Introduction

Locating the emergence of the concept of Hindu *Rashtra* in the nineteenth century Maharashtra to the conflict of interest of two subject people namely, the Hindu and the Muslim, has been the trend in the research concerning the anti-colonial struggle. The theory got impetus due to two important developments. Firstly, the political and economic movements of the late colonial period has been viewed in the context of the struggle of the colonized people against the colonizer's oppression without giving sufficient importance to the internal contradiction. This led to the placing of entire population into the category of colonized and thereby oppressed who as a result took part in the anti-colonial struggle. Constructing a monolithic, non-stratified colonized subject substantiated this. It's an undisputed fact that colonialism was oppressive. At the macro level it drained the country of its wealth whereas at the micro level it could oppress only those who had something to lose viz. power, wealth and social status. As far as the rest of the population was concerned, in Tilak's own words, it mattered little as to who ruled India.

Secondly, revival, orthodox and reformer in social field and moderate and extremist in the political field have been viewed as absolute categories. In the case of Maharashtra, the pre-Gandhian anti-colonial struggle was dominated by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, whose construction of Swaraj as essentially a Hindu category and his starting of the Ganapati and Shivaji festivals which led to Hindu-Muslim antagonism is regarded as the starting point of mass mobilization to liberate the country from its foreign rule. In this context Tilak has been considered a revivalist and a progenitor


of Hindu revivalist tendencies. At the same time the consolidation of Hindu tradition was attempted in the north by the *Arya Samaj* that acquired a strong anti-Muslim colour. Jafferlot and Anderson placed Tilak, Aurobindo, Vivekananda, Ramakrishna and Bipin Chandra Pal in the same category. Hansen considered that around the turn of the century, Tilak emerged along with Lala Lajpat Rai in Punjab and Bipin Chandra Pal in Calcutta as important spokesmen for a radical populist mobilisation of the Hindu community on themes of cultural, economic and political self-reliance and self-determination. Construction of Hindu nationalism from Hindu revivalism, which preceded it, can not be held true for the whole of India. In Bengal, though the Hindu revivalism articulated itself strongly during the Swadeshi movement, Hindu nationalism was not prominently advocated. Maharashtra having an insignificant Muslim population and little religious connotation to the Swadeshi movement strongly advocated Hindu nationalism. Tilak used the term *Hindutva* in 1890, however the articulation of the term Hindu nationality did not emerge until the commencement of Home Rule Movement in Maharashtra. Tilak, during the *Swadeshi* movement called the Bengali, Punjabi, Gujrati as separate nationalities. On the contrary, the idea of Hindu nationality was well developed in Bengal. Nabhagopal Mitra, who organized *Chaitra Mela* which later became Hindu *Mela* viewed that “the Hindu nationality is not confined to Bengal alone but embraced all of Hindu name and Hindu faith.

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throughout the length and breadth of India". Hence the Hindu nationalism was not necessarily followed by Hindu revivalism. The construction of Hindu nationalism upon the sole foundation of Hindu revival movements arose due to uncritical acceptance of the absolute categories of revival, orthodox and reformer in social field and moderate and extremist in the political field. These terms are quite ambiguous and open ended.

The connotation of revivalism itself differed very widely from region to region. The *Arya Samaj* initiated revivalism centered around reviving four premises. First, advocating *Vedic* religion and the way of life, which included, the *Vedic* rituals, relaxation of rigid caste restrictions, and an improvement in the condition of women by adopting post-puberty marriage, widow marriage and education of girls. Second, revivalism led to either suppression of various pluralistic traits in the society or modified them to suit the *Vedic* religion. Herein, *Arya Samaj* attempted to incorporate the lower caste groups within the fold of *Vedic* Aryan Hinduism leading to the suppression of popular culture by deprecating

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7 B. B. Majumdar, *Indian Political Associations and Reform of Legislature 1818-1917*, (Calcutta, 1965), pp.95-6. Hindu Nationalism in Bengal in the third quarter of the nineteenth century was not a response to the new consciousness among Muslims. (p.18) It was the census report (p.30) and the fear of possible occupational threat that brought the Hindu nationalism in direct confrontation with the Muslim consciousness. Papia Chakrvarti, *Hindu Response to Nationalist Ferment*, (Calcutta, 1992). Chandrakant Basu wrote Hindutva: Hindur Prokrito Itihas in 1892 after the anti-reformist failure to stop the Age of Consent Bill. Amiya, P. Sen, *Hindu Revivalism in Bengal*, (Delhi, 1993), p.439.


their beliefs, symbols and rituals. Third, these two tendencies led to the expansion of the base of vedic religion from the Brahmins to the entire society. Fourth, this consolidated Hinduism led to newfound aggression which resulted in the formation of a strong lobby of "Self" as against the "Other".

On the other hand in Maharashtra, the revivalism i.e., the revival of vedic religion did not lead to suppression of pluralistic tendencies and the construction of a monolithic religion. It actually led to the upholding of pluralistic tendencies in the society by emphasizing the role of Saint poets in the formation of Maharashtra's regional identity. Mahadev Govind Ranade's interpretation of the Bhakti movement as a kind of Protestant reformation of Hinduism, served as legitimization for modern ideas of social justice. Ranade spearheaded a movement supporting pristine vedic religion and the existing pluralism as against linear construction of Hinduism by Vishnushastri Chiplunkar and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Tilak called Ranade as a revivalist. Ranade objected to the term revivalism. By stating "what shall we revive? Meat-eating habits of Brahmins? Twelve forms of sons? Eight forms of marriage?".

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16 Maharatta Jan 30, 1889, p.5, letter to the editor Commemorating the death anniversary of V. Chiplunkar. For Tilak's own construction of Hinduism see ch.6.
17 Maharatta, May 15 1887, p.2.
18 Ranade's speech before the eleventh Social Conference, Amravati 1897. Miscellaneous Writings and Speeches of the late Hon'ble Justice M.G. Ranade, (1915), pp.190-1.
tradition per se but rather an attempt to challenge and deny the pretended supremacy of the culture of the colonizer as well as to reassert the cultural identity of the colonized. In Punjab too, revialism did not mean reviving the vedic social norms completely, but an attempt to construct an identity against essentially a perceived Muslim threat. In Maharashtra, the construction of monolitic Hinduism was accomplished not by Vedic revivalists but by their staunch opponents - the Puranic orthodoxy headed by Chiplunkar and Tilak. The latter gave a militant character to it.

Similarly, the term reformer has a context of region. Lala Lajpat Rai, closely associated with Arya Samaj movement, advocated women’s education. In Bengal both Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo, the flagbearers of militant Hinduism, were also staunch supporters of reforms regarding the status of women and that of the Shudras. Vivekananda wrote perhaps the most biting, articulate and bitter condemnation in recent times of the physical misery and misguided beliefs of most Indians. Raja Radhakant Deb, the founder of the Hindu Dharma Rakshana Sabha in 1855, opposed the Widow-Remarriage Bill but supported female education. He also facilitated Vidhyalankar to write a booklet named Strishiksha Vidhyakara. This booklet helped the Christian missionaries to


20 V.C. Joshi (ed.), Lala Lajpat Rai’s writings and Speeches, (Delhi, 1966), p.49.

21 Amiya Sen (1993) Summing up the Bengal experience argues that “I must strongly contest the view that a Hindu Nationalist could not at the same time be a humanist”. p.14.

popularise the idea and utility of the female education.\textsuperscript{23} Similarly, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, generally considered a protagonist of neo-Hinduism, observed that “one is not good simply because he is a Hindu, nor bad because he is Mohamedon — A Man who with all his qualities is lacking in \textit{Dharma} is infirm no matter whether he is a Hindu or a Muslim.”\textsuperscript{24}

In the initial stages of social reform question, \textit{Mahratta} was careful to emphasise its stand as distinct from that of the orthodox,

\begin{quote}
We look upon ourselves as distinct from the orthodox Hindu society, and though we tolerate some of their customs as necessary evils and because we are powerless to remove them, we do not at the same time sympathise with them... In all questions of orthodox learning they do not consult us or, if they do, do not give our opinion the same weight that they give to those of orthodox people... As long as this continues, we must never hope to succeed.\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

This explained the position of Tilak who was neither a leader of the orthodox nor an important leader to be consulted on all-important matters. The orthodoxy, which concerned itself with the ritualistic Brahmanism was not willing to be drawn into the debate with the new leaders of assertive Hinduism as it, amounted to questioning the colonial rule. They appeared to be content with the option of ex-communication whenever the caste rules were broken and severe criticism of reformers whenever such attempts were made. Their interests were purely religious unlike the class that Tilak represented. Tilak as a defender of economically dominant Brahmin section had larger interests to defend both economic and political

\textsuperscript{23} Syamalendu Sengupta, \textit{A Conservative Hindu of Colonial India: Raja Radhakanta Deb and his Milieu 1784-1867}, (New Delhi, 1990), pp.56, 78, 149.

\textsuperscript{24} Quoted in K.N. Panikkar (ed.), \textit{Communalism in Indian History Politics and Culture}, (New Delhi, 1991), p.4.
than the Age of Consent, where Tilak was willing to make certain concessions. Hence, Tilak and *Mahratta* were anti-reformers rather than orthodox, who no doubt accepted the orthodox Puranic theology in totality yet they differed from the orthodoxy.  

Similarly, the orthodoxy was not an absolute category. D.K. Karve, the *Chitpavan* reformer, who married a widow and established Hindu Widow’s Association, explained that there were, “two classes of orthodox people in our society. One class consists of ritualists who spend hours and hours in repeating *mantras* and going through *havans* and other rites. The other class consists of devout people belonging to the *Bhakti* school. They would read vernacular hymns composed by Saints, which they understood and meditate upon the features of the deity... People of this class are generally emotional and broad-minded. They can feel the pangs of the depressed and the oppressed and sympathise with them”. The reformist journal of Poona *Indu-Prakash* was jointly edited by radical, reformist M.G. Ranade and a traditional Pundit called Vishnu Parsharam. So a section of the orthodoxy was ready and open for change and transformation that was taking place in the nineteenth century colonial India.

M.M. Kunte, the Head Master of the New English School started by Chiplunkar, Tilak and Agarkar at Poona, explained that opposition to the

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26 *Mahratta* discussing the declining financial condition of a Graduate Association stated that “a Swami belonging to a Vaishnava sect collected from his followers Rs. 50000. If people could pay so well to temples and tellers of Faith, they should necessarily pay more to such Institutions. I am sorry for my countrymen. They will not rise in the scale of civilization”. *Mahratta* April 29 1888, p.3. The Graduates Association.


reforms was not only from the Brahmins, but also from the Maratha Sardars “who saw in orthodoxy the stability of the homage which they obtain from the people”.\textsuperscript{29} Tilak endorsed this in another context.\textsuperscript{30} In 1893, Sardar’s election was held and G.D.Panse, a reformist Sardar, was elected. Tilak derogatorily remarked that the two important qualifications that Panse had were his passion for dogs and horses and his good knowledge of English respectively, and further challenged the concerned authorities to publish the voters list as he was sure that “the hereditary voters voted for the chiefs of Ichalkaranji\textsuperscript{31} and Kurundwad while Mr. Panse was mainly supported by women, titular and 3rd class Supernumeries”. Tilak’s defence of the interest of the landlords and merchants was as strong and effective as his attack on social reform. Tilak’s close associates also came from this class. Thus, Vasukaka alias Ganesh Joshi of Satara District, whom Tilak considered his mentor, was the son of money lender. N.C.Kelkar’s father was a clerk as well as Mamlatdar. K.P.Khadilkar’s father was a moneylender. Both N.C.Kelkar and K.P.Khadilkar served Tilak as editors of \textit{Mahratta} and \textit{Kesari}. Mamlatdar Ramachandra Natu, who assisted Tilak in organizing Ganapati festival, was the son of a wealthy landowner. S.M. Paranjpe’s father was a money-lender.\textsuperscript{32} Paranjpe was the editor of \textit{Kal} and he along with Tilak

\textsuperscript{29} M.M. Kunte \textit{The Reform Question}, (Poona, 1870), pp.1-3.

\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Mahratta} June 4, 1893, p.3. The Sardar’s Election. Editorial.

\textsuperscript{31} Chief of Ichalkaranji was a Chitpavan. Ian Copland “The Maharaja of Kolhapur and the Non-Brahmin Movement 1902-1920”, \textit{Modern Asian Studies}, 7(2) 1973, p.216.

\textsuperscript{32} B.T. Ranadive considered the groups to which S.M. Paranjpe belonged as the middle class and considered him a radical revolutionary. \textit{The Independence struggle and after} (New Delhi, 1988), p.23. The term middle class is vague and not self-explanatory like the rich or the poor classes, Richard Cashman (1975), pp.223-225.
organised Boycott and large scale burning of foreign goods during Swadeshi movement. Annasaheb Patwardhan's father was a wealthy lawyer. Similarly, in Bengal, Rajendra Lal Mitra, who led a crusade against the Age of Consent Bill, was also the strongest defender of the interests of the zamindars. As a member of the British Indian Association in 1871 he opposed the proposal by other members to levy a cess on the zamindars and utilise the same for improving the roads and education. In Bengal, landed patronage helped to hasten the swing towards social conservatism. Sen argues that the general economic status of the Brahmo Community even in relation to the Hindu middle class society of Calcutta was not very high. In Maharashtra too, the reformers came from the background of moderate to extreme poverty and anti-reformers were from economically powerful class and were closely connected with the defense of landed interests.

Similarly, the term 'reformers' has been used in the sense to denote those who accepted providential nature of the colonial rule and hence were mild in their criticism of the colonial rule. The moderate school invariably consisted of the reformers who were dazzled by the western knowledge as against the extremists who opposed the colonial rule in no uncertain

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33 B.B. Majumdar, (1965), p.79.

34 Amiya P. Sen (1992), pp.407-8. M.G.Ranade discussing why graduates die young? stated,that they were extremely poor who study hard and also work to earn a living .Many of them had no parents or family property to fall back on.Ramabai Ranade,The Miscellaneous Writings (New Delhi 1991)pp.305-312

terms. Contrary to this established notion, Bhaskar Pandurang Tarkhadkar was the first critic of the colonial rule in Western India. Tarkhadkar, the brother of Dadoba Pandurang the founder of the first reformist organisation - Paramahamsa Sabha, was himself a reformer. He stated bluntly to the colonial masters that “we cannot look on your government in any other light than that of the most bitter curse India has ever been visited with”. His attack centered around the drain of wealth from India, the myth of peace granted by the British presence and the British imperialism in China and Afghanistan. Gopal Hari Deshmukh alias Lokhitwadi was the first to advocate the use of Swadeshi goods and the boycott of foreign goods. Lokhitwadi expressed concern on the slow capital formation in the nineteenth century India. He criticized the people who preferred to store their money rather than to use it to improve the conditions for manufacture of their own goods. He urged the people to use swadeshi goods even though they may be of poorer quality than the foreign items and suggested the boycott of the imported goods. Lokhitwadi, besides his bitter criticism of the evils prevailing in the Hindu society, called upon the people to make a firm determination to attain economic sufficiency by manufacturing all the goods that India required and develop the ability to rule and gain

36 Tilak opposed the unrestricted usage of the term moderates and extremists. When he stated that “the extremists of today will be moderates of tomorrow just as the moderates of to day were extremists yesterday”. Speech at Calcutta Jan 2, 1907 in, Christine Dobbin, Basic Documents in the Development of Modern India and Pakistan, (London, 1970), p.57.


administrative experience.\textsuperscript{39} Bhau Mahajan criticised both the social obscurantism and the British who “after coming to the country were behaving like a pack of wild rascals”.\textsuperscript{40} Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Gopal Ganesh Agarkar criticised the British policies. Vishnushastri Chiplunkar’s attack on the colonial rule was certainly borrowed from Lokhitwadi’s \textit{Shatpatre}, the only difference being that Chiplunkar and later Tilak held the colonial rule responsible for the social deterioration.\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Mahratta}’s criticism of the colonial rule confined to the latter’s interference in the internal matters of the Hindu Society, with the actual colonial exploitation receiving little attention. So what differed the anti-reformer’s critique of the colonial rule from its reformer’s was that the former held the colonial rule responsible for primarily social deterioration and latter for economic deterioration. Since colonial rule was basically an economic imperialism with the secondary importance being its impact on the society, the reformist critique was comprehensive, logical and rational.

In 1897, the Government of India asked the Government of Bombay to send the translation of seditious articles following the murder of Ayerst and Rand, the Bombay government sent all the relevant articles.\textsuperscript{42} The reformist journal \textit{Sudharak} headed the list with six articles, the \textit{Kesari} with

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{40} J.V. Naik, Bhau Mahajan in N.K. Wagle (ed.), \textit{Writers, Editors and Reformers, Social and Political Transformations of Maharashtra 1830-1930}, (New Delhi, 1999), pp.70-71.
\item \textsuperscript{41} J.V. Naik in A.R. Kulkarni, (Ed) \textit{Medieval Deccan History}, (Bombay, 1996), p.252.
\item \textsuperscript{42} \textit{Source Material for the History of Freedom Movement}. vol II, p.341.
\end{itemize}
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three articles, the *Mahratta, Dyan Prakash* and *Subodh Patrika* with one article each. The headlines of the article published in *Sudharak* were:

1. The Climax of Loyalty 18.4.1897
2. Oppression of Plague Committee 19.4.1897
3. Why do we weep like Cowards? 19.4.1897
4. Appeal to the Citizens of Poona 3.3.1897
5. Does not the government make *bandobast*? Learn to make it yourself 3.5.1897
6. Loss of Self Respect 10.5.1897

The articles published under these headlines questioned the very nature of the colonial rule and called upon the people of Poona to take the matter of plague control into their own hands. *Sudharak* was also the first journal to oppose plague measures as early as March 1897 and the *Kesari* and the *Mahratta* joined the debate only in June-July 1897. The headlines of the articles published in the *Kesari* were,

1. Shivaji’s utterances 15.6.1897
2. Shivaji’s Coronation Festival 15.6.1897
3. Reply to Lamb, the Collector of Poona’s speech 6.7.1897

The headline of the article published in the *Mahratta* was:

1. Reply to Lamb, the Collector of Poona’s speech 4.7.1897

The voices raised in these articles, though in general anti-colonial, were specific in case of *Sudharak* whereas obscure in those of *Mahratta*. The anti-reformist critique remained articulate but vague till the end. The Home Rule League under Tilak published its aims, which consisted of a criticism
of despotism and a defense of the right of the eastern people’s demand for self-government.\(^{43}\) The Home Rule League under Anne Besant was clearer as to why India needed the Home Rule. Besant explained that India urgently needed certain acts to be passed and some existing ones to be repealed, whose importance the colonial rulers had not realized. These acts needed to be passed included the *Panchayat* act, the compulsory education act\(^{44}\) and those to be repealed included the press act, the seditious meetings act.\(^{45}\) So the radical difference between the reformist and the anti-reformist critique was where as the reformers dealt with the colonial issue in totality, the anti-reformer were concerned only with who ruled the country and according to whose leadership that rule has to be exercised.\(^{46}\) Since the landed –business interests linked with the caste interest was at the heart of the matter of Tilak’s *Swaraj*, he could not articulately place demands similar to reformists but instead, insisted on the transfer of power into the Indian hands saying that the Indians were fit to rule.

The inability to articulate the caste – class interests in clear terms was due to predominance of *Bhakti*-tradition which held austerity, simple life and pursuit of knowledge as the highest ideals. The life, which the reformers were leading, as a result, were becoming models to the younger generation.\(^{47}\) The historical developments in Mahrashtra had placed both


\(^{47}\) One of the important fear that Chiplunkar and Tilak had against Lokhitwadi was that “the younger generation would worship Lokhitwadi” *Maharatta* Jan 30 1889, p.5.
land and wealth in the hands of a section of Chitpavans, which had to be defended both from the reformers whose radical ideas had begun to axe the hierarchical Brahmin centered society as well as from the colonial rule which viewed them with suspicion and were passing the rules that adversely affected them as a class.

When the British defeated the Peshwas in 1818, unlike in other parts of India, they came across a fairly smooth running administrative apparatus built over a period of two hundred years by Shivaji and the Peshwas. Moutnstuart Elphinstone who was made in-charge of its incorporation into the colonial state decided to continue the Maratha administration with as few innovation as possible. The Chitpavans dominated the administration. The colonial rulers concluded that since they replaced the Chitpavans as the rulers the latter was bound to create trouble as they would be “deprived of their accustomed means of subsistence by the cessation of most of the Peshwa’s charities”. Elphinstone was anxious to conciliate Chitpavans as a class. Not all Chitpavans could have been accommodated in the Peshwa administration, but Elphinstone felt that “the majority must have benefited from the fact that the Brahmins held the leading position”. Elphinstone’s experiences with the landed Chitpavan aristocracy that he had to deal with after deposing the Peshwa regime, led

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48 Social Critique had reached radical stage in the third quarter of 19th century Krishnaji Keshav Damle (Keshavstut) declared in Nava Shipai (New Soldier) “I am not a Brahmin, not even a Hindu. I belong to no sect. My home is there where the poor and the fallen dwell, wherever I go, I have brothers and sisters. They are mine, and I am theirs”. And again in Tutari (Bugle) “The old is dead, let it go Bury it, or cremate it, but let it-go”. V.S Naravane, A Cultural History of Modern India, (New Delhi, 1991), p.148.

49 Mount Stuart Elphinstone, Territoris Conquered from Peshwa, (Delhi, 1973), p.IV.
him to conclude that with economic and spiritual power they would be a source of future trouble.\textsuperscript{50}

Elphinstone also recognised the power of the \textit{Chitpavan} Brahmin community, which at the height of its glory had combined the spiritual and temporal powers along with the economic power as a potential threat to the colonial rule. So Elphinstone continued the privileges which the Brahmins had enjoyed earlier - \textit{Dakshina} or Scholarship to those proficient in Sanskrit and ritualistic studies, \textit{Inams} or grants of lands and revenues to the temples.\textsuperscript{51} This was further carried on by two important developments. Firstly, Jyotiba Phule, the non-Brahmin social reformer, singled out \textit{Chitpavans} as the sole oppressors of the society. Secondly, Richard Temple, Governor of Bombay, placed an exaggerated emphasis on \textit{Chitpavan}'s antagonism to the colonial rule.\textsuperscript{52} Temple wrote letters when Vasudeo Balwant Phadke's revolt was at its height. As Phadke was a \textit{Chitpavan},\textsuperscript{53} Temple concluded that the \textit{Chitpavans} would be a threat to the British rule.\textsuperscript{54} However, no record exists regarding any \textit{Chitpavan}

\textsuperscript{50} Kenneth Ballhatchet, \textit{Social Policy and Social Change in Western India 1817-1830}, (London 1961)p.45 and 83.


\textsuperscript{53} The revolt of 1857 must have been also the cause of Richard Temple's fear regarding \textit{Chitpavans}. In 1857, the Bengal army, which revolted entirely, composed of Brahmins and other upper caste Hindus and Muslims. Where as the Bombay army, which remained loyal to the British had Brahmins 10% Maratha 37%, Rajput 7% and the rest consisted of Mahars and other lower Caste Hindu and Muslims. Rabindra Kishan Hazari “The Sepoy and the Raj: A Social History of Bombay Presidency Army.” unpublished M. Phil Dissertation CHS/JNU (1985), pp.36-56.

support to Phadke. The *Chitpavan* intelligentsia actually distanced itself from Phadke. Tilak, a prominent *Chitpavan*, also opposed Phadke. Gordon Johnson has explored the link between *Chitpavan* struggle and the anti-colonial struggle. He has concluded that it was they who by virtue of being numerically predominant in acquiring English education, questioned the colonial authority more than others and they dominated the intellectual field as they were the authors, journalists and lawyers and defended their caste interests. He based his conclusions on his findings that out of sixty editors of Marathi newspapers twenty-three were *Chitpavans* in 1902. However, what he failed to notice is that the majority of these *Chitpavan* editors like G.K.Gokhale, who advocated radical social and economic reforms, were actually antagonistic to larger *Chitpavan* interests. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s it was V.N.Mandalik’s *Native Opinion* and Tilak’s *Kesari* and *Mahratta* that defended *Chitpavan* interests whereas M.G.Ranade’s *Indu Prakash* and *Subhod Patrika* and G.G.Agarkar’s *Sudharak* concerned themselves in advocating social and economic reforms undermining *Chitpavan* interests. Both Chiplunkar and Tilak used the ‘*Chitpavan threat*’ for political ends, elevating it to quell the colonial idea that the Indians were inefficient to rule themselves. Tilak even declared that if the British had not come to India, the *Peshwas* would be ruling the entire country.

Then to the question - was ‘*Chitpavan threat*’ a myth? - The answer is no. The threat was not from the *Chitpavans* as caste but from the landed


Chitpavans as a class. This class consisted of those who owned land and those who were attached to the land in various capacities like maintaining village accounts (Kulkarnis), collection of revenue (Khots), those who got rent free lands (Inamdars), those who lost the lands due to revenue settlements, moneylenders to subsistence, marginal and medium peasants and those who were benefited by Dakshina funds. This class was the actual fallout of the Peshwa regime and it was they who stood to lose the greatest amount of privileges under the changed conditions of the colonial rule. Few representatives of this class, who acquired English education, worked in government services and also as lawyers, editors who acted as spokespersons for this class.\textsuperscript{57} For the rest of the Chitpavans employed in the Peshwa administration, the colonial rule provided an equally good opportunity as is evident from the fact that overwhelming majority of Chitpavans were Judges, lawyers, officials in various government departments, teachers, literary figures, authors and editors.\textsuperscript{58} Chitpavans from this class were for change and reform as to each Chiplunkar and each Tilak there were hundreds of Agarkars and Ranades form poor background, high on idealism, willing to cross the disabilities imposed by the 19\textsuperscript{th} century Hinduism. It was the interests of landed Chitpavans that was being contained by reformers, colonial rulers and the non-Brahmin movement. So the need to control the direction, which the society was taking, became the basis of Talik’s anti-colonial struggle. To achieve this, a control over the means of communication was essential.

\textsuperscript{57} Refer to the first published article on Patriotism in Mahratta in Ch. 6 where privelges and patriotism almost merged together.

\textsuperscript{58} E.E. Mcdonald following the traditional Chitpavan dominency argument states predominance of Chitpavans among the nineteenth century literary figures authors, editors did not change the social character of communicative leadership. “The Modernizing of
The print media was the most powerful builder of public opinion in the nineteenth century India. An efficient postal service enabled the journals and newspapers to reach even small towns and villages even though the considerable vastness of the country added with the absence of a quick mode of transport made it seem impossible. So intellectuals often began their career by starting a newspaper. In Maharashtra the reformers made the earliest efforts. Bal Shastri Jambhekar started his Anglo-Marathi paper *Bombay Darpan* in 1832 and *Dig Darshan*, a Marathi magazine in 1840. Gopal Hari Deshmukh was connected with *Prabhat* in which he published his 108 letters (*Shatpatre*) between 1848-50. Dadabhai Naoroji was the founder editor of *Rast Goftar*. Mahdev Gobind Ranade, after completing his graduation and before joining the government services, edited *Indu-Prakash* and later regularly contributed to the *Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha*. V.N. Mandalik started *Native Opinion* in 1864 and edited it till 1871.59

Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar started the *Nibhand-Mala* in 1874, one year after Jyotiba Phule started the *Satya Shodak Samaj*.60 He also edited the *Deccan Star*. So the effort of Chiplunkar and Tilak to start *Kesari* and *Mahratta* was in continuation of the nineteenth century tradition of utilising the print media to disseminate the ideas in the society. The change from the oral communication to print media was significant, as the nation

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is an imagined political community. By utilising both Marathi and English, the intellectuals were able to communicate effectively, their ideas, which aimed towards creating the consciousness among the people regarding the place of their religion and the country in relation to other religions and the larger issue of colonialism. The issues discussed by the reformers and anti reformers were often anathema to each other, but both aimed towards the same end i.e., the construction of nationality. However, they differed substantially as to the nature of the nationality. Reformer’s insistence on the nationality constructed on the basis of reformed Hinduism, liberty and equality of all human beings resulted in the liberal construction of Indian nationality whereas the anti-reformer’s insistence on the hierarchical Hinduism based on caste duties led to the construction of Hindu nationalism. Both these developments were the results of the newly developed print media.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was born on July 23, 1856 in the Konkan village of Chikhalgaon. His great-grandfather was a Khot or the village revenue colector of Chikhalgaon, who later became a Mamlatdar or administrator of Ratnagiri’s Anjanvel Taluka in the later years of the Peshwas. Tilak’s grandfather was an official in the survey department and later became an ascetic. Tilak’s father Gangadhar Pant, who worked as a Deputy Educational Officer, was also an author, moneylender and a

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shareholder in a mill. Tilak joined the Deccan College in 1872. Krishnarao Sarangpani, Tilak’s batchmate, remembered that the college hostel had already been divided into Sovla and Ouala – orthodox and reformer wings and students admitted each of their own friends according to their views”. Tilak joined the orthodox wing and graduated in 1876, continued his legal studies at Deccan College but remained without a job. Thereafter he joined Visnu Shastri Chiplunkar and they, along with Ganesh Gopal Agarkar, started the new English School in 1880, which was a private endeavour to impart inexpensive English education. Tilak, with the assets inherited from his father, started Kesari and Mahratta in 1881. In the sixty-sixth issue of Nibandhmala, the prospectus of Kesari was published under the combined signatures of Chiplunkar, Tilak, Agarkar, and Namjoshi. Tilak incorporated Chiplunkar’s Deccan Star into Mahratta and the editor of the Deccan Star, M.B. Namjoshi, continued his association with Tilak by joining Mahratta. The name Kesari was a consensus among its founders whereas the name Mahratta was of entirely

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64 In the year 1866, Tilak’s father started the year with Rs.250 and closed it with Rs.3900 which was in those days an enviable income for a middle class family. Ram Gopal, Lok Tilak A. Biography, (Bombay, 1986), pp.3-9.

65 In the same year Tilak’s father died and as the only son, Tilak inherited the entire property except one third of which went to his uncle for looking after Tilak D.P. Karmarkar, Bal Gangadhar Tilak – A Study, (Bombay, 1956), p.2.


69 Mahratta during the first year carried the caption on the front page “with which is incorporated the Deccan Star”, Micro Film Roll 1 and T.V. Parvate, (Ahmadabad, 1958), p.27.

70 S.L. Karndikar, Lok Tilak, (Poona, 1957), p.58.
Chiplunkar’s choice.\textsuperscript{71} So \textit{Mahratta} directly carried forward Chiplunkar’s crusade against reformers.\textsuperscript{72} The first issue of \textit{Mahratta} came out on 2\textsuperscript{nd} January 1881 and \textit{Kesari} on 4\textsuperscript{th} January 1881 directly entering into the public debates concerning the socio-economic policies of the colonial rule and their effects on the people. \textit{Kesari}, under Agarkar, defended the reformer’s point of view whereas \textit{Mahratta}, under Tilak, represented anti-reformist views. The differences reached a boiling point on the curriculum of the Female High School at Poona and Tilak removed Agarkar from the editorship of \textit{Kesari} in October 1887.\textsuperscript{73} Thereafter both the papers became the champions of anti-reformist opinion. \textit{Kesari}, being in Marathi, participated in the ongoing debate and \textit{Mahratta}, being in English, was meant to convey the anti-reformist stand to the bureaucracy and the English educated public, both within and outside the province.\textsuperscript{74}

When \textit{Kesari} and \textit{Mahratta} came into being, the journalism in western India, was dominated by the reformist journals. \textit{Indu Prakash} and \textit{Subhod Patrika}, both bi-lingual and Bombay based weeklies, had a circulation of 1200 and 1600 copies each. Poona based weeklies \textit{Dnyan Prakash} and \textit{Dnyan Chakshu} had a circulation of 700 and 1000 copies each. The anti-reformist \textit{Native Opinion} of V.N.Mandalik and the \textit{Deccan Star} of V.K.Chiplunkar had a circulation of 300 copies. \textit{Nibhandmala} had


\textsuperscript{72} This continuity has been given very little attention. Even Ambedkar believed that they represented two different intellectual tradition. “The intelligentsia was divided into two schools – a school which was orthodox in its beliefs but unpolitical in its outlook and a school which was modern in its beliefs but primarily political in its aims and objects. The farmer was led by Chiplunkar and the later by Tilak”. Vasant Moon (ed.) \textit{Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Speeches and writings}, Vol.I (Bombay, 1989), p.218.

\textsuperscript{73} V.P. Varma (1978), p.23.

a circulation of 700 copies. The claim of *Nibhandmala* regarding its circulation is difficult to substantiate. The May edition of *Nibhandmala* for the year 1880 was published only in October 1880.\(^{75}\) So in the pre *Kesari* and *Mahratta* days the anti-reformers had little control over the print media.

During forty years of its existence under Tilak, *Mahratta* was edited by four editors. *Mahratta* began its editorials only in March 1888 till then the paper consisted of two to three lead articles, editorial notes, letters to the editors and news from European countries regarding politics, economy and trade. Letters to the editor were always signed under a pseudo name like A.Rambler, Will-O-The-Wisp etc. The absence of editorial till 1888 was more of a norm than exception with the Indian journals of that time. The editorials were of less importance as the journals took stand on major issues through the lead articles. The nineteenth century Indian journals had single ownership as against European newspapers, which were characterized by joint stock company ownership. The main feature of the single ownership was that the same man was editor, owner and publisher. A regular body of staff was almost unknown. He was assisted at the most by his friends and relatives.\(^{76}\) So the reader always knew who actually wrote the articles and whose opinion the articles represented. When Tilak was arrested in Kolhapur Brave's case in October 1882, Vasudeorao Kelkar edited *Mahratta*, and Tilak assumed its editorship only in

\(^{75}\) Compiled from the Native Newspapers report for the year 1880.

September 1891 though he had taken over *Kesari* in October 1887. In September 1897, Tilak was arrested for sedition and Narsimh Chintamanrao Kelkar, who had joined *Mahratta* a year earlier became the editor and continued to assist Tilak when he assumed his responsibilities in 1899. Tilak was arrested again in 1908 and this time both N.C. Kelkar and K.P. Khadilkar jointly managed both the papers as instructed by Tilak. The papers remained in their hands until Tilak's death. After Tilak's death in 1920, N.C. Kelkar, the inheritor of Tilak's legacy took over the sole editorship of *Kesari* and *Mahratta* as K.P. Khadilkar joined Gandhian movement and not the Hindu Mahasabha as Kelkar did. Henceforth *Mahratta* began to express the ideas and opinions of the Hindu Mahasabha.

The extraordinary feature that strikes anyone going through the paper from 1881 to 1920 is its consistency of opinions in all matters irrespective of whether Tilak, V.Kelkar or N.C. Kelkar was the actual editor. For example *Mahratta* wrote on Women’s Education,

1. “we fail to see the utility of teaching English to girls”.( Jan18.1885 p.1 V.Kelkar)

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78 ibid. p.515.


2. "teaching English would prove to turn out girls to be a dead weight on their husbands" (Dec 25, 1892 p.3 Tilak)

3. "the light of education should be so manipulated to make the domain of women a blessed place" (Feb 20, 1916 p.87 NC Kelkar and K P Khadilkar)

Technically it is difficult to prove who actually penned the editorials and other lead articles, but the language and the opinion are of Tilak, who considered both Kesari and Mahratta as his party papers. When N.C. Kelkar differed from Tilak in 1907, Tilak wrote,

when I took you up as colleague 12 year ago, your views on politics could hardly be said to have been settled and little thought that you would develop during the period any not consonant with these of Kesari...the Kesari and the Mahratta are like most other papers party papers more or less and I wish to maintain them as such especially as we are building up party just now... on all important points and at all important times both the paper must support the same policy with equal vigour... (otherwise) It will, I need not say be extremely painful for me to part with you.

So it is clear that if the editor did not agree with Tilak's ideas, he resorted to removing him from the services as he had done with Agarkar. Tilak was also particular that those who did not completely adhere to his ideas did not enter the coterie. When Baba Maharaj's adoption case came up before the court, Tilak was in Mandley prison and advised his nephew Dhandu Wasudeo Vidhvans that either Kelkar, Khadilkar or G.V. Joshi should take up the work and "anyhow an outsider should not be allowed to


82 Tilak G.S. Khaparde and other 3 members were the trustees of the estate of Baba Maharaj of Poona. After his death Tilak and 3 member favoured a boy from Aurangabad to be adopted by Tai Maharaj. She adopted the boy in 1901 and within a month went to her hometown Kolhapur and adopted a boy which was also supported by the Maharaja of Kolhapur Tilak fought a legal battle which was decided against him.
come in". So Mahratta represented Tilak's opinions and ideas, hence the unbroken consistency was maintained throughout the period. Tilak with the help of Kesari and Mahratta was able to build up a strong opposition to the radical legislations like the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act and the Age of Consent and the question of women's emancipation like widow remarriage and women's education. The papers assisted him in channalising these oppositions into a strong anti-colonial movement.

Tilak's popularity with the anti-reformists throughout the country is further demonstrated by the fact that the earliest biographies of Tilak were written in Sanskrit. In 1901 Keshava Gopal Tamhan wrote Tilaka Subhagyam. In 1909 Paravasta Krishnamacharya of Tamil Nadu wrote Tilak Manjari Sangrahah. Appa Sahstri's Tilakasya Karagraha Nivasah and Karmkar's Lokmanyalamkarah dealt specifically with his ordeal in prison. The next set of biographies was written to coincide with Tilak's birth centenary celebrations. These biographies basically attempt to defend Tilak. Ram Gopal has argued, "before the mass of evidence to the contrary, the charge that Tilak was anti-reformist evaporates into thin air". Athalye too considered that Tilak did not oppose reform but wanted to carry on "genuine reform of the body politic of India'. S.V. Bapat published finest reminiscence of Tilak by his acquaintances. And Tahmankar has argued,

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83 Ravindra Kumar (1992), p.36.
87 S.V. Bapat (Ed), (1925).
"Tilak's claim to be regarded as a social revolutionary is unchallenged."88 S.L. Karandikar tried to emphasize Tilak's role in bringing Brahmins and non-Brahmins together and his association with the All India Depressed Classes Conference.89 D. P. Karmaker and T.V. Parvate concentrate on defending Tilak’s anti-Muslim stand and Parvate has attempted to prove that he was a victim of “misinterpretations and misunderstandings”.90 Karmarkar agreed with Tilak that violence that took place in the riots was for self-defense.91 G.P. Pradhan and V.G. Bhat emphasised on Tilak’s sacrifices and sufferings92 and his Sanskrit scholarship.93 The same line of argument has been followed by the later writers on Tilak. S.C. Tiwari wrote of Tilak as a neo-vedantic nationlist.94 Of the biographies written by the admirers of Tilak, N.C. Kelkar betrays real motive behind Tilak’s social and political attitudes. Kelkar begins the biography with a strong defence of Chitpavan Community against “those who want to humiliate the Chitpavans or to paint them black.” He opposed the Satyashodak community, who in a “fit of hatred sometime twist the Konkanasthas as not belonging to Konkan and the taunt not unnaturally pierces certain Brahmins to the quick”.95 Kelkar accepts that the Brahmin non-Brahmin

88 D.V.Tahmankar ,Lok. Tilak - Father of Indian Unrest (1956), p.49.
95 N.C. Kelkar Life and Times of Lok Tilak, (Delhi, 1987), pp.3-6.
conflict had begun before the starting of *Kesari* and *Mahratta* and feels that “the stinging criticism which Chiplunkar wrote in the Nibhandmala against the books of Phule were largely justified”. The common issues discussed in these biographies centre around judicial cases, Sanskrit scholarship and the towering personality. The important issues like his opinions on women’s education, moneylenders, rural indebtedness, the non-Brahmins movement, Indian nationality are totally absent.

The best defense of Tilak has come not from his admirer-biographers but by the Soviet historians, whose preoccupation with colonialism led to a total disregard for internal contradictions. They discuss at length the agrarian condition of the peasants by holding the colonial rule responsible for it. The Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act finds only one mention. Similarly, writing about the conditions of Bombay Textile workers, they discuss *Maratha Aikya Itchcha Sabha* and Lokhande’s role in the campaign for revision of the Factory Act of 1881 without mentioning Tilak’s opposition to it. Likewise, the *Bharat Dharma Mahamandal’s* meeting of 1906, which was “attended by Hindu feudal lords”, is discussed without mentioning Tilak’s participation in it. Hence, by using selective information they were able to consider Tilak in the liberation struggle against the foreign yoke as the most consistent and forward-looking leader.

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96 ibid, pp.67-68.

97 I.M. Raisner and N.M. Goldberg (Ed), *Tilak and the Struggle for India’s Freedom*, (New Delhi 1966)p.418

98 ibid. 533.

99 ibid. 437.
of the movement. Their contribution to the study of Tilak is the term ‘Tilakites’ to define group consisting of Tilak and his associates as different from other extremists or Nationalists. This term is more comprehensive than the other two terms.

Stanley Wolpert in a comparative study of the lives of Gokhale and Tilak in shaping the public opinion in Maharashtra recognized that it was in the Ganapati melas that the militant Hinduism’s first modern cadre was born, but agreed with other writers’ view that the Hindu Muslim riot was responsible for it. Wolpert is of the opinion that Tilak was more concerned with liberty than equality and as a result set before himself the target of achieving freedom before encouraging social reform.

Richard Cashman concentrates entirely on Tilak’s ability to define myths in a creative fashion. The mass movements centered around Shivaji and Ganapati festivals, the no-rent campaign of 1899, and his involvement with the Bombay proletariat are taken as examples of Tilak’s extraordinary leadership. Cashman emphasise that there was a relative absence of caste conflict in Maharashtra as the Brahmins and non-Brahmins shared the myths. Cashman considered Tilak as modern and liberal who was often shackled by traditional interpretation of myths.

So the writings on Tilak’s ideas and his methods of agitation centered around the dichotomy of colonizer and the colonized with no

100 ibid. 368.
102 ibid. p.300.
emphasis on the internal contradictions inherent within the society. This work is an effort to analyse an anti-colonial struggle in the light of the internal contradictions because “nationalism has to be understood by aligning it not with self consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which as well as against which it came into being”\(^{104}\). It is an attempt to look beyond Tilak’s scholarship and leadership and into the actual issues that prompted Tilak to take a particular stand in social, economic and political spheres.