

# Objective of the Chapter

- To comprehend political ideas of M.G. Ranade.
- To assess the contribution of M.G. Ranade to social reforms.
- Understanding his concept of Liberalism.
- Personal Liberty and Jurisdiction of State.
- Understanding his views of British Rule in India.
- Views on State, Economy, & Social Reform.
- To evaluate the work of M.G. Ranade as a liberal political thinker.

- 19<sup>th</sup> century India was characterized by the emergence of various ideologies and movt. Seeking to bring about social and pol. Reforms
- Justice MG Ranade was in the forefront of this reformist movt. In the western part of India
- He was the “Spiritual Father of Indian Liberalism”
- He stood for all-round and total reforms.
- He sought to enlighten the Indian masses about the benefits of material progress which a means of to ethical and desirable lives
- He expounded a political philosophy that aimed at spiritualization of politics but opposed the use of religion or spiritual authority in Politics.

## Childhood & Early Life

- He was born on January 18, 1842 in Niphad, a Taluka town in Nashik district, Maharashtra in a Maharashtrian Chitpavan Brahmin family. His father was a minister.
- At the age of six, he attended a Marathi school in Kolhapur and was later transferred to an English school in 1851. When he was 14, his father sent him to study in the Elphinstone College, Bombay.
- He belonged to the very first batch of students in Bombay University. He acquired the B.A. degree in the year 1862 and then obtained L.L.B. from the Government Law School in 1866.
- He achieved distinctions in all his degree courses and remained a scholarship holder almost throughout his academic career.

necessary recommendations to stabilize the financial condition. For his services in the committee, he received the decoration of Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire.

- Throughout his career, he also served at the positions of syndic and dean in arts at the Bombay University. He also encouraged the translation of standard English works and tried to introduce vernacular languages into the university curriculum.
- He co-founded the 'Prarthana Samaj' with his friends Atmaram Pandurang, Bal Mangesh Wagle and Vaman Abaji Modak, to propagate theism based on the holy Vedas.
- He was also the founder of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha and Ahmednagar Education Society.
- He was instrumental in the establishment of the Social Conference movement, which worked against child marriages, the shaving of widows' heads, and spending heavily in marriages and other social functions.

## Career

- In 1871, he was appointed as the Presidency Magistrate, a rank for the fourth judge in the Bombay Small Causes Court.
- In 1873, he became the first-class sub-judge at Pune and then in 1884, he was elected as the judge of the Poona Small Causes Court.
- From 1885 he belonged to the Bombay legislative council until he became a member of the Bombay High Court in the year 1893.
- In 1885, he also helped in the formation of the Indian National Congress Party, which essayed a major role in the independence movement of India.
- From 1887, he became a special judge under the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act.
- In 1897, he became a member of a committee which was allotted the task of tallying national and local expenditure along with

- He also published books on Indian economics and on Maratha history which includes 'Rise of the Maratha Power' (1900).

## Major Works

- His most noteworthy accomplishment was his continuous social and political efforts in order to reform the Indian society.
- He stressed on the rights of women and children and also fought against the caste system.
- He also contributed towards development of a stable economy by promoting the development of indigenous small industries.
- Another major work which he undertook was the establishment of the 'Prarthana Samaj', a Hindu movement inspired by the Brahmo Samaj, advocating principles of enlightened belief based on the ancient Vedas.
- He was also one of the leading personalities behind the formation of Indian National Congress.
- One of his notable works was the formation of the Social Conference movement, which he supported throughout his life.
- He actively supported widow remarriage and female education and raised his voice in support of abolition of child marriages.

- Mahadev Govind Ranade was an Indian social reformer, a distinguished scholar and founding member of Indian National Congress.
- He was among the foremost reformers who denounced the caste system and untouchability.
- He advocated social reforms such as widow re-marriage, liberation of women and emancipation of the oppressed classes. As a judge, he exercised his powers to promote equality of the sexes, the spread of education, rescuing children and widows from social injustices, and protection of agricultural workers and land tenants from exploitation.
- He always advocated the use of constitutional and legal ways for attaining freedom and bringing in social reforms.
- Later, he became involved in the working of a number of institutions aiming at social, economic and political advancement of India such as the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha,

- - the Social Conference, Industrial Conference and the Prarthana Samaj.
- As a founder member of the Indian National Congress, his influence was inescapable.
- He was also considered to be a great historian who played a decisive role in the modernization of the Indian economy. He also published books on Indian economics and on Maratha history.
- He considered Western education as a vital element for the formation of a new and progressive India.
- A reformer, lover of justice and a believer of equality among all, he inspired many other Indian social reformers through his works.
- Ranade's political as well as social ideas could be derived from
- his two major works viz. *Essays on Indian Economics* and *Rise of the Maratha Power*.

- From French revolution and enlightenment in England were responsible of emerging the Liberalism
- Acc. To liberalism- Individual was a rational citizen
- It stands on 'all men should have rights and must be enabled to enjoy equality of opportunities'
- The liberalism very much impacted at the time of Indian independence movt.
- Indian liberal thought rejected violence, force, agitation and bloodshed and believed in peaceful achievement of social and political goals

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Bamerjee, Phirojshah Mehta. GK Gokhale, GG Agarkar are prominent thinkers tried to present a liberal critique of Indian society and colonial state and provide a set of liberal ideas for the transformation of Indian society and polity.
- But no one of them succeeded in providing a comprehensive philosophical framework of Indian Liberalism.

- Liberalism is a political and moral philosophy based on liberty, consent of the govt., equality before law
- Principles- limited govt., Individual rights, free markets, democracy, secularism etc.
- John Locke, Glorious revolution 1688. 1776
- His concept of liberalism was based on upon moral belief that the purpose of all human activity was the development of man and his capacity in all sphere of life

- ‘the end’ he wrote “is to renovate to purify and also to perfect the whole man by liberating his intellect elevating his standard of duty and perfecting all his powers”
- 3 goals of his liberalism- 1 political elevation, 2 social emancipation, 3 spiritual enlighten
- He was a moderate liberalist. He didn’t believe in revolutionary methods(violence, war, force) political method is constitutional i.e. purity of means was emphasized.
- The change was sought through the constituted authority and not breaking it.

- The agitators were expected to exhaust all the legal means available and try to change the heart of rulers.
- Liberalism means progressive change belief in the dignity of human beings and individual liberties, duty to obey the laws of the state
- Gradual change through constitutional means-aims of liberalism
- Ranade believed that, advancement , if had to be permanent, had to be slow thus his liberalism was essentially progressive

# Elitism

- The most imp. Feature of Ranade's liberalism was its Elitism
- He thought that only the elites were capable of providing direction and control over the complex process of India's transition from feudalism to liberalism
- He believed that in all backward countries like India— there is always only a minority of people who monopolies all the elements of strength
- His idea elite group was composed of Brahmans, Banias, Zamindars and the educated middle class. This sections of the contemporary Indian society possessed qualities like intelligence, wealthy, unity and initiative while the masses were ignorant unlettered, disunited etc.
- This masses, on their own, were not capable of understanding th significance of the principles of liberalism or participating in the liberal movt.

# Ranade on Liberalism

- Ranade was regarded as a spiritual father of Liberalism in India. He was also a champion of social reforms.
- Individual freedom is essential for the overall development of an individual. So it must be protected by the state.
- Parliamentary democracy is a good form of government for the protection of individual rights.
- Right of women are to be protected and they are to be emancipated from all kinds of orthodox customs.
- Renovating, purifying and perfecting man requires liberating his intellect , elevating his standard of duty and perfecting all his powers.
- Liberty is granted to Indians by foreigners are concessions forced on us by the force of circumstances.
- Political and social reform could not be separated from each other. Social reform can be done only with the help of politics.

- Every social system must be based on reason and justice.
- Social reform should be the priority of the state. By that there will restoration of dignity of an individual.
- For the development of the society all social evils are to be eradicated.
- Interference of State in the field of economic activity can be justified.
- The purpose of the state should be to make every individual happy, rich and complete.
- Government should work as a positive instrument of welfare of the people. Therefore Government's initiative in the field of industrialization, planning, social reform, legislation and protection is justified.
- In the sphere of politics, Ranade was usually referred to as a political Rishi. He was committed to Liberalism and Constitutionalism.
- **Liberalism** is a political philosophy or worldview founded on ideas of liberty and equality.

- Liberalism is characterized by individual freedom, equality and a form of government that should not only have the backing of the people but should also be engaged in the moral development of the people.
- Ranade was an unfaltering supporter of all these ideals. We must admit that Ranade did not produce a liberal theory of the state or of individual freedom. However, on the basis of his political essays, speeches and commentaries we can obtain a logical account of his notions on freedom, equality and the end of the state that seem to be adjusted with political liberalism.
- Ranade believed that freedom was a boon of God given to the individual to distinguish between good and evil and applying his free mind choose the good to guide his soul to salvation.
- Ranade recognized the predominance of individual's freedom and the authority of her conscience.
- Ranade defined freedom as a responsibility to obey the voice of God that could be discerned in our conscience.

# Personal Liberty and Jurisdiction of State

- Being a liberal, Ranade was naturally inclined towards individual freedom and individual's progress.
- He had an abiding faith in individual's ingenuity and responsibility. For him the state was not an end in itself but a means to create suitable conditions wherein the individual could progress and lead a 'nobler, happier, richer and perfect' life.
- Ranade did not approve of giving an absolute free hand to individual. He believed in an enlightened individual who would never misuse the freedom made available to her.
- His individual would not be an revolutionaries to challenge all restrictions put on her by the state and society.
- For individual to lead a contented and meaningful life, Ranade supported the institution of private property.

- Private property, according to Ranade, would not only ensure a comfortable life to individual it would also ensure requisite conditions of leisure so that she/ he could pursue meaningful activities that would ultimately be beneficial for the entire society.
- His individual had to be a self-reliant and a confident being. For personal needs and welfare she / he should be capable enough to fulfill them herself.
- His individual was not expected to look for external help for her progress.
- He explained “State help is after all a subordinate factor in the problem. Our own exertion and our resolutions must conquer the difficulties which are chiefly of our own creation.”
- So Ranade was an individualist with a difference. His individualism was not exactly a reproduction of the Western concept of individualism that guaranteed absolute and unrestrained freedom to individual so long as she /he did not violate laws.

- Although Ranade stood for individual freedom, he wanted that it should help an individual to become enlightened, self-reliant and a productive member of society.
- Discussing the liberty in the context of India of his time, Ranade pointed out that the liberties that Indians enjoyed were actually concession made available to them by the foreign rulers.
- The real liberties would be pulled off when all Indians engaged in varied fields of activities would strive for a change in their social standings and for that purpose would prepare themselves for great sacrifices.
- Ranade believed that for progress, purification and perfection of individual, her mind should be liberated. Ranade contended that a state that would guarantee various liberties to its citizens (welfare state).

- He suggested that a welfare state should be much more than maintaining law and order, protecting the geographical integrity, collecting taxes and extending liberties to the people; it has to prepare economic plans so that the materialistic, educational and health related needs of the people could be fulfilled.
- Ranade was in favor of enlarging the activities of the state.

## Understanding of British Rule in India.

- Ranade was of the opinion that the British conquest of India was a divine arrangement because it was God's desire to keep the Indians under British guidance.
- Ranade realized that foreign rule had adversely affected the intellectual, moral and cultural health of the society.
- However, he believed the Indians could benefit from the British experience in the establishment of industries, management of markets, modern secular education, knowledge of English Language and proficiency in different arts and sciences.
- Thus, the British association for him was a long educative process that would help India Realize her soul.

- Though Ranade was an important member of British administration, he was critical of it because of its centralization.
- He condemned the administration of his time because it could find out the ways and means to harass people.
- In view of this he favored the strengthening of the institutions of local self-government. He was in favor of assigning real and more powers to these institutions.
- He also supported the principle of people's power to choose their representatives. He even suggested that in matters such as levying of taxes, people should have the final say.
- In 1893, he observed "Freedom means making laws, levying taxes, imposing punishment and appointing officials." Ranade wished that all these functions should be performed by people's representatives.

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# Negative Views

- 1. Critics on British Economic Policy:-
- Indian poverty, insufficient capital, wrong method of distribution of credit, loose of self confidence
- Industrial decay and growth of dependency on agriculture
- So British govt. take much emphasized on industrialization and focus on process of production not distribution of wealth
- When decide the govt. policy so given availability of chance to all minimum development
- Govt. not take neutral policy in economic spehere

## 2. Critics on British govt. policy of Sansthanik

- In those days, sansthanik used worst method/power
- So British govt. did not control but ignore it
- So role of British govt. was to remove their poli.power in the hands of sansthanik but did not –by British govt.
- Govt. given legitimacy to that sanstahnik and with that help of sanstahnik oppressed the people
- So govt. much take interests of people

### 3. Critics on Non-intervention policy of British govt. in public life

- He was a individualistic thinker and focus on individual liberty but rejected European individualistic idea
- In Europe individualism means minimum intervention of state in individual matter and human beings are rational, with their rationality they inculcate the sense of what is good and bad so no need of govt. cooperation to in individual in this regard
- So the European individualistic policy could not apply Britishers in India. So they can change their policy acc. To chainging time,place and circumstances

- There is differences between European and Indian situation so in underdeveloped India Britishers take necessary step to pol. Eco. Social development and social reformist
- Acc. To Ranade British power did not hindrances in individual liberty
- That's why in India British govt. took reformist policy in agri. Industrial , social, education sector
- So it is their duty

# Views on State & Economy

- Ranade was among the earliest political commentators who had systematically studied the nature and functions of the institution of state.
- For him the state was an organic entity. He believed that the state represented the highest and the most disinterested wisdom of the times.
- In his opinion the state in its collective capacity represented the power, the wisdom, the mercy and charity of its citizens. He favored a welfare rather than a police state.
- In Ranade's opinion the state should be a national organ for looking after national needs in all those fields in which the efforts of an individual or of a cooperative organization were not likely to be effective.
- Additionally, the state could enable citizens to become nobler, richer and more perfect in whatever the field they were engaged in. Ranade also viewed state as an agency to promote industrialization and social reforms.

# Social Reform

- Ranade also wanted state to intervene in bringing about social reforms in the country. He pointed out that half the battle for the reforms was already won when the British introduced English education in India.
- Many social reform movements were the off shoots of modern, scientific education through English medium. Though Ranade believed that the ideal method of bringing about social reforms was through persuasion, he did have no objection to state interference in matters of social reforms.
- sati system was abolished with state intervention. He, therefore, argued that when the social reformers could not meet with any significant success, the state should step in to carry forward the project of social reforms.
- Ranade regarded the spheres of society, politics and economy as inter-dependent and inter-connected. He, therefore, reasoned that it would be only in a progressive society that the political and economic ideals would be accomplished.
- To make society progressive and enlightened the need of social reforms could hardly be exaggerated

- He consistently championed the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. He wished that the two major communities of India should jointly end favor for the development of the nation.
- He also advocated that the Indians should develop an eclectic attitude in social affairs. They should not have a superiority complex believing that it was the Hindu culture alone that was the repository of all the best values and knowledge.
- They should make efforts to understand other cultures as well and should also acknowledge and adopt the positive features of those cultures.
- Through social reform, Ranade intended to give a new shape to society. He was trying to bring about a “change from constraint to freedom, from credulity to faith, from status to contract, from authority to reason, from unorganized to organized life, from bigotry to toleration, from blind fatalism to sense of human dignity.”
- Ranade was aware that to bring out such a change was a tall order but he got himself committed to it because there was no other alternative to improve Indian society

- Ranade prescribed five methods to bring about social reform. They were:
  - A) By persuasion that required making appeals to people so that they would commit to give up evil social practices.
  - B) By enlightened interpretations of holy scriptures and ancient tomes so that they favored reform.
  - C) By disseminating new moral principles.
  - D) By extending a helping hand to those caste organization which had intention to bring about reform in their caste group.
  - E) By state intervention.
- It is clear from the prescribed methods that Ranade thought of that he opted for state intervention only as a last resort.
- In other words Ranade was in favor of petitioning the state to make legislation for reform only if the first four methods failed. For him state intervention was the “least eligible way” that should be resorted to rarely and only for putting an end to a terrible social evil.

# Social Reform

- His vision of reformation was total as it covered the social, pol. Eco., religious aspects of our lives.
- 1 Ranades criticism of the Hindu Society:-
- He felt that the root of all evils of the Hindu society could be traced to a distorted understanding of the Hindu religion
- It was religion that gave sanction to the caste system, untouchability and subjugation of women
- He maintained that the caste system had divided the Hindu society into groups and factions

- Birth and not merit determined a persons social mobility
- He wanted total change in the Hindu society
- He was critical of the lack of freedom in the Hindu society
- He advocated the creation of a society in which individuals would be free to associate with one another and not be conspired by considerations of caste status and the limitations imposed by the caste system

# Ranade on Method of Social Reforms

- He advocated social reforms because he knew that all-round reforms were necessary to bring about social reforms and he held that barring revolution all other methods should be pursued
- **Acc. To him, there were 4 methods of social reform and they were as follows:-**
- **1.** the first method was the method of tradition in which the cause of social reforms was advocated with the help of religious texts
- **2 the** second method was that of appealing to the conscience of the people to the corrupt, superstitions and unjust practices

- 3. it was enforcement of reforms by means of penalties for instance the govt. Banned the practice of burning widows
- 4. the fourth method was that of rebellion which sought to change the evil and inhuman customs by force. This could however break the continuity and would divide the society
- He did not favour the revolutionary method because it would break the historical continuity of the community
- He recommended the first two methods but he was not averse to the use of state power or enforcement of reform

# On Social Reforms

- He believe in all round development of the society and held that social, religious , pol. Ecnomic refroms were interdependent

# Evaluation

- Ranade is rightly regarded the '*Political Rishi*' and one of the most significant social reformers. For bringing about social reforms in Indian society in a concerted and systematic way, he put in lot of efforts to establish the National Social Conference in 1887 and remained a passionate activist of the organization until his death in 1901.
- Though Ranade was opposed to revivalism, he wanted to retain the healthy and positive cultural, philosophical and religious traditions of India.
- He did not like complete banishment of Indian values. His approach to social reforms can be described as spiritual because for him the ultimate purpose of the reforms should be purification, perfection and liberation of an individual's mind.











