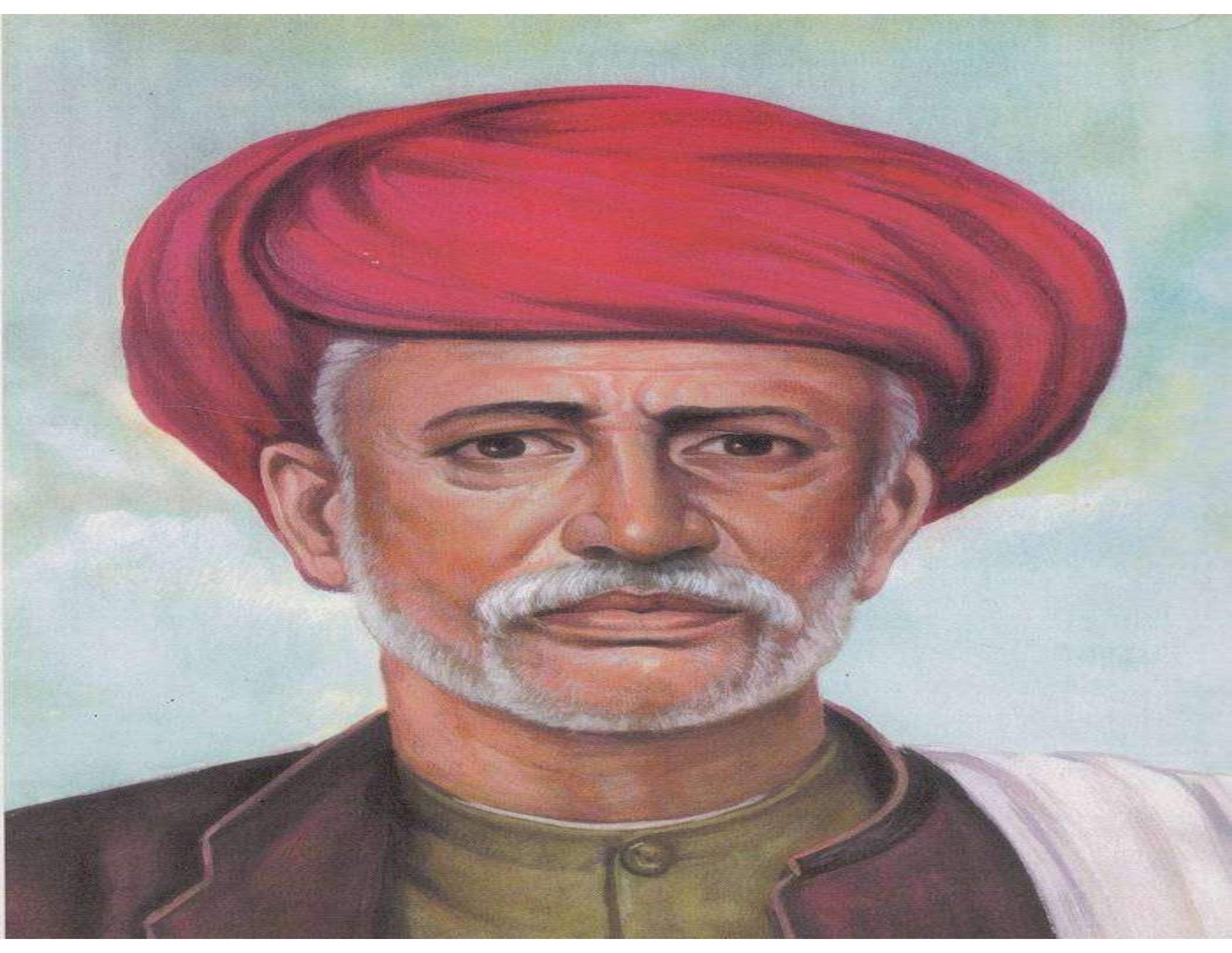


# **MAHTMA JOTIBA PHULE**

**1827-1890**

**Father of Social Revolution in India**

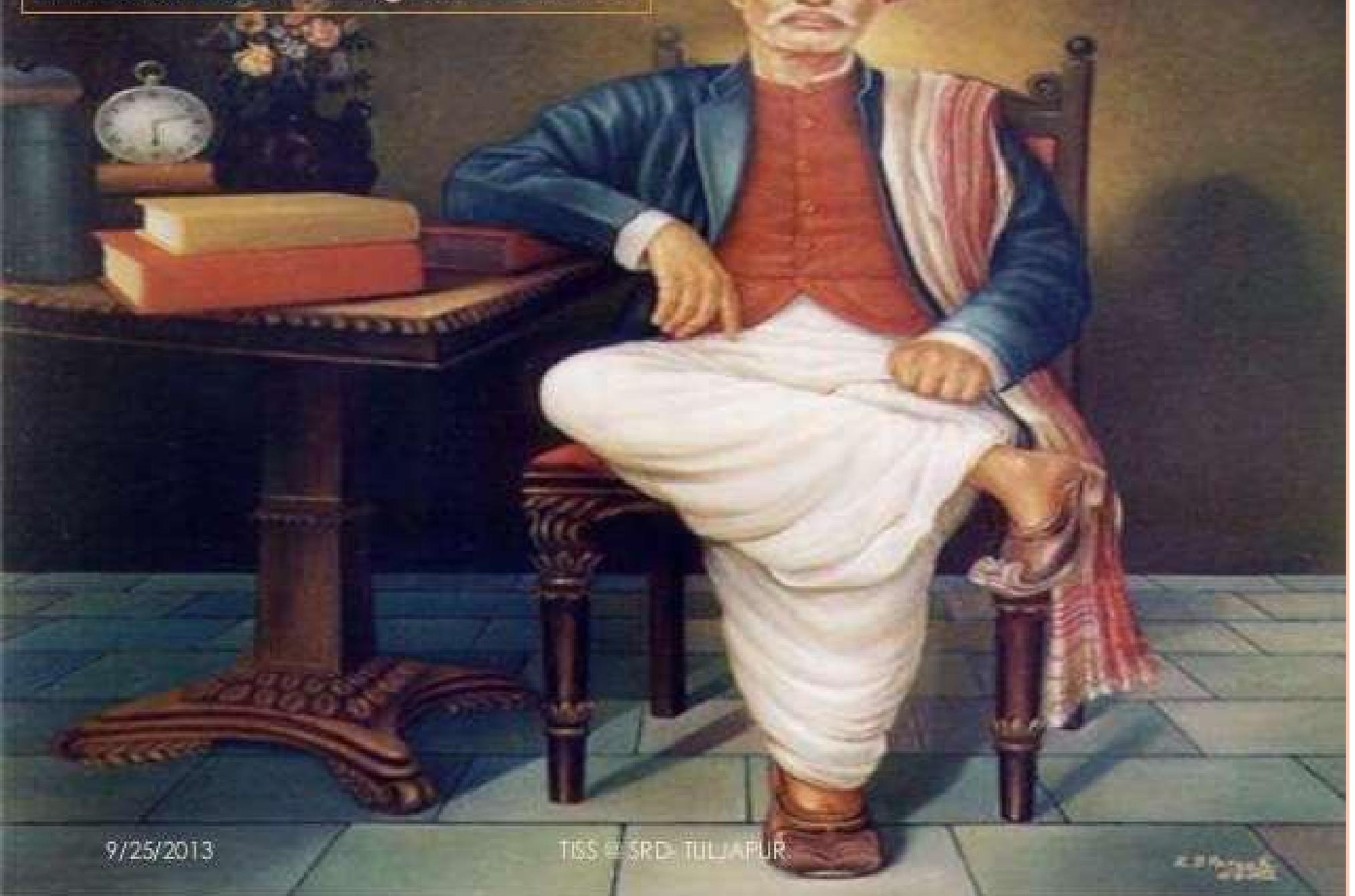


# INTRODUCTION

- In India , colonialism generated new classes, rise of commercial bourgeoisie i.e. a new middle class or intelligentsia which was a product of the colonial educational system.
- This educated middle class was composed of members of the traditional elite or high castes, the Bhadrak in Bengal, the Brahmans in Madras and the prabhus in Bombay presidency.



**Mahatma Jyotirao Phule**  
**(11<sup>th</sup> Apr. 1827- 28<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1890)**  
**The Man who Brought revolution**



9/25/2013

TGS © SRD TULJAPUR



# Jyotiba Phule

**Born:** 11 April, 1827

**Place of Birth:** Satara, Maharashtra

**Parents:** Govindrao Phule (father) and Chimnabai

**Wife:** Savitri Phule

**Children:** Yashwantrao Phule (adopted son)

**Education:** Scottish Mission's High School, Pune;

**Associations:** Satyashodhak Samaj

**Ideology:** Liberal; Egalitarian; Socialism

**Religion:** Hinduism

**Passed Away:** 28 November, 1890

**Memorial:** Phule Wada, Pune, Maharashtra

- ❑ A prominent **social reformer** and a great thinker
- ❑ Movement against the prevailing **caste-restrictions** in India
- ❑ Revolted against the **domination of the Brahmins**
- ❑ Struggled for the **rights of peasants** and other **low-caste** people
- ❑ Fought for **education of girls**
- ❑ The first Hindu to start **an orphanage** for the unfortunate children



# Childhood & Early Life

- His father, **Govindrao** was a **vegetable-vendor** at Poona
- Jyotirao's family belonged to '**sudra**' caste and their original title was '**Gorhay**'.
- Jyotirao's father and uncles served as **florists**, so the family came to be known as 'Phule'.
- Jyotirao's mother passed away when he was just **nine months old**.
- Due to the poor financial condition at home, he had to **stop his studies** at an early age

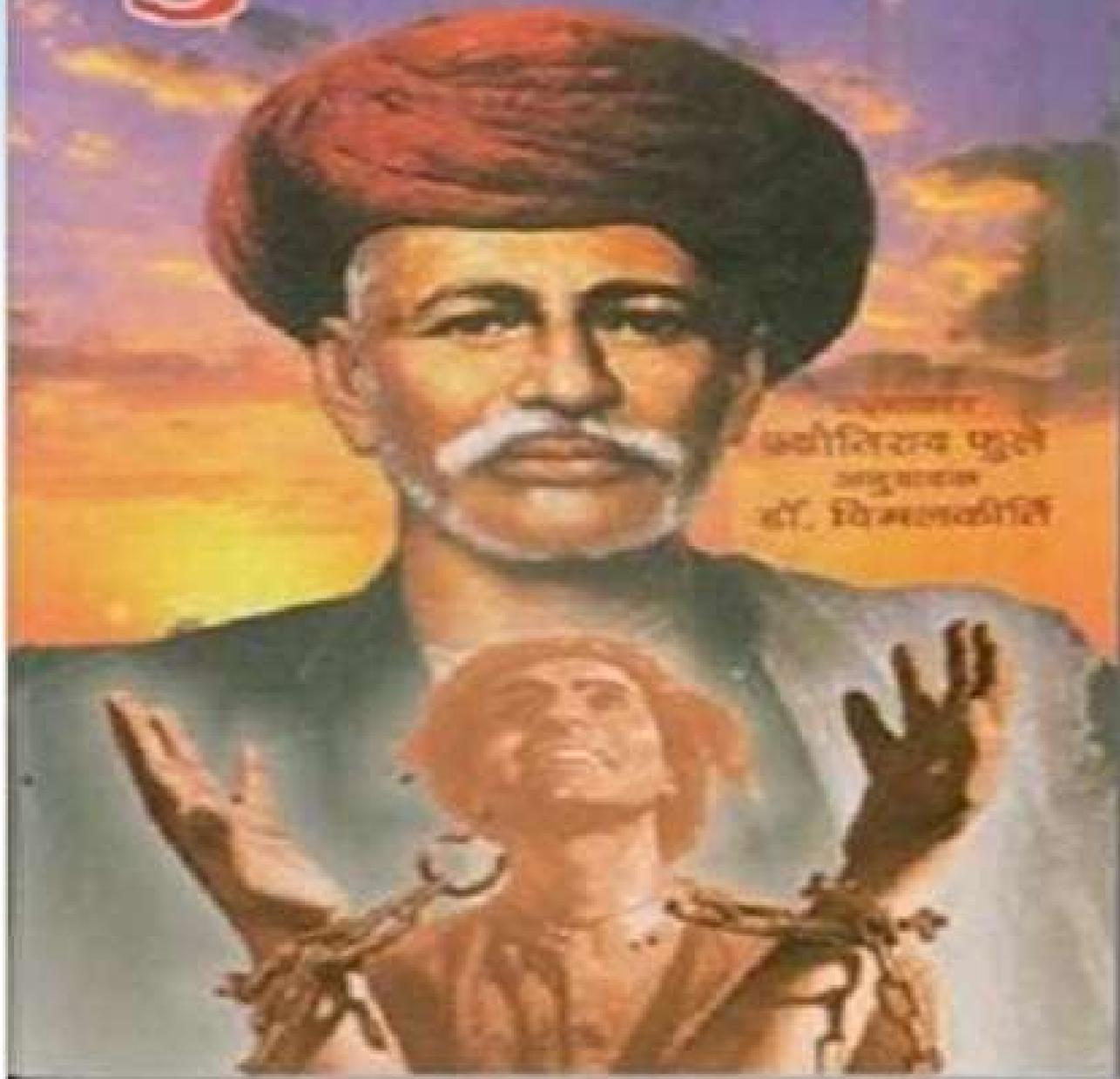
- a neighbour persuaded his father to send him to school
- In 1841 - Scottish Mission's High School, Poona
- He completed his education in 1847

➤ Sadashiv Ballal Govande, a Brahmin friend through out his life time

➤ At the age of just 13 years, he was married to Savitribai



# गुलामगीरी



गुलामगीरी  
बालगंगाधर तिलक  
अनुवादक  
डॉ. विमलकीर्ति

# WRITINGS

- His philosophy found his following books
- **Brahmanacha Kasab 1869-** In his phule has exposed the exploitation of downtrodden by the Brahmin priests
- **Gulamgiri- 1873-**in his book he has given a historical survey of the slavery of lower castes . Narrate the history of Brahmin domination in India. He advised the people religious epics are made by men, do not tolerate exploitation on the name of religion.



- Shetkaryancha Asud(1883) –the Cultivators Whip cord- in his book he has analysed how peasants were being exploited in those days.
- Sarvjanik Satyadharman pustak 1891- he put forward the concept of universal religion and throws light on blind faiths. This book published in 1891 a year after his death.
- Asprushyanchi Kaifiyat – In his book he discussed about crisis in agriculture and suggested solutions of the agrarian problems.

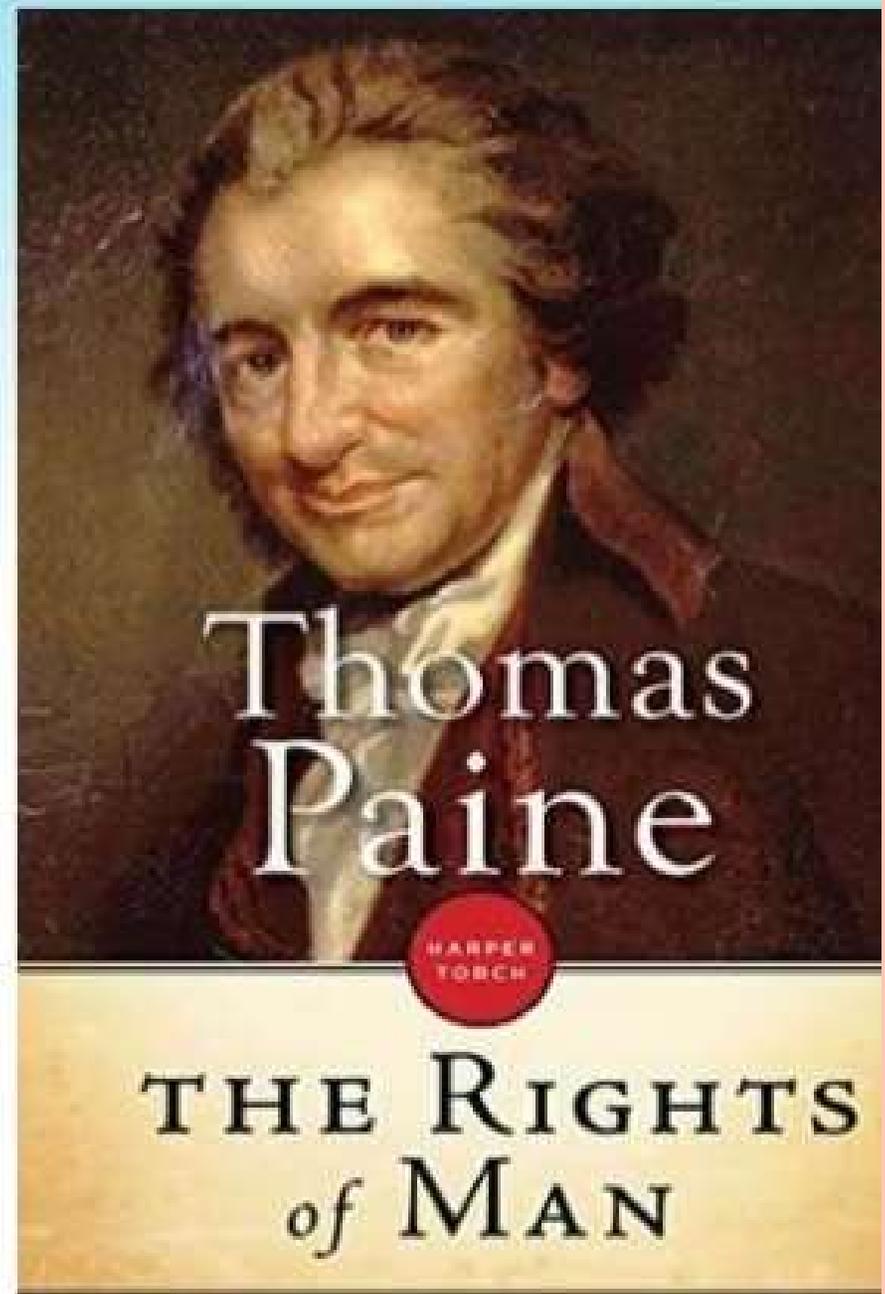


- Chatrapati Shivaji Raje Bhosale Yancha powada 1869
- Tritya Ratna (The Third Eye)-1855
- As a recognition of his great work for the lower castes, he was felicitated and a title 'Mahatma' in 1888.
- From his writings we come to know that his thinking on social and political issues was influenced by Christianity and the ideas of Thomas Paine



✓ After reading Thomas Paine's famous book '**The Rights of Man**', Jyotirao was greatly influenced by his ideas.

✓ He believed that **enlightenment of the women and lower caste people** was the only solution to combat the social evils.

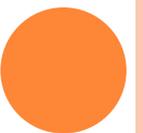


- Historian **Gail Omvedt** has argued that Phule was an anti-nationalist in the sense that he would prioritize the emancipation of lower castes over the project of national unity which left unaddressed the question of social justice.
- His idea of patriotism wasn't limited to mere territorial unity.
- His radical humanism made him distinct from other nationalist leaders and was emulated by both E V Ramaswamy and B.R. Ambedkar.
- His remarkable legacy could be attested by the fact a set of social movements in Maharashtra involving women, farmers, Dalit's, and environmentalists consider Phule as their forerunner.



# RADICAL LIBERALISM

- Greatly influenced by ideas of Thomas Paine
- Social Reform
- Stress on Education
- Acceptance of British Government
- Opposed Brahminical Domination
- Opposed to traditionalism for Reform of Ranade



# THOMAS PAINE- LIBERAL THINKER

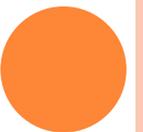
- Phule's radical liberalism was greatly influenced by Thomas Paine's book 'The Rights of Man', which changed his whole life by this book.
- In many times in his writings he used Paine's idea
- His philosophical outlook assumed on his writing of book 'Sarvajanic Satyadharma'.
- In his book he talked about Humanism and ideal social system. He further explained that his idea of new society is on the basis of sarvajanic satyadharma



- In his philosophical outlook, phule was influenced by the revolutionary liberalism of Thomas Paine. Natural rights and represent. govt
- Phule's book, 'Sarvajanik Satyadharma' pustak restated the liberal principles contained in Paine's 'Rights of Man'
- Phule stated that all men and women are born free and equally capable of enjoying rights.
- The creator(Nirmik) has made men and women possessed of equal human rights and no man or group of men should suppress other men.



- The creator has bestowed upon all men and women equal religious and political liberties.
- They should have equality before law and equality of opportunity for entry into the civil or municipal administration.



- Phule looked at the position of the shudras and atishudras in the light of these principles of **liberalism**, that these social groups were slaves for generations. They were **deprived of human liberty**. This **slavery** was sustained by Brahmanical rules.
- The Brahmans, according to Phule, **cunningly** devised mythologies, established an intolerable caste system and formulated cruel and inhuman laws.



- He exposed the falsehood and selfish motives behind the Hindu mythology and the cunningness of the codes of conduct propagated by the Brahmans in their own interest.
- The sudras and atisudras, according to Phule, experienced greater hardships and oppression than the slaves in America.
- He observed that what little improvement had occurred in the contemporary position of the masses was due to British rule.



# OPPOSED TO TRADITIONALISM FOR REFORM OF RANADE

- Phule opposed the **elitism** (the belief that a society or system should be led by ab elites or leaders) of the Ranade school and put forward an alternative liberal framework for the liberation of the sudras and atisudras i.e. the low and downtrodden castes.
- Ranade wanted **larger state support to higher education** at the **cost of the education of the masses**.
- He argued that it was an **injustice to neglect** the education of the masses as a greater portion of the **revenue** come from the peasantry.



- Ranade was proud of the Hindu tradition. Phule wanted to break with it.
- He criticized Hindu religion, its mythology and sacred books like the Smritis and the Vedas.
- He maintained that **the history of Hinduism was the history of Brahmins domination over the Sudras.**



# OPPOSED BRAHMINICAL DOMINATION

- Phule wanted to re-orient the whole educational system for the upliftment of the masses.
- He realized that, due to their education, the Brahmans were able to capture the administration from the top to the bottom.
- He suggested that the Brahmans should be appointed in government services in proportion of their number and that due share should be given to the other castes.
- The sudras should be educated to qualify themselves for positions in government.



- Phule criticized the various organisations established by the liberals of the Ranade school.
- The prarthana samaj, he said was used by the Brahmans to confuse the sudras and atisudras.
- He pointed that though the ‘Sarvajnik Sabha’ was claimed to be a public organization, it was in fact, monopolized by the Brahmans; he did not find in it any kunbi, Mali, Dhangar, Koli or Bhil.
- The sabha demanded more seats for Hindus but the word Hindu was misleading because Brahmans reaped the advantage.
- Further he exhorted the lower castes to acquire education and political unity.



# ACCEPTANCE OF BRITISH GOVERNMENT

- British Rule, Phule believed, was meant by the creator to rescue the sudras from slavery.
- Owing to English education, true knowledge was being imparted to the ignorant sudras and thereby they were becoming conscious of their rights and had begun to think of complete freedom from the cruel system of slavery.
- Phule wanted the sudras to exploit the golden opportunity given by British rule to get themselves emancipated from Brahman domination.



- His views on the economy were also different from those of Ranade.
- Phule thought that the peasants and the masses were being exploited by the Brahman elite and feudal rulers.
- He concentrated on the problems of agriculture while the elitist liberals had favored industrialization.
- In this way, Phule's liberalism was radical, while Ranade school was moderate and elitist.



# CRITICS ON BRAHMANISM AND MONEY LENDERS

- Introduction :-
- Phule wanted to establish new society on the basis of human merit.
- The play, **Tritya Ratna** (The Third Eye), which he published in 1855 is a powerful exposition of his ideology.
- The play is about the **exploitation of an ignorant and superstitious peasant** couple by a cunning , Brahman priest and their subsequent enlightenment by a Christian missionary.



# THREE IMP. POINTS STAND OUT IN THIS PLAY

- 1 **critical of Brahman Domination**. He made a wider point concerning the oppressive nature of Hindu religion, that in its present form imposed an **ideological hegemony** on the shudras and by suggesting several purifying rituals.
- 2. by underlying the **role of a Christian missionary who** rescued the couple from the clutches of the greedy Brahman, Phule seemed to have explored the possibility of conversion as probably the only practical device to get out of the exploitative Hindu religion.



- 3. another major ideological point concerning the imp. Of education in sustaining the Brahmanic hegemony in Hindu society. For that access education, particularly literacy of English.
- At the outset he stressed on respectful place for shudratishdra from Brahminical domination and exploitation and exploitative nature of colonialism.
- He was not against Hindu scriptures but he was against the values and ideas sustaining the prevalent Hindu system.
- In his view, Hinduism is rooted in Shrutis, Vedas and the Smritis and Brahmans distorted them to rationalize their hegemony.



- Oppressive nature of Hindu Religion
- Christianity- means of Emancipation
- Education- A way of sustaining Brahmanic hegemony
- It was his aim to reconstruct the social order on the basis of social equality, Justice and reason.
- According to Dhanajay Kerr, it was confirmed view of Jotirao that the ancient history of India was nothing but the struggle between Brahmins and non-Brahmins



- Phule consciously sought to bring together the major peasant castes (Kunbis, the Malis, Dhangars) along with the large untouchable castes of Mahars and Mangs In a common 'front' against Brahmin domination.
- He attack on Brahmanism was uncompromising he realized that the seeds of the Brahmins power, supremacy and privileges lay in their scriptures and puranas :



# PHULE'S OBJECTIVES OF THEORY OF INCARNATION

- To deny the Brahmin's privileges and superiority
- To make shudra-atishudra aware about their hidden identity of Kshatriya and to get them realize for their rights.
- To interpret the important stories, figures and symbols



# MODEL OF THE INCARNATION THEORY

- Stage I:- Invasion for loot, Matsya, Karma, Varah
- Stage II :- Brutality for worriors- extermination, Narsimha, Waman, Parshuram
- Stage III:- Devious policy for establishing the rule, Brahma, Manu



# PHULE CONSIDERED SOME ASSUMPTION TO DEVELOP THE INCARNATION THEORY

- The Brahmans are overseas and the shudra-atishudra are indigenous
- The religious materials are the device of exploitation
- The Bramins have been delegated authority by the religious materials to power over the shudra-atishudra
- The shudra-ati shudra are made slave by the religious literature
- The stagnation in the life of indigenous is occurred by the religious Karmakand



- Acc. To Phule, the economic development of the shudras atishudras was stagnated due to the **Hindu religious literature.**
- The literatures were developed to become easy to institute the Brahmins privileges and to prevent shudra and atishudra **from their economic, political, and social rights.**
- Except Brahman all subjects were exploited by **morally, physically and psychologically.**
- The religion therefore Phule named it as Brahmanism and it made religious duties of the Brahmin priests to perform supported exploitation



- Reinterpreted sacred religious literature:-
- Concept of Avatars(Imagination)
- Concept of Bali
- Attack on Brahmanical scripture, puran, revolt against Priest craft and the caste system
- Attack on Supernatural forces in Hindu Myths(Heaven, sin-pious, rebirth ), alternative path i.e. concept Nirmik- operate according to laws of reason



# FORMATION OF SATYA SHODHAK SAMAJ- 1873

- It deals with course of **low caste protest** movement under the guidelines of this society
- He dreamed about '**Balistan**' Phule termed this condition as a rule of creator or as a rule of truth. In the same line **Karl Marx expected classless** in equal society in Europe continent.
- Phule's aim was limited as compare to Marx i.e. his goal that to fight against Brahmanical domination and **upliftment of the downtrodden** i.e. women, shudras and Ati-shudras



## THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- The Satyashodhak Samaj is founded by some wise Shudra men to the shudra people from long sustained slavery executed by Brahmans such as Bhats, Joshi priests and others
- To spread education among the shudras to make them aware of their rights and to get them out of influence of the sacred books that were made by the Brahmans for their own survival
- To unite all shudra, Ati-shudra masses and rejected all kinds of Brahman domination and exploitation on the basis of religion and all religious sources of inequality (this was heart of non-Brahman movt.)



- Revolting against Brahmanical culture , to establish ideal society based on some principles as follows:
- Faith on one God (creator)
- Rejection of any kind of intermediary between God and Man.
- Rejection of caste system and the basic 4 folded Varna division of society and believing on that man's supremacy determined by his qualities and not by his caste
- Faith on equality, freedom and brotherhood



- Samaj was a **non political body**, which against the objectives was to make amends for the neglect of Natural Rights of human beings especially of the shudras and Ati shudras over the past centuries.
- To **restore their rights** and also to take remedial action for their misery.
- The Samaj insisted **that education** is essential especially English education which play an vital role not only for providing occupational skills but also for the **intellectual emancipation** of the low castes.



## AGENDA ACTION PLAN

- In the agenda of action plan of Satyashodhak samaj Phule proposed the programme and appealed the samaj that worship our own supreme God(creator) and avoid the role of the Brahman priest in performing the socio-religious ceremonies thereby dispensing the hegemonic ideology of the Brahmans and establishing the shudras and Ati-shudras as a new moral community



- Representatives:-
- In this samaj representatives were the peasant and urban lower castes, the true Kshatriyas of 19<sup>th</sup> century Maharashtra
- During 1873 to 1890 a large number of rural masses nearby Pune and Bombay attracted towards the activities of samaj
- To spread the ideology of Satyashodhak Samaj krishnaro Bhalekar started a news paper 'Deenbandu' in 1877.
- To make aware the shudra, Ati shudra masses of the game of the high castes and to make them free from social slavery.



- The major expression of opposition and rejection of Brahman elite culture was advocated in Phule's literature and in the literary works published by his colleagues.
- While opposing Brahman elite tradition, Phule glorified the native tradition by providing myths and symbols such as God- Khandoba, king Bali, Chatrapathi Shivaji, who were considered as the protectors of shudras interest.



- In its constructive action plan the education of women, shudra and Ati shudra in this regard the samaj attempted to open new schools to the low caste people.
- Providing scholarships to shudra students was another attempt to encourage their education.
- In support of this Phule submitted a memorandum to Hunter commission in 1882 criticizing the existing education system which is not available to all.
- He expected education to liberate the minds of the children from superstitions and dogma



## MONEYLENDERS

- Village moneylenders who were generally Marwari's or Brahmans
- The village Kulkarni created dissensions among the shudra cultivators and involved both sides in litigating thus creating a sources for exploitation
- He also acted in the capacity of a moneylender, got false documents of loans signed by the cultivator and filed suits in the courts for the recovery of the amount
- The money lenders invariably took the land in lease as a security for the loans advanced.



- A land once leased never returned back to the cultivator because for one thing the **judicial procedure and the legal system weighed heavily** against the cultivators
- The business moneylending community held a **powerful lobby in the courts** as well as in all of the administration
- Phule criticized the **functioning of the British courts of law and the Revenue offices**. All the law courts were staffed with Brahmans right from clerks to judges.



- The pleaders were mostly Brahmans. The Brahmans moneylenders had **easy access to these caste matters.**
- The Marwari moneylender had friendly or **business type relation** with these pleaders and the Brahman officers in the court.
- The pleaders humiliated their shudra clients and exploited them by demanding more money for **minor things.**
- The officers in the court helped both Brahman and Marwari **moneylenders by manipulating the witness papers and other documents** in the court.



- Phule said that even the (Brahmans) judges humiliated the illiterate cultivators in the courts by using disgraceful language.
- Then Phule felt that the wrong procedures and ways of functioning of the courts were responsible for the denial of justice to the cultivators.
- Material life, social, economical deprived a cultivators



# WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION

- 1 social reform movements and women
- 2 Phule's understanding of the situation of women
- 3 Phule's conceptualization of Brahminical patriarchy
- phule's struggle for womens emancipation
- a) womens education
- b) Radical reform agenda
- c) Defense of Tarabai shinde and Pandit Ramabai



# SOCIAL REFORM MOVTS. AND WOMEN

- The conditions of women at the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century was miserable.
- They did not get equal treatment.
- In 19<sup>th</sup> century the problems of women in India invited the attention of western humanitarian thinkers, Christian missionaries and Indian socio-religious philosophers.
- Women's participation in the work assignments as well as in other activities increased during this century due to the technological changes of the Industrial revolution which transformed the process of production.



- The socio-religious philosophers protested those evil practices such as sati, child marriage, prohibition of widow remarriage , polygamy, dowry, and devdashi.
- This views were strengthened when Christian missionaries exposed evils of such social customs when these customs stood as the stumbling block in their missionary activities
- Further , some of the enlightened British officials in India and England also initiated in support of the abolition it



He believed in the equality of men and women. He stressed on women's education, emancipation of women. He said equality and oneness is necessary for the development of the country

He gave education to his wife Savitribai and trained her for the school. Thus Savitribai was the first women teacher in India.

For empower women he opposed child marriage. He initiated widow-remarriage and started s home for widows.

He opened a home for new born infants in 1863 to prevent infanticides and suicides.



- He makes a special reference to women when he **discuss human rights**. Just a shudras were deprived of rights by the Brahmins by **keeping them ignorant**,
- He thought that selfish men had prohibited women from taking to education in order to **continue male domination**.
- The **Hindu religious texts** had given no. of concessions to men but had imposed severe **restrictions on women**.
- Phule attacked the **customs and practices** such as child marriage, marriage between young girl and old man, polygamy, objection to remarriage of women, prostitution, harassment of widows etc.



- He advised shudra peasants **not to have more than one wife** and not to marry their young children.
- He had given serious thought to the **institution of marriage** and had devised a **simple and modern contract type ritual** for the marriage ceremony of the members of Satya shodhak samaj
- Phule did not stop at visualizing equal status to women in marriage, family, education and religion but claimed that **women was superior to man in many respects.**



- He stated that, ‘Nari nari sabhi mehanti bano , Parivar ko pale, Anand le. Nit bacho bachi ko padne bheje. ’
- He explained the aspects of womens position to the Brahmanical social order , he seemed to imply that the end of Brahmanical dominatoion of would end the exploitation of women.
- According to Phule Brahaman women was much shudra as a shudra women. In this sense he was remarkable modern and feminist view, which saw gender itself and not varna



- Jotiba and his wife Savitribai amis the women's reform movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Maharashtra. Vithaal Ramji shinde, M.K. Gandhi, B.R.Ambedkar were real successors of the feminist movement of Jotiba's thought, which they developed further the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- Patriarchy did not even spare the women from upper caste. The society in Phule's period was suffering from a 'slavery' of all aspects of life including social, economical, political, and cultural.



- Phule wanted to empower women, for they could fight for their rights. **Through education**, they could think about oppressive nature of Hindu social system.
- By Phule – along with the caste system prevalence of **male domination** and **patriarchy** in the social system reflects the **irrational behavior of society towards women** had never been recognized.



## DEFENSE OF TARABAI SHINDE(1850-1910)

- She was a feminist activist and feminist literary critic who protested patriarchy and caste in 19<sup>th</sup> century India.
- She is known for her published work 'Stripurush Tulna'(A comparison between women and men) originally published in Marathi.
- The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed women in the Indian subcontinent having to resist forced widowhood, denial of education, forced marriage, sexual violence within and outside the family i.e. how they must behave both in the private and public sphere.



- She was the harbinger of a revolution one of the few women who dared to speak out against religion at a time when zealots were many and dissenters were few.
- Her father's association with the reformer Jotirao phule contributed to her engagement with the reform movements of the time.
- She was a member of the satyashodhak samaj.
- She received most of her experience through her work with Jotirao and Savitribai Phule who shared the same ideas of the oppression of gender and castes in Indian society.



- She raised awareness on the double standards of men and women in society.
- She refused to accept the superiority of men in gender relation and was extremely pragmatic in admitting that women did have faults, but none that made them inferior to men.



# PANDIT RAMABAI

- She worked rigorously for women's emancipation
- She founded the **Arya Mahila samaj**, which showed how committed she was for the cause of social reform.
- Later she opened '**Sharda Sadan**' In Mumbai
- She believed in the idea of '**Self-reliance**' for real **progress of society**.
- She's life was transferred from Hindu traditions to Christianity
- Book 'The High Caste Hindu women', 'Stridharma Niti'



# PHULE'S STRATEGY TO EMANCIPATE OR MOBILISE SHUDRAS

- 1. The Brahman as the responsible for the present plight of the shudras and for the oppressive caste system
- 2 Knowledge as a key to Emancipation
- 3 Education as the key to Reform
- 4 The Human Rights Argument
- 5 Using History to create a New Identity
- 6 Shivaji the symbol for Reconstructing a New Identity



## THE BRAHAMAN IS THE RESPONSIBLE .....

- He projected the Brahman is the responsible for the present **plight of the shudras and for the oppressive caste system**
- Brahmns to deliberate keep the Hindu masses **ignorant and illiterate**
- Phule to show how the Brhmans conspired to use the **doctrines of Karma, Dharma**, Varna, caste not only to exploit and plunder the low castes but keep them permently backward
- Phule advocated that **God** had sent English into this country to resolve the disabilities which the Brahmans had imposed on the shudras.



- In 'Priest craft Exposed' miserable dependency of the Kunbi on the Brahman priest at every stage of his life
- He narrates how the Brahman priest plunders the poor and ignorant kunbi at the time of birth in the family, at the time of his marriage, at the time of his daughter reaches puberty and when shudra builds his house.
- In short ballad entitled 'Brahman Teachers in Education department' phule tells us how Brahman teachers discriminate against low caste students; how they repeat lessons and explain them well to the high castes and punish them judiciously.



- Phule also narrates how Brahman school teachers send **misleading reports to the** Education department regarding the aptitude of the children cultivator, portraying them as **unfit for higher studies.**
- I 'Slavery' he make a more attack on the 'Brahman Priest' and the village Kulkarni and heartless moneylenders- how they were **exploited to the cultivators peasant.**
- So Phule's strategy for the uplift of the Shudras was to free them for their dependency on the Brahmans for **rituals and education.**



## 2 KNOWLEDGE AS A KEY TO EMANCIPATION

- Phule realized the significance of knowledge as a key to their emancipation and as **tool for breaking the monopoly of Brahmins** in the society.
- His effort were to change the world/society with the weapons of knowledge.
- In his writings **'Third Eye' i.e. knowledge**, as it can **mentally and materially** emancipate human beings.



# THREE TYPE OF KNOWLEDGE

- He describes 3 types of knowledge
- 1 **Knowledge of Self**, which means to realize one's own consciousness and come out of the **pseudo understanding of caste, class, race and gender.**
- 2 **The Collective Knowledge**, which means a social cluster that introduces itself or an individual according to class, caste, race and gender and **makes aware of the dynamism knowledge.**
- 3. **Practical, technical and scientific knowledge**, that helps human beings in materialistic progress as well as emancipation.



### 3 EDUCATION AS THE KEY TO REFORM

- In 1848 Phule established his first school for girls belonging to the low and untouchable caste in Pune.
- Phule encouraged his wife Savitribai for education
- The Dakshina Prize fund Committee gave him a mere grant of RS 75 per month that was very inadequate.
- For his untiring services to the cause of female education among the low and untouchable castes, Phule was publically honored by the Bombay government with Major Thomas Candy, principal of the Pune college, presenting him traditional pair of shawls.



- In 1853 Phule formed a society for increasing education among untouchables.
- His close friend and colleague **Sadashiv Govande** was made the president while **Valavekar** and **pparanjpa**e were appointed secretary and treasurer respectively.
- The society established **two schools** for untouchables and arranged for lectures for explaining the **benefits of education in these schools.**



- Phule thought that lower castes should not be only given education only in the basic skills of reading and writing.
- He wanted to be given complete education so they can decide what was good and what was bad for themselves.
- Phule waged his ideological war against Brahman domination in the field of education on two fronts.



- First he urged the **education and employment of the lower castes in schools** as teachers and in administration so that the stranglehold of the Brahman elite could be **broken**
- So he preferred **Englishmen** as educators and administrators because of their more **secular and liberal outlook**.
- Second, he made point to convey to the British administration his feelings about the designs of the Brahman employees.
- He blamed the Brahmans for trying to **impress on the British that low castes had neither** any liking nor real aptitude for education.



## 4 THE HUMAN RIGHTS ARGUMENT

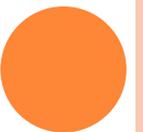
- His strategy to **fight Brahman domination** he also made use of Natural Rights argument.
- He was deeply influenced by Thomas Paine's philosophy he argued that **all men enjoyed certain natural and alienable rights** which every just society must recognize.
- In Slavery he condemns Hinduism for its violation of Man's natural rights and argues that God has given the shudras, Ati-shudras, other people the **freedom to enjoy equally all the things of the earth.**



- He accuses the Brahmans of seeking advantage only for themselves, of writing 'false books' on God's name and trampling on the rights of all other men.
- He thanks the English rulers and the missionaries for making the low castes aware of the fact that they are human beings just like the Brahmans and worthy of all forms of rights.
- In sept. 1873 Phule found the satyashodhak samaj a non political body whose objective was to make amends for the neglect of natural their rights and also take remedial action for their misery.



- According to him, God never make some men are inferior or superior



## 5 USING HISTORY TO CREATE A NEW IDENTITY

- According to Phule the most important stories of popular **Hindu Mythology** were actually the distorted reflections of the ancient **struggle between the Brahmans and non-Brahamns**.
- He explained how the mythological accounts of the **Ten incarnation of Vishnu and Parshuram's** destroys the Kshatriyas from the earth were deliberately distorted versions of the actual historical conquest and defeat of the natives.
- He devotes **9 chapters of Slavery to reconstructing the past and reinterpreting** the 10 incarnations of Vishnu in historical terms.



## 6 SHIVAJI THE SYMBOL FOR RECONSTRUCTING A NEW IDENTITY

- In June 1869 Phule published his ballad on **Chatrapati Shivaji Bhosale**, the 17<sup>th</sup> century Maratha warrior.
- While the ballad undoubtedly praised the of Shivaji Maharaj, a symbol, **for instilling a sense of pride and creating a new sense** of identity among the various lower castes of Maharashtra.
- The ballad represented the shudras and Ati shudras as **the forgotten descendants of the heroic race of kshatriyas of ancient India**, led by the mythical king Bali, as the leaders of the lower castes against external oppressors.



- As part of his strategy to unite the kunbis and shudra , ati-shudra communities and to create a new common identity for all lower castes of Maharashtra.
- He sought to make them rally round the pre-Aryan God Khandoba and Bali.
- The Gods Masobha, Bhairobha, and Khandobha were also made the central figures round which he sought to unite all the non-Brahman castes.



- In Slavery, he portrays king Bali in historical terms as the **greatest ruler of the original Kshatriya community**.
- For Phule, Bali is the **symbol of oppressed humanity and Bali stood up** for the lowly and the simple peasants. For the lowest of the low.
- He even describes George Washington and French military officer Lafayette, as the disciples of king Bali.

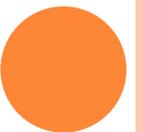


- progress of individuals was possible only with education. Jotirao says in the introduction to
- the book “Shetkaryacha Asood”:
- Without education wisdom was lost;
- Without wisdom morals were lost;
- Without morals development was lost;
- Without development wealth was lost;
- Without wealth the Shudras were ruined;
- So much has happened through lack of education



# SARVAJANIK SATYADHARMA

- 1 Concept of Nirmik
- 2 Alternative Rituals
- 3 Religion- as a philosophy of social emancipation



- M.J. Phule was aware of the necessity of a moral spiritual center to a revolutionary counter culture and the need of a religious core to political activities.
- He attempted to establish a universal religion, the sarvajanik satyadharma, published post humously laid out an alternative to the caste ridden Hindu society.



# CONCEPT OF NIRMIK (CREATOR OR MAKER)

- He founded this ideal world on the idea of God as the Nirmik: the loving and rational creator of a just and benign world.
- The formulations of this religion are oddly secular. It is a republic of justice and equality, where God is a loving and indulgent parent.
- He dismisses the priest's role as the intermediary in the communion between humans and God.
- The moral basis of this world is truth and reason and his theology is a rational and moral system which filters in and allows the good, the right, and the truthful to prevail.



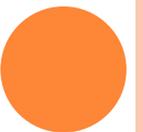
- The word sarvajanic means public, indicated two things: 1 it was not individualistic and so individual salvation was not its aim. 2 that it was not concerned with other world but with the social life of man in this world only.
- Satyadharma i.e. the religion of truth means that it aimed at finding and establishing truth in this world.
- It did not aim at mental or spiritual bliss and peace. There were no rituals, no saints and no priests.



- His satyadharma insisted on nothing but truth and the truth was not the truth coming to us through divine revelation but by exerting one's reason and conscience.
- Man must be recognized as man whatever his race, religion or creed. As a man he is entitled to some fundamental rights and pleasures of life.
- This humanism consisted of freedom, equality and internationalism. Phule's humanism was universal and no barrier to the essential equality of men.



- In G.P. Deshpande's words, 'Sarvajanic satyadharma pustak is almost like phule's testament. It is the summary statement of his theology and his view of what a rationally and scientific religious system could be for India and the Hindus.'



# ALTERNATIVE RITUALS

- In it he gave a savage critique of the Vedas, the Ramayana and Mahabhartar stories and undertook the effort to formulate a religious alternative.
- A true religion should be universal; it should be founded on reason and truth and rejection of superstition; i.e. it should be suitable for a scientific age.
- It should be anti-ritualistic; it should be ethical; it should be equalitarian, not recognizing caste or ethnic differences and especially admitting the equality of women.



- In the context of 19<sup>th</sup> century thinking, where Thomas Paine represented the height of radicalism, he also felt that a religion had to be monotheistic.
- Truth and rationality were central to it.
- It was to pay the way for healthy growth of humanity on the principle of the unity of all men and women as equals, abolishing all artificial distinctions that divided them.
- God is only one and there cannot be two. He is the creator of the universe. He is greater than the universe and so beyond human comprehension.



- He is impersonal. So he cannot be seen. He does not expect worship from his own creation and he cannot be pleased by offering him flowers.
- God is never hungry so it is futile to offer him 'Naivaidya'. The food is for use of man so it should be offered to the needy the old, the handicapped or orphans or to those who have spent their lives honestly.
- According to Phule there is no such things as heaven or hell. There are the creations of the fantasy of the old fashioned people whose knowledge was limited.



- He rejected the need of the institutions like priesthood. One of the conditions for the membership of 'sarvajanic satyadharma' was to promise that for no religious functions would be employed and intermediary between him and God.
- Bezos it would created inequality. Phule included freedom and equality of men and women, impartially and dignity of labor.
- God created the universe for the use of all men and women and so everybody has got equal right to make use of it, acco. To his needs and capacity.



- Equality means nobody has to right to dominate or subjugate other or even to regard his as low.
- Everybody has right to live and to live freely and to enjoy the fruits of his honest labour
- Everybody being equal, has the right to practice the religion and cherish ideas as per his own conviction and faith.
- Equality demands the ends of discrimination in schools , of in the administrative services.
- It is respectful to eat the bread of one's labour. No work of profession is bad or low what is low and mean is to live on others toils by cheating and deceiving others in name of religion or otherwise.



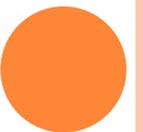
- Other principle of truth are related to moral principles like not to tell lies, not to commit theft, to avoid use of narcotic and intoxicating drugs, respecting parents and elderly persons, not to hurt animals.
- His concept of liberty was profound. It included the liberation of men from the fetters of astrology, fortune, fear of another world and rebirth.
- He wanted to be free from nonsense customs and traditions which restricted from freedom his own conscience and reason.



- His religion has no conception of salvation, rebirth, heaven etc. he felt these notions created a kind of a social quest of God and a concern for their own salvation than for the good of the society.
- Phules concept of God is unique in many respect. He is neither hungry nor thirsty. He expects no offerings from men. He does not want man to pray or worships. He wants men to take their lives more enjoyable and worth living.
- So in his religion there are no temples, no prayers no bhajan and kirtans, no sacrifices in fact no worship.



- Phule used the notion of God and religion for creating a secular equalitarian society. His satyadharma did not attach any imp. To personal salvation.



- All men and women should live together unite on this earth as one family, with honesty and without discrimination, no matter to which village, province, country, continent or religious beliefs they adhere to.
- □ The Creator created man to be independent and capable of enjoying equal rights as others. The Creator has given freedom to all men and women to express themselves freely, but without causing harm on account of their thoughts or views. This is known as **true (righteous)** conduct.



- □ The Creator has endowed everyone with human rights. Hence it follows that an individual or a group cannot dominate another. To follow this principle is to practice righteous conduct.
- □ The Creator has given all men and women **religious and political freedom**. One who does not harm another in any way and does not usurp another's rights is a practitioner of righteous conduct. Conduct which will please the Creator is public truth (virtue). The honest behavior of any human being towards his fellow human beings may be termed as **morality**.



# FEATURES OF RELIGION

- □ Phule discarded idolatry, ritualism, asceticism, fatalism and the idea of incarnation.
- No intermediary between God and devotee was considered essential by him.
- Phule never believed that any book was God ordained.



- □ Phule visualised Sarvajanic Satya Dharma (Public True Religion) to take place of Hinduism. His true religion broke from Hindu tradition altogether.
- He severely criticised the mythology and sacred books like Smritis and Vedas of Hindu.
- He tried to prove that the history of Hinduism was in fact, the history of Brahmin domination and slavery of Shudras.
- He found cunningness, selfishness and hypocrisy in sacred scriptures than discussion of true religion.



- □ The elite reformers criticized the contemporary degenerated form of Hinduism, while Phule attacked it from its very inception and showed that Brahmins had deceived lower castes throughout history.
- Phule interpreted Hinduism as a relation based on Varna and caste system devised by the cunning Brahmins to deceive the lower castes.



- □ He dismissed Hinduism altogether, he did not reject the very idea of religion or dharma.
- He tried to put in its place universal religion based on principles of liberty and equality.
- His Sarvajanic Satya Dharma put emphasis on truth seeking without the aid of any Guru or text.
- His religious ideas were definitely influenced by Christianity but he never advocated conversion because he was also influenced by the radical religious argument of Paine, who had shown a number of defects in Christianity.



- His universal religion was liberal and in many respects very different from traditional religions.
- His religion was mainly and primarily concerned about secular matters.
- Phule had visualized a family where each member of that family might follow his own religion.
- In this ideal family a wife might embrace Buddhism while her husband might be a Christian and children might follow other religions because
- Phule believed that there might be some truth in all the religious texts and scriptures and therefore one of them could not claim the ultimate truth.



- □ He thought that the government should not close its eyes to inhuman religious customs or unjust traditions and practices of Hinduism.
- At one place he criticized the colonial government for its policy of continuing the practice of giving grants to temples, since he claimed that the money had been collected from lower castes in the form of tax.
- Thus there was no place for any communalism or unwarranted neutralism in matters of religion so far as Phule's religious ideas were concerned



