ABSTRACT

Liberalism, it seems certain, begins and ends with the ideals of human freedom and individual happiness. These remain central to the creed whatever the specific nature of the economic and political arrangements of liberal-democratic society. There is as well a built-in notion of fairness, or the idea of relative balance of economic and political arrangements, whatever their specific form and nature, must offer individuals both the opportunity and the incentive to make their own choices and to develop themselves fairly.

The liberal demand for freedom and the liberal concept of liberty had both positive and negative consequences. For seventeenth-, eighteenth- and many nineteenth-century liberals, freedom meant the absence of external control or restraint over the behaviour of individuals or groups and was therefore a negative concept. Liberty, so defined, included freedom of speech and assembly, liberty of conscience and freedom of thought, freedom of the person along with the right to hold property and freedom from arbitrary arrest and seizure as defined by the concept of the rule of law. These were perceived by early liberals as necessary preconditions for the creation and preservation of the kind of society for which they argued. Nineteenth and twentieth-century positively, liberals were aware of the historical consequences of the principle of mutual free
consent in political, social and economic life, and responsive to the socialist argument that economic freedom often meant social injustice, sought to introduce much-needed egalitarian considerations into liberal theory. Although freedom took precedence over equality in their hierarchy of values, the positive liberals realized that freedom means little to those who are poor.

Although contemporary liberal social policy reflects these egalitarian considerations and has achieved considerable success in mitigating the evils of the early industrial system. Some neo-modern liberals continue to oppose all governmental interference in men's lives beyond what is necessary to ensure the preservation of basic rights. Others argue that massive social inequalities are unjust and can be removed only by the intervention of state authority.

Today, if liberal democracy is to survive and to prosper, liberals must work towards a more equitable international world order, tolerance and justice at home while seeking to further the same ideals throughout the world. Liberals must also seek to assist developing countries, especially by encouraging the creation of a more equitable system of world trade. If liberals truly believe in freedom, dignity and well-being for all mankind, they must detach liberalism from its identification with nineteenth-century nationalism and imperialism and return to
the concept of medieval Revolutionary Christianity restoring faith in the book and spirit, not in the authority of the established, organized and authoritative Church, further, posing belief in the universal brotherhood of man, sharing a common and universal destiny. Otherwise no future for the man.

The chief features of social life of India had been the domination of religious hierarchy, and domination of the Brahmins. The Verna system determined the status of the individual in the society irrespective of his merit.

The tradition of the dissent and protest against this social and religious hierarchies had also a long history. The social philosophy of Jainism and Buddhism were totally against gradation. The same trust was dominant features of the Tantrik, Nathpanthits, Yogis and others.

The Sufis have profounded the social philosophy on the dictum of Dar-in rah tafriq-i bandgi wa khwajgi nist (in our path there is no difference between a slave and a master), this remained the motto for them throughout. Similarly the leaders of the Bhakti movement like Nanak and Kabir also talked about an egalitarian society. In this way the individual came to the focus of the agenda of pre-modern social reform movements.

While social reform movement in modern times goes back to the efforts of the social legislations inspired by Lord William Bentinck. No doubt these ventures were
supported by Rajaram Mohan Roy and other leaders of the Bengal Renaissance, yet it was the determination of the British officials "Who were under the impact of Western liberal thought" to stamp out social evils and to establish a just social order which bore the fruits.

SCHEME OF CHAPTERISRTATION

The plan of this thesis is on the following framework:

CHAPTER - I

This chapter, considers the intellectual origins and evolution of the liberalism, and examines the traditional, modern and contemporary liberalism. The philosophy of liberalism varies with varying conditions: liberals may one day challenge and another day Cherish the Church, in one age they may seek less government intervention in economic affairs, in another age more, they have been hospitable to the interests and ambitions of the business community, under changed circumstances. They may be hostile, for decades they have preached the virtues of labour unions, they may one day consider their vices. But in every case the inspiration is the same: a hostility to concentrations of power that threaten the freedom of the individual and prevent him from realizing his potentialities, a willingness to re-examine and reconstruct social institutions in the light of new needs.
CHAPTER - II

In this second chapter, an attempt has been made to look at the genesis of western liberalism in Europe. The concept of virtue is central point to all political thought; the Greeks in ancient period tried to achieve that goal through the medium of politics. To the Greeks freedom of the individual is an important attribute of virtue. To be sure, the ancients' freedom was not universal being denied to the majority of the population - the slaves. It is also, among the ancients the individuals, a sovereign in public affairs, is a slave in all private relations. On the one hand, medieval society and the absolute state gave way to a new type of society and a new type of state which encouraged both personal autonomy and individual fulfillment. On the other hand, early liberals were perhaps insufficiently aware that the right to freedom, unless checked by the utmost nobility of purpose, conferred an absolute right to the relentless and unlimited accumulation of material wealth in one's own self-interest. Modern liberalism, seeks to overcome the problems inherent in single-value models by introducing the principle of distributive justice into liberal-democratic theory. Therefore, the basic attitude, liberals have not changed. They are still individualists who advocate the largest possible measure of freedom for the individual, who, they hold is rightly independent of religious authority, of public opinion, of other men, and of
custom. But the changing economic and social conditions, then, liberalism has come to favour something approaching a welfare state.

CHAPTER III

In the third chapter, an effort has been made to study the growth and development of liberalism in United Kingdom. Traditional English liberalism has rested on a fairly simple concept of Liberty and Rule of Law, that of freedom from the constraints of the state. Hobbes the founder of liberalism, he sees individualism as the definitive characteristic of the entire liberal tradition. In memorable phrase, he says, "The Liberties Of Subjects Depend On The Silence Of The Law". In general, however, English liberals have always been careful not to press this notion to anarchist extremes. They have regarded the state as a necessary institution, ensuring order and law at home, defence against foreign powers, and security of possessions - the three principles Locke summarized as "Life, Liberty and Property". English liberals have also maintained that the law can be used to extend the liberties of subjects insofar as the law is made to curb and limit the activities of the executive government. Thus, classical liberalism freedom had meant the absence of political impediments to voluntary activity. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, however, certain radical movements and
certain English liberal theorists, developed, partly under foreign, left-wing influences, a different — as they claimed, a broader — concept of freedom. Which was, to a large extent, to prove more popular in the twentieth century than traditional English liberalism with its economic gospel of Laissez-Faire. The central aim of this new school was welfare — namely, freeing men from misery and ignorance. Thus, modern liberals have used the resources of the state to promote both social equality and the common good while seeking to enlarge the area of freedom. They have favoured and furthered universal education, universal welfare and a large measure of economic and social planning. On the other hand, an extension of the state's power and control in order to liberate the poor from the oppressive burdens of poverty.

CHAPTER - IV

Chapter IV, tries to look at the historical background of the social reform movements in India. The Indian social reform movement was, like all other movements, the product of the age. In Europe, it was an era of enormous promise. Men took their destinies boldly into their hands and began to construct a new heaven and a new earth. Like in India, the liberal intelligentsia who were at the helm of the Indian National Congress were the leaders of the Indian nationalist movement during the second phase. Their
ideology and methods determined the programme and forms of the movement which reflected the interests of the development of the new bourgeois society in India. Its programme includes on the social side, the right to undertake distant voyages, suppression of child marriage, the remarriage of widows, temperance, and morality. On the economic side, it seeks training for industrial and commercial careers, and to attract capital and energy to the continuous development of national wealth. On the religious side, advocates fidelity to a Hinduism freed from the pagan scum which has come up to its surface. Among administrative reforms, pride of place went to the demand for Indianization of services through simultaneous I.C.S. examinations in England and India. Other administrative demands included separation of the judiciary, extension of trial by jury, repeal of the Arms Act, higher jobs in the army of Indians, and the raising of an Indian volunteer force - demands which evidently combined pleas for racial equality with a concern for civil rights. The principal political demand was reform of supreme and local legislative councils to give them greater powers and to make them representative by including some members elected by local bodies, Chambers of Commerce, Universities, etc. Thus the immediate perspective fell far short of self-government or democracy.
CHAPTER - V

The fifth chapter deals with specific reform and the movement led by Mahadev Govind Ranade. The most important contribution of Ranade to social reform movement was the creation of the National Social Conference. It was the first national institution to carry on collectively in an organized way and on a national scale the social reform movement. (No doubt the Brahmo Samaj Movement took an institutional form but it emphasised religious reform more than social reform). But till, it played a valuable role of the inspirer and populariser of a such a programme. It exposed the social evils surrounding the Indian society diagnosed them and carried on the propaganda of what it considered to be correct solution of these evils. It kindled and accentuated the urge for proposed social reforms of Indian society on a democratic basis among the advanced reform section of the Indian people. The conference was also a fore-runner in utilising the technique of questionnaire for gathering information regarding social reform, from various organizations, the technique which is to-day employed in all empirical and scientific analysis. He also pointed out that isolated piecemeal solution of national problems, social and political was not possible. He, therefore, stressed the necessity of simultaneous, interdependent social and political movement. This reveals the great vision and deep insight into social problems
possessed by Ranade. He raised the problem of social injustice from a local plane to a national level. He secularised the national social reform conference, so that religious differences may not distort discussions and solution of social problems. His role is distinct and unique in this respect, because he laid the foundation of an All-India Organization to carry on the struggle for social reform. Last but not the least, he laid down the organizational principles of social reform institutions as well as the methodology of social work.

CHAPTER - VI
The sixth chapter deals with, Ranade's economic ideas. An attempt is made to analyse them in the perception of his comprehensive approach of reforms. He was the first Indian thinker to emphasize the sociological background of Indian economic studies. He showed clearly that in India non-economic factors like social, political and cultural factors had a close and vital relation to the economic development of the country. In many respects such as the role of the state in an industrialised community and the overriding importance in economic policy of non-economic considerations. Ranade's thinking was very much in advance of his days. Ranade actively supported encouragement and assistance of the state to cause a division from small scale agriculture to large scale farming from agriculture to
industries, from rustication to urbanisation, from internal trade to external trade and from labour immobility to colonial emigration. He suggested industrial development as the basic requirement of an all-round economic development and state must aid in the form of initial capital, guidance and superintendence. The credit system of the country was to be re-organised, land policy of the Government should be liberated and suggested a permanent Ryotwari system in which assessments may be made every 20 or 30 years. We find that many of his ideas were translated into actual practice. He was the first writer to use the expression "Indian Political Economy. Modern Indian economic thought the eclectic attitude of Indian economists and practical urge behind the scientific enquiries all these inherited from Ranade. He can rightly be called the "Father of modern economic thought".

CHAPTER - VII

The seventh chapter, Ranade's political ideas has been explored. He is rightly remembered as one of the most prominent of the founders and promoters of the Indian National Congress. He had started his work of political education of the people, first as a writer in the columns of the Induprakash and later in the Journal of the Sarvajanik Sabha. In these writings he has functioned in all these roles. He has dealt with questions of current or immediate
importance, criticised administrative measures and departmental actions, suggested improvements for the time being and advocated far-reaching reforms. He took the view that moral stamina was more important than political freedom. Without the will, the energy and the courage to try to modify or change those social customs that hinder the implementation of new policies, there could be no attainment of national political freedom based upon the ideal of social equality. Those who advocated political reform before social freedom wanted to establish a democratic form of government, was a democratic form of government possible without a democratic form of society? It may not be necessary for a democratic society to be marked by unity, by community of purpose, by loyalty to public ends and by mutuality of sympathy. But it does unmistakably involve two things. The first is an attitude of mind, an attitude of respect and equality towards one's fellow. The second is a social organization free from rigid social barriers.

CHAPTER VIII

The eighth chapter sum-up the efforts of Ranade, as a pioneer of Indian liberalism. I have said enough to show, that Ranade's activities were many-sided, that in many spheres of life, - judicial, religious, social, political, industrial, educational, - he has done Yeoman service to his country and that he brought to bear upon his work
qualities of head and heart which but few possess. The close connection of the different kinds of social activities was ever prominent in Ranade's mind. There is an interdependence between the parts, so that it is not possible to do justice to one without doing justice to the other also. In his address to the Provincial Social Conference, Satara, 1900, Ranade said: You cannot have a good social system when you find yourself low in the scale of political rights, nor can you be fit to exercise political rights and privileges unless your social system is based on reason and justice. You cannot have a good economical system when your social arrangements are imperfect. If your religious ideals are low and grovelling, you cannot succeed in social, economical or political spheres.

CHAPTER - IX

The concluding chapter IX is the summary and contains observations on the basis of the analysis of the western impact over the social and political leadership in India. The Indian intelligentsia, the pioneers of Indian nationalism, should have adopted the liberal philosophy in western models. However, the premises upon which the modern social reform movements rested upon their doctrines, included not only humanitarianism, and universal spiritual equality, but also the western ideas of individualism, natural rights, the ethical duties of an individual to
society at large, the possibility of human progress, social efficiency, and the religious doctrine of acquiring merit through good works.

With some variations of details and emphasis, Ranade's ideas were shared by the other Indian liberals, namely, Gokhale, Gandhi and Nehru. They all advocated the reform of Indian social institutions along liberal lines, economic development through industrialisation, and agrarian reforms, and the extension of liberal-representative political institutions, i.e. parliamentary democracy on the spirit of universal adult franchise.