CHAPTER V

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CHAPTER V
DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL REFORMS

I. Leadership of Social Reforms:

With the advent of the British rule number of social, economic and political changes began to take place in India. The western education started by missionaries and encouraged by the British government created a new generation of educated youth who studied western ideas, philosophy and culture. As a result they developed a new outlook and were prepared to accept changes in the society in the light of new knowledge. The impact of British rule created an urge for new way of life.

In the changing circumstances and time a generation of leaders emerged which took the lead in welcoming changes in social and political sphere.

The term "leadership" is related to the term "to lead", i.e. to show the way to followers, which implies sharing of feelings, giving proper directions for activities with definite objectives. The leaders co-ordinate various activities and give proper directions to their followers.

After 1818 first generation of leaders grew up. These leaders created favourable atmosphere for social
reforms in traditional Indian society. All the leaders and reformers welcomed the new ideas from the west. They used all possible means like education, the press, organizations to organise public opinion in favour of reforms. In other words these leaders tried to create awakening and consciousness among the people to welcome changes and to accept modern way of life. They had single-minded devotion to their work. They never bothered about personal happiness or sorrows. Many a times they were opposed, criticised and harrassed by the conservative and orthodox elements in the society. But they continued to work for the cause they advocated and tried to create new atmosphere in the society.

Two Phases of Leadership: -

The span of approximately 80 years from 1818 onwards can be divided in two phases. The first phase consists of 40 years i.e. from 1818 to 1857 and second phase starts from 1858 onwards.

First Phase (1818-1857) -

The emergence and growth of leadership during the first phase was the result of native elites to the challenges thrown in the society by new development. The most outstanding leaders of this period were Nana Shankar Sheth Murkute (1803-1865), Balshastri Jambhekar (1812-1840),
Gopal Hari Deshmukh - alias Lokhitwadi (1823-1892), Vishnubawa Brahmachari - Vishnu Bhikaji Gokhale (1825-1871), Ram Balkrishna Jayakar (1826-1860), Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917), Ganesh Vasudeo Joshi (1828-1880), Dadoba Pandurang Tarkhadkar (1814-1882), Vishnu Shastri Pandit (1827-1876), Bhau Daji Lad (1824-1874) etc.

These leaders in the first phase had to encounter a lot of difficulties, continuous opposition and obstacles, created by orthodox Hindus in their way of social reforms. Secondly, they had to counter criticism by Christian missionaries about Hindu religion and existing Hindu social order. Thus, this leadership had to fight on two fronts simultaneously.

However, some of the leaders had their own limitations. Hence though they were progressive in their thinking they hardly had courage to act openly. For example Dadoba Pandurang and Bhau Mahajan used to work secretly for Prarthana Samaj. The society was so orthodox and traditional in nature and the force of orthodoxy was so profound that even an otherwise respected person like Lokhitwadi had to face criticism by the people and by his family members, when he send his son to England. After his return from there Lokhitwadi had to take penance i.e. Prayachita, for violating the tradition of not crossing the sea.
Thus, the leaders in the first phase had to do much tight-rope walking in the most unfavourable and sometimes hostile atmosphere in the society.

All these leaders can be grouped in three categories as under - (1) First group of leaders consisted of missionaries and their Hindu followers who embraced Christianity. They were in favour of social reforms. They started schools at different places in Bombay Presidency. They had a good rapport with the Government. Their activities and influence helped to get certain reforms implemented through Government - like prevention of Sati, prevention of female infanticide, prevention of child marriages etc.

(2) Second group of leaders had deep faith in the basic goodness of ancient Hinduism. They are known as revivalists. They were against the unwanted, inhuman, outdated practices in society and wanted to remove them. But the method which they propagated was to revive the old practices and re-establish past glory of the ancient Hindu way of life. In short they were revivalist in approach.

(3) Third group of leaders was of that of liberals. They were supporters of moderate approach. They were greatly influenced by western liberal thought and philosophy, education, and traditions of western society.
Though all the leaders in different groups had
different background, different fields of activities and
operations and adopted different methods, they had a
common objective of reforming society from its traditional
nature and make it a modern one.

Second Phase: 1858 onwards

The important feature of the leadership in this phase
is that, it looked to social reforms in broad perspective.
The leaders in the second phase led the society in poli-
tical, cultural and religious aspects of the development
at the same time. They also tried to inculcate spirit of
nationalism among the people of this country. The social
reform movement, thus, became deep-rooted, wider in its
scope. In this way, the leadership of this second phase
had dual objective. One was to change the society and
another was to create spirit of nationalism among the
people.

The most influential leaders of this period were
Ramkrishna Bhandarkar (1837-1925), Baba Padamanji (1831-
1904), V.N. Mandalik (1833-1889), M.G. Ranade (1842-1901),
K.T. Telang (1850-1893), N.G. Chandawarkar (1859 to 1923),
Krishna Shastri Chipulnikar (1850-1882), Vishnushastri
Chipulnikar, Jyotirao Phuley (1827-1890), Tarabai Shinde
(1850-1910), B.M. Balbari (1853-1912), B.G. Tilak (1856-1920),
Gopal Ganesh Agarkar (1856-1895), Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922), Dhondokeshav Keshav Karve (1858-1962), etc.

The leaders in second phase also can be grouped under four categories.

(1) M.G. Ranade represents a group which was liberal, moderate and influenced by western education and philosophy. His group was not in favour of aggressive methods to reform society. It considered evolutionary approach as a natural, and demanded 'legislation' for social reforms.

(2) The second staunch and aggressive group was led by Lokhitwadi, Phuley and Agarkar. They had firm belief in revolutionary approach. They thought it was not possible to achieve reforms without breaking the traditional framework of society. However, everyone of them had his own peculiarities about the issues undertaken, methods adopted and its rational outlook.

(3) Third group was that of revivalists who advocated revivalism of society existed during Vedic period. Some of them were also in favour of reforming Hindu religious traditions in these concrete perspectives as existed in the past instead of adopting western values and methods of bringing change in the society. The Arya Samajists or Theosophists come under this category. They had firm
belief in the righteous of ancient Hindu traditions and the metaphysical foundations of Hindu social order.

(4) Lastly, therefore, leaders like Tilak who were in favour of giving priority to political activity and creating political consciousness among the people. To them political issues were of urgent nature. The social problems can be dealt with in course of time.

Nature of Leadership:

Most of the leaders except a few belonged to Brahmins, Parsi and Chandraseniya Kayastha Prabhu (C.K.P.) communities.

The Brahmins having very long traditions of education were the first to realise the advantages of western education. Therefore they were the first to confront the western culture. The resulted in influencing their thinking and the first generation of English educated natives emerged. They started thinking about the society around them, and comparing it with the western society. As a result they took up the issues like fight against inhuman practices and absolute traditions which had made the society stagnant and backward in many respect. Since they belonged to upper strata of the society all their efforts were centred around the issues and sufferings concerning that upper class in the society. They could
not appreciate and really understand the problems and sufferings of the lower strata of the society.

As a result of the access to education to the lower classes of the society due to the efforts of Christian Missionaries and the government during the early years of British rule, composition of leadership in the field of social reforms began to change. Some persons like Mahatma Phuley, Tarabai Shinde from middle level castes and communities came forward. Converted Christians like Baba Padamanji, Pandita Ramabai also came forward to reform society on the principles of Christian theology.

Thus, people from different castes and communities came forward, which strengthened the reform movement. The issues and problems confronted by the people at lower level in the society also became a matter of concern to reform.

Another feature of the leadership in the second phase was the participation of women in the social reforms movement. Savitribai Phuley, Pandita Ramabai, Kashitai Kanitkar, Tarabai Shinde can be regarded as some examples.

Thus the composition of leadership changed slowly during the course of social reforms movement in 19th century Maharashtra. At the end of 19th century there
were some leaders from middle level caste groups, who change came forward to bring in the society. Woman leaders also began to play an important role in the process. This leadership no more remained the monopoly of upper class western educated elites but it began to acquire multi caste/class nature, covering wider range of issues and problems.

Issues Taken up by the Leaders:

The issues that were taken up in the early phase of social reforms in Maharashtra as referred in the third chapter were Sati, Widow re-marriage, Keshwapan, education, women infanticide etc. For details refer Chapter III. But these issues were mostly the concern of upper castes mainly the Brahmins. Naturally the Brahmins who had access to education during this phase, took up the problems which they experienced. Thus, their concept of social reforms was confined to solve the problems of their own community. This limited perception of the social reforms was mainly responsible for not taking up the problems of other lower and down-trodden classes by this upper caste leadership of early phase. In other words the social reform movement did not percolate to the lowest level of the society where reforms were most needed, That means the reform movement in the early phase was narrow
in its scope and approach. Therefore, broader issues like fight against of caste system, which was the root cause of perpetual inequality in the society - female education, education for untouchables were not taken up on priority basis. Economic issues like poverty and backwardness did not figure at all in the early phase of social reform movement.

However, in the second phase Jyotirao Phuley, is bold known as reformer, revolutionary leader, took up such issues which were neglected so far. Jyotirao and Savitribai Phuley were among those who devoted themselves to promote education for women by establishing separate schools, for girls. Another issue taken up by them was that of illegal progeny (i.e. children who are discarded by parents after birth). Phuley boldly started a house for such children in 1868 in his own house. On this background leaders and reform organizations established such houses in Maharashtra.

Prevention of child marriage was also the prominent issues discussed throughout 19th century.

Instruments of Social Reforms:

(1) Individual efforts (2) Organized efforts and (3) Press - (newspapers) were used as means and instruments for social reforms by the leaders in 19th century.
Individual Efforts:

Individual efforts consisted of organising and addressing public meetings, submitting petition to government etc., Nana Shankar Sheth, Vishnubawa Brahmachary, Lokhitwadi, B.M Malbari, Vishnushastri Pandit, Pandita Ramabai are some of the leaders who tried their best for social reforms at their personal level. M.G. Ranade, Jyotiba Phuley, were among those leaders who worked at personal level as well as by setting up organizations to mobilize support and to spread their thought throughout society. Lokhitwadi submitted, in 1848, a detailed note to Governor explaining the need for widow re-marriages. Bhaskar Domodhar Pandale (1832 - 1874) from Ahmadnagar also addressed a letter to Governor requesting him to enact legislation for widow re-marriage. B.M. Malbri and M.G. Ranade also sent many letters to British government to raise the marriagable age of girls. Mahatma Phuley submitted a petition before Hunter Commission explaining the need of primary education and education for down-trodden classes. These are some of the examples of personal efforts.

The Organized Efforts:

Individual efforts had certain limitations. This was realised by the leaders and the reformers of early
phase and second phase. Therefore, they took initiative in establishing various organizations and institutions for undertaking particular aspect of reform movement. Manav-dharma Sabha, Paramhansa Sabha, Bombay Association widow re-marriage association, Prarthana Samaj, Satya - Shodhak Samaj, Anti-Caste Association, National Congress, National Social Conference are some of the important and major organizations established during the course of social reform movement in 19th century- Maharashtra. The composition, objectives and the achievements of such organizations are discussed in the last Chapter IV. Their main objective was to challenge the old customs and traditions, promoting education and bringing reforms in Hindu religion. These organizations are mainly responsible for wide spread support to various social reforms. These organizations provided institutional framework for reform activities of that time.

The Press:-

The Press was another powerful instrument of social reforms used by almost all leaders throughout the 19th century. Some of the leading papers of this period were 'Durpan', 'Mumbai Akhbar', Dyanodaya', 'Dyan Prakash' 'Prabhakar', 'Kesari', 'Indian Spectator', 'Sudharak' 'Native Opinion', 'Din Bandhu', 'Arunodaya' etc. They carried on the message of social reforms. Thirdly the
press through these papers and periodicals. Some of the leaders like Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, M.B. Malbari, were editors themselves. Where as some reformers used this media by writing articles in these papers, issuing appeals. This was very popular instrument with the reformers as it was easy to contact number of people spread in the wider area simultaneously. And secondly it was an instrument of better communication with educated class in the society. It was a new way of public communication exploited successfully by the leadership of the period under study.

State Intervention:

The involvement of the state is also an important factor in the process of social reforms. Support of the state to reforms by way of making laws in its favour gives the strength to the efforts. Therefore, along with making people aware about the problems and mobilizing them in support of the change. There is need to seek help from the state. Many a times vested interests in the society oppose the reforms. In such circumstances the state laws and government intervention works. In early phase of social reforms when the conservative and orthodox elements were stronger the reformers sought the intervention of the government. And in many cases
like practice of Sati or widow remarriages state intervene by making laws.

In 19th century Maharashtra the state response in the field of social reforms came in the field of spread of education also. There were three important features of Bombay Govt’s educational policy of that time. They were as follows:
(1) encouragement to primary education, for which a separate department was created (2) efforts for female education and (3) education for people of lower strata of the society.

With the initiative and inspiration of British Govt. number of aided schools and colleges began to work in Maharashtra. This western education had its influence on all walks of life.

Another example of favourable response from the government was the law giving legal sanction to widow marriages in 1856. Lokhitwadi, Vishnubawa Brahmachari and Vishnushastri Pandit and other leaders continuously campaigned for this act.

In second phase, the response from British government was not that encouraging compared to its role in the early years of its rule. It was not because the leaders were inactive, but because of the British governments cautious
policy in this regard. The incident of revolt against British rule in 1857, was mainly responsible for government's policy of neutrality in the socio-religious matters of the natives.

The only remarkable achievements or response of leadership were (1) spread of education and (2) the passing of the age of Consent Bill in 1891.

In the field of education leaders had impressive achievement with the response of government. Mahatma Phuley constantly urged upon the government to spread mass education.

The age of Consent Bill was the result of the continuous struggle led by B.M. Malbari and National Social Conference. Malbari went to England to get public support and support of British Parliament. Then only the British Government in India enacted this Bill raising the age of marriage of girls upto 12 years.

Controversy about the Priority to Social Reforms-

Another issue in social reform movement was 'whether to give precedence to political freedom over social reform? After queen's proclamation of 1858 conditions in India in general and in Maharashtra in particular changed. People began to aspire for political freedom along with social reforms. However, one group was more keen to achieve
political freedom first with less interest in social reforms. This group is known as Extremist headed by B.G. Tilak. This group constantly appealed to people to unite together for national freedom. This group had its viewpoint about social change and reforms, which it thought, can be implemented after political freedom from the yokes of British rule is achieved. They wanted to revive the past and bring back glory once again of ancient Indian culture.

However, another group headed by M.G.Ranade, Agarkar, Phuley and Malbari was of the view that social reforms should get precedence over political freedom. The group of supporters of political freedom became stronger at the end of 19th century and opposed the moderates. As a result M.G.Ranade and his supporters had to establish separate organization known as 'National Social Conference' in December 1887. This organization exclusively served the purpose of effecting social reform.

II. Role of the Press-

The role of "the press" in socio-political communication is an important factor in modern state. Since the invention of art of printing in the Europe, the device is being used to socialise the people politically. The advantage of the press was easy communication, wider
in scope, numerically and subjectwise. In India Portugeas were the first to start printing press and introduce art of printing in the middle of 16th century.

In the early days the press had two objectives. Firstly, to propagate Christianity, and secondly to circulate information about trade activities. With these objectives Dr. Garry, a missionary, established printing press at Sharampur near Calcutta. Marathi books were also published in this press.

Bhramji Parmakh was the pioneer of press in Bombay Presidency in 1662. Thereafter the activity in the field of press gathered momentum and gradually publication of newspapers in Marathi, Gujrathi and English languages started. In 1789 first newspaper in English namely 'Bombay Herald' was published from Bombay. Afterwards 'Bombay Gazettee' (1790) and 'Bombay Curier' (1792) were started. 'Mumbai Samachar' was the first newspaper published in Gujarathi in 1822.

Ten years after Balshastri Jambhekar started first Marathi newspaper 'Durpan' from Bombay in 1832, which is the first Marathi newspaper. It was published simultaneously in both the languages - English and Marathi. Following 'Durpan' Jambhekar started 'Digdarshan' (1837) and 'Dnyan-Shindhu' in 1841. Bhau Mahajan started 'Prabhakar' in
'Dnyanodaya' a fortnightly was published from 1842. It was followed by 'Dnyan Prakash' (1844), 'Chandrika' (1854), 'Prabhodaya' (1850), 'Dnyan-Durpan' (1861). VishnuShastri Pandit started 'Indu Prakash' in 1862 with the objective of popularising social reforms among the masses. 'Vividha-Dnyan Vistar' started in 1867, It was also devoted to propagate social reforms. 'Dambha- Harak' (1871), Chiplunkar's 'Nibandha Mala' (1874), Bhalekar- Phuley's 'Din- Bandhu' (1877), V.N. Mandlik's 'Native Opinion' (in English), B.G. Tilak's 'Kesari' (1880), Agarkar's 'Sudharak' (1888) and others.

All these periodicals and newspapers had measurable contribution in social reform movement of 19th century Maharashtra. By publishing different view points about the problems of that period and also by providing opportunity to newly educated youth to express their view points on number of burning issues of that time. They provided a platform through their columns, for discussion on social problems.

It is observed that after 1850, the newspapers and journals had registered all round development with regard to circulation, quality of printing and the contents. During this period, apart from social reforms, the press handled variety of subjects like public health, law,
trade, labour, education etc. The press provided opportunity for both types of writers i.e. pro-reformists and anti-reformists.

It is seen that since the publication of first newspaper (1789) in Bombay Presidency, upto 1880, the number of newspapers and journals in all languages covering different branches of knowledge was 82, in which the number of Marathi periodicals was 34.

In the early days of East India Company's rule, the press was under number of restrictions. It was after Lord William Bentinck took over as a Governor General that the press began to enjoy some freedom. Naturally free and frank expression of view points on the issues and problems of that time became possible. Bentinck was of the view that "the press might be an auxiliary to good government". Therefore, he was also regarded as a social reformer by his Indian contemporaries.

But the situation changed after 1857. With anti-British revolt of 1857, the Queen's Government became conscious about the growing anti-British feelings among the natives. It was also felt by the British rulers that free press may endanger British rule.

Publication of "Nibandhamala" in 1874 by Vishnushastri Chiplunkar marked a turning point in the history of journalism in Maharashtra. Chiplunkar took aggressive
posture against reformers, Missionaries, and the British government.

Vishnushastri Chiplunkar was very critical about all these elements. At the same time in 1874 Disraeli won the general election and became Prime Minister of England. He was conservative. Lord Lytton was appointed as a Governor General of India by Desraeli government to follow its conservative policy. Lord Lytton immediately passed Vernacular Press Act in 1878 which curtailed the freedom of press. The act was effectively used against all newspapers which were published in Vernacular languages and which criticised the British rule - and supported nationalist cause. This was coincided with rise of unrest among the people throughout India.

In 1880 Liberal party won the election and Gladstone became Prime Minister of England. In this changing situation Lord Ripon came to India in 1880 as Governor General, who repealed Vernacular Press Act in 1880 and once again freedom of the press was restored in India.

In last 20 years of the 19th century it is evident that the press was well developed in Maharashtra. Once again the press as an instrument of reforms was available to the reformers and their organizations. Some social
reformers started their own newspapers and periodicals to propagate and spread their ideas. For example V.N. Mandalik's 'Native Opinion' (English), Agarkar's 'Sudharak', Bhalekar - Phuley's 'Din-Bandhu' etc.

In the context of social reforms and political movements during that period the press can be identified in the following groups:-

(1) Christian Press.
(2) Pro-reformist Press.
(3) The Nationalist Press.
(4) The Press for specialised and Miscellaneous writings.
(5) The Revivalist Press.

(1) Christian Press:-

The newspapers and periodicals published by Christian missionary societies had main objective of propagation of Christianity and conversion to it. However, problems of castes, problems of down-trodden classes, ban on widow re-marriages were also discussed by the missionaries. They also tried to expose evil practices and defects in Hindu religion, and highlighted good ideas of Christianity. This process brought forward in open for the first time discussion on the defects of Hindu society and indirectly created favourable atmosphere for reform movement. But to reform society was not their main objective.
In the latter half of the 19th century number of newspapers and periodicals viz. 'Tal-Prasarak' (1850), 'Prabhodaya' (1856), 'Sayan-Deepika' (1861), 'Arunodaya' (1866), 'Satyarth-Deepika' (1873) etc., were published. Except 'Indian Reformer' all other christian periodicals were published in Bombay presidency.

Indian Reformer strongly advocated education for women. It appealed the people to break all barries of caste-system. It also admired the government for passing widow re-marriage Act in 1856. "The age of Consent Bill" was passed in 1891. But Indian reformer was ahead of its time when it strongly argued in 1861 in favour of rising the age of marriage of girls up to 16 - 17 years instead of 12 years as proposed in the Bill.

The 'Dnyanodaya' deserves praise for expressing the idea of widow re-marriage. The campaign of raising the age of marriage of girls which was undertaken by B.M. Malbari during 1888 - 1891 was supported by 'Dnyanodaya'. One must not forget that it was Dnyanodaya which laid the foundation of this thought way back around 1857. It also, supported the views expressed by 'Lokhitwadi' on social reforms in 'Prabhakar'.

To summarise the contribution of Christian press to social reforms movement, it can be said that it created
the background for the many of the progressive legislations made by the British government during this century.

It is reported that there were approximately 30 Christian newspapers and periodicals published and managed by missionary societies.

In addition to Christian press there was another group of press which played an important role in social reform movements in 19th century Maharashtra. 'Durpan', 'India', 'Native Opinion', 'Dnyan-Prasarak', 'Indu-Prasarak', 'Sudharak' were some of the leading newspapers which openly supported the reform activities.

There was no controversy about the methods and agencies of social reforms. But in the latter half of 19th century the important problems of discussion was about governments intervention in the field of social reforms through legislation.

2) Pro-Reformist Press:

As the leadership was divided in two groups - the press was also divided in two groups in this controversy. For example 'Kesari', the leading paper was not in favour of reforms by legislation. At the same time, 'Dnyan-Prasarak' and 'Sudharak' and few others well-known papers favoured the legislation as a means to reform the society.
"Dyan-Prasarak" strongly felt that the society should be freed from all sorts of blind belief evil practices and ignorance. The paper also regreted the inferior status of women, lack of education in them, practice of early marriages and pointed out its disadvantages. Therefore the paper supported separate schools for girls to facilitate speedy spread of women's education. In this regard the paper emphasised the role of government and advocated legislations in this regard. In one of its issues the paper explained that "law reflects hapiness and welfare of the society and the government". Thus it favoured legislative remedy.

"India", another monthly forcefully wrote in favour of social reform activities and gave wider publicity to "the age of Consent Bill" in 1890. The paper also gave wider publicity to the resolutions passed by National Social Conference in its session held on 28-12-1890 which requested the government to raise marriagable age of girls upto 12 years.

Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, the staunch supporters of social reforms in Hindu society was the editor of 'Sudharak'. Earlier Agarkar was working with Tilak. But when the differences between them on the issue of social reforms developed to the point of no return, Agarkar parted company with Tilak and started his crusade for social reforms single handedly through "Sudharak".
'Sudharak' appealed to the people not to be indifferent and self-centered towards reforms. It also warned that "if the people re-mained static and orthodox social progress would be impossible". 'Sudharak' in another issue favoured government's initiative to reform society through legislation. Sudharak welcomed "the prevention of child marriage act" and wrote that "it is symbol of the freedom for women". Agarkar criticised orthodox Hindus as anti-social, and called upon the Maharashtrians to "awake and rise".

Thus, Sudharak was always in the forefront of reforms in the society. Throughout his writings Agarkar argued the cause of social reforms rationally and logically and tried to create favourable background for reforms by the government intervention.

Apart from the newspapers mentioned above, there were other few viz., 'Subhodha-Patrika', 'Indu-Prakash', 'Vividha-Dnyan-Vistar', 'Balbodha' etc. which supported reform activities.

It has been observed that widow re-marriage was welcomed by Gujarathi Samaj. The 'Subhodha-Patrika' regreted the outlook of non-Gujarathi people for not accepting widow re-marriages. The Patrika praised the work and activities undertaken by voluntary organizations. It constantly discussed topics like women's education,
adult marriages, abolition of caste system etc. It again and again reminded the people that the work of reform movement should be considered as their own.

'Vividha-Dyanan-Vistar' devoted adequate space for the writings on reforms. It also took detailed review of the benefits derived by India from British rule. The paper also strongly supported widow re-marriages, and repeatedly wrote against child-marriage. It paid tribute to the work of Mahatma Phuley.

'Balbodha', a monthly, also did good work in the field of social reform movement. In one of its issue it remarked that, "social progress was necessary pre-condition for national development". 'Balbodha' tried to interlink social reforms with political progress.

The point of reforms through legislation reflects the conflicts between the reformist under influence of western liberal education, and those who regarded social and political reforms as two distinct fields.

The position taken by the newspapers in favour of this or that side was the result of orientation of its editor, owner or the proprietor.

3) National Press: -

It is worth mentioning that the birth of "Poona
Sarvajaneek Sabha" (1870) created political and national spirit among the people of Maharashtra. 1870 - 1874 was a period in which national awakening and feelings were developed, and that resulted in the establishment of 'Nibandha Mala' in 1874 by Vishnushastri Chiplunkar. Its birth is the turning point in the social and political history of Maharashtra. During this period historical novels in Marathi language were written. Some of the newspapers journals were started which mainly supported political freedom. This can be grouped in 'Nationalist group of Press'.

Indian National Congress was established in 1885 and since then there was a great controversy over the problem "Whether social reforms should precede political reforms?" By that time the political demands increasingly became stronger and got momentum.

"Nibandha - Chandrika" - published from Ratnagiri emphasised political freedom movement as necessary for effective implementation of social reforms. Thus the newspaper gave preference to political freedom. Nibandha Chandrika also criticised the viewpoints expressed by Christian missionaries against Hinduism - and Hindu way of life. In one of its issues it pointed out that, "it was wrong to brand everything old as useless". It also
called upon the society to examine old traditions and practices carefully before attacking them. It advocated "go slow policy" in the field of social reforms. It expressed the view that social and political movements are interdependent.

'Kesari', started by Tilak in 1880 is another example of a newspaper giving first priority to political awakening and second priority to social reforms. 'Kesari' was well-known at that time for its continuous fight for political freedom. Tilak thought 'Kesari', gave priority to political freedom. However, he was not against social reforms, but his approach of looking towards social reforms was somewhat different. He advocated "go slow approach" in the social field. According to 'Kesari' social reforms should, as far as possible, be consistent with overall framework of Hindu culture, religion and traditions. Therefore, Kesari did not like the idea of foreign intervention in domestic field of reforms through government legislation. Kesari took this position consistently.

B.G.Tilak has extensively expressed his view on topics like freedom movement, Indian National Congress, Social Conference, military education, boycotting foreign goods (i.e. Bahishkar), Swadeshi, Hinduism, Hindu-Muslim relations etc.
All these topics taken into totality reflect one thing. Tilak was a great force in creating national awakening and unrest in the minds of common man.

Tilak was not against women's education. In fact he encouraged his daughter's education. This shows his keenness in women's education. However, he suggested different kind of education for women, which enables woman to discharge their obligations as housewife.

4) The Press for Specialised and Miscellaneous Writings:

Fourth group comprised of such publications which covered variety of topics like law, public health, trade union movement etc. These periodicals were informative in nature and reported news, published articles both in favour and against reforms.

"Asiatic Quarterly Review" from Bombay published an article by a "native", in which the author requested the government not to give unnecessary importance to social reforms by taking initiative on the basis of pressure built up by few English educated people. It cautioned government not fall a victim to such pressure of Anglicized elites natives. B.M. Malbari, who was fighting for age of Consent Bill visited England and acquired support from few British citizens who had never seen India.
Hence, the author in this article, also requested government not to accept Malbari's proposal as it did not have support from majority of natives.

Under this group two more periodicals published from Poona deserve mention. One was "Karamanuk" and other was "Dnyan-Prakash". Karamanuk pointed out that social reform is a matter which should come from within i.e. from people themselves. People should initiate reforms and then government should support it. Such type of opinion was expressed by many reformers of that time.

'Dnyan-Prakash' wrote many articles on general topics. One interesting example can be quoted here. There was a feeling among the people, that printing ink contained animal fat. Dnyan-Prakash published two articles and brought the truth that ink did not contain any fat. Thus, many a times the papers wrote articles to remove such blind beliefs and misunderstandings as well.

Another monthly "Prabhodaya" was published from Bombay. In one article it criticised the increase in school fees by government. 'Prabhodaya' pointed out that rise in fees would deprive many poor students from getting primary education. This type of criticism was certainly thought provoking.
'Nityupdesh' was another paper which was started with the objective of promoting ethical and moral values among the people. It appealed the people to follow the path of morality. For the same objectives one voluntary organization named "Niti-Prasarak-Mandali" was established in Bombay in 1882.

These miscellaneous newspapers wrote on different subjects. They created and helped in raising and spreading the knowledge to common people. Thus they also contributed to the process of reforms.

5) The Revivalist Press: -

There were some newspapers and periodicals which were started to counter criticism of Christian Missionaries and advocate revival of old values and social order.

As stated earlier "Dnyanodaya" continuously criticized Hindu religion and its practices. In every issue it pointed out some defects of Hinduism and raised number of questions. For about 15 years from 1842-1855 anti-Hindu thoughts were published unchallenged. As a reaction to this anti-Hindu writings, some Hindu leaders started a newspaper "Sad-dharma-deepika" in September 1855. In the first issue the paper declared that, "it was its duty to enlighten Hindu religion as it was and
not as depicted by missionaries, and to expose the hollow-
ness of Christian missionaries".

As a supporter of Hinduism the 'Sad-dharma Deepika'
sometime wrote against social reforms. For example, it
published detailed report of the public meeting held in
Poona in which Hindu re-marriages Act was criticised.
This was clearly a hostile stand against pro-reformist
legislation.

However, the major contribution of this newspaper
was that it tried effectively to refute charges made
by missionaries and by 'Dnyanodaya' against Hinduism. It
also answered many questions raised by Dnyanodaya. Thus,
"Sad-dharma-deepika" acted as a spokesman of Hinduism.

Another short lived newspaper namely "Vichar-lahari"
was also published from Bombay. It also continuously
tried to defend Hinduism and refute the argument against
it made by missionaries.

Thus, the role of "the press" in social reform move-
ment in 19th century Maharashtra was very significant.
The issue of social reforms were discussed in all its
aspects through the press during this time. Some favoured
reforms through legislation, on the other hand some favo-
ured change in the attitude of the people. Some newspapers
gave priority to the issues of reforms whereas, some espe-
cially in the latter half of the 19th century preferred political activity.

However, the press as such created favourable public opinion for social reforms. Considering the limitations of time and situation the press had done commendable job of educating the people in this regard and played active role in influencing the government of the day to take some favourable action on the reforms through legislation. Thus, the press played an important role in the national awakening and social, political and cultural movements in the 19th century Maharashtra. Both, Christian and non-Christian press created thought provoking atmosphere in Maharashtra.

III: Marathi Literature and Social Reforms

It is a common belief that the literature reflects the reality. Literature depicts what happened in the past and also represents present social situation. It also predicts probable social changes in future.

Marathi literature also was thus, the important factor that influenced the formation of public opinion in favour of social reforms. We have already noted the role of scholars and thinkers who utilised the press for this purpose. A review of creative writing of the period
will also help us to understand the dynamics of social change in 19th century Maharashtra.

Elphinstone, the first Governor of Bombay Presidency, encouraged the growth of Marathi literature by Government assistance. Large amount was made available for publishing translations of wellknown English books in Marathi. Production of text-books for the schools was also taken up by the Company Government to provide educational facilities in the Bombay Presidency.

With the advent of education a new generation of writers, authors, novelist came forward and started writings in Marathi. They handled various forms of literature i.e. stories, novels, dramas, poems etc. All these forms of literature reflected the social conditions and social changes that were taking place to reform society during the century.

Sadashiv Kashinath Chhatre was the pioneer of Marathi press. He wrote a short story-book namely "Bal-Mitra" in 1828. Between 1828 to 1874 nearly 660 books on variety of subjects were published in Marathi language. Marathi literature in different forms contained view points encouraging social reforms and sometimes opposing social reforms. However, it is found that books favouring social reforms were more in number.
In early stage it is found that most of the Marathi books tried to expose the evils and irrationality in Hinduism. "Hindu-Dharma-Prasidhikaran" is a book published by Dr. Wilson.

In 1856 widow re-marriage Act was passed. In 1857 Baba Padamanji wrote a novel "Yamuna Paryatan" he graphically described sufferings of Hindu widows of that period in this work. He also published his autobiography "Arunodaya" in 1879.

Supporters of Hinduism came out with large number of books defending Hinduism. Gangadhar Shastri Phadke wrote a small book in 1852 namely "Hindu-Dharma-Tatwa" which glorified Hindu religion. Five Years later Vishnu Bawa Brahmachari wrote a book "Vedokta-Dharma-Prakash" in 1858. In this book he refuted all charges against Hinduism. Brahmachari also wrote other few small books which expressed the ideas of welfare state.

Following the same line one anonymous writer brought out a book "Jati-Bhed-Viveksara" in 1861. Dad\textsuperscript{a} Pandurang also wrote and published a book namely "Dharma Vivechan" in 1868. These writers while defending Hinduism tried to pin-point defects like rigid caste system, child-marriage, ban on widow marriage etc. They were interested in making Hindus more open-minded and reform themselves.
While examining impact of Marathi literature on social reforms, it is noticed that some literary books have described and discussed a particular social problem or religious mal-practices before passing particular act by the government. For example, one Telugu and Maharashtrian Brahmin jointly wrote a book in 1837. The book was devoted to discuss the problem of widow re-marriage.

Gangadhar Shastri Phadke also wrote a book "Punarvivah-prakaran" in 1841 on this subject of widow re-marriages.

On the same problem Mr. Madgaonkar wrote a play "Vyavaharopayogi" in 1859. Vishnu Shastri Pandit published Marathi translation of Ishwarchandra Vidyasagark’s book "Widow re-marriage" in 1865 and also established "Widow re-marriage Association" in the same year. In 1878 Halwe Shastri wrote a novel "Hatna-Prabha" and defended widow re-marriages. Thus, the issue of widow re-marriage, was a favourite subject of literatures of that period itself importance and intensity of the problem. In this regard a reference can be made to two books (1) Balkrishna Shastri Bapat wrote a book "Vidhava-Vivah" and (2) Krishnaji Prabhakar Shastri sathe wrote "Punar Vivah Mesheoth". Both of them were published in 1865 and opposed widow re-marriages on the ground that it does not have support from Hindu Scriptures. Mr. Bedekar and Daftardur jointly published a book "Ashastratecha Bodhakwand" in 1871 opposing widow
re-marriage. They gave additional support to opponents of widow re-marriages.

During the same period some authors with their works came out in support of adult marriages. At the same time some of them also encouraged more freedom for women in choosing their husbands.

As early as in 1868 N.S. Risabud wrote a novel which supported love marriages. Jorwekar K.L. produced a novel "Vichitra-puri". In a drama "Swair-Sakesha" written by R.S. Abhyankar the problem of unequal marriages was discussed. This was published in 1871.

M.B. Chitale wrote a drama "Mano-rama" in 1871, which exhibited the glaring defects of child-marriages. The drama somewhat created favourable atmosphere against child marriages.

"Sharda" is one of the most impressive play written by Mr. Govind B. Dewal in 1899, which has discussed social problem - unequal marriages.

There is a well-known case which created some sensation in Bombay Presidency in 1886-87. The case is known as "Rakhamabai-versus-Dadaji" where in Rakhamabai openly declared that she did not approve of her marriage and she demanded divorce. The case was a unique incident.
As a result of this certain books opposing freedom for women and against women's education were published. Mr. Bhagwat published a book "Fashionable wife" in 1884 in which he opposed women's education. Two years later W.M.Potdar published "Shushikshit Sri" (educated woman) in 1886 and Kamatikar wrote "Taruni-Shikshan Natika" in 1886. These three books are the examples of such efforts to bring to the notice of people at large the possible dangers of women's education. It was argued by these authors that education shall weaken the bond of marriage, and perhaps it may loose its sanctity. Apprehensions were expressed about the possibility of demand of divorce by women on the large scale, as a result of education. It was also argued that this may disturb the structure and stability of family.

In Marathi literature of that time, as stated above, a different thought processess are visible. It was in a introspection of the Hindu society or self-examination. The Marathi authors writing in this way first pointed out defects and evil practices in Hindu society, and then wrote in favour of reforms. For example, Tukaram Tatya Padwal wrote, "Jati-Bhed Vivek Sar" in 1861. In 1870 Shidoba Misal wrote "Jati-Bhed Sambhashan". Lokhitwadi wrote and published a book "Jati-Bhed" in 1877. All of them pointed out defects of caste system.
Among the writers supporting reforms, contribution of Mahatma Phuley is very important. Phuley consistently wrote against rigid caste system and domination of Brahmins over the society. He wrote many books like "Shetakaryancha Asud", "Gulamgiri" etc., describing evils of Hindu society and called for its improvement.

As stated earlier the period from 1870 onwards is marked by view points which awakened the political consciousness among the people. Therefore, many writers were inspired to write about the glorious past history and heroic characters in it to enliven sense of national pride. As a result historical novels, dramas, poems were published during this period.

Before 1870 Vinayak J. Kirtane wrote "Thorale Madhav Rao Peshave" in 1861. C.M. Apte published a drama "Putalabai" and Gunjikar wrote "Mochan Gad" in 1871. "Afazal Khanacha Mrutyu" was also published in the same year by Hari Narayan Apte. He wrote many social, political and historical novels. Some of them were 'Ushakkal' (1895-96), "Swarajya Sathi" (in 1898), "Mysorcha Wagh" (1890), etc. These works had intention to remind the past glory of the society. In that sense it was a revivalism of historical past.

Some books discussing political issues were also published during the period under study. Mr. Madgaonkar

If one reviews Marathi literature that was published in 19th century Maharashtra, one gets the impression that the writers intentionally wrote something for creating spirit of Nationalism, consciousness and promotion of modern outlook. The Marathi literature on the whole encouraged social reform movement by creating new feelings and inspiring people for welcoming changes in the social life.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES:


2. The common features found with leaders are their skill, communication, oratory, knowledge, intelligence, confidence and capacity to take decisions. Sociologists define leadership as "exercise of power or influence in social collectivities—such as groups, organizations etc.


4. Such house was founded at Pandharpur in 1875 Lala Shankar Umiya, a Prarthana Samajist. Pandita Ramabai also founded "Sharda Sadan" at Kedgaon in 1890. Narayan Tillu, B.G.Tilak, Gharmode, Purushottam Matange, K.N.Thatte, V.M.Bhide and many other reformers took active part in such activities.


6. For details see Chapter II.


8. Kanade, R.G., *Marathi Niyatkalikancha Itihas* (Marathi), Karnataka Publishing House, Bombay, 1938, p.I. However, it is reported that American mission published first Marathi newspaper in 1813 before 'Durpan' but authentic information about this is not available.


11. Ibid., p.94.


15. Indian Reformer dated 18.10.1861.


19. Dnyan Prasararak dated June 1856, and July 1855.

20. Dnyan Prasararak, August 1855

21. Dnyan Prasararak, June 1856,


23. Sudharak - 16-12-1889.


26. Sudharak - 10.2.1890.

27. Sudharak - 16-2-1891.

28. Subodha-Patrika, 27.11.1881

29. Subodha-Patrika, 7-8-1892.

30. Subodha-Patrika, 22-5-1892.


32. Vividha-Dnyan Vistar, January 1878.

33. Balbodha, June 1890.

34. Nibandha-Chandrika - January 1883.

35. Nibandha-Chandrika - August, 1883.

36. Ibid.

38. **Kesari** - 6.3.1888
39. **Kesari** - 4.10.1887.
40. *Asiatic Quarterly/ July-October 1890 Review*,
41. **Karamanuk** - 1.11.1890
42. **Dnyan-Prasarak**, September 1854.
43. **Prabhodaya**, June - 1859
44. **Nityapadesh**, January 1885.
45. **Saddharma Deepika** Vol. 15, 1855.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION
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The present study of 'social reforms and politics in 19th century Maharashtra' is an attempt to understand and analyse the process of social transformation and its impact on the political process in Maharashtra of the last century. The scope of this study is limited to western Maharashtra region of the present Maharashtra State. This part of the state was a part of erstwhile Bombay Presidency. Vidarbha and Marathwada, two major regions of the present state were not parts of Bombay Presidency during the British rule. They were parts of C.P. and Berar and Nizam's dominion of Hyderabad respectively. They had different historical and cultural background. Therefore, the developments in these two regions are not taken into consideration in this study.

The present study is mainly historical in its approach and analytical in nature. It covers approximately a period of eighty years of British rule in beginning in the region from 1818 A.D. onwards. This was the period which was the beginning of over all changes in this region. With the change in the political
power the society also began to change. The period under study witnessed the process of social transformation through various social reform movements. However, this is not just a chronological account of different social reform movements that took place in Maharashtra in the last century. It is an attempt to understand the dynamics of the social reform movements and its linkage with the politics in the region, in the form of British response to these movements and their impact on the awareness and mobilization of the people in social and political field.

The word 'Politics' used in the title of this thesis is used in this limited sense and not in sense of democratic politics of present days context.

This study addresses itself to some important questions about the social reforms movements in 19th century Maharashtra. They are as follows:

(i) What were the factors instrumental in encouraging social reformers in traditional and orthodox society to set in motion the movement for change in the society?

(ii) What methods were adopted by the reformers?

(iii) What was the response of British rulers?
(iv) To what extent the efforts of the reformers succeeded in achieving desired changes.

(v) What was its overall impact on the society?

The information and the material presented and discussed in earlier chapters help us to arrive at certain conclusions in regards to the beginning, development and the achievements of the social reform movements in 19th century Maharashtra. These findings can be summed up as follows.

1) British Rule as an Instrument of Social Change:

The advent of British rule was an important factor in the beginning of social reform movements in 19th century Maharashtra. The end of Peshwa rule and beginning of British rule was a major political change. This event was of a far-reaching consequences. British brought with them their language and through it new ideas and ideals of the west.

The society in pre-British period was quite static. Religion was the dominant factor. Fatalism, ritualism and burden of age old traditions and customs were its features. The majority of the people were illiterate, poor and with no voice in the political process. Some of the traditions and customs were
cruel and inhuman, and the whole society was prisoner of this set up. Neither the people nor the Peshwas felt anything wrong with this social structure and evil practices. Naturally any thought of changing them was out of question.

With the emergence of British rule the situation began to change slowly. The new rulers streamlined the administration, which not only created sense of security and safety among the people but also provided their support and legitimacy to it. The British rulers introduced changes in the educational system which exposed the people to new ideas and ideals of the west. As a result the first generation of English educated elites, began the reassessment of the existing social condition afresh. Had there been no change in the political field, it is doubtful whether the process of social reforms could have been started by the people at all.

Thus, it can be argued that the political change in the first quarter of 19th century was mainly instrumental in creating favourable atmosphere for the social changes, which in the course of time strengthened the social reform movements in the region. That way tradition of social reforms in Maharashtra dates back to the teachings of the Saints and on set of Bhakti move-
-ment from 13th century onwards. But this was an exercise with spiritual overtones rather than bringing changes in the material conditions of the people in the society. The British rule was the major breakthrough in this regard.

2) The Dynamics of Social Reforms: its contents, methods and approaches -

The whole course of social reforms movements can be divided broadly in two phases, viz: pre-1857 i.e. period of East India Company's rule and post-1857 period of rule by British Crown. The social reform movements underwent considerable change in its contents, methods and approaches.

In the beginning of the first phase the Christian Missionaries played an important role in this regard. The main objective of Christian missionaries was spread of Christianity. For that purpose they published books on Christian religion, established educational institutions to educate the people and thereby introducing them to new religion. They discussed the absolute character of Hindu traditions and customs with the people. They started writing about these matters in their periodicals. The educated elites who came in their contact began to think about the need of reforming