokhale in high esteem and was happy that Gokhale came forward to shoulder the responsibility. Ranade coached Gokhale rigorously for weeks to show him the nuances of Indian finance. Ranade gave a letter of introduction to Wedderburn asking him to guide the young man on the right lines. Gokhale presented the Indian point of view with great authority and confidence. Wedderburn was frank enough to praise the young man in these words “Your evidence will be much the best on our side. Let me congratulate you on the signal service which you have rendered to your country. Our minority report will be based practically on your evidence”.

The Plague And Famine Administration 1897

In 1896 there was a famine, and in the next year bubonic plague broke out in Bombay and Pune. Schools and businesses were closed and the Government appointed W.C. Rand as plague Commissioner for Pune. He was keen on enforcing health regulations and had ordered police to inspect homes harboring victims. All those who were infected by the disease were removed to the quarantine hospitals. The authorities also sent a band of officials to take measures to prevent the spread of the epidemic. There were protest by the local people regarding the quarantine hospitals as death hospitals. The rumours began to spread that the police were violating the sanctity of women's quarters. A series of memorials were sent to the Bombay Government under the leadership of Lokmanya Tilak. They denounced police oppression.

The criticism of the Plague Administration and its Commissioner Rand became more bitter. Gokhale who was in England in connection with the Welby Commission received letters from his friends in Pune reporting excesses by the famine police. It was reported that several women in their Pune homes were molested. Gokhale told a small committee of members of the House of Commons about the barbarity.

‘The Manchester Guardian’ carried the news. The Bombay Government denied such atrocities. Gokhale was challenged to reveal the sources of his evidence. Gokhale had to retreat and he publicly apologized for the charges. The real fact was that Gokhale feared police reprisals to the informants. His mentor, Ranade persuaded him not to pursue the course of going all out against the government. “In effect Ranade asked Gokhale to risk his public career to avoid a disastrous conflict in Pune” Gokhale like an Obedient disciple did what Ranade told him to do. Ranade tried his best to prevent breakdown of relations between British and Indians especially when he found that the criticism of the famine administration had caused the resignation of Principal Welby of Deccan college. It was a very sad affair. Gokhale could have exposed the British authorities and Ranade could have adopted a bold stance but in the long run it would have produced evil consequences.

Ranade’s efforts however could not conciliate the ardent nationalists. The sixtieth year of Queen Victoria’s accession was being celebrated in the country. The governor had held a party in Pune to celebrate the occasion on June 22, 1897. The storm of famine and plague administration seemed to have subsided. But as Commissioner and Lieutenant Ayerst were coming out after the celebrations, they were attacked by Chapekar brothers and they murdered them. Lokamanya Tilak, was arrested after five days for his provocative articles in the ‘Kesari’ and charged with disaffection against the government. The nationalism in Maharashtra was taking a different turn from what Gokhale and the moderates had contemplated.

A True Patriot

The ‘Apology incident’ had infuriated some extremists. The orthodox among the extremists took the opportunity to excommunicate Gokhale for his foreign travel. Gokhale took all such disabilities and reverses in his stride. The death of Ranade in 1901 created a vacuum in his life. However, he had dedicated his services to the nation. He scaled new heights in public life when he was nominated as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council in 1902. During the first four years of his tenure, he had to struggle against the autocratic policy of Lord Curzon. Gokhale had become a truly cosmopolitan economist of his generation and according to informed circles he was the greatest authority on Public Finance of his time in India.

The partition of Bengal in 1905 was another severe blow to the moderates in the Congress who had reposed their trust in the political wisdom of the British rulers. Gokhale was elected President of the Banaras Congress that year. He showed exemplary courage to justify the use of boycott as a

political weapon under certain conditions. He visited England in the following year to represent the popular opinion in India to the British authorities and the public. The moderates were losing ground as the victory of Japan over Russia had produced a wave of nationalism throughout India. Lokmanya Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Roy and Aurobindo Ghosh were leading the boycott movement. The extremists split the Congress at the Surat session in 1907 and the moderates sustained the Congress until 1916.

His Achievements

Gokhale never faltered in his dedication to the service of his people. He wanted to create a band of self-denying workers and patriots and therefore founded the 'Servants of India Society'. He believed in self-government within the British Empire. He advocated the association of India with the British even after full independence and sovereignty. It was desirable for the progress of India. He always adhered to the constitutional means to achieve his goal. The rules of the Servants of India Society would reflect the hard discipline that he demanded of the members of that Society. The main guidelines laid down in its preamble were as follows :-

- (a) Every member of the Servants of India Society must endeavour to arouse intense national feelings among the people by his own example.
- (b) They should lead campaigns for political education of the people.
- (c) They should strive to promote co-operation and understanding among the people.
- (d) They should promote education especially scientific and industrial education among the people.
- (e) They should encourage industrial movements.
- (f) The members should consider as their moral duty to ameliorate the condition of the backward people.

Gokhale by his disciplined behaviour had set a great example of a dedicated servant of India. He was not worried about the praise or ridicule from the people. He disregarded his personal comfort and aspiration while serving the national cause as he saw it fit. He supported the boycott movement and also the non-violent resistance to autocratic policies. However, in the interest of the nation he co-operated with the British Government in the framing of Morley Minto Reforms of 1909. In 1912 he visited South Africa as requested by Ghandhiji. He fully supported Ghandhiji in his movement against the colour bar. Gokhale requested Ghandhiji to return to India in 1914, and serve India which needed, a dedicated worker like him. Gokhale was preparing a scheme for reforms in the years to come. It was published after his death in 1915. It was known as the 'Political Testament of Gokhale.'

The method of the moderates was derisively called 'Political mendicancy'. The piece-meal reforms and the constitutional means advocated by Gokhale, Dadabhai, Pherozshah Mehta, Wachha, Bannerjee and others was taking the Indian National Congress at the snail's pace towards the cherished goal of 'dominion status' within the British Empire. Dr. Rash

Behari Ghose however recommends “some kindly thoughts for those who too, in their day strove to do their duty however, imperfectly through evil report, with it may be a somewhat chastened fervour, but a fervour as genuine as that which stirs and aspires younger hearts”.

Gokhale’s devotion to Motherland was total and complete. His uncritical trust in the fair sense and justice of the British rulers might not be accepted by many. His patience with the obstinate British administration even when the public, pressure was mounting against his moderation, might not appeal to the younger generations. His deep influence on Gandhiji’s policies and the constructive work that he did to free nationalism from narrow-mindedness entitles him for a high place in the regional as well as the national history. Lokamanya Tilak has aptly described him as ‘the diamond of India, the jewel of Maharashtra and the Prince of Workers’.

Check your progress :-

Q.1 . Write in brief Gopal Krishna Gokhale’s achievements.

7.3 THE EXTREMIST PHASE

Although the moderates trained Indian people politically and popularized the ideas of democracy and civil liberty, their elitist background failed in making any far-reaching impact on the masses. This led to the emergence of the young nationalist group in the Indian national Congress under the leadership of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. This group was very critical about the ideology and methodology of the moderates and wanted to adopt a more radical programme for the attainment of their demands. Right from the foundation of the Indian National Congress, some leaders were dissatisfied with the moderate politics. However, their number was less. With the beginning of the 20th century the extremist elements emerged as a strong force led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, popularly known as Lokamanya Tilak. The extremist leaders like Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai were extremely critical of the ideology and methodology of the moderate leadership. With the rise of Lokamanya Tilak, the extremist ideology became popular among the common people.

Extremist Politics

The programme outlined by the founders of the Indian National Congress aimed at promoting better understanding between people and the government. However, the events that followed by foundation of Congress, disturbed even the tenor of the line of action visualised by the liberal leaders. The Indian Councils Act of 1892 as already pointed out above disillusioned many young members. There was also a feeling of uneasiness among them at the bandwagon of Western superiority in every field of life. Some of the more dynamic personalities like Swami Vivekananda, Lokamanya Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Arobindo Ghosh began to take a serious link to the ancient glories of India. Swami Vivekananda unfolded the true nature of Indian culture and Hindu religion before the parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893. This revived the interest in the India’s

past. Aurobinda Ghosh declared “Independence is the goal of life and Hinduism alone will fulfill this aspiration of ours”.

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The other factors which encouraged Extremist politics in Maharashtra were the outbreak of famine in 1896 and the plague epidemic within Bombay Government and the celebration of the 61st anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne in the midst of the misfortunes reminded of Lord Lytton's policies. The policy of prayers and petitions of the moderate leaders exasperated the young men who wished to accelerate the progress towards responsible government.

Lora Curzon's obstinacy to partition the Bengal provided the fuel for the fire of Extremist politics. Lokmanya Tilak was quick to perceive the opportunity to denigrate the British supremacy in the wake of Japan's victory over a European nation, Russia in 1905. The repressive policy of Lord Curzon created a favourable ground for Tilak's extremist politics and the Swadeshi Movement.

This group came to be known as the Extremist Congress which dominated the Indian national movement from 1905 to 1920 till the death of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Although, there were several national & international factors responsible for the rise and growth of Extremist Congress, the main spirit behind this was of Bal Gangadhar Tilak only. He was graduated from the University of Mumbai and founded the Maratha and Kesari the two newspapers to create awareness among the people.

In order to bring people together and promote brotherhood among them, he popularized the Ganesh festival and introduced the festival of Shiv Jayanti in the honour of Chhatrapati Shivaji, the great Maratha ruler of this country. Tilak appealed farmers not to pay land revenue when there was no production due to the failure of monsoon and he asked the people in general to boycott the English goods. This led him to attract the eighteen months rigorous imprisonment. Tilak was also sentenced again for six years rigorous imprisonment and sent to Mandalay, Burma on account of sedition charges and danger to the British rule in India.

Tilak wrote Gita Rahasya a commentary on the Gita a holy book of Hinduism in the prison. He was released from the prison in 1914. He established the Home Rule league and started the movement in Mumbai and Pune under his own leadership. This noble son who called the Swaraj is my birth right and I will have it, whom the British called him as the father of Indian unrest, was the main Pillar of the Extremist Congress in Maharashtra. This noble son of India died on 1st August, 1920.

Although, the Swadeshi movement was started by the moderates to promote Indian industries but the Extremists used it the means of boycott to press the British and create serious effects on their economy. The Extremists wanted to make all mills and factories of the British stand still and snatch independence or swaraj from them. Bal Gangadhar Tilak himself led the Swadeshi movement and boycotted the British goods in

order to facilitate the swadeshi goods. Tilak set up cooperative stores and organised bonfires of British goods throughout Maharashtra.

Nationalism of B.G. Tilak

Tilak was a born fighter and his nationalism had that militant approach. Like Ranade, Gokhale and Dadabhai he appreciated the contribution of the Western civilization and the benefits of the British systems of education and administration. However, he did not want the British to be their rulers. It was for this reason that he had talked of complete independence. He had declared in 1887 "Swarajya is my birth-right and I shall have it." This was the guiding principle of his life. He could not have any patience with the procrastination of the constitutionalism of the Moderates.

His idea of Swarajya which he expressed in Kesari is as follows : "Independence (Swarajya) is nothing more than managing my home affairs myself. Swarajya is simply the people's rule replacing that of the foreign bureaucracy. Collectors, Commissioners, Governors are capable, we want such officers but we want them under our control. They should work as servants and not as masters". Tilak although leading the extremist politics wanted to retain ties with the British Commonwealth but not as master and servants.

Tilak was a pragmatic politician and wanted to follow constitutional methods towards the goal of independence. His life was a continuous struggle against the foreign rule. He suffered much as no other politician of Maharashtra or the whole of India had suffered for his country during that period. He was imprisoned for eighteen months in 1897 for suspected instigation for assassination of Rand, the plague commissioner of Pune and Lieut Ayerst.

He wanted to move a resolution condemning the governor of Bombay Lord Sandhurst. The partition of Bengal sharpened his criticism of the British Government. Tilak soon assumed the leadership of a substantial number of extremists. His political stature began to grow fast. The pressure of the extremists compelled the Indian Congress to pass radical programme of Swarajya, Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education in 1906.

In 1908 Lokmanya had to stand trial against the charge of sedition. The British government regarded him as the greatest danger to their rule in India. He was deported to Mandalay for six years to serve the sentence of rigorous imprisonment there. He returned from Mandalay on June 16, 1914. Before his conviction, in the sedition case of 1908 the Congress had split at Surat in 1907 as the Moderates thought they could not work with him. His radical programme had frightened them. They were able to keep Tilak away from the Congress for about nine years for his extremist politics. He entered the Congress in 1916 again and the Moderates went out of the Congress. Tilak participated in the Home Rule 'Movement' started by Mrs. Annie Besant after his release in 1914. He was again sentenced to six months imprisonment in 1916.

The Home Rule Movement:

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During the absence of Tilak for Six years in Mandalay, Burme many things had happened in India as the Morley-Minto Reforms and cancellation of the partition of Bangali were some of them. Tilak came back to India on 16th June, 1914 and the national movement got new spirit. After the outbreak of the First World War and the death of G. K. Gokhale and Sir Pherozshah Mehta, the Moderate leaders, Annie Besant began to explore the possibility of reuniting the Moderates, Extremists and Muslim League together. She also prepared for the Congress-league pact in 1916 to revigourate the Indian national Congress and pressurise the British to grant the self-Government to India.

Although, these events took place during the First World War, the national movement remained dormant. In order to infuse a new life in it, Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak established Home Rule Leagues on the basis of Irish Home Rule League in Madras and Pune respectively. Tilak appointed Kaka Joseph Baptista as the President of Home Rule league of Pune in 1916. The objective of the Home Rule League movement was to attain Home Rule or self-Government within the British Empire by constitutional means and to educate and organize public opinion towards the attainment of the same without any violence.

In order to achieve the objective of the movement, Tilak and Annie Besant cooperated with each other and travelled together across the country. They secured cordial response from the people everywhere. This led the British Government to suppress the movement. The British prosecuted Tilak many times for delivering seditious speeches across the country. Although, the people supported the movement, it declined following the August Declaration of 1917 of the British Government by Montague, the then secretary of State for India.

Check your progress :

1. Discuss about the programmes of the Extremist Congress.

Tilak and Gokhale

Tilak was older than Gokhale by ten years. But both had to work with two different set of people in the Congress and outside. Gokhale enjoyed the esteem of the British rulers (rajmanya). Tilak was acclaimed as their hero by the masses (Lokamanya). Tilak was called 'the uncrowned King of Maharashtra' and later of India during the Home Rule days. Both had imbibed the same spirit of liberalism and dedicated service to the country. Both believed in the constitutional method to achieve the goal of 'Dominion Status' within the British Empire. One emphasised persuasion of the rulers; the other preferred to fight against the rulers for achieving the goal. The difference in approach was due to the difference in the making of their personalities.

Tilak had lost faith in the sense of justice and fair play of the British. When Gokhale talked about constitutional means Tilak made a scathing attack on the ineffective method as follows:

“The moderate claim that they adhered to constitutional method of agitation. We wish to put a straight question to these confused people to come out with any constitution of the government of India in their possession. We searched for such a record in the history of India after the transition to British Rule, we failed to lay our hand on anything like the British constitution for India. If Hon Gokhale had filed it in the records of his “Servants of Indian Society, he should better display it”. His forceful language and the logic of his arguments disarmed his opponents.

These two great patriots from Maharashtra had rendered selfless service to the nation. Gokhale wanted to win the British rulers as Tilak wanted to replace them Gokhale excelled in the council chamber and impressed the Royal Commission. Tilak made a powerful appeal to the masses. His forum was a public platform. Tilak would prefer to win the hearts of the people and undergo any personal discomforts for his speeches, writings and activities. Gokhale was ready for any sacrifice but would prefer to remain within the limits of the law. Tilak also liked to carry on his activities within the limits of the law. But once he found that justice, morals and progressive thoughts support his action he did not bother about the limits of the law laid down by the British. The violation of the laws would entail punishments and he was fully prepared for the punishments that the foreign masters would pronounce.

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaram has given a comparison of the outlook and personalities of these two sons of Maharashtra who worked for the same cause but followed two different paths usually in opposition to one another. He says “Gokhale’s plan was to improve the existing constitution; Tilak’s was to reconstruct it. Gokhale’s ideal was love and sacrifice. Tilak was service and suffering”. Gokhale’s objective was self-government Tilak’s objective was Swarajya which is the birthright of every Indian and which he shall have without let or hindrance from the foreigner”.

The revival of the Hindu Society attempted by Tilak and others had inspired many young men to assert their rights against the foreign rulers. Tilak had fought constant wars against the British authorities whenever he found an occasion to fight against them in defence of the weak and the oppressed be it the victims of the famine and plague disaster or the Revenue Commissioner Crawford’s sinister money transactions. Tilak never allowed any opportunity to slip to castigate the government. Nevertheless, he never resorted to armed rebellion against the government. The government could never prove any charge of rebellion against Tilak. He always preferred to stay within the limits of the law and adapted constitutional means to resist the government’s evil policies.

Check your progress :-

1. What were different paths between Tilak and Gokhale?

7.4 REVOLUTIONARIES IN MAHARASHTRA

Moderates, Extremists
and Revolutionaries in
Maharashtra

The nationalists in twentieth century India were divided into the moderates, the Extremists and the Revolutionary nationalists. The moderates drew their inspiration from the constitutional history of England and wanted to achieve self-Government through peaceful and constitutional means. The extremists wanted to Swaraj through the policy of boycott and promoted swadeshi movement-vehemently. The revolutionary nationalists also believed in swaraj but undertook the practices followed in Russia and other western countries to achieve it.

There were several factors contributed to the rise of militant nationalism as the emergence of English educated middle class, that was enough sensitive to the miseries of Indian people and was not able to speak openly. There were other causes also responsible like unemployment, recurring famines, the Vernacular press Act, the Arms Act and the failure to pass the Ilbert Bill, which grew indignation among the people. The revolutionary nationalists derived their moral encouragement from the Hindu religion, its philosophy, the fearless rational journalists and positive intellectuals in the country. They believed that they would demoralize the British administration in India by Coercing their officials and would certainly achieve freedom for the country.

Since the British government suppressed the political movements and imprisoned the national leaders, the underground activities of revolutionary nationalists increased a lot who were as under: 1) Vasudev Balwant Phadake 2) Chapekar Brothers 3) V. D. Savarkar .

1) Vasudev Balwant Phadke :

Vasudev Balwant Phadke is regarded as one of the outstanding Indian revolutionaries. Burning with the zeal of liberating Maharashtra from the imperial rule of the Britons, he risked both his career and life to what V.S. Joshi terms “task of lifting the nation from the abyss of foreign bondage through insurrection and organization.” According to N. C .Kelkar, “after Peshwa Nana Saheb, it was Phadke alone whose name struck a grim terror in the hearts of Englishmen”. He single- handedly sought to build a revolutionary organization to overthrow the British regime.

Born in 1845 in the district of Kolaba in a poor Chitpavan Brahmin family, Phadke did not receive much education. In 1863, he joined the Military Accounts Department of the Bombay Government and remained in service for the next fifteen years. According to his biographers, the denial of leave to attend on his ailing mother by his superiors in 1869 developed in him a feeling of profound dislike for the British government.” His feelings were deeply stirred by the devastation caused in Western India by the terrible famine of 1876-77, for which he held the British rule responsible. Besides, the changing political situation in the Deccan from 1870 onwards and the agitational politics of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha under the guidance of M.

G. Ranade and Ganesh Vasudev Joshi, known popularly as “Sarvajanik Kaka” added fuel to the burning patriotism in his heart. Ranade’s stinging criticism of the economic exploitation of India by the British, further strengthened his romantic resolve to fight the exploiters.

Sarvajanik Kaka’s vow in January 1871 to use exclusively **Swadeshi** goods, including clothes, inspired Phadke to discard foreign cloths. He also prevailed upon his colleagues and associates in “Aikyavardhini” an organisation founded to promote unity among the Maharashtrians for the national uplift of India to use Indian - made goods. **The Bombay Gazette** in its issue dated 28 June 1879, wrote : There is a section in Poona, of Brahmins, who have bound themselves by a vow never to purchase or use an article of British produce. Vasudev Balwant was one of these and those who knew him in the Finance Office say he religiously kept his vow.

The forced abdication of Maharaja Malharrao Gaikwad of Baroda in 1785 on “the malicious charge” of attempting to poison the British Resident, and the riots known as “Deccan riots”, gave fresh impetus to anti British feelings. The hunger and starvation of millions of famine stricken peasants and accompanying death of hundreds of people due to epidemics of cholera and small-pox rendered the sight in several places, such as Sholapur, pitiable and distressing. The measures taken by the ‘Civilised and enlightened British Government to alleviate the sufferings of the people were utterly inadequate. The holocaust of famine and the government’s failure to take energetic steps to combat it convinced Phadke and other like-minded men that only ouster of the alien regime could improve the conditions of the people. Hence they resolved to immediately rise in an armed revolt against the British and establish Swaraj. Phadke now undertook the mission of collecting men, money and arms for the proposed revolt.

The natural surroundings of Poona with forts, hills and rivers were ideal for an armed uprising. But the revolutionary armed ways were not palatable to the educated classes. Hence, Phadke sought his recruits from among the masses, including the sturdy Ramosis. He incited them against the British by his outspoken analysis of their miseries and sufferings. He succeeded in convincing them that the British rule was the main cause of their present state of affairs.

Phadke and his associates organised a secret revolutionary society and undertook a vigorous training of their recruits in the use of arms. All members of the secret society were bound by a pledge: “ I shall respond to the call of my nation, sacrificing my all at the altar of my motherland” . Thus prepared themselves, Vasudev Balwant Phadke and his men launched on 22 February 1879, the first organized revolt of the Maharashtrians against the British since 1818. Most of the one hundred or so volunteers in his force were victims of poverty and starvation. Ramosis, Kunbis, Dhangars, Chambaras and Brahmins dominated its ranks. While the majority of them were actuated by the lust of immediate gains from loot, some of them were inspired by the hatred of the British.

As reports of Phadke-led revolt were flashed in newspapers, the whole of India struggled hard to comprehend the real implication of the upheaval in the Deccan. The Government became anxious and concluded that the situation was fraught with grave danger to the future. But as Phadke's men embarked on dacoities and were involved in short skirmishes with the police, sympathy of several people was with them. The Government was worried not only by the threat to life and property, but also by what they thought challenge to their authority. Sir Richard Temple, then Governor of Bombay, was baffled by "... the apathetic and unsatisfactory behaviour of the people in many villages and the sympathy known to be left, if not openly evinced, by many of the upper classes."

Realising the political character of Phadke's dacoities, the Bombay Government moved swiftly and succeeded in arresting some of the leaders of the raids. A man-hunt was launched to capture Phadke, but he could evade the police because he was sheltered and befriended by the rich and the poor, by the upper and the lower castes. In course of his wanderings, he tried to enlist the support of villagers and recruit men for his cause. His aim was to loot the Government treasury in order to raise a force of five hundred good men committed to his cause. But his ambition was rudely shattered by the conduct of the Ramosis who were not inspired by any patriotic ideas but merely looked to their own interests.

On 29 March 1879, Phadke committed two dacoities and got some money; but soon there were quarrels about the distribution as the Ramosis had misappropriated part of the booty without even informing him. Disappointed and disgusted, Phadke dispensed with the Ramosis and went away. On 24 April, he wrote:

"I have only seven days to live so I think; therefore I bow before the feet of all you my brethren inhabitants of India, and give up my life for you and will remain pleading for you in the Just Court of God".

However, he recovered from illness and went to Sholapur. According to V.S. Joshi, Phadke's biographer, "towards the first week of May 1879, Phadke issued his famous proclamation denouncing the British policy of economic exploitation of India and demanding economic relief for the peasants as a matter of 'natural right'. He warned the government that many groups would simultaneously rise in different parts of the country would simultaneously rise in different parts of the country, and if the government did not concede the demands the Governors and other high officials would be put to death".

The proclamation sent a shrill of excitement throughout the country. But the Government went on undeterred in its plan to suppress the revolt. A reward of Rs. 3000/- for the arrest of Phadke was announced and troops were dispatched to the disturbed region. As the Government forces hunted the insurgent strongholds over the Ghats, Phadke and his men crossed the Kasara Ghat to avoid a straight fight with them. They went to Konkan, committed dacoities and escaped with the loot-precious stones, like rubies,

pearls and jewels, costly nose-rings and earrings, necklaces etc. Their raids created a panic among of people. District after district stood in constant dread of the raids of Phadke and the terror created by his dacoities compelled a large number of rural people to migrate to cities like Bombay and Poona.

The Government of Bombay suspected that some of Phadke's active collaborators were in Poona and adopted stringent measures to trap them out. The resultant "harassment and persecution of civilians "had no precedent in the whole history of the Brahmin community of Poona", and the city transformed into a huge prison".

The conflagration at Poona and the revolt of Phadke became the absorbing topics of the day in political circles in London. 'The Times' demanded that adequate measures should immediately be taken to stamp out the seditious trends in India. The Secretary of State for India was forced on 23 May 1879, to admit that the "Deccan has without doubt been subjected to great distress for some weeks past. " The government machinery moved faster and pursued Phadke until they came across him asleep in a temple in the village of Dever Nadigi, in the Kaladgi District of Hyderabad, at 3.a.m. on 21 July 1879.

Phadke was charged for collection of men, arms and ammunition with the intention of waging war against the British government of India, for exciting feeling of disaffection to the Government and for committing dacoities. He was transported for life to solitary confinement in the Aden Jail, on 3 January 1880. He tried to escape from the jail on 13 October 1880 but was recaptured. He died there on 17 February 1883.

According to R.C.Majumdar, "Phadke's revolt was curious phenomenon one man standing against the mighty British empire. He left a legacy and the seeds he sowed grew into a mighty banyan tree with its shoots spread all over India, in about a quarter of a century. His patriotism and daring spirit were taken up by the Chaphekar brothers... and from them it was taken over by the revolutionary wing of the Indian nationalists early in the twentieth century. Even his methods of secretly collecting arms Imparting military training to youths and securing necessary funds by means of political dacoities were followed by a latter. He may, therefore, be justly called father of militant nationalism in India". But the means he employed and the torture to which his men forced their victims to submit makes it difficult to form a correct estimate of Vasudev Balwant Phadke's revolt.

Check your progress:-

- 1) Write a note on the revolutionary activities of Vasudev Balwant Phadke.

2) Chapekar Brothers :

They continued the revolutionary activities in Maharashtra in order to pressurize the British Government to leave India. They were Damodar, Vasudev and Balkrishna, the three brothers who founded the Hindu dharma Sanrakshini Sabha in 1894 and carried out various activities in and around Pune area. In the same year, they circulated pamphlets and leaflets during the Ganesh festival and motivated the people to rise in arms against the British as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj had done against the Mughal emperor. Poona and neighboring area came under the dreaded disease known as plague in 1897, which killed several thousand people. The British Government established committee known as Plague Relief Committee under the charge of W. C. Rand, a headstrong British officer, who troubled people and violated their secrecy of life instead of providing them relief. He became so unpopular that Damodar and Balkrishna Chapekar to teach him a lesson and they shot W. C. Rand and Lieutenant C. E. Ayerst when they were returning back home from attending the sixtieth anniversary of the coronation of Queen Victoria on 22 June 1897. In order to remove the evidence Vasudev, the younger brother of Damodar and his friend Ranade assassinated Ramchandra and Ganesh the two approvers in the case of Damodar and Balkrishna Chapekar during their prosecutions. Finally, Chapekar brothers and Ranade were arrested, tried and sentenced to death, which created much indignation all over India. This incident brought in the chain of revolutionary activities throughout Maharashtra.

Check your progress :

- 1) Explain the revolutionary activities of Chapekar brother.

3. V. D. Savarkar (1883-1966)

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar who was born in 1883 of a Chitpavan Brahman family in the Nasik District, was cast in a different mould. He was a staunch Hindu and was proud of his religion and the ancient culture. While in School he had formed a society with his friends to serve the nation. It was named 'Rastrabaktimandala' (Society of Patriots). He was very much influenced by Paranjape's nationalism. Savarkar was especially attracted to the philosophy of Herbert Spencer. The appeal of full national freedom advocated by Shivram Mahadev Paranjape's another patriot, inspired Savarkar and his comrades to act. They started in 1904, 'Abhinav Bharat' (New India) for undertaking revolutionary activities in Maharashtra and rouse the people of other provinces also for similar movements. After his B.A. examination he was selected for the Shivaji scholarship offered by Syamji Krishna Varma who was carrying on the freedom struggle from outside India. He was very much influenced by the 'Risorgimento' of Joseph Mazzini and exploits and sacrifices of Garibaldi in the great work of unification of Italy in 1870. He wrote three books all dedicated to the subject of struggle for freedom and national unity. His first book 'The Indian war of Independence of 1857' was written in Marathi. Subsequently it was translated in many languages by the Ghadar party,

Sardar Bhagat Singh and later on Subhash Chandra Bose secretly managed its publication in India

Savarkar also wrote the 'history of the Sikhs' and a book on Joseph Mazzini (Atmacharitra Ani Rajkarana i.e. An autobiography and Politics) He disarmed similarities in teaching of Ramdas and Mazzini.

Revolutionary Activities

The British government had kept Savarkar under strict surveillance when he returned from France after his short sojourn there. The news of Jackson's murder in a theatre in Nasik led to the investigation of the 'Nasik Conspiracy. Anant Laxman Kanhere, a young man of eighteen had murdered the collector of Nasik on the night of December 12, 1909, in the Vijayanand Theatre. The accused admitted his crime and told the court that he had killed the collector not out of any personal enmity but because the collector represented the oppressive government of the British. He had done his duty and was ready to die at any moment.

In 1910, Savarkar was arrested in England as he was suspected as an agent provocateur. He was to be taken to India. On his way to India the ship carrying him called at the port of Marseilles in France. He escaped through the porthole and swam to the shore. He was apprehended by the French police and was handed over to the British. After bringing him back to Bombay he was tried for treason and involvement in the Nasik conspiracy. He was condemned to transportation for life to the Andaman Islands. There he underwent the rigorous imprisonment and later was brought to Ratnagiri. He was under detention in Ratnagiri for thirteen years and was not allowed to participate in politics. Only in 1937 he could enter public life once again after his unconditional release.

Savarkar's Militant Nationalism

Savarkar's life in imprisonment and the intense nationalist fervour that he expressed through his writings would always stir the hearts of every Maharashtrian of whatever political leanings he might be. His emphasis on Hinduism and Hindu-nation might appear anathema to our secular nationalism Savarkar defined Hindu as a person who "looks upon the land that extends from Sindhu (the Indus) to the seas as the land of his forefathers ... he is a Hindu to whom 'Sindhusthan' is not only a 'Pitrubhumi' but also a 'Punyabhumi' (Holy Land).

His Revolutionary Zeal

Savarkar was not much impressed by the struggle led by the Indian National Congress either under the leadership of the moderates or the extremists. To him even the radicalism of Lokamanya Tilak seemed ineffective to deliver the goods. He was convinced that only armed revolts could shake off the foreign yoke. He worked out the intellectual justification for armed insurrection. Savarkar and other revolutionaries believed in the cult of the bomb.

The terrorism in India did not end with the transportation of Savarkar to the Andamans. The revolutionaries abroad encouraged the insurrection in India during the world war. Whatever attractive the exploits of the revolutionaries might be it was not through insurrection that India won freedom; it was won without boldness by the Act of the British Parliament (Indian Independence Act) passed in July 1947.

In Retrospect

The growth of nationalism in Maharashtra as well as in other parts of India after the 'War of Independence of 1857' was a matter of great concern for the British authorities in India. The foundation of the Indian National Congress, although welcomed in the initial stages by the rulers, upset their calculations at the growing unity of Hindu Muslim communities. Proselytising activities of the Christian Missionaries had met with a great setback by the 'Sepoys Mutiny'. Pandita Ramabai's statement made to the 'Christian weekly' of the U.S.A. in December 1889 that 'Sharda Sadan' was a Christian institution created a great furor in Maharashtra.

The British authorities therefore pinned their hopes on the Muslim community to re-strain the march of the Indians towards independence. The British authorities in India persuaded Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and other Muslim leaders to keep away from the Indian National Congress. The Anglo-Muslim alliance against the growing strength of the Congress weakened the united move and created obstacles in the path of unity.

The starting of two public festivals in Maharashtra by Lokamanya Tilak (Shivaji Jayanti and Ganesh Chaturthi) created uneasiness among the Muslims in Bombay and Pune. In 1893 the first Hindu Muslim riot took place in Bombay and thereafter communal riots became frequent. Some of the Muslim police officers in Bombay showed partisan attitude and H.H. Aga Shahabuddin Shah the head of the Shila Imani Ismail Seet was disturbed. The partition also added to the misunderstanding and strained the relations. Veer Savarkar's talk of Hindu-Rashtra impeded the growth of secular nationalism the dream of many a moderate Congressman including Gandhiji. The growth of nationalism became uneven thereafter. Check your progress :-

- 1) Discuss in brief the revolutionary activities of the V. D. Savarkar
br.

Summary

Gokhale's devotion to motherland was total and complete. His uncritical trust of the British rulers are not accepted by many. Though Tilak aptly described him as the diamond of India and the Jewel of Maharashtra. Tilak was called "the uncrowned king of Maharashtra and later of India during the Home Ruled days.

Veer Savarkar's talk of Hindu-Rashtra impeded the growth of secular nationalism the dream of many a moderate congressman including Gandhiji.

7.4 QUESTIONS

1. Explain the activities of Moderate Congress.
2. Evaluate the role of Gopal Krishna Gokhale in the Indian Freedom Movement.
3. Evaluate the role of extremists in the Indian National Movement.
4. Discuss about the programmes of the Extremist Congress.
5. Review the activities of the Extremist Tilak
6. Examine the contribution of revolutionaries of Maharashtra towards the freedom movement of India.

7.5 ADDITIONAL READING

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RESPONSE TO GANDHIAN MOVEMENTS IN MAHARASHTRA

Unit Structure :

8.0 Objectives

8.1 Introduction

8.3 The Non-Cooperation Movement

8.4 The Civil Disobedience Movement

8.5 The Quit India Movement

8.6 Summary

8.7 Questions

8.8 Additional Reading

8.0 OBJECTIVES

After the study of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Understand the Non-cooperation Movement of Gandhiji.
- Tell the Disobedience Movement of Gandhiji.
- Perceive the Quit India Movement of Gandhiji.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The third phase of Indian freedom struggle is known as Gandhi era. Gandhiji was the leader of Indian National Movement from 1920 to 1947. He made the revolutionary changes in the freedom movement and it has reached to all sections of society. In true sense it has gain the national character. He started number of movements and it was participated by majority of people throughout the country. The people of Maharashtra participated in Gandhiji's movement in large number. During this era, Maharashtra was the important centre of Indian national Movement.

Early Life of Mahatma Gandhi:

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who was rightly called the father of the Indian nation, was born on 2 October, 1869 in a small town known as Porbandar of today's Gujarat. After his initial education, he went to England and completed the degree of Barrister at Law. After coming back to India, he started his legal practice in the Mumbai High court but very soon he got a chance to go to South Africa, where he made a very remarkable mark not as a Legal practitioner but as a political leader.

Gandhiji fought against the unjust regulations and racialism in South Africa because all Indians in South Africa were put under severe social restrictions and racial discrimination. Even Gandhi himself had its taste while he was traveling to Pretoria. He was forced to vacate a first-class railway compartment and was beaten up even if he had been with a bonafied ticket for the same. These events led Gandhiji to convert himself from a shy lawyer into a bold champion of rights of his people. In order to fight for the plight of Indians in South Africa, Gandhi developed the philosophy of Satyagraha over their Satyagraha means insistence of truth by way of non-violence. He defined it as soul-force and born out of truth and non-violence. He said that Satyagraha was not a meek submission to the will of the evildoer, it was the pitting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant, which enabled a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour and laid foundation for the empire's fall. Gandhiji taught and led the people to resist unjust laws and organised workers strike in South Africa which forced the South African Government to agree with Gandhiji and made him to succeed in completing his mission in South Africa.

After returning from South Africa, in 1915, Gandhiji stayed at the servants of India society, Pune for some days and discussed about political problems in India with his political guru, Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Finally, he settled down at Ahmedabad and founded his popular Ashram on the bank of river Sabarmati. In order to understand the problems of Indian people, he traveled extensively throughout India and concentrated on specific grievances of people as indenture system under which Indian labourers were taken abroad to work in miserable conditions. Gandhiji led the Government to abolish the system completely. After this Gandhiji worked for the rights of indigo cultivators in Champaran (Bihar), farmers in the district of Kheda (Gujarat) and the mill workers of Ahmedabad. These campaigns made him a popular leader and helped gather many devoted followers around him. His popularity, idealism and his methods enabled him to concentrate on the nationwide problems.

8.2 THE NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT (1920-1922)

There were several circumstances responsible for Gandhiji's non-cooperation movement as the disappointing and unsatisfactory Montague-Chemsford Reforms, passage of Rowlatt Act of March, 1919 and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 13 April, 1919 were prominent events among them. The Hindu-Muslim cooperation during and after the Khilafat movement, the Hunter committee inquiry report and the void created by the death of Lokmanya Tilak stimulated him to adopt the non-cooperation proposal in a special session of the Congress convened in Calcutta in the month of September, 1920. The non-cooperation programme of Gandhiji was consisted of

- 1) Surrender of British titles and honours.
- 2) Boycott of British legislatures, courts and educational institutions

- 3) Boycott of foreign made goods.
- 4) Promotion of Swadeshi goods especially Khadi
- 5) removal of untouchability
- 6) promotion of Hindu – muslim unity
- 7) abstention from alcoholic beverages
- 8) attainment of self-rule or Swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means
- 9) refusal to serve in Mesopotamia by soldiers, clerks and workers.
- 10) non-payment of taxes
- 11) establishment of national educational institutions
- 12) establishment of panchayat courts
- 13) popularizations of charkha

The programme of the non-cooperation movement was ratified at the Nagpur session of Congress except Jinnah all supported Gandhiji for the same. The same session threw open the Congress membership for all people above eighteen years to age which transformed the Congress from a debating society into a non-violent revolutionary movement.

Non-cooperation Movement in Action :

After the declaration of the programme of the movement people from all walks of life, communities and classes participated in it whole heartedly. Schools, colleges and all Government institutions were closed and national educational institutions were opened to cater educational needs like the Jamia Millia Islamia and Kalshi Vidyapeeth. Boycott of foreign made goods, their bonfires and hartals were observed everywhere enthusiastically. The whole atmosphere was charged spontaneously with nationalism and patriotism. A total hartal was observed on the days when the members of the English royal family, the Duke of Connaught and the Prince of Wales visited Indian cities.

The British Government began to repress the movement and declared the Congress and Khilaphat and their organizations unlawful, which led the Ahmedabad session of Congress in December, 1921 to authorize Gandhiji to intensify the movement. Gandhiji selected Bardoli a Tahsil in Gujarat to start mass civil disobedience movement. But before the movement was launched at Bardoli, a case of mob violence took place on 5th February, 1922 to outwit the Government repression. It was so happened that on 5th February, 1922 at Chauri Chaura in the district of Gorakhpur of present U. P. a group of infuriated people being fired upon by the police turn violent and set on fire to the police station in which twenty two policemen were burnt alive, which dismayed Gandhiji. He suspended the movement immediately to avoid further violence. The call of decision of the movement disappointed almost all Congress leaders and people in general all over the country. The Government took full advantage of this situation, arrested Gandhiji and sentenced him for six

years imprisonment but he was released after two years of jail on the ground of his ill health. Although, the non-cooperation movement was suspended the nationalism continued to burn brighter. The prisons lost their terror and became the places of pilgrimage for the purpose of liberations of our country.

Check your progress :

1) Discuss the programme of the Non-cooperation movement started by Mahatma Gandhiji.

8.3 THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT (1930)

This was one more important movement, which Gandhiji started and challenged the British Government to sanction the demands of Indian people. The Indian National Congress accepted the Nehru Report in its Calcutta session held on 31st December, 1928 and informed Government to accept it on or before 31st December, 1929, otherwise the Congress prepared to organize a nationwide movement. Although, the declaration of Viceroy Irwin disappointed, Gandhiji met him on 23rd December, 1929 and tried to understand the plan of action of the British Government. But the Viceroy did not commit anything more of them his declaration. This led Gandhiji to start the Civil Disobedience movement. The Congress session held at Lahor in December, 1929, authorized the Congress working Committee to launch the movement. The Congress working Committee in turn assigned full rights to Gandhiji to start the movement in February, 1930. Gandhiji announced the movement and informed the Viceroy regarding the same on 2nd March, 1930. Pandit Nehru, President of the Congress, hoisted the Tricolour flag at Lahore after the grace period given to the British Government to accept the Nehru Report came to an end. The Congress also called the people to celebrate 26 January as Full Independence Day and asked them to take an oath to oppose the British Government to gain freedom by way of non-violence.

The Dandi March :

Gandhiji planned to start his march from his Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad to Dandi a seashore village, 240 miles away from the Ashram. Gandhiji trained everyone about the non-violence and the programme of the March, which came to be known as Dandi March. The programme of Dandi March included

- 1) breaking of salt laws after reaching Dandi
- 2) Picketing shops selling foreign cloth and liquor
- 3) refusing payment of taxes
- 4) boycotting courts and
- 5) resigning from Government posts.

Gandhiji left his Ashram with trained seventy-eight volunteers. He walked from village to village, held meetings with the villagers, halted at several villages and covered the distance of 240 miles within twenty-four days. Gandhiji reached Dandi on 5th April, 1930, spent the whole night in prayer

and guiding people over there. He inaugurated the disobedience movement on 6th April, 1930 by picking up a handful of salt lying on the beach of Dandi.

Spread of the Movement :

Gandhiji's act was a symbolic action and signal the country had been waiting for. Once he cleared the way by his symbolic defiance of the salt Laws at Dandi the people throughout the country followed him and the disobedience movement spread everywhere. Although today's Maharashtra and Gujarat were together under the Bombay state then Mumbai played very important role in the freedom struggle of India. In order to carry out the programme of the movement, people in Mumbai established four major committees as

- 1) The Maharashtra Civil Disobedience Committee
- 2) The War Council
- 3) Supervisory Committee for salt manufacturing centres and sub-centre
- 4) The Desh Sevika Sangh.

Mahatma Gandhiji appointed Jemnalal Bajaj to carry on the disobedience movement at Vile Parle a suburb of Bombay. There were K. F. Nariman, Gokulbhai Bhatt, Kishorlal Mashruwala, Shankarao Dev, G. V. Ketkar, and Vasudev Sahasrabudhe to assist him in the movement. People from western Maharashtra, Ahmednagar, Thane Satara and Pune flocked together at Vile Parle. On 6th April, 1930, the crowd brought sea water in groups and manufactured salt in cement pans symbolically to announce the breakage of salt laws. The scene was very spectacular in which men, women, children, young and old had participated with the zeal of patriotism. As the result of this disobedience movement Jamnalal Bajaj, Nariman and Batt were arrested and sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment. But the whole atmosphere which was charged with nationalism, patriotism and gusto for independence, did not deter from their objections.

After the salt manufacturing and the violation of salt law at Vile Parle was over, other centres began to function under the charge of local leaders. These centres were Ghansoli, Chembur, Ghatkopar, Mulund, Bhandup, Belapur, Versova, Bhayandar, Shirawane Haji Ali, Esplana de ground and Bhatia Baug. Kamla Devi, Prof. Gharpure, Yusuf Meherali, Jafferbhai, N. Sadik, Sardul Singh, Ali Bahadur, Mohinuddin Kasuri and Pandit Sundarlal participated in the manufacturing of salt on the terrace of the Congress House. The moment this news reached to the British Government in London, it led the police to raid the Congress house. The police destroyed the salt pans and arrested the people involved in it, this continued for several days. The women satyagris took lead in Girgaon Chowpati Satyagrah. Among them were Kasturba, Janakdidevi, Sarojini Naidu, Kamala Devi, Lilavati Munshi, Avantikabai Gokhale, Hansa Mehta, Ramibai, Perin, Dosani, Laxmibai Bhide, Khandwala and Ratnaben Mehta.

As the War Council and the Committees of salt manufacturing contributed

to the disobedience movement in Maharashtra, the Desh Sevika Sangh also did a commendable work during the movement. This Desh Sevika Sangh was formed of all women, among them Hansa Meht and Ranibai were prominent and they guided them in the movement. They picketed all shops dealing with foreign goods, went house to house and propagated the importance of Swadeshi. They offered as well as collected jewellery for raising fund for the movement. Due the hard work of the Desh Sevika of Swadeshi, the British Government decided to close sixteen mills in Mumbai. These circumstances motivated all traders of various communities in all markets in Mumbai to participate in the movement. The association of journalists, Lawyers and pleaders announced their support to the movement. Lawyers like K. M. Munshi, Bhulabhai Desai and S. K. Patil gave up their legal practice and actively participated in the movement which led to their arrest and mercilessly beating by the police.

The British police arrested and tortured the Red Shirt Satyagris of Peshwar, who had the spirit of Garibaldi's Red Shirt volunteers and participated in the disobedience movement under the leadership of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. That was the reason for the Mumbai satyagris to raid the salt depot of Wadala under the leadership of Kamladevi. In response to this the police opened fire and killed many satyagris. This news reached London and the British Government ordered the Mumbai police to arrest Mahatma Gandhi on 5th May, 1930. the news of Gandhiji's arrest at Kharadi and his confinement in the Yerwada jail spread like wild fire and created a chain of massive hartals, processions, and closing down of all economic activities spontaneously throughout India by people belonging to all sections of life. It was very difficult for the Government to bring the situation under control. The atmosphere was so much charged with the spirit of nationalism that not only all Indians but people like Cyril walter, an Australian also participated in the disobedience movement. This was the movement in which Babu Genu a young Satyagris laid his life while obstructing a truck carrying foreign goods. Although, the movement became mass movement throughout the country, the satyagra at following places had much importance they were 1) Shirode Satyagrah 2) Satyagrah in Vidarbha 3) Solapur Satyagraha :

1) Shirode Satyagraha :

Gandhiji's disobedience movement and salt satyagraha spread to every nook and corner of the country. Shirode satyagraha was outstanding among them. Leaders like S. D. Jawadekar, Dr. Athalye, Vinayakrao Bhuskute, Dr. Lagu, Prof. Dharmanand Kosambi and Dr. Bhagwat guided and supervised the Shirode Satyagraha, near Vengurla in Konkan area on the bank of Arabian Sea on 12 March, 1930. In this Satyagraha, people plundered the salt pans and the salt in local as well as distant markets. In order to violate the salt Laws some of the satyagris like Appa Saheb Patwardhan, Deogirikar and Ranade the local leaders brought salt from Goa, a Portuguese place then and sold in the market. Several satyagris from Satara, Nagar, Nashik, Solapur, Jalgaon and Thane joined them and made the satyagraha and the disobedience movement a great successful.

The police let loose lathicharge, arrested around three hundred people and tried to suppress the movement desperately.

2) Satyagraha in Vidarbha :

This area also witnessed unprecedented support to the disobedience movement of Gandhiji. The satyagris like Brijal Biyani, P. B. Gole Ranka and Bajaj founded a War Council at Nagpur the hub of Vidarbha, led the satyagris to Dahihanda, a hamlet in Akola district where an open well of saline water was there on 9th April, 1930. The satyagris manufactured salt with the Saline water of that open well and sold it in the open market and violated the salt laws of the British Government. All people male, female and young children from all sections of the area joined the disobedient movement and made it successful. In addition to this a group of women satyagris undertook picketing shops which were dealing with foreign goods to whom the school and college students joined enthusiastically, without fear of police Lathi charge and made the movement grand success.

3) Solapur Satyagraha :

Although, Solapur participated in the Disobedience movement, it went the way of the Chauri-Chaura incident happened in 1922, during the non-cooperation movement. The moment Gandhiji was arrested; the people in Solapur became restless, took out a large procession against the arrest of Gandhiji and announced a massive hartal. This tense situation took a different turn when some young people burnt a liquor shop dealing with foreign goods in popular markets on 8 May 1930. Consequently, the police arrested some of the innocent people and tortured there. This arrest led the people to come together and request the police to release the arrested people. The police without listening to the people opened fire on the unarmed people, it continued for several days in which more than 25 people were killed and several hundred injured seriously. Mr. Playfair, the district Superintendent of police and Mr. Knight, the Solapur District Magistrate tried to hush up the campaign. On the other hand, prominent leaders like Manekchand Shah, Ramkrishna Jaju, Tulsidas Jadhav and Kuruban Hussain provided the leadership and guided the people who participated in the movement. Finally, the British organised a cursory trial of arrested satyagris, proved them guilty and hanged them to death on 12 January, 1931 in Yerwada Jail.

Check your progress :

- 1) Briefly describe the disobedience movement started by Mahatma Gandhi in 1930.

8.4 THE QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT – 1942

This was one more movement, which Mahatma Gandhi started in 1942 in

pursuant of Indian independence. There were several factors responsible to start this movement such as

- 1) Resignation of Indian ministries in September, 1939.
- 2) The August offer, 1940
- 3) The failure of Cripps proposals, 1942.

The Congress ministries elected as per the Government Act of 1935 in February, 1937 performed their jobs admirably in education, welfare of depressed classes, public health, agriculture and industries. But the same ministry could not continue for a long time and resigned on 1 October, 1939 because Lord Linlithghgow the Viceroy of India declared that India would enter the World War II on the side of British Government without consulting the elected representatives of people. This prepared a sound ground to start a movement on large scale.

The World War II broke out in September, 1939, the Congress offered cooperation in war efforts to the British Government provided the British accepted the popular demand for independence and immediately establishing a provisional national Government at the centre. The Viceroy did not accept the demand and admitted for the first time on 8th August, 1940 that framing constitution was the responsibility of the Indians only. He further said that a representative constitutional body would be set up after the end of the World War II, this came to be known as the August offer of the Viceroy which was too late and too little. The Congress as well as the Muslim league therefore, refused the offer. Meanwhile, the World War II progressed. In June, 1941 violating the non-aggression pact of 1939, Hitler attacked on Soviet Union, whereas Japan invaded an American naval base, Pearl Harbour on 7th December, 1946. This led America to declare war against Japan, Germany and Italy to assist England and her allies.

Due to continued non-cooperation of the Congress to British in their war efforts, pressure from the Chinese President Chiang Kai Shek and the American President F. D. Roosevelt and the Japanese advance to the Indian frontiers forced the British Prime Minister to send Sir Stafford Gripps to India to seek support of the Congress in the war efforts. After coming to India, Cripps held discussions with the leaders of various political parties and declared that India will be given Dominion status, after the World War II, and a Constituent Assembly to frame a new constitution. In addition to this, the Indian states would be given option to remain independent and the British Government would shift all departments to Indians except defence. Considering this proposal as a postdated cheque on a crashing bank, Mahatma Gandhiji and Muslim league rejected the proposal. Thus, the failure of the Cripps Mission led Gandhiji to conclude that the presence of the British in India would be invitation to Japan to invade India and the departure of the British from India would make Indians to concentrate on their own security. This was the basic reason for Gandhiji to start the Quit India movement in 1942.

The Quit India Resolution:

The Congress working Committee met at Wardha on 14 July 1942 and adopted the resolution. Quit India movement, which was suggested by Yusuf Meharali. The Congress committee met on 8 August, 1942 at the Gowalia Tank ground, which popularly came to be known as the August Kranti Maidan. S. K. Patil had made arrangement for this session to accommodate around 20,000 people. The Congress session ratified the resolution that the Congress had passed at Wardha on 14 July, 1942. After Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President had opened the proceeding, Gandhi began to speak that the ending of British rule in India was an immediate necessity both for the sake of India and the success of the United Nations. He further addressed that "Every one of you should from this moment onwards consider yourself a free man or woman and act as if you are free. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. We shall do or die. We shall either free India or die in the attempt."

After few hours of the session, the British Government arrested Gandhiji, Nehru, Maulana Azad, Sardar Patel and other leaders in the dawn of 9 August, 1942. The Government put them all in a train, which left Victoria Terminus at 7 a.m. and reached Poona. Gandhiji, Sarojini Naidu, Miraben and Mahadevbhai Desai were lodged in the Aga Khan Palace. All other Bombay leaders were kept in the Yeravada Jail while leaders like Nehru, Patel, Maulana Azad, Kripalani, P. C. Gosh, Asaf Ali, G. B. Pant, Sitaramayya, Syed Mohammed and Narendra Dev were kept in the Ahmednagar Jail.

In absence of prominent leaders, Aruna Asaf Ali along with a strong mob of four thousand volunteers hoisted the tricolour flag at the Gowalia Tank ground as scheduled. In order to disperse the volunteers, the police started Lathi Charge and arrested them. This added to the fury sparked by the arrest of all national leaders. Kasturba Gandhi, and Sushila Nair attended a meeting scheduled at Dadar in the afternoon of 9th August, 1942. The police firing and lathi charge which claimed & lives and wounded 200 people that led the crowd to burn colours near the Tilak Bridge Dadar. This was the beginning of the violence, which was initiated by the police. Sardar Patel urged the people that the Congress would not come to tell you any more what you to do and what not but they ought to take the initiative and do what deemed proper under the circumstances. He asked the students to take lead when the leaders were arrested. All sort of spontaneous activities like protest, hartals, strikes and processions followed through the state. The people from all sections like students, teachers, peasants and workers from all corners of the state participated in the Quit India movement and resorted to violence and rebellion against the British.

The situation was worsened in the curfew bound Bombay on 10 August, 1942 when the police seized the Congress offices, sealed bank accounts and arrested the Congress rank and file. The student of all colleges in the

city, came to fore front uprooted poles, post boxes, lamp posts, road boards, bus stop boards, water hydrants and put them on the road to interrupt the police and military vans. In the same way students destroyed police Chowkies, disarmed the police officers wherever it was possible and filled the Tram-car tracks with stones to detain them. The crowd entered the Dadar Railway station, put several obstacles on the track and brought the raily traffic to stand still. This closed down all cotton and silk mills in Bombay. In order to suppress the movement the Bombay Police Commissioner ordered to shoot at sight everywhere in the city. The emergency whipping Act was announced, and army was deployed which began to fire indiscriminately. This firing claimed 34 lives and wounded 385 people up to 13 August, 1942 in Bombay city only.

Dislocation in Bombay was different than the other parts of the country. There were bomb explosions occurred in post offices, telephone installations, and railway stations. Colleges like, Elphinstone, Sydenham, Grant Medical and Wilson participated in the movement. In the Bombay province only the number of casualties was more than 447. The movement in Bombay was monitored by the secret Radio, group of the Congress which was the brain child of Miss Usha Mehta, an M. A. student of Bombay University, who was the daughter of a judge in the judicial services of the British.

This movement spread to each corner of the county and the state. The outstanding feature of the movement started in the districts of Satara and Sangli of today's Western Maharashtra came to be known as the Pratisarkar. The whole credit of this movement goes to Nana Ramchandra Patil, Yashwantrao Balvantrao Chavan, Vasant Dada Patil and P. G. Patil. Nana Patil had built a cadre of workers while Yeshwant Rao Chavan gave a call to all students to assemble together, who boycotted schools in the area under the leadership of Y.B. Chava. They had mass rallies in every taluka the area. The mamlatdar of Khatav taluka, ordered to fire on one of such rallies which claimed 8 lives. This incidence provoked the crowd to commit violence which followed the activities including guerrilla warfare and looting trains that gave Rs. 20,000/- and 5,51,000/- cash for the movement. The leaders of Pratisarkars moved in police uniform, collected taxes and use to beat on the sole of police, their informant and govt. officials. These leaders also patched the sole of these officials with tin sheets. Therefore, this movement came to be known as patrisarkar in this area.

Although, the Quit India movement spread throughout India it was failed due to absence of leaders, proper organisation and the brutal tactics adopted by the British to suppress the movement even then the Quit Indian movements made two points clear that the Indians had desperately determined to be free at any cost and it led the British to plan to leave India as early as possible.

Conclusion of the movement:

Gandhiji wanted to execute the quit India movement on the line of non-

violence. He had written a letter to the Viceroy to publish it but the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow did not do it. The people without any guidance and absence of leaders followed the course of action they deemed fit. The police explored the opportunity and crushed the movement mercilessly. In order to self-purification, Gandhiji went on fast for twenty-one days on 10 February, 1943. Although the Congress leaders requested the Viceroy to release Gandhiji on the pretext of his deteriorating health but he was not released. On 18 October, 1943, Sir Archibald Wavell became Viceroy of India, who released Gandhiji on the medical ground on 6th May, 1943.

Although, the quit India movement was suppressed by the British, there came no end to the efforts of the Congress towards achieving independence, on the contrary activities were speeded up one after another. The Rajaji formula was tabled in 1944 which the Muslim league did not accept. On 27 June, 1945, Lord Wavell, the Viceroy called a conference at Simla to select members for his executive council but failed due to the Muslim league opposition.

Towards Freedom :

On 24th March 1946, the Cabinet Mission, under the leadership of Lord Pethick Lawrence came to India with a compromise formula on the demand of Pakistan, but it was rejected by the Muslim League. On 16 August 1946, the Muslim League announced the Direct Action Day. As the result around five thousand people lost their lives and around fifteen thousand people were seriously injured. On 2 September, 1946 Pandit Nehru became the head of Interim Government but could not function successfully.

Clement Attlee, labour party leader became the Prime Minister of England in 1945. On 20th February, 1947, he announced in the House of Commons that the British would leave India before June 1948, irrespective of any agreement among the political parties in India. He sent Lord Mountbatten to India on 24th March 1947 as the next Governor General of India. Lord Mountbatten discussed with the major political parties in India and announced the plan for partition of India on 3rd June 1947. It was accepted by all political parties. Accordingly, the British Parliament passed the Indian independence Act on 18 July 1947, which declared India independent on 15 August 1947. The Congress, which was established in 1885, succeeded in achieving her goal of independence of India.

Check your progress :

- 1) Discuss the Quit India Movement of Mahatma Gandhi.

8.5 CONCLUSION

Thus from the above discussion it is clear that the state of Maharashtra supported and contributed immensely in the Indian national movement. Thousands of people participated in this freedom struggle directly.

Mahatma Gandhi launched three important movements for the attainment of freedom and the people of Maharashtra responded well towards these movements. It has reached to all sections of society and finally India got freedom from the clutches of British rule in 1947.

8.6 QUESTIONS

1. Describe the Non-Cooperation Movement of Mahatma Gandhi.
2. Discuss the Civil Disobedience Movement of Mahatma Gandhi.
3. Explain the importance of Quit India Movement in the Indian National movement.

8.7 ADDITIONAL READING

1. Chaudhari, K.K, Maharashtra and the Indian Freedom Struggle, Govt. of Maharashtra, Bombay 1985.
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SAMYUKTA MAHARASHTRA MOVEMENT

Unit Structure :

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Its Background
- 9.3 Course of Events
- 9.4 Samyukta Maharashtra movement
- 9.5 Summary
- 9.6 Questions
- 9.7 Additional Reading

9.0 OBJECTIVES

After the study of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Understand the main events in the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement .
- Know the leaders of the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The State of Maharashtra in which we are living today did not come into existence in an easy, happy and smooth manner. People had to struggle hard to achieve it. In order to liberate and integrate different parts of Maharashtra, people had to make a lot of sacrifice, and had to undergo hardships, sufferings and torture. The Samyukta Maharashtra Movement was a movement for uniting into one Linguistic State all the regions where the Marathi speaking population lived in majority, such as, Mumbai, Vidarbha, Marathwada, Goa, Belgaum, Karwar and adjoining areas. It was a battle against the linguistic injustice caused to the Marathi-speaking people by the then Congress Governments at the Centre and at the State. It was a unique movement associated with the life and identity of every Marathi person. Never before or afterwards all the Maharashtrian people got so united for a common cause, keeping aside all their differences of party, caste, creed, region, religion, occupation or economic status. All the sections of the Maharashtrian society such as, the students, working women, house wives, government servants, workers, peasants, lawyers, teachers, artists, writers and journalists participated in this agitation. Every Maharashtrian felt that it was his own movement and every one tried to give to the best of his or her ability. The slogan given by them all in one voice reverberated through the entire atmosphere of Maharashtra,

"Mumbaisaha Samyukta Maharashtra Zalach Pahije" (Along with Mumbai, United Maharashtra must take place).

9.2 ITS BACKGROUND

Though the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement was vigorously launched between 1955 and 1960, its roots go back to the early decades of the 20th century. During the British rule, the British-Indian territory was divided into eleven provinces, but it was an artificial division not taking into consideration the popular sentiments. That division was made keeping in view the imperialistic interests and administrative convenience of the British. Therefore, every province had population belonging to different languages, religions and cultures. It was felt that the map of the country should be redrawn on linguistic basis. That is to say, wherever the people of a particular language are found in majority, all such regions should be united to form a linguistic state. Right from 1920, Gandhiji and Dr. Rajendra Prasad were in favour of creating linguistic states. With the involvement of the masses in the National Movement from 1919, Congress undertook political mobilization in the mother tongue and in 1921 amended its constitution and reorganized its branches on a linguistic basis. Since then the Congress repeatedly committed itself to redrawing the provincial boundaries on linguistic lines.

The Marathi speaking area was divided into several separate units - the Bombay Province was under British control, the five districts of Marathwada were under the control of the Nizam of Hyderabad, Vidarbha was first under the Nizam and from 1853, it was a part of Central Province under the British control, whereas, in south Maharashtra sixteen small and big states were ruled by Indian princes. Thus although different parts were under different rulers, they all were Marathi speaking and therefore different political leaders and literators were of the opinion that all those parts should be united into a single Marathi-speaking state. The persons who saw the dream of such a Marathi state even prior to 1946 were: Sahitya Samrat N.C. Kelkar, B.G. Tilak, Vitthal Vaman Tamhankar of Jaipur, Dr. S.V. Ketkar, Datto Appaji Tuljapurkar, K.C. Thakre, G.V. Patvardhan (the editor of the Jyotsna Magazine). Shankar Ramachandra Shende (Sangli), G.T. Madkholkar, Datto Vaman Potdar, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Dhananjayrao Gadgil, etc.

9.3 COURSE OF EVENTS

On 1 October 1938, the Legislature of the C.P. and Berar Province passed a resolution put forth by Shri Ramrao Deshmukh saying that the bilingual province of CP and Berar should be broken and all the Marathi speaking portion should be united into a separate unilingual Marathi state of Vidarbha. Accordingly, to achieve this objective, the Maha Vidarbha Samiti was constituted.

On 15 October 1938, in the Marathi Sahitya Sammelan held in Bombay under the presidency of V.D. Savarkar, a resolution was passed saying that along with Vidarbha, all the Marathi speaking regions such as, Marathwada, Goa, Belgaum and Karwar should be united into a separate Marathi speaking state of Maharashtra.

9.4 SAMYUKTA MAHARASHTRA MOVEMENT

Although, the Samyukta Maharashtra movement got momentum after the independence of our country, the process towards the united Maharashtra had the beginning in the 20th century by the leaders and literary personalities in Maharashtra.

The Legislative Assembly of the Central Province had passed a resolution to secede from the bi-lingual Bombay (Mumbai) Presidency and form an unilingual separate state of Vidharbha on 1 October, 1938. In order to pursue the resolution passed in the literary meet at Mumbai, a Sanyukta Maharashtra Sabha was formed on 28 January, 1940. During the period of 1940 to 1945 the movement could not do any progress because of the World War II and the implementation of the Quit India Movement.

On 12 May, 1946 a Sanyukta Maharashtra resolution was passed at the All India Marathi literary Conference held at Belgaum, G. T. Madkholkar was the president of the Conference. The conference also formed a Sanyukta Maharashtra Committee consisting of Madkholkar, Shankarrao Deo, Keshevraro Jedhe and S. S. Navare to materialise the resolution. There was one more conference held on 28th July, 1946 at Mumbai. It was called Maharashtra Ekikaran Parishad, which was presided over by Shankarrao Deo and, it was attended by two hundred delegates from all over Maharashtra and passed a resolution of Sanyukta Maharashtra on the proposal moved by Acharya Data Dharmadhikari. The leaders, who were active in the movement held a meeting under the leadership of Pattabhi Sitaramaya at Delhi in December, 1946.

The movement spread throughout the state. A meeting of the Maharashtra Ekikaran Parishad took place at Akola on 13th April, 1947 and determined to speed up the Sanyukta Maharashtra movement for unilingual state of all Marathi speaking people. This meeting came to be known as the Akola Pact. In order to address the popular demand of forming the linguistic states of Maharashtra, Andhra, the Constituent Assembly appointed a Commission in 1948, which came to be known as Dhar Commission. To pressurise the Commission, a Virat Parishad was formed at Dadar and meeting was held on 15 and 16 October, 1948. On 13 December, 1948, the Commission submitted its report stating that the reorganizing states on the linguistic basis would be against the unity and integrity of the nation. In order to remove the outcome of the Dhar Commission report, the National Congress accepted the Principle of reorganisation of states on the basis of language and appointed a committee of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramaya to examine the report of the Dhar Commission at its meeting held at Jaipur

on 5th April, 1948.

The Sanyukta Maharashtra movement was speeded up during the period of 1950 and 1953; it also abolished the Sanyukta Maharashtra Parishad and determined to work jointly. In meantime, Potti Shriramallu died fasting for the demand of Telugu State of Andra Pradesh, which led to create it after his death in October, 1953 and the appointment of the Fazal Ali Commission for considering the matter of reorganization of states on the linguistic basis.

Appointment of the State Reorganisation Commission

After the formation of Andra Pradesh in October, 1953, Sharnkarrao Dev wrote a letter on 4 November, 1953 to the Prime Minister and demanded the formation of Sanyukta Maharashtra State. Under these circumstances, Pandit Nehru announced the appointment of the State Reorganisation Commission on 22 December, 1953 in the Parliament under the Chairmanship of Justice Faisal Ali. The Commission was asked to examine the basic conditions of the problem, its background, preservation and strengthening the unity, economic and administrative considerations of the country. The commission faced a number of strikes, demonstrations and clashes between the different linguistic groups during its exploration of reorganization of states on linguistic basis. The Commission also visited various places in the then Mumbai state as Nagpur, Chanda, Pune, Akola, Amravati and the city of Mumbai. The commission submitted its report on 10 October, 1955, which was accepted by the Government with certain modifications. The commission report suggested formation of three states as:

- 1) Sanyukta Maharashtra with Vidharbha and Marathwada
- 2) Maha Gujarat with kutch and Saurashtra and
- 3) Bombay as union territory.

This report was again rejected by the people but the Congress working committee accepted the three state solution of Nehru on 8 November, 1955.

The lefts were in favour of the Sanyukta Maharashtra movement, and observed a strike in Mumbai on 18th November, 1955 to support the movement whereas Morarji Desai challenged the claims of the Sanyukta Maharashtra movement and held a rally in Mumbai on 20th November, 1955. On the very next day i.e. 21 November, 1955, the police fired on the huge morcha on the then Bombay state Legislature by the Left parties and killed fifteen people and wounded hundreds of people at the behest of Morarji Desai. Even then the Congress Leaders in the state supported the Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru, naturally; the movement became violent in 1956.

The State Reorganisation Act of 1956

The Parliament of India passed the State Reorganisation Act in November, 1956 and established fourteen states which were Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Bombay, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Madras, Mysore, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal with six Union Territories as Andaman and Nicobar Island, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura and Lakshadweep. The Act also provided for five Zones and Zonal Councils. The zonal Council was to consist of a union minister who was to work as the chairman of the council, along with the Chief Ministers and other two ministers from the state in the zone. This Zonal Council was to advise the Central Government for its development.

Formation of Maharashtra and Gujarat:

The Samyukta Maharashtra movement became stronger day after day. It was further stimulated by Nehru's formula of keeping Mumbai under the Union Territory. There was much unrest, which led to a huge strike everywhere in Mumbai. The police force of Morarji Desai opened fire on such peaceful strikers and shot 100 people dead between 16 and 20 January, 1956. C. D. Deshmukh, Cabinet Minister of Nehru supported the agitation for separate unilingual state of Maharashtra and resigned from his cabinet post on 22 January, 1956. This led the strikers to form the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti on 6 February, 1956. The Samiti announced the programme of Satyagrah at Mumbai and Delhi on 31st October, 1956.

To satisfy the people in Mumbai, the Nehru Government cancelled the nature of Union Territory of Mumbai city and made declaration of bilingual state of Bombay. This proposal was also met with strong protest both from the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti and Maha Gujarat Janata Parishad which were carrying on Satyagraha in their dominant areas from November, 1956 till the formation of their respective states for nearly five years. On 23 April, 1960 Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti organised a huge procession on the Parliament of India. Indira Gandhi was the Congress President then, who reopened the issue with the Central Government, that led the Parliament to pass the resolution in favour of Samyukta Maharashtra including Mumbai. The Government passed the Bombay Reorganisation Act of 1960, by which Mumbai was to be the capital of Samyukta Maharashtra, whereas Ahmedabad was scheduled the capital of Gujarat. Thus, the Samyukta Maharashtra came into being on 1st May 1960.

Maharashtra State with Bombay as its capital was formed with the merger of Marathi-speaking areas of Bombay State, eight districts from Central Provinces and Berar, five districts from Hyderabad State, and numerous princely states enclosed between them. The pro-Samyukta Maharashtra writers claimed that in all 105 persons died in the battle for Bombay. However Goa (then a Portuguese colony), Belgaum, Karwar and adjoining areas, which were also part of the Maharashtra envisaged by the Samiti, were not included in Maharashtra state.

Check your progress :

- 1) Explain briefly the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement.

9.5 SUMMARY

In this way we have seen in this chapter how the modern state of Maharashtra came to an existence in 1960. Hyderabad was liberated from the clutches of Nizam under the leadership of Swami Ramanand Teerth. Number of Marathi speaking areas were later joined to the state of Maharashtra. S.M. Joshi, Shripad Amrit Dange, N.G. Gore, Dadasaheb Gaikwad and Prahlad Keshav Atre fought relentlessly for Samyukta Maharashtra, even at the cost of sacrificing the lives of several people and finally succeeded in convincing Congress leaders that Maharashtra should form a separate state. The Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti achieved its goal on 1st May 1960 when the State of Bombay was partitioned into the Marathi-speaking State of Maharashtra and the Gujarati-speaking State of Gujarat.

9.6 QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the formation of Samyukta Maharashtra.
2. Evaluate the role of various leaders of in the creation of unilingual Maharashtra in 1960.

9.7 ADDITIONAL READING

1. Chaudhari, K.K, Maharashtra and the Indian Freedom Struggle, Govt. of Maharashtra, Bombay 1985.
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CONTRIBUTION OF REFORMERS IN EDUCATION

Unit Structure

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Contribution of Reformers in Education
 - 10.2.1 Jagannath Shankarshet (1803-1865)
 - 10.2.2 Dadoba Pandurang Tarkhadkar
 - 10.2.3 Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917)
 - 10.2.4 Mahadev Govind Ranade
 - 10.2.5 Dr. Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, (1837-1925)
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 - 10.2.14 Karmaveer Bhaurao Patil (1887-1959)
 - 10.2.15 Rayat Education Society
 - 10.2.16 Scientific and Technical Education
- 10.3 Summary
- 10.4 Questions
- 10.5 Additional Readings

10.0 OBJECTIVES

- 1) To realise the efforts made by the reformers towards the spread of modern education in Maharashtra.
- 2) To know the progress of education in Maharashtra in 19 th and 20 th century.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Social reformers of 19th and 20th century gave utmost importance to the education. They considered it as a key to social change. They established a number of schools and colleges at various places for the promotion of education for all the sections of society. By putting great efforts, they made a significant contribution in the field of education.

10.2 CONTRIBUTION OF REFORMERS IN EDUCATION

10.2.1 Jagannath Shankarshet (1803-1865)

He is rightly called as the Architect of Modern Bombay. He was born on 10 February 1803 in a wealthy Daivajna family. This family originally hailed from Murbad. His grandfather Babulsheth was a small trader, and his father Shankar Sheth was a trader of diamonds and pearls. Jagannath lost his mother during his childhood therefore, he was brought up by his father, but even his father died when Jagannath was eighteen. Therefore, Jagannath had to take over the responsibility of his family business. He was a successful businessman, but whatever money he earned, he largely spent on the all-round development of Mumbai. He realized that upliftment of the people was impossible without education. He was protagonist of the synthesis of oriental and occidental learning. He held that Western Education could reach the mass of the people only if it was imparted through the vernaculars. He very intensely tried for enrichment of Indological studies and female education. Jagannath Shankarsheth became an active leader in many arenas of Bombay life. Foreseeing the need for improvements in education, he became one of the founders of the School Society and the Native School of Mumbai, the first of its kind in Western India. The school went through a series of name changes: in 1824, it became the Bombay Native Institution, in 1840, the Board of Education, and in 1856 the name which continues to this day, the Elphinstone Educational Institution. He took a lead in founding the Elphinstone College in 1834. When the Students' Literary and Scientific Society first opened their girls schools, Jagannath Shankarsheth contributed much of the necessary funds, and gave his own residence for the school despite strong opposition of some members of the Hindu community. He was one of the founders of the Bombay Association established on 26 August 1852. This was the first political organization of the Bombay Presidency. Other educational projects started by him include the English School, the Sanskrit Seminary, and the Sanskrit Library, all of which are located in Girgaum, South Mumbai. He was also a force

responsible for the establishment of the Grant Medical College in 1845 in the memory of Robert Grant, the Governor of Bombay. The Government Law College, the first of its kind in India, was founded in 1855 on public demand under the inspired leadership of Jagannath Shankarsheth. It was affiliated to the Bombay University in 1860. Shankarsheth and Bhau Daji Lad greatly contributed to the establishment of the Bombay University in 1857. Ever since its inception, Shankarsheth was a member of the Senate of the Bombay University and remained on that post till his death in 1865. He was also behind the establishment of the J.J. School of Art in 1857. Jagannath Shankarsheth made all efforts to promote the Marathi theatre, because the theatre was a medium of full manifestation of many arts. He became the friend and supporter of Vishnudas Bhave in his efforts. He wanted that the Marathi stage must get the same status, which the British theatre was getting in England. Jagannath Shankarsheth offered his Wada Mansion to be used as a theatre. He was responsible for the establishment of the Victoria Garden and the Prince Albert museum in 1862, and himself gave a donation of Rs. 5000 for that purpose. The Government honoured him with the post of Justice of Peace. He expired on 31 July 1865. In 1864, the citizens of Bombay honoured Nana Shankar Sheth by installing a life-size statue of him on the premises of the Asiatic Society, the intellectual centre of the city. His work was continued to some extent by his son Vinayak Shankarsheth. He launched the 'Jagannath Shankarsheth Sanskrit Scholarship' in 1866 in the name of his father.

10.2.2 Dadoba Pandurang Tarkhadkar

A valuable service was rendered by Dadoba Pandurang Tarkhadkar to spread the education among the people. In 1848, the students of Elphinstone College established the Dnyanprasarak Sabha to propagate education in the society. Dadoba was the first president of this Sabha. The spread of education and increasing social awareness were the chief objectives of the Sabha. He also acted as the Director of the Training College in Mumbai. According to him, superstition and the social system were the chief causes of the miserable condition of the Indian.

10.2.3 Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917)

He too was a product of the renaissance and one of the inspiring spirits of the times. He was a professor in the Elphinstone institution and one of the founders of the Bombay University. He made efforts for the education of Parsi girls. The Parsis were just beginning to emerge from their mercantile mould. He was the founder in India and in England of more than thirty institutions. In the teeth of opposition, Dadabhai laid the foundation of women's education in Bombay on fourth August 1849. By going door-to-door, he urged parents to send their daughters to schools, as at that time girls were not allowed to go to schools. He volunteered to teach free at the first girls' school opened by the society in a cottage loaned by Jagannath Shankar Sheth, a member of the board of education, and with improvements funded by Mr. K. N. Kame. He founded the 'Jnana Prasarak Mandal' and in 1851 he started a Gujarati fortnightly journal, *Rast Goftar* (Truth Teller), as the organ of progressive views on social, religious and

educational reforms. Dadabhai, being an Athoman (ordained priest), founded the Rahnumae Mazdayasne Sabha (Guides on the Mazdayasne Path) on 1st August 1851. The ethos of the Rahnumae at its inception was to restore the Zoroastrian religion to its original purity and simplicity. The society is still in operation in Bombay. He was an active member of the 'Bombay Association founded in 1852. Pherozechah Mervanji Mehta, Dinshaw Edulji Wacha, Naoroji Furdunji and Sorabji Shapurji Bengali emerged on the scene and enriched the elite in Bombay under the inspiring spirit of Dadabhai Naoroji.

The first four illustrious graduates of the Bombay University - Mahadev Govind Ranade, Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, Bal Mangesh Wagle and Vaman Abaji Modak, all contributed to the development of education in their own capacity. They were followed by youths of great initiative Pherozechah Mervanji Mehta, Kashinath Tryambak Telang and Rahimtulla Muhammad Sayani. These leaders of the Intelligentsia became the leaders of public opinion, and they devoted themselves to the renaissance in Indian society. That period is indeed worth recalling and introspecting upon even now. Learned men like Balshastri Jambhekar. Naoro Furdunji and Dadabhai Naoroji were disseminating learning from the Dias of professorship in the Elphinstone College.

10.2.4 Mahadev Govind Ranade

Mahadev Govind Ranade joined the Elphinstone College a Professor of English literature, history and economics. Ranade believed that a reformation would be impossible without the spread of education. Therefore, in September 1882 he founded the Sarasbagh girls' high school in Pune. Along with Tilak, Agarkar, Gokhale and Chiplunkar, he founded the Deccan Education Society at Pune in 1884. This Society established the Fergusson College at Pune in 1885 and the Willingdon College at Sangli in 1919. Ranade strongly believed that the medium of education must be mother tongue. He made constant efforts to include Marathi as a subject in the curriculum, and finally, his efforts were successful in 1898.

10.2.5 Dr. Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, (1837-1925)

Born in Malvan on 6th July 1837, he was a great orientalist, an linguist, a historian and a social reformer. His original surname was Patki, but since his ancestors worked in the treasury department, they were called Bhandarkar. He was teaching oriental languages first in the Elphinstone College and then in the Deccan College. He was also a distinguished Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University (1893-95). He was a syndic of the University from 1873 to 1882. He was a member of the Legislative Council of Bombay Presidency and also of Government of India. He was keenly interested in the improvement of curricula, and was a great protagonist of general education as well as research. He participated in international conferences on Oriental Studies held in London (1874) and Vienna (1886), making invaluable contributions. He reconstructed the political history of the Deccan, wrote the history of the Satavahanas and the history of Vaishnavism and other sects. Dr. Bhandarkar's works

included treatises on Sanskrit grammar, critical editions of Sanskrit texts, reports on Sanskrit manuscripts and contributions to proceedings of learned societies and journals. His book Ancient History of the Deccan has been acclaimed as the most authoritative work on the subject. A strong adherent of the critical and historical school of Philology, and unrivalled in the accuracy and thoroughness of his scholarship and literary criticism, Dr. Bhandarkar soon attained a world-wide reputation for oriental learning. In 1904, the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, an extremely rare honour, was bestowed upon him. The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute was founded at Pune by his disciples and admirers as a temple of learning. It was formally Inaugurated by Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Bombay, on 6 July 1917. Bhandarkar was not only a scholar but also a reformist and humanitarian. He was associated with the Paramahansa Sabha and then the Prarthana Samaj. He worked for the cause of Depressed Classes and women. He strongly opposed social evils like child marriage, castism and alcoholism. He stood for women's education and remarriages of widows. He got his widowed daughter remarried. By quoting references from ancient Sanskrit scriptures, he ardently dealt with women's education, prohibition of child marriage and advocacy of widow remarriage. Dr. Bhandarkar died on 24 August 1925. His son Devadatta Ramakrishna Bhandarkar was also a great Indologist.

Bal Mangesh Wagle adored the professorship in the Poona College (now Deccan College and Post Graduate Research Institute). Jambhekar, the pioneer of Marathi Journalism, and V.N. Mandlik were enlightening the reading public through modern newspapers like the 'Native Opinion'. Tilak, Agarkar, Chiplunkar and Ranade first founded the New English School and then the Deccan Education Society at Puna in 1884. Tilak, Karve and Gokhale taught in the Ferguson College, and Gokhale was its Principal as well.

The endeavours of these enlightened Indians received not merely a good response but an encouragement from some of the Westerners such as Elphinstone, Sir Alexander Grant, Dr. John Wilson (who became one of the greatest Sanskrit Scholars), Dr. Dugald Mackichan, Prof. William Wordsworth, Justice James Gibbs, Sir Raymond West, every one of whom was a lover of English literature and a thinker.

Several colleges were established out of the donations given by rich philanthropists. For example, The Ismail Yusuf College, established in 1929-30, owes its origin to the generosity of Sir Mahomed Yusuf who had donated eight lakh rupees for higher education of Muslims, way back in 1914. It has, however, been a cosmopolitan institution. The Shikshan Prasarak Mandali of Pune, who expanded Western education after the Deccan Education Society, established two colleges in Bombay, viz., Ramnarain Ruia College in 1937 and R. A. Poddar College of Commerce and Economics in 1941. The first one received a donation of 2 lakhs from the house of Ruia and the second one, 1.46 lakhs from the house of Poddars. both of whom have many textile mills and other business to their credit in Bombay. The Khalsa College was established in 1937 out of the funds collected by the members of the Sikh Community. The Puna

University was founded in 1948. Bal Gangadhar Kher, the first Chief Minister of Bombay was instrumental in the establishment of this University. After the partition of India, the Sindhis displaced from Pakistan sought refuge in India and many of them settled in Mumbai and the neighbouring areas and made every possible effort to bring about all round development of this region. The Jai Hind College and Basantsing Institute of Science was founded in June 1948 by the migrant professors from Karachi. The National College, Bandra was inaugurated in June 1949. The K. C. College was established in 1954.

10.2.6 Mahatma Jotiba Phule and his wife Savitribai Phule

Mahatma Jotiba Phule and his wife Savitribai Phule were the pioneers of women's education in Maharashtra. Phule is most known for his efforts to educate women and the lower castes as well as the masses. He believed that education was power and the real progress of the country was impossible without imparting education to women and the lower castes. Phule believed that education had no alternative for the liberation of the masses from psychological and economic servitude. Phule believed that the Depressed Classes fell a prey to exploitation because of their ignorance. The Brahmins used to consider the "untouchables" as "unfit" for education. He held that the Depressed Class persons should be given vocational training so that they would take to different vocations and thereby would not turn to criminal activities. Phule believed that if education was given to a male person, it educated only one man, but if education was given to a woman, it educated a whole family. Phule began his mission early in life by opening the first school for girls in India in the Bhidewada of Budhwar Peth of Pune in August 1848. But, owing to social opposition and lack of supporters, he had to close down this school. He re-established this school in Budhwar Peth in 1851. As no lady teacher was available, he trained his wife, Savitribai Phule to teach in the school. In all, he opened six schools -three exclusively for girls and three jointly for 'untouchable' girls and boys. In 1853 he established the 'Society for the teaching of knowledge to Mahars, Mangs and other people'. He opened a Night School in the same year. He advocated equal opportunities of education and intermingling of low caste students with those of the upper castes. He started a weekly journal called 'Deenbandhu' for untouchables. Krishnarao Bhalekar was its editor. Later on, Narayan Meghaji Lokhande started its publication from Bombay. He had been a member of the Puna Municipality between 1874 and 1883. When he learned about the plan of the Municipality to establish a market at Pune, he strongly opposed it and insisted that the same amount of lakhs of rupees should be spent on educational work. In 1882, Phule even appeared before the Hunter Commission, where he argued that the Government collected revenue from the farmers but spent it on the education of higher classes. Phule demanded that the Government should promote education of the masses and suggested that all the children below the age of 12 should be given free and compulsory education. His educational work served as a model before Chhatrapati Shahu, Dr. Ambedkar, Maharshi Vitthal Ramji Shinde and Karmaveer Bhaurao Patil.

10.2.7 Vishnushastri Chiplunkar

Vishnushastri Chiplunkar also contributed to the spread of education. He was of the opinion that the existing system of education failed to serve the purpose of nation-building. Though he represented the conservative ideology in society, his contribution in the field of education is commendable. He wishes to create a generation of patriotic young men. With this aim, he laid down the foundation of New English School in 1881 along with Agarkar and Tilak.

10.2.8 Pandita Ramabai

Pandita Ramabai emerged as a prominent figure and remarkable woman due to her courage and heroic efforts to spread education among women. Her father Ananta Shastri supported Ramabai in her cause. She founded Sharda Sadan in Mumbai in 1889 for the spread of female education. This institute rendered valuable service for the cause of female education. Later on, this institute was shifted to Pune where she continued the work of imparting education upon orphans, poor and widows.

10.2.9 Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj

Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur (1894-1922) made several efforts to promote the education of the Depressed Classes. He started the movement for Boarding Houses under the scheme of "Moral and Material Progress" of the masses and provided other facilities like free accommodation, remission of fees, free meals and clothing. Another motive for these boarding houses was, to put into practice his egalitarian policy in administration and education. He wanted to blunt the caste distinctions and feelings among the masses. As part of the Students Hostels Movement 20 hostels were established in Kolhapur city. He also aimed at training social workers who would take lead in their communities; this led to the establishment of more hostels and boarding schools.

Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj and the Arya Samaj enabled many students receive school and collegiate education. They started schools and led the Maharashtrian masses in the political field as well. They became torchbearers of knowledge for the masses in the State.

In 1913, he issued an order to the effect "that every village in the State should have a school. In 1918 he passed another order to make primary education free and compulsory for all. Kolhapur was the second native state to introduce this, the other being Baroda. However, unlike in Baroda, there was no segregation along caste lines.

He imposed an education cess for providing finance to educational activities. He increased the number of primary, secondary schools and higher education institutions in the State. The effects of his educational policy were visible even during his lifetime. For example, in 1894, the Rajaram College at Kolhapur had only 97 students on its rolls of whom six were non-Brahmins. By 1922, there were 100 non Brahmin students out of

265 on roll. Also, the number of school-going students in his State increased from 10,884 to 22,830. He encouraged female education. There was free education for girls at Rajaram College.

He provided facilities like freeships, scholarships, and prizes to backward class students. Separate schools that existed for the so-called untouchables were closed down. All teachers in government and private schools receiving grant from his government were asked not to discriminate between students on grounds of their caste identity. As early as 1919, he legally prohibited the segregation of untouchables in schools and recruited some educated untouchables, as clerks in the State service and also admitted some of them to the Bar. They were permitted to practice as lawyers and compete for and occupy positions traditionally regarded as the preserve of the upper castes.

10.2.10 Dhondo Keshav Karve

The educational work of Dhondo Keshav Karve was very valuable. He dedicated his entire life in the spread of women's education. In 1907, he established Mahila Vidyalaya (women's college) at Pune. Later college was transferred to Hinganein 1911. To spread education in villages, he took a lead in establishing 'Gram Prathamik Shikshan Mandal'. In 1916, Shrimati Nathibai Damodar Thakersey (S.N.D.T) University was established by him. His dedication and his efforts led to the foundation of many schools and colleges in Maharashtra. The educational efforts of Dhondo Keshav Karve led to the all-round progress of women.

10.2.11 Punjabrao Deshmukh

Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh played a leading role in spreading education among the masses in Maharashtra. He dedicated himself to the educational work in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra. As a president of Amravati district council, he made primary education compulsory education. As an education minister in the provincial government, he offered educational concessions and scholarships for the benefit of needy and poor students. In 1932, he established Shri Shivaji Shikshan Sanstha at Amravati in order to spread education among the students living in villages. In all over Vidarbha, a number of schools, colleges and hostels were started by the Shivaji Shikshan Sanstha. He truly followed the example of Karmveer Bhaurao Patil by laying emphasis on mass education. Thus he was responsible for the spread of education in eastern Maharashtra.

10.2.12 Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (1891-1956)

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar ceaselessly worked for the upliftment of the Depressed Classes. He believed that education of the Dalits would arouse their self confidence, would make them conscious of their rights and would induce them to fight against injustice and for their rights. He tried to educate them through his speeches, books, newspapers and institutions. His message to the Depressed Classes was, "Educate, Organize and Agitate". He established the People's Education Society in 1946, which founded the Siddhartha College at Bombay and the Milind College at

Aurangabad Dr. Ambedkar opened the Siddhartha College of Commerce and Economics in June 1953 .

Contribution of
Reformers in Education

10.2.13 Maharshi Vitthal Ramji Shinde (1873-1944)

Maharshi Vitthal Ramji Shinde, the stalwart who worked against untouchability all his life, was influenced by the teachings and work of Mahatma Jotiba Phule, the Prarthana Samaj and the Arya Samaj. On 18 October 1906, he founded the Depressed Class Mission. The Mission arranged lecture series for the poor and downtrodden, night schools for the working people, tailoring classes and vocational schools for the untouchables, Libraries, and founded the "Nirashrit Sevasadan" for the untouchable women. Many schools and hostels were founded by this mission. By 1912, the Depressed Classes Mission had 23 schools, 55 teachers, 1100 students, 5 hostels, 12 branches, and 5 canvassing volunteers across 14 locations, in seven States and four different languages. His sister Janakka Shinde also worked for the promotion of women's education, particularly that of depressed women,

10.2.14 Karmaveer Bhaurao Patil (1887-1959)

Bhaurao was born on 22 September 1887, in a Jain Farmer family at Kumbhoj/Kambhoja in Kolhapur district. Bhaurao's father Payagonda Patil was a clerk in the revenue department of the East India Company and had to move around from place-to-place. Therefore, Bhaurao had his primary education at different places. During his childhood days, he was directly influenced by Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, the King of Kolhapur, who was a promoter of social equality and education of people belonging to backward castes. Eventually his father sent him to Kolhapur to the Rajaram High School for further education. Here he lived in the Jain Hostel. The Students living in the Jain Boarding had to strictly follow the norms of Jainism. But, Bhaurao, who was of a rebellious nature, often broke the rules and even induced other students to break the rules. Therefore, Mr. Latthe, the warden of the hostel drove him out from the Jain Hostel. Here he got in contact with Satyashodhak Movement and found another source of inspiration, Mahatma Phule and Maharshi Vitthal Ramji Shinde. At the age of eighteen, Bhaurao married Lakshmibai, who assisted him in all his social work. Bhaurao garnered political interest and decided to play his role in the fight for Indian freedom struggle by working in other beneficial aspects like public education. While he worked for Ogles, Kirloskars and Coopers he participated in activities of Satya Shodhak Samaj. He had realized by then that the only remedy for the social evils of that time was education of masses. In the year 1919, he started a hostel at Dudhgaon in the Sangli district, where kids from backward castes and poor families could stay and get education, at the same time do work to take care of the expenses. This was the foundation of what later became Rayat Shikshan Sanstha

As Bhaurao started working on his education for the masses, Gandhiji had also launched the struggle for Indian independence. During a public meeting in 1921, Bhaurao happened to come across Gandhiji at Mumbai.

He was highly impressed by Gandhi's appearance in a loin cloth and his philosophy of Khadi. Following this encounter Bhaurao decided to adopt Khadi attire and follow Gandhian principles in everyday living. Eventually he vowed and saw it to completion, establishment of 101 schools in Gandhi's name..

10.2.15 Rayat Education Society

While working as an employee in the Kirloskar factory at Kolhapur, Bhaurao got involved in working for Satyashodhak Samaj. In a council of Satyashodhak Samaj. held at Kale near Karhad, a resolution was passed that in order to run SatyaShodhak Movement successfully, it was necessary that they must educate the Bahujan Samaj. Accordingly, Bhaurao Patil established Rayat Shikshan Sanstha at a small village named Kale, in Satara district, of western part of Maharashtra, on October 4, 1919 on the auspicious day of Ashvin Vijaya Dashami. Banyan Tree was its emblem, and it soon grew and spread like a banyan tree. 'Swabhimani, Swadhyay, Swavalamban and Swatantrya' was the four-point basis of this institute. In 1924, He founded the Chhatrapati Shahu Boarding House at Satara, and gradually Satara became the chief centre of the Rayat Shikshan Sanstha. This society was specially meant for the children of masses, so it was named Rayat (Marathi word for masses). The objectives of the Society were: to promote rural education, particularly that of the downtrodden masses, to discourage all differences based upon caste, creed, region and religion, not to practice untouchability, to promote dignity of labour and to promote values like equity, humanity and social justice. The Society rapidly progressed and it established several educational institutions in Maharashtra such as, training colleges for the primary teachers, hostels for poor students, primary schools, high schools and colleges in rural areas. In order to meet the expenses of the poor students, Bhaurao appealed to all the households to daily set aside only a handful of grains, which were collected by the workers of the society on weekly basis. In 1935, the Silver Jubilee Training College was established at Satara. In 1940, he founded Maharaj Sayajirao High School while in 1947, he founded Chhatrapati Shivaji College at Satara. He founded a college at Karhad in the name of Saint Gadge Maharaj. During his lifetime, the Sanstha had 38 cosmopolitan boardings, 578 voluntary schools, 6 training colleges, 108 secondary schools and 3 Colleges. He is known for his work for spreading education in the rural areas of Maharashtra. He firmly believed that the rural areas could be transformed only through education. Bhaurao played an important role in educating people from the backward castes and also the poor masses by coining the philosophy of "Earn and Learn."

People of Maharashtra gave him the title of Karmaveer (Marathi for "King of actions"). The Government of India gave him Padma Bhushan in 1959. The University of Pune gave him D.Litt in the same year. He passed away on 9 May 1959.

10.2.16 Scientific and Technical Education

The Elphinstone Institution was founded at Bombay in 1841, in which mathematics, chemistry, botany and natural sciences were taught. In 1845, The Grand Medical College was established at Bombay. The Seth Gordhandas Sunderdas Medical College was founded in June 1825, with King Edward Memorial Hospital founded in February 1926. The Engineering College was established at Pune in 1854. The Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute (VJTI) was founded at Bombay in 1887, wherein diploma and degree courses in engineering were started. G.K. Gokhale established the Ranade Industrial and economic Institute at Pune in 1908. In 1883, the Bombay Natural History Society was established in order to promote scientific research. In 1886, the Anthropological Society of Bombay was established to study human races. Dr. W.M. Haffkine d The Plague Research Laboratory in 1899. The Laboratory was renamed as the Bombay Bacteriological Laboratory in 1906 as it was further expanded to undertake research in other infectious diseases, besides plague. In 1923, the Biochemistry department and Rabies section were added. The Laboratory was renamed as the Haffkine Institute in 1925. In 1906, the first teachers' training college was founded at Bombay. In 1914, the University Department of Chemical Technology (UDCT) was established, wherein subjects like chemical engineering, textile chemistry, etc were taught and it was the first institute of that type in India. The Royal Institute of Science (RISC) was inaugurated in March 1920. Since then this premier Institute in India has contributed immensely in various fields of scientific research, and some of the scientists produced by it have adorned honourable seats in the Indian Science Congress. It was after Independence that it was renamed as Institute of Science.

The Victoria and Albert Museum, now known as Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, was founded in 1858 and finally housed in the Victoria Gardens, where it was inaugurated on 22 May 1872. Its ownership was transferred to the Bombay Municipality from 1 October 1885. The Museum stands testimony to the pioneering zeal of Dr. Bham Daji Lad. The Prince of Wales Museum of Western India was established i commemoration of the visit of Prince of Wales (later King George V) to Bombay i 1905. The magnificent building and galleries were raised through munificent donations by Currimbhoy Ibrahim, Cowasji Jehangir, Ratan Tata, Dorabji Tata, etc. The Museum comprising three main sections-Art, Archaeology and Natural History was opened to the public in 1922. The Bombay Historical Society, established in 1925, has done a good deal of work relating to research in Indian history, epigraphy, archaeology, numismatics and allied subjects, more particularly on Bombay and Western India. It is functioning in association with the Prince of Wales Museum. The Father Heras Indian Historical Research Institute of the St. Xavier's College founded in about 1925, maintains a historical and archaeological museum and rare books and manuscripts, and an excellent reference library. It was founded by the famous Indologist Father Henry Heras.

The Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) was founded by the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust and the Bombay Government in 1945. It was in

February 1956 that the Government of India recognised the TIFR as the national centre for advanced study in Nuclear Physics and Mathematics. The country owes a debt of gratitude to the TIFR for producing scientists of international reputation such as Dr. Homi Bhabha, Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, Dr. H. N. Sethna, Dr. Raja Ramanna and Dr. Jayant Narlikar. The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) was established in 1950. The Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TIS) was founded in 1944.

Check your progress:-

1. Summarize the efforts made by the reformers towards the spread of modern education in Maharashtra.

10.3 SUMMARY

Thus, it is clear that many of the social reformers took lot of efforts towards the spread of modern education in Maharashtra. Most of the social reformers worked towards the spread of modern education in Maharashtra and because of their efforts many important issues were addressed and solved by them.

10.4 QUESTIONS

1. Summarize the efforts made by the reformers towards the spread of modern education in Maharashtra.
2. Describe the progress of education in Maharashtra in 19 th and 20 th century.
3. Write short notes on the following:
 - a) Jagannath Shankarsheth
 - b) Role of Dadabhai Naoroji in Education
 - c) Role of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj in Education
 - d) Scientific and Technical Education

10.5 ADDITIONAL READINGS

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CONTRIBUTION OF REFORMERS TOWARDS EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

Unit Structure

- 11.0 Objectives
- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Emancipation of Women
 - 11.2.1 Female Education
 - 11.2.2 Widow Remarriage
 - 11.2.3 Child Marriage
 - 11.2.4 The Hindu Code Bill
- 11.3 Summary
- 11.4 Questions
- 11.5 Additional Readings

11.0 OBJECTIVES

After the study of this unit, the student will be able to:

- 1) Realise the issues concerning emancipation of women and efforts made towards its realization
- 2) Understand the work of reformers towards Emancipation of Women.
- 3) Know the various problems of women's in the 19th century of Maharashtra.
- 4) Trace the efforts of social reformers to eradicate the various problems of women's in the 19th century of Maharashtra.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

The issues connected with emancipation of women are fully discussed here as the social reformers who showed moral courage to handle the issues found them too formidable for their generation. Men like Ranade who could not devote their full time for that work had to establish Social Conference to attract more men. We have given details about his work in this lesson and the contribution of other reformers is dealt with in the next lesson.

11.2 EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

Society in Western India, as already noted, on the eve of the British rule in 1818, was “hide-bound” and stagnant. A hundred years of Peshwa administration had made little significant change in the conditions of the people. Economically Maharashtra was poorer than Bengal. In Agriculture, industry, trade and commerce also it lagged behind though there was homogeneity between its rulers and the subjects, the Maharashtrian society, like its counter parts elsewhere in India, was caste ridden. People, in general, were tradition - bound and superstitious, despite the progressive teachings of Saints like Tukaram and Namdeo. There was little movement in thought, no progress in beliefs and institutions, including in the developing city of Bombay. Not only the orthodox people and priests were opposed to any social change, but also the economically rising section of each caste and groups, who had prospered in Bombay under the British presence.

The status of women was equally bad. As S. Natarajan has pointed out, the social customs and laws relating to marriage, family- property, inheritance. position of widows, etc. were loaded against women. Women were the most sufferers in the social system because “here as well as in all societies the rigorous of the conventional community bore most heavily on Women”.

This plight of women attracted the attention of some European Christian missionaries and a handful of Western-educated persons including Brahmins and Parsis. Bombay gave the lead to rest of Maharashtra. Great social reformers like Mahadeo G. Ranade, B.M. Malabari, S.S. Bengali, Karsondas Mulji, Jyotiba Phule, Pandita Ramabai and D. K. Karve rendered yeoman service to the cause of the emancipation of women. For instance, Ranade and his Indian National Social Conference worked steadily (with some success) against such glaring social evils as child marriage and the prohibition of widow re- marriage. As it is possible to discuss in detail all aspects of the movement for the emancipation of women in the 19th Century. it is proposed to concentrate on : female education, widow re- marriage and child-marriage in detail as follows :-

11.2.1 Female Education

The establishment of the Prarthana Samaj gave the impetus necessary for reform. It is true, as R.C. Majumdar writes, “In Bombay Presidency the women led a comparatively freer life as there was no Purdah, among the Marathas, yet, like their counter parts in other Presidencies, women in Western India were not encouraged to receive education”. Naturally, some English-educated young men launched a determined movement to spread ‘female education through schools in Bombay and Poona. In this laudable attempt, they were encouraged by their European professors in Elphinstone Institution in Bombay (1848). These enthusiastic young men established the “Students Literary and Scientific Society.” The Society espoused the cause of female education. The lead was taken by the members of the Gujarati Dnyan Prasarak, Mandali. Parsi reformers like

Dadabhai Naoroji, realized that only support from the leading businessmen (Shetias) of the community would provide the money and the pupils with which they could start schools for girls. F.C.Banaji and the Cama family showed the way by giving education to their daughters and money to the schools despite opposition from Orthodox Parsis. By 1852 there were four schools with 371 pupils. In 1857, S.S.Bengali and his friends started the magazine 'Stri Bodh'.

The initial success of the Parsi schools led to the establishment of similar schools by the Marathi and Gujarathi Hindus in 1849 with the financial support of businessmen such as Jagannath Shankarset. The Parsi and Gujarati girls' schools were able to get financial support from the businessmen (shetias) of their communities. However the Marathi Schools were starved of funds because of Maharashtrian Hindu Community possessed no really affluent Shetias, apart from Jagannath Shankarset. Hence, their schools were supported by monthly contributions from Elphinistonsians like Bhau Daji, Thus, a beginning though creaky had been made in female education.

In 1848, Jyotiba Phule established a private school for girls education at Poona. An Association of India Young men also started girls Schools in Bombay and in some other parts of the Deccan Division of the Bombay Presidency. The Prejudices against female education were fast disappearing and "there will be no more difficulty found in establishing female schools than there is in those for boys", wrote Capt. Lester, then Acting Educational Inspector of the Deccan Division.

In the second half of the 19th century female education received considerable attention of the Government of India. The Education Commission of 1882-83 made a number of recommendation regarding the education of girls.

As for higher education for women, there was no separate institution either in Bombay or at Poona. Nevertheless, premier Colleges like the Elphinstone College, Wilson College and St.Xavier's College in Bombay, the Fergusson College at Poona and the Wellington College at Sangli always kept their doors open for female education. Reformers like M.G.Ranade, D.K.Karve and Pandita Ramabai also made significant contribution to female education in Maharashtra. G.K.Gokhale's 'Servants of India Society' generated very powerful forces for the advancement of female education.

Before we conclude, it is necessary to note the remarks of Bipin Chandra Pal, made in 1881 : "Bombay was socially far ahead of Bengal ... Female education and the freedom of social intercourse and movement of respectable Maharatha ladies was a new and inspiring experience which I had in Bombay." But as S.D.Javdekar has pointed out, in Poona and other interior places among even educated persons, belonging to the Sardar and Brahmin castes, one could find nothing but orthodoxy and "darkness". This is evident from articles published in 'Prabhakar'. Social reformers like Ranade, Agarkar and Phule, and institutions like the Sarvajanik Sabha

had to carry a relentless struggle to clear the cobwebs of antiquated, anachronistic social customs and traditions, relating especially to women, though in those days Poona was considered itself the real intellectual and political capital of the Bombay Presidency.

11.2.2 Widow Re-marriage

The Hindu Joint family was accompanied by property laws which were devised to emphasize the family, rather than the individuals as a unit. Inheritance was either withheld from women or greatly modified against their interest. The Hindu system of marriage ensured that property remained within the family. The worst affected were the Hindu widows.

Among Hindus marriage was considered as a Sacrament and therefore could not be dissolved by divorce or death, especially of the husband. Though the system was applied rigidly only to the higher caste, there existed a tendency among the lower castes to imitate the higher castes; prohibition of widow re-marriage was one such imitation. The British Law Courts, during their early days, applied the Hindu Civil Code, as interpreted by Hindu Pandits indiscriminately to Hindus of all castes. According to Hindu

Shastras, men were authorised to take more than one wife if they could not get a male progeny from the existing marriage. However, in the course of time, a Hindu male was permitted to take a second or more wives, even if he had male children.

But there was no legal protection for women against the arbitrary action of their husbands in marrying other women. Moreover, they could not re-marry, even when a woman's husband was dead. Any man who married a widow or an already married woman was held of bigamy, and it was punishable offence. The only way to escape from this arbitrary and cruel custom was through conversion to Islam or Christianity. It was against this evil that enlightened Western-educated social reformers raised their banner of revolt as was being done by the Brahmo Samaj in Bengal.

In Bombay, young Elphinstonians, including Dadabhai Naoroji, Dadoba Pandurang, Jambhekar, Karsondas Mulji, Baba Padamji and the militant, Hindu, Vishnubabu Brahmachari advocated widow re-marriage. In Poona, reformers like "Lokhitawadi" Gopal Hari Deshmukh, Vishnu Shastri Pandit and M.G. Ranade intensified the movement. The reformers cited the authority on the Vedas for widow re-marriage.

Journals like the 'Indu Prakash' were wedded to the advocacy of widow remarriage. The reformers founded, in 1866, the Hindu Widow Marriage Association (Vidhwa Vivahottejak Mandal). The object of the Association was limited i.e. re-marriage of widows of the high caste according to the authority of the Hindu Dharma Shastras.

Opposition to widow re-marriage also increased. A number of inhabitants of Poona submitted two petitions to the Government opposing the Widow Marriage Legislation of 1856. A Society for the Protection of the Hindu

Dharma was established. The Shastris, Pandits and other orthodox views ganged up against the movement for widow re-marriage. But the initiative rested with the reformers. Vishnu Shastri not only translated Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar's writings on the subject into Marathi and published in the 'InduPrakash' but also brain stormed the principal towns of the Deccan on the lecturing tour and initiated a heated discussion in the Marathi press and meetings. Vishnu Shastri also challenged the orthodox to a public debate on the question of widow re-marriage. In the debate that followed in March 1870 in Poona, Presided over by the 'Shankaracharya of Karvir and Shankeshwar, the reformers alleged that the Shankaracharya had tampered with one of the arbitrators and persuaded him to lie since religion was at stake.

Nevertheless, the Widows Marriage Association claimed a moral victory – a victory based on the Vedic Authorities for “widow Re-marriage” and by avoiding any significant reference to Western ideas.

Ironically, the movement witnessed in 1870, an anti-climax. Gopal Hari Deshmukh performed penance (“prayschitta”) in Ahmedabad and was re-admitted to his caste. This action by the President of the Window Marriage Association caused the movement a set back. The movement suffered a further blow in the death of Vishnu Shastri Pandit in 1876. Thereafter, for more than a decade the movement remained dormant although in Bombay, the movement was continued by the Gujarathi reformers, led by Madhavdas Raghunathdas, and by the Prarthana Samaj.

Maharshi Dondo Keshav Karve also rendered great service to the cause of widow re-marriage. He himself set the example by marrying Godubai, a widow sister of his friend, in 1883, braving hostile criticism of orthodox Hindus and their journals. With the co-operation of some friends, including R.G. Bhandarkar, he revived the Widow Marriage Association. He utilised his vacations for lectures on behalf of the Association in order to educate the public on widow re-marriage. In 1896, he started the Widow Home Association, inspired by Pandita Ramabai's Sharada Sadan. Justice Ranade and Dr. Bhandarkar were also associated with it. Earlier, he had established the Hindu Widows Home which was aimed at making the widows self-supporting by giving them training as teachers, midwives or nurses. Since its establishment in 1889 until 1915, the Hindu Widows' Home got 25 Maharashtrian Widows married.

Thus the untiring efforts of reformers of Bombay and Poona, journals like Indu Prakash, and the activities of Widow Remarriage Association of Vishnu Shastri and of Social Conference of Karve began to fruit. By the turn of the 20th Century they had succeeded in focusing attention of the Hindu community on irrational attitude towards the question of Widow re-marriage, based on wrong interpretation of the Vedic literature.

11.2.3 Child Marriage

Child marriage was one of the cruel customs prevalent in India among different communities since ancient times. It became a social practice after the medieval period due to the alleged fear that unmarried Hindu girls

would be taken away by the Muslim nobles or would be molested by anti-social elements. Though child marriage seemed to solve some social and economic problems, it was harmful to the society and degraded women in several ways. Nevertheless, pre-puberty marriage became a social tradition in all parts in India. It was only in the nineteenth century that enlightened men like B.M. Malabari, M.G. Ranade, Dr. R.G. Bhandarkar and some others challenged this socially and ethically degrading custom and launched a determined struggle against it. As a result of the efforts of reformers of Bengal the British Government of India had been persuaded to pass Act III of 1872 abolishing “early marriage” making polygamy a penal offence sanctioning widow remarriages and intercaste marriages for “parties not coming under any of the existing marriage laws and not professing any of the current faiths. In spite of the law, the evil of child marriage continued to be widely practiced among people, including those in Maharashtra.

The issue of child marriage was highlighted in 1880s by the Parsi reformer and editor of Indian Spectator, Behramji M. Malabari. With a view to place his views on the twin evils before the public and government officials for their opinion, he suggested that Universities should not give permission to married students to appear for examination, that government Departments give preference to unmarried men in making appointments and that materials describing the evils of early marriage be included in school text-books by the Education Department. He was supported by such eminent persons as Dr. Bhandarkar, Ranade, K.T. Telang, Agarkar and Chandavarkar in his crusade against child marriage. Ranade suggested that the government, by a law, must fix the minimum marriageable age both for boys and girls (at 16 to 18 for boys and 10 to 12 for girls). He even suggested that the Penal Code be amended so as to declare sexual intercourse with a girl under 14 as “rape”. He wanted men above the age of 45 debarred from marrying girls who were virgins. Likewise, he also advocated a ban on marriage between young men with girls older than themselves. Since, in his view, such marriages were “unnatural and mischievous”. In fact, Ranade strongly advocated state assistance to raise the age of consent for girls from 10 to 12.

Malabari's notes and Ranade's suggestions on them roused a storm of protest, led by Lokamanya Tilak, one of the highly educated and advanced thinkers of Maharashtra and a prominent political leader. Tilak made it clear that he did not object to the proposed reforms as such, but to the suggestion that a foreign government should interfere in the social reform of the Hindu Society. The British, on their part, did not show any hurry to enact legislation on the lines suggested by the reformers since they had adopted a policy of neutrality on social matters of the Indian people. Therefore, Malabari had to visit England thrice to appeal to the people of England to bring pressure upon the government to enact legislation prohibiting child marriage. Despite virulent opposition, Malabari and his fellow-reformers continued their campaign for legislation fixing the age of consent. Finally, they were successful in securing legislation against child marriage, known as the Age of Consent Act of 1891.

The Act according to R.C. Majumdar, “was a poor substitute for the

prohibition of early marriage of girls, and from the very nature of the case, its practical effect could not be of much consequence". Nevertheless, the Act, by forbidding the consumption of marriage before the wife had reached the age of 12, succeeded in creating a sense of awareness among the Indian people about the need to reconsider the custom of child marriage. The Age of Consent of 1891 can be regarded as a piece of human legislation meant to remove a glaring social abuse and emancipate women from the miseries resulting from an early marriage.

However, complete and immediate elimination of such social practice was not possible because social prejudices die hard. This was exemplified by the marriage of Ranade at the age of 31 to girl of 11, against his will. Ranade tried unsuccessfully to dissuade his own father and the father of the girls from forcing that marriage on him. In difference to his father's wishes, he had to consent to the marriage, but after the marriage, he educated his young wife in liberal thinking.

Gradually, she grew in confidence, and in the first decade of the 20th century, became a leading social reformer-Ramabai Ranade.

Despite social orthodoxy and politically inspired opposition to social reform with government assistance, Malabari, Ranade and their associates succeeded in arousing the desire for reforms among enlightened and educated section of Maharashtrian. The Age of Consent act was a signal for enlightened reformers and various associations to work for the betterment of the lot of females by saving them from oppressive and degrading social customs.

No discussion on women's emancipation can be complete without reference to Pandita Ramabai, a pioneer in the reform of women's upliftment. Ramabai incurred the wrath of orthodox Hindus for marrying out of her Maharashtrian Brahmin caste. After the death of her husband, parents and brother she returned to Poona. Her denunciations of men for keeping women in bondage, her marriage out of caste and her criticism of "popular Hindusim" roused the orthodox. Hindus, including Tilak, against her though they admired her scholarship. In Poona, she opened the Arya Mahila Samaj, under the auspices of the Prarthana Samaj for social service among Hindu women. She also started the study of English languages. Although Ranade and Bhandarkar Sympathised with her, her efforts to establish branches of the Arya Mahila Samaj throughout Maharashtra met with little success owing to the orthodoxy's hostility.

Dejected and piqued at the attitude of the fellow Hindus, Ramabai approached the Christian missionaries for help. She went to England and America and returned to Poona with promise of financial support for educational work. In the meanwhile, she had got converted to Christianity and written a book indicting caste Hindus. In 1889 she established Sharada Sadan in Bombay, which she transferred to Poona in the next year. Ranade and Bhandarkar continued their association with her activities, but her activities met with hostile opposition. Tilak denounced her as agent of Christian missionaries and alleged that she was engaged in conversion in

the garb of imparting educational and social reform. She defended herself by maintaining that it was their indifference and hostility that had forced her to seek assistance of the missionaries.

However, later, she was obliged to admit that she was doing proselytising work on behalf of Christian missionaries. This disclosure made Ranade and Bhandarkar to discontinue their association with Ramabai declaring that their original understanding with her had been broken. Nevertheless, the Arya Mahila Samaj continued its work and gave a great impetus to the work of social reform and social welfare of women.

11.2.4 The Hindu Code Bill

Dr. Babasaheb rendered great service to all the women by his emphasis on equality. The preamble of the constitution of India promises to secure to all citizens justice. Parts III and IV of the constitution have provided these objectives which contain many provisions providing for preferential treatment for promoting social status of women and children.

Dr. Ambedkar was truly liberator of the Indian women. He as a Law Minister submitted a bill which raised the age of consent and marriage, upheld monogamy, gave women the right of divorce and treated stridhan as women's property. However the conservative opposition to the radical proposals led to the postponement of the Hindu Code Bill. Dr. Ambedkar resigned in disgust due to attitude of the conservative members of the Constituent Assembly. Later sections of the Bill were passed as four distinct Acts, The Hindu Succession Act of 1956 made the daughter as the equal co-heir with son. Monogamy was made mandatory for man and women. Thus, Dr. Ambedkar devoted his entire life for the upliftment of all sections of society for the overall development of our country.

Check your progress:-

Q. What were the difficulties in Emancipation of women and what efforts made towards its realization ?

11.3 SUMMARY

Thus, it is clear that many of the social reformers took lot of efforts for the upliftment of Indian society. Most of the social reformers worked towards the emancipation of Women and because of their efforts many important issues were addressed and solved by them.

11.4 QUESTIONS

1. Explain the various problems of women's in the 19th century of Maharashtra.
2. Trace the efforts of social reformers to eradicate the various problems of women's in the 19th century of Maharashtra.

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CONTRIBUTION OF REFORMERS TOWARDS UPLIFTMENT OF DEPRESSED CLASSES

Unit Structure

- 12.0 Objectives
- 12.1 Introduction
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12.0 OBJECTIVES

After the study of this unit, the student will be able to:

- 1) Realise the contribution of Vitthal Ramji Shinde and the Depressed Classes Mission of India.
- 2) Understand the role of Shahu Maharaj to upliftment of the Depressed Classes.
- 3) Study the role of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar to upliftment of the Depressed Classes.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Phule was the pioneer of upliftment of the downtrodden V. R. Shinde Shahu Maharaj and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar worked against caste- system. They wanted to eradicate inequalities, superstitions, illiteracy from Society. Through they were attached to different organizations, they achieved their goal to some extent.

12.2 CONTRIBUTION OF REFORMERS TOWARDS UPLIFTMENT OF DEPRESSED CLASSES

12.2.1 VITTHAL RAMJI SHINDE (1873-1944) :

As we have already noted that social reformers of Maharashtra like Balshastri Jambhekar, Lokhitawadi Gopal Hari Deshmukh, Bhadarkar, Justice Ranade and Jyotirao Phule gave priority to social reform over political reform. Phule and Agarkar stressed the need to make the Indian Society fit for preserving freedom after winning it. They believed that freedom was meaningless if political power was monopolised by a privileged few, and hence Phule had endeavoured to establish the principle of justice and equality by emancipating the vast non-Brahmin masses of Maharashtra from the social and religious bondage. Since men like Tilak denigrated the reformers as 'stooges of the alien government' because of their advocacy of reform with the help of the government, most of them kept away from politics. In the early years of the Indian National Congress, some of the reformers, notably Ranade, were associated with the freedom movement but as the nationalist struggle came to be dominated by the close of the 19th century, by conservatives such as Lokmanya Tilak links between the reformers and the leaders of the nationalist movement were severed.

Until the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi on the national scene, both the social reform and nationalist movements appeared to run parallel to each other. Consequently, social reform movement, especially the efforts to give a fair deal to the Ati-sudras or the untouchables, received a set back. But one reformer Vitthal Ramji Shinde made repeated attempts to re-establish

contacts between the social reformers and the nationalist freedom fighters. Finally, he succeeded in integrating social reform with, political reform, and persuaded the Indian National Congress to include abolition of untouchability in its programme.

Born in a poor Maratha family on 23rd April 1873, Shinde was married to a then one year old when he was barely nine. Surprisingly, his family was comparatively liberal in the observance of social customs such as "Purdah" and female education. He graduated in Arts with the financial support of a prominent Poona lawyer, named Gangaram Mhaske, and the enlightened ruler of Baroda Sayajirao Gaikwad (1898). During the period of his college education. Shinde was influenced by the writings of J.S. Mill, Herbert Spencer and Agarkar. After his graduation he was attracted by the reformist ideas of the leaders of Prarthana Samaj like Ranade and Bhandarkar and joined the Samaj. In 1901, he managed to secure a scholarship to study at the Oxford University on the condition that on his return he would serve the Prarthana Samaj. At Oxford he studied 'Comparative Religion'. On his return to Bombay, he worked for seven years as missionary of the Prarthana Samaj.

The Depressed Classes Mission of India

Contribution of
Reformers towards
Upliftment of
Depressed Classes

While serving the Prarthana Samaj, Shinde also established on 18th October 1906, the Indian Depressed Classes Mission for uplifting the untouchables. With Shinde as general secretary, and with the patronage of the Prarthana Samaj and the Bombay Presidency Social Reform Association, the movement quickly spread over Maharashtra. Shinde and members of his family, including his parents and his sister Janabai, took a pledge to serve the untouchables. But his work in the Prarthana Samaj did not give him enough time to spare for the activities of the Depressed Classes Mission. In 1910 differences between him and the leaders of the Samaj on organizational and other matters developed, forcing Shinde to give up his work of the Samaj. From then on, he devoted his full time to the work of the Mission.

At the same time, fearing that separatist movements on the basis of caste would destroy the sense of unity so necessary for the success of the freedom struggle, he starved for social justice as a part of the movement. Since the non-Brahmins, especially the Marathas, formed a very large group in the total population of the Bombay Presidency, he took the initiative to form the Maratha Rashtriya Sangha (the National Union of the Marathas) to maintain the unity of the Maratha Community. But despite his efforts, the Marathas were divided into two groups i.e. one led by a nationalist Maratha and the other by the Satyashodhak Marathas who claimed to follow Mahatma Phule's teachings. Hence, Shinde established a new organisation called 'All India Untouchability League' to safeguard the interests of the untouchables and work for their political rights.

In 1917, with the help of Mrs. Annie Besant, Shinde successfully persuaded the leaders of the Indian National Congress to pass a resolution demanding eradication of untouchability. When, under the Government of India Act of 1919 Muslims were given separate representation, he petitioned the government for special representation in the legislature to the depressed classes. However, he lost the election which he had fought on a general seat, allotted to Poona City, due to the last minute withdrawal of support by Shahu Maharaja. Thereafter, Shinde had to face a lot of difficulties and opposition within the Depressed Classes Mission. A section of the politically conscious untouchables who did not like the moderate line of Shinde on the issue of untouchability sought to capture the organisation. Hence, he entrusted the powers and responsibilities of work of the Poona Branch of the Mission to the new leaders of the untouchables.

When Gandhiji emerged on the political scene of India as the leader in the political struggle for independence, Shinde was attracted towards him as he felt his aspirations realised in Gandhiji's social and political thought. After having relinquished the responsibilities of the Depressed Classes Mission, he worked as the missionary of the Brahmo Samaj in 1923-24, and participated in the famous Temple Entry Agitation at Vaikam in Kerala. Later, he supported the Jedhe brothers to organise the peasants movement in Maharashtra against the proposed rise in the land revenue (1928). He took part in Gandhiji's non-cooperation movement, courted arrest and

suffered imprisonment for six months. But he had no peace of mind because of indifference shown towards him by the new leaders of the untouchables. A decade before his death on 2nd January, 1944, Shinde was completely broken financially, physically and psychologically. Those for whom he had devoted his prime years almost ignored him and forgotten him.

Vitthal Ramji Shinde was a true follower of Mahatma Phule. Though he differed from Phule in his approach to Hinduism, he was convinced that there was a widespread Aryan i.e. Brahmanic bias in the consideration of India civilisation. Therefore, he was in favour of abolition of the caste system. He dedicated himself to the promotion of the welfare of the masses. More than with anything else Shinde identified himself with the uplift of the Depressed Classes. Wherever he went, Shinde opened a day and night schools for the children of Depressed Classes he started hostels and free dispensaries for the children and adults of these classes. He sought to create spirit of revolt among members of the Depressed Classes against existing conditions. The Depressed Classes Mission, under Shinde linked up work in several centres in the Bombay Presidency and some in Madras as well. According to S. Natarajan the Mission was responsible for turning out the leadership of the next generation of these classes and for inspiring in them a spirit of service.

Check your Progress.

1. Give an account of the work of Vitthal Ramji Shinde.

12.2.2 SHAHU MAHARAJ

Among more than 563 rulers of the Princely States in British India, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaja was a very enlightened monarch who made genuine efforts to promote the cause of social reform. His fame rests particularly on his defiance of the age old caste system and championship of the rights of the Depressed Classes and his work for their emancipation. His reforming efforts supplemented the activities of Mahatma Phule and Vithal Shinde and in some ways contributed to the consolidation and spread of the non-Brahmin movement in Maharashtra. However, his victory in the fight with the Brahmins during the 'Vedokta movement', his success in establishing the rights of non-Brahmins to perform Vedic rites, in fact, strengthened the traditional upper castes, namely the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas. Hence, his victory in the 'Vedokta movement' was a setback to the anticaste system movement of reformers like Phule and Shinde. Shahu Maharaj was considered to be the main pillar of Phule's Satyashodhak movement and the movement of the Maratha Sudras and Ati-sudras; but he never accepted full responsibility of leadership of both these movements. As one of the writer has observed that he never fully involved himself in these two movements. In fact, in the last decade of the 19th century and early decades of the twentieth century, he publicly criticised the non-Brahmin movement.

Notwithstanding this criticism, it must be accepted that the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur rendered very valuable service to the cause of the upliftment of women, the untouchables, their education and employment of the working class. According to Dhananjay Keer, he abolished slavery in which the untouchables, including the tribals, were held for ages in his kingdom, and gave them equal rights. Unmindful of his position as Chhatrapati Shahu dined with the untouchables and thereby displayed his progressive attitude towards the socially disadvantaged communities. He wanted to destroy social inequalities and caste distinctions because he regarded these as evils which had fragmented the Hindu Society. As Mathew Lederle remarks - "Shahu Maharaj in the spirit of Phule, worked for the upliftment of the untouchables, and promoted the education of the masses.

In the very first year of his ascending the throne in 1894, Shahu issued a directive abolishing the system of forced labour. Realising that people belonging to non-Brahmin caste would not be able to break the Brahmin monopoly of administrative service due to lack of education, he prepared a scheme for their education. He was determined to provide equal opportunities to the backward or Depressed Classes. Therefore, he wholeheartedly supported the establishment of students' hostels on the basis of caste.

In 1902, he issued from England an order reserving 50 percent of the administrative posts under his government for candidates belonging to the backward castes - a measure aimed at destroying the Brahmin stronghold. For instance, in 1894, out of 71 officers in the General Administrative Department, 60 were Brahmins; in 1912, there were only 35 Brahmin officers out of a total of 95.

Although during the period of the 'Vedokta Controversy', Shahu Maharaj upheld the rights of the Marathas as Kshatriyas and claimed that they were superior to other non-Brahmin castes, he boldly took measures that struck at the very roots of the caste system. Towards the end of his life, he demanded the abolition of the obnoxious system itself. Calling it "the greatest obstacle in the path of our progress", he held that it was a crime to support the caste system.

Shahu was one with his contemporary reformers in holding free and compulsory education as the most effective remedy to cure the maladies from which the Hindu Society suffered for centuries. He established several institutions of primary, secondary and higher education. The effects of his educational policy were visible even during his life time. For example, in 1894, the Rajaram College at Kolhapur had only 97 students on its rolls, out of whom six were non-Brahmins. In 1922, there were 100 non-Brahmin students out of 265. During this period the number of school going students in his state increased from 10,884 to 27,830 and the number of non-Brahmins from 8,088 to 21,027 of whom 2,162 were untouchables in 1922. These figures bear an eloquent testimony to the Chhatrapati's sincere efforts to break the monopoly of the privileged few in the field of education. All teachers in government as well as private schools receiving grant from his government were asked not to discriminate between students on the basis of caste.

Likewise, his government guaranteed equal treatment to all patients including untouchables in the hospitals. Partly under the influence of the Satyashodhak Samaj, Brahmo Samaj and Prarthana Samaj, and mainly under the influence of the Arya Samaj whose member he became in 1916, Shahu devoted the last years of his life for the improvement of the conditions and status of such as tanks and wells. Separate schools for the untouchables were closed down and they were made to study in schools belonging to the upper classes along with high caste students. Untouchables were permitted to practice as lawyers and compete for and occupy positions traditionally regarded as the preserve of the upper castes. His government replaced the Kulkarnis (village accountants, mostly Brahmins) by Talathis, and offered some of these new posts to the untouchables.

The Brahmins, as was expected, resented the measure; but the policy had far-reaching effects on the administrative machinery of the villages. The ruler of Kolhapur also sought to improve the lot of the Maharas by abolishing the traditional system of “Watan” and the “Baluta” system, which had led to forced labour by the villagers belonging to upper caste. In 1918, Chhatrapati issued an order abolishing the Mahar watan those who opposed the measure were liable to pay fines or undergo imprisonment.

Shahu Maharaja's efforts contributed substantially to social development among all non-Brahmin and untouchable castes, especially among the Marathas. The activities of Jyotirao Phule, and Shahu were a reaction

against ‘Brahmin Nationalism’. But the role of these two champions of non-Brahmins deferred. According to Gailomvedt - “they symbolized the two primary ideological trends within the non-Brahmin movement, one with a more lower class, the other with a more elite social base. Phule was a complete secular and equalitarian radical; Shahu leaned toward the “Kshatriyas’ ideology”.

The Vedokta Episode

“Vedokta” refers to “Vedic religious rites which were claimed to be the right of all twice-born Kshatriyas and Brahmins”, as opposed to the Puranic or “Puranokta” rites which all Shudras were entitled to perform. (Traditionally, even the Vaishyas were included in the “twice born” category.) Since the background of the controversy could be traced to the struggle between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas for supremacy from ancient times, and the space at our disposal is limited, we shall restrict our discussion to the immediate events that led to the movement.

However, we may note that this controversy had raised its head in Maharashtra first time in the nineteenth century in 1837. When Pratap Singh was the ruler of Satara. To put an end to the vexed question about the permissibility of the Kshatriyas to perform the Vedic rites, he summoned a meeting of the leaders of both the castes, since the Brahmins had been arguing that they alone were eligible to perform the vedic sacrifices and rituals. The outcome of the meeting was that the Brahmins lost their case. Aristocratic Maratha families such as the Bhonsles, Ghatges, Palkars, Jadhavs, Mohites, Manes and Mahadiks’ were now

officially declared as the Kshatriyas. Their right to perform Vedic rituals and sacrifices was confirmed with documentary evidence.

The controversy reappeared in 1896 in Baroda, where rituals in the palace of Maharaj Sayajirao Gaikwad used to be conducted in Puranokta". Under the influence of Jyotirao Phule, Gaikwad decided to adopt the Vedic religious rites as was being done in the ruling houses in Rajputana. When he ordered that the Vedokta religious rites be followed with effect from 15th October 1896, and the domination of social and religious life by the Brahmins went a long way in strengthening and consolidating the non-Brahmin and anti-caste movements. Although his efforts did not get much favourable response outside the State of Kolhapur during his own life time, his struggle for the emancipation of the untouchable castes from the bondage of upper castes provided the basis for the work of J. D. Javalkar and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Hence, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaja has been called a revolutionary and man of the people.

The Kolhapur Incident

While the "Vedokta" controversy was raging in Baroda and arousing the Brahmins of Kolhapur as well of other parts of Maharashtra to agitate the Gaikwad's action, another similar controversy but of a greater intensity broke out in Kolhapur. In 1900 a dispute arose when the ruler of Kolhapur, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj discovered that his hereditary priests in the

service of his palace were performing only "Puranokta" rites for him instead of Vedokta rites. On enquiry, the priests explained that since he was a shudra, he was entitled only to the "Puranokta" sacrifices they were performing. Provoked by their arrogance and also by their declaration that he was a Shudra, and therefore not entitled to Vedic rites, Shahu Maharaja ordered that all rituals in his court should be performed according to the Vedas. Thus began a fierce inter-caste conflict, which gave a great fillip to the non- Brahmin movement in Maharashtra.

The high priest of Shahu, the Rajopadhya refused to comply with the orders of his king to perform Vedic rites. Hence, the Maharaja confiscated his "Inam" lands. The Shankaracharya supported the palace high priest against Shahu; enraged, the ruler of Kolhapur ordered the confiscation of the hereditary lands of the Shankaracharya in Kolhapur.

Behind the "Vedokta" controversy there was the burning question of political and social equality. It was alleged by the Marathas that the Brahmins were trying to sow dissensions in their Maratha community, and were trying to split the royal families. But leaders of the Brahmin community cleverly sought to convert the conflict between them and the Marathas of Kolhapur into a problem affecting the entire Hindu community. They demanded that Shahu should treat the "Vedokta" controversy in that light and solve it, keeping in mind that his decision would affect the entire Brahmin Community in India. However, he was not in a mood to compromise on the issue.

The conflict took a new turn when Lokmanya Tilak argued that Shahu may be allowed, in his capacity as the “Chhatrapati”, to have Vedokta rites. But he refused to acknowledge Shahu’s right for such rituals as matter of family right. In the end, the Maharaja resorted to coercion to make the Brahmins recognize his right to “Vedokta” rituals as he desired. Both the Rajopadhya and the Shankaracharya yielded so that they could win back their lands. But this did not modify Shahu, his attitude was further hardened towards the Brahmins. He was convinced that only non-Brahmin power could force the Brahmins to acquiesce in obeying his orders.

Therefore, immediately after the Vedokta controversy, Shahu began to bring non-brahmins into the administration of Kolhapur and in many other ways he sought to weaken the position of the Brahmins. The Maratha nobility was happy to see “Brahmin nationalism” reeling under the blows of Shahu’s reforms. But, as Gail Omvedt points out “the new Brahmins, who had come into the administration, were non-aristocratic persons. They began to pay attention to the message of secularism and equality and ceremonies to be held without any Brahmin at all that was being spread by the Satyashodhak Samaj. However, within a decade, a compromise with the Vedokta atmosphere was worked out in Kolhapur when many ceremonies of the Maratha community involved use of the sacred thread as one of the aspects of the claim to Kshatriyas status”. But, in spite of this compromise, these ceremonies were significant. They were conducted in defiance of Brahmi priests by trained non-Brahmin priests. (The social and political significance of these developments will be discussed in later Unit).

Check your Progress:-

Q. 1. Briefly describe the Vedokta Episode.

12.2.3 DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a great modern social thinker, a born fighter, a famous advocate & a humanist. Dr Ambedkar, who was born in an “Untouchable” or dalit community called Mahar in Maharashtra, took a leading role in promoting the welfare of the untouchables & elevating their status. Being the most highly educated untouchable in India, Dr. Ambedkar became the undisputed spokesman of the untouchables and depressed classes in India. He fought against many of the injustice done to the untouchables by establishing a political party & a couple of organisation for the upliftment of the untouchables.

Pandit Nehru rightly described him as the “the greatest revolutionary who fought against all the oppressive features of Hindu Society.”

CONTRIBUTION OF DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR TOWARDS UPLIFTMENT OF DEPRESSED CLASS

Dr. Ambedkar had made it clear that his main aim in life was to remove the practice of untouchability and to take the untouchables towards socio economic equality and justice. In order to make them socially & politically

conscious he made the Dalits aware of the indignities heaped on them and sought to oversee their pride as human beings, for that he started initially many satyagrahas which included the demands of civil rights. There were the issue of public places like roads, tanks etc. He organised Satyagraha for temple entry also but he was very clear in his ultimate goal of emancipation of dalits. Infact, it was an indirect action to gain political and educational power for Dalits.

Dr. Ambedkar made an appeal to his people to change their style of life to suit to the needs to time. He urged them to stop the dragging of dead cattle, out of the village. He wanted them to give up eating carrion, alcoholic drinks & begging. He wanted them to become literates & send their children to schools. Finally he wanted them to dress well & have self respect for themselves. Thus one of his chief aim was to bring about a revolution in the way of life of the untouchables & in their aspiration for themselves & their children.

In his efforts to raise the status of the untouchables, Dr, Ambedkar considered the caste system as one of the obstacles. He expressed his great disappointment with the caste system as well as the Varna system. He even gave a call to destroy the caste system in his famous book, "The Annihilation of Caste" (1936). He wrote in "Harijan" in 1933, "The outcaste is a by product of the caste system. Nothing can emancipate the outcaste except the destruction of the caste system". As an expression of his disillusionment with Hinduism, he embraced Buddhism along with his followers.

Dr. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR'S EVIDENCE BEFORE SOUTHBOROUGH COMMISSION

British Government declared that it will form responsible Government in India in 1917. In order to give safeguards to minorities to prevent their political rights, British Government started interviewing various leaders in India. British Parliament sent a committee chaired by Southborough in order take the evidences and decide the policy in the matter of franchise.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar submitted written evidence to Southborough Commission in which he demanded following rights.

- 1) Untouchables should be given right to vote.
- 2) They should be given right to contest the election.
- 3) Their should be separate electorate reserved for them.
- 4) Untouchable representatives of untouchables must be elected by untouchable voters.
- 5) In an untouchable dominant constituency, they should be given reserved seats as per their population.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar demanded civil rights for untouchables before Southborough commission and it was the first organized effort in modern India to start civil rights movements of untouchables.

BAHISHKRIT HITAKARNI SABHA (1924)

Dr. Ambedkar founded the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha on 20th July 1924 with an aim to spread the culture of education

among the depressed classes. Bahishkrit means 'Exterio' or 'out caste'. For the betterment of the interests of such people; the sabha started a hostel at Sholapur in January 1925. It was basically for the high school students whose expenses of on clothing, stationary & boarding were to be born by the sabha itself. The Sholapur municipality was kind enough to sanction a grant of Rs. 401 for the maintenance of the hostel. The Sabha also established an institution to inculcate a liking for learning and knowledge and a love for social service into the minds of the students of the depressed classes. The students soon started conducting a monthly magazine called Vidya Vilas. In addition, a free reading room in Bombay and Mahar Hockey Club was also started for recreation. The motto of the Sabha was "educate, agitate and organize". Ambedkar classified all these objectives.

On behalf of the Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha, Dr. Ambedkar submitted a memorandum to the Simon Commission demanding joint electorates with reservation of seats for depressed classes in legislatures and opposed the principle of nomination. Then on question of framing a constitution for India the British govt. convened a Round Table Conference in London in 1930 for which Dr. Ambedkar was also invited. There he served on almost all the sub committees including Minority sub-Committee, appointed by the conference. Dr. Ambedkar prepared a draft of the declaration of Fundamental rights safeguarding the cultural, religious and economic rights of the untouchables. He also prepared a Scheme of Political Safeguards for the Protection of Depressed classes in the Future Constitution of Self governing India and submitted it to the minorities subcommittee. To Dr. Ambedkar, the Round Table Conference laid the foundation of self Government of India and proved to be a successful so far as the rights of the depressed classes were concerned.

Check your progress :

- 1) Explain the work of Bahishkrit Hitakarni sabha.

MAHAD WATER TANK SATYAGRAHA (1927)

Of the attempts made to indicate the right to take water from the public watering places, it is enough to mention the case of Chavdar Tank. This tank is situated in the town of Mahad in the Kolaba district of Bombay presidency. This tank is a vast expanse of water mainly fed by rains and natural springs. All its sides are embanked around the tank there are small strips of land on all sides belonging to private individuals. This tank is an old one and no one knows when it was built or by whom. But in

1869 when a municipality was established by the Government, it was handed over to the municipality and since has been treated as a public tank. The untouchables were not allowed to take water from this tank.

Dr. Ambedkar's March to the 'Chavdar Tank' in Mahad, dirt Kolaba in 1927, was really an historic event. With the resolution moved by Rao Bahadur S. K. Bole and passed by the Bombay legislative Council in 1926, the tank was thrown open to all untouchables who could not exercise their rights due to the hostility of the caste Hindus. Hence, it was decided to convene a conference of the depressed classes at Mahad and March was taken to the 'Chavdar Tank' on 20th March 1927, under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar. It was historic in the sense that for the first time in the history of India the untouchables demonstrated to assert their rights not only to fetch water but also symbolize the event with equal right to fetch drinking water, a gift of nature. However it was disliked by orthodox Hindus and they opposed this satyagraha. However, Dr. Ambedkar established untouchables right over water in 1927.

Check your progress :

1. Give the reasons why Mahad Water tank Satyagraha was launched?

BURNING OF MANUSMRITI

The burning of Manusmriti took place at Mahad on the 25th December, 1927. The function was a part of the campaign for establishing the right to take water from the chavdar tank. It took place publicly & openly in a conference of the untouchables. Moreover, the resolution proposing the burning of Manusmriti was moved by Gangadhar Neelkanth Sahastrabudhe, a Brahmin associate of Ambedkar. This event shocked all the orthodox Hindus, Pandits, Acharyas & Shankaracharyas of the country who exclaimed it as outlandish attack on their sacred Hindu scriptures. Dr. Ambedkar, at whose hands the smriti was burnt expressed his joy & demanded a new one to reshape the life of Hindus at large.

This event was symbolically rejecting the rules so specified & the doctrine of inequality at birth on which the caste system was based. It was a historic event which denied the unequal social stratification and demanded for social norms based on modern humanitarian principles.

KALARAM TEMPLE ENTRY SATYAGRAHA

As an integral part of untouchability the untouchables were denied entry into the Hindu temples. The Kalaram Temple at Nasik had been a major place of worship for the Hindu devotees of Rama. The untouchables desired the temple open to them being Hindus, but the trustees did not agree. It was therefore decided to launch an agitation Satyagraha for the purpose. The struggle commenced on 2nd March 1930 & continued for about a month. During the Satyagraha, a fatal life attack on Dr. Ambedkar was made & a fighting of the untouchables & touchable took place. As a result the trustees closed down the temple for a year. On the temple entry

movement, Ambedkar remarked that he did not actually want to enter the temple & touch the feet of the deity but wanted to assert the right of the untouchables of temple entry, because they claimed to be Hindus. Kalaram Temple Entry Satyagraha was another civil rights movement planned by Dr. Ambedkar to establish the civil rights of backward caste.

DR. AMBEDKAR'S ROLE IN THE BOMBAY LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Dr. Ambedkar was appointed as representative of untouchables in the Bombay Legislative Assembly. Dr. Ambedkar was involved in work of Start Committee, which was constituted by a resolution in Assembly to formulate policy regarding educational, financial and social development of untouchables and tribal people.

Dr. Ambedkar visited Belgaon, Khandesh and Nasik and observed the conditions of these castes. He made valuable suggestions to the committee.

ROUND TABLE CONFERENCES AND POONAPACT

To frame the future Constitution of India the British govt. convened a Round Table Conference in London in 1930 for which Dr. Ambedkar was also invited. He was present for all the three conferences and raised the issues of Dalits at international level.

First Round Table Conference:

British Government arranged Round Table Conference in London in 1930 in order to solve the political problems in India.

Dr. Ambedkar put forth the plea of untouchables before conference at an international level. The main intention behind it was to give political safeguards to untouchables in the future Constitution of India.

Second Round Table Conference:

On 7th September 1931 Second Round Table Conference was arranged in London. Dr. Ambedkar demanded separate electorates for the untouchables in the conference. Because of Dr. Ambedkar's untouchables got political representation and political voice in modern India. Gandhiji attended the conference on behalf of Indian National Congress and strongly opposed the Dr. Ambedkar's demand of separate electorates for the untouchables. However Ambedkar convinced the Conference and asked them to grant separate electorate for the political development of Dalits. Then Prime Minister Ramsey Macdonald accepted the demand of Dr. Ambedkar and declared Communal Award.

Poona Pact (1932)

Gandhiji started fast unto death to oppose separate electorates granted to the untouchables under Communal Award. Dr. Ambedkar met Gandhiji in Yerwada Jail at Poona where discussions were held and an agreement

was reached to. This agreement is known as the Poona Pact (1932). Dr. Ambedkar was rather compelled to sign the Poona Pact against his will sacrificing the interests of his people to save the life of Gandhiji. As per the pact, the Dalits were given reservation instead of separate electorates. Later on in his lifetime Dr. Ambedkar opposed this pact and demanded separate electorates again for the Dalits.

Check your progress :

1. Explain the three Round Table Conferences and Poona Pact.

MAHAR WATANS AND DR. AMBEDKAR

Mahar watan was another such issue called for an attention of Dr. Ambedkar. Mahar watan meant a piece of land given to a Mahar, a major caste among the untouchables in which a Mahar or his family members had to serve the village & the Government day & night just for some food grains from the villages and meager salary from the govt. Their services were regulated by the Bombay Hereditary offices Act, 1874. Moreover there were 12 Balutedars & 12 alutedars for village to render their services as villages servants. Dr. Ambedkar described it as an atrocious system and advocated its abolition too. But, being a source of income, some Mahars favoured its continuation. Hence, for their well being, Dr. Ambedkar introduced an amendment to the Bombay Hereditary offices Act of 1874, which aimed at freedom of contract for the Mahars & suggested that the Baluta should be converted into a money cess and it should be collected with the land revenue. Thus Ambedkar wanted to end the exploitation of Mahars.

ORGANISED MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Dr. Ambedkar conducted number of conferences to make the Dalits aware of their rights. The following are the important conferences:

a) Yeola Resolution (1935):

In a conference of Yeola, Dist. Nasik on 13th October, 1935, Dr. Ambedkar declared that, "he was born as a Hindu but would never die as a Hindu" And expressed his regrets for the sorry state of affairs and plight of the untouchables at the hands of Hindus and advised the people to sever connection with Hinduism & choose any other faith wherein equality of status & opportunities would be guaranteed. The Sikhs, Muslims & Christians wanted to induce him to embrace their religions. They offered enormous funds and other amenities not only for himself but for his followers as well. But he refused all these tempting offers. His attachment to Buddhism was so deep that no other religion could win him to any extent. Therefore he converted to Buddhism on 14th October 1956.

b) Mumbai Elakha Mahar Parishad (1936) :

With a view to considering the question of conversion further, Dr. Ambedkar organised a special conference of his people on May 30 & 31, 1936.

Addressing the special conference at Bombay he told his followers to remember the words of Tathagata 'Atta Dipa Bhava' and asked them to take refuge in reason. This was a clear indication of his love for Buddha & his Dhamma.

Besides this he summoned number of conferences where he strongly advocated the grievances of his fellow people.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY (1936)

Dr. Ambedkar established the Independent Labour Party in 1936. Its main objective was to advance the welfare of the labouring class including the depressed classes. The main points of the manifesto of the party were as following:

- A) To start new industries based on the production of raw material in the area,
- B) Extensive programme of technical education,
- C) Legislation to protect the tenants from their landlords & industrial workers from their employers in respect of promotion sick course etc.

Thus, the Independent Labour Party put forth a comprehensive programme for the upliftment of labourers and peasants. On behalf of the party Babasaheb contested elections in the Bombay legislature & got elected among with 16 others in 1927. It was a great success to the Indian Labour Party Society in Bombay with a view to establish and run the ideal institutions for promoting higher education among the lower middle class & scheduled castes.

The Independent Labour Party founded by Dr. Ambedkar played very important role to solve the problems of workers class in India.

ALL INDIA SCHEDULED CASTE FEDERATION(AISCF) (1942)

The All India depressed classes conference was held at Nagpur on 8 & 19 July 1942. It declared the formation of the All India scheduled caste federation & demanded separate village settlements at the cost of the govt. The federation was labeled as the 'National Party of untouchables' by its opponents. It was on behalf of the federation that Dr. Ambedkar prepared a memorandum on 'Safeguards of the scheduled castes' which was later on submitted to the Constituent Assembly & published, under the title "States & Minorities."

Check your progress :

1. Explain the programmes of Independent Labour Party.

DR. AMBEDKAR ROLE IN THE VICEROY'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (1942-1946)

Contribution of
Reformers towards
Upliftment of
Depressed Classes

Dr. Ambedkar was appointed as Labour Minister in Viceroy's Executive Council on 1st July 1942. Dr. Ambedkar gave representation to Viceroy, stating the need to give 13.5 percent reservation to backward caste. He also demanded for representation of backward caste in Public Service Commission. He established Employment Exchange. He raised the representation of backward caste in provincial and central assembly. He kept reservation in Government jobs for backward caste. He passed various legislations for the benefit of Labours in India.

Dr. Ambedkar played a vital role for the progress of workers classes in his capacity as Labour Minister in Viceroy's Council.

DR. AMBEDKAR'S WRITINGS

Dr. Ambedkar was literary genius. He addressed number of issues related with Dalits in his writings. He wrote on many subjects like Anthropology, Sociology, Economics, Philosophy, Religion, Politics, History and Law etc. He wrote Annihilation of Caste, Federation Vs Freedom, Thoughts on Pakistan (Pakistan or the partition of India), Mr. Gandhi & the Emancipation of the Untouchables, Ranade, Gandhi & Jinnah, What Congress & Gandhi have done to the Untouchables, Mr. Gandhi and the emancipation of the untouchables, Riddles in Hinduism, Who were the Shudras?, States & Minorities, The Untouchable, Maharashtra as Linguistic Province, Thoughts on Linguistic State, Buddha & His Dhamma, Revolution and counter-revolution and Buddha or Karl Marx etc.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar spread his revolutionary ideology through newspapers like Mooknayak, Bahishkrut Bharat, Janata, Samta and Prabuddha Bharat. He gave various speeches which analyzed Indian social system and it gave a new humanitarian dimension to solve the problems of suppressed and depressed classes.

DR. AMBEDKAR'S EDUCATIONAL REFORMS

In the field of education Dr. Ambedkar made many reforms. Through his Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha, Dr. Ambedkar established many hostels for the untouchable's children. He also established many libraries & reading rooms. In June 1928, he started two hostels. He established 'Depressed classes education society'.

In July 1945, he founded the 'People's Education Society'. This society played very important role in spreading higher education amongst the depressed classes. This society established number of schools and colleges like Siddharth College (Mumbai), Milind College (Aurangabad) etc.

ECONOMIC PLANNING OF DR. AMBEDKAR

Dr. Ambedkar was an economist by his basic training. His writing on economics covered a wide range of interrelated issue, including economic

development and planning, the capitalist system, alternative economics of the caste system.

Dr. Ambedkar wrote three scholarly books on economics:

- (i) Administration and Finance of the East India Company,
- (ii) The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India, and
- (iii) The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution

A distinctive feature of Dr. Ambedkar's scholarly contribution is his perceptive analysis of economic dimension of social maladies, such as, the caste system and untouchability. While Mahatma Gandhi had defended the caste system on the basis of division of labour, Ambedkar came out with a hard-hitting critique in his book 'Annihilation of Castes' (1936), pointing out that what was implicit in the caste system was not merely division of labour but also a division of labourers. Dr. Ambedkar's attack on the caste system was not merely aimed at challenging the hegemony of the upper castes but had broader connotation of economic growth and development. He argued that the caste system had reduced the mobility of labour and capital which in turn, impeded economic growth and development in India. In his memorandum submitted to the British Government titled "States and Minorities" in 1947, Dr. Ambedkar laid down a strategy for India's economic development.

As a Labour Minister in viceroys executive council, Dr. Ambedkar enacted number of laws for the betterment of labour, peasants etc. He initiated the multipurpose projects like Hirakud project, Damodar Valley project and many other to solve the problem of water and power. He personally visited the coal mines to understand the grievances of mine workers. He suggested the inter linking of rivers to solve the problem of irrigation. This shows his far sightedness and true nationalist.

After Independence, Dr. Ambedkar became the first Law Minister of India. Even while drafting the Indian Constitution (as the Chairman, Drafting Committee) in 1948-49, the economist in Dr. Ambedkar was very much alive. He strongly recommended democracy as the 'governing principle of human relationship' but emphasized that principles of equality, liberty and fraternity which are the cornerstones of democracy should not be interpreted narrowly in terms of the political rights alone. He emphasized the social and economic dimensions of democracy and warned that political democracy cannot succeed when there is no social and economic democracy. He gave an expression to the objective of economic democracy by incorporating the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Indian Constitution.

Check your progress :

1. Explain the economic planning of Dr. Ambedkar.

DR. AMBEDKAR: CHIEF ARCHITECT OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

Contribution of
Reformers towards
Upliftment of
Depressed Classes

Dr. Ambedkar was the main architect of the Indian constitution. Dr. Ambedkar was the main inspiration behind the inclusion of special provision in the Constitution of India for the development of the backward caste and other backward caste and minorities. He was elected as the Chairman of Drafting committee and worked tirelessly to prepare the draft constitution within a very short time. Though he was unwell during this period, but he worked a lot for the country which was well appreciated by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of Constituent Assembly.

Indian Constitution is one of the greatest constitutions of the world and Dr. Ambedkar was acknowledged by Colombia University by conferring him the degree of Doctorate in Law.

“One man, one vote, one value”, equality, liberty, fraternity and social justice is the important feature of Indian constitution.

DR. AMBEDKAR’S ROLE AS A LAW MINISTER

Dr. Ambedkar became first Law Minister of India in independent India. He formulated Hindu Code Bill which was put forth before Parliament in February 1950. Bill was associated with the freedom of women and tried to give various rights to women like property, inheritance, marriage, divorce etc. However it was opposed by the orthodox members of the parliament and finally Bill was not passed. Dr. Ambedkar’s demand for allocating the reservation to Other Backward caste was not sanctioned by the contemporary Government. Due to this reasons, Dr. Ambedkar resigned from the post of Law Minister in 1951. However later on he was elected for Rajyasabha where he worked as a member till his death.

Check your progress :

1. Explain the political work of Dr. Ambedkar.

CONVERSION TO BUDDHISM (1956)

Dr. Ambedkar, along with his followers converted to Buddhism on October 14, 1956. About 4 lakh people witnessed this ceremony which began at 9.40 A.M. Its original venue was Bombay but later on, it was shifted to Nagpur. Standing Solemnly before the image of Buddha they recited three times “Buddham Sharanam Gacchami, Dhammam Sharanam Gacchami”. They bowed thrice before the Buddha image and offered lotus flowers before it with this the conversion ceremony was over.

Dr. Ambedkar’s conversion to Buddhism was in search of the way for liberating human minds from the clutches of Hinduism, Chaturvarnya, Caste and Untouchability.

Dr. Ambedkar died on 6th December, 1956 in Delhi. Philosophers had interpreted the world but question was to change the world. Dr. Ambedkar played very important role as a philosopher and as a mass leader in social revolution in India.

12.3 SUMMARY

Thus, between 1900 and 1920, a mutual influence involving Kshatriyas-oriented aristocratic anti-Brahminism and the mass-based radicalism of the Satyashodhak movement took shape. On the one hand, it brought more “Vedic” outlook into the non-Brahmin movement such as the emphasis on the sacred thread ceremonies and claims to Kshatriya status by the Marathas of Kolhapur and its surrounding areas. On the other, the hostility of Shahu Maharaja to Brahmin domination of Hindu education and culture led to a climate in which militancy and social radicalism grew among educated non-Brahmins.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar played a pivotal role in the building of democratic movement in India. He wanted political democracy to rest on social democracy. He strived hard against chaturvarnya caste and untouchability system. As chief architect of constitution of India he mobilized democratic revolution in India in general and depressed classes in specific. His life and mission was devoted for the upliftment of oppressed and depressed classes in India. Dr. Ambedkar is one of the greatest social revolutionary of India. Dr. Ambedkar was the emancipator, of the depressed and oppressed classes & crusader for social justice. He was posthumously awarded ‘Bharat Ratna’ in 1991.

12.4 QUESTIONS

1. How did V. R. Shinde and his depressed classes Missions function?
2. Examine the Role of Shahu Maharaj in the movement against Brahmin dominance.
3. Briefly describe the Vedokta Episode.
4. Explain the work of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar for the upliftment of depressed classes.

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